



# The Delbarton Courier

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## An Interview with THE Mr. Christopher Opisso: A Delbarton Legend in the Making

John Morris '09 — Inhabiting the first floor of Old Main is a teacher that only a few lucky students have had the pleasure to study under. Another select few have been able to work closely with him on *The Archway*, Delbarton's yearbook. Whether it be instilling values in the classroom or on the lacrosse field, after only two years as a member of the school community, this man has cemented his position as one of the most popular teachers and one of the most respected. His name is Mr. Christopher Opisso, and here is an insight into the future of the Delbarton faculty:

**The Courier:** Please state your name for the record.

**Mr. Opisso:** Mr. Christopher M. Opisso. Born and raised in Bay Shore, NY on the South Shore of Long Island. The third of 4 boys, including my twin brother whom I've got beat by two minutes.

**TC:** Quite an accomplishment. In a complete non-sequitur, is it true you live on campus with a few other legendary gentlemen?

**CO:** No, I live alone. In the vicinity of legendary gentlemen, but alone.

**TC:** Let's get the obvious out of the way: Do you have any hidden talents/secret identities?

**CO:** I'm not sure about the hidden talents part, but my secret identity was revealed by a con-

tributor to the Delbarton Archway student surveys last year.

**TC:** And, with it being a secret identity, I wouldn't expect you to reveal it on the front page of such a widely circulated periodical like this. Anyway, how'd you come to work at Delbarton and why pick this fine institution?

**CO:** A few reasons, not the least significant of which was the fact that I went to college with a couple of Delbarton guys who were (and still are) absolutely obsessed with this place. So, yeah, they certainly helped steer me in Delbarton's direction. And as for why, c'mon.

**TC:** You're right, you're right. Now... complete the phrase without thinking: (1) High School \_\_\_\_\_ (2) Sloppy \_\_\_\_\_ (3) Delbarton \_\_\_\_\_.

**CO:** I'm not good at these types of things, but definitely Sloppy Joes.

**TC:** If you could have had any of your colleagues as a teacher when you were in high school, who would it be?

**CO:** Mr. Goodale. He's a fine man and a great story teller. Oh, and Mr. Sanfacon, too, for sure.

**TC:** To reveal more about the true nature of your inner character, I thought *The Courier* should force you to make some tough

choices.: So, Harry Connick Jr., Harry Potter, or Harry Truman? Why?

**CO:** Harry Truman. The buck stops with him.

**TC:** Daniel Day-Lewis, Daniel Boone, or Daniel Sonpal? Why?

**CO:** Sonpal, because if this article is half as good as his was, I'll consider it a success.

**TC:** Dane Cook or Chris Rock?

**CO:** Chris Rock. I never really got into the Dane Cook craze.

**TC:** Good man, me, too. If you could see any band live, what would it be?

**CO:** Billy Joel. It's a Long Island thing.

**TC:** Dinner with any three people, living or dead, real or imagined:

**CO:** Ralph Bekkevold (my grandfather), Joseph Campbell, and my future wife.

**TC:** When I said imagined, I meant like some character, but I'll let that slide. Moving on, *The*

*Delbarton Courier* or *The New York Times*. (Think long and hard considering I can manipulate anything you say.)

**CO:** You guys, of course. You're writing a feature article on me!

**TC:** This is your chance to speak to all of Delbarton directly. What else do you want to say?

**CO:** Well. I've always been a big fan of quotes. I think we should pay close attention to these quotations that are always popping up in our lives, especially in school. You know, "Carpe Diem" and the like. But we shouldn't just relish them in passing. Take the ones you like with you. Write them in your notebook or hang them up next to your bed. And really try to live by them once in a while. The other day I was falling asleep on my couch on a nice Saturday afternoon and one popped into my head. I got up, went to the gym, read the newspaper, called a few buddies from home and then had myself a nice lunch. This might not be your idea of seizing the day, but whatever it is, these pithy little phrases can be gems of inspiration.

## The Best in Morris County

Keith Levinsky '09 — After suffering a concussion early in the season, Delbarton Soccer Captain Shane Conlin '09 was Delbarton's ball boy for several games. He told a reporter that the job "required special skill." Once Shane had conquered the art of being a ball boy, he returned from his injury and was able to lead the Green Wave to a Morris County Championship and the New Jersey North State Finals. Last month, Shane's incredible efforts were recognized by the Morris County Coach's Association as he was named the Morris County Player of the Year. Shane finished the season with twelve goals and three assists and was

among the top point-getters in Morris County for much of the season. In Delbarton's Morris County Tournament run, Conlin scored the game-winning goal in the quarter-finals against Roxbury and also scored in the semi-finals against Whippany Park. Shane was an important leader for the Green Wave who primarily led by example but did give some impassioned speeches. He was also selected to the first-team All-State, All-Morris County, and All-Northern Hills Conference teams. Shane will attend Colgate next year to play soccer and will certainly be missed next year.

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## Letter from the Editor

## Opinion & Editorial

### The Greatest Hits of President George W. Bush

Scott Ruesterholz '10 — On January 20<sup>th</sup>, President George W. Bush will once again be a private citizen; he will no longer carry the weight of the free world on his shoulders. In his eight years in office, America has faced historic challenges and has persevered with historic successes. Only history can fully judge the ability of Bush, but we should examine his legacy as it stands now to understand why his Presidency, contrary to his approval ratings, was an overall success.

Many Americans point to the economy when citing Bush's biggest failures; after all, 2008 was a dismal year. However in historical context, Bush was in fact an economic success. During the last years, unemployment averaged 5.25% lower than that of the Reagan administration. Moreover, GDP grew more under President Bush than it did under any other President. Yes, we are facing economic difficulties, but this economy is far better than the economy of the 1970's. Overall, Bush handled the economy pretty well, and now, we are experiencing the normal bust of an economic cycle.

However, Bush will be known for his foreign policy more so than his economic policy. On September 11, 2001, America was completely shaken. President Bush was the rock that we all could lean on. He and Rudy Giuliani were pillars of strength in one of the darkest times in American History.

Very few people remember that over 90% of America approved of Bush in the wake of 9/11. He will go down as a President who could inspire us when we needed inspiration.

Bush, of course, waged the war on terror, and he has dealt terrorism a mortal blow. Yes, he has mismanaged Iraq and Afghanistan, but these fronts have changed dramatically over the past few years.

Iraq has turned into a tremendous success, and we are in the middle of successfully building a staunch U.S. ally in the Middle East. Even Democrats admit that Iraq has been a success. New York Governor David Patterson called Iraq a "tremendous success," and Presi-

dent-Elect Barack Obama said that the "surge exceeded our wildest dreams." Bush took victory from the jaws of defeat in Iraq.

In Afghanistan, we have crippled Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. These groups realize that America has won in Iraq, so they are focusing solely on Afghanistan. As a result, this war has become much more challenging. It will be up to Obama to finish what Bush started.

There is also an assortment of issues that Bush should be remembered for. Katrina was a complete disaster. Our budget has been horrific. Russia has grown too strong too quickly. On the other hand, Bush has done tremendous things with AIDS in Africa. He has kept traditional family values intact. He has furthered race relations with his cabinet choices. He has guaranteed a somewhat conservative court for years to come.

Just like all Presidents, Bush has had his successes and his mistakes, but there is one issue that he has not received enough credit for:

Since 9/11, there have been zero attacks on U.S. soil. In that sense, the war on terror has been an absolute success. In 2001, everyone thought that another attack was imminent. President Bush has kept us safe for over seven years now; he has thwarted many cowardly terrorist attacks. For that, we owe the President immense gratitude. Keeping us safe was a tremendous accomplishment; it was nearly impossible to achieve.

Sure, it's easy to bash Bush, but he doesn't deserve a complete bashing. Yes, he deserves criticism, all Presidents do. He also deserves our respect, which the media refuses to give him. President Bush can sleep soundly at night because we have been safe under his careful watch.

Yes, he was no Reagan, but he was no Carter, either. I think history will judge him more kindly than it judges Bill Clinton. Overall, President George W. Bush was a "B" President.

Mr. President, thank you for all you have done the past eight years.

## The Delbarton Courier



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# Delbarton Life

## GIBBONS

Tommy Gibbons '09 — Every punishment, every meeting after class, and every code infraction are Delbarton Students getting the same Delbarton Students in trouble (besides the obvious fact that it was our actions that got us in trouble in the first place). Sometime a few years ago, we decided that we would like to submit ourselves to the school's rules and restrictions by coming to Delbarton. A similar parallel is that just how society chooses to tie one arm behind its back through censorship, we all decided that we need these rules just in case we might get a little out of line in the future. It's a powerful idea to think that when we show up a minute late to class and have to be sent down to get a late pass it is really ourselves who are levying the punishment. We all could have chosen to go to a school where tardiness and disobedience are tolerated (if such a school exists), but we realized that in that type of environment, we might not do nearly as well. We chose to have ourselves punished when we miss a class that we paid for (like a slap on our own wrist). School is interesting in this way. I'm not sure that at Disney World if you pay full admission and then decide not to show up, Mickey Mouse will hunt you down and put you on Space Mountain. Conversely, few institutions will allow the sales people or the corporation to waste the customer's time and money and get away with it. If a teacher shows up five minutes late to a

class of 15 people, they cost that entire class \$45 of tuition but they will undoubtedly go unpunished (multiply that cost by twelve for doing nothing during a long block). Conversely, that one minute that provoked being sent to the front office only cost the student \$.60, and it is of his own money nonetheless! This apparent injustice is actually quite fair for one sole reason: we chose it. We chose to have people make sure that we came to school on time so that we might actually be educated, and we chose to give the teachers the benefit of the doubt and put ourselves at the mercy of their discretion. Our parents and ourselves believed long ago that the faculty would know in the future what was best more than we would. They trusted that the teachers were using those 5 minutes purposefully. Maybe, just as a company will offer benefits in order to attract the best employees, the school believed it could woo the best teachers by giving the employees the most authority. Or, perhaps the school believed that the student consumer would learn better if he is subordinate to the service he paid for which includes parking behind, waiting in line after, and keeping outside of a garden and lounge. Whatever the reason may be, we gave a lump sum of money and freedom to Delbarton and said "teach, coach, and punish us however you think will work, and they do exactly that.

Will O'Donnell '11 — If a student popped their head inside the Fine Arts Center's auditorium on any given afternoon, they would currently see a collection of thespians, stage crew members, and teachers working feverishly. Why might one ask? Because every winter term, Mr. Conn adds another fantastic musical to his directing resume as the Abbey Players put on a stunning show. Almost a year ago, the performers blew audiences away with the classic show "South Pacific", flexing their creative and acting muscles as they took on a very popular and challenging show. However, if last year's cross-dressing sailors, Polynesian romances, and hard-to-get nurses didn't impress you enough, then the production of "Man of La Mancha" will surely put you over the edge.

Imagine this: it is the sixteenth century in Spain and tax collector/soldier/author Miguel de Cervantes (Pat Chiarolanzio) and his assistant, Sancho (Andrew MacMaster) are thrown into prison by the Spanish Inquisition. Soon after, the prisoners steal Cervantes's possessions, but he convinces them to allow him to win back a package that belonged to him. Pleading his case, Cervantes gives a dramatic defense by reenacting the story of Don Quixote of La Mancha: the passionate and poignant tale of a noble knight who lives in a world

of madness and cannot see that chivalry has died. Quixote falls in love with the fair maiden, Aldonza (Anna Dugan), and convinces her to live a moral life, for she is a prostitute. Aldonza is later assaulted, but Quixote and Sancho quickly come to her rescue. Moved by the story, the prisoners return Cervantes's manuscript just before he is called before the Inquisition.

Thus is the story of "Man of La Mancha". The musical has already been established as one of the classics of Broadway, and has been revived many times since. The standout ballad, "The Impossible Dream," has become a standard and is recognized as one of the greater Broadway numbers. Consequently, "Man of La Mancha" has become a beloved musical in modern theater and Mr. Conn and his performers will certainly do it no shame. Although the group will be presented with a very difficult challenge of meeting the standard set by the popular production, they will surely surpass all expectations as usual. With jail mates, prostitutes, and Spaniards dancing across the stage there will certainly be a reason to visit the Fine Arts Center on the first weekend of February.

Showtimes are February 6 and 7 at 7:30, and February 8 at 2:30.

## The Impossible Dream

## Shane Conlin Interview

*Continued from page 1*

**The Courier:** How does it feel to be the best player in Morris County?

**Shane Conlin:** It feels good to be one the best in Morris County because there are a lot of good players in Morris County. It is considered one of the best counties in New Jersey so it is an honor.

**TC:** You have been compared to Berbatov. How true are these comparisons? If you had a kid would you name him Berbatov?

**SC:** Berbatov is my favorite player. I think those comparisons are pretty true because we play similar positions, and we like to score goals. Unfortunately, I do not think I would name my kid Berbatov.

**TC:** What pre-game rituals do you have, if any?

**SC:** I always listen to the same

music. I also always wear the same undershirt, a blue Morris County undershirt.

**TC:** So you plan on going to Colgate. How much better you think you will be than all the players there? When do you plan on entering the MLS?

**SC:** I'm looking forward to going to Colgate. I think I will be a bit behind because I am young and inexperienced. I will go to the MLS after four years in college. I plan on graduating.

**TC:** Can you define a Donovanism? And what Donovanism is the best? Will you still eat the grass at Colgate?

**SC:** Donovanism is a weird and unique action of Coach David Donovan. My favorite one is the awkward silences he does in the huddle. No, I do not plan on eating grass at Colgate.

# Arts & Entertainment

## A Coming of 'Age' Party Gone Wrong

Andrew Flatley '11 — In November, alternative rock band "The Killers" released their third studio album "Day and Age." After the commercial success of their first two albums, titled "Hot Fuss" and "Sam's Town," it was no surprise that "Day and Age" debuted at number 1 on the charts in many countries, and sold in excess of 450,000 copies in its first week. The album was preceded by the single "Human," which peaked on the worldwide charts at number 3. The album itself was released with decent reviews, with an average user rating of 3.5 out of 5 stars on Rolling Stone Magazine's website. Here's rundown on each of the album's ten songs.

### "Losing Touch"

Analysis: The song speaks about somebody who is battling inner demons and who asks a close friend to help "Console me in my darkest hour." The song is a decent opening track, albeit slightly dull and repetitive at times.

Rating: B-

### "Human"

The acclaimed single, starts off with a quick beat, and front-man Brandon Flowers comes in quickly, singing about how "I did my best to notice" and advising you to "Close your eyes, clear your heart, cut the cord." The song's recognizable chorus asks the unusual question "Are we human, or are we dancer?" It is a decent song, tailor-made for pop radio.

Rating: B

### "Spaceman"

This song talks about someone being abducted by aliens, an unusual lyrical topic. However, the quick beat keeps you interested, and the topic of alien abduction is only detectable if you listen closely to the lyrics (a daunting task, considering the speed that Flowers sings them at). Overall, the song was my favorite on the album. Rating: A-

### "Joy Ride"

A song that begins with a funky drum beat, quickly leads into the first verse which sings about a girl "Stranded on the heat wave, burning with desire," who is "looking for a night-life." The funky beat, horn parts, and bongo-fueled drums help keep the instrumental interesting. Overall, it is a decent song. Rating: B

### "A Dustland Fairytale"

This slightly U2 sounding ballad talks about the love between a "slick chrome American prince," and a "Cinderella in a party dress."

The song is one of the best on the album with thoughtful lyrics and a good change of pace instrumentally. Rating: B+

### "This Is Your Life"

This song starts off with what appears to be tribal chanting, and then leads into a slow chiming guitar part. The lyrics talk about a girl named "Candy" who is in "wait for something better." They essentially talk about patience and how time will help you fulfill your dreams. It is a decent instrumental, but a just OK track overall. Rating: B-

### "I Can't Stay"

Largely a cappella vocals start this track, with only a quiet electronic bass-sounding beat to accompany Flowers's vocals that talk about how "the emotion it was electric." Interesting bongo beats and a harp part help the instrumental hold its own. Rating: B

### "Neon Tiger"

This song almost immediately leads into vocals, where Flowers uses the interesting metaphor of a "Neon Tiger," to discuss the contrast between the city and the countryside. He talks about a place "Far from the ever-green of old Assam," which he describes as "the wilder side of gold and glitz." The lyrics are interesting, but the instrumental is largely boring. Rating: B-

### "The World We Live In"

Another song with a vocal introduction, the slightly auto-tuned vocals and decent lyrics in which Flowers describes "The World We Live In" as a place where you struggle to achieve ultimate happiness. The instrumental is just OK, but the vocal styling makes it one of the better songs on the album. Rating: B+

### "Goodnight, Travel Well"

This song has a slow thumping beat, and starts off with an ominous sounding instrumental arrangement that sounds like it could have been in a horror movie. The vocals kick in with the same ominous feel, and the lyrics describe a sense of hopelessness in which Flowers says "There's nothing I can say, there's nothing I can do now." It is a decent ending track. Rating: B

The album reminded me a little of U2, but only in styling. It was decent, but by no means as good as "Hot Fuss," and perhaps not even as good as "Sam's Town."

## A Coming of 'Age' Party

Rob Frech '10 — The following four albums are the best that pop and rock had to offer in 2008. These records are more than just chart-toppers; they represent the creative leaps that pop and rock artists made this year.

TV on the Radio: *Dear Science*  
Overall rating: 4.5/5

Few will dispute that TV on the Radio's *Dear Science* deserves critical acclaim. Unlike previous TV on the Radio albums and EPs, *Dear Science*, the band's third full-length, has a sense of purpose, direction, and clarity. Groove-dictating guitar vamps provide funky foundations, burbling horn charts create swift dance impulses, and delicate string sections underline the aching melodies. This album has it all: from the pulsating afrobeats of "Red Dress" to the echoing piano chords of "Family Tree," *Dear Science* embodies a vast array of musical elements. My only criticism is that the vocals are a little weird on some tracks, but otherwise this is a great album. With images of war and economic desperation, this record sounded most like America in 2008.

Coldplay: *Viva La Vida or Death and All His Friends*  
Overall rating: 4.5/5

Coldplay got ambitious this year. As lead singer Chris Martin put it, the band wanted to write the "Great American Rock Album." Although Coldplay probably didn't write the greatest rock album ever, they sure came close. *Viva La Vida* represents a creative leap for Coldplay. With the help of

Talking Heads and U2 producer Brian Eno, the band drew on exotic instruments like Indian tablas and the Persian santur. Also, the band took on a new lyrical perspective; instead of writing about their own feelings, the group decided to comment on world events and culture.

Metallica: *Death Magnetic*  
Overall rating: 4/5

Death Magnetic represents Metallica becoming Metallica again. The band has returned to their original sound found on their trilogy of 80's albums: *Master of Puppets*, *Ride the Lightning*, and *And Justice for All*. The long, intricate songs Metallica offers on this album are ideal challenges for the Guitar Hero addicts who've made music video games big business. With the shortest track more than six minutes and the longest, "Suicide & Redemption," a ten minute instrumental, "Death Magnetic" requires listeners to put aside other distractions and immerse in the music.

Vampire Weekend: *Vampire Weekend*  
Overall rating: 4/5

The Columbia University grads that make up the band Vampire Weekend, with an average age of 23, create a suave sound that blends ska, new wave, and Afropop. The bouncing bass lines, tumbling drum patterns, and piping keyboards make this album sound modern and fresh. With their debut album, Vampire Weekend has already started to find a global sound.

## Arts & Entertainment

### A Hidden Gem from A Legendary American Punk-Rock Trio

Andrew Flatley '11— On September 21, 2004, world-famous punk rock artist Green Day released their seventh studio album, titled "American Idiot." The album, widely acclaimed by many as a "Punk-Rock Opera," told the story of a fictional character who calls himself "Saint Jimmy," and the "Jesus of Suburbia." The album experienced phenomenal success, selling 15 million copies worldwide to date. It is widely regarded by the public as the latest album from the band (which consists of front-man and guitarist Billy Joe Armstrong, bassist and back-up vocalist Mike Dirnt, and drummer Tre Cool). However, what most people do not know is that the band released an album called "Stop Drop and Roll!!!" on December 8, 2007, under the nom de plume "The Foxboro Hot Tubs." It didn't take long for Green Day fans to discover that the sixties sounding garage band was indeed their beloved Green Day, and soon lead singer Billy Joe Armstrong was forced to admit that "The only similarity between Green Day and The Foxboro Hot Tubs is that we are the same band." Four of the twelve tracks on "Stop Drop and Roll!!!" can be heard on the band's MySpace ([myspace.com/foxborohottubs](http://myspace.com/foxborohottubs)). However in order to hear the rest of the songs, you have to find them among internet torrents or on YouTube, because the songs, which were put up for download for five days on the band's MySpace have since been taken down, and are not currently for sale at any online or offline store. Being one of the lucky few to have downloaded the songs when they were posted, here is a track by track review of the album's twelve songs.

#### "Stop Drop and Roll"

**Analysis:** The song starts off with a quick driving riff, which is played for around twenty seconds until a quick drum fill leads into the main verse where Armstrong sings about a troubled teenager leading a crazy, party-fueled life. With lyrics like "Losing control, break my sanity," the song seems to be trying to portray a character similar to the aforementioned "Saint Jimmy"; one who's out of control lifestyle brings him to experience both pleasure and insanity. Overall the song is a pretty solid track. Rating: B+

#### "Mother Mary"

This song starts off with a similar-sounding riff, but it is played at a slower pace. The lyrics on this song seem to

mark it as a twisted love song, portraying disturbing images such as two lovers hanging together from gallows. However, the tune suggests otherwise, and without paying close attention to the lyrics the song can come across as a sweeter-sounding track. Overall, although it evokes disturbing images, such as the aforementioned gallows example, the song is one of the best songs on the EP. Rating: A

#### "Ruby Room"

The song starts off with a drum-roll which leads straight into the verse. In this song, Armstrong belts out lyrics about a boy succumbing to the world's many vices, such as "Gonna drink my hard-earned pay, Cause it doesn't matter anyway, Seein' double on a one last, one night stand!" Overall the song is a pretty typical song off the album. It isn't fantastic, but is a decent track with some interesting instrumental work (organ-sounding keyboards in the background of the verses and a decent guitar solo). Rating: B

#### "Red Tide"

The track begins with some sound-sampling, and then enters into a slow and very psychedelic sixties sounding verse. The lyrics describe a girl with a lack of ambition who in a psychedelic drug-influenced stupor wonders "Is this passion or...or your red tide?" Overall the song wasn't great, but the slow beat did subconsciously get my attention. Once again the track had interesting instrumentals and a particularly sixties garage-rock sounding guitar solo. Rating: B

#### "Broadway"

The song does not waste time getting to the point, with the opening verse stating "I'm just killing time now, I do it all the time now, and it's killing me." Overall the song seems to focus around the central theme of wasted youth and wasting time. It had an interesting change of pace towards the middle of the song when a crescendo of guitars and percussion lead into a quiet, relaxed drum beat and Billy Joe again singing the first verse in a soft, and slightly comforting voice. The song was one of my favorites on the album. Rating: A-

#### "She's a Saint, Not a Celebrity."

This song seems to reference the bible often, with lyrics like "I will be the leper. Read

me my last rite, a crippled believer, gimme sight." Other references include a lyric that says "Mary I'm crucified," and "Would you drink my wine." The song's instrumental parts are moderately straightforward. However, the overall tune of the song is very catchy. It is one of the better songs off the album. Rating: B+

#### "Sally"

"Sally" is a good track instrumentally, with unusual changes of pace throughout the song, many guitar and drum fills, and another interesting organ/keyboard part. The lyrics talk about fast motorcycles, and Armstrong continually encourages "Sally" to "Ride like the speed of light." It is a decent song but not one of the better tracks on the album. Rating: B-

#### "Alligator"

This song is a comic interpretation of a girlfriend of Armstrong's who apparently is a "space-invader," who is an "agitator" who is "is making your rounds." The song has a funky beat and funny lyrics and is an enjoyable listen. Rating: B+

#### "The Pedestrian"

The song has a very happy and upbeat tempo that makes it a very uplifting listen. The lyrics state "I don't need a reason to be a misfit," and describe how Armstrong feels that the character he is singing about is commonplace and "Pedestrian." Overall, it is a pretty good song. Rating: B+

#### "27<sup>TH</sup> Ave. Shuffle"

This song talks about the depressed views of a working-class person, who says in

melancholy fashion "Well if you call this living, I just wanna hang my head and cry." It has a quick beat and decent guitar and drum work. Rating: B

#### "Dark Side of Night"

This song is very unique as opposed to the relatively similar sounding first ten tracks. It starts off with a flute part, and has a slow and somber beat. It describes a "Killer's on the run, with a halo of lies." It has probably the most interesting instrumental of the album, and is one of the best songs. Rating: A-

#### "Little Pieces of Truth"

This song returns to the quick and upbeat style of the first ten tracks. It has one of the more interesting instrumentals with a beginning that includes a short intro guitar fill and a quick organ part. The instrumental also includes a short horn solo. The lyrics describe a situation involving a girlfriend who has apparently lied to Armstrong who states that he "Wonders what he got himself into." It is a pretty typical song by the band but overall, a good ending to the album. Rating: B+

Overall rating: B+

Overall Analysis: A good album, with many interesting songs. It was curious to hear a modern-punk band's interpretation of sixties rock. Only real flaw was that many songs sounded very similar.

Song to Listen To/Download When Available: "Mother Mary"

## Obama's First Steps

Charlie Patten '09 — The 2008 presidential election was one of the most captivating elections in American history. Debates raged back and forth for two long years before the ballots were finally counted. Now that Barack Obama has won and will be our 44<sup>th</sup> president, changing history books in the process, there is still a big question: what will he do while in office?

During the campaign, Obama intentionally sought the support of many different groups varying in ethnicity, race, political beliefs, and more. He has made promises to each in order to gain their trust and support. Now they expect him to follow through on the multiplicity of promises he made on the campaign trail. Obama will face many challenges and obstacles in order to live up to people's hopes, and although he has the support of a predominantly Democratic Congress, it will simply be impossible for him to satisfy everyone. There are certain problems our nation is facing that are clearly more pressing than others.

The first issue Obama must deal with is the economy. Without a strong economy, he will be greatly limited in many other areas. A poor economic situation affects the most people, and even has considerable global consequences. Fortunately, the president-elect has already shown that the economy is his primary focus. He chose his economic advisors early on, and is already putting together plans for a substantial stimulus package that could potentially reach \$1.3 trillion. Furthermore, Obama will likely make his promised tax cuts, which were a fundamental aspect of his campaign.

A second issue he needs to focus on early is that of energy. It

is by no means a problem that can be solved quickly, or even within his own presidency, but Obama holds a firm stance believing that Americans need to reduce their oil consumption and seek alternative energy sources. The sooner his New Energy Plan for America gets underway, the more likely it is to become a reality.

Finally, we can expect Obama to begin pulling out of the war in Iraq almost immediately. However, he has several other military aspirations that will likely be put on hold. These include securing all nuclear weapons and materials from terrorists and rogue states, and finishing the fight against al Qaeda and the Taliban.

During his campaign, our nation's health care was an important issue for Obama. He stated it was his goal to secure universal health care for the United States. While some believe that this issue is important enough for him to take immediate action upon entering office, his plans may not be feasible until the economy is back on track. Immigration and abortion laws were also topics of debate, but it is unlikely that the new president will consider them important enough to take immediate action. Obama has stated that abortion should be legalized, but he tried to take the middle ground on the issue, and failed to act decisively. As for immigration, he supports providing the twelve million illegal immigrants a clear path to citizenship.

One thing is clear, with the number of problems facing America today; Obama will have to make important decisions from day one. We can only wait and see which issues he chooses to act on first.

## Never Too Early to Look Ahead: NFL 2009

Dan McLaughlin '10 — With the 2008 NFL season drawing to a close, and a new year underway, it is time to take a quick preview at the 2009 season. As with every season, 2009 will be sure to have its fair share of surprises. Although it will be hard to follow up the 2008 campaign; a season where the Patriots went 11-5 without Pro-Bowler Tom Brady and yet failed to make the playoffs, Brett Favre was whisked to the Jets to save the franchise but instead sunk Eric Mangini's ship, the Detroit Lions managed to be the only team to ever go 0-16, and the previously 1-15 Dolphins rose to 11-5 to capture a division title. As football fans we can only hope that 2009 holds as much drama in store for us.

Presently there are four head coaching positions open in the league; the Jets, Lions, Raiders, and Rams. With the coveted Bill Cowher out of the mix (he will not coach anywhere in 2009) and Mike Shanahan also out of the running, the Jets next head coach will most likely be a young coordinator. At the top of their wish list is Giants defensive ace Steve Spagnuolo, followed by Ravens defensive coordinator Rex Ryan. However, the team has contacted ex-Ravens head coach Brian Billick, and he could be a possible fit for the job. Surprisingly, when the Browns took a hard look at ex-Jet Eric Mangini, he emerged as the frontrunner for the job; not long after, he won it. They have shown a strong interest in hiring the Patriots VP of football operations, Scott Pioli. If both Mangini and Pioli are hired, it would be a reunion of the two who both worked for the Patriots. As for the Lions, they have Spagnuolo and the Vikings defensive coordinator Leslie Frasier on their list. While the Lions head coaching job has been viewed as a dead end, there is no where to go but up for this winless team. However, the Lions are notorious for having at best five win seasons and damaging coaching careers (Steve Mariucci, Rod Marinelli). By far the most surprising of the

vacant spots was the Broncos job, after they fired fourteen year veteran and two time Super Bowl champion, Mike Shanahan. However, they have already hired former New England Patriots offensive coordinator, Josh McDaniels. The Raiders and Rams had interim head coaches in 2008, and I believe both Tom Cable (Raiders) and Jim Haslett (Rams) will return.

There were many surprise teams in 2008, most noticeably the Falcons and the Ravens, both of whom were guided to the playoffs by rookie quarterbacks. At this time last year nobody would have foreseen the sudden rises of these two franchises, the Ravens were just 5-11 and the Falcons were 4-12. Two teams who have the potential to shock the NFL in 2009 are the San Francisco 49ers and the Houston Texans. Both teams showed significant improvement in 2008, which should lead to promising 2009 campaigns. The fiery Mike Singletary took over for Mike Nolan after a 2-5 start, and he guided the team to a respectable 7-9 finish. Singletary, a hall of fame linebacker for the Bears, has won over the locker room and has given the 49ers a winning attitude. For 2009, Singletary will most likely bring in another quarterback to compete with Shaun Hill, despite his 5-3 record this season. The 49ers will also hire an offensive coordinator who favors the run more than Mike Martz did. This should bode well for the explosive Frank Gore, and he will be joined with tight-end Vernon Davis as critical offensive weapons. The Texans finished 8-8 in 2008 and are showing signs of improvement under Gary Kubiak. They have a young, versatile quarterback in Matt Schaub, and one of the best receivers in the game in Andre Johnson. The Texans lost four games in 2008 by seven points or fewer. If they win the close games in 2009, they will be a playoff team despite playing in the rough AFC South.