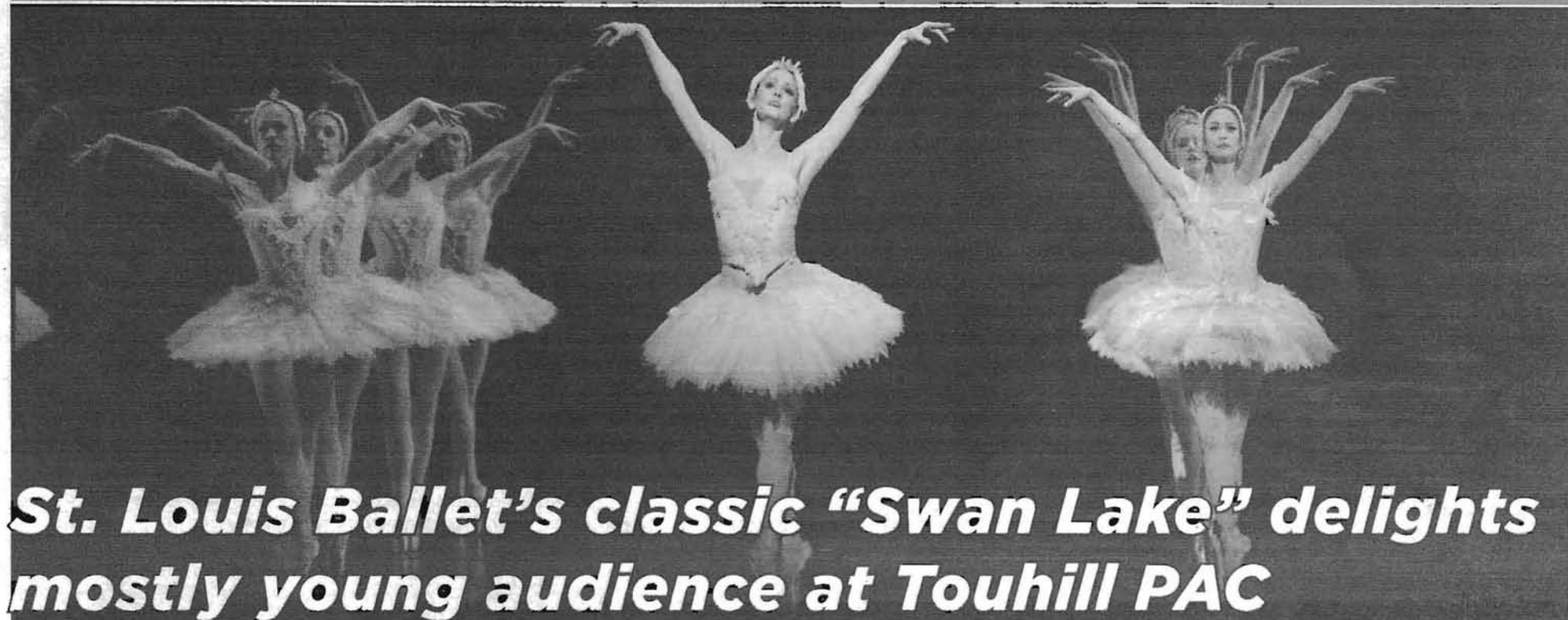


# The Current

WWW.THECURRENT-ONLINE.COM

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## St. Louis Ballet's classic "Swan Lake" delights mostly young audience at Touhill PAC

Swan Lake presented by Saint Louis Ballet at the Touhill.

COURTESY OF GIGI WEAVER

### CATE MARQUIS A&E Editor

If one were to choose to see only one ballet, that ballet should be "Swan Lake."

"Swan Lake" is regarded as ballet's greatest and most popular production. Tchaikovsky's beautiful, haunting music combined with the ballet's mysterious, romantic story and its famous choreography make "Swan Lake" an experience not to be missed. Yet unlike Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker," which is performed every Christmas, "Swan Lake" is more rarely seen.

St. Louis Ballet's performance of "Swan Lake" at the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center, April 27-29, was both welcome and highly-anticipated. There were four performances, an evening performance on Friday, April

27, a matinee and evening on Saturday, April 28 and a matinee on Sunday, April 28.

The near-capacity audience on Friday included well-dressed dance enthusiasts, hip young adults and whole families. Often these families included little girls in fancy dresses, who pirouetted through the lobby during the production's two intermissions.

St. Louis Ballet's artistic director, Gen Horiuchi, said he was inspired to present this greatest ballet by the movie "Black Swan," which revived popular interest. But it was clear from this young, enthusiastic audience that something more than the R-rated movie was at work.

Horiuchi, who was Principle Dancer with the legendary George Balanchine's New York City Ballet, created the

choreography. The troupe of dancers alternated roles for different performances. "Swan Lake" is a ballet that allows some flexibility in its story, and Horiuchi chose to use a prologue and a happy ending.

In the Friday night prologue, the child Prince Siegfried (Deaglan Erhart) witnesses a young Princess Odette (Lissy Joslyn) transformed into a swan by the evil sorcerer Von Rothbart (Octavio Nieto).

Act I begins years later, in a lavish garden outside the palace, where the Queen (Lisa Wolfsberger) is celebrating Prince Siegfried's (Elliot Geolat) coming-of-age, along with Siegfried's tutor (Michael Monsey) and young members of the court. The Queen presents Siegfried with a crossbow as a gift but then tells him he must choose a bride at the upcoming

ball, which leaves him uneasy.

The staging and scenery were lovely, using panels of fabric to create depth against a garden wall backdrop, all in reds and golds. The costumes pick up the same colors, as young nobles engage in lively dances or are entertained by young women in colorful peasant attire. Siegfried's tutor is a comic role, teased by the women. The dancing was lovely and energetic.

In Scene II, the Prince goes hunting with his new crossbow at Swan Lake, represented by ethereal scenery in muted blues and greens. Siegfried spies a beautiful white swan (Tanya Strautmann), but as he prepares to shoot, he hesitates, entranced by her beauty. He realizes she is the enchanted girl Odette. Odette flees, joining a flock of other enchanted

white swans, but Siegfried follows and convinces her of his affection, before being driven away by Von Rothbart.

The scene contains the most haunting beautiful music of the ballet and some of its most famous choreography. Ballerinas become swans by holding a gracefully curved arm over their heads to form a swan's head and neck. Swans take flight with a dramatic sweeping up-and-down arm movements, a dramatic combination of mimicry and grace.

The scene includes a famous dance, where four ballerinas cross arms to hold hands while dancing in close, cross-stepping fashion, which was performed splendidly.

The dramatic high point comes in the ballroom scene, when Siegfried must swear eternal love to Odette to free

her from the spell but mistakes the black swan Odile (Lori Wilson) for Odette. Typically, the black swan is danced by the same ballerina, but Horiuchi chose to cast different dancers. The scene, in lush reds and golds, features dramatic Russian, Spanish, Italian and near-Eastern dances, as well as a beautifully executed pas-de-deux by Wilson and Geolat, which was rewarded by wild applause.

The ballet concludes as Siegfried and Odette reconcile and defeat Von Rothbart, ending happily with the spell broken and the lovers united.

This wonderful production of the beloved Swan Lake thoroughly delighted the audience, likely to be treasured memory for the young ballerinas.

Grade: A

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# The Current

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## ABOUT The Current

The Current is the student newspaper at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, printing weekly through the fall and spring semesters on Mondays. Advertising rates are available upon request; terms, conditions and restrictions apply. The Current, financed in part by student activities fees, is not an official publication of UM-St. Louis.

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The Current accepts letters to the editor. All letters should be brief, and those not exceeding 250 words will be given preference. The Current edits letters for clarity and length, not for dialect, correctness, intent or grammar. All letters must be signed and must include a daytime phone number and, where applicable, student number. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to respond to and to deny any letters.

## AFFILIATIONS



# What's Current

Your weekly calendar of campus events. "What's Current" is a free service for student organizations. Submissions must be turned in by 5 p.m. the Thursday before publication; first-come, first-served. Listings may be edited for length and style. E-mail event listings to thecurrenttips@umsl.edu, with the subject "What's Current." No phone or written submissions.

## Tuesday, May 1

### Silent Witness Initiative / Domestic Violence Fair

From 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Located in MSC Century Room C and open to all. Come to learn about the problem of domestic violence in our community and what you can do to stop it. For more information, call Kristin Carbone-Lopez at 314-516-5426.

## Thursday, May 3

### St. Louis Storytelling Festival

Starts at 10:00 a.m. Located in Anheuser-Busch Performance Hall and open to all. Each year, more than 40 regional and 7 featured storytellers and their audiences gather during this four-day event for the telling of tales. The Festival is an annual event for all ages, primary attendance during these first three days of the Festival (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday) is by area school children. A special phone bank is scheduled in February for teachers wishing to make group reservations. For more information, call Touhill Ticket Office at 314-516-4949.

## Wednesday, May 2

### Pursuing Engaged Scholarship in an Age of Austerity

From 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Located in 403 JC Penney Conference Center and open to all. Dr. Katherine Lambert-Pennington, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Memphis and 2011 recipient of the Ernest A. Lynton Award for the Scholarship of Engagement, shows in this presentation how she has integrated her teaching, research, and service in unique ways that address issues of poverty, racism, inequalities, and social justice, particularly as they relate to neighborhood development. For more information, call Peggy Cohen at 314-516-4508.

## Friday, May 4

### Arianna String Quartet: Famous Last Words

Starts at 8:00 p.m. Located in the Touhill's Lee Theater and open to all. The Arianna Quartet closes out its 2011-12 Touhill Series with a musical odyssey through final works for string quartet written by three leviathans of the quartet repertoire. The ASQ begins the evening with Felix Mendelssohn's dazzling Andante and Scherzo, Op.81, a seldom-heard work full of virtuosic appeal, and follows with Bela Bartok's evocative Quartet No.6, a seminal work of the early 20th century. For more information, call Touhill Ticket Office at 314-516-4949.

## Monday, May 7

### Textbook Sell Back

From 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Located at the UMSL Bookstore and open to students. It's Textbook Sell Back time! Stop by the UMSL Bookstore to sell back your Textbooks! Receive a minimum 5.00 for each textbook. Enter to win a iPad for each book you sell back. For more information, call UMSL Bookstore at 314-516-5763.

# Crimeline and Reports

Injury in Greenhouse April 20, 2012 - 3:30pm Report # 12-166. An UMSL employee cut their hand on a piece of steel, he conveyed himself for medical treatment. Disposition: Information only.	Burglary Minus Theft in Normandy Hall! April 23, 2012 - 8:00am Report # 12-167. An UMSL employee found a door to a	maintenance room had been forced open, nothing taken. Disposition: Investigation continuing.	Vandalism in Lot C! April 24, 2012 - 4:30pm Report # 12 - 171. An UMSL student discovered a message scratched into the paint of their parked car. Disposition: Investigation continuing.	Theft in The Nosh! April 26, 2012 - 4:47pm Report # 12 - 174. A Sodexo food service employee reported two separate thefts of money from a secure area, occurring between April 10, 2012 and April 23, 2012. Value \$1118.00. Disposition: Investigation continuing.	Theft in SSB! April 26, 2012 - 7:47pm Report # 12 - 175. An UMSL student reported	a laptop computer stolen from a work area between 6:45pm and 7:15pm. Value \$600.00. Disposition: Investigation continuing.
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For further details, visit <http://safety.umsl.edu/police/campus-crime-info/daily-log.html>, or check out UMSL Campus Police on Facebook and Twitter.

## WEATHER

MON. <b>79</b> <b>65</b>	TUES. <b>84</b> <b>67</b>	WED. <b>87</b> <b>68</b>	THURS. <b>86</b> <b>67</b>	FRI. <b>85</b> <b>62</b>	SAT. <b>83</b> <b>63</b>	SUN. <b>83</b> <b>60</b>
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# News

## Student-teacher relationships part of campus life for many universities

**SHARON PRUITT**  
Opinions Editor

While many would say that romantic relationships between students and teachers are unethical when the relationship in question takes place in a high school setting, relationships between college students and their professors have long been a topic of debate, both within the academic community and outside of it.

The same policy on consensual amorous relationships applies to all schools with the UM - St. Louis system, which include University of Missouri - St. Louis, University of Missouri - Columbia, University of Missouri - Kansas City and Missouri University of Science and Technology. According to the collected rules and regulations for personnel, consensual amorous relationships between members of the university com-

munity are "prohibited when one participant has direct evaluative or supervisory authority over the other because such relationships create an inherent conflict of interest."

The university defines amorous relationships as being between two individuals who "mutually and consensually understand a relationship to be romantic and/or sexual in nature except when those two individuals are married to each other." Examples of prohibited relationships include, but are not limited to, "employee (faculty, staff or student)/student and supervisor (faculty, staff or student)/subordinate, when those relationships involve direct evaluative or supervisory authority."

In explaining their prohibition on the subject, Chapter 330: Employee

Conduct of the collected rules and regulations prefaces itself by stating that the University "promotes an atmosphere of professionalism based on mutual trust and respect. The integrity of interaction among faculty, staff and students must not be compromised."

It is the aforementioned conflicts of interest in student-teacher interaction that cause many universities to take a solid stance against such relationships. The policy for those in the UM-System requires that the individual in the supervisory position disclose the relationship to his or her administrative superior and cooperate in removing themselves from any such supervisory activity in order to eliminate said conflict of interest.

"The student-teacher relationship is inher-

ently an uneven one and fraught with peril," Paul Lannon, Boston education lawyer, said to ABCNews.com in 2009.

One such relationship was the 2011 case of 22-year-old Katy Benoit, a graduate student at the University of Idaho, and Ernesto Bustamonte, a psychology professor at the university at the time of their relationship. The relationship ended in murder-suicide, after Benoit filed a complaint against Bustamonte that resulted in his losing his job. Shortly after, Benoit was fatally shot outside her apartment by Bustamonte, who was later found dead in a hotel room, having shot himself. Preceding the fatal shooting, Benoit had told friends that Bustamonte had threatened her with a gun multiple times.

Also in 2011, a music professor at Montana State University was accused of having sex with a student and threatening to ruin her career if she ended the relationship.

Sadly, occurrences such as these are far too common, as the student-teacher relationship is one that is inherently unequal in terms of the distribution of power, and such relationships can often result in the abuse of that power within the confines of the relationship. The student-teacher relationship leaves ample room for coercion and manipulation, which is why many universities have policies against it.

"The teacher obviously has authority over the student, and the student is vulnerable to undue influence. There is always going to be that pressure," Middlebury College pro-

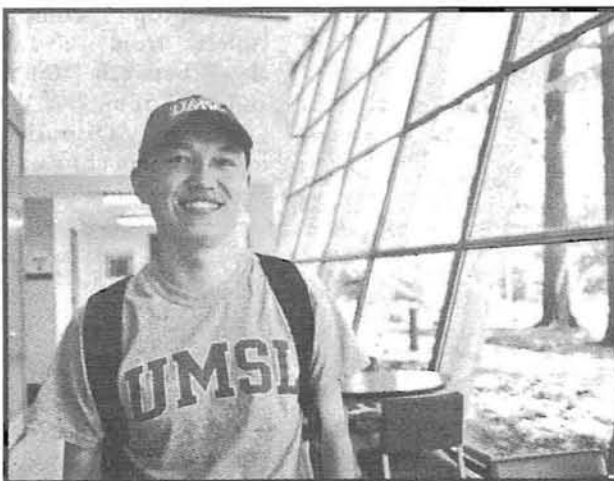
fessor Miguel Fernandez told ABCNews.com.

Not all cases of student-professor romances end in tragedy and strife, however. In early 2012, Columbia law professor Philip Bobbitt married former student Maya Ondalikoglu. Previously, Ondalikoglu had been a student in one of Bobbitt's classes when the two traveled to an academic conference together. Following the trip, Ondalikoglu withdrew from the class, as they both agreed that this was the appropriate course of action in order to avoid an unhealthy power dynamic and to remain ethical in their actions. The two married only months later in a wedding officiated by Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan, who is a former dean at Harvard Law.

## The UNDERCURRENT

by Ismail Adiputra

### "How do you spend your study breaks?"



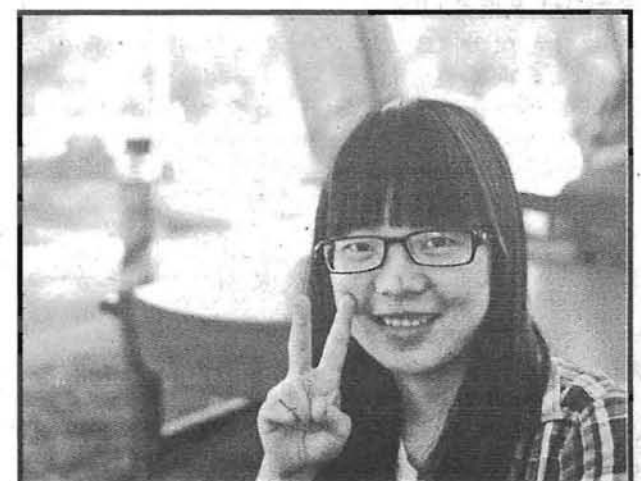
"I usually exercise and stretch during my study breaks, or move to a different place. That takes maybe 15 minutes to walk, a good time frame for study break."

Kamil Edil  
Graduate  
Public Policy



"I would go doing something with some friends. Last week my friends and I went to Forest Park to play some frisbee during our study break."

Aquira Foster  
Senior  
Biology / Psychology



"I usually watch movies and listen to songs when I need to take some break from studying."

Lingling Zeng  
Graduate  
Education

# The Political Corner - UMSL and Amnesty International

## Amnesty International - UMSL joins effort to bring awareness of wide- spread violence against women

**SHARON PRUITT**  
Opinions Editor

On Thursday, April 26, Amnesty International-University of Missouri -- St. Louis hosted a screening of the award-winning documentary "Saving Face" as part of their new campaign to raise awareness of violence against women worldwide.

The Oscar-winning documentary, directed by Daniel Junge and Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, brings to light the horrific reality of socially-accepted violence for many women in Pakistan, where vicious acid attacks often go unreported and largely unpunished. The attackers generally face very minimal punishment from the state.

The film intertwines the personal stories and lives of two victims of acid attacks, Zakia and Rukhsana, as they deal with the aftermath of such horrific attacks while also bringing focus to the nation of Pakistan, where awareness of this social problem is burgeoning.

"I'm of Pakistani descent, but I was born and raised in Britain, so I kind of have a mix of both cultures. I'm not completely westernized; I try to keep a balance between the two, so at the same time I can see what's going on in my culture," Sabah Mehmood, president of UMSL's Amnesty International chapter, said.

In many cases, women who have been the victims of acid attacks are victimized by their significant others, family members or others who are close to them. Both women in the film were attacked by their husbands, Zakia after filing for divorce. Though there are groups dedicated to aiding victims of acid attacks in Pakistan, such as Acid Survivors Foundation-Pakistan, many victims have very little access to reconstructive surgery and live out the rest of their lives following the attack both physically and emotionally scarred.

Obaid Chinoy has been quoted as saying of the film, "It goes beyond the immediate horrors of acid violence to its prolonged effects. It forces its viewers to empathize with, but also admire, the immense strength of the survivors."

The screening of the film is one of many that the group plans to host in order to raise awareness of violence against women, in the hopes that students will be spurred to action.

"The women have no voice in those countries. They're uneducated. They don't have jobs. They're totally dependent on the men of the family. Before marriage they're the property of their fathers and after

marriage they're the properties of their husbands, so they have no life of their own. They have to depend on the men, and I think that as western women it's up to us to give those women a voice," Mehmood said. "We can easily reject a marriage proposal, but for them it's a matter of life or death. Someone could kill them, someone could mutilate them, just for saying 'no, I don't want to marry this guy.' And the man can attack them with acid, with the mentality of 'if I can't have you, no one can have you.'"

The group plans to host more presentations and movie screenings that focus on the reality of violence against women worldwide, in a continuing effort to get UMSL's student population interested and involved.

"We really want to raise awareness about what's really going on, especially in third world countries and other male-dominated societies. We're trying to break the stereotype. [The violence] is not a part of religion, it's [the product of] twisted minds," said Mehmood.

Though the group was pleased with Thursday's turnout, they plan to host repeat screenings of "Saving Face" in the future.

## Glass ceiling awaits female students

**SHARON PRUITT**  
Opinions Editor

According to a 2011 study conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor, women today earn around 81 cents for every dollar that men make. The pay gap between the genders varies according to college majors as well, but on the whole, in most fields men still make more than women who hold the same degree.

Payscale, a "market leader in global online compensation data," collects salary and career data from millions of employees from a variety of fields and industries. According to the analysis of Payscale's database, there is a large pay gap between men and women with the same level of education. This discrepancy can be seen among nearly every industry and college major.

The largest gaps exist in architecture, education and criminal justice, with a five percent pay difference between

male and female graduates who hold a bachelor's degree. Those who majored in business and/or marketing/management face a four percent pay gap between men and women, with men again earning more than their female contemporaries. This gap expands as factors such as age and education level increase, with women who hold more advanced degrees still earning less than men with the same qualifications.

In entry-level jobs, men and women operate more or less on the same playing field. It is when women try to move upward at work that the glass ceiling becomes apparent. The glass ceiling refers to the invisible barrier that often prevents women from advancing in the workplace. This phenomenon occurs most often in high-paying positions. According to data collected by Payscale, in jobs where employees earn more than \$100,000, women earn only 87 percent of what their male

colleagues make. This discrepancy in pay can be a disheartening reality check for female students planning to enter the workplace after graduation.

But do female students avoid majors and industries where women have been proven to earn less?

"It's not clear whether women shy away from these fields because they are male dominated, or whether a lack of role models is a better explanation. We've learned in politics that sometimes seeing someone like yourself hold a particular position makes it seem more interesting and accessible. It may be that female students don't see many women role models in STEM (science, engineering, technology and math) fields, so they are more likely to consider something else," Dayna Stock, manager for the Sue Shear Institute of Women in Public Life, said.

*Continued on page 11.*

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# Top evolutionist E.O. Wilson's keynote at Consilience Conference

**CATE MARQUIS**  
A&E Editor

What do biology, social sciences and humanities in common? Evolution, according to the cross-disciplinary field of consilience.

The College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Missouri - St. Louis hosted the "Consilience Conference: Evolution in Biology, the Human Sciences and the Humanities," a three-day interdisciplinary conference April 26-28 in the J.C. Penney Building.

"There is an international movement, essentially, in consilience, and it is to look at the overall effects and impact of evolution in all these different areas," Ron Yasbin, Dean of School of Arts and Sciences, said.

The conference brought in 18 speakers who are leaders in the fields of biology, the social sciences and the humanities. Topics included "The Darwin Economy: Liberty, Competition and the Common Good," "Cold-Blooded Kindness: Insights Into Pathological Altruism" and "The Evolutionary Riddle of Fiction."

"It is a great opportunity for our students, our faculty and our staff to learn about this important convergence of these three areas. We look at it as a major role for a College of Arts and Sciences in a land-grant, metropolitan university, to educate the community on these important topics," Yasbin said.

"It touches on three important disciplinary areas to the College of Arts and Sciences and involves presenters who are remarkable in their fields," Deborah Baldini, associate dean for the College of Arts and Sciences and associate dean for Continuing Education and Outreach,

said. Baldini helped organize the conference.

The keynote speaker on April 26 was renowned evolutionary biologist Edward O. Wilson, whom some have described as "Darwin's natural heir." Yasbin described Wilson as "the top evolutionist in the world right now."

Wilson has alternated research on ants with publishing on the wider application of evolutionary principles. He won the National Medal of Science and two Pulitzer Prizes. His 1998 book "Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge" introduced the topic of this conference.

Yasbin said that recruiting such a distinguished speaker was the work of the three faculty organizers, Patricia Parker, E. Desmond Lee, professor of biology and chair of the Department of Biology, David Rose, professor of economics and chairperson of Department of Economics, and Joseph Carroll, Curators' Professor of English.

"I didn't think we had a chance of getting him," Yasbin said. "When he heard about the whole idea of the conference and bringing all these people together, and how many people had already said they were coming as speakers, he said he'd be happy to do it. We were thrilled."

Chancellor Thomas George kicked off the conference by noting the university's commitment to the kind of cross-disciplinary study that the conference represented. The chancellor introduced Peter Raven, president emeritus of the Missouri Botanical Garden, who in turn introduced the keynote speaker. Raven introduced Wilson by calling him "my long-

time friend" and described Wilson as "a person pushing the boundaries," comparing him to such historical figures as Erasmus and Francis Bacon.

Wilson spoke to a packed house in the J.C. Penney auditorium. Drawing on his upcoming book "Social Conquest of Earth," Wilson spoke about how Darwin's principles opened the door to solving riddles of human nature that had eluded thinkers throughout human history.

The members of the faculty committee were responsible for recruiting speakers from their areas. "They came up with an outstanding group of speakers," Yasbin said.

The speakers who followed gave a sense of the breath of the intriguing topics. John Hawks, a paleoanthropologist, spoke on comparing the genomic DNA of Neanderthals with modern humans and our close ape relatives and the insights such genetic analysis gave about the origins of language and about culture. Dan McAdams, a psychologist, spoke on the evolution of personality and the adaptive nature of personality traits, using as an example former president George W. Bush. Herbert Gintis, a mathematician in game theory, spoke on the evolution of the human sense of morality.

Yasbin said the College of Arts and Sciences plans to sponsor one conference a year on very topical and important areas. "Last year, we had the conference on 'Women in Academia: Leveling the Playing Field,'" Yasbin said. "Next year, the conference is being organized by the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice."

The Current is now accepting applications for the following paid positions for the coming academic year.

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-Business Manager

-Advertising Director

For more information, inquire at 388 MSC or email us at:

[Thecurrentjobs@umsl.edu](mailto:Thecurrentjobs@umsl.edu)



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314-647-1743

## A&amp;E

## Shabazz Palaces won't win any new converts to the harem with their disappointing Luminary set

DAVID VON NORDHEIM

Staff Writer

Shabazz Palaces, the latest project by underground hip hop icon Ishmael "Butterfly" Butler and multi-instrumentalist Tendai Maraire, made a downright insulting appearance at the Luminary Center for the Arts on April 24.

Though the Luminary, an independently-owned South County art gallery and nonprofit, certainly lends itself to an interesting performance, whatever promise was generated by the inspired venue choice was quickly dampened by Butler and Company's flippant attitude towards their undeservedly loyal fans.

Taking a liberal interpretation of the old adage "doors at 7, concert at 8," Butler and Maraire made their appearance an excruciating two hours after the already overlong opening acts had finished, with nary an apology or explanation, although perhaps finding the right dashiki to match his player shades took longer than one might give him credit for.

That someone's idol is a jerk in person is never an easy truth to swallow, but Shabazz fans, take note: behind the weirdo death mask and Bedouin robes, Butler is just as much of a diva as your average Weezy or Drake.

As is often the case with a show of this caliber, the opening acts were both local DJs with edgy, intentionally misspelled

names: DJ Needlez and DJ Loose Screwz.

Needlez' set showcased a lot of ambition if not outright mixing talent, and he came across as a sort of low-rent Fly Lo. On the other hand, Screwz did little more than cycle through the same swathe of indie nuggets one hears on the average KDHX program (Little Dragon, James Pants, Erykah Badu, etc.) with a few halfhearted turntable scratches thrown in for good measure. This went on for nearly two hours until an unannounced third opener joined Screwz, an energetic rapper whose command to the audience to "move your asses or move on out" was met with stubborn resistance by the shuffling, plaid-bedecked crowd.

Butler and Maraire finally arrived at 11 p.m., marching in with maracas in hand and seemingly oblivious to the ill will that was rapidly spreading among their pasty audience. Still, given that the average Modest Mouse or Shins concert would likely give them very limited exposure to the notoriously noncommittal approach the average underground rapper takes toward their show (a friend of mine once admitted to waiting until 4 a.m. for MF Doom to show up), their patience up to that point was quite impressive. Still, though this re-

viewer may be indulging in a bit of petty spitefulness (which usually accompanies a poorly spent \$20), it must be admitted that the set was not disappointing in and of itself. Butler has not lost his talent for deftly spinning brain-numbing abstractions honed in his Butterfly days, and Maraire's presence ensured that the show was more than Butler simply rhyming over the instrumental tracks from "Black Up." Still, the unapologetic mugging was a shockingly egotistical move for the man who once spun lines about "creamy spies" and being an insect in his Diggable Planets days.

Although certainly not the most egregious breach of the artist-audience contract this reviewer has witnessed (that distinction goes to Cold Cave's 20-minute set of white noise and sound clips at The Firebird), it was the exact kind of fan abuse that makes one think twice about buying another Shabazz Palaces CD.

If you ever have the opportunity to see this fashion-forward space rap collective in-person, do yourself a favor and invest the \$20 ticket fee on a sushi platter and a copy of "Black Up," which, as far as this reviewer is concerned, is still the ultimate Shabazz Palaces listening experience.

Grade: C-

## LATEST + GREATEST

### Movie Calendar

Movies opening Friday, May 4  
(subject to change)

#### THE AVENGERS (everywhere)

The summer action film seasons kicks off early with renowned writer/producer Joss Whedon directing this superhero movie, bringing together the Marvel Comics line-up launched in previous films, including "Iron Man," "Captain America," "Thor" and more. Stars Robert Downey Jr., Chris Evans, Scarlett Johansson and Jeremy Renner.

#### THE FAIRY (Plaza Frontenac)

An audience favorite and critics' prize winner at last fall's St. Louis International Film Festival returns for a theatrical run. A little bit of "Micmacs," a little bit silent comedy, even a bit Coen Brothers. This French-language charmer is hilarious, magical and packed with visual comedy, while also being surprisingly sweet and romantic. It all begins when a hard-luck hotel clerk (Dominique Abel) in La Harve gets a visit from a strange woman (Fiona Gordon) who says she is a fairy and offers to grant him three wishes. What happens after that is nothing you expect but a pure delight. The comedy's stars also co-wrote and directed the film.

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## Second City comedy troupe sails through controversial issues with ease

ASHLEY ATKINS  
Features Editor

The Second City comedy touring company stopped by the Lee Theater of the Performing Arts Center at the University of Missouri -- St. Louis on Thursday, April 26, to introduce some new material from their "Laugh Out Loud" tour to an eagerly awaiting audience.

Second City is the Chicago-based improv and sketch comedy troupe that started the careers of comedians such as Tina Fey, Jim Belushi, Alan Arkin, Robert Klein, Fred Willard and many others. Their wise-cracking mentality resembles the popular television show Saturday Night Live, whose founders included notable "Second City" alums John Belushi, Gilda Radner and Dan Aykroyd.

Spreading out from its original Chicago venue, which started in 1959, the improvisational company has created chapters in other major cities such as Toronto and Los Angeles. The company has gained popularity with its take on current issues in pop culture, politics, etc. You name it, they have probably talked about it.

Thursday's show at the Lee theater featured the talents of Chelsea Devantez, Cate Freedman, John Hartman, Warren Phynix Johnson and Kevin Sciretta.

The show began with a skit about marriage and commitment. A

young man in his thirties (played by Hartman) was shown on the stage with his 60-something-year-old father (Sciretta) complaining about his upcoming nuptials. As the father, it is Sciretta's job to talk his son into going through with wedding. Unfortunately, he achieves this by bad-mouthing the physical appearance of the boy's mother, among other things. As a result, both father and son jet off of the stage after the father screams out "Oh, shit, I need to get you out of here." There was an uproar of laughter as the seasoned couples in the crowd listened to these two comedians spit out the truth about their own relationships.

Another crowd favorite was a skit performed by Hartman where he played an annoying office worker who liked to dance to The Heavy's "How Do You Like Me Now." He danced in honor of his achievements at the office. He danced for his love-making skills. He even humped a chair when he got top reservations at Ruby Tuesdays, which was a real crowd-pleaser. His fellow co-worker looked upon him in shame and when Hartman was confronted for his "whiteness," he began to cry to a soundtrack of the sappiest eighties music ever heard. Another unforgettable

highlight was the skit promoting the new school program "Absta Dance" where teenagers are encouraged to break into dance whenever they feel the urge to take part in any sort of sexual activity. The audience sees a young man talking to a girl who says, "I will do anything to make you like me." He does a wild dance and says in response, "I danced that boner right off." Clearly, this was a show for an adult audience, but it was still entertaining.

The show did have its misses, containing skits about various presidents and constantly revisiting the "black guy" joke. But the evening was saved by yet another skit performed by Hartman where he plays a taxi driver for two karaoke-loving women. When they hit the high note for Journey's "Don't Stop Believing," Hartman turns down the radio, hits the car brake, and the two woman bang their heads on the windshield, leaving them unconscious. He stares at the audience and gives a still demented smile, long enough for the audience to die laughing. Then he slowly turns the music back on. The rest of the song continues to play and he has two woman knocked out in the back of his cab. He is content.

Grade: B

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John Cusack stars in Relativity Media's stylish gothic thriller "The Raven." COURTESY OF LARRY HORRICKS

## 'Raven' fails to live up to promise despite Cusack's strong performance

**CATE MARQUIS**

A&E Editor

A historical fiction film about Edgar Allan Poe and starring John Cusack sounded like an idea with some promise. Poe, the inventor of the mystery story, seemed to offer some ripe material for a historical fiction film that draws on the author's works and tragic life. Casting Cusack as Poe seemed like a good fit as well. As a fan of both Poe and Cusack, this reviewer had high hopes.

Cusack gives it a valiant try, but despite his best efforts and those of a supporting cast including Brendon Gleeson, along with lush, atmospheric photography by Danny Ruhlmann, "The Raven" is a rather dull story with little to no suspense, a story that goes nowhere.

"The Raven" takes the last few days of Poe's life and some elements of his best stories to create a pale imitation of "Seven," but without the suspense. "The Raven" does have blood and gore but without the suspense, that is just not enough.

The movie starts out promisingly. The film has a stylish look and loads of atmosphere. The tale is set in the last days of Poe's life in his hometown of Baltimore. The heavy-drinking poet and author is in desperate circumstances, broke, barely able to sell a book review

to the local paper that once serialized his works. His alcoholism raging and his fame and talents fading, Poe is clearly near the end.

When Baltimore police detective Fields (Luke Evans) investigates a gruesome double murder, something about the crime seems familiar. The detective soon recognizes that details from the crime mimic one of Poe's famous suspense stories. The detective brings Poe in for questioning, but another bloody crime reveals that a serial killer is at work, taking his victims using techniques lifted from Poe's stories. The detective pressed the author to help.

Poe is reluctant to become involved in something that will distract him from his drinking and his efforts to make a little money. Despite his situation, Poe is engaged to well-to-do Emily (Alice Eve), but her father Captain Hamilton's (Brendon Gleeson) disapproval means that they have to keep the engagement secret.

Yet, this is the kind of film one keeps pulling for, hoping it will finally come together. Part of the reason for that is Cusack's fine performance. There is one scene in which Cusack's Poe reads from his poem "The Raven" before a rapt audience of formal corseted ladies. His

efforts are rewarded with applause, but the gifted often arrogant author is then expected to politely offer advice on poetry writing to the refined ladies paying for his time. The scene echoes an earlier one in which the poet tries to cage drinks in a tavern, relying on patrons who can quote the same poem. Cusack wrings every drop from each scene.

Another reason for the hope is that the film gets so many visual elements right, presenting a haunting, beautiful, eerie setting for the tale. The problem lies with screenwriters Ber Livingston and Hannah Shakespeare, who are responsible for the movie's under-written script, and director James McTeigue, who cannot transcend it.

There is a bit of quirk in Cusack's Poe, but the script can hardly decide if it wants to imitate "Seven" or "Sherlock Holmes," so it does little. The dialogue is dull at best and there seem to be about four scenes where the detective apologizes to Poe for one thing or another.

This is one thing the film gets right - someone does owe Poe (and for that matter Cusack) an apology because both deserved better.

**Grade: C**



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# Features



Eventide performs at the Battle of the Bands Thursday night at the Pilot House.

NIKKI VAHLE / THE CURRENT

## UMSL students rock out to original songs at Battle of the Bands

**ARTEMIS CARVER**

Staff Writer

On April 26, the University of Missouri – St. Louis held its second annual Battle of the Bands competition, which was sponsored by the University Program Board, PHLCA and held in the Pilot House.

The five bands that rocked the stage did not disappoint, leaving everyone feeling as if they were at a true rock concert. Audience members got to vote for their favorite band by donating money into each band's bucket, and the winning band received a trophy as a prize. All proceeds were given to the Saint Patrick's Center.

Each of the bands had

their own unique sound, from classic rock to a little bit of alternative rock. They performed original songs that showed the audience and judges just a little bit more of their artistic side.

One band, Eventide, consisted of six members and performed original songs such as "Silver Lining," "Burn On" and "You Know." Lead singer Brett Arnold was seen by judges as vocally incredible after performing the song "Silver Lining." Others saw Eventide as the voice of a pretty great music festival.

"Major, you are the bomb.com. You totally

killed it on the first song and you brought your own spark of personality to the stage," Aeisha Patterson, vice president, Student Government Association, said. While all of the judges agreed that Arnold was amazing, guitarist Major Harper was told that he held his own as he rocked out with his blue electric guitar.

Also in the showcase was Native American Youth, which consisted of brothers Aaron and Caleb Seidel and Andrew Harrington. Even though this band did not sing a word, their music could be heard throughout the MSC as drummer Caleb Seidel

played his heart out loud and proud. Aaron Seidel proved he was born to play the guitar as he strummed his way into legendary status.

"I love loud music and I thought you guys were great, but I might need a couple of headache pills before I go to another one of your concerts," Dean Bob Bliss, Honors College, said.

Audience members found out that before they had even performed, the band Between the Rivers was already in first place, but it was not until they took the stage that audience members found out why. Considering that they were newcomers,

Between the Rivers did not disappoint. The band, which consisted of four members, brought the house down. Drummer Dennis Fowler Jr. had his long hair thrashing back and forth like a true rock god in his own right. Guitarist Dustin Hook and David Kruszka could be seen having fun as the connected with each other and the crowd on their first song, "From Destiny." But it was the voice of lead singer Mike Coalter who brought the crowd to their feet as he nailed every note of the band's second song, "Vaporized by the Sun." Even as he joined the crowd the audience

could be seen cheering the band on, and it was no question to the judges or anyone else why Between the Rivers won the university's Battle of the Bands for the second year in a row.

"The band was freakin' awesome and I for one cannot wait to see them perform again," Cheroyl McKibben, senior, graphic design, said.

The second annual Battle of the Bands was a huge success. For those who missed winners Between the Rivers performing at the Pilot House, you can catch them May 30 at Saint Louis' annual music festival Pointfest.

# UMSL wraps up spring semester with some multicultural inspiration

ASHLEY ATKINS  
Features Editor

Thursday, May 3, the Office of Multicultural Relations at the University of Missouri -- St. Louis will host a Multicultural Festival at the Nosh in the Millennium Student Center and Rotunda area. The events, which will take place from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., will also provide students with some activities on the outside lawn.

"This event is a part of many activities that [the Office of Multicultural Relations] have conducted this year for students, faculty and staff. One of the department's goals is to promote and support cultural awareness on campus," Natissia S. Small, assistant dean of students and director of the Division of Student Affairs,

said. "This event provided us with another opportunity to educate and promote cultural awareness on campus."

Although the event is entirely coordinated by the Office of Multicultural Relations, its goal is also supported by the Office of Admissions on campus, as well as the Office of Equal Opportunity & Diversity, Student Life and Campus Recreation.

The Office of Multicultural Relations believes that this event will provide students and the surrounding community with an opportunity to appreciate, value and celebrate the many faces that grace the halls of UMSL.

"The festival will showcase on- and off-campus resources available to assist

and support our diverse student population. You will be provided with samples of food, history and performances that represent the diversity that we see on campus daily," Small said.

It was also mentioned that some of these performances will come from UMSL students. The UMSL Afro-Cuban Ensemble is expected to perform, as well as the Korean Fusion group and the gospel choir. Talent from the St. Louis community will consist of African Drumming and Song, Asha Prem and Dances of India.

Small said that during the planning of the event, she was inspired by the students who expressed interest in sharing their own histories with the community

through song and dance.

"It is my hope that their efforts provide a valued experience for all that attends this event. I am looking forward to witnessing the diversity of the campus [students, faculty and staff] taking the opportunity 'tell their story' to one another, understanding that this event is a small step to understanding the unique differences we offer as individuals, yet reminding us that we share an important purpose that has brought us together as a campus community--education!" Small said.

The festival will be free of charge to those who choose to participate or attend.

Are you looking for another way to immerse in

various cultures? The Gallery Visio, located on the lower level of the MSC, is hosting an exhibit entitled "Multicultural Expressions" from April 27 to May 16. The exhibit is a student exhibition that celebrates the vision of cultural diversity.

"We decided to create an exhibit celebrating cultures from various countries. Students, alumni, faculty... everyone was able to submit however many pieces they chose to submit," Fannta Drummer, senior, liberal studies, said.

"We have pieces here that are abstract. We have realism, surrealism... This is why the show is such a success. There is not one piece in here when we say 'Well, that is too political.' Every-

thing fits," Drummer said.

Drummer acts as an intern for the Gallery where she studies under Stephanie Sivils. "I am a visual artist that works with multimedia and I enjoy what I do. I decided to get fully involved in Gallery Visio because it is my calling. It is a position that I will most likely be doing in the future," Drummer said.

The Gallery celebrated the opening of its exhibit last Thursday by having two artists perform. One performer was a DJ from the U student radio station and the other was a songstress from the Department of Multicultural Relations who dabbles in guitar. She performed a couple of songs that were made popular by the artist India Arie.

## Glass ceiling still a harsh reality for women in the workplace

SHARON PRUITT  
Opinions Editor

*Continued from page 4.*

The way women are raised to behave in society is also said to play a role in the wage deficit between the sexes. The different ways that men and women are taught to view themselves and their worth from an early age can affect how likely it is for employees is to ask for raises, thus acquiring fair compensation for their work.

Beyond battling discrimination that takes the form of "boys' clubs" in the workplace, developing salary negotiation skills is seen as a way for women to continue actively fighting the good fight for equal pay. Resources like the Wage Project (wage-project.org), an organization that regularly hosts

workshops on the subject for students and women in the workplace, exist to help women learn to negotiate the best possible salary for themselves.

"I think the future is

"I think the future is bright for female UMSL [University of Missouri -- St. Louis] students, but in today's world, it's imperative that in addition to having skills in your chosen field, you have skills in networking and negotiation."

---Dayna Stock

bright for female UMSL [University of Missouri -- St. Louis] students, but in today's world, it's imperative that in addition to having skills in your chosen field, you have skills in networking and negotiation," Stock said. "Some of the gap is

attributable to wage discrimination, but women can help themselves and close the gap by knowing their value and negotiating for the best salary possible. Many women find

it uncomfortable to negotiate, but when you realize how much you stand to lose if you don't, it's well worth it. We need to be more confident about asking for what we want and know we deserve."

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# Sports



Erin Driskell, senior, business, races down the line as Maryville tries to recover the bunt on Wednesday, April 18 2012.

ERICA THOMPSON / THE CURRENT

## UMSL Softball 2012 season review, thoughts for future

**OWEN SHROYER**  
Sports Editor

It has been an up-and-down year for the women's softball team. With a few seniors on their way out, the final double headers of the season offered the Tritons a slim chance at a Great Lakes Valley Conference post season tournament rebirth for the University of Missouri -- St. Louis. In a year filled with the growth and development of freshmen players, it was the seniors on the squad who had it all at stake for the final two double headers.

Needing a lot of help around the conference to get into the post season, the

women's softball team tried to make the impossible happen, starting in Springfield, Illinois for a game against the University of Illinois -- Springfield.

Starting game one for the Tritons was Jena Boudreau, freshman, nursing. Boudreau had been pitching for the Tritons and had been nearly unhittable in her last three outings.

Game one was a thriller. UMSL got on the board first, scoring a run in the second. Illinois -- Springfield answered with a run of their own in the third inning and then struck again for two runs in the

fourth inning to take the 3-1 lead. A homerun by Shannon Beatty, senior, social work, in the fifth inning, along with an RBI single from Brianna Butler, freshman, early childhood education, tied the game at three runs apiece.

It all came down to the final frame, and it was Illinois -- Springfield that got the walk-off hit to win the game 4-3, a crushing defeat for the Tritons. They struggled to recover from the loss.

Game two was not as exciting. There was a lot of offense, including three hits from Erin Driskell, senior, business,

and a homerun from Butler. But it was not near enough, as Leslie Davis had trouble getting outs and gave up 11 runs, nine earned, in a Tritons defeat, 11-5, for all intensive purposes, eliminating the Tritons from the post season. Illinois -- Springfield went 4-0 against the Tritons this season.

Although their shot at the post-season was over, there was still one double header left to play at Quincy University. The Tritons split their home series with Quincy, and hoped to finish the season strong.

The first game was all Tritons. Boudreau was back in

form, going seven innings and allowing two runs while striking out seven. The offense was seeing the ball well, as the 2-4 hitters in the Tritons batting order combined for nine RBIs and nine hits. Boudreau had a monster game, with three hits and two RBIs to go with her stellar pitching performance.

The Tritons looked to finish the season strong in game two. Bourdeau started again, but could not go the distance as she gave up two runs in three innings, which was enough for Quincy to win the game, as the Tritons could only muster one

run in the season finale. The Tritons finished the season 27-25 overall, with a conference record of 16-18, just outside the playoff picture.

Beatty, Driskell, Monica Strube, senior, physical education, Courtney Gahan, senior, marketing, Stephanie Benson, senior, criminal justice, and Heather Arras, senior, criminal justice are all leaving the team at the end of the year. However, the Tritons have plenty of talent coming back next season, as well as some future commitments from players around the nation.

# Tritons lose against Miners, rained out: defeat Quincy

**LEON DEVANCE**  
Staff Writer

For the University of Missouri -- St. Louis Tritons, Saturday was a complete washout.

The Tritons lost the opening game of their scheduled double header against Great Lakes Valley Conference Western Division leader Missouri S&T with a score of 6-3 in a key conference game.

The second game was then cancelled when rain swept in between the two games.

The loss left the Tritons' record at 24-18, 16-13 in the GLVC. Charlie Mohr, senior, business administration, was the Tritons' best offensive weapon, delivering three hits in four at-bats that included two RBIs.

This victory gave the Miners a record of 28-11, 17-8 in the GLVC. The Miners grabbed a quick 4-0 lead, scoring two runs in the first and third innings. Mohr doubled in John Pilackas, senior, biology, who led off the bottom of the fourth inning with a leadoff double.

The Miners then plated two more runs in the eighth inning to stretch their lead to 6-1, with the Tritons committing two errors. Mohr then struck again as he singled to right field to score Pilackas, who tripled in the gap in right center.

The Tritons scored the final run in the ninth inning as Trevor Nathanson, senior, business administration, delivered an RBI single that plated Drew Standefer, junior,

nursing, who reached base on a pinch single. Pilackas, at the plate with two runners on, represented the Tritons' last chance as the tying the game, but instead he sent a fly ball out to center field to end the game.

Four Tritons players collected two hits, including Pilackas, who also scored two runs, and Nathanson, who contributed an RBI single for the Tritons, extending his hitting streak to eight games. Lucas Matecki, junior, business administration, added two hits to his team leading nine games.

Adam Radick, junior, communications (4-4), suffered the loss as he allowed four runs on nine hits in 6 2/3 innings. Radick struck out three and walked two batters.

The Tritons had better results against the Quincy Hawks on Tuesday. On the April 15 double header, the Hawks broke one of baseball's golden rules, running into an out at third base to end the ninth inning as they tried to grab an extra base. Matecki's relay to shortstop Jeremy Butler, senior, business administration, cut down the Hawks shortstop Drake Austin to preserve a 6-5 victory. The Tritons then completed the sweep by winning the second game, 4-2.

The Hawks returned to make up the game rained out on April 14 and grabbed a 7-1 in the top of the

fourth inning before the Tritons plated six runs in the bottom of the inning to tie the game at 7-7, eventually winning 9-7.

"[The Hawks] just lost a tough game," Tritons baseball coach Jim Brady said. "It is tough to regain your composure in 30 minutes. Losses like that tend to demoralize you."

While comeback wins against quality completion builds confidence, Brady feels the Tritons are a different team from the start of the season.

"Quincy was the conference champion last year and almost everybody came back. We feel that if we play our A-game, we are capable of playing with anybody. This team continues to evolve and get better and better. Just look at the Cardinals. They made believers out of everybody as they overcome overwhelming odds because the sky is the limit," Brady said.

Brady also said that the Tritons always put themselves in position to win. "Well, we know what we did put [Quincy] in a great position to win. At the start of the game, we were not in tune with what we do. But this is a mature team that plays with confidence until the game is over. This team is about battling back and finding a way to win the next game. We keep playing like that, then I like my chances," Brady said.

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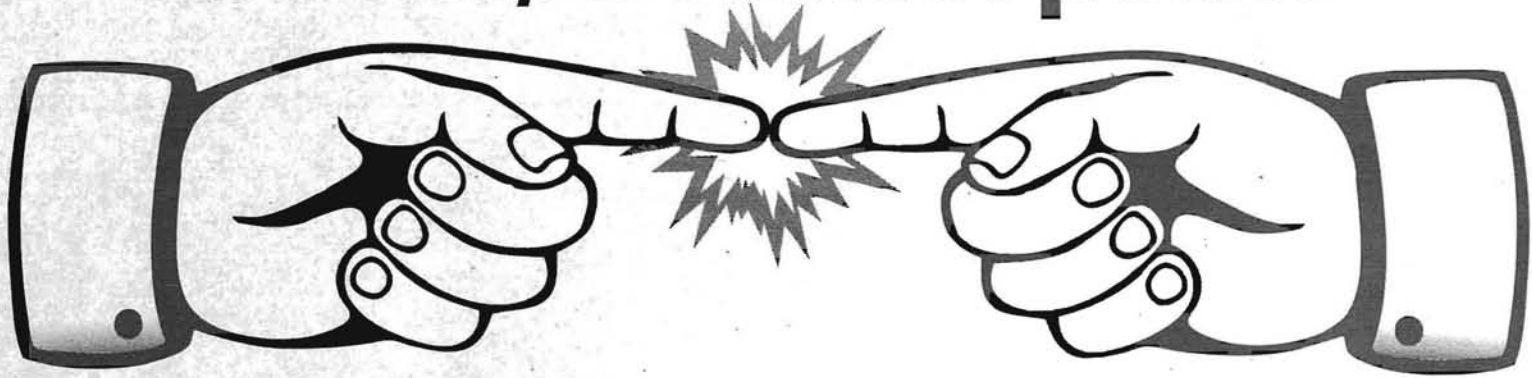
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# Point/Counterpoint



*Should social websites like Tumblr and Pinterest ban pro-anorexia content?*

## Anorexia should not be celebrated on social media

Recently websites such as Pinterest, Tumblr and Instagram have made news headlines over the pro-anorexia and “thinspiration” photos, quotes and blogs that have been posted on their sites by users.

While some people view these sites because they feel that they are overweight, others are appalled at the motivational pictures posted as a method of extreme dieting and sharing unhealthy weight loss goals.

One such example comes from the blog “Light as a Feather, Thin as a Rail,” which provides a disturbing inside look at how much these girls want to lose weight. The owner even posted about celebrities such as Natalie Portman in “Black Swan” as a diet guide and Victoria Beckham and Kate Moss as people to look up to.

However, what these young girls fail to realize is that some people have always been skinny and have at several times in their careers been shamed for being too thin by the public and paparazzi. Nicole Richie, who was also showcased as a role model, almost died from being too thin in 2006.

In a country that has always been known for an overwhelming issue with women wanting to be super-model skinny, sites such as Pinterest and Tumblr

should ban these images and the accompanying messages they send to girls as young as 12, messages that they are too fat because they can’t fit into a size zero pair of jeans. Although doctors will admit that the United States is suffering from an obesity “epidemic,” that doesn’t mean people should freak out every time they hear about someone weighing less than they do. Just because someone is smaller than you doesn’t automatically make you unhealthy.

A few weeks ago “The New York Times” published an article about a new trend that’s grown popular with brides in America. It’s called the “feeding tube” diet, and it consists of brides-to-be eating only 800 calories per day, through a feeding tube, for 10 days. A bride who tried the diet was quoted as saying that there was no harm involved because her doctor was there with her every step of the way and because it was a crash diet, not a prolonged one.

People are still talking about how disgusted they have become at the brides who reportedly lost about 15 to 20 pounds by trying to lose weight the quickest and most extreme way they can. Whether it’s through surgery or fasting for a month, this is the real epidemic that is plaguing this country.

Pinterest and Tumblr are both becoming websites that are used internationally, so many parents are worried when they see their size-14 daughter not eating or getting tips from websites about how to hide anorexia from their loved ones.

What people who are “pro-ana” (short for anorexia) do not realize is that this form of extreme dieting has a dark side that could easily become the quickest way for teens to die. The anorexia epidemic that, according to the CDC, already claims the lives of 10 million men, women and children each year could very easily become a leading cause of death.

Losing weight can be a valuable lesson if it’s done correctly and in a healthy way. Actress Jennifer Hudson lost weight by working out and eating smaller food portions. Singer-songwriter Beyonce and actress Kate Winslet are just two people who are great role models to look up to; they exercise and eat healthy without resorting the extremes when trying to lose weight. The next time any woman thinks that she is too fat, she should just remember that in the real world guys are not just attracted women like Victoria Beckham and Nicole Richie or to a single size or type of woman. Be confident and embrace your curves.

## Banning content does nothing to solve the real problem

If there is one thing that cannot be contained, it is an idea. The Internet plays host to all sorts of unsavory ideas and beliefs. However, the rights of freedom of speech and expression supersede how unpleasant some of us may find some of the content that’s being hosted and shared on the Internet. As long as no one is getting hurt, you can’t silence someone just because you don’t like what they’re saying. What you can do, however, is fight back – and that is what websites like Tumblr and Pinterest should be doing, rather than engaging in censorship.

Eating disorders and unhealthy body images are very real problems among both girls and women today. Pro-anorexia content, which glamorizes both disordered eating and an unhealthy body image, has been around for a very long time. It is a very involved culture among many people.

The fact that this type of material has such a strong underground presence just goes to show that we, as a society, have a lot of work to do when it comes to correcting the damage done to girls and women by living in a body-and-sex obsessed world that upholds strict, unattainable beauty standards. Pretending this subculture doesn’t exist is not the answer.

That does not help any of the people involved – they will just find other spaces online.

The rise of pro-anorexia content on social websites illustrates the rise of a very real societal problem, one that we are all responsible for trying to solve. Banning the content makes a showy statement of disapproval, but what good will disapproval without action do? It can even have the effect of strengthening the underground pro-anorexia community, as nothing brings people together like a sense of shared alienation.

By banning the content, sites like Tumblr and Pinterest are shutting down the conversation without engaging in it. They’re indulging in an empty sentiment while simultaneously ignoring the real problem and neglecting to actually do anything constructive about it. Banning the content would perhaps be justifiable if it was paired with something meaningful that showed actual dedication to the issue. Moves like this make it seem as if these sites are all bark and no bite – against unhealthy beauty ideals for girls and women, but not enough to actually do anything to help those girls and women. They seem more concerned with their own reputation and distancing themselves from unsavory material

that parents or politicians might object to. Reducing the issue to a PR stunt is disrespectful to all of the girls and women who are suffering, both physically and mentally, from eating disorders like anorexia and bulimia and the self-harm that stems from the pressure of unhealthy and unattainable beauty standards. For them, “pro-ana” content is not just a hot button topic or eye-catching headline, but a very real presence in their lives that has very real consequences.

Those who are truly dedicated to fighting negativity in our world would be wise to do so by countering it with a healthy dose of positivity. Don’t just ban the content – get people talking about the underlying issues. These sites are where people are meeting and that opportunity should be used to bring awareness to an issue that too often stays in the shadows of the Internet.

Rather than seeking to stamp out that which cannot be truly eliminated, websites such as these should seek to counteract such influences with positivity, knowledge and communication. This would be a fine opportunity for these sites to launch awareness campaigns aimed at girls and women about the unhealthy beauty ideals in our society.

## SCIENCE MATTERS

## Consilience Conference puts UMSL in scientific spotlight

University of Missouri – St. Louis is often overlooked and under-rated, despite having some first-rate academic programs, particularly biology. It is hard to be noticed in a town with two major universities with medical schools.

But last week this campus garnered a little extra attention when the world's top evolutionist, Edward O. Wilson, was the keynote speaker at the three-day Consilience Conference, April 26-28, sponsored by the College of Arts and Science.

Wilson is a very famous scientist and author. His research focuses on ants, a social species, and he has alternated that research with publications that apply evolutionary theory to other fields of study. He has won two Pulitzer Prizes, was named one of "Time" magazine's "25 Most Influential People" and is credited as one of the founders of the environmental movement. He is a sometimes controversial figure whose writings on human evolution have sparked some debate. When economists say that in the future they will not credit Adam Smith as the founder of their discipline but Charles Darwin, Wilson had a role in that. His 1998 book "Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge" introduced the topic of consilience.

Consilience is defined as "the agreement of two or more inductions drawn from different sets of data; concurrence." The unifying concept in consilience is evolutionary theory.

Wilson's talk on Thursday drew a big crowd, not just professors from this campus and some interested students but people from around the area, just for the chance to hear this evolutionary giant speak.

How is it that such a sci-

entific rock star landed on our campus? Credit the organizing power of three faculty organizers, Patty Parker, chair of the Department of Biology, Dave Rose, chair of economics, and Joe Carroll, curators' professor of English. These three worked in collaboration with Ron Yasbin, Dean of Arts and Sciences and Debbie Baldini, Continuing Education Assistant Dean. Parker is an internationally recognized expert in evolution and conservation. Carroll's area of expertise is consilience. Dave Rose helped organize extra resources from the Department of Economics to help make it possible to bring Wilson here.

But the thing that really persuaded Wilson to come was the assortment of high-quality, diverse speakers already scheduled.

It is an intriguing group of topics, presented by top names in their fields. John Hawks, a paleoanthropologist looking at the genetics of human evolution at University of Wisconsin – Madison, offered an intriguing talk on Neanderthals, the surprising findings in comparing their genomic sequence with modern humans and apes and what that means for culture, human evolution and patterns of dispersal.

Ellen Dissanayake, a cross-disciplinary author and lecturer at University of Washington who focuses on the arts in evolutionary biology, cultural anthropology and other fields, offered an intriguing hypothesis that linked early humans' primitive markings with the universal adolescent impulse for doodling and graffiti.

Economist Robert Frank, Cornell University, suggested that economists in the future will be guided more by Charles Darwin's principles than Adam



Cate Marquis

Smith's "invisible hand."

Dan McAdams, chair of the psychology department at Northwestern University, described the evolution of personality traits, their adaptive functions in society, using George W. Bush as an example.

The intriguing subjects went on: "Evolution of Morality" was presented by a mathematician in game theory, Herbert Gintis. Massimo Pigliucci, City University of New York, who holds doctorates in evolutionary biology, genetics and philosophy, talked about how consilience is "a unification of knowledge that crosses ... the divide between two cultures (science and humanities)." "Graphing Jane Austen" was the topic for UMSL's Joe Carroll, who literally "wrote the book" on Literary Darwinism, as one source put it.

Other topics included "Cold-Blooded Kindness: Insights into Pathological Altruism" and "The Evolutionary Riddle of Fiction." Both were offered by top-flight scientists. The range of topics was exceeded only by their unexpectedness.

Certainly this was a conference worthy of attention. Best of all, there are plans for a different topical conference next year.

Cate Marquis is the A&E Editor and a columnist for The Current.

## MAD WORLD

## The trouble with being a black parent in a mad world

A black mother looks down at the infant son she holds in her arms. It is his first day of life, and he looks as innocent as can be, wrapped up in the hospital blanket and cradled safely in her arms. It is his first day of life, and he is absolutely beautiful.

Despite the beauty of the moment, however, a strange amalgamation of thoughts runs through her head.

She knows that there is no protection that she can offer him against an institution that does not work in his favor. She wonders how she can teach a child that when it comes to him, no matter how clear-cut the case may seem, the pursuit of justice may be a long hard road. That he cannot count on law enforcement to help him. That if he calls the police for help, he's more likely to be treated as a criminal than a victim.

How does she teach a child that the society he was born into is in no way, shape or form on his side?

She will have to instruct him how to be seen as a victim in the case of his own murder. Never get into any sort of trouble at school, never post obnoxious Facebook photos and you sure as hell better keep all of your receipts on you. Don't be born with skin too dark, don't be too "mean-looking," or wear certain things in certain ways. Be careful of how you talk and around

whom, smile to show that you're friendly, keep your hands where they can see them and have a reason for being wherever you are at any given time, especially if it is a neighborhood where someone may think you look like you don't "belong" (a permission slip signed by a white person is preferable in many cases). Stay out of certain neighborhoods, don't play your music too loud and don't make eye contact for too long. Don't avoid eye contact for too long, don't touch the merchandise and don't come in if you're not going to buy something. Don't laugh too loudly, don't hang out in groups of your peers that are larger than three and don't wear your hood too low. Don't be too tall, too large or too "scary." Keep your nose clean and your head down. It is never self-defense. These are the rules you must follow so that you can avoid looking suspicious.

How can she teach him that he can never fully avoid looking suspicious, no matter what he wears or how he talks or the things he says or does? That so many of these things are beyond his control, no matter how hard he tries? These are questions she must ask, because it is not, nor will it ever really be, just the clothes he is wearing or the way he is walking or the car that he drives

or the area that he is in that makes him look suspicious. How can she teach him that there are some people who will only see him as things that he is not, no matter what he says, does or accomplishes? That who he really is won't always matter. How can she teach him that whatever he says or does, big or small, will not only be a reflection of himself but of every young black male? His actions and words will not be attributed simply to himself, as an individual, but as a greater representation. How can she teach him that if he goes missing, it will not be front-page news? That his life will be seen by many as being worth less than that of a blond-haired, blue-eyed white girl? That this will be clear not necessarily in what is said, but in what is unsaid? What else can she say to him? "Son, it's a mad world out there."



Sharon Pruitt

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What else can she say to him? "Son, it's a mad world out there."

Sharon Pruitt is the Opinions Editor and a columnist for The Current.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Let us know at [www.thecurrent-online.com](http://www.thecurrent-online.com)

## Comics

## Simply Beagle by Karlee Sellars



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