

Breakdown

Stress causes problems in students' lives, but there are ways students can prevent and deal with it

By CRYSTAL DOBSON
THE BATTALION

Every year, the pressure of college life builds. It may seem as if professors think their classes are the most important and managers believe their employees should work more hours. In addition, friends may not understand that school must come first. After all, education is the reason students attend Texas A&M.

With so much going on in their lives, it is important for students to learn how to manage stress.

According to the MSN Health Website, the body's stress areas are the brain, heart, lungs, vessels and muscles. When stress persists, these parts can become chronically over- or under-activated. If this occurs, physical or psychological damage can accumulate over time.

The Website said that sleep plays a major role in dealing with stress. Eight hours of sleep each night is important to keep the body well-rested. By maintaining a regular sleep schedule, students are better able to deal with stress. However, unresolved tension from stress can cause insomnia, which will keep a stressed person awake or cause them to wake up during the night.

To maintain a stress-free year, it is necessary to keep the body healthy by eating the right foods. The Website said that a diet rich in a variety of whole grains, vegetables and fruits is important. Things to avoid are excessive alcohol, caffeine and tobacco.

According to the Website, stress has a significant effect on the brain, especially the memory. A typical victim of severe stress suffers loss of concentration and may become inefficient in their work and will be more accident-prone.

Learning to control

stress is a life-long process, and it will contribute to better health but also a greater ability to succeed with one's goals.

Some students prefer to make a "to-do" list.

"When I get overwhelmed, especially when I am studying, I make a list of all the things I have to accomplish," said Katie Dove, a junior marketing major. "I do this so I can allocate my time better, and when I finish things, they get crossed off my list so that I feel much more productive."

There are stress-management programs to help students develop methods to manage their stress. Student Counseling Services will hold a "Beat the Hell Outta Stress!" management program Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Memorial Student Center Flag Room and Rudder Fountain area. The program will include an information segment, a question and answer panel and a free screening for anxiety disorders.

The Website states that some evidence exists that stress-management

programs reduce the risk of heart problems by up to 75 percent in people with heart disease.

Some students emphasize leadership activities to avoid stress.

"What makes me stressed is the thought of a test coming up and putting off studying until the day before," said Nick Luton, a senior civil engineering major. "I deal with it when I realize there is a lot more you can learn from college than what you get out of a book. Stuff that will make you a better person in whatever you do and that if you build yourself up in leadership roles, then that time is much better spent than putting your nose in a book."

The Website said that cognitive-behavioral methods are effective ways to reduce stress. This includes identifying sources of stress, restructuring priorities, changing one's response to stress and finding methods for managing and reducing stress.

This is accomplished by first identifying the worst possible outcomes of a project. For example, a major is paper is due and the day before, the student's computer crashes. Students should rate the likelihood of this outcome happening. It is not very likely the computer will randomly crash. Students should envision the favorable result of turning the paper in early and receiving an 'A.' Then, students can develop a specific plan to achieve the 'A' on the paper or any other positive outcome.

Freshmen who never have experienced managing time on their own need help in realizing the importance of starting assignments early. Freshman architecture major April Schneider said she wishes she knew what lie ahead when she arrived at Texas A&M.

"I had no idea the scale of studying required when arriving at school," Schneider said. "But now, I have pin-pointed how to maintain satisfying grades which will help me have a successful college career."

Student Counseling Services employees are ready to assist students who need someone to talk to or advice.

Dr. Andrew Smith, associate director of counseling, believes that most of the stress is caused from time pressures students create for themselves.

"One of the challenges students face, especially freshmen, is how to manage their time," Smith said. "Planning ahead and managing time will help to reduce the stress. Another thing that helps is learning how to take care of yourself and acquiring healthy habits, such as a sufficient amount of sleep and a well balanced diet. It also is very important to recognize and predict when something is stressful and turn it into positive; keeping these things in mind should help a student to maintain a great semester."



AMEY BHAN • THE BATTALION

VOLUME CONTROL



Lil'O
Da Fat Rat Wit Da Cheeze
Atlantic Records

Lil'O is the rapper who "comes knee-drunk, ice-grilled, flexin' a flame." He is straight out of Houston, or affectionately, H-Town. The first track lets people know they are listening to "Da fat rat wit da cheeze." This track is somewhat typical of rap albums. It defines his prowess and lets listeners know he is controlling the box and that he shuts it down.

The second track, "The Throwdest," is nothing special and has some not-so-nice things to say about women.

At this point, listeners can skip ahead to "Beg, Steal and Borrow." This is the bass powerhouse of the album. Beyond that, it is a lament about the corrupt world and how he must "do what I got to, cause who is gonna feed me?"

These types of songs are all over the rap scene. It is reminiscent of Tupac's "Changes." The song talks about a horrible street situation, and Lil'O tells the kids, "If you ain't in these streets, stay the f-k away from these streets because these streets are nothing to play with; you feel me?"

This track is sad, and Lil'O begs the question, "What happened to the rules of the Lord? 'Thou shall not kill,' 'Thou shall not steal.' " Then Lil'O exclaims, "We need to pray to Christ ... cause I know everybody's tryin' to get 'em some wealth ... always got the plan, but the plan always fails, and we always end up dead or in jail."

Clearly this is an inspired track that carries political undertones and is socially identifiable.

Next, listeners hear the lines that have been grooving crowds all summer, "Back, back. Back, back. Gimme 50 feet." This

song is an instant hit. Songs like this crop up once in a while in the Bryan-College Station area and are usually from Houston. This is Lil' Troy's "Wanna Be a Balla" from 1999, Lil' Flip's "I Can Do That" from 2000 or St. Lunatics "Midwest Swing" from last spring. These songs fill the dance floors, and everybody will be moving their head to the snap of the snare. The best part is the bridge at 2:47. There is a prolonged hum in the background, and Lil' O begins, "I keep my game face on when I'm ridin' on chops ... lookin' like a snail crawlin' slow through the lot."

Throughout, this is a solid album with plenty of hits for dancing, cruising or just macking, with driving beats and nice flow via Lil'O, H-Town representative. (Grade: A)

— Kevin Burns



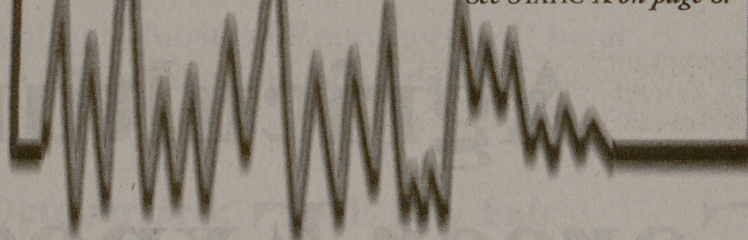
Static-X
Machine
Warner Bros. Music

Static-X rushes into a Pantera-like furor on the first track, "Bien Venidos." In the tradition of Ministry and Sepultura, lyrics are indecipherable and come out as caveman onomatopoeias: grunt, urgh, ger-rah, ahurrh.

Everything about this album is hardcore and relentless. Listeners may want to break something — a television, a car window or their own thumb. There are nihilistic forces underpinning the bar cords and upbeat 128 beats-per-minute drumming. The bridges, however, are softer.

Some listeners may have trouble handling the dark tones spawned, no doubt, from a murky self-existence. But, this is quite possibly a first CD choice for a short roadtrip to Austin or Dallas. With "This is Not" blaring in the background, listeners may find themselves thinking, "I

See STATIC-X on page 6.



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