

The Media, Elections and Diebold Machines

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the machines properly—workers that aren't readily available. Diebold, one of the largest manufacturers of e-voting machines, has been dealing with problems from its machines for years now, including accusations that they illegally tabulated votes before the polls closed.

It doesn't help that, according to agonist.org, which has a very interesting timeline of the cases involving Diebold, Walden O'Dell, Diebold's CEO, was quoted saying, that he is "committed to helping Ohio deliver its electoral votes to the president next year." Perhaps I

am just a paranoid, bleeding-heart liberal, but to me, that sounds *pretty* sketchy.

The internet has been a great tool in this campaign and election, and it'll be interesting to see, four years down the line, how the next set of candidates will use it. But as with all things we *must* exercise caution and be ethical...we need to apply our lovely honor code to politics. If we're going to use these voting machines and other technologies, they need to be integrated into our system slowly and thoroughly, without risking or compromising our most basic right.

Geology takes to the mountains

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an avalanche rumbled in the distance.

Our final glimpse of a glacier came after hiking up the steep face of nearby Parker's Ridge that afternoon. At the top of the ridge, strong gusts of wind suddenly blasted against us, signaling our success. Our efforts were rewarded with a view of the Saskatchewan Glacier, a long, thin arm of the Columbia Icefield, which had carved out a characteristic U-shaped canyon as it expanded. As I stood there, swaying in the wind with my classmates and savoring a brownie that Barber had broken into small pieces for the group, I realized that I had learned enough thus far in the trip to understand by myself what was significant about the vantage point. For an instant, nothing else mattered—only that we had climbed to the top, we had done it together, and we knew why we were there.

We spent the last day of the trip "pinballing" southward along the Icefield Parkway and dipped briefly into neighboring Yoho National Park. Though we had left the region's largest icefield, we could see evidence of other glaciers in the milky turquoise waters of Peyto Lake and Lake Louise; they owe their brilliant colors to the fine powder called "rock flour" that is created by the friction of glacier movement. And through mist and clouds, we got a view from across Emerald Lake of the Burgess Shale. Not even the gloomy weather could suppress Professor Bruce Saunders' excitement at his first opportunity to glimpse this world-famous Cambrian fossil bed, a site studied by his paleobiology students each fall.

Returning to Calgary that evening in preparation for an early Friday flight, we quickly passed through the main ranges, front ranges, and finally, foothills—retracing our initial path into the Rockies. I kept rubbing the sleeve of my new favorite garment, a blue North Face fleece, against the fogged van windows and expected to see mountains emerging from the earth. The jagged peaks that had become so familiar were replaced by flat, open land that somehow seemed empty in a way it hadn't less than a week earlier.

We pulled into the PSB lot after dusk on Friday. The group splintered, but I lingered there with two of my fellow travelers. I remember looking at my backpack and tote bag on the curb—and feeling as though everything I needed was contained within their zippers. Returning to my room in Brecon felt unnecessary; locating a washing machine and a warm dinner were greater priorities. I had been without e-mail for a week and often without cell phone service—and had learned to enjoy that detachment.

At times, we seemed so close to home, like when a sign in the rustic lobby of the Banff Caribou Lodge welcomed the Bryn

Mawr College group to its hotel. But it was humbling to sit at breakfast three days later, in a remote camp-like cafeteria, and be asked by a waitress, "Where's Pennsylvania?" Our lives were at times more complex and yet inherently simpler in the Canadian Rockies. The charge was this, and only this: to learn about and appreciate our surroundings.

As I try to distinguish the academic aspects of the trip from my feelings about my first flight, my first time on a hike, and my first time being outside a 300-mile radius of my birthplace—all very personal experiences, I find it impossible to separate the two.

I'm not sure what was aspect of the trip affected me the most—the phenomenal natural beauty or the fact that I saw that beauty only because the geology department genuinely wants to educate all students, not just those it considers its own. The professors and students are always eager to spread appreciation for their subject. Though there are only a handful of declared majors annually, the department has undoubtedly touched the lives of many students whose glossy mug shots will never appear on a geology bulletin board in the PSB.

On the last day of the trip, as we walked through cold drizzle to catch a glimpse of Emerald Lake and the Burgess Shale, I talked with Blythe Hoyle, lab coordinator who I had worked with in a class freshman year. She had told me years ago about changing her course of study from journalism to geology. I shared with her that I finally understood why a trip like ours to the Canadian Rockies could throw off a person's internal compass. On our Jura Creek hike, I had watched Professor Matthew Strine working with both geo and non-geo majors to calculate "strike and dip," measurements related to the tilting of a plane, by placing compasses on flat rock surfaces. But before this could be done, we had to reorient the compasses to reflect our trip from Bryn Mawr to Exshaw.

By the trip's end, I too needed to reorient myself—back to life at Bryn Mawr, but more importantly, to the direction I'm heading career-wise. Until sunrise the morning after we returned, I navigated my way through graduate school sites online, searching for some way to integrate my newfound interest in geology with my love of journalism. I could only smile and agree when at last Thursday's "Geo Lunch," Riihimaki enthusiastically told me, "We're slowly converting you!"

In truth, though, I think the trip "converted" us all—either helping us to see for the first time or reminding us how our studies can enrich our appreciation of the world. In case I lose sight of this, particularly come thesis-writing time, I have hundreds of photos, postcards, and most significantly, many new friendships, to remind me.



The Flick Chick: The Grudge

by nina hagen

As Halloween draws nearer, many a Mawrtyr will find herself heading to the movie theater, the video store, or the first floor of Canaday looking for a good horror fix. Unfortunately, these days a good scare is hard to come by as studios produce reels of boring fright flicks that lack imagination and couldn't scare a kindergartener. Luckily, *The Grudge* is surprisingly good. While most adult viewers won't necessarily find it terrifying, it is quite suspenseful and definitely creepy.

Karen (Sarah Michelle Gellar, "Buffy the Vampire Slayer") is an American student taking a semester abroad in Tokyo with her boyfriend Doug (Jason Behr, "Roswell"). While volunteering at a local care center, she is asked to look after Emma Williams, a semi-catatonic American (Grace Zabriskie, *The Wind Effect*) whose regular caregiver (Yoko Maki, *Battle Royale II: Requiem*) has disappeared after a mysterious encounter in the house where the patient lives with her son (William Mapother, *Suspect Zero*) and daughter-in-law (Clea DuVall, *21 Grams*). While in the house, Karen discovers a strange little boy named Toshio (Yuya Ozeki) and sees a terrifying being attack her patient. After waking up in the hospital, Karen tries to uncover the truth about the house and the horrific events that took place there, and to avoid being the next victim of the spirits who attach themselves to everyone who enters it.

Much of the story is told in flashbacks, shifting periodically from the main narrative, which centers on Karen, to earlier events focusing on different characters. This device actually works because it allows certain information, such as the fate of the Williamses, to surface gradually, stringing the viewer along and leaving questions unanswered for as long as possible. At times, the plot is a bit thin,

but most of the back-story comes together eventually.

The Grudge is an Americanized remake of the 2000 Japanese film *Ju-On* and is directed by Takashi Shimizu, who wrote and directed the original. Unlike many remakes of foreign films, it does not transplant the action across the Pacific but merely makes most of the principal characters American, thus keeping most of the dialogue in English without changing the setting. The movie successfully merges Japanese and American horror conventions and manages to add a dash of camp to its tamer moments without destroying the effect of its scarier ones; this is not surprising when one considers that it was co-produced by American horror legend Sam Raimi (the *Evil Dead* trilogy). The acting is good, and the characters do look genuinely terrified at the appropriate times; however, having so many previously unconnected Americans wind up in the same

storyline, without explaining how most of them got to be in Japan in the first place, comes off as an obvious ploy. The film probably would have been more believable if fewer Americans had been used, or if more of them had been given reasons for immigrating in the first place.

Perhaps the most effective device is the movie's repeated use of chilling images. It's a well-known fact that a scary-looking child can freak out even the most seasoned horror fan, especially when the appearance of said child often results in death, but Shimizu uses that technique with incredible skill. If you've seen the trailers, be aware that the open-mouthed apparition yowling like a cat is actually one of the less scary images in this film.

The Grudge may not deliver very many screams, but it definitely gives its fair share of chills. Sam Raimi's still got what it takes, and Takashi Shimizu is poised to become a household name in the U.S.

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