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"The God I believe in isn't short of cash, mister."

- Bono of U2

"The last temptation is the greatest treason / To do the right deed for the wrong reason.



— Thomas a' Becket from T.S. Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral

Te drives a Mercedes, lives in a \$685,000 home and says it is all in the name of God. He is the author of two bestsellers, and he leads a church of over 7,000 interdenominational members every Sunday and Wednesday. He has claimed to have healed over 1,000 people with his vast array of ailments. This "messenger of God" also has his own television show.

It's the Benny Hinn show. No, not "Benny Hill," - although, at times the preacher with the anvil-shaped head can be just as outrageous. You probably have seen him when there was nothing on TV and you had to explore the dregs

of the cable-channel selection. But in the name of fairness, other televangelists, such as Robert Tilton, that Tammy Faye look-alike woman (I called the Trinity Broadcasting Network to find out her name, but the line was busy) and of course the infamous Jim Bakker himself, should not be forgotten.

Benny Hinn just happens to be the latest thing in the wonderful world of televangelism, a profession that boasts a casting call that I liken to a circus sideshow of freaks and heretics. Hinn also has a controversial past, present

and a doubtful future. Hinn realized it was God's will for him to preach when he was cured of a bad stuttering habit in the middle of his first sermon. His childhood friends don't remember anything

about a stuttering ailment, however. He also has had difficulties in verifying the 1,000 healings he boasts, a number which includes those who were healed while watching Hinn's show on TV.

Hinn is an easy target because he reeks of show business, from his Rolex watch and Armani suits to his outlandish style of healing. When a person with an ailment arises out of the audience to be healed, Hinn simply blows on them, and they fall backward into the arms of Hinn's minions. Hinn then dances a little jig

and is on to the next person.

When the show is almost over and there are many left to be "healed," Hinn announces that 'miracles have occurred." Then the television audience sees a bunch of people who had arrived in wheelchairs strutting clumsily down the aisles.

Not only are Hinn's fire and brimstone preaching methods an insult to religion in general, but his preposterous claims of healing that give false hope to the elderly and the sick are disgusting to watch.

Which is exactly why I called TCA cable to find out why this show is aired and who watch-

Local TCA Cable General Manager Randy Rogers says all channels are chosen because of customer preference, which begs the question, "who are the customers who watch Benny Hinn and other televangelists like him?"

Rogers says that although customer surveys show TRN as one of TCA's nels, once when the station considered dropping the channel, many people protested.

"The people who were against dropping the channel, though it is a gross generalization, were elderly people and others who weren't physically able to attend church," Rogers said. Hmmm – these also are the types of people

who always are being scammed by others just looking to make a buck. Beginning to sound familiar?

Televangelist Robert Tilton has hung up his Armani suit because of a \$50 million lawsuit accusing him of "intentional infliction of emotional

Tilton sent a letter to one of his "followers" foretelling of a "miracle day," and also mentioning to pay up on a previous pledge – the only problem was that the addressee had died two months before the letter was sent. Oops.

Tilton, who has been criticized in the past for ridiculing those who didn't have the "faith" to give more than a \$1,000 offering, recently lost 85 percent of his 8,000-member church. Seems someone wasn't pleased.

Hinn also has been criticized for the same under-handedness; a particular church service in 1992 was punctuated by a story of a man who went to heaven but was not permitted to see the Father, to which Hinn commented that the man probably never gave to the church - all while the offering plate was making its rounds.

All television preachers are not in it for the money. The "televangelist" - the character that brings to mind Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker, sex scandals and money-handling problems - is a gross misrepresentation of what religion and religious people are all about.

Kyle Littlefield is a senior journalism major

Is it time to give fascism a chance?

Citizens might better appreciate democracy in its absence

lose your ears, great Statue of Liberty.

I am about to advocate something blasphemous in this revered democracy that you call home.

Simply put, we need some more fascism in this great country of ours.

But wait, madam, I will say that I envy you. How proudly you must have smiled down on the free elections that took place in Haiti two weeks ago.

CHRIS

COLUMNIST

STIDVENT

As their country emerged from the shadow of the military junta that seized power there in 1991, Haitians responded enthusiastically to their chance to take part in the hallowed democratic process. Ninety percent of the eligible population, about 3.5 million popular programment and the units. about 3.5 million people, registered to vote.

Did you notice? People made their way to the polling places by walking for hours, sailing, riding donkeys and cramming themselves into trucks and buses. Clearly, these people planned to make full use of their newly-won voting rights.

How brightly our country must shine as a beacon to the rest of the world. We might have borrowed much of our constitu-tional structure from the British when we formed our own country, but everybody knows we still do the democracy thing the best.

The Haitian vote was viewed as a further trial f whether democracy could be conducted peacefully in a fragile new country.

Along with this test comes the feeling that the forces of democracy have triumphed over the dreaded military dictatorship that once unjustly

FRANK

COLUMNIST

STANFORD

held power there.

Miss Liberty, you could also pat yourself on the back when you witnessed the free elections taking place in South Africa last year. Anybody who watched the mile-long lines of formerly-oppressed blacks patiently waiting

their turn to vote could not help but feel that we Americans had played a crucial role in the bringing about of this event. But perhaps before we continue with our self-congratulations, we ought to take a closer look at our own country. Come closer, now. We do seem rather adept at helping other countries form

their own democracies, but how good are we at running our own? Ours is the country in which 54 percent of those eligible to vote actually voted in the last

presidential election. This was an improvement over the turnout in the 1988 elections, in which exactly half of the eligible populace went to the polls.

Ours is the country in which the voter partici-

pation percentages become increasingly dismal the more removed the races are from Washington. They haver in the low 40s for senatorial races

held in years when there is no presidential election. By the time we get down to local school board elections, those who do vote are usually directly related to the candidates running for office.

We have one of the lowest voter turnouts in the modern industrialized world.

Perhaps this apathy can be explained by the increased alienation from government that we Americans tend to feel.

Not only does our vote not make a difference, the people whom we do vote for do not respond to the requests of anybody but the wealthy special interests. So why should we vote? The demands of being both informed and of being a voter are a bit time-consuming.

Nobody ever made it clear to most Americans that, as members of a democracy, they would have to make a few intelligent decisions for themselves. At least under fascism, we would have fewer choices to make and more time to watch television.

And really, was voting ever in our contract? I don't recall agreeing to do anything besides pay

taxes in order to remain a citizen. And traveling to the polling places on something as primitive as a boat or a pack animal? What the hell did those Founding Fathers want from us anyway? Most of us probably would not even get out of bed to go vote if we lived in Haiti or South Africa.

Maybe our collective ignorance and apathy can be explained by the fact that we have things too easy. Who has to fight for voting rights for anybody anymore?

Women, minorities, teenagers, they all have the vote. Nobody has to march on Washington anymore because there isn't anything left for

which to march. Maybe we need a good fascist dictatorship in this country for about five years. Perhaps once we don't have the right to vote anymore, we will

wake up and fight to get it back.
So, until our voting turnout numbers increase and we start noticing that we are members of a democracy, I am going to be voting for the fascist party in every election. I bet those guys can really

shake things up. Now, if I can just remember to register.

Chris Stidvent is a senior philosophy major

Loss of hair should not mean loss of mind

ey baldy, grow some hair!" they yelled from a speeding Chevy Blazer.

"Who are those damn
high school kids screaming

at?" I thought to myself as I continued my walk Then I realized they were yelling at me. I was the "baldy" who provided momentary entertainment

for a bunch of kids. I felt like a hairless geriatric at the ripe old

age of 25. How could anyone possibly think I was bald? They must have been mistaken.

Maybe I just looked bald in the glare of sunlight. After all, it was a particularly bright sum-

Having been in the sun everyday for several months, my hair was almost white and could easily have been mistaken for a shining chrome

dome. It must have been the glare off my full head of hair that fooled them.

Or maybe my almost bouffant coiffure had lost its body from the humidity.

That's it, humidity Hell, my head looked like someone threw a bucket of water on it. I had only been walking for 15 minutes and was already sweating like Sen. Bob Packwood at a Now rally.

Using my hand as a squeegee, I had been flinging pints of perspiration off my scalp and matting down my usually wispy locks.

Those kids mistook blond, wet hair for bald-

ness, an easy mistake for anyone to make. Then I remembered how my high school friends and I would yell all kinds of things out of car windows at unsuspecting passers-by.

So when a truckload of hairy teen-agers zoomed past me, a little frustrated screaming aimed my way seemed understandable.



As I continued on my walk, I realized

how defensive my rationale had been.
Was my hair so thin that fellow human beings might feel it necessary to lean out of their cars and tell me about it? And if it was so sparse, why should I care? I'm still the same guy whether I look like Captain Picard or

But the truth is I am going bald, and I don't care what my hair looks like.

Most of it fell out one semester when I lived off of tortillas and cheap hot dogs made out of chicken buttholes.

Ever since, my scalp has been visible from all angles. When I go swimming, my hair looks like a mangy, wet possum died on my head. And when the sun is shining there really is a

glare. Those are the facts. My hair is leaving me and I can't do anything

Or can I? Each year American males spend countless millions of dollars trying to maintain a mane, and the options available to them are ridiculous

and expensive. By far, the stupidest method of "hair en-hancement" is the spray paint sold on late-

Some balding men actually spray this stuff on their heads – like mascara – to enlarge each hair. According to the commercial, chicks really dig it. Apparently, there's nothing women like more than running their fingers through hair that's really paint.

What about hair plugs or surgery? Can you say, "scalpels, blood and thousands of dollars?"

Forget it.

Hair weaving is big bucks too.

The president of Hair Club for Men is counting on it. Fake hairs are woven together with

real ones.
It's like having your own Chinese floor mat

on your head.
Wigs, toupees, rugs or whatever you call them, look fake. Even the expensive ones. Besides, it would be much more embarrassing to have the damn thing fall off than to just go

Anyway, anyone who would care if you're bald is as shallow as a frisbee.

Minoxidil, the drug found in Rogaine, is heroin for bald guys.

It really does facilitate hair growth, but it costs a fortune and you're hooked like a junkie. If you stop using it, the new hair falls right out. Whoopee. Then there's my favorite and least observable

method. It is used by bald guys who want to have hair like Fabio without the cost. All you have to do is twirl nine hairs in a coil

on the top of your head like an upside down Navaho basket. If that's not your style, you can flip a 14-inch sideburn clear over to the other side of your

face. No one ever notices. The most important and mentally healthy

way to deal with hair loss is to just accept it. No one cares if you're balding.

In fact, the only people who ever care are bald guys, and they should be working on their self

image, not their hair. So if you're a guy with thinning hair and a bunch of kids point at you and say, "Ha, Ha, you're bald," stand tall and be proud of yourself.

Know that baldness is a indication of a high testosterone level and a sure sign of maturity. Then point back at them and yell, "So's your

Frank Stanford is a graduate philosophy student



Kids should be taught about birth control

I am responding to Thomas Ashour's letter that was printed on June 29. Ashour states, "If you look at how our country is now, compared to how it was 35 years ago before contraceptives were available and somewhat reliable, you can see a huge difference." You sure can see a huge difference.

Thirty-five years ago, it was difficult for women to obtain birth control, especially if they were unmarried. As a result, many women ended up in an abortionist's dirty office.

These abortionists often were not even licensed doctors. In fact, many times they demanded sexual favors from women after they performed their services on their dirty tables with their unsterilized instruments. So if that is what Ashour meant, then he sure is right.

But I simply can't agree that things were better 35 years ago than they are now. It has clearly been shown that you can't force someone to remain abstinent by not giving them access to birth control. It just doesn't work.

Sure, kids need to be taught about abstinence, but they also need to be taught about birth control. The abortion rate in this country is as-

tounding.
Maybe if people were given better information and access to birth control, they wouldn't find themselves in a situation where they felt they needed an abortion.

> Kimberly Thomas Class of '95

Liddy deserves praise for talk show work

In response to the editorial on June 28, I want to congratulate the National Association of Radio Talk Show Hosts for bestowing upon G. Gordon Liddy the much deserved free-speech award.

Liddy is much maligned for his comments about shooting federal law enforcement officers. However, the liberal media chooses not to tell the whole story.

If taken in context, his comments make a lot of sense. The American public as well as The Battalion editorial board needs to understand what Liddy said.

His comments involved innocent, law-abiding citizens who are approached with gestapo-like tactics by federal agents in bullet proof vests. You either try to defend yourself or get shot. It is that simple. One such case involved Randy Weaver, a recluse living in the

Federal agents solicited Weaver to become an informant for them. When he refused, they sent an undercover agent to try to persuade him to sell a him a shotgun sawed

mountains with his family.

off one-inch shorter than the law Weaver consented. Later, dozens of federal agents surrounded his house. His little boy went outside to

draw water from the well. Federal agents shot him, his dog and his mother, who was holding a baby in Liddy should be commended for

denouncing conduct such as this by federal agents.

For once, the National Radio Talk Show Hosts got it right.

Thomas Wood Class of '94

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