Identity in Narrative – a lecture by Cuban-American writer Achy Obejas

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Opening her lecture, last Thursday, October 28, 2010, at Lake Forest College, writer and journalist Achy Obejas pointed out the prevalence of stories in our life. “Writing brings order to chaos,” said Obejas. “And stories are all around us. We think and dream in narratives.” Widely renowned for deftly navigating complex themes such as race, religion, and sexual orientation in her work, Obejas speaks as a Cuban-born American with a Midwestern accent. Her super-awareness of the subtleties of this identity (she is an emigrant without the comfort of exile) as well as her marriage to a woman, are some of her sources of inspiration. During the lecture, Obejas spoke primarily of identity. She read from an unfinished, untitled story of a young doctor, a woman, describing turtle hunting, painting vivid images of beheaded turtle carcasses strung up on trees like numerous Christmas ornaments. “We write from personal experience or interviews, backing up ideas with our own identity, which incorporates details gleaned throughout our lives,” she said. Obejas admitted she wasn’t one to hunt turtles. “Words stand apart from the writer,” she said, explaining how truth was irrelevant to a good story. And yet, said Obejas, the writer’s identity influences the words. As a fluid concept, this transcendent identity is ever-expanding to encompass our experiences, but “not purely subjective.” This theme of identity and the inverted exile is particularly poignant coming from Obejas and is lent ethos by virtue of the author being a Cuban-Jewish-lesbian woman. Writing every day is necessary, advised Obejas after relaying the story of her family’s escape from Cuba on a small wooden boat - a tale of days spent baking beneath the sun in the open Atlantic Ocean. After days an enormous steel ship where the six-year-old Obejas was hauled onboard by a pink-skinned, blonde American. “Was this an alien? I had never seen blonde eyelashes before,” said Obejas.

The lecture was followed by a question and answer session where the writer’s candid sense of humor encouraged inquiries into her personal inspiration and discussion of a possible return to Cuba.

Obejas is the author of Days of Awe, Memory Mambo, and We Came all the Way from Cuba So You Could Dress Like This? For many years Obejas worked for the Chicago Tribune as a journalist, and in 2001 she received a Pulitzer Prize for her team’s series “Gateway to Gridlock.” Her work has appeared in numerous anthologies in the form of poetry and prose. “Telling stories is like shedding skin – you lose something living even while you gain new possibilities.”

Rally to Restore Sanity: The Intrepid Report from the (near) Front Lines

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Jon Stewart’s Rally to Restore Sanity happened. It was funny. Smart things were said. But was it important?

I went hoping it would be. I like Jon Stewart and, to a lesser extent, Stephen Colbert, for very Philosophy-major reasons. I think Stewart is a Socratic figure in modern times, acting like a kvetching, vulgar fool while actually speaking truth to power and encouraging wisdom in this country. His jokes, no matter how couched they may be in clever word play and awkward giggling, are not derivative but progressive—“not only is your perspective ridiculous, there is also a better way of doing this”.

Colbert, meanwhile, is a brilliant satirist but is often more silly than he is effective.

So, I arrived expecting something more. And I think I got it, although in a way I did not expect.

Arriving with my brother, a Sierra Club lawyer who lives in DC and allowed me to go to this rally relatively painlessly, I first saw the crowd.

I don’t care for numbers. Statistics often dehumanize success and tragedy. So, a hundred thousand, a hundred and fifty, or Stewart’s mock analysis of 10 million; however large the crowd, it felt momentous. People talk about feeling like a part of something, and I noted the transition from walking through DC’s morning bustle and grabbing a lovely ham and cheese crepe, to entering the throng, which, by 10:30 for a noon-starting rally, was already a horizon unto itself. I saw the ironic and sane signs, often dismissing irrational demonizing or lauding universals, saying things like “Hooray for Most Things” and “Hitler died 65 years ago.” They were clever and nice.

We found ourselves in the second section from the front, with the stage in view but my height and the heads of those in front making my best bet the jumbotron looming to my right. It is unfortunate to say that most of my time at a live rally was spent looking at a massive screen displaying exactly what the TV audience saw, but the atmosphere remained even as the performers were
Custodial Services: ARAMARK’s Maiden Voyage At Lake Forest College

Many students coming to Lake Forest College have little idea of how custodial services function. They know that they clean up after students, but other than that, they are oblivious. Students know that they were the friendly people sometimes seen cleaning the residence halls. Students are also aware that ARAMARK supplies us with a great cafeteria service that most students enjoy on a day-to-day basis.

However, this year ARAMARK has taken over janitorial contracts. This may seem like a small change, but when put into perspective this change has been quite important. Custodial duties entail a lot of responsibility that takes 23 full time employees and nine part-time employees to do. Many may believe that the LFC custodial staff simply cleans up after us, but they provide more services than only “cleaning up.” Nick Schmitt, Manager of Custodial Services, said that the other responsibilities around campus include “daily and weekly general cleaning along with project cleaning that includes carpet and hard surface floor care. The custodial department is also responsible for doing the set-ups and teardowns for events.”

David Siebert, Director of Facilities Management, explained how the LFC custodial services: “Custodial Services operated as a department within Facilities Management with a college-employed manager in charge of the full and part-time college employed custodial staff.” This old system worked very well with the college before it put 60 million dollars into the creation and restoration of various parts of campus. The Sports and Recreation Center nearly doubled in size, thus creating a new demand for custodial services.

This expansion ultimately strained the old system that Lake Forest College had in place, so the college looked to partner up with ARAMARK therefore outsourcing the custodial services. The effects of this change have been everything that Siebert expected. “My expectations have been exceeded in every category, this change has been a win-win at every level,” he said. Some of his expectations exceeded in every category, Siebert maintains a glass-half-full attitude about the subject. “We have every reason to believe that our expectations will be met or exceeded.”

“ My expectations have been exceeded in every category. This change has been a win-win at every level.”

Campus Watch

| Case Number: 1000606 | Date & Time Reported: 10/26/2010 5:18:42 PM | Location: DEERPATH HALL | Offense: LARCENY / THEFT OF FENCE |
| Case Number: 1000607 | Date & Time Reported: 10/27/2010 5:44:22 PM | Location: SOUTH CAMPUS | Offense: MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENT |
| Case Number: 1000608 | Date & Time Reported: 10/27/2010 5:44:22 PM | Location: REID CHAPEL | Offense: MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENT |
| Case Number: 1000609 | Date & Time Reported: 10/28/2010 1:47:13 AM | Location: SOUTH CAMPUS | Offense: MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENT |
| Case Number: 1000624 | Date & Time Reported: 11/1/2010 6:46:52 AM | Location: STUDENT CNTR/COMMONS | Offense: DAMAGE TO PROPERTY - CRIMINAL/VANDALISM |
| Case Number: 1000625 | Date & Time Reported: 11/1/2010 11:04:22 AM | Location: NOLLEN HALL | Offense: DAMAGE TO PROPERTY - CRIMINAL/VANDALISM |

Upcoming Events

11/4- Kenneth L. Weik Undergraduate Life Sciences Research Symposium, 4:30 pm, Mohr Student Center
11/5- Zambra’s 4:30-5:25 pm, LFC Sports & Recreation Center Dance Studio
11/5- Men’s Hockey vs. Finlandia, 7:30 pm, LFC Ice Rink
11/5- e.Team movie: Inception, 8 pm, McCormick Auditorium
11/6- Graduate School Practice Tests, 9 am, Library Rooms 203 and 221
11/6- Men’s Hockey vs. Finlandia, 2:30 pm, LFC Ice Rink
11/6- History Student/Faculty Social, 6-8 pm, Pierson Rooms
11/6- Women’s Hockey vs. St. Olaf, 7 pm, LFC Ice Rink
11/7- Lake Forest Dance Marathon 2010, Mohr Student Center
11/7- Women’s Hockey vs. St. Olaf, 2 pm, LFC Ice Rink
11/7- Lake Forest Lyrica: Bella Voce, 3 pm, Lily Reid Holt Memorial Chapel
11/8- Brain Awareness Week: Keynote Lecture in Neuroscience, 4:15-5:15 pm, Meyer Auditorium
11/8- CAP Colloquia Series Lecture on schizophrenia, 4:30 pm, Meyer Auditorium
11/8- Brain Awareness Week: Brain Outreach “Sex & Sleep”, 5:30-7 pm, Stuart Commons
11/9- Business Club’s Deal or No Deal, 8 pm, Student Center
11/9- Brain Awareness Week: Brain Anatomy 101, 12:30-2 pm, Johnson 215
11/9- Brain Awareness Week: Disease 101, 2:30-4 pm, Johnson 200

NOTE- Only home games are listed.
glimpses seen when I foolishly jumped to see above the crowd. That atmosphere was quite spectacular, and perhaps defined this experience for me more than any of the humor or reason.

Colbert and Stewart were good, you see. Their sh!ck was on, their jokes were good, you see. Their humor or reason. No better than any of the spectacular, and perhaps atmosphere was quite foolishly jumped to see

Standing around us were college students, those expected crowd, along with Michigan retirees and middle-age parents with their daughter, perhaps less expected. I saw no controlled substances, no vitriol, just people hanging out and maybe learning something for the six hours I was on the Mall. Stewart, speaking on behalf of the charity Trust for the National Mall, told us all, without any irony, not to litter, and we didn’t, the mall looking a little trampled but quite pristine as I left at 4:30pm. Colbert also raised funds for Donorschoose.org, which connects charitable individuals with specific schools’ needs, thereby making your donation personal and meaningful and improving many schools. From the coldly factual “I have a sign” crowd to some liberal but polite dismay at Sarah Palin et al (including a humorous depiction of Palin, Beck, and Hannity as the three prisoners in O Brother Where Art Thou?), there were signs seemingly written by that smart aleck everyone loved in high school abounded.

What really stood out for me, though, was the attitude. People were basically thoughtful, reasonable, and having a good time, many mocking the idea of radicalism itself, others simply being there to be there, Whether these thousands will vote or will found movements or will boycott cable news is yet to be seen. Whether Stewart and Colbert will take this rally as a beginning or an end is unknown. Perhaps asking us what we would do for our country was a waste of this massive crowd. Perhaps we were ready to be a flock for good. But the rally was remarkable for gathering tons of people just wanting Americans to calm down and talk to each other, you know, if you have the time and all. Stewart wants more out of the country, and wants us to want more and do more, just not to get all crazy about it. Being one of thousands that came without knowing why for sure and left feeling good, that seems reasonable to me.

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The audience moved and swayed like a non-drugged Woodstock contingent, clapping and chanting when appropriate. But the comedy was neither striking nor controversial, avoiding the tragic notes Stewart has struck in recent breakdowns of the political system. And the music did not bring tears, just polite acknowledgement for its vaguely moderate messages—and The Roots, despite a fantastic opening, were underutilized during the show. A Detroit Rap Rock hick and a fading Crow do not the best hip-hop band of all time beat.

The Roots, John Legend, Mavis Staples, Kid Rock and Sheryl Crow; an especially impressive Islam (formerly Cat Stevens) singing “Peace Train”, Ozzy Osbourne interrupting with “Crazy Train”, and The O’Jays compromising with “Love Train” were丢了，不够明确。需要的是一些更清晰的语法结构和更好的表达方式。
A Student Government Update from Secretary Brianna Lemond:

Hello Foresters!

Here is an update on what Student Government has been up to this year:

- Student Government added their names to a list of Signatories for the Collegiate Housing and Infrastructure Act (CHIA, HR 1547/SR 781). Current IRS tax policies require that charitable donations and those being donated to lose tax exemption status, which in many cases discourages the giving of grants. The passing of CHIA would alter tax policies to have no tax on either party or tax on the donated money and would allow a greater budget for safety improvements.
- Conversation regarding Mail Services
- Student Government now has a bulletin board outside of the Gates Center
- Several Student Organizations were approved; Congratulations to American Marketing Association, Fusion, Mathematical Association of America, S.N.A.P., and the Commuter Student Organization!
- Treasurer and Homecoming Chair Riley Hutchinson planned a very successful Homecoming week
- Discussion of numerous why there was an increase warning grades given out this semester and how to lower the number of warning grades for next semester
- Dialogue concerning ARAMARK service
- FAAC presented a proposal to transfer $7,000 from the Speaker Fund to the Discretionary Fund. This bill will take effect upon next year’s budget allocation.

Much more to come! Including:

- TONIGHT! Student Government “Meet and Greet”, November 4, in the Skybox. We will also be discussing a possible Constitutional Amendment!
- Potential Open Forum with Public Safety, Residence Life, and student body
- Conversation regarding the enrichment of school spirit
- Executive Board Elections!

Please join us and express your opinion! Thursdays at 7:00 in Meyer Auditorium
To say that Mumford and Sons can put on a good concert is like saying Tom Hanks is a fair actor or that Johnny Depp is a reasonably attractive man.

Given the modern music scene, Mumford and Sons should not be popular — they don’t churn out hypnotic hip-hop beats or perform with a choreographed group of back-up dancers, and they’re not fifteen-year-old teeny boppers with floppy hair. Instead, they have created their own brand of intelligent, London-based folk-rock that references everything from Shakespeare to John Steinbeck, and that speaks to young and old alike. They don’t just write music — they write music that awakens the soul.

On Saturday, October 30th, I saw Mumford and Sons perform at the Riverside Theater in Milwaukee, and thanks to my general admission ticket, found myself in the middle of the crowded orchestra pit, watching the show from 15 feet away. This, I feel, is proof of divine intervention, since Mumford and Sons have produced sell-out crowds for all 20 cities on their American tour.

These sell-outs are even more exceptional, considering Mumford and Sons are notably reserved by today’s entertainment standards. Band members Marcus Mumford (lead singer, guitar), Ben Lovett (keyboard), Country Winston (banjo), and Ted Dwane (double bass), wear plaid shirts, white Oxfords, and vests that recall the working class of nineteenth century London, and their stage presence is witty, yet soft-spoken, almost to the point of being bashful. These are four men in their early twenties who are humbled by their explosive popularity.

The entire show was based around this idea of class and simplicity. The stage decoration, for one, was limited to a string of lights similar to the ones used in their video for “Little Lion Man,” and the lighting merely changed colors to reflect the tone of each song — there was no spectacular laser show, no explosion of confetti, and no costume changes. Even the group’s physical arrangement was superbly simple — all four members of the band stood in a row at the front of the stage, allowing the audience to focus on the music.

And boy oh boy, Mumford and Sons know how to write music. The melodies are simple and tuneful, but the musical arrangement is almost impossibly rich, featuring everything from acoustic guitar to double bass to banjo to horns to accordion to a kick drum and tambourine set that lead singer, Marcus Mumford, operated while singing and playing the guitar. Talk about multi-tasking. Mumford’s raspy howl is exquisitely primed to convey a range of emotional intensity - the line “I really f***ed it up this time” dripped with anger and resentment, while the final chorus of “Awake My Soul” soared to a joyful crescendo that filled every cranny of the theater and transported the audience into a fit of near-religious ecstasy.

What made this show so memorable, however, was the band’s connection to the audience. Their appreciation and gratitude for the fans was palpable from the moment they stepped onstage, and Mumford made a point of making sustained eye contact with the fans in the front rows through the entire concert, including this star-struck writer.

But nowhere was the connection more apparent than during the first song of the encore, when the group brought the opening acts back onstage, unplugged all of their instruments and microphones, and sang an intimate version of the Old Crow Medicine Show song, “Wagon Wheel,” at the edge of the stage. The audience provided back-up vocals for the entire song, and on the last repetition of the chorus, Mumford yodeled, “You know the words, now f***ing SING!”

For their final song of the night, Mumford and Sons performed “The Cave,” an upbeat fan favorite featuring rollicking banjos that made the entire theater explode into a fit of raucous jumping and clapping each time the chorus rolled around. About two-thirds of the way through the song, the music slowed and began to swell in intensity, with the audience singing in giddy anticipation of the explosive finale. And just as the band soared into the final chorus, Mumford yelled, “Come on, Milwaukee!” and the theater burst into an insane storm of screaming and dancing.

I never realized how powerful music could be until I saw Mumford and Sons perform. I sang and screamed like a woman possessed, and when they played “The Cave,” I threw my fists in the air and danced as if my very soul depended on it. Every attendee was there with the same purpose — not to get drunk or waste time on a Saturday night, but to celebrate a band that has brought a sense of purity and authenticity to an industry ruled by AutoTune technology and Justin Bieber. The concert was communal, it was raucous, and it was perfect on every possible level.

From the quiet melodies of “Timshel” to the heartbroken agony of “I Gave You All” to the foot-stomping glee of “Roll Away Your Stone,” Mumford and Sons put on an incredible concert that crackled with electricity and magic. The band has said on several occasions that their mission is to write honest music that resonates with joy and emotional intensity. Congratulations, boys. Mission accomplished.

Rating: 11/10. Yes, it really was that good.

Marcus Mumford electrifies the audience with his heartfelt singing.
Haunted houses deliver chills that last beyond Halloween season

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Halloween is a time of great terror and great fun: this is the art of the haunted house. What is considered tame and what is considered terrifying? It is hard to find one that is just right. With that in mind, I visited two different haunted houses: Hixon Hospital here at Lake Forest and Realm of Terror in Round Lake about twenty-five minutes away from campus. This won’t be a comparison of the two, rather some elements that worked well and could have made to keep people on their toes that much longer. But overall, a fun time.

Driving to the Realm of Terror in Round Lake with a group of people already on edge proved to be a good mix of fear and excitement. This was a haunted house not for the faint-hearted, as there were people waiting to terrify us in the parking lot and at the ticket booth. Once inside, there was a lengthy wait, but it was completely worthwhile by the time the show began. Consistently shocking and creepy, Realm of Terror was worth the thirteen dollar admission. The final leg of this haunted house, which consisted of a small claustrophobic maze and intense strobe lights, even had this journalist a little freaked out. It was impossible to avoid crashing into the walls or other people.

Though the haunted house may not be the main element of Halloween for all, it is highly enjoyable for those who are open to being scared. The sense of fear often overrides the knowledge of security, making people forget that they are in no real danger. Halloween is a time to be with friends and try to scare one another or see just who is the bravest one in the bunch - it may not be who you’d think.

Image courtesy of Segmentnext.com

Richard Pettengill is both an enthusiastic theater professor, as well as the chair of the department which allows him to oversee productions from the LFC theater department. The most recent play that Pettengill supervised was Fefu and Her Friends, a unique production that ran in late October where audience members stood among the actors and actresses and followed them from room to room in lieu of scene changes. Pettengill said Fefu was a great success, and that tickets sold out very quickly. (Make sure to keep an eye out for the tickets to the production of Anton Chekhov’s The Three Sisters in February!) Pettengill said that he used to teach in both the English and theater departments, but has been concentrating on theater as of late.

Pettengill grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts and went to Bates College in Maine for undergraduate school where he majored in English. Theater never even crossed his mind as an interest until he spent a semester abroad in England (Oxford University), where he had the opportunity to read all 37 of Shakespeare’s plays. But it was the numerous productions that he attended (over 50) that instilled a love of the theater. When his advisor suggested that he get his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, Pettengill discovered the Court Theater. He attended performance after performance, often staying late to speak with the performers and directors, only to hear the fateful line. “We’re closing now…”

Pettengill said that the semester he spent abroad at Oxford University in England changed his life forever. There, he found perfection. Around that time, he also created an educational program called the High School Matinee Series, which was born from Pettengill’s desire to expose public school students to the theater and its production, meaning, and history. He wanted to do more than educate students; he wanted to involve them.

After 12 years of working as a dramaturge at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, he realized that he wanted to finish his Ph.D., which lead to his continued interest in English and theater. Lake Forest College was one of just two places offering a job that incorporated both Theater and English, and Pettengill was happy to accept.

Pettengill explained that he loves the work that goes into an effective translation of a play from the script to the live performance, everything from the scenery to the lighting to the costumes, as well as gathering an understanding of the playwright himself. He enjoys how different actors and actresses bring the play to life. Directors sometimes take classic plays and set them in a different era, or location. Pettengill says such performances can be spectacular when they are done correctly, and he has seen many spectacular performances.

Pettengill sees Theater as one of the most flexible and beneficial majors a student can choose, as well as a major with a great number of intangible benefits. For example, Theater majors develop a sense of self-awareness, personal comfort, and confidence during both physical and vocal presentations. Such qualities are tremendously helpful in the “real world.”

Apart from the theater department, Pettengill has played guitar for many years, and continues to play in several bands, one of which, Fast and Cheap, is composed of LFC faculty, staff, and students. He is also currently researching music in terms of live-improvisation, specifically in terms of how the band members communicate with each other before, during, and towards the end of live improvisation. Pettengill also took a five week, full-time improv class this past summer, working with the Chicago-based comedy troupe, Improv Olympics.

“"Theater majors develop a sense of self-awareness, personal comfort, and confidence, which are tremendously helpful in the real world."
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Ask Isaac, with Isaac Acosta*

Yo Isaac,
This friend of mine was going out with this girl for a little while, but he decided he didn’t like her and he didn’t want a relationship. But, it’s been like a month and he just won’t talk to her and break it off. What should he do?
-Concerned Pal

Well the more he puts it off the more she’s going to get hurt. Confront it, be a man and tell her that you have moved on but that you wouldn’t mind being friends. For future reference, don’t go out with a person out of a crush, it can lead to bad things.

Thanksgiving is probably the best holiday out there. All you do is eat... all day....

Because then you have chaos in the hot line. You can’t please everyone, so it shouldn’t be a big deal. I say make the cafeteria bigger.

What do you think the most decrepit building on campus is? Where should I wear a hard hat?

Sure, more variety of food sounds great. Let’s change the menu for every other month and not have the same pasta every other dinner.

I would say there’s no real decrepit building in Lake Forest College. Wearing a hard hat is just over-reacting to something that has not happened before in LFC. Nollen.

Why’s it so difficult for people to form a line that wraps around by the front of the hot line instead of making a line that goes all the way back to the pizza?
-Practical thinker

Why do we still celebrate Thanksgiving? Isn’t it a genocide?

- deserted thinker

What would one get ahold of you... that is, if they don’t know how to? Because, clearly, I do.

Sincerely,
Looking out for others
-Every female ever

Isaac can be reached by e-mail and campus mail. Simply drop him a line at acostic@lakeforest.edu or submit your questions to The Stentor mailbox near the gates center.

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* Subject to appropriate approvals by ACPE
What makes all our 1950s icons undeniably, exceptionally, and unbelievably cool

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I was five years old when Dean Martin died. I was eight when Frank Sinatra passed away. I wasn’t even born before Sammy Davis Jr. expired. I have seen roughly a half hour of the original Ocean’s Eleven, I’ve seen only a high school adaption of Guys and Dolls, and I don’t particularly care for music of the 1950s and 1960s.

Despite all that, I recognize all three men to be undeniably, exceptionally, unbelievably cool. In the face of my indifferent attitude regarding the works, why do I find them so cool? As unspecific and cringe-worthy the word “cool” is, I cannot possibly explain myself any further because Frank Sinatra is simply cool. Period. It is impossible to elucidate myself any further because Frank Sinatra’s coolness is an objective fact.

I am not alone in this belief. I suspect this sentiment is quite common amongst my generation. In his 2009 album The Blueprint 3, Jay-Z recorded the song “Empire State of Mind” in which he boldly declares, “I’m the new Sinatra.” Why? Why does he choose to make me? I do not imagine Frank Sinatra as he was, but as how he was portrayed by the media, or his publicist, or by whomever. A quick Google search confirms as much. Nearly all the returns are off carefully crafted images of Sinatra. I intuitively find him to be cool because I am only ever presented with images of him looking cool.

Even though today’s celebrities are more media conscious and savvy than ever before, it is impossible to control image to that degree. When asked to mentally picture Jay-Z, I might imagine him performing, mic in hand, wearing a baggy t-shirt with beads of sweat dripping down his head. Or, I might imagine him sitting, looking bored at a sports event next to Beyonce. There’s nothing wrong with these images, they are just rather pedestrian. Unlike the images of the rat pack, these are pictures of Jay Z acting naturally. They are authentic portrayals of what life is like for Jay-Z.

Frank Sinatra is here to stay, not necessarily for his contributions to American music, but as a testament to contemporary cool.

Men and The Big Lebowski

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Brief Editorial Preface from the Columnist

[Please note that this article does not represent the opinions of the Stentor – only one of its many good-looking writers, who does not constitute the Stentor proper.]

Also, note that this article promotes the celebrity of all genders and sexes and only intends to note – somewhat seriously – on the general quiescence of men.

The Actual Article:

A ream of reports tell us that women are increasingly dissatisfied with their male significant others; ABC, the New York Times, and the BBC published articles commenting on the phenomena pointing to the current deficiencies of men. Personal experience, furthermore, shows me that my guy friends are just pretty phlegmatic (e.g. I am one of two men from my group of friends to graduate high school).

I don’t think that I should be speaking for my sex or that people should give me the space to reproach my gender, for I am a poor example of a man. Even my timorous tone at the beginning of this article shows that I lack the requisite courage of a man. Or maybe it shows that I’m sort of apathetic and that I shirk full explanation of my ideas.

Nonetheless, I will assert my stentorian opinion – here in THE STENTOR – and claim that men – my friends, my family members, and me – are totally lame.

What I mean by lame is that most guys I know associate their gender in some way with their dull sense of alacrity; specifically, men don’t do a whole lot because it isn’t cool to do stuff when you are a guy. Since this last sentence’s level of clarity emulates my degree of manli-
Men, continued

...showing irreguarly, or their environment. Men malinger like kids, bath in lassitude, and own it all. I think that I know the source of the malady. The Big Lebowski (1998) may be the worst film that I will ever watch. I can’t watch the entire film because of the languorous protagonist and the insipid jokes about white Russians and being lazy. But I really don’t care about critiquing the movie – only its nefarious effects. The Coen brothers wanted to critique the deaf quotations spoken by the Dude. My friends and I, moreover, have used the word “dude,” since I was about fourteen. I don’t know what could be more perilous to a young man’s vocabulary.

This is not a novel concept for movies and television, however. The Simpsons, Family Guy, and the King of Queens use the same techniques; stupid men with protruding guts act stupid and funny to point out vices in typical American life.

and blind attitude of young, apathetic, American males towards politics, war, and society in general. The problem is that the brothers only perpetuated the phenomena.

Rather than creating a really great critique for the audience, they made a model – the Dude – for my male friends to live by. Instead of thinking that the Lebowski sucks, my friends actually like this idiot.

The entertainment, however, is merely entertainment. People laugh at the critiques – at themselves – and continue on with their lethargic lives. The irony fails.

I point to movies and shows like The Big Lebowski for the general lassitude of men. I totally see a correlation between these movies and men wanting to avoid college.

With the proliferation of men without fathers or with mere half-the-time fathers and with the increasing amount of time spent watching idiotic movies, I see no alternative answer. Although this may sound like carping, I really mean it.

The stress that exists within all walks of life

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This Monday afternoon, I was sitting in the Deerpath Lobby, feeling just about the same as I usually do at two o’clock: stressed from all the studying I had to do. I was bent over some French homework worrying about the quiz coming the next day, when my attention became a little un-focused on myself. I noticed what I might classify as our Deer- path “janitor” sitting at a table next to the window. He was peering outside, seeming to be as distracted as I was at the moment.

His look was what I suppose in a book would be called pensive, and I began wondering what he was thinking about. He was staring outside at the surrounding buildings and scenery, but he probably wasn’t thinking about Lake Forest College. In fact, I’m pretty sure he wasn’t.

As often happens when you’re staring at someone, the janitor (for lack of a better name) turned toward me. I smiled at him, he smiled back, and I looked back down at my homework because we all know it’s awkward to stare at strangers. But as I continued to study I periodically looked back up at him while I was in the lounge because he had got me thinking- and about something other than my own schedule or dilemmas.

He meandered over to the other side of the lounge and rested on a piano bench and continued to stare outside from a different vantage point. I wondered what he was doing. I knew the guy’s bathroom had been cleaned already. I assumed the guy’s had been as well. And he obviously didn’t appear to have any work… “Is he waiting on a ride home, perhaps?… Maybe he shares a ride to work everyday with a family member who drops him off…? Maybe he can’t even afford a car…?” I didn’t get any answers to these questions. But the answers I did come up with were more important than most of the issues I was fac­ing that day.

After all, what leads someone to get a job cleaning a bathroom? No one wakes up one day and says “my dream job is to be a janitor.” No one envisions their life as a kid doing many of the jobs they are faced with the reality of doing much of their lives as adults. But in the words of the show Dirty Jobs “someone has to do it.”

But who? Someone does them, but so often it seems he or she is overlooked. Likewise, how? How did the person that is scrubbing my community shower end up there?

Now, these questions are coming from a girl who grew up in a farm town. A girl who spent most of her life trying to get away. A girl who got away and then fulfilled the classic story of realizing that even getting away wasn’t as cracked up as it was made out to be.

People from my home­town have the habit of telling me and my friends who left that we’re the lucky ones. That we worked hard enough to experience something new. But coming to a place which often seems like it’s completely different world… well, that’s just how I judge it as being: different. I don’t see this life in Lake Forest as being better or worse with its fancy cars and huge houses than my own world back home with tractors and barns… It’s just different.

So what does the pensive janitor have to do with it? Just that it seems that no matter where we’re at in life, we’re always looking to something else or somewhere else to make things easier. What is that janitor’s life like? He obviously got the job because he had to. He needed to pay his bills. Perhaps he has a wife and kids he is doing is best to provide for. Perhaps he has a family he’s sending part of his check to every month. Perhaps the work he does that we consider menial, has more value to it than all my years at college will have.

Maybe he’s working just as hard as I am on a very different thing, for reasons which could out­weigh my desire to earn an A on a test any day of the week. Perhaps, his job that he has to do, is more selfless than anything I’ve done my whole life.

Moving to a suburb of Chicago, I realized the stigma that was held to­ward farming communities. Not all untrue, but a kind of superiority, as though we “have more education, culture, and smarts because we’re doing more important jobs. Instead of combining corn; we’re running court cases.” But what I got out of the change wasn’t a superior­ity, but instead a respect for those who do what they don’t necessarily want to do because it’s the right thing.

I don’t know that janitor’s story. I’ve made it up on my own with no known facts. But something had to get him where he is now and even if his story is nothing like I’ve guessed, whose to say it’s any less significant than my own? In fact, whose job is any less important than the professors of this school? We need them both. Just like we need farming and business in our nation.

Who is the arbitrary judge of what job, way of life, or education choice is better than another?
Women’s hockey checks into a new season

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Last Friday marked the home opener for the Women’s Hockey team, which hopes that this season will match if not top the success they had last year.

The Foresters hosted visiting Augsburg College in consecutive games on Friday and Saturday night, skating themselves to victory in each of them with final scores of 2-0 and 4-2. The team, who was ranked in the top ten in the country in Division III Women’s Hockey last year, has a nice mix of talent ranging from veteran seniors to incoming freshmen, leading Head Coach Carisa Zaban to believe that this year has the potential to be even better than last.

Zaban, entering her seventh year as Head Coach of the Women’s Hockey team, is the all time leader in wins for a head coach in school history. She knows that the success of last year’s team is a strong building block for this year, but doesn’t necessarily mean that the team can pick up where they left off. “I feel this year’s team has the capability to be stronger than last year’s, but ultimately it is going to come down to how much we want it,” she said.

The 2010 Foresters are also different from the 2009 Foresters in that they enter this year as defending NCHA Champions, with the invisible target on their backs placed there by every team they will face throughout the course of the season. The only thing in sports more difficult than winning a championship is winning consecutive ones, something Zaban is both aware of and confident her team will be able to handle. “This year, being the NCHA champs, it puts a target on our back, but I also think it holds us more accountable, which is good,” she said. Zaban feels that the Pre-Season’s Coaches Poll that had Lake Forest finishing 3rd in the NCHA this year is “extremely feasible.” “One thing we learned last year,” she said, “is that everything we do leads up to how we finish, and our goal this year is to get past the semi-final game and fight for the O’Brien Cup and then hopefully the NCAA’s.”

With the season still in its early stages, the contribution of first year players remains to be seen on a larger scale, but the return of several key players has Zaban confident that they will help develop some of the team’s younger players. Zaban points to three of last year’s scoring leaders: Kim Herring, Lynn Switaj, and Melissa Kravich as “big impact players,” with the hope that they will be able to produce similar success from last year. Defensively, Zaban feels that the return of Molly Wallner and Angie Chronis will be enough to “help the four new freshmen at that position.”

Every game will be meaningful for the women’s hockey team this year, and if it isn’t it will be for the other team who will be looking to come away with a victory worthy of bragging rights. Every team in every sport lives for the opportunity to defeat a champion of some sort, and this year, the Foresters are that team.

The season is young, with just two games crossed off the schedule, but with both of them going the Forester’s way there is strong reason to expect another memorable season.

Photos Courtesy of Scott Sanford

Top: Women’s Hockey lines up before the first game.
Above: Jenn Caldwell pushes the puck up the ice.
Left: Forester football intercepts a pass.

Football concludes season with a win

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Perhaps it was the presence of family and friends on Senior/Parents Day last Saturday that inspired the football team to come away with their most decisive victory of the season. The 35-6 triumph over visiting Knox College hoisted the team’s record to 2-7 for the season, with one game remaining at St. Norbert College. Parents of all the players, freshmen through seniors, were acknowledged along with their sons at halftime before a well-attended crowd of 758. The win was the team’s second in a row, with the first of the season coming the previous weekend against Lawrence. History was made in the second quarter when Sophomore Dominick Campagna kicked the school’s second longest field goal at 49 yards, extending the Forester’s lead at the time to 9-0. While the recent success of the team will not be enough to see their season extend beyond Saturday’s game at St. Norbert, there exists a sense of promise in finishing the season on a high note.
Men’s Soccer Ends on a High Note

Lake Forest College Men’s Soccer team ended the 2010 season on a high note with a 1-0 shutout victory over Monmouth College last Sunday at Farwell Field.

The victory put their overall record for the season at 12-6 and 5-4 within the conference. Head Coach Chris Bergmann described the finish to the season as “the best in the last six years.” The team finished in fifth place in the Midwest Conference, missing the postseason by one spot.

Despite missing the playoffs, the Foresters had success in numerous categories by season’s end, finishing first in shots, points, goals, and goals per game. The team also finished second in the average number of goals allowed per game with 1.22. The team’s 12-6 overall record is even more surprising given that they split the first eight matches of the season, going 4-4, before going on an 8-2 tear to close out the year. Only one of the team’s losses was by more than a single goal, a 4-0 loss at Millikin in October. The other five defeats were all one goal defeats that could very well have gone the Foresters way on any other given day.

October 24’s 3-2 loss to Beloit officially ended Lake Forest’s chances of reaching the tournament, dropping their conference record at the time to 3-4. The team went onto win each of their remaining two matches against Illinois College and Monmouth at home during Halloween weekend.

In a sport where 1-0 scores are not uncommon and scoring chances can ill afford to be squandered, the 2010 Foresters have much to be proud of, despite falling short of their ultimate goal in the end. Statistically, they were one of the strongest teams in the conference all year, which tells more of the story than the simple result of a final score. “The team has built a strong foundation for success,” Bergmann acknowledged, adding that “we have built our foundation on character, community, courage, and work ethic.”

Freshman Mahir Mameledzija scored the first goal of his collegiate career en route to a 3-1 victory over Concordia Chicago on September 14. Fellow freshman Steven Johnson had the opportunity to celebrate the same accomplishment eight days later in a 4-0 shutout against Benedictine. The Midwest Conference acknowledged Chris Haught-Thompson and freshman Mahir Mameledzija as Defensive and Offensive Players of the Week on September 27th. Mameledzija was later named “Forester Athlete of the Week” by the school for two goals and two assists he had in a pair of conference games. Tom Biesiada was also named Player of the Week for his ten saves in goal against Elmhurst, matching a personal career high.

Finally, it was the widespread talent and success of so many different players, emulated when freshman Alexi Spiratos scored his first goal of his career, becoming the 19th different player on the team to score a goal this year that highlighted the depth and longevity of talent this team possesses. Perhaps the greatest victory for the team came against Augustana, a 1-0 victory in the 108th minute in a double overtime victory, a testament to the team’s resiliency and “never give in” work ethic preached by Coach Bergmann.

With a slow start to the season being the only reason the Foresters find themselves not in postseason action, there is little to be disappointed in and much to look forward to next year.

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Above: Mahir Mameledzija kicks the ball out of the goalie’s hands.

Photos Courtesy of Scott Sanford