

# The Voice

A STUDENT FORUM

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Wake Technical Community College, Raleigh, North Carolina

Spring 2007

## Marchers Gather To Honor King, Carry on Dream

By Roger May

**R**ALEIGH—A crowd of more than 6,000 people, of all races and ages, gathered on the grounds of the state Capitol Jan. 15 to remember Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

As the crowd prepared for the 26th annual march, there were smiles, handshakes, hugs, even tears. Many in attendance were not even born when King delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech nearly 45 years ago. Others knew firsthand the history and struggle of the man they gathered to recognize.

Cee Niles, an African-American marcher and community activist, was especially pleased with the turnout in honor of King: “It occurred to me as I ate breakfast this morning, in the South, that I wouldn’t have been able to do something as simple as eat breakfast in a white-owned restaurant without the effort, commitment, and undying love of one individual who wasn’t afraid to take a stand.”

As marchers rounded Edenton Street, a few passersby joined, melting into the crowd. The procession moved around the Capitol to Fayetteville Street, directed by members of the Martin Luther King Celebration Committee, and continued down the street, steadily and deliberately singing *We Shall Overcome* and *This Little Light of Mine*.

“It was a fantastic turnout today,” Niles said. “Change has to start here in our community. I really feel a sense of community by being a part of this.”

*(Editor’s Note—May wrote this for Jou 110.)*

## Columnist Calls for Aid for Darfur

By Brian Freskos  
Co-editor

**P**ulitzer Prize-winning author and *New York Times* columnist Nicholas D. Kristof spoke recently to an audience at N.C. State in an attempt to draw public attention to the humanitarian “crisis” in the Darfur region of Sudan.

The speech came as conditions in the region continue to deteriorate as government-backed militias clash with Sudanese rebels.

Since fighting began some four years ago, the civilian death toll has continued to climb. Estimates vary, but CBC News puts the number dead at more than 200,000. Particularly troublesome, said Kristof, is the escalated attacks on humanitarian workers in the region—13 workers have died since May.

“We don’t know exactly how many people have died,” he said to a packed auditorium in Nelson Hall. “[But] when you go to Darfur, you see evil . . . We have to respond.”

But the escalated attacks on humanitarian workers have hindered what help and assistance could be coming to the region.

The International Crisis Group, a non-profit organization aimed at resolving armed conflict, said that

—continued on page 3



Participants in the 26th annual Martin Luther King March stand in front of the Capitol on Jan. 15. More than 6,000 people turned out for the event.

Roger May

## An Attitude: Success of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Brenda F. Allen

**M**artin Luther King Jr. was assassinated when I was a student at Virginia State University. Wake Tech’s celebration of his life, especially the eloquent recitation of his “I Have a Dream” speech by an 11-year-old, caused me to reflect on my journey related to his dream.

When I heard the news of his slaying, I went to the bathroom stall of my residence hall to cry, question and pray. I cried because I felt I had lost a friend, even though I had never met Dr. King other than through mass media. He had proven to be a friend, seeking to quench a thirst for freedom by using his gifts unselfishly. Secondly, there was a question about the fate of Negroes in America without such a gifted leader. Age-old questions came to me: Why do bad things happen to good people? Where do we go from here?

My prayer was that another leader would soon receive his mantle and faithfully promote the dream, encourage people everywhere to be of good courage, build coalitions to work peacefully, and challenge us by example to live by faith in God and love for each other.

It was not until many years after my college days that I traveled where King had in Atlanta and Memphis.

Last year when I walked the streets of the Sweet Auburn Historic District of Atlanta, it was with an attitude of gratitude. Now I reflect on him as one who helped me build a caring attitude, especially with compassion for those differences that make us unique through ethnicity, culture, language, religion, age, clothing, gender, sexual orientation, and working style. Still, I am challenged by Mahatma Ghandi’s words: “Be the change you want to see in the world.”

Considering King’s achievements, I evaluate my attitude toward people. Since I believe “She who learns teaches,” my goal is to continue to learn and teach others to value diversity in all of God’s creation. Dr. King not only encouraged us to appreciate differences and similarities, but he contributed to our understanding and desire for “an oasis of freedom and justice.” A better understanding of diversity supports positive behavior and relationships that enrich our lives, as we interact with individuals, communities, and groups. If we have his attitude, we shall always march ahead while knowing that we cannot turn back.

*(Editor’s Note—Allen wrote this for Eng. 273.)*

### Spring Semester Calendar

<b>March 20</b>	Last day to withdraw without penalty from Spring Semester	<b>April 6</b>	College Holiday
<b>April 3</b>	Spring Fling—Health Sciences Campus, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.	<b>April 25</b>	Fruit for Finals
<b>April 4</b>	Spring Fling—Main Campus, 11 a.m.–2 p.m. and 5–7 p.m.	<b>May 7</b>	Spring Semester ends
<b>April 5</b>	Faculty Professional Development—No classes for DAY students	<b>May 8–15</b>	Break for students
		<b>May 16</b>	Summer Semester begins

## Wake Tech's Newest: Simulation and Game Development Program

By Geanice Gee

“Simulation and Game” is a new Associate in Applied Science degree that has been available to Wake Tech students since Fall 2006. To obtain a degree, a student needs to complete 76 credit hours, but students can also receive a diploma.

Sebastian Mier plans to do big things with a degree in this field. “I want to work for a big company and while I’m doing that, I plan to earn a PhD,” he says.

Mier has numerous reasons for wanting a degree in this field: “I decided to major in the ‘Simulation and Game program’ because I really want to know what it takes to create a game, and I feel that this could be a big opportunity for me, but at the same time, I enjoy doing it and working with computer graphics,” he said.

He also would like to create video games: “I would like to work for the FBI or NASA doing simulation games for their company.”

According to a Feb. 27 article in the *News and Observer*, the program’s \$93,000 lab has 25 Alienware computer workstations and much has been funded by an \$850,000 grant from the National Science Foundation. In the Triangle there are more than 30 electronic entertainment developers, including Red Storm Entertainment, creators of the Tom Clancy “Ghost Recon” franchise.

Instructor Brad Swearingen told the newspaper that his students not only produce games, but study marketing and how to pitch games.

“We’re trying to give them some good entry level skills to go out into the entry level positions,” Swearingen said.

Students interested in this program can attend “Simulation and Game” meetings at noon Wednesdays in Puncher-Lemay 341. There also is a new game lab in Puncher-Lemay.

### SUM -i am

By John Medalla

Just being  
Not conforming  
A battle  
A war  
A struggle  
To be  
Who you are  
To love  
To personify  
Is beautiful  
Is everything

### The Voice

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The Voice can be read online at <http://www.waketech.edu/studlife/studentvoice/index.html>.

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We welcome your news and views. Please sign your name to submissions and include a telephone number of email address where you can be reached. Staff meetings are held from 11:10 a.m. to noon Tuesdays and Thursdays in Room 114 of Howell Library.

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### Reviews

## Casino Royale on DVD March 13 Look for Craig to Continue as Bond

By Isaac Hicks  
Co-editor

No other announcement rattled the halls of Moviedom more vigorously than confirmation of a new actor taking over the role of James Bond. Though Sean Connery became the definitive man behind the martini after his first line of dialogue in *Dr. No*, his followers have since become acquired tastes. George Lazenby was a disgrace to the role resulting in a brief Connery comeback, Roger Moore brilliantly introduced a more comely gumshoe, and Timothy Dalton hit the bullseye with his excellent pair of outings. It took two films for me to adjust to Pierce Brosnan, the fact that I was 9-years-old in 1995 when *GoldenEye* was released and had an immature understanding for the cinema in general being beside the point. Now, as a mature critic who proudly displays the entire Bond series on his DVD shelf, I believe it wasn’t until *Tomorrow Never Dies* that Brosnan found his stroke, and I say this after observing it in only the past few months.

Brosnan grew to be the best Bond besides Connery, which signaled a likely kick in the gut to the series when he left the role before *Casino Royale* was put into production. Who could possibly continue the savvy trend of one of the most talented actors the role will ever see? The answer comes in a puzzling form: Daniel Craig, a somehow unlikely candidate. When we first see him in *Casino Royale* he is already a calm and anticipating presence with his brownish blond hair, high cheekbones, and piercing blue eyes. Craig is aware of all the prejudgments surrounding him, and he dodges potential negative criticism almost right off the bat; the role fits him like a glove. He is smooth, charming, decadent, and puts on a great show when his character’s tree of action is ordered. You casually buy into the fact that this man is the cool action hero we all know and love, knowing that you’ll have to get used to him sooner or later, but it isn’t until the definitive moment that you realize he is such. Just shy of the halfway mark, when he struts onto the screen wearing a tuxedo, it hits you like a truck going at full speed: oh yes, he is James Bond.

*Casino Royale* is the 21st film in Hollywood’s most durable series. Not only are different Bond altogether; this Bond is young and agile, and has just received his double-O status with a pair of kills, which we see in the black-and-white introduction sequence. He is establishing the shaky relationship he will have with M (Judi Dench) for the rest of his career, which he believes will probably be a short while. “Double-ohs have a very short life expectancy,” Bond playfully utters to his boss, a line that earns a laugh of irony from the audience. At the dawn of his career, Bond probably doesn’t know his own strength. Still, here we are, watching a *Dr. No* prequel (shall we say?), and we all know what Bond will endure in his career. But since Bond grins when he says that, could it be possible that he knows what we already know about him?

Martin Campbell makes a glorious return to the series, having directed *GoldenEye*. So with a new film, a new actor, and a new Bond comes a seasoned director on top of everything. But Campbell doesn’t lead the production on a tango of high tech action sequences; his rejuvenation of the series resurrects the suspenseful prowls of the Connery and Moore eras. Q is out of the picture and his high tech gadgetry along with him, meaning that Bond typically uses nothing except his wits and stamina to get him out of close calls, and they are many.

Neal Purvis and Robert Wade, who penned *The World Is Not Enough* and *Die Another Day*, join forces with Paul Haggis, father of back-to-back best pictures *Million Dollar Baby* and *Crash*, to deliver what has to be the best story the series has unveiled in years. Bond’s first assignment lands him at the Casino Royale in Montenegro, where he enters a high-stakes poker tournament that pits him against Le Chiffre (Mads Mikkelsen), a terrorist financier who comes complete with the series’ almost mandatory “villain physical disfigurement policy”: a tendency to weep blood. Bond is an accomplished cards player, but so is Le Chiffre, and Bond’s mission to de-finance the mongrel proves more difficult than, say, trying to deprive a madman of his satellite/submarine/heat ray/warhead that will grant him world domination.

Our hero is assisted by Vesper Lynd (Eva Green), one of the most subtle of the Bond girls, who is a good card player herself, but not the kind that Bond is. Vesper has a lot depending on her (and so does Green) for she is a predecessor to Ursula Andress Honey Ryder. The romance between Bond and Vesper isn’t of the familiar sort; it is more emotional than physical, which is compensated for in the film’s final and unexpected half-hour.

Pervis, Wade, and Haggis demonstrate their impeccable senses of agility with a masterful screenplay, giving *Casino Royale* the kind of note-perfect touch that makes it the best installment since *Goldfinger*. But on the back lots of well-crafted brawls, hair-raising suspense, and a torture sequence that beats everything *Hostel* had to offer, is the suave and confident Craig, who takes the wheel of cinema’s most critical leading role and never allows the ride to slow down. He has an immediately encapsulating style that taps into the wonder of the secret agent himself, and he isn’t embarrassed to allow light comedic relief to convince us of who he is on-screen. When a bartender asks Bond if he wants his vodka martini shaken or stirred, Bond replies, “Do I look like I give a damn?” Bond is just now figuring out his charisma, and we have no trouble whatsoever realizing Craig’s charisma as Bond. And by the way, he will return.

### Review

## It Should Have Been More Original for a Pimp

By Charles Scales

Terrance Howard is a talented actor. His portrayal of a television director, whose entire life is changed by a racist interaction with a cop, was great. Now, if this were a review of Academy Award Winner *Crash*, then it would be a stellar review. Sadly, this is a review of *Hustle and Flow*, about the dreams of a low-level Memphis pimp. The main character Djay has this honor because, I assume, there’s more drama in a poor, weed-selling pimp with two working ladies, one toddler, and a pregnant former working lady than a poor guy who works two jobs to support his family. It seems the writers have crammed so many problems into Djay to make it easier for the audience to root for him, but it really isn’t.

This film is widely considered to be a drama, so I’m in the minority in thinking that it’s much more of a comedy. Hearing Howard’s Djay say “Mahne,” or as many people say it “Man,” a couple thousand times is enough to drive a “mahne” insane. The Memphis-inspired dialogue isn’t the main problem with this film.

Howard’s acting, and that of the cast, is actually decent, succeeding in making you believe they’re just citizens struggling and trying to survive in Memphis. It’s sad that they are saddled with a boring, generic story: Someone, in this case a pimp, is stuck in a dead-end job with no real future in sight. The road to boredom is stopped after a chance encounter with an old friend (or stranger) who brings out the dream and shows the main character has talent. He, in turn, makes some adjustments to change, but some in his life have grown accustomed to the old ways, so they try to bring down his dreams. This negative opinion causes him to stand up for his new dream and move on from the old ways, which leads to him finding a new love interest. With nose to the grindstone, complete with a “training” montage, this main character gets a shot at the big time.

This is where *Hustle and Flow* seems to have broken away from its cheat sheet. What’s odd is that the writer, Craig Brewer, actually decided to end it twice. Brewer has a great gritty ending, and then, out of nowhere, ends with a safe, cheap one. With the chance to be original, Brewer decided to do his best rendition of *8 Mile* and tie it with a pretty little bow.

Why is it that movies using rap as a plot device rarely take a chance when it comes down to the story structure or an ending? Considering rap is a music genre that is about being oneself and speaking one’s mind, Brewer had a chance to take the stage he was given to do something different as an allegory for what’s going on in the world of rap. It’s fitting that Hollywood’s rap movies now mimic the state of 90 percent of the rap world, a bland carbon copy of what’s worked before.



videota.com



imdb.com

## Review

**Happy Feet** on DVD March 27**Fun But Not Heartwarming**

By Isaac Hicks  
Co-editor



videota.com

March of the Penguins apparently failed to mention that its Antarctic objects of study share a common passion for singing. With *Happy Feet*, a beautiful canvas of realistic CGI adroitness, George Miller gives us a first class view of the world of penguins, the cold and icy continent of Antarctica hasn't looked this croakily lavish since *Alien vs. Predator*, all the more eloquent due to a tentative visual style. The technical showmanship demonstrates a curious notoriety of the story. Uncomfortably double-barreled, its squandering reach for an additional ten minutes of running time causing the romp to outstay its welcome, *Happy Feet* could have benefited from a storytelling facelift, although it all makes for a solely commendable animated endeavor.

We learn that a penguin's primary and mandatory purpose in life is to find his or her "heart song," a joyous tune that will define inner strengths and charisma through life, and these collaborative tunes fuel the sub-zero soires of these creatures. Elvis-reminiscent Memphis (voice of Hugh Jackman) and sweet Southern thang Norma Jean (voice of Nicole Kidman) have high hopes for their hatchling Mumble (voice of Elijah Wood). We know that the males stay with the unhatched eggs during the fishing season while the females travel to obtain food, and Memphis accidentally drops Mumble when he is still in the shell, retarding his cranial makeup and giving him the passion for dance instead of song. As Mumble grows into maturity, with his squeaky singing voice and his tapping feet rendering him an outcast among his peers, and his love for Gloria (voice of Brittany Murphy) at the service of timidity, the elders of the penguin community exile him because of his abnormal artistic ability (no one mentions that he doesn't even look like an Emperor penguin).

Mumble's absence from the herd grieves his parents but delights the anklebiters in the audience as our hero encounters an evil seal, assorted disasters, and a crew of small, feisty Latino penguins, headed by mini-man Ramon (voice of Robin Williams, who unsurprisingly steals the show), that serve up a lot of laughs. But eye-rolls and conformity commence as a third-act gimmick involving "aliens" (human beings) obtaining large amounts of fish from the colony presses Mumble to society, where his encounter with people makes for startling realistic animation and narrative hindrance. At this point, its pure socio-political opportunity, respecting one's environment being a drawn lesson that will pass the little ones by. *Happy Feet* is a fun-filled adventure, lovable and delightful (it would be criminal of me to not call it such), but it just wants to beat you into submission instead of capturing your heart.

## To Be Continued

By Shaheedah Darina Marti

Sun shining as the indecisive breeze dances with imperfect me. I am like that breeze, at times I come on too strong, not strong enough, and on good days just enough. Just enough to let my own natural self play its own melody. Yes, on those days my breeze dances perfectly. But oh how rare those days are, so it seems, or should I say, so I've been told. Every day my heart and mind console each other with known deception, I have no one. I am truly alone in all that I do. My heart and mind deceive each other purposely so that I stay strong and move on. How long can I play this charade with my life? How long can I hold on? My body and soul cry out for true, unconditional, respectful, and total love. A million thoughts and feelings circulate through my mind, which ones will come to surface I cannot foresee.

## Aid for Darfur —continued from page 1

humanitarian aid in the region is "catastrophic." The lack of aid is because of state-sponsored violence, lack of humanitarian strategic-planning, and the weak state of Sudanese refugees, the organization said.

Kristof condemned the Sudanese government for barring humanitarian workers from entering the region.

"The Sudanese government wants the aid workers out. I think they don't want any foreign witnesses," he said.

Another area of disturbance that Kristof touched on was the amount of sexual violence perpetrated against the women in Darfur. He gave several accounts of women being brutally raped and tortured by the state-sponsored militias. Many of these examples brought gasps from the crowd.

One example was of a girl who was kidnapped to be turned into a "sex-slave." When she was finally released after one week, she was so crippled from having her legs ripped open that she can no longer walk.

The crisis began in February 2003 when the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice Equality Movement—two rebel groups—took arms against the Sudanese government. The rebels claim that their region of the country, Darfur, has been neglected and marginalized.

According to the International Crisis Group, the Sudanese government responded to rebel attacks by hiring Arab militias, known as the "Janjaweed," to "clear out" civilian African tribes thought to be backing the rebellion.

Kristof ended his speech by calling on the public to persuade the United States into pressuring the Sudanese government to end the conflict. He was critical of President George Bush's administration for not providing any assistance or military presence.

"The Bush administration has taken away that hurdle where you can call something 'genocide,' and not do anything about it," he said. "I've seen a lot of people die from things like AIDS, but nothing touches me more than a government choosing kids based on tribe [or] skin color, and then throwing them in a bonfire."

The United Nations has stepped up assistance to what it has called "the worst humanitarian crisis in the world." On Aug. 31, the UN called for increasing its presence in Sudan by expanding the *Security Council Resolution 1706* to involve their deployment to Darfur.

Kristof cited deterrents, like the war in Iraq, that may have hindered the United States' ability to become directly involved.

He wants the United States to "raise the cost" on the Sudanese government by imposing sanctions and freezing international assets—a move that worked when the country was harboring Osama Bin Laden, he said.

Another possibility is to send in a high-level negotiator, or for Bush to make a visit to the area. But government involvement will only occur if the public pushes politicians.

"We have nothing to lose by speaking out," he said.

A peace agreement between the competing factions "may be conceivable," he said. The rebels are not asking for independence, but want more recognition from the Sudanese government.

Kristof is often credited with bringing the Darfur situation to the attention of the American public. Writing for *The New York Times* since 1984, he received a Pulitzer Prize in 1990 for his coverage of the democracy movement activities in China's Tiananmen Square. He has traveled to Sudan several times since the fighting started.

## Choosing a College: A Terrible Task

By Melanie Hudak

When I was still toddling around my parents' shag-carpeted living room, barely able to vocalize words, I was told I could be anything, go anywhere and do everything. Today, I still know that to be a truth. But with a mind this open and a world so big, it seems impossible for any college student to choose a major and stick with it.

Starting college at the age of 23 put me behind on the professional career schedule. I'm unsure if I'll ever have a husband and kids one day; but if I do, first I would like to be grounded in my career. I fear the situation of becoming the trapped housewife with no education and no skills, struck by divorce and thrown into independence with her only experience waiting tables.

I envision myself leaving a family at home and trudging in to a double shift at the local bistro. Servers barrel around corners running into everyone; plates crash to the floor. They deliver a ribeye that is undercooked, return with one that is overdone, and magically appear with coffee and dessert on the house, all within five minutes. Then the client responds with a 10 percent tip on the \$60 bill. But what can one expect with only a high school diploma?

Imagine you graduate from a four-year university with a bachelor's degree and venture out into the real world. What a surprise to find no one willing to pay decent money for jobs suited to your degrees. That is the scenario for a dear friend of mine with a large debt for college loans. Yet he stands right beside me in the restaurant biz, fighting with the line cook over a ramekin of Alfredo sauce.

There is another area of conflict that I must not neglect: college is expensive. All seems well when the government is throwing loans at me, yet it seems I purposefully forget that when I graduate, these loans will have to be paid back. The pressure is on when it comes to choosing a major because I need to choose one that will offer opportunities and help repay loans.

The issue I'm battling the most is that I want my career to be beneficial to the human race. Making money is not all I'm after. I want my career to make me happy for a lifetime. I believe happiness will come from a deep satisfaction of knowing that through my career I bring some form of healing to those who don't know how, or can't attain it.

I dream of going to underprivileged countries and teaching children the basics of math and reading. Yet, there are kids in our own country who struggle—I could stay and help them. Still, my experience and passion for the outdoors, along with my love of life and watching living things grow, tell me I should major in horticulture. My love of learning and ability to share that points to a major in early childhood education. However, my experience with drug and alcohol addiction, combined with a desire to turn that into something helpful and a source of comfort for others, screams that I master in psychology. All three are different careers, yet they lead to the same goal.

My history reveals that I have never been good at keeping with a goal. I know that many tasks take practice and persistence. I have learned that the more I put into something, the more I will receive. My history also uncovers the magic of avoidance. The longer I "forget" that I have to choose a major, the longer I will fool around without picking one.

As a result of these feelings, I have devised a few solutions. One, an interview—simply an interested college student speaking with a professional about a career. This could glorify or diminish a certain trade. I would ask what a typical day is like. Or does one have the opportunity to become one's own boss? What about hours and travel opportunities? What about diversity in the workplace? I'd want to know the insurance benefits. What about bonuses and vacation time?

I might also want to interview college students majoring in fields that interest me. I would ask how much study time is required to maintain a good GPA? This is an important question. I must maintain a full time job. I would ask if they have started their hunt for a career, and if so, have they hit many roadblocks? I would also ask if the universities have been much help in career assistance.

During the interview process, I may meet potential friends who share the same interests as I. Another avenue—getting a new job—could be helpful in my decision-making. I've thought of getting a job as a receptionist in a psychologist's office, or possibly scoring a spot at a troubled kids' wilderness camp.

Another option might be the power of prayer. I believe that if I pray about my trouble and turn it over to God, He will handle it, as long as I put forth some effort. Prayer has not let me down thus far, so I assume it will not fail me now. To watch for answers, I need to look to everyday encounters. I call these people "angels with skin." Through prayer, the benefits of having a problem lifted from my shoulders is always worth it. I would be free of the burden, free to learn without worry, and well aware that I will end up where I am supposed to be.

Looking forward, it seems that my problems are not so difficult. Actually, it looks like my problem is a blessing in disguise: In this process, I will have the opportunity to meet new, intelligent people who find joy in some of the same things I do. I will enjoy new experiences at new places and grow closer to God. All the professors, counselors and classmates I encounter just might be those "angels with skin" for me. They might be the ones to lead me into a career that will bring me joy and peace.

(Editor's Note—Hudak wrote this essay for Dr. Don Ball's Eng. 111.)



Wake Tech's SGA sponsored International Day Nov. 13 – 17 with many different nationalities represented. From dancing to sampling a variety of foods, students, staff and faculty had a great time. (Photos by Zita Resnais)



## Orientation

By John Medalla

a meeting of “unknowns” ambitions, dreams, ideas transferring through “self’s” creating a plethora of hope

## The Hollywood Trinity: American Filmmaking Innovators

By Isaac Hicks  
Co-editor

In all realms of artistic innovation, there is not a single aspect that fails to boast at least three great contributors. Art, for an example, would indubitably credit Michelangelo, Leonardo DaVinci, and Pablo Picasso for being the most ground-breaking individuals of the field, while science would most likely hail Ptolemy, Sir Isaac Newton, and Albert Einstein as its greatest radical champions.

Unrealized by many, the process of filmmaking is both an art and a science, and its greatest fieldsmen, or directors, are constantly debated about. There are three directors who have practically molded the face of modern film: Alfred Hitchcock, Steven Spielberg, and Quentin Tarantino. With very little difficulty, American patrons and critics alike accepted them, and they were then able to establish and execute their unique individual movie-making styles and focus in on their own range of subject matter. All three, each separated by a generation, have sewn their influences into the fabrics of Hollywood and American culture, providing rich social and humanistic commentaries throughout their careers.

As the sun rose on the movie industry during the early and middle parts of the 20th Century, a British director made his way to Hollywood after conducting a successful string of films with production companies in his homeland. His name was Alfred Hitchcock. At a time in which American society was experiencing the chaos of cultural transition, Hitchcock was brave enough to encapsulate the sense of wartime paranoia and spy intrigue with *Saboteur*, but his more interesting movie



was a dark take on peaceful American domesticity in *Shadow of a Doubt*. Hitchcock was avidly exploring “the opposition between the city — home of crime, sexual depravity, and lonely, familyless women to be preyed on by the likes of the Merry Widow killer — and the small town — home of family values, republican virtues, and quiet evenings at home spent reading gruesome accounts of murder” in his clouded tale of next-of-kin suspicion, critics said. The film transported the Americanized fear of unspeakable urban crimes and placed them at the heart of the suburban family, in the form of charming, handsome Uncle Charlie.

Critics immediately adored Hitchcock, but it was his method that crafted a more appealing notion. As the director continued to helm acclaimed motion pictures, he exercised his creativity with the camera. In *Rear Window*, Hitchcock utilizes his camera like a chess piece. When the point of view shifts to that of James Stewart, a laid-up photographer indulging in a spying endeavor on his neighbors, the camera maintains an unusual distance from most of the action in the nearby apartments. That extended scenario, along with the desolate “crop-dusting” episode from *North by Northwest*, the dizzying zoom-in pull-out shot on the winding staircase in *Vertigo*, and the patient and warranting angle used in the infamous “shower scene” from *Psycho* outlined the core focal points of Hitchcock cinema: a divine interest in the macabre, the dark cor-

ners of the soul, and a perverse emphasis on human potential, including blackmail, murder, and betrayal.

On the heels of Hitchcock rested a new generation of directors intent on delivering its brand of cinematic storytelling. As fantastical adventures such as *Jaws*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* began to horde theaters across the country, Steven Spielberg became one of the most talked-about sensations of the 1970s and early 1980s. His notable masterpiece, *E.T.: The Extra Terrestrial*, sparked a wave of attention from younger audiences and their parents, for his tale of a gentle little alien befriending a Californian boy stimulated the reaches of youthful fantasies and imagination. Many consider this to be the pivotal point in Spielberg's career, but his “saccharine image (created by *Close Encounters* and *E.T.*) as a filmmaker for children,” notes critic Donald R. Mott, was about to receive a mass reconsideration.



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*Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984) was Spielberg's step into a hailstorm of negative criticism. A violent and substantially dark sequel to the soaring *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the film featured adventurer Dr. Indiana Jones battling the forces of darkness and black magic. Spielberg cooked up a frightening viewing atmosphere, as he desired his whip-wielding hero to combat evil, supernaturally motivated villains that contrasted the power-hungry Nazis from *Raiders*. *Temple of Doom*, along with *Gremlins*, which was marketed as a soft and innocent family flick about furry little creatures but turned out to be the exact opposite, “reinforced the pressure to create a new rating for children under thirteen,” says Mott. Thus, the PG-13 rating, a bridge between the PG and the R, was born via Spielberg's two horrific pictures, and became established with the director's approval.

Spielberg's subject matter is one of unique diversity, and according to critic Roger Ebert, “no one else has put together a more popular body of work.” From gallant sci-fi tales such as *Jurassic Park* and *War of the Worlds* to powerful and important true stories such as *Saving Private Ryan* and *Munich*, the director has never aligned himself with any particular theme. However, Spielberg's very name has become synonymous with the visual definition of an epic. His films involve grand scale plots and settings that encapsulate the audience, and no matter what the film (*The Color Purple* or *Catch Me If You Can*), each one of his films is bubbling with its own sense of adventure.

Like Hitchcock, Spielberg's magic with the camera instills a sense of nobility in his films. His swooping shots and his tendency to keep the lense in one spot while capturing the entire relevancy “show Spielberg's storytelling abilities and an awareness of cinematic techniques such as montage and continuity,” notes Mott. Spielberg has always fascinated as a filmmaker, and his messages of wonder and hope have provided the American film industry with some of its most golden works.

While it appeared that Spielberg had finalized the image of modern film, all of that was drastically changed

in 1992 with the release of *Reservoir Dogs*. Met with mixed reviews by the mainstream, the ultraviolent, ultravulgar crime thriller announced the arrival of homage-paying writer-director Quentin Tarantino, a man who would later turn filmmaking on its head. Tarantino won over a rather large cult status with *Reservoir Dogs*, but the film industry, including international, was welcomed with open arms from the media. *Pulp Fiction* was an immediate hit, although some critics “weren't sure they should approve of a work of popular art so enjoyably and cleverly crafted,” said one. Tarantino's instant classic embraced the lurid, the violent, and the oddball spheres of life with a gallery of offbeat characters and a well-written screenplay. The aberrantly funny exchanges in the film's dialogue came “bursting off the screen like shrapnel,” writes reviewer Owen Gleiberman, illustrating Tarantino's enticing handling of his characters and their word choice.



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Tarantino's third film, the eagerly awaited *Jackie Brown*, was released only three years after *Pulp Fiction*. Like his earlier works, *Jackie Brown* painted a vividly entertaining portrait of the criminal world and swept the box office with critical acclaim, “revealing that Tarantino was “the real thing, and not just a two-film wonder boy,” writes Ebert. Tarantino followed up six years later with yet another acclaimed vision, *Kill Bill*, a two-part saga about an assassin's revenge against the associates who left her for dead. Unlike Spielberg, Tarantino's distinguishable theme is defined in every one of his works, which is the complex dynamics of the criminal mind. His characters are often social misfits, sociopaths, murderers, drug addicts, dealers, and thieves, all of them either wanting something more than what they have or something they can never have. His status as a America's most innovative new filmmaker has redefined the way many patrons approach movies, and his ability to create interesting characters and stories make him perhaps the most credible director of his generation.

To say that Hitchcock, Spielberg, and Tarantino are the innovators of American filmmaking is to allow countless other directors to go unchecked. In addition to these three being perhaps the greatest directors in the history of film, one can only argue that other storytellers such as Martin Scorsese and Clint Eastwood have made even greater contributions to the cornerstones of American movie-making. This “Hollywood Trinity” is only a matter of opinion, for three is too small a number and the finest directors are too many to narrow the argument down. Still, these three fieldsmen have done everything to hone the film industry, through their acceptance, their approaches to telling a story, and their meaningful subject matter. Of all the legends, these three men and their works will most certainly be treasured for generations to come.

(Editor's Note — Hicks wrote this essay for Susan Doody's Eng. 111.)