

# Bailout is poor solution for economic problems



Zach Vicars

The Dow is plummeting by record numbers, Congress can't decide how to bail out big business, and widespread panic sweeps the land. Yes, the world as we know it is coming to an end.

And maybe that's a good thing. That's right. Call me crazy, but I can't help but see the virtue of holding greedy investors accountable for their transgressions. Although a few hundred politically driven puppeteers may take one position, I'm going to side with Jeffrey Miron, senior economics lecturer at Harvard University. In his article on why the bailout was "a terrible idea," Miron writes, "The right view of the financial mess is that an enormous fraction of subprime lending should never

have occurred in the first place. Someone has to pay for that. That someone should not be, and does not need to be, the U.S. taxpayer."

Miron is right. The economy does not need a takeover. It doesn't need a blank check. It needs something called accountability, something that can only be found in a free market. So in this case, bankruptcy, not bailout, is the answer. Sure, for a while, the economy will take a hit, but as Miron notes, someone will make a profit while all these unethical corporations and government programs fall flat on their face.

So where does that leave us? What can you and I do about this economic crisis? It's simple, really. We need to attack this crisis with change at the individual level. Each American — greedy CEO and greedy mortgage owner alike — needs an economic realignment.

Before America can gain any ground, we need to deal with our addiction to debt. The infestation of debt on the national level has been well-documented. It's inexcusable and needs to be erased. But the debt that should

really make Americans sweat is their own. According to MSN, the American people — not the government — are in about \$2 trillion of debt.

But debt alone isn't the problem. Americans started this economic crisis by borrowing money without having any idea how they would pay it back. They thought they could get away with it. And, for a time, they could, but that time has passed.

Americans need to find a way to eliminate debt. Whether that means paying in cash, swiping your credit card a few less times a month or completely adjusting your budget is up to the individual. But we need to find a solution soon because it appears the government won't come up with a solution for us.

Americans also need to deal with the entitlement clause we seem to have added to the Constitution. We need to stop thinking that everything should be given to us. We act like we're guaranteed sustainable housing, health care, even a job. That's just not true. All we're really guaranteed is life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Everything

else must be earned.

The truth about entitlement will become all the more evident in the face of this economic crisis. As times get tough, each of us will have to decide what we really need. Do I need a nicer home? Do I need a fancy barbecue grill? Do I need a new car? The answer to all those questions is probably not. But you'll have a hard time convincing most of us.

The problem that scares college students most is the job hunt. Many students already lose sleep wondering if there will be a job in their field of study upon graduation. With the stock market in shambles, fears only worsen. Again, we need to realize that we're not entitled to our dream job. We're entitled to the pursuit, which may mean working jobs that seem "below us" before we reach our true potential.

Lastly, Americans need to realize that we are enslaved to nations all around the globe. China and the Middle East collectively have a death grip on our great land. We made them our masters, but we also can rise up and free

ourselves from their oppression.

We can write to our congresspeople for help, but beyond that, we must demand change within our lifestyles. We must avoid unnecessary energy use by riding our bikes and walking whenever possible. We must insist that our clothing, food and other essentials are made in America by eating homegrown foods and supporting local tailors, artisans and bakers. For the last 20 years, America has done whatever it can to stimulate the economies of other nations. Now it's time we start stimulating our own.

If Americans can find a way to pay off our debts, readjust our entitlement mindset and stimulate our local economies, then this economic crisis will pass away like a mist. This solution to such a wide-reaching problem as our economy may seem simple, but it is far from easy. It will take commitment, hard work and sacrifice — three components that have been missing from the American economy for far too long.

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

## AROUND THE QUAD

Are you going to participate in any Homecoming activities?



"Absolutely not. I never plan on having anything to do with it."

Joseph Leiber junior



"Yeah, the football game — I play on the football team."

Greg Eagle freshman



"No, I usually don't have time for fun activities, sadly enough."

Katie Seto freshman



"No, I think I'm going to be busy with other things."

Marek Haruza senior

# Participation in Homecoming events should remain optional



Brenna McDermott

The word Homecoming scares the crap out of me. It doesn't get me pumped for a fun week at Truman. It brings me back to the darkest, most horrible time of my life: high school — high school and the Homecoming football game, pep rally, dance, decorations and court.

Shockingly, I was a big part of Homecoming in high school. Being the third-runner up in the Homecoming Queen race is a title I will probably carry with me for the rest of my life with pride. Hey, fourth place out of five ain't too shabby.

But when I came to Truman, I was pretty disillusioned with the whole Homecoming rite-of-passage thing. I was burnt out of school spirit, so I chose to opt out of the Homecoming festivities.

But apparently, I wasn't choosing to skip the week of

activities. I wasn't welcome in the first place. The prevailing theory is that Homecoming celebrations aren't accessible to individuals not in a major organization on campus. I had no idea I was so discriminated against.

I don't know who complained, but I never felt left out of the Homecoming activities. There were no signs saying "Greeks only" or "Organizations only." I was just lazy and didn't want to go, which is a valid life choice.

So to help those who feel discriminated against, this year the Homecoming committee is trying to encourage those who don't belong to an organization to participate. I thought being a Truman student during Truman Homecoming was inclusive enough.

And here I go again, back to high school. I thought the days of not cutting anyone from the team, trying to include everyone and not hurting anyone's feelings were over. Life, what little I've experienced so far, doesn't work like that.

We come to college to take off our training pants. We're told that to make it in college a student must

be a self-starter. No one will check to make sure we have done our homework, no professor will make us come to class. We have to want to go to class. It's all up to us.

Why should that self-starting stop with academics?

The Homecoming committee members work their butts off every year to plan exciting events for students and alumni, so why should they have to work even harder to make sure everyone feels accommodated? We are all supposed to be a bunch of get-up-and-go people, so why do we have to be corralled into Homecoming activities like sheep?

Homecoming isn't meant to exclude people. It is meant to bring students, alumni and staff together to celebrate Truman. Sure, it is hard to be in a group of a few among the many organizations that attend these events, but if you are unwilling to join an organization, then that is the only way to experience this thing called Homecoming, which we are all entitled to participate in. Don't wait to be included, just include yourself. That is the only way Homecoming ever will be a real success.

Brenna McDermott is a sophomore English major from St. Louis, Mo.

## Why do we have to be corralled into Homecoming activities like sheep?

## When it comes to presidential debates, there is no purely objective way to choose a winner.

Recently, the first of four presidential debates featuring the two candidates took place. The Sept. 26 debate involved issues like foreign policy, the war in Iraq and obviously, the economic crisis. Debates in general are an extremely important part of the political process. They allow us to get to know the candidates better, see how they react to opposition and answer the questions we've all been curious about.

As a result of last Friday's debate, polls stated that voters are more confident with Barack Obama when it comes to the economy and trust John McCain on issues regarding foreign policy, according to CNN's Web site. In my eyes, however, Obama won this debate.

My reasoning for Obama deserving the win is not solely rooted in my political affiliation. I think that Obama's eloquent way of answering the tough questions proved that he is prepared for whatever is thrown at him. He did not back down. Unlike McCain, Obama answered questions clearly and made people understand his ability to be a successful president. For example, a large portion of the debate was obviously dedicated to the bailout plan. Obama was very clear on where he stood about

this issue. He called for specific conditions including a payback plan for taxpayers and assistance for those struggling with mortgage payments if the bailout succeeds. However, McCain was not as clear in explaining what his stance was regarding this issue. But when a candidate is giving billions of dollars in tax breaks to wealthy corporations and individuals, I suppose it's pretty easy to see what he thinks about a plan costing \$700 billion of taxpayers' money.

Obama also had an edge over McCain regarding foreign policy. I realize that McCain does have more foreign policy experience. During the debate, though, Obama discussed how he thought

the war was unnecessary from the beginning. McCain, however, supported entering Iraq. Now, I realize how crucial foreign policy experience is,

but look at the outcome of this war that the Republican candidate advocated. I don't know about you, but after all these years in Iraq, I'm ready for a president who sees just how wrong entering Iraq really was.

I am a Democrat. Obviously I think Obama deserves to be called the victor of the debate. But what does it really mean to win a debate? There is no purely objective way to choose a winner — personal bias always will be too strong to tell who actually deserves the win. I know when I hear a debate or even just a speech, no matter what the speaker is saying I always value it more when it is from someone I like. For example, I like Barack Obama. Obama was the winner in my eyes. However, I realize that this bias is not the best way to handle anything, especially politics. I think if we all try to counteract our biases we would be more likely to vote on issues rather than just blindly following the rest of our parties.

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

# Removing trays from cafeteria would reduce hassle, waste



Tyler Retherford

Cafeteria trays might finally be receiving their long overdue comeuppance. Sure, they may seem innocuous, but trays are just an antiquated cafeteria tool that do more harm than good. In addition to adding unneeded cost to cafeteria operations, trays encourage food waste and serve little actual purpose in the University dining halls. It's about time we move on to a dining future without trays.

Frankly, I won't be sad to see the awkward little irregular hexagons go. As crowded as the tables at the dining halls are during peak usage hours, trays tend to take up more space than is strictly necessary. More often than not at least one person I'm eating with gets rid of his or her tray immediately after having sat down to make room at the table for everyone. Even getting rid of these plastic nuisances at the end of a meal makes for more work than

without them. Rather than being able to neatly and efficiently stack plates and cups on the disposal conveyor belt, the trays have to be placed side by side lest they be precariously stacked at all sorts of worrying angles. Clearly, whoever introduced the cafeteria tray to common use had no sense of spatial reasoning.

In theory, trays at least are helpful in that they allow you to carry back a few helpings of your favorite cafeteria fare to your table. In practice, however, cafeteria policy only allows students to take one serving of a main course per trip anyway. The tray really only allows you to carry back a salad or a dessert in addition to your primary plate and drink, a feat most people are perfectly capable of on their own. Even if you'd rather not take your chances with carrying three things at once, the central location of drink dispensers in the cafeterias means that a second trip back for a drink is only a mild inconvenience.

If their extremely limited use wasn't enough to condemn these wastes of plastic to their rightful place at a recycling center, there's also their encouragement of waste. Trays have to be washed between uses, wasting a considerable amount of water as

well as time and effort on the part of cafeteria workers. Furthermore, trays facilitate food waste. Truman wouldn't be the first university to remove trays from its cafeterias. The University of Minnesota went tray-less for a day on Earth Day last April, according to Minneapolis' WCCO-TV Web site, resulting in an estimated food waste reduction of 1.5 ounces per person. With about 2,500 students living on campus at Truman, and not even taking into account cafeteria frequenters who live off-campus, that could amount to more than 200 pounds of food being saved each day simply by removing trays from the cafeterias.

Trays have had their chance. For years they've been the iconic symbol of cafeterias. They've been there for our first days of school, for our uncomfortable cafeteria seating politics in high school and they have refused to go away even when we moved on to college. But it's time to let them go. After all, I suspect they would be happier as sleds or recycled into something new and useful rather than remain as pathetic plastic platters.

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Students find new use for TRAYS