

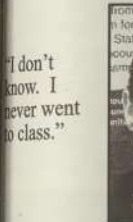
# Student Poll

What was the most unusual assignment you've been given?



"Write an essay on evolution and religion in only one page, double-spaced."

Alexandria Vallelunga



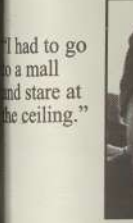
"I don't know. I never went to class."

Ashley Marchi



"I had to print out 175 pages for a writing workshop."

Dusty Rugsdale



"I had to go to a mall and stare at the ceiling."

Josh Yoder



"I had to stand in an elevator backwards to break norms."

Justin Harlon



"I wrote a story on S&M."

Nicole Bush

This week's poll compiled by Tayo Stalnaker

# Grades don't really matter

Joe Piazzisi

The Clackamas Print

In college every student strives for the best grade they can possibly get. We all do it thinking that the better our grades are, the better the job or pay we'll get in the future. So do grades really have a bearing on this outcome?

I don't believe this to be the case for those students who are going for any type of degree. As long as one receives the degree one is going for, the grades don't really matter in my opinion. Obviously one still has to pass all the classes that are required to get the degree. I'm just saying one doesn't need a perfect 4.0. One could just cruise on by with a C average and have the same end result. This is, of course, as long as one isn't under some type of scholarship program that requires a GPA higher than a 2.0.

How often does someone say "I have a bachelor's

degree," for example, only to be asked, "What was your GPA when you received this degree?" It almost never happens. Not in the working world.

It happens when you transfer colleges and go on to your next degree, but once out of college all the employer cares about is the degree itself.

"During our hiring process, if someone has a degree we tend to just ask for proof of the degree," said Linda Piazzisi, a loan officer for a local credit union. "Most corporations don't check grades for a degree. The only time it may matter is if you are trying to get a top position in the company."

Shane Vigil, a former department manager for Fry's Electronics and current store manager for the Sharper Image, agrees with Piazzisi.

"If you are applying with a degree, all that I am worried about is if [you] can do the job required, not how good or bad [their] grades were in college," said Vigil.

If this is how the working

world is, why do we strive for perfection? Realistically, all that matters is the degree that we graduate with, not the grades that got us there.

The answer is that we do it for ourselves. The simple thought that we can do better is what pushes us.

We justify all the craziness of pushing for that 4.0 with what we consider to be a more important reason, such as a better job or better pay, when really we just don't want to settle for average.

To those students who are getting no sleep

and driving themselves crazy with their grades, I just have one thing to say: relax. Just pass all your required classes and you will be OK. Don't stress over things that won't affect the end result.

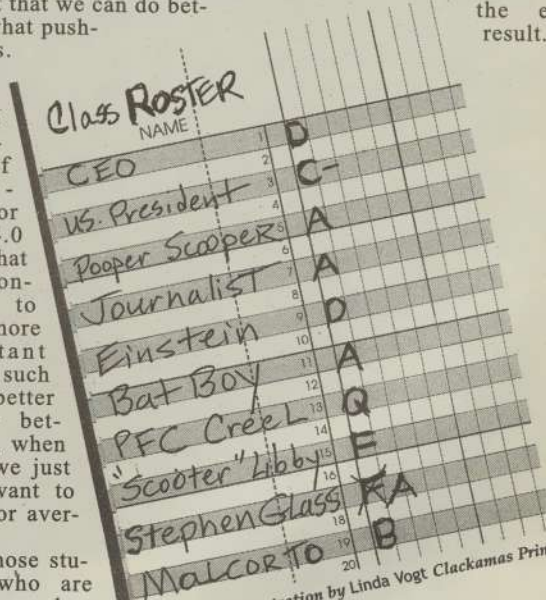


Photo illustration by Linda Vogt Clackamas Print

# Torture distasteful, but could prove useful

Elizabeth Hitz

The Clackamas Print

The Senate passed a defense bill to outlaw the use of "cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment" on any detainees by any U.S. government entity on Oct. 8. The House of Representatives passed the same bill, minus the anti-torture proviso.

In the forefront of this situation is the very public battle between an embattled Vice President Cheney and Senator John McCain, R Ariz., who sponsored the original bill in the Senate. Cheney proposes to add an amendment to the bill which would allow the CIA to torture detainees (political prisoners and terrorists) in foreign countries. His concern is that without this provision, the president's hands could be needlessly and disastrously tied in wartime.

Needless to say, this proposition has left everyone from human rights groups and the media to conservative Republicans sputtering in outrage and shock, especially after the president's statement in a January 2005 interview with the *New York Times* in which he stated, "Let me make very clear the position of my government and our country. We do not condone torture. I have never ordered torture. I will never order torture. The values of this country are such that torture is not a part of our soul and our being."

The debate is on. Is torture acceptable? More specifically, is it "acceptable" for Americans to torture terrorists on foreign soil in the middle of a war to obtain information that could save hundreds of lives or win crucial battles?

Human rights groups find the very idea of torture appalling and completely inhumane. But someone somewhere has to draw the line between protecting people who simply have different convictions than us, and those who are plainly our enemies, such as the types that will joyfully blow up 3,000 Americans. While the government must constantly walk the fine line between maintaining an individual's rights and protecting its citizens, a good dose of common sense is in order for the entire American populace. When a person stops acting like a human, how much leniency is owed?

Would the same people who oppose Cheney's revision have turned down a chance to stop Hitler before he committed mass genocide, even if it meant torturing Nazi officers?

All sides of the issue should be considered. For instance, it is very easy to see how granting the power, however limited, to torture detainees almost invites corruption and abuse. Nevertheless, is giving up that option worth the risk? Which is worse, the illness or the cure?

Other than the fact that

extreme torture would not be tolerated under Cheney's amendment, the limits of that torture have not been fully outlined for the public. They should be, if merely to calm some of our deeper fears.

In the end, the matter of whether or not detainees should be tortured comes down to checks and balances. We should leave our options open, but we should also carefully monitor and restrict those options.

# Gulf coast insanity

Megan Koler

The Clackamas Print

The definition of insanity is repeating the same action and expecting different results.

I am completely convinced that the individuals in the gulf coast who rebuild after hurricanes each year are, in fact, completely insane.

I am reminded of the buffalo. Buffalo will not react in any way if, for example, another buffalo is shot beside it. They lack certain basic defense mechanisms, a trait that seems to be shared by those in vulnerable gulf coast areas. I imagine that in addition to rebuilding on the treacherous coasts, they plan to buy a winter bungalow in central Iraq. I hear it's lovely that time of year.

Every year the same places seem to be in danger of being wiped off the map. If the residents can't seem to take a clue, maybe the state needs to step up. Either they can require that all houses built near the coast be hurricane safe domes or they can simply declare it a no-build zone. It seems practical to make those vacant

areas public or private beaches. Let corporations build near the coasts. They certainly know how to insure themselves.

It won't solve the problems inland but it will decrease the amount of human and property casualties.

We happen to be very lucky here in Oregon. Aside from the occasional volcano, flood or freak tornado, it is actually a pretty safe place to live. If for some reason it suddenly became a hazardous place to live, I would allow myself to go through one or two tragedies and then I would pack my bags. I love my state, but it just would not be practical to stay.

Those who have the money and resources to move have no excuse to remain in hazardous places. They just become liabilities. Money should be spent on helping those who can't help themselves, not those that just want to stay because "beach houses are cool."

I genuinely feel for those who have a sentimental attachment to homes that are incidentally death traps. But loving someone, something or somewhere is never a good reason to be around if your life is in danger.