

The Marksman

- TURNING BIG BROTHER'S EYE BACK ON ITSELF -

THE ISSUES:

INTELLIGENT DESIGN: Who's your daddy, G-d or ape?

IRAN: Is the threat to Israel worth our time?

SOCIAL SECURITY: Who should control your retirement?

IRAQ: Victory or defeat, which path are we on?

EVENTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

1. President Bush delivers his annual State of the Union Address
2. Hamas win Palestinian elections
3. House GOP elects new majority leader to replace Tom DeLay
4. Sam Alito is confirmed to become the 110th Associate Justice of the Supreme Court

¹ The views expressed in the Marksman do not necessarily reflect the views of Adlai E. Stevenson High School.

A Letter from the Editor:

Dear reader,

My name is Eric Kaufman, and it gives me great pleasure in introducing to you *The Marksman*, Stevenson's new political publication. In an effort to increase students' interest and participation in the political process, I have created this publication as a forum for which both teachers and students can shed their insight and opinion on current matters of controversy or debate. The topics discussed in each issue are those of heated discourse that ring through the chambers of the United Nations, the U.S. Congress, the Illinois State Legislature, and the Lincolnshire Town Hall.

The issues that our nation faces every day are laden with complexity, and it will be up to us, the leaders of tomorrow, to progress forward with effective solutions and remedies to the troubles of society. This is a daunting challenge, but that is why I established the *Marksman*: to expand your knowledge and provoke your thoughts on today's hot topics.

The pieces you are about to read are written by your fellow classmates, and each commentary reflects that author's opinion, not that of the *Marksman*. Each article is layered with sound facts so as to solidify a subjective opinion with objective information. In addition, because each piece is one hundred percent the work of the author, all major spelling and grammatical changes are of the author's responsibility to correct. The *Marksman* attempts to present a politically well-balanced publication, but the very discussion of the issues is sufficient to breed insightful and thorough debate.

It is often said that only those who vote have the right to complain about their leaders. Through the *Marksman*, it is my hope that you grow intrigued, enlightened, and inspired to participate in the political process when reading each piece. Enjoy and remember: the *Marksman* provokes, YOU DECIDE!

Yours truly,

Eric Kaufman (Class of 2006)

INTELLIGENT DESIGN: THE ISSUE.

For years now, there has been a heated debate over how humans came to be on this planet. Whether it's Darwin's Evolution or the will of G-d, the libation stems from the question: which concept should schools teach in their science classes? Two Marksman writers weigh in on the issue: YOU DECIDE!

Intelligent Design Dan Rockoff

During the election of 1960, John F. Kennedy trumpeted the importance of maintaining scientific excellence in public schools. With the Soviet rocket speeding over America, the nation feared that Communism would triumph and the western world would fall behind. He proposed a new emphasis on scientific learning within the classroom, and the plan worked; by the end of the decade, we had landed on our own moon, and our nation surged ahead.

Decades later, a new threat has emerged to challenge the nation's prosperity from within the science classroom. This time, the Soviet Union plays no role; the problem is from within our own culture. School boards around the country have begun to introduce Intelligent Design into the scientific curriculum. Intelligent Design proponents claim that evolutionary theory is incomplete and that an unnamed force, presumed to be God, designed life. Allowing this pseudoscientific idea to stand side by side with evolutionary theory in America's public school system would undermine progress by introducing fundamentally religious ideas as scientific facts.

The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States declares that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion. As a wall of separation between church and state, this instruction means that Congress must never endorse one form of religious belief over another. Intelligent Design presupposes the existence of a supreme being by claiming that the world must have been planned. If this subject were taught as science in public schools, the national government would be openly endorsing the existence of such a being and discriminating against American citizens who do not share that philosophy. The government should not be promoting religious beliefs, especially when those beliefs threaten scientific progress.

A violation of basic constitutional principles would only be the beginning if an Intelligent Design program were fully implemented. Proponents often refer to Intelligent Design as a "theory," then warn, as a Georgia school district did, that evolution is "a theory, not a fact."² Yet this idea completely ignores reality; a scientific theory is meticulously tested and proven repeatedly using empirical evidence derived from experimentation. By contrast, the conclusions reached through intelligent design simply cannot be found through experimentation. If large segments of the population are taught principles rejected by the scientific community, then ignorance spreads and the United States will begin to lose its lead in emerging biological fields.

America desperately needs a renewed commitment from the federal government not to allow misinformation to be spread in the public education system. Polls currently indicate that a majority of Americans believe the biblical story of creation over evolutionary theory. Something has gone terribly amiss in American society when the President of the United States declares intelligent design should have equal time with evolution the same year that Britain granted licenses for cloning human embryos. We can advance in this field, but success will only be found if we stop mixing religion with science and promote knowledge over ignorance.

Ask yourself: WHO'S YOUR DADDY?

² www.cnn.com/2005/LAW/01/13/evolution.textbooks.ruling

Intelligent Design Isn't Intelligently Designed

Alex Florea

Intelligent Design (ID) is one of the more prevalent and divisive social issues of our time, and just like most other social issues it will not be resolved by speeches, editorials, protests, presidential endorsements or anything of that sort; this issue like all others before, it will be resolved by our “impartial arbiter”-- the courts. So for a change of pace I will analyze the legal side of the argument rather than the ideological, which unfortunately is about all you will get from most sources.

The established precedent dealing with “creationism science” was set in 1987 under *Edwards v. Aguillard*, which held that such policy violates the Establishment Clause of the 1st Amendment if it impermissibly endorses religion by either “promoting the theory of creation science that embodies a particular religious tenet or to prohibiting the teaching of a scientific theory disfavored by certain religious sects”(findlaw.com). Essentially, if the purpose of ID policies or laws is anything other than their stated purpose of “greater academic freedom,” they are unconstitutional. What the true purpose of a law/policy is difficult to discern, however; in deciding *Aquillard*, Justice Brennan used two tests: the first is whether the law/policy actually accomplishes its stated aims and the second is the subjective motive test which is basically an examination of the law’s intent given its context and background. In the Pennsylvania case, U.S. District Judge John E. Jones, a recent Republican appointment, struck down the

school district's ID policy, finding it “a religious view, a mere relabeling of creationism, and not a scientific theory”(aol.com/news) .

Although this was not a surprising decision given that *Aquillard* was decided the same way and the two cases are essentially the same, Judge Jones went so far as to state that ID is not a scientific theory. If that assessment is to become accepted precedent then all further uses of ID will be unconstitutional since it does not enrich academic freedom if it is not science. That is ultimately the greatest challenge faced by ID, the courts have consistently held evolution to be science while the recent trend is to rule that ID is not science since does not provide an alternate theory as it simply points out weakness in evolution. The other barrier to being scientific that ID faces but it simply states there is a greater intelligence at work; it does not state what or, most importantly, how. The simple fact is that ID does not factually explain evolution; it simply states that Darwin is wrong and that there is a greater power at work. Until it manages to fill out some of those details, it cannot be considered science and will be laid bare for the Creationism it is. And everyone knows that Creationism in science class is (legally) extinct.

Which school of thought should be taught in SHS biology classes? YOU DECIDE!

IRAN: THE ISSUE.

With his election, the new Iranian president, Ahmadinejad, has taken a very hard-line, anti-U.S. / Israel policy through inflammatory rhetoric and the pursuit of nuclear weapons. Is the threat to Israel credible? Does Iran pose a threat to American national security? Is any of this worth our time? Daniel Yukilevich, a Marksman contributor, provokes, YOU DECIDE!

The Case Against Iran

Daniel Yukilevich

When most Americans embraced the year, there wasn't a lot of public outrage over the events taking place in Iran. The majority of the media still retained its focus on the chaos in Iraq. Unfortunately, this attitude of ignorance is not only witnessed in

America but is seen throughout the world. European and Asian countries like Russia and China are still questioning whether or not the issue over Iran's nuclear intentions should go towards the U.N. Security Council. Is the world asleep as a country governed by a militant, terrorist-sponsoring government is enriching its nuclear program to a point

where it could build a nuclear bomb?

It is absolutely horrifying to see the world's public and international governing bodies remain so ignorant of Iran's threat. Perhaps they don't realize what kind of transformation has been evolving in Iran over the past months. After the illegitimate election of President Ahmadinejad to the democratically principled government of Iran, Ahmadinejad has strengthened Iran's ties to Islamic terrorism, enacted a "Big Brother" watch over Iran's citizens and foreign visitors, called for the destruction of Israel, and has significantly enriched Iran's nuclear research to a degree never before seen. His enrichment of the nuclear program has only caused further devastation to Iran's economic infrastructure because he is taking away money from social reform. 40% of Iran's citizens live in poverty, and the unemployment rate has become almost 12%. In order to resist public upheaval, Ahmadinejad has strengthened surveillance and has created public propaganda rallies with thousands of Iranians shouting for the sponsorship of terrorism against the West. Hasn't this happened before in history where a fanatical leader rallied his people for utter destruction? Just like the German people, the Iranian population remains significantly educated and prominent in world society. Unfortunately, education doesn't always stop the population from being manipulated by an authoritative leader.

Most of the world's governments are still not convinced that Iran's leader has bad intentions when they see this expansion of power. Russia and China, Iran's prominent economic partners, want to turn the debate over to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) so negotiations could take place with Iran. Obviously, the countries proposing this idea do not actually want to put significant economic sanctions on Iran. A similar political pattern took place in WWII when England tried to appease Hitler in order to stop

an invasion of Poland. Hitler manipulated the British and attacked Poland despite their pleas. The most chilling factor behind all of this is that Ahmadinejad could be more dangerous than Hitler. Within six to twelve months, nuclear experts believe that his researchers will be able to finish the enrichment facilities that would give Iran a nuclear bomb. Iran has Shahab-3 missiles that place Israel and U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan within easy range. The Shahab-4 could hit Western Europe, and a Shahab-5 could reach North America.

Many experts question the location of the core of worldwide Islamic terrorism. I think the answer is already clear after the ascendance of the Iranian militant to power. Iran has maintained its support for Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and Al-Qaeda. Ahmadinejad has urged Palestinian terror groups to ignore the cease fire in order to "wipe Israel off the map." As this man rises to greater power and strengthens Iran's nuclear power, there is no time for appeasing negotiations as proposed by the IAEA. The world needs to finally wake up and realize the significance of the threat imposed by Iran. We cannot repeat the mistakes of history that have left millions of casualties.

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SOCIAL SECURITY: THE ISSUE.

In his State of the Union address last year, President Bush wished to privatize social security. In other words, should accounts be created to allow citizens to use their Social Security income to spend it as they like? Or, should the government maintain the status quo? With much Democratic opposition to the President's Social Security Reform plan, the efforts are in a stalemate. Amit Patel voices his view on the issue: YOU DECIDE!

Why Social Security is not the Solution to Making Our Society Secure...AND WHAT IS!

Amit Patel

Ralph Waldo Emerson once suggested, "Money often costs too much." Now, if we are to value money so much, how can we possibly afford to throw it into the worthless, ineffective "plan" called social security? Simply, we can't, especially when there's a better solution right in our faces. After we observe the woes and hopeless future of social security, we will realize that personal retirement accounts are where this nation should be headed if we are to make our society secure.

As a capitalistic, economically desperate society, we should immediately be repulsed at the thought that the government takes our money and throws it into the doomed program of social security. According to the CQ Researcher on March 1, 2002, the average 50 year old in America has less than \$40,000 in personal financial wealth; furthermore, the average American retires with only enough savings to provide 60% of his former annual income. Having to deal with the same expenses as preretirement life, combined with the additional general and unforeseen medical expenses of old age on a mere 60% of the preretirement income sounds pretty much impossible, and for many it is, driving thousands of seniors into irrecoverable debt. The progression of the baby-boomer generation into retirement is only going to exacerbate this problem. Even the president, at the 2002 National Summit on Retirement Savings, stated that he feels social security is inadequate for financially supporting retirees, offering a less than 2% rate of return and paying them 30% of what they earned before retirement. Did that say inadequate!? With each generation living longer and longer, this inadequacy will only become steeper and steeper. Well, then how in the name of the people of the United States can we afford to keep investing in such an inadequate program that is evidently doomed to

failure?

It's time to move on to the Age of the PRA (personal retirement account). According to the director of fiscal policy at the CATO Institute, privatized social security comes with such advantages as providing Americans the ability to save more throughout their lives, control their own investments and, ultimately, take more control of their own and their families' destinies. Furthermore, while social security offers a horrendously low rate of return-2%-privatized accounts have the potential to offer much more. According to Carrie Lips, an assistant for the CATO project on Social Security Privatization, even at a conservative rate of return of just 5%, a private account would offer a 25-year-old making \$25,600 per year a savings of \$438,640 by age 67. This would translate to a monthly benefit of \$3,292, which would be a whopping triple that promised by social security. With triple the benefits and control of one's own assets, it's a wonder that PRAs aren't the norm already.

So we see that while social security is never going to get out of its hole, PRAs offer a much more viable solution to providing adequate financial support to our retirees. Now, more than ever, it is crucial to quit wasting our money on social security as we see its problems with the baby-boomers moving into retirement. If we don't act now and move for PRAs, perpetuating this economically inept "solution" of social security, it will be we who are most devastated in our old age by the lack of social security funds, and it looks like old age is going to be a longer time than it's ever been.

Social Security or "Insecurity"? YOU DECIDE!

IRAQ: THE ISSUE.

In Iraq, the U.S. military endures casualties every day. Discussion of a military pull out, the Hussein trial, insurgency, and the thinning of U.S. troops in Iraq and around the world: Are the U.S. efforts to create a stable democracy in Iraq a close realization or a nightmare from which we must all awake? Two Marksman contributors shed their insight: YOU DECIDE!

Iraq: Where Do We Stand Today?

Abby Phillips

In the beginning of the War on Terror, Americans were promised that the Afghanistan and Iraq wars would lead to victories not only for Americans but also for humankind. Americans are constantly being reassured that America will come out victorious and that the government is working relentlessly to secure peace during the insurgency. However, there are facts that must be faced. Time equals money. In a month's time, the American government spends roughly \$7 billion to support our troops. Money has been taken from government operations such as Social Security, Medicare, and the Post Office to support the many facets of the war. With \$7 billion being spent each month, the death toll has passed 2,000, with 160,000 troops still in Iraq. The Iraqi civilians are also at a great risk. The insurgency continues to be a hazard to the people of Baghdad. Suicide bombers attack daily, threatening our soldiers and Iraqi civilians. Ratification of the Iraqi constitution has the power to help, only if a consensus can be reached with the Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds as to how the land should be divided, what religious tilt the government will have, and the division of the government.

Where do we stand? America stands divided as to how to deal with something we started. Some say that we "declare victory" and pull out as soon as humanly possible. Others might say that we need to be in Iraq indefinitely to sort out what we have created. Last, others might say that we need to finish the constitution, get the situation under control, and leave. There is no easy way to work around two nations that have different ideals for democracy. No matter what, there are going to be people who are unhappy with decisions made by the joint efforts of Americans and Iraqis.

In reality, there are only two plausible choices: declare victory now or stay until some level of control

is apparent. By declaring victory now, America is forgetting its mission of creating a free, stable, secure democracy for the Iraqis. If America were to leave Iraq tomorrow, we would be leaving a country torn by insurrection. America has to finish the job it started without continuing to alienate the Iraqi people and leave in a timely fashion. America should be given six months to a year to finish its duty in Iraq; otherwise, the American people will be given a chance to revolt due to the war's cost and death toll.

Sources Consulted

"U.S. Rhetoric Cools Even as Nation's Patience Fails."
Editorial. Chicago Tribune. 13 Nov. 2005.

MARKSMAN POLL:

**Are we on the path toward victory
in Iraq?**

PLEASE FORWARD YOUR OPINION TO THE
MARKSMAN.

Where Does Iraq Stand?

Justin Wolf

War is an unpopular and usually controversy-spawning word. The Iraq War is several years under way and its unpopularity has been growing exponentially as of late. The conflict is no longer a question of whether or not we should go to war; now people question whether or not it is going anywhere. Statistics and controversy over the United States' plan for victory leave America skeptical on where we stand. Currently, the U.S. military has suffered over 2,000

casualties and over 15,000 wounded. Many other coalition forces are pulling out, from terrorist threats and for their country's needs. The U.S., still having around 138,000 men and women, has the greatest number of coalition forces in Iraq. Being the majority of forces in Iraq, the United States controls a major role in the fate of this country. The augmenting popularity of the Iraq War has left people wondering why we can't just pull out now.

Having had a civil war of its own, America should understand how hard it is to compromise. The majority of Iraq is made up of Shiite Arabs and Kurds, as well as the Sunni Arabs who have lost the most since losing the power Saddam's reign held, along with other minorities. Iraq has had a long history of hasty, violent revolutions. If we leave, the new Iraqi government in its early stages has almost no defense against the threat of al-Zarqawi and other terrorist affiliated groups. Iraq would again be torn to revolution and would end up with another dictatorship or oligarchy, thus making the war worthless.

The U.S. wants the Iraqi government to become stronger and eventually gain 350,000 soldiers, become stable under a system similar to the Democrat-Republican system of the United States, and end the terrorist threat in Iraq. The United States government is setting deadlines that give the Americans an idea of when they will pull out, but with Iraqi defense personnel constantly under strain of attack, a government divided, and terrorists reorganizing and growing in number, there is no safe deadline that anyone can actually set. There are too many variables that can decide how long troops stay in Iraq.

America has its own problems. 8 out of 10 Americans are "concerned" over the war. Since America has been spending about \$5 billion each month and Hurricane Katrina still taking its toll on the economy, there has been speculation. However, Iraq being one of the leading exporters of oil can't be allowed to lead to turmoil because alternative fuels are just starting to become part of the economy. American leaders like Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld have explained that the "timing of war is never predictable--there are no guarantees." So, amongst so many conflicting situations, America is undecided about the fate of the United States in Iraq and is unable to give a statement of where the War in Iraq stands because Iraq has yet to stand on its own.

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**WOULDN'T
YOUR OWN
OPINIONS AND
IDEAS LOOK
GREAT IN THIS
EMPTY SPACE?**

**SUBMIT TO
THE MARKSMAN
TODAY!!!**

Cloak Room Knowledge

Citizen's Trivia

1. Who was recently elected Majority Leader in the U.S. House of Representatives?
2. Which member of the President's cabinet was not present at the State of the Union Address?
3. When is the next candidate forum hosted by SHS?
4. Who recently confirmed as an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court?
5. Who is the current Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court?³

John Q. Public's Buzz Words of the Week

1. **Cleavage** (Keep it clean.): Deep and long lasting political divisions.
2. **Beltway:** Washington, D.C.
3. **The Hill:** the Capitol complex which houses both the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives. It gets its name from a hilltop on which the Capitol building sits. The city of Washington was built so that the Hill was the center of the city.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have a reaction to something you read? Is there an issue that you think people need to be aware of? Do you want to be heard?

We are looking for submissions for our next issue. You can write an editorial in response to one of the articles, an original article on a political / social topic of your choice, or create a political cartoon.

Drop off submissions to Mr. Gertzfield in the East English Office or e-mail them to jgertzfield@district125.k12.il.us.

If you are a first-time contributor, please fill out and submit the form below in order to be published.

Submission deadline is the first of the month to be included in that month's issue (e.g. March first is the deadline to be published in the March issue). This deadline will be extended until March 15 for our second issue.

Authorization to Write for The Marksman

I, _____, accept all responsibility for the material in the piece(s) I have written, and I agree to comply with all current and new guidelines as put forth by the sponsor and the editors-in-chief in the "Rules and Procedures." In addition, I relinquish all affiliates of Stevenson High School and those involved in the creation and distribution of *The Marksman* of any responsibility, and I hereby acknowledge that *The Marksman*'s sponsor and editors-in-chief reserve the right to edit pieces as it sees fit in accordance with *Marksman* guidelines.

Signature of Submitter: _____

Student ID: _____

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Submit this form to Mr. Gertzfield in the East English Office.

