

## Giving it the old college try Star of *Phantom Menace* trades movie scripts for textbooks

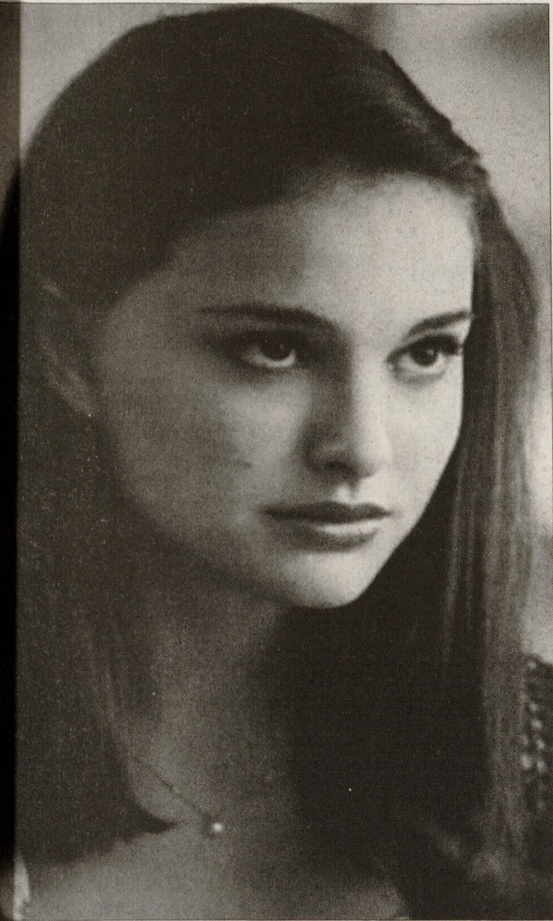


PHOTO COURTESY OF FOX 2000 PICTURES

Portman stars in the upcoming movie *Anywhere But Here*.

NEW YORK (AP) — Natalie Portman is going to hate herself in the morning.

Hate herself because there are dirty jeans and unread books piling up in her dorm room. Hate herself because she is here, hundreds of miles away, curled up on a sofa answering questions.

"It's so overwhelming. I have to go home after this and just cry over how much work I have," the 18-year-old college freshman, her eyes rolling heavenward said.

"I'm having the most amazing, amazing time. But it's really hard: balancing everything, taking care of yourself, setting your own limits, scheduling for yourself," she said.

"And, on top of that, you have to balance doing, like, your housework, too — which was never a part of the equation! All of a sudden, you have to do laundry and clean your sheets and vacuum and wash the toilets."

That is an image: Natalie Portman, the star of the summer's biggest smash hit and one of Hollywood's most sought-after young actresses, getting busy with a bathroom scrubber.

And why not? After all, that, too, is Portman, a teen-ager who rises to announce she needs "a potty break" or who pre-emptively apologizes for her "stinky feet" upon shedding her Guccis.

"I'm just trying to be true to who I am and not let anyone define me except for myself," she said. "I'm not trying to have a magazine call me the 'It Girl.'"

Perhaps "Lit Girl" would be better. Portman may have ruled a planet in the *Star Wars* prequel, but now she just wants to be one more stressed-out frosh lugging books across the quad.

"I've been so lucky to have these opportunities, but we have a way of making movie stars not mortal. We have a way of making them images rather than people, and they're human beings," she said.

"They're extraordinary at what they do, but so is my father who is a doctor, and no one ever freaked out about meeting him. No one would ever shake shaking his hand, but people meet me, and they'll shake, and they'll cry, and that's weird — and that's wrong."

Keeping Portman sane are her new college pals: the youngest speaker at the Million Man March; a cellist who has worked with Yo-Yo Ma; the poet-slash-artist down the hall; her roommate, a star tennis player.

"You should hear these kids!" she said. "I mean, these people are just all so fantastic in their own right that, you know, nothing I do is that impressive to them that they'd be overly interested in me."

Portman is as cagey as she is self-deprecating. She is an on-the-record vegetarian, a straight-A student, a teetotaler and an adamant nonsmoker. Drugs? Don't even think about it.

"I don't like it when people just assume they can smoke around me or do drugs around me," she said. "I think probably people view me as a goody-goody, which isn't necessarily true. I mean, I'm a human being. I'm not an angel."

There are areas, though, that Portman feels uncomfortable discussing. She shies away from referring to her hometown on New York's Long Island and the gossipy details of her life at Harvard University are not easily forthcoming. She's even registered under a different name at school.

### PLASMA

Continued from Page 4

only means and manner by which the administration or Johnny perpetuates? For the former, yes. For the latter, no. The donation of blood and the selling of plasma does benefit a good cause other than tamale money. It helps hospitals perform vital transfusions that keep people alive and well, namely Bing Crosby and his entourage of liver transplants.

But at the risk of sounding only slightly paranoid, one cannot help but wonder what the ulterior motives are for blood banks and plasma centers. Governmental storehouses of DNA? Sophisticated file cabinets of the future? Tracking systems designed to keep Americans under the wary eye of Big Brother? Hardly. These far-fetched conspiracy theories are as improbable as they are immature. They are merely the stuff of elementary imagination and modern ghost stories.

Blood banks are neither being utilized as a source of information about American citizens nor as identification systems for the nation's scattered denizens, or as any other ridiculous Hollywood-spawned notion. Rather, they are being used to assemble a su-

per soldier, a genetically engineered superior fighting machine with all the traits desired for combat: the discriminating eyes of a stock broker, the sharp hearing of a short-order deli cook, Schwarzenegger's propensity for kick-butt one-liners, and the overpowering brutality and cold impersonality of Bill Gates.

Thanks to blood banks, the soldier of the future will not only be the perfect killing machine but will also be able to predict market fluctuations and make a rocking club sandwich while saying an Arnold-esque "Your order is up," and all the while remain geeky. If we ever go to war against a country of software designers, we'll be sitting pretty (with or without a super soldier).

The super soldier scenario is admittedly fictional, although scientists are currently trying to splice the DNA of supermodels with the DNA of nymphomaniacs in hopes of finding a cure for what they term to be "cancer of the children."

But the advent of the gene market, the selling of desirable traits to covetous couples, epitomizes a scenario that is not too different from that of the super soldier. Specialists have come to call the probable outcome of genetic tampering and DNA marketing "the super suburbanite."

By skipping natural selection's middle man, about two to four million years, scientists hope to engineer a being with the ultimate urban survival ability.

With impeccable eyesight, foresight, hindsight and Lucite, the super suburbanite will be able to jump higher, shop thriffter, run faster and steal cable television faster than ever before.

But there is a downside to this vision of the perfect politically correct citizen. No one will know where others' traits came from.

The variations of gene sequences are endless, as will be the number of people one could contact while interacting with only one individual.

One could feasibly be romanticizing one's own grandmother without knowing it (a malady that will no longer be exclusive to residents of Arkansas).

This is not a call to cease donating blood or selling plasma. The probable bad is still overpowered by the realistic good, whether it be providing vital transfusions for medical patients or money for nachos magnificos.

— Jacob Huval is a sophomore English major

## TEACH?!

Perform one of the highest services—teach!

Teach at The Brazos School for Inquiry & Creativity, a new experimental school in North Bryan that serves many low-income students. The Brazos School for Inquiry and Creativity seeks undergraduate and graduate students interested in working with in grades K-12 on science or art projects. We seek arts and humanities majors—poets, painters, musicians, and dancers to teach 2-3 or more hours per week in the visual or performing arts. We also seek science majors to teach 2-3 or more hours per week in the physical, biological, or social sciences. A small honorarium will be paid.

For more information, please call 229-4652 or 229-4651

## Hope Pregnancy Centers OF BRAZOS VALLEY

### STILL HURTING FROM A PAST ABORTION?

- ◆ Grief Counseling
- ◆ Help for Symptoms of Abortion Trauma
- ◆ 10-week Recovery Program
- ◆ Emotional & Spiritual Support
- ◆ Free & Confidential

Call and ask for the PACE (Post Abortion Counseling & Education) Director.

846-1097

3620 E. 29TH ST • BRYAN  
www.rtis.com/hope

## STUDENT TRAVEL

London.....\$366  
Paris.....\$410  
Madrid.....\$457  
Tokyo.....\$837

Planning Trips  
for Generations  
X, Y, and Z.



(800) 777-0112

STA TRAVEL  
We've Been There.

## Are You Ready to Meet Your Lord?

Muslim Students' Association presents:

# Islam101: An Intro to Islam

Topic: Salvation and Afterlife

Thursday, Nov. 11  
@ 7pm in MSC 145

Free Admission! Free Refreshments!

For more info, call 846-7718 or email islam101@tamu.edu  
Visit our table in the MSC hallway every Wed. between 11:30 and 3pm

The Texas A&M University Student Media Board  
is accepting applications for

## Editor THE BATTALION

— Including radio and online editions —

Spring 2000

(The spring editor will serve from Jan. 10 through May 5, 2000)

Qualifications for editor in chief of *The Battalion* are:

- Be a Texas A&M student in good standing with the University and enrolled in at least six credit hours (unless fewer credits are required to graduate) during the term of office;
- Have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point ratio and at least a 2.00 grade point ratio in the semester immediately prior to the appointment, the semester of appointment and semester(s) (all summer course work is considered summer semester) during the term of office. In order for summer school grades to qualify as previous semester grades, a minimum of six hours must be taken during the course of either the fall or two summer session(s);
- Have completed JOUR 301 (Mass Communication, Law and Society), or equivalent;
- Have at least one year experience in a responsible editorial position on *The Battalion* or comparable daily college newspaper,
  - OR —
  - Have at least one year editorial experience on a commercial newspaper,
  - OR —
  - Have completed at least 12 hours journalism, including JOUR 203 and 303 (Media Writing I and II), and JOUR 304 (Editing for the Mass Media), or equivalent.

Application forms should be picked up and returned to Francia Cagle, Student Media Staff Assistant, in room 013D Reed McDonald Building. Deadline for submitting application: 4 p.m. Friday, Nov. 12, 1999. Applicants will be interviewed during the Student Media Board Meeting beginning at 4:15 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 16, 1999, in room 221F Reed McDonald.

An Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Employer. Committed to Diversity.

## PET PARADISE

1104 C Harvey Rd. College Station 693-4575  
1873 Briarcrest Bryan 774-PETS

HELP us Nov. 9- Dec. 15  
help PHOEBE'S HOME  
with your non perishable food donation  
you will receive

15% off  
your purchase  
and be eligible for  
other specials.

**PET PARADISE**  
Hairball Control™  
**\$2 Off**  
any size

Expires Dec. 31, 1999

\*Not valid on dog or cat food, aquariums and sales.



Don't Forget  
Us For

Lunch & Late Night

Pizza by the Slice  
Value Meals

Cheese & Drink	Specialty & Drink
\$2.25	\$2.75
1 Topping & Drink	Add a Slice
\$2.50	\$1.25

11 a.m. - 1 p.m. M-F at Northgate Location Only

1 Large 1 Topping  
**\$6.99**  
10 p.m. - Close

College Station 764-7272  
Bryan 268-7272  
TAMU/Northgate 846-3600

## WEDNESDAYS

will  
NEVER be  
the same

**TOM'S**  
Barbeque

3610 S. College (Bryan)  
846-4275

# MINISTER TURNED ATHEIST

Come hear Dan Barker of the  
Freedom From Religion Foundation  
talk about his transition  
7pm November 9th MSC 201  
by the Agnostic & Atheist Student Group