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Hilltopics Staff

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HILLTOPICS

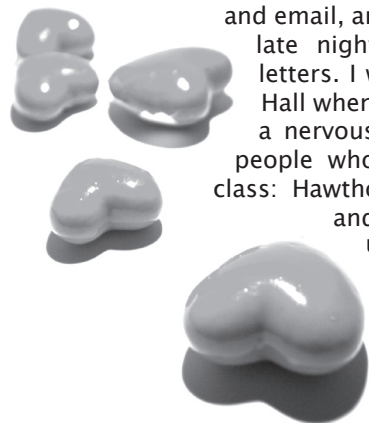
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Aren't we supposed to be young and carefree? So where are all the people falling in love?

by Michael Hogenmiller

Where's everyone's restlessness? Where's their need for interaction with someone else, to be silly and goofy, random and ridiculous? Here, it's too much palm-pilot and email, and not enough Waffle House, late night walks, and hand-written letters. I want to walk through Dallas Hall when class lets out, and overhear a nervous conversation between two people who just came out of English class: Hawthorne and the Scarlet Letter and how they really wish they understood it better—maybe over a coffee at the Starbucks down the street?



Why does it seem like those things that were once classic—hand holding, first kisses, nervous

dates, genuine crushes—are so scarce here at SMU?

I want girls making eyes at boys across the room in English class, guys offering to pick up the coffee of the cute girl in front of them in line at Java City, and strangers sharing tables in the library. Too often, we have these acquaintances whom we see on a regular basis, even flirt with and talk about to our friends, but whom we never say anything honest too. It's small-talk here, witty comment there, a hint at something personal that we think might sound like a compliment, and never a "Hey, what are you up to this afternoon?"

There needs to be more spontaneity, more chance, more instances where people drop the social stigma about being friendly to strangers and start taking notice of the people around them. Too often, we never act on the feelings that we have, whether it's a goofy attraction to a stranger, something more meaningful with a friend, or a long-harbored, full-blown, out-of-control, word-muddling, feet-staring,

see **LOVE** on page 3

Student immigration protests all over metroplex highlight important problems with US policy

by Anjolie Patel

This past Monday, I was driving home from work when traffic came to a stop. As it slowly began to move, I saw police cars strategically placed all within a mile of a Dallas high school. My first thoughts immediately turned to a school bombing or some other tragic occurrence, but as I drove past the school I passed officers who were anxious to contain students, rather than help evacuate them. Looking over my shoulder I saw a large gathering of mostly Hispanic students, with one student holding a sign that read "Illegal Alien."

I had to wait until I reached home to figure out what was going on. For the life of me, I couldn't find it on the radio or on the 80 channels of television I have. Finally I went online, and found several stories about Hispanic students all over the Metroplex walking out of school and protesting H.R. - 4437, a bill concerning immigration and the tightening of the border. The school I passed had been put on lockdown, while several schools across Dallas had students walk out. It is estimated that on Monday alone, over 4000 students

protested in Dallas. Among its provisions, the bill proposes to construct a 700 mile security fence and make it a felony for anyone who assists an illegal alien. In addition, it would change the illegal presence of an immigrant from a civil violation in the US to a federal crime, which would not only classify over 11 million men and women as felons, but also would include children.

I am an immigrant. Mind you, a legal one, but do you know how hard it is to become a part of the United States? A land founded on immigrants? If you are not white and not immigrating from Canada or a European country, it is hard to even obtain a visa and/or green card. With the frustration I feel in trying to become an American citizen, I cannot even begin to imagine what the experience is like to be an illegal alien in America, a country which thrives off of the exploitation of the immigrant population, be it legal or illegal. Now, if it were easier to obtain citizenship for those who legitimately

see **PROTESTERS** on page 3

INSIDE this issue

Sport: We all know it's there, but no one wants to see it. James Longhofer dives into the dark side of college sports, in light of the recent scandal in Durham, page 2.

Life: Looking to change things up this Spring? Nothing can change your outlook like a new haircut—if you're brave enough to get one, page 4.

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Duke lacrosse team scandal exposes the problem with the seedy underbelly of college sports

by James Longhofer

I've always had mixed feelings about college sports. Don't get me wrong: I love watching college sports more than the pros, but my conscience always nags me about the dark, seamy side of many college programs.

College sports seems more pure to me because the players aren't competing for millions of dollars (instead they are competing for the chance to make millions of dollars). College players seem to be far more accessible than pro players, and college games have just the right number of mistakes and boneheaded plays to remind everyone that these guys are still learning the game. However, there is a sordid part of college sports too. A lot of programs are, for lack of a better word, dirty. (Paging Louisville basketball.) The role of wealthy boosters in selecting coaches and luring players to programs adds a taint to the idea of the "student athlete." Let's not forget the sorry academics of many college athletes: take a look the graduation rates of many top programs and Vince Young's performance on the Wonderlic test. Then there are the players who are nothing more than classless thugs like Marcus Vick whose behavior on and off the field is inexcusable.

The reason I bring up my mixed feelings about college sports is that a revolting story has popped up in

the sports world. About two weeks ago, the Duke Lacrosse team (ranked second in the nation, not that it matters) had a party at a house rented out to the three team captains where an exotic dancer was allegedly gang-raped. According to the victim's statement, she first left after the partygoers starting acting aggressively, but was coaxed back inside after one of men came outside and apologized for the behavior. After she went back inside, she was pulled into a bathroom and assaulted. These allegations have ignited a firestorm in Durham, because there is also a racial aspect to this case. The victim is black and her alleged attackers are white and used racial slurs during the assault.

This story is still developing and there is an investigation into the veracity of the victim's claims, but this case has shown some serious problems at Duke and in college sports. First, immediately after the incident, the players of the lacrosse team did not cooperate with the investigation and stonewalled officials. It was only after significant pressure was placed on the team that 46 players provided DNA samples. Second, Duke did not decide to suspend the team's season until almost two weeks after the incident, and right after the incident, the coach said that the team's main focus was their next game

against Georgetown. Finally, this entire case has shown that there is a racial divide in Duke that needs to be addressed no matter what.

This ugly incident shows that all college sports programs need to pay better attention to their players. These programs need to hold players accountable for their behavior in the classroom and off campus. The NCAA trumpets the concept of the "student athlete," but it's becoming clear that the athlete part is the only thing that people care about. It's not enough for Duke to cancel its team's season after an incident like this; instead the coach and the athletic director should be working to ensure that things like this don't happen in the first place and that bad behavior will cause players to lose their scholarships. The fact of the matter is that college athletes across the nation are not being held accountable for their actions, and the NCAA needs to send a clear message to university presidents and athletic directors that they need to clean house.

James Longhofer is a sophomore political science, economics, and public policy major.



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Protesters at Dallas-area schools bemoan failing immigration policy continued from page 1

deserve it, then certain "crackdowns" might be justified, but from the perspective of an immigrant, these new regulations are simply a manner of legalizing the exploitation of immigrants. For instance, who does the government really expect to build a fence between Mexico and the United States? I



can assure you, the majority of workers will not be white American citizens.

The response to the bill has been surprising, within Congress and without, especially in the mobilization of traditionally non-participatory Hispanic groups. It is an issue that

has not only evoked reaction from adults but also students. I was surprised at how quickly Hispanic students were able to organize these protests and wondered at how this was carried out when I had heard nothing about it. I quickly looked at MySpace, and sure enough, found postings on people's sites. I then asked some of my friends, and they said they had received fliers, emails, and text messages. As a result, the turnout in students was exceptional. However, even after the protests took place on Monday and Tuesday, I still had trouble following the issue. Where was it in the media? The reluctance to bring to light this issue and publicize it within the Dallas media is an attempt to preserve the status quo. By acknowledging the extent of the situation, Dallas would also have to acknowledge the changing tides of city, as the minority Democrat vote has the power to sway Dallas County in its favor. Furthermore, the protests have the ability to mobilize other Dallas minority populations as they recognize the strength of their vote, and so by containing the situation, politicians hope to keep it a moot issue.

In congress, the House version of the bill passed in December; however, it is facing greater difficulty in Senate, as it was turned down in its current form in the subcommittee. While Democrats solidly oppose the bill, the Republicans are split, as they realize the potential consequences of alienating Hispanic immigrants in America.

So how did the student protestors fair? Schools are using the opportunity to educate the students on immigration issues and the legislative process, as well as how to effectively make their voices heard without skipping school. Nevertheless, most students face discipline of some sort, ranging from unexcused absences, to in-school suspension and prohibition from certain school activities, such as prom. This has not deterred students from continuing the fight, as many students will participate with the Hispanic community this Sunday, March 9th, in an organized rally and march for their rights.

Anjulie Patel is an international studies, public policy, and Spanish major.

Love doesn't seem to be in bloom, despite favorable weather on Hilltop continued from page 1

sweaty-palmed and all-clammed-up serious crush on someone who's been on our minds for way longer than we'd like to admit.

The degree doesn't matter; it's the fact that whatever it is, it's there for a reason, and every time you ignore it, every time you rationalize it away or convince yourself that you're too busy/too young/too old/too hurt/too cool, that voice grows fainter, until you no longer hear yourself telling you who the people are around you that have the potential to mix up your life.

There comes a time when staying up until 4 a.m. with someone who was a total stranger hours earlier sounds like the only thing you want to do right now and you wish they'd just walk in the room, take your hand, lead you out and off into something long and meaningful, comfortable and completely foreign.

It's not like you'll drop out of school and disappear forever. You might be tired the next day, a little out of it, head-spinning from amazing conversation and the coffee you slammed on your way to your 9 a.m. You might even miss class. But you know what? It's completely worth it. It's what reminds us that we're alive, that each day when we wake up there's an element of randomness, the possibility of something life changing, of an unpredictable chance that we can't account for. It's the urge to stand up on the table in the middle of class and walk across it, to dive off of the balcony in McFarlin auditorium just because it's so high and foreign and physically intimidating, or to get in your car when it's a warm night outside, roll down your windows, and just drive. It's the way you check your email and your cell phone before you go to bed, just to see if there's anyone else out there who doesn't want to let go of today quite yet. It's the way you can't go to bed on certain nights, why you stay up late for no reason, when you haven't done enough living yet that day to justify going to sleep.

It's what is lacking around here at SMU, that crazy whim that young people can afford to jump on now and again.

Micahel Hogenmiller is a senior political science and music major.

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A new haircut can do more than change your look; it can change your whole outlook

by Amanda Wall

A haircut is a powerful thing. As most women will tell you, haircuts can be traumatic. Haircuts can be spiritual. Haircuts can be life-changing. I asked my friends what they thought of haircuts, and as it turns out, they thought quite a lot.

Haircuts, one person told me, are like therapy. They're like massages: happy and cathartic. "I used to get two haircuts a month in high school because I was so stressed out," she said. Another girl said, "Before, whenever, I would get a haircut, I'd get depressed. But then I found my current stylist, and she makes me happy."

My last haircut was a test of will. I wasn't sure I liked what the stylist was doing, but I felt like I had to see it through to the end, to give it a shot. She, I was sure, had learned to layer hair in the 1960s. When she got done, I looked like Farrah Fawcett—feathery and huge. I left with a headache, because I didn't want to tell her I was tender-headed. But I also left feeling powerful, like I had survived an ordeal.

This feeling is not unusual: I heard story after story about haircuts of survival: after graduating, after breaking up, before breaking up. A haircut is a new beginning. Hell, a haircut can change the shape of your head; you might as well be a new person. In the words of one girl, "My ex-boyfriend didn't want me to have short hair, and I cut off about ten inches. Got rid of him." Guys—lucky bastards—get to have haircuts more often. Their haircuts are also cheaper. But is there anything better than running your fingers over that soft and spiky newly-shorn head? I think not.

And it's not just haircuts: we have a whole culture of hair. Hair, I am sure you know, can communicate. There is an entire language of flirtation, of suggestion, of subtle intimacy attached to the wonders of hair. An improvised bun with a pen through the middle might say, "I'm working. Go away." Free-falling tresses might say, "How 'bout it?" There are hair nouns: highlights, trims, washes, layers, bangs, and

ponytails. There are hair adjectives: choppy, chunky, sleek, straight, curly, fluffy, feathered, wavy, pixie, soft, smooth, and clipped. Hair can even make an action out of an object: ever get your hair razored?

To top it all, hair can inspire political statements. What did Yankee Doodle do? "Stuck a feather in his hat and called it macaroni." A macaroni was an extremely elaborate Italian hairstyle that was enormously popular for ladies in London back in the 18th century. Gals would spend hours having ships of the line or birds' nests constructed on the tops of their heads, hairstyles that required wooden supports braced on their shoulders to hold them up. So when British soldiers sneered at the soon-to-be rebels of the American colonial militia and dismissively called them "doodles"—basically first-class idiots—the colonialists, in true American style, made a song about it and insulted the Brits right back: they made fun of their women's hair. If that's not an insult, I don't know what is.

Amanda Wall is a sophomore English, Spanish and women's studies major.




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