

# THE OAKLAND POST

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

March 31, 2010

Volume 36, Number 29

# Survey Pills

Sixty percent  
of students  
support MIP  
amnesty.

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Save the date:  
Wednesday, April 14 at 6 p.m.  
outside the Oakland Center.  
See back page for details.

Cover illustration by Jason Willis

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"To provide a forum for news, information, opinion and discussion for the Oakland University community."

— The Oakland Post mission statement

# Perspectives

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www.oaklandpostonline.com

March 31, 2010

STAFF EDITORIAL

## We want a re-vote!

### *Club sports referendum mishap is cause for do over*

Student voting had a shaky start Monday morning.

Forty-one students cast their online ballots before a problem with the referendum regarding club sports funding was fixed.

The ballot question asked whether club sports should directly receive 5 percent of student activity fees. They currently receive about that same amount of money through the Student Activities Funding Board. In turn, the SAFB would receive 5 percent less of the fees. This was proposed originally by the SAFB and club sports.

What should have been a yes or no question, the referendum presented some of these first voters with three options from a 2008 student election about what the university should do with excess funds. If the referendum question wasn't confusing enough, the completely unrelated options presented to some of the voters made it worse.

If this were any other game, everybody at the table would be screaming misdeal.

Even if the final count is one way or

the other regardless of these 41 votes, there needs to be a re-vote.

Perhaps the reason why Oakland University Student Congress and the representatives from club sports don't seem worried about this is because they assume they wouldn't make a difference.

One OUSC member admits that he doesn't think it would matter because students will vote yes for anything. In 2005 and 2006, similar yes/no questions regarding percent changes in funding for the direct-funded organizations were passed.

Every year, a committee of leaders from direct funded student organizations, including The Oakland Post, look at the appropriations of funding. This year, the committee took their own vote on whether or not the club sports issue should be presented for students to decide.

The Oakland Post, WXOU and Student Video Productions all voted against putting it on the ballot. While we can't and don't speak for other organizations or individuals, it makes sense

that people might think the margin won't be significant enough to have a re-vote.

Voters probably assume that something is on the ballot because it's a good idea. It's not as if there was a petition going around to get it on the ballot.

It's not as if there was any more publicity for this change other than what The Post printed in a news story (that admittedly, not everybody reads).

One of the reasons The Post did not want this issue to be voted on by students at this point in time was because of the fact that there is very little knowledge of what club sports does or has available.

We believe the club sports representatives when they say the club sports council is working to remedy this lack of awareness, but shouldn't that have been done before the students even voted?

Candidates for president and vice president were out in full force telling students what they stood for.

We expect the same from any group that is looking for us to pass anything in their favor.

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##### Letter Policy:

Writers must provide full name, class rank, phone number and field of study. Please limit letters to 250 words or less. Letters may be edited for content, length and grammar.

## THE OAKLAND POST TRIVIA CONTEST

Do you read our paper cover-to-cover? This contest is for you!

- 1) What's the third school that may partner up with OU for dual enrollment?
- 2) What exercise does Fit for Life focus on each Friday?
- 3) How many times does Hadi Alzawad pray each day?
- 4) Why is Towbey Kassa important to the women's lacrosse team?
- 5) What noise can be likened to a robot giving birth in an electrical storm?

Directions: The first reader to answer all five questions correctly will win a prize!

E-mail your answers to oakpostcontest@gmail.com with "Trivia Contest" in the subject line.

#### CORRECTIONS CORNER

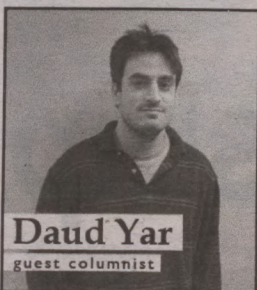
• Last week's Local piece "Get your noodle on" incorrectly stated that guests would receive 25 percent off their meal. It was meant to read that if the customer mentioned the National Kidney Foundation, Noodles & Co. would donate 25 percent of their purchase to the foundation.

The Oakland Post corrects all errors of fact. If you know of an error, please e-mail oakpostmanaging@gmail.com or call (248) 370-2537. You can also write us at 61 Oakland Center Rochester, MI 48309.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

- The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States

# The lesser of two evils depends on your party



**Daud Yar**  
guest columnist

We all — at one time or another — have taken some time out of our busy schedules to sit down and watch television. Unfortunately, with great innovation comes unforeseen but inevitable side effects: mutants that are unwanted but creep to the surface. MSNBC and FOX NEWS are two of these mutants.

As much as both networks are complete opposites, one compliments the other like Batman and the Joker; Harry Potter and Lord Voldemort; Yin and Yang. Launched just 4 months apart from each other, these networks have niche characteristics that any viewer can associate with; conservative FOX is entertaining and comical while liberal MSNBC is boring and juvenile.

FOX knows how to popularize its agenda or pre-constructed narrative. People need to be told opinions — even with extensive blackboard use — no matter how factual or creative they are. This is something MSNBC fails to understand. Air America's demise is a good example. Never challenge people to think, tell them what to think. It is clear both strategies could better suit the public.

So who benefits from these two media mutants? Look no further than those that run our glorified country: Politicians. The lawmakers of our land reap the rewards from the labors of both these networks via live inter-

views. This platform allows any politician to articulate his or her position on current legislation while criticizing the other party. These tactics allow for audiences to favor a certain party over the other.

Politicians do help with extreme partisanship of both networks, but there is more than one way to skin a cat. There are two other kinds of broadcasting: opinion and news. What carries the most influence? Well lets find out ...

Most would think the pundits do most of the work, but this is not the case. Take Bill O'Reilly for example. O'Reilly has an audience of three million people on average over his 16 years on the air. He is, also, the most popular TV pundit to date. Three million is only 1 percent of the overall U.S. population. This means no one watches pundits. Even Rush Limbaugh only yells at 16 million or 5 percent. The pundits are the most politically fundamentalist group, but they are as influential as Keith Olbermann's rhetoric.

So the pundits are peanuts. That leaves the reporters. For those of you who attended journalism classes, you know news folk are strongly suggested to report without opinion and prejudice. Well it turns out both these networks should report unbiased, objective news, but they would rather make money. Every day both of these networks supply the hottest and most popular stories, and they are not afraid to skew the facts a smudge. It's like selling your soul for ratings.

Both networks may not be objective, but there are underlining tones in their reporting. FOX tends to report on stories that make us feel uncomfortable about

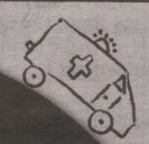
national security. The other FOX theme is simply "Yay America." Can you say Republican values?

MSNBC tends to report like Senate Democrats: What are we doing? Why are we here? Can we just think about this for a second? Fortunately amongst the confusion, the network sticks to the script with the help of Democrats willing to speak about Washington business.

Let us not forget about the selection of experts each network offers. Their opinion may look like news, but a simple click to the next network shows an equally wrinkled face spewing a different point of view about the same topic. Who's right? Well ... are you a Republican or Democrat? Either way, partisanship is the only product being offered.

This is the goal. It is much easier to influence a constituent than a centrist on any issue. Let's assume a Republican cheats on his wife. Conservatives will be more considerate and may forgive the politician for his actions even though the politician violated a core conservative belief. A liberal individual will be as sympathetic to Democrats who do not pay their taxes. And why does this happen? Because most individuals become very partisan as FOX NEWS and MSNBC fan the flames of their biases.

FOX NEWS and MSNBC are complete opposites, but they share a common objective apart from making a profit. The goal of their TV programming is to create a choice between good and evil; right and wrong; black and white with no other alternative. So next time when a news story reports on heroes and villains, do yourself a favor. Change the channel.



## POLL OF THE WEEK

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### LAST ISSUE'S RESULTS

total votes: 81

How do you feel about the newly passed health care bill?

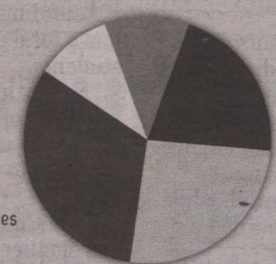
**A** I think it's awesome, and will have a positive influence on our country.  
17 votes > 21%

**B** I think it's a terrible piece of legislation, and will be detrimental to our country.  
21 votes > 26%

**C** It's a small step in the right direction, but more action needs to take place.  
26 votes > 32%

**D** This bill has been re-written so many times that I don't even know what's going on.  
8 votes > 10%

**E** I haven't decided yet - I'm going to wait and see what happens.  
9 votes > 11%



### CURRENT POLL

Do you think the OUSC voting snafu warrants a revote?  
See our editorial on page 4!

**A** Yes, I don't care if the 41 invalid votes make no difference in the outcome -- I still want each vote to count.

**B** No, because it's just going to be a waste of time.

**C** I don't really care. I didn't even vote the first time.

**D** Yes, but only if the numbers are close enough that it would make a difference.

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor:

There are at least a couple of reasons for skepticism about the AAUP's "no confidence" balloting:

- The AAUP leadership, hardly a neutral party to the ongoing fight, appears to have been solely responsible for counting the ballots, either electronically, by hand, or both.
- A snap (24-hour) poll like this one works to the advantage of those most agitated and/or aware of the process. Add that it was held on a Monday — when faculty are most likely to be distracted with the week's preparations — and one can expect significant bias to the outcome. It is pretty clear that the intent was to advantage the "true believers." Turnout was reportedly 48 percent.

In fairness, the AAUP's "no confidence" initiative has had the salutary effect of bringing the president back to earth regarding communication. That its architects could not bring themselves to declare victory at that point makes this look more like a jihad. The scorched-earth sextet at the heart of this darkness must retreat for now. They will bide their time and return sooner than the rest of us wish to resume hostilities. Meantime, the several external threats to the institution loom ever larger, even as OU moves forward. Shared governance is actually a two-way street, requiring all of us to match "I want mine!" and "We're watching you!" with "How can we help?"

Pat Piskulich  
Political Science