Number of words: 579

Title: Where did the urgency go?

Dear Editor,

For a time, there was much talk about immigration reform. What it meant, what would happen, how long it would take to begin affecting families. Rallies and protests where abundant and it seemed that nothing would stop the need/want for change. T­­his is sadly not the case anymore. The interest for this cause had dwindled although the number of people affected did not.

According to the New York Times, people are being abused by Border Patrol Agents and more often than not no disciplinary action is taken against the agent. Approximately 97% of cases go un-resolved or completely ignored. Reports state multiple kinds of abuse ranging from physical, emotional, and sexual. Testimonials from people being harassed by Boarder Agents are not uncommon, so why is it that I had to search through pages and pages of articles to find it? Last summer one could not watch or read the news without some discussion on immigration reform coming up.

In the after math of Obama Care and other hot topic political issues Immigration reform was left to wait. Last year a bill that would offer a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants was passed through the Senate and has been waiting in the House ever since. Obama has spoken publicly about coming to more compromise on this bill. It seems like he may just want this over and done with as well, I could only hope that whatever “compromise” he is will in to do will not ultimately end in an even more unfair immigration process.

In the book *The Martian Chronicles* Ray Bradbury alludes to the immigration of a new people complete taking over a new land and disregarding its history and people. I believe that many American are afraid that this will be the case when immigrants have a chance to come to America legally. This, on many levels, is ridiculous. To start America is not a country with a long history of beloved culture, it is a mixture of cultures from around the world due to the “diversity” it sometimes likes to boast about. Most immigrants, from Mexico at least, want nothing more than a chance to live a better life. More often than not they send the majority of their money back to Mexico to support family. The fact that immigrants want a path to citizenship versus expecting outright acceptance should be even more proof that their actions are genuine.

Coming from an immigrant family this topic means a lot to me because people do not realize just how many people are affected. It is not simply the actual illegal immigrant but also their family and everyone who knows them. For months during my childhood I was terrified that my mother would be sent back to Mexico. That I, an American citizen, would never again get the chance to see my mother just because years earlier her own parents refused to wait any longer for the American government. I was lucky and eventually got to see my mother again, others are not so lucky. According to the Applied Research Center, now known as Race Forward, Over 5,000 children are living in foster care unable to meet their parents due to their parents being deported. I believe no child should ever have to experience that fear and I am willing to do everything in my power to see to that. Even if that means I have to withstand a few mug shots and cold cells.

Word count: 626

Title: Do we remember

Dear Editor,

In my opinion, America has held on to many of its out of date colonial principles. One such example is the overwhelming need for Americans to think individualistically and pursue personal wealth and freedom with an almost complete disregard for others and society as a whole. We are force fed the notion that not only do you need to strive to obtain a higher education, you must also graduate from that system and immediately find a “real” job and begin to pay every tax that applies. Our Country places to high a value on money and it blinds us from making real change, although, for those in higher positions of power I’m sure that is a good thing. We are taught about the American Dream in elementary school and we are lied to periodically about what it means and how it was built. We are expected to adapt or we are forgotten in the shuffle of dollar signs and scan-trons.

That brings me to yet another tired system that desperately needs a reboot. Our education system was based on now ancient thoughts and needs an over hall badly. According to Carla Amurao a study done by the Advancement Project and the Power U Center for Social Change shows us staggering statistics about our education system and how it is failing youths across the US especially young minority groups. She writes, “The U.S. spends almost $70 billion annually on incarceration, probation and parole. This number lends itself to a 127% funding increase for incarceration between 1987-2007. Compare that to a 21% increase in funding for higher education in the same 20-year span.”

The US has always had a bad habit of paying more attention to having a grand army to flex before a healthy education system, couple that with a business like incarseration system that feed off of the nation’s minority youth it is a wonder how any children manage to overcome these obstacles and enter a university.

Again I believe that this pipeline was generated not only by the nations lack of care, but also because in some aspects war and prisons can be sources of quick income for some people. After reading Las Casas’ *Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* we can see the lengths some are willing to go for riches and lands. Las Casas repeatedly described horrible acts of conquerors destroying cultures and killing children. Those in power are still doing this today only now they are much more discreet about it.

Cultures are being destroyed when we do not allow the chance for children to learn about then, or when we take away what little non-academic classes children have. Children are slowly being killed when they are forced to conform to the US educational system or pushed into incarceration for being unable to meet standards.

In order to combat this we must redefine what our public schools see as important. Teaching to a test is not really teaching our students. It is forcing them to remember a date and bubble it in three weeks later. We have to more evenly distribute funding for schools and increase funding across the board. According to Bruce J. Biddle and David C. Berliner, co-authors of a research synthesis in Beyond Instructional Leadership, almost half of the funding for public schools in the United States is provided through local taxes. This is great for school in high income areas but for many schools this means a vast gap in funding and losses to more “expendable” programs.

If we want to see real change anywhere in our society we have to start from the bottom. We have to give our students a fighting chance and we have to work for them not against them.

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