

## Armstrong exemplifies dedication

Lance Armstrong has yet again won the most celebrated event in cycling,



JONATHAN JONES

the Tour de France. But the Texan is now reaching toward yet another impressive milestone — the fifth-year anniversary of his battle with testicular cancer. Along the way, he has shown Americans the true meaning of being a hero. Armstrong has overcome great personal adversity and achieved the highest level of professional accomplishment. Fox News reports that for cancer survivors, the fifth anniversary is usually the date on which they can be declared cured. Doctors say Armstrong faces a one to two percent chance of recurrence. There is no greater gift that he could give to himself or the American public than to continue to demolish the difficulties that stand in his way.

Despite the negativity that surrounds professional athletes, the exploits of cycling's champion can teach us a great lesson. It is unfortunate that his feats tend to fade from the memory of even sporting enthusiasts. Last year, Armstrong was overshadowed by the incredible British Open victory of Tiger Woods, where he completed golf's career grand slam, at the age of 24. Now, the start of football training camps and rumors about the return of Michael Jordan to professional basketball seem to garner more attention than Armstrong's triumphs at the Tour de France.

Armstrong and his feats should be admired for reasons beyond just winning a race and holding cancer at bay. In cycling, participants compete not only against others, but their environment. An unparalleled amount of mental discipline is required to stay in the race. Explaining his calculated transformation from an ordinary, middle-of-the-pack participant to stage winner, Armstrong said, "I assumed that if I had to bluff, then they would ride even harder. In cycling, everybody is watching. I

know that [the team directors] are all sitting back there in the cars watching TV, and I can hear when a motorcycle comes up with a TV camera. Sometimes you have to play that game a little bit."

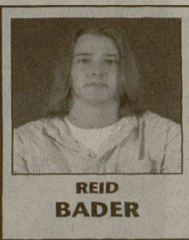
Armstrong stands out among athletes because he has added a third competitor to his human and environmental adversaries — himself. The Austin native could have retired as an eternal media darling after 1999's emotional race, when the media focused on his heartwarming story of overcoming cancer. But it was important to Armstrong that further goals be set and surpassed. He did that by winning the Tour de France last year. Then again this week, he surpassed even that by winning the crown jewel of cycling for the third consecutive year. Despite establishing himself as the best in the world at his profession, Armstrong still is not finished. "The fourth title is still the goal," he said after his triumph in Paris on Sunday. "The Tour de France is the most beautiful, the biggest and most special race in the world for me and for the United States."

His chief competitor, Jan Ullrich of Germany, finished a distant second. Ullrich said, "I tried everything to seek out the slightest weakness, but Lance didn't have any." A social theorist somewhere might be tempted to appoint Armstrong a representative of a "cancer survivor" winning his race. Armstrong is more than just that. He is a true hero, the type that is never satisfied with simply overcoming obstacles and pushing the limit. Instead, they want to the very best all the time, and then get better. They are constantly in a contest with themselves, determined to live to the highest standard of excellence. Lance Armstrong has the heart of a champion, leading the way for his admirers to aspire to similar heights. In a time when America needs heroes, there is one right in our backyard.

Jonathan Jones is a senior political science major.

## Social irresponsibility?

A new plan to take the battle against AIDS to the next level is already off on the wrong foot — and leading the plan into failure is the United States.



REID BADER

The plan, organized by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, focuses on the rampant growth of AIDS in Africa. Some nations there already have rates of infection so high that one in four adults are infected with HIV or AIDS. Annan's plan involves treatment, research and prevention. It is considered to have the most potential and to be the most aggressive AIDS-fighting program ever. However, the program will not come without a great price. It will cost somewhere between \$7 and \$10 billion per year.

Rather than shying away from the program, or saying it is far too expensive, the 'Group of Eight' nations have decided to offer it \$1.3 billion. The United States offered a mere \$300 million contribution.

This paltry \$300 million comes from a nation that is planning to spend \$60 billion on a national missile defense system over the next couple of years. So why does the United States not invest more of its money into AIDS research? Because it does not have to.

Leaders from all across the world are announcing how they have committed to the fight against HIV and AIDS. In Russia, newspapers are lauding President Putin's donation of \$20 million during a time of financial crisis.

Dr. Vadim Pokrovsky, Russia's leading epidemiologist and the head of the Russian AIDS Research Center said in the *Moscow Times*, "I'm glad that President Putin paid attention to the problems of AIDS."

The Chinese government proclaims that there are only 22,517 HIV-infected persons in China, the world's most

### U.S. falls short of expectations in AIDS funding for Africa

populous nation. Estimates from medical workers inside the country put this figure closer to one or two million. Perhaps this is how China justifies not contributing to the U.N. AIDS fund.

But the worst travesty is

merely are trying to give the people that voted for them warm, fuzzy feelings that will disappear when they realize that nothing of consequence is being done.

The richest nations were only able to donate \$1.3 billion to the cause this year. For the plan to re-

ally work, another \$5.7 billion must be found. The failure of the United States to donate a pertinent amount of money, thereby leading other nations into realizing what such a program can accomplish for the world, will result in a program that will forever be under-funded, underused and destined for failure.

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So why does the United States not invest more of its money into AIDS research? Because it does not have to.

the United States not taking a leadership role. This is a real chance for President George W. Bush to step up and make a commitment, at least, to slow down a virus that has claimed 22 million lives so

far. Instead, he relies on Secretary of State Colin Powell to act as a "yes" man.

Powell, who is leading a White House team examining the AIDS issue, has committed the United States to the cause since taking the helm of the Clinton-era group.

By announcing all these donations, and saying they reaffirm their commitment to the fight against AIDS, the United States and other governments of the world



ANGELIQUE FORD/THE BATTALION

## Early political activists had right idea

(U-WIRE) — This past weekend, in the small Italian port of Genoa, a protester was shot and killed by an Italian police officer as he approached a police jeep carrying a fire extinguisher, intending to throw it through a broken windshield and at the officer inside.

Some are already calling the 23-year-old protester, Carlo Giuliani, the first "martyr" of the anti-globalization cause. However, this simply cannot ring true. This man was no hero. Pictures published in many daily newspapers across the globe depict Giuliani attempting to hit the officer with the extinguisher, which would have had enough force to probably cave in his skull.

I will side with the police officer in this instance. He was guarding himself from an individual seemingly bent on injuring and perhaps even killing him. The officer was within all reason of shooting Giuliani. There are reports of at least 400 protesters being injured in clashes with police and 280 being arrested. This shows a violent mob, not a peaceful group wanting their voices heard.

However, this incident brings to light the increasing amount of violent activity that has become entangled with anti-globalization meetings over the recent years. Scenes of masked individuals spraying the anarchy symbol on the glass store fronts of the Gap in Seattle and protesters breaking through a police barricade in Ottawa, Canada have

become engraved in our minds. Such scenes will become much like the pictures of police attacking anti-war demonstrators in Chicago's Grant Park during the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

But the game has changed. Unlike the majority of the anti-Vietnam protests, our own are marked with violence. We didn't see hippies throwing bricks at national guardsmen at Kent State. We saw them approaching the guards with flowers.

Activists of a generation or two ago, such as Ghandi and Martin Luther King Jr. were right in their proposals that non-violent activism was the best way to persuade others to their particular cause.

The films of police dogs being used to attack blacks in Birmingham, or the scenes of the Alabama state police chasing down non-violent marchers shortly after they crossed the Pettus Bridge in Selma showed everyday Americans, especially those in middle-class homes, how the state officials were using excessive force to quell the non-violent movements.

However, when protesters turn to violence, they almost always isolate themselves from the very people they need to sway to their cause — the moderate, middle-class members of society. Had the marchers at Selma been carrying rocks, clubs and other weapons and fighting the

police, such a groundswell of support probably would not have occurred as it did. The police would have been perceived as enforcing the law against a violent mob.

Yes, the protests of today are needed as much as they were back in 1968, and I am happy to see people rallying behind what I see as a worthy cause. As with the protests against the World Trade Organization in Seattle two years ago and even this past weekend in Genoa, the vast majority of the protesters were non-violent activists, seeking only to display their support of the issue. However, a few violent ones ruined the limelight, and instead of headlines talking of a peaceful march, they screamed of yet more chaos and violence.

Our generation has long been searching for a cause of some sort that we can be active in fighting for or against. We have been perceived as a generation who does not care about the issues. It seems as though we have found our cause in the anti-globalization movement — one that fights indirectly to keep trade restrictions that keep jobs in America, and one that fights for the rights of less powerful countries than the one in which we live.

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### CARTOON OF THE DAY



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