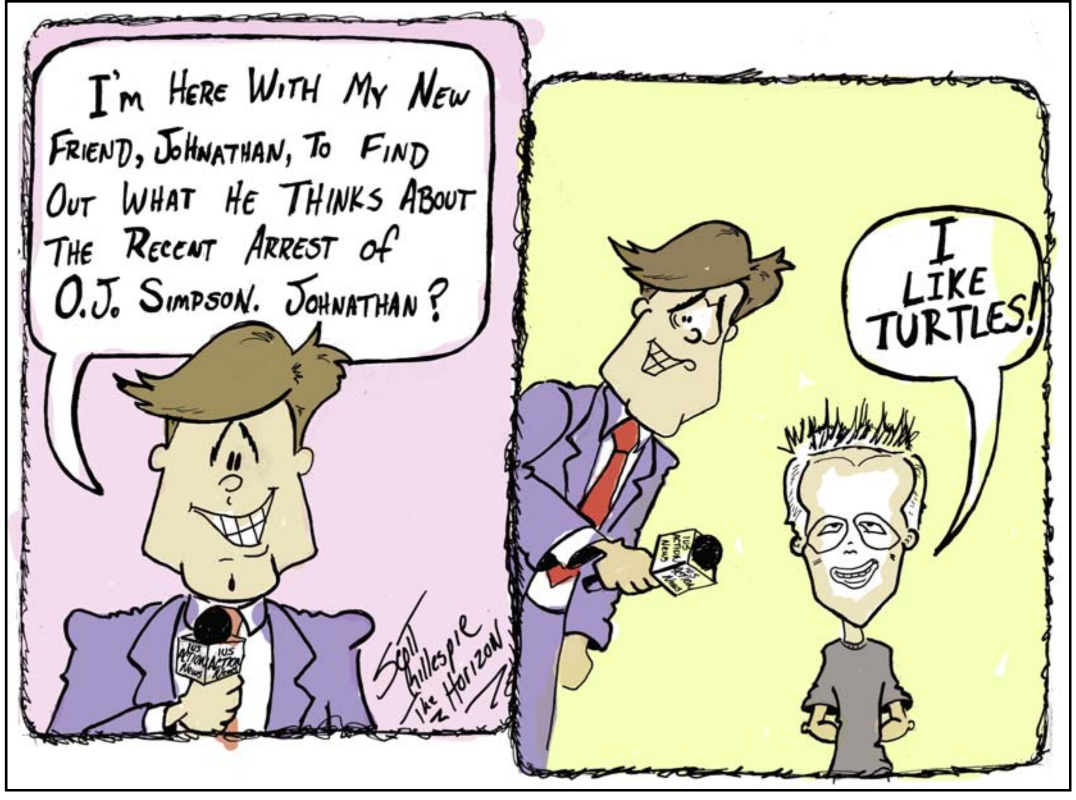

Famous for what?

Who are these people and why are they famous? For instance, Paris Hilton. She received her degree in which field of study? She wrote what kind of book? Directed which type of film? Oh, she's an heiress to the Hilton hotel chain. Wow. That's an outstanding accomplishment; born into wealth. She must have endured many hardships to get where she is today. Now, I suppose, she is only enjoying the fruits of her labor, or lack thereof.

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Who exactly is at fault here though; Paris? Or perhaps it's her father's fault for building a hotel empire? It never really bothered me and I never really thought about who should be held responsible for portraying this person as a celebrity or even a person who deserves recognition for anything until I saw it all over the tabloids and the news; the actual news. Major news networks gave us around-the-clock coverage of her arrest and jail time. They even spent, or wasted, time speculating on how this will affect Hilton and what is going to happen with her in the future. Does this strike anyone else as insane?

Sadly though, we are living in a country where virtually any television program receives more viewers than a presidential address or debate. Perhaps the media's agenda has been running somewhat astray, but the public desire for drama and need for scandal is only feeding the media machine for ratings.

Another person who had fallen victim to being a waste of news coverage was the late Anna Nicole Smith. What in the world did she ever do for society or even her local community for that matter? Let's break it down. She was a stripper from Texas, if I'm not mistaken, and married a billionaire (for love, although it was reported they never resided together) who was older than her grandfather (love makes you do stupid things sometimes, right?). She was given her own show on the E! Network which documented her oh-so thrilling life of figuring out how to dress herself and which color her hair should be for the day.

After her death, major news channels were holding her high on a pedestal, giving her almost more airtime than 9/11 (you remember; those four hi-jacked planes that were flown into the World Trade Towers, the pentagon and a field in Pennsylvania killing thousands). Now I hear there's going to be a film about her life; the full and exuberant life which she lead. I don't know about you, but I can tell you who won't be watching this embellished atrocity.

If a network is going to spend so much time covering this garbage, they are better off not calling themselves "The News," but rather, "Nonsense for Listless Folk." I find it hard to understand the newsworthiness of a celebrity getting drunk or walking out of a public bathroom barefoot. It is an insult to everyone everywhere when the top story is regarding the inheritance of someone's property, custody of someone's illegitimate child or the arrest and DUI conviction of an idiot. This is not news. The outcome of these occurrences concerns nobody but the parties involved.

However, it's not the fault of Smith or Hilton that the media are the way they are. If the media stayed away from this trash, these women would not be the idols of so many young girls. And if the public worried about their own lives instead of others', there would be no demand for the news to supply us with this insufferable and meaningless refuse.

I am concerned about the fact that people would be more familiar with the name Britney Spears, than Nancy Pelosi (Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, but I'm sure you knew that already). This is not a good position for our generation to be in. Political issues and the passing of laws whether you agree with them or not is what runs a country. The public should know more about a person who is running for a particular office than about their favorite singer or movie star. I believe it's great to have an idol or a role model, but be sensible in the reasoning behind why such person should be awarded your time and attention. I hope I am not the only one who feels this way because if I am, we're in a lot of trouble as a generation.

So the next time you're in line at the grocery, do us all a favor and try not to reach for the tabloid papers. Read the backs of candy bars or strike up small talk with the person ahead of or behind you because I promise you'll learn a hell of a lot more.

'There's many a bestseller that could have been prevented by a good teacher.'

– Flannery O'Connor

O.J. Simpson fails at life

Ladies and gentlemen, The Juice is back.

In less than a week, Orenthal James Simpson has managed to wade back into our collective consciousness and recapture our hearts.

The smirking, arraigned face of The Juice graced millions of computer screens Sunday and Monday as news consumers perused their favorite news sites.

The situation almost seems like it came out of one of the Naked Gun movies, in which The Juice played the hilarious and lovable Nordberg.

In case you haven't heard the news, The Juice was arrested the night of Sept. 16 after questioning two days previous.

He was charged with multiple counts of robbery with a deadly weapon, and coercion, among others.

If The Juice is convicted of all counts, he could face up to 60 years in prison.

Marcia Clark has already returned to ensure that the job gets done. She sat tight-lipped and severe as ever, looking on in the Las Vegas courtroom where Joe Bonaventure, Jr. set bail for The Juice Wednesday.

All we need is for Kato Kaelin and Mark Fuhrman to come back, and it'll be like a family reunion.

After paying the $125,000 bail, The Juice returned home on a US Airways flight, sitting in economy class.

If you look, it's possible to see comedy in all of this. O.J. is back, and he's about to take the ride of his life. Clark will most certainly pay close attention to the proceedings, and thousands of people are already chanting death cries.

The question I pose is this: Do people really think this is a fitting punishment for him? It's as if people are expecting this to serve as a replacement for the double life sentence he was supposed to receive 12 years ago.

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A man dressed in a chicken suit who calls himself "Chicken George" stood outside the courthouse holding a sign that said "Not this time, O.J."

All across the country, people are talking. O.J. is finally going to get what he deserves. The Goldmans, who recently acquired the rights to The Juice's hilarious book, "If I Did It," are seeing the sales of the book skyrocket. If only Johnnie Cochran was still alive to see this.

The Juice's murder trial more than a decade ago showed the world what the American legal system is capable of. It's not that I don't want to see O.J. go to jail, but I can't comprehend how jail time for robbery of sports memorabilia is going to serve as retribution for a double homicide.

Besides, O.J. is innocent, right? Right?

10 Ways to...

Improve IU Southeast

Editor's Note: "10 Ways to..." is a humor piece. Follow the advice at your own peril.

1. Free food. Now, I don't mean pizza and burgers during special events. IU Southeast should provide free meals to all students, faculty and staff (administration can afford their own). How does Google keep its employees happy? Free gourmet meals. It would work for IU Southeast, too, and it doesn't need to be gourmet. Can you study when you're hungry? No. If we want it, we can make it happen.

2. Laptops for freshmen and juniors. Do we really need more than 850 computers on campus for students to use when we can just buy laptops for freshman and juniors? Wake Forest does it. Berea does it. We can do it, too. Why juniors? Computers, especially laptops, get outdated fast. Now, if you are a freshman for five years, you only get one laptop. Sorry.

3. IPods. This idea comes from Duke. They provide iPods (now iPhones) to students so they can download language tapes, lectures and literature. Bonus: happy, quiet students. IPods should be exchanged for newer models every two years. If we can make a deal with Bill Gates for software, I'm sure we can make a deal with Steve Jobs for iPods. They should come preloaded with broadcasts from the IU Southeast News — available at The Horizon's Web site.

4. Get your 10th class free. It works for sub shops and coffee shops, and it can work for us. We can do without punch cards, though.

5. New iconic landmark. The clock in McCullough Plaza is nice, but every campus has a clock. We need something unique — truly different. May I suggest a giant ferris wheel? No one else has one of these. It would make giving directions easy: "Get on 265 and head toward the giant ferris wheel." It beats the old water tower by a mile.

6. A fourth observatory. Is three really enough for a world-class university? No. I know a cleared space of land behind Knobview.

7. Football. Do I really need to explain why?

8. Shuttles. The walk across the Evergreen parking lot is just too long. If a shuttle picked up students every five minutes, students would make it to class on time and less sweaty. It would make the trip out to the car to smoke a lot easier, too.

9. IUS Tavern. Many campuses have a pub in their student unions. We need one. Imagine after a hard day of classes going to the University Center and getting a nice, cold beer. Mmm.

10. Lose the Grenadier. No one knows what a grenadier is. No one cares. We need a cool mascot, like a rat or a knight. Yeah, a rat. Everyone knows what a rat is, and they're mean. "Rat" also rhymes with a lot of other words: "bat," "fat," "hat," "mat," "gnat," "pat," "sat" and "vat." Thank you, Dr. Suess, and go IUS Rats!