

# ISSUE

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# La Raza Unida returns

## By Katie Pace

Thirty years after La Raza Unida Party disappeared from Texas politics, it has returned, but this time as a statewide organizing tool of Chicana/o activists and not as a political party.

After a series of mini-summits held throughout the state, La Raza Unida held a daylong, statewide summit at Texas State University in San Marcos on Saturday, Sept. 20. Its mission: "to recommit, redirect, reorganize and reclaim past Chicano activism."

The idea to hold a statewide summit emerged out of a June 14 meeting of over 200 Mexican-American leaders in San Antonio.

"There exists a void in the current leadership of people of Mexican-American descent in the United States," Lorenzo Cano, a Chicano activist, wrote in a paper entitled, "The Rationale for Action," following the June meeting. "One of the major goals [of the summit] is to lay the foundation for a new, vocal, pro-active and challenging organization with a cross-section of people from the Mexican community," he wrote.

Chicana/os cannot afford to wait and "weather their oppression" in hope that Anglos will see the errors of their ways, said José Ángel Gutiérrez, elected party chairman in 1972.

"We must stop being governed and prepare to be the governors," Gutiérrez said.

Despite the growth of the Mexican-

American middle class, Chicana/os continue to suffer from high incarceration and dropout rates, underrepresentation in college, overrepresentation in low-paying jobs, racial profiling, environmental injustices and an educational system that alienates Chicana/o youth.

"We carry the barrio with us," Gutiérrez said. "We are no better off than the worst among us."

Chicana/os must reverse the effects of an Anglocentric educational system and culture on their own communities before they can create change within society, he said.

"Schools try to make Anglos out of us...We learn to hate ourselves," Gutiérrez said. "First reclaim your own pride, your own identity. Reclaim your right to fulfill your own destiny...We don't need to continue to blame others. We need to look inward and change ourselves."

Chicanas will play a leading role in the struggle to reempower their communities, he said.

"We are going to be women-led in 15 to 20 years. Get over it, get used to it, and learn to follow."

Among the major topics of discussion was the need to teach Chicana/o youth the skills necessary to assume leadership positions, skills untaught by a public school system that teaches Chicana/os little about their culture and history.

"The youth is our future," said Gloria Guevara, a Chicana activist from Dallas. "We've got to let our youth know that they

can no longer be complacent" and must inject their "vitality and passion" into La Raza Unida organization.

But first, Chicana/o youth must reconnect with their roots.

"We need to incorporate spirituality back into us," Guevara said. "Our spirituality has been broken."

Among the ideas proposed at the mini-summits to empower Chicana/o youth were the creation of mentoring programs, cultural centers and summer youth camps.

Other topics discussed in the 20 committees that met during the summit included education, immigration, environment, health, labor, criminal justice, border relations and coalitions.

Martha Ester Salinas, an activist from Mission, Texas, where over 2,000 plaintiffs have spent the last six years in a class-action law suit against 34 chemical companies for contaminating their water and land, attended the environmental committee meetings. Salinas said she is surrounded by neighbors who have died or are dying of cancer and unknown disorders and by infants born with chemical dependencies and mental and physical disabilities.

"The brown population has been forgotten or neglected, Salinas said. "I've got to fight for my rights. I'm going to do it peacefully...I'm not a militant. I believe in humanity."

For more information on the summit, go to <http://www.larazaunida.org>



## Resist the Free Trade Area of the Americas!

The FTAA, an expansion of North American Free Trade Agreement to the Western hemisphere, excluding Cuba, is holding a ministerial conference this Nov. 20-21 in Miami, Fla. To express opposition to these talks and to serve as a tool for mobilization, two events will take place the week of Oct. 6-10 on campus:

Wed. Oct. 8, 6 p.m., Location TBA:

The Coalition of Immokalee Workers come to UT to speak about their struggle with exploitative labor practices under Taco Bell.

Fri., Oct. 10, 4 p.m., Chicano Culture Room in the Texas Union

Representatives of the Texas Fair Trade Coalition and of Global Exchange address global justice as it relates to free trade. Both events will be followed by break-out sessions to facilitate proactive resistance to the November talks.

For updated info on CIW event: [UTgreens@yahoo.com](mailto:UTgreens@yahoo.com)

Issue is a newspaper offering in-depth reporting and analysis on issues affecting the University of Texas at Austin campus and surrounding areas. Stories focus on issues not regularly covered by mainstream media outlets. We are committed to achieving social justice and offering readers ways they can become active in the process for social change.

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# Private prisons: UT's connection

*"Through one or more of its individual institutions, The University of Texas System seeks ... to cultivate in students the ethical and moral values that are the basis of a humane social order."*

*- The University of Texas System mission statement*

*"There are over 900,000 undocumented individuals from Middle Eastern descent. That's ... half of our entire prison population. That's a huge number, and that is a, a population for, for lot's a reasons that is being targeted. So I would say the events of September 11, um, let me back up. The federal business is the best business for us. It's the most consistent business for us, and the events of September 11 is increasing that level of business."*

*- Steve Logan, CEO of Cornell, a private prison company financially backed by Lehman Brothers*

**By Bob Libal**

**F**rom sweatshop operators to weapons manufacturers, the University of Texas does business with many ethically questionable companies. One of the worst is Lehman Brothers, Inc. – the largest financial backer of for-profit prisons in the United States.

For-profit prisons, prisons operated by private corporations paid by the state, are a driving force behind the prison expansion that is locking up more and more youth, people of color and immigrants while siphoning funds from higher education budgets.

## Lockdown USA

This summer, the federal government announced that there are over 2.1 million people in prisons in the United States – a number that far exceeds the incarcerated population of any other country. While the United States has roughly 8% of the world's total population, it incarcerates nearly 25% of the world's imprisoned population.

It hasn't always been this way. In the past 30 years, the number of people in prisons, jails and detention facilities in the United States has risen from 300,000 to seven times that number. In the past 10 years, the number of incarcerated people has doubled from 1 million to the over 2 million people.

People of color are particularly affected, especially young black men. The United States incarcerates black men at a rate

higher than South Africa under apartheid. More young black men are in prison or on parole than in colleges and universities.

Behind these increases are a number of factors – the "war on drugs," tough-on-crime political posturing, the unemployment in urban communities due to rapid globalization, and the increasing view of prisons as profit-making institutions.

Immigrants are one of the fastest growing prison populations in the country. The passage of 1996 regressive immigration policies and post-9/11 legislation has led to a rapid increase in the number of immigrants behind bars as well.

## If you build it, they will come

The construction, maintenance and operation of prisons have become a multi-billion dollar industry in the U.S. From construction companies who build the prisons to telephone companies that charge inmates exorbitant rates for calls to families, entire industries are being built around the assumption that more people will be locked up in the future.

The most egregious examples of this prisons-as-profit mentality are explicitly for-profit prison companies. Led by corporations like Corrections Corporation of America and Wackenhut Corrections, these companies are paid by state, federal or county governments to operate prisons.

Beyond the moral dilemma posed by putting people in prison for money, it is

increasingly clear that for-profit prison operators have a sordid history including increased rates of inmate and guard violence. Criminologist James Austin found in 1997 that privatized prisons have 49% to 65% higher rates of violence against both inmates and guards. These effects come largely from cost-saving measures such as cutting the number and pay of guards and trimming programs for education and rehabilitation.

In addition, for-profit prison companies are affecting public policy to guarantee their financial future. Prison companies spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in the past five years supporting "tough-on-crime" politicians in states throughout the country. Prison companies also participate in the creation of model legislation through right-wing think tanks such as the American Legislative Exchange Council.

By 2000, a series of scandals and a saturated state prison market had crippled the private prison industry. Along came global investment bank Lehman Brothers, Inc. to save this unsavory industry. Lehman has refinanced credit, arranged bailouts and negotiated favorable deals for the three largest private prison companies in the United States, keeping the industry afloat. In exchange for their services, Lehman has made millions from ensuring the future of prisons for profit.

## Education versus Incarceration

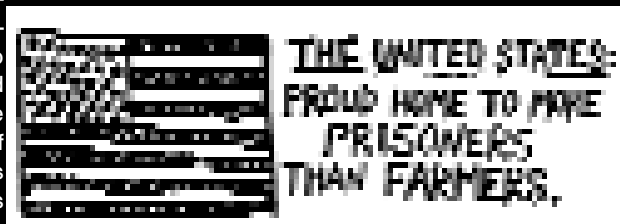
At a time when UT administrators have to beg for scraps of funding reserved for the state's expanding university system, funding for prison expansion seems endless. Between 1980 and 2000, spending for prison construction in Texas rose 400% while funding for higher education increased at less than a tenth of that rate.

It would seem odd that the UT System, especially in a time of tight budgets, would repeatedly do business with companies that directly finance prison construction. But that's exactly what UT does each time that it uses Lehman Brothers, Inc. to underwrite bonds issued for capital projects.

Here's how it works. Whenever a UT system school needs money that it doesn't have for a major project like construction of a building or renovations, it issues a number of bonds. A company like Lehman then facilitates the sale of these bonds for a substantial fee. In fact, over the past several years, UT has completed four underwriting deals with Lehman, totaling nearly \$500 million dollars – which creates a substantial chunk of change in underwriting fees for the country's biggest private prison financier.

Because the bonds and the underwriting fees are paid back through student tuition and fees, students are pouring millions of dollars into Lehman and financing an industry of injustice.

For more information about the campaign to end UT's relationship with Lehman Brothers and private prisons in general, please email [bob@notwithourmoney.org](mailto:bob@notwithourmoney.org).



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# Last one standing: the workings of a Texas food cooperative

By Caren Panzer

"Do you have a member number?"

Blank stares, quizzical looks and the occasional indignant glare meet this question daily at Wheatsville Food Cooperative on Guadalupe. They look around ... Since when do grocery stores have membership?

Wheatsville, like other food cooperatives around the world, is not your everyday grocery store. Even those who shell out the \$15 annual or \$70 lifetime membership fee may not truly understand the principles and inner workings of a food cooperative.

According to the International Cooperative Alliance, cooperatives, or "co-ops," are autonomous associations of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise. Once upon a time, co-ops used to be run solely by volunteers who donated their time, energy and capital to the grocery collective. Today, many stores have a paid staff and use membership fees to run operations.

## A brief history

Cooperatives attempt to reduce waste by buying in bulk and encouraging the reuse of containers. The first successful cooperative, established in 1844 in Rochdale, England, was one of the first stores to take out the "tare," the weight of containers, from bulk items. Other stores would include the heavy wrapping in the weight while charging by the pound. Co-ops like Wheatsville take out the weight of receptacles containing bulk items and give money back to customers for bringing their own containers.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Austin was home to at least nine cooperatives. The small town of Denton, north of Dallas, had at least five at one point. One by one, co-ops around Texas closed their doors.

"They weren't run as businesses but more like social experiments," Dan Gillote, general manager of Wheatsville, said of Austin co-ops. "One had a jar at the front, no cashiers and a 'pay what you can' policy. It didn't last too long."

Wheatsville is currently the only food cooperative in the state of Texas. It opened in 1976 thanks to the University of Texas Student's Association, who hosted a ZZ Top concert to raise over \$13,000 in

startup capital. A staple of Austin culture, Wheatsville now has over 4,000 members and makes over \$4 million in annual sales. Cooperative buying is still tough in a market where large competitors buy in huge bulk and sell at below cost. This year will be the first time Wheatsville has turned a profit in over five years.

## How does it work?

Unlike commercial grocery stores where the goal is to turn a profit for generally uninvolved investors, co-ops are designed to be more responsive to consumer and member needs. Membership is voluntary, and one need not be a member to shop at a co-op. Policies on non-members vary at different stores, but Wheatsville tacks on a seven percent surcharge to those purchases.

The \$15 annual fee only covers the cost of setting up and maintaining the individual member accounts, said John Perkins,



financial manager at Wheatsville. The \$70 lifetime fee, \$55 of which is refundable up to 60 days after joining, is the real capital investment that keeps Wheatsville up and running. That capital investment goes into the equity of the business and is used for various operating costs.

If the cooperative turns a profit, members usually receive a "patronage refund" proportional to the amount they spent in the store during that year. Unless a substantial profit is turned, adequate to cover the cost of redistribution of funds, net gains are recycled into developing the co-op, setting up reserves, and supporting various community and charitable activities.

Charity and community involvement are a top concerns of members at Wheatsville. Formerly, they would sponsor or donate food to specific events voted on by the board of directors or chosen by the general manager. In an effort to empower members in this process and give more proportionally to each cause, Gillote implemented a program called

"Community Action Wednesdays." In each fall election, members vote for 10 charities to support, with space for write-ins. Each month is designated to one of these organizations, who receive one percent of profits made each Wednesday of that month.

"[Community Action Wednesdays] seemed like a way to infuse more democracy into the system," Gillote said.

While maintaining this democratic basis, many co-ops have switched from the purely collectivist, anti-hierarchical systems of earlier days to a managerial structure. At Wheatsville, the general manager is hired by the board of directors, who are elected annually by the members.

The board of directors holds its meetings on the last Tuesday of every month. Board Chairman Bob Kinney said that a yearly calendar is set up to dictate the focus of each month's meeting. If a member has a concern they wish to voice at a board meeting, they can contact the chairman or the general manager in advance.

"Being a board member is akin to being in the crew's nest of a big ship. Our job is to look ahead to see where the ship is going and to plan for our ship's future path. We don't spend much time looking down into the engine room to see how the [general manager] and the crew are running the ship. That's the [general manager's] responsibility and the crew's job,"

Kinney said.

The general manager communicates with and oversees the team heads. Six umbrella teams oversee each individual department at Wheatsville. Teams include finance, front end, grocery, deli, health, and produce.

"The hierarchy system is more important than people think," said Gillote. "You can still get input and run an efficient co-op."

In a similar vein, Kinney said, "The flow of authority works in both directions, but you can't bypass one level in the chain or the likelihood of trouble is great."

## Why are there so few?

One can find successful co-ops in India, Sri-Lanka, South America, Korea, Europe... The list goes on. So why does only one relatively small cooperative remain in Texas while they abound in almost all other U.S. states and around the world?

There are several obstacles to overcome before opening a cooperative. According

## HOW-TO OPEN A CO-OP

Wheatsville General Manager Dan Gillote advises, "It seems simple, but the first thing you have to do is figure out what your purpose is for being in existence."

### -What kind of cooperative are you trying to establish?

Gather like-minded people with similar goals and form a vision. Decide what form of equity, or ownership right in property, you will implement.

### -Will your co-op be volunteer run and owned and how will company stock be divided?

Find out about getting licensed and the necessary legal procedures in your area.

Under the Texas Cooperative Association Act, cooperatives are subject to many of the same rules as laid out in the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act. For the full text of the Act: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/statutes/vn/vn0003201toc.html> then click on "Cooperative Association Act."

### Raise startup capital respective to your ambition.

-Try a benefit concert or art show, garage sales, cook-offs or anything you can think of! Recruit local artisans or well-known figures.

**Find a location!** Try to pick a location that is **relatively accessible** to most people in your city or town. Square footage will depend on your desired amount and type of inventory.

-For some perspective: Wheatsville has about 5,100 sq. ft. of retail space and about 10,000 total sq. ft.

Don't forget to talk to operators and **founders of other co-ops**. Learn from them and reinforce the spirit of cooperation.

to John Perkins, Wheatsville's financial manager, legal help is necessary in order to obtain a license under the Texas Cooperative Association Act. Even if the co-op is solely volunteer run, licenses are still needed.

Then, the organizers must establish articles of incorporation, bylaws, forms or equity and, possibly, a board of directors. The daunting task of obtaining startup

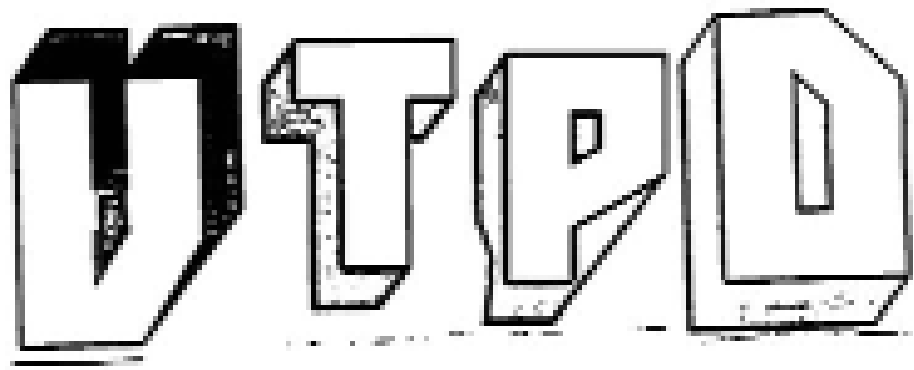
**By Chiefin' Geoffrey Can-the-Van Slike**

In March 2003, Edmund Gordon, director of the Center for African and African American Studies, asked what solutions the University of Texas Police Department thought were necessary to avoid future racial profiling incidents. The UTPD Chief of Police Jeffrey Van Slyke responded, "I would say none."

In response to his reactionary statements, multiple students filed complaints with the UTPD. Fortunately for Van Slyke, a self-declared anti-racist, he was in charge of confirming and following through with the legitimacy of complaints. Breathing a sigh of relief, Van Slyke crumbles up a complaint and scores two points as it enters his trash basket amongst other wadded up complaints that did not meet his personal standards as legitimate.

Incidents of sexual assault, physical assault and racial profiling are piling up, receiving more attention from local media and UT community members than from the Administration. The UTPD has an internal grievance policy overseen solely by the chief of police. Students cannot file anonymous complaints, and neither they nor anyone outside of the UTPD are involved in the complaint process in any way.

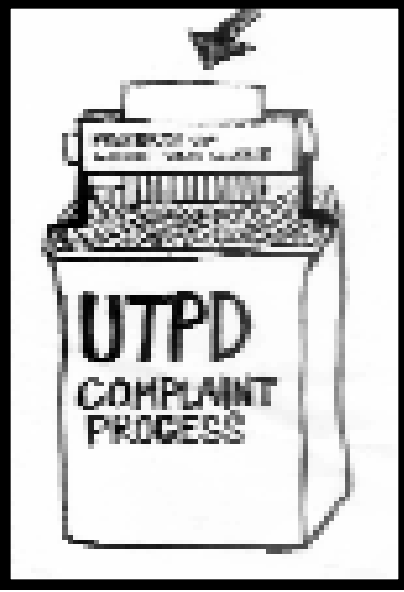
Former UTPD officer Sellers Bailey was charged with and acquitted of forcing a female student to perform oral sex on him. Multiple students have been subjected to racial profiling (though only one filed a complaint, possibly due to structure of complaint process), while other students



have been harassed for their political beliefs. One student was sent to the hospital last semester after a UTPD officer slammed his head into a wall. This issue is real within the Forty Acres.

Last semester, the newly elected Student Government voiced concerns regarding the UTPD with the passage of their first resolution, which detailed the problematic make-up of the UTPD complaint process, highlighting the conflict of interest of its internalized nature.

The administrators' response: "Let's create a committee!" Unfortunately, the Administration had a different understanding from that of the elected student representatives concerning the jurisdiction of the UTPD Oversight Committee created in



July by UT President Larry Faulkner.

In their resolution, SG requested a committee in which their "peers could air their concerns with the UTPD's methods and processes without entering the formal complaint process, allowing concerned students to maintain an identity of anonymity if they so desire." Nevertheless, in a memo sent out to SG students after the committee was created, Faulkner outlined the duties of the committee, a 12-member group of administrators, faculty, staff and students, as "not intended [to be] a substitute for the established means for handling formal grievances and complaints. Rather, the Committee seeks to learn of possible systemic problems in the operation of the UTPD and, if such exist, to learn of possible solutions for consider-



by  
**joe  
weisenthal**  
.....  
**COLUMNIST**

Of course, I could always use the approach of popular comic artists such as Tom Tomorrow and Pat Oliphant. Their formula for making humor goes like this: Take some headlines from the day's paper, add a drawing and voila -- it's funny!

You could have ArnoldSchwarzenegger telling GrayDavis "Hasta La Vista" or a penguin hitting a news anchor over the head with a sign (get it?) or, in one of my favorite Oliphant pieces of all time, Bill Clinton walking into an Italian restaurant called Il Fellatio (get that? read closely!). Oh wait, one problem -- that's not a joke.

So, really, I implore you to come up with an example of good political humor. I'll give you a second...

OK, so I bet you came up with something, and now I'll debunk it without even waiting for you to email me your responses.

Here goes: Okay, Doonesbury has always sucked. Don't even give me that "Well, it was funny during the Nixon era" bullshit. It wasn't. I've read them all, and they're all dumb.

And for that matter, I don't think you should be bringing up The Daily Show in this debate. It's funny because it lets the news do the talk-

ing, not because they try to add any humor. Why do you think CNN picked up the show for their international broadcasts? It's a news show.

What? The Onion? Give me a challenge. Politics has always been their weak point. The funny stuff is always about the local man who thinks he is really experiencing life across the border at the local Taco Bell and doesn't understand why them Mexicans want to come here so bad. The politics is always weak.

No! Your parents worn out Tom Lehrer records don't count! And no, Saturday Night Live wasn't funny during the 1992 Presiden...well, never mind about that.

So my point stands. I win, I think. Political humor is an impossible oxymoron, and I guess that's why I got the punishment of having to write it. I'm sure you disagree, and, if so, you may email me at weisenjo@yahoo.com

Also, if anyone out there needs someone to write a humor column for their publications on: Economics/Geology/Anthropology/Juvenile Oncology/Critical Theory/Post-structuraism/feminism/gerontology/or Library Sciences, please let me know--I'm a really funny guy.

ation by the UTPD and the President." A quick look at the history of UT committees, which can make recommendations to the UT president but have no power to ensure that those recommendations are acted upon, would leave anyone at least slightly pessimistic about any substantial reform of the UTPD's complaint process. Rather than to effect change, the administrative strategy behind this committee is to further bureaucratize student concerns and grievances with yet another administrative layer that students must wade through before any change occurs. The committee co-opts and absorbs legitimate and neglected student concerns, establishing a façade that complaints and concerns of students are being taken into account.

In reality, the committee has no power except that of consultation, which does not guarantee the implementation of any infrastructural changes. Although there are students on the committee that are chosen by the Administration, few (if any) of them have had negative experiences with the UTPD (or any police force) from which they could offer constructive criticism of current procedures. Nonetheless, their intentions are good, and they are willing to participate in dialogue with students in the interest of transparency. Feel free to contact Katie King at [katieaking50@hotmail.com](mailto:katieaking50@hotmail.com) with concerns or comments.

Students have voiced their concerns and gone through the "appropriate" administrative channels. However, students and administrators have both fallen short of their responsibilities. The Administration must fulfill student-based recommendations from the UTPD Oversight Committee, regardless of the committee's flawed nature. The students' responsibility lies in utilizing the current complaint process where, hopefully, both students and administrators will recognize the process's inability to efficiently respond to student complaints.

But students must also be more proactive in expressing grievances. A dual-pronged strategy of working within the committee as well as a sustained student-led initiative in which students demand that the University externalize the complaint process would both hold the UTPD more liable for its actions and prove fallacious the belief that creating committees is a sufficient administrative response to demands for change. Send comments regarding the policies, practices and operations of the UTPD to [pres.cmte.utpd@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:pres.cmte.utpd@mail.utexas.edu).

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# The g L O b a L S e L L o u t o f H i g h e r E d u c a t i o n

By Nick Schwellenbach

On Sept. 8 and 9, two days prior to the World Trade Organization's meeting in Cancun, Mexico, students from around the globe converged on the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México to discuss the impacts of the WTO and other neoliberal policies on higher education. The students gathered to organize resistance to privatization of their education, tuition deregulation and increases, and slashed university services. Their goal: to defend popular and accessible education for all. The University of Texas is on the forefront of these developments within global higher education; if student concerns are pushed aside, there may be a radical transformation of higher education.

Students at UT and elsewhere can organize to defend public education by developing an understanding of the impact of globalization on higher education and using it as an opportunity to build alliances with students across borders.

## The GATS Attack

In 1994, the World Trade Organization was formed out of the last round of the GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs). Both the WTO and its predecessor are global rules-based institutions where member countries negotiate trade agreements. When the WTO was created, services were then covered under a multilateral agreement. Until that point, trade agreements existed to reduce tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers for goods that were produced in one place and sold in another. Services such as transportation and financial services historically have been traded, but others such as health care and education generally had been exempted. With NAFTA serving as a precedent, select countries within the WTO now target those sectors.

One of the current WTO agreements is the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services). The GATS covers almost every kind of service, with a few exceptions. Only services provided solely by a government and using only government funding could receive exemption. Yet, since most countries have private universities and because at least part of public university funding comes from private money, public education cannot be exempted.

The framers of the GATS are acutely aware of the fact that no bright line exists between public and private sectors. Along these lines, Kurt Larsen of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris says of the distinction, "It's something that is not very clear," because "trade people don't want that to be very clear." (International Herald Tribune 2/18/03) As a result, such rules can be

defined or manipulated to eliminate such exemptions. If the distinction between what constitutes public and private was clear, it might mean limiting the scope of the GATS.

The motive behind the ambiguous language can be traced back to the interests that are actively promoting neoliberal policies and those that have the most to gain from those policy implications. To put the matter simply, the European Commission describes GATS as "first and foremost an instrument for the benefit of business," (Towards GATS 2000) and not as an agreement to increase the quality of education for the public. Likewise, Scott Sinclair, a Canadian researcher, concludes, "the agreement is designed to facilitate international business by constraining democratic governance" (Sinclair 2000).

Through a process of closed-door decision making, public opinion is marginalized, and corporate lobbyists are better able to manage international trade policy as well as pursue a corporate agenda by neutralizing government's ability to organize the delivery and distribution of national resources for the public good.

The WTO literature on the GATS gives an impression of the enormity of the agreement's implications. The WTO states that not only is it unique because it is the first multilateral agreement to "provide legally enforceable rights to trade in all services," but because it is also the world's first multilateral agreement on investment. In 1998, the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), which would have decreased the power of governments to create legislation that restricts corporate activities, was defeated by a worldwide grassroots lobbying campaign. GATS is seen as the next MAI, especially as it would reach

more sectors. In fact, there were efforts to expand GATS to include investment in Cancun.

GATS applies to services in two ways. The first is called the "National Treatment Principal" whereby there is a general set of obligations that apply to all WTO member countries. Essentially this principal means that there should be no favoritism for a national provider as opposed to a foreign one. If implemented and applied to higher education,

the U.S. could not favor a state public university over a foreign private school. If a state subsidized its public university, then it would either have to subsidize the private school as well or it must eliminate state support of education altogether.

The role of the state is no longer to

ensure the common asset of education but to facilitate its auctioning off to foreign multinationals. The elimination of state subsidization is unlikely, though — even the WTO is not certain as to "whether higher education can be profitable for private investors without public subsidies" (WTO 1998). Thus, a scenario may develop where states are privatizing public universities and subsidizing both private and once-public universities, therefore socializing costs and simultaneously privatizing the profits and control.

Secondly, member countries are allowed to choose which sectors of education they want opened up to international competition. To this extent, the GATS is a bottom-up agreement as opposed to a top-down, imposed agreement like NAFTA or the proposed FTAA, but there are provisions for a 'built-in agenda,' or allowing for continuing negotiations of opening up sectors and liberalization. The implication is that countries are supposed

to open up progressively more sectors to the GATS. Some countries and corporations believe the current system is operating too slowly and support a top-down agreement to accelerate the process. In either case countries are "locked in" and cannot go back on their commitments.

The GATS has the power to penalize nations by reversing laws and regulations that do not abide by the agreement, depriving nations of their sovereignty to legislate in the public interest. "Final authority will rest with the GATS Disputes Panel to determine whether a law or regulation is, in the memo's language, 'more burdensome than necessary'" (*The Observer*, 4/15/2001).

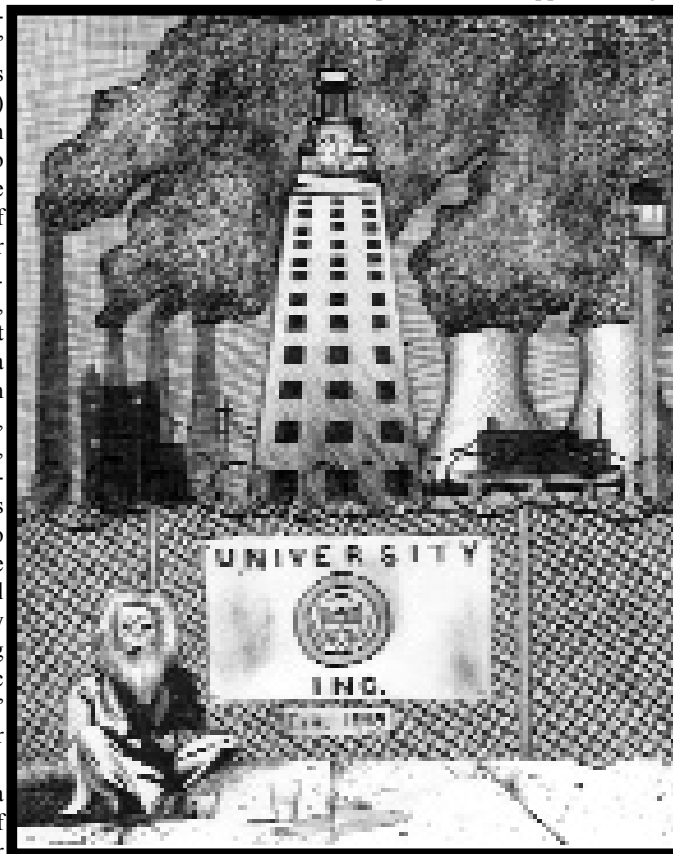
In sum, the GATS isn't about trade alone, because it has the added power of circumscribing legislation in the public interest as so-called "barriers to trade." The only legitimate goal for governments under the WTO is to facilitate the profits of the few, at the expense of the public.

The Global Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE), an organization of private, for-profit education providers, has already produced a list of barriers in education for the WTO. Some of these barriers to trade include state subsidies to education, investment limits by foreign entities, education requirements, and any form of local, state or national standards. If these "barriers" are eliminated, then the public delivery of education could be undermined through the reduction of state support for public education and the transference of public subsidies to private entities.

Attacks on social spending, although corporate subsidies appear to have received a de facto exemption, are nothing new — neoliberal policies have been on the offensive since the 1970s. The rhetoric of budget crises is a common theme, both giving rise to and reinforcing these policies. Like a vicious cycle, neoliberalism attacks social services and their funding as a way to restore corporate profits, meanwhile crippling those services in order to rationalize their privatization. An increasing proportion of the costs are shifted to the public, disproportionately the middle and lower classes, which pays more for the same service of declining quality through individual payments (for students, tuition, etc.). This is what has been happening to the universities as they have become privatized and more entrepreneurial.

## UT as a Case Study

"In 1970 tuition was \$50 for *any* in-state student enrolled in *any* college or school for *any* number of credit hours and total fees were \$54 for anyone enrolled at the University. In the fall semester of 2002, you won't get a twelve hour course load for less than \$2,300." -UT Watch Tuition Study, 2002



Art by Kevin Rollins

In spring 2003, the Texas 78<sup>th</sup> Legislature deregulated the power to determine tuition in the University of Texas System, transferring the power to set tuition from its own hands to that of university governing boards; tuition caps have also been removed. Tuition is more than likely to increase at a pace much faster than before when deregulation comes into effect in spring 2004.

Along with the tuition increases of the last 30 years, what is happening is summarized well by Luis Navarro “as a conversion of a constitutionally guaranteed citizen’s right [for a free public education] into a class privilege combined with the ‘option’ of ‘public assistance and charity’” [i.e. student loans] (NACLA Jan/Feb 2000). These increases in tuition and the power to set rates as a profit-making business are complemented by the change in perception of public education from being a public good (education as having a social role) to being a private one (an investment in one’s future).

The UT administration increasingly views students as consumers of university services. This description fails in terms of usefulness to students who are struggling with increased school-workloads and second and third jobs. With the rise of mass higher education in the 1950s, the government’s intentions were clear — universities were to be the training grounds for a productive, intellectual workforce. The medieval university as primarily a site for intellectual exploration has been discarded in favor of a factory-like model. Students are workers in the university, working on unwaged schoolwork — the disciplining and socializing processes necessary to prepare them for the next 40 years of sitting in a cubicle. Without this additional dimension in the analysis of students, it is difficult to explain efforts by universities to graduate students faster. The social role of UT of providing intellectual labor in the state of Texas became apparent when a university committee’s interim report recommended 5-year graduation limits. (The Daily Texan 9/9/03). Tuition deregulation may play a role in achieving faster graduation rates.

These increases in tuition not only become necessary for the low government subsidy/high tuition neoliberal model of higher education, but they work to also increase workloads in the university. In the *Highlights of the 78<sup>th</sup> Legislature* report for the UT Board of Regents, one of tuition deregulation’s listed benefits was increased “enrollment management” — using financial leverage on students to intensify their course loads, pushing them into taking certain classes and disciplines and to maximize the efficiency of university resources (i.e. redirecting educational resources to those areas with the greatest commercial payoff). Students should not be seen as products on an assembly line to be sped up and technocrats in the Tower should not micromanage our lives.

Faced with GATS and its effect of an accelerated process of the privatization of public universities, tuition is poised to skyrocket. Other changes are possible as well. Academic freedom has been increasingly on the chopping block as programs are judged on profitability. “Unprofitable” disciplines have experienced a rapid shift towards the increas-

ing reliance on graduate students and part-time, untenured faculty “freed” from the protections of academic freedom. Programs and classes that are in demand by corporations and the military will become well funded, while others will endure austerity and possible elimination. Such programs already suffer under the weight of “national security” and intellectual property restrictions that hobble the free exchange of knowledge and ideas. A corporate agenda will further reign over the university, to the detriment of public and individual needs and desires.

The transformation of university research is already an excellent example. In 1982, the Bayh-Dole Act, which allowed universities to obtain licenses to inventions financed by government support, passed the U.S. Congress. Since then, patents granted to universities have radically increased. According to an article written by Yves Engler in *Z Magazine*, for

university revenue, while funding for education continues to languish.

When universities spin off companies or license technology to private corporations from the research financed through public funding, they use public financial capital to prop up the private beneficiaries. “Roughly two-thirds of the nation’s academic institutions hold stock in start-up companies that sponsor research performed at the same institution” (*Wall Street Journal*, 1/22/2003). The UT System has increased flexibility in controlling its own financial capital that enables it to do this. The creation of the University of Texas Investment Management Company (UTIMCO) in 1996 was a first for a public university — it’s a private company with control over public funds. UTIMCO invests in venture capital to support university spin-offs through investments in funds such as Austin Ventures, if not through direct investment.

expand abroad in the same way, swallowing up foreign systems of higher education. The UT System gained increased autonomy from the state legislature in other areas of operation.

A bill passed during the 78<sup>th</sup> Legislature, SB 1652 (omnibus deregulation), gave UT the authority to own, operate and manage facilities outside of Texas. If countries open up their education systems under the GATS agreement, then potentially UT could move in and take over foreign education if it thought it would be profitable.

UT has already established connections in Mexico. On Sept. 8, the UT Board of Regents met with the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Antonio Garza on matters relating to education and health care. As the largest provider of both in Texas, UT would be positioned to manage, operate and own Mexican higher education and health care institutions. GATS would set the stage for such a takeover.

### Resistance

These developments do not go unopposed. An international campaign led by GATSWatch aims to “take education out of the GATS” by carving education out of the agreement the same way national security has been. Students around the world have also done analysis and education detailing how neoliberal globalization is affecting themselves and others. At Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, students went on strike for 10 months from 1999-2000 to oppose tuition hikes, and they researched and documented how government spending cuts stem partly from International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies. These processes threaten public education and are operating at a global level. Students will need to begin to organize, operate and challenge them globally as well.

But perhaps on a deeper level, we students will need to reconceptualize the way we perceive ourselves in order to truly organize against these policies to construct a university based around our needs and desires. In order for students to organize for themselves and against being passive cogs manipulated by outside forces, they will need to see themselves as central to the operating of this machine, UT Inc.

It may be wise to remember words from one of UT’s first professors at the founding of UT in 1883. Professor Mallet addressed the first class of students:

“To the students: We ask you to be fellow workers with us. You should try to understand your true relations to the university. You frequently hear the phrase used, ‘coming to the university,’ not remembering that you ARE the university. More than the faculty - more than the board of regents - more than all else - it is the students that make the university. It is not the crumbling stones of Oxford, nor the memories of its hundreds of able teachers that make it the great university of England, but it is the never dying intellectual and moral life of the five and twenty generations of men who have gathered there as students. The students are, in the highest and truest sense, the university themselves.”

Check out our website at

[www.issueonline.org](http://www.issueonline.org)



From left: UT President Larry Faulkner, UT System Chancellor Mark Yudof and Regent Charles Miller

Historian of science, David

the year 2000, universities were granted “3,273 patents; 269 were granted in 1979.” And universities are using these patents to make money — “universities collected \$1.1 billion in royalties from [the] 13,000 patents they hold” (*Boston Globe*, 4/28/2003). But this development is not the treasure trove it may seem to be. The money going in to fund the research is much, much greater than the returns. According to an *Austin-American Statesman* article on July 6, 2003, “universities [across the nation] spent \$27.6 billion on research in 2001.” In effect, publicly funded higher education serves as an indirect subsidy for corporate research for which the fruits can be privately reaped — the public produces and funds the research but doesn’t own it. Taxpayers and students pay to have their fat sold back to them.

UT is no exception to this trend. According to the same *Statesman* article, UT “earned more than \$4 million from its licensing fees” in 2002. While plenty of tax money goes to support such research by paying for researcher salaries, equipment and other supports, none of the licensing fees goes into general revenue for the University. In the same article, “[of that tech transfer revenue, half is shared with the professors who create the ideas, and half is kept by Nichols’ office [the UT Office of Technology Transfer]. By law, all royalties must be used to further technology transfer.” UT and other universities are turning more and more to technology transfer as a way to gener-

Noble puts it simply: “Universities are getting out of the education business like U.S. Steel got out of the steel business” (*Newsday* 10/8/89). This is because state funding for higher education has stagnated, and corporate/military funding for research is up. What little the state does provide, is increasingly geared towards commercially-oriented research, since administrators are under the mistaken assumption that will generate more funding for education. With state subsidies being attacked by austerity and agreements such as the GATS, these trends will only increase.

In the case of outright privatization, which is the aim of the GATS, UT may become a kind of corporate logo. It is already trademarked with draconian consequences for anyone who attempts to use UT in their name or use the longhorn logo. And UT may go multinational if it becomes a private institution, since it will have nothing holding it down in Texas.

This might not be so far fetched. Although higher education has a hard time physically moving its capital around (except for distance learning), according to Robert Ovetz, a professor of globalization and ecology at the New College of California, “it can move financial and human capital to countries which have been forced to privatize their education systems and take them over the way Bechtel failed to do with a municipal water system in Bolivia in the late 1990s.”

The stage has already been set for UT to

# RACE: THE PINK ELEPHANT IN THE AMERICAN LIVING ROOM

By Esther Wang

I moderated a classroom discussion not too long ago on Asian Americans and the racism that affects that community. The class was for “minority leaders” here at UT, and, at first glance, it could have been a poster for diversity and the beauty of multiculturalism — about a third of the students were black, a third were white, and the rest of the class was Asian American and Latino. But it quickly became obvious that, while we were all gathered together in the same room, we could not communicate with each other.

At first, comments were innocuous — “I honestly never learned anything about Asian Americans in my history classes.” But then — “People in Asia only learn American history because they want to take over the U.S., and they’re jealous.” And about the 1982 beating death of a Chinese-American male by two white men with a baseball bat — “I don’t understand why people made it such a huge deal. It was only one guy. It wasn’t important. I think people exaggerated it a lot.”

The gulf of misunderstanding in the room was expanding even as I and the other moderators scrambled to build threadbare bridges. I left that class feeling like a hand was clenched around my heart, wondering just how far we have really come since the days of “separate but equal,” and thinking of how much further we still have to go.

It used to be that the color of your skin was definitive proof of some inherent quality of yours. As recently as 1994, social scientists such as Charles Murray, author of “The Bell Curve,” stated that intelligence fell along racial lines, with “Mongoloids” as the smartest race, followed by Caucasians, and blacks trailing at the end.

Today’s scientists, however, say that race is biologically meaningless and has no genetic implications on your intelligence, personality or soul. So why, then, do we still check the little boxes on applications and forms that ask us what race we are? Why do black men in the U.S. with college degrees earn almost \$10,000 less annually than their white counterparts? Why does race still dominate so much of our political, social and economic life? Why, in a class made of our university’s diverse student leaders, did I receive the responses I did?

Answers to these questions are keys that open up a whole slew of Pandora’s boxes, full of even more questions that make us squirm. If race does matter in any sort of real way, then we must admit reluctantly that racism still operates in this society.

We talk, think and debate about race because we will never be able to shed our skin

and our color. Never. It would be nice if we all could dismiss race as something artificial and exist in a color-blind society where we could all recognize our shared humanity. But it is a

**“It was only when I came to college that I realized to be Asian-American in this country was to be a foreigner, the *perpetual* Other.”**

basic human fact that we will always need to categorize them, fit them neatly into already delineated identities that will help us more easily understand others.

The girl sitting next to you in class, with the Reef flipflops/piercings/no bra? She’s a sorority girl/punk rock poser/neo-hippie, and that bit of knowledge, however true or untrue, colors your perception of her and your assessment of her intelligence and core beliefs. Race is simply the easiest and most obvious I.D. tag available to us.

We see similarities and realize we are all simply people after all; we encounter difference and secretly wonder if those dissimilarities mean that we are very different creatures, you and I. So where in the twain do we meet? Perhaps we do meet somewhere. We live in a country, after all, that ostensibly celebrates diversity and all things multicultural. Don’t we have a Chinese buffet and Tex-Mex restaurant on every city block, and don’t we idolize black sports stars and musicians? It is seductive to think that, as a society, we have fully embraced diversity and eradicated racism — just look at Eminem or at the success of J.Lo!

But underneath the gloss of pop culture flows the deep currents that move our country and society. Why is a white rapper able to achieve prominence and gain widespread popularity, whereas black men who are equally talented do not? Why is it so easy to accept another people’s food, music and clothing and lock them in prisons and deny them a decent education at the same time? These are tough questions that ask us to probe the very essence of what it means to be an American — what do we embrace, and what do we choose to exclude?

On a more personal level, race colors and shades our every day. I am an Asian-American woman. When I was growing up, I didn’t know what that meant, to be a woman and

Asian (and... American?) at the same time. It was only when I came to college that I realized to be Asian-American in this country was to be a foreigner, the perpetual Other, and to be a

woman was to be thought of as somehow less than a man.

“Where are you from?” San Antonio, I reply. “No, where are you REALLY from?” The color of my skin, my hair, my flat nose, all the features that mark me “Asian” never, and will never, mark me as “American.”

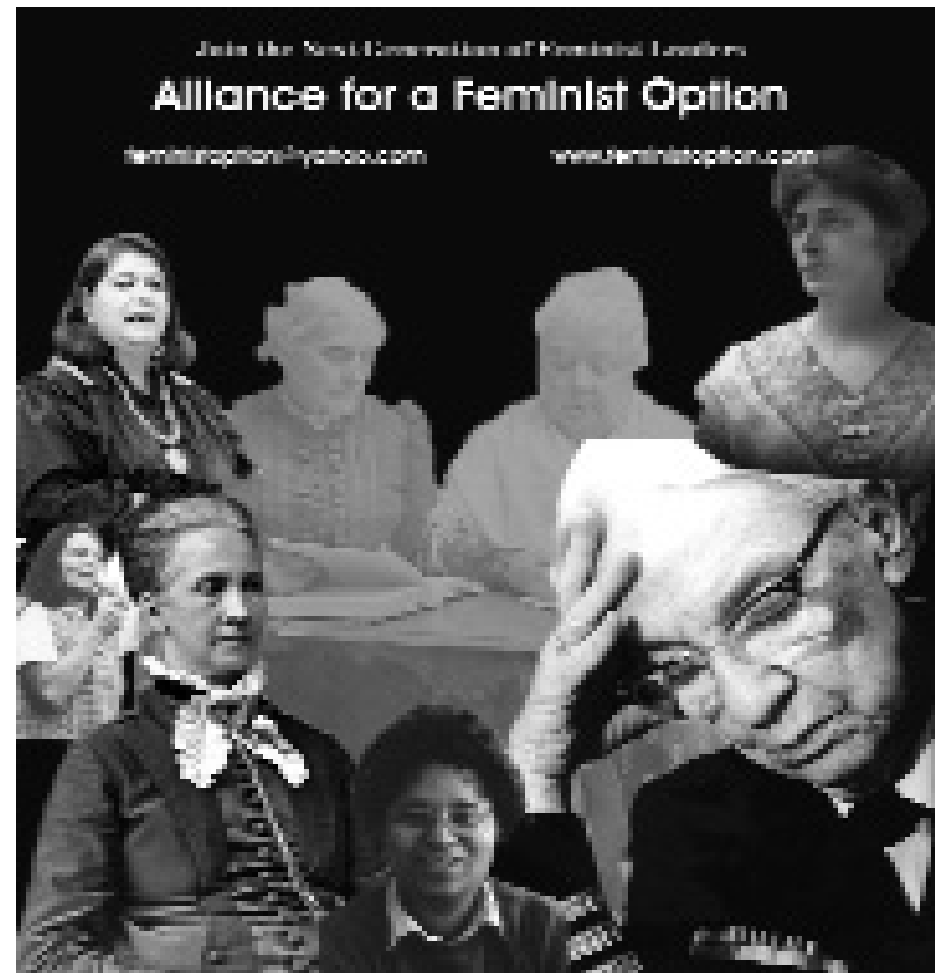
We all come with baggage, filled with the images and incomplete knowledge we have

accumulated in our short lives about those who are different from us. While it is tempting to think that the baggage we bring can be dropped off, and perhaps it can be, a lack of true understanding and real interaction is the fundamental problems in this country.

“The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line,” said the black scholar and social critic W. E. B. Du Bois. Only, like tectonic plates once touching but now moving apart, the lines have become a yawning divide.

Race is a tricky topic. It’s very real, but, at the same time, it’s not. We talk about it all the time, but we’re always shouting rhetoric across that divide. What will it take to bring us back together for true and gritty dialogue? I have no answers — all I know is that it is hard to first be honest with yourself and then even harder to ask the difficult questions.

Perhaps in the distant future, bathed in the light of understanding, we can all link arms, smile at one another, and wonder out loud, “What were we thinking? We were so foolish!” But until then, all we can, and must, do is find that space where we can all meet, smile at one another, and say, perhaps for the first time, “Hello.”

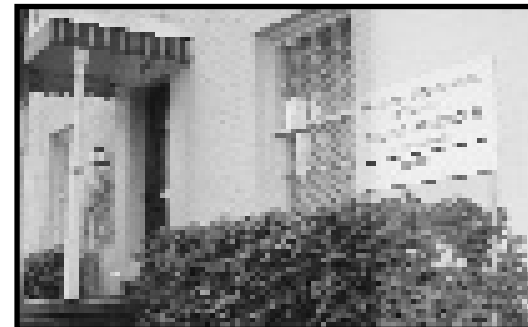




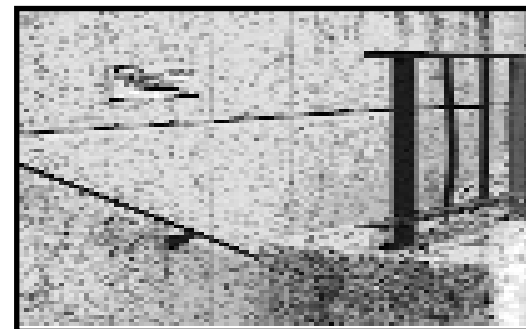
# THE DEADLY TOXIN

In fall 2003, two American *Daily Texan* reporters investigated forged transcripts. Now three students have been convicted in the public eye. And the *Texan* hoped to pass it off as a terrorism scare.

## Through the Texan's basement door



Above: It is possible that this *Daily Texan* reporter does not want to be found, or at least does not want to find a picture of his house to appear in this newspaper. Below: The *Daily Texan* office. Photos by Leah Caldwell.



By Lauren Sage Reinlie

On Monday, Sept. 22, *The Daily Texan* broke a story about three students accused of transcript fraud at the University. The University has experienced 37 other cases of fraud in the last five years, but, in this case, the students happened to be Pakistani. Because of the news angle chosen by the *Texan* and other news media outlets, these students have already been convicted in the public eye and have become suspected terrorists.

Transcript fraud is an important story for the UT campus. Many students, faculty and staff were unaware of the number of transcript fraud incidents at the University. However, this case is one of many and should be covered as a problematic campus trend, not as a breach of national security.

Accusations flew after the story was published. The nightly news claimed terrorists had been discovered at the University. FOX News 8 Austin confidently reported on their website that three students committed transcript fraud at the University, although the investigation is not complete and charges have yet to be filed at the time of printing. On the UT campus, the Young Conservatives of Texas considered putting up "Wanted" posters for the three "terrorists." The Pakistani Students Association shut down their booth on the west mall of campus and went home for the day.

### And *Texan* reporters tried to pass it off as a University cover-up

UT students and all students who attend schools funded by the U.S. Department of Education receive protection of their educational records. Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, these records are only available without the student's consent under certain circumstances, such as when school officials have legitimate interest and when law agencies issue subpoenas.

Part of the headline of the article stated that "UT officials hoped to keep it all a secret." It is true that UT officials did not report this incident to the press and that the International Admissions Office asked their employees not to talk to the press about the incident. But this does not constitute a cover-up. Under the FERPA law, the University is required to keep the files closed in order to protect the privacy of the student. The *Texan* used sensationalism to point fingers at the University and the three students.

### Unwitting accomplice?

According to a *Texan* Viewpoint, these two reporters have been investigating this incident for over six weeks. This time could have been spent developing the story, looking at trends over time here and at other universities, or discussing how to cover a sensitive issue while

trying not to incite a backlash or make rash assumptions about the students.

Maybe we could chock this up to inexperienced student reporting or as a learning experience. But several members of the staff were involved in pursuing this story, hoping to "break" something big, get recognition and gain clout.

While *Texan* editors vow to make the paper more accessible and more racially sensitive, stories like these leave us wondering - who is the unwitting accomplice? Is it the editors and student reporters who feed irrational terrorism scares? Or is it us, the readers, who are convinced of the *Texan*'s credibility, racial consciousness and unbiased nature while swallowing articles that point to the contrary?

### Hidden behind an agenda

Perhaps these reporters are hooked on conspiracy and breaches of national security and unable to see the big picture - the human picture. The *Texan* has produced some good investigative pieces, but this story calls into question the integrity of the newspaper and its ability to deal with human subjects.

"It's hard to say how much attention U.S. officials have paid to the forgery," the article states. The reporters dedicated eight paragraphs to the number of national agencies who were uninformed about and not involved in the investigation. By adding this, the authors

forced the assumption on readers that agencies such as Homeland Security Department should have been informed of the incident.

If this were an international student from Germany, Mexico or Australia, would the article even have mentioned the Homeland Security Department? The reporters used this method to goad the reader into thinking, "How is this person posing a threat to my life, and how are they involved in a terrorism plot?"

This story is an example of the racial profiling trend that is rampant in our country and in our news media. These reporters are students and training in their field, but I feel that as students it is even more important for us to learn to look at every institution in our society with a critical eye.

### The worst of our fears

The response of some students, such as the Young Conservatives of Texas, was horrendous. But many students have said the story was harsh, sensational and insensitive.

As students and upcoming journalists and editors, we must reevaluate our ability to be unbiased and question the way we report issues. Media unquestionably impacts our views, and members of the press corps should be held particularly responsible for perpetuating or eradicating ignorance and fear.

# Building bonds and breaking boundaries

By Katie Pace

We speak of community, identity and a plethora of terms that leaves me confused and searching for concrete definitions and answers that no one can provide. We dream of coalitions of activists, lament our failure to build them, and all the while I wonder what these coalitions are. Are they links on a webpage, temporary collaborations to organize events, or lifelong commitments that influence all the work we do?

What is the relationship between identity and politics, and how does it affect our coalition building? Must our identities always limit our ability to work together, or can they serve as catalysts to expand our political consciousness?

I ask these questions as I wander from organization to organization, hesitant about claiming membership in any one group. As a white female dissatisfied with predominantly white organizations, I desire to play only peripheral roles in groups I could easily join and feel limited to playing peripheral roles in groups I long to be part of. I refuse to separate my female identity from my politics and so will not demand the separation of identity and politics from anyone. Unwilling to limit my activism to white-dominated spaces, how do I work with people who do not share my white identity without imposing my whiteness upon them? How do I understand the politics of a community I am not part of?

Our identities are complicated things, shaped by the experiences we have as a result of our

personal characteristics, among which include race, class, gender, culture, sexual orientation, health and appearance. But while society shapes our identities, so, too, do we as we respond to our experiences. We all have different experiences, and we all have different responses. So what does it mean to be a woman? To be black or African American? To be Hispanic, or Latino or Chicano? What does it mean to be a white, middle-upper class male? Can the latter know the former without first knowing himself? Without understanding how he has been shaped by his privilege and how that affects his interactions with others?

Equating identity with a political affiliation ignores that, while identity is self-made, it is also defined by a society that treats us all differently and unequally. We are not anarchists, Republicans or anything in between until we chose to be. A black man is identified as a black man when he emerges from the womb. But then what of those characteristics that change or cannot be seen? Who is the man born in a ghetto who now lives in the suburbs? And so, more questions...

But, in the midst of my confusion, I know our identities are not liabilities. Nor are they something to be simply accommodated for or sacrificed in political organizing; yet, our different identities do not preclude us from working together. Our identities emerge as much from within ourselves as from without. Our politics - our analysis of the power relationships that created our experiences -- determine which

identities we claim.

Different identities emerge from similar politics, but our shared political beliefs remain a basis around which we can form coalitions. We cannot do so however, until we define what coalitions are and until we acknowledge that for some, working together poses more risks than it offers rewards.

Maybe our attempts at coalition building fail because we do not all dream of the same types of coalitions. Maybe we assume that we all are targeting the same audience and that coalitions will therefore always be equally effective. Some of us are not targeting governments and large corporations. Some are working to undo the discrimination that has taken from us the power to challenge these institutions in the first place. Before we target institutions outside of our communities, we must work from within to empower them.

Community and identity are inextricably linked to our struggles. Our communities support and empower us. So how do we form effective coalitions while focusing on community? Do we risk forming coalitions in which our partners, because they do not understand or appreciate our identities, disrupt the work we are doing?

It is not uncommon for women to form activist groups separate from men; yet, most women acknowledge that we must interact with men. In trying to organize around our needs as women, however, we feel compelled to form spaces in which our politics take priority. We

exclude men out of fear that we will be confronted by males who, though they shout their support for female liberation and equality, dominate our groups in the ways they have historically dominated in society and who fail to understand our specific needs.

We know that at some point we must emerge from our female spheres or open them up to male participation. But until men understand why we excluded them in the first place, they cannot effectively form coalitions with us.

Likewise, many communities of color choose to organize separately of whites. To accuse these communities of segregation ignores the unequal power relationships that define segregation. White society has historically segregated people of color in an effort to ensure white domination. When communities of color work separately of whites, they do so without the power to dominate, intending only to empower themselves.

We cannot prevent a replication of unequal social relationships unless whites acknowledge the power they possess and the ways in which they use (and abuse) it. This is not to say whites should hang their heads in guilt. No one desires guilt, only honesty and attempts to use privilege positively. Neither is this to say that we alone must make the effort to build coalitions. The responsibility falls on us all. But because whites have dominated and continue to dominate society,

continued on p 11

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## Race relations turns into public relations

By Esther Wang

On Feb. 17 of this year, President Larry Faulkner held a forum on race relations here at the University. Soon after, Faulkner announced the creation of the President's Committee on Racial Respect and Fairness.

Several incidents prompted both the forum and the committee: the egging of the Martin Luther King Jr. statue on MLK's birthday; the racial profiling of a black student, Kevin Curry, by the UT Police Department; and incidents of black face and other offensive behavior at parties thrown by the fraternities Phi Gamma Delta and Kappa Alpha.

Clearly, there were problems on campus that needed to be addressed, and the administration had to do something or racial tensions would have, in all likelihood, boiled over. But not everyone agreed that the creation of a committee was the best way to get at the heart of racial tensions on campus.

Brenda Burt, director of the Multicultural Information Center, questioned what a committee could truly accomplish.

"I think it's a waste of time," Burt said. "The University will never do what people want them to do."

Committee chair Dr. Darlene Grant characterized the committee as "intense." She said the goals of the committee would be short- and long-term change that would last and not superficial cosmetic fixes.

Each of the 14 members has devoted significant time to the committee — the group has met 25 times, with each meeting running about

3 and 1/2 hours, Grant said. The report, which has yet to be released. But if history is any sort of precedent, this committee and its recommendations will fade away, be forgotten and never

implemented.

Remember the 1989 Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Harassment that was created after similar offensive racist events created tension on the



Photo By Caren Panzer

UT campus? You probably don't — institutional memory is, after all, short term. In a report released on Nov. 27, 1990, they recommended, among other things, "that the curriculum be reexamined... consideration should be given to the inclusion of required courses that deal with the social sciences and the arts with respect to people of different cultural backgrounds" and that the University institute a multicultural class as a requirement for all students. (As a sidenote, but noteworthy to point out, this committee was chaired by none other than the current UT System Chancellor, Mark Yudof, who was then the dean of the law school).

Obviously, the recommendation released by the committee, which is very similar to Faulkner's most recent creation, went nowhere. And the numerous reports carefully prepared by the committee and several others that followed behind simply floated off into the ether.

Faulkner's committee has been doing its job; yet, recommendations are simply that — suggestions until someone with authority takes them and implements them. Now it is up to President Faulkner and other top-level administrators to take their recommendations seriously and make them a reality. If they do not, their commitment to "racial respect and fairness" on this campus and students of color will be revealed for what it is—pure public relations.

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**MonkeyWrench Books—a literary Molotov Cocktail.**

# UT's biological warfare

Continuations...

From Coalitions pg. 10

there is a unique responsibility.

There is power in numbers, as the saying goes. And despite our differences, we all struggle against discrimination, which, though given different labels, has the same disempowering effects. In the end, if we are to struggle together, we must understand one another and so must understand ourselves. We must not be afraid to admit that we do not know or that we might be wrong. Understanding does not come quickly and is never complete. We politics and identity constantly change. We forget this in our haste to form coalitions. Maybe if we commit ourselves to listening, to having patience, we will find the language that will link our struggles without repressing our identities.

From Co-op pg. 4

capital can be dissuasive to many people.

Perkins said that buyers clubs, which are collectives that buy goods in bulk for lower prices without a central location, can be a good way to start a cooperative, especially in a small town.

"If you have a buyers club of a half a dozen people, you may not need any startup capital at all," Perkins said. "Investment capital from members and borrowed loans are essential. [Cooperatives are] hard to open from scratch."

Establishing a member base is also key to forming a co-op, he said. Passionate people committed to cooperative principles and willing to donate the time and energy needed are essential.

It is important not to be dogmatic or exclusive, Gillote said. "If you're trying to open a co-op in a small town in Texas, you've got to realize it's not the same political atmosphere as Austin," he said.

Regardless of political ideology, many communities would rally behind a co-op for the purpose of supporting local businesses in an increasingly homogenized, corporate environment. "Co-ops are a place where the right and left can meet on the other side," Gillote said.

By producing minimal waste, giving each member an equal vote, responding quickly and wholeheartedly to customer needs and living in the true spirit of cooperation, cooperative living and buying can enhance communities worldwide by involving people with true, responsive democracy with visibly positive effects.

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combination of biodefense research and commercialization of health-related products. Many of these projects involve deadly diseases that could possibly infect the researchers and surrounding communities if they are not handled properly.

In 1994, Dr. Jean-Paul Gonzalez, a French expert on viruses and visiting professor at Yale, broke a vial containing the Brazilian virus Sabia while working at the Arbovirus Research Unit. Four days later, the professor exhibited symptoms and had to be hospitalized for treatment. During the four-day period leading to his hospitalization, Dr. Gonzalez came in contact with thousands of people, potentially placing them all in danger of infection. Although scientists now know that the disease is not easily transmittable, their knowledge of infection at the time was limited.



A New York Times article<sup>iii</sup> later revealed that shortly after the Sabia incident, two of the senior researchers in charge of the Arbovirus Research program, Dr. Robert E. Shope and Dr. Robert B. Tesh,

chose to leave Yale and come to work at the University of Texas. However, these career changes occurred amidst a period of intense scrutiny by investigators assigned to the Gonzalez case. One of these investigative committees discovered that the Arbovirus lab exhibited "a lack of appropriate biosafety training and related support services for personnel." In fact, a biosafety review of the lab had not been performed in four years.

Such accusations and concerns did not stop UT from hiring Shope and Tesh, and the researchers were soon given integral positions in UTMB's Center for Tropical Diseases. Likewise, an article in this spring's issue of the *UTMB Quarterly* glosses over Shope and Tesh's history. When they "decided to move to UTMB from Yale University in 1994, it made the front page of the *New York Times*," the article states, but the only explanation given concerning the move is that "Shope and Tesh decided to come to Texas at a time when Yale had shifted its support away from their interest, arboviruses, to AIDS research." Shope has since become a John S. Dunn Distinguished Chair in Biodefense at UTMB's Center for Biodefense and Emerging Infectious Diseases.

Now UTMB is moving ahead with plans to complete a biosafety level 4 lab, which will put the University in a position to procure a new national biodefense laboratory. In response to such safety and security concerns, the American Civil Liberty Union of Texas and the Sunshine Project, an organization working for transparency in biodefense research, are pursuing disclosure of UTMB

plans for the lab, including the minutes from meetings and documents released by the University's Institutional Biosafety Committee. So far, these attempts have been met with hostility from the UTMB administration, which argues that such information is excluded from public disclosure under the PATRIOT Act and federal and state Homeland Security acts.

The issue, however, is not one of compromising security but of Texas citizens' right to be aware of programs potentially harmful to the public that are performed by state institutions. The Sabia accident occurred before strict post-9/11 national security guidelines were implemented, and the safety rules in place were not being accurately followed. Without information from the Biosafety Committee being made public, there is no way to know whether such accidents have happened or if there is a direct danger to the people of Texas.

Despite the large sums of money currently being poured into health-related and defense-related research, there are major problems that must first be addressed. First, profit-oriented

projects receiving subsidies from the federal government for private industry applications redirect money away from academically-oriented projects that could benefit students and education as a whole.

Secondly, such projects represent a potential danger to the public and should be subjected to the disclosure requirements provided by the Texas Open Records Act and the Freedom of Information Act. Not only would it be fair to true democracy to do so, but it would also aid one of the fundamental requirements of good scholarship - namely the free exchange of research performed at public universities, the expansion and exploitation of scientific knowledge, the "marketplace of ideas," and technological innovation. Public safety and open government cannot be sacrificed under the guise of "national security" or profit incentives. In the words of Benjamin Franklin, "Those who would sacrifice liberty for security deserve neither."

i Yudof, Mark. "Higher tuitions: Harbinger of a Hybrid University?". *Change*. March/April 2002.

ii Keefe, Bob. "R&D on Uncle Sam's dime". *Austin American Statesman*. July 28, 2003.

iii Hsu, Kristi. "UTMB awarded bioterrorism agents project". *The Daily Texan*. September 23, 2003.

iv Altman, Lawrence K. "Yale Accepts Blame for Safety Lapses Linked to Lab Accident". *New York Times*. December 13, 1994.

# Boredom is Fear, Be Brave

## Ongoing:

Tuesdays 12:30 - 1:30

### **Protest Police Abuse in Austin**

Austin Police Department  
8th St. and I35

Fridays 12:30 - 1:30

### **Protest Police Abuse in Austin**

Travis County Courthouse  
10th St. and Guadalupe

## October Events:

Wed. Oct. 1 - Fri. Oct. 3

### **Weaving in Warfare from Chiapas: cooperative weavers and women's rights activists visiting from Chiapas**

activities consist of:

Oct. 1

7:00: Trinity United Methodist Church

8:30: Monkey Wrench Books

Oct. 2

6:00: craft sale, Hill County Weavers

Oct. 3

9:00: craft sale, UT Gebauer, 4th floor

12:00: Slide show and presentation

UT Gebauer, 4th floor

6:00: Main event and farewell party La Peña, 227 Congress Ave.

Contact American Friends Service at 474-2399 for information

Thurs. Oct. 2 - Fri. Oct. 3

### **Thirty Years of Struggle: Visions and Divisions of Women's Rights**

activities consist of:

Oct. 2

8:00: Opening Remarks with

Sarah Weddington @ UT Garrison 1

Oct. 3 8:00 - 5:45

Presentations and discussions

[www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/ams/conf04/schedule.htm](http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/ams/conf04/schedule.htm)

Fri. Oct. 3 8:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.

### **Salsa Dance Festival**

TX Union Ballroom

\$8 in advance, \$12 at door

Sat. Oct. 4 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

### **Workers' Rights Workshop**

Tarazas Branch Library,

1105 E. Cesar Chavez St.

contact I.W.W. at 467-7360

Tues. Oct. 7 6:30p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

### **"Net Loss" documentary screening:**

**Effects of salmon farms on indigenous fishing communities and the environment**

UT Taylor Hall, Room 2.006

Friday Oct. 10 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### **Sharon Bridgeforth in**

**Like Jazz (jazz, blues, prayer poems and performance stories)**

**Diaspora Talk, Race,**

**Gender and Sexuality Series**

Winship Drama Building,

Room 2.112

Sat. Oct. 11 - Sun. Oct. 12

### **Green Festival**

Presented by Global Exchange and Coop America [www.greenfestivals.com](http://www.greenfestivals.com)

Sat. Oct. 11 - Mon. Oct. 13

### **FTAA Primer and Solidarity Delegation to Nuevo Laredo**

Contact Tom at 762-7952 or

Gilbert at 474-2399 for information

Wed. Oct. 15 2:00 - 4:30

### **Love Your Body Day**

TX Union Quadrangle Room

Sponsored by the UT Women's Resource Center

Thurs. Oct. 16- Sat. Oct. 18

### **Las Tejanas: 300 Years of History**

A symposium sponsored by Center for Mexican and Mexican American Studies activities consist of:

Oct. 16

6:00: Keynote Address

UT Bass Lecture Hall

Oct. 17-18

Presentations 8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

UT LBJ School and Library Complex

Sat. Oct. 18

### **4th Annual March Against the Death Penalty**

1:00: Meet at Republic Park

4th and Guadalupe

2:00: March to Capitol

Sat. Oct. 18

### **Symposium on Middle East and N. Africa**

Contact [afra@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:afra@mail.utexas.edu) for information

Sat. Oct. 18 8:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

### **Weapons Check II**

San Antonio Peace Center

[www.iconmedia.org/mdp/weapon-schecks/index.html](http://www.iconmedia.org/mdp/weapon-schecks/index.html)

Wed. Oct. 22 10:00 p.m. - 2:00 a.m.

### **SMS hip hop show**

featuring T-Double, DJ Mel and more

TX Union Ballroom

\$10 at door, \$7 with canned goods and student ID

Friday Oct. 24 3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### **Tiffany Gil**

**Diaspora Talk: Race, Gender and Sexuality Series**

Jester A232A

Contact UT Center for African and African American Studies for information

Sat. Oct. 25- Sun. Oct. 26

### **Not With our Money Conference**

Held by community and student activists to end the use of prisons for profit

[www.notwithourmoney.org](http://www.notwithourmoney.org)

## Want To Be Faulkner's Boss?

### Our Fellow Potential UT System Regents -

Last Tuesday (9/23/03), UT Regent and Vice Chair Dub Riter passed away. Because of this, Governor Perry is taking applications for a brand new Regent. That could be you! Take this painless test:

1. Are you 18 years of age or older?
2. Are you a United States citizen residing in Texas?
3. Have you not been adjudged mentally incompetent by a court nor convicted of a felony (fulfillment of sentence and pardon exceptions available)?
4. Are you a registered voter?

If you answered all those affirmatively, well shucks, you could be a Regent!

the general appointment url:

<http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/appointments/>

for the appointment application:

<http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/appointments/process/application>

Here at Issue, we fit the requirements, and so the entire staff is going to apply. We'd like to encourage some friendly competition, so don't be shy-spread the word! See you in the winner's circle!

Send your articles, opinions, art, poetry, photography or whatever fits in email form to [submissions@issueonline.org](mailto:submissions@issueonline.org).

Also, we need your help. And we promise not to hurt you... too much.

We need help with: art, layout, copy editing, photography, fundraising, advertising, organizing, distribution and more.

If you are interested in helping out send a note to [editors@issueonline.org](mailto:editors@issueonline.org).

Submit to us

