Every year the Student Government Association (SGA) holds an election for the next year’s student government representatives. On April 13, 2005, the SGA debate took place in the Medical Arts building. The debate serves as a way for us (the students) to become familiar with the candidate and their ideas. Although the student attendance at the debate was very low, the debate still proceeded and their ideas and visions for the upcoming year 2005-06 were fully expressed.

The candidates for the Student Government association are:

Arthur Fu, running for the SG president, is currently the treasurer for the SGA and wants to improve the school spirit. He stated, “We must work more with Communiqué to write about the SG issues so students could have a sense of where we’re coming from.”

Lucy Rui Jia Shia, also a candidate for the SG presidency, enjoys helping students in the math center and hopes to be elected so she can accomplish “helping many students to improve their grades and graduate on time.”

Byron Naranjo, running for executive vice president, wants to work more with students and wants to see more cultural events and debates. Byron stated, “We must educate the students about us through tiger mail, we must improve our communications so they can be knowledgeable of events such as these, and undoubtedly there would be more students in these events.”

Abhishek Roka, also a candidate for executive vice president, hopes to be elected so he can improve class schedules for students. He strongly feels that we should include a questionnaire in the Communiqué to better understand the problems and simply have some kind of sense between what the students have on their minds.

Rafick Khan, a candidate for administrative vice president, wants more students to take pride in the college and wants to establish different activities to create a bond with students.

Renato Compres, a candidate for programming vice president, is currently the senator for the Humanities Club. He stated, “I want to create more awareness of all activities and the best way of going about it is by word of mouth.”

Damaris Taveras, a candidate for treasurer, an experienced student governor from high school, wants to set aside a budget to put up more boards for students to better advertise student programs and events. In addition, Damaris wants to create more smoke alarms in different buildings because of many students who smoke in stairwells.

Hye Rim Hahn, running for vice president for part-time students, hopes to resolve and fully understand the difficulties that students face while in college. She also hopes to accomplish a better relationship with students.

Hezekiah Premkumar, candidate for vice president for part-time students, feels that we must use the students’ emails to have a closer relationship with them and also set up flyers to advertise Communiqué.

Michael Nguyen, running for vice president for evening students, wants to encourage all clubs to encounter more with each other so there will be more student turn-out in events such as these. He also feels that “Communiqué is a great way and we should put a calendar in the paper to better advertise our issues.”

Dr. Eduardo Marti, the esteemed president of Queensborough Community College, traveled abroad recently to attain an awareness of the doctrine of higher education in China. In his reflections, we heard the candor of parallels that were drawn with regards to the university-at-large in China as it relates to the institutions of higher education here in America.

As with all developed nations, there are “acid tests” that exist to best determine the strength of the questions that are at hand. Given the quality of the institutions, the allegiance and devotion of the students that reside in China, one can surely affirm that “higher education in China is comparable, if not stronger in nature, than here in the United States,” stated President Marti.

There is indeed a noticeable ebb and flow of university students traversing between China and America, in pursuit of educational consumption and evolution. This seems to enable all of us to conclude that there is a current bond, if you will, between the focus on importance of education in China and in America.

There are noted differences that Eduardo Marti presented to the forum that were immediately alarming. The first was that “education in China ends at the ninth grade,” said Marti, where “the parents can either opt to pay out of pocket to educate their children, or not.” This was an interesting angle with regards to the direction of most teenagers. As Marti stated, “only the most qualified, that score highest on the National standardized test,” will be drafted into the tiers of upper-level institutions. In addition, there is no ambiguity to the fact that there is a strong divide in higher educational opportunities between the “urban” Chinese and the “rural” Chinese.

In closing, President Marti articulated to the audience, the existence of a truly “diverse” college community in China, pertaining to the student bodies as well as ideas. “Many administrators would compare collegiate structure in China to that in America, based on our college websites via the Internet.” This final point truly serves to illustrate the care and concern of both countries in keeping their higher education standards at a paramount level.
These editorials represent the opinion of the Editorial Board of Communiqué, which is solely responsible for its contents. These are not necessarily the views of the Queensborough Community College administration and staff. Communiqué welcomes any letters or editorials for the population of QCC. Submit work to Communiqué, H-428. The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit letters for spatial needs and grammatical accuracy.

**Gut Talk**

**By Paul Kaiser**

A fine toothed comb need not apply when preening for broad brush corruption within America.

To date, President Bush has thoroughly emblazoned this country overseas. Within the confines of his administration, Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense has announced through countless public diatribe that, “we have no exit strategy,” with regards to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. And let it be noted that the United Nations has harmonized with weapons inspectors and have unanimously concluded that there are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Now this line of thought would, to be sure, enable one to see that, we are have unanimously concluded that there are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Now this line of thought would, to be sure, enable one to see that, we are not only purposely sacrificing the lives of gallant American Milita men and women, but have invaded a country under unanimously false pretenses.

On the home front, we have a full blown boarded crisis in relation to illegal immigration. We have an administration that continues to parry from the issue, and by design, has taken a “deadwood” attitude. In addition, we have an atrocious economy, and to top that line of thought off, we are in a perennial blitz to export as many American jobs overseas as possible. Many within this country feel that this is nothing less than flat out governmental “delinquency.”

In a nation where the scope of attention is aimed at Michael Jackson wearing pajamas to court, many Americans feel that the media in this country has become a sub-par proxy of the hard truth. Just recently we were all bombarded with a smorgasbord of media debauchery where Terry Schiavo’s, and her family’s, dignity was mangled by the press, and our very own Congress as well.

Currently, Americans are forced to bear witness to a Federal Government, in its entirety, out of control. The steadfast abridgement of simple consciousness for pertinent issues within this country is not only evident in the executive and legislative branches, but in the judicial as well. Entrenched on the bench, there are antique federal justices that, by partisan design, were, and are to this day, appointed to make decisions to better the lives of their constituency. But this line of thought is in total contradiction to what the principles of “fair judiciary” is most deeply rooted in.

Is it safe to say that the practice of a fair trial in this country has be nullified, thanks to partisan dramas? Can we conclude that as Americans, and as a country at large, we will soon become a subordinate nation, synonymous with a “global left over” status, due to our languid decision makers? Will we start paying attention to the issues we are most stricken with right now? Or will we continue to patience ourselves, and stand by with baited breath, as the members of our gravy train government coerce us into viewing the world through rose colored glasses as they have designed?

**Life or Death: Who Decides?**

**By Elena Acosta**

There is much controversy surrounding the Terri Schiavo case, and the main issue seems to be: was it the right decision? This case was not about “end-of-life” decision-making; it was about intentionally killing a disabled woman by denying her food and water. Terri was not on life support, she was simply being fed through a tube. Terri’s case is not about a patient’s right to refuse medical treatment but about the government deciding when time was up. This decision is a hard one, whether to keep someone alive who is really not living at all, only breathing and eating through a machine, or to let her go, so she could be at peace and rest rather than being kept alive by machine in a hospital and having no real life experience at all.

In my opinion I believe it was better they let her “die” than keeping her alive, which was more for their sake and not hers, since she had been in that vegetative state for so long. After a while it’s really unlikely for someone to come out of that state especially after 15 years. I do sympathize with the family and understand it was a really hard decision to make since in fact she was breathing on her own, but she wasn’t enjoying life at all so why keep her alive. I’m sure she herself, if she could see herself, would probably want to be laid to rest instead of causing a burden upon her family and having them revolve their lives around her. I’m sure she would have wanted them to move on. With all this in mind I agree with the decision that was made to remove the feeding tube and let her “lay to rest,” but at the same time, disagree that the decision was made by the government it should have been made by the family at their own will. The government should not even have the right to step in.
CUNY Negotiations Settled for Students, Continue for Faculty

By Elena Acosta

Finally, a deal was reached on the billion dollar state budget and the status of the SUNY and CUNY tuition hikes. It was settled at $106.6 billion which will send $331 million more in aid to city schools than last year. It was also decided to allow voters statewide to state their opinion on a $2.9 billion transportation bond act.

The new spending plan is the earliest passed in Albany in 21 years. Gov. Pataki seemed to be okay with the plan and said he’ll allow voters to determine the fate of the transportation bond act, even though he is unsure now if he’ll back it. Half the bond funds are intended for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The city’s schools also included in the deal were well “taken care of,” their aid rising to about $5.5 billion. State Sen. Frank Padavan (R-Queens) said, “The budget also helps make Mayor Bloomberg’s $13 billion school construction capital plan a reality by granting the system the authority to borrow more as well as money needed to service that debt.” The deal also prohibits any tuition increases this fall at CUNY and SUNY colleges.

Pataki said he was “extremely pleased” and that the plan was “a good budget.” Lawmakers will join him in setting up a hospital closing commission and curb the spiraling growth in Medicaid spending. The deal also calls for low-income New Yorkers enrolled in the state’s Family Health Plus program to make higher co-pays for visits to doctors and increases the state tax on nursing home receipts by 1%.

The governor was very content with the decision lawmakers made on backing a prompt expiration of the temporary tax surcharges that wealthy New Yorkers were hit with two years ago. The 0.25% temporary sales tax surcharge will also expire, but residents of New York City and its suburbs will see a new .125% sales tax increase for the MTA.

As for the CUNY teachers contracts, no decisions have been made yet. Negotiations are still being made and students are still picketing and rallying at the offices of CUNY’s Board of Trustee officials.

Student Gov’t. continued:

continued from page 1

Finally, all candidates expressed their ideas and beliefs thoroughly, but unfortunately, there weren’t many students present to feel the heat and enjoy the competitiveness from these candidates. In response to the low turn-out, Gisela Rivera, the director of student activities stated, “We have sent emails of this event to all students and faculty members but I think the busy schedules and the carelessness from students was the outcome we had. Furthermore, Gisela stated that the next debate would definitely take place in the middle of campus so all students will be knowledgeable of the event and the outcome should be different.

Queensborough Community College offers its students many opportunities to participate in or join one of the student clubs or the different student activity programs.

These programs and clubs are beneficial for many reasons but most importantly, it makes you an active student within the campus and it gives you a voice to represent your fellow students in the many controversial issues that we face on campus.

The Student Government association is the head organization that symbolizes the students in many aspects such as student activities programs, different cultural clubs and most importantly solving the problems that we face on campus regularly such as the food, cafeteria and parking space.

Throughout this year the Student Government Association has made incredible accomplishments in different areas on campus. First, the Student Government has increased the variety of food, the cafeteria’s and Bistro’s accountability as well as the accessibility of the Bistro for the students.

Second, they are responsible for the development of the new Student Center at the Student Union lower level which offers many students a place to enjoy themselves and relax.

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The future of Queensborough’s External Education Program for the Homebound may be in jeopardy. The college recently received notification that Federal funds, which have supported the program for more than 28 years will end on August 31, 2005.

The External Education Program for the Homebound was initiated by Queensborough Community College to meet the higher education needs of individuals with disabilities who are unable to leave their homes to attend classes on a college campus. This program has become a national model. Computers, video conferencing, Softboards, and other types of telecommunication technology are used to communicate with students directly from the classroom. Cable TV is also used in selected courses.

Through this program hundreds of homebound individuals residing throughout the greater metropolitan New York City area have earned certificates and degrees, some without ever coming to the campus. A wide range of support services are provided to students including counseling, mentoring, specialized tutoring, home visiting and technical assistance. The Homebound Program has been supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, TRIO, and Special Services. Without these funds, the program will close, leaving homebound students out in the cold.

The college is planning an appeal, but the future of the program remains uncertain. I want to tell you what the program has meant to me. In 1992 while walking in the streets of Barcelona, I fell onto the cobblestones like a rag doll. I was unable to pick myself off the ground. My friends had to lift me up and carry me back to our apartment. I was very weak and barely able to move. I knew something was very wrong.

I flew back to my home in Puerto Rico and went straight to sleep. When I awoke, I was paralyzed, yet in so much pain. I screamed for my mother who took me to the hospital. At the hospital many tests were run. The results were all negative, yet I was becoming more and more disabled. I could barely breathe. My speech was becoming slurred. The doctors told me in order to save my life, I had to go to Columbia Presbyterian Hospital where they were doing research on the symptoms I was having. I traveled to New York, was admitted and stayed in the hospital for a month. As a result, the doctors diagnosed me with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) (Also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease). The doctors predicted my lifespan to be no longer than two years and asked my family to give me whatever I please. In my heart, I had hope.

Therefore, I requested to my family to leave me in New York, a place that I truly love. At first, my family refused because they thought that I was losing my senses. I had been a vibrant and productive person and now I could barely move. I was in a deep depression. I felt lost, not knowing how I was going to live my life and make a contribution to society.

I went to assistive technology program at the Yonkers HealthCare Center for Assistive Technology University of New York Brooklyn College where they told me about the only program that could help me achieve my goal of getting a college degree, the Queensborough Community College Education Program for the Homebound at Queensborough Community College.

I immediately applied and was accepted. Since that day, I have been taking my classes from home, via Internet and telephone. Because I have very limited use of my hands, I use a head mouse to access my computer screen. I can do anything with my head mouse that a “regularly-abled” person can do.

I am now the president of the Homebound Student Organization and was recently elected Chair of the CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities, representing over 9,000 CUNY students with disabilities. May disabilities become abilities!

With a lot of hard work and the support of the Homebound staff, I am getting ready to graduate in June with a degree in Liberal Arts and on my way to the CUNY’s Baccalaureate program for a four-year degree. Without this program, this would not have been possible. Now, the whole world is open to me. I have a future. I have shown throughout the years the values of Independent Living by being able to make it here on my own.

This program is an equalizer. It changes lives. I am living proof that it works. It will be a sad day if this program is no longer able to function.
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If you think that to get a job these days all you need is an education and experience, then you are wrong.

When job applicants stroll into Universal Studios Hollywood theme park, a computer gives them their first interview — and sometimes their last.

A growing number of retail chains and similar businesses frustrated by near-constant employee turnover are entrusting the first step of the hiring process to computers, designed to zero in on applicants likely to do a job well — and stay a while.

To do that, the computers gather not just names and Social Security numbers, but also work to size up an applicant’s personality, and provide hiring managers with a list of questions for follow-up interviews.

Over the past few years, personality assessment tests have moved from the realm of experiment to standard practice at many of the nation’s largest companies, including the Albertson’s grocery chain and retailers such as Neiman Marcus and Target. A recent survey found that about 30 percent of all companies use personality tests in hiring. To many companies, the tests are as important, if not more important, than an applicant’s education, experience and recommendations.

The growing use of employment exams worries some, who say many aptitude tests lack rigorous review by professionals in the field and are crafted too narrowly to accurately judge one’s eventual performance.

“You are really doing a disservice to the complexity of human individuality,” said Dan P. McAdams, a professor of psychology and human development at Northwestern University.

Psychologists have long debated whether personality can be reduced to a set of numbers, like a person’s weight, shoe size or eyeglasses prescription. But that has not stopped people from trying. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which measures four qualities of a person — introversion/extroversion, sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling, judging/perceiving — is often used to help match people up with careers. The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, which attempts to measure propensity for substance abuse or other pathologies, is regularly used to assess candidates for sensitive positions in police departments, banks, nuclear plants and the like. The Neuroticism, Extroversion and Openness Personality Inventory breaks personality down into five characteristics that some companies use to assess traits such as management potential.

Today, an estimated 2,500 U.S. firms offer assessments that are mostly variations on these main tests and are geared toward hiring.

“A well-developed test is probably the cheapest and most valuable selection tool an employer can have,” said Gary G. Kaufman, owner of Human Resources Consulting near Nashville, who has worked in hiring at J.C. Penney Co. and the Internal Revenue Service. The problem, he said, is that “personality testing in general is a largely unregulated business, which means that anyone can make up a test and put it on the Internet and make a few claims they choose about the test.”

Some companies, many of which employ teams of PhDs, say they follow rigorous scientific methodology. But some reviews by independent assessors have raised questions. A survey by the Aberdeen Group Inc., a Boston-based technology research firm, found that 49 percent of companies using computerized hiring systems saw no impact on turnover. An American Psychological Association study found little evidence that tests purporting to measure honesty are accurate. The World Privacy Forum and the Electronic Privacy Information Center, privacy advocacy groups, allege that more than a few violate the spirit of privacy laws by asking sensitive questions.

As the candidates sat in the waiting room in Universal Studios Hollywood theme park, a recruiter began to review printouts of their assessment results. Some who came in that day looked like they might work out — others less so. One candidate who wanted to be a dishwasher rated 35 for customer service and 47 for dependability. A “yellow” rating. This person was less likely “to maintain a good mood,” the computer cautioned. Another was applying to be a theater attendant and had strong previous experience but scored 10 for customer service, 13 for dependability. A “red” rating. This person might “be quiet or even unfriendly” and might tend to “waste time.”

Sources: Washington Post Staff Writer; www.usatoday.com; Arizona Daily Star

What It Takes To Get a Job These Days
BY NIKSON SHALOMAYEV

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An Era Ends with Pope John Paul II  
BY MONICA HERNANDEZ

We are living in an historic time for the Catholic Church and for the whole world. John Paul II, the 264th Pope, died on April 2, 2005. In addition to being the leader of the Catholic Church he was also a very influential world leader who championed human dignity and who sought to bring healing and peace to our troubled world.

Pope John Paul II was Karol Josef Wojtyla. He was born in Poland in 1920. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1946 and became Bishop in 1958. In 1978, he became the first non-Italian Pope in 455 years.

As Pope he did more than any other person to help dismantle the Soviet Union in 1988 without bloodshed. He reached out to religious leaders throughout the world and fostered unity among Christians.

He traveled more than any other Pope in history making more than 170 trips around the world to 115 countries.

He went to the corners of the earth including Cuba where he urged Fidel Castro to allow greater religious freedom. John Paul II ended 2000 years of pain in his strife to build a relationship between his Church and the world’s Jews. He became the first non-Italian Pope in 455 years.

His Papacy was the third longest in history lasting over 26 years. Pope John Paul II’s funeral was perhaps the largest in human history as well with over 4 million people attending and with over 2 billion people watching on television. He may very well go down in history as John Paul the Great. John Paul II also had a sense of humor, Msgr. Michael Brennan from Our Lady of Fatima Church remembered and smiled when in 1992 he met Pope John Paul II and said, “As he gave me a rosary as a gift, he asked me where I was from when I answered him Brooklyn, the Pope answered me, Oh! Brooklyn, that complicated Diocese.”

On April 19, 2005, 115 Cardinals of the Catholic Church met in the Sistine Chapel in Rome and elected Benedict XVI as the 265th Pope. The new Pope had at least 77 votes from the Cardinals, which included 58 Europeans, 14 North Americans, 20 Latin Americans, 11 Africans, 11 Asians and 1 Oceania. At 12:04 P.M. the bells rang throughout St. Peter’s Square and the rest of Rome’s Catholic churches. Cardinal Jorge Arturo Medina Estevez from Chile came out from the balcony at St. Peter’s Square at 12:41PM saying, “Brothers and sisters,” in different languages following with the words “Habemus Papam!” (We have a Pope).

Joseph Ratzinger of Germany is to lead over one billion members of the Catholic Church. Deacon Thomas Gilbert: “Pope Benedict XVI is a man of exceptional holiness and learning. We are blessed to have such a humble servant as our chief Shepherd.” He’ll bring incredible experience and enthusiasm to the Office of St. Peter. Even though old eras come to an end and new ones start, a leader’s efforts always leave a mark.

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Dress Code “Short and Tight”:
Are College Girls Going Too Far?

BY RODNEY NICHOLLS

It appears that with the rise in temperature, comes the rise in college girls’ shorts, and the lowering of their pants. A belly shirt seems to be the preferred tops, with hipsters as the ideal bottoms. While under that you’ll find a pink Victoria Secret thong just below a butterfly tattoo, and a sheer shirt exposing a push-up bra, this appears to be the new dress code on campus for college girls.

College girls appear unphased by the dangerous situations and derogatory remarks aimed at them. The dress code for a large majority of college girls resembles not inspiring scholars, but 1980s New York streetwalkers. However, when named names like whore, slut, or easy, names more closely associated with the way they are wearing, these college girls are insulted. It’s not often that one is told, “I am not a police officer” upon approaching someone dressed in a police uniform. It is highly unlikely that we would question the profession of someone dressed in an EMT uniform when 911 is called. It is not to say that someone who dresses a certain way necessarily live that lifestyle; however, it’s often said that if it walks like a duck, and it talks like a duck, .

When asked if college girls are going too far, Michael Keuber, a student at Queensborough Community College said, “Not far enough.” It seems that college girls are enjoying their newly found freedom despite the hidden dangers. In February of 2001, the U.S. Department’s National Institute of Justice, and the Bureau of Statistics, reported in an article entitled the Sexual Victimization of College Women, that 13% of college women said they had been stalked in the prior year, however, the fact that 1.1% admitted to being the victims of a rape attack was downplayed. Even more startling 1.7% of those women interviewed admitted to being victims of a complete rape, meaning that 1 in 33 were the victims of a rape or attempted rape. The most frightening statistic in this particular study is that 1 in 14 women will be the victims of rape in an American university or college.

It’s not just potential sexual predators that are targeting young beautiful college girls, but large corporations as well. Many large designer companies who are seeking cheap advertising view these underdressed college girls as living billboards just waiting to be posterized. It’s almost impossible to find a college girl wearing a pair of low rider jeans, exposing a thong that does not say Victoria Secret, Damage, or Express. To take it a step further Abercrombie and Fitch recently released a line of thongs featuring phrases like “eye candy.”

There’s no telling how far college girls are willing to go for attention, or how much college girls are willing to accept. However, judging from that designers view as fashionable, and what some college girls might consider a positive attention, it wouldn’t surprise me if college girls began wearing nothing but a smile and a scarf to classes.

Don’t Can Our Corn

BY STEPHEN CHOU

“Ohio to NY: don’t can our corn, museum.” I looked down at the plastic overhead sheet, a perfect headline for a frivolous article on a museum being constructed in Ohio to New York. It was an exercise in writing headlines at the NYU College Media Conference being hosted by the New York Times. I handed it to the representative from the Times.

As the collection continued the head of copy editing at NY Times Arlene M. Schneider talked about the internships at her paper. All summer interns are paid $600 a week and also are put in NYU dorms. Of course, every student in the nation interested in reporting and editing want to intern at the NY Times.

Someone raised their hand, “So what are the best ways for me to stand out as a candidate?” Summing up Arlene’s response, every summer you should line up an internship with a smaller daily paper.

I realize this headline exercise was probably the closest I would get to writing for the NY Times in the near future. I had never had an internship and had only written for a monthly school paper. There would be a lot of work ahead.

Prospective reporters and editors have a lot to do. But there is a wealth of information and guidelines that can be found on the Internet.

One of the most important opportunities that students need to be aware of is the Dow Jones Summer Internship. The Dow Jones web site http://djmnewspaperfund.dow.jones.com/fund/cs_internships.asp explains the rewards.

“The Dow Jones Newspaper Fund offers annual summer internships in business reporting, newspaper copy editing and sports copy editing. Each program provides free pre-internship training seminars on college campuses and weekly salaries starting at $350 for a minimum of 10 weeks. Interns who return to college full-time the following fall will receive $1,000 scholarships from the Fund.”

Arlene Schneider of the New York Times stresses that those who do well on the test and attend the internship “boot camp” have more opportunities open to them. The big papers tend to draw their interns from this pool.

The application itself is due every November 1st for the following summer. A test also needs to be administered by a college professor before December 1st of the same year.

Copies of the past test can be found at http://www.freep.com/jobspage/, the Detroit Free Press’s excellent resource for those interested in working at a newspaper. Jobs, internship and guidelines can also be found from this web-page.

Another important web page is Editteach.org. An important resource for editing work, it is invaluable for those looking to improve their language skills, writing content and finding out about the professional life working in journalism.

Of course, Queensborough Community College students have resources and opportunities located on campus. There is the introduction to journalism class taught by Professor Reesman which helps students gain the skills and techniques important to journalism and editing. Also students are welcome to submit articles for QCC’s own monthly paper Communiqué.

Also as a reporter for the Communiqué, I had the opportunity to attend a College Media Conference where I was able to attend informational classes being held by New York Times, Washington Post, Yale and other knowledgeable establishments.
iTunes Empire Threatened by Napster’s New Service?

By Anne Marie Simon

Portable MP3 players are all the rage nowadays and leading the way is Apple’s iPod, which has become as big an accessory as the Lance Armstrong bracelet or a pair of UGGs. Along with iPod, Apple provides its customers with the music downloading service iTunes, which offers customers the ability to purchase songs on a pay-per-download basis of 99 cents a song.

While iTunes has gone relatively without competition, that may all be changing now. Many may remember Napster as a renegade music service and pioneer in peer-to-peer file sharing, but it has since become a legitimate music provider and is planning a $30 million advertising campaign in the U.S. to promote its new music subscription service, Napster To Go. Napster To Go allows users to pay a monthly fee of $14.95 for unlimited downloading from their database of over one million songs.

Napster To Go is the first music subscription service to use Microsoft’s Janus program, which acts like a timer for the songs loaded onto the MP3 player. “Janus allows you to take an encrypted download from your PC hard drive and move it to your portable device with an electronic license, then that has to be renewed every 30 days,” said Napster CEO Chris Gorog. Basically, the customer is renting the music and as long as the subscription is renewed every month, they will have the songs on their player. Cancel the subscription, and the songs are gone forever, unlike iTunes where the user can purchase the song for 99 cents and have it for life.

However, there is a problem with Napster’s software and other online music suppliers, including iTunes. There’s a way to bypass the security device installed in the program, so anyone can go and download an unlimited amount of songs and burn them onto a CD without paying an extra fee. Napster, iTunes and other music services all know about the problem but can’t do anything to stop it. A spokeswoman for Napster said, “The bottom line is that people are always going to find a way to get around the system, although we give people a way to enjoy music while respecting artists’ rights.”

In the long run, iTunes may seem more expensive, but for the die-hard music fans, including iTunes’s bundling program, which acts like a timer for the songs loaded onto the MP3 player. “Janus allows you to take an encrypted download from your PC hard drive and move it to your portable device with an electronic license, then that has to be renewed every 30 days,” said Napster CEO Chris Gorog. Basically, the customer is renting the music and as long as the subscription is renewed every month, they will have the songs on their player. Cancel the subscription, and the songs are gone forever, unlike iTunes where the user can purchase the song for 99 cents and have it for life.

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In the long run, iTunes may seem more expensive, but for the die-hard music fans out there who collect vinyl or just can’t bring themselves to throw out their cassette tapes and can’t fathom not having their music for life, iTunes is definitely the way to go. While Napster To Go may be a better option for those who don’t have a lot of money, like many college students, or have a short attention span when it comes to music.
The US Dollar Shrinks As Expenses Rise

The dollar is not the giant of the world economy that it once was. In recent years the dollar had dropped 38% to the Euro, 23% against the Yen, and 25% against our northern neighbor Canada. We have other problems right, budget deficits growing and $50+ for a barrel of oil sounds like a much more serious problem than other currencies that most of us have never even seen before. But it is.

The only difference we might experience personally is that our foreign vacations become a little more expensive. Yet, the consequences of the U.S. economy as well as the balance of the world economy would be on tilt. The worst case scenario is that foreign investors are also scared away by the status of the dollar and take their money out of the U.S. markets.

The cause of the falling dollar is directly related to the import export trade ratio that has been growing steadily for the last 15 years. In 2004 the U.S. account deficit is estimated to be $650 billion or 5.6% of the GDP. These numbers will stay steady or even grow due to the lifting of trade quotas with China this February.

For those who are not business majors, I’ll break the current situation down. The U.S. buys 10 million pairs of pants from China for let’s say $2 million. We in turn send 2 million of our dollars into the Chinese economy. If the U.S. doesn’t sell as much to China, the balance of trade is different. Currencies follow the same principals of supply and demand as any other product. If Staples buys too many notebooks and has leftover stock, the price will depreciate in order to move the excess product. With currencies instead of a price depreciation, the value is depreciated.

Now what can we do and the even bigger question, if changes we make will help or hurt the situation or worst of all, no change whatsoever. These questions along with our actions hold worldwide consequences. Timing the trade deficit with China would bruise their export based economy. China relies on U.S. consumers to purchase the huge amount of textiles they produce.

A blow to their economy would potentially hurt our political relations with China as well. With scares of nuclear proliferation in North Korea, hurting Chinas economy might influence their position with the U.S. in the event of a conflict with North Korea. China is a powerful factor in Asia and losing their confidence could produce grave consequences.

Europe is also at risk with the status of the dollar. If the dollar keeps falling, the Euro becomes more and more attractive to foreign investors. Foreign investors will in turn want to trade their dollars for Euros. The rising euro puts a strain on Europe’s export competitiveness on a strain and threaters their overall economic growth.

This problem could be explosive and all we can do is sit back and watch. I hope we all watch this situation carefully because it is OUR MONEY.
MR. BLOOMBERG, I GRADUATE 05.18.08

CHRIS STARIN  BUSINESS MAJOR  NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Graduates of New York Institute of Technology are uniquely prepared to succeed in the world's leading companies. Our students are passionate about their fields of study and serious about learning all they can. NYIT's eight schools, including Management, Engineering & Technology and Education & Professional Services, provide opportunities for internships at companies such as AT&T, JP Morgan and CBS. To register or arrange for tours of the Manhattan and Long Island campuses, call 800.345.NYIT. Visit nyit.edu.
MLB — “STEROIDS” Today some fans are beginning to doubt whether the latest record-setting numbers made by bulkier players are meant or deserved to be kept. The first thing that probably comes to mind that connects with steroid use is baseball. Not mentioning any specific players, but enhancing abilities by using steroids could mean a big difference between winning and losing in the major leagues especially in the big games. Baseball has always been known as an American pastime. Before this latest charge on the legitimacy of baseball, we can honestly say that we used to enjoy the game when players such as the late Ted Williams and Hank Aaron made major league history numbers based on their work ethic and love for the game.

Let’s say hypothetically you are a die hard Yankee fan, and your team made it through the World Series only to lose by the opponent not because they have more talent, but because they used steroids — Do you feel cheated? How about the moments of suspense and excitement when we watch Mark McGuire and Barry Bonds breaking the single season home run record right in front of our eyes — if the accusations about these two future hall of famers were true about them using steroids — would you still cherish and appreciate those moments?

Steroids can also be referred to as Anabolic-Androgenic (which means muscle building-increased masculine characteristics) and are only legally available in the United States by prescription. It is usually used to treat conditions when the body produces low amounts of sex hormones (testosterone and estrogen) such as delayed puberty or some types of impotence. They are also used to treat patients that have diseases as a result in loss of lean muscle mass.

Also, anyone who uses steroids to increase performance will notice a change in physical appearance, such as being bulkier and more masculine. But steroids also have their side effects, such as mood swings, depression when it’s not in use, paranoid jealousy, extreme irritability, delusions, and impaired judgment stemming from feelings of invincibility. In simple terms the drug can basically shorten your lifespan. Since the late Ken Caminiti told Sports Illustrated that more than 50 percent of all baseball players used steroids, the drug has been the topic of discussion and has aroused suspicion among fans and players.

The question is why have baseball players started taking steroids? Well, an anonymous source said that the reason players like Ken Caminiti took steroids was because they felt the pressure that they have to perform at a high level just to compete or keep up with the big boys of baseball such as Barry Bonds. In addition, players feel stress from the competition of playing almost every game to win. As Jose Conseco put it in his 60 Minutes interview with Mike Wallace, “I don’t recommend steroids for everyone, but for certain individuals, I truly believe, because I’ve experimented with it for so many years, that it can make an average athlete a super athlete. It can make a super athlete—incredible. Just legendary.”

Is this the kind of message we want to send to our children who have aspirations of one day becoming professional baseball players? Do we want them to think that “man, if I am to catch up with this guys, I should use steroids, too.” We hope not because it’s been tarnished enough already as it is that we would not want the tarnished next generation of baseball players to follow the footsteps of Conseco or Giambi.

Steroids have truly left a scar in baseball’s once proud credibility of great athletes, and the purity of the competition that we once enjoyed game by game. Even though Major League Baseball has recently implemented a new drug policy on anabolic steroids which is: first offense is a 10 day suspension; by the fourth offense is a one-year suspension.

As one retired baseball player puts it, “Players had been using steroids for quite a while; the only reason why players did not say anything was because they wanted to become the best players they could possibly be, so that they can boost the entertainment value of this sport and can lead to more money for themselves.” I can only wish as a sports fanatic that the latest drug policy will calm down steroid abusers, and hopefully, restore order to a sport that is now tainted.