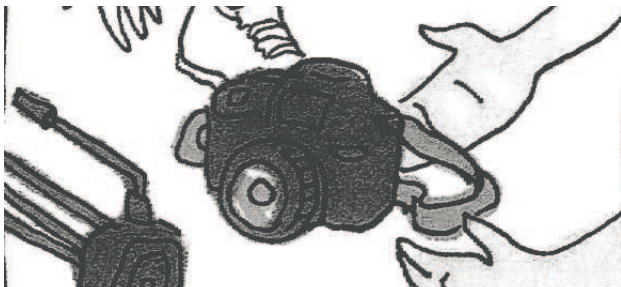


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UNIVERSITY

UTDirect replacement postponed

By Kahlil Said
@kahlelo

The launch of MyUT, a new student portal designed to host common student needs — such as registration and class schedules — will be delayed until the spring semester.

Joe Williams, interim communications director for the Office of the

Executive Vice President & Provost, said UT delayed MyUT's launch to modernize the system alongside broader technological upgrades across campus.

"Most UT systems are mainframe-based, however UT is upgrading them to the more modern cloud-based system," Williams said. "Due to all of the moderniz-

ing occurring, the time it took for the MyUT portal to be ready was underestimated."

Jody Couch, program director for student administrative systems, told The Daily Texan in May that MyUT will integrate student data to personalize the portal for each student.

"Over the next year, we will roll out features like

“

Most UT systems are mainframe-based, however UT is upgrading them to the more modern cloud-based system.

—Joe Williams,
Interim communications director

targeted messaging, calendar integration and the ability for colleges to add content for their students," Couch said.

Williams said the delay

of the launch will provide time for MyUT to be checked for other issues.

"More surveys and fo-

MYUT page 2

UNIVERSITY

Texas Express discontinues operations

By Claire Allbright
@claireallbright

UT has discontinued the Texas Express bus service for the 2015–2016 school year.

The service, contracted through the transportation company Star Shuttle, transported students on weekends and University breaks from campus to Houston, Dallas and San Antonio.

Parking and Transportation Services discontinued the service due to low ridership and competition from other transportation providers, director of PTS Bobby Stone said.

"Service had declined steadily since Megabus came to Austin," Stone said. "Over the spring semester, several of the weekend bus trips were canceled based on the lack of demand."

Texas Express prices on

BUS page 3



Zoe Fu | Daily Texan Staff

A group of UT students board the Megabus on Monday afternoon. Since the arrival of Megabus, Texas Express services have been discontinued.

CITY

City plans to address transportation issues

By Rund Khayyat
@rundkhayyat

The City of Austin announced a partnership with the Rocky Mountain Institute to transform Austin's future in transportation and mobility. The partnership will mobilize innovation and technology to make positive changes in congestion, commuting and safety, according to RMI. RMI is a nonprofit research and education facility that consults with cities on energy and resource efficiency, according to its website.

"Austin is growing fast, and we are at a crossroads," Mayor Steve Adler said. "To make progress on our city's mobility challenges, we need an 'all of the above' approach — that means embracing innovative solutions."

RMI chose Austin for the partnership along with Denver because it is a leader in education, technology and innovation, city manager Marc Ott said. Austin also faces a huge challenge in transportation mobility

because it is the fastest-growing big city in the country, according to Ott.

"We understand the world is transforming as we speak. RMI is out there and paying attention," Ott said. "The partnership provides for some pretty powerful and new conversations. It brings new people to the table that think about things differently."

The partnership will strengthen existing efforts in the city and develop new options that are quicker and easier for drivers, said Mobility Committee chair Ann Kitchen.

"Our ideas include streamlining transit information so citizens have it at their fingertips, making more elective vehicles, more self-driving and revamping the land code to be ready for the future," Kitchen said. "We will transform how we think about technology."

RMI will bring in great minds and aggregate ideas to

MOBILITY page 2

CAMPUS

Self-proclaimed nerds share passions

By Emily Fu
@efu_utexas

Astronomy buffs, board game aficionados, "Doctor Who" fanatics and other enthusiasts gather weekly at the Union with one mission in mind — to fight for nerdiness.

The University Nerdfighters, an organization founded four years ago, is based on best-selling author John Green and his brother Hank's online Nerdfighters community. Nerdfighters is dedicated to "increasing awesome and decreasing worldsuck" through weekly meetings and volunteer activities every few weeks.

History sophomore and president Nick Pfeifer said the organization focuses on promoting acceptance toward people of all backgrounds and interests.

"We want to make an open culture for anyone who has a nerdy interest or fringe interest and foster a little family among these people," Pfeifer said.



The University Nerdfighters is an organization that is dedicated to promoting nerdiness and community involvement, as well as acceptance of nerdy people.

Graeme Hamilton
Daily Texan Staff

History senior and Nerdfighters co-founder Zach Foust defines a nerd as anyone who is insanely enthusiastic about specific things. Foust said he can talk for hours about anything history-related.

"I also really love board games and tabletop games," Foust said. "I'll watch videos about how they're designed and the psychology behind how we perceive what is fun."

To promote the idea of embracing nerdiness, the Nerdfighters' meetings

consist of members presenting mini 15-minute TED talks about a topic of their choice. The talks don't have to be educational as long as they are something the speaker is passionate about.

"This week, I talked about math," Victoria Dominguez, vice president of Nerdfighters and mathematics and astronomy junior, said. "And last week, [Foust] talked about Abraham Lincoln. Whatever someone's passionate about, they get to talk

about in the meetings."

Pfeifer said the organization works to change people's perception of the stereotypical nerd and cliché nerdy interests. He said he is a huge fan of "Doctor Who" and Green Day.

"I love to talk about that with people," Pfeifer said. "And to know that some people would listen, that's a cool thing. We're trying to expand what the word nerdiness means."

NERDFIGHTERS page 5

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Interior design senior wins a \$30,000 scholarship.

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OPINION

The Daily Texan Editorial Board weighs in on hiring processes and background checks at UT-Austin.

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Defense needs to improve as Big 12 play approaches.

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Oklahoma scores a big win over Tennessee.

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Libertines make a comeback with latest release.

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East Austin museum features wacky collectibles.

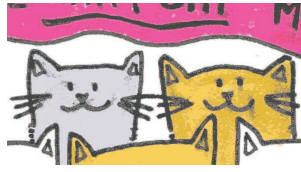
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ONLINE

If you're looking for music to listen to this week, check out our review of two unplugged concerts.

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REASON TO PARTY



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THE DAILY TEXAN

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FRAMES

FEATURED PHOTO

thedailytexan

Chris Smith, an employee at The Corner Shoppe, checks inventory on a Monday afternoon.

Zoe Fu | Daily Texan Staff

The Texan strives to present all information fairly, accurately and completely. If we have made an error, let us know about it. Call (512) 232-2217 or e-mail managingeditor@dailytexanonline.com.

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TOMORROW'S WEATHER

High 91

Low 73

Life. That's hilarious.

THE DAILY TEXAN

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assistant to the president, Brennan gave advice on counterterrorism strategies and helped organize the government's policies for responding to terrorism, cyber attacks, natural disasters and pandemics, according to the event website.

Finance sophomore Ali Prasla said she is attending the event as an opportunity to learn more about the intelligence community than what movies portray. Prasla said she is also concerned about privacy protection in the United States.

"The Snowden revelations revealed a lot of troubling things about the American security apparatus," Prasla. "This would be a good opportunity to see the other side of the argument."

The lecture is scheduled for at 3 p.m. at the Etter-Harbin Alumni Center.

MYUT continues from page 1

cus groups will be used to check for changes that might need to be incorporated," Williams said. "The goal is for MyUT to be able to handle the massive load of all its users on days like [the] class registration deadline."

Gathering feedback from students this semester is critical to improving the design of MyUT before its launch, Couch said.

"We will have focus groups later this semester to share the portal with students to get their

thoughts on the design and to make any pre-launch adjustments we need," Couch said.

Couch said the changing technology environment at UT presents unforeseen complexities with integrating different systems with each other.

"Some of the complexities occur when integrating with other systems, ensuring the portal can handle user access and making sure integrations are good," Couch said.

Couch further stressed the need for a portal that will not crash or slow down on days with heavy

user traffic.

"On days with heavy user traffic, our main-frame database systems tend to slow down or crash," Couch said. "The implementation of the cloud-based system aims to fix this problem."

First-year law student Evan Martin said providing a better portal for both undergraduate and graduate students would make everyday student life easier.

"From what I've heard about MyUT, the portal will be easier to navigate and more dependable for students," Martin said.

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CAMPUS

Police brutality, social injustice discussed in forum

By Rachel Freeman
@rachel_frmn

The Texas Millennial Institute hosted its first event, a forum at the Student Activity Center discussing police brutality in the Austin area, on Monday.

TMI is a nonprofit, transparent organization which aims to bring about social change through activism. Monday's event aimed to mobilize the Austin millennial community against police brutality by bringing a community of like-minded individuals to discuss activist ideas, according to the TMI website and Noelle Mandell, TMI chief executive officer and philosophy and sociology senior at the University of Houston.

"This is the first major event we have done through Texas Millennial Institute, and we are really excited about it," Mandell said. "In Austin, there is a community that is in an uproar about police brutality. We want to bring issues like this into the campus bubble

and do activism by bringing together the strong campus voices we have."

Topics ranged through the night from how participants felt about racism in their communities, police brutality in their lives and the general public's perception of these topics and activism projects. Area resident Stephanie Webb discussed how he felt about the popular Twitter hashtag #BlackLivesMatter, which was used after several high-profile cases of police shootings of black individuals across America.

"A problem with the conversation of race in America is how the media has portrayed #BlackLivesMatter," Webb said. "People have taken it to mean that not everyone's lives matter, which is not what we are saying at all. The problem is how we are seen to have separation between little camps of black people over here and white people over there. That's the thought that is creating the fear — and apparently the violence."



Stephanie Webb, a citizen involved with the Texas Millennial Institute, voices her perspective and personal experience on the topic of police brutality at the Student Activity Center on Monday evening.

Morgan Boone
Daily Texan Staff

Local community member Stephen Leger felt that also adding to what he views as the problem of police brutality is the way officers are trained before joining the force.

"The critical incident of training which law enforce-

ment go through is completely sub-par," Leger said. "To have this course as the resource most officers use is dangerous. We need to communicate about other resources available. And that's another thing about this con-

versation — we can't just say what's wrong with the system [such as police training] without saying how to fix it."

The forum went over a wide range of ideas about how to fight against police brutality — ideas such as

marches, protests and discussions with legislation were discussed, but nothing was decided. The organization will host forums in the future on LGBT rights in Denton and women's issues in College Station.

MOBILITY

continues from page 1

improve city commuting in Austin, Adler said.

"My sense is that rather than trying to explain this by grabbing a few ideas, there are hundreds of ideas out there," Adler said. "We will no longer ask if transportation is available if we need it but when we need it."

Through the partnership, Austin will serve as the leader and incubator of cutting edge ideas and connect with other leading cities, businesses and universities, according to Kitchen.

"The partnership will bring many community partners, industry leaders and entrepreneurs down with new resources," Kitchen said. "We are all joining



Joshua Guerra | Daily Texan Staff

Mayor Steve Adler spoke announced a partnership with the Rocky Mountain Institute at City Hall on Monday morning.

together as we move down this path."

For the people of Austin, this means improvements over the next ten years in congestion and commuting times, Adler said.

"It is not going to happen

overnight, but we will see cleaner, safer business opportunities, improvements in the local economy and in standard of life," Adler said. "Its going to take all of us to pull this off, but we can and we will do it with you."

BUS

continues from page 1

trips from Austin to Dallas were \$20 and Austin to Houston, \$15. The Megabus prices vary depending on a variety of factors.

Physics junior Jairo Portillo said the Texas Express provided a way to get to and from his home in Houston for the past two years but suffered from reliability issues.

"It was very convenient since it was always there, and you could use it as a last-minute trip," Portillo said. "However, it wasn't very reliable at times. I once had a conversation with a driver on the trip and noted they always had different drivers, and he told me they just put anyone on the

route. This would pose a problem since the drivers wouldn't know exactly where the stops were. On one instance leaving from Houston after Thanksgiving, the bus nearly never showed up — it was four hours late."

Portillo said the discontinuation of the bus system would hurt students who do not know about or are unable to use other transportation options. Portillo said he now drives himself and other students home.

"Now I have my own vehicle, so I drive home and offer rides to people," Portillo said.

Psychology freshman Emily Bastis said she was unaware the Texas Express existed in previous years but believes it would be a great system.

"I think the Texas Express would be beneficial to students who travel home on a regular basis," Bastis said. "Whenever I travel, I end up having to take the Megabus, and I'm not too happy about that because it is pretty expensive."

Stone said PTS currently has no plans to implement a similar service due to lack of demand, but is monitoring the market for future changes.

"There are multiple private services that offer low-cost transportation between campus, Dallas, Houston and San Antonio," Stone said. "Some of these pick up directly from areas adjacent to campus. Each prospective rider should do some market research to find the services that best meets their needs."

MUSIC

Violinist explores musical therapy through nonprofit

By Jameson Pitts
@jamesonpitts

Vijay Gupta, Los Angeles Philharmonic violinist, spoke Tuesday about how classical music can be used to elevate the homeless and inmates from suffering while drawing attention to their struggles.

Gupta gave the presentation as a part of the UT Center for Music Learning's Distinguished Teachers Series. He began his talk with a violin solo — the same solo he plays for inmates and homeless individuals in Los Angeles.

"San Julian is the epicenter of the homeless capital of the United States," Gupta said. "There are 7,000 new homeless showing up to shelters on skid row every week."

Gupta told the story of Nathaniel Ayers, a classically trained double-bassist whose paranoid schizophrenia forced him to drop out of the Juilliard School of Music and

ultimately left him homeless. Gupta said Ayers taught him an important lesson.

"All he cared about was music," Gupta said. "All he cared about was making a connection with me."

Ayers inspired Gupta to begin Street Symphony, a nonprofit that performs classical music at prisons and homeless shelters in Los Angeles.

Gupta said there were times he feared for his safety, but the community and other musicians came together to bring music to those who need it most and force people to examine the issues by drawing them in through the common ground of music.

"As a musician, I never thought I would be involved in politics or activism," Gupta said. "But we can actually use our work as a platform to say, 'Something important is happening here.'"

Bob Duke, professor in the

School of Music and director of the Center for Music Learning, said Gupta showed how music can transcend traditional boundaries to create change.

"For a lot of our students imagining what a life in music can be like, seeing models of artists who have made a contribution beyond music-making can be a great thing to see," Duke said.

Rick Palese, music and human learning graduate student, said he admired Gupta's strong connection to his work.

"What really strikes me is his passion and his vulnerability for the cause," Palese said. "You can see him get emotional, and you can feel that."

Gupta said students could work against homelessness by routinely volunteering at a community shelter.

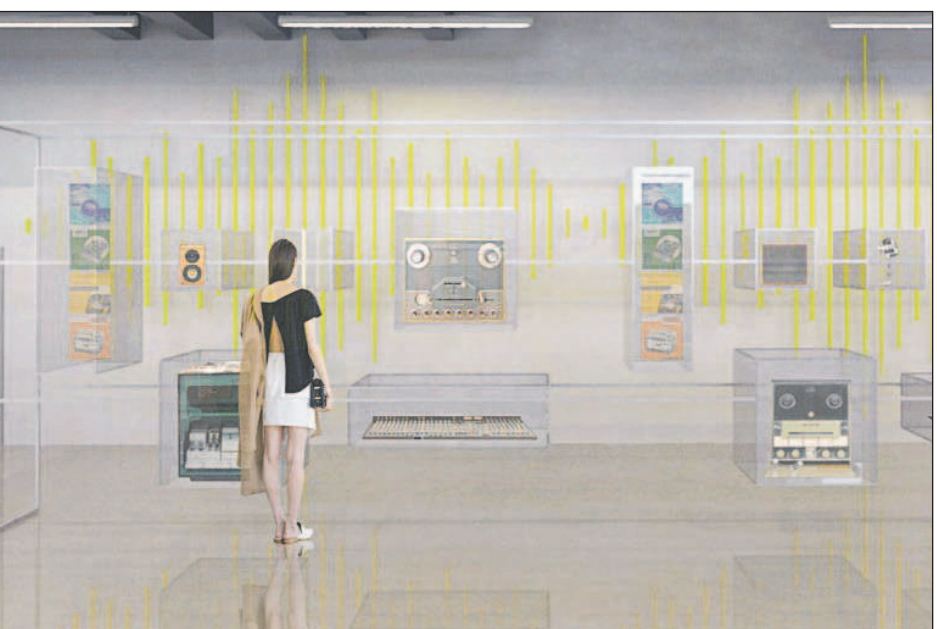
"Take your time," Gupta said. "Make real relationships."



Mike McGraw | Daily Texan Staff

Vijay Gupta, a violinist for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, speaks at the Student Activity Center on Monday evening. Gupta spoke about the value that music can add to activism.

CAMPUS



Courtesy of Raquel Torres

Interior design senior Raquel Torres received the Angelo Donghia Senior Student Scholarship in Interior Design. Torres' design, pictured above, prioritized interaction using glass displays.

Design student wins scholarship

By Ashley Tsao
@tsaoashley

Interior design senior Raquel Torres was awarded a \$30,000 scholarship from The Angelo Donghia Foundation after entering her project, "Museum of Magnetic Sound Recording," into the Donghia competition.

Interior design experts and educators judged Torres' portfolio at the competition. Torres is the tenth UT student to receive the Angelo Donghia Senior Student Scholarship in Interior Design, according to the UT School of Architecture.

According to Tamie Glass, associate professor of interior design, Torres was one out of 14 students in the nation to receive this recognition.

Torres said her project focused on designing the inside of a museum that would house vintage recording devices.

"I approached my design

with the goal of making the museum interactive," Torres said. "I wanted to create a series of glass envelopes and boxes that would hold vintage records, machines and listening booths. There was still the invisible boundary of glass between the guests and exhibit, but it is much more interactive than a museum where you just stare at objects."

Torres initially created her project as an assignment for a design class where students had to practice working with clients, Glass said. Torres' client was Martin Theophilus, the president of the Museum of Magnetic Sound Recording, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving methods of sound recording.

The Donghia competition, available to participants by invitation only, is a senior scholarship restricted to students majoring in interior design and in their third year of school, Glass said.

"This means that this com-

petition contains the best of the best," Glass said. "Being able to combine an interesting concept about display with good representational drawing skills has allowed Raquel to distinguish herself amongst her peers and win the competition."

Even though the Donghia competition is over, Torres' design will be utilized when the Museum of Magnetic Sound and Recording has enough funding to create a permanent facility, Theophilus said.

"If you look at vintage museums around the world, so many of them are just comprised of shelves with equipment that isn't working," Theophilus said. "It is important that the interior design complements the exhibit. Raquel has achieved this goal by creating a museum that lets people see equipment from all different angles. Trying to combine a studio atmosphere with a museum is hard, but Raquel has succeeded in doing so."

EDITORIAL

Hiring questions demand answers from UT

On Sept. 8, the Austin American-Statesman published a story detailing the criminal record of two brothers, Glen and Darren Gay, who were convicted of assaulting a gay man in 2004, which police labeled a hate crime. According to the Statesman, the arrest affidavit said the two men tied the victim down and physically and sexually assaulted him. In 2011, these two men were hired by the University — Glen Gay as a volunteer research assistant and Darren Gay as a teaching assistant while a graduate student.

Although the University does not conduct background checks on student applicants, in 2011 it began conducting background checks for potential employees. According to J.B. Bird, director of media outreach, anyone who has served prison time for or been convicted of a certain type of felony within the last seven years is generally not allowed to work at the University. This includes violent crimes, sex crimes and drug crimes. The Statesman reported that Darren Gay was sentenced in 2005, served over three years and ended his parole in 2011 — ten months before the College of Natural Sciences hired him.

Six days have passed since the Statesmen broke the news of Darren and Glen Gay's employment. Since then, the Dean of Students, the Office of Graduate Admissions and the Division of Student Affairs have declined to

“The University owes students much more than this recklessness, and at the very least, an explanation.

or claimed to be unqualified to comment on the story to the Texan. When asked what the University would change to avoid similar situations in the future, Bird was unable to provide an answer, even after consulting the University Human Resources Department.

Teaching assistants work closely with students — not only through teaching and mentoring through office hours but also grading. The University should not have viewed Darren Gay, who was an undergraduate at UT at the time of the attack, as qualified to work with these students.

Did UT know of his involvement in the assault and hire him regardless, or did the background check not provide them with enough details?

If the background check process is incapable of notifying University employers of these details, it needs to be fixed for the sake of campus safety. If not, the University needs to be able to



Zoe Fu | Daily Texan Staff

comment on and defend the process.

The administrative complacency could very well be occurring in a multitude of other instances. The students need to be able to trust the staff and those who hire them. Allowing

these men to teach students after committing what police called a hate crime is worthy of condemnation. The University owes students much more than this recklessness, and at the very least, an explanation.

HORNS UP, HORNS DOWN



Illustration by Melanie Westfall | Daily Texan Staff

HORNS UP: LONGHORNS FINALLY GET A WIN

With a 42-28 win over Rice, UT won its first football game of the season and evened its season record. Redshirt freshman quarterback Jerrod Heard threw a pair of touchdown passes and rushed for almost 100 yards in his first career start. With two more home games in the next two weeks, Texas has a chance to build some momentum heading into matchups against TCU and Oklahoma next month.

HORNS DOWN: NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE WERE THERE TO NOTICE

If a sloppy two-touchdown win is the best Texas could do against the lowly Owls, it's hard to imagine the Longhorns beating stronger competition in the Big 12. Rice outgained UT by 185 yards and picked up 30 first downs to Texas' 11. And with 15,000 tickets left unsold, not a lot of fans got the privilege to watch Rice beat itself.

HORNS DOWN: #NEWPRESUT

President Gregory Fennes will be sworn in Thursday as the University's 29th President. We can finally learn about the new agenda and initiatives Fennes will have in store for campus. With Fennes's inauguration, the University can look forward to a new slate and not being bogged down by the controversies of the past administration. It's a new start for UT.

HORNS UP: WHY NEED AN INAUGURATION?

UT Human Resources sent an email Monday inviting students and faculty to Fennes' Inauguration at Bass Concert Hall on Thursday at 3 p.m. Employees are encouraged to come "as long as it does not adversely affect the work of the department," but must get approval first. Nothing says "too much trouble" like getting prior approval to listen to an administrator talk for an extended period of time.

COLUMN

Fisher case threatens diversity on campus

By Noah Horwitz
Daily Texan Senior Columnist
@nmhorwitz

Multimedia
Read our news coverage of the Fisher case online at dailytexanonline.com

After much anticipation and preparation, President Gregory Fennes finally announced in August that the long-controversial statue of Jefferson Davis would come down. After a last-minute court challenge was unsuccessful, the depiction of the Confederate president was removed from its prominent place atop a pedestal at the Main Mall.

It was undoubtedly a cause for much celebration. I have opined in these pages many times in favor of the move. But the University need not lose sight of other, very real problems affecting students. Chief among these is the Supreme Court's recent decision to put this University's continued use of affirmative action in jeopardy.

Three years ago, Abigail Fisher — a disgruntled one-time prospective student who blamed her rejection from UT on affirmative action — and her case against this University reached the Supreme Court. Fisher and her lawyers, namely Edward Blum, argued that the use of race-conscious admissions violated the Constitution.

The Supreme Court punted on the case, sending it back to the federal appeals court. But after the Fifth Circuit reaffirmed UT's use of affirmative action in 2014, the Supreme Court granted certiorari to rehear the case earlier this year.

"Under the Supreme Court's existing precedent, the University's commitment to using race as one factor in an individual-

“Quite literally, this decision has the capacity to slam the doors of education shut on those who are not of privilege.

ized, holistic admissions policy allows us to assemble a student body that brings with it the educational benefits of diversity for all students," Fennes said in a statement at the time.

But many contend that the Supreme Court will beg to disagree with Fennes' reasoning. Assuming for the sake of argument that Justice Anthony Kennedy and the court's four conservative justices do, in fact, disagree, the consequences will be nothing short of disastrous. According to a study by Princeton University, college enrollments among people of color, particularly at the most selective universities, would be gutted. It shows that the number of both black and Hispanic students would be more than halved.

Admittedly, this University will be able to ensure some diversity through other means, namely the continuation of the Top 8 Percent rule. But affirmative action is still absolutely needed, and its removal would be nothing short of devastating.

Much ink has been penned on the topic of how detrimental the Davis statue was to students of color. And it was. But the elimination of affirmative action would be a travesty, not only for students on the 40 Acres, but from all over the country. Quite literally, this decision has the capacity to slam the doors of education shut on those who are not of privilege.

I was in the crowd on that fateful Sunday morning when the crane picked up the statue. I cheered. But I recognized that it was not the end of any type of struggle. Contrarily, it was only the beginning.

Horwitz is a government senior from Houston.

COLUMN

Hollywood not making enough progress on gender equality

By Mary Dolan
Daily Texan Senior Columnist
@mimidolan

This past week, Oscar winners Julianne Moore and Cate Blanchett spoke out about the pervasive sexism still present in the entertainment industry. Even though more attention is being paid to unfair practices, many of this year's movies highlight the fact that Hollywood still has a long way to go.

Take this summer's biggest hit, "Jurassic World." To date, it has made over \$1.5 billion and now holds the title of the third-highest grossing movie of all time. However, many people ignored the movie's financial victories and instead chose to

focus on its outdated gender politics and the fact that the heroine inexplicably wears heels while running from dinosaurs. To be fair, "Jurassic World" was never going to be the kind of movie that paid attention to gender roles or sexism.

Many recent movies that have female protagonists have done well at the box office, and yet Hollywood seems reluctant to make more. The female-directed Pitch Perfect 2 has grossed almost \$300 million since its release in May. On a more action-oriented note, "Mad Max: Fury Road" was released the same month and received nearly universal praise from critics and audiences alike. Many paid special attention to Charlize Theron, whose character is the exact opposite of the typical feminine "eye candy" role.

These movies and others have proven that fans enjoy seeing legitimately strong, well-rounded female characters. However, the entertainment industry still, for the most part, expends its energy on movies that give men great parts and leave women to play the love interests. It's clear that studios and filmmakers need to change their thinking. Yes, studios can still make action movies, but what's wrong with financing a few more often successful female-led films?

It's not just grown women who want to see more realistic female characters on screen. The most prominent role models for girls trend toward princesses and more feminine, passive characters. Instead of showing girls characters that are only there to support or romance the hero, we should

give them female characters that are the stars of their own stories.

It is encouraging that actresses are starting to speak out and even more that the media is listening and showcasing this issue. But those in the entertainment industry need to join the conversation and actively begin to create roles that paint women as the complex, three-dimensional people they are. When this happens, women and young girls will be able to see a variety of characters that reflect the things that they think and feel. After all, a woman who runs from dinosaurs in heels is fine, but a woman who fights dinosaurs is even better.

Dolan is a journalism sophomore from Abilene.

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MUSEUM

continues from page 8

with a lifespan, such as a cut flower. The museum provides a home for objects that would ordinarily not have one — from Marilyn Monroe’s last smoked cigarette to a leaf from the tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment.

From the outside, the Webels’ home blends in with the rest of the houses near East Martin Luther King Boulevard. Through a short cast-iron gate and a wall of protective cats, the house’s two front doors face the street. The door on the right leads into the couple’s home, and the one on the left reads “Museum,” indicating the exhibit’s entrance.

The museum is a single room with low ceilings, packed with oddities from all over the world. Jen said the items in their collection come from antique malls, eBay and friends. Some are donations from visitors who, after taking a tour, realized they had an object collecting dust in their attic that would fit in with the collection.

Austinite Arlie Melo visited the museum last weekend and said it reminds her of the old, weird Austin.

“Everywhere that you turn, there is something either beautiful or terrifying,” Melo said.

Scott said the museum’s original curators — his great grand-uncle and partner — opened the museum in 1921. But after his death in the 1940s, the contents of the museum were boxed up and moved to Scott’s

grandmother’s house, where they remained until 1999, when Jen and Scott unearthed them.

The couple, who lived in Tucson, Arizona, at the time, decided to reopen the museum for a community art walk that same year. When they moved to Austin two years later, they brought the museum with them.

“It started out just for fun — a little creative side project,” Jen said. “It could be whatever we wanted, and if we didn’t want to be open, we didn’t.”

Their first Austin location stood between fraternity houses in West Campus. Scott said right away they started meeting other collectors and noticing the city’s support for informal art environments, such as the Cathedral of Junk or Casa Neverlandia.

“It was really easy to get established here,” Scott said. “We found this amazing, thriving culture of people who were making art environments out of their homes in a really informal way.”

The museum has grown since its early 20th century origins from the dozen items hiding in Scott’s grandmother’s shed to the extensive collection of taxidermy, celebrity relics and world fair memorabilia that it is today. Scott said the underlying theme of preserving endangered modes of collecting remains the same.

“I think there is a sense of preserving my family heirlooms,” Scott said. “But more than that, [preserving] the worlds that these objects were collected from.”

LIBERTINES

continues from page 8

all mood of each track.

With drug references kept to a minimum, stronger pop influences and a tightening of the album’s production, it might be hard for fans to embrace this new version of The Libertines. However, these changes display an important part of Barât’s and Doherty’s evolution into more mature songwriters.

The Libertines’ style has changed so drastically that they might as well not even be the same band, but with Doherty finally in good health, The Libertines’ future looks nearly as bright as when they began recording.



Courtesy of Universal Music

Anthems for Doomed Youth brings typical thought-provoking Libertines lyrics but also shows the lighter side of the group.

NERDFIGHTERS

continues from page 1

Dominguez said that at her first Nerdfighters meeting, the members cracked puns and jokes, making her feel like she fit right in.

“I found that people actually like me, and it’s okay to be who I am,” Dominguez said. “We encourage our members to continue that

outside of the club and just be good people.”

Once a year during finals week, the Nerdfighters host Project for Austin, a spin off of John Green’s Project for Awesome, where the group films a 12-hour-long online live stream to raise money for the Capital Area Food Bank of Texas. The group puts on performances, live games and demonstrations and invites

viewers to donate online to the food bank. Last year, they raised more than \$700.

“It’s kind of like a telethon,” Foust said. “We try to do the event in a nerdy way. One of the things we did last year was a jeopardy game, and we partner with other organizations such as GigglePants and the Astronomy Students Association to perform and demonstrate at the event.”

Dominguez said her favorite part about the Nerdfighters is their inclusivity and ability to be open and welcoming to all kinds of people.

“You can be any shade of LGBT or any color or any major or any class level,” Dominguez said. “You can be anything, and as long as you want to decrease worldsuck and are passionate about something, you can be a part of us.”



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FOOTBALL

Defense looks to improve versus Bears

By Ezra Siegel
@SiegelEzra

Texas' defense flashed some brilliance with big plays in the team's 42-28 win over Rice, but the performance didn't come without issues.

Most glaringly, the defense struggled to finish drives and get off the field. The Longhorns forced Rice to 21 third down attempts but allowed the Owls to convert 14 of those attempts — a 67 percent conversion rate. Now, after two weeks of poor third down play, the Longhorns rank last in the nation in opponents' third down percentage.

To address the issues, head coach Charlie Strong showed his defense film of every third down conversion. After watching the tape, junior safety Dylan Haines said that the issues are mental, therefore correctable. Now, it's about execution.

"It's as simple as getting on your assignment," Haines said. "It's about not trying to do too much. ... Let them have three, four yards, and then it's fourth and one or two. They'll punt the ball, and we're off the field — it's about discipline."

The Longhorns specifically showed a lack of discipline in their tackling. Texas consistently let Rice senior quarterback Driphus Jackson slip away from pressure, while the secondary regularly gave up extra yardage with blown tackles. Strong said that the team had its opportunities but failed to execute when the time came.

"I told Vance [Bedford] during the game, I said, I guarantee you, I said we have 20 missed



Graeme Hamilton | Daily Texan Staff

Freshman linebacker Malik Jefferson (46) provided a spark with a 26-yard fumble return for a touchdown, but the defense still struggled, giving up 462 total yards to Rice on Saturday.

tackles or more," Strong said. "God almighty, what did we miss, about 10 sacks?"

Frustrated with the mis- cues, Strong said that the team has to focus on its mechanics before playing California's explosive offense. The Golden Bears emphasize putting their playmakers in space, and the Longhorns will need to make the one-on-one plays to get off of the field.

"We just have to get back to the practice field and really work on tackling. If you miss a tackle, everybody else is pursuing to the ball, so it

makes things a lot more man- ageable," senior cornerback Duke Thomas said.

Strong also preached the need for improvement in pass rushes. Texas consistently found itself in Rice's backfield but failed to bring Jackson down. Now, with tackling practices several days per week, the team is focusing on taking better angles and converting those chances when they get into the backfield.

In particular, Strong said that he needs his defensive line to step up. Coming into the year, he emphasized the unit's

depth and its potential to anchor the defense. However, his front has underperformed thus far, as both Notre Dame and Rice consistently found success running at Texas' defensive interior. With a stout offense in California looming next week, the Longhorns' defensive line will try to right the ship and justify the offseason hype.

"We are not getting to the ball fast enough," junior de- fensive tackle Hassan Ridge- way said. "We need to make sure somebody has to go back there and make a play. Eventually, we are going to

do it and get it right. We've got to go back and practice."

Texas has shown the flashes of becoming a big- play defense. It forced four turnovers against Rice, in- cluding a fumble recovery for a touchdown and made several jarring hits. While consistency has been the is- sue so far, the Longhorns are optimistic that they can take the next step.

"We're always confident in what we do," sopho- more safety Jason Hall said. "We just have to capitalize and execute."

STAT GUY | COLUMN

Senior cor- nerback Duke Thomas (21) tallied seven total tackles and a 56-yard punt return but was a part of a defense that gave up 228 rushing yards against Rice on Saturday.



Graeme Hamilton
Daily Texan Staff

Longhorns need to fix issues on defense before Big 12 play

By Akshay Mirchandani
@amirchandani41

Tell any Texas fan last Friday that Rice would beat the Longhorns in first downs 30-11, total yards 462-277 and time of possession 44:02-15:58, and they probably would have prepared for doomsday. A loss to Rice? That's rock bottom after a 38-3 loss to Notre Dame.

But despite getting beat in nearly every major of- fensive statistic, Texas still took down the Owls 42-28.

Granted, part of the reason the offense wasn't on the field was thanks to two special teams and de- fensive touchdowns. Plus, the offense worked fast. Redshirt freshman quar- terback Jerrod Heard led Texas on four quick touch- down drives, spanning a total of 6:51.

Still, for the most part, the offense wasn't on the field because the defense couldn't get off it, which is shaping up to be a big issue for Texas.

The defense was the strength of the Longhorns last year, ranking No. 2 in the Big 12 in total de- fense. Through the first two games of this season, they're sitting at No. 8 in to- tal defense, allowing 494.5

yards-per-game.

This stat clearly isn't ide- al. Notre Dame is a good of- fensive team, so the young Texas defense struggling in that game isn't a shock. But, a team like Rice running all over the Texas defense is concerning. The Owls are a good Conference USA team, but if they did that against Texas, I shudder to think what the elite Big 12 teams might do.

There were plenty of times on Saturday when the Texas defense had Rice on third down but couldn't get off the field. The Long- horns are last in the NCAA in defensive third down conversion. Opponents have had third downs against Texas 35 times and converted nearly 63 per- cent of the time. Essen- tially, the Longhorns leave plays on the field. Head coach Charlie Strong said in his Monday press con- ference that Texas missed eight sacks.

Overall, Texas has allowed 221 rushing yards and 273.5 passing yards per game, which is eighth and ninth in the conference respectively.

None of this bodes well when stacked up against the better teams in the Big 12. Junior quarterback Baker Mayfield is averag- ing 287.5 passing yards

per game for Oklahoma, and the Sooners still have sophomore running back Samaje Perine.

TCU, led by senior quar- terback Trevone Boykin, is piling up 538 total yards- per-game. Baylor is still ex- plosive, averaging 61 points and a whopping 754 total yards-per-game, which leads the Big 12.

Even Texas Tech has put up offensive fireworks in its first two games. Fresh- man quarterback Patrick Mahomes is passing for an average of 393 yards- per-game and has thrown eight touchdowns to one interception. Tech is the No. 1 scoring team in the conference, putting up 64 points-per-game.

A lot of these teams have faced inferior foes, but the Big 12 is still a very good offensive league. Texas' de- fense has to step up if it hopes to have any semblance of a successful year.

It seems like the offense finally found a spark after switching play callers and going to Heard as quar- terback. Strong and Vance Bedford are good defen- sive coaches and have a budding star in freshman linebacker Malik Jefferson. There's some optimism, but this young defense needs to grow up fast.

BIG 12 NOTEBOOK

Sooners pick up big win over Tennessee

By Ezra Siegel
@SiegelEzra

Oklahoma completes massive comeback

After falling behind 17-0 in the first half at Tennes- see, the No. 16 Sooners stormed back and claimed a comeback victory on their opponent's home field.

Oklahoma scored the last three touchdowns of regu- lation to send the game to overtime before redshirt ju- nior cornerback Zack San- chez picked off junior quar- terback Joshua Dobbs to seal the win in double-overtime.

Sooners' junior quar- terback Baker Mayfield ac- counted for all four Okla- homa touchdowns in the victory, while senior receiver Sterling Shepard hauled in two touchdown receptions.

Following the win, head coach Bob Stoops said that the win was in the running for his favorite career victory.

TCU gets back on track

The No. 3 Horned Frogs struggled in their season opener against Minnesota, but it didn't take them long to find their rhythm against Stephen F. Austin.

TCU scored 10 total touchdowns against the Lumberjacks on their way to a 70-7 win.

Senior quarterback Trevone Boykin threw for 285 yards and four touchdowns in the victory. His big performance was highlighted by a 60-yard touchdown toss to senior re- ceiver Kolby Listenbee in the first quarter.

The Horned Frogs will finish out their non-confer- ence schedule against SMU on Saturday.

Mahomes leads Texas Tech to second straight victory

Texas Tech continued its strong start on Saturday as sophomore quarterback Pat- rick Mahomes led the team to its second win with a 69-20 victory over UTEP.

Mahomes filled up the stat sheet while accumulat- ing 361 passing yards, four passing touchdowns and two rushing touchdowns. Through two weeks, he ranks No. 2 in college foot- ball in both passing yards and passing touchdowns.

Over six career starts, Mahomes now averages 369 yards and over three touchdowns per contest.

The Red Raiders will get their first major test of the season this week as they head to Fayetteville, Arkansas, to take on the Razorbacks.

Baylor runs over Lamar

There was no shortage of rushing offense for No. 5 Baylor in its 66-31 win over Lamar. The Bears ran for 412 yards and five touchdowns in the blowout victory.

Junior running back Shock Linwood led the way for Bay- lor while racking up 130 yards and three touchdowns on the ground.

Through two weeks, Bay- lor ranks No. 3 in the nation in rushing yards and No. 1 in total offense.

The Bears will look to keep their College Football Playoff push alive against Rice on Saturday.

Iowa State loses rivalry game to Iowa

For the second time in the last three years, Iowa took home the Cy-Hawk trophy with its 31-17 victory at Iowa State.

Hawkeyes' junior quar- terback C.J. Beathard efficiently picked apart the Cyclones' defense while throwing for 215 yards and three touch- downs. Senior running back Jordan Canzeri added 124 yards on the ground and a rushing touchdown.

For Iowa State, senior de- fensive end Dale Pierson picked up two sacks in the losing effort. He leads the FBS with five sacks this season.

The Cyclones will look to rebound against Toledo on Saturday.

SIDELINE

NFL

	EAGLES	24
	FALCONS	26

MLB

	ASTROS	3
	RANGERS	5
	RED SOX	0
	ORIOLES	2
	YANKEES	4
	RAYS	1

TOP TWEET

Chloe Collins
@chloweecollins

I just want one Shipley's Donut.

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TODAY IN HISTORY

2004

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman announces a lockout as talks between the league and the players' union fall apart.

SPORTS BRIEFLY

Women's golf finishes second round in tenth

Texas women's golf has a long way to go to salvage a result after struggling in the first two rounds of the Minnesota Invitational on Monday.

The Longhorns closed out the first day of the Minnesota Invitational with a total score of 614 points — only good enough for a tie of tenth place.

Senior Tezira Abe and junior Haley Mills are leading Texas' individual leader board at 6-over par, though Abe is only competing as an individ- ual, and her score doesn't count for the team.

Trailing behind Abe and Hills are sophomore Sophia Schubert at 10- over and senior Natalie Karcher at 13-over. Junior Julia Beck and freshman Maddie Luitwieler both finished 14-over.

Purdue leads the tour- nament with a 10-over through 36-holes, while reigning tournament champion East Carolina is four strokes back.

The other two Big 12 teams in the tournament have had similar results. TCU currently holds the ninth spot at 27-over, and Kansas is last out of the 12 teams with a 50-over par.

The Longhorns will look to improve on their position in the third and final round Tuesday.

—Reanna Zuniga

Daily Texan Comics

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Jackie (17)

whoa!

Gosh you're so old now.

I can feel my youth slipping away!

Like, superold! Better start learning to crochet & knit!

I know!

Wow Teri, you're practically ANCIENT now.

RIGHT???

Dad (43)

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S.M.M. 9-15-15

Pickles & Self-Hatred

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UM, WHY IS THAT?

I LIKE ROCKS, SIR.

LIKE- I WANNA LICK 'EM.

I FIGURED THIS WAS THE BEST PLACE TO GO.

THIS SAYS YOU'RE TRANSFERRING FROM THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS.

by Melonie W.

MILKSOPS BY RACHEL TYLER

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IS SHE OK?!

IT'S OK, I'M-

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	6	7				2		
			6			7	1	
4	7		2					9
	3		7		8			2
	5	4	1	2		3		
7				4	6	5		
3		9						

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz No. 0811

- ACROSS**
- 1 Butchers' cuts
 - 6 Goo-goo-eyed, old-style
 - 10 "Shoo-be-doo-be-doo-wop," e.g.
 - 14 Fancy tie
 - 15 Ones steeped in tradition in England?
 - 16 "___ be in England" (Browning line)
 - 17 Frequent Bart Simpson antic
 - 19 Chicken condo?
 - 20 Critique scathingly
 - 21 Lowly worker
 - 22 Chili con ___
 - 23 Ask the boss for more vacation time after getting a raise, perhaps
 - 26 Befitting
 - 29 Org. for "King James"
 - 30 "Finding Nemo" setting
 - 31 Biblical kingdom or its Utah namesake
 - 32 Birds flying in a V formation
 - 34 Scold a person
 - 41 Millionaire's vessel
 - 42 Can't Believe It's Not Butter! product
 - 43 Oh, I can't go on!
 - 46 Frat guy
 - 47 Camden Yards team
 - 50 Landmark with the year 1620 inscribed on it
 - 53 Depart from the prepared text
 - 54 River to the Ubangi
 - 55 Message spelled out with coconuts, maybe
 - 58 Where the tibia is
 - 59 Messy sandwich filler ... or a hint to this puzzle's circled letters
 - 62 Hand: Sp.
 - 63 Color printer purchases
 - 64 "Well, ___!"
 - 65 Editor's "On second thought"
 - 66 Prominent part of a Groucho disguise
 - 67 What "N" is for, in a Sue Grafton title
- DOWN**
- 1 Reindeer herder
 - 2 Sweatshop regulator, for short
 - 3 iPad screen feature
 - 4 Vote in France
 - 5 Meet a challenge, say
 - 6 Classic beer once brewed in Detroit
 - 7 Ogre
 - 8 Fleming who created 007
 - 9 "For shame!"
 - 10 San Diego setting, informally
 - 11 "How does it feel ...," in Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone"
 - 12 In a New York minute
 - 13 Kansas city
 - 18 Mexican money
 - 22 Unrefined
 - 23 Nawlins sandwich
 - 24 Prime draft classification
 - 25 Modern alternative to a taxi

ACME	PHEW	CHEAP
PEEN	LEGO	LOOSE
SANDWEDGE	OWNUP	
EST	HAGS	DTS
SEASIDE	NOHOPE	
LPS	PATE	ALB
RUBIKSCUBE	ODIE	
ISLE	ERROL	ADZE
CEOS	MARBLES	SLAB
ARC	DIBS	PIE
SKIRTS	WHOSWHO	
TEE	CROC	HOP
FACES	SAYCHEESE	
EXAMS	TREK	PEER
NEWSY	PARS	ALDA

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- PUZZLE BY JAY KASKEL AND DANIEL KANTOR**
- 26 Bit of band equipment
 - 27 Roast pig side dish
 - 28 Oversaw
 - 32 Word cried before "on it" or "lost"
 - 33 iPad reading
 - 35 "Nattering" sort in a Spiro Agnew speech
 - 36 Off-white shade
 - 37 Opportunity
 - 38 Tide competitor
 - 39 ___Lo Green, former coach on "The Voice"
 - 40 Sends to the canvas, for short
 - 43 Sudden contractions
 - 44 So yesterday
 - 45 Writer's credit
 - 47 Open-ended threat
 - 48 Part of Hollywood?
 - 49 Stranded during the winter, say
 - 51 North Dakota city with a nearby Air Force base
 - 52 Some inveterate users of steroids
 - 55 Go it alone
 - 56 Balls
 - 57 ___Ball
 - 59 A.T.M. requirement
 - 60 "___ momento"
 - 61 Mahmoud Abbas's grp.

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Crosswords for young solvers: nytimes.com/studentcrosswords.

Today's solution will appear here next issue

5	1	2	9	8	7	4	3	6
8	7	3	4	6	5	2	9	1
4	6	9	1	2	3	8	7	5
7	4	6	2	5	8	3	1	9
1	3	8	7	9	4	6	5	2
9	2	5	3	1	6	7	8	4
6	5	4	8	3	1	9	2	7
2	8	1	6	7	9	5	4	3
3	9	7	5	4	2	1	6	8

Trudy's

Happy Hour

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\$4 DEEP EDDY FLIGHT

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OFFBEAT

Couple celebrates oddities in home museum

By Katie Walsh
@katiehwalsh_atx

A miniature glass bottle of collected eye boogers sits atop a shelf inside Scott and Jen Webel's East Austin home. Across the room, a fetal pig floating in a jar of its own placenta rests on a ledge above a 4-foot narwhal tooth leaning against a cabinet.

Their home functions as a place to raise their two children as well as house the Museum of Natural & Artificial Ephemerata. The couple operates one of the few remaining in-home, family-run museums in America, offering weekly donation-based tours that explain the stories behind the eclectic arrays of trinkets, exotic artifacts and relics on display.

"[The museum] is a place where there are really tiny things that invite you to look in close, and then there are giant things that make you feel a little small," Scott said. "It's sort of enchanted in that way."

Jen said ephemerata can be classified as anything



Lisseth Lopez | Daily Texan Staff

MUSEUM page 5

Jen, left, and Scott Webel are the owners of the Museum of Natural & Artificial Ephemerata. The museum is home to many eclectic trinkets and articles, including clippings of Elvis Presley's sideburns, and Marilyn Monroe's last smoked cigarette.

ALBUM REVIEW | 'ANTHEMS FOR DOOMED YOUTH'

Mainstream style invades The Libertines' comeback album

By Chris Duncan
@chr_dunc

With *Anthems for Doomed Youth*, The Libertines have done what many bands from their era cannot — return after an 11-year-long hiatus as enigmatic as before.

Ever since they formed the Libertines in 1997, co-frontmen Carl Barât and Pete Doherty have surrounded themselves with an aura of mystery. The duo's love-hate relationship and Doherty's drug use have been scrutinized to no end, and their recent

reformation raises more questions. *Anthems for Doomed Youth*, released Friday, answers none of them, blending their early rough rock sound with a modern pop twist to create a surprisingly full and exciting experience.

Anthems for Doomed Youth is built upon the same key element every Libertines release is — songwriting. The Barât-Doherty duo matches the likes of Lennon-McCartney with the intricacies and dynamic components of their lyrics. In "Heart Of The Matter," the album's third

single, Doherty reflects, "With all the battering it's taken, I'm surprised it's still ticking." In one sense, Doherty is literal, wondering how his heart didn't fail after his rampant drug use, but in another, he's referring to the band's emotional turmoil.

Although most of their songs revolve around love, the songs that stand out on this LP aren't always about relationships.

"Iceman," an acoustic tale of redemption, is far from the Libertines' typical rebellious style but is executed with

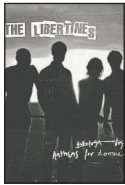
inscrutable detail, making it an exclamation of the group's return.

This album strays away from a bitter approach, opting to maintain a retrospective but confident mood. Each melody on *Anthems for Doomed Youth* provides an energetic sound, with "Gunga Din" and "Glasgow Coma Scale Blues" standing out with their catchy choruses.

At some moments, though, minor pop influences contribute too heavily to their sound. Jake Gosling, the album's main producer, worked with Ed

Sheeran and One Direction. He tends to steer The Libertines toward the pop side of the indie spectrum. For some listeners, this creates a more hospitable sound, but older Libertines fans might want the rougher and uneven version of the group back.

As listeners dive deeper into the music, minor but important production flaws rear their ugly faces. On several choruses, especially that of "Belly Of The Beast," backing vocals are brought far too upfront, making the lyrics an echoed mess. The lead



ANTHEMS FOR DOOMED YOUTH

Genre: Indie Rock
Tracks: 12
Rating: ★★★★★

guitar of these songs should have been accented more to embellish the over-

LIBERTINES page 5

CAMPUS



Check out our recurring series Tat-Tuesdays online at dailytexanonline.com.



I got it because in the story, Bilbo goes on an adventure, and one of his quotes that I love is 'There and back again'... This is the beginning of my journey.

—Esther Sanchez, Journalism freshman



Photos by Graeme Hamilton | Daily Texan Staff

MOVIE REVIEW | 'WOLF TOTEM'

'Wolf Totem' pleases visually, lacks narrative

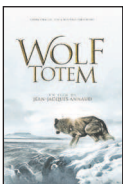
By Charles Liu
@charlieindahaus

The decline of frontiers around the world is one of the great tragedies. As people ventured into untamed lands, they destroyed what they could not tame.

"Wolf Totem" chronicles one of these tragedies — the struggle of people and wolves to survive the harsh plains of Mongolia. In an adaptation of Jiang Rong's semi-autobiographical novel, director Jean Jacques-Annaud produces a visually powerful experience that's heavy on drama but light on character. There's a lot to like about this Chinese-language epic, despite its tread on familiar territory.

For Beijing college student Chen Zhen (Feng Shaofeng), Mongolia is anything but familiar. Driven by the communists' Cultural Revolution, he is one of many Han Chinese settlers who journeyed there to modernize the land and introduce agriculture to the nomads. Zhen's encounter with a pack of wolves quickly changes his view of the plains, and he develops enormous admiration for the creatures that roam it.

When the Chinese settlers cut off the wolves' supply of food, the wolves turn to the nomads' livestock and doom themselves when they



"WOLF TOTEM"

Running Time: 121 minutes
MPAA Rating: PG-13
Score: ★★★★★

attack a herd of prized Chinese horses. Annaud and cinematographer Jean-Marie Dreu-jou place the audience in the middle of the hunt, delivering dozens of beautiful and terrifying shots as the late James Horner's score ramps up the chase's intensity.

After the debacle, the Chinese order the nomads to kill the wolves and their cubs, but Zhen refuses to obey the order and saves a cub he calls Little Wolf. As Little Wolf grows older, his bond with Zhen is threatened by settlers, nomads and wolves alike.

"Wolf Totem" does not sustain the energy of its strong start — the rest of the film feels like a long comedown after the incredibly staged horse chase sequence. The drama becomes repetitive as the wolves attack and humans retaliate again and again, drawing attention to the abundance of events and the characters'



Courtesy of Columbia Pictures

"Wolf Totem" beautifully captures Mongolian plains but lacks character development and story narrative.

lack of dimension.

Youthful Zhen is innocent and noble, and that's pretty much all the movie tells the audience. The script doesn't give Shaofeng much to do, and, while his performance is good, there is little depth to it. He does, however, make his relationship with Little Wolf sweet and memorable.

The most striking part of "Wolf Totem" is how it highlights the gorgeous Mongolian plains. Dreu-jou employs numerous wide shots that display Mongolia's magnificence, emphasizing its seemingly infinite stretch. The film feels real — it doesn't touch up the locales to make them perfect, and there's ruggedness in the nomadic settlements.

The wolves are a constant presence. They are symbols rather than characters, serving as an

allegory for nature's demise at the hands of man. Thanks to their mysterious, supernatural aura, they imbue the picture with mysticism and imply that man's confrontation against wolf is also a battle against a higher, spiritual power.

That power is Tenger, the chief Mongolian god. The nomads display awareness of Tenger's work and live with nature as a way of respecting him, while the Chinese settlers disregard the life he gives to the land. The conservationist message has been done before, but "Wolf Totem" imparts it in a graceful manner.

"Wolf Totem" is an eye-popping epic that chronicles the decline of the Mongolian plains. What it lacks in narrative and characterization, it makes up for with its emotional and visceral strength.