

The Digitization of Education

iBooks replace traditional textbooks

Verizon

12:00 PM

90%

Tracie Momie

The Signal

Learning in the digital age is undergoing a revolution. Technology has made it possible to gain access to a vast selection of content almost instantaneously and through a variety of mediums.

Many students rely heavily on smartphones, laptops, tablets and e-readers, yet when they enter the classroom, they are disconnected both literally and figuratively. This burgeoning dependency on electronic devices is prompting a revamp of how information is delivered to students.

On Jan. 19 Apple held a conference at New York's Guggenheim Museum to unveil its latest educational application. Apple's iBooks 2 app for iPad allows students to purchase textbooks and download them directly to their iPad.

The app itself is free and delivery is immediate. The books are interactive, searchable, durable and portable. Apple has more than 20,000 learning apps available through its App Store.

Michael Lee, assistant professor of communication

and digital media studies, who is teaching a mobile apps course at UHCL on the Apple platform, believes this technology is amazing but feels there should be some concerns with using apps as educational tools, especially for younger children who are often left unsupervised on electronic devices.

"I believe the educational outcome depends on human interaction," Lee said. "Parents need to work with their children when they are using apps and ask questions because this will help your child learn, not only visually but also verbally. It stimulates their minds when you ask them questions about the choices they made when doing homework or playing a game."

Although Apple is developing new tools to help digitize education, the concept of digital delivery is not something exclusive to Apple.

Barnes and Noble operate more than 630 college campus bookstores across the nation, including the bookstore at UHCL, and the bookstores are also committed to furthering digital content delivery.

"As students have a variety of learning styles, we have found that having as many formats and cost-saving options as possible are critical," said Brent Wells, UHCL bookstore manager. "So while digital sales and acceptance will continue to grow, we will continue to offer multiple choices, such as new, used, print rental and digital rental to our students."

In 2010, Barnes and Noble launched NOOK Study, a free downloadable software application that provides students an e-textbook experience with access to more than 2.5 million titles. Today e-textbooks represent a small percentage of student purchases but Barnes and Noble has seen these purchases grow over the past year.

E-textbooks can be updated daily, weekly or monthly via the Internet, ensuring the book is always up to date. This is possible through cloud computing. The concept of cloud computing, or "clouding," allows users to share resources, so that the applications are not dependent on a

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'Ike Dike' proposes to keep flood waters at bay along Texas Gulf Coast

Jennifer Ferguson

The Signal

In wake of the devastation caused by Hurricane Ike in 2008, many plans have been presented for implementing a means of protection for the Texas Gulf Coast.

While Galveston serves as the front line of attack for hurricanes in the Gulf, the Galveston Bay and surrounding areas are just as vulnerable to the flooding and devastation that threatens the coast.

One solution was created by William Merrell, professor of oceanography at the Texas A&M University in Galveston. Merrell began working on a concept after witnessing Hurricane Ike's devastation firsthand. His idea, deemed the "Ike Dike," is an extension of the current Seawall to include more of the west end of the island, paired with a similar structure along the Bolivar Peninsula to protect the immediate coast.

As for protecting the rest of the Texas Gulf Coast, the project includes plans to construct colossal flood barriers at the entry of Galveston Bay. These gate-like structures, which were modeled from the Delta Works project in the Netherlands, would allow for the natural flow of bay waters during calm weather but could be closed in a matter of 30 minutes.

"The Dutch developed gate technology that allows for navigation and water exchange while the gates are open but protects from storm surge when the gates are closed," Merrell explained. "Having worked with the Dutch for a number of years and being familiar with their best practices and technologies, I worked on how to apply them to the Galveston Bay region. The result is the 'Ike Dike' concept."

Merrell said the project would cost the city close to \$3 billion to build the necessary structures. Since 1900, Galveston has experienced six direct, major hurricane hits with damages costing at least \$34.7 billion and with as many as 12,222 lives lost.

"The liability of this happening, as we saw with Ike, is 10 times the cost of [the Ike Dike]," Galveston Mayor Joseph Jaworski said. "The cost of going forward doing nothing is untenable."

Galveston is not the only county that would benefit from such a structure. A 2007 study by The Perryman Group reports that the 14-county area that makes up the Gulf Coast is populated with approximately 5.6 million residents, accounts for about 30 percent of the business economy and

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Starbucks' support of gay marriage brews boycott

Chelsea Dennard

The Signal

Starbucks is stirring up more than just coffee these days following the company's recent announcement to support a bill to legalize gay marriage in the coffee chain's home state of Washington.

"Starbucks is proud to join other leading Northwest employers in support of Washington State legislation recognizing marriage equality for same-sex couples," said Kalen Holmes, Starbucks vice president and University of Houston alumna, in the official Starbucks statement that was released Jan. 24. "This important legislation is aligned with Starbucks' business practices and upholds our belief in the equal treatment of partners. It is core to who we are and what we value as a

company."

Pastor Steven Andrew, president of USA Christian Ministries, gained national attention after urging Christians to boycott the Seattle-based coffee chain for "turning against God" with its support of same-sex marriage. Andrew's hope is for Starbucks to lose 80 percent of its customers from the boycott because 80 percent of the country believes the Christian faith.

USA Christian Ministries consists of a website with a Facebook page and Twitter account. As of Feb. 16 there were a total of 37 participants on the Facebook page. The address posted in order to support the ministry with money, stocks or wills is a mailbox rented from a UPS store in San Jose, Calif.

SEE STARBUCKS', PAGE 6

BRYAN WAITES:THE SIGNAL



One venti Starbucks boycott to-go, please

Evangelist encourages Christians to avoid popular coffee chain

EDITORIAL

“I’ll have a venti, green-tea Frappuccino with whipped cream, please,” is one of the many daily orders at Starbucks locations around the world.

America’s most-recognized coffee chain is now in the spotlight, but not for its coffee. The company is being attacked for expressing support for the state of Washington’s bill legalizing same-sex marriage.

Feb. 8, Washington state became the seventh state, including Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont and Iowa among others and the District of Columbia, to legally approve same-sex marriage in the U.S.

After Starbucks expressed its support of the bill, Steven Andrew, pastor and president of USA Christian Ministries, called on all Christians to boycott Starbucks in a post on his website.

From the looks of his website, Andrew is an evangelical pastor whose congregation seems to consist of a website, a Facebook page and a Twitter account. USA Christian Ministries’ Facebook page has scrolls of postings from Andrew but only one comment from someone other than Andrew, 37 “likes” and 9 people “talking about this.”

There is nothing to indicate

that he went to seminary school. It’s possible he purchased an ordained minister license online, which would give him a license to conduct services such as marriages, baptisms and funerals. It would not lend him any more or less credibility to speak for the entire Christian community than any other person of the Christian faith.

Andrew calls people who drink Starbucks coffee “God haters” and states “Starbucks can follow Satan if they want to.” He believes that 80 percent of Americans are Christians and, therefore, Starbucks will lose 80 percent of its customers. He notes that the boycott is important because “God blesses those who obey Him and judges those who don’t.”

Andrew’s prediction assumes all Christians agree with him, which is not true. In reality, the Christian faith is based on and follows the life and teachings of Jesus. Its followers vary and are subdivided in three large groups in the world of Christianity; the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox churches and the various denominations of Protestantism. The United Church of Christ became the first Christian denomination to support and celebrate same-sex marriage.

Many Christians are part of the silent majority. It does not mean they agree or disagree; they

follow their Christian maxim known as The Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you,” which was translated from Matthew 7:1.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a boycott as “the act of engaging in a concerted refusal to have dealings with a person, store or organization, usually to express disapproval or to force acceptance of certain conditions.”

Is boycotting legal? Yes. Is boycotting ethical? There have been examples of great social changes achieved as a result of boycotts, for example, the Boston Tea Party, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the United Farmworkers Boycott, and the boycotting of products manufactured using the exploitation of child labor.

Is attacking Starbucks an example of bringing about great social change or is it about something else? History’s celebrated boycotts are about liberation and equality, not suppression and inequality.

Why is Andrew going after Starbucks but not any of the other approximate 100 corporations that also supported the bill? Nike, Amazon, Microsoft and Google all said ‘I DO’ in showing their support for same-sex marriage? And who is Andrew to impose authority and speak for the entire Christian community?

Singling out a brand like Star-

WANTNEEDO



Kalan Lyra

bucks and condemning people for supporting a law that will allow same-sex marriage in a state does not sound very Christian-like. If we would all follow the sentiment behind the Golden Rule,

the world would be a much better place. In fact, let’s drink to that – a tall café-latte with two splendas to go please!

Houston Rockets bring back clutch city

David Hensley
The Signal

Remember when Hakeem “The Dream” Olajuwon was winning back-to-back championships for Clutch City? Remember when the quote “Never underestimate the heart of a champion,” by Rudy Tomjanovich the former Rockets head coach, was commonplace?

This year’s Houston Rockets are trying to bring a championship back to Houston with a new coach and an offense that is scoring points no matter who’s on the court.

For the 2011 season, the Rockets brought in new head coach Kevin McHale, a former Boston Celtic legend and Minnesota Timberwolves head coach. During McHale’s playing career, he has won three NBA titles and was elected to the hall of fame in 1999.

McHale’s performance as head coach in Minnesota was not



STAFF COLUMN

as profitable as his playing days in Boston; he finished with a 55-66 record as a head coach over the three years he coached there. When he was hired as the Rockets head coach this past year, many fans had their doubts on how it would turn out.

Because McHale was a great player, he has knowledge of the game, but his previous head coaching record indicates that he wouldn’t be able to get the job

done as a head coach. There were still many loyal Rockets fans that stood by the hiring choice and wanted to give McHale a shot.

McHale has answered the call and has the Rockets playing great basketball this season. The Rockets are seventh in the NBA in scoring, averaging 98 points a game, and fifth in the NBA in rebounding averaging, 44 a game this year.

Much of the team’s offensive success can be attributed to the way the bench is playing right now. The players are not getting caught up in how many minutes they are playing; instead, they are solely concerned with winning games and doing whatever it takes to bring a title back to Houston.

The Rockets bench is one of the main reasons the team is having some success now. The Rockets bench is sixth in the league in bench scoring, averaging 36 points a game, and shooting 47

percent from the field puts them second in the league for shooting percentage.

McHale has also had to adapt to a condensed season due to the NBA lockout. The Rockets are playing as many as three games in as many nights, and the presence of a good bench allows the players to remain fresh and healthy.

The Rockets are a top five team in the Western Conference and are moving up the standings. McHale has the Rockets team believing they can compete with anyone in the league and has shown he’s not afraid of sticking with his bench to get the job done.

The Rockets look poised to get into the playoffs this year and make a run for the NBA championship. The NBA is “where amazing happens,” and the Rockets are sure to finish this amazing season strong.

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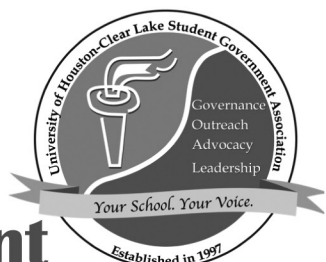
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Student Leader February 2012
Ritu Bohat

The UHCL Student Leadership, Involvement and Community Engagement (SLICE) program and UHCL Student Organizations

U.H.C.L. Day of Service *United to Help Change Lives*

Friday, March 2: UHCL Day of Service Kick-Off
"Volunteerism: Fostering Life-Long Ideals for Community Leadership"

6pm – 8pm, Bayou Forest Room 1418

Featuring Guest Speaker: Dr. Stephen Cherry

School of Human Sciences and Humanities

Nacho Bar (courtesy of Gringo's), Free SLICE t-shirts and Service Journals for attendees who are also pre-registered to volunteer on Saturday, March 3 for our Day of Service .

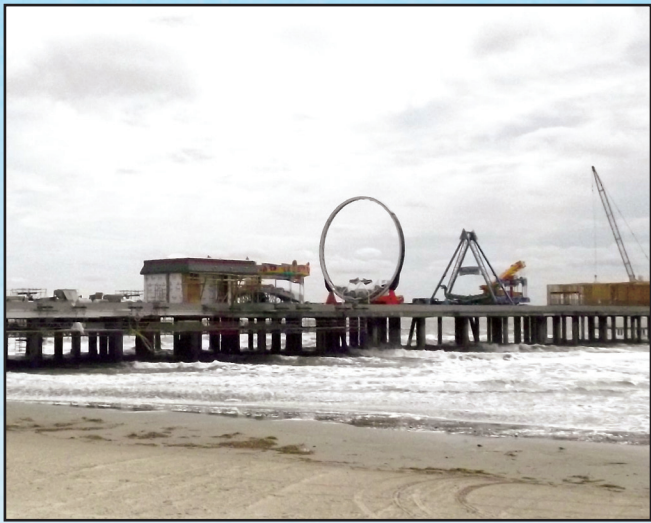
Saturday, March 3: UHCL Day of Service **Service Projects Include:**

Houston Area Women's Center – Race Against Domestic Violence
Krause Children's Center's First Healing Hearts Benefit (Houston Zoo)
Houston Food Bank
Bible Way Baptist Fellowship ONEPowerful Movement Food Fair
Moody Gardens Palm Beach Spring Break Set Up
Baytown Habitat for Humanity
Interfaith Caring Ministries Resale Shop
Descendants of Olivewood, Inc.
Armand Bayou Nature Center (filled)
Triumphant Tails (filled)

Participating Student Organizations include:

Healthcare Students Association, The History Club, The National Society of Leadership and Success, Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, Pre-Health Student Association, Omicron Delta Kappa, Alpha Kappa Delta, Indian Students Association, Texas State Teachers Association, Nepalese Student Association, Society for Environmental Toxicology, and Chemistry, Amazon TREE, Counseling Psychology Students Association, American Marketing Association.

Still accepting registration for most projects. FREE.
Pre-register at www.uhcl.edu/slice and click on "Day of Service"



TRUETT MANNING: THE SIGNAL



Galveston Pleasure Pier set to open in May

Michelle Kalenberg
The Signal

Whether it's the food, sand or scenery that draws the crowds to Galveston Island, the Seawall will soon offer a new attraction intended to beacon an estimated 3 million people annually.

This May, a historic landmark will be put back on the map: The Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier. Prior to the original Pleasure Pier, there was another amusement park known as Electric Park, built in 1906 and located across the boulevard. The park played host to vaudeville shows, rides and a restaurant. In the 1940s the original "pleasure pier" was built to accommodate military families and serve as a recreation facility. Post World War II the pier was given to the City of Galveston and renamed Pleasure Pier. From there it became a family venue filled with nostalgic attractions such as headlining dance bands, motion pictures, a full carnival, aquarium and, of course, fishing.

After Hurricane Carla destroyed the pier in 1961, Houston

banker James Lyon, a University of Houston alumnus, rebuilt it as the Flagship Hotel in 1965. After 1990 the hotel began to fall into disrepair and was purchased in 2003 by Landry's Restaurants Inc. for the sum of \$500,000. The original plan for the hotel was to undergo a complete renovation and reopen in 2011. However, the aftermath of Hurricane Ike in 2008 called for a change of in plans when the building's structure was damaged beyond repair.

In October of 2009, Landry's announced their new idea for the pier. While the plan was still to restore the hotel, there was mention of carnival-type rides and entertainment. The company kept a tight seal on the plans until the end of January 2012. Landry's then revealed their intention to undertake a "momentous renovation plan to return the 25th Street and Seawall Boulevard pier to its magnificent roots as a preeminent Historic Pleasure Pier."

Adrienne Culpepper, owner of Nautical Antiques & Tropical Décor and co-founder of Islander

By Choice, LLC, sees an increase in tourism as one of the biggest advantages of the new Pleasure Pier. After Ike, the island saw a drop of more than 25 percent in tourism.

"The community really came together to rebuild," Culpepper said. "It was a grassroots movement to come back stronger."

She and her husband Michael have seen the island change in positive ways for more than 14 years.

"Anything that attracts people to the island is good for small businesses," Culpepper said. "People who already love the island, residents here and tourists will all see what the island has to offer"

At helm of the project is Tilman J. Fertitta, the sole owner, chairman and CEO of Landry's Inc. Tilman grew up in an apartment across from the pier in Galveston and often rode his bike along the Seawall. As a teenager he also worked as a lifeguard for the Flagship Hotel.

"When you look at the whole development on 53rd Street, that's

where I used to go and play," Fertitta said in a recent press release. "It's always fun to go back and there is that nostalgia part of it."

Fertitta currently owns several large restaurant chains including the Chart House, Rainforest Café, Saltgrass Steakhouse, Landry's Seafood House, Fish Tales and the first Bubba Gump Shrimp Company in Texas. Fertitta is also known for his ownership of several hospitality venues including the Kemah Boardwalk, the San Luis Resort, Hilton and Holiday Inn hotels just to name of few.

"Of course, I would not have done as much in this town if it was not my hometown," Fertitta said.

Pleasure Pier has been a \$60 million dollar investment for Fertitta to create a family-orientated destination for locals and tourists alike. The pier itself extends nearly 1,130 feet into the Gulf of Mexico, will employ more than 600 individuals at one time, and will be able to host between 6,500 and 7,000 people at a time. Its attractions will include rides, carnival

games, themed food venues and several retail and novelty shops.

The Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. will make its Texas debut on the Pleasure Pier with a full dine-in restaurant. Next door will be the Gump on the Run, which will offer a fast-food version of its menu items.

"This is absolutely exciting," said RoShelle Gaskins, spokeswoman for the Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau. "History has shown that the old Pleasure Pier was a huge draw, and this will be even bigger."

An increase in tourism and improvement in local economic growth is highly anticipated. Galveston Mayor Joe Jaworski said he hopes this will be a place that tourists are drawn to and will help Galveston come back better than ever.

"The city of Galveston's commitment to enhancing our Seawall experience has now been improved upon by one of Galveston's own," Jaworski said.

Leapsters celebrate birthdays every four years

Samantha Samuel
The Signal

There are several things in this world that are taken for granted, such as nature, the ability to hear or speak, and even people in general.

One thing the majority of people take for granted is their own birthday. It's the one day that comes around every year to celebrate the anniversary of someone's existence. What happens to the select few who don't get to experience this exciting occasion on an annual basis?

A leap year occurs every four years if the year is evenly divisible by four. If the year can be evenly divided by 100 then it's not a leap year unless the year is also evenly divisible by 400.

A leap year consists of 366 days, as opposed to a regular year, which has 365 days. Leap years are needed to keep the calendar in alignment with the Earth's

revolutions around the sun. If Feb. 29 wasn't added to the calendar approximately every 4 years, we would lose almost six hours off our calendar every year, meaning that our calendar would be off by approximately 24 days after 100 years.

Those born on Feb. 29, also known as Leap Day, are referred to as "leaplings" or "leapsters." People with this unique birthday only have official birthdays once every four years. Wendy Mass, author of the book "Leap Day," wrote a story that takes place on that particular day.

"I wanted to write a book that took place on one day, so I went through the calendar in hopes of finding the perfect day," said Mass. "It wasn't a leap year that year, but when I got to February, the idea just hit me. It's such an odd day, a day out of time with a lot of story potential."

In "Leap Day," the protagonist,

Josie, is a teenage girl who's turning 16 even though it's only her sixth official birthday. Her family and friends plan to make her last official birthday as a teenager special.

"I started researching Leap Day birthdays and found that 'leapsters' celebrate in all sorts of ways," Mass said. "Her family and friends make her day extra special with a lot of surprises. Josie also takes her driving exam and has a sweet sixteen initiation of sorts. A lot of secrets are revealed."

Many "leapsters" celebrate their birthday on March 1 since it's the day after Feb. 28. Others wonder how they feel about their unique birthday. Brooklyn Siegmund, a Texas native and proud "leapster," has a positive attitude about it.

"I love having this unique birthday," Siegmund said. "I'll be 24 this year, but technically I'll only be 6. Not many people can

say that. People don't understand how someone can be so excited to be able to celebrate their birthday on their actual day of birth."

Brooklyn naturally experienced teasing for her unique birthday, which helped her develop a good sense of humor.

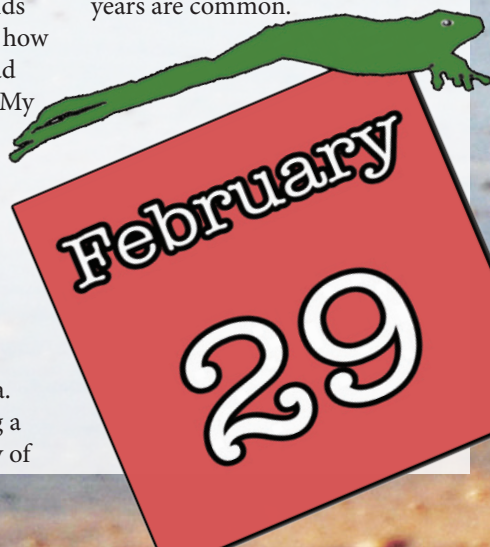
"When I don't have an 'official' birthday, my parents say, 'there's no need to buy you presents this year since you don't have a birthday,' Siegmund said. My friends always state my age based on how many actual birthdays I've had instead of my age in general. My boyfriend gets teased about being with a 6-year-old. He'll say to me, 'act your age, oh, wait a minute, you are!' I always try and get a child's discount at restaurants, but that never works."

Corey Everett, 35, is a "leapster" residing in Georgia. He and his wife are expecting a son who also has a possibility of

being born on Leap Day.

"I think it would be pretty exciting if our son has a leap day birthday," Everett said. "I know he would get a lot of extra attention since it is pretty unique. We are a little torn on the idea because we don't want him to feel slighted not having his own day."

People who are born on Leap Day are often teased; They are quick to point out that the other years are common.



Paperback Paradise

Jessica Brossack

The Signal

Miles of blue water all around and sandy beaches as far as the eye can see. No telephones, televisions, computers or—egad—i-anything!

If you're not lucky enough to be Tom Hanks in "Castaway" and marooned with a cargo shipment full of things to occupy yourself, what do you do?

Well, you would read. But what would you read? Even Tom Hanks wasn't fortunate enough to find a book washed up on shore. A copy of "Robinson Crusoe" by Daniel Defoe would have been perfect for his character's dilemma.

"What would you read on a desert island?" is the question the staff of the UHCL Alfred R. Neumann Library poses on its new blog entry located under "News from the Neumann" entitled "Desert Island Books."

Martha Steele, associate director for public services, developed the idea after noticing that their blog didn't really say anything specific about books.

"Most of the library staff are devoted readers and would be pleased to provide recommendations and book reviews," Steele said, "but I suggested that we get recommendations from faculty. The opinions of your faculty of what is worthwhile reading will be of interest to many students."

Steele enlisted the help of reference librarian Gerald Churchill to conduct interviews and write the blog.

Churchill contacted several faculty members for face-to-face interviews and sent out a small survey for those unable to meet face-to-face, with such questions as "Name a favorite book. Why is it a favorite?" and "For you, what is a good book? What should it do?"

Christine Paul, director of foreign languages and continuing education, believes that the books she reads have to be well written, whether it's Margaret Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind," or Bernard Schlink's "The Homecoming."

"Whenever possible, I enjoy reading books in their original language," Paul said, who has the ability to read English, French, Spanish and German, and mentioned Irene Nemirovsky's "Suite Francaise" as one of her favorites.

While many professors listed "To Kill a Mockingbird" as one of their favorite books Patricia Cuchens, lecturer in business writing, it has a personal tie.

In the 1960s, Cuchens and her family moved from Detroit, Mich., to Pensacola, Fla., where racial segregation was still very much in existence.

"Harper Lee's book was one

of many touchstones of the Civil Rights era," Cuchens said. "Although the story takes place in an earlier time period, 'To Kill a Mockingbird' strongly affected people in the 60s and 70s. However, the death of Emmett Till [a 14-year-old black teenager who was tortured and killed in rural Mississippi] in 1955—five years after Harper Lee's book was published—was one piece of strong evidence of the book's relevant theme."

The Cuchens family moved from inner-city Detroit where she attended an integrated school, to the suburban South with a segregated school.

"A few years later, when I first read the book, I was surprised by all the references I could understand," Cuchens said.

Even now, she says, when she reads that book, she is reminded of how she felt at that time in her life.

While that book holds a poignant place in Cuchens' life, she does say that a person reading it today would probably not be affected the same way, nor does the book have the same impact as it did in the '60s, but Cuchens thinks it would still generate debate and discussion in the classroom where the book is still regularly taught.

Both Steele and Churchill said that they have been surprised by the recommendations made by faculty and, in writing the blog, they have been exposed to, and enjoyed reading, some books they had never previously considered.

Churchill said he really enjoyed reading "All Quiet on the Western Front" and "Madame Bovary" which were listed by Associate Professor of History, Barbara Hales, as well as "the Armada," recommended by Professor of History Jonathan Zophy, both of whom have entries on the library blog.

At this point, only faculty responses have been highlighted in the "Desert Island Book" blog series, but students, staff and all faculty members are encouraged to participate.

"It is my hope to one day have President Staples submit an entry," Steele said.

To read all of the entries of the blog participants or to participate yourself, log on to www.uhcl.edu/library and scroll to the bottom left corner of the page, click on the green and white "Read our Blog/News from the Neumann" link, or contact Gerald Churchill directly at Churchill@uhcl.edu.



STARBUCKS': continued from page 1

“Starbucks was the first company I heard about promoting homosexual sin in Washington,” Andrew said. “Christians are thanking me. Pastors are telling me that they are joining the boycott. One church is having its 5,000 members boycott Starbucks.”

Senate Bill 6239/House Bill 2516 states that it will provide “equal protection for all families in Washington by creating equality in civil marriage and [change] the domestic partnership laws, while protecting religious freedom.” The bill was passed with a 28-21 vote in the state Senate Feb. 1 after an hour-and-a-half long debate. Exactly one week after being passed in the state Senate, the bill was passed in Washington state’s House of Representatives with a vote of 55-43 Feb. 8.

“I think that the legislation of same-sex marriage is the government finally recognizing a subjugated minority,” said Nathan White, former events coordinator for the Gay-Straight Alliance at San Jacinto Community College-Central Campus in Pasadena. “Until [the gay community has] the same rights and privileges as every other individual, it’s truly discrimination. I’m glad state governments are slowly realizing that separate but equal is not equal. It’s something we should’ve learned in the 1960s but has been overlooked in regard to the LGBT community. It is the duty of the government to protect the rights of the minority even against the will of the majority.”

Washington Governor Chris Gregoire signed the bill into law Feb. 13.

“It shows that time and time again, the

“I THINK THAT THE LEGISLATION OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE IS THE GOVERNMENT FINALLY RECOGNIZING A SUBJUGATED MINORITY.”

— Nathan White,
Former Events Coordinator, Gay-Straight Alliance,
San Jacinto Community College-Central Campus

“WE ARE DISAPPOINTED THAT THE LEGISLATION DID THIS IN WASHINGTON.”

— Ed Vitagliano,
Spokesman for the American Family Association

public’s understanding of marriage equality and the country’s acceptance of it seems to be shifting in a positive direction,” said Karina Shagren, the governor’s spokeswoman, in an official statement.

Opponents of the bill are threatening a challenge with a referendum that will need more than 200,000 signatures submitted by June 6 in order to appeal the law.

“We are disappointed that the legislation did this in Washington,” said Ed Vitagliano, spokesman for the American Family Association, a non-profit organizationt that believes a culture based on biblical truth best serves the well-being of the country. Vitagliano said the legalization of same-sex marriage is the “deconstruction of traditional marriage” and will eventually “open the door to polygamy.”

“Saying that people who drink Starbucks are ‘God haters,’ that is horrible,” said Alan Mansfield, president of the Unity Club at University of Houston-Clear Lake. “That’s a huge market to insult and typically a more sophisticated one too; [the] consumers are

typically more educated, white-collar professionals that will see right through the pastor’s ignorance and bigotry. Starbucks is a true advocate of the LGBT community. They’re one of the few companies that offer such employees full and equal benefits to spouses of same-sex partners. I don’t like coffee, but I go as often as possible to Starbucks for other products and gift cards for friends/family because by supporting them, I’m supporting equality.”

Andrew says he has received a very favorable response from his calling of the Starbucks boycott.

“I am happy with the results so far,” Andrew said. “I believe that George Washington, John Adams and Abraham Lincoln would also approve. Our Founding Fathers made the Christian laws that Starbucks and others want to ‘change’ into non-Christian laws. George Washington made the law to court martial homosexuals in the military so God would bless the military; as history shows God did. No American should support Starbucks or any other anti-God and anti-American company.”

At close of business Jan. 23, the day before the official statement from Starbucks was released, Starbucks’ stock was at \$47.34. At close of business Feb. 16, Starbucks’ stock was at \$48.52.

Starbucks joins the list of other powerhouse brands, such as Nike, Microsoft and Amazon.com (all also headquartered out of the Pacific Northwest), that support the legalization of gay marriage in the state of Washington. ••

IBOOKS: con't from pg. 1

particular computer or server configuration.

E-textbook delivery is spanning the globe and many countries are adopting this delivery exclusively. South Korea’s Education Ministry has announced plans to get rid of traditional textbooks and replace them with digital versions. The project would allow students to read their materials on a variety of electronic devices including smartphones, tablets, PCs and Internet-connected smart televisions.

Primary schools will be first, with their educational materials digitized by 2014, followed by secondary and high schools in 2015. However, there is no mention if this project will also be rolled out to college students.

Here in America, e-textbook delivery is also becoming a part of the curriculum. McAllen ISD, in McAllen, Texas is one of the largest school districts in the country rolling out e-textbook delivery through its TLC³ Program. The program, which stands for Transforming Learning in the Classroom, Campus and Community, currently has 6,000 students with access to iPad and iTouch devices. The district hopes all students will have devices by January 2013.

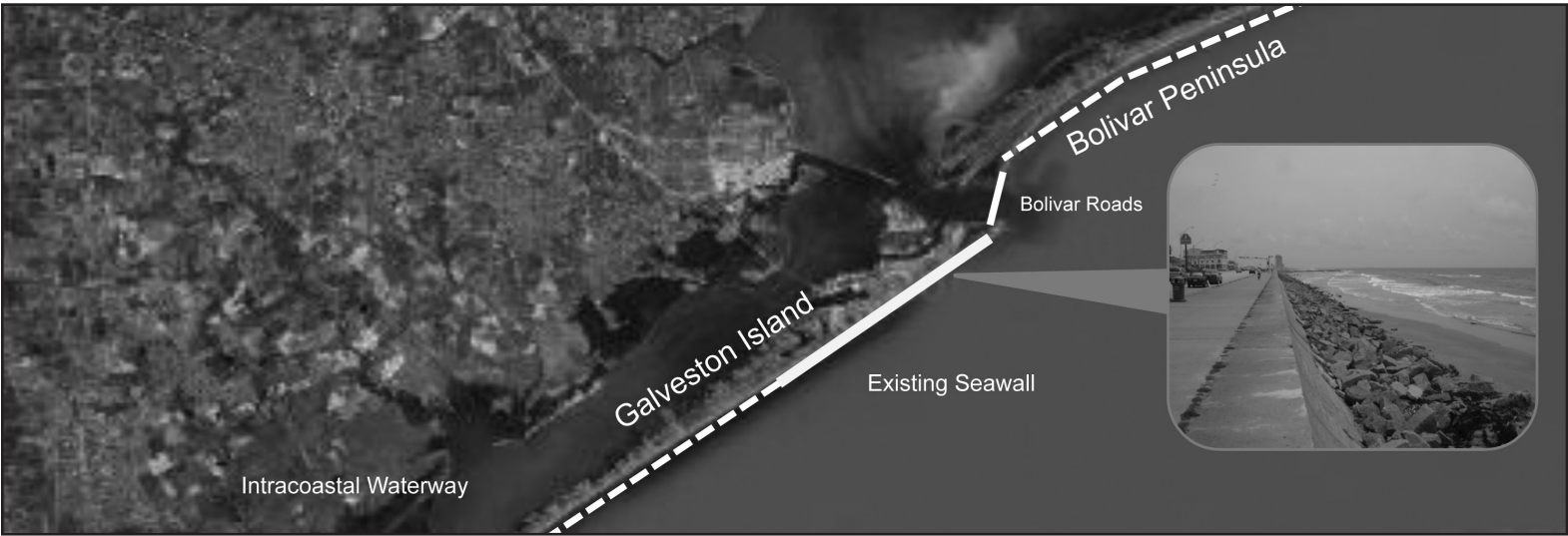
McAllen ISD has 25,000 students; 91 percent are Hispanic, 65 percent are at risk and 67 percent are economically disadvantaged. The district knew it had to do something to transform education and considered technology as an option. However, instead of adding more computers to classroom McAllen ISD wanted to take it a step further.

“We wanted to level the playing field to make sure our children had access to this kind of technology,” said Norma Zamora-Guerra, community information director for McAllen ISD.

The district did its homework and was able to justify the upfront cost of the devices by not only repurposing funds set aside for computers but also through special funding.

“We save on calculators and other supplies by using iPads, which have all these tools built in,” Zamora-Guerra said. “All these extra tools and apps make the experience with iPads so rewarding because teachers can witness students make the connection to what they are learning. It’s what teachers live for.” ••

IKE DIKE: continued from page 1



WILLIAM MERRELL:COURTESY

The "Ike Dike" is a concept developed by William Merrell to protect Galveston and surrounding areas from future hurricanes. Pictured above is phase one of a three-phase proposal. Visit The Signal online at www.uhclthesignal.com for photos of phases two and three.

26 percent of the total income of the entire state of Texas. Additionally, the area generates almost one-fourth of the entire country’s petroleum products, making this region essential, not only to the Texas economy, but that of the nation, as well.

Nonetheless, the only thing protecting this region is a 10-mile-long, 17-foot-tall cement barrier, the Galveston Seawall. The Seawall, which was completed in 1904 in response to the Great Storm of 1900, was designed to defend the island from violent storm surges.

While the Seawall has proven successful in its initial purpose, the Galveston surface has sunk as much as 10 feet in certain areas. It does not offer any protection to the island’s expanding west end nor the Bolivar Peninsula, nor does it provide any defense from

flooding in the Galveston Bay and those surrounding areas.

“At the time of the 1900 Storm, the west end had cattle grazing and, I believe, a lace linen factory with a railroad line, and very few residents,” said Jerry Mohn, president of the West Galveston Island Property Owners Association and advocate of the Ike Dike. “[There was] no economic advantage to build the Seawall to the west end.”

A major hurricane hits the Texas Gulf Coast approximately every 15 – 20 years, creating a demand for up-to-date defense systems.

Marie Robb, president and CEO of Coastal Solutions, was a resident of Bermuda Beach during Hurricane Ike. Robb lost her entire home to the hurricane.

“It was the closest thing to a war setting that I think I will ever see in my life,” Robb

recalls of returning to the island. “I remember thinking, ‘This is insane; why would we ever let this happen again? If in 1906 we could build a Seawall, why can we not build a fortified dune?’”

Robb, unaware of the Dutch program, borrowed a pencil from the reception desk of her hotel room. She then sketched a concept that was eventually passed on to Merrell. Merrell applied his previous knowledge to the concept, and the Ike Dike was born.

While originally received as a great solution to an ongoing issue, the Ike Dike has lost its momentum in recent months.

The Gulf Coast Community Protection and Recovery District is a six-county public cooperation that was created to examine surge protection on the upper Gulf Coast. The cooperation, made up of Brazoria, Chambers, Galveston,

Harris, Jefferson and Orange county judges, is expected to launch studies based on the Ike Dike and other storm surge concepts. Nonetheless, the review process is expected to be lengthy.

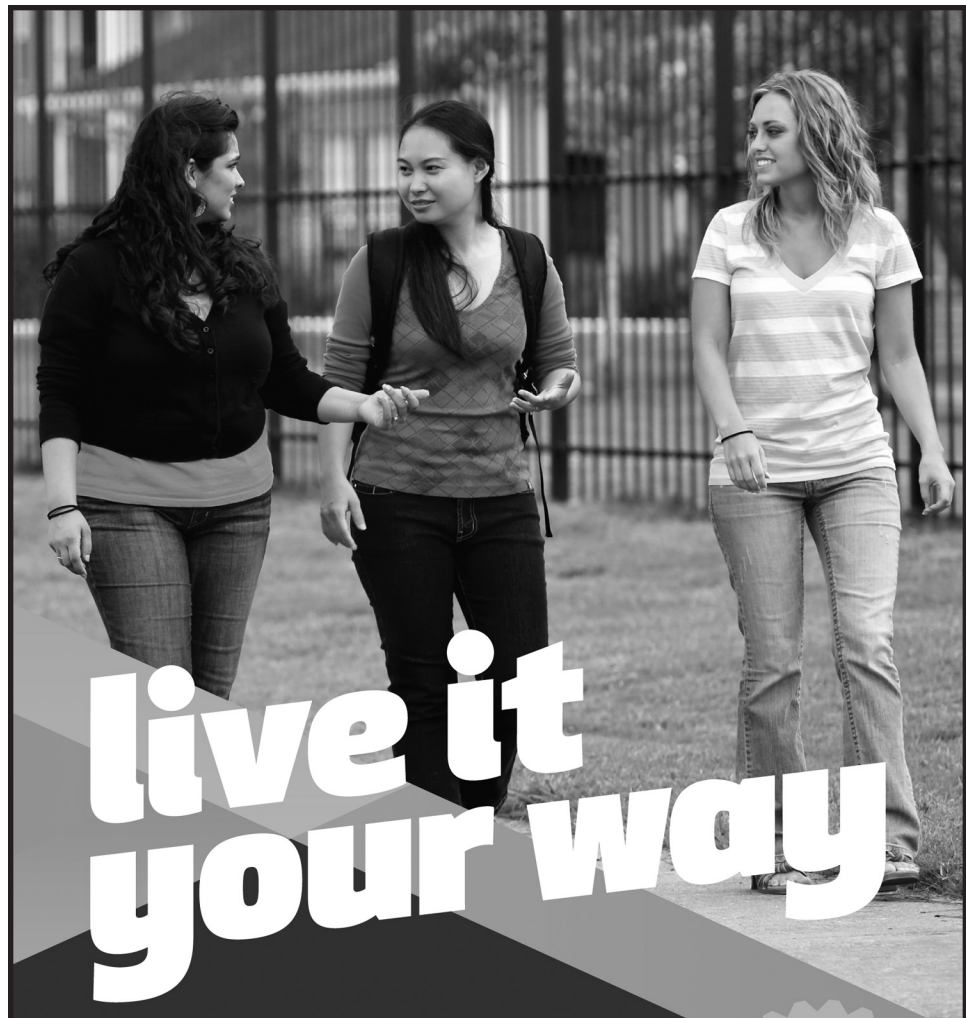
“Right now it will take years,” Mohn said. “There are no funds for the project, only a concept that we believe is viable because the Dutch have been so successful with surge protection systems.”

With every major hurricane, residents of Galveston and the surrounding areas are left to pick up the pieces and go on with their lives.

“Now I think the public can get involved by at least demanding some sort of engineering study for a levee, or some sort of revetment,” Jaworski said. “However, doing nothing is not an option.” ••

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Vagina Warriors fight against domestic violence



JOSH OJEDA: THE SIGNAL

Shayla Habibi, cast member of "The Vagina Monologues," makes her final make-up touch-ups before her performance as a Vagina Warrior.

Lakeisha Moore The Signal

Vagina is a word usually reserved for private or anatomical conversations, but at UHCL the word has become synonymous with an annual production whose purpose is to raise awareness and funds to help end violence against women and girls.

For the fourth straight year, UHCL has played host to "The Vagina Monologues," a production used by the V-Day Campaign, an international organization founded by Eve Ensler. The play was written by Ensler in an attempt to break taboos enabling women to freely express certain issues that derive from being a woman. The areas covered within the monologues during the Feb. 17 and 18 productions included domestic violence, body image and sex – both pleasurable and forced.

"What we are really trying to

focus on is letting people know that sexual and domestic violence happens every day in our community," said Julie Smith, UHCL coordinator of women's and LGBT services. "It's here; it's us."

UHCL students are not immune to domestic violence. One student, whose name is being withheld to protect her privacy, said she was molested repeatedly by her teenage brother starting when she was five.

"In the middle of the night, my brother would climb out of his bed and into mine," the student said. "He called it a game."

It was a game she didn't enjoy playing and a game that left her in excruciating pain and bearing undetectable scars. She became suicidal.

She grew up unable to show affection toward anyone in her life. Any attempt of affection made her fear that it would result in being abused again.

"That fear was in my heart and I was disgusted by any male in my life," she said.

Widely reported statistics show that one out of three women in America, more than one billion, become victims of sexual or domestic violence daily. Ninety percent of the funds raised from the production benefit Bay Area Turning Point (BATP), a local nonprofit organization that provides recovery solution services for survivors of family violence and sexual assault. The other 10 percent will go to the international V-Day Campaign to help build safe homes for women in Haiti.

"All of the funds raised from events like UHCL's 'The Vagina Monologues' go directly to victim services," said Diane Savage, president and CEO of BATP.

The services offered by BATP help provide sexual and domestic abuse victims with transportation, childcare, medical attention and job and life skills. Other services include a 24-hour crisis hotline, therapeutic counseling and emergency victim accompaniment to area hospitals and police stations.

Last year, nearly 8,700 Clear Lake-area women and children were aided by BATP, Savage said.

Domestic and sexual violence not only takes a toll on the lives of its victim but also those associated with the victim.

"Everyone is impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault," Savage said. "In

the workplace, you are around people who have been abused and there are children in school classrooms that have been abused.

You could be sitting next to someone who has survived domestic or sexual abuse or a person who currently is being abused and not even know it."

Regrettably, Savage

said, everyone is a target, as she recalled a recent incident in which a man not only killed his estranged wife but the wife's friend, too.

"You may have a friend, family member or co-worker who is being abused and wind up placed in the middle of an attack," Savage said. "Although you are innocently with him/her, you could be made susceptible to domestic violence as well."

Potential batterers may be identified by certain behaviors like showing early signs of jealousy, making excuses for

their excessive anger or making their victims feel like things are too good to be true.

Smith said that while UHCL's production of "The Vagina Monologues"

"SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HAPPENS EVERY DAY IN OUR COMMUNITY. IT'S HERE; IT'S US."

**— Julie Smith
Coordinator
Women's & LGBT Services**

is entertaining, its true mission, and the mission of the international V-Day Campaign, is to educate audience members about sexual and domestic violence. Her hope is that aside from raising awareness about domestic violence the production may encourage someone who is being abused to come forward. Victims can turn to the UHCL Counseling Center by calling 281-283-2580 or 281-557-0290 for Bay Area Turning Point.



JULIE SMITH: UHCL IISS

Cast members of this year's "The Vagina Monologues" production.

Black History Month 2012

Black History Events

- February 21, 1 p.m.
"Third Ward, TX"
Movie Screening,
SSB Lecture Hall



- February 23, 5 p.m.
"We Are Women,
Hear Us Roar,"
Bayou Garden Room

To find out more information about Black History Month and other events sponsored by IISS, call 281-283-2575, email iiss@uhcl.edu or stop by the Office of Intercultural and International Student Services, Student Services Building, Room 1.203.



CARLA BRADLEY: UHCL IISS

To kick-off IISS' Black History Month celebration, cross-cultural graduate students Stacey Baldon and Felicia Woodard performed an Afro-Fusion piece incorporating West African, West Indian and modern dance moves in the SSB lobby Tuesday, Feb. 14. The dance performance was followed by a presentation by Rockell Brown Burton, assistant professor in the School of Communication at Texas Southern University, on "The Historical Representation of African-Americans in Mass Media."



Julie Smith, coordinator of Women's and LGBT services in the office of International and Intercultural Student Services, is conducting a survey to determine the need for an on-site child care service. To participate in the survey, go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BHTN9DW> or use your smartphone to scan the QR code below.

