

AUSTIN IN TRANSIT

THE LIBERATOR

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PAST, PRESENT
& MOVING FORWARD

Photo by Madhu Singh

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NOVEMBER 2013

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Photos by Madhu Singh & Logan Hailey



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ON THE COVER **10** | **TRANSPORTATION IN MASS**

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this issue will be printed in the next edition of *THE LIBERATOR*.

THE LIBERATOR is the official publication of The Liberal Arts
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PHOTO BY LOGAN HAILEY



the history of 'keep austin weird'

Being in and around Austin, you have probably seen more than one bumper sticker, t-shirt or sign that reads "Keep Austin Weird." The origin is kind of a complicated story. This catchy slogan was inspired by a man named Red Wassenich in 2000 and it was later trademarked by Outhouse Designs. Officially, the Austin Independent Business Alliance adopted "Keep Austin Weird" as their slogan to promote local business in the city, but the phrase has a lot of history.

THE ORIGINS OF THE PHRASE

Why is Austin weird though? Strangely enough, reputable journalists and academics have put a lot of thought into that question. Austin is a mix of Texas heritage, music from every angle, sprinkled with food trucks and a dash of breakfast tacos. I had the pleasure of interviewing the man who invented this phrase that has taken over our city over the past years, Red Wassenich himself.

Red Wassenich came up with the phrase while volunteering for a local radio station during a fundraiser to help local businesses, and one of the callers asked him why he was doing it and he simply replied "to keep Austin weird." He went home later that night and mentioned it to his wife, who immediately saw its potential, and that's when the phrase really took off. They went on to make bumper stickers and a few local businesses took note of them.

"The reason [the phrase] got so big because of Book People and Waterloo Records because they started handing out the bumper stickers for free in support of local businesses. They distributed around 200,000 of the bumper stickers," said Wassenich.

Soon, the phrase would go on to attract attention from those who saw the profitable potential of the phrase, something that didn't make Wassenich very excited. "It

**"There's the obvious things
[that show how weird
Austin is], like the cathedral
of junk and Leslie Chochran,
but fundamentally there's
an openness in this town,
it's okay to be different as
opposed to a lot of other
Texas towns."**

struck a nerve because it became such a big deal. There's this general sense that we like what we have here, and we don't want it to change," said Wassenich about the growth in popularity of the phrase.

CAPITALIZING ON UNIQUENESS

Outhouse Designs trademarked the phrase, with Wassenich fighting them all he could, but ultimately the design company won. The "I don't think anyone should own it; it reinforces the materialism that I object to," he said.

Our city is weird for many reasons and if you were to ask a group of Austinites, everyone is going to have a different one. According to Wassenich, "there's the obvious things

[that show how weird Austin is], like the cathedral of junk and Leslie Chochran, but fundamentally there's an openness in this town, it's okay to be different as opposed to a lot of other Texas towns."

Austin is changing though, and to many people who have lived here for a while, it's hard to accept everything that's going on. When Wassenich was born in Austin, the city was the 73rd largest city in the nation. Now, it's the 11th.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

When asked about the infamous attitude of Austinites to the change and influx of new people, he begrudgingly admitted to that line of thought. "I have to admit I'm not proud of it, people have brought some good stuff, for example the town is wealthier, but the bad part is that it used to be unbelievably cheap to live here. You could have a part time job and live in the best places downtown. The expensive living is driving a lot of the cool, slacker type away who are the people I love interacting with."

The "Keep Austin Weird" phrase means many things to a lot of different people. To Red Wassenich, "It gives me something to have, a line in my obituary."

Having lived here for only one full year, I've grown to love this city and all of the little things that make it unique. To me, the Keep Austin Weird phrase means always having something interesting to do, and never being able to say "I'm bored." Finding your niche in Austin isn't hard, and once you find your niche, you can find your own meaning behind the phrase. Go explore--the weirdness awaits.

■ NATALIA NARANJO

GOOGLE FIBER

& WHAT IT MEANS FOR TECHNOLOGY IN ATX

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

**TWC&GRANDE
ONLY OFFER CABLE
BROADBAND**



**WITH
BROADBAND
YOU SHARE
BANDWIDTH WITH
YOUR NEIGHBOR
{so}**

**↑ USERS
SERVICE SPEEDS ↓**



**IN SOME
NEIGHBORHOODS
[*cough* WEST CAMPUS *cough*]
OLD SCHOOL DSL
CAN BE FASTER**

Austin will soon be at the apex of Internet service, thanks to Google Fiber. In addition to being the "Live Music Capital of the World," Austin is often touted as the "New Silicon Valley" with tech startups and incubators taking over much of the city's downtown.

A SIGN OF ECONOMIC HEALTH

According to their press release, the city's Austin-preneurial spirit and UT's new medical center were what drew Google Fiber to Austin. After building the infrastructure, then testing and improving on it in Kansas City, and finally, following a stringent selection process, Austin will officially be the second Google Fiber city.

Google's service is expected to reach about 160,000 Kansas City homes, and promises to reach out to nearly two dozen surrounding cities, bringing thousands of jobs along with it. In response, service providers announced much faster Internet to be launched by mid-2014 in both Austin and Kansas City. Google's improved service is expected to arrive to Austin sometime in 2014, offering up several services and serious competition.

Google Fiber will be offering three product plans: Gigabit + TV, Gigabit Internet, and Free Internet. Preliminary pricing lists the 1-gigabit-per-second broadband service for about \$70 a month, or with an additional television service for about \$120 per month. If you cannot be home to watch your favorite shows, any show can be streamed live on your personal tablet, and up to eight television shows can be recorded at once. 1 terabyte of Google Drive storage is also provided, in addition to 2 terabytes of digital video recording space.

By comparison, Time Warner offers monthly Internet services from 1 megabit per second for \$20 to 50 megabits per second for \$65. Grande offers similar broadband, while AT&T offers services FiOS at 300 mbps and promises to match whatever Google introduces to the area.

CREATING HEALTHY COMPETITION

Clearly, Google will introduce serious competition

that may overthrow the current Internet and TV monopoly; at the least it could shake things up, making these services more affordable and accessible for customers. This isn't necessarily bad for Google, as some speculate the company mostly wanted to introduce a new Internet market and infrastructure that can uphold Google's main source of revenues—advertisements.

Dr. Clay Spinuzzi, professor in the Department of Rhetoric explained, "Google is more interested in providing service so that it can get more people online; these people can then make advertising revenue for Google, both directly and indirectly." That doesn't seem so farfetched, considering the data Google has been known for storing on users.

Google Fiber will open up sign-ups by mid-2014 to determine where demand for the lightning-speed service is the greatest. Homes and small businesses are welcome to sign-up for the service.

Google promises to work with the city to identify a number of public establishments, like

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hospitals that will get the
service for free**

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University of Texas senior Brian O'Connor exclaimed, "It's an exciting opportunity for Austin that could potentially be really beneficial to the university, and the state in general."

POSITIVE FORECASTS FOR EVERYONE

Not only is Google Fiber's arrival a good indication of our economic health, but it will also bring additional revenues by servicing out to local firms and hiring a small team in Austin.

As Google revolutionizes the entire landscape of Internet service with Fiber, Austin will be benefiting as it rides the wave of service providers trying to compete with the brand-new service. Not only will Google bring thousands of jobs, but it might even drive down the cost of internet and TV for local businesses, and make it accessible to many more.

■ ALEYA NOUR

TECH START-UPS IN AUSTIN

the silicon valley of the south

Right now, imagine you are the fourth-grade version of yourself. Close your eyes and envision your perfect dream job. Are you shaking your hips like Shakira in front of thousands of people who are screaming your name? Perhaps you are rushing into a burning building to save a family. Or, maybe you are floating in space collecting rocks off the moon. Now, open your eyes and look around at your reality.

Regardless of where you are or what you are doing, odds are the dream that you had in fourth grade is not what you are currently here to study. And, who can blame you; today's frightening economic situation has caused the decrease of what is called 'chasing your dreams'. But, there are people on campus and in Austin who are fighting this sad reality through technology, namely through the creation of tech start-ups.

an austin trend

One has to wonder why tech-start ups are so popular in Austin. GoodApril recently voted Austin as the best place in the US to launch a start-up, especially when it is based on technology; their reports were based upon tax costs, housing and building costs, and median employee salary, all factors that are extremely important when establishing a start-up.

Nicknamed "Silicon Valley of the South", Austin is an extremely diverse city, and as more people relocate to Austin, this diversity grows. Comyar Zaheri, president and co-founder of the UT organization Mobile App Development (MAD) which teaches students how to create their own mobile apps, attributes this technological progressiveness of Austin to its well-rounded atmosphere of talent, logic, and creativity.

"All the factors are there," comments Zaheri, "You have a school that is a top 10 Computer Science

institution in the country, but also it's the culture of Austin which looks down upon the whole established culture of society and the idea that you go into a board-room with investors and make a small company. You can come together with a great idea and no money and have people back you up; you can start from scratch. So you have talented people but also this culture that if you have a good idea you can start right now."

The process of a tech start-up is very fast-paced, a pure reflection of the fast-paced mindset in the world of technology, a view that if you do not put your idea out into the world as fast as possible, someone else will. Even though competition within the tech world is fierce, tech start-ups help level the playing field a bit.

"Technology allows anyone to create something amazing," comments Zaheri. This universal aspect of technology has allowed individuals to grow and profit, but it has also pushed Austin towards becoming the center of technology in the nation.

liberal arts in tech

While many people believe tech start-ups (and technology in general) only apply to people who constantly exercise the muscles in the left-hemisphere of the brain, it is quite clear that collaboration and creativity, both typically strong suits of Liberal Arts students, are essential in the creation of anything

technological. Also key to the creation of a tech start-up are patience and dedication, qualities Liberal Arts students are very familiar with.

"It takes a lot of time commitment because meeting once a week isn't really going to make you an expert so we encourage our members to dive into it on their own time and create their own projects," says Niko Lazaris, vice-president and co-creator of MAD.

The creative minds of Liberal Arts students are strongly needed in not only the brainstorming process but also in the developmental stages.

Tech start-ups need a continuous flow of high-energy, new ideas, and resilient attitudes as the industry is filled with trial-and-error data. The fast-paced nature of tech start-ups does not faze CoLA students who can churn out an essay

on gothic themes in a South African novel in a matter of hours. And, lastly, deep-level thinking taught in Liberal Arts classes prepare CoLA students to adapt to any job or obstacle put in their way.

So now, try again to see the future through the eyes of your fourth-grade self; see the possibility of a future that is just as exciting as you had imagined, but maybe in a different way. Tech start-ups are all around us, especially since we are in Austin, but it is up to you to open your eyes to the constant flow of possibilities and embrace the new and exciting world of tech start-ups.

■ KELLIE STONE

Tech start-ups need a continuous flow of high-energy, new ideas, and resilient attitudes as the industry is filled with trial-and-error data

TOP 3 TECH STARTUPS TO WATCH OUT FOR IN AUSTIN

half past now

App and Website which allows you to create your own personal profile of interests and then matches those interests with cool events going on in Austin
Creator: Marc Bhargava and Michael Wei

Importance: creation of an offline community, personalization

knowyourcontract.com

Website which uses top lawyers in the US to simplify, review, and create contracts
Creator: Michael Kiamanesh

Importance: users are able to understand fully what they are signing in a contract, destroys confusion in legal agreements, creates more knowledgeable citizens

culturebooster

A free curriculum in which middle school and high school students combine lessons on business, marketing, collaboration, and human services with a cause: to raise money for self-directed and produced projects that benefit their schools
Creator: Ceraldine Smythe

Importance: creates innovative curriculum with real world experience to teach far beyond normal classwork

language programs at UT

& the factors that can make or break them

Part of the fun of learning a new language is being able to express yourself in a new way... sometimes in ways that you couldn't even have in English

Here are some unique words that don't have direct translations in English (but maybe should):

kummerspeck – german word that means “excess weight gained due to emotional overeating - literally translates to grief bacon

Backpfeifengesicht – a german word meaning a face that wants to be punched

Espirit d'escalier - french word for thinking of a witty comeback when it's too late

Tsundoku - Japanese word for leaving a book unread after buying it

Pana Po'o - Hawaiian word for scratching one's head while trying to remember something

“Est-il important d'apprendre les langues étrangères?” Many students can easily answer this question due to the vigor of UT's foreign language departments. University of Texas offers courses in dozens of foreign languages from some of the highest ranked departments in the country.

purpose and popularity

However, foreign language programs face many challenges to uphold the success that is expected of them, and some succeed more than others. Variation in demand for courses, curriculum design, study abroad opportunities, quality of textbooks, resources available on campus and many other factors influence the overall quality of programs.

Every language program has its own unique purpose. Jill Robbins, the Chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, asserts that “people take languages for different reasons” so comparing foreign language programs is like “comparing apples and oranges.”

Dr. Hector Dominguez-Ruvalcaba, a Graduate Advisor of the Spanish program, asserts that Spanish is not a foreign language in Texas; instead, “it is a second language of the state.”

Compare this to the popularity of other programs such as Arabic, Chinese and Russian, in which attention is mostly due to geopolitical national interests. These differences create varying expectations from students. Therefore, degrees of success of UT's foreign language programs are difficult to compare on the same scale, because each program has its own unique purpose.

challenge and response

Since 2008, most of UT language programs have been facing on-going budgetary cuts, which have influenced the inner-workings of each department. Professor Jill Robbins asserts that “The Arabic program has quite a lot of funding from outside of the university,” and that translates into a larger and more involved teaching staff. That is a hard system to copy, with sixty-three sections of Spanish alone at the lower-division level.

Dr. Dominguez-Ruvalcaba believes that such challenges allowed for creativity in curriculum design and has left the quality of Spanish courses unaffected by financial challenges. Other programs have dealt with financial constraints differently. One of the most effective methods has been consolidation of individual language programs into one department.

Professor Sonia Roncador, who teaches Portuguese courses, asserts that this consolidation has protected certain language programs from being canceled. She

states that the Department of Spanish and Portuguese is planned to evolve into a new major, “Iberian and Latin American Languages and Cultures,” which will protect the Portuguese program, as well as allow for a more culturally comprehensive approach. Similar methods of consolidation have been implemented in the Department of Germanic, Slavic and Eastern European studies.

Curriculum design is an essential element of the department's ability to succeed. Kristen Brustad, the chair of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, asserts that a unique method allows them to get more students interested in Islamic studies. Languages like Spanish and French are popular in American high-schools, therefore curriculum design must be adjusted to take such parameters into account. While some students might feel challenged by the lack of flexibility, popular programs such as the French and Spanish cannot easily allow for much variation in their classrooms.

the study abroad factor

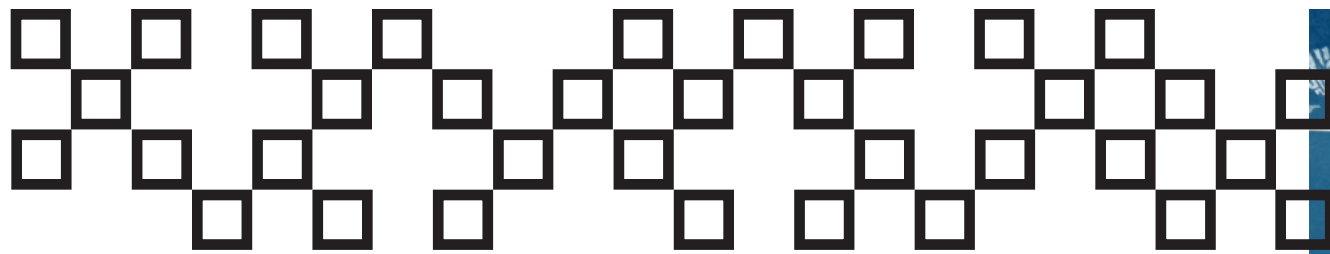
Availability of study abroad opportunities is an influential factor in the success of a foreign language program. The Department of Middle Eastern Studies offers the acclaimed Arabic Flagship program, which has boosted the department's popularity. Professor Kristen Brustad states that the Flagship Program “has allowed [them] to propose and develop a full intensive language-teaching methodology that was pioneered here at UT.”

Students are encouraged to travel abroad and fully immerse in studies of Middle Eastern art, history, music and literature. Other department like the Spanish, Russian, and French offer a wide range of study abroad opportunities, and often couple with other subjects to attract a diverse participation.

Jason Brownlee, professor of Government and Middle Eastern Studies, asserts that knowledge of a foreign language is essential in understanding of current political developments and that “there is no actual substitute for ideas from non-English speakers in their native language.”

We live in a world torn apart and connected by so many different perspectives and ideas. Listening to each other's experiences and understanding each other's views will stimulate a conversation over ideas that are often misunderstood and misconstrued. Success of foreign language programs ought not to be compared at the university level, but through the global political economy in which those languages are used.

■ ALEXANDER D'JAMOOS



AUSTIN FROM THE SIDEWALK

You walk past them every day on your way to class or to eat. You may politely ignore them or perhaps you may stop if you can spare some change. Ah, but what it's for? Are you helping someone catch a bus home or just supporting another bad habit of alcoholism or drug addiction? Are you donating to a good cause or perpetuating financial dependency, unemployment, and ultimately, the situations that got them here?

I've met quite a few homeless people; in fact, I have quite enjoyed their company. However, the guys (and a few gals) hanging around Austin are unlike any I've ever met in Dallas or LA, specifically those on Guadalupe Street across from the University of Texas campus (popularly called 'the Drag').

Upon moving here, I came across the term 'drag rats' rather quickly and was particularly unsettled by it. The term has been around since the 1970's and has almost gained status as a local colloquialism. There is no denying the negative connotation of rats in Western society. Rats are known for being unclean animals that steal food and spread diseases. I assume that people use this term in a relatively blameless manner, but are these people really 'rats' or just men and women with different ways-of-life who enjoy hanging out on the Drag as much as UT students do?

This is a tough question to pose, due to the variance in lifestyles of these people and the discrepancy of opinions that passers-by form about them. Stephanie Carnes Peco wrote in the UT Memory Book in 1980 "These [the 70's] were the halcyon days of Austin. You couldn't walk across campus without smelling dope and everyone's dog was a lab and named Toke." During those days people seemed to know the "drag worms" (another coined term synonymous with drag rats) quite well.

I am no Austinite, but I have found that things are not quite like they used to be on Guadalupe. Some locals of the early 2000's have commented on a specific punk-flair style adopted by a younger subculture found hanging out on the Drag, harassing passing students for money and wandering around drunk or high on something or another, however I couldn't fit my current frame of reference into this image either.

Carrot-Top and Slick were two younger dudes wandering around Texas who stopped by in Austin for a few months to "find some good dope and meet some chill people". Slick had a bullet wound in his leg from robbing an office building and stealing multiple flat screen televisions.

Dickey is a middle-aged guy from New Hampshire usually found sitting in front of an abandoned shop "just hangin' out".

One boy sits on the sidewalk sketching a skyline of campus and another walks around with his Doberman mutt smoking cigarettes and talking to people.

One girl shares her story of drug addiction and street violence, with a lot of people, while others keep to themselves.

Moose has a job and "bums around the streets sometimes" and another guy panhandles for enough money to return to his home in Australia.

I haven't yet encountered any outrageous behavior or rudeness as described by some people's stories about harassment on the Drag, nor have seen any distinct style shared by this 'group' of people. Honestly, it's been quite the

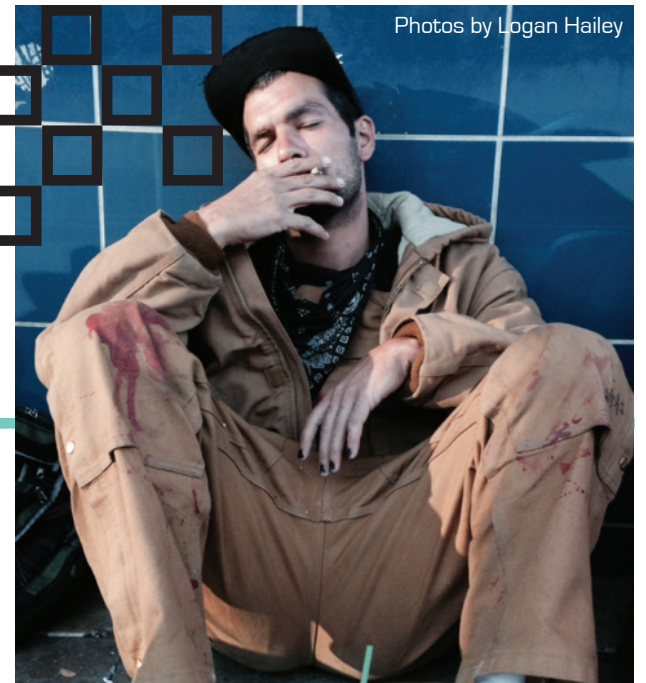
opposite: people ask for money, I don't have any and decline, they say "thanks" and smile then we both continue on with our day.

People ask to bum a cigarette, I give them one if I have one or I decline, they say "thanks" and smile then we both continue on with our day. People make me laugh with their signs (one says "smile if you masturbate") and others exchange smiles or a tip of their hat. Some folks question the true nature of these people's homelessness and others just let them be.

Poverty is a serious issue in this city and around the world that definitely shouldn't be taken lightly, but on a daily basis, these so-called 'drag rats' are just people doing their own thing. Some people are homeless, some people go to school, some people travel around as vagabonds, some people have houses; we're all the same. We are all humans after all. Everyone has a story and each story is beautiful and unique, that is, if you look at it the right context.

■ LOGAN HAILEY

Photos by Logan Hailey



the costs of cutting back

the student impact of CapMetro's changing services

Being a student here at the University of Texas comes with many rewards and challenges. One of those challenges is not getting lost in the greater Austin area. The UT shuttles and the Capital Metro busses are provided to help students travel from one place to another safely and, hopefully, efficiently. Having gotten lost several times myself, I can verify that the bus routes are indeed useful. However, the current transit system is getting a face lift.

COMING SOON TO LOCAL BUS STOPS

Have you ever wanted to pay the bus fare with your phone? Well, now you can. According to Project Connect's Planning and Development Director, Todd Hemingson, Capital Metro is partnering with CAMPO to provide the city of Austin with an original plan that will help Austin deal with one of its biggest challenges; traffic congestion.

Project Connect is a multi-part design that will include an innovative high capacity transit bus system called, Metro Rapid. The city-wide renovation, 20 years in the making, is currently being implemented and scheduled to be complete by January 2014.

The new bus system will increase bus capacity by 50 percent with longer busses and decrease traffic congestion by 15 to 33 percent with new designated bus lanes. Riders will also be able to pay for the fare by using their phones thanks to the new technology Capital Metro is incorporating into the Metro Rapid blueprints.

The many bikers of Austin will also benefit from Metro Rapid. Because they recognize that the city of Austin is one of the most bike friendly cities in the nation, Capital Metro will increase the number of streets that include a bike lane. The Metro Rapid system wants to provide choices for the commuter, not take them away.

SOME SETBACKS FOR STUDENTS

But what happened with the reduction of shuttle

service for Cameron Road and Wickersham Lane? Many UT graduate students use the shuttle to get to campus so that they can benefit from the cheaper housing offered on the east side of I-35. If Capital Metro is capable of financing such an immense project like Project Connect, then why can it not also provide shuttle service to all UT students?

Capital Metro and the University of Texas have an agreement that each will pay half for the shuttle



The new bus system will increase bus capacity by 50 percent with longer busses and decrease traffic congestion by 15 to 33 percent with new designated bus lanes.



services provided for UT students. Hemingson explains that "the UT share of the funding has been steady for several years now but does not take into account the fact that the cost of service continues to [rise]."

THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

The lack of an increase in student tuition, decrease in state funding, and increase in student population, has hampered the University's ability to contribute to the shuttle service. The University of Texas put a cap on increasing tuition rates to assist its student populace financially [see p. 17 for more info]. However, the money used to pay for shuttle routes is appropriated

from tuition. This places UT in a complicated situation because it cannot please everyone.

In response to UT's monetary dilemma, Capital Metro has decided 'reduce the level of service' for the less popular routes so as to avoid complete cancellation. Less popular routes are identified by low ridership-- the number count of how many people use the bus per hour. This is a monetary issue that the University will have to address if shuttle routes continue to be cancelled.

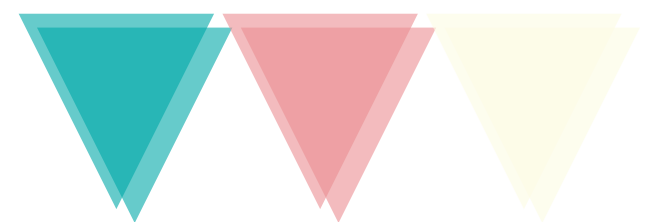
On the other hand, it is clear that the reduction of service to Cameron Road and Wickersham Lane has no connection with financing Project Connect. Capital Metro is capable of providing UT with an efficient expansive shuttle service but has no incentive to do until the University re-evaluates the shuttle budget.

Meanwhile, Capital Metro's Rapid Metro transit system will be implemented by 2014. Signs of its construction can be seen all over the city from the road work to the new red bus stops.

Commute long distances? Well now you will be able to get to campus faster and easier. Don't want a car? Well, now you don't need one with a bus system that can take you anywhere in Austin.

The way UT students travel around town is about to change. The Rapid Metro will bring public transportation into the twenty-first century with new technology, new research, and new priorities. Go beyond the 40 acres, and explore this city that we Longhorns call home.

MADELEINE KENNEY



WHAT STUDENTS THINK ABOUT THE CAPMETRO BUS SYSTEM:

"The bus system is convenient when it wants to be."
Rachal Katerale

"I like that it isn't absolutely necessary for me to have a car here at UT. I can get to the places I want without too much hassle just by taking the bus."
Jesse Dohmann

"A pro about the bus system, umm, it gets you to a place for free and when its a long distance its beneficial. A con, uh, the time schedules are always not reliable and sometimes you could get to where you need to be just by walking."
Patrick Palmer

"I like the UT shuttle buses. The bus drivers are really friendly and they pass every 5 minutes so if you miss one you just have to wait 5 minutes."
Araceli Arellano



the online option: classes of the future

When I walked through the access-only doors, what I saw was a newsroom. It was hot from the bright spotlights, there was a bustling camera crew making last minute adjustments, and a few people were exciting the studio audience with questions and funny remarks. After a few moments, I heard a countdown and suddenly the whole room burst in applause. Online Psychology 301 was beginning.

Dr. Jamie Pennebaker and Dr. Sam Gosling began teaching PSY 301 as an experiment because they thought it would be “fun and interesting.” Neither had any idea of the impact their teaching method would have on students.

While taking PSY 301 students tend to do well in their other classes and racial and social lines and statics become blurred. Studies show that students who come from lower socio-economic backgrounds only do well towards the middle of the semester, but Dr. Pennebaker informed me that “we saw all students doing better than average throughout the semester”.

I thought what made this online course different than others was the fact that it is a psychology class. But this is not the case. “Memorable classes usually have an influential teacher or interesting content and changes the way students tend to think” and this is what Dr. Pennebaker and Dr. Gosling think PSY 301 falls into this category. This would explain why students describe this class as “exciting” and “great.” While students were filling the seats of the studio audience, they eagerly said to each other how this is the most unique class they have taken, and that they are happy to have chosen this class.

During the last decade or so, education has been transitioning. Learning no longer takes place only in a classroom, listening to a lecture, while learning facts from a textbook. Online classes are popular among those who have less time to commit to school, those wishing to get ahead or catch up.

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) are how these

courses are generally taught. Students log on and listen to pre-recorded lectures. According to Dr. Gosling, “MOOCs have high dropout rates and they don’t have a sense of community. On the other hand, PSY 301 is infectious. It has a newness about it.”

Together, Dr. Pennebaker and Dr. Gosling are “trying to use technology to capture what is good about in-person classes and bring it on a larger scale.” Their system is different because it is a SMOC (Synchronous Massive Online Course). The “show” is broadcasted to several thousand students who log in during a specific class time.

They watch the lecture and through an online chat community can ask each other and the professors questions.

Using the same tactics television producers use, they try to keep their students actively engaged. Dr. Pennebaker told me he “hates textbooks” and with Dr. Gosling has found an interesting way to avoid using them. Some readings are articles, some are demonstrations or videos.

Dr. Gosling predicts that within the next twenty to thirty years, most introduction classes will be taught online. However, when asked if upper level or graduate school courses

were going to become transition online Dr. Gosling said “the demand would be less” because the methods SMOCs utilize are partly inspired by the small discussion style of advanced classes.

Dr. Gosling and Dr. Pennebaker believe that SMOC will not only have a positive effect on their students but also those that help with PYS 301. “There is nothing like this in the world. The university and COLA have invested a lot into our project. Thanks to these investments, UT is placed at the top. Our TAs, camera and technology crew now have this skill that will be in demand by all universities.”

“What we are doing is charging forward without really any idea where we are going,” but if students have learned anything while at UT it is that: what starts here changes the world.

■ AISHA ALI

the good

Option of taking classes by semester or self paced

Very flexible, anyone could commit either taking a full course load or just one class

The requirements for UT Extension are flexible enough for almost anyone to be eligible

the bad

Not much variety offered

Courses are generally grouped to one-two days per week, meaning long hours

Students aren’t allowed to sit in or try out a class before purchasing

UT Extension does not offer degrees

STAYING GREEN IN THE FACE OF MODERNIZATION

Austin is one of the fastest growing cities in the U.S. with people moving here everyday. This isn't surprising considering it has many job opportunities, a great economy, and a youthful and innovative population. With Austin being a hotspot destination for recent graduates and start-up companies the city has been rapidly expanding. In attempts to accommodate the newcomers, the city is expanding.

But with the expanding population and never-ending construction, is Austin losing sight of its environmental awareness? The city of Austin has doubled since 1990, with almost one million current Austinites. Is the city doing enough to both protect the environment, but not hinder Austin as a growing business destination?

Luckily, there are some programs that have been put in place to keep Austin as environmentally aware as always. The Commute Solutions program is housed under the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and serves six counties, Bastrop, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, Travis, and Williamson.

Julie Mazur, a planner for CAMPO, explained, "Commute Solutions is a voluntary trip reduction program that offers information and resources on transportation options." And this program doesn't only offer typical options such as carpools, but also includes vanpools, transit, bicycling, and walking, as well as providing information on work schedule alternatives such as flextime, compressed workweeks, and teleworking to reach a larger demographic.

In addition, they have myCommuteSolutions, which is

a ride-matching and trip planning tool. Registered users can look for a carpool/walk/bike/transit buddy. They can log trips on the calendar and be eligible for incentives. By logging their commute, users can track fuel and money saved, calories burned, and emissions avoided.

"The key point is that there is not one option that will resolve this regional issue and it will take all of us working together to make a difference."

Mazur said, "The key point is that there is not one option that will resolve this regional issue and it will take all of us working together to make a difference."

The website can also set up custom sub-sites for employers, cities, universities, colleges, and organizations, allowing them to customize information for their employees or students. They can manage incentives, collect data, and promote the program to suit their needs, as well as search for carpool matches with people that

work with them.

The environmental efforts of the city have been evident, especially during ACL this fall. The ACL festival website had a comprehensive 'travel' page that included locations where there are park and ride busses that will drop people off by Zilker Park, information about where you can and cannot park a car, including a large color coated map, as well as other transportation options including information on taxis, bicycles, scooters and motorcycles, passenger drop off, and road closures.

Other options included Car2Go and Zipcar, both are car-share services that allow individuals to use cars, after signing up, located around the city of Austin. The Car2Go website says, "A car2go is always a pleasure to drive: just take it, drive it, park it. Simple and straightforward." Additionally, every Zipcar takes 15 personally owned cars off the road, and with over 9000 cars across the U.S. Zipcar will have a huge impact on pollution and the environment.

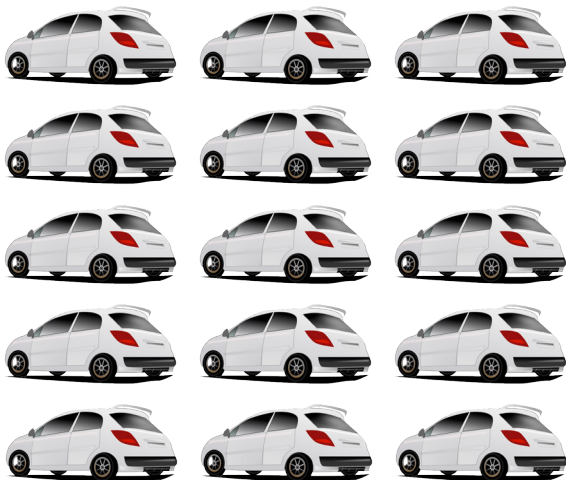
All of these programs, either through the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) or private companies, help manage the mass transit in Austin as well as helping to cut back on emission and gas. These programs not only are better for the environment and the city of Austin, but are also very cost efficient for the college kids and young adults living in Austin. The city is continuing to create plans that will accommodate the growing city.

■ MEGAN PALOMBO

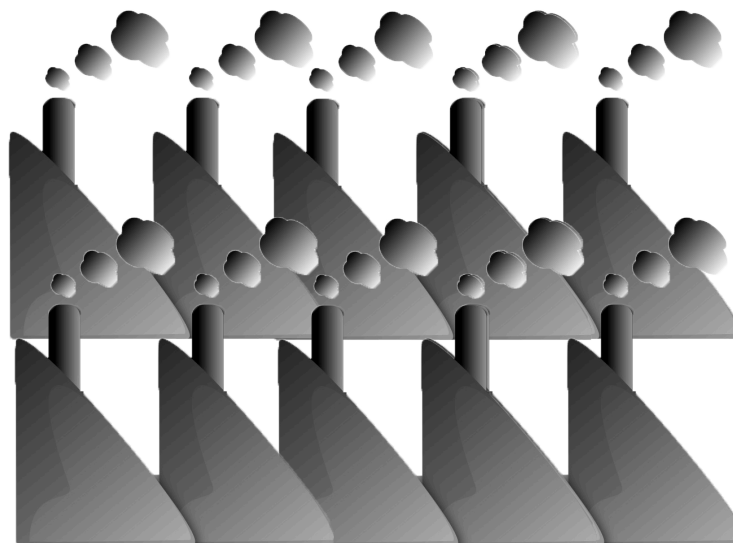
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF 1 ZIPCAR



**1 ZIPCAR
ELIMINATES:**



15 CARS OFF THE ROAD



**& SAVES >10 TONS OF CARBON
DIOXIDE FROM BEING RELEASED
INTO THE ENVIRONMENT YEARLY**

**CARBON
DIOXIDE
IS ONE OF THE MOST
CONTROLLABLE
CONTRIBUTORS TO
GLOBAL
CLIMATE
CHANGE**

KEEPING UP WITH A GROWING CITY

BIG PLANS FOR I-35

SOME FACTS ABOUT ROAD TRAVEL IN AUSTIN:

>> Austin is #15 for the worst traffic in the US and #21 in the Americas according to a GPS manufacturer that collected stats on the most congested cities in the Western Hemisphere

>> 18% of Austin's jobs are located in or around downtown, which is the 4th highest percentage in the country...and also explains why you may want to avoid driving in the area during rush hour

>> I-35 formally opened in Austin in 1962, when the population it served in the city was 201,762 less than a quarter of what it is today

Raise your hand if you've ever sat in rush hour traffic on I-35 after a long day at work or an internship. Regardless of the time of day there always seems to be traffic on I-35. It serves as a main route to get to downtown Austin, go to Dallas or San Antonio, or any other destinations considering it spans Texas for 505 miles.

I-35 starts in Duluth, Minnesota and stretches across the United States all the way until it hits the Mexican-American border in Laredo, Texas. Prepare, Austin, because major construction is in the cards for one of the most condensed traffic ways in Texas.

There has been talk about sinking I-35 underground from Lady Bird Lake to 15th street. A very radical idea, this is one way that a construction project could promote the growth of the city without sacrificing the environment. This project would cost around \$550 million to build and would turn the existing interstate into parks and mixed-use development.

Besides adding more parks to the city this project could possibly also help eliminate the physical barrier between the east side and west side of Austin. This could potentially alleviate the socio-economic barrier that is created by the I-35 division. Current decisions regarding this plan are still being discussed and nothing has been decided.

As for now, the overcrowded highway is about to be remodeled and expanded to better accommodate the heavy amount of traffic around Austin. Public Information Coordinator Kimberly Sims explained, "The I-35 project has been divided into three segments—North from US 380 to Turbeville/Swisher Road; Middle from Turbeville/Swisher Road to

President George Bush Turnpike, and South from President George Bush Turnpike to I-635."

The Interstate 35E corridor between Denton County and Dallas County is being expanded to accommodate additional general purpose lanes, frontage roads and new managed lanes. This construction will better manage the flow of traffic on existing facilities by regulating demand, separating traffic streams, and utilizing available and unused space.

Before you get anxiety and swear to never drive on I-35 again, don't worry. There are plans in progress to handle the population in terms of roads and route planning. Sims said, "We have a comprehensive communications and outreach plan in place."

This project could possibly help eliminate the physical barrier between the east and west side of Austin. This could potentially alleviate the socio-economic barrier that is created by the I-35 division

[see p. 15 for more on the division of Austin by I-35]

Information on lane and road closures and detours can be found on their website www.35Express.org. They are also placing information on Facebook and Twitter, and commuters can sign up for eNewsletter and text alerts by visiting the website so they can be prepared for traffic or delay before they get behind the wheel. They expect to have a mobile app up and running by the end of the year. In addition, they are forming business owner task force meetings for each segment of the project and these groups will meet quarterly.

The city of Austin is working hard to accommodate the high amount of traffic and people that commute into and out of Austin every day, and they are trying to enhance the numerous methods of transportation for bikers, walkers, and drivers. The ultimate end goal is for Austin to continue to protect the environment and be environmentally conscious without sacrificing growth and business.

So the next time you are going to SXSW or ACL, think about renting a Zipcar, biking, or taking the bus, rather than driving and parking a car. Utilize the numerous public transportation opportunities that are available to Austinites at a low cost and are better for our environment. If we all individually make small changes they will add together to have a significant impact on the weird city that we all love.

■ MEGAN PALOMBO



Rush hour traffic is a familiar sight for Austins, with another well-traveled highway in Austin, Texas Loop 1 or MoPac, pictured here. Photo by Madhu Singh

RANDY LEWIS



Photo by Madhu Singh

PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT: THE MODERNIZATION OF AUSTIN

END OF AUSTIN

EXCERPTS FROM DR.
LEWIS'S ONLINE FORUM
ENDOFAUSTIN.COM

It's true that Austin has a vibrant cultural scene, especially in music and film/video. It's true that Austin's politics are less reactionary than Dallas'. Austin is no doubt a more environmentally friendly city than Galveston. But if those claims are the best we can do in defending our soulfulness, we are setting the bar a bit too low."

[The Souls of Austin by Robert Jensen]

In 1928, a master plan known as the "Koch Proposal" legally designated East Austin as a "Negro District" to prevent the necessity of additional segregated facilities throughout the city...Today, the segregated history of the East side remains a problem, as racial divisions are as wide as I-35 itself.

[The Beginning, the Middle, and Not the End by Maret Hanes]

Austin's astounding growth over the past decades has been the result of a balance between tradition and innovation. In fact, Austin's greatest tradition might be one of constant innovation

[Cities Do Not Have Souls by Barry Shank]

In most instances, the "end of Austin" is perhaps imagined as a trope used to cope with urban change. After all, it is difficult to square the city's incredible demographic and economic growth with its end.

[An End Both Slow and Urgent: Blackness in Austin by Andrew Busch]

The end of Austin is really the end of a particular authentic Austin, an Austin that existed in time, in the past, but is invoked as a type of ritual spell against living in the present Austin.

[The Ends of Austins by Jonathan Silverman]

If a city's urban identity is composed of a diverse web of elements that culminate into one idea, and articulate the characteristics of a place, how would one describe Austin? It is imagined to be weird, environmentally conscious, and a musical heaven, but as the city continues to progress into an age of rapid growth and corporate influence, it's easy to speculate that the future of Austin won't be as quirky as its past.

KEEP AUSTIN WEIRD

Professor Randy Lewis is an American Studies in the College of Liberal Arts, and the editor of the online publication The End of Austin. More importantly, he has seen Austin transform first-hand from a sleepy city in 1985, defined by its small town charm, into a trendy third coast urban center.

Today Austin is the 11th largest city in the US—with a supposedly rich cultural scene equipped with trendy restaurants and concerts galore, all of which add life to a city that was once the underrated gem of Texas.

"We're on our way to becoming Houston in size," Lewis said. "The question becomes whether we can keep our identity."

Lewis speculates that retaining a distinct sense of identity in a globalized age, when strip malls, Wal-Mart's and freeways are a homogenous element of urban life, will be difficult. Especially as the city continues to grow further away from what made Austin unique in the first place. Austin may already be plagued by a future defined by tourists, as the city institutionalizes weirdness to attract economic growth.

"One thing gets fetishized [in Austin] and it's Willie Nelson and it's the music scene and its high-tech and it's a knowledge economy," Lewis said. "But I don't know if those things just become sentimental attachments for the city that's going to grow out further and further."

BUT AT WHAT COST?

In light of this, Lewis poses an interesting critique on how the conversation of urban

growth in Austin focuses on certain values. By preserving weirdness, while circumventing a fundamental problem faced by Austin—we ignore the lack of economic, racial diversity and knowledge of what Austin truly embodies.

"Growth is not a win-win for everybody, somebody loses," Lewis said. "Often times it's someone who gets priced out of their neighborhood and can't afford to live on the east side that's getting gentrified."

As long as I-35 is still considered to be a wall of apartheid, and those earning the

"As the city grows
we're going to lose things
and if you don't think
about that for at least a
five minutes you're going
to say goodbye
to it forever"

highest wages are insulated from the plight of lower class, Lewis sees a serious problem in Austin as we move forward.

"Economic diversity and racial diversity are very important to democracy, otherwise you end up with what a writer, who is actually from Austin, calls the great sort. You just end up in a neighborhood where everyone votes the same way, has the same income and looks like you."

Lewis said. "If you're in that neighborhood, you may think you've achieved the American dream and I'm glad for you but that is not the civilization I want to live in."

Additionally, it's interesting to analyze how exactly Austin plans to continue infrastructural growth. Since the Texas way is typically to build as cheaply and efficiently as possible, Lewis speculates that there may not be a deep investment in

the environment or architecture as the city develops.

"How do we build a city that is beautiful and will be a world class city versus whatever is expedient for some developer on a given project," Lewis said. "Because then we may have this kind of helter-skelter place where some places are beautiful, but a lot of places are really ugly."

Lewis explains that it is important to have an idea about a place because that imagined community is what bonds people to it, whether or not that image is the reality is often a source of debate. However, he also recognizes that a serious undercurrent in this city is the Austin mythology, where people continue to buy expensive property in less pristine parts of town (Airport Blvd, Ben White, parts of Lamar) solely because of the image of Austin represents.

AN OPEN FORUM

In an effort to spark conversation in the community, Lewis and a few graduate students set up an online forum called the End of Austin that analyzes Austin's changing image, which has gained media attention as a great representation of modern urban transformation.

"As the city grows we're going to lose things and if you don't think about that for at least a five minutes you're going to say goodbye to it forever, so this is a place where we can kind of think about what are we giving up as we move forward," said Lewis.

Since people don't typically have the kinds of conversations that The End of Austin is trying to spark, the writers are trying to present ideas that many Austinites have never thought of before, and provide a forum where smart creative people can have a conversation about Austin's rapidly changing identity.

"Ultimately it's not just a melancholy memento of Austin's gloom and doom," said Lewis. "But a much more idealistic desire to preserve what's best in the past, honor the past, and figure out what we want to bring into the future."

■ ANITA FARSAID

AUSTIN

THEN & NOW

A [BRIEF] HISTORY OF AUSTIN'S PROTEST MOVEMENT →

Complicated. Perplexing. Frustrating. And worthless? "People turn away from the Liberal Arts because they think, 'Well, the Liberal Arts hasn't solved this for me yet, so they must not be worth much.'" Sociology professor and Associate Dean of Student Affairs Marc Musick replied when asked about popular opinion of the Liberal Arts. He then added, "...but that's not the point." Although beginning as an Aerospace Engineering major during his first few years at UT, Musick followed his true passion and graduated with a Sociology degree. In 1999, he returned to UT after finishing his doctorate at Duke University. Accessible, amicable and knowledgeable, Dean Musick is the go-to person for students who are passionate about the liberal arts and yet struggle to comprehend and endure the scrutiny that the liberal arts and humanities currently face.

THE GRASS WAS GREENER THEN...

When Musick was an undergraduate at UT, he did something unthinkable. "Just imagine getting in your car and driving to Texas A&M to go to their library. We wouldn't even imagine that today." Doing such a thing is unheard of now, but during Musick's time in the late 1980s, things were different. The Liberal Arts, and Liberal Arts students, were different. "As a Liberal Arts student back then, if you wanted to be good at what you did, you had to be willing to go out there to explore, to push beyond, and to look for good information to support what you were trying to do." Musick said before comparing today's students and research methods. "Information was not at your fingertips as it is today." He recalled a lack of advisors, smaller faculty, and less cohesion among students and faculty. In fact, the concept of the liberal arts was not as prevalent because, as Musick noted, "We were more focused on our own majors. There was not this overarching feeling that the Liberal Arts [is] this unified body."

...BUT FLOWERS ARE BLOOMING TODAY...

While students were generally more independent and entrepreneurial back then, "...students today are much more focused." Musick says. "The students are just too good. People I know say that they have to make their tests harder because the students have gotten so much better." He mentions the impressive rise in SAT scores and in the overall competitiveness among students. And what has been a consequence of that growing competition? Liberal Arts students know very well that the banter among Engineering, Natural Sciences, Business, and Communications students has become more cutthroat, whereas during Musick's time as an undergraduate, competition was friendlier. However, Liberal Arts students

who follow their passion like Dean Musick understand how valuable their education truly is. "The United States has moved towards a higher education system in which we have seen the commodification of education," said Musick. "And people are increasingly thinking about their education in terms of what it means for career prospects." For Liberal Arts students, their education is different. A broad comprehension of history, philosophy and literature offers a way of understanding the world through critical thinking processes that have been sharpened by questioning, curiosity and intellectual passion.

...AND IN THE FUTURE

"Think about any major problem this world faces," Musick said when asked about the relevance of the Liberal Arts in the future. "Tell me how the Liberal Arts does not apply." Many people argue that the solution to any issue is technological. Austin is facing a drought. Yes, the

"There is no way the Liberal Arts can ever be rendered obsolete. I guarantee you at some point in everybody's life they're going to be questioning, 'Why am I here?' 'What is my purpose?' Everybody has those questions. And what Liberal Arts can do is help find the answers."

solution could be finding or building a new water source, but to really solve the problem critically, a sharper and more creative perspective is needed. "There are also social solutions. And the social solutions are the Liberal Arts." Musick goes on to say, "What solutions have been put in place? They're not technological. We put in place water rationing. Water rationing is rules. Rules are the Liberal Arts." In fact, questions about rules, ethics, morals and human interaction are rooted in the Liberal Arts. Likewise, the answers stem from the Liberal Arts. "There is no way the Liberal Arts can ever be rendered obsolete. I guarantee you at some point in everybody's life they're going to be questioning, 'Why am I here?' 'What is my purpose?' Everybody has those questions. And what Liberal Arts can do is help find the answers."

■ ELIE WU

BACK THEN

The environmentalist movement surged in Austin during the 1980s in an effort to preserve Barton Springs in spite of the proposed extension of the Edwards Aquifer. Historic preservationists also grew in number while independent musicians flocked to the city, creating an atmosphere of nonconformity and creative, colorful individualism that would make Austin a cultural oasis. For Dean Musick, UT was the home of the powerful protest movement. Protest organizations were enormous on campus and they wielded a lot of power. When Musick returned to UT in 1999, the protest culture disappeared. "What happened in the mid-1990s that killed the protest culture?" Musick asked. "And I only have one answer to that: The internet."

NOW

Nowadays, the protest movement mainly exists online. With regard to the student organizations that spearheaded those protests, "There were student organizations back in the day that were enormous, but barely exist today." Dean Musick recalled the election of Toni Luckett as the Student Association president of UT in 1990. Her win made headlines "all over." The reason? She was the first gay African-American woman to be president-elect of the organization (Source: utwatch.org), and her vote was, according to Musick, "on the back of the Queer Student Alliance." Unlike today, the organization was titanic at the time. "My sense was that it was a more polarized time," Musick remarks. "Today, the students are more attuned to the university in terms of academics more so than social issues."

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

As Austin's population and popularity continue to grow, the various issues such as overcrowding, gentrification and environmental damage that arise from rapid growth will require brighter minds to solve those problems. Liberal Arts students who have made Austin their home, their pearl, and their oasis will continue to study today to provide solutions tomorrow.

CHECK OUT
THE REST OF
THE STORY
IN ELIE'S
PODCAST
HERE

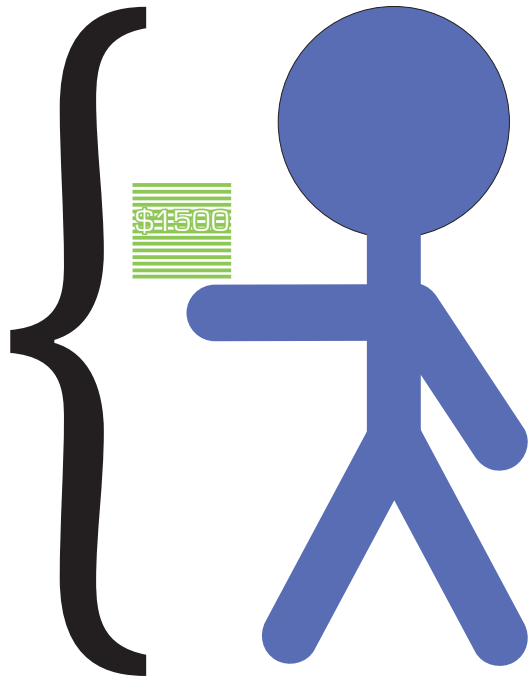


RACING INTO THE FUTURE

This weekend's F1 was the second of ten scheduled to take place in Austin over the next decade, what does hosting this international event annually mean for Austin?

F1 BY THE NUMBERS

800,000 to
1.2 million
annual visitors
x4.6
day stay
[on average]
x\$1500
spent daily
per person



an estimated
520 million
people view the
F1 season in
187
countries
30 million
[viewers per race]

If you ever thought cars were dull, silence your judgment until you witness Formula One racing. These machines are modern marvels, able to reach top speeds of over 240 mph and reach 60 mph in less than 2 seconds. They compose a motor sport renowned the world over, and until at least 2021, Austin, Texas will be the American home of Formula One.

It was in the summer of 2010 that Austin native Tavo Hellmund signed a deal with Formula One to revive the United States Grand Prix. Many investors, including Red McCombs and Austin native Bobby Epstein, backed the construction of the appropriate track, Circuit of the Americas, here in Austin. However, starting from scratch with a completion deadline of June 2012 was no easy task.

Ali Putnam, media relations manager with Circuit of the Americas, says she has been working at the venue since it was shrubs. Now, she is part of an attraction that is placing Austin on the global map.

"The inaugural race hosted more than 265,000 over the three-day weekend, which was the second highest F1 attendance for any F1 race that season [after the Australian Grand Prix]," Putnam says. "Fans from all 50 states, 46 countries and six continents bought tickets."

Putnam says the Circuit of the Americas is also helping Austin from within. According to a recent post-event study, approximately 3,000 seasonal jobs were created during the United States Grand Prix, \$547 million was generated in Grand Prix-related revenues for Texas and the venue is projected to generate over \$4 billion for Texas in the next 10 years.

"We expect this year's United States Grand Prix to be an even bigger and better event," she says.

The reputation of the Circuit of the Americas has been growing in the year since the 2012 United States Grand Prix. To this date, the venue has hosted high-profile events such as numerous concerts under the Austin360 Amphitheater, the MotoGP Grand Prix of the Americas and is scheduled to host the X Games next summer.

Assistant professor of advertising Dr. Angeline Close says as a Formula One fan and Austin citizen, she supports the roster of events because of the jobs and the bumps in our economy that they provide. She says the introduction of the X Games can tie in well to Austin, and Formula One, retaining the city's cool vibe of uniqueness while still

providing a home for a traditional sport. "On top of this, the [citywide] entertainment events and concerts that align with the [venue] events bring excitement to downtown and can help build a sense of community," Dr. Close says.

International relations and global studies major Carola Guerrero worked at the 2012 United States Grand Prix as a COTA model and representative to the United States and Texas when meeting figures within Formula One. She says the racetrack was clearly a profitable idea, shown by its extension to host other iconic events such as the X Games.

"I think the Circuit of the Americas is important because it brings international attention and commerce into Austin," Guerrero says. "Big things happen when bright people and investors from around the world get together in one place."

Indeed, at last year's United States Grand Prix, several American fans noted the extent of 46 countries being represented within Austin. Many Latin Americans attending the event even jested on whether it should have been labeled the "Latin American Grand Prix" or the "Mexican Grand Prix."

"I noticed most of the fans were from Brazil and Mexico," Guerrero says. "I feel Latin Americans are becoming an essential part of the growing economy in Austin, so it's important that entrepreneurs and local businesses take that into consideration [and] take advantage of the big influx of people Circuit of the Americas is bringing to the city."

Guerrero says the fans were extremely passionate, with nationalism being demonstrated by many covering themselves with their country's flags. This bears similarities to massive global sports such as world tournaments of soccer and the Olympic Games.

In the 2014 Formula One season, New Jersey is scheduled to host the Grand Prix of America alongside the United States Grand Prix in Austin, hinting at much satisfaction with last year's event from Formula One organizers. Where this puts the United States in the midst of the popular global sport is yet to be seen, but the fans will keep in mind that Austin is home to the revival of Formula One in America.

THE GREAT

DIVIDE

WHAT PROXIMITY TO I-35 REALLY SAYS ABOUT AN AREA'S SAFETY

Austin is a weird city. It's in one of the few liberal counties in an otherwise deeply conservative state. It's home to one of the top universities in the nation, it's the live music capital of the world, and it managed to be deemed "recession proof" by CNN, Forbes, and CBS. But like all cities, Austin is not even close to being crime proof.

In many large American cities, interstate highways separate populations by race, income, and crime rate. Austin may be weird, but it is no exception. Due to forces like gentrification and white flight, whites have established a firm presence on the west side of I-35, while blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities have been pushed further east.

West Austin is and always has been more prosperous than East Austin. The population is largely white, and the idea that West Austin is safer than East Austin is prevalent in the minds of many West-Austinites.

According to the Austin Police Department's 2012 Records Management System, which is divided up by zip code, there were 3,813 crimes committed in the West Campus area. In the area immediately east of Campus, or the beginning of the East Side, there were 1,203 crimes committed. If you move further into the east towards Mueller Lake Park, the crime count increases to 2,170. The majority of these crimes were theft and burglary along with four murders taking place. We all know that Campus is a relatively rowdy area of the city; so comparing it to the neighborhoods that lie just across the highway wouldn't be a fair approach.

More records from the APD tell us that there were 13,706 crimes that took place in the Riverside area in 2012. This location had the highest number of crimes from murder to grand theft auto (it was tied for first with another East Austin area for eight arson cases).

These statistics might give you the idea that East Austin is a criminal infested vortex in an otherwise stable and safe city. But think about this for a second: there were 11,149 crimes committed in the downtown area WEST of I-35 in 2012. That means that an area of Austin that's supposed to be a part of the white, wealthy, and well-to-do West has the second highest crime rate. Just south of Downtown, still west of I-35, the '04 area had 9,813 crimes committed last year. So it looks like Austin strays from the norm in terms of the highway separating crime

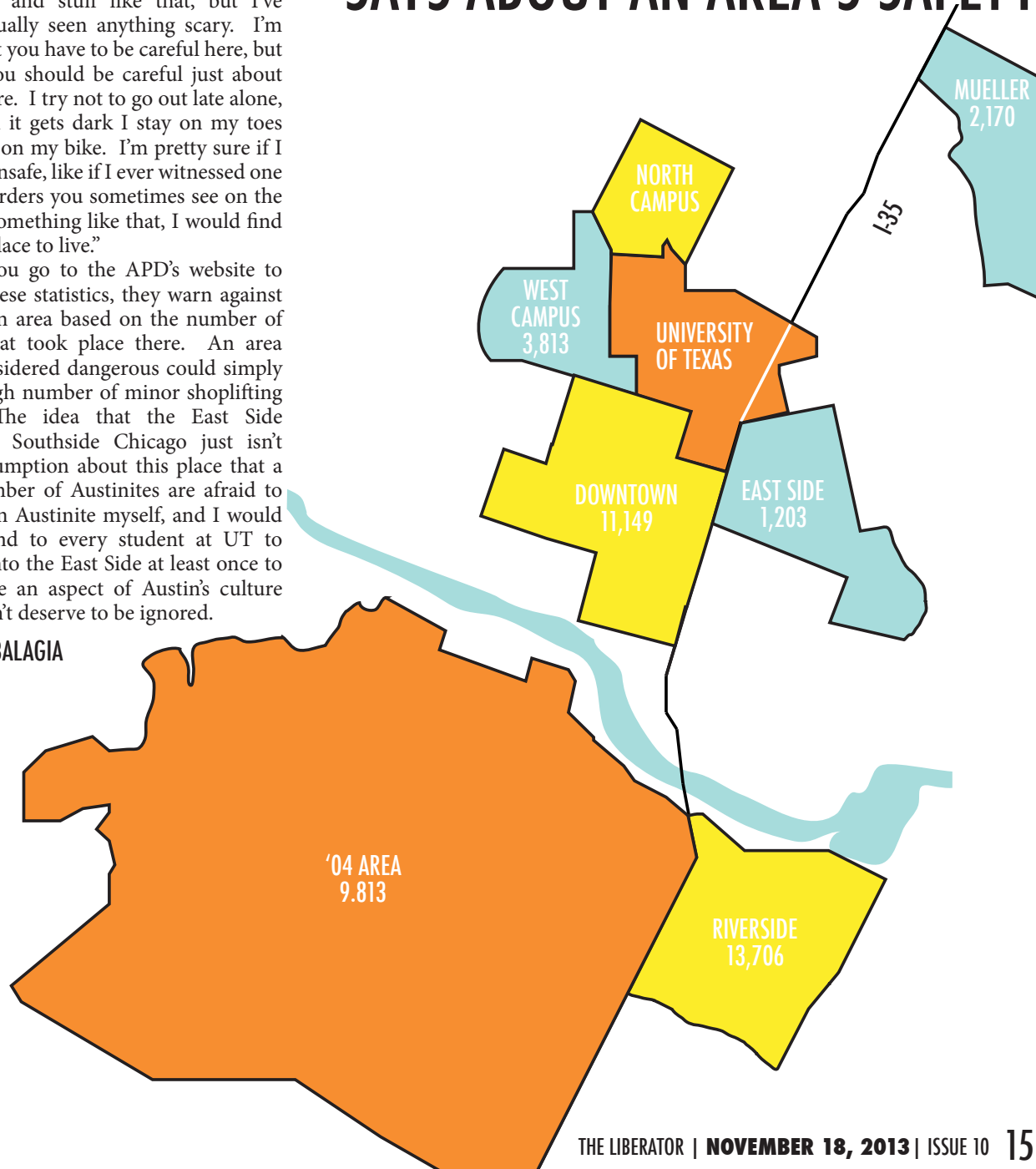
rates.

Andrew Miscoe, a third year Computer Science major here at UT, lives on East Riverside Drive in the apartment complex known as The Zone. He rides his bike to class, and often goes to Zilker Park to play pick-up soccer on the weekends. "You could say that I'm outside a lot compared to most people," he says as we sit down for coffee at The Buzz Mill, a pretty awesome East Austin coffee joint.

"I've never really felt scared when I'm riding my bike. I mean, you hear about muggings and stuff like that, but I've never actually seen anything scary. I'm aware that you have to be careful here, but I think you should be careful just about everywhere. I try not to go out late alone, and when it gets dark I stay on my toes when I'm on my bike. I'm pretty sure if I ever felt unsafe, like if I ever witnessed one of the murders you sometimes see on the news or something like that, I would find another place to live."

When you go to the APD's website to look at these statistics, they warn against judging an area based on the number of crimes that took place there. An area that's considered dangerous could simply have a high number of minor shoplifting cases. The idea that the East Side resembles Southside Chicago just isn't a fair assumption about this place that a good number of Austinites are afraid to go. I'm an Austinite myself, and I would recommend to every student at UT to venture into the East Side at least once to experience an aspect of Austin's culture that doesn't deserve to be ignored.

■ JAMES BALAGIA



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DECEMBER 5

LAST DAY OF CLASS

DECEMBER 9-10

DEAD DAYS

DECEMBER 9-14, 16-20

SPRING SEMESTER
FINAL EXAMINATIONS

DECEMBER 18

UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALLS
CLOSE AT 9:00 A.M.

JANUARY 3

TUITION PAYMENT DEADLINE IS
5:00 P.M. FOR UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS FOR THE SPRING

JANUARY 6

ADD/DROP FOR SPRING SEMESTER

DECEMBER 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

WANT TO BE A PART OF LIBERAL ARTS COUNCIL?

As the official student organization for the college, LAC offers its members opportunities to connect with faculty and administrators, serve on various college- and university-wide committees (like the Liberator staff), and interact at a truly unique level with the student population, creating a well-rounded and rewarding experience.

Look for our Spring 2014 application at:
www.utlac.com

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AND POETRY & CHECK OUT OUR NEWEST ISSUE
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TEXAS TRAVESTY

**THE
LIBERATOR**

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

THE OUTLET

CAMPUS LIFE, POP CULTURE, MINUTIAE.
MUNDANE OR INSPIRING, THE LIBERATOR SHARES ITS
THOUGHTS ON... WELL... EVERYTHING.

CTBAC UPDATE

THE PROBLEM: EVERY YEAR THERE IS A 2% INCREASE IN UNIVERSITY BUDGET (LARGELY DUE TO INFLATION), WHICH MEANS THAT WE NEED A **RECURRING SOURCE OF REVENUE** TO COVER IT. OUR OPTIONS FOR THIS ARE VERY LIMITED, **HERE'S WHY...**

TUITION

THE BOARD OF REGENTS HAS VOTED TO **FREEZE OUR TUITION FOR THE NEXT 2 YEARS**. ISN'T THAT A GOOD THING?

YES, WE DON'T HAVE TO PAY MORE...BUT THE REASON THAT MOST UNIVERSITIES RAISE TUITION EACH YEAR IS TO MATCH A STEADILY INCREASING BUDGET. TUITION IS THE #1 SOURCE OF **RECURRING REVENUE**

HOW DO **SIMILAR UNIVERSITIES** [UVA, UC BERKLEY, ETC] COMPARE?

- IN A 12 UNIVERSITY NATIONAL COMPARISON GROUP, WE HAD THE **2ND LOWEST TUITION RATE**
- OTHER SCHOOLS ALSO ACCEPT MORE **OUT OF STATE STUDENTS** TO INCREASE FUNDING BUT WE ARE REQUIRED TO RESERVE 75% OF OUR INCOMING FRESHMAN SPOTS FOR STUDENTS IN THE TOP 10% OF THEIR GRADUATING CLASS, SO THIS IS NOT AN OPTION

IF TUITION ACCOMODATED INFLATION:

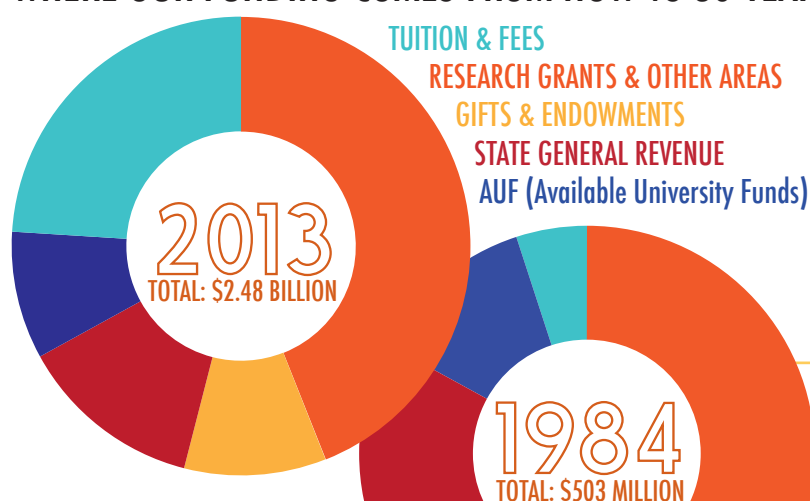
2013-14 UNIVERSITY IN- STATE
TUITION »\$10,000

2% INCREASE = \$200 MORE

FOR CURRENT IN-STATE
FRESHMEN, THE TOTAL COST OF
TUITION FOR ALL 4 YEARS OF
SCHOOL WOULD BE:
»\$41,216

**FOR A TOTAL OF \$1,216
MORE** THAN WOULD BE PAID IF
TUITION REMAINED AT \$10000

WHERE OUR FUNDING COMES FROM NOW VS 30 YEARS AGO



GIFTS AND ENDOWMENTS: YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

GIFTS AND ENDOWMENTS ARE BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT FOR UNIVERSITY FUNDING ANNUALLY. STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT **STUDENT PARTICIPATION**, THROUGH EVENTS LIKE LAC'S PROJECT THANK YOU (IN WHICH STUDENTS WRITE THANK YOU NOTES TO DONORS) **INCREASES THE AMOUNT OF DONATIONS** RECIEVED BY THE UNIVERSITY

THAT SAID, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REALIZE THAT GIFTS ARE **1 TIME SOURCES** OF REVENUE, NOT RECURRING. THEY CANNOT FULLY ACCOUNT FOR A COMPOUNDING 2% ANNUAL INCREASE IN BUDGET

RESEARCH GRANTS

UT Austin has received more research grants (over \$700 million of them) than any other American university without a medical school, except for MIT

Source: UT Budget Office, CTBAC & giving.utexas.edu

STATE REVENUE

EVERY **\$1** THE STATE INVESTS INTO UT AUSTIN
↳ **\$18** IS GENERATED FOR THE STATE ECONOMY

UT Austin is the highest ranked public school in the state of Texas but recieves less funding than any other state institution

AVAILABLE UNIVERSITY FUNDS

Part of the university's funding structure is the Permanent University Fund. If you've heard that the University is "rich" from oil money, you've heard about the PUF. Texas does use some oil revenue to help fund higher education, just as other states draw upon their industries to support public services. The PUF isn't "extra" money — it's part of the state's higher-education funding structure. PUF assets include more than 2 million acres of oil- and mineral-producing land in West Texas. However, the revenue from these acres does not go exclusively to UT Austin but to 17 institutions in the Texas A&M and University of Texas Systems.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN ATX IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS?

I want a west campus movie theater built.
-James Balagia

I'm confused why we don't have an
awesome science museum.
-Patty Sanger

A better system for finding parking!
-Natalia Naranjo

Personally I wish Austin had more indoor
go-karting places.
-Kellie Stone

A subway system would make things
better... getting around Europe is so easy.
-Megan Palombo

I want a legit movie theater that is
closer to campus.
-Madeleine Kenney

Speaking of places that should be closer to
campus, a Trader Joes. Actually, more Trader
Joes in general. I wish some of the froyo
places could be replaced with just awesome
grocery stores.
-Elie Wu

Amusement park? Or like a state fair?
Too much? How about a new Disney Park...
-Kelly deMoya

More Cap Metro trains.
-Jacob Troublefield

That underground reconstruction of I-35! Or
a bullet train system that connects us to all
major Texas cities! Or a weekly fireworks
show on the lake (for you to watch from the
Oasis)! Or a bigger airport! Or or or or an
NBA Basketball Team!
-Omar Gamboa

THE SCHOLAR

CAPMETRO ADVENTURES

Traveling on a Capital Metro bus can be an interesting experience. Sometimes the ride can be rather pleasant, especially if the bus is keeping to its schedule or even extra-pleasant, if the bus driver is jovial and sings the entire way to your destination. Capital Metro buses are also great places to observe human behavior.

Psych major or not, you'd be astonished by the things that will happen on your way home or to campus. Not every bus ride is enjoyable, however. Some bus drivers seem like they are trying to reenact the Blockbuster hit *Speed*.

Some commuters choose to get into heated arguments midway to your destination. Despite these uncomfortable situations, Capital Metro is a blessing to all students and other commuters because, simply put, it's convenient.

■ JACOB TROUBLEFIELD

OBSERVATIONS

6:00 am // Bus 10 to Campus

Early morning bus rides can be the most tranquil part of the day, a good time to catch up on leisure reading.

6:30 am // Bus 7 to Campus

I'm sitting across from an old lady who keeps smirking at me with a mostly toothless grin. I check myself for any clothing mishaps. Nothing seems to be wrong. Now she begins to silently laugh. I check again. The laughter continues all the way to campus. I'll be self-conscious all day.

8:00 am // Bus 37 to Campus

In the seat in front of me are a young father and his 2-year-old daughter. The father is fast asleep. The daughter is chewing on the metal window frame. This won't bode well for her immune system.

9:00 am // Bus CR to Campus

The bus is packed, so I'm forced to stand in the aisle. A cute girl smiles in my direction, which boosts my confidence. I happen to look behind me to find an Adonis standing there. My confidence returns to its normal, lower level.

Noon // Bus RR to Lunch

A guy wearing a baseball cap is having a very loud, one-sided conversation with a student about the perils of Obamacare and 911 conspiracy theories. It's not the first time I've seen this guy latch onto an unsuspecting person. The kid exits the bus quickly at his stop. Chatty guy tries to catch my attention, but I know better. I keep my eyes elsewhere.

5:30 pm // Bus 10 to Home

I board the bus behind the stadium, and it begins to head north. As we pass the open stretch of lawn in front of the LBJ School, a woman says, "There's those kids playing that weird game again." The kids are playing quidditch.

6:15 pm // Bus 7 to Coffee Shop

A man sitting across from me yells out: "HEY! Look how unencumbered I am!" I'm not really sure what he means.

6:30 pm // Bus RR to Home

I hop on the bus and sit next to a girl who happens to be in one of my classes. She strikes up a conversation that lasts all the way to my stop. This moment was the beginning of a very close and endearing friendship.

7:00 pm // Bus 37 to Campus

It's raining outside. All but one pair of seats is occupied. I take a seat only to realize why no one is sitting there. It's sopping wet. Thanks for the heads up.

10:25 pm // Bus 7 to Home

A guy boards the bus with two car tires, and swears he didn't steal them. Like that clears things up.

10:45 am // Bus CR to Campus

It's a particularly stressful day because finals are approaching. The bus pulls up to campus, and I'm passing the driver as I quit the bus. The driver says to me, "Hey, get that A!" Encouragement like that makes all the difference.

11:30 pm // Bus 10 to Home

An upset woman is yelling at her boyfriend who isn't very responsive. He looks intoxicated. Their stop arrives. The girl gets up to leave, but the boyfriend stays, swaying in his seat. She stomps up to him and pulls him to his feet. He's gone at this point, and collapses onto the ground. The girl simply exits the bus, leaving him behind. The bus driver tells the semi-conscious man that if doesn't get up he'll call the cops. I expect this kind of thing on the E-Bus. I thought the number 10 had more class.

1:30 am // E-Bus to Campus

Bedlam. Inebriation-fueled chaos. How do these bus drivers handle it?

5 PEOPLE WHO HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE

1780 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Letter to Scientist Joseph Priestly

Arguably one of the most vital forefathers of our country, Franklin guessed in 1780 that in the future, "Agriculture may diminish its labor and double its produce: all diseases may by sure means be prevented or cured (not excepting even that of old age,) and our lives lengthened at pleasure, even beyond the antediluvian standard."

NOW

This letter to Joseph Priestly may not have come true in the literal sense, but considering the time, he was obviously onto something. Health care has advanced to the point that diseases like Polio are practically non-existent, and many others have effective vaccine treatments. Even agricultural output has increased almost 60%, just since 1948, a century and a half after Franklin wrote the letter.
[Source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/agricultural-productivity-in-the-us.aspx#.UoPG7RpwqSo>]

1838 ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"Address Before the Young Men's Lyceum"

Lincoln was only 28 when he declared, "I mean the attachment of the People. Whenever this effect shall be produced among us; ... By such things, the feelings of the best citizens will become more or less alienated from it; and thus it will be left without friends, ... At such a time and under such circumstances, men of sufficient talent and ambition will not be wanting to seize the opportunity, strike the blow, and overturn that fair fabric..." He said that without a close connection to each other, we as a nation would be more likely to distrust, and there would be some who took advantage of that system.

NOW

For not trying to be a fortune-teller, Abe did a pretty good job of it. Respect for laws and government can only go so far when the people don't trust them. Look at Obamacare. Half the country still thinks it's going to lead us to Socialism, and the other half think the failure of the website means the government can't do anything right. Lincoln advocated for a citizenry that, whether they agreed with the law or not, did their best to uphold it. If they felt strongly, they could participate to overturn it through elections or campaigns. If that failed to happen, most people would stop caring, but the outspoken few would take advantage of their silence and sway the way the government worked. Here's lookin' at you, Tea Partiers.
[Source: <http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/lyceum.htm>]

1900 JOHN WATKINS

"What may happen in the next 100 years"

For the article, Watkins predicted many innovative technologies including "Ready-cooked meals will be bought from establishment similar to our bakeries of today" and "Wireless telephone and telegraph circuits will span the world....We will be able to telephone to China quite as readily as we now talk from New York to Brooklyn." He also prophesized that "Strawberries as large as apples will be eaten by our great-great-grandchildren."

NOW

Disappointingly, strawberries are not quite that large, but fruit has increased in size dramatically due to genetic engineering. If you want to buy some, you can walk over to the modern equivalent of a bakery that sells pre-made meals-- Walmart. Now say you want to call home to see if you should get milk, too. Easy. Even if your home is in Europe and you're shopping in the U.S. [This is not recommended. The TSA does not allow liquids over 3oz on flight, and it would likely spoil during the transportation]
[Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-16444966>]

1940 ROBERT HEINLEIN

The short story: "Solution Unsatisfactory"

Discussing nuclear power in his short story, Heinlein writes, "The other nations would get in the game. It would be silly and suicidal...All it takes is a very small group, hungry for power, a few airplanes and a supply of dust. It's a vicious circle that cannot possibly be stopped until the entire planet has dropped to a level of economy too low to support the techniques necessary to maintain it [sic]." Heinlein wrote the story before the U.S. had joined World War II, let alone used the bomb and could assess the consequences of their actions.

NOW

First, America joined the second World War. The world witnessed the power of an atom splitting and raced to replicate it. The Cold War gave us the first glimpse of what this could mean: how can we ever trust each other when we can blow each other up with a single button? There are nuclear weapons all over the globe now, spurred by the historic event in World War II. And Heinlein saw this coming over 50 years ago.
[Source: http://www.baenebooks.com/chapters/0743471598/0743471598__5.html]

1988 TIME MAGAZINE

"L.A. 2013"

Twenty-five years ago, the magazine decided to take a stab at what the future would be in 2013. Told in narrative form focusing around a family of three, at one point the son "grabs his 'smart card'-- a peraosnl portable computer about the size of a 3x5 card..." and when the father figure goes to order a new suit "...photos of suits appear on his computer screen showing various colors and fabrics. Bill then orders the style and material he likes...and [the suit] will show up by the end of the week."

NOW

Although in the article, the 'smart-card' is used only for educational activities and the suit order service only works if you call first, these predictions aren't terribly far off. Phones are reaching the size of an index card and can hold far more information. As for ordering off the computer, the internet has expanded so that anything can be purchased. A suit is hardly a concern.
[Source: <http://documents.latimes.com/la-2013/>]

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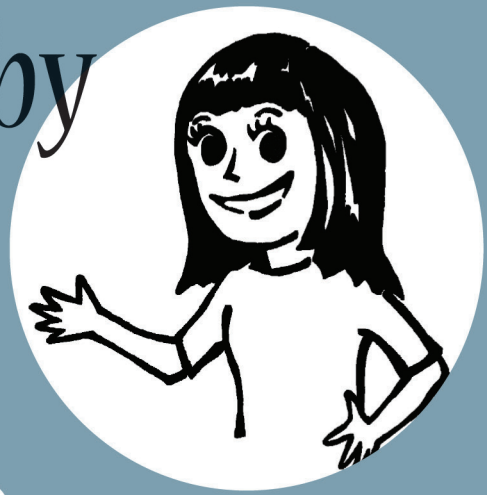


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