

THE MUCKRAKER

the students' voice since 1997

THE INDEPENDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL STUDENTS' NEWSPAPER

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Snow. White, soft, melting snow. It is not cold and windy enough to call it a snowstorm, but then again, the continuity of it makes one feel as if this winter wonderland would last forever. A winter depression, especially with the outlook of five long weeks of school filled with exams, is not uncommon these days. Symptoms are lying on the couch, clinging onto a cup of coffee, and listening to Bill Evans' "You Must Believe in Spring".

But how can we be sure that spring is to come? Why exactly do we believe in spring? Empiricists will tell you that, since the beginning of human documentation, spring has always followed winter. So the probability of spring arriving in late March is extremely high, and things that are possible and highly probably are very likely to happen.

But that is merely a probability, isn't it? Yes, says the rationalist. To argue that spring will come every year after winter, one must take universal truths and the method of deduction. The argument goes as follows: Since science has shown us that the earth is a sphere-shaped body orbiting the sun with an axis tilted by 23.5°, and that the sunrays that arrive on earth are almost parallel, it follows that the temperature caused by "photonic waves" differ on each latitude, and because we go round every 365 days (while the angle of inclination doesn't change), the amount of energy at each specific latitude would gradually change during the course of the year. Puh. But then again, there is still no guarantee that spring is going to come this year. What if suddenly an unforeseen comet collides with the earth? What if our physical laws suddenly cease to be true? Who would believe in anything without verification?

However, belief is, by definition, the trust in something without supporting evidence. It is a confidence that springs from feelings. When we see flowers timidly exploring the surface, when we hear birds warming up their voices, when we smell the first sweet fragrances of a sunny breeze, when we feel the weight of work lift from our shoulders, we can only believe in spring.

Cheers,
Your editors.

SCandal Behind the SCenes of the Student Council



Berlin, 20.2.2009 – Almost 160 days have passed now since our Student Council presidents (Frances Copeland and Julian Graham, in case you had forgotten) took office. So I decided that the time was ripe to go and check on them to see what they had accomplished so far. Now, as so often in life, this wasn't as easy as it seemed at first. SC presidents are busy people with a tight schedule (or at least

they're supposed to be), so tracking them down to arrange a time for an interview proved to be a mission. And when you coincidentally happen to run into one of them in the hallway and ask, "Hey, how would you describe your work relationship with your co-president?" all the answer you get is, "I'm not commenting on that". So I decided to take a different approach to this article. Instead of asking the presidents what they think of themselves, I asked other people what they think about the presidents. And that turned out to be much more interesting...

Apparently, the Student Council got off to a rough start this year because it still had a pile of financial debts that date back all the way to Max Jürgens' and Julian Lasius' presidency. Under their regime two years ago a stockpile of school t-shirts ordered by the SC had gone missing, putting the SC out of a substantial amount of

SCandal, continued on page 2

Volksentscheid

Am 4. Februar 2009 wurde es verkündet: 265 823 Berliner haben im Volksbegehren Pro-Reli ihre Stimme abgegeben. Das sind 10,9% aller Stimmberechtigten; Pro-Reli ist somit das größte Volksbegehren der Berliner Geschichte. Am 26. April entscheidet das Volk. Notwendig für den Erfolg des Volksentscheids sind 610 000 Ja-Stimmen, hinreichend, jedoch, ist eine Mehrheit.

on page 7

Library/Student Lounge

The high school students are confronted with a grave logistical problem: You cannot talk in the library (rules), you cannot sit in the student lounge (trash). Where to spend lunch, the decade-old question. Moritz Zeidler and Stefanie Lehmann present the latest critique.

on pages 4-5

Dr. Reale's Resignation

The first reaction to the news of Dr. Reale's resignation is usually: "Is it for real?" Most students, in fact, had no idea his resignation was under debate. While the reasons and proceedings remain obscure, we wanted to know what students could tell us about his leaving.

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Veganism

While vegetarianism may be rooted in eating habits, its more drastic form, veganism, usually implies a political worldview. Vegans living in Berlin have their own lifestyle, their own shops and restaurants, and their own ideology. Having first-hand experience with veganism, Leonie Schulte relates the unadulterated facts about vegan Berlin.

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JFKS Life

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money. Fortunately, the presidents were finally able to even out the debt this year and clear the slate.

Little did the unsuspecting young Student Council know that their maybe greatest challenge this year would come from within their own ranks. Nobody could have foreseen that someone who, at the beginning of the year, had still pledged that, "When I have responsibilities to fulfil, I'll fulfil them - there's no doubt about it", and who was elected by a clear majority of the student body, would become wantonly neglectful of exactly those responsibilities. Who would have thought that the guy, who said he would cut down on other things to incorporate his Student Council duties into his life, would, as it seems, end up choosing the "other things" over his duties and thus jeopardize and undermine the work of the entire 2008-2009 Student Council? If you still haven't caught on to who is meant, skip to the last page and try a sudoku.

According to a reliable source from within the highest circles of the SC, Julian Graham, German SC president, has adopted a bad habit of neglecting his presidential obligations. As I was informed, Julian is frequently absent at official Student Council meetings and I myself witnessed that he wasn't there for the revolutionary first Open SC meeting in December. Rarely does he, who promised to be the one at the other end of the bridge who invites people to have their voice heard, check the Student Council e-mail account, which was installed as medium for students to express new ideas and criticism to the SC. Even SC cabinet sessions often have to be held without Julian. Allegedly, the reason Julian gave for not attending the latest cabinet meeting on February 17th was that he had been sick - but when Jung-Hyun An, runner-up for the post of American SC president in the election earlier this year and currently American side vice-president, called Julian's home number to check on him, whoever picked up the phone at the other end informed Jung-Hyun that Julian was not lying in bed sick, but was at his girlfriend's house at the time of the cabinet meeting. Now to some of you this may not sound all that severe, or you might be thinking, "Well the Student Council is just child's play anyway. They don't actually decide anything really important". But it does get important when parent representatives complain about the absence of Student Council representatives at a School Conference session. And it definitely becomes significant, especial-

ly for the higher grades who frequently claim that they don't need to care about the SC, when the German SC president is even conspicuously absent at meetings of the Educational Directorate (ED), where he is supposed to represent the students' interests on issues such as the English Zentralabitur.

Fortunately, the Student Council has a dual executive and at least one president who takes her work seriously. Statements by Frances Copeland's fellow SC members about her performance in her role as American SC president range from "Frances does a lot, assisted by Rebekah Serio and other helpers" to "She does all the work". Her predecessor, Victor Boadum, evaluates Frances' work so far as follows: "She has worked very hard to keep the SC on track. In all work relationships there are problems [note by the author: He should know...] but the student body chose them [Julian and Frances] and so we should trust them."

A meaner person than I might say: Julian and Frances' work relationship isn't just fraught with problems - it's dysfunctional. No wonder that Frances didn't want to comment on it. With the considerable workload that the office of Student Council president entails so unevenly divided, it's not surprising that there is some interpresidential tension. And it seems that also at a more personal level, there is not love lost between Ms. Copeland and Mr. Graham: We all know that you can find just about anything on Facebook. But I myself was surprised that in the deep recesses of cyberspace, there exists a Facebook group called "Frances Copeland is a dictator". The creator of this derogatory group is a certain Ally Thomas, a Facebook identity with only one single friend - Julian Graham. And coincidentally, the majority of the group members are close friends of Julian's girlfriend, Anissa Nehls. But regardless of this dubious virtual slander, the majority of my inside sources agree on the fact that the current situation in the Student Council is dire. The easy way to go would be to simply hope that the German SC president will live up to his responsibilities when public opinion and his co-workers in the SC put some pressure on him.

But many of them are already willing to take a drastic measure in order to save the 2008-2009 SC year: impeachment. The problem with voting a president out of office, though, is that there is no precedent (no pun intended). It has, fortunately, never been done before. With this course of action, the SC would be enter-

ing uncharted waters and according to a source, "impeachment would be ugly - and then there would be the question of the replacement". If Julian Graham were really to be voted out of office, the Student Council would have to choose a replacement from within its own ranks to serve as president in Julian's stead until the next official elections.

Jennifer Flöter, the vice-president on the German side, would be the legitimate successor, but she could only serve as an interim solution since she is graduating with her Abitur in May already. Other candidates shortlisted to inherit the presidency could include Jung-Hyun An, except that he technically doesn't have the right nationality and current Secretary and former German president Max Jürgens. Frida Winkelmann of 11th grade, who is German and Head of the Organizational Committee, and last but not least Victor Boadum, last year's American SC president and the first student to ever hold the title of Head of the Student Lounge, could also be in the running.

Whatever measures the Student Council deems necessary in order to correct the current situation and get back on the path to a successful year, the decision may have already been made by the time this article is published. If that turns out to be the case, you'll at least know why whatever it was happened. And if not, then if something does happen in the next weeks, at least it won't hit you by surprise.

Randolf Carr

The Cynic's Dictionary

RESIGN

"A good thing to do when you are going to be kicked out."

- Ambrose Bierce

Feeling cynical, too?

Then submit your own definitions to themuckraker@gmail.com by March 9th.

Eileen Wagner

Comments, Replies?

send your opinions and articles to:

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On the Subject of School Principles: Why students never have the floor

A school is like a company. A company with many organs – we have the students, the teachers, the library, the administration... and the enigmatic ED that seems to govern this school with an invisible force. Only when all of these organs function and work together, we become a successful school with a wonderful atmosphere. While Frau Rübiger is doing a great job at replacing the vacuum Frau Klemm created with her leaving, the school is preparing for two more announced resignations this year. Both our German principal Herr Schürmann and our guidance counselor Mr. Blount are leaving us at the end of this school year.

But it came as a surprise (at least to the students) that our American principal, Dr. Reale, is resigning this year, too. In the faculty bulletin published on Jan. 9th, Dr. Reale states, "my colleagues asked me to leave, and after very long reflection, I accept their judgement that I am the wrong person for this job. I regret deeply that the American principalship continues to be unstable when stability is needed, but if the school leadership believes that instability is preferable to my continued presence here, I accept responsibility for that." This statement ignited a heated debate among students: For what reason? How? Who? When? The general lack of information about this new situation seems to worry students. Why are we always the last to know? Moreover, what are we supposed to think about this? Teachers, especially American teachers, have varying opinions about his leaving. Even after the final decision, members of the faculty are still discussing about the justice of it all. Meanwhile, many parents believe he was unjustly forced by the administration to leave the school. Some are even trying to organize a GEV-Versammlung to prevent his resignation, though the decision is allegedly final. Some students, however, have made up their minds already about this decision.

To display the diverse student opinions concerning Dr. Reale, the Muckraker interviewed two students about their working experience with Dr. Reale and what they think about his resignation. Victor Boadum, last year's SC President, regrets that Dr. Reale is resigning.

"I experienced a very good working relationship with Dr. Reale. Ever since his arrival, Dr. Reale has been a strong advocate of students' interest. During my year as SC President, Dr. Reale offered to meet on a weekly basis with us stu-

dents to listen to our concerns and discuss possible ways how he could help us accomplish students' wishes. It was in large part due to Dr. Reale's assistance that the students were able to successfully lobby for a Student Lounge. Without Dr. Reale's help and assistance, our struggle to finally get a student lounge would not have been as successful as it was. Furthermore, Dr. Reale was a strong and outspoken advocate of the implementation of the English Zentralabitur because he realized that the majority of students were in favour of the Zentralabitur.

I was very sad to hear about Dr. Reale's departure from our school. I believe that all members of the school administration play a pivotal role in shaping our school and with Herr Schürman leaving at the end of this year, I assumed that Dr. Reale would remain a member of the school for many years to come. I am not exactly sure what motivated the departure of Dr. Reale. It seemed that Dr. Reale had grown accustomed to the school environment and atmosphere and the fact that he speaks both English and German was a great attribute to this school. As far as I can tell, the factors that led to his decision to resign as the principal from our school remain very elusive to many students, and until those factors become relatable and understandable for students and parents alike, the decision will continue to seem somewhat abrupt and, most importantly, sad. Nevertheless, I wish Dr. Reale the very best in the future and hope that he enjoyed the last two years at our school as much as we students enjoyed him here in the last two years."

Another member of the student body, who wishes to remain anonymous, is of a very different opinion.*

"In general, working with Dr. Reale has been extremely difficult. He is a character who seldom accepts opinions different from his own. Therefore, it is not surprising that those who share his principles get along with him and benefit from his status.

The "status" he sees himself as having was inappropriately exemplified on September 11th, 2008, when he wore a police uniform. Although perhaps with good intention, wearing an attire of force and violence was completely unsuitable and ridiculous.

At numerous occasions, I was confronted with representing students' opinions, where upon I was disregarded and

looked down upon, to an extent which was simply unfair and disrespectful. On many levels, I felt like school policies were solely constructed by Dr. Reale without the consent of the administration, teachers, parents or students.

Furthermore, I have come to find that not only is he unwilling to compromise, but he also cannot accept defeat. When, for instance, he makes a decision, he permits little to no cooperation in finding a solution that would please both parties. Out of first-hand experience, I can tell you, it is only after more drastic measures and the involvement of additional voiced opinions opposing his point of view that he begins to accept the possibility of an alternative. Then, after superfluous back and forth between both contenders, he (sometimes) is willing to change his opinion, yet simply brushes off the fact that he had so feverishly defended it just minutes before.

In a school that embraces democracy, togetherness and bicultural exchange, we cannot have a principal who clearly does not embody these ideals. Although he was able to trigger positive change in a few incidences (i.e. creating a student lounge), at large, he was unable to contribute toward a friendly, open and welcoming school atmosphere. Even though Dr. Reale does not fit into our JFKS school environment, perhaps other schools will benefit from his disciplined, close-minded single-leadership."

* The reason for anonymity is the student's personal concern regarding possible consequences carried out by either the person in question or any of those like-minded. The name of the author is known to the Muckraker editors, however.

No matter what really caused Dr. Reale's resignation and on what grounds he is leaving, it seems that the students have had too little information on these school affairs. After all, this school is here for no other reason than serving the students, educating them, and helping them grow up to become strong and independent individuals. What we learn at school is not solely written in books. School politics give us a reduced version of the real-life workings of an organization, a company. To truly understand this process, students have to be included in those debates. We are this school's products, and we have a right to be informed about the change in management.

Muckraking at Home I:

The student lounge

For some time now, our school has been blessed with a student lounge. Many Oberstufen students enjoy this luxury and use it to some extent as a place to hang out and to relax.

I, however, am no longer capable of relaxing in there. I try to avoid it when possible, as I am, frankly, disgusted by the way it looks and is treated.

To combat this, the student council has, as many of you might have already noticed, introduced a new system, which assigns each class one week to clean up the student lounge. I had the privilege to take over the first shift together with a classmate and we were both horrified. Let me share with you all a list of things we encountered on our quest to bring neatness to the lounge:

- Several rotten banana peels
- The dried up and crumbled remains of innumerable oranges or similar fruit
- Numerous chewing gums stuck to the floor
- Haribo and chocolate bar packaging strewn all over the student lounge – especially in the vicinity of the trash cans (thanks for trying)
- Two empty water bottles
- Several unidentifiable objects, which could have been anything (Jolly Ranchers, physics homework, hamster intestines? I do not know.)

There. Just to give you all the basic idea. But that still wasn't the worst bit. It was practically impossible to fulfil the task we were assigned, as we desper-

ately lacked equipment. We had to pick up all pieces of trash one by one with plastic bags we provided for ourselves, as the student lounge lacked trash bags as well as a broom (when we asked for one we were handed a hand broom which we had just set aside seeing as attempting to clean the carpet with such an instrument is absolutely hopeless), and the provided vacuum cleaner had roughly the same effect as a light summer's breeze (no bags provided either!).

Now I have two appeals to make. The first goes to all students using the student lounge: Please, try to keep this place tidy. It isn't that difficult to clean up the mess you leave behind, and actually walking to a trash can to throw things out instead of just chucking them into the general direction of where you might believe the trash can could possibly be won't kill you either. If I am informed correctly, this isn't the first student lounge we have, and it wouldn't be the last one that gets taken away from us.

My second appeal goes to the student council: Please, prepare projects like this better. If you want us to clean up the student lounge, well, fair enough. But provide us with the necessary material!

Moritz Zeidler

Singing Saboteur

A performer's review of "The Phantom of the Barbershop"

I do have to say, the setting for the Barbershop performance this February is certainly a new one. Upon entering the Aula, the audience is confronted with Dr. Hepner's warning of how the show is haunted by the so-called "Phantom of the Barbershop," whose objective is to keep the performance from going on in any way possible ever since he was rejected from joining a Barbershop quartet. But, he advises, that shouldn't keep people from enjoying the show. That being said, the Aula hall is filled with beautiful music for the next 1 ½ hours, and of course the laughter of the audience as they watch the phantom fail repeatedly while trying to sabotage the performance in between songs. It certainly was a very good trade-off between Barbershop harmony, performed by both choruses and numerous quartets, Jazz music, performed by the Jazz ensemble and combo group, and a comical potpourri of slapstick comedy and Looney-Tunes style cartoon accidents. In the end, the phantom does manage to fulfill his life's dream, and the final note of "With a song in my heart" surrendered to a bombardment of applause on both nights. All three musical directors (Dr. Hepner, Mr. Germann, and Mr. Leatherwood) as well as all performers received numerous congratulations on the performance. All I can say is that, even if some performers got impatient backstage at times, the end effect was definitely worth it, and there wasn't any phantom around to ruin that moment.

Jakob Marsh

-Staff- Box

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1. Come to our weekly meetings in the 20-minute-break on Tuesdays in B214
2. Send in your articles to themuckraker@gmail.com
3. Drop a note in our mailbox or approach us randomly in the hallways

A Bit of Peace in the Library?

After last year's library war - the students against Miss Rubin, hostile propaganda included - the situation seems to have cooled down a bit now. The new librarian, Mr. Epps, brought ten years of experience with him to JFKS. He has now settled in (thanks to Miss Rubin's helpful instructions and the good organization of pretty much everything, as he says) and perceives the students as the brightest and politest he has ever worked with. However, he says he also observed some tensions towards the library administration from the beginning and attributes this to people being extra sensitive as a result of last year's situation.

The administration this year is certainly different. While Miss Rubin showed new ideas, she did not manage to enforce the rules which were set up, resulting in a constant struggle to assert her authority and ultimately, her quitting. The library helpers who regularly patrol the aisles and seem to have gotten a hellhound reputation for their rigorous kicking out or admonishing of students not involved in academic activities (this seems to include those who stand somewhere in the library, trying to decide where to go when the library is overly full at every lunch hour; or those who share computers) undoubtedly do succeed in enforcing the rules. This results, of course, in a multitude of

complaints put forth to Mr. Epps, who believes that the students' cooperation, as well as their realization that a study atmosphere should be prevalent in the library, is crucial in sustaining an agreeable atmosphere. However, he does recognize the difficulty in dealing with certain young students who seem not to be able to keep down the volume level even when studying.

The main problem for the students is, of course, the lack of a better place to go. The aula is 'far away' and one would have to drag oneself through the snow sludge in winter - besides, it isn't exactly cozy, and populated by elementary kids more often than not. The student lounge is only accessible to 11th grade and up, and usually in an exceedingly unappetizing state. The stairs are dirty and the traffic on them never ceases; the hallways are - hallways. Come on, who would want to spend their lunch there? So there really is no other decent place to go, not even considering the problem of where to eat, since that is obviously prohibited in the library. While the library administration is aware of this, it needs to maintain the academic properties of the library first and foremost. That means, according to Mr. Epps, that if you have been on Facebook for half an hour, you shouldn't be surprised if you're accosted with the request to shift your focus

towards more educational matters - after all, you can just as easily "check your Facebook at home".

Even as some of these rules make sense in theory, others do seem a bit over the top, like the idea that chairs can't be moved when a couple of students want to sit together and talk - quietly, of course - even when they promise dearly to return the chairs to their original position afterwards. The implementation of rules like these is sure to raise complaints and incredulous shakings of the head amongst the students. Obviously, their enforcement cannot simply be abandoned without a loss of credibility and consistency on the part of the administration. Yet it is a given that the students' grumbles and growls will grow louder with time. And as we saw already concerning the realization of the concept of the student lounge, it is nigh impossible to organize another place for students to go to during lunchtime. There won't be as much blood as last year, partly because the library administration seems to be cooperating better with the school administration this year, but there isn't a groundbreaking resolution of the problem in sight for the near future, either.

Stefanie Lehmann
Paula Elle

Handwriting

They say handwriting can reveal some aspect of your character or personality. If your "i" dots are circles, graphologists (people who analyze handwriting) think you desire to be unusual and unlike others. Yet if your "i" dots are firm dots, they say you strongly defend your opinion, regardless of opposition from others, and that you are loyal. If you write a loop in the stem of a "t" or "d", you may be easily hurt by criticism. Graphologists also take notice in the handwritings slant; it may indicate the writer's emotional reaction. When writing with a right slant (////) he or she could strongly respond to emotional situations, whereas a "left-slant-writer" (\\\\) may not show any emotions, which is often misinterpreted as being cold and uncaring. Those who can't choose between left and right have been noticed to be mixed up or confused. Although this is based on psychological graphology, this may not pertain to every person.

Whoever first taught you to write probably emphasized the importance of writing neatly and legibly if it is important information. Some teachers count points off if they can't decipher the symbols that supposedly resemble letters. They may be hieroglyphics, or random symbols. Or uncertain squiggles trying to be words.

Usually students write a few versions of an essay, revise some of them, restart some others, change the topic completely, or do worse to fight themselves through some painful writing. It's as if they're running a five kilometer marathon. Five kilometer don't seem long compared to a usual

marathon of about ten times more distance, but five kilometers are hard to run. So they sprint the last kilometer and come to the finish line. They're out of breath. Powerless. Aching legs. With shaking hands they give their essay to the jury (teachers). And then comes the long time of waiting for their results. Some teachers just take a few days (powerful cheering!); some take a week (loud applause!). And other teachers take a month to correct the same essays (respectful applause).

When you do get those essays or tests back eventually, you may read squiggles all over your paper or the teacher's response at the end. Impatient to know what they thought of it, you begin to read what they wrote. Or at least you try. Doesn't it seem that more and more teachers' handwritings are becoming harder to read than those of your classmates? Aren't they the ones that stress the importance of neat writing - especially in cursive? Why should we make an effort to write clear, when some of our teachers, acting as role models, don't do so? Is this just a reversed philosophy or are they following the natural human desire to do exactly what they shouldn't do?

Sources:

<http://www.aliceweiser.com/handwriting.htm>

<http://www.viewzone.com/handwriting.html>

Rebecca Jetter

Thoughts Aside:

Is the Internet evil?

Yes.

You don't believe me? Someday Google will rule the world! If it were to turn malignant, we would all be absolutely defenseless, since it is a giant in multiple senses (e.g. a googol refers to the number 10^{100}).

If you're using Gmail as your email provider, you allow Google access to the content of every email you have ever written or received. Imagine what would happen if that information were to be used against you. Are you scared yet? No? What about Google Desktop Search? They wouldn't even need to hack your computer, since you're freely inviting them into your files.

I'm not saying that you should avoid Google and its affiliations. I am, in fact, a great supporter myself. However, it is necessary to consider the risks related to your online behavior.

Consider how much you depend on the Internet. You probably couldn't live a week without it. No need to force yourself into a self-experiment, though. It's not so much a matter of willpower as it is one of conformity and simply living in one's day and age. We live in the 21st Century, a globalized age of information and technology. You need to do online research and write emails concerning courses, extracurriculars, and social engagements. Reference books and letters simply no longer make the cut. Our dependence on this merely 40-year-old construct constitutes an unquestionable fact.

Naturally, we associate joy and entertainment with it as well. Youtube videos are fun and often informative. Amazon-dot-com and eBay wonderfully enhance our commercialism. Websites of organizations and institutions offer information that would otherwise be extremely hard to come by. Wikipedia is a small multiverse of general and specific knowledge without which life would not be the same, even though it is unfortunately not yet a legitimate reference source.

However, the Internet also poses infinite dangers. If you haven't been a victim of electronic bullying, you've accidentally agreed to a contract or chatted with strangers in ominous forums. Not to forget the practical dangers of bugs and viruses, especially when you lack a decent firewall, and innumerable blue screens, in case you are a Windows user. At the very least, you've probably wasted a lot of valuable time on Instant Messengers and Facebook. If you aren't already addicted to your computer, it is just a matter of time.

Do we need to act? Or is it already too late? Try to think back ten years, did you know what the Internet was back then?

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

Teacher Feature: Miss Helmbreck

It is Thursday lunch as I enter the green building, go up to the second floor, and walk into Miss Helmbreck's art room. It is packed with 7th and 8th graders, all desperately trying to finish their art projects before the second quarter is over. Pieces of paper, dirty paintbrushes, empty packets of cornflakes, and student's works of art lie all over the place, covering almost every surface. Miss Helmbreck herself, a young American teacher with a reputation for detesting the color orange, is sitting at the teacher's desk, surrounded by piles of pictures, altered books, and students who are all demanding to know their quarter grades. "Morning Miss Helmbreck," I say. "I came to do the teacher feature."

"Oh, right now?" she asks. "Wait a second." She turns around to reassure some nervous looking pupils that none of them are failing art this year. "Ok then." I take out my notebook and pen and start the interview.

Miss Helmbreck, am I correct in thinking that you hate the color orange?
Yes.

Then how come you have orange hair?
I have orange hair?!!!!!! My hair is not orange! If I'd have orange hair I'd be at a punk night club in New York City. ("It's not really orange. It's more sort of a reddish-blond," a girl from the back of the class interjects)

Who is your favorite artist?
Toulouse-Lautrec. He was a Post-Impressionist who hung out in the Moulin-Rouge and painted dancing ladies.

Was art your favorite subject at school?
Yes.

In our very first art class you started the lesson by telling us your life-story. Why?

Because I think it is good to know someone whom you've never met before. Especially if you have to spend a whole semester with them.

Could you quickly tell me your life story now?

I'm from Massachusetts but I've lived in Seattle for 11 years. And I've been traveling between Dublin (Ireland) and Seattle for three years. I was raised in Wisconsin.

Out of all these places which one do you like best and why?

I like Seattle best. It has an excellent art scene and unique...erm...what's the

word I'm looking for...erm (she sees me writing this down) are you going to quote that? Why did I agree to do this? Anyway, Seattle has an artistic, liberal, creative group of individuals.

What is your favorite movie?

I don't really have one. But all soapy chick flicks make me cry.

What do you like best about teaching?

Hmm...("Our class! The LOVEMUFFINS!!!!" somebody sitting behind me shouts.) Having fun with the kids. I'd also like to say: The art-room is the coolest place to hang out in lunch. ("Yeah baby" a passing by boy adds.)

And what do you like least about teaching?

Meetings after school that last for hours.

What type of art is the most fun to teach?

I like teaching my students how to do illustrations for children's picture books.

How long are you planning to stay in Berlin?

My contract runs out in 2010. And I'm getting married this summer. So if I can convince my boyfriend to stay here, we'll stay.

Your boyfriend is a frame maker, right?

He is.

Isn't it kind of funny that you are an art teacher and that your boyfriend is a frame maker?

Well, that's just how it goes. He does art, too, though. But it's just a hobby. He doesn't want to make it his career.

Ok, what was the most embarrassing thing that ever happened to you?

pause Actually, I can't think of anything. Sorry.

Well, what was your worst ever fashion disaster then?

I think my worst ever fashion disaster was in Middle-School.. I wore braces and a perm, an extremely curly hairstyle. Early 90's fashion was all about perms.

Before I go, one last question. What is your first name?

Cindy. It's short for Cynthia. But my friends call me Cinderella.

Thanks for the interview. Goodbye.

Lisa Feklistova

Opinion

Die „freie Wahl“ zwischen Religion und Ethik

Pro-Reli

Warum trauen wir nicht dem Einzelnen zu, sich frei für Religionsunterricht oder für Ethikunterricht zu entscheiden? Religionsunterricht zwingt keinem den christlichen Glauben auf. Dies ist eine freie und persönliche Entscheidung jedes Einzelnen bzw., wenn man zum Glauben kommt, zwischen Gott und dem Einzelnen. Besucht man den Religionsunterricht, ist man nicht unbedingt ein Christ. Auch im Religionsunterricht werden verschiedene Religionen vorgestellt. Trotzdem ermöglicht er, sich ganz gezielt mit einer Religion tiefer auseinanderzusetzen und so eigene verbindliche Werte zu entdecken und toleranter anderen Religionen gegenüberzutreten.

Das Volksbegehren möchte Schülerinnen und Schülern die Möglichkeit geben, zwischen den Fächern Ethik und Religion frei zu wählen. Wird das Fach Ethik von staatlicher Seite zwangsverordnet, bleibt die Freiheit zur Religion und die Toleranz gegenüber anderen Religionen auf der Strecke! Die selbst auferlegte Verpflichtung zur weltanschaulichen Neutralität im Fach Ethik ist wohl unerfüllbar. Trotz aller Sachlichkeit können die Inhalte des Ethikunterrichts nie objektiv vermittelt werden.

Der Religionsunterricht ermöglicht ein besseres Verständnis für Religionen im Allgemeinen, sowohl deren Ursprünge und Auswirkungen, als auch gegenüber Religionskonflikten, zu entwickeln. Das eigene Verständnis von Religion soll gestärkt, und nicht das anderer Religionen schlecht gemacht werden!

Um die Freiheit zu haben, sich für eine Religion zu entscheiden, muss man nicht nur ihre Grundsätze verstehen, sondern auch die Möglichkeit haben, Inhalte zu reflektieren und Auswirkungen authentisch erfahren zu können, ohne sich zu Beginn sicher zu sein, wie eine persönliche Entscheidung ausfallen wird. Nur die freie Wahl kann hier eine ehrliche und offene Entscheidungsgrundlage sein.

Unser ganzes Leben und erst recht ethische und moralische Wertevermittlung, soll sie denn gelingen, erfordert ein Bezugssystem, das Motivation und Sinn gibt, sich an Moral zu halten; eine weltanschauliche Grundüberzeugung, die sich letztlich aus der Religion herleitet, sei sie nun säkular-humanistisch oder religiös. Mit oder ohne Gott? Diese Entscheidung muss wohl jeder für sich selbst treffen, egal was Staat oder Kirche vorschreiben.

Jonathan Groß

Pro-Ethik

Ein Volksentscheid zugunsten von Pro-Reli wäre in einer demokratischen und fortschrittlichen Stadt wie Berlin schlichtweg unverantwortbar.

Die Kampagne spricht die Weltoffenheit der Großstadt an, indem sie „Toleranzförderung“ und „Wahlfreiheit“ in den Mittelpunkt ihres Marketings stellt und kaschiert damit zugleich ihre übelsten Konsequenzen. Auf den ersten Blick mag man dem Trugschluss erliegen, klar, es wäre doch tolerant und freiheitlich, jeden wählen zu lassen, ob Ethik, Religionsunterricht oder nebulösen „atheistischen Weltanschauungsunterricht“. Wer das glaubt, hat sich ungenügend mit den Tatsachen befasst.

Der Ethikunterricht wurde 2006 in den Klassen 7-10 eingeführt, um Schülern der multikulturellen Metropole Berlin ein gemeinsames, konfessions- und weltanschauungsneutrales Lernen und Diskutieren über ethische Fragestellungen zu ermöglichen. Ziel des Unterrichts ist also eine konstruktive, objektive Auseinandersetzung mit Unterschieden und ein besseres allseitiges Verständnis. Religion ist ein Hauptthema. Alle wichtigsten Religionen werden gleichberechtigt und sachlich behandelt. Niemand kann behaupten, diese Art von Unterricht schließe irgendeine Schülergruppe aus. Der Unterricht ist für alle, genau deshalb ist es das Fach Ethik, das Toleranz schult.

Inwiefern Schüler ein respektvolles Miteinander lernen, wenn sie getrennt werden, ist schwer vorstellbar. Das Argument heißt wohl, man könne nur Anderes „tolerieren“, wenn man sich des Eigenen bewusst ist. Doch das bringt uns zur nächsten Frage: Was ist denn das Eigene eines 7.-10. Klässlers? Kulturelle und religiöse Wurzeln wurden im Haushalt gesetzt, das stimmt. Aber ist es nicht ein Grundprinzip der modernen Bildung, jungen Menschen in der Schule Perspektiven, die über die Erfahrungen im Elternhaus hinausgehen, zu bieten? Sollte nicht die Schule durch eine umfassende, unvoreingenommene Bildung die Selbstbestimmtheit und das Selbstbewusstsein jedes Schülers stärken, sodass er im späteren Leben tatsächliche Wahlfreiheit und frei und gebildet gewähltes Eigenes hat? Wenn nun gesagt wird, neutrales Wissen über alle Anschauungen böte auch der Religionsunterricht, ist die Erwiderung offensichtlich: Warum denn dann die Trennung? Moslems hier, Juden da, Christen dort. Das kann nur negative Auswirkungen auf das Toleranzvermögen haben. Es beraubt außerdem die Kinder ihrer Wahlfreiheit; mit 12 Jahren wird ihnen

auch in der Schule vorgeschrieben, wo sie hingehören, mit welcher Identität sie ihren Mitschülern gegenüber zu treten haben.

Weiter argumentieren Pro-Reli-Vertreter, nur mit der Möglichkeit des Religionsunterrichts könne in der Schule Wertevermittlung stattfinden. Seit wann ist der Staat befugt, seinen Bürgern Werte vorzuschreiben? Man vergesse nicht die Trennung von Staat und Kirche! In Schulen dürfen lediglich jene Werte vermittelt werden, die in der Verfassung verankert sind. So zum Beispiel die Menschenrechte oder die Gleichberechtigung von Frau und Mann oder Toleranz. Darüber hinaus wird im Ethikunterricht keine Moral gepredigt. Wenn die Aktion Pro-Reli nicht Verfassungswidrigkeiten in Erwägung zieht, dürften in einem etwaigen Religionsunterricht auch keine Werte über die Universalien der Bundesrepublik hinaus gelehrt werden. So fällt das Argument der Wertevermittlung. Dazu sei aber noch zitiert, was der Initiator der Pro-Reli Bewegung zu Werten sagt: „Es gibt auch Leute, die ohne Gott Werte haben.“ Tatsächlich. Die Kirchen sehen das anders. Für Pro-Reli warben sie: „Werte brauchen Gott“. Liegt dieser Streit zwischen Theisten und Atheisten dem ganzen Aufruhr zugrunde? Erstens liefert die Empirie keinen Anhaltspunkt zu denken, Nichtgläubige seien wert(e)los. Diese Beschuldung ist nichts weiter als Polemik. Zweitens ist der Ethikunterricht nicht atheistisch, er ist neutral, er vertritt weltanschauungsunabhängige Verfassungswerte! Behaupten Pro-Reli-Unterstützer etwa, die Religion stünde im Widerspruch zu diesen globalen Werten, religiöse Kinder seien von ihnen unbetroffen?

Wenn man argumentiert, der Religionsunterricht ist sowieso ergänzend zur Ethik für alle als AG verfügbar, hört man von Pro-Reli, es fehle den Schülern die Zeit, Religion als Zusatz zum regulären Schulpensum zu wählen. Wie wäre es mit einem Erlass des Mathematik- oder Biologieunterrichts, damit Schüler Zeit haben, anderen privaten Unterfangen nachzugehen? Religion ist kein Ethikersatz. Der Unterricht basiert auf dem Konzept des Zusammenlernens, der gleichen Darstellung aller Religion und enthält Themen über die Religion hinaus. Diese Inhalte sind vom Schulsenat vorgesehen. Ethik ist ein Pflichtfach. Kein Schüler sollte davon befreit sein; keinem Schüler sollte diese Bildung vorenthalten werden.

Lena Walther

Write Out Loud!

Walter's Coffey - a popular lunchtime-destination among JFKS students and the home of Vanilla Chai Latte, Ben & Jerry's and "Tomazza" bagels. Regulars will know that this cozy little café usually closes its doors at 19:00h... unlike it did on the 23rd of January. That night, the Senior Class' "Write Out Loud" took place - an open mike fundraiser to give aspiring writers a platform. Roughly 25 students attended the event, leaving no room to sit and forcing the friendly staff to prepare coffee after coffee in a high-speed fashion. Lisa Fenklistova delighted the audience with her witty

and very heartfelt poems, as well as Julien Gentle, whose very poignant poetry left the audience impressed and speechless.

The laid-back atmosphere proved itself truly inspiring - more and more audience members decided to spontaneously contribute in one way or the other. This resulted in an impromptu interpretation of the underground hit "Friendship Betrayal" and a couple of interesting a cappella performances. Further noteworthy acts included David Heim on his saxophone, as well as Leonardo Liccini and David Hirst.

In relation to the size of the venue and our student body's overwhelming appreciation for poetry, this fundraising event was definitely one of the most successful ones. All participants and audience members agreed that the 2€ admission fee was money well spent, and that similar events should take place in the future. In that sense, we hope to see many more of you at a possible "Write Out Loud" reunion or other similarly awesome Senior Class events.

Ina Fischer

Veganism and Vegetarianism: The New Fad in Berlin

From the Bio Company to Vegan Fast Food

Three years ago, I was introduced to veganism by my now ex-boyfriend and devout animal rights activist, vegan, anarchist and anti-fascist, Daniel. Though I have been a practicing vegetarian for close to 15 years, I found that being exposed to veganism meant a severe change in my everyday habits; when I was out with him I couldn't eat or use anything made with animal products, we had to go to special restaurants. He also gave me various hair products and creams - all vegan. In this two-year period of our acquaintance, I discovered the booming world of vegan-Berlin, was dragged in and out of various Kreuzberger Bio-supermarkets, vegetarian fast-food restaurants, and animal rights and globalization debates. I found that, unlike vegetarianism, veganism is not only a dietary practice but a huge political statement and lifestyle. Veganism goes hand in hand with an animal friendly, anti-capitalist, and often very radical political approach to life. Upon meeting Daniel's friends, I discovered that most of them, like Daniel, believe in a form of Anarcho-communist society (please don't ask me what that means... I still don't get it) and exercise a so-called "Straightedge lifestyle", which entails no drugs, no alcohol, and no cigarettes. Most of them seem shy and lead introverted lives, confining solely to their vegan community. I'm not saying that all vegans are like this, but from my observations, veganism comes with a complex string of political and societal views aiming for a peaceful communal way of life. Though I don't personally believe in (or understand) this ideology, it was a refreshing alternative to the ever-growing consumerism and over-media-friendly Berlin environment.

At this point you are probably wondering what veganism actually entails: veganism is a lifestyle that endeavors not to use any animal products for food, clothing, and other products. It is usually linked to an ethical conviction concerning the rights of animals, human health, the environment, or spiritual or religious concerns. If balanced properly this diet can be extremely healthy and can reduce the risks of colon cancer, heart attack, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, prostate cancer, and stroke. However if the diet is not well balanced, i.e. not enough diversity in foods or is not enforced through dietary supplements, veganism can be extremely dangerous because the body loses too many vitamins and minerals (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veganism). Since my last encounter with veganism in 2007, I have observed its growing popularity in the young Berlin scene. More and more vegan and vegetarian restaurants are popping up in Kreuzberger and Prenzlberger blocks and Bio-supermar-



Yellow Sunshine, Berlin-Kreuzberg

kets are spreading quickly through the city, even in suburban areas like our own Zehlendorf Mitte (Bio Company, Reformhaus, and Gorilla). As there is a growing global focus on the environment and health, it appears that a larger amount of people are resorting to a healthier, environmental-friendly diet and lifestyle, making veganism and vegetarianism the new fad for young Berlin.

Though this way of life, and especially the cuisine, seems tasteless and boring to some, I must say that my experience with some Kreuzberger veggie-restaurants has been rather pleasing. "Yellow Sunshine", a vegetarian/vegan fast food diner off of Görlitzer Bahnhof has, over the years, become one of my favorite hangouts. It offers a wide variety of burgers, wraps and salads all meat-free but extremely delicious and filling.

Ultimately, though this conduct does come with one or the other strange Birkenstock-wearing, unshaven-armpit-baring individual, I must say that an occasional resort to vegan practices can be extremely healthy and in the long run may even help our environmental conflicts. Conclusively, in this rapidly growing junk-food driven environment, I guess it would be wise for all of us to pick up a carrot from time to time; but basically, it's whatever floats your boat, right?

Leonie Schulte

Columns

Twelfth of the Nothings

If you type the word "hate" into Google, Wikipedia comes up first. Then a Polish rock band by that name. But next a more interesting website is listed: "I hate Men Dot Com." It is significant to note that a simple search into the word 'hate' brings immediate mention of this ongoing battle: the complex relationship between men and women in society; full of hate, resentment and blame, at least as much as it is defined by love. Whether in the radical line of the website or in more restrained tones, the question of gender definition and women's rights touches everyone. Some of you, I am sure, are smirking by now. Perhaps you've been waiting, just waiting, for me to write a column about the sexes. For other readers, I should explain that I am the token feminist of the JFKS Junior Diploma Class and it's not a title born of respect. Feminism is out of fashion nowadays, a relic from a Civil Rights Movement that's become a fairy tale for today's youth, interesting, commendable, but also endearingly, almost pathetically, naïve. Any mention of possible mysogynism is met with rolling eyes and the term 'sexual harassment' has evolved into little more than a punch line. Any real discussion among teenagers on this topic is held in the spirit of the past, arguments late at night when the news is slow and hot button political issues have been exhausted. It's as if, since we vote and go to law school, since we're called Ms. instead of Miss, and since we wear bras instead of corsets, we are automatically equal, automatically free. But women are not free. Minds, those of men and those of women, hold both sexes prisoner. It's in every contemptuous look, every passive-aggressive comment, every (okay, sometimes funny) "female" joke. It's in a student's sarcastic "Feminism is dumb, besides, I thought we all agreed women are inferior." It's there when a teacher follows a comment in class with "Oh, and what time does the bra burning begin?"

There is, as the website mentioned above exemplifies, another side of the problem. Because "Men can't cook" comes up as often as "Women can't park." And although in my experi-

ence as a human being on this planet, I must concede that a certain truth lies in these particular stereotypes (station wagons that render the sidewalk impassable and boys that bring cakes to class in ziploc bags), it is still dangerous to allow such generalizations to go too far. As women become steadily—if for us frustratingly slowly—more empowered, men are inevitably forced to redefine their role in society. Reconciling the century-old traditions of Western civilization with the new demands placed by increasing gender equality involves making compromises. And many of those compromises are being made by males. Men, robbed by circumstance and time period of their cigars and superiority are redefining the way gender works into their identity. But the transition from the macho breadwinner of the 50's to today's dishwashing, diaper-changing pseudo-cowboy was not accomplished without significant sacrifice. One generation is not enough to change the mindset of millennia, and men, doing for their wives what their mothers wouldn't have dreamed of demanding, have paid the price for this rapid historical turn over.

This is, perhaps, the root of the problem. Young men, seeking to find themselves and their place just like generations before have done, experiment with their female counterparts. However, because our society is reeling from the rebalancing of power between the sexes, a new factor enters into teenage exploration. And so, in an attempt to discover and define themselves, they look back to when they held the sceptre, and try, subconsciously, to see if women are perhaps prepared to return it, full-time, to them. The jokes, the masculine laughter, the hints at physical superiority, are symptoms of a sex that is still searching for its true place, its ultimate destination. Because they were pushed. And when the incessant jostling for power stops, when women are equal and men are secure, perhaps there can be a world of balance, of equilibrium, of homeostasis, of peace...

Anna Zychlinsky

Unsere Kultour: Dinner for one - Killer for five

Er ist in Deutschland schon über 230 Mal ausgestrahlt worden (wofür er seit 1988 den Weltrekord hält), für viele gehört er zu Silvester wie der Weihnachtsbaum zu Weihnachten, und allein 2004 sahen ihn 15,6 Millionen Deutsche im Fernsehen. Mit Freddie Frinton und May Warden in den Hauptrollen ist einer der beliebtesten deutschen Sketche ein Engländer - Dinner for one.

Die Handlung ist relativ einfach: Miss Sophie feiert ihren 90. Geburtstag und möchte dies gerne, wie jedes Jahr, im Kreis ihrer vier besten Freunde Sir Toby, Mr. Pommeroy, Admiral von Schneider und Mr. Winterbottom tun. Dumm ist nur, dass die Herren seit Jahren tot sind, und so muss ihr Butler James deren

Rollen übernehmen. „Same rocedure as last year, Miss Sophie?“ fragt er sie, worauf sie ihm antwortet: „Same procedure as every year, James!“. Schon stößt er wieder für die vier Herren mit ihr an und vergisst auch zwischendrin nicht, über das Tigerfell zu stolpern.

In „Dinner for One - Killer for Five; Der 90. Geburtstag und was wirklich geschah“ erzählt Michael Koglin, wie die vier Herren zu Tode kamen. In einer spannenden Geschichte rund um Ehebruch, Spionage, Homosexualität und Wünschelrutengängern ermitteln Chefinspektor DeCraven und Constabler Oggerty im Hause Miss Sophies; mit einem fünften Mord hält das Buch auch noch eine kleine Überraschung bereit.

Durch charmanten Humor, Intelligenz und Liebe zum Klischee ist Michael Koglin's „Dinner for One - Killer for Five“ (Erschienen im Verlag Knauer) für alle Liebhaber des Sketches ein muss - egal, ob jung oder alt.

Nebenbei noch ein Kultour-Tip: Am 29. März ist die fünfköpfige A Cappel-la Truppe „Wise Guys“ ab 18:00 Uhr im Kesselhaus in Prenzlauer Berg zu Gast. Näheres unter www.wiseguys.de, Karten gibt's unter www.ticketonline.de. Für alle, die es nicht schaffen, selber zu kommen gibt's im Muckraker danach an dieser Stelle selbstverständlich einen Konzertbericht.

Moritz Zeidler

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Zeidler im Wunderland: Wintersport ist Mord!

Winterurlaub in den Alpen ist wunderschön. Ich kann mir nur Weniges vorstellen, was schöner ist, als oben auf einem Berg zu stehen und den Blick in die Ferne schweifen zu lassen. In der Ferne die schneebedeckten Berggipfel, deren Bauch wie mit Watte von Wolken umhüllt ist, im Tal die Tannen, deren Schneedecke an Zuckerguss erinnert. Die Sonne scheint mir auf den in ein Unterhemd, ein T-Shirt, einen Rollkragenpullover, zwei Fleecejacken und einen Anorak eingepackten Bauch. Ja, so bin ich glücklich, denke ich, und starre weiterhin verträumt in die Ferne. Wenn da doch nur nicht...

„Mensch Moritz, jetzt komm doch endlich. Stell dich nicht so an! Es ist einfacher als du denkst!“ unterbricht mich Kasimir. Kasimir ist mein Cousin. Er ist fast so alt wie ich (nur ein klitzekleines Bisschen älter) und eigentlich verstehen wir uns ganz gut. Da er sehr sportlich ist, verstehen wir uns manchmal auch nicht so gut, und er kann gut Skifahren, deshalb mag ich ihn im Moment überhaupt nicht.

...Wenn da doch nur nicht das Skifahren wäre, führe ich meinen Gedanken zu Ende. Nichts ist mir mehr zuwider als die Idee, auf dünnen Brettern einen mit umweltschadendem Kunstschnee bepackten Berg herabzurasen. Und dann all' die Touristen! Man kann sich kaum umdrehen, ohne jemandem in den Nacken zu atmen.

Kasimir verdreht die Augen, schnallt seine Skier ab und kommt zu mir herübergestapft. Ich würde auch gerne meine Skier abschallen und ihm cool entgegen kommen, bekomme die verfluchten Bindungen aber nicht auf und muss meinem Schicksal daher widerstandslos in die Augen sehen. Wehe, er kommt jetzt auf dumme Gedanken!

Er kommt auf dumme Gedanken. Er stellt sich hinter mich und gibt mir einen kleinen Schubser. Nur einen ganz kleinen, etwa so wie man eine Tür aufstößt, hinter der jemand schläft den man nicht wecken will. „Ha! Was sollte denn das?“ Frage ich ihn. Er grinst mich breit an, und ich verstehe. Bei diesen verdammten Skiern reicht auch schon der kleinste Anstoß und sie nehmen höllisch Fahrt auf. Und tatsächlich, ich nehme höllisch Fahrt auf! Ich verdrehe noch meinen Kopf und sehe, wie Kasimir mir grinsend zuwinkt, ehe er sich wieder zurück zu seinen eigenen Skiern aufmacht. Ich gestikuliere wild und verfluche ihn. Ich kann ihn jetzt wirklich nicht leiden. Er kann sich in Zukunft selbst Ritter Sport Schokolade kaufen, von meiner kriegt er nichts mehr ab.

Liebe Leser, ihr wisst überhaupt nicht, wie schnell 8,5 m/s² sich anfühlen können. Angst erfüllt meine Augen, als die Bäume zunehmend schneller an mir vorbeirasen; mich überkommt... Panik? Nein, interessanterweise nicht. Ich halte es zunächst für Panik, aber es ist eher ein Glücksgefühl! Ich

habe den Berg besiegt! Mensch, wie schön Skifahren doch ist! Was kann schöner sein, als auf schnittigen Skiern einen schneebedeckten Berg herunterzufitzen? Vor meinem inneren Auge sehe ich mich schon als professioneller Skifahrer; ich sehe mich mit Goldmedaillen umhängt auf einem Podest stehen, sehe mich als Stargast im „Aktuellen Sportstudio“. Ich bin ein unentdecktes Genie! Ein Naturtalent! Ich hänge alle anderen Skifahrer locker ab! „Hurra! Ich kann's!“ schreie ich mir meine Freude vom Leibe.

„Sch****, ich kann's nicht!“ schreie ich im nächsten Augenblick. Denn eines habe ich nicht bedacht: mein Unwissen darüber, wie ich diese Teufelsplanken unter meinen Füßen dazu bringen könnte, in eine andere Richtung zu fahren. Ich fahre direkt auf einen Abhang zu – die tückische Piste macht an dieser Stelle eine Kurve. „Kasimir! Wie fährt man eine Kurwhoop!“ brülle ich.

Das ist alles, woran ich mich erinnern kann. Das Nächste, was ich weiß, ist, dass ich im Krankenhaus aufwache. Neben mir sitzen meine Mutter (mit besorgtem Gesicht), mein Vater (mit schockiertem Gesicht), meine Schwester (mit gelangweiltem Gesicht) und Kasimir (mit schuldbewusstem Gesicht) und einer Tafel Ritter Sport Schokolade in der Hand, die er mir wortlos überreicht als er sieht, dass ich wach bin).

Wie gesagt, ich kann mich an nichts mehr erinnern, aber meine Aktion muss ziemlich spektakulär gewesen sein. Ich hatte den Großteil meines Gewichts wohl nach hinten verlagert, sodass ich einen doppelten Rückwärtssalto in der Luft vollführte (Haltungsnoten: 3, 2, 4, 2, 1), ehe ich nach einem rekordverdächtigen Sprung von 25 Metern Weite relativ hart mit meinem Kopf auf dem Boden aufkam und noch gut 50 Meter weiter den Berg herunterschlidderte, ehe ich stehen blieb. Kasimirs Augen glühen, als er mir das alles erzählt, als hätte er es im neusten Bond-Film gesehen. Wie ich ihn doch hasse. Außerdem habe ich Kopfschmerzen und weiß nicht mehr, wie spät es ist.

Ich solle mich ausruhen, meint meine Mutter. How. Der große Manitu hat gesprochen, also schleichen sich alle raus, ich bleibe mit meinen Kopfschmerzen und meiner Langeweile (wenn Kasimir doch nur hier wäre um mich aufzuheitern!) im Bett liegen, lehne mich zurück um ein wenig zu schlafen und warte auf die Ärzte. Ich soll noch behandelt werden, was genau an mir kaputt ist konnte mir keiner meiner Verwandten genau sagen; egal wo ich hinfasse, es tut weh. Sie kommen.

Moritz Zeidler

Beauty

Imagine the following: You walk through the park outside our school, as any other day, but with walking sticks in your hands. You feel as always, nothing is extraordinary. The trees glitter, immovable, you can still read some of the products' names that have changed their purpose to make up the anatomy of a tree. Parts of articles from a common newspaper begin to loosen off the "trunk" of the tree. The folds seem "natural". Paper rustles around you, metal cans and some cardboard crunch under your feet. The walking sticks help you make sure you can move through some of the new street-coverings, which may

still be a little soft or in case there's some exceptionally high bump somewhere. Other people walk around you with grim faces, the sky is much nearer than what you know from old stories, you can nearly touch it, it's grey and thick.

Yes, it's true. Beauty is secondary to inner feelings. But one does depend on the other. It is inner feelings that make beauty because beauty is relative. Real beauty is just as metaphysical as, say, love. Once that has been settled, instead of taking as beauty that which a magazine or a public mass may propagate, beauty is indispensable.

Real beauty touches the soul in a way that it makes life worth it's while. The beauty of a human being, as well as anything else. It isn't without a basis that a character in the computer game "The Sims" becomes unhappy if he or she lives in an anaesthetic apartment. It isn't without reason that some sights in nature make us speechless. And that is precisely what I'm going for. If that weren't there, would we be able to live, or rather, wouldn't it be like living in a world deprived of laughter or love?

Kim von Schönfeld

Entertainment

The Beginning of the End of Obamania

Even though I was born in America, I am not an American citizen. I do not see myself as an American. I didn't watch any ceremony around Chancellor Merkel and I haven't heard a single one of her speeches in full length. But I was amongst those hundreds of members of the Kennedy School society to watch that of Barack Obama.

Two million people were gathered in Washington to witness the inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America, the first black man to reach the highest office in American politics. An innumerable amount of people across the entire world watched some of the world's greatest musicians playing and singing, prayed together with a friend of Martin Luther King Jr., listened to the speeches of some of the most influential people in the world, and listened in awe to Joe Biden and Barack Obama swearing their oaths as well as Obama holding his Inauguration speech, which seemed to lack the enthusiasm of his previous speeches, evidence of the change

from President-Elect Obama to President Obama.

As the only TV-channels we could receive had someone translating everything said into German, I sat in front of the TV, watching the pictures, and listening to everything said over the radio (thank you, BBC!). Even though this caused Biden's lips to say everything three seconds after I heard it, even though Rick Warren can't count, even though Obama's oath was a jumble (for those who didn't hear the news yet: He took it again the following day, being the third president to do so) and even though his speech wasn't half as good as some of his past ones, I must confess that I was touched when Aretha Franklin sang, that I laughed when Obama's daughter was given a stool to stand on, that I was proud to witness this historical moment, even if it was only via the media.

But still, Obama is one of the people I would least like to be now. Many people have great hope for better times with him as US presi-

dent; all eyes in the world are rested upon him, watching his every step. Obama has led one of the most strategically well-developed election campaigns in the world's history. He has promised much, and much is expected of him, and it will be hard for him to meet the standards the world and his nation set for him. Many people see Obama as the Messiah of modern days; as Obamania grabs hold of them, they come to believe that he will solve all problems in an instant, be they of economic or political nature. He will not be able to fulfil all expectations, as the limit comes sooner than the sky and many people will be disappointed in him. With each fan he has made in his campaign, he has made his reelection one step harder, and the legacy Obama will leave behind is still unknown. Will he be remembered as a man of great words, or as one of great deeds?

Moritz Zeidler

Unlabeled

Emo, nerd, preppy, happy, sad, ecstatic, depressed, introvert, extrovert, rich, poor, musical, athletic, pretty, ugly. Why do we feel this constant need to label ourselves? Not just our own selves, but the people around us.

Why is everyone who wears black considered emo? Since when does being engaged in school make you a nerd?

There is an ancient need to fit in some place in society. People who were rich could not mix with the poor; families with scandals were not accepted by society. Today, a lot more is acceptable. Thus, it is the small things that count. The right clothes, the right attitude or the correct amount of bounce in your step!

Currently, the obsession with perfection is more wide spread than ever. The perfect woman: Career, mother, and perfect wife. The flawless man: charming, handsome, down to earth, with a career.

Being judged is inevitable.

With the edited images in magazines and flawless models on the advertisements, we are surrounded by the pursuit of perfection constantly: On our way to the S-Bahn at 7.30 in the morning, walking to Zehlendorf during lunch, even when we turn on the TV at home.

Girls bash their bodies more than ever. Companies and organizations such as Dove call attention to problems such as eating disorders and girls being repelled by their appearances.

In order to feel superior to others or just better in general, we feel bashing other's bodies, clothes and habits will make us feel better. A careless remark in the hallway or even playful teasing among classmates can really crush another person. Careless remarks that are perceived as funny by the masses may really afflict an individual.

Maybe next time we call someone fat, weird, ugly, gross, vulgar, anorexic, repellent, smelly, wallflower, druggie, unfashionable, a loner, bookworm, thunder-thighs, awful, beastly, dumb, deformed, airhead, or repugnant we will think of the possible consequences our careless remark may cause.

Katarina von Witzke

Movie Reviews:

The Wrestler and Milk

"The Wrestler" is technically a sports film, but distinctly sets itself apart from that genre. It is not a clichéd story about someone beating all the odds to end up on top, but a portrait of a man at the end of his rope, a semi-retired professional wrestler, who clings to the only thing he can do, even while being destroyed by it. Playing the titular role of Randy "The Ram" Robinson, Mickey Rourke looks absolutely battered; a fighter long past his prime, who resembles, as he puts it, an "old, broken-down piece of meat". It is this raw quality, in part, that gives Rourke's performance a degree of authenticity lacking in many other films. He feels so real, and is such a sympathetic character, that it is heartbreaking to see his attempts to lead a normal life and to reconcile with his estranged daughter crash to pieces around him. Director Darren Aronofsky, together with cinematographer Maryse Alberti, gives everything a documentary-style realism that makes the climax, one that could easily be too sentimental, unforgettable in its visuals and emotional impact.

Gus Van Sant's *Milk* tells the story of Harvey Milk (played beautifully by Sean Penn), the first openly gay person to be elected to public office in the United States. It covers the last eight years of his life, from his rapid rise in San Francisco politics to his assassination in 1978. The remarkable screenplay was written by newcomer Dustin Lance Black, who, like director Gus Van Sant, is openly gay himself. Black researched extensively for his endeavor, and as a result, the story feels unusually fleshed out, with a wealth of anecdotal details and supporting characters; even small roles indelibly work their way into the audience's perception of Milk and his circle of friends. Wonderful performances come from James Franco, Emile Hirsch, Alison Pill, Diego Luna, and others, whose characters are conveyed so well through small moments and bits of dialogue. Josh Brolin plays Dan White, Milk's fellow supervisor and eventual assassin, whose tortured emotional state comes out from a brilliantly enigmatic performance, even if the exact motivations of the deed do not. Unlike many biopics, Milk never gets boring; the story is supported all the way by its characters and Gus Van Sant's direction, which seamlessly incorporates both real and staged archival footage and still photographs into the film. It is an entertaining, vibrant, and deep look at a man and his times, with a message that is just as resonant today as it was then.

Nikolas Jaeger

Entertainment



Ergänzung zum Pro-Reli-Artikel

Bald gibt es in Berlin auch einen Engelsberg...

Der Muckraker möchte betonen, dass dies unentgeltliche Werbung ist. Wir behalten uns einen sarkastischen Unterton vor.

Sudokus!!

Eileen Wagner

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

Easy Sudoku

					4	3	2	
6			1	9	8	5	4	
5		1	7				8	
4			5					
3	1		4		7		6	5
8					9			2
						6		
1	3	8	2	6	5	7		
	9	6	8					

Hard Sudoku

					7	1		
5	2		8			3	9	
			5	1				
6	5							8
8		3		5		2		4
2							3	6
				3	6			
	6	8			5		2	1
		5	4					