

OUR VIEW

Readers should monitor circus surrounding Alito

President Bush's nomination of federal appellate court judge Samuel Alito to the U.S. Supreme Court on Monday undoubtedly will spark a heated partisan battle during the winter months in Washington.

No matter where they place themselves on the political spectrum, it is important that all those who are in the position to approve a nomination step away from basing their decision solely on a nominee's stand on a single issue.

The new Supreme Court justice must be one who, first and foremost, is qualified for the job. We encourage all to look past the partisan bickering and examine whether ideological bases are sufficient to vote down a qualified nominee.

It is unfortunate that, given the aims of interest groups on both sides, Alito's nomination likely will become a glorified forum for a debate about abortion. Although the Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 stands as one of its most controversial, the Court will face a breadth of complex issues during this session. Nearly all cases it hears require an encyclopedic knowledge of constitutional law and an extraordinarily sharp legal acumen. Any citizen — lawmaker or layman, Republican or Democrat — who subjects a nominee to any sort of ideological litmus test simply is viewing American politics and the judicial process with a closed mind.

Associate Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, appointed by President Clinton in 1993, spent eight

years as an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, one of the nation's most liberal interest groups, before her nomination to an appellate judgeship in 1980. Ginsburg was rightly confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 1993 because of her impeccable qualifications for the High Court. Samuel Alito has served in his capacity on the Third Circuit Court of Appeals since 1990. His qualifications for the Supreme Court, like Ginsburg's, are undeniable.

Although Democrats have been criticized for obstructing many of President Bush's judicial nominees at the district and appellate levels, one must remember that Republicans used identical tactics when dealing with many of President Bill Clinton's choices in the 1990s. The current battle brewing about the ideological composition of the nation's federal courts begs the question of whether the nation's founders would approve of the partisan fights that have come to mark it.

Both parties are equally responsible for this partisan fight that has emerged at the forefront of the American political scene. The Alito hearings unfortunately will be a culmination of smaller previous battles.

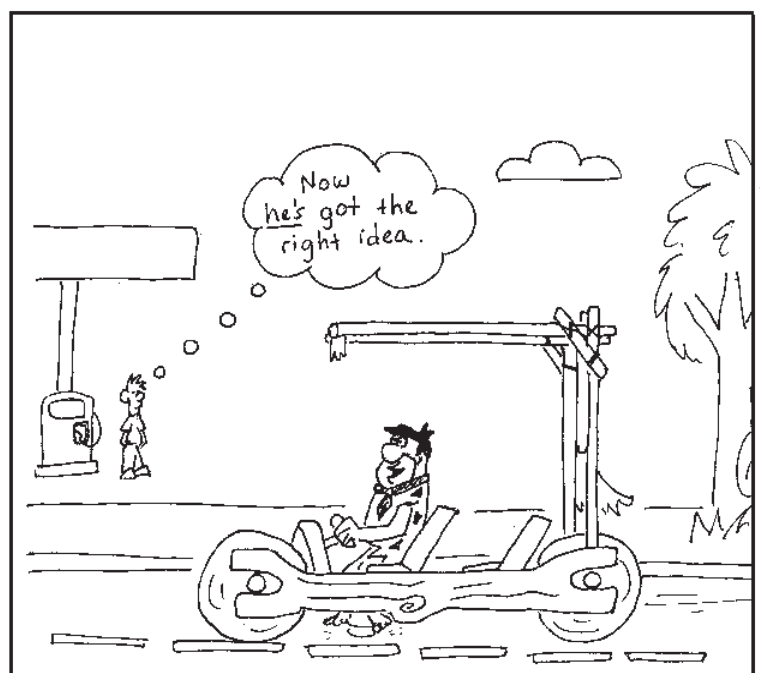
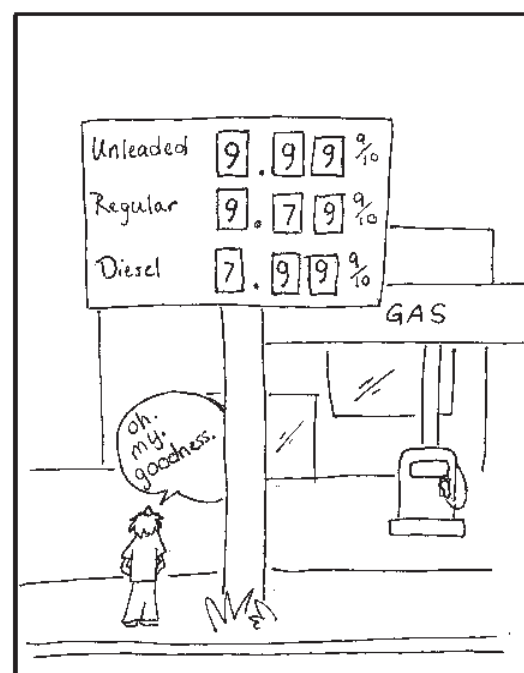
We encourage professors to incorporate the upcoming political fight into relevant classroom discussions. University professors also should be warned not to inject their personal views into classroom discussions but should encourage students to examine the views of others in greater detail.

Alito's nomination can teach us plenty.

It is unfortunate that ... Alito's nomination likely will become a glorified forum for a debate about abortion.

Truville

Perrin Carrell/cartoonist



Letters to the Editor

Victim comes forward with her response to Plan B pill legislation

First, I would like to start off by saying how big of a step it is for me to come into the limelight and confront the topic of the Plan B pill [Oct. 27 issue of the Index]. But I felt under the current situation it was not only necessary but the right thing to do. Upon hearing that I couldn't submit my letter to the editor with anonymity, I was upset and downright disappointed. I had a decision to make. Do I remain silent and go on with my everyday life, or do I fight back against with burdens which have been placed on my shoulders? I have decided to fight back.

Every day I wake up missing one thing I had until Sept. 27, 2004: trust. Not only did the guy who took advantage of me that night forever ruin how I view every man that approaches me, but also the hospital that reported the incident, the police who came to my door early the next morning and lastly the Index who published an article about it without my trust. I understand that all these different people had their jobs to do, but I didn't feel safe anymore. I did not know who to trust.

Once I read the article, I was infuriated at Congress, our government and our state. The FDA is stalling putting Plan B on the market for over-the-counter use. Contradictory to what the article states, Plan B is used not only for people who have unprotected sexual intercourse. Plan B is most often used in rape cases such as mine. As a preventative measure, Plan B gave me some sense of protection that had been taken from me within 24 hours. Sometimes I think people associate the day-after pill with sexually irresponsible adults, but there are some of us out there who just got the short end of the stick.

I can't help but think about what would have been different if I could have quietly gone to Wal-Mart and purchased these two simple pills. For one thing I wouldn't have been scared to stay in my dorm room. The fear that every time the phone rang it was going to be a reporter or even someone who had heard from a friend of a friend what had happened. So I went home for two days. Without notice to any of my teachers and only told a couple of friends, I left Kirksville and my trust behind. I wouldn't have been so paranoid that every person staring at me knew my secret once I came back to school if the article hadn't been published. It has been a little over a year, and I still only trust a handful of people on campus.

I read the articles in the Index every day, hoping and praying this travesty has not happened to anyone else and if it has, no one will ever have to find out. For those who oppose Plan B being over the counter, I urge you to put yourself in my shoes, if only for a minute. Wouldn't you rather deal with the issue privately with friends and family instead of a whole community? Certain things are meant to be kept private. We as students should be able to trust the institution we have chosen to prepare us for the rest of our lives. Everyone has a job to do, and it is my job as a rape victim to stand up for future rape victims. Fight for the privacy and trust I lost in hopes that they may be able to salvage some piece of this if the Plan B pill is available over the counter.

It is in great hopes that since I have personalized the fight for Plan B more people will be able to identify how it is beneficial to people who have been wronged. If by coming out with my opinion about the Plan B pill being over the counter can get more people to support this act in legislation, then the scars of Sept. 27 will be healed just a little more.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Shaneka Galbreath
Freshman

Example of SAM proves Senate shouldn't travel that road again

Here we go again. We went through the SAM thing a few years ago. For those of you who don't remember, Truman's Student Senate started a Student Association of Missouri with a couple of other universities with the goal of lobbying Jefferson City for more money. They funded it by using \$2 of each student's activities fee. What did SAM accomplish? Well, each involved university got a cell phone free-of-charge, spent several thousand dollars on (real) food and several more thousand on having a fancy "conference" solely in hopes of attracting MU's Senate to join SAM. MU didn't even show up. And ... that about sums it up. Back then, you could submit a written request to Student Senate/SAM to have your \$2 refunded if you felt they were misusing your money. I know I did, and I smiled as I cashed my \$2 check. Don't think I won't do it again.

Now Student Senate is trying to get a similar organization started again. Here's a tip: until they have true accountability, they will only continue to use our money to have fun at our expense [Oct. 27 issue of the Index]. By "true accountability" we don't mean the student population who has forgotten (or didn't know in the first place — yes, it happened) that Truman has a Student Senate. Does anyone see Student Senate do anything except when they stand on the Quad and hand out candy from that dog dish? Did anyone want to see a magician? Anyone? Anyone? Bueller?

In case this seems to be "What have you done for me lately?" whining, we assure you it is not. Our concern is much like the "if a tree falls in the forest ..." joke. If Student Senate does something important for once, and no one hears about it, have they really done anything at all? And we aren't those anti-Stu-Co people who are bitter we never got elected in high school. Several of us were on Stu-Co. One of us was even president their senior year. So we know Stu-Co is really a joke (and you would too, if you admitted it to yourselves). Student Senate is simply Stu-Co on steroids, but in higher education they use our money for their privileged status. Someone should remind them that this isn't high school, so they should stop acting like it.

Katie Sutter, B.J. White
and Jessica Tennyson
Graduate Students

April Owens
Senior

External affairs committee should be praised for conference effort

Last week's Index featured an article and editorial about the external affairs committee of Student Senate hosting a conference with other public universities in Missouri. I would like to congratulate Mindy Maness and her committee for putting together a collaborative effort of students to fight for higher education funding in Missouri. A collaborative voice is exactly what is needed to get higher education off the chopping block. As the state continues through a tough fiscal climate, most often legislators look toward the largest pool of discretionary spending, the state colleges and universities, to cut spending.

After reading the Index, it was apparent that once again many student senators and editorial staff look at only minor details, like the conference entertainment, rather than focusing on what Maness and her committee truly want to accomplish. It is too bad that student senators would rather complain about a magician than work to increase

attendance for the conference and build a strong student voice that can effectively advocate for higher education funding. I suppose those students are the same ones who stood by and watched the demise of the Student Association of Missouri last year. Had they stood up and fought for an organization designed to accomplish the same goals of this intercollegiate conference, perhaps Maness wouldn't have to start from scratch. And to the Index staff who wrote the editorial, \$1,800 for a conference is nothing. In fact it is less than what many Truman students receive each year in Bright Flight scholarships.

I hope that Student Senate and the entire student association soon realize that working together with students around the state is the only way to ensure that the needs of the students will be addressed in Jefferson City. That includes general funding for Truman and on-time Bright Flight checks.

Bethany Ordaz
Alumna

Wal-Mart boycotters overlook basic facts about corporation

After reading the article "Wal-Mart dominates local economy" by Mandi Sagez [Oct. 20 issue of the Index], I can understand the views of people who decide to boycott the Wal-Mart giant, but I believe that they are overlooking certain facts.

The major factor I believe the boycotting group isn't considering is the fact that "Missouri Wal-Marts donated more than \$8 million to charities and other organizations in 2004," a fact the Index cited in Michelle Fortner's article "Corporation aids charitable causes" in the very same issue. Fortner also pointed out that the Kirksville Wal-Mart has donated about \$50,000 to charities since February of this year.

Also, the fact that the store here in Kirksville is the sixth-largest employer in the area illustrates the fact that employees aren't that angered by the lack of union support by the company. They obviously haven't quit. You might even notice that many Wal-Mart employees have been there for a while, so the working conditions aren't that awful.

Another thing is that I understand how Wal-Mart's low wages paid to workers keep poor people poor, but its low prices allow those families of lesser means to continue to support themselves and survive. In an ideal world, no one would have to worry about living paycheck to paycheck, but not everything is perfect. In a capitalist society like America's, there will be poor people and there will be rich people. The only thing that matters is that we can all survive, and Wal-Mart helps us achieve that goal in its own way.

Finally, I'm sure that it's possible to find cheaper prices and the same products elsewhere, but not everyone has that kind of time. As fellow students at Truman State, I'm sure you all understand the time constraints placed on college students. If I need something, and I think that Wal-Mart will have it, I'm heading straight there, not to mention that it is open 24 hours. We seemingly nocturnal college students and procrastinators enjoy the occasional late-night Wal-Mart adventure.

I know that Wal-Mart is on the verge of becoming an illegal monopoly, and some might argue it already is, but the charitable nature of the corporation, its large number of employees and easy access and cheap prices make it a worthwhile one-stop shop that I won't hesitate to make.

Spencer Wilkes
Freshman

INDEX Web poll

Are you planning to attend the Cake concert on Friday?

Nov. 1 Results

as of midnight Tuesday

15% (4)

There's a concert Friday?

41% (11)

Of course. It's the biggest concert of the year.

44% (12)

I'd rather save my money.

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

Does intelligent design have a place in a public school education?

vote online at
www.trumanindex.com

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Serving the University community since 1909

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The editor in chief consults with the staff and adviser but ultimately is responsible for all decisions. Opinions of Index columnists are not necessarily representative of the opinions of the staff or the newspaper. Our View editorials represent the view of the Index through a majority vote of the Editorial Board, consisting of the editor in chief, managing editor, news editor and opinions editor. The Index reserves the right to edit submitted material because of space limitations, repetitive subject matter, libelous content or any other reason the editor in chief deems appropriate. Submitted material includes advertisements and letters to the editor.

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Letters policy

The Index welcomes letters to the editor from the University community. Letters to the editor are due by noon the Monday before publication and become property of the Index. Submissions are subject to editing, must contain a well-developed theme and cannot exceed 300 words except at the discretion of the editorial board.

All letters to the editor MUST be typed, double-spaced, signed and include a phone number for verification.

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