



Culture Pirate

By OMER
AHMED
News editor

Rooting for the underdog

Watching an underdog fight always makes me want to cheer but the fight by those being sued for illegally downloading music has been so unbalanced that it has been hard to get excited about. After all, David didn't have to pay \$10,000 for each stone he threw at Goliath.

The current tactics of the Record Industry Association of America are made specifically to intimidate the people they sue and ensure that they cannot fight back. The case of Cassi Hunt is one good example. An MIT undergrad, she was sued by the RIAA for downloading 272 songs off the i2hub peer-to-peer network. Earlier this year, she received a legal notice stating that she was being sold but that the RIAA was willing to settle for a reduced fee of \$3,750. Great deal... if you have \$3,750 lying about to avoid a costly legal battle.

Hunt called the RIAA representative to negotiate her settlement but was told that the RIAA doesn't negotiate. When she tried to explain her situation as college student who was short on funds, the representative on the phone told her, "The RIAA has been known to suggest that students drop out of college or go to community college in order to be able to afford settlements." At this point, she has resorted to collecting donations on-line to help her pay off her settlement.

The RIAA has sued many students like Hunt, in addition to a few instructors, single mothers, pre-teens, a dead man and, strangely enough, two people who didn't even own computers. They seem to be waging a legal blitzkrieg with mass lawsuits, indiscriminate targeting and no possibility of negotiation.

Recently, the fight has started to become a bit fairer. When you fight so many Davids, chances are you are going run across one with a rocket launcher instead of a slingshot. Marie Lindor, one of the computer-less people sued for an impossible crime, has begun to use the defense that the RIAA lawsuits are unconstitutionally damaging and her judge has allowed said defense.

The basics of it are that the fee the RIAA wants is not fair but made to harshly punish defendants. They charge \$750 per song if those sued to not accept the settlement but the average song cost 99¢ online.

More than just a slight discrepancy that is.

However, one tiny legal win doesn't fix the situation. The fight is still extremely unbalanced. At the moment, the underdog still has to pay \$750 for every \$1 of merchandise and the RIAA is just as aggressive as ever but the recent win, along with a few earlier ones, do create hope. This tiny bit hope makes it much easier to root for the underdog.

Ohlone welcomes holiday shopping

By FRANKIE ADDIAGO
Staff writer

Ohlone College held its annual Holiday Boutique on Wednesday. As usual, the sale took place inside the cafeteria and lasted from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. On hand, merchants sold their arts and crafts to the students of Ohlone.

Almost all the vendors at the Holiday Boutique were veterans of the monthly Flea Market at Ohlone.

And it was through this program that they heard about the sale. "We sell at the Flea Market [and] we got a flyer," said Jim Walker, who sold jewelry and a variety of other trinkets. "In addition, we sell a lot of pottery. We didn't bring it here," he said.

Business at the Flea Market has been fairly solid, although some might say it got off to a slow start. "It's been okay," said Michael Yang, whose inventory ranged

from bracelets to baseball cards, "I would expect it to pick up right about lunch time."

The boutique focused largely on jewelry. One of the biggest outfits at the boutique was a home-based company called Cookie Lee. "It's basically fashion, [and] jewelry," said representative Carol Jackson. Not only does her company also set up at the Ohlone flea market and other small gatherings, but she displayed a catalogue on her table.

This catalogue can be found on www.cookielee.com

One of the more unique booths belonged to Jenifer Kirsch, who specialized in her own line of t-shirts. "I draw and print my own shirts," she said, "being self-employed rocks." Kirsch said that she learned how to start her own company from a video she purchased on Craig's List. For more information or to see Kirsch's shirt designs, visit www.juror2.net.

Ohlone student tells tales of Africa

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rate is only upwards of 6 percent - but rising.

Still, the threat of AIDS was rarely mentioned in the conservative village culture, said Pasternak. Often, the mounting deaths would be attributed to more acceptable causes, such as pneumonia or tuberculosis.

The Peace Corps was established in 1961 following then-senator John F. Kennedy's call to Americans to "serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries." Today, its 7,810 volunteers provide 71 countries with everything from education to community development to information technology, according to www.peacecorps.gov. Its slogan, "the toughest job you'll ever love," was one Pasternak felt was apt.

"It was challenging, it was exciting, it was an adventure," said Pasternak, who became interested in the Peace Corps in high school because she wanted to not only travel to other countries but also "become part of their culture and language."

Pasternak began her Peace Corps training with a homestay family about 70 miles inland in the Uluguru mountain range in Tanzania. In December, she moved to a small, unfurnished one-room house in Nanguruwe, a tiny village in the Mtwara region of Tanzania, without electricity, running water or paved roads. Luckily, she said, the villagers were welcoming, providing furniture, a bed, food and gifts.

Still, there was a bit of a culture shock when she first entered the village. "I didn't expect the poverty, the lack of infrastructure [such as public transit]," said Pasternak. Everywhere, she said, there was chaos - children playing on the street, many people packed into one small place, and plenty of noise.

A week after arriving, Pasternak began teaching HIV/AIDS prevention at the high school. "I'm teaching a subject that I'm only recently slightly familiar with, in a foreign African language that I just started learning 3 months ago, to people that I don't know or understand," wrote Pasternak. "The Peace Corps really stretches your limits."

Between teaching, Pasternak would take a bus down to the larger city of Mtwara, where she would buy food, send emails back home and generally escape the village. The public transportation always proved to be interesting, never mind chaotic. For example, there was a fairly wide window of time in which the bus might come, so

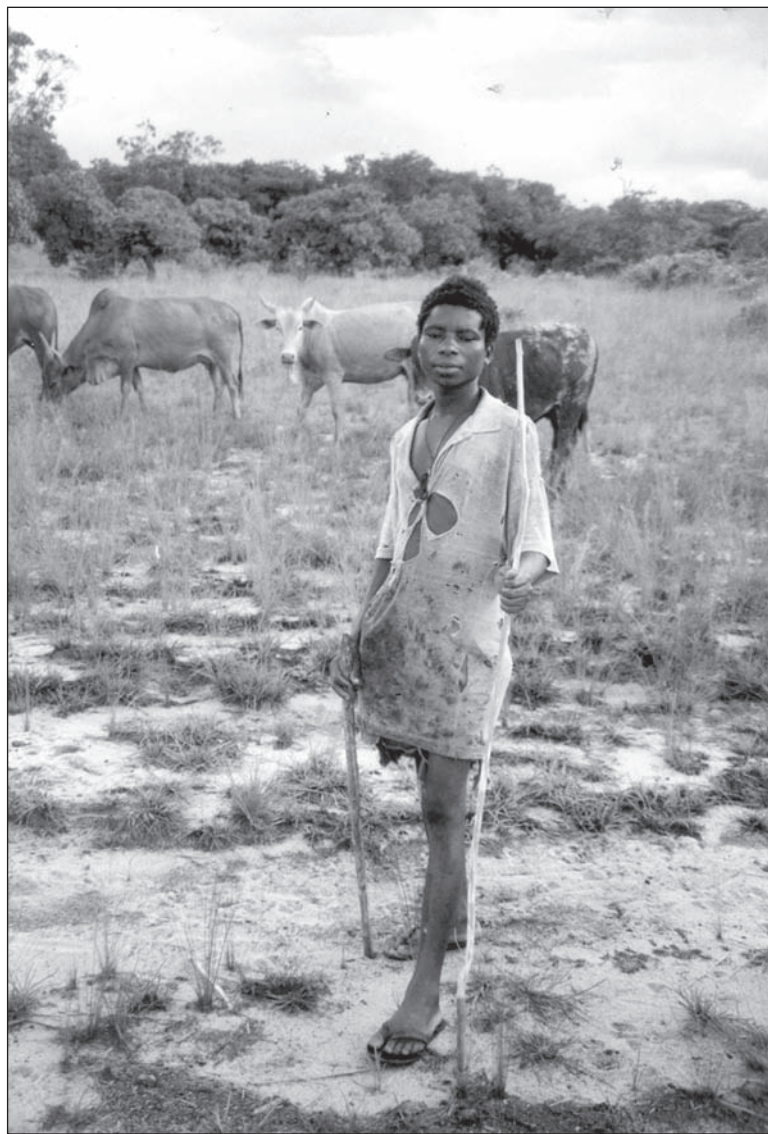


Photo courtesy of Lucy Pasternak

A young man in Africa works to herd and care for cattle around the land.

Pasternak had to head to the bus stop extra early in order to be sure to catch it. Once there the bus - often loaded to three times its intended capacity - would go bouncing over unpaved roads to its destination, a teeth-jarring experience at best, said Pasternak. While en route, the already overloaded bus would repeatedly take on more passengers, cramming it even fuller.

"In Africa, there's always room for 12 more [passengers]," said Pasternak.

Sometimes, there would be further delays. In one instance, jobless men at the bus stop demanded that the conductor give them money or they'd put nails under the wheels. The men were finally thrown off, but the nails had already been planted and the bus had a flat, further adding to the length of the journey.

To avoid having to take the bus, Pasternak began riding her bike the 25 miles from her village to Mtwara. This lasted until January, when her bike was stolen right in front of her in Mtwara. She was unable to catch the thieves and had to wait until February for a new bike from the Peace Corps. The thieves

were not apprehended until the end of February.

But the thing Pasternak found most draining was not the public transportation but the heat. In fact, it was not only hot, said Pasternak, but extremely humid as well - as soon as she stepped outside, she felt like "stepping into an ocean."

Towards the end her stay, Pasternak was sent a thermometer so she could record the temperature accurately for the first time. She recorded 95 degrees Fahrenheit in

the shade; when she moved the thermometer to the sun, the mercury immediately rose as high as the thermometer would go - 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Pasternak put it back in the shade, for fear of breaking it.

Scariest even than the heat, though, was the threat of various sicknesses that befell many of Pasternak's fellow Peace Corps members including tapeworms, diarrhea and, more seriously, malaria. Pasternak caught the latter after stepping in a puddle with a cut foot, and was in bed for three days in hundred-degree heat, suffering aches and extreme nausea. Still, the doctors assured her it was only a mild case.

What Pasternak ultimately discovered, though, was that she alone couldn't fix Africa's problems; it was going to take a bigger effort by everyone. "So as I tell this story, I try to relate that very little is necessary here," wrote Pasternak. "I finally know what [the people here] need. Money and clothes is the main thing. I want to come home and ask you guys to ask all of your friends and family and everyone you know at school or work to donate a penny, a nickel, a quarter if you're feeling happy, and a dollar if you want to. Or more; that would be appreciated."

"This truly is the toughest job you'll ever love, because it takes so much out of you, the emotional drain from seeing those gorgeous little dusty children in ripped clothes, no shoes...you just realize that this is exactly where you have to be right now, giving them a little chance at life, at self confidence, admiration, appreciation...It's giving them something to care about, like themselves."



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Shanghai dancers wow Ohlone

Dancers from the Shanghai Theater Academy in China performed here Nov. 16 and 17. The school is known as one of the prestigious dance colleges in China. Look for more Shanghai dance pictures in an upcoming issue.

Photo by Chen Lin



Devil's Advocate

By ANNA NEMCHUK
Editor-in-chief

Holidays. Oh joy.

Ever been attacked by a wild turkey? Whoever came up with the idea of eating the angry little things must have done so out of sheer perversity – such vicious gobbling could not go on unchecked. Why else would eating such an inordinately tasteless and invariably dry bird be pursued yearly with such grim determination other than as a twisted revenge for unprovoked ankle peckings?

But that's nothing compared to Halloween. Distorted from a pagan tradition honoring mysticism, it now regularly sends dentists' children through college and provides the single most widespread abuse of orange crepe paper in the continental United States. Just for a day, society embraces with open arms all the vampires, devil ladies and giant lima beans it otherwise dismisses as muddled fiction. For some of us, coming out of the broom closet happens only once a year.

Next we have that most torturous of days for anyone not owning stock in Hallmark's: Valentine's Day. To come up with a more misanthropic holiday would tax the mind. Millions of kids are scarred for life because that unanticipated "I Choo-choo-choose you" from the kid who lunches on crayons prompts a crisis of kindness vs. coolness. Dating sites' bandwidth bills exceed the annual income of most African countries. Anyone possessing a significant other is disappointed in the quality of chocolates/teddy bears/red roses/nerf guns they dutifully receive and subsequently breaks up the next day due to the lack of imagination and/or cash. Anyone single claims a constitutional right to call out sick, purchase three gallons of cheap red wine and five quarts of low-fat vanilla ice cream, and indulge in 24 hours of nauseating black and white love films if female, bad German porn involving ducks and clarified butter if male. Single bars make the Mohave Desert seem like a great resort locale and hotels alternate between delivering champagne and plastic rose petals to rent-by-the-hour rooms and mopping up yet another suicide too depressed and, apparently, dirty to blow their brains out anywhere but a full bathtub.

Then, the day a man who said we should be nice to people was supposedly born. Those pagans just can't catch a break – it's not like they've been celebrating Saturnalia for a bit longer than the Christians have, is it? But no matter – cries of a savior tend to obliterate such trivial things as history and onward we plunge into plastic sleighs, shameless displays of fake festive plants and a complete void of decent radio music. But at least one decent result's come out – candy canes. So convenient, so delicious, they almost make thousands of years of religious persecution and war worth it. Almost.

Auditions to be held for spring show

By MANIKA CASTERLINE
Staff writer

For the first time in Ohlone's history, auditions for the spring dance production will occur prior

to the end of the fall semester. This is due to the change of going from 18 week semesters to ones that are 16 weeks in their length.

The "Elements" production will take place during the weekend of

April 20. Four suites will be segmented into one of the natural elements of fire, water, air, and earth. Dance instructor Janel Tomblin Brown said, "I hope about 50 to 100 people show up to the auditions

hoping to be a part of the show".

Auditions will be held on Saturday at the dance studio at 12:30 p.m for hip-hop. The audition for other types of dance such as ballet and jazz will be at 1:30 p.m.

Foot Notes hopes to dance in China

By NOAH LEVIN
Staff writer

Dance, song, and music will come together this Friday night in an effort to help the Foot Notes Dance Company raise money for its hopeful trip to Shanghai, China, next semester. Showcasing jazz and tap dance styles from the upcoming Winter Showcase next week, Foot Notes takes center stage amidst live music, a DJ, and singing. Led

by Ohlone teacher Janel Tomblin Brown, Foot Notes can be considered a sister company to Ohlone's Bliss Dance Company, headed by Cassie Begley.

However, Foot Notes possesses some striking differences. Rooted in jazz and tap styles as opposed to contemporary and abstract, Foot Notes is still fairly young, having only begun last semester, in Spring '06. Originally meant to be a tap only troupe, company leader Brown

found tap had "too narrow a scope," and soon expanded the repertoire to jazz, with some distinct "contemporary flare."

Company member Morgan Lindstrom finds the work with Brown to be exciting and challenging, "It's something new for all of us," remarked Lindstrom. "Janel is really fun to work with...we're all there for the same reason!"

The Foot Notes Dance Company's versatile styles warranted the

attentions of Ohlone College President Dr. Douglas Treadway, who has invited the company to travel to Shanghai, China, in a reversal of the visit two weeks ago by the Shanghai dancers. Friday night's showcase will be a fundraiser to help pay the company's way to China. The showcase, though focused on the company, will also include a live band, a DJ, solo singers, and a solo dance performed by a former adjunct faculty member.

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