

Students in low-income sector fall victim to wage theft

DANNIEL RODRIGUEZ
Staff Writer

Students may want to look more closely at their next paychecks because they may not be receiving what they're owed.

Wage theft has been making waves in Miami-Dade County and the University's Center for Labor and Research is at the forefront in the battle against it.

Cynthia Hernandez, a senior research associate at the Center for Labor and Research, always asks her students if they have been victims of wage theft.

She said at least a dozen students raise their hands in each class.

"With the high unemployment rate, many students who graduate are not able to find jobs in their field and take jobs in

the low wage service sector," Hernandez said.

Wage theft is when a worker is legally owed money, but their employer refuses to pay wages, underpays them, violates tips, commits unauthorized deductions or misclassifies employees.

Hernandez said the labor center began research in 2006 in

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PANHELLENIC BID DAY



CARL-FREDERICK FRANCOIS/THE BEACON

New members ran with excitement towards their new families during bid day on Sunday in the football stadium.

Few liberal arts degrees, but opportunities remain

MARISOL MEDINA
Staff Writer

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, from 2009-2010 about 3 percent of students in the United States graduated with a degree in liberal arts, 2 percent from English, 1 percent from history and 1 percent from philosophy and religious studies. The same statistics showed a business degree was the most popular between 2009-2010.

Currently at the University, the most popular major is still business. The degree accounts for 35 percent of all degrees conferred between 2011-2012.

Noble Cook, a professor of history, is not concerned about the low numbers of history graduates. He dismisses the possibility of concern for some students of

having difficulties finding a job upon their graduation of an area in the liberal arts.

"It is a false worry because historians are trained to think critically and write coherently, which are the basic foundations for most careers," Cook said.

Cook said that many history majors go on to have successful careers in journalism, law, business and the government. He said most history majors don't end up teaching, but either continue their education or enter an entry-level job in fields like sales and government.

"I started my university career in engineering and switched to history in junior year because I realized that people are more interesting than engineering," Cook

said.

Cook said that the job market

graduates," Cook said.

Sean Hermanson, a professor of philosophy, also dismisses fears of the marketability of a philosophy degree.

"I understand that it is a concern but it is important to acknowledge the university as a place to develop your mind and not like a trade

going to a trade school to learn a skill quickly to get a job upon finishing.

"Logic and reason never go out of fashion. Philosophy will combine well with anything that requires someone to think critically because you have to become a linguistic acrobat and that serves well for areas such as law and even medicine," Hermanson said.

About pursuing further education in order to improve job placement possibilities, Hermanson says it is not just a good idea for liberal arts majors, but others as well.

"There is no danger of the liberal arts disappearing. Whenever economy issues come up, the liberal arts are always targeted, but it is only because people don't see an immediate payoff," Hermanson

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“Logic and reason never go out of fashion.”

Sean Hermanson
Professor
Philosophy

changes constantly, rising and falling every 3-5 years.

"Students should not pick their majors based on how the job market is, because it is very likely to change by the time the student

school where you learn a technical skill and get a job," Hermanson said.

Hermanson said that if a student's sole concern is landing a job, that student should consider

Policy on electronic cigarette usage remains unclear

DIEGO SALDANA-ROJAS
Staff Writer

The University's ban on tobacco products has been in effect since January 2011 and includes "electronic cigarette(s)... or any other device intended to simulate smoked tobacco."

Despite present regulations, the use of electronic cigarettes is prevalent on-campus.

University Chief of Police Alexander Casas said the University Police Department treats electronic cigarettes as it would any cigarette, however, he has not personally seen them being used on-campus.

Jose Correa, a senior marketing major, said he was unaware that the ban extended to electronic cigarettes and that he has never been reprimanded for using his e-cigarette anywhere on-campus.

Correa disagrees with University policy on e-cigarettes on the basis that they are allowed elsewhere.

"It's a vapor, it's not smoke," Correa said.

Casas said UPD plans on taking steps

to ensure that electronic cigarettes are not being used to consume illicit substances.

"If we see people using that, we want to make sure there isn't some kind of oil version or synthetic version of a prohibited [substance,]" Casas said.

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, consumers of electronic cigarettes have no way of knowing how much nicotine or other dangerous chemicals are being introduced into their bodies due to a lack of research on the products.

"Nicotine is addictive. It's a chemical that causes constriction of blood vessels and it is also retained in the lungs and causes tissue damage," said Raul Tano, an assistant professor at the Herbert Wertheim School of Medicine and a medical doctor for the University's Health Faculty Practice.

The oral pharynx, esophagus, windpipe, larynx and bronchioles are some parts of the body that Tano said can be damaged by nicotine.

"There has been some analysis that the e-cigarette cartridges do contain some

specific tobacco nitrosamines which are known cancer-causing agents," Tano said.

"[Electronic cigarettes] can be less toxic than regular cigarettes, but by no means is it toxic-free because it still has certain chemicals that can be toxic to the cells," Tano said. "It's a good alternative if you want to stop smoking, if you start with these, but there should always be a plan to wean yourself from the electronic cigarettes."

Casas advises students to keep their electronic cigarettes away from campus grounds for health and legal reasons.

Matias Salvo, a sophomore physics major, and Luis Montoya, a sophomore psychology major, both use electronic cigarettes on-campus.

Salvo said he had no idea the rule was in effect whereas Montoya intentionally defies it.

"Some people comment on it and I've gotten looks from [teaching assistants,] but they don't really say anything," Salvo said. "Nobody really gives me any trouble. It's a rule nobody enforces."

And Montoya said although he has been stopped by UPD before, he has never been formally reprimanded.

"Two officers [have approached me,] but they mainly told me not to smoke around people that are eating," he said.

Casas said that the wording of the University's policy on electronic cigarette regulations will need to be more explicit or the prohibition may need to be lifted altogether.

"I'm sure they'll get revised to be more clear as to the fact that they are prohibited or in fact that they may be allowed depending on how policies are re-defined in the future," Casas said.

Both Salvo and Montoya believe their electronic cigarettes do not bother others and due to this reason, should be allowed on-campus.

"As far as I'm concerned if its not harming anybody else - which seems to be the consensus - I don't see why you shouldn't be allowed to do it," said Montoya.

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WORLD NEWS

French senate says no to pageants

Child beauty pageants may soon be banned in France, after a surprise vote in the French Senate that rattled the pageant industry and raised questions about how the French relate to girls' sexuality. Such contests, and the made-up, dolled-up beauty queens they produce, have the power to both fascinate and repulse, and have drawn criticism in several countries. France, with its controlling traditions, appears to be out front in pushing an outright ban. The proposed children's pageant amendment sprouted from a debate on a women's rights law. The legislation, approved by a vote of 197-146, must go to the lower house of parliament for further debate and another vote.

Iran releases human rights lawyer

Iran has released a prominent human rights lawyer after keeping her in prison for three years, relatives said Wednesday. Reza Khandan, the husband of lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh, told The Associated Press that authorities brought his wife home and told her she has been freed. Iranian opposition websites also reported a dozen other prisoners held on security charges after the 2009 election have been released. Among them is Mohsen Aminzadeh, who was deputy foreign minister during the presidency of reformer Mohammad Khatami. In a statement, the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran welcomed the releases and urged President Hassan Rouhani to continue to take concrete steps toward improving the country's "urgent human rights situation."

Starbucks says guns unwelcomed, though not banned

Starbucks says guns are no longer welcome in its cafes, though it is stopping short of an outright ban on firearms. The fine line that the retailer is walking to address the concerns of both gun rights and gun control advocates reflects how heated the issue has become, particularly in light of recent mass shootings. Most states allow people to openly carry licensed guns in some way and many companies do not have policies banning firearms in their stores. But Starbucks has become a target for gun control advocates, in part because of its liberal-leaning corporate image. In turn, gun rights advocates have been galvanized by the company's decision to defer to local laws.

For more world news, check out www.FIUSM.com.

Center for Labor and Research fights for victims of wage theft

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the agriculture industry where wage theft was not reported.

However, more research revealed wage theft in industries where even more students are typically employed.

Bryan Angarita, a senior anthropology major who interns with the Center for Labor and Research and is now directing a documentary on wage theft, said that when he was 15-year-old and working for a silk screening warehouse in Doral, he experienced wage theft.

"I worked with about 30 other low income

employees, most of them undocumented. We were paid below the minimum wage and sometimes not at all," Angarita said.

According to a report by the Research Institute for Social and Economic Policy and the Center for Labor and Research, the industries mostly affected by wage theft are retail, hospitality, restaurants, agriculture and construction.

"Student can be severely affected since many students often work in retail, hospitality, and restaurant businesses," said Angarita.

The same report by the Labor Center states that

Miami-Dade County has the largest documented wage theft cases in the state with approximately 7,000 cases and \$2 million in unclaimed wages.

With help from the Labor Center and the Research Institute on Social and Economic Policy, in 2010 Miami-Dade Commissioners passed the first county-wide wage theft ordinance.

Since its inception, it has recovered over \$500,000 in unpaid wages.

Hernandez said that other counties have used the research accomplished by the University's Labor Center to help pass their own ordinances to combat

wage theft on state wide level.

As for what's next for the Labor Center, they hope to continue fighting this issue.

"We hope to create stronger mechanisms for workers to collect their wages once they have gone through the preliminary hearings," said Hernandez "It's really about bringing awareness to workers about their rights and what they can do if they're confronted with wage theft."

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Colleges enforce ban on cellphones in class

ANDREA SANMIGUEL Contributing Writer

While the ban on cellphones in schools is prevalent in K-12 classrooms, restrictions have been popping up on college campuses in New York, Wyoming, Nevada and California, according to Technobabble.

Susan Jacobson, professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, said that she does not allow students to use their cellphones during class unless it is an emergency.

"I believe that if a student is texting friends or surfing Facebook during class, the student is

not participating in the classroom discussion and is cheating [himself or herself] out of an education," Jacobson said.

According to a 2012 survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation on the media habits of young people, two-thirds of college freshmen said they use social media sites while in class.

As for considering phone use during class hours as a distraction, Vanessa Garcia, junior psychology major, says it depends on the student.

"I could have my phone on my desk the whole time and just check the time. If someone texts me in class, I might check it, but if it is nothing

serious, I'll just flip my phone over and continue taking notes," Garcia said.

However, David Sanabria, junior broadcast journalism major, agrees that it is a distraction for students.

"People get addicted to [their cellphones]," Sanabria said. "It's compulsory, almost like [attention deficit disorder]."

Moses Shumow, assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, has a certain expectation that his students stay off their cellphones in class.

"We have this idea that we are able to multitask and listen to the professor and also

text with our friend and go on Facebook," said Shumow. "But the fact is that once you start doing those other things, your ability to listen and pay attention to the professor essentially goes to zero."

Whether or not a ban should occur, David Gonzalez, junior broadcast journalism major, said people who are distracted on their phones or electronics are most likely going to find another way to distract themselves.

"Laptops, cellphones, I don't know - Nintendo? They'll figure something out," Gonzalez said.

Sanabria said a ban would make students pay attention to their

professors.

Shumow, however, said that using cellphones as a tool in the classroom may be an alternative to a ban altogether.

"Engaging students on their terms is the only way to really make an impact. Incorporate technology in class, put things in front of them that are familiar," Shumow said. "This can be one of the many alternatives to eliminate the idea of getting rid of phones and electronics in the classroom. [We can] work with the idea that technology is in the present day and will be something that is almost impossible to get rid of."

Gonzalez said.

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Students and faculty not concerned with marketability of liberal arts degrees

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said.

Carolyn Meeker, assistant director at the office of Career Services, says she thinks all students, not just liberal arts majors, worry too much about job placement upon graduation.

"I understand why some parents would push their kids towards other majors that are more technical but there are many things students can do to enrich their liberal arts degrees, like doing work with a school organization, for example," Meeker said.

She suggests students start working on their

outside-classroom skills such as networking and public speaking as soon as possible and get additional certificates to enrich their majors.

Matt Tanner, assistant director at Career Services, also suggests students do an internship soon in their college career so that they can show a future employer that they have real world experience.

"In the real world you need to be able to relate with employers. It's no good having a 4.0 GPA if you can't shake an employers' hand and engage them in a conversation," Tanner said.

Cathiana Limage, a senior studying linguistics, said she wasn't worried about not being able to find a job immediately after graduation.

"Linguistics has a lot of fields, so I am not worried when it comes to that. I could teach, translate, interpret - there are so many things I could do," Limage said.

Limage has found an internship and is working on gaining experience before she graduates, with hopes of continuing on to graduate school to become a professor.

Dexter Grooms, an art senior, is graduating this

semester. He is currently working with Campus Life as a junior graphic designer. He will continue working there full-time when he graduates.

"I didn't see myself doing anything else. I was all in because if you're going to do art, you need to be in it fully to get results," Grooms said.

Grooms admits the thought of his major's marketability crossed his mind, but it didn't stop him.

"It is a difficult road, but it is possible if you believe in yourself and you keep at it," Grooms said.

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Internet users exploited daily by Google and Facebook

MOISES FUERTES
Staff Writer

We should all be paid for using social media.

Very few people are aware that social media companies are data-centric corporations that make a fortune out of selling user data to advertisers or any third party interested in buying it.

These companies are taking advantage of user-generated content for their own economic purposes, such as when I use Google to search for something or make a post on my Facebook account.

The same is being done to you.

Google basically stalks the actions of every single person who produces a search and uses this data to specifically target advertising based on the user's search behavior.

Facebook does the exact same thing but I consider it even worse because they use all the information a person posts on his or her site and not just the information provided on each respective "About Me" section.

This means that every post a person has ever made on Facebook is sold to advertisers, despite your privacy settings.

You might have your settings so only your friends see what you post, but Facebook is still able to save everything and inevitably sell the data.

It is no surprise, then, that I continuously receive ads pertaining to video games, as I'm a video game reviewer and constantly update my Facebook with information about the video game industry.

It is an illusion of privacy that should be done away with. Services like Face-

book and Google are ultimately platforms that come with an undisclosed cost.

Not only do we pay for the services with our privacy, but our privacy is also at risk of being utilized by third parties that can potentially do more harm to the individual by purchasing the data alone as opposed to any stranger that can see the posts.

Regrettably, we have become completely dependent on these services in our daily lives.

Ultimately, if the Internet continues to exploit its users in this manner, we will all be forced to censor what we post online, which completely negates our freedom of speech.

-For the full column, go to fiusm.com.

THE BEACON | Editorial

Use the library as a place to study, not eat

When walking into the Green or Hubert Libraries this summer, you may have noticed the distinct lack of food that has become a staple of students cramming for tests or just hanging out.

While this unpopular pilot program is over and rules have been eased to allow eating in the libraries once again, this doesn't mean it's a free for all, no holds barred, let's have a pizza party next to the new computers.

The wording of the new policy is pretty clear: snacks and water are allowed in and anything else will be asked to put it away or to take it outside.

The first question that comes to our minds is, "What constitutes a 'snack'?" We believe that Subway subs, Sushi Maki sushi and Alazmazar's falafel do not qualify as snacks.

However, dry-packaged goods such as chips, cookies and nuts are snacks. And we hope students will be smart where they take their snacks and drinks within the library.

They should not be eating or drinking near the computers because that's just common sense -- a little spilled water can ruin a keyboard.

We do not agree with the old ban, but we also do not agree with students bringing in burgers, fries and sodas anywhere above the first floor.

Such foods are distracting to others with their smell, noisy wrappers and Styrofoam create. They can also dirty floors, tables, chairs, computers and other equipment that we all share and do not want to damage.

Students should have the courtesy to keep their food on the first floor, it's that simple. If students are that hungry, go downstairs and grab a bite either on the first floor or in the Graham or Wolfe centers.

As students, we go through long strenuous study sessions at the library which can incur hunger, and this is why we endorse the lift on the previous ban.

Students should be allowed small dry goods and water to help them sustain energy during their studying activities.

However, students should not bring a three-course meal upstairs: it's distracting, can leave the entire library smelling, desks dirty and computers and other equipment damaged at worst, greasy at best.

Besides, we don't want an extra study buddy around -- like a rat.

Ladies, know your drinking limits

LAUREN BANA
Staff Writer

College life wouldn't be the same without alcohol and I think we can all safely admit that. But have we, as women, been overdoing it?

According to the Huffington Post, a study conducted by the University of Vigo discovered that college women are more likely to binge drink than college men.

The study has found that college women are drinking over their bodies' weekly limit, resulting in health complications that contribute to the over 23 thousand deaths caused by alcohol every year.

The Huffington Post further reported that "white, college-educated women aged 18-24 with \$75 thousand or more

annual household income were more likely to binge drink than women of other races, ages and socioeconomic categories."

After reading that, I instantly consid-

"I know a lot of girls who always go crazy when we go out drinking, and every time, one of them manages to get sick from alcohol poisoning."

Douglas Soler
Senior
Political Science

ered some of my friends who fall under that classification.

I was thinking about whether or not

they are being safe when they go out drinking.

It even makes me worry for myself.

Again, drinking in college has become a completely normal part of life, and we have grown to accept and enjoy it, but even our guy friends have noticed how crazy it can get.

Senior Douglas Soler, majoring in political science, said, "I do know a lot of girls who always go crazy when we go out drinking, and every time, one of them manages to get sick from alcohol poisoning."

-For the full column, go to fiusm.com.

Is America living under a culturally iconic rock?

ITZEL BASUALDO
Contributing Writer

Despite their worldly, out of this universe, global, galactic and international fame, you may be surprised--or not--to hear that some of the people around you have no idea who this idolized rock 'n' roll quartet is.

In February 2012, the infamous veteran Beatle Paul McCartney took the stage at the 54th annual Grammy Awards, igniting the social networking site Twitter with confusion and bewilderment.

"Who is Paul McCartney?" rapidly became a trending topic of the site, with users making cretinous observations and posting instantly stupefied remarks.

"Who is he, he hella old too," and "im about to sounds naive as F but who the hell is Paul McCartney???" this song sucks btw," were only a few of the jumble of the ill-made ignorant tweets that overtook Twitter.

Incredulously appalling -- yes, I know.

Now, we've all heard that America is becoming increasingly ignorant.

The next generations seem to be absorbed in a warp of mere futility, disconnected from the rest of society and unaware of almost all of their surroundings.

It's true, American society has come to be known for thinking inside the box for blissfully indulging in the realm of fast food, accepting our political ingenuity and lagging in many academic aspects. We've voluntarily acquired

the title of ignorant over the years.

And the clamor over the ecumenical rock-star really didn't make things much better.

It is bad enough that not too long ago, Newsweek released a survey in which 29 percent of one thousand United States citizens were unable to name the current Vice President and six percent couldn't date Independence Day (the fourth of July, seriously?)

So, that only goes to show that not only do we know nothing about our own didactic matters, but we don't know anything about pop culture, either.

Sad, that's what it is.

This problem stems deep within the tenets of American culture.

More and more we are placing value on

abstract objects that are meaningless, the material and vain and forgetting about our past and what makes us who we truly are.

We are paying more attention to the shallow and luring, listening to songs which repeatedly emphasize promiscuity, idiotic phrases -- YOLO, you only live once -- and a world of remote materialism that the rest of society dim-wittedly fantasizes about.

Putting the issue regarding our meager education system aside and the hooks the media places to reel in blind spectators, we are left pointing fingers.

To whom?

It's time we point them at ourselves.

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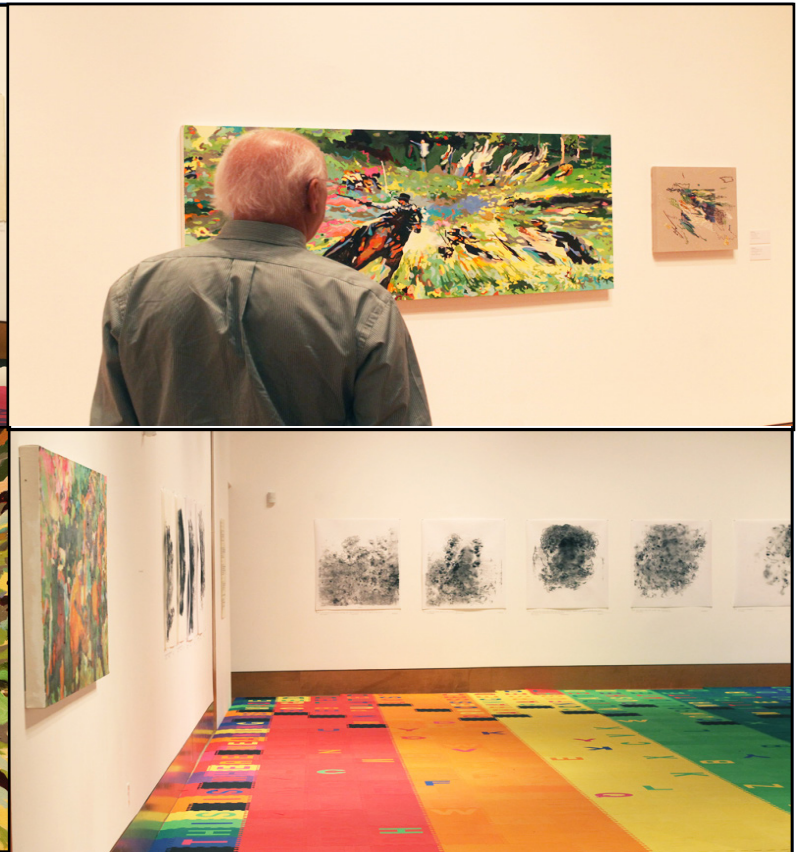
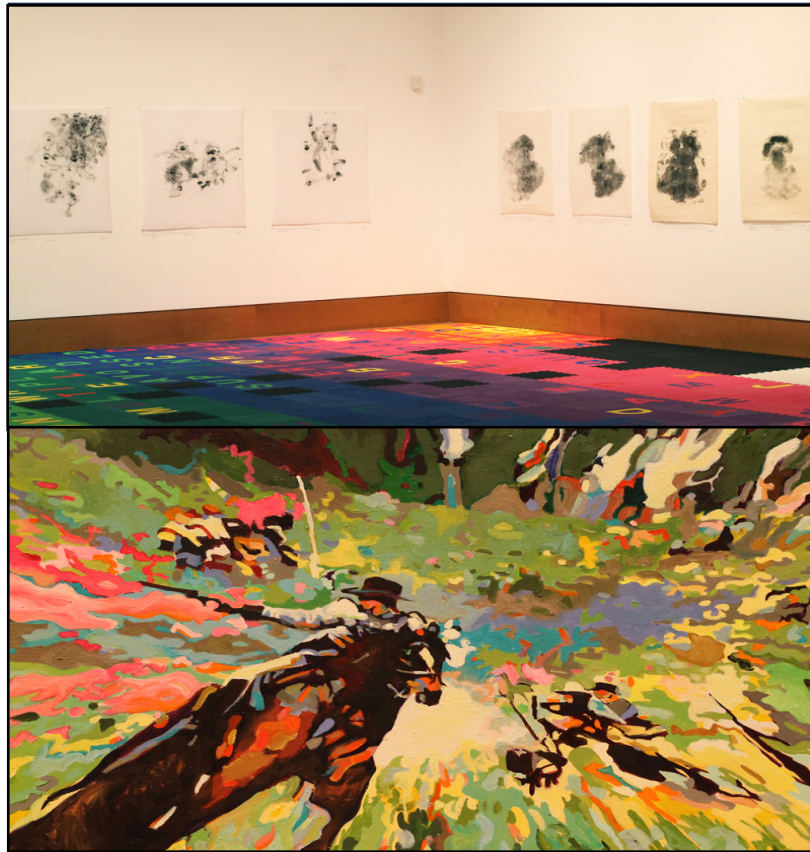
Frost opens two new exhibitions by faculty

ASHLEY GARNER
Staff Writer

On Wednesday Sept. 18, the Patricia & Philip Frost Art Museum opened with two new exhibitions on the third floor featuring the art work of faculty members Pip Brant and Michael Namkung. Between these two artists the show was an exhilarating collection of painting, textiles, drawings, sound and mixed media.

When you first step into the gallery space on the third floor you are thrown into a world of vibrant colors such as hot pinks meant to represent aggressive and suppressant puffs of war smoke, lime greens and rich oranges. This was Pip Brant's re-enactment of famous battles or war in general. Her paintings and accompanying embroideries offer an alternative to re-creations of historical events by de-romanticizing these events and rendering them useless to history as the actual popular renditions already are.

Brant reflected on this body of work in her artist statement, "Even though there are attempts at authenticity, this is an impossible task. A degrading of the actual battles happens. Political correctness can further pollute the forgotten truths. With my works, I am trying to decompose these events even more, with the removal of color and conversions of visual information. The ques-



ASHLEY GARNER/THE BEACON

The Patricia and Philip Frost Art Museum is opening two new exhibitions by faculty members on Sept. 18. One exhibition focuses on war and the other on babies and lullabies.

tion that I want to play with has to do with color switches and abstractions that sweeten the gory truths usually romanticized by traditional panoramic historical painting and embroidery. I want to see color convey the content."

In the gallery space next to Brant's work is assistant art and art history professor Michael Namkung with his show, "Baby Pictures and the People's Lullaby Collective."

The entire gallery floor

is covered from wall to wall with the world's largest alphabet foam board and the audience is asked to remove their shoes before walking into the space.

In the artist statement, Namkung suggests that removing your shoes might help your body remember to feel.

The images hung on the walls consist of 26 unframed monotype prints with captions indicating what was

happening at the moment the drawing was created, the age of the artists' baby at the time, the date and the duration of time it took for the image to be fully produced. There is also a multilingual lullaby collection sang by 47 caregivers singing to their children playing across the room. Through this lullaby Namkung advocates that through the sound waves emotions are expressed in the materiality of the voice.

Babies will sense when you are not engaged so you must open up your senses to be vulnerable and empathic, tying back in with Namkung's reasoning for having you remove your shoes before entering the gallery space.

Between Brant and Namkung's shows, you leave feeling vulnerable in a powerful way.

As though you have just taken an emotional risk and are slightly uncertain about

your feelings on all things relating to the past.

Your childhood, your parents' childhood, long forgotten war battles and immortalized moments in the history that is presented to us is completely put into question as we look at it through a new frame of mind.

Both shows will be open in the gallery for viewing until October 12.

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The explicitly average but entertaining "Don Jon"

COLUMNIST



JUAN BARQUIN

If there's one thing to say for Joseph Gordon-Levitt, it's that the guy knows exactly what "bro culture" is like. This knowledge of bros who move through life doing nothing but working out and having sex serves him well, but even with that, "Don Jon" isn't as great a film as he thinks it is.

We've all seen films about drug and sex addiction, but Gordon-Levitt, trying his hand at writing and directing this time around, decides to present the world with an addiction to pornography.

Yes, the stuff of straight male fantasies. Breasts bouncing, asses shaking and unrealistic sexual situations that no real woman would be willing to provide to a deluded man.

That's exactly what the titular character, played by Gordon-Levitt himself, is: a deluded porn addict.

He believes that women in real life can never give him what porn gives him, and even when he seemingly falls in love with good-girl Barbara (Scarlett Johansson), porn is the top thing on his mind.

When he's caught, Jon vows to his woman never to engage in such a "disgusting" act again, but addictions are never easy to break.

By its description alone, anyone can tell "Don Jon" isn't an entirely serious film.

No one in their right mind would sit down to write a straight drama about a man addicted to pornography, or at least I'd hope not, and Gordon-Levitt is no exception.

He knows how to play with comedy, but some of his directorial decisions make little sense, forcing the film in and out of satire throughout.

There are moments where the sheer ridiculousness of the concept is on full-force, constantly intercutting his addiction with the reality of life in an amusing fashion.

This isn't to say it doesn't feel gratuitous

and grating at times, as you can only really drive the point of the addiction home so many times before it reaches a "Requiem for a Dream" level of repetition.

Then there's the women.

However much the female fantasies of modern porn clips satisfy Jon, some of the women in his life are a far cry from satisfyingly written for an audience that includes more than men of the same ilk as Jon.

Brie Larson is criminally underused, a silent figure for most of the film, while the always talented Julianne Moore only comes into play to offer an incredibly strange tonal shift in "Don Jon" that leads it down a path far from comedy.

For all the disappointment that comes with them, every bit of comedic writing intended for Scarlett Johansson comes off without a hitch.

Her commitment to this Jersey Girl is impeccable, drawing out some genuine laughs in scenes that are so blatantly ridiculous, you can't help but fall in love with her as much as

Jon, if not more.

Really sealing in that R Rating, Joseph Gordon-Levitt pulls no stops at pushing that stereotypical Jersey accent and style, with every f-bomb you can imagine, and it makes for some entertaining moments.

Language isn't all that's there though, as the sex count is pretty high, both from the pornography and Gordon-Levitt himself with multiple women.

It's a shame he didn't take the NC-17 route like Steve McQueen did with his sex addiction drama "Shame" though, because an actual masturbation scene or two would have been nice between all the bouncing breasts.

However weak some of the writing might be, Joseph Gordon-Levitt's debut is actually a fine one.

It may be almost entirely about him and his character, but it's far from the disappointment it could have turned out to be.

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BP renews bid to suspend oil spill settlement payments

MICHAEL KUNZELMAN
AP Writer

BP on Monday renewed its request for a federal judge to temporarily suspend settlement payments to Gulf Coast residents and businesses following its massive 2010 oil spill, citing a scathing report on alleged misconduct within the court-supervised program.

In a court filing, BP attorneys said the report issued earlier this month by former FBI Director Louis Freeh shows the settlement program is plagued by problems that need to be fixed.

U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier already has rejected two previous requests by BP to suspend settlement payments, but both rulings preceded Freeh's Sept. 6 report.

Freeh concluded that top members of claims administrator Patrick Juneau's staff engaged in conduct that was improper, unethical and possibly criminal, but said he didn't see a need to shut down settlement payments.

BP lawyers questioned whether Barbier would have authorized Juneau to begin processing and paying claims more than a year ago if he had known the settlement program would be "riven by conflicts of interest," lacked adequate anti-fraud controls and operated in a "grossly inefficient and over-costly manner."

"While BP does not presume

to know for certain, it submits that the answer most likely would have been an emphatic 'no,'" company lawyers wrote. "Instead, the Settlement Program would have been instructed to fix its problems first, before being allowed to open its doors to the claims of class members."

On Aug. 28, Barbier rejected BP's second request to suspend all payments to businesses and residents who claim the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico cost them money.

The judge said an internal probe by Juneau's office didn't find credible evidence of fraud involving employees of the settlement program's Mobile, Ala., claims center.

Barbier also ruled that BP's separate complaints about alleged conflicts of interest inside the settlement program didn't warrant a halt in the claims process.

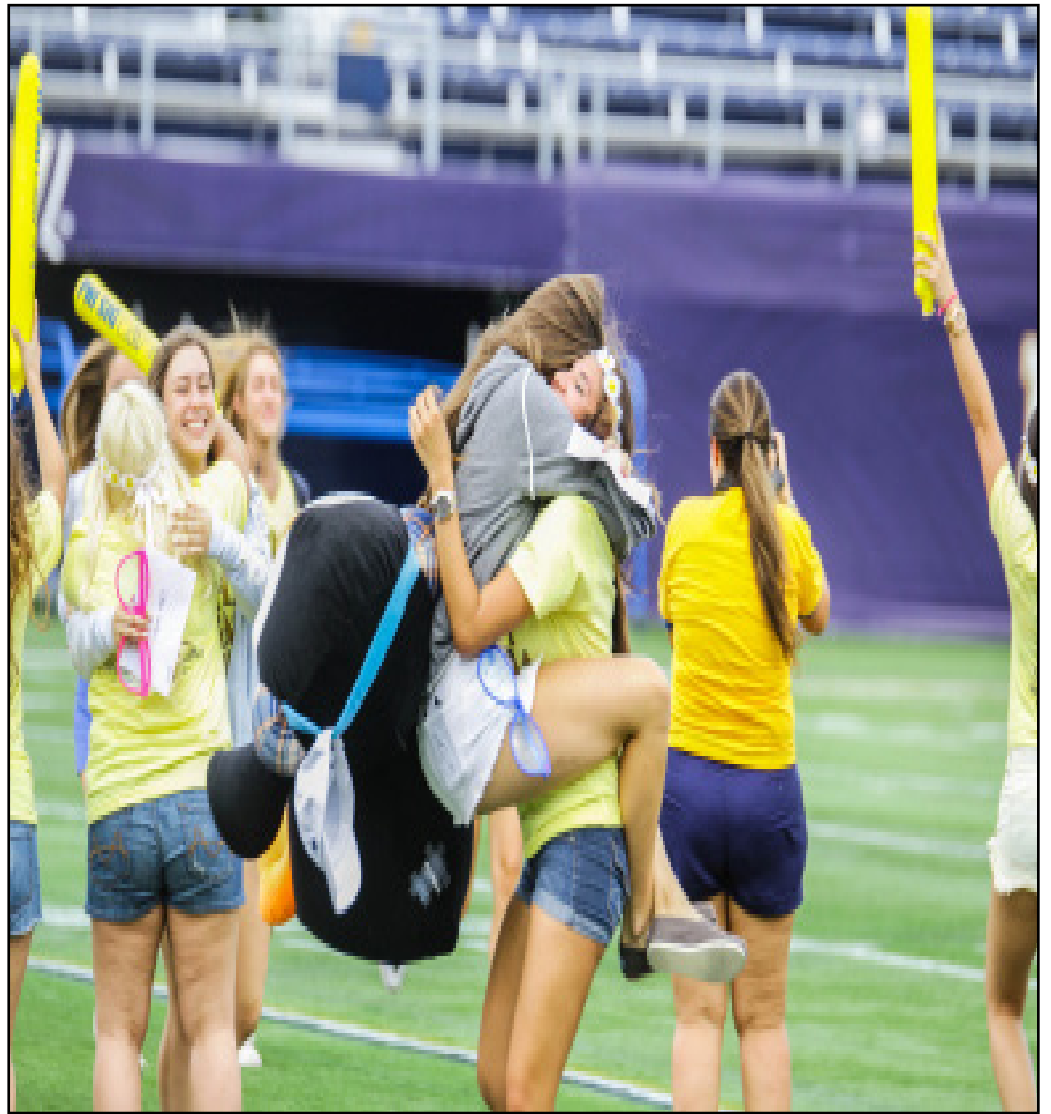
Freeh's report said two private attorneys — Glen Lerner and Jon Andry — used Lionel Sutton, a lawyer on Juneau's staff, to expedite a claim by their firm for nearly \$8 million.

In return, Sutton received more than \$40,000 in fees from payments on claims he had referred to their law firm before joining Juneau's staff, according to the report.

Sutton resigned from Juneau's staff in June.

BP also noted that Freeh's report said BrownGreer, a vendor

NEW MEMBERS REJOICE



CARL-FREDERICK FRANCOIS/THE BEACON

A new member jumps onto her new sister as she finds her home in Phi Sigma Sigma.

Zimbabwe author shortlisted for Booker prize

ANGUS SHAW
AP Writer

An African teenager living in Detroit can't understand why her immigrant aunt is always dieting when people back home in Zimbabwe go hungry every day.

The teenager, named Darling, is the creation of the first Zimbabwean and black African woman to be nominated for the coveted British literary Booker Prize. NoViolet Bulawayo's novel touches on the woes in her troubled homeland.

"We Need New Names" is one of six works on an annual shortlist of the finest English-language writing from Britain, Ireland and the 54-nation Commonwealth of former British colonies. The winner of the award officially known as the Man Booker Prize after its sponsor, financial services firm Man Group PLC, will be announced on Oct. 15.

Bulawayo, 31, writes on the search for identity in the United States by Africans escaping poverty and upheaval at home, and leaving behind childhood friends and what she describes as the vibrant "colors and magic" of

their continent.

In Bulawayo's book, the character, Darling, grows up in a Zimbabwean shanty town with friends with equally quirky names — Chipso, Godknows, Bastard and Sbho. The cheerful urchin gang raids the gardens in wealthy suburbs to steal fruit. The book title comes from the fact that immigrant children are given American names as they struggle to be accepted in a different world, Bulawayo said.

At home, "the kids transcend poverty and are funny and hopeful and they have spunk. But even with the American dream, Darling's character flattens out. She is out of her geographical space and becomes lost," Bulawayo said in an interview with The Associated Press in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital.

Bulawayo, who was visiting Zimbabwe to promote her debut novel, went to the United States to study law in 1999. Later, she earned a master's in fine arts at Cornell University, where she was awarded a Truman Capote fellowship. She is currently on a fellowship at Stanford University.

In Zimbabwe, Bulawayo

for the settlement program, has resisted efforts to control its costs. BrownGreer has averaged more than \$15 million per month in fees for its work on the program.

"BrownGreer appears to be part of the problem, not part of the solution," BP lawyers wrote.

Freeh's report said his work

is "ongoing" and will result in recommendations for strengthening the settlement program's operations and anti-fraud measures. BP urged Barbier to suspend all settlement payments until Juneau and Freeh can reform the program, "bringing a satisfactory resolution" to the problems Freeh uncovered.

Juneau has said Freeh's report validates his team's work, calling his staff's alleged misconduct an "isolated situation."

"The Freeh Report specifically recommended we continue to process and pay claims. That is what we have been doing and we will continue to do so," Juneau said in a statement Monday.

has met with her Zimbabwean publishers, the Weaver Press of Harare that specializes in promoting Zimbabwean writers and earlier published her work in a collection of short stories. She talked to aspiring writers and held signings of her novel, described by Zimbabwean media as sassy, witty, intricate and elegantly written. It also received positive reviews in the United States and Britain.

"I am overwhelmed and humbled. It's a national win" and an inspiration for other Zimbabweans, Bulawayo said.

Born Elizabeth Zandile Tshele, her adopted name derives from her mother Violet who died when she was an 18-month-old baby. In the local SinNdebele language of her western Matabeleland province, "NoViolet" means "withViolet." In English, it signifies deep remembrance of an absent mother and traditional family values. Bulawayo is the western provincial capital, Zimbabwe's second city and her home town.

In America, the author said, she strove to understand political violence and economic turmoil that reached its height in Zimbabwe in 2008 and led to at least 2 million

Zimbabweans fleeing the country to become diaspora communities around the world.

In the novel Darling, in a phone call with a childhood friend, is accused of abandoning her home rather than staying to deal with the challenges. That is the kind of discomfort experienced by many Zimbabweans exiles living abroad.

The shanty homes of Darling's friends were razed to the ground, a description of the brutal, real-life slum clearance operation in 2005 known as Murambatsvina, or "clean out the trash" in the local language. President Robert Mugabe's government called it an urban renewal program, but critics said it aimed to crush burgeoning support for Mugabe's opponents in the impoverished townships. The United Nations said as many 700,000 people were left homeless.

"We have ways of looking at our destiny. I write what moves me. I am driven to write. When things were getting hectic (in Zimbabwe) it became a matter of catharsis for me, of putting a face to it," said Bulawayo, born after independence from colonial era

rule and the first all-race elections that brought Mugabe to power in 1980. Mugabe was recently re-elected, brushing off accusations from the opposition that his supporters engaged in widespread fraud at the polls.

"Any decent government should provide for its people. You make a dangerous society by having a disgruntled people. I am just a writer. I don't make policy to change lives at a tangible level. I only have a voice," said Bulawayo, who spent her early childhood in rural western Zimbabwe. There, she listened to the folktales of her grandfather and father, who had been in the colonial Rhodesian police force and was branded a "sellout" after independence.

Bulawayo, without access to a television until she was 18, was an avid reader. The leading chain of bookstores where she picked up cheap titles is virtually bankrupt now, after years of economic meltdown.

Electronic media aside, "I hope somehow we go back to a culture of reading," Bulawayo said. "There's an economic issue. What you can afford — getting something to eat or reading?"

The state of FIU football following a 72-0 loss at Louisville

RHYS WILLIAMS
Staff Writer

When the final statistics sheet of the pounding that the University of Louisville Cardinals gave the Panthers was released, it is easy to see that the team's bye week was much needed.

The score, the worst showing in university history, passed the previous mark of 59 in losses to the University of Florida in 2009 and Penn State University in 2007. As you go down the stat sheet however, things look terrible for Head Coach Ron Turner's first season and game against a top-10 team.

The offense had a total of 30 yards--the lowest in school history by 35 yards--included three rushing yards and 27 passing yards. Those 30 yards came on a total of 43 offensive plays for the Panthers which was a significantly less amount than the 56 plays that the Cardinals offense ran for 464 yards.

Some positives on the team from the game were

the punts, for which punter Chris Ayers, who had nine of the team's 11, boasted a large number in total yards between him and Austin Taylor, his backup. There were 355 yards from those punts with only 48 total return yards from the Cardinals. The other was that FIU was in charge of time of possession overall in the game. FIU had the ball for four minutes and 40 seconds more than the Cardinals did but there was no avail in that.

The Cardinals were in complete control of the statistics dominating in the sacks, with four for 33 yards, kickoff returns with one for 93 yards and a touchdown and the offensive yards with 210 yards on 29 carries with four touchdowns and 22 completions out of 27 attempts for 254 yards and five touchdowns.

Quarterback E.J. Hilliard, who made his first start of the 2013 campaign against his former high school teammate in Cardinals quarter-

back Teddy Bridgewater, had a less than spectacular first start. Hilliard went four for nine in passing but ran for a total loss of 32 yards.

According to the University of Louisville athletic department website, Student Media learned that this was the largest margin of victory for the Cardinals since 2007 when they beat Murray State University 73-10 and the first shutout they've had since a 26-0 win over the University of Connecticut in the 2010 season.

"It was just a great overall performance in all three phases of the game," Bridgewater said to the Cardinals Athletic Department on the game. "We just went out today and competed and played a complete game."

Turner also commented on the Louisville game. Due to media availability Turner was unavailable for comment directly to Student Media.

"Nothing will surprise me with this team," Turner said of Louisville. "They're a great football team all the



JASON DELGADO//THE BEACON

After losing by the worst score in school history, FIU looks to regain some composure during the upcoming bye-week.

way around. There are no weak areas. They're very well coached, they play hard and they have exceptional athletes."

There was also an issue between Turner and an official, creating a situation for a running, no-stop clock in the second half after the Cardinals were already up 38-0.

Gerald Austin, coordinator of officials for Conference USA clarified the issue in a press release.

"Coach Turner made a comment to one of the officials that, given the amount of injuries and the limited numbers of players he had available, he wanted to run the ball in the second half. One official misinterpreted that comment. Coach Turner, at no time requested that the clock run. FIU threw just one pass in the second half. After reviewing the tape there were five times that the clock should have been stopped and

it did not. Four times were on first down and one play where the runner went out of bounds, based on a quick review of the video," Austin said.

The winless Panthers, who are on bye week one out of two this week, face the University of Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles on Oct. 5 for their first game in C-USA play.

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Dynamic duo increases offensive output

YOSVANY RODRIGUEZ
Contributing Writer

Batman & Robin, LeBron & Wade, Quentin & Alterio?

While these two might not be at the level of the aforementioned duos, they have been able to make the FIU soccer squad a formidable offensive force.

"We need competition on the team, especially myself" Junior forward Quentin Albrecht said. "We need to score and he's a guy who can score."

The Panther's are currently 16th in the country in total goals scored (14).

The leader of the offensive attack so far has been USF transfer Junior midfielder Roberto Alterio with four goals through seven games.

The four goals are good enough to rank him 18th in the nation in total goals scored.

Not far behind is the man who led FIU in total goals last season (10), Quentin Albrecht, with two goals.

While Albrecht has only connected on two goals this

season, he leads the team with shot attempts (21).

Eventually, the law of averages will come in play and he will likely see some of those missed shots become goals.

The sky is the limit for FIU's offense with these two studs leading the attack.

As Alterio becomes further acclimated with the team and builds greater chemistry with Albrecht, the goals should come in bunches.

Alterio and Albrecht should continue to push each other all season, which should lead to a very exciting campaign for the Panther's.

Best defense is a good offense

FIU at the moment is ranked dead last in Conference USA in goals allowed per game (1.86).

Yet, FIU seems to be turning a new page on the defensive side of the ball as they have only surrendered three goals in their last three

meetings.

"We're young, we're a little inexperienced, that aggression defensively leads to some fouls." Head Coach Ken Arena explained.

"We played four games in eight days, we probably challenge our self physically and mentally more than any team in the country. I think now as we have games, which were more fresh, we could hold ourselves to the standard we need to defensively."

FIU was able to record its first shutout of the season on Sunday evening against the Jacksonville Dolphins, although the Panthers almost had one a few nights before against the North Florida Ospreys.

In both matches, FIU combined for 46 total shots, while their opponents only attempted 16.

The Panther's have been able to control the ball for much of the game in both instances, which has led to two successful games for the defense that had been struggling.

FIU's best defensive



JONATHAN SEGAL//THE BEACON

After going 1-1 during this past weekend, the FIU men's soccer team looks to continue its pursuit for a tournament berth.

strategy seems to be to just be on the constant attack.

Tough slate ahead

After failing to win a single conference game the prior year (0-7-1), it's no surprise that the point of emphasis this year has been conference play.

FIU has already dropped their first conference game of the season to the undefeated first year C-USA member FAU Owls (5-0-1),

in a 2-1 loss.

The Panther's are just three short weeks away from heading into the part of the schedule everyone's been waiting for.

On Oct. 6, the Panther's will take the Marshall Thundering Herd to begin a streak of eight consecutive conference games.

FIU will play half of the games on that slate on the road.

The Panther's are off to a pedestrian start on the road currently 2-3 away from

home.

However, FIU should be ready for the tough road ahead as they were able to improve the strength of their non-conference schedule in order to prepare them for these games.

"The quality of our opponents wasn't as high as it should've been." rationalized Arena. "We tried to make our non-conference schedule a little tougher to better prepare us for the conference."

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Panthers beaten like they stole something



CARL FREDERICK-FRANCOIS/THE BEACON

After suffering a 72-0 loss this past weekend to Louisville, the FIU football team looks to pick up the pieces.

COLUMNIST



PATRICK CHALVIRE

Saturday's football game was more of a gladiator match of men among boys.

The Cardinals pecked their way to a 72-0 route of the Panthers, who looked like alley cats praying for salvation. The second half became their worst nightmare, as the Panthers managed to end the half with a loss of three yards.

You would have to go as far back as the Panthers' inaugural year to find their previous low in total yards: 65 against Western Kentucky in 2002. Worse, the loss to the Cardinals made it the biggest blowout in program history, surpassing the 62-3 beating that team took at the hands of the Florida Gators back in 2009.

So far, the team has allowed 187 points, compared to only scoring 23. Giving them the benefit of the doubt, the first four games of the season were expected to be the toughest of the season, but the way

the games have been played and the way they've lost was just something out of a video game.

It's hard to pinpoint one aspect of the game that stood out or needed the most work. Backup quarterback E.J. Hilliard, filling in for injured Jake Medlock, only went 4-9 with 27 yards passing, including four sacks—stats that we're used to seeing after a quarter. His former Northwestern high school teammate and Cardinal counterpart Teddy Bridgewater finished 17-22 with 212 yards and four touchdowns.

Bridgewater's only blemish? One sack, courtesy of Randy Harvey.

It's tough to avoid sounding repetitive when faced with outcomes like this; it's clearly a team that is nowhere in sync. The "it's early in the season" line flew out the window after the Louisville game. These guys are just outplayed and outmuscled.

You see it in every game: the guys have been beaten up in every possible way and there doesn't seem to be a light at the end of the tunnel. Rather,

if this team were a Football Championship Subdivision team, they'd be a laughing stock.

Another call to question has been the conservative styles of play-calling the Panthers have showed this season. Long third down plays have resulted in runs that only produce a yard or two. In regards to the Louisville game, only converting one out of 13 third downs.

With the way the season has been so far, you'd think to give a quarterback more than seven pass attempts in a game. Nothing wrong with running the ball on third and long when the previous times rushing only got you three yards. For those who may have realized the second half go by faster than usual, there were talks of Head Coach Ron Turner possibly requesting a running clock once the game was out of reach.

Turner denied the request and, later, Conference USA Coordinator of Officials Gerald Austin issued a statement that said: "Coach Turner made a comment to one of the officials that, given the amount

of injuries and the limited numbers of players he had available, he wanted to run the ball in the second half. One official misinterpreted that comment. Coach Turner, at no time requested that the clock run. FIU threw just one pass in the second half."

After reviewing the tape there were five times the clock should have been stopped and it did not. Four times were on first down and one play where the runner went out of bounds, based on a quick review of the video."

So not only was the game going wrong for Turner, but so was the officiating of the clock—a great way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

All in all, this is a season for the trash, one to forget about and hope for better days. T.Y. Hilton isn't walking through the door, neither is Anthony Gaitor.

Wonder if Mario Cristobal would want to leave his spot with the number one team in the nation to come back home?

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Stenson wins Tour Championship

DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

At this stage in his career, Henrik Stenson never expects anything to come easily.

He already had poured in hours upon hours of work to even get to this stage — a four-shot lead going into the last day of the Tour Championship, giving him a clear shot at the FedEx Cup and the biggest payoff in golf. He was reminded what was at stake when he saw the two trophies displayed on the first tee at East Lake.

"I knew it was a lot of things on the line," he said.

He figured his best move was to play his best golf, and he delivered a 2-under 68 on Sunday to claim both trophies.

With a birdie on the 15th hole that thwarted a late charge by 20-year-old Jordan Spieth, followed by three pars from the sand, Stenson wound up with a three-shot victory over Spieth and Steve Stricker in the Tour Championship. Equally important, if not more, he captured the FedEx Cup and its \$10 million bonus.

"The main thing is to block everything out and go play golf, which I was pretty good at in the long run," Stenson said Sunday.

The short run hasn't been

bad, either.

No one has played better over the last three months. Stenson tied for third in the Scottish Open, and was runner-up a week later at the British Open. He was runner-up in the World Golf Championship at Firestone and finished third at the PGA Championship. And when the FedEx Cup playoffs began, the 37-year-old Swede didn't lose his stride. He won the Deutsche Bank Championship to get the No. 2 seed, and then capped it off with the first wire-to-wire win (no ties) in the Tour Championship since Tom Watson in the first year of this 30-man showcase.

"Hats off to him," Stricker said. "He played great. He played great in the playoffs. He won two of these events. He deserves to be champion."

The PGA Tour is sending out ballots for the player of the year, with the result to be announced Friday. Stenson figures to be on the ballot with his two FedEx Cup playoff wins, and as FedEx Cup champion. It still might not be enough to trump Tiger Woods and his five victories, or the two-win seasons of major champions Phil Mickelson (British Open) or Adam Scott (Masters).

Spieth is a lock for rookie

of the year. He started the season with no status on any tour, earned enough money to get his card for the 2013-14 season, won the John Deere Classic, shot 62 the last day of the Deutsche Bank Championship, made the Presidents Cup as a captain's pick and closed with a 64 to put a brief scare into Stenson on the final day at East Lake. He wound up seventh in the FedEx Cup, the best ever for a rookie. Not bad for a 20-year-old Texan.

The tour hasn't awarded comeback player of the year since 2010, and maybe that's where Stenson fits in.

What a turnaround. Twice.

The first slump more than a decade ago was by far the most severe as Stenson had no idea where the ball was going. This time, it was a combination of a few health issues and a lot of bad golf, the latter cured by hard work.

Even so, the Swede was not even among the top 200 in the world going into the 2012 season. He now matches a career-best at No. 4 in the world rankings.

"It shows that I never give up," Stenson said. "This is way beyond what I could have imagined."

Spieth made him work for it.

"AN EROTIC COMEDY WHIRLWIND."

—Peter Travers, *Rolling Stone*



DON JON
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT

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RELATIVITY

STARTS FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 27TH IN THEATERS EVERYWHERE!

A night of “magical” food and wine pairing

COLUMNIST



DANIELA WALTER

The wine selection, the food and the budget were the first thing that came to mind last Friday when I was hired to do my first wine selection for a birthday dinner.

When you have a menu preselected, it is easier to do the matching.

If you are going to a restaurant and the party size is bigger than four, the wine selection can be challenging, so choosing the wine that the host likes the most might be the best solution.

If you are the host, and you know the tastes of your guests, the proper thing to do would be for you to order what they like to drink. As a result, it would magically pair with the food they have chosen.

For this birthday party, I worked with a preselected menu and I knew both of the hosts, which made my job easier when selecting the wines. The only challenge I faced was the budget. I had to take into consideration how many people would be attending.

The math for serving it is easy. Usually a glass would be considered around five ounces. A bottle

has 750 ml, which equals to 25 oz, or five servings. If you divide the number of guests by five, you will get the number of bottles needed. In my case, I had 10 people to pour, resulting in two bottles per course.

Matching food and wine is more than science. It is the understanding of the main components in food, which are sweet, sour, salty and bitter, and the main in wine: sweet, sour and bitter. The combination of these two create a synergistic match between them. Generally, one should not overwhelm the other, but rather compliment. As an example, food with high acidity and a heavy body should be paired with a wine with similar characteristics (like pasta al pomodoro with a Chianti) Food with light body and high acidity, such as a ceviche, should be paired with a wine that has similar characteristics, like a Sauvignon Blanc.

When matching food and wine, you should consider other components as well, such as texture, use of meat, particular flavor, spiciness, etc.

To find the ideal wine and create a perfect combination with the food it is a challenge as well as a pleasure.

In my case, the host was not a big fan of white, so to accommo-

date her taste I decided to only do reds. Because big and bold wines are not her favorite, I went to a medium-light body selection.

Here is the menu I had to work with:

Appetizer: Crostini of goat cheese and sundried tomato

The main course: Penne al Pesto

Dessert: Homemade blueberry pie with vanilla ice cream.

My wine selection for the first course was a Pinot Noir, very elegant and considered the lightest of the red category. It is usually a medium-light wine with subtle tannin and mild acidity.

Affordable: Kudos 2011 with an alcohol percentage of 13.8 from Willamette Valley, OR; \$15.99.

My favorite: Peter Paul 2010 with an alcohol percentage of 14.3 from Russian River Valley, Mills Road, CA; \$40.

My wine selection for the second course: Zinfandel.

It is little heavier than the previous one, but with an outstanding balance between acidity, tannin and sugar this wine was the best of the night. Its tones of raspberry and pepper made it very easy to drink, producing the perfect match for the second course.

Affordable: Alterra 2011 with

SAUDI NATIONAL DAY



ANDRES BEDOYA/THE BEACON

For Saudi National Day, Sept. 23, a tour bus visited different colleges around Miami to raise awareness toward the country and its history.

an alcohol percentage of 13 from Sonoma County, CA; \$14.99.

My favorite: Williams Selyem – Bacigalupi Vineyard 2009 with an alcohol percentage of 14.9 from Russian River Valley, CA; \$80.

My wine selection for the third and last course: Moscato D’asti.

Affordable and one of my favorites: Beviama 2011 with an alcohol percentage of 11 from

Asti, Piedmont DOCG, Italy; \$15.

It is semi-sweet with lightly sparkling notes, golden pale with a crisp freshness, elegant floral aromas and delicate flavors of peaches and apricots.

Always pick a wine that is less sweet than the dessert you will serve.

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Catholics cheer pope’s remarks on gays, abortion

KAREN MATTHEWS
AP Writer

Catholics attending Sunday services around the globe said they were heartened by Pope Francis’ recent remarks that the church has become too focused on “small-minded rules” on hot-button issues like homosexuality, abortion and contraceptives.

Worshippers applauded what they heard as a message of inclusion from the man who assumed the papacy just six months ago.

“I think he’s spot on,” said Shirley Holzknicht, 77, a retired school principal attending services in Little Rock, Ark. “As Catholic Christians, we do need to be more welcoming.”

In Havana, Cuba, Irene Delgado said the church needs to adapt to modern times.

“The world evolves, and I believe that the Catholic Church is seeing that it is being left behind, and that is not good,” said Delgado, 57. “So I think that they

chose this Pope Francis because he is progressive, has to change things.”

Francis, in an interview published Thursday in 16 Jesuit journals worldwide, called the church’s focus on abortion, marriage and contraception narrow and said it was driving people away.

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the head of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the pope’s words were welcome.

“He’s captured the world’s imagination,” Dolan said after Mass at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York. “Like Jesus, he’s always saying, ‘Hate the sin, love the sinner.’”

But Dolan said Francis’ change in tone didn’t signal a change in doctrine.

“He knows that his highest and most sacred responsibility is to pass on the timeless teaching of the church,” Dolan said. “What he’s saying is, we’ve got to think of a bit more effective way to do it. Because if the church comes off as a scold, it’s counterproductive.”

In Brasilia, Brazil, the capital of the country with the largest Catholic population in the world, 22-year-old student Maria das Gracas Lemos said

Republic, took a similar view of Pope Francis’ statements on gays. Although he believes the church will never accept homosexuality, Ortiz said Francis

that everyone has the basics, shelter, food, clothing.”

In Philadelphia, churchgoer Irene Fedin said priests “should be more focused on helping the person gain a spiritual connection to God instead of just condemning people because of certain actions that they believe are wrong.”

Outside a church in Coral Gables, Fla., Frank Recio said he was grateful that the pope is trying to shift the church’s tone.

“I’m a devout Catholic, always have been. I think the Catholic Church had gotten out of touch with the way the world was evolving,” said Recio, 69, who’s retired from a career in the technology industry.

Recio said he would support changes like allowing priests to marry. “It’s a natural state in life, for men and women to have a partner,” said Recio.

In Boston, Evelyn Martinez, 26, said she agrees with Francis that compassion should be one of the church’s main priorities.

“I don’t believe that

“As Catholic Christians, we do need to be more welcoming.”

Shirley Holzknicht
Retired School Principal
Little Rock, Ark.

Francis was “bringing the church up to date.”

She said children of divorced parents used to be barred from some schools in Brazil. “All that has changed. In Brazil, people are no longer rejected because they are divorced,” Lemos said. “The church has to catch up with changes in society, even if it still doesn’t admit divorce.”

Isaias Miguel Ortiz, a teacher at a private university in the Dominican

is “getting closer to more people.”

“All the people should be accepted the way they are,” he said.

The pope didn’t say he accepted abortion or homosexuality, noted Martha Fabiola Rojas Lerma, 76, of Mexico City. Rather, he said he wasn’t going to stress those issues.

“It was very correctly well-spoken,” she said. “There’s a lot of injustice. Instead, we should work so

someone’s sexuality should keep them away from any religion,” said Martinez, a graduate student at Emerson College who attended Mass on Saturday night.

Jose Baltazar, a 74-year-old vice president of an insurance company and longtime church volunteer in Manila, in the Philippines, said the pope has set his priorities mindful of stark realities.

“We have to give priority in working to bring those who have gone astray back to the fold,” Baltazar said. “We pray for them. Why did they go astray? What’s our shortcoming? What’s the shortcoming of the Catholic Church?”

Associated Press writers Rodrique Ngowi in Boston; Anne-Marie Garcia in Havana, Cuba; Jeannie Nuss in Little Rock, Ark.; Marco Sibaja in Brasilia, Brazil; Katherine Corcoran in Mexico City; and Jim Gomez in Manila, Philippines, contributed to this report.