

# THE ALBRIGHTIAN

February 14, 2003

The Voice of Albright College

Volume 94, Issue 1

## Freshman Retention Rate at 76%

Sheila Berninger  
The Albrightian

At this juncture in the academic year, students are not only bombarded with projects and ridiculous syllab, but also overwhelmed with the stress of finalizing schedules and deciding on their plans for this semester. Especially for freshmen, plans for the spring semester can change drastically. For example, they may choose to pursue a different major, transfer to a different school, or even withdraw from college altogether. These choices directly affect the freshman retention rate at a college or university, that is, the percentage of enrolled freshmen that remain for at least their sophomore year. Last year, the freshman retention rate for the Class of 2005 was only 76 percent.

"I don't know if we really have found [out why] or if there is one main reason people are leaving," Dave Ballaban, Registrar, said.

One of the reasons widely accepted for the low retention rate in 2001-2002 was poor nation-wide economy. Some students' parents got laid off or suffered financially in other ways, and Albright just became too expensive for them, according to Ballaban.

Another reason that accounts for a number of students leaving Albright each year is decisions made on the part of freshmen to pursue a major that Albright does not offer. Last year at least one left Albright to major in engineering at another institution equipped for that field of study. Two other freshmen left to pursue majors in digital media.

Of course, problems with the institution itself always comprise a large percentage of student complaints. The internet access problem of this past semester and lack of heat in the dorms have drawn a great deal of

frustration from the student body.

However, financial issues remain as the leading reason for leaving Albright, especially after the economic uncertainty after last year's tragic events.

"There are always cheaper schools," Provost David C. Stineback said, "but this is a very affordable school for its quality."

Once freshmen have completed their second semester, provided that they have maintained at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA, the probability that they will return to Albright for their sophomore year greatly increases, according to Stineback. Financial difficulties still overshadow the ability of freshmen to return for a second year.

"They wanted to stay, but couldn't afford to stay," said Dean of Admission Gregory E. Eichhorn about some members of the freshman 2005 class. Eichhorn also stated that he feels financial difficulties will be the biggest problem for this year's freshman class, citing declining retention rates nationwide as a result of the poor economy.

A year and a half ago, The Freshman Retention Committee was formed, headed by Eichhorn, to find ways to bring freshmen back to Albright for their sophomore year. The primary goal of the committee is to detect students who are struggling and provide necessary assistance before they consider the option of leaving Albright. The committee attempts to predict any financial, medical, or family problems that a student may experience while at school, and finds ways to counteract them. They review midterm grades of freshmen to assure that students are making academic progress.

The committee works in conjunction with academic

## Drug Testing for Athletes?

Julie Jones  
The Albrightian

As of right now there is no drug testing policy for student athletes here at Albright, but that may all change in the near future. Over the summer the trainers, health center, and athletic director worked

We're modeling some of it after other schools and using the Drug Testing for Sports guidelines of the NCAA", stated Stetler.

Many of the coaches and athletes seem to support the idea as long as it is done fairly. The head baseball coach, Jeffrey Feiler states, "I think it's

*"We're going to look at this long and hard before it goes into effect. We're modeling some of it after other schools and using the Drug Testing for Sports guidelines of the NCAA", stated Stetler.*

a good thing. Good for student athletes and teams as a whole." I support it. I

school to test 10% of every sports team for drugs banned by the NCAA as well as some other "street drugs" such as marijuana and alcohol. The consequences are not certain at this point in time but they do say that the athlete will not be banned from his or her sport on the first offense and that it will be based on a three strikes and you're out policy. The main reason for doing this is to make sure athletes are not unknowingly taking supplements banned by the NCAA such as creatine, ginsana, ephedrine, and many more (The complete list of supplements banned by the NCAA can be found in the trainer's office). It is also to help students who have problems and inform them of the effects these drugs can have on their bodies.

When asked about the policy Sally Stetler, the Athletic Director, said, "the safety of the students needs to be considered and it's a problem a lot of people don't want to address. I think it would improve the program overall here at Albright." She also emphasized that everything regarding this new policy is still tentative and that nothing is certain at this point. "We're going to look at this long and hard before it goes into effect."

think it's important to test the athletes for drug supplements that are illegal in order to bring education and awareness to the athletes," says Angie Peirce, the head volleyball coach. d awareness to the athletes," says Angie Peirce, the head volleyball coach. Jenis Frederick, the head swim coach states, "I think it's a good idea, especially since it's not a one strike and you're out deal. A lot of young people are putting harmful substances into their body and don't even know it!" AJ Campo, a soccer player, says, "I agree with it because it keeps the level of competition at a fair level and no one has any edge by means of using any drugs to enhance performance." Leon Adams, a baseball player, states, "I agree with it only if it's used in the right text and not to just pick on certain athletes." Lauren McGuirl, a soccer player, says, "I think it's a good idea because athletes shouldn't be doing drugs especially while in season. It affects them as not only a player, but also as a team and a school."

Julie Jones is a freshman reporter for The Albrightian

## SGA Corner

I wanted to take the opportunity to welcome everyone back for the Spring Semester on behalf of the Student Government Association. This semester's activities started with allocations which were held on Sunday, February 9, 2003. All budget request forms should have been submitted to SGA no later than 4pm on Friday, February 7, 2003. Also, I would like to welcome three new organizations to the Albright College community; African Diaspora, Rotoract, and Ultimate Frisbee Club. Similarly, we are welcoming back the Hillel organization and the Albright College

Republican's Club. I would like to remind all organization leaders that the second Senate meeting is on March 9, 2003, at 4pm in the Campus Center and it is very important for you to have a representative there to give a report of your group's activities. We encourage all students to come to the Senate meetings even if they do not have a report to give. Once again, back and good luck with the upcoming semester.

Sincerely,

James J. Zurn

SGA President

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## INSIDE

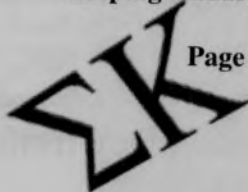


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## The Smell of the Mushroom Farm

(formerly "From the Editor's Desk")

Dan Ruedy  
Editor-in-Chief

Here it is. The first issue of *The Albrightian* for the Spring, 2003 semester. It is your paper. Do what you want with it. Line you cat's litter box with it. Tear it up for cheap dorm room insulation. Use it as a poor man's paper towel. I hope you read it first, but that's just me.

As you may or may not know, *The Albrightian* ceased publication last year due to a lack of student interest and submissions. My hope is that that will never happen again. Student newspapers are as integral to college life as...well, they're important to say the least.

Maybe that person in the back of your English class has some good ideas, but never has the opportunity to share them. Perhaps the guy who lives in your dorm has some interesting political views that you'd otherwise be deprived of. Friends, the power of print can change all that. This newspaper is more than just a final destination for a couple of trees. It is a medium to facilitate open discussion of student interests and concerns, raise awareness of events on campus, and justify the declining GPAs of the layout staff.

### Intended Publication Dates for Spring, 2003

Friday, February 14th

Friday, February 28th

Thursday, March 13th

Friday, March 28th

Friday, April 11th

Friday, April 25th

(Deadlines for print will be seven calendar days prior to publication date)

In light of the enthusiasm generated from our informational meeting held late last semester, it appeared as though we might be able to put an issue out before the break, but forces that be had other plans. A hot water pipe that had seen better days burst in our newsroom and the resulting flood of hot water and steam created significant complications for even the sincerest of our efforts, but serendipitously resulted in the shiny new tile floor adjacent to the mailroom for all to enjoy.

With the hope that future operations will remain on schedule and unaffected by any forthcoming natural disaster, we hope to retain the bi-weekly publishing schedule of previous years. The length of the paper will be noticeably shorter and more to the point, ultimately determined by quantity (and quality) of submissions and material. My apologies to those contributors whose hard work for this issue is either belated in release or got lost along the way.

We're always looking for more to join our ranks. We have a number of staff positions open...actually, almost all of them. If you're interested in getting involved, contact me in the newsroom or via e-mail at [albrightian@hotmail.com](mailto:albrightian@hotmail.com)

## Well, If It's Politically Expedient...

Andrew Harris  
The Albrightian

On January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2003 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania inaugurated her new governor, Ed Rendell. The January 22<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Allentown Morning Call quoted Rendell saying, "the time has come for Pennsylvania to dream of a better future and ask, 'Why not?'" I would like to answer Rendell's rhetorical question by saying that until we get rid of politicians who believe in political expediency, then the future looks just like the status quo.

What is political expediency? The definition I would use is someone who makes political decisions in a self-serving way. When Rendell was running for governor, one of the major issues was gambling. Rendell supported legalizing slot machines at racetracks to support education, according to an August 5, 2002 AP article. What I find disturbing about this idea of legalization is Mr. Rendell's rationalization for it. When he visited close to my home of Danville, he supported his gambling plans by saying, as quoted by the August 24, 2002 edition of the Daily Item, "If there are ills to gambling we're not stopping people from taking those ills."

What kind of rationalization is that? There are ills to murder, but murder still happens. There are ills to the use of drugs, but Mr. Rendell did not come to the College Libertarians of Albright's gubernatorial drug forum and tell us that we should legalize them since people use

them anyway. What can we expect from a government that runs on self-serving rationalization?

The rationalization is self-serving because Rendell saw an easy source

*"Pennsylvanians and Americans will not be able to dream of a better tomorrow, till we start demanding more from our political candidates and officeholders."*

of income to support a popular cause. I find the rationalization disturbing because it shows a lack of principle and leadership. One could say on principle that gambling should be legalized, that we have the legal right to do so. Rendell could have argued that the government's job is not to be the moral police. Instead, he uses a weak rationalization that has no real basis or principle.

It shows a lack of leadership because it offers no hope for the future. Its just another vague ungrounded reason to do something meant to get votes. How is it

different then the status quo? Why will legalizing gambling and its proceeds make education better? I'm sure everyone would like to see education get more money, but how will that change the future of Pennsylvania? If politicians allocate the money in the self-serving ways they do now, what will be different?

Pennsylvanians and Americans will not be able to dream of a better tomorrow, till we start demanding more from our political candidates and officeholders. Instead of settling for political expediency that is meant to pander to us, we need principled leaders that have dreams along with principles. Leaders who have good reasons for their ideas and sell those ideas based on their merits, not vague notions of what would be good. Before we dream of a world better than the status quo, we need to start looking to leaders who have something different to offer compared to the status quo.

Andrew Harris is a junior columnist for *The Albrightian*

## THE ALBRIGHTIAN

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*The Albrightian* reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste. Send letters to Campus Center Box 107. All letters received become property of *The Albrightian*.

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

The Caf seems to have a new policy regarding using social security numbers as a substitute for a Student ID. That policy, as I was a little surprised to find out, is that they no longer allow us to punch in our code if we forget our ID in our room. I noticed they have a memo posted that says they are trying to prevent theft of meals by students using other people's social security numbers. This past week, I decided to try switching IDs with another student. We were both admitted, using another student's ID. I am a little concerned that this can happen, and leads me to believe that the reason they need to inconvenience us seems to be for their own convenience, or laziness.

-Concerned in Crowell

Dear Albrightian Editor,

The other day I had an epiphany. I don't live in the woods, but I like to pretend I do. I have friends up there and occasionally I like to be able to see them, but not one Thursdays, Fridays, or Saturdays. These are the nights that Campus Security sets up a checkpoint making it impossible for me to drive my Honda Civic into the complex. Someone once told me that the checkpoint is there as a preventative measure against the rash of car break-ins last semester. I don't think anyone is stupid enough to think that thieves consider all the other nights of the week as "off nights," so could someone please explain to me the real reason?

-Inquiring Woods Wannabe

"Look at you: member of the honor roll, assistant to the the assistant manager of the movie theatre. I'm telling you Rat, if this girl can't smell your qualifications, then who needs her, right?"

-Matt Dumone, "Fast Times at Ridgemont High"

Happy Valentine's Day from *The Albrightian*!



# NEWS

## Freshman Retention (cont. from page 1)

advisor and Assistant Academic Dean Tiffenia D. Archie. Resident Educators are also encouraged to interact with students and provide feedback to the committee. President Henry A. Zimon strongly agrees with Eichhorn's theory that the more people involved and more feedback will help improve Albright's freshman retention rate. He added that the best sources for information on freshmen include faculty, resident educators, and athletic coaches.

"We're very up front with what Albright is all about," he said.

The President assured that the aim of the Freshman Retention Committee is not to pressure students to stay at Albright, or even to convince them to come here in the first place. He hopes that students will decide what college to attend according to their own desires, and that students who do choose Albright will see that the college is exactly what they were told it would be.

Although President Zimon said that he would like to see the freshman retention

rate above 80 percent, he did not see a major problem with Albright's four-year retention rate.

"I think our four-year retention rate is great," Zimon said.

According to Zimon, other private colleges and universities, such as Lycoming College, King's College, and Wilkes University, similar in size to Albright, all have a retention rate very close to Albright's. Albright's retention rate is better than state schools such as Kutztown University and Alvernia College.

"We're not trying to outdo every school in the nation," Zimon said.

By interacting more with students and finding out why they leave Albright, the Freshman Retention Committee is trying to find the best ways to cater to students who do decide to stay at Albright and find it to be the best college for them.

Sheila Berninger is a sophomore reporter for The Albrightian

## Crime Watch

Many students who are attending classes at Albright College are not aware of the immediate area and may be unfamiliar with local surroundings and unaware of local problems within the city. The city of Reading, like many similar in size and stature, has its share of problems including crime.

Some of you may not have the time to read the local newspaper or peruse local information on the internet, which would leave you unaware of recent local events. On January 2, 2003, the Turkey Hill on Hampden Boulevard, which is a few miles from campus was robbed. The individual was believed to have proceeded to the Albright Campus area. Both the Muhlenberg and Reading Police departments were present; however the individual was not found on campus property. An almost identical incident occurred on January 17, 2003, at the same Turkey Hill on Hampden Boulevard. Again, the individual who perpetrated the robbery was believed to be in the vicinity of Albright's campus.

On January 23, 2003, a gun battle ensued between two individuals. The two engaged in a shoot-out while in their vehicles at the 900 block of Exeter Street and continued to the Barta terminal located at 1700 N. 11th Street. Many of you may be familiar with the Goose House, which is in the immediate area where the shoot-out occurred. Reading Police attributed the shoot-out to a likely drug-related incident.

On February 1, 2003, another shoot-out occurred in the 900 block of Pike Street. Located within this block are Mike's Rising Sun Bar and the Pike Cafe. The shoot-out occurred when a patron left Mike's Rising Sun, and three individuals attempted to rob him. On the three perpetrators was shot and killed.

The sole purpose of this column is to promote awareness of your local surroundings. The safety of our students is paramount. If you choose to frequent bars and local clubs in the area, take the time to research the area and the reputation of the establishments. If you choose to frequent an establishment, be aware of what is happening inside as well as the surrounding neighborhood. If a situation should occur, try to distance yourself from it. Becoming embroiled in a controversy could produce disastrous results.

If there is anything that you believe Safety & Security Department can do to help you to be more aware of your surroundings, please let us know.

Be Safe!!

Submitted by L. M. Gross  
Albright College Safety and Security



## THE SEARCH FOR ALBRIGHT'S NEXT SUPERSTAR

### Eligibility Requirements:

- at least 1 semester on-campus living experience
- 2.50 or better GPA
- acceptable community standards record

The Search has begun for contestants in Albright Idol: RE Selection '03. Contestants will compete for the award packages below for 2003-04 academic year.

Step up to the Mike...



### RA Superstars awarded:

- All expense paid on-campus single occupancy accommodations
- Free Entertainment Delivery System
- Free Refreshment Station
- Spending Money

Approximate value of award package equals \$8273\* (Total value of free room with super single upgrade, free cable, free microwave, and proposed stipend.)

### PE Superstars awarded:

- Free upgrade of on-campus accommodations to single occupancy
- Free Entertainment Delivery System
- Free Refreshment Station
- Spending Money

Approximate value of award package equals \$5683\* (Total value of super single upgrade, free cable, free microwave, hourly wage and proposed stipend.)

Applications to apply to be an RE for 2003-2004 are available starting 01/29/03

online  
(<http://www.albright.edu/studentlife/housing/index.html>),

from the Housing Office or from Resident Educators.

\* Estimated compensation value; Actual amount is subject to change. 2003-2004 Albright budget approval.



## ALPHA PHI OMEGA Coeducational Service Fraternity

### Rush Events for February 2003

Monday, February 17: Coffee Hour  
Campus Center Main Lounge 6:00pm

Wednesday, February 19: Pizza Party  
Norht Hall 5:00pm

Thursday, February 20: Twister!  
Krause Hall 7:00pm

Monday, February 24: Bowling  
Meet at Mohn Hall 7:00pm

Tuesday, February 25: Ice Cream Social  
Smith Hall 6:00pm

Wednesday, February 26: Service Project  
Krause Hall 7:00pm

Thursday, February 27: Wallyball  
Meet at Walton Hall 6:45pm

IF CREDIT CARDS GIVE  
YOU SO MUCH FREEDOM,  
WHY DO I FEEL  
IMPRISONED BY DEBT?





# FEATURES

## Albright College: The live-in high school?

Sumi Holman &  
Becky Lewis  
*The Albrightian*

It has been said that at college one goes to class two minutes after rolling out of bed sporting his or her favorite pair of pajamas or most comfortable sweatshirt and sweatpants. Have you not heard the story of the popular frat boy falling for the sorority sweetheart? Of course you have, but there is always a twist. Little does the frat boy know that this stunning girl is the same girl wearing rubber duck pajamas and slippers he had been sitting next to in Spanish class for the past five weeks. At Albright, however, if one is to walk into class wearing blue jeans and a sweatshirt, he or she is likely to feel as though they just committed a fashion felony when looking around at peers wearing Armani sweaters and slacks from the Banana Republic. Even students at the gym will be seen in nothing less than the latest pair of wind pants to be put out on the line at Abercrombie and Fitch. Recognizing that girl from class at a party is not such a difficult task.... at the beginning of the party anyway. As we have arrived at Albright we have heard several student comment on how they feel as though they are "trapped in high school". These incidents sparked curiosity into how other Albright students feel about this condition. We set

out on a mission to answer the question of why students feel this way.

"As I made my way slowly but surely down the hall to the bathroom one early morning, I stopped to read a fellow dorm mate's dry erase board. It read, 'Great minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, and small minds discuss people. Which are you?'" There had been conflicts lately between many of us living together in the same hall. When we first came here we were all friendly with each other, but as time when on it was evident that some people were going to become closer with certain people, and other people were going to click better with other. I didn't foresee a problem; I wasn't insulted at all. I felt as though I was beginning to figure out which girls on my floor I could become closer to. All of the sudden it blew up into people talking behind closed doors, feelings being hurt, and messages such as the one above being scrawled out on dry erase boards at all hours of the night. Many of us felt as though we were back in our freshman years of high school, if not middle school. Fortunately, things were resolved between us and now we understand each other. In the back of my mind I still think, 'What the hell was that?'" Freshman Sumi Holman's unique story, along with the stereotypical situations mentioned above sparked our curiosity of how

other Albright students feel about the social drama that takes place on campus. Everyone knows that one of the biggest aspects of college life is living with the people you go to school with. This is one of the biggest reasons why there is so much drama, we are all together 24-7. This constant contact with peers is enough to allow bonds to form between students that will last a lifetime. Ironically, this continual contact with your peers may cause conflicts to arise. Living together with roughly thirty people is a huge change from being in your own house with four or five family members. Because students are away from their families, bonds are formed between students in order to feel the security they felt at home. "I think it's really cliquey here", says freshman Krista Logan, "There are more opinions of what's right and what's wrong." That is a valid point. Certain frames of mind, or even the way that you were brought up can play a role in whom you become close with. As a result of some of the tight friendships that are formed, students may feel as though they are unable to fit into certain groups. This leads to the feeling that college is, in the words of Albright freshman Bill Reilly, "exactly like a petty high school". "No matter where you go it's going to be like that", points out college freshman Catherine Maloney.

As long as we are human we will always gravitate towards the people we feel most comfortable around, the people that we feel know us the best. Therefore, we should not take offense to all the cross-country guys sitting at one table for dinner- it's simply because they share the same interests.

Perhaps the problem that most freshmen are facing is identifying with themselves. "Coming to Albright, I'm friends with a lot of different

upperclassmen, most did say that they too shared the same feelings when there were freshmen. So in the words of any involved upper-classman, "Give it a chance".

When students go to college many questions are raised in their minds. Will I fit in and make new friends? Will I be able to get involved in campus organizations and broaden my leadership skills? Will I find other people interested in the same things I am? The answer seems to be

yes, as illustrated by the upper-classmen we had a chance to talk with. By getting involved with organizations that you're interested in you

will find people that share your common interests. It seems as though there is a majority of college freshmen that feel as though they don't quite know where they stand yet. This is only natural, so maybe it's not so much similar to high school, but similar to any new experience one may have. In the words of Becky Lewis, "It simply takes time to adjust."

Sumi and Becky are freshman columnists for *The Albrightian*.

*"No matter where you go, it's going to be like that."  
-Catherine Maloney ('05)*

people. It seems like here I'm more of an individual if that makes any sense", smile Matt Brick, a junior here at Albright. As freshmen, cliques exist, however as time continues and students mature, there won't be "people [that] care about who they're seen with and who they sit with at lunch" (Becca Vanucci, freshman). Students will simply enjoy time spent with good friends -the people who encourage you to be yourself, bettering yourself in the process. When I asked sophomore Laressa Werst how well she got along with all the people in her dorm, she burst out laughing and said "Really well! People are more mature here [than in high school]." When asking the

## Costly Wining and Dining in Reading, Pennsylvania

Sid Vaidyanathan  
*The Albrightian*

*Everyday, Albright Caf.:*

The price of an exquisite, vintage meal at Albright's Cafeteria for dinner - \$7.50. The price of a surprisingly more scrumptious meal at the Wawa or Amazing Wok - \$7.50. What is the more tantalizing option? Decide for yourself. Students living on-campus, however, cannot decide for themselves because one has to take a meal plan if they live on campus. Why that is the case is among the many questions that this article seeks the answers to.

In order to satisfactorily answer some of these questions, we must first decide the nature of the cafeteria at Albright. Is it meant to be a profitable or a non-profitable organization? One would think that schools as such are not intended to be business in themselves and therefore non-profitable organizations. By this, I mean that schools intend to break

even with respect to their costs and their expenditures. In all fairness though, schools must make some 'surplus' in order to facilitate re-investment directed towards the overall betterment of the school. However, the cafeteria, I think, should not be tied in with the schools re-investment plans. Getting a college education at Albright, and most other colleges, is quite an expensive proposition. The rules followed by the housing department regarding the compulsion to pay for a meal plan as well and the payment plan followed by the cafeteria are in no way helping students here. It is perfectly understandable that the food served during the weekends is

not as much as is served during the weekdays. What doesn't seem to comply is why the price still remains the same. It is a question that has been raised before and must be raised again with increasing

form of a plan."

For example, say we want to eat dinner only on one day and lunch and dinner on the next, we should get charged accordingly and not for the lunch which we did not

meal plan just as we are now, but students get paid back the balance for all the meals that they didn't eat. I think that would be a more reasonable option.

After taking all this into consideration, we must also remember that serving 3 meals a day to a student body all in one place must not be an easy task. There are times when groups of people have eaten meals at the cafeteria, with numbers reaching close to two thousand people being fed at a meal. My opinion on the subject is highly dependent on whether we view the school and the cafeteria as being a non-profitable or a profitable organization. Making that distinction should answer most of those questions and concerns.

Sid Vaidyanathan is a freshman reporter for *The Albrightian*

*"In order to satisfactorily answer some of these questions, we must first decide the nature of the cafeteria at Albright. Is it meant to be a profitable or a non-profitable organization?"*

frequency if it is to be given any consideration by the people in authoritarian positions.

Most colleges in the U.S. follow different types of meal plans, most of which seem more reasonable than the one we follow here. One type of plan that seemed more viable and feasible for our dining structure is that you only get charged for the meals which you eat but not in the

eat. The obvious concern that will be raised by administration and/or the cafeteria is about how regular students will be with paying their bills at the end of the semester. As always, there is an alternative. Instead of students paying for all the meals that they ate at the end of the semester, which would be a credit system, we could operate on a debit system. This means that we pay for a





# STUDENT LIFE

## Sigma Kappa's Helping Hands

Michelle Law  
*The Albrightian*

This past year, Sigma Kappa Sorority has lent a helping hand to many different organizations. As a National Sorority, Sigma Kappa has the privilege of supporting national philanthropies such as Alzheimer's Disease Research/ Gerontology, Maine Sea Coast Missionary Society, and Inherit the Earth. However, our giving does not stop there. Last spring, Sigma Kappa donated \$250.00 to the Breast Health Institute; a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for clinical research and public awareness for Breast Cancer. Sigma Kappa also donated \$150.00 to the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

The sisters of Sigma Kappa started off last semester right by organizing a "Miss-A-Meal" program for Maine Sea Coast Mission. Sigma Kappa has been supporting the mission for over 85 years, donating monetary and holiday gifts to small and often times isolated Maine coastal communities and islands. We were able to raise \$650.00, almost twice what we made last year. In October, the sisters of Sigma Kappa also participated in the Diabetes Walk which benefits the

Diabetes Association. Everyone is sure to have seen the sisters of Sigma Kappa outside the Caf selling lollipops which helps raise money for our national philanthropy, Alzheimer's Disease Research; we even sold them at Wal-Mart! Not only have we been selling lollipops, but after asking our fellow students, professors,

Caum Memorial Home on Hampden Boulevard. Twice each month, sisters visit the assisted living community for older women to play bingo and make crafts. This experience is not only wonderful for the women who reside there, but also for the sisters. We have painted pumpkins, planted flowers, and sung Christmas Carols with the women, which



Members of Sigma Kappa participating in America's Walk for Diabetes (L to R): Ellen McCormick, Laura Tangradi, Tara Walsh, Kathleen Gaynor, Michelle Law, Alison Chisholm, Trisha Scott)

and community members, we were able to donate over \$1,000 to the Alzheimers Association. Also, in October, we went "Trick-or-Treating" for canned goods. We were able to collect 260 pounds of food, donated to the Greater Food Bank of Berks County. To help support Inherit the Earth, sisters of Sigma Kappa held a campus clean-up in which we picked up trash around North Hall, the Quad, and the baseball and football fields. However, the most memorable and exciting thing the sisters of Sigma Kappa participate in is visiting the

is always a wonderful time.

We would like to thank everyone in the Albright community for helping us continue an amazing foundation program. The sisters of Sigma Kappa express their love for others in the community. Being a part of an organization such as Sigma Kappa allows for amazing opportunities to help others, as well as strengthening and growth of friendships.

Michelle Law is a sister of Sigma Kappa and contributor to *The Albrightian*

## Reading Brings in the Rock?

Adrian Chesh  
*The Albrightian*

Here at Albright College, perhaps the most common complaint amongst students is that both on campus and off campus in the city of Reading there is nothing to do unless you are old enough to go to the bars. However, this year, thanks to a budding concert scene, perhaps things may be different. Up until now, seeing a good concert meant driving at least an hour, usually all the way down to Philadelphia. This is now changing, though, thanks in particular to local musician Frank Phobia. Frank is the owner of Wooden Waves Skate Park in

Reading and has all-ages shows there almost every single weekend, showcasing both local and lesser-known national acts. His involvement does not end here, however, as he also books better known acts at the Silo Night Club. In fact, last semester alone, the Silo featured acts such as ALL, the Misfits, Clutch, Mushroomhead, and Cannibal Corpse. Even if none of these acts appeal to you, the prospect of new rock music in Reading looks very good. This semester promises to bring even more national acts to within ten minutes of Albright College.

In fact, one show this semester should attract an extremely large crowd. CKY (Camp Kill Yourself), a four-piece rock group from West Chester, PA has been gaining fans at a rapid pace since their exposure on MTV's hit series Jackass. Now, their national

tour stops at the Silo here in Reading on March 6th. CKY's music is extremely unique and difficult to describe. Incorporating heavy riffs, scratchy yet melodic vocals, and even some electronic elements, it is truly something that must be experienced live to understand. CKY's second full-length album, *Infiltrate, Destroy, Rebuild*, was released in the fall of 2002 and has been selling steadily since, even

For more information on shows and venues, check out:

[www.thesilonightclub.com](http://www.thesilonightclub.com)  
[www.woodenwaves.net](http://www.woodenwaves.net)

breaking into the Billboard Top 10 one week. Opening for CKY will be hardcore band Atreyu, another musical force quickly on the rise. Atreyu, features a more aggressive style than CKY, molding harmony in small doses around blood curdling screams and yells along with guitar solos and double-kick bass. Once again, though, descriptions of musical styles cannot do either band the justice it deserves. To truly know what either of these bands is about they must be seen live. So if March 6th, you find yourself with a free night, stop by the Silo for some of the fastest rising rock bands in the U.S. It's guaranteed to be a better time than DJ Skribble.

Adrian Chesh is a sophomore and regular contributor to *The Albrightian*

## Is the Doctor In?

(First article in a series)

Autumn Wilson  
*The Albrightian*

Getting sick sucks. We all know that. Getting sick in college sucks even more, with no one to baby you like your mom did. Most students, especially freshmen that don't know better yet, are left to the Gable Health Center with any variety of ailments that strike your average college student. Unfortunately for the unsuspecting students here at Albright College, going to the health center will not accomplish much.

Have you ever gone to the Health Center just knowing you were sick, and been sent home with some Allegra and Motrin for what ended up being bronchitis? Have you ever gone

in all achy, and been diagnosed with "unidentified muscle ache"? I have, and that unidentified muscle ache was the flu. Everyone has a Health Center story. Many revolve around being questioned about pregnancy and STDs. In fact, the "testing" rumor is one of the most prevalent, consistent rumors on campus that thrives on rumors, so it is possible that the Health Center is concerned with more than just sexual health. However, while it is an important issue to address college students with, there are other health issues on this campus. A college health center that is capable of the full gynecological exams, pregnancy testing, and STD testing that they are so proud of should be able to grow a throat culture in less than three days.

More than the emphasis on sexual health, the Health Center seems to believe that Motrin and Allegra are cure-alls. I understand they do what they can, but sometimes 600mg of Motrin is not the answer.

Honestly, the Health Center wouldn't be so bad if it was what it seems to be; a small health center at a smaller college trying to do its best to treat the students in the best way possible. However, the treatment that I, as well as others have received, it what makes me never want to return. I was diagnosed with mono this past October, and I asked them to fax my test results home. Unfortunately, to have

anything faxed, a release form needs to be signed. So I trekked back over there in the cold, sick as anything, to sign a release form and give them the fax

Have you ever gone to the Health Center just knowing you were sick, and been sent home with some Allegra and Motrin for what ended up being bronchitis?

number. When I got to the little window, I was harshly asked, "What are you trying to accomplish by going home?" and practically accused of lying when I told her I already had an appointment. The obvious answer to her question would be that I was trying to be responsible in maintaining my health to the best of my ability by going to my family doctor

who is not only aware of my medical history, but can perform a strep and mono test in under five minutes. So after signing the form, giving the fax number, and repeating the date and time of my appointment, I left for home. I should have saved myself the trip in the cold, as the Health Center found it was too difficult to fax my test results.

For what we pay to go to this college, don't we deserve some semblance of adequate health care? Or is it that the focus is so much on sexual health that general health is often overlooked? I, for one, am going to keep looking into this.

Autumn Wilson is a sophomore and regular contributor to *The Albrightian*



# STUDENT LIFE

## Domino Players Lock-in

Danny Campos  
*The Albrightian*

On January 24, 2003, another tradition returned to the theatre. The Domino Players Theatre Company held a lock-in in the First Union Theatre. It was the first lock-in in over three years. The festivities started at 8pm and ended at 8am the next day. Some of the activities included theatre games, improv, dancing, and two professional workshops.

Nathan Roberts (00' Albright graduate) taught a stage combat workshop. All the participants learned to punch and kick just like the pros. Following the stage combat workshop, there was a stage makeup workshop

given by Aaron Jackson. Aaron Jackson was the scenic designer for the recent Domino Players' production of *Fuente Ovejuna*. During the workshop, the participants learned how to apply regular stage makeup and other techniques for simulating the effects of aging and bruises.

Besides the workshops and the games, everyone enjoyed tons of food and drinks that were provided throughout the evening. Overall, the event was a huge success and the Domino Players look forward to another lock-in later on in the semester.

Danny Campos is a  
sophomore reporter for *The Albrightian*

## Horoscopes

**Aquarius: Jan. 20 - Feb. 18**

Your family and friends are likely to tempt you with sweets and interrupt your workout schedule, but remember that the road to total wellness requires a lifelong commitment. Be wary of the pond, my unsuspecting friend.

**Pisces: Feb. 19 - March 20**

Would you like to leave town for a few days and get away from it all? This is an excellent time to travel. Consider a romantic getaway to a faraway island or a cosy retreat for two.

**Aries: March 21 - April 19**

A romance with an old flame could be tempting, but remember -- you had a good reason for breaking up. You'll have much better luck with a new love interest, so go for it.

**Taurus: April 20 - May 20**

Whether you're involved or single, it's a great time to pack up your nearest and dearest and go on a road trip. If you're afraid of cars, then get on your computer and play a driving game.

**Gemini: May 21 - June 21**

Watch out for unexpected expenses and larger-than-usual financial transactions. Doublecheck your receipts and count your change. You don't want to be called to account for your mistakes.

**Cancer: June 22 - July 22**

Be careful of a new friend that you meet in a chat room. They may not be who they really say that they are. But then again, neither are you, Cancer. So keep your eyes open and your mind alert.

**Leo: July 23 - Aug. 22**

This week, tackle some chores or finish a home improvement project. Invite that special someone over when it's time to relax, Leo. The reward for your hard work will be some fun playtime.

**Virgo: Aug. 23 - Sept. 22**

It's a good week to entertain, Virgo. Invite people over whom you haven't seen in a while. It's also a fine time to catch up on chores or decorate your home. Socialize while you work.

**Libra: Sept. 23 - Oct. 22**

It's DVD party time. So sit in front of the TV and invite a horde of your buddies over for the latest action thriller and don't forget the snacks. After the film, chill out with your friends and get the latest dish.

**Scorpio: Oct. 23 - Nov. 21**

Perhaps some new duds would make you more approachable at the next social scene. Get something that makes you stand out. Attracting a mate won't be hard with your new bunny slippers.

**Sagittarius: Nov. 22 - Dec. 21**

You could revive a hot romance with an old flame, Sagittarius. It's a fine week for those who are seeking love and tenderness. Sit back, relax and prepare to renew that love affair. However, beware of strangers with chocolates!

**Capricorn: Dec. 22 - Jan. 19**

You'll have a good time if you stay in town. You'll be invited to a swinging party so stay close to the phone this week. Be prepared to have a fabulous time when you go out, to the Woods!



## Get in the KNOW...

### Announcements and Upcoming Events at Albright

#### Winter Ball: February 15, 9pm

The African American Society will be having the fourth annual Winter Ball on Saturday February 15, 2003 at the Lincoln Plaza Hotel. Transportation will be provided. Buses will depart from Walton Hall every half-hour from 9-11pm and will return to Walton Hall at 12:30 and 1:00am. Tickets are \$10 for a single and \$18 for a couple. Tickets are on sale from February 10th to 14th during lunch and dinner in front of the Caf. There is a cash bar for anyone over 21. This is a semi-formal event. Please come out and enjoy a night full of dancing and elegance.

#### Blood Drive: February 24

Rotaract will be hosting their second blood drive on February 24th. Any one that would like to donate blood can sign up for a time beginning on February 13th until February 19th. The sign-up table will be outside of the Caf.

The blood drive that was sponsored last semester had wonderful results and Rotaract would like to have even better results this semester. There will be a competition between colleges in this area to see which drive can get the biggest percent of their campus to participate. Rotaract will be sponsoring a "sub-competition" between all organizations and teams on campus. Whichever organization/team is able to bring in the most people will receive a special prize.

#### Lion Diplomats

The Lion Diplomats are hard at work for the Spring Semester. We are planning a wonderful surprise for the seniors and are being careful to make sure that no one finds out what we have planned for their Sr. Mystery Dinner! We'll just say... "get ready for a wonderful night!" On Saturday, April 26th at 3pm up in the Woods, the Lion Diplomats will hold our annual OozeBall Competition!!! What a way to close out Spring Fever Week! Look out for more info about teams and fundraisers. We welcome the support of all students on campus. If we continue to support each other, this will be the best year yet!!!

#### Gospel Ensemble

The Albright College Gospel Ensemble is sponsoring the following events for the Spring 2003 semester, which are all open to the Albright Community! Hope to see you there. All Night Community Worship experience filled with Christian music, games, and worship leaders that will provide a spiritual word for all to hear. Feb. 28, 2003, 9:00pm - 7:00am in Koop Hall.

DOMINO PLAYERS PRESENT

# ALICE IN WONDERLAND



An Adaptation of the novel by Lewis Carroll,  
created by the Manhattan Project under the  
direction of Andre Gregory

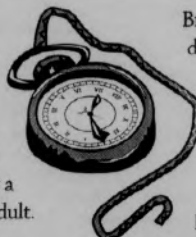
Directed by Julia Matthews

February 14, 15\*, 21, 22\* @ 8 p.m. 20 @ 7 p.m.  
16 @ 1p.m. Luncheon Theatre, 2:30 p.m. Performance

\*Student Nights 2 for 1 with ID

## "Free Family Fridays!"

Children receive free  
tickets on 2/14 & 2/21  
when accompanied by a  
paying adult.



Bring your family and  
don't be late for a

## Mad Hatter Tea Party

February 14 & 21  
at 7:15 p.m., theatre lobby  
Free for all ticket holders.



# SPORTS

## Albright Track well into season

Dena Shibib  
*The Albrightian*

The Albright Track team has undergone some changes since the 2002 season. This season, the team is under a new head coach, Deneen Ebling who was previously an assistant coach. Assisting coach Ebling are Dan Scott (distance events), and Holly Whitpan (jumps) as well as returning assistant coach Barry Stebbins (throwing and pole vault). Along with a new coaching staff, the team also has some new uniforms. For the first time, the Albright track team has been participating in fundraisers to help offset the cost of purchasing new uniforms and other equipment.

Though there have been many changes, a few things remain the same. Qualifying for the Middle Atlantic Championship (MACs) is still a primary goal for many members of the team. ECAC qualifications are the focus for those who have already qualified for MACs. Additionally, school records are waiting to be broken.

The team is led by Andrew Klinskiak, Chrissy Matticola, Dena Shibib, and Todd White. This year the team is welcoming eleven freshmen

to join eighteen returning members. The only seniors are throwers Mark Snitzer and Dottie Vauls, and sprinters BJ Summer and Todd White. The men's distance squad consists of Matt Frasso, Matt Long, Joe Sarno, and Brendan War. The women's distance team includes Kim Hassel, Chrissy Matticola, and Joanie Grady. Michelle Cain, Kristin Eickstadt, Aileen Mulligan and Dottie Vauls, Andy Klinskiak, Tim Loehwing, Billy Shue and Mark Snitzer all represent Albright's throwing team. Taking care of jumps are John Burke and Joe Harkins. Pole vaulting for Albright are Allison Domday, Amelia Mazza, Bethann Pagano, and Jeff Feverston. Covering sprints are Josh Madkins, Todd White, Kevin Bliss, Dionne Mitchell, Amy Eremita, Lakeisha Fairley, Desarae Mauldin, Dena Shibib, and Bri Yachera.

The team competed in its first meet of the season at the Kutztown University Invitational on Friday, January 17. Among the top finishers were junior Billy Shue taking first in the shot put with a throw of 42'5 1/2". Sophomore Lakeisha Fairley finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the women's long jump with 14' 9 3/4". Fourth place finishes

were captured by freshman Matt Yoder in the men's 1000 meter run with a school record-breaking time of 2:52, sophomore Chrissy Matticola in the mile, Amy Eremita in the 500 meter, and Andy Klinskiak in the 35 pound weight throw.

At the Haveford Invitational on Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, sophomore Lakeisha Fairley won the women's long jump and took 2<sup>nd</sup> in both the 200 and 400 meter dashes. Freshman Joe Harkins won the high jump and took a respectable 6<sup>th</sup> in the long jump. Sophomore John Burke placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the triple jump, and Jeff Feverston soared to 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the pole vault. Junior Billy Shue received second place in the shot put with a school record-breaking throw of 43' 3 3/4".

Upcoming meets include a home meet on February 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am. The Bear's Den Invitational at Kutztown University and the MACs at Susquehanna will round out the rest of the winter season.

Dena Shibib is a junior reporter for *The Albrightian*

## Saturday is Rugby Day!

Eric Adair  
*The Albrightian*

Hello again and welcome to a brand new section of *The Albrightian* which is solely for the purposes of letting you know about Albright rugby, talking about rugby, and making you love the sport that is rugby. First let me give you a brief history of the sport of rugby and why it isn't such a huge sport in the U.S. It was invented by the Rugby School of England in 1823 by a man named William Webb Ellis when he picked up a ball while playing soccer and ran with it. The game then grew in Cambridge where they popularized it and adopted their own set of rules.

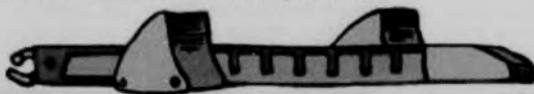
In 1895, the Rugby League was founded and a 13 player game with altered rules was created for professional play. After the creation of the Rugby League, the sport exploded throughout the world and found a very well received home in the United States (mostly on the west coast). The lack of precise rules and the vagueness of rules drew a lot of United States players away from the game and major changes were invoked. In 1880 the scrum was replaced by the line of scrimmage but the game still played with rugby rules. It continued to play with rugby rules until 1905 when photographs of a match played by Swarthmore and

Pennsylvania were published. Then President Theodore Roosevelt heavily insisted that the game be changed to tone down the brutality of the sport. In 1906, the forward pass was invented and the birth of American football occurred. Rugby is played throughout the world in such places as England, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

United States rugby reemerged in the 1960's with the help of college students who found the sport an escape from the rote discipline and professionalism of American Football. From 1964 to 1980 the number of clubs climbed from 80 to over 1000 and the United States of American Rugby Football Union was created in 1975. As of right now the game of rugby is played in over 80 countries and is second most popular sport in the world under soccer.

In the coming semester I will be posting scores from area colleges more notably our own school and trying to get more people involved in rugby and get more knowledge of the game to a public who would normally have nothing to do with the sport of rugby.

Eric Adair is a sophomore and regular contributor to *The Albrightian*



## Sports Wire

Jim DeLuccia  
*The Albrightian*

The men's basketball team went 1-1 last week, losing to Elizabethtown 105-67, but bouncing back to defeat Widener 66-56. Junior Terron Buchanan became the 30th player in school history to top the 1,000 point barrier in the loss to E-town. The Lions' record currently stands at 4-11 overall, 3-4 in the Commonwealth Conference.

The women's basketball team lost three tough games, dropping home games to Elizabethtown, 57-52, and Gettysburg, 71-62, and also falling at Widener 67-63. Senior Anne Dougherty is playing some of the best ball of the season, averaging 17 points and nine rebounds over the last three contests. She also leads the Commonwealth Conference in blocked shots.

Women's swimming saw their 58 meet win streak go by the wayside last Friday in a 124-81 loss to F&M. The ladies bounced back in a big way on Saturday, beating Lycoming

120-86. Seniors Courtney Kroh and Brooke Heebner and freshman Mandi Carroll each had big weekends for the Lady Lion swimmers.

The men's swimmers continue to dominate their competition, winning two lopsided meets last week. On Friday, Albright routed F&M 137-67. Freshman Eric Daney set two school records and junior Matt Stumhofer set another school mark to lead the Lions. On Saturday the men continued to roll, knocking out Lycoming 125-79. Daney set yet another school record, and the Lions' 200 free relay team set a new pool mark for the Albright Natatorium.

Wrestling suffered through a tough week, losing dual meets to Messiah, Gettysburg, Ursinus, and Wilkes. Senior Matt Ballistreri and freshman Wade Ginter continue to have excellent individual years, as they both went 3-1 over the four-match stretch.

Jim DeLuccia is a senior sports correspondent for *The Albrightian*

## SKI TRIP!!!



The Albright College Ski Club is organizing a trip to **Bear Creek Mountain** on **February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2003**

**Transportation provided!!!**

**\*\*Sign up at Campus Center Desk\*\***

**Bus Leaves - 8:15am in front of Walton Hall**  
**Returns - 5:00pm in front of Walton Hall**

Snow tubing only	\$12
Lift Lesson & Rental	\$25 (Beginner slope only)
Lift only	\$30
Lift & Rental	\$47

**Refreshments will be available!**



# COMMENTARY

## The Way of America to be the Way of the World

Bethany Adams  
*The Albrightian*

Is the way of America to become the way of the world? It seems that this is the direction things are headed. Since the end of World War II, the United States has risen to become the leading nation in the world economically, militarily, and influentially. The CIA reports in their 2002 World Factbook that America has the largest and most technologically powerful economy in the world... [at] the forefront in technological advances, especially... military equipment. The response to the terrorist attacks of September 11 showed the remarkable resilience of the economy... Buoyed by victories in World Wars I and II and the end of the Cold War in 1991, the U.S. remains the world's most powerful nation-state.

The United States has the highest number of nuclear warheads, second only to Russia. Because of its economic and military prowess, the United States' influence continues to grow and dominate world affairs. Despite its domination, this country is continuing to fight and obtain more power. The longer the world continues to appease the United States' quest the more difficult it will become to stop it. On November 8, 2002, the United Nations adopted the

resolution on Iraq proposed by the United States. While it was a gesture of good fellowship by the U.S. to propose a resolution to the United Nations, it was made clear that the U.S. does not need UN support. At an October rally in New Mexico, the President said, "Either the United Nations will do its duty to disarm Saddam Hussein, or Saddam Hussein will disarm himself. In either case, if they refuse to act, in the name of peace, in the name of a secure tomorrow, in the name of freedom, the United States will lead a coalition and disarm Saddam Hussein." Essentially, the U.S. has stated that the United Nations is too weak to control its members, it is an ineffective legislative body that has no power in the real world.

The U.S. has hostile relations with Iraq, Iran, and North Korea and has termed these three countries as an "axis of evil." The U.S.'s relations with Iraq and Iran have been shaky since the Persian Gulf. Relations with North Korea have been uneasy since the Cold War but have escalated since 1994. What is the common link? The UN, with heavy U.S. support, banned these three countries from developing nuclear weapons programs. While one may argue that no foreign government has a right to limit another, it is safe to allow these countries to develop their own

nuclear weapons programs? This is debatable, and there is no answer. It is not a question of right or wrong, it is a question of can and should these countries be trusted not to use a nuclear weapons program offensively in an unjustifiable manner. Furthermore, on what basis can this be determined? What person can say what the intentions of another are? The United States has assumed this role as the decider because it is the most powerful nation in the world and is the easiest target, it has the most to lose in this respect. To protect its own safety the American government must control potential threats.

But where does American intervention in foreign governments end? The United States has obstructed governments in the world ever since the end of World War II. The U.S. has hindered and thwarted the spread of Communism, fought against dictators, and uprooted the Taliban. Where will it end? The United States is a democracy, a government that is supposed to represent and fight for the rights of its people. Democracy is an institution of freedom for those who support it and would choose it over any other government. But for anyone who, for whatever reason, would not choose democracy for their country, it is an evil oppressor. No government, no

matter how popular, how moral, or how perfect it seems can meet the needs of everyone nor has the right to try and impose its institutions on any nation. A true democracy is one that can live peacefully with every other form of government without threatening another or being threatened by another. But this is non-existent, it can not exist. Mankind is untrusting by nature and blinded by greed to permit a peaceful co-existence.

The United States is a threat to the European nations. The close relationship the United States has with Great Britain has agitated many European heads-of-state. The Belgian defense minister feels that "Britain is talking less and less about European defense. It needs to be less Atlanticist and more European." One goal of the EU, European community is to make European countries more influential in today's world. Europe realizes that the United States has lopsided the world power scale and it is striving to even it out once again before it is too late. But the E.U.'s attempts to unify are hurt by Great Britain. As America's closest ally, Great Britain has given its unending support militarily and politically. It seems as though Britain is trying to accomplish two things: develop into a strong, independent world leader and giving unfaltering

support to the U.S. to avoid bringing her wrath upon Great Britain. By remaining the United States' closest friend when so many countries are against it Great Britain is assured a certain level of safety from the U.S.

By being with the U.S. instead of against it, Britain has the opportunity to flourish and reclaim its lost place as a world leader. Whether this attempt on Britain's part will be successful only time will tell but if it is not, then there is only one alternative to end the U.S.'s sole domination of the global community.

There will be no stopping the United States without mass destruction to several parts of the country at one time. The United States has survived an unending onslaught of violence (both World War I and II, the Cold War, and various terrorist attacks) over the last sixty years and still remains the leading country in the world. Opposition and criticism of this country are high, but will it do any good? Will American institutions be accepted world wide or will it come down to a third world war?

Bethany Adams is a freshman columnist for *The Albrightian*

## Eminem: Rebel with a contract clause

Dan Ruedy  
*The Albrightian*

The other day I saw a local Reading youth wearing an Eminem T-shirt, just like I have on countless other occasions. I asked the young man why he likes Eminem's music, and he replied "cause he's a rebellious bad-ass and doesn't take anything from anybody!" The reply was given with a surprising air of enthusiasm; this was obviously a true Eminem fan. I suppose the allusion to his "bad-assness" isn't the worst answer that I could have received, but for a few minutes I considered how much of a "bad-ass" Eminem really is.

Part of what makes Eminem appealing to young audiences is the level of controversy surrounding his lyrics and actions, particularly in response to his opinions on homosexuality and social classes. Ironically, this kind of press kit is hard to package into the standard medium of music acceptable for play on radio or TV. Indeed, even an artist as obnoxious and difficult to ignore as Eminem needs assistance in getting the initial

name recognition and youth following that will sell records. A strong argument can be made to attribute much of his early mainstream exposure to MTV's Total Request Live, the only time MTV1 seems to play music videos anymore. TRL is little more than an extremely efficient proving ground to swiftly gauge an artist's popularity and marketability potential. Record labels, like Eminem's Interscope Records, might pull strings to have their newly signed artists featured as guests on TRL to promote a new album or upcoming tour, just as they did for Limp Bizkit a few years back. Such promotional appearances are also known as advertisements for those in the industry, but the general public audience rarely seems to notice. In fact, the heavily commercialized hour of TRL's pseudo-entertainment is actually passed off as legitimate programming, and generates additional revenue from traditional commercial air time.

Viacom has sole ownership of the MTVi Group, but has no stakes in Interscope and therefore would not directly benefit from sale of Eminem's albums. Indeed, the

only connection between Viacom and Vivendi Universal, Interscope's parent company, is joint ownership of the relatively obscure United Cinemas International. But even though Eminem has enjoyed free publicity to plug his movie on MTV's Total Request Live, Viacom has enjoyed their fair share of fantastic ratings and cheap programming.

This brings us to Eminem's recent film "8 Mile", distributed by Universal Pictures. I have not actually seen the film since I have no money, but its artistic merit has little to do with my claims. Regardless, the movie received respectable reviews. Eminem admits that the movie's storyline is only loosely based on his own career— an embellished resume, as it were. Even though the feature might be mildly entertaining, is "8 Mile" little more than a carefully orchestrated promotion for the product known as Eminem? Better yet, it is an infomercial not too dissimilar from the Showtime Rotisserie, except that people actually pay the \$7.50 out of pocket to watch it. This

conclusion is difficult to support, but impossible to disprove. Undoubtedly, a lot of money was made. The movie itself proved to be hugely successful, netting 54.5 million in its debut weekend.

Now, it may seem as though Eminem's record company would have a desire to claim some of the royalties generated from the movie. After all, besides the help of free promotions on MTV, they have a significant claim to his success. The thing is, they're only competing for that claim with themselves. Interscope Records, which owns Eminem's "Shady Records" label, is part of the Universal Music Group. The soundtrack for the movie is on the Interscope label, and features other artists including Jay-Z, Obie Trice, 50 Cent, Rakim, and D12. The breakdown is as follows: Jay-Z is with Def-Jam, part of Interscope. Rakim is with Aftermath Records, also part of Interscope. Obie Trice, 50 Cent, and D12 are all with Shady Records, part of Interscope. So all of these labels, if you haven't already connected the dots, are owned by Universal Music Group; Vivendi Universal's extremely successful music

industry venture. Now wait, who distributed "8 Mile" again? Ah, yes. Universal Pictures, part of Vivendi Universal. I wouldn't lose any sleep over all this conglomerate mumbo-jumbo, but the breadth of connections is at the very least unsettling.

The modern music business has turned what was once an art into an industry. When you buy a CD, are you actually purchasing the intellectual property of an artist, or are you just a sucker being peddled a product with an obscenely high profit margin? I don't mean to bust on Eminem, but beg to question the degree to which he is a rebellious bad-ass in light of how his image is being packaged and sold. I suppose he is fairly talented at whatever it is that he does to be so popular and recognized, but upon whom should all this praise honestly be bestowed? With so many players involved in the bizarre but undeniable success of Eminem, it's easy to hand the credit to anyone but him or any of his monikers, for that matter.

Dan Ruedy is a sophomore columnist for *The Albrightian*