

Left, right must change view of president-elect



Zach Vicars

As the electoral votes started to rack up for Barack Obama on Tuesday night and the senatorial seats slowly gave way to the Democrats, I found myself sinking into a state of depression. I told myself I wouldn't — that I'd trust in the American people no matter what happened in this election, but ultimately my cynicism took over. I began to think ahead to Jan. 20, 2009, the day I thought of as the death of American conservatism. I took a run through the streets of Kirksville, hearing people shout "Obama!" and I tried to piece together in my mind how

to respond to the 44th president. I realized that for us to welcome President-elect Obama in the correct way, we need a change of heart from conservatives and liberals alike.

Perhaps the greatest victory for conservatives in this election is that we have the chance to revive a fundamental American value: mistrust in the government. For far too long Americans have viewed government as an entity that was created for our benefit and enjoyment, when the truth is quite the contrary.

Our Founding Fathers never intended for us to enjoy being governed by the powers that be. Indeed, one of our principle historical documents, the Declaration of Independence, is based on a mistrust and disdain for the governing body.

Conservatives need to drive it home during the next four years that our government is meant to

protect the American people, not provide for them. I might sound like a broken record, but the Constitution guarantees us life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness — everything else must be earned. Suspicious conservatives must make sure that Obama doesn't try

to use government in a way that it was never intended to be used.

Conservatives must be willing to serve Obama, but they need not trust him implicitly.

I know that for much of the last eight years I was guilty of blindly following George W. Bush wherever he led when I should have been scrutinizing his actions as president. Such blind trust is unfair both to the people and to the president of the United States. Bush was able to greatly increase our national spending

because members of his own party didn't do enough to check up on him. Oh sure, a few liberals wailed and moaned and demonstrated in the streets of Washington, but few rational thinkers came up with solutions to problems that plagued the Bush Administration.

As a left-minded president takes the oath of office, liberals must be wary not to commit the same mistake that so many conservatives did. The love affair

that so many Americans have with Obama must end now if we are to have any chance of recognizing America four years from now. Liberals must be sure to examine Obama's every move, making sure that he doesn't overstep his role as president. As a conservative, I've learned that there's only so much

complaining I can do, but Obama will listen to those who elected him.

So today I challenge conservatives and liberals alike to put aside their presuppositions about Obama. Whether you danced around in an Obama-suit on Election Day or waved McCain signs to passing cars, it's time to face the reality that Obama is no longer a candidate for the highest office in the land — he's heir to the throne, you might say. Obama holds in his hands the power to bring America back to "her best traditions" or keep America on the path to destruction. As president, Obama needs neither our love nor our hatred. He needs our service, and he needs our scrutiny.

Zach Vicars is a freshman English and history major from St. Charles, Mo.

Juicy Campus tempts curious students with smears, lurid gossip



Whitney Fay

As I looked up, eyes glazed from my computer, I realized that I had been glued to my monitor for almost three quarters of an hour. No, I wasn't researching for that Media Criticism paper or reading my back-logged e-mail, I was doing something far more petty — I was browsing JuicyCampus.com.

Juicy Campus came to my attention about a week ago when the president of my sorority read us a letter from Interfraternity Council telling us not to look at the Web site. You can't give candy to kids and then tell them not to eat it, so of course I looked. The sole purpose of this Web site is to provide a completely anonymous forum for select college communities to dish on the latest gossip. Truman now has a page.

When you go to the site and find Truman, some of the first comments that pop up are "gingers," "Coke" and "I want to have sex with..." so clearly redheads, drugs and soda and sex are some of the most pressing things on Truman students' minds. As I delved a little deeper the site became both more and less menacing.

Some people chose to use the site to ask questions about local events and to make comical posts about students' dogs. Then there were those posts praising various fraternities — obviously written by members — and posts calling these same people out, even telling them to grow up.

Some chose to take the path that has been blasted by national media and college students alike — they chose to defame and ridicule their fellow students. There were posts

ranging from a girl who allegedly "pooped her pants on the way to class" to the obligatory "easiest lay on campus."

But the strange part, dear readers, is that I was hooked. Once I started looking at some of the comments, I just had to see the rest. I felt compelled to read every nasty personal assertion, shrill sorority denial and mindless fraternity grandstanding. And even more strangely, most of the people I talked to about the site felt the same phenomenon. But, dear God, why?

The only explanation I could come up with is that buried deep down inside all of us is undeniable schadenfreude. No matter how evolved and enlightened we think we are, there is a part of us

that still enjoys watching and ridiculing other people's pain. I like to think that I generally am a compassionate and thoughtful person, yet I chuckled in evil glee as I saw people that I disliked get bashed on the site. It was like a disease of pettiness that I caught through my own eyes.

Another possibility is that some people truly do enjoy that outlet for the frustrations they feel they can't fully express in real life. Maybe this is the only place these people have to fully vent their frustrations.

I have to admit, there were some pretty evil ideas that popped into my head when I realized the full capabilities of what I could say on Juicy Campus, but I'll keep those thoughts safely tucked in the back of my mind. After I finish writing this column, I've made a promise to myself to never look at the site again. For the same reason that I refuse to watch the "Saw" movies, I refuse to look at Juicy Campus — it can only rot my brain, not create anything positive.

Whitney Fay is a junior communication major from Columbia, Mo.

I felt compelled to read every nasty personal assertion, shrill sorority denial and mindless fraternity grandstanding.

AROUND THE QUAD

What is your reaction to the presidential election results?



"I'm glad McCain didn't win. I'm scared he'd die and Palin would be president."

Angelina Guidos
junior



"I didn't actually vote, but I'm glad Obama won. It's good to break down stereotypes."

Jonathan Whitfield
junior



"I was satisfied but I wasn't surprised."

Lauren Jensen
freshman



"Totally stoked."

Ashley Hufft
sophomore

Extra credits give underclassmen unfair advantage in registration



Tyler Retherford

The frantic, desperate struggle for class registration is stressful enough. However, in addition to competing with hundreds of other students for the few prime spots in the classes I really need with the professors I want at the times I can manage, I'm realizing my one solace — that it will get easier as I near the end of my four years here at the University — is not quite as certain as I had thought. I blame all those credit hours we tend to bring in from high school. It's always nice to be ahead, but these hours are distorting the way that the registration process is supposed to work.

The registration process is based on credit hours, theoretically meaning that juniors and seniors get priority for classes so as to help them graduate on time and pick up those last few tough-to-get classes they really need. Of course, that's not exactly how it always works. I, like almost all of my friends, have come in with credit hours from Advanced Placement or dual

credit classes from high school or summer classes from colleges back home. I only have a few credit hours from outside the University, but some people had enough to be counted as sophomores by credit hours as incoming freshmen.

There's certainly nothing wrong with putting in extra work to get a head start on college, but the way registration currently works, these extra hours give some students an unfair advantage when registering for classes. Not only does this allow some students to register sooner than others with as many semesters left before graduation, they also have more required classes taken care of, doubling the disparity. This also puts students close to graduation at a disadvantage if they don't have as many credit hours. To fix this problem registration priority should be based solely on credit hours from the University, making suitable exceptions for transfer students.

Some people might argue that students with substantial pre-admittance credit hours worked hard and earned this advantage. Having those classes out of the way, freeing up time for electives and making it feasible to not get every class they need each semester and still graduate on time should be reward enough. Frankly, not everyone has the opportunity

to have this advantage. Some high schools don't offer college credit courses, and some students can't afford to pay for summer classes. Forcing this hardship on students who didn't have these advantages available to them is simply unfair.

Freshmen and sophomores might not be happy getting stuck with the classes no one else wants, but it's a necessity for the system to work. During the first couple of years in college there are a lot of required courses to take care of, especially Liberal Studies Program requirements. In most departments there are an abundance of these classes, which means if you can't get into a higher level class that you wanted you can at least find a class you need to fill the hours. As an upperclassman this isn't the case. By the time you're a junior or senior there aren't many classes to fill your schedule with, making it important that you get to pick the harder to get classes first. Counting non-University credit hours allows students to cheat this system, making life unnecessarily harder for students who really need the classes that are filling up even faster than usual.

Tyler Retherford is a sophomore anthropology major from Springfield, Mo.

Awareness of current events should continue after election



Molly Skyles

News flash: There is a war going on in the Middle East, and American soldiers are dying on a daily basis. But how would you know that? I mean, with all the campaign coverage we just don't have enough hours in the day to dedicate to anything other than election propaganda. Perhaps that was a bit overdramatic. Of course you know that there is a war going on, but I bet there is a lot you have missed lately because of election coverage.

For the past year or so you couldn't go a day without seeing Barack Obama or John McCain's face plastered on newspapers, billboards, magazines, TV commercials or the Internet. In fact, after a little investigative research, I found that for the week leading up to the election, six out of the seven front cover pictures on the New York Times dealt with the election. What about the soldiers dying in Iraq

for our protection or the fighting in the Democratic Republic of the Congo that could lead to its potential collapse? Nope, we Americans only want to hear about how Obama's a socialist or how much money Sarah Palin spent on clothes. The campaign was everywhere. It was almost sickening. Even Saturday Night Live skits had turned into strictly political comedy during the last few weeks. Granted, Tina Fey was hilarious as Palin, but is nothing sacred?

Correct me if I'm wrong, but I can really only think of one major issue that the media covered as much as the election recently. Even though the press coverage only lasted a week or two, the financial status of the United States did obtain mass amounts of media exposure. But my question is, did it really take something as catastrophic as an economic crisis similar to the Great Depression for Americans to take their eyes off the campaign? I know the world did not stop because the United States was in the midst of an election, so it makes me wonder what we have all missed out on while our eyes were glued to anything that said "Election 2008."

I don't mean to downplay the importance of the election because I think it was very important and I

foresee its outcome changing our lives a great deal, and most — although not all — of the media coverage was vital. The media gave us debates and speeches, which provided citizens with the knowledge needed to vote for the best candidate. But because of all the scandal stories, phony ads and continuous polling updates we were bombarded with, we seemed to forget that the rest of the world still exists.

Now that the polls are counted, though, and Barack Obama is officially the next president of the United States, will anyone even watch or read the news anymore? It's sad to say, but I think most Americans are a little ignorant about issues that aren't continually thrown at them. I mean if it doesn't directly affect you, why bother paying attention, right? I hope that's not the mind-set of most people, but I am not convinced. I may be generalizing too much and not giving people enough credit, but I know my stack of New York Times to be recycled at the end of every week has been much bigger lately than in the past because of election coverage.

Molly Skyles is a freshman communication major from St. Louis, Mo.

