



**Tony
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Like a meteor, life flashes by

There I was, tired as a dog and ready to call it quits, when a bolt of flaming rock flashed across the sky. Like the glowing embers of a spacefaring cigarette, the fiery ashes of the Leonid Meteor Shower were short-lived, but for a brief moment – what a sight!

This stargazing occasion happened four or five years ago, when I still had the energy to stay out late and the time to waste. But was it such a waste to catch glimpses of astronomic flurries? Was it worth the wind chill and dark silence going atop Mission Peak to get a better look at the sky? You bet.

I mention this half-a-decade-old incident only because recently, my youthful enthusiasm and childish wonder have slowly returned. Busy as a chicken with my head cut off, the pressures of school, work and family have wreaked havoc with my imagination, and nary a peep of creativity was heard.

But since I decreased my units, surrendered my editor-in-chief position and found a new job, I have been able to have significant, coherent conversations with my friends. This spark of communications has set off a wildfire in my mind, jumping from the steppes of complacent thinking to the jungles of uncharted thought and ideas.

To not challenge one's assumptions, or continually push the personality/identity envelope is to remain stagnant, still and stupid. No one is into disco anymore, nor do people pretend to be "grunge."

When you're a kid, your only goal is to find the cookie jar or get the best crayons. When you're in junior high, you just want to talk on the phone and play video games. In the future, assuming you're not in prison or dead, most people want to be happily married and well paid.

Sadly, you don't always get Forest Green, your own cell phone or the corner office. Life would be disappointing if we expect to achieve all our goals. No matter how much we study, if we flunk a test, there's nothing we can do to pass the class. Yet we still "float on" in life; how is that possible?

Back to the stars, you'll recall that it's pretty hard to count them all. A couple trillion, last I heard from NASA, with "stellar nurseries" in the Milky Way spitting out new stars left and right. Even our oft-maligned brain cells, whose neurons seem easy to kill (ask any alcoholic or boxer), have been shown to regenerate, given time.

The billions of people on earth are as temporary as that shooting star I saw, but we have one trait that those meteorites do not: the ability to change and grow as we streak across earth's sky.

Now, whenever I gaze up at the starry night, I think about how boundless the horizons are for me. At least, until dawn.

Condom handout is part of Sexual Responsibility Week

By **TAHSIN KHAN**
Staff writer

Sexual Responsibility Week was celebrated at Ohlone Feb. 7-14, featuring distribution of sexual information and condoms in the Quad on Feb. 8, 10, 11 and 14, plus a discussion about sex on Feb. 8.

Led by Rosemary O'Neill, head of mental health services at the Student Health Center, "Let's Talk About Sex" was held from noon until 1 p.m.

On St. Valentine's Day, Tri-City Health Center workers at the Sexual Responsibility table in the Quad handed out gift packets, which included a wallet, pencil, stickers and condoms. There was also informative literature and candy roses.

Volunteer workers at the table said they were promoting "The Two R's," which they want you to remember in a sexual relationship, responsibility and respect.

Responsibility is so you use a condom to protect yourself from STDs, HIV or AIDS. In addition, respect is about understanding someone else's values about sexuality.

Sexual Responsibility Week was a joint project sponsored by the Tri-City Health Center and Ohlone College. The program cost about \$300 this year.

Students have ready access to help with birth control, sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy tests at the Student Health Services, located in Building 16 on the Fremont campus.

Free and confidential testing for HIV is available at the center Tues-



Photo by Shari Wargo

Matt Martinez, Health Educator for the Student Health Center, left, talks to student Shanti Charan, right, about the goodie bag she received during Sexual Responsibility Week.

days from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and no appointment is necessary. Results are available in two weeks and no needles are used. For more information, call (510) 659-6258.

Sexual Responsibility Week was

first held on campus five years ago by the Student Health Center.

At the clinic, you can also share and talk about your feelings, thoughts and values. You can also learn about safe sex and birth control.



**Jessica
Losee**

Bring back Janet Jackson

What is the world coming to today when you are supposedly entertained by watching Paul McCartney sing a few songs during the Super Bowl?

There were no fancy pyrotechnics, no flashy dancers in underwear; in fact, there was nothing very spectacular about it at all. Don't get me wrong, I love the Beatles and Sir McCartney, but I need to see a halftime show that gives me a bang for the time that I'm going to be wasting watching it.

If I had TiVo at the last Super Bowl, you could have bet that I would have been instant-replaying Janet Jackson's nipple falling out of her costume and Justin Timberlake's jaw dropping to field-level. It's hardly that I'm obsessed with seeing famous people's nipples; it's that like everyone else, I love the shock factor.

Sex and football, it's a godly mix, as many guys will agree. We have left the time when dancing bears were all we needed to be entertained. Cindy Crawford drinking a Pepsi is appropriate to satiate some of our desire for commercial sex, but what about our shock factor? To shock us, TV corporations have to go to the farthest lengths, such as having Justin Timberlake strip part of Janet Jackson's bustier off while singing in front of thousands of people. It works, too.

That is all we live for. The next surprise coming around the corner is all we want. We strive to see nipples fall out, to see one guy beat up another guy during a baseball game, to see men bare-chested and painted as if going to war. Not only do we live to see sex and violence, but we practically center our lives around seeing people get embarrassed and put to the test.

That's why we have reality-TV. Americans watch reality TV shows that range from a rich guy hiring and firing people, to people dating and marrying, to surviving on an island by eating rats.

Why the obsession? With humans living at the speed of light, corporations must be fighting to keep our attention spans for more than the 6 seconds it takes to imprint on our minds the product from some commercial during prime-time.

Whatever happened to the classic way of watching TV while the family gathered around the single console (not fighting over the remote) and spending perhaps a couple hours on a show? The non-nude, family entertainment was just not enough, I guess.

As for the next Super Bowl, I would recommend having celebrity gladiators fight to the death. Or, better yet, just jolt the whole audience in their seats with a few hundred volts. That may shock us enough. Barely.

Tsunami benefit



Photo by Shari Wargo

Viet Nguyen, cabinet adviser for Asian Pacific American Student Association, enjoys one of the snacks they sold in the Quad on Monday, as well as tee shirts for \$10 to raise money for tsunami victims.

Forensics team brings home awards

The Ohlone College forensics team brought back three awards from the Fall Championship tournament at California State University, Long Beach, back in December.

There were 32 schools competing, including Pepperdine, CSULB, and other four-year schools.

In January competed in the Diablo Valley College speech tournament, and brought back four more individual awards.

Tony Yang won 4th place in Informative Speaking at Diablo Valley College and received a 4th place award in Extemporaneous Speaking at Long Beach.

Joyce Chuang came home with 3rd place in Informative Speaking and 3rd place in Speech to Entertain from Diablo Valley College.

Cara Cuison won 3rd place in Oral Interpretation.

Chase Ramirez won 3rd place in Poetry Interpretation and 4th place in Impromptu Speaking at Long Beach.

You can see the forensics team in action on March 30, in an exhibition before traveling to the National Championship tournament in Philadelphia.



New look for the nation's capitol

By **AMAN MEHRZAI**
News editor

Going to Washington DC brought back memories of when I grew up there.

The city has changed from a place of poverty and homelessness that used to be visible all along 14th Street to a place where "big money" is now apparent in the cars people drive, and the new marble buildings and infrastructure being built all around.

Although some of the homeless could still be seen roaming around, the city's character has greatly improved from its previous status of shady streets, metaphoric to the shady politics of the time.

Although Bush's administration is debatable at best, some would feel that his straightforwardness is a "new" change from old-style politics; hence the metaphoric image of the newly improved, clean (and rich) city. Politics, along with politics and more politics, is found in every part of the city, including advertisements and food.

The mood of Washington has changed too. During Clinton's era, Washington's late night jazz bars and blues clubs were vibrant. Now, the city's new marble structures show off its shine as a city of riches and "bling-bling."

The journalism conference my two colleagues and I attended last week was held in Washington D.C.'s Sheraton Four Points Hotel. Outside the hotel were two newspaper stands: *The Washington Post* and *The Washington Times*, the former stand being blue and the latter being red.

Various contradictory viewpoints could also be seen during the conference among the many young journalist of the future. At one point, some journalists walked out on a speaker who touched on controversial issues. We only later realized that the conference was sponsored by The Fund for American Studies, a slightly partisan organization with guest speakers such as Kevin Kellems, an assistant to Vice President Dick Cheney.

Kellems also formerly prepared speeches for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. Nevertheless, the conference was enlightening, fruitful and educational with other various speakers who more than made up for some bias presented.

The most pleasurable experience I had was meeting people who may well be the future journalists of the world.

Seeing folks from Africa, South America, North America, Europe and Asia made me realize that the future tasks of informing truth not only to the electorate of America, but to the citizens of the world lay in our hands.



Photos by Tony C. Yang

Clockwise, from top left, The Washington Monument, The Supreme Court. Center right, Ohlone "Monitor" News Editor Aman Mehrzai, right, with a fellow journalist. Bottom right, panel discussion with students. Bottom left, Panelists Stephen Henderson with David Hoppe on his right discussing Supreme Court issues.

Ohlone students in Washington

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essential for understanding news and complex ideas. Along with briefings on current political hot potatoes, this idea of responsible journalism was presented in panel after panel.

Overall, the Ohlone delegates learned the importance of ethics, and as Mary Lynn Jones- online editor of "The Hill" - said, "Beware of universal truths. If the truth is unclear, find a fresh perspective."

The Ohlone editors also learned tricks of the trade, to always carry the following journalistic essentials: Paper, pen, press pass, cell phone and a pencil (in case the pen runs

out of ink).

Knight-Ridder National Correspondent Stephen Henderson said, "Always be ready to interview."

One of the delegates' favorite panels was "Covering the 109th Congress." Reporters told them about how they must wait hours for a senator to emerge from closed-door committees- then follow the politicians down the halls to ask just one question.

In an interview with Representative Pete Stark (D-13), the congressman said it was vital for young people to understand politics and journalism. He said, "It's far more

important to them. I don't need scholarships. I've got good health insurance- many young people don't." He urges students to get involved, and to stay abreast on current events, even if it's through bloggers.

Like the Internet, parts of the conference were one-sided. "I felt like I was at a political rally," said Mehrzai. "But it's all good." It seems even a bit of politics is better than none.

Other aspects of the conference were better received: "I thoroughly enjoyed Washington D.C. because I had the chance to explore our country's heritage," said Adams.

