

# THE DEATH OF THE CONFLUENCE



After The Confluence was forced to vacate by Linn Armstrong and Grand Valley Management, I found myself walking by 1450 Elm Ave. yesterday, former home to the Confluence Collective. The big empty house was a ghostly shell of a lifestyle I had enjoyed for the past fourteen months. In that short time, my life came to revolve around that house, the people in it, and the community created in that space. The reality of closing down, packing up, and moving out was an option I hadn't really considered during my time there.

The Confluence Collective was created to provide the space and tools necessary for grassroots community organization and participation. We provided a lending library of radical books and dvds, a magazine exchange, an info rack, public access to internet and other computer resources, meeting space for various local activist and political organizations, a bike shop, and one of the most popular activities the house provided was a weekly vegan pot luck dinner. At one point, we offered a 'free store' in which people take what they needed and left what they didn't. It was community supported and self-sustaining, however it was shut down due to city zoning ordinances, that stated we could not run a business or store in a residential area. I think they missed the point.

One of my housemates commonly referred to this living situation as "The Experiment." I was not ready to see the Experiment end. Living together with a group of people in a conscious effort to build community was what had drawn me to this experience. Over the past year, we have met and gotten to know numerous people from the community that we may have never known had it not been for that created space.

Many people expressed their disappointment with the closing of the Confluence. They expressed the need for an organization such as this in Grand Junction. The inability to find a suitable place for similar activity has forced us to take a step back, but by no means are we silently fading into the conservative desert. The space is gone, but not the heart of the Confluence Collective. We would like to thank our friends and everyone in the community that supported us and for all the good times we've had.

Standing in the middle of that dirt patch we used to call a yard, the porch was eerily quiet with no one chillin' on the couch. I could almost hear the clinking of wine glasses in celebration by Grand Junction's elite.\*

# State of Disunion

NUMBER OF AMERICAN TROOPS that have died in America's war in Iraq: 2851

CONFIRMED NUMBER OF CONTRACTORS killed in Iraq: 367

PERCENTAGE OF CITIZENS 18-24 years who voted in 2004: 47%

NUMBER OF RADIOACTIVE BUILDINGS found in Grand Junction before the clean-up: 4200

NUMBER OF TIMES the Criterion has accused The Red Pill of using too big of words: 1

## CALL TO ACTION

The Red Pill is looking for volunteers: graphic designers, writers, poets, cartoonists, artists, and photographers are needed. Get your work published now. Help distribute The Red Pill in your community, church, and school: contact us at [gjredpill@hotmail.com](mailto:gjredpill@hotmail.com). You can also do your part to keep us in print by donating time, paper, film, copies, and of course money (it doesn't print itself).



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CONFIRMED NUMBER OF JOURNALISTS killed in Iraq: 113

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF IRAQIS killed in since the invasion of Iraq: 650,000

PERCENTAGE OF CITIZENS over 25 years who voted in 2004: 66%

DOLLARS CONTRIBUTED to Nancy Pelosi-D by the Israeli lobby for the 2006 Election: 22,350

DOLLAR VALUE OF US AID LOANS to Iraq during the 1980s: 7,000,000,000

GRAND JUNCTION,  
COLORADO

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH TAKE

# The Red Pill



THANK

YOU

NOVEMBER 2006

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## DEMS TAKE BACK BOTH HOUSES; DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH

The Democrats scored a huge victory on Tuesday taking control of both the Senate and the House of Representatives, but very little is likely to change.

The soon-to-be speaker of the house, Rep. Nancy Pelosi-D, has publicly stated that impeachment of the president is "off the table." Rep. John Conyers-D, who is expected to head the House Judiciary Committee has echoed Pelosi's 'no impeachment' sentiments. This is the same Conyers who last December outlined the grounds for the impeachment of the president, in a 350 page report titled, "The Constitution in Crisis: The Downing Street Minutes and Deception, Manipulation, Torture, Retribution, and Cover-ups in the Iraq War." Talk about a flip flop. Even the head of the Democratic Nation Committee, Howard Dean, has said that impeachment is not an option.

In addition to refusing to hold President Bush accountable for his actions, the Democrats have stopped

short of calling for a withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. Howard Dean said that "Voters also made it clear that they want defense policies that are tough and smart." Some democratic leaders are even calling for troop level increases in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Unpopular draconian legislation passed by the White House and a Republican controlled Congress, like the USA PATRIOT Act, Real ID Act, and the Military Commissions Act of 2006, are not going to be repealed.

The Democrats are also firmly in the Israel lobby's pocket. Colorado Congressman, John Salazar-D is a good example. He received \$3600 from pro-Israeli PAC's during the 2006 election cycle, and took an all expenses paid trip to Israel; paid for by the American Israeli Education Foundation; cost \$14,115.

The Who said it best "Meet the new boss, same as the old boss."

## BLAST FROM THE PAST: HOT TOWN 1971

An article published in the December 20th, 1971 Time Magazine entitled "Hot Town," brought national attention to sleepy Grand Junction. At issue was that Uranium mill tailings had been used by contractors and builders in concrete and/or as fill dirt, and most of the buildings in town were radioactive. Schools, malls, sidewalks, and just about everything made with concrete was leaking radon and her radioactive daughters. Scientists found that Grand Junction had a significantly lower birth rate and higher incidents of cleft palates. Birth defects were 50% higher than the rest of the state.

Eighteen years and \$450 worth of cleanup later, Grand Junction is still a 'Hot Town.' Many private homes were left unremediated, and to this day in order to build in town a developer has to get the property inspected for remediated radioactive waste. The waste was taken to the Cheney Holding Cell, 18 miles south of town, but pictures published by the Red Pill in May of 2005 show improperly stored nuclear waste. Grand Junction, to this day, still has a cancer rate significantly higher than state and national cancer rates.

Check out the article: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,878989,00.html>•



Photos show improperly stored nuclear waste at the Cheney Cell, 18 miles south of GJ.

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## EVANGELICALS ARE GAY

**C**he American Evangelical world was rocked again by scandal. Reverend Ted Haggard, 50, president of the thirty million member National Association of Evangelicals, and pastor of the 14,000 member New Life Church in Colorado Springs, was caught in a gay sex and drug scandal. Self-confessed gay prostitute, Mike Jones, 49, of Denver, claimed that he had a three year relationship with Haggard.

Reaction from officials was swift and denial laden. Seventeen year member, Brian Boals, dismissed it out of hand saying, "It's political," E.J. Cox said, "People always say stuff about Pastor Ted, you just learn to blow it off." The initial reaction from the National Association of Evangelicals was to dismiss it as "a political ploy."

Haggard offered a stilted denial at first. Yes, he knew Jones, but received only a massage from him. Yes, he did buy methamphetamine, but he didn't use it. Jones soon offered more specific and damning evidence, and Haggard broke down and confessed to everything.

Haggard was subsequently removed from both of his posts as president and pastor. Haggard is said to have entered "reprogramming" with Focus on the Family President, James Dobson personally supervising. The process is said to take years.

It should be noted that Dobson's program, "Exodus International," is not without controversy. In October 2002, John Paulk, chairman of E.I. was removed for going to gay bars in the Washington D.C. area and lying about it. Paulk was the face and figurehead of the so-called "Camp Homomo" movement, claiming

Christ "cured" him, and eventually marrying an ex-lesbian.

Before their falls from grace, Paulk and Haggard were virulently and militantly antigay, who often used harsh, dehumanizing rhetoric when referring to gays. Haggard's harshest invectives came during the three years he was tweaking and freaking with Jones.

To call both men hypocrites does not do their harsh, self-hating actions justice. It is one thing to have gay sex or to try methamphetamine. It's quite another to use a national pulpit to bash and vilify those who behave similarly, except who are at least open and honest about it. Homosexuality has been around since pre-biblical times and it isn't going to go away simply because some priggish, fascist, dishonest, and self-hating control freaks feel uncomfortable around it.



## COMFORTABLE IN WORTHLESS FURY

—POETRY—

**M**an will succumb to the machine he created, bolstered with pride, and believed in with every breath he could muster. Abandoning peace in primal combat to replace his many fears with weapons of mass destruction in a rage of confidence as though he were God himself. Bloodshed in the name of a common cause; cries a result of reckless passion; a movement contradictory to any possible good to be. Slaughtered by our own handicap, as eyes fall lifeless into eternal slumber, we will lack understanding of the error in our ways. All destroyed, our ironical mentality is exposed in the proper light of a larger scope of existence than we cared to view, thus every premature, overzealous, or unnecessary display of power is simply the initial contact the blade of extinction makes with the surface concealing a collective jugular. Do you see the blood on your hands?

### Every Monday • 5pm

Grand Junction's peace group, A Voice of Reason meets to discuss and act on issues surrounding the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Call 245-3720 for more info and meeting place

### Every Friday • Noon

A Voice of Reason holds a lunch hour peace vigil to end the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. At the intersection of 12th and North.

## HANGIN' WITH SADDAM

**S**o now that Saddam Hussein has been found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to hang, we should be able to close the book on that chapter of history and move on, shouldn't we? That might seem tempting, especially since we are so bogged down in Iraq with no easy way out seen. Truth is, things are not that clear, simple, or easy.

It has been clearly demonstrated that Saddam Hussein was America's boy in the Middle East for decades. We trained, funded, and supported the coup that brought him to power. We trained, funded, and supported the regime that brutally repressed its own people. We supplied the poison gas, and other weapons and technology that killed so many people.

In Saddam, we had created yet another dictatorial Frankenstein and turned him loose against his own people. We have such a poor record in this area, you'd think that the rabid support of America for another Tinhorn dictator would at least renew calls for reform, especially in areas of foreign policy and intelligence. But that isn't the case.

People are simply calling, "hang 'em high," without examining for even a second what responsibility we have to the people of Iraq. When we convict Saddam of crimes against humanity, it is also clear that we, too, are guilty, and owe some sort of reparations against the poor, long suffering people of Iraq.

Instead, we offer them cluster bombs, deadly roadblocks, torture and Abu Ghraib style imprisonment. Saddam is down and out, but his sadistic puppetmasters remain in power. In fact, the lives of the average Iraqi has worsened steadily as we step up with newer, more brutal, more efficient ways to terrorize the populace.

Saddam will hang and twist in the breeze, but unless he is cloaked in an American flag, the truth will not have been told and justice will not have been served.



### Wednesday, November 15th • 7:30pm

GJAM's Documentary Series #3 presents, A Night of Shorts, featuring "Dying to Live: A Migrant's Journey" and "Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage" and more. Saccomanno Lecture Hall, Mesa State College

## WE'RE ANARCHISTS AND WE VOTE

**J**f voting changed anything, it would be illegal." ~Emma Goldman

At first glance, a bunch of self-proclaimed anarchists participating in the electoral process seems oxymoronic. There are many reasons anarchists choose not to vote. Some feel that voting doesn't change anything, so there's no point in choosing the lesser of two evils. Others feel that by voting one is supporting and upholding the status quo of a hegemonic system that feeds off the exploitation of others.

There are many other reasons people don't vote, too numerous to mention in such a short article. Here I would like to discuss why I decided to vote, despite my feeling that voting is futile. Che Guevara said that if one can vote, do so. People may call me a hypocrite for proclaiming an ideology that doesn't believe in government, no less a representative government, and at the same time participating in that system.

I ask folks to take a look at my context and location. Here in Grand Junction, we are surrounded by conservatives. My ideologies are necessarily tamed to work within the local political and activist scene. I asked myself what I would gain by not voting.

I voted because I felt there were valid issues on the ballot that needed to be addressed. I walked out of Saunderson's Field House feeling good that I did my civic duty, in "making my voice heard," for whatever that's worth.

The next morning I woke up to hear the results of Nov. 7. Like the morning after a night of questionable sex, I found myself asking what the point of that was. Many people felt that the Democrats taking both houses and five states turning blue were victories, but the issues, the ones that actually affected the people failed. I was disgusted with the fact that many people want to see change, and they think the Democrats will bring that, but then they vote down real change in the form of ballot issues.

At best, voting is a mixed blessing. And to me, dropping out of the system all together does just as much to uphold this system and status quo as attempting a change from the inside.



### Sunday, November 19th • 9am-2pm

Alternative Christmas Fair has great socially conscious Christmas gifts. St. Joseph Parish Hall, 3rd and White downtown Grand Junction.