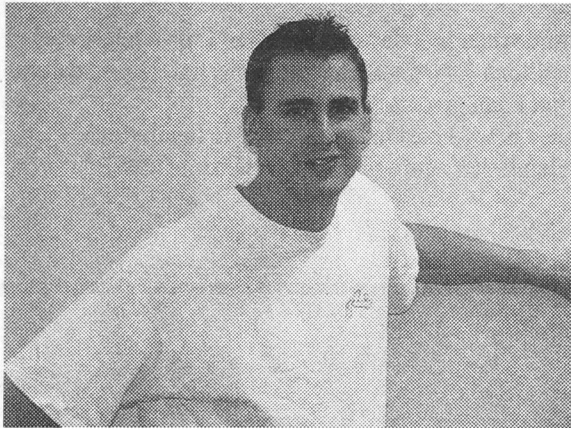




## CCSU Bids Farewell to Four of its Most Outstanding Student Leaders



**Andreas Bloch**

*Photograph by Kevin Dixon*

I have worked with the Ambassador's Club since 2002, and I served as a tour committee chair. I also worked in the Ambassador's call center as a supervisor. I was a Student Orientation Leader in 2001 and 2002, and I became the Student Orientation Team Leader for 2002 and 2003. I was a member of SAM from 1998 to 2002. I played for the CCSU Soccer Team in 1998 and 1999, and I have been the CCSU Basketball Stats Assistant since 1998.

I grew up together with my brother Michael in Berlin, Germany where I graduated from Lily-Braun-Oberschule. While I lived in Berlin my mom and dad (Dietlinde and Winfried) have been very supportive of my studies and allowed me to participate in a high school exchange program that became my ultimate springboard to become a student at Clayton State. Currently I am trying to get accepted to Grad-School in order to get my MBA.

The faculty in the school of business and the College of Information and Mathematical Sciences has been outstanding. I found their dedication and eagerness to help and interact to be the most beneficial to me. A special thanks goes to Dr. Deis, Dr. Nakos, Dr. Hubbard, Dean "Bud" Miller and Jean Jacques for making classes fun and interesting.

I will be receiving my B.B.A. in Marketing. I live in McDonough with my parents and my little sister. I graduated from Eagles Landing High School.

I have been a member of Honors Student Association for four years. I served as the secretary for two years and as the senior class representative for one year. I have worked with the Ambassadors, and have served as their secretary as well. I was a Student Orientation Leader for one year, and I have been on several committees for the school.

My plans are to work in a marketing firm, hopefully in promotions or advertising.

My message to the campus would be what I tell any student I meet and give tours to: "Clayton State is as fun as you make it. If you want to have a good time and be a part of student life, you have to get involved. There is a lot to do, but you won't know what unless you join a club or organization on campus. You can't complain if you aren't willing to try and make it better."



**Anika Chambers**

*Photograph by Michelle Lawrimore*



**Raechel Nebergall**

*Photograph by Michelle Lawrimore*

I am receiving my Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Human Services

I have been a member of the Honors Student Association for four years. I served as the president of HSA for one year and as the activities committee chair for 2 years. I have been a member of the American Humanics Student Association for 3 years. I also participated with Ambassadors, Campus Crusade for Christ, and the new Inquiring Minds Psychology Club.

I live in Tyrone with my mom, dad, and brother, Daniel. I went to high school at Pace Christian High School.

Future Plans: I am traveling to Sarajevo, Bosnia with CCC in September and I will stay for a year to do mission work. When I return I hope to attend graduate school. Ideally, I would like to get into a Ph.D. program in Counseling Psychology and become a psychologist.

To Anika: Friend, I will never forget the way the Lord brought our lives together. "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you. In every prayer of mine I always make my entreaty and petition for you with joy for your fellowship in advancing the good news from the first day until now. And I am convinced...that He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ, developing and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you." (Philippians 1:3-6)

To the honors students: You all have so much potential. Thanks for teaching me so much and making my senior year a joy.

To Dr. Hatfield: I hardly know what to say. Thank you for believing in me. And every now and then you really do remind me of Dick Van Dyke.

To Dr. Sellers: The love of literature is a beautiful gift. Thank you. Oh! And just one more question...

To the Collective: Thank you for your wonderful friendship. I don't know where I would be without you guys. Remember, we will never truly be apart.

*Congratulations to all CCSU Seniors! Good Luck!*

I am graduating with a B.A. in Communication & Media Studies degree (one of the first ever, there's 3 of us graduating).

I am from a military family, and traveled quite a bit. I did my high school years in Warner Robins, GA and graduated from Warner Robins High School. I come from a family of five, mom, dad, brother (25) and sister (28). I have been at CCSU since Fall 1998.

Future plans: I have a few options I am currently looking into. The people I have met working with the Atlanta Thrashers has helped and the administration here at CCSU has been very helpful as well.

Departing message:

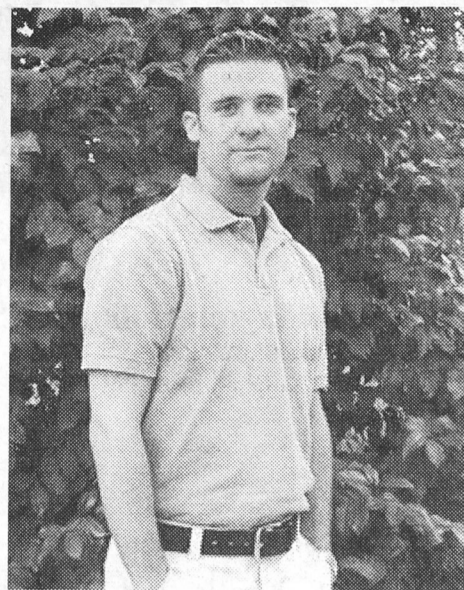
It's going to be different waking up every morning and knowing that I don't have school or some sort of class to go to. I mean, for the past 16 years I have woke up, gone to class, worked and came home. Now I have to be concerned with bigger aspects in life.

I was truly blessed in all my years here with a wonderful faculty. Most college students say that they have that "one" professor that helps them see the light, well I have a handful of professors that I can look back on and say, "I wouldn't be where I am now if it weren't for them." Stories like, if it weren't for a certain math professor here (you know who you are) I wouldn't have made it through the world of

integers and imaginary numbers and statistics. If it weren't for a certain communications professor I wouldn't have been able to push myself to the limits I had no idea I could go to (and he is still pushing others to this day—thanks Dr. Spence). I have a story like that for every professor I have had, and I couldn't give enough thanks for the guidance and support they have given me.

Outside of the class I was able to smooth out some of my writing skills by overseeing and really working on the Bent Tree Newspaper. What started as a one man paper with Scott Taylor (HUGE thanks to Scott) has turned into a wonderful voice for the student body. I know that I have left the paper in good hands as the Editor now has far exceeded what the first two editors have accomplished (Great job Michelle). Most of all the staff involved in Student Life has done a wonderful job in getting more and more students interacting with the entire student body. With our university growing on the rate it is, I see nothing but a wonderful future in store. And Jeff Jacobs, as many times as we have had disagreeing thoughts, I couldn't be happier with my time spent in Student Life. You've made the program what it is—don't let that go to your head!

I wish I had the entire newspaper to show my thanks to Clayton State, but I guess I need to wrap this up (I feel like I'm giving an acceptance speech at the Oscars—and the producers are telling me to get off the stage).



**Kevin Dixon**

*Photograph courtesy of Kevin Dixon*

And when that day comes, when I have made my millions, Clayton State will be the first place I call, so that I can give back all that they helped me build—we'll be in touch Reda! Thank You again to everyone here at CCSU!

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## *Intimate Insights*

**Q:** I was wondering if there is a way of enforcing a quiet atmosphere while trying to study in the library?

I hear cell phones going off all the time and people actually picking up and carrying on a conversation where the whole place can hear what is being said. I mean — Come on! I do not care what your plans are, who they are with, etc., etc.!!!

Then you have peopled who think that the library is a gathering place. They swarm in here and talk loud and just basically have no sense of respect for others that are trying to study.

Are the library staff members not aware of this situation? I don't think so—maybe if they ventured out of their desk area, they would know!

I think this is absolutely ridiculous. Some of us actually come to the library to study and need the quiet time to concentrate. We can't go home because some of us live far away and if we have AM classes and PM classes, the library is a convenient place to be in between.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE—is there any way to direct this message to the proper authorities and have some kind of regulation to enforce a quiet environment? It is getting to the point where I am considering transferring to another university.

**A:** I think the library has already tried to make some changes. Have you seen the "no cell phone" signs that are posted literally on everything in the library? Does that stop people? No. I don't think you are going to find a library at any school that offers a completely quiet environment. If the librarians were any stricter, we would feel like we were in elementary school. It's difficult to say what the best course of action would be here. We basically have adults who are inconsiderate of others and who feel that their agendas are more important than others. Maybe it says something about our human nature or about our American culture. If it bothers you that much, you could try going to the Clayton County public library in Jonesboro. Maybe just students are selfish.

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## *Classified Ads at Clayton State*

**ROOMS FOR RENT:** Two furnished rooms for rent, \$390 per month and \$410 per month plus 1/3 utilities each, in Morrow, 5 minutes from CCSU. House in quiet residential area has digital satellite TV, washer, dryer, dishwasher, central heat/AC, off-street parking, and carpeting. Georgia State University graduate seeks two male roommates, international students welcome. (770)968-0822 or [benwilliams@mindspring.com](mailto:benwilliams@mindspring.com).

**CHILD CARE SERVICES:** Ellenwood. Sunday-Friday, 6:00am-8:00pm. Children 2 weeks old and up. Meals included. CAPS accepted. [Sweetpea5443@aol.com](mailto:Sweetpea5443@aol.com) or Ms. Ford at (678)289-1122.

## Over so Soon...My Thoughts on CCSU

By Brian Gardiner



For the last 21/2 years, I have spent the majority of my life at Clayton State. On May 10<sup>th</sup>, I will walk my way across the stage at graduation and will move forward into a new part of my life. During my time at Clayton State I have undergone a few less than pleasurable experiences, a few wonderful experiences (I got engaged, believe it or not I have a soul) and I have learned a great deal. The majority of what I have learned has revolved in some way around academics, but hasn't necessarily been academic in the traditional sense of the word. So, as a result of my experiences I have decided to divulge to you a little bit of advice that, if you listen, will be extremely helpful.

One of the major advantages of going to a school the size of Clayton State is that each student has the opportunity to develop a relationship with their professors. At Clayton State there are a great deal of wonderful professors that are more than willing to talk to you about, class, life, or whatever. If you do not take advantage of this you will not get everything that Clayton has to offer. I can honestly say that in my personal experience, the best part of my education at Clayton State has been the professors that I have had the pleasure to meet. In particular, I have a few professors that I would like to thank. Dr. McCarty, thanks from the bottom of my heart for everything that you have done. I know I am not the only person who feels that way. Dr. Deering, I don't think I could have mentally made it through last semester without you. I am forever in your debt. Dr. Thompson, thanks for being you, it's refreshing. These professors have helped me in a great number of ways ranging from simple advisement to helping me cope with a range of problems that I would wish upon no one. If ever you are in need, any of these wonderful professors, as well as most other professors on this campus, are more than willing to help. If you never seek help, don't expect to receive it. This is probably the best advice I can give to anyone entering college or just returning to the scene. Your professors are accessible; take advantage of it!

I personally have heard a number of people complain about there not being enough to do at Clayton State. These are the same people that are more interested in partying than going to school and are likely to say to their professors "Do you think that we don't have any other classes?" Those of you that whine about the difficulty of the courses, or are more interested in partying, *should* go somewhere else. You could go somewhere like Georgia Southern (where I went at first), where you are more likely to end up in a gutter your first year than you are to actually pass your classes. However, if you are interested in an institution that prides itself on achievement and is full of extremely well-qualified and brilliant professors, stay awhile, you'll be pleased. Simply put, if you shut up and pay attention, you will learn a lot here, and you will be marketable.

Now, let me take a moment to gloat, in the hopes that some of you can understand that it is possible to perform well in school regardless of what is occurring outside of class. Since I have been in school I have worked an average of 25-35 hours per week, every week. At the same time I have taken between 15 and 18 credit hours a semester, every semester, including the summer. As a result, I have finished my Bachelors degree in 2 years and eight months, with honors. I am not particularly smart, and I have never cheated on anything, ever. At this point some of you are saying, that's no big deal I work more than that, or I have fifteen kids. Well, I AM NOT TALKING TO YOU. I am explaining this to the kids, many of whom are probably younger than me (I'm 20), that complain about being too busy or never having free time. Look, you are going to have to learn to manage your time or you are not going to make it, so shut-up and put out or get out. But, I really hate to have my last paragraph end on a sour note so: sugar.



### Make Your Summer Vacation Fun

By Ashley Spillers

What do you plan to do this summer? There are a few options if you really think about it. Some people choose to spend their summer being lazy; sleeping all day, watching television, and avoiding any type of work. Other people enjoy using their summer as a way to be productive, creative, or adventurous.

One option would be to find a summer job. A summer job can be anywhere—a clothing store, a restaurant, or an office. This is a great way to earn some money for the following school year.

Some college students take the summer as an opportunity to find an internship that will help them later on in their career. The summer is a small window of opportunity to see what real life will be like in a particular job situation. The internship will help the student gain experience in their field, and offer a chance to add on to their resume.

Other students decide to take classes during the summer. Clayton State has a few classes that are offered during the summer. The summer classes give a student a chance to earn some credit hours with a relaxed atmosphere. A creative alternative to a regular class schedule during the summer is to participate in the study abroad program. The study abroad program gives a student a chance to see a different part of the world, to travel that part of the world, and to see how another group of people live. Steve Spence comments that, "For most students, it's a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see the world while they are still young. People either go while they're in college, or they have to wait 30 years and go after they retire." The study abroad program is a great opportunity for students.

As you can see, the summer does not have to be a boring couple of months that end up with wasted time. There are many useful and fun ways to spend your summer vacation.

### Tearing Your Hair Out? How to Cope...

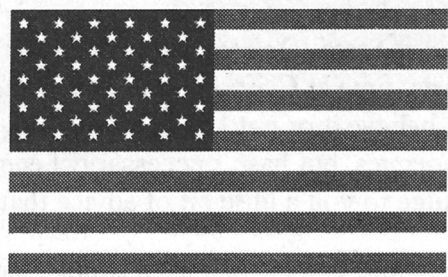
By Redd Horrocks

It's 3 a.m. Your paper is due in six hours, you haven't slept in two days, you've gone through nine cups of coffee and half a box of Krispy Kreme's since midnight. Your body is screaming for you to let it go, just give up and crash... but No!!! You must finish your paper! To top it all off, you have writer's block and have been doodling your name and something that looks vaguely like a rhino for the last half hour. You know that you shouldn't have procrastinated this long, but now that you have, what can you do about it?

Okay, this is what you did wrong (other than procrastinated). First, the coffee was a bad idea. Coffee is a diuretic, basically meaning it makes you urinate more frequently. All those times you had to go to the bathroom interrupted your train of thought. Drink water, or herbal tea if you can stomach it. Water enhances brain activity and gets all your thoughts flowing again. Avoid soda; caffeine and sugar are not the answer. Okay, the donuts. Yes they taste yummy, and the sugar may have pepped you up a bit, but now that it's gone, you are going to crash, probably right when you had an epiphany and were about to make the main point of your essay or solve cold fusion or something. Eat fruit. Bananas are best because they provide you with energy and natural sugars which won't make you crash so easily. Trust me, the donuts will make you want to curl up into a little ball if you aren't careful. Play some music or turn on CNN. Something that gives you background noise but doesn't catch your attention too much can help some people. Turn off your cell phone. Get comfortable.

Stress is rough. To be plain, it sucks. But when you are studying, the little things put together can help you through a rough night. If all else fails, you can go to bed and get up early to finish the paper. You may have a fresh perspective then. Sleep deprivation can add to stress and increase those little mistakes that your professor is sure to notice.... and point out.... in front of the whole class.... We all know that you shouldn't procrastinate, but that's like saying you shouldn't lick a frozen telephone pole. Everyone knows you shouldn't, and yet sometimes you just can't help yourself. Chill out, calm down, drink some water.... you can do this.

# War



# In

# Iraq

## Students' Opinions

### Resentment Towards America

By Chris Collins

There is a great amount of resentment toward America in the world today. In almost every country there is someone in power that does not like how Americans live, how Americans spend their money, how Americans eat, or how Americans became Americans. With a world full of many different countries, each with many different states, all with different people, many of them are not going to like Americans for one reason or another.

American is the top country. How many people are there flocking into France, or Russia, or Canada because of their great economy or their superior education or for the chance to live out all their wildest dreams? They live by the same basic rule as the liberals of this country; bring everyone down to a lower level instead of bringing people to a higher level. Luckily, we live in America where it is left up to the individual to decide on how they want to live their life. Only in America can you live the American dream. The American dream just happens to be almost everyone's dream. It is like in high school or middle school, you loathed the kids that were rich and got to do all the cool stuff and had the nice cars. It is just that you didn't like them because they had that; you disliked them because you wanted what they had. You envied them. That is the same thing that is going on in the world today. People 'hate' America because we drive SUVs and we make hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. They 'hate' us because we go to college and learn and own our own businesses. They 'hate' it that we do not give enough back to the rest of the world. Just one problem, what has the world given us? They did not give us anything, it was made right here in the great land of the USA. It was hard work and determination, something every successful American knows about. It is really funny how the same Beijing college students that threw rocks at the American embassy (after the accidental bombing of China's Embassy in Yugoslavia) soon applied for American visas to come study here. Why would they do that? Because they know it is only in America that they can get the opportunity that they want, to live their lives to the best of their abilities. We are Americans; we are the best because we will not settle for anything less. God bless the United States of America!

### What Does it all Mean?! Just Tell if Saddam is Dead.

By John Maruyama

The following is a briefing on some common military terms used in the coverage of war on Iraq; I will also offer my opinion on the issue of whether or not Saddam is alive.

**Division** - A division is a medium sized military unit—smaller than a corps (which is comprised of several divisions) but larger than a brigade (approximately 5,000 soldiers). A division may be armored or mechanized. An armored division contains armored vehicles, such as M1 Abrams tanks. A mechanized division has motor vehicles, both M1 Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles; however, a mechanized division usually carries less tanks than an armored division.

**Battalion** - A subgroup of a division that can be further broken down into companies.

**Sortie** - A sortie refers to any single operational flight by an aircraft.

**Global positioning system** - A navigational system supported by 24 satellites orbiting the earth. These satellites send out radio signals of their position and time, which are then detected by GPS receivers. The GPS receivers use this information to calculate its own position (within a few meters) on the planet—its longitude, latitude, and altitude. The GPS system is useful in synchronizing attacks between military units and navigating through a homogeneous desert devoid of road signs.

**Is Saddam dead?** When I refer to Saddam, it should be noted that Saddam may not refer to a fixed person, since it might refer to one of his many body doubles or Saddam himself. I will therefore distinguish between the unfixed "Saddam," which could contain one of his body doubles or the real Saddam, and the fixed Saddam, which must contain the real Saddam. After the initial strikes, "Saddam" provided a live broadcast of himself reading some document wearing glasses; however, the document contained no time references, so we cannot be sure when this took place. After this appearance, and in the interval of time before an appearance in the streets of Baghdad, any "Saddam" sighting was pretty inconclusive. During this time, "Saddam" was shown meeting with military officers, but we could not hear the content of their communication nor see any visual evidence (for instance, a recent paper) which might reference some point following the initial attack, showing that "Saddam" has survived. The latest broadcast of "Saddam" greeting people on the streets of Baghdad, however, does give us visual evidence placing "Saddam" in the period of time after the initial strikes, since it shows black smoke in the background presumably caused by coalition strikes or recent burning oil fields. So, we have two hypothesis: Saddam is alive and Saddam is dead. The above evidence I mentioned—"Saddam" reading with his glasses, and more conclusively, "Saddam" greeting people in Baghdad—support the hypothesis that Saddam is alive. I should mention that the support is minimal because the unfixed "Saddam" is supporting a hypothesis about a fixed Saddam. What about the hypothesis that Saddam is dead? Assuming the hypothesis is true, and that the Republican Guard units and the Iraqi leadership close to Baghdad know it to be true, then we might derive the following proposition: Republican Guard units or some Iraqi leadership around Baghdad would be surrendering to the coalition forces in significant amounts. Of course, this is not happening, which lessens the probability that he is dead. Although I admit my hypothesis is supported by limited evidence, I say that Saddam is alive.

## War What Is It Good For? Shaping the Future for our Children

By Tony Farrell

On September 11, 2001 my 5-year-old son watched with a horrified nation as four passenger jets, filled with civilians, crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center, a field in Pennsylvania, and the Pentagon. An act of terrorism that left 2948 confirmed dead and fifty more reported missing or dead. That's twice as many confirmed dead than resulted from the 1941 attack on the USS Arizona in Pearl Harbor. (*Please Note: The USS Arizona had military personnel not civilians*)

There has never, prior to that notorious day in September, been a successful attack on the continental United States by a foreign power.

A couple of weeks ago, nearly two years after the attack on the U.S., my son proudly displayed a recent drawing he made of the Statue of Liberty with an American tank firing rounds at a terrorist plane flying overhead. Shortly after that, he and his four-year-old brother were playing biochemical warfare.

This is the reality of the world they will grow up in.

Meanwhile our country finds itself split between two opinions: War or Peace? Protesters pick sides. Protesters who, like me, grew up in a time when their only real concerns, as children, were what Saturday morning cartoon to watch and Captain Crunch versus Cookie Crisp. Attacks on the U.S. were simply storylines in Arnold Schwarzenegger action movies.

How long will it be before our children are playing thermonuclear warfare? Incidentally, I didn't even know what those words meant when I was their age. However, not only do my sons know what these words mean but also they see them as a possible future. This was confirmed on September 11, 2001.

Now keep in mind that I am not a politician. My politics are mostly shared between my barber and me. You can rest easy at night knowing that the fate of our nation does not rest on my shoulders. There are a lot of things I don't fully know or completely understand.

For example, was diplomacy truly exhausted with Iraq? I don't know.

But I do know this; dictators that show absolutely no regard for their own countrymen will show absolutely no regard for mine. Dictators that put their own civilian children in harms way will not think twice about jeopardizing my children's safety.

This is the reality of Iraq's children, it has been their past and it is their present. We, as a nation, are helping to determine their future. And our own children's future as well.

**The Bent Tree welcomes feedback on our work. A recent complaint was made about "the half page devoted to the speech of a child who had been fed half-truths at best" that was included in the war feature of the March issue. The rest of the response follows:**

The military is taking great pains to avoid hurting civilians - especially children. The problem is that Saddam Hussein is hiding his military behind women, children, hospitals, mosques, and historical buildings. The protestors point to the bomb shelter full of civilians that was destroyed in 1991 to demonstrate the evil of the United States. Does any of these people remember the pictures of dead Iraqi mothers clutching their dead children in the futile effort to protect them from the poison gas that Hussein dropped on his own people because they dared disagree with him?

Saddam has at least 14 palaces, yet his people starve. Has anyone seen how the Iraqi people fight for the food and water that our military is giving to them?

Saddam Hussein pays \$10,000 to the family of Palestinian suicide bombers, yet the protestors say there is no link to terrorists. There are terrorist training camps in Iraq, yet the protestors say there is no link to terrorists.

Some say that this is a unilateral action. United Nations resolutions 678, 1441 and at least 10 others, stipulate that military force could be used if Iraq did not comply with the requirements set by the Security Council. For 12 years he ignored the UN.

It is said that if you do not learn from history, you are doomed to repeat it. Approximately 65 years ago there was a man elected to lead his country. He quickly built up his military that he was not supposed to have because of international agreement. He began murdering his own people. He invaded a neighboring country, claiming that historically, it was part of his own. The French and others did not want to get involved militarily. It was not their problem. That man was Hitler.

If it was blood for oil, we are already in Kuwait. We could just claim victory there and take the oil. At the time of this writing, our troops control the southern half of Iraq and over 600 oil wells. If this were about oil, we could just keep them. We are protecting them from the man who tried to burn them so they can be given back to the Iraqi people.

Some say we are trying to set up a puppet government after Hussein is defeated. We defeated Japan and Germany, rebuilt them, and let them govern themselves. I believe that the same will happen in Iraq.

Protestors encourage Hussein and discourage our troops. Lets unite until this is over and then go back to bickering over tax cuts and social programs.

By Chris Burdette

## US versus Iraq

By Richard Hotard  
Csu16006

As a former Marine, one might think that "I" would be all "Gung Ho" and approve of the US going to war with Iraq. I do believe that Saddam needs to be removed and a legitimate democracy be installed. But, unlike back in 1991, when the whole Arab community and the world was up in arms over Saddam's aggression against Kuwait, we do not enjoy the same camaraderie and support from our Arab brothers as we did 12 years ago.

Iraq is no threat to the US. The people of Iraq are no threat to us either, only Saddam! My current belief about the US becoming the police force for the United Nations and the world is probably controversial to some. Were we nominated? No we were not. Our leaders just took it upon themselves to become it.

Let the Arab world deal with Saddam on their own terms and turf. When they come screaming for help after getting their tails kicked, then we go in. But in the mean time, all this money being spent on this endeavor could be put to much better use here at home.

Inside my circle, those who know me know, that I am a "take care of family first" kind of guy. The citizens of America are my family from a global viewpoint. How about we concentrate on our own problems, and let others worry about theirs, and when it is time, let all the oil rich conglomerate countries pay through their nose for us; just like we have been paying through our nose for their oil since the early 1970's!



## Wedding Special: Two Sides of the Story



### Being a Groom is Not Easy

By Keith Bleckley

It starts out with you going on a date with a girl that you think you might like. Then you are telling this girl that you love her. Things are going along nicely and you are very happy. Then one day it hits you: you are truly, madly, and deeply in love with this girl. The two of you have talked about the future, but nothing very serious or certain. All of a sudden you are talking about marriage. The next thing you know you are on one knee – if you are a gentleman – and you are asking this girl to spend the rest of her life with you. And to your amazement she says yes! What now? Well, you are now a groom and will be getting married in the near future. You have quite a bit of planning to do and a multitude of decisions to make. The first and probably most important of these decisions is: What kind of groom are you going to be?

There are essentially two types of grooms in this world. There are those that will say, "Tell me what to wear, where we are getting married, and what time to show up for the wedding." Then there are those that will say, "What can I do to help you plan this wedding? I want to be as helpful as possible." So you have to ask yourself what kind of groom you are going to be. If you are going to be the groom who just shows up, your job is done and you do not have to read any further; although, it would probably do you good to finish reading this article. If you are the kind of groom who wants to be helpful then below you will find a list of things you can do to help keep your bride from becoming what is known as Bridezilla. The first thing you should do is read the article in this issue titled, "How to Avoid Becoming Bridezilla." It will help you to better understand this creature and the havoc it can wreak on a newly engaged couple. After you have read that, look at the list below.

- 1) If you want life to be really easy then listen to what the bride has to say. If you do not agree that is fine, but be mindful of how you state your disagreement. Remember, she has been planning this day her entire life. There has been no input but her own and she wants this day to be perfect!
- 2) This is your day too. Be sure that your bride knows what you want – refer to Item 2.
- 3) As you know by now, the average American wedding costs \$9,000. You can pick up your jaw now. You may spend less or more than this. Try to give your bride everything she wants . . . within reason of course.
- 4) When planning a wedding some people choose to use a Wedding Planner/Coordinator. This can be a great reliever of stress to both the bride and groom. You may not always agree with the Wedding Planner/Coordinator, but they are very knowledgeable and have great connections. Most Wedding Planner/Coordinators will try to give you the wedding you want within the budget you specify.
- 5) If your bride does not use a Wedding Planner/Coordinator she may use something called [theKnot.com](http://theKnot.com). This is an online Wedding Planner that is free and easy to use. There is one downside though – you will more than likely get very tired of hearing, "But [theKnot.com](http://theKnot.com) says this . . . or [theKnot.com](http://theKnot.com) says that. . ." Just listen to what she has to say and be supportive.
- 6) The bride's mother will want to help with planning. This is just a fact of life that you can not change and that you have to deal with. Suck it up and be polite.
- 7) Be kind. Do the little things that you know your bride likes. Try to make them surprises when you can. She needs to feel loved – especially by you!
- 8) If she asks you to do something, do it as soon as you have time or right away depending on the urgency of the matter.
- 9) If you want to live a long and healthy life then you should come to understand that your life has now forever changed. You are about to make one of the most serious commitments in your life. You may not be able to hang out with the guys as much as you used to. You may also find that pizza is not the greatest meal in the world to everyone – even if it has all of the major food groups! Basically, you are making a major change in life so you may want to try and keep up.

### How to Avoid Becoming Bridezilla

By Amanda Sahlbom

Congratulations! Chances are you're reading this article because you've just become engaged and are planning a wedding. Recently, I also became engaged and started planning a wedding. Little did I know what I was getting into! The myth about planning a wedding is similar to myths found in fairy tales. Supposedly, the girl meets the boy . . . they fall in love . . . the boy asks the girl to marry him . . . they are both happy . . . they have a beautiful wedding . . . and then live happily ever-after.

Unfortunately, there is one small detail left out in this fairy tale story. It occurs after the engagement ring loses its sparkling captivation and the bride realizes she must plan a wedding. Shortly, thereafter, she turns into Bridezilla and the groom wonders what happened to his beautiful bride.

By this time, you may ask yourself "What is Bridezilla?" Bridezilla is a monster that bears a striking resemblance to the previous bride-to-be. She stresses and worries about planning an elaborate, well-thought out ceremony that costs extravagant amounts of money. She is a scary individual who will demolish anyone or anything that stands in the way of her end goal.

Now, I'm not trying to scare any grooms-to-be away from proposing or trying to scare brides-to-be away from accepting a proposal. However, I am trying to warn you about the future and provide tips about how to avoid becoming Bridezilla.

1. Hire a wedding coordinator. Wedding coordinators can be expensive; however, because of their experience and connections, wedding coordinators can save you money and your sanity.
2. If your budget does not allow for a wedding coordinator, [theKnot.com](http://theKnot.com) is your best friend. Yes, your fiancé will get tired of hearing, "But the knot says . . .," but this website is an excellent and free planning tool.
3. Mom is not always right, but she is never wrong. It is important to undertake your Mom's help in planning a wedding. She can be a pain, but she can also be a very wise decision maker.
4. Set a budget and then double it! The average American wedding cost \$9,000.
5. Do not procrastinate! Start planning early. Research indicates that it takes approximately eight months to a year to plan a wedding. While it can be done in less time, planning a last minute wedding is always more stressful.
6. Do not stress about the little things! If the bridesmaids don't like the shoes you picked out, let them pick out their own shoes.
7. Involve the groom! Sometimes the groom wants to be involved in the planning process, but doesn't want to ruin your wedding day plans! Incorporate his ideas with yours so that he feels that it is his wedding day as well as yours.
8. Keep the wedding party small. While you may feel awkward leaving some of your friends out of your wedding, a small wedding party makes for a more intimate ceremony, better pictures, and less hassle in coordinating schedules. (It also means less money spent on gifts!)
9. Keep your priorities straight! Don't let the wedding plans run your life.
10. Remember you are only planning a wedding! Your wedding day is the first day of the rest of your lives together!

- 10) And last, but not least, you are marrying another human being. She has thoughts and feelings too. Be mindful of such things. Consider the consequences of your actions more thoroughly because there are now two people involved in the decision making process.

This may seem like a lot, but there could be more. I did not want to tell you everything and ruin all of the fun! The planning of a wedding is a great time to work together to achieve a common goal and not kill each other in the process. Just remember to be kind and loving, be supportive, and communicate. A great deal of emphasis will be placed on the wedding day; try not to forget that the wedding day is only the first day of the rest of your life together.

# Why Doesn't it Last? Are Your Relationship Lacking Commitment?

By Michelle Lawrimore

Anyone who has taken Intro Psych is familiar with the eight stages of psychosocial development identified by Freud's student, Erik Erickson. Most college students are struggling with the "intimacy vs. isolation" stage. We have the desire to develop companionship and love with another person, but we must overcome our fears of rejection and disappointment first. Most of us probably would say that our primary goal for adulthood is to get married. However, marriage does not necessarily mean that we have achieved intimacy. Many adult relationships are superficial and unfulfilling due to a lack of true commitment. Commitment essentially means binding yourself to another person with a promise to work on, build, and maintain a relationship.

Notice the word "love" was not included. Love is not required for commitment; it just makes it easier and more fun. There is a quote in my sociology of marriage and family textbook that says, "Commitment means a willingness to be unhappy for a while. You're not going to be happy with each other all the time. That's when commitment is really important." The book also discusses the "80 percent I Love You/ 20 percent I Dislike You" phenomenon, meaning that you will never be 100 percent satisfied with any partner. It's actually somewhat of a miracle if you can be satisfied with 80 percent of another person. Often, we make the mistake of focusing on the 20 percent of things we dislike or feel dissatisfied about, and we will take for granted the 80 percent of things that we are happy and satisfied with. Often people who are ready and willing to commit make the mistake of choosing a partner who is less ready or willing to commit. Unfortunately, the person who is less committed holds all of the control in the relationship. They have the "put out or get out" mentality, not necessarily just pertaining to sex. They basically insist on getting their way all of the time or else they will just bail on the relationship. They have nothing to lose because they have invested so little. The other partner has invested much more, and therefore has a greater desire to hold the relationship together, even if it means they give in to their partner's wishes all of the time. The single strongest factor in influencing the success of a relationship is the level of commitment. That is, both partners have an equally high expectation that the relationship will grow, be strong, and last. When people are committed, problems that arise become obstacles to overcome, not brick walls that bring about an end to their journey together. Overcoming the problems strengthen a relationship. A tendency to consider breaking up or divorce when problems arise indicates a severe lack of commitment.

Commitment styles and attitudes are formed and displayed within families. We all initially learn what commitment is supposed to be like from our parents, siblings, or guardians, even if it is a very distorted version of the truth. We also teach our children through our interactions with them, our observable interactions with our spouse, and the interactions that we encourage and discourage between siblings. One way each family member gains a healthy view of commitment is through being able to trust that the other family members can be depended upon for support, love, and affirmation. This is evident in families that pitch in to help each other when someone is overworked, in need, or in crisis.

Learning about healthy commitment early in life helps people to become cooperative adults who are open-minded and good at compromising. The ability to commit oneself allows for stability and enthusiasm about the future. People who have this quality can make plans for their futures and enjoy emotionally intimate relationships without fear. Commitment does not mean losing one's identity or removing all social boundaries; it is simply a willingness to stay in a relationship and promote that relationship's growth. It is really just a promise to not give up or desert, but instead to work through and improve. Being able to commit means being able to be trusted and to be depended on for support, validation, and continuing consideration for the well being of one's significant others.

## Are You Afraid of Commitment?

1. Do you want to get married someday?

- A. Yes, definitely
- B. Maybe
- C. Probably not
- D. Never

2. The idea of getting married at your current age and status makes you feel:

- A. Overwhelmed
- B. Doubtful
- C. Excited
- D. Happy but Hesitant

3. Why do you think some college-aged people experience feelings of anxiety about marriage?

- A. Because they are eliminating all other dating prospects
- B. Because they want to establish themselves financially first
- C. Because they are not emotionally ready for the commitment
- D. All of the above

4. Some people describe an urge to flee from the situation when pressured about marriage. If your significant other began pressuring you to get married, would you:

- A. Openly and honestly disclose that you are not ready
- B. Go ahead and get engaged
- C. Break up with them
- D. Continue to date but make things less serious

5. The relationship you observed between your parents can best be described as:

- A. Volatile and unpredictable
- B. Warm and loving
- C. Suspicious and lacking trust
- D. Friendly and casual

6. In response to you, your family members:

- A. Are willing to help anytime for any reason
- B. Usually keep to themselves and do their own thing
- C. Are often busy but will help when you're really in need
- D. Expect you to solve all problems without their help

7. In response to your family members, you:

- A. Think they must be responsible for all of their stupid decisions
- B. Support them unconditionally and give limitless help
- C. Help them when they are badly in need
- D. Try not to get caught up in their business

8. Five years from now, you see yourself:

- A. Married with a child and a good job
- B. Still in college, partying and dating
- C. Living with your parents and saving money as you work
- D. Living alone in a stylish loft in a busy city

9. If your best friend asked you a year in advance for a really big favor, would you:

- A. Immediately agree
- B. Agree tentatively
- C. Say you're unsure
- D. Say you cannot

10. Which of the following is the most appealing quality in a boyfriend/ girlfriend:

- A. Unconditional love and forgiveness
- B. Trustworthiness and faithfulness
- C. Optimism, open-mindedness, and a sense of humor
- D. Impulsiveness and constant desire to have fun

Scoring:

- 1. A-1, B-2, C-3, D-4
- 2. A-4, B-3, C-1, D-2
- 3. A-3, B-1, C-2, D-4
- 4. A-2, B-1, C-4, D-3
- 5. A-3, B-1, C-4, D-2
- 6. A-1, B-4, C-2, D-3
- 7. A-3, B-1, C-2, D-4
- 8. A-1, B-4, C-2, D-3
- 9. A-1, B-2, C-3, D-4
- 10. A-2, B-1, C-3, D-4

If you scored:

**10-17 Ready to Commit**

You have the ability to develop healthy relationships. You are not afraid to be emotionally vulnerable or intimate; you learned well from your family. You have reached the appropriate maturity level to take that next step and fully commit yourself to another person, and you know what qualities are most important for having long-term success.

**18-25 Willing but not Ready**

The only obstacle for you to overcome to be able to commit yourself fully to another person is your own emotional maturity. It is normal. You may feel like you are too young for commitment now, but you will handle it well in a few years. The best thing for you to do now is to focus on developing your own independent identity and to do a lot of introspection to find out what you really want for your future in every aspect of life.

**26-33 Deliberately Distanced**

For one reason or another, you want to maintain your status of having no strings attached. You love your freedom, often too much. It can prevent you from experiencing the love and belonging that is so humanly necessary. You're not hopelessly destined to be old and lonely though. You have time to change. You can gain insight into your behavior by reading books about commitment and attachment. If you still find yourself shying away from long-term relationships, therapy is not just for crazy people.

**34-40 Commitment Phobe**

You've never experienced a truly loving and trusting relationship. You don't know how to open yourself up to another person and you are afraid to be that vulnerable. You put up a façade of being a wild child and enjoying the company of many casual acquaintances, but it's really just compensation for your extreme loneliness. You will be miserable if you do not change. Therapy is highly recommended for you.

*This questionnaire is intended for entertainment purposes only. There is no empirical evidence for its reliability or its validity.*

## Clayton's Poetry Corner

### You are my hero

You are my hero, soldier man  
you were all you could be;  
Because you shed your blood and died  
I now have liberty.  
In silent anonymity  
you fought with all your might;  
Defending us with steadfast will  
both morning, noon, and night.

Your sacrifice is not lost on me  
but lo, I must confess  
The things that I feel in my heart  
my words cannot express.  
You answered to the call for help,  
you laid your fears aside;  
And though I deeply mourn your loss,  
I now shed tears of pride.

How can simple words express  
my gratitude to you  
If I can never see things from  
a soldier's point of view?  
You were fearless, loyal, proud, and true  
courageous, strong and brave;  
Your country's pride and gratitude  
go with you to your grave.

For my freedom you have paid  
a high and costly price;  
And for my freedom you have made  
the final sacrifice.  
You are my hero, soldier man,  
you answered to the call;  
And for the life we now can live,  
you are best of all.

- Sandra McGill

Lying there beside you  
on frosted sheets  
my black see-through humiliation  
softly hid my pallid skin  
your breathing deepened  
in the layers of slumber  
and blankets and only then  
did you find your comfort  
But as each bead of  
salted moisture  
ran down my warm cheeks  
and sought absorption in my fluffy pillow  
I turned toward the window  
and saw myself in the foggy panes,  
my little black baby doll  
hidden by the covers that tucked you in  
to sleep  
I closed my eyes in embarrassed silence  
and awakened to the kiss of  
cold sunlight on my face.

It sinks through me like lead.  
your gaze incoherently drops through me  
leaving in its wake  
my momentum  
my pride  
my soul.  
I follow you  
riding waves of desperation  
down to rest—  
a boulder on shaky ground  
you walk away  
My eyes drill holes into you.  
Does your heart sink like mine?

her cheeks are on fire  
tears sizzling into steam  
as they roll down into the  
flames  
it's time to go  
her fingers surge  
she wants to rip into the walls  
instead she looks to the floor  
it trembles beneath her feet  
betrayal seethes itself beyond her veins  
the structure rumbles with her scream  
primal, raw  
fear is replaced by unfeasible hatred  
her vision painted red  
the closed door looms ahead  
capturing the bitch inside.  
it will open soon.

-Lindsay Baxter

### Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the obstacle  
Between what is and what could be  
Only by embracing it  
Can one ever be set free

Engulfed by hurt or anger  
One's heart will turn to stone  
The peace and warm well being  
Will forever be unknown

The tormentor has forgotten  
Moved on with no regrets  
The heavy burden lies  
With the one who can't forget

A pardon opens the path  
Between depression and elation  
The barricade is a mental wall  
Of leery hesitation

-Michelle Lawrimore

## Push it all Aside

By Redd Horrocks

Are we a society that holds too many  
grudges? Is it possible to forgive and forget?  
Is there any good in pursuing a hatred and  
dislike for someone?

I'm a very opinionated person, I tend to  
make up my mind about liking or disliking  
someone within the first two or three minutes  
of meeting him or her. From that point on, if  
I have decided that I like them, I only see  
their good qualities, and I constantly search  
for more reasons to like them. And vice  
versa, if I dislike them then I only look at  
their flaws. No matter how much they may  
try and be nice to me, I will constantly  
search for hidden agendas and I will be  
suspicious of every pleasant word. Is it just  
me? In a world where there is so much war  
and pain and suffering, are people unable to  
simply forgive? I'm English, and I have  
actually had German people apologize to me  
for World War II even though they were not  
born at that time and had nothing to do with  
it. It was a long time ago, nearly half a  
century before I was even born. Should I  
hold a grudge against all Germans because  
one of their distant cousins may have tried to  
shoot one of my distant cousins last century?  
It's bordering on racism, holding a grudge  
and taking it too far. I prefer to judge people  
on their actions to me, not the actions of their  
ancestors. But I digress. The issue is what  
do we gain from harboring a dislike for  
someone? It does give us a target for our  
anger, but so does a punching bag. We all  
live in this country, in this world. If we forget  
our anger and embrace one another, then we  
can stand united against the fears that we  
face. Instead of screaming and squabbling,  
we can try and see everybody's good side.  
We are all human; we all have bad days.  
We are all misunderstood at times, so lets  
make an effort to reach out, to forgive and  
forget.

A great band called Alisha's Attic once  
wrote a song called "Push it all Aside",  
which I shall quote from...

"Lets push it all aside and take a swallow of  
our pride, and realize  
That nothing could be sweeter than loving  
each other if we forget who was wrong and  
who was right."

I couldn't agree with them more.

## The Bent Tree Staff

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