

Campus  
Smoking Policy

UH Student  
with serious  
hip action  
page 6

Review:  
**HOT FUZZ**



# Dateline: Downtown

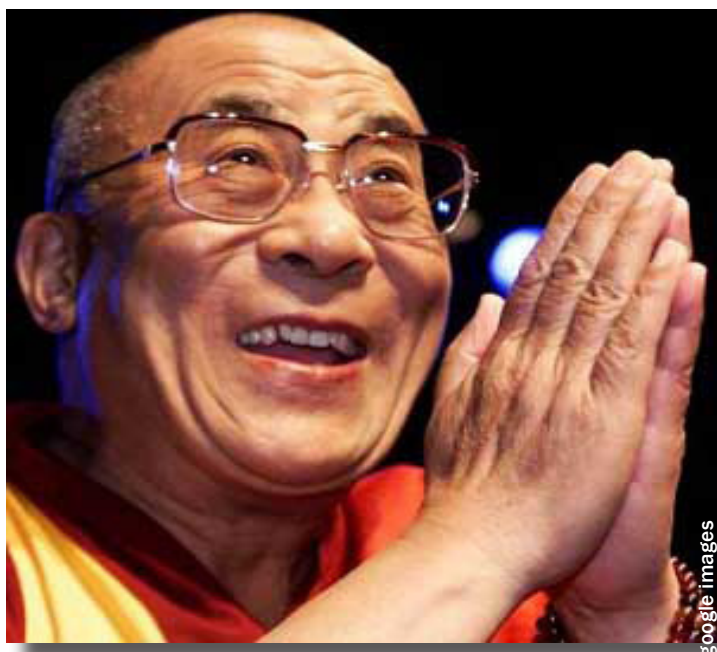
April 30 - May 12, 2007 NEWSPAPER FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN Spring Volume 38 Issue 7

S T U D E N T - R U N S I N C E V O L U M E O N E

## COOL WEBCAST

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Visits Houston  
Tuesday, May 1, 2007

While the event at Rice University is sold out, everyone can view the discussion live, via streaming video, at <http://webcast.rice.edu>



Google Images

## Avoid Burnout During Finals

Find out how to prepare yourself mentally on page 4



## The Climate Project visits UHD

### Global Warming and its potential consequences

By Joseph Recinos  
Dateline: Downtown

On Monday April 23rd, University of Houston-Downtown commemorated Earth Day. Mr. Gary Dunham, a representative of the Project Climate organization and advocate for Al Gore's movie "Inconvenient Truth" shared his concerns on global warming. Inspired by Al Gore's Oscar winning movie "Inconvenient Truth," Mr. Dunham created a PowerPoint presentation with pictures from Gore's book to

educate individuals who are ignorant or naive of the global warming crisis. Mr. Dunham presented explicit information on the consequences earth is facing due to climate change, such as the melting of the polar ice caps and the deaths of arctic wildlife due to this melting. He also spoke about the contributors to global warming.

Climate Project is a non profit organization founded by Al Gore and scientists who were concerned about the effects of global warming on earth. They wanted to alert individuals around the world about the dangers of

climate change. Climate Project's first initiative was to educate 1,000 individuals to become effective messengers to inform citizens of the repercussions of global warming. Gary Dunham was in the first class of these trainees, selected from a pool of 6,500. These individuals have the ambitious goal of eliminating global warming. In order to accomplish this task, they seek to educate citizens and governments across the world, and to challenge them to take immediate action.

Global warming is considered by most scientists

see GLOBAL pg 10

## Marketing Students team up with Bausch and Lomb

By Urban Marketing  
Dateline: Downtown

UHD marketing seniors were selected as one of five schools throughout the country to participate in a national competition to develop a marketing campaign for Bausch & Lomb.

Students enrolled in Dr. Madeline Johnson's course, Marketing Management and Strategy, created and implemented a marketing campaign to promote Lasik surgery to UHD students. Bausch & Lomb, a leading company in eye care, has a laser procedure

called Zyoptix that allows surgeons to customize Lasik for the individual eye.

Bausch & Lomb, in collaboration with EdVenture Partners, sponsored this unique learning program to give marketing students from select universities

marketing agency, Urban Marketing, which included event development, advertising, public relations, web-based marketing, and research. Bausch & Lomb provided them with a \$2,500 budget to implement their campaign. Each element of the campaign was designed to increase awareness of Lasik and its benefits to college students.

"...We have a very strong marketing program at UHD, and we look forward to showing Bausch & Lomb executives that our marketing students are excellent marketers!"

Dr. Madeline Johnson, UHD Professor

around the country the experience of developing, implementing, and measuring a marketing campaign. Twenty marketing students created a

Students were briefed on Lasik surgery on January 29 by talented ophthalmologist, Dr. Stephen Slade, from the Slade & Baker Vision Center, and Lauren Ries, Business Development Manager at Bausch & Lomb. On

see MARKETING pg 8

S T U D E N T - R U N S I N C E V O L U M E O N E



# IS IT JUST ME?!?®

## The Lure of Sports: Part II Racism Revisited

is this: what did you think about Don Imus? The talented, responsible, and mostly African-American Rutgers women were doing what they were told society wanted. They weren't just playing ball wonderfully well. They came back from underdog status with team of mostly freshmen, with no seniors. They made it to the finals against the powerhouse women from my home state of Tennessee (Go 'Vols!), going where no Rutgers team has gone before. But they were also good students with a variety of interests, including medicine and music. As Essence Carson, team captain, stated Imus "stole our moment of joy."

If people who play sports based on objective standards can be treated like this, is it any wonder those of us in jobs judged by subjective standards can be treated even worse? The Rutgers women were treated shamefully, but they can still play ball and go to school. The professors I mentioned in my previous article were out of work.

But wait! There's more! Imus' apology was fairly convincing because he didn't try to slide around it with the ever-popular ploy of blame-shifting. "I'm sorry if you felt that way." He said, straight up, that he was wrong. He was doing fine until....dun, dun DUN!! (menacing music), he decided to mention gangster rappers. Somehow he, and

the conservative talk shows, has been turning the criticism away from racist white adults to "brainwashed" black musicians. And people are falling for this?!?!?

I am the first to agree that some rappers need to clean up their acts. But I also teach about rap music, so I know there are many styles, from the tricky-party-rap of Run DMC to the growling anger of DMX; from the political preaching of Public Enemy to the fatherly love of Will Smith; from the positive pictures of black men created by Salt 'n Pepa to the negative images of Jay-Z calling Houston's own, the talented Beyoncé Knowles, his "number 1 'ho." Some of this stuff has got to go. I won't go into the economics of rap, a driving force in our capitalist society. I won't even go into the fact that, according to authorities, 80% of the Gangster Rap market is white suburban males.

What I will say is this: I don't know a single rapper (or family) who has belonged to the KKK. No rapper has lynched anyone. No rapper has denied a qualified person a job or a house mortgage based on race. No rapper burned down my sister's house when she was about to integrate a neighborhood. Self-hatred is part of the pathology of oppression. As Chris Rock has so aptly said about a number of issues, "I'm not saying it's

right, but I understand."

I resent Imus' lack of understanding in lumping all rap together, just as he lumped the entire Rutgers women's basketball together with a nasty epithet. I also resent those who use the Rutgers' women's accomplishments as the sole reason they shouldn't have been treated this way. No woman should ever be treated like this -- Ever. Whether they're on welfare or on the basketball court, once we learn to treat all women with respect, we're on the way to a healthier society. ■

**By Dr. Yvonne Kendall  
Dateline: Downtown**

Many on campus read my article on sports in which I spoke of professional sports as a career where a person of color could get the fairest shake, though the road was sometimes bumpy. I wrote that minorities with the best qualifications in more subjective jobs, like that of college professor, don't always get hired because of standards that were mysteriously changed to work against them.

My words provoked much needed discussion on important issues, a development I applaud. Some agreed with me; others did not.

But talking about this issue is the first step in dealing with it. However, some complained *about* me (but not *to* me). These people misunderstood my words and accused me of being anti-sports as well as a reverse-racist. This is interesting, not just because it's so far off base, but because several people of a variety of races, including Caucasian, told me they enjoyed the article and that it was no more than the truth. Their only complaint was that I was too gentle.

The complaints ranged from accusations that my recognition of racist practices encouraged the same, to accusations of my being a racist myself. I won't dignify any of that foolishness with a response. What I will say

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Op-ed

# Smoke-Free UHD?

By Doug Musgrove  
Dateline: Downtown

It's a rainy afternoon as I finish one of my classes. I have twenty minutes until my next class. That test was brutal, and I could really go for a cigarette. But wait! I can't because the University is now a smoke-free campus. So I walk out into the rain and down the hill just to have a smoke.

Far fetched? Not really. UHD is considering making the campus smoke-free sometime in the near future, so I interviewed several students, both smokers and non-smokers, to get their opinions on the situation. One young lady I talked to, Randi, a 24 year old junior who has smoked for about eight years, said "I can completely understand people not wanting us to smoke." But she doesn't feel that it's fair for the smokers not to have a designated area at all, even "one little section." According to Randi, this sections should be covered and be large enough to accommodate all smokers at UHD.

Next I spoke with Layla, a 25 year old junior who has smoked off and on for about ten years. When asked how she would feel if UHD went smoke free she said, "I don't think they should. I think they should have designated smoking areas like we do now." When asked how she felt about a smoking section being placed back by the cafeteria, she said "That would be fair, but they would need to cover it." Do you think the smoke-free campus would make you want to quit smoking? "I do want to quit, but school is so stressful, it makes me want to smoke."

Lisa, a senior who has

been smoking for only one year stated, "I think the smoking is already confined to specific areas, so if they really felt like it was a problem they should confine it to one area." Bennie, a 24 year old second-semester junior who has smoked for about eight years, said "I would be greatly opposed to a smoke-free campus. We have just as much right to smoke as the other people have the right to not smoke." What if we were given an area in the back? "They would definitely have to make some changes [as far as covering specific areas] because I am not going to endure the elements of Houston just to comfortably smoke."

Afterwards, I spoke with some non-smokers as well. Yolie, a 24 year old senior, said "I don't think it's fair to ban smoking all together. I mean, they have the front porch broken into smoking on one side and non-smoking on the other, and the wind is always blowing through there so it never bothers me." Mark, a 20 year old non-smoking sophomore, said he could care less either way. The smoking doesn't bother him, but if they decided to ban it, it wouldn't bother him much either. This level of apathy is common within the American psyche, and certainly more pronounced with those in their late teens and early twenties. When situations do not impact our lives directly, we tend not to care at all.

In reality, we are all adults here. The law says you must be eighteen to smoke; and, with a few possible exceptions, everyone on campus is over eighteen. While it is not very popular to say so, smokers have rights, too. I feel it would be unfair to take those rights away from us. I say "No!" to a smoke-free UHD. ■



## Students breath some fresh air and meet UHD's Student Organization



### SHOW OFF YOUR HENNA TATTOO

Top left: Sable, Biology major

Bottom left: Danyell, Urban Education

### MIKE AND IMELDA MAINTAINING THE PEACE.

Mike says jokingly, "Imelda is plains clothes doing undercover work." By the looks of it she is their to have fun and enjoy the day--with the students she protects daily.

Top right: UHD Officers (L) Mike Auzenne and (R) Imelda Rodriguez

glam shots by JUAN O

## Find A Routine For Final Exams

### Students offers tips to avoid burnout

By Andre Wojcik  
Dateline: Downtown

The days are getting longer, and the Houston heat is intensifying. Swimming trunks and bikinis that have been relegated to the bottom of the underwear drawer are beckoning. Yes, summer is almost here. As April gives way to May, students have one last academic hurdle to clear before they can hang their finally put away their bookbags and shelve their textbooks. Finals. A big hurdle at that. In many classes, final exams can make up a third or more of a student's grades, and all the work done since January is condensed into one test meant to reflect the semester's academic progress. So how do we prepare for these monster tests so that we get the

grade that we feel we deserve?

Having a plan of attack is important. Decide which classes need the most attention and in what order you want to tackle them. Make sure you are certain that you know exactly what the professor wants you to know on the test. Review the material in the textbook and make flashcards of the most important information. Writing down things you need to know is a good way to burn the information into your memory.

Time management is also important. Give yourself enough time to prepare. Do not wait till the last minute to cram all the info. I repeat, do not wait till the last minute. Start studying now and do it on a consistent basis. Make a schedule of your exam preparation. Being on a schedule will ease the tension of the sheer amount of study you need to do

by compartmentalizing it and breaking it down. To make a study schedule, consider these factors: you need to sleep 7 to 8 hours in a day (Get plenty of sleep), to study of a maximum of 4 hours, and have at least 2 or 3 hours to play. A good strategy is to earmark an hour in the morning, an hour in the afternoon/evening, and two hours at night to study, with plenty of time for leisure in between. For example, study History in the morning, English in the afternoon, and that difficult Computer stuff at nighttime.

It is not a good idea to study continuously for too long; it makes your brain hurt. Take 5 to 15 minute breaks every couple of hours. You will find that you are more focused and refreshed throughout your study time.

Eating right is also key. You may be tempted to eat deep-fried, highly calorific comfort

food while studying, but you will find that healthier snacks will provide more energy and make you feel better. Snacks high in carbohydrates and grease tend to make you want to take a nap instead of studying. Granola bars, popcorn, fruit, and nuts are good ideas. These 'brain foods' will make you more productive while studying.

Exercise can help in reducing the stress of studying for finals and also help keep your mind focused. The more you study, the more stress your body and mind experience. Get it out. Go the gym or play some basketball for 20 minutes and you will feel much better, more serene, and fully invigorated.

Changing locations works as well. You can go stir-crazy if you sit in one place for too long. Try studying in the library for a while, then move down to the

cafeteria, and then study at home. A change in scene can stimulate your mind and give you a fresh perspective. If you get easily distracted, try to change things around in your study location. Turn the television and the radio off. If the weather is nice, crack open the window to let some fresh air in.

Make sure you get plenty of sleep. When you are sleep deprived your mind does not function optimally, and hence, you tend to remember less material. Getting a full night's rest (7 to 8 hours) in between bouts of studying and before the finals will ensure that you are better focused and mentally ready for the task on hand.

Summer is almost here and the swimming pool beckons. Let's ace these finals so that we can enjoy our well-deserved break. ■

### Student Cartoon

by Sadixt



I have always loved the view of downtown from the south deck of the university



I find myself appreciating the freedom pigeons have dipping between the sky scrapers and the sense of serenity the buildings have at dusk.



And- Uh...

Is that man defecating in the river?  
Yes, yes he is.  
And now he's flipping me off.



# SPORTS

## Graduating Senior Scores at Roller Derby

By Heather Villalobos  
Guest Writer

Twenty-three year old Kerrisa Maddocks, a graduating senior at UH-Main, has been playing roller derby since it's beginnings in Houston in 2005. Her interest in playing roller derby was sparked when a friend told her about the new sport and encouraged her to join.

The league, known as Space City Rollergirls, soon evolved to a skater-run enterprise known as Houston Roller Derby which is made up of four teams: the Burlesque Brawlers, the Machete Betties, the Bayou City Bosses, and the Psych Ward Sirens.

Each team is made up of 17 girls varying from 21-50 years old, who are mothers, lawyers, teachers and business

professionals. Each skater has a roller derby persona, complete with a name, which allows them to skate under an alter-ego and get away from their everyday lives as mothers, teachers, business professionals and lawyers.

Kerrisa, who skates as "Kerrizma Kevorkian" for the Psych Ward Sirens,

is a jammer—or a point-scorer who races through a pack of girls while either trying to help her

### Upcoming Dates:

May 6 - Houston Roller Derby All-Star Team, HaRD Knocks play the Hotrod Honeys in Austin, TX

May 12 - Art Car Parade

May 20 - MAYHEM, Bout #3 @ the Verizon Wireless Theater

[Machete Betties v. Psych Ward Sirens](#)

[Bayou City Bosses v. Burlesque Brawlers](#)

through or stop her dead in her tracks with a hip check that may send her flying into an excited audience member's lap. Roller derby is a race, and points are scored by how many opposing team members can be passed inbounds in two minutes or less.

Maddocks, who grew up in Midland, TX, has always been involved in high school sports such as track and soccer. She was taking part in yoga classes at the UH Wellness Center when the opportunity of being part of a group of strong women while getting exercise came along in the form of Roller Derby.

Self-proclaimed pop-art junkie and Fine Arts major, Maddocks gets mixed reactions



photos by HRD

Maddocks, a.k.a. Kerrizma Kevorkian, jams for the Psych Ward Sirens when her classmates find out about her involvement. "Some [classmates] freaked out at first, then they looked at me and said, 'of course, I can see you doing that.'" She says that one of her classmates volunteers at events, and others often frequent the sporting event to watch her play.

Last year, as a member of the then-undefeated Psych Ward Sirens, she helped her team score their first Championship title before undergoing a painful foot surgery in the off-season.

"Overall everyone has been

very supportive" was Kerrisa's response to how she managed to juggle her hectic schedule that not only includes school and roller derby, but several part-time jobs. "After graduation, I am looking forward to getting cable television and reading leisurely."

It's doubtful that this Rollergirl will be much sitting around after graduation since her team, the Sirens will be taking on the Machete Betties the following weekend at the Verizon Wireless Theater downtown. ■



photo by HRD

Maddocks takes a hit while helping her jammer through the pack

www.HOUSTONROLLERDERBY.com

### Business manager

Business manager for UHD student newspaper needed for 2007-08. The Student Publications Advisory Committee is seeking applicants for the position of **business manager** for *Dateline: Downtown*, the student-run bi-weekly newspaper at UHD. Flexible beginning date, but candidates must commit for the entire 2007-08 academic year. Duties include managing all financial matters for the paper, including advertising sales, and selling advertising space. The paper includes business in the campus neighborhood of UH. Will use PeopleSoft accounting system for payroll and accounts. Typical compensation is 20 hours/week salary plus 15% commission on all advertising sales. Qualifications include at least sophomore standing; at least one semester of college-level business courses; and a minimum GPA of 2.5. Applications are sought immediately and will be accepted until April 22 or until the position is filled; include names and phone numbers of two references. To apply, download application from UHD web site and forward via email to Dateline adviser, Dr. Anthony Chiaviello, at Chiaviello@uhd.edu.

# NEED A JOB?

## Interview

## MOVIE REVIEW



FINESSE MITCHELL

google images

## “It’s Finesse not Fitness”

### Finesse Mitchell, of SNL fame, talks about latest endeavours

Houston has been visited by great comedians this year, and Dateline continues to acquire interviews with these rising stars. This past weekend, stand up comedian Finesse Mitchell entertained in his comeback to stand up after writing his new book “Your Girlfriends Only Know So Much.” Finesse is graduated from the State University of Miami. Before comedy, and after graduating college, Finesse worked a series of odd jobs in Florida ranging from a financial advisor to a manager of an R&B group. Although Finesse’s stand up is reaching millions of viewers through BET and Comedy Central, many more find his most memorable comedy when he was a featured player for three seasons on Saturday Night Live.

Finesse’s stand up is best described as an entertaining, “semi-non-discriminate,” with loads of heckler bashing time. Finesse did not disappoint. He regaled us with stories from his SNL days. One story was

when he met Brad Pitt for the first time. Brad whispered to Finesse that he was a big fan at an after party, and Finesse claimed that for just a second, he was gay. Throughout his career at SNL and stand up, Finesse is a natural on stage.

**DL:** How was college life for you in Miami?

**Finesse:** Beautiful, I think my college career was more fun than SNL. I just think being 18, being in Miami, pledging for Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, and playing football for two years was fun. But, then I wouldn’t go to class and I had like a 1.5 GPA, but I got serious. In all I think the experience of adjusting and finding out who you are twice in your life when your 18-21 years old, and then a 25-30 stage will be the most memorable experience in your life. During the 25-30 years old stage, you say to yourself, “I should be having a great job by now or you know I’m doing all right.” I think that the choices we make at those ages really define who we are.

**DL:** Do you feel college is necessary?

**Finesse:** The whole  
see FINESSE pg 10

## Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson get a lot of guns

By Wil Chinchilla  
Dateline Downtown

*Hot Fuzz*, a comedic gem released last weekend, has gained \$5.85 million in revenue and continues to climb the box office. It stars the brilliant “British duo” of Nick Frost and Simon Pegg. The title *Hot Fuzz*, as described by Director Edgar Wright is “pure nonsense.” Actor Pegg and director Wright are also credited for writing the film. Their previously released *Shaun of the Dead* gained much success across the world, gaining \$30 million in the worldwide box office. *Shaun of the Dead* is a romantic comedy-zombie film that is non-stop comedy and horror. For those who have been exposed to British humor from such works

as *Monty Python* movies and the *Mr. Bean* series, then you already know the humor is dry, witty, and absurd.

Edgar Wright, on *G4TV’s Attack of the Show*, said that the goal of the film is to make a British cop look very cool. Make him a badass, if you will. The story centers on police officer Nicholas Angel (Pegg), who is obsessed with serving up a nice cup of justice to all violators of the law. Angel is originally a cop in London who has outwitted, outplayed, and outlasted all other police officers in the city. Because his successes have embarrassed his fellow officers, they transfer him to Sandford, a small countryside village so calm that it’s being considered for the “Safest Village in England” award. However, a rash of suspicious deaths in the village has been characterized

as “accidents.” Angel is joined by the large oaf (Frost) in the village. The two team up after watching and reveling in great cop movies like *Point Break* and *Bad Boys II*. A laugh riot ensues as the pair investigates the series of “accidents.”

The punch lines are always on queue and the joke development is great. Stylistically, the film is reminiscent of great action movies like *Sin City*. The only downside to this movie is that the beginning is too long. Every other aspect of the movie was great, as the film stayed true to its British roots. The actual Fuzz in the movie are all great actors from England. Look out for “the Andy’s,” and the directness of the jokes. Go watch *Hot Fuzz* in theater’s now. ■



photos by Juan O

## YAPA... is so delicious!

girl PRINCE) to enjoy YAPA, just adventurous to take the short stroll down the bridge to 917 Franklin St. storefront which is connected with the Bayou Lofts.

YAPA is South American vernacular, meaning "a little something extra." As students, this something extra means that fast food will have to take a back seat to our needs for quality food at a reasonable price, often beating the fast food costs.

The day that I visited the café, I was trying to beat time between classes in the Commerce Bldg. and had \$10 on me. YAPA has a combo sandwich special with a variety

of tasty selections. Working in restaurants, I am familiar with different spices, spreads, and veggies, and was pleased to see on the menu fresh basil pesto, tarragon, rosemary (No not your friend Rosemary!), Portobello mushroom, goat cheese, etc. My taste buds and expectations were celebrating.

### Menu

but not limited to...

Sandwiches: \$7.95 (menu price, UHD discount may be less)

- Tarragon Chicken Salad
- Grilled Chicken w/ Basil Pesto
- Rotisserie Turkey w/ Cranberry
- Grilled Portobello Mushroom
- Tuna Salad
- Pork Loing w/ Tonnato Sauce
- Hot Meatloaf
- Grill Chicken Wrap

Take a look at the full menu when you visit.

I was told that the combo includes choice of sandwich, chips, and a soda for \$5.95. This combo includes UHD student special discount punch card option and after 10 punches, you can it for a free combo lunch.

The cooler is compacted into a small area that shares its space with fresh produce, freshly prepared food, and dry foods. This area is for the student on the run who wants a better choice of ingredients and flavors. My choice is the tarragon chicken salad sandwich, peppered potato chips and a soda. By the way, tarragon is considered "the King of Herbs" by the French and has a warm aromatic flavor. The sandwiches are pre-prepared, so I was eating in no time. The chicken is always fresh and moist--the mayo, flavored with tarragon, is balanced between two slice of bread. A party in anyone's mouth!

Try one Yapa's delicious soups Gazpacho, Sicilian Tomato Soup, Santa Cruz Tortilla Soup, Summer Vegetable and Chicken, Black Bean Soup and Cream of Mushroom. Half pint \$3.95 Pint. \$6.

More information can be found at [www.yapakitchen.net](http://www.yapakitchen.net) or by calling 713-227-7076. ■

## Is national recognition next?

continued from page 1

March 7, they presented their ideas for the marketing campaign to Bausch & Lomb. After receiving approval from Bausch & Lomb, the students implemented the campaign.

The implementation of the "Life After Lasik" campaign included the placement of ads in the Dateline, the offer of a \$1,000 surgery discount to UHD students, an informational event on April 9 at which students could gain more information about Lasik from representatives of Slade and Baker Vision Center. Students also produced posters, flyers, brochures, press releases, games, and developed a page at MySpace.com where students could learn more about Lasik. Jennifer Osterholt, Urban Marketing Agency Coordinator explains "Through this marketing campaign, we hope students take with them more knowledge of Lasik and Bausch & Lomb Zyoptix® vision correction system, and hopefully this will encourage them to get the procedure done, so they could rid themselves of the hassle of having to constantly wear their glasses or uncomfortable contact lenses."

The next step in the competition is a written and oral report to Bausch & Lomb on May 7. The research department for Urban Marketing has been collecting survey data to show its client that the marketing campaign was effective in creating interest in LASIK among college students.

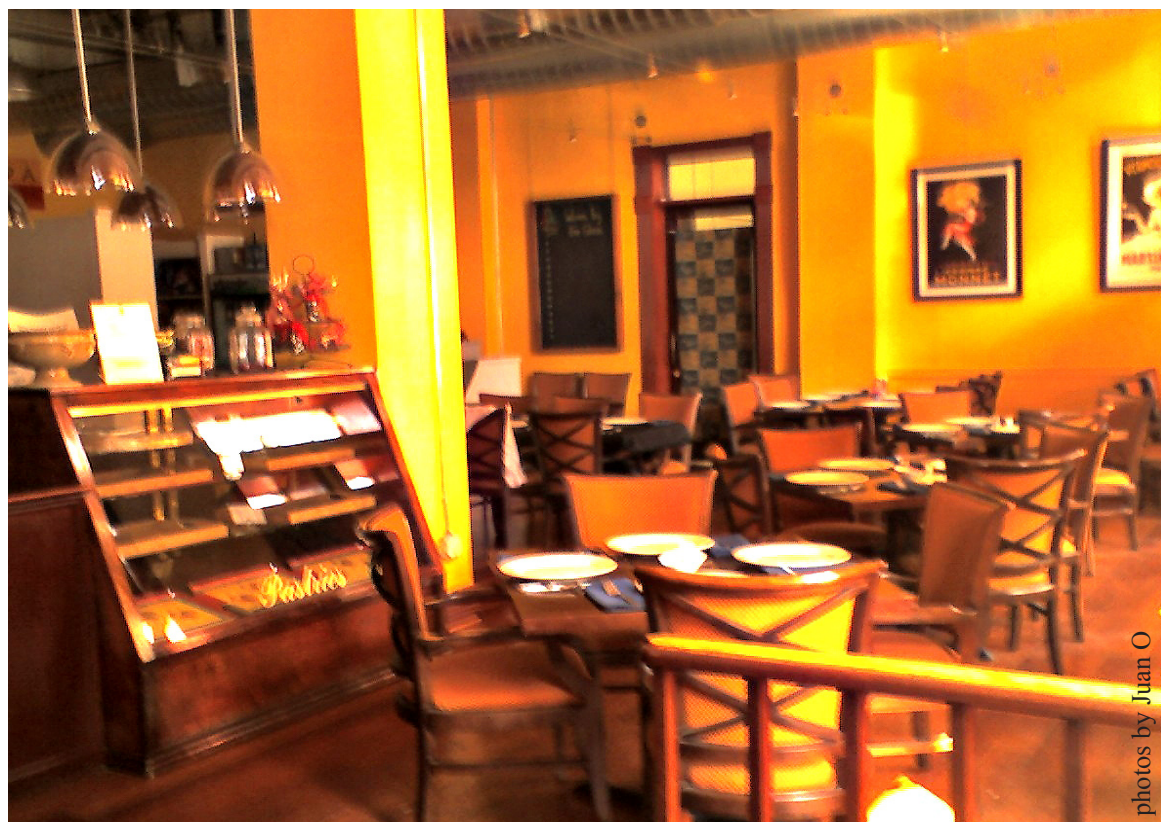
What's next? The students hope to be one of the national finalists invited to Rochester, New York to make a presentation of their campaign to upper level executives at Bausch & Lomb. Professor Johnson comments, "Our goal from the beginning was to develop the best campaign. We have a very strong marketing program at UHD, and we look forward to showing Bausch & Lomb executives that our marketing students are excellent marketers!"

To learn more about the benefits of the Lasik procedure, and links to Bausch & Lomb and Slade & Baker Vision Center, please visit Urban Marketing's website at [www.myspace.com/urbanmarketing1](http://www.myspace.com/urbanmarketing1). ■

By Juan Ortiz  
Dateline: Downtown

Our campus may not require students to walk great distances in order to get their fill of education, or food. YAPA Kitchen Cafe wants to extend an invitation to the UHD community to get your fill of delicious food, a relaxed study environment, or something to fight off that global warming, as we enter the endless months of Houston's infamous climate. It's just down the street!

YAPA is determined to create a lasting relationship with UHD students by opening its doors for those who want a change from the mundane. Houston's lunch crowd fills this high-ceiling space between 11pm and 1pm, after which it stays quiet until dinner time. Yapa invites students to come and enjoy this UHD retreat with ample sunlight streaming from its large window as the perfect place to study or conduct group meetings with your mates from class. You don't have to be rich (to be my



photos by Juan O

Imagine yourself here!







## Professor Michael James (L) and Gary (R) Dunham bring environmental awareness to UHD

continued from page 1

to be the most serious concern facing Earth today. The result has been an increase in the Earth's temperature, representing a change in long-term weather patterns. The global temperature has risen one degree in the past century. Scientists have concluded that the temperature will continue to increase by two to three degrees over the next 100 years. While this may seem minor to the non-scientific citizen, the reality is enormous. Prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Earth's climate has remained stable for hundreds or thousands of years. This has allowed human life to thrive. But the impact on life in the next century could drastically change if the temperature continues to rise, forcing the climate to further change.

While all but a handful of fringe scientists agree that climate change is a reality, the scientific community is not in agreement as to why this has been occurring. There is some speculation that the sun's heat has been increasing, for instance. Many scientists, however, believe that human activities have greatly altered the chemical composition in the atmosphere. This buildup of greenhouse gases has affected the planet's ability to regulate its temperature. These gases, including methane, nitrous oxide, and carbon dioxide, has eroded the ozone layer, a protective covering surrounding

the Earth. Deforestation, industrial production land mills, and mining are human activities that produce significant amounts of greenhouse gases. In addition, the use of fossil fuels in transportation and the production of energy sends enormous amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. With carbon dioxide emissions rising exponentially, we are contributing in affecting the earth's climate. This will not only impact our climate, but society and animals also will suffer dire consequences.

The consequences we have already seen with climate change include heat waves, increased severity of hurricanes and tropical storms, and the melting of polar ice caps. Continued melting of polar ice will eventually add more water to the oceans, raising sea level rise, and producing coastal floods that will affect plants, animals, and societies. Low lying coastal areas, and entire islands, could be overcome, falling into the oceans, leaving people without homes.

There are solutions scientists that believe can help control global warming. Producing cleaner air, we must reduce our reliance on fossil fuel, limiting the amount of greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere. Hydro power, wind power, solar power, and

nuclear power are alternative fossil fuel industries must consider. On March 21, 2007 Al Gore recommended solutions to congress to help prevent global warming called "The Honorable Al Gore's Recommendations to Congress."

Students can also get involved. Environment Defense provides simple steps to undo global warming by washing cloths in warm or cold water not hot and not over heating or cooling homes. Adjust the thermostat to save enormous amounts of energy, which can even save you money when the electric bill comes due. Buy energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs for your most-used lights. When possible, walk, bike, carpool or use mass transit. If, you choose to buy a car, select one that gets good gas mileage or is a hybrid. Recycle everything you can. New York Mayor Bloomberg recently suggested that if 3 million New Yorkers each changed one light bulb to an energy efficient one, the city would save enough energy to power three Empire State Buildings.

Just remember that your individual actions make a difference. You can continue the status quo, which will continue to increase global temperatures. Or you can make a few simple changes that will improve living conditions for generations to come. The choice is yours. ■

## Comedian finds inspirations from Pryor and Murphy

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college experience is the only reason I'm here right now. Why my topics are so raw, and why my people skills are excellent: because there is so much diversity in Miami. You finally learn that the world is not just black and white.

**DL:** Where did you get started in stand up comedy?

**Finesse:** I knew I wanted to be a performer but I didn't know what. I tried to be a rapper, found out I couldn't rap. I tried to be a singer, I couldn't sing. Then I managed an R&B group that was successful in Miami. Then one day I was at a comedy club in Atlanta on a date with a group of friends and I didn't know that there was a two drink minimum. Then a the MC of the club said that there was a joke contest to win a free bottle of champagne and in winning the bottle there would be no two drink charge. So I took one for the team, I made up a joke on the spot and I won. The MC even said that I was a natural and that I had talent, and that I should get into this.

**DL:** How was SNL and why did they kick you out?

**Finesse:** It was really budget cuts, and when it came down to it, it was whoever was getting the most airtime on the show. So I was inevitably taken out. I kind of knew that if something didn't happen on my last season on the show, why should they keep me around. Some days I was happy, but sometimes I was any other emotion.

**DL:** You're a writer too, how does it feel to have a column?

**Finesse:** It feels pretty good; it's your opinion, it's a lot of power, you can say whatever you want to say. But that's one thing though; you can tend to be cocky.

**DL:** Being African American, what is your view on the comments made by Michael Richards at the Laugh Factory?

**Finesse:** I was

disappointed. Talented funny people, necessarily don't respect what stand up really is. That is why you hear Eddie Murphy say he is never getting up on stage ever again. There is not a lot of places to practice their material. Michael Richards is hilarious on TV, but he just had to face the fact that he just wasn't funny that day. Either you know how to handle a heckler or you just digress. Now for what he said, that is unacceptable, anyone in the public eye would be fired. To me is was what is was, but the viciousness of it, I don't need anyone in comedy telling me what he meant or that he was just having a bad day. That part was actually better than his act.

**DL:** What's your view on politics and comedy?

**Finesse:** I definitely want to start talking about something that matters. I've heard the joke about Bill Clinton being the first black president all the time; I hear your momma jokes all the time. So I want to develop my routine to explore everyone's America in a meaningful way.

**DL:** Was there a comedian who inspired you to start standup or was it just a career you have strived for?

**Finesse:** I like, of course, Richard Pryor, all the Eddie Murphy specials. That's when I just wanted to laugh. Then when I actually started looking into it, I liked Def Jam comedy; I watched Chris Tucker's set and Dave Chappelle's set. When I started to try it, I liked Dave Attell.

**DL:** Is there any comedian we don't know about who we should give a shot?

**Finesse:** There are just too many. That is the inevitable part of comedy, if you don't get your name out there you are just a needle in a haystack. There are just so many guys and they always change their stage name so it's hard to keep up with them. ■

# Virginia Tech Massacre

## American media's ethnocentric world view

This week, His Holiness the Dalai Lama will make a visit to Houston. His trip in 2005 was cancelled because Hurricane Rita beat him to town. The topic of discussion will be "The Meaning of Compassion in Everyday Life." Compassion is sometimes difficult for people to maintain in our modern world of violence, corruption, and apathy.

I was particularly struck by the event two weeks ago at Virginia Tech. There are many aspects of this act of violence that I could discuss here. There's the impact of our cultural socialization that leads individuals to believe that violent acts can solve problems. There's the stigma of mental illness, and the reluctance for people to seek needed treatment, or for others to encourage this treatment. There's the overwhelming media frenzy that obsesses about every detail of the crime, and of the video released later. But these have been covered in the media, and are perhaps better addressed in a term paper for a Sociology course.

I think the most powerful outcome of this tragedy was the palpable grief of the nation. Like Americans in late 2001, the entire nation came together for a week

and mourned the loss of life. Our compassion extended to those who lost their lives; to those who lost family members; to those who lost friends; to those who were exposed to scenes of terrible violence; to the loss of innocence on a university campus.

Most of the time, we see Americans fighting each other on this issue or that. But when Americans die, it seems that we all stick together; cry together; mourn together. Then, after a suitable period, we start arguing again. We blame each other for the violence, and seek to enact changes that will make none of us safer, but will make us all feel a little better about ourselves.

I'm not entirely certain where our compassion comes from. We are certainly one of the most religious people in the western world. Perhaps our devotion to faith accounts for our culture that can produce compassion as great as our anger, hatred, and violence. The contradictions in our society are striking. And I think that this is not a new trend. Certainly, when our founders declared all men equal, while holding men, women, and children in chains, they did not really believe those words. Yet,

they laid down the foundations to what would become, two centuries later, one of the freest societies on earth.

One of the most common tenets of religious faith is the innate (some would say God-given) value of human life. All people have equal value. Sometimes this is easy. We know people who look like us, think like us, act like us. We find a certain kinship with them, and can easily see their value. Seeing their worth is an extension of seeing our own worth. But when people do not look like us, think like us, or act like us, the challenge is far greater. Even when circumstances are quite similar, Americans have a tendency to place greater value on American life than on any other life.

This tragedy at Virginia Tech highlighted this contradiction in faith. Americans stopped in their tracks, devoting an entire week to memorials, tributes, and 24 hour news coverage to the innocents

lost. But the international media did not treat the story with the same enthusiasm. Rather, this was simply one tragedy out of many, and certainly not the worst. Indeed, as an interesting experiment, you may wish to check out [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) and then switch over to <http://edition.cnn.com>, the international version. The differences that a single corporation puts out can be dramatic.

In Iraq, for instance, more than 30 innocent civilians are killed daily. Can any of us imagine that level of tragedy? Why do we not mourn this loss of innocent life? In February, in fact, university students in Iraq were gunned down in a manner reminiscent of those in Virginia. The major difference was that in Iraq three times as many students died in the massacre. We expect that in a war, people will die. We certainly expect that soldiers will die. Perhaps it is because of this that America is rather numb to the fact that, on average, more

than a dozen American soldiers lose their lives in Iraq every day. But the hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths should be far less anticipated, or accepted.

Why is it that we, as a society, don't care about those deaths? In nations around the globe, hundreds of people are shot to death every single day. Miserable death is all too common. But when it is not close to home, it seems that our apathy overpowers our faith. A quite religious friend told me, when I expressed these concerns, that people in Iraq and Africa are simply expected to die, as if God does not care for them as much as He does for Americans. How sad, I thought, to believe this. But my friend is not alone. Many Americans, I am certain, feel the same way. Until we break our collective shell, caring for others as much as we care for ourselves, we will never truly be welcomed into the international community, or fulfill our religious aspirations. ■



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