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* Is America Ready For Clinton and Obama?
* How Do The Candidates Address Climate Change?

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The Quarterly is still in need of more writers and editors! Let us know if you are interested!

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Nate Berger, Feature Writer
Jacqueline Sievert, Opinion Editor

Interested in writing for The Quarterly? E-mail us to join our staff for our next issue! Have something to say? Write a letter to the editor or an opinion article and send it in. Got a suggestion for an article or want to contribute creative work? Drop us a line!

MALS.Quarterly@dartmouth.edu
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

There is an electric charge running through the American political climate; as the fall leaves are changing their brilliant hues, our disenchanted nation is unrelentingly searching for change in its leadership. This irrepressible need for change has created a political whirlwind throughout 2007, with public interest in the primary presidential elections reaching never-before-seen heights. Riding this surge in interest, presidential candidates began announcing their runs a full year in advance of the primaries, and individual states have been clamoring to move up their primary caucuses to ensure that citizens have as much say as possible as to who becomes the official nominees. New Hampshire’s first-in-the-nation primary has had to move up as well to the first week in January of 2008. As a result, presidential hopefuls have descended upon our small state this fall, hoping to court voters and recruit campaign workers.

In this issue, we’ve taken a look at our own thoughts on the 2008 election, what issues matter to us as young Americans coming of age in the early twenty-first century, and how these issues effect us as MALS students at Dartmouth College. We are, like the rest of the nation, excited at the promises for positive change, but wary of those who make such promises. We have the desire to improve our world but question our ability to effectively contribute to that improvement. But most of all, we all agree that we love to disagree.

As always, if you would like to contribute a letter to the editor or an opinion article for our next issue, please send it our way! We are receptive to ideas, suggestions, and submissions of creative work.

That said, we hope you enjoy our latest issue. Happy reading!

Jessica Carvalho
MALS Quarterly Editor-In-Chief

“I’m always impressed by the quality of the Quarterly’s articles. I can’t wait for the next issue!”

“Where are our alumni? They should begin contributing more often.”

Have something to say? We want to hear it! E-Mail all comments and/or criticism to MALS.Quarterly@dartmouth.edu
Subject line: Letters
Democratic Presidential Debate Held At Dartmouth

Jessica Carvalho

On September 26th, MALS students were quite literally caught up in the whirlwind of the 2008 Presidential election as Dartmouth hosted the third Democratic Presidential debate, broadcast live from coast to coast on NBC. High-profile political figures, including all the major democratic presidential candidates and national news media outlets, descended upon Hanover to participate in the event, which took place in Spaulding Auditorium at the Hopkins Center on campus. Throughout the day, events, rallies, and debate parties kept students hopping from one discussion to another, and everyone seemed caught up in the political fervor.

Richardson, Obama, and Edwards on stage during the Democratic Debate at Dartmouth. Photo courtesy The Dartmouth.

It was a unique kick-off to fall term, as students headed to their first day of classes amidst the hoopla. Tents and campaign paraphernalia covered the Green, creating an almost carnival-like atmosphere as rally cries from the competing camps fought for dominance. The loudest chanting came from the two campaigns with the largest bases of support at Dartmouth - those of Illinois Senator Barack Obama and New York Senator and former First Lady Hillary Clinton. At the center of the commotion sat the obligatory "Big Top" - the MSNBC tent, from which Chris Matthews hosted his popular Hardball program live from the Green.

Earlier that day, Rockefeller Center hosted a "Meet the Campaigns" event, where students met with senior campaign staff members, as well as candidate spouses Elizabeth Edwards and Elizabeth Kucinich. Each campaign had their own rooms for meetings, allowing students to visit as many as they liked and learn first-hand about the campaign experience.

That evening, all eight candidates took the stage in Spaulding Auditorium to discuss the issues and continued on page 17
MEET OUR NEWEST MALS STUDENTS!

Twenty-one new MALS degree candidates arrived on campus this fall, diving head-first into Dartmouth life. Representing a diverse array of backgrounds, interests, and goals, their contributions will be a benefit to our program. Join us in welcoming them to MALS!

CHRISTINE ANNEBERG

Hailing from Denver, Colorado, Christine loves to travel, and has spent every summer since high school traveling, working, or volunteering abroad. She earned her B.A. in International Relations from Brown University, where she was also a member of the lacrosse team. Christine came to Dartmouth in 2004, and has been working ever since as the Assistant Coach for the Dartmouth Women's Lacrosse Team. In MALS, Christine is pursuing the Globalization track and hopes to live and work abroad.

LINDSAY DAVIS

After graduating from the University of Vermont in 2005 with a degree in Political Science, Lindsay worked in the fields of corporate finance, law, and education. She enters the MALS program hoping to explore her interest in women's and cultural studies, specifically in regards to prison studies in the United States. Through the MALS curriculum, she hopes to be able to synthesize modern theories and approaches to political science, sociology, and feminist philosophies to create a well-rounded study of the prison system in America.

ELMA DEMIR

Elma comes to Dartmouth from Bosnia and Herzegovina, where she earned her B.A. in Political Science from the University of Sarajevo. Following graduation, Elma worked for several years in the governance sector in Bosnia before applying to the MALS program. While in MALS, Elma plans to conduct interdisciplinary studies and research in politics.
MEGAN FALLON

Megan has worked at Dartmouth for a little over a year as Assistant Director of the Center for Women and Gender. Before coming to Dartmouth, she helped to prevent violence against women through her work at crisis centers and by lobbying congressional leaders on both the state and national level. Megan joins MALS hoping to focus on the intersections of race, class, and gender through Cultural Studies. She also likes long walks on the beach, pina coladas and dancing in the rain.

MIN FANG

Min Joins MALS from China, where she earned her degree in Chinese Language and Literature from Nanjing University in 2003. After working for a shipping company, she married and moved to New Hampshire with her husband. Min comes to MALS eager to learn more about American literature without translation. She also hopes to study the American education system, especially some of the current issues in the public schools.

CHENGXIAO FU

Chengxiao comes to Dartmouth from the northern part China, near the capital, Beijing. She is excited to experience life in the Upper Valley, a place without pollution and with blue sky and fresh air. She was attracted to the MALS program for its flexibility; Chengxiao likes that she may select courses to shape her own research focus. She hopes to devote herself to her studies as she fully enjoys American life!

JOSHUA HILLARD

Joshua arrives at MALS having just completed his B.A. at Hampshire College, and is excited to be attending graduate school at Dartmouth. Joshua enjoys interacting with people from all walks of life, and his work experiences run the gamut from working in a kindergarten and picking apples alongside migrant workers to busing tables in an upscale restaurant. At Dartmouth he hopes to continue studying cognitive science, as well as reading and writing, and the many interesting ways in which they intersect.
REBECCA MCCARTY

Never a traditional student, Rebecca graduated from high school early and moved to San Diego, where she did a stint at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University before earning her BA in Political Science from the University of Vermont. A political junkie, Rebecca was deputy field director for the 2004 Vermont Democratic House Campaign which won the majority by picking up 13 seats. Rebecca is a partner in the lobbying and strategic communications firm Morris DeMag McCarty, Inc.

LEENA AL OLAIMY

Leena graduated from NYU with a degree in Culture and Communications. She pursued a career in Event Management which led her back to her native Bahrain, organizing government events and forums for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Having both an Arab and American political perspective, Leena desires to help foster multicultural and interfaith understanding, especially in terms of Conflict Resolution in Islam. Her other interests include performing, scuba diving, fashion, and humanitarian work.

MATTHEW PERRY

After graduating from Dickinson College in 2000 with a degree in History, Mat returned to his hometown of Newburyport, Massachusetts and began teaching high school-level history classes at the Pingree School in South Hamilton, MA. While at Pingree, Mat also coached soccer and hockey. On leave from Pingree for one year, Mat is excited to explore the various aspects of globalization studies. Having lived abroad as a child in both Brazil and Taiwan, Globalization Studies is both a passion and a career choice for Mat, and he looks forward to the challenges of being back in college.

JEFFREY SHARPE

After a few years working as a director for Kaplan, Inc., Jeff started his own tutoring and academic consulting business in New York City. Perhaps being involved in education stimulated Jeff’s desire to return to school, but he was also eager for a reason to escape NYC, at least temporarily, to the mountains and rivers that he enjoys so much. Jeff will ultimately return to New York after the MALS program, hopefully with an increased insight into the way public policy has shifted in response to globalization.
AMANDA SHEEHAN
Amanda has New England in her blood, although she grew up in Florida and Georgia. After completing her B.A. in Environmental Science and almost Philosophy (she was one class short of a double major) at Oglethorpe University, Amanda took a few years off to work full time. This was not as fulfilling as she hoped, so she’s come to MALS to study Ecological Anthropology. She’s thrilled to be living somewhere with mountains, so give her a call if you’d like to go hiking. She may even bake some delicious vegan cookies for the trip.

JACQUELINE SIEVERT
Jacqueline arrives at Dartmouth fresh off of finishing her undergraduate studies at New York University, where she earned her degree in Political Science and Economics. She was drawn to MALS because of the interdisciplinary nature of the program, and to the Upper Valley because of her love of the outdoors. Jacqueline hopes to pursue the Globalization track, and eventually pursue a career in foreign policy affairs or diplomacy.

CHRISTOPHER TUCKER
Chris earned his B.A. in History from Southern New Hampshire University in 2007, where he studied racial prejudices in the first African-American military regiment in the Civil War. His interests in the humanities encouraged him to apply to MALS, where he hopes to create a thought-provoking and exciting final thesis. Chris also enjoys the Red Sox, modern art, theatre, film, and working with children.

* Jessica Carvalho * Erik Lambert * Nate Berger * Ian Isherwood *
What do these MALS students have in common? They spent their summer at Oxford!
Want to spend your summer term studying at Oxford University? Ask the MALS office about applying today! Applications due this winter!
MORE NEW MALS STUDENTS:

The following students’ biographies were not available at press time, but please welcome them anyway!

* MELISSA CADREACT  * LINNIESARAH HELPERN  * VANESSA VICERA  *

* TING KANG  * ANNA MINARDI  * CAITLIN SCUDERI  *

The sun shines through the colorful trees on a warm fall day outside of Dartmouth Hall, near the MALS building. Photo by Jessica Carvalho.
MALS Students Present Screenplays, One-Acts

Chris Tucker

On the evenings of December 2nd and 3rd, several MALS students in the Dramatic Storytelling workshop presented their final screenwriting and playwriting projects to the public. The course, fully titled Dramatic Storytelling: A Playwriting/Screenwriting Workshop, was team-taught by MALS screenwriting professor Bill Phillips and MALS playwriting professor Joe Sutton. Of the seventeen students in the course, seven were MALS students; the course was offered as an elective to undergraduates. According to Marcus Winters, a MALS student enrolled in the course, “students learned the process of adaptation by writing a story in play form and then adapting the same story into screenplay form.” Each student in the class participated in writing and revision workshops on their work, and ultimately chose one revision to have performed.

The presentations began in Wilson Hall at 6:00 PM each evening with eight total readings on the first night and nine on the second. Each reading lasted between fifteen and twenty minutes. The plays and screenplays were presented by a panel of student readers, each portraying a different character in the work, and one acting as a narrator to voice the stage directions.

CAMPUS EVENTS:
The readings covered a variety of genres, from drama, to comedy, to satire. While the presentations were not overwhelmingly attended, there was a definite sense of pride and academic respect from the audience. For the students enrolled in the class, the public performances undoubtedly were a satisfying conclusion to a semester’s work, while audience members who were not enrolled in the class were able to experience some insight into their fellow students’ creative processes.

The MALS students enrolled in the course as well as the title of their plays/screenplays are as follows: Rob Keim, “Fruits of Eden;” Kathryn LoConte, “The Wrong Man;” Chris Ivanyi, “Paprika;” Keisha Luce, “Dog and Wolf;” Kaitlin Colladay, “How Does a Fish;” Elise Vranicar, “Blood Ain’t;” Marcus Winters, “Pecan Pie.”

No Laughing Matter: A Humanities Conference

Chris Tucker

“Laughter matters for all sorts of reasons,” began Kobena Mercer, during the keynote lecture of this year’s International Humanities Institute Conference held at Dartmouth from November 8th to the 10th. The theme of this year’s conference was No Laughing Matter: Visual Humor in Ideas of Race, Nationality, and Ethnicity, and coincided with a sister exhibit at the Hood Museum's Harrington Gallery, which ran from October 6th through December 9th. According to the introductory remarks by Dartmouth’s Provost Barry Scherr, the conference would examine how caricature and stereotyping in art and art criticism influence the definitions of “the other” and “the superiority of the self.”

According to Mercer, an independent scholar from the United Kingdom, laughter is worth examining because of the pleasure it provides, its existence as an ambivalent phenomenon, and its role in humanizing the audience - all of which add to the social significance of laughter. The lecture focused primarily on the criticisms of Mikhail Bakhtin, who examined the representation of laughter, defacement, and comic visualization in artistic images of carnival freaks and the grotesque.

Mercer’s lecture did not just focus on Bakhtin’s criticisms; he also examined laughter and comic imagery in history, such as the black-face minstrel shows of the nineteenth and early-twentieth century. It also appears in contemporary art, such as Paul McCarthy’s Spaghetti Man and the famous Duchamp piece, Fountain/“R Mutt.” Mercer also provided some provocative opinions on such modern entertainment as The Simpsons, forcing us to beg the question: when it comes to comic art, are we laughing with it or at it? Identifying the difference, according to Mercer, is crucial.

The opening lecture of the conference was well attended, with the Hood Museum’s Loew continued on page 15

Have an event you’d like covered? Have you attended an event and would like to submit a review? Maybe you’d just like your event listed on our calendar? E-mail our Events Editor, Chris Tucker, or the MALS Quarterly today!
MOVING FORWARD: Are Americans Ready For Clinton and Obama?

by Jessica Carvalho
Three years ago, a few months after Bush's reelection and almost a year before either Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama were seriously plotting a run for the White House, I, during a political discussion with my three roommates (a Taiwanese, a Jamaican, and a Ghanaian), posed the following question: who do you think America will elect first: a black President or a female President?

It was not an easy question then, and at the time, it was purely hypothetical. We could not even come close to agreeing on an answer, and then we were assuming the minority in question would be running against the stereotypical white male candidate; we certainly never foresaw the United States having to choose between one or the other. But now here we are: only a few years later, and, while some might argue that the 2008 election is still far from a two-person race, they cannot deny that the two most plausible Presidential candidates are a white woman and a black man.

Early in their campaigns, both the Clinton and Obama camps managed to skirt around the issue of Hillary's sex and Obama's skin color, choosing to focus on the talents of each as politicians and leaders. As admirable as that is (not to mention the fact that those are the traits voters SHOULD be considering), we cannot deny that both Obama and Clinton's campaigns are about more than just the Presidency; by vying for the most powerful position in the United States, they are inadvertently forcing Americans to face a multitude of deep and largely unresolved issues we have regarding race and gender in this country.

On one hand, we have Senator Obama. Although not the first black Presidential candidate, he is nevertheless the first to have a very real chance of actually winning not just the party nomination, but the Presidency. To many African-Americans

“By vying for the most powerful position in the United States, and, arguably, the world, [Clinton and Obama] are inadvertently forcing Americans to face the multitude of deep and largely unresolved issues we have regarding race and gender in this country.”

Obama represents hope for equality, their hope for acknowledgement of their policy concerns, and their desire for a leader who holds an office of sweeping decision-making power, as opposed to unofficial African-American "presidents," such as Al Sharpton, whose influence is relegated to rallying the community and lobbying officials in power for change. Yet despite those factors which are appealing (in addition to his more cross-culturally appealing talents as a speaker and a leader), the African-American community, so far, remains divided about him as a candidate.

Had Obama run for office fifty years ago, in 1968 (had that even been possible at the time), the

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TAKING ISSUE WITH
GLOBAL WARMING
by Nate Berger

One MALS student speaks out about U.S. environmental policy and the 2008 Presidential campaign

Photo courtesy of stopglobalwarming.org
The pitiful Miami Dolphins almost beat my beloved Pittsburgh Steelers November 26th on Monday Night Football. I blame global warming. Lightning delayed the kickoff 15 minutes. The constant downpour of rain delayed scoring nearly the entire game. Pittsburgh, a 17-point favorite, kicked a field goal with 17 seconds to play to escape with a 3-0 victory over the then winless Dolphins. The late November rain turned Pittsburgh’s grass field into mud, making players slip all over the place and allowing the Dolphins to compete with the much more talented Steelers. Many people criticized Pittsburgh’s grounds crew for the poor conditions. But Pittsburghers are accustomed to dealing with snow—not heavy rain—in late November. I don’t blame the grounds crew. I blame politicians.

President Bush has been perhaps the staunchest ally of global warming. Whether he is pulling out of the Kyoto Protocol, refusing to regulate power plants’ CO2 emissions, or failing to properly fund the Advanced Energy Initiative, Bush has always been there for global warming—even if he hasn’t always acknowledged its existence. Now that Bush believes in global warming, he believes we should work individually to fight the problem.

I try to do my part. The thermostat in my apartment has barely crept above 60 degrees in the past four years, some of my light bulbs are compact fluorescent, and I once ordered An Inconvenient Truth on Netflix. Still, I have to use electricity to watch the Steelers play on television. If power plants were more efficient, I would be a more environmentally friendly Steelers fan with no effort.

When the Steelers are not locally broadcast, I have to drive my car to the sports bar to watch the game. If cars were more fuel efficient—which could be mandated through more aggressive federal standards—I would be a more environmentally friendly Steelers fan. People must drive and use electricity in their daily lives. But as individuals we have no power to make daily decisions about the efficiency of power plants or fuel efficiency of cars. These changes must come at the level of federal policy.

“As individuals we have no power to make decisions about the efficiency of power plants or...cars. These changes must come at the level of federal policy.”

Most environmentalists believe a Democrat in the White House would improve our policies that effect global warming. But while a variety of environmental organizations have endorsed various Democratic presidential hopefuls, I have yet to throw my weight (175 pounds at time of printing) behind any of them. The Democratic candidates generally have better environmental records than their Republican counterparts. Still, I am not convinced any of the Democrats are committed to making the drastic changes necessary to substantially...continued on page 19
Humanities Conference
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Auditorium nearly filled to capacity. Open to the public, Mercer’s audience was well-represented by both students, faculty, in addition to invited guests from other art and art history programs, including a group of students from Yale University. International guests also included a group from as far abroad as Australia.

“Art history can also be social history. . . by looking at art as historical artifacts.”

Social History Via Art
Chris Tucker

On November 13, the Hood Museum hosted one of their popular afternoon Gallery Talks, entitled “Teaching Social History Through American Art.” The lecture was given by Mary Coffey, Assistant Professor of Art History at Dartmouth, and Professor Coffey used the Hood’s exhibit “American Art at Dartmouth: Highlights from the Hood Museum of Art” to discuss how she uses social history to teach art in her survey courses.

The talk focused on several portraits which demonstrate how social history can influence the perception of fine art. With The Reverend Eleazar Wheelock, Coffey discussed how artist Joseph Steward uses small, seemingly minute details to signify class and stature. Coffey also focused on the portraits of Daniel Webster’s two wives, Mrs. Daniel (Grace Fletcher) Webster by Chester Harding and Caroline LeRoy Webster by George Peter Alexander Healy, which depict the differences in how artists and the public once portrayed women. All the aforementioned portraits, as well as others, are on display on the second floor of the Hood Museum.

Coffey also discussed how American art can be very useful to portray the differences between the America of today and the America of 300 years ago, specifically highlighting the unrest attached to movements involving women, Native Americans, and African Americans. Art history can also be social history, Coffey argues, and by looking at art as historical artifacts, students and instructors alike can better understand the periods of social turmoil in American history.
Dartmouth presents **Hair!**

Chris Tucker

In November, the Dartmouth College Theater Department presented their production of *Hair!*, the 1960s musical celebration of sex, drugs, and rock ‘n roll that was labeled an “American Tribal Love-Rock Musical” upon its 1967 debut. The musical, once notorious for its harsh language, overt drug use and unabashed sexuality, is looked at today as a stunning portrayal of one of the most turbulent eras in American history. Running from November 8th - 11th and 14th - 17th, the cast of nearly thirty Dartmouth students did not disappoint.

The musical follows “the Tribe,” a group of long-haired, promiscuous, politically-rebellious bohemians living in New York City. The racially diverse Tribe, led by the free-spirited Berger (played by undergraduate Matthew Cohn ‘08) protest the Vietnam War and thrive on drugs and free love. Act I of the musical focuses primarily on Berger and his Tribe-mates, most notably Claude (performed on alternating nights by Joshua M. Feder ’08 and David Mavricos ‘10) who learns he has been drafted into the United States army. Act II takes place primarily during a psychedelic, drug-induced hallucination wherein Claude and the other members of the Tribe contemplate life, death, and their mortality as young Americans in times of turmoil.

The opening night performance of *Hair* was a boisterous, rowdy, and exhilarating display of college theater, the cast fully immersed in their respective roles. Through the music of the era, every member of the cast transformed the Hopkins Center stage into an electrifying portrait of the 1960s counterculture and sexual revolution. Several of the musical’s rousing numbers, such as

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Hair! The Musical
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“Aquarius,” “Hair,” and “Good Morning, Starshine,” became counterculture anthems and the importance of the music was not lost on director and co-choreographer Carol Dunne. In the program’s “Director Notes,” Dunne writes, “As Hair concludes with the hopeful ‘Let the Sunshine In,’ its anthem asks us to look within ourselves and find a way to make the world a better, more compassionate and peaceful place.” As anyone who was fortunate enough to see one of the sold-out performances can attest, the cast, crew, and especially the music of Dartmouth’s production of Hair not only entertained, but inspired as well.

Democratic Debate
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hopefully differentiate themselves from their competitors. Moderated by Tim Russert from NBC's Meet the Press, the debate covered hot-button issues including the war in Iraq, health care, and the environment. The candidates, however, seemed to do little to separate themselves from current front-runner Hillary Clinton. Many MALS students agreed that the biggest disappointment came from Obama, who seemed reluctant to challenge Clinton for fear of tarnishing his image of running a positive campaign.

While the auditorium itself was filled mostly with VIPs, students were able to watch the debate live at a watch party in Leede Arena. There, students debated with one another over the issues being brought to the forefront by the candidates, and shared opinions on how each candidate was performing on stage. Following the debate, several candidates arrived at Leede to speak directly with students, including Barack Obama, Bill Richardson, Dennis Kucinich, and Joe Biden.

Other candidate-oriented debate parties were held around Hanover, including a Clinton party at Ramunto's pizza, an Obama party at EBA's, and a Biden party at the Canoe Club. Although few could agree on a debate "winner" when asked, a poll conducted among the Dartmouth population showed that 34% believed Clinton won the debate, with Obama trailing in second with 26%.
Clinton and Obama

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difficulties brought on by the possibility of a black president would have likely been more obvious. But just as racial tensions in twenty-first century America are not clear-cut, the problems that Obama's run highlight are not as simple as the traditional fear that "whites would never elect a black person" concept, although that is still a part of it.

Instead, a large portion of this uncertainty goes beyond Obama's ability to be elected, and stems from a confusion about black identity in America. For example, Obama has been accused by some African-American groups as not really being "black" because he is not descended from African slaves, has a white mother, and grew up largely outside of the U.S. Other camps criticize him for his "whiteness" in personality and speech, or that he makes extensive efforts to appeal to white people, and, in doing so, is not really "black." Even more confusing is the sentiment among many black groups that Bill Clinton was really the first "African-American President," because of the Clintons' focus on minority rights and issues; Bill even set up his personal offices in Harlem after leaving the White House. As such, a large portion of that community retains loyalty to the Clinton camp, and may instead vote for Hillary as the "black" candidate.

Hillary’s candidacy addresses equally perplexing issues among women. Traditional wisdom would claim that women would see her as a figure representing equal opportunity, guaranteed protection of women’s rights, and a liberal role model for young women, while men would fear that she was too weak or emotional to be an effective leader. However, the issues surrounding her campaign are similarly complex and also speak to gender identity issues among Americans.

For example, rather than being criticized for being too emotional or feminine, Hillary is most

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curb global warming. I worry the environmentally friendly rhetoric of the Democratic primary campaigns will soften when the winner of the Democratic nomination moves away from the left and towards the center in the general election.

I especially worry about global warming lessening in importance in the general election after visiting the Lebanon offices of the top four Democratic candidates and finding the issue to already be marginalized in their primary election. Campaign workers in each office spent about 10 minutes telling me why I should vote for their respective candidate. Nobody mentioned global warming. I was especially bothered by the campaign workers inability to articulate their candidate’s plan for global warming when I pressed the issue. I heard these same campaign workers confidently express Senator Clinton’s health care plan, Senator Obama’s plan for governmental ethics reform, Governor Richardson’s determination for diplomacy and withdrawal from Iraq and Senator Edwards’ desire for “sweeping change” (I hope that includes climate change). These are the issues the candidates appear to be stressing to their campaign workers—not global warming.

These issues certainly are crucial. But global warming is also important and affects the other major issues. By awarding Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) the Nobel Peace Prize for 2007, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has already made the argument fighting global warming will reduce violent deaths.

Ice melt in Greenland reached record levels in 2007, including this large crack which split the main ice sheet in half. Photo courtesy PBS.org.

James Lovelock of Britain is just one of many prominent scientists that predict global warming will create a massive human health crisis over the next century, yet Senator Clinton’s health care plan mentioned nothing to address this dire threat. While other candidates’ economic reform plans don’t factor in climate change, global warming is already directly affecting the economy. My friends’ Christmas 2006 ski trip to Killington, VT was cut short when unusually warm weather closed down most of the slopes and cut revenue for the local ski industry. In the 1990s my stepfather ran a snow-removal business in southwestern Ohio that would no longer be profitable today. Because global warming is so
far-reaching, affecting so many aspects of our lives, it is going to control my vote.

I feel like no candidate wants my vote, because no candidate has convinced me global warming is on top of their platform. I’m not a Republican or a Democrat. I’m just a Steelers fan who likes to see Pittsburgh win—in the snow. I would also like to avoid the global crisis global warming could cause in my lifetime.

I just do not understand why global warming is not the most important issue. When a fire starts in your kitchen because you left the DiGiorno’s pizza in the oven too long you immediately extinguish the fire. Maybe you want to finish your Pilates exercises, pay your phone bill, feed the cat and register for your MALS classes. All of those things may be important. But they won’t be important if you don’t put first put out the fire.

The Democratic presidential hopefuls did not give me terrific analogies or hope for the fight against global warming when I visited their local offices. Instead they gave me campaign signs to put in my friends’ snow-covered lawn. Those MALS-educated friends quickly removed the signs. I hope the presidential candidates’ ideas to fight global warming prove more useful than their lawn signs. But I fear their ideas are fleeting and will melt like the snow on the ground when the primary season dries up.

For more information on how you can reduce carbon emissions, or how to help lobby policy makers in Washington to focus on the issue of climate change, visit STOPGLOBALWARMING.ORG.

Clinton and Obama

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often attacked by men for being too masculine, emotionally cold, and overly tough. Even her famous outfit of choice, the pantsuit (and how much choice in clothing do professional women have?) is routinely criticized for being unflattering. Compared with Obama’s emotional speeches and natural empathy, many men may vote for him as the “feminine” candidate.

Conversely, however, many women have labeled Clinton as weak for staying with her husband following his famous affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky during his Presidency, and called her out on the carpet for showing “cleavage” in one of her pantsuits. Yet, during her husband’s first term in office, so many women attacked Hillary for being super-liberal, even going so far as to claim she didn’t know how to bake cookies (a thinly-veiled attempt to call her a bad mother), that Hillary had to go on the Today Show and produce a dozen chocolate chip treats in order to prove the claim false. Now, many of those same women are calling her too conservative, and may end up voting for Obama as the “liberal” candidate.

As the race continues, I am fascinated to see how these issues - be they relevant to politics or not - play themselves out. If nothing else, these two campaigns are forcing Americans, whether we like it or not, to participate in the discussion of race and gender in the United States as we prepare ourselves for the leadership of either Clinton or Obama. . . or maybe even both.
Excerpt from
The Empty Church
by Chris Tucker

The funeral is in Rye, a small little beach town on the Seacoast, beyond Portsmouth and Hampton. I wake up at 9:00 so I can give myself plenty of time to get ready and drive down there for 11:00. I end up wearing wrinkled khaki Dockers and a plain white shirt along with my black corduroy sport coat, the same one I wore to Mass during high school. I don’t wear a tie. I call the store around 9:45 to tell them I need a half day and I can work the afternoon, but my boss tells me to take the whole day. Apparently they don’t need me. I’m tempted to call Amanda and see if she wants to ride together, but I’m not going to give her the satisfaction. I don’t want her to think she made my decision for me.

It’s raining. The only thing more tragic than a funeral is a funeral in the rain, I’ve decided. It’s as if God Himself is saying, “I know your loved one is dead, but asking for sunshine on the day of his burial is a bit too much, I think.” But then again, when you’re burying a son, I suppose the weather is the last thing on your mind.

I get to the church a little early, 10:40, and sit in a pew about 10 rows back from the
front. Already, I see a few folks from high school. Shane Thomas is sitting in the second row with a pretty girl I’ve never seen before. He turns, looks in my direction, and nods and I return the gesture; looking past him, I see the outstretched arms of Jesus Christ on the cross.

The place is starting to fill up and I end up having to move to the middle of my pew to make room for friends of the Collins’ family, who came all the way from New Jersey to attend the service. Amanda shows with about ten minutes to spare, and she sits down next to me. At about 10:55, Kelly Saunders starts to walk down the aisle holding her sister Irene’s hand. Their parents are already sitting, and the girls join them. Kelly’s wearing a subdued black skirt and black and white blouse. Her hair is down, unlike yesterday at the mall, and her face is a mess with smudged mascara and reapplied cover-up, as if someone tried to make it look better but gave up after a few minutes. She’s so sad, it’s almost beautiful. It’s the sadness you see when there’s been real love lost. For the first time, I get what Dad meant about the church feeling empty.

After the service ends, I stay seated while the church empties around me. I see several more of my old classmates and most of them nod towards me, or I to them, and for a few minutes while they’re all filing out, I feel alone. Not in the sense that I don’t know these people anymore, or that we don’t owe each other anything, or that they all have their degrees and nice jobs and I have nothing; just in the sense that we all feel alone. Every one of us will leave this afternoon and go back to our normal lives, and in a few weeks Rob will just be a passing memory. Kelly will probably get married one day and have some kids. Even Rob’s family will get by all right, I think. But at this moment, as the casket is being lifted into the hearse, as I slowly start to walk outside, as the rain begins to stop, we’re all left alone to our thoughts, feelings, and anxieties.

As I step out into the church parking lot, I see the back of Irene Saunders’ head, and a few steps behind her is Kelly, slowly making her way towards their car. I say goodbye to Amanda, give her a quick peck on the cheek, and follow Kelly. What starts off as a brisk walk slowly turns into a slow run as I try to catch up to her. Like yesterday, she’s close enough for me to touch her just slightly on the shoulder, and she jumps slightly; nevertheless, she stops, turns, and looks at me. Her eyes are full.

“Kelly,” I say, putting my hand on her left arm. “I’m sorry.”

She smiles faintly, and turns to go with her family.

As she gets in the backseat of her father’s Subaru, the sun breaks through the clouds and warms the day.

Have a piece of creative writing you would like to share?

E-mail our Creative Writing Editor, Caitlin Scuderi, or the MALS Quarterly - subject line: Writer’s Corner
Reflections on the American Politik

Jacqueline Sievert

I’m not surprised at all to hear reports out of Moscow of intimidation of voters and threats on behalf of Vladimir Putin’s party in the recent parliamentary election. Nor am I really that surprised he has set his sights on the role of the Prime Minister once he is no longer constitutionally able to retain the office of President. And it’s really not alarming to hear of his connection with less than law-abiding and well-connected Russian businessmen. It doesn’t surprise me because Russia has not always been known for its open and transparent government.

What does surprise me, more accurately deeply saddens me, is that as our own Presidential election approaches, some of our front runners have had similar dealings with shady characters, but we don’t seem all that concerned.

Since this past August, multiple candidates have had close donors or colleagues indicted on charges ranging from fraud and conspiracy to lying to federal agents. This trend is not party specific as front runners Hillary Clinton and Rudy Giuliani have both found their friends in hot water. One Hillary donor had been a fugitive of the federal government for sixteen years and has been a major contributor to her campaigns for nearly half that time. Close personal friend of Giuliani and former head of the New York City Police, Bernard Kerlik, turned himself in after receiving word of his 16-count indictment. What is most shocking is not that these events have occurred at all, but that the media and voters fail to be surprised by their actions. We have come to accept that politicians are less than honest with their constituents and supporters.

Clinton and Giuliani have denounced their connections with the indicted colleagues in speeches claiming to apologize for their mistakes, or the inability to thoroughly investigate the backgrounds of their numerous donors and volunteers. And it is easy to say that we should overlook a few faux pas in the light of all the positive improvements they have made on behalf of their communities. However, is it too much to ask that...
our elected representatives earn their positions solely based on their merits, and they only deal with people who operate in accordance with the laws of the country they are one day hoping to lead?

“How can we continue to advocate being the truest form of democracy if we are not concerned that the leading candidates already have connections with criminals, dirty businessmen, and fraudulent fundraisers?”

If this were any other democratic nation in the world, would we not be the first to speak out about corrupted elected officials and demand changes in their election process? How can we continue to advocate being the truest form of democracy if we are not concerned that the leading candidates already have connections with criminals, dirty businessmen, and fraudulent fundraisers? Isn’t it time the American public starts taking notice of just who we are supporting and start demanding candidates who do not deal with individuals who feel they are above the rule of law. Personally, I feel we deserve the honesty that these candidates claim to be giving to us, and believe its truly time for a change, not only in the nature of politicians, but in the standards we voters have for our candidates.

Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Senator Hillary Clinton discuss policy. Photo courtesy The New York Post online.

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IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

One of the most unique things about the MALS program is the diversity of its student population and the cultural investigations which MALS students pursue while at Dartmouth. In our next issue, we’ll look at multiculturalism and its study in the MALS program.