

THE MUCKRAKER

THE INDEPENDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL STUDENTS' NEWSPAPER

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THE MUCKRAKER Speaks!

Can you believe it's March already? Because we surely can't. Only 20 more days until spring vacation and after that, it's really only a matter of weeks until another school year will come to its end. So let us recapitulate what has happened in the last month: report cards with a preciously high amount of those new Individual Education Plans (IEP), a fatal hurricane that turned out to be more of a strong wind, and an unusually successful school dance.

It seems that the new course load for our little 7th grade younglings is really drawing its consequences. Although the 7th graders will be fortunate enough to complete their Abitur after only 12 years, they now have a more rigorous schedule, tougher classes, and less free periods. As for the wanna-be hurricane, although us Berliners weren't too impressed, the strong winds seem to be an indicator of the potential effects of global warming. Especially with the moody weather we've been having lately (Is it winter? Is it spring?), it seems that the future of our children and our children's children will not be as safe as ours, regarding climate change.

The Student Council dance, on the other hand, came as a positive surprise to most of us, as school dances are normally less successful and have gained quite a dismissive reputation at our school. Nevertheless, congratulations to the SC! Let's hope more successes will await us in the future.

Anyway, as you all know, these next couple of weeks before spring break will be tainted with Klausuren, tests, quizzes, and presentations, but remember, school will be over soon and once you get through these weeks, you can pat yourself on the back.

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The Bandaged Charité

Lampposts snuggled up in *H&M*, busses roaming the streets sporting *Sketcher's* hottest, and for the Brandenburg Gate, only the finest off of *Gucci* racks. Our city not long from today: an advertisement jungle.

This fear manifests itself most clearly at the sorry sight of the Berliner Charité. Its central hospital building has been wrapped up and bandaged in 4200 square meters of plastic featuring 10 giant yellow letters; a commercial poster that reads "Vanity Fair". On the night of February 6th, 20 mechanics hoisted the advertisement up to the top ten floors of the world famous hospital

ence community. To make this happen, "Vanity Fair" will be posted for about a year.

A hospital covered in advertisement is only the peak of the iceberg though. As of 2007, advertisement design company VVR Decaux proffers an alluring new campaign perspective for its customers: "train station dominance". From pioneering the legendary "Litfaßsäule", invented by the "advertisement king", Ernst Litfaß, to sending the first horse carriage used as an advertisement tool into the streets of Berlin – the company now known as VVR Decaux, has always been an innovator in its league. "Train



station dominance" may well transform our city as much as previous Decaux strategies. The idea behind it is that floor, walls, ceilings, and poles in a subway station be plastered full with the client's advertisements – and only that one client's

and now it hangs majestically above the city, the writing lit up at night. Those of us worried about missing the market's latest are thanking the fashion deity, but what about those inside the hospital? They're rejoicing over the advancements in poster engineering: The little holes in the poster material make for a great view out the window! And what about the lit-up letters? No need to worry about that. Its lights extinguish at eleven – perfect bedtime for the newborns on the 11th floor!

The comfort of the patients set aside, one has to ask: How do a magazine advertisement and a health facility fit together? The Charité has assuaged concerns over this discrepancy saying it's not and will never be a cigarette commercial. The hospital depends on the money it gets for advertising; it is remodelling its façade and adding seven new floors – aiming to make the building symbolic for the Berliner sci-

logo and colors, hence the dominance. So far, two companies have shaken on the deal: U-Bahnhof Ernst-Reuter-Platz now occupied by "GRAVIS", a computer company and U-Bahnhof Friedrichstraße, enveloped in "Germanwings". Sounds like one building, one train station after another will be covered in a wild jungle of advertisements. Under den Linden's elegant sap green trees will be lost in a blurry array of bright printer ink. Are *H&M*, *Sketchers*, and *Gucci* what Berlin stands for? Should the "dominance" be in the hands of corporate companies, or is this our city, our hospital, our public transportation system? Whether we like it or not, advertisements are growing in size and prevalence. At least no must-have product will escape us.

Lena Walther

JFKS Life

The Student Council Valentine's Day Dance

What have the Student Council Presidents Max Jürgens and Julian Lasius achieved till now? Many students who had once put their hope into the newly elected presidents became some of the Student Council's strongest critics. The same people who had once congratulated ideas such as the Grade Council, now doubt the capabilities of Max and Julian. However, the SC presidents have



managed to not only continually work very hard behind the scenes of school business but they also managed to pull off a big successful event to ring in the second semester.

The SC Valentine's Day Dance, which many students had looked down upon, turned out to be a huge success. Although the SC had managed to plaster the entire school with posters, it still didn't seem as if the dance would be well visited. When asked whether they would be attending this pivotal dance – at least for 7th and 8th graders – older students just laughed at the idea, claiming that going to a school dance would just be "lame and embarrassing".

To the surprise of many, including my-

self, after the helpers and of course our SC presidents themselves had finished setting everything up for the big bash, a lot of people started to show up. Although most 10th – 13th graders, excluding those who helped out, stayed true to their promise of not attending the dance, some fun-loving older students did show up and appeared to enjoy themselves. Not to forget the hoard of younger students who gladly joined in on the festivities, which guaranteed a huge amount of profit due to the amount of tickets and drinks sold at the dance. The DJ (Jakob Thomae) and the extremely amusing break dance moves of one of the SC presidents were some of the most entertaining events of the night.

Although many of us still have a lot of questions concerning the work and achievements of the SC presidents, all of us should at least acknowledge the hard work and successes achieved by the young men that were elected by a vast majority of the school.

Let's hope that the SC dance wasn't just a glimpse of success but rather the start of an exciting, eventful, and extremely successful second semester, especially since another semester largely filled with empty promises and behind the scenes work isn't what anyone bargained for when they voted for their SC presidents. For now, we can just try and be positive, seeing as some positive thinking at least once in a while can't harm anyone.

Victor Boadum

Teacher Quotes

Schon bald müssen die Yearbookseiten fertig gestellt werden. Dabei sind gerade die „Teacher Quotes“-Seiten eine gute Möglichkeit das, was ihr dieses, bzw. letztes Jahr erlebt habt, mit einzubringen. Unsere Lehrer hauen doch immer

wieder mal gerne den einen oder anderen dummen, lustigen oder einfach nur falschen Spruch raus. Damit nicht nur ihr

diese Sprüche kennt, bitte ich euch alles was ihr habt an mich zu senden, damit es auch dieses Jahr wieder veröffentlicht

werden kann. Ihr könnt mir die Quotes als E-Mail schicken (MattWerner88@web.de) oder mich einfach in der Schule ansprechen.

Matt Werner

Graffiti, the newest trend?

When reflecting back upon the year 2006 it seems that a lot of new trends have come about. One of the biggest trends is that we teenagers seem to have taken a liking to graffiti. I for one would be lying if I said I didn't love seeing a good "piece" on a building or an S-Bahn.

But what I don't like - and I think many of you will agree - is seeing some amateur kid's sloppy tag smeared all over the walls of our school. It's ugly and no one finds it cool.

I know a lot of you think it's funny or cool to tag in the bathrooms or the banisters but it really isn't. I am friends with people who spray: they are amazing artists and they spray in places that don't jeopardize other peoples' well-being and because they love and respect the art of spray painting - now that is cool. However the kids tagging in the bathrooms of our school are trying to impress the older kids - its not impressing them. I talked to an old friend of mine, who is also an amazing sprayer and he said that that kind of tagging just doesn't make an impression on him and that if those kids want his respect they should be out there doing what he's doing and not destroying our bathrooms.

If you're trying to make a point, congratulations, you've made it: all of the JFKS bathrooms now look like public toilets at an U-Bahn station. The bathrooms have become nasty and are hurting our school's reputation.

So, if you guys are really into graffiti, that's fine, but a lot of kids at our school may not be and it's not fair to them if they have to walk into those bathrooms everyday and be subjected to visual pollution just because some people think it looks cool.

If you really love spraying then do it on a legal wall, where you can really show off what you've got and where people can and will respect you for it.

Whoever did the tagging in our school really destroyed a lot. They damaged not only the bathrooms but also the trust that we shared with our teachers because now the administration is holding class conferences and pulling innocent kids into this. If it doesn't stop soon the school has threatened to get the police involved.

So please, don't let this problem escalate. It's up to you.

Leonie Schulte

Raised Hands

A class of twenty students: five raise their hands, the others yawn, doodle, sleep, look out of the window, or talk to their neighbors. Who will the teacher pick on to answer the question? Student A whose arm hurts from stretching it into the air for five minutes, or maybe student B who is really into the subject and wants to share her opinion. No. The teacher will ask Bob to say something, although Bob does not know or care about the symbolism in Tom and Jerry. Bob (no offense to anyone whose name may be Bob) will tell the teacher that he does not know the answer, and the teacher will pick on other students randomly, completely ignoring those that actually do raise their hands. At some point the attentive students feel slightly offended and slowly lower their hands.

Is that reasonable classroom management? I say it isn't! Teachers should not ignore their students as much as students should not ignore their teachers. Our life at school, especially the student to teacher relationship, is based on mutual respect – otherwise difficulties may arise. I might have exaggerated in the above-mentioned example, however, this does indeed occur, and I think that the teachers are not even aware of offending their students, especially those that seem to show interest in their classes.

Why do students actually have to raise

their hands? Is it because the teacher needs a way to be able to control the class and keep order? The bigger a class the more difficult it must be for a teacher to manage it. One hears often enough of those teachers who fail at this task. Small classes are a lot nicer for both the teacher and the students.



The fewer students in a class the more likely it is that they all get to say something. Of course, there are always the few upper grade classes whose teachers have abolished the hand-raising idea completely. No doubt that there must be a certain level of maturity in such a class that is simply impossible to attain in the 7th grade for example.

There probably is a common consensus on the need of hand-raising in school, especially in the lower grade levels. However, it is not a nice feeling for student X who has raised his hand for five

minutes to be told that student Y gets to say something, and that the class must move on to the next topic after Y's comment. Student X will put his hand down and will probably feel at least slightly offended, and might express something like an "ach menno" or a "darn it". I believe that this is one of the greatest insults a teacher can give a student, to ignore his or her opinion, especially in classes that are all about the expression and forming of opinions. What is also unfair is shouting an answer into the class while other students raise their hands, although this is different in the way that it is an insult from one student to another.

All of the above may seem exaggerated to some of you, but definitely there is a truth to it, even if it may not be applicable to everyone, as there are students who don't like to raise their hand anyway. However, there are always the few really interested kids in a class who raise their hands but who, at some point, get ignored by their teachers, which will make those students feel bad.

Teachers, please try to be fair: Also let the students who you know will know the answer speak – don't just call on those who don't want to be called on.

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

KYRILL

January 18th, 8:15 am: „An announcement to all JFK students, you may go home today after 6th period due to a hurricane coming towards Berlin in the afternoon.“ An early dismissal: Probably the one thing every student wants to hear on a cold and windy Tuesday morning. Already on the night before we had heard about this horrible storm heading toward Europe. Days before that, the few wind-warnings developed into official hurricane-warnings. On the night of January 19th the German meteorological service declared the storm as the strongest since hurricane Lothar in December 1999.

Hurricane Kyrill crossed almost all of Europe – from Estonia to Romania, from Denmark to Slovenia, from Great Britain to Germany.

A family from Neuhausen wanted to name an anticyclone – a system of

winds that circulate slowly around an area with high atmospheric pressure – after their father, Kyrill, for his 65th birthday. But since anticyclones can only be given female names on uneven years, they decided to name a cyclone – a system of winds rotating inwards to an area of low atmospheric pressure – after him. What they didn't know was that this cyclone was going to turn into a hurricane.

On the 15th of January, the hurricane developed out of a cyclone that started over Newfoundland. The center of the storm crossed Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Sweden. Over the British Islands it reached the first high wind speed of 130 km/h. It reached Europe on the 18th of January and lasted until the 19th. Although hundreds of schools, kindergartens, universities, and undertakings were closed, all in all there were

24 casualties and 34 fatalities. 1 million citizens were without power and dozens of flights were cancelled, streets and highways closed, and rail traffic in parts of Europe completely shut down.

The highest wind speed in Germany was measured at 202 km/h over the Bavarian city of Wendelstein, while the maximum wind speed overall was 225 km/h. The storm crossed Germany quicker than the meteorological service had predicted and caused less damage than expected. Still the costs of the damages caused by the storm range around 8 billion € in Germany only. Even though the storm caused horrible damages all over Europe, Berliners thought of it more as a strong wind than a hurricane.

Theresa Volkmer

All hell would break loose without them!

The other day my semester test presentation was friendly interrupted by a knock on the door. Some man inquired whether my classmates were all present or not. For a second or so I lost my train of thought, but then I recuperated from the disruption and continued in mid-sentence knowing that the man was only helping my dear teachers.

Aren't they a gift from heaven, those friendly men and women who go from room to room, hour after hour for our undoubted benefit? Why, what would our dear tutors do without this enormous help? They would definitely collapse under the workload caused by the absence of their classes! I seriously wonder how on Earth the homeroom teachers managed it to keep track of attendance in the previous decades. Nowadays this seems impossible without the help of these dedicated and friendly people.

Isn't it bliss for the students to lose the few precious seconds of class in which the teacher takes the attendance and the minute of confusion caused by the

knock on the door? Our classes are therefore on average about one minute and twenty seconds shorter! If we have eight classes a day we save about ten minutes in which we would be forced to learn something about trigonometry or Louis the XIV.

The average homeroom teacher would be buried by the work involved in keeping track of whether his or her students are present in all of their classes or not. What does he or she care about the attendance of other teachers' classes anyway? Now the average tutor needs no longer worry about his or her students' health or skipping tendencies unless they directly affect that teacher's class. It's great that our tutors were freed from all this work, now they might even be able to correct our exams and hand in the grades on time, which is all that matters in school.

The average subject teacher is, of course, totally overtaxed by filling out the formerly used absent slips for the small percent of sick and skipping students. Hence, he or she would simply

leave absences unnoticed, which would result in too many zeros or small numbers in the designated column on the report card. This catastrophic scenario must be cauterized. We need the big numbers on the report cards to prove that attendance is indeed taken, since we all know that it is very unlikely that an entire grade level was present every day in a semester. So people had to be hired to check that the teachers actually do mark their students absent. It is most definitely a just cause because there always has to be someone to keep an eye on the people in charge; otherwise total anarchy would break out, which would be simply catastrophic.

The friendly helpers are a gift to our school, and we must all thank the people whom we owe for this kindness, since they check on our teachers, shorten our classes, and always give us something to laugh at, talk or think about.

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

Not another trash article!

How our electric friends pollute our environment

Let's talk about our real best friends, the ones who help you when you're lost, the ones who entertain you when you're bored and the ones who finish all of your work, unless they run out of power: cell phones, laptops, mp3-players, and other digital tools. We use them everyday, and a world without them would be hard to imagine. But, once in a while, even the best gadget ceases to function or becomes outdated by other clever instruments. Fortunately, you don't have to throw them in a regular garbage can, with all the other garbage created by your family. No, manufacturers usually provide digital waste disposal points that allow your former best friends to be professionally dismantled and then... and then what?

What most likely happens is that they embark on a long journey and overcome distances that you wouldn't have dreamt. They are exported to villages in China, India or Kenya – after all, these developing countries NEED advanced technologies! They just have to find some engineers who can

repair these devices that are not fully operative but otherwise good-looking. Almost every electronic item we use will sooner or later fit in under the category "e-waste", or Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE),



Source: sfzr.org

whether it's your two-year-old cell phone, laser printer, TV, or vacuum cleaner. And, it might sound shocking, but these products often contain highly toxic chemicals such as cadmium, lead, tin, mercury, arsenic, manganese, antimony, PCBs, and many more. While

the Chinese engineers are still trying to figure out the possible usage of these e-wastes, the toxic metals and organic contaminants inside our electronic tools begin to slowly emerge and pollute the disposal sites – a paradise where birds sing, children play, farmers grow rice and the underground water system runs freely through the country.

At least we can make sure that our friends will be in good company: e-waste is already a mass product. Every year, up to 50 million tons of e-waste are generated around the world. The EU has banned the use of hazardous chemicals in electronic products, but will Apple be able to recycle more than 70 million iPods that have been sold since 2001? And how many more computers will be dumped on disposal sites now that Windows Vista is on the market?

For more information please visit www.greenmyapple.org.

Eileen Wagner

Opinion

Preventing an African Jihad

Ever since the U.S. started their "war on terrorism" in the Middle East by destroying former governments and leading them into a temporary state of chaos, it seems the Bush administration has found a new playground to test their weapons: in war-torn Somalia. What this entire war really boils down to is the western anti-terror governments (led by the United States and Great Britain) opposing the radical Islamists groupings (such as al-Qaeda). The question is how the people of Somalia are affected by this poten-

their headquarters in Baidoa managed to regain their power through the involvement of foreign powers. Somalia's neighboring country Ethiopia intervened when Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi ordered thousands of troops to enter Somalia. The Islamist's fled the country, most of them heading towards Kenya.

The task of providing a stable government for the Somali people, however, is very far from being reached. The ICU - although radical - managed to bring a sense of security to Somalia during their 6-month reign, and I doubt the newly formed Transitional Federal Government (TFG) can accomplish this feat. The TFG consists of many warlords who actively participated in destroying Somalia during the past 15 years. The civilians have re-armed themselves in a quest to protect their homes and families while the ICU is supposedly preparing their soldiers to wage a guerilla war and the Ethiopian

in 1993 during the incident referred to as "Black Hawk Down".

At this point in time there seems to be no real solution for the problems Somalia is facing. Although the African Union has already stationed 8 000 troops in Somalia and are considering sending in more troops, many problems still lie ahead of the people of Somalia. Thousands have fled the country and are now refugees trying to find their way back home. According to recent news reports 5, 000 troops supported by the ICU and possibly the al-Qaeda are preparing for guerilla war in Mogadishu. The war has caused food shortages and the people are so afraid that they too have been gearing up for a possible civil war. The only question that remains is how far are the western powers, especially the United States, are willing to go to ensure that Somalia doesn't turn into a "terrorist state"? After the proceedings of "Black Hawk Down", it's sure that the U.S. will act with caution because at this point in time nobody truly knows how this Jihad is going to end.

The most likely solution, however, is that just like the atrocities in Rwanda or



tial Jihad. How did the once promising country known as Somalia transform into the new platform to build up a terrorist retreat area?

The current conflict first started six months ago when the former Islamic Courts Union (ICU) forcefully gained control of Mogadishu - Somalia's capital - and, gradually, of the remaining Somali regions. The "government" meanwhile remained in the Baidoa (provincial area), watching in disbelief as the ICU instated numerous new laws. In an attempt to rebuild Somalia after the warlords had tormented the citizens and completely destroyed large areas during their strife for power, the new Islamist "government" disarmed all citizens, banned the widespread consumption of the drug Kat, and, furthermore, closed cinemas, forbade music and television, and lifted roadblocks. These measures, although they seemed drastic, helped the ICU in their struggle for an organized Somalia as the crime rates plummeted and order was temporarily restored.

The "government" that had set up

pian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has already announced his plans to pull out of Somalia, leaving the country in uttermost chaos.

This is where the U.S. plays a role in the further development of Somalia. The U.S. and Great Britain vetoed a resolution of the UN to call for a retreat of Ethiopian troops, a move that wouldn't be in the interest of the Bush administration at all. Although the U.S. State Department lists Somalia's government type as "none", an American AC-130 gunship destroyed a suspected al-Qaeda target located in the south of Somalia and in the process also killed civilians. The fact that the TFG allowed the American attack is startling, considering the fact that warlord Mohammed Aidid is the Deputy Prime Minister of the TFG and also coincidentally the son of Mohammed Farrah Aidid whose militia killed 18 U.S. troops



the crisis in Dafur, this potential African genocide could lead to an implosion in East Africa. I just hope that in the interest of the Somalis it ends fast and with a minimal amount of bloodshed but considering the lack of interest in African problems, all Somalia can do is hope for foreign help but at the same time realize that this crisis will not be over anytime soon.

Victor Boadum

Comments, Replies?

send your opinions and articles to:

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Opinion / Culture

„Es ist nicht deine Schuld, dass die Welt ist, wie sie ist!“

Der Mensch ist gierig, geradezu unersättlich. Er will mehr, viel mehr als ein einzelner zum Leben benötigt.

Leider haben wir das Talent entwickelt, uns Dinge anzueignen, die uns gar nicht zustehen.

Verschwenderisch mit unserer Schulzeit, müssen wir die 52 Staaten der U.S.A. auswendig lernen, wenn wir doch statt dessen anfangen könnten, die Welt mit zu gestalten. Hannibal und seine dressierten Elefanten mögen interessant gewesen sein, doch viel wichtiger wäre es schnellstens unsere unnötigen technischen Spielereien zu verkaufen, den Erlös Greenpeace zu spenden, und in allererster Linie an der Front gegen die Umweltverschmutzung mit zu kämpfen.

Vor zehn Jahren ist die „Erika“ vor der Küste der Bretagne aufgelaufen. Jede Menge Öl verschmutzte den Strand, tötete Tiere. Jetzt wird verhandelt, wer für die Schäden aufzukommen hat. Es scheint sich nur um Geld zu drehen. Bedauerlicherweise scheinen die Menschen nicht aus Fehlern zu lernen, denn es schippert immer noch viel zu viele unsichere Öl-Tanker durch den Ärmelkanal, eine der meist befahrenen Schifffahrtstraßen der Welt.

In Afrika verhungern täglich Kinder, während in Europa Lebensmittel vernichtet werden, um den Preis hoch zu halten.

Es ist unsere Welt!

Welches Recht nehmen sich die Autofirmen heraus, die den CO₂ Ausstoß nicht reduzieren wollen, weil das mit immensen Kosten verbunden ist?

Wieso werden Menschen im Irak entführt, gequält, getötet, die einem anderen Glauben anhängen?

Mit welchem Recht stellen sich diese Menschen über ihresgleichen?

Warum setzen sich Länder, die ihn unterschrieben haben, über den Atomwaffen Sperrvertrag hinweg? Mit welchem Recht entscheiden sie über die Geschichte der Menschheit?

Macht und Geld sind die wichtigsten Faktoren in unserer Gesellschaft. Und die Menschen werden immer gieriger.

„Es ist nicht deine Schuld, dass die Welt ist wie sie ist. Es wär nur deine Schuld, wenn sie so bleibt. Denn jeder, der die Welt nicht ändern will, ihr Todesurteil unterschreibt!“ – die Ärzte.

Was für einen Nutzen hat die Welt für uns, wenn wir sie weiter so kontinuierlich zerstören?

Die grüne Prinzessin

To buy a ticket or to not buy a ticket?

I was recently in the S-Bahn with a friend of mine on our way to the Schwarzes Cafe. We hadn't seen each other in almost a year, so we were having a great time goofing off and chatting about old times. Then all of a sudden, like a cold breeze down the back of your shirt, we heard the all-too familiar "Guten Tag, die Fahrscheine bitte!" Of course neither of us had our train tickets with us. So when the surprisingly masculine-looking "S-Bahn Lady" (you know, the one with the ill-advised facial hair) came marching over to us in her fashionable little blue BVG outfit, we started rummaging through our bags pretending to look for our misplaced tickets, while thinking of some ridiculous excuse to explain why we couldn't find them. Before we had the chance, however, the woman interrupted our frantic search, muttered something like "schon gut", and continued patrolling down the narrow train aisle. Strange. Normally the ticket controllers are so vicious! They make no exceptions: you could be lying on the floor of the train bleeding to death after just being stabbed and robbed and they would still make you show your ticket.

But for some reason, this manly little woman didn't charge us. Was this an once-in-a-lifetime stroke of good luck or was this the beginning of a new era?

An era where train checkers and passengers would live together in peace? According to a recent article in the "Tagesspiegel",

S-Bahn checkers are going to be controlling passengers less frequently and will be more lenient in patrols. Their reason: most people do in fact purchase tickets, so it's an apparent waste of time and money to check!

Even though I am more than thrilled to hear this wonderful news, I can't help but feel sceptical. So I re-read the article from the "Tagesspiegel" and considered the following:

I stroll into the S-Bahn without buying a ticket, sit down and the S-Bahn checkers come marching up to me and demand to see my ticket. Can I then just make up some crazy story like: "I was stranded in Falkensee last night and I had to wait 4 hours in the freezing cold until my train would arrive, so I had to burn my ticket to keep warm," and they will just say "schon gut" and stroll away?

The truth of the matter is that I don't know but I can't afford to risk it. And I wouldn't recommend you doing it either unless you think teasing the S-Bahn checkers is worth 40 euros...

Leonie Schulte

Hamburger Bahnhof

After completing my 10th grade pop-art project, I wanted to find out if any original works of the famous pop art artists I had learned about in art class are located in Berlin. During my search, I stumbled upon a beautiful, white neo-classical building lit up by blue neon lights – the "Hamburger Bahnhof". This modern art museum is just a short



walk away from Berlin's new main train station and is definitely worth seeing. During my recent visit, I was positively surprised to find some great works of art by pop artists such as Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. One of Andy Warhol's most impressive paintings is a huge canvas presenting Mao Zedong's face. A most striking painting by Roy Lichtenstein is one of a landscape in bright colors.

There are also several other notable in-

stallations in the museum, for example, a room solely made of black Plexiglas, or glass shelves with thousands of different pills neatly arranged in rows. The gigantic bookshelf installation called "Volkszählung" ("Census") by Anselm Kiefer leaves an unforgettable image. The immense books on the shelves are made of lead filled with thousands of peas.

Entering this museum, which served as a train station that provided transportation from Berlin to Hamburg in the 19th century, I was immediately confronted with a large golden carpet made of candy wrapped up in golden wrappers. Throughout the building, various installations presented sweets in various colourful wrappings that one was allowed to eat.

This unique museum has some pieces that may be a bit too provocative but all in all, there is a large variety of modern art that includes something for everyone's taste.

Laura Kampf

Culture

Spirit of Fashion

zwischen kitschigen Totenköpfen und 14 cm hohen Lackstiefeln

Die Motive, die im Moment von vielen Modegeschäftsketten gerne auf T-Shirts, Jacken, Blusen oder auch Rücken gedruckt werden, sind zu einem populären Trend aufgestiegen. Man kann sich kleine süßen Totenköpfe, Muffins, Sternchen, Kirschen oder Herzchen gar nicht mehr von den Shoppingmeilen weg denken. Überall promenieren junge Frauen und Mädchen mit gepunkteten Jacken und Schleifchen im Haar auf den Straßen der Städte.

Eine Modemesse stellt diese Motive von Jahr zu Jahr erneut vor. Die *Spirit of Fashion* ist eine Fachmesse für Großhändler, die nach neuen Kollektionen für Undergroundgeschäfte Ausschau halten. Über die Jahre hat sich diese Messe für Fans von Rockabilly, Punk, Gothic, Brit-Pop-Streetwear, viktorianischen Gewänder und neuerdings auch für das umstrittene Emo-Styling etabliert und vergrößert. Neue Labels erhalten neben den alten die Aufmerksamkeit der neugierigen Käufer. Schon im Sommer 2006 hatte die deutsche Hauptstadt das Vergnügen, diese Modemesse „der etwas anderen Art“ willkommen zu heißen. Auch dieses Jahr hatte die Messe vom 26. bis 28. Januar in der Arena Treptow ihre Tore geöffnet. Während Naturbe-

geisterte sich auf der Grünen Woche ihre Freizeit vertrieben, schlendern aufwendig gestylte Mitmenschen durch die glitzernden und funkelnden Reihen der *Spirit of Fashion*.

Kaum in der 5000 qm großen Veranstaltungshalle angekommen, befindet

allerhand Piercingaccessoires. Unter den unbekannten oder neuen Anbietern befinden sich auch bekannte Labels wie zum Beispiel Underground Shoes, T.U.K., Lucky 13, Be Bob A Hula oder Dickies, die ihre neusten Kollektionen vorstellen.



sich der Besucher in einem Meer voller schicker Totenköpfe, Leopardmuster in allen möglichen Farben, Würfel und Schleifchen. Von Ständen mit teils 14 cm hohen Lackstiefeln oder altmodisch viktorianisch verzierte Pumps streift man zum anliegenden Rockabilly Stand mit Pin-up verzierten Artikeln. Gegenüber öffnet sich eine Welt voller handgefertigter Korsetts, Rüschenkleider oder

Pro Messtags bringen zwei Catwalkshows das Flair der luxuriösen und legendären Modenschauen von Gucci, Lagerfeld oder Armani den aufmerksamen Zuschauern nahe, allerdings werden die Kollektionen eher auf eine spaßige, theatralische Art und Weise präsentiert. Mit Glück kann man sogar mit Bandmitgliedern von szenebekannten Bands einen Smalltalk führen, wenn man sie denn unter den anderen auffälligen Geschöpfen überhaupt erkennt.

Doch als Besucher gilt zu berücksichtigen, dass diese Messe hauptsächlich für Großhändler veranstaltet wird. Normale Besucher haben keinen Zutritt, außer man arbeitet in einem der verbreiteten Berliner Szenegeschäfte oder gehört der Presse an.

Vanessa Dietrich

The New Internet Addictions

Myspace, Facebook, Xanga, Hi5, Friendster; we've all heard of these websites. Whether you use them to listen to the new tracks of your favorite band, to post a comment on your elementary school friend's profile, or to check out pictures of your cousin's birthday party, these websites are a predominant trademark of the modern era of the World Wide Web. As of 2005, there are over 300 known social networking websites and the total amount of members of only the 80 most popular websites is already over 630,000,000! So what's so special about these networks, most of which have more members than Spain has citizens?

Well, it all started in 1995, with the creation of the first social networking website, classmates.com. Instead of losing touch with friends and acquaintances due to misplacing contact information or not bothering to make that awkward phone call, let alone put pen on paper and actually write a letter,

classmates.com helped its members to easily find, connect, and keep in touch with their loved ones. Shortly after that, more and more businesses launched their own networks. But it was not until 2003 that social networking was perfected, through the advent of Myspace. Through Myspace, you could not only keep in touch with your friends and family and create your own personal profile, but you could also browse the profiles of over 20,000,000 artists and listen to their brand-new songs or watch their brand-new videos. That is why Myspace has become the 6th most popular website in the entire World Wide Web and now hosts over 130,000,000 members. Facebook, the second fastest growing social networking website, started in 2005, is slowly catching up and has around 14,000,000 members as of 2007. The difference here is that Facebook is more of a people's directory – or yearbook – and specializes in creating networks, of which it

already has 40,000.

Of course, these websites are not as unproblematic and benign as they seem. There has been a lot of criticism lately regarding safety and privacy issues within these networks, as they are mostly open to anyone and everyone searching the web. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that these networks provide uncomplicated and unchallenging ways to keep in touch with friends and acquaintances. These developments in modern communication help us globalize our circle of friends and family, as it is now possible for us to connect with people from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. We can't deny that we're living in a modern age so we can either accept the progress simplifying our daily lives or reminisce to the good, old-fashioned days of stationary sets and postage stamps.

Samira Lindner

Entertainment

Movie Review: Mein Führer Truly The Truest Truth?

Dani Levy told the press that he is braced for a "tsunami of controversy." That was before the premier of his film, the first mainstream German comedy on Hitler, "Mein Führer -The Truly Truest Truth About Adolf Hitler". With poll results showing that 56% of Germans asked, discountenance a humorous approach toward their country's past, the Jewish film producer thought he was breaking a societal taboo. But instead of the anticipated exasperations of shock, critics uttered yawns. The truly truest value of the film is merely the thought it may provoke - let alone because the mustached visage of fascism seems to pop up wherever you go ever since the movie's been out. Of the "kind of laughter that brings knowledge and understanding", as Levy had promised, or much laughter at all, one cannot speak.

"Mein Führer" is set in wartime Germany, when Nazi defeat was within sight. An emotionally frail, motivationally exhausted Hitler (Helge Schneider) is to hold one final, crowning New Year's speech before his people. Propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels, portrayed as the mastermind behind the Hitler regime, has prepared everything from fake city façades to Leni Riefenstahl's camera team to ornament a demolished Berlin in glory. The only thing standing in the way is Hitler's withering psyche. As a desperate last hope, he brings Jewish stage actor Adolf Grünbaum from Sachsenhausen to the "Reichskanzlei" to coach the "Führer". In exchange for the release of his wife and children from the concentration camp, Grünbaum (Ul-

rich Mühe) conducts a series of training sessions, in which he challenges not only the speech delivery, but also the emotional state of the Nazi leader.

A Hitler dressed in yellow slacks down on all fours, obediently following his Jewish mentor's advice, a Hitler in the bath tub with his toy battle ship, a Hitler in pajamas who wanders around many a sleepless nights with his pet dog "Blondi" - those were the few painfully cliché laughs. A Hitler traumatized by childhood beatings - that was the oddly incorporated answer to the "why" the filmmaker who calls himself tired of the demonized image of political tyrants in documentaries, encourages us to ask. A Grünbaum distraught at the sight of his people's biggest enemy, who finds himself sympathizing with the persecutor, adds a story of Holocaust tragedy and deeply humane beliefs. All in all, the film has no apparent direction, is an odd collection of notions that neither appalls viewers nor conveys a legitimate statement.

It is the uneasiness with which one tells the lady at the ticket counter that you came to see, "Um... 'Mein Führer'", the way in which one observes his or her own response to the movie ("Am I laughing? Am I sympathizing? Is my posture relaxed or tense?"), and the immediate wrinkling of the nose that the words "Hitler" and "comedy" used in the same sentence evoke, make the film something to discuss. The Anglophone world has accepted laughing about Hitler since Charlie Chaplin's "The Great Dictator". In fact, Chaplin's 1941 film is considered to have been

important psychologically as the intimidation and fear that the World War II allies faced was weakened by Chaplin's famous humor. Naturally, here in Germany, we have a harder time laughing. Nevertheless, since the 2004 premier of the award-winning "The Downfall", some of this tension seems to have been alleviated. The film was praised for its earnestness and objectivity, its appropriately balanced insightfulness without understating the horrendous guilt of those depicted. It seems that since the "The Downfall", joking references to the "Führer" are becoming increasingly popular among talk show hosts. The question is: is our laughter tentative - a shyly ashamed and suppressed chuckle? Or is it an educated and resolute, conscious decision to express the understanding that while we must never forget what happened and see it as our responsibility, as bearers of such knowledge, to be informed, critical world citizens, we cannot deny ourselves self-confidence or a voice, a voice to mourn and a voice to laugh. As the first generation of Germans that is free of immediate confrontations with guilt, it is especially in our hands with what mindset our country reflects its past and builds its future. The black, red, and gold patriotism of the summer of 2006, "The Downfall", and Dani Levy's "Mein Führer" are all indications of our struggle to find this mindset, in order to regain identity.

Lena Walther

Interview With The Vampire

'I want to die; kill me. Kill me,' I said to the vampire. 'Now I am guilty of murder. I can't live.' He sneered with the impatience of people listening to the obvious lies of others. And then in a flash he fastened on me just as he had on my man. I thrashed against him wildly. I dug my boot into his chest and kicked him as fiercely as I could, his teeth stinging my throat, the fever pounding in my temples. And with a movement of his entire body, much too fast for me to see, he was suddenly standing disdainfully at the foot of the steps. 'I thought you wanted to die, Louis,' he said.

Interview with the Vampire is the first book of the chilling series, *The Vampire*

Chronicles. It came out 1976 and is now counted among one of the top vampire classics along side *Dracula*. It is about a man called Louis who is turned into a vampire and how he copes with everything being a vampire entails. He refuses to drink human blood and together with the vampire girl Claudia tries to murder his own creator, Lestat and then sets out to look for answers, a reason for existing. Their search brings them to the vampire Armand and his Theatre of Vampires, vampires that pretend to be humans pretending to be vampires, on stage. Here Claudia is killed and Louis realizes that Armand cannot help him. Louis tells the entire story 200 years later, to a young journalist, who writes

a book about it, called "Interview with the Vampire".

In 1994 the movie version of this book came out, starring Brad Pitt as Louis, Tom Cruise as Lestat, the mysterious vampire hero with a lot more lurking behind his cocky appearance than one would think, Kirsten Dunst as Claudia, the child vampire, Antonio Banderas as Armand, the 400-year-old leader of the 'Theatre of Vampires', and Christian Slater as the mortal interviewing Louis. The movie is now over 13 years old, making our stars considerably younger, which is always fun to see. But as usual the book and the movie can hardly be compared, as the plot of the novel is far too convoluted for a normal-length

Vampire... continued to page 9

Entertainment

Vampire... *continued from page 8*

movie. Neil Jordan (the director) managed to stay with the general plot of the story, but striped it of most of its deeper, sensuous, and speculative elements, such as the questioning of God and the Devil, the boundaries between good and evil, and the vampiric conception of love. Seeing that vampires are all exceptionally beautiful, they tend to fall in love with one another easily, and they can love more than one person and one gender at once. Louis for example, hates and loves Lestat: he hates him for turning him into a 'monster', and yet he can't really live without him. He also loves the girl Claudia whom he and Lestat 'save' from death and turn her into a vampire who will forever be trapped in the body of a 5-year-old. Louis loves her not only as a daughter, but also as a lover, but he still turns around and falls in love with the mysterious Armand, who seems to be the answer to his prayers, but then turns out to be just as, if not more lost than he is.

Anne Rice has a very sarcastic and dark sense of humor that is especially strong in the character of Lestat, who lightens the mood of the sometimes, too philosophical triads of the book, which at times get a little boring and make the reader lose sight of the actual plot of the book.

The Vampire Chronicles are for the most part centered around Lestat and not Louis as one would think after reading the first book. Beginning with the *Interview with the Vampire*, the series continues with *The Vampire Lestat*, in which Lestat is now a rock star and

decides he wants to write down his story as well. The story follows Lestat through his life before, during, and after he met Louis, and introduces another important character to the series, Marius, one of the 'old ones', vampires



who are over a thousand years old.

The third book is the one that answers everything that Louis was searching for in the first book and had already given up hope of ever finding; where do vampires come from? Take a journey back to a time before ancient Egypt and find out that vampires are nothing but a big tragic accident.

The fourth book addresses another one

of the typical things associated with vampires, their wish to become human again. In *The Tale of the Body Thief*, you can read how Lestat finds out how to get back a human body, and then find it to be quite disgusting to be human again.

The fifth book is definitely the most speculative of them all. It tells the story of Lestat and how he meets the devil, or as he calls himself, Memnoch, hence the title, *Memnoch the Devil*. This book goes on to explain the creation of the earth, and the relationship between God and the Devil, it even goes so far as to let Lestat meet Jesus Christ.

The sixth and apparently last book, *The Vampire Armand*, seems to take a different turn entirely and finally explains Armand's background, and that of his maker, Marius, who lived 600 years ago in Venice. But in reality it continues where the last book left off, wonderfully displaying Anne Rice's talent at jumping back and forth in time to explain the happenings of the plot.

All in all Anne Rice's books are nothing for people who can't stand blood, or who are looking for stories of mindless killing and little or no real emotional explanation. But those who like to read emotional turmoil, love vampires, and also need their share of action, might find their next great passion lurking behind these pages.

Joanna O'Neill

Armageddon

Farsane Tabataba-Vakili

When rats rally through the roads,
And insects swarm the inconspicuous air,
The world must have become hell's lair,
For, over there, evil bodes.

Who decides when the end hath come?
Dost mankind hath a choice, to live or die?
I dare assume that it is all a lie.
In the atramentous night we stand, numb.

The fires of hell swarm the vast land,
All hope from this world is forever banned.
The gauges of death hath opened for us,
Through them seeps red-hot lava like puss.

Armageddon hath come upon humanity,
Nevermore shall this world regain its long-lost sanity.

Cynicism Lost

Ilsa Salt

Once I thought,
you could succeed,
by arrogance,
and pushy greed.

But now my cynic self
is gone,
my views on life and men
were wrong.

I search and search
for sanity,
I have a faith-
Humanity.

Entertainment

Ségo vs. Sarko

Die Franzosen können einem echt Leid tun. Was sich zurzeit in dem Land, das neben Deutschland liegt, nicht aber neben Polen, abspielt, ist besorgniserregend. Nein, weder die Froschschonkel noch die Schnecken rebellieren, und auch die Jugendlichen aus den Vororten der großen Städte haben die Straßenschlachten gegen die Polizei weitestgehend aufgegeben. Nein, die Politiker selber machen Rambazamba. Anlässlich der Wahl des Präsidenten der Französischen Republik, vielleicht auch der Präsidentin, haben sich die Politiker Frankreichs dazu entschieden, für dieses Amt zu kandidieren. Und nein, das ist nicht nur politisches Säbelraseln, denn der französische Präsident ist in etwa das, was in Deutschland der

Kanzler, pardon, die Kanzlerin ist, und damit meine ich nicht hässlich. Das Problem, vor welches viele Franzosen sich nun gestellt sehen, ist die Frage: Wen wähle ich? Denn außer der Kandidatin der Sozialistischen Partei (PS), Ségolène Royal, hat vor allem der Kandidat der konservativen Partei (UMP), Nicolas Sarkozy, gute Chancen, den zweiten Wahlgang zu erreichen. Im ersten Wahlgang werden zwei Kandidaten für den zweiten Wahlgang ermittelt, quasi eine Stichwahl. Und sogar Jean-Marie Le Pen, Kandidat des Rechtsradikalen Front National hat gewisse Chancen auf die Stichwahl. Zumindest ist klar, wen die Franzosen nicht wählen werden, wer jedoch in der Gunst der Wähler am höchsten steht ist schwer zu sagen. Den

Umfragen zufolge liegt Nicolas Sarkozy derzeit vorne, dicht gefolgt von Ségolène Royal. Und das obwohl ausgerechnet Sarkozy sich vergangenen Sommer nicht nur Freunde gemacht hat, als er, während der Straßenschlachten zwischen der Polizei und den Jugendlichen, versprach, Frankreich von diesem Abschaum zu befreien. Die logische Alternative, Royal, glänzt mit einem sehr teuren Programm und vielen nur halbfertigen Ideen. Wer also soll der neue Präsident der Französischen Republik werden? Der Rechtskonservative Sarkozy, die Sozialistin Royal, oder der Rechtsradikale Le Pen? Franzose will ich zurzeit nicht sein.

Dies Irae

Sudokus!!

He-in Cheong

Easy Sudoku

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

Hard Sudoku

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

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

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