What You Want to Know About Pay-for-Print

Melanie Allen
Staff Writer

When I received an email from Kasey Helton in early January that I would have to pay 10 cents for every sheet of black and white paper and 35 cents for every colored page- I was pretty upset. Apparently, I wasn't alone. Today, there are 324 students joined a Facebook group titled: Students Against the New Printing Policy. She told me that she received 119 emails from concerned students.

Beginning this semester, the H building and J building labs converted from free printing to pay-for-print. The policy was instituted to prevent wasteful printing. Apparently, some people thought printing out works of Shakespeare, the Quran, or hundreds of black boxes, and then abandoning them, was a good idea. The administration believed that the best way to do this was instituting this policy.

As a student affected by this policy, I wanted to learn why they chose this method. I interviewed Kasey Helton to learn more.

Q: What was wrong with the previous system of free printing?

There were three reasons that we pursued pay for print:

1. The State of Georgia didn't meet their revenue goals for this fiscal year. In response, many State Agencies were asked to cut their operating budgets. The University System was required to cut their operating budget 9%. Each University in the system had to make this cut. In years past, general lab printing was paid for out of IT's operating budget. Finding a revenue source to pay for printing was important.

2. The sheer amount of paper being printed in the labs was astounding. 1,250,000 sheets of paper last year. In the fall semester it exceeded 950,000. So far this spring we have printed 12,709 sheets of paper. If this trend continues, we should print less than 100,000 sheets of paper this semester. From a sustainability perspective, this is a considerable improvement.

3. We have gotten a lot of feedback from students over the years that printers do not work consistently. Revenue from pay for print will go toward printing supplies and (if we make enough) a service and renewal contract for the printers and copiers on campus.

FYI...some students have been concerned that pay for print is a cash cow for the University. The trend on other campuses is that when pay for print is brought online printing is curbed 60%. We counted on that. I think it will decrease even more than that on our campus. If you use the estimates above, you'll see that we estimate $10,000 in revenue this semester. I'm spending half that amount today on printing supplies.

Q: Why is pay-for-print considered the best decision for solving these problems?

I'm a student. I would rather pay for what I use than to have the average of what everyone uses assessed on my account as a fee. Pay for Print, from my perspective, is a much more fair way to pay for the service. You can control your own spending. If we had taken an average and assessed that to every student, each student would have paid more than $20. Many students don't print in the labs at all. It seems unfair to assess that fee on students that don't print in the labs.

Q: What reasons were there for not pursuing a printing quota policy instead? (having a maximum amount of printing per length of time before paying)

...see above. Its important to realize that there is no such thing as a "free print". Someone was going to have to pay for it. It could either a) get paid for out of an operating budget and something else would have been cut, b) a fee could be increased to pay for printing or c) students, faculty, staff and department can pay for what they actually use.

Q: There are 311 students in a Facebook group voicing opposition to this policy. (for comparison there are 383 members of 0 Everyone at SPSU 0) Did you expect this level of a response from students?

Honestly? Yes. I think that students should be aware of where their money goes and why. We did a considerable amount of research before we pursued this. We couldn't find another school (at our level) in the State System that doesn't use pay for print. I realize that it is a change. I have responded to every single student that has emailed, called or come by my office. I understand the frustration and don't begrudge them to opportunity to complain. I also think we would have had many more than 311 students complain if we had assess a $20 fee on all their accounts.

Q: Many students think it is unfair to institute this policy because they already had to pay higher tech fees. Would you care to reply to this sentiment?

Historically, Technology Fees have not been designated to pay for consumable items like paper and ink.

Q: Are there areas on campus where people can print their assignments for free?

Currently, the only two labs using pay for print are the general use labs in the H and J.

Q: It seems that poorer students and international students will be affected most by this decision, because most richer native students prefer the convenience of buying their own printer. Did the administration consider this when making this decision?

I'm not sure that buying your own printer would actually end up being less expensive. I have a printer at home and the ink cartridges are expensive. There are several variables. How often do you print? Do you sometimes need to print in color?

Q: Is this a temporary policy? How long do you think it will be in place?

I don't foresee the policy changing. But that doesn't mean that it won't.

Some of us may be less than satisfied with the answer to that last question. Good news, we could conceivably get our tech fees to pay for a printing quota. The deadlines for tech fee proposals ended January 31st. Helton said that a proposal to purchase 50 sheets of paper for every student ($5 credit each account) would amount to around 24,000- which is a reasonable request of the tech fee committee (Students can serve on the tech fee committee through SGA). She did warn that we would need to make a hard sell, since tech fees have not traditionally paid for consumable goods, and even then the proposal could be rejected. Still, those who are very interested in having 50 sheets credited to their account should write a tech fee proposal the next time they are due. If it isn't written it can't be accepted or rejected either way. Also, the different schools run their programs individually. It may be possible that enough student interest inside a department could encourage the department to credit printing funds to their students. However, remember that the department most often (if not always, I admit I'm not sure) pays out of the lab fee, which means if they provide you pages, that is less money they can spend on buying new equipment for the labs.

Global Game Jam 2009

Jon Preston
Game Development Professor

This past weekend, Southern Polytechnic State University participated in the first annual Global Game Jam – and event that spanned 53 locations in 23 countries. SPSU was host to 18 participants that included students and faculty from the Art Institute of Atlanta and SPSU as well as an 8-year veteran of the game development industry. The GGJ involved a 48 binge of caffeine-induced design and creation of a game wherein each team built a game from scratch with no prior notice as to what the game was to be about. Participants arrived on Friday late afternoon and received the constraints of the event; each time zone around the world had unique constraints, and the US East Coast time zone teams had to build a game : 1) that lasted no more that 5 minutes, 2) that incorporated the theme "As long as we have each other, there is no end to the problems we'll face,"

and 3) utilized one of the following three adjectives, "pointed", "illusionary", or "persistent."

For the first hour on Friday, people traded ideas and self-formed into teams of 4. And by 6:30pm, the teams set up and began their quest to build a new game from the ground up. It was nice to see artists and programmers working together to collaborate. SPSU provided its new "Game Hive" lab – fully equipped with Xbox 360s, Sun Workstations, and ample software to do the 3D modeling, 2D texture development, and core game engine programming. By 2am on Saturday morning, some participants had left for sleep and to attend to tasks on Saturday, but most remained and worked long into the night.

Saturday continued on and the teams worked relentlessly. By late Saturday afternoon after a pizza lunch, you could see the games coming together. The graphics somewhat worked, and the game controls were there in their nascent form. Amid the

work, participants exhausted the entire set of PS3 and Xbox360 game catalog on hand in the Game Hive – Rock Band and Skate ranking high on the list.

Sunday was quiet and focused as Chris and Daniel, spearheading the team working on a 2D survival shooter, nudged each other to stay awake after not sleeping at all the entire weekend. And the "Obsessive Compulsive Dungeon Master" game was nearing completion (complete with voice talent from SPSU's faculty member, Jeff Greene). In the end, development wrapped up at 3pm on Sunday and everyone had a chance to play all the games.

Kevin O'Gorman, faculty from the Art Institute of Atlanta, Britt Stevens, the founder of Computer ArenA in Roswell, Vernard Martin from Emory's High-Performance Computing division, and Jon Preston from the Computer Science and Software Engineering Department at SPSU judged the games. While the games were all amazing in

their own right (especially given the short timeframe and intense sleep-deprived efforts it took to produce them) "Rope" took the award for Best Game. Team members Li Yingfan and Michael White received one year memberships to the Georgia Game Developers Association sponsored by Clinton Lowe, President of the GGDA. But beyond the prizes, the most important outcomes were new friendships, intense learning, and a sense of accomplishment from all involved. As one participant put it, it was a "tactical" and "dream-like" experience! Keep an eye out for GGJ2010 and join us next year!

All 300+ games developed by 1600+ participants worldwide can be downloaded for free and played from http://globalgamejam.org/Game_browser.

Executive Scheduled to Speak

Marcus Guidry
SPSU AITP President

Dave Kardesh, Home Depot's Vice-President of Information Technology, will come to SPSU on Thursday, February 26th. He will speak to all students on the campus about "Leadership" and what it takes to be successful in the future. Students will get an opportunity to ask Mr. Kardesh questions during his visit. The SPSU AITP will hold this meeting in Atrium Building in conference room J-381 at 5:00 PM. Food will be served and all students are welcome to attend.

The AITP is a well-known technology group nationwide,

consisting of both student chapters and professional chapters in all 50 states. The SPSU AITP is sponsored by the Atlanta AITP professional chapter. The national AITP is mostly known for its annual National Collegiate Conference, a technology conference that brings together students of information technology from more than 50 colleges and universities. Students get the chance to compete in national contests in hopes of bringing back home some trophies to their respective colleges.

The SPSU AITP is planning to send 8-10 students to Oklahoma City this April to represent Southern Polytechnic

at the nationals. The chapter is in the process of holding fundraisers to collect the funds needed to cover travel costs. If you are interested in giving donations or sponsoring this student group, the chapter president, Marcus Guidry can be reached by email at mguidry@spsu.edu.
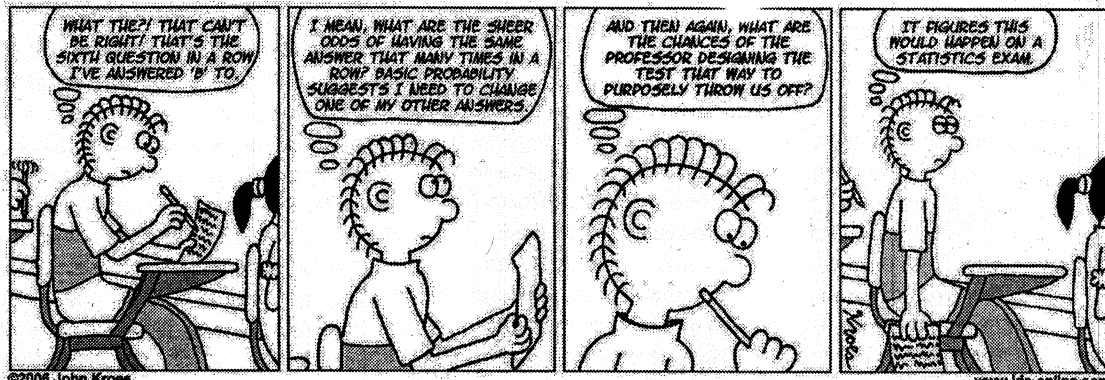

Printing
Continued from Front Page

Capstone students are the most affected by this state of affairs. In my search for labs, I spoke briefly with the Construction Management department. They switched to pay-for-print as well. CM students used to print for free in labs and when pay-for-print was instituted however, other students from the lower H building lab were printing their papers in the CM lab- and the program could not afford to let the entire school print in their labs! Unlike many departments, anyone can sign onto the CM computers. Now, CM capstone students who have to print in the CM lab (they can't get the information on

their home computers) have to pay for all the pages they print. One possible solution mentioned to me for Capstone students, is allowing them to print for free in the Instructor Supervised labs, but that is something to be decided by the administration. Either way, it is important to realize that SPSU was going above and beyond most University of Georgia colleges when it provided free print for anyone.

The most important question of all may be: how to get around this? Kasey Helton's email was only to let you know that the general purpose labs were shifting to the policy, but many departments or classrooms still provide free printing. Most classroom labs in the J-building let you print for free. If you're a Computing and Software

Engineering student, your program allotted you 150 pages to print in any of the CSE labs (J-211, J-251, J-260, J-261, J-263, J-266, J-359). English and TCOM students can print in J-212- although be careful, it doesn't always work. Architecture students can print for free in M-137 (They say hours are sketchy- so try to make the best of it). MET students can print their allotted 150 pages in M-132 and M-131. There is a lab where Biology, Physics, and Chemistry students can print for free in the E building, but I was unable to locate the lab (I hear it is a bit shabby, but hey, it's there). Honors students can print for free in the D and Courtyard study rooms. Be aware that using these labs to print may encourage them to switch to pay-for-print.

Last-Ditch Effort

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GAMEHIVE AT SPSU

J201L (Atrium) J- Building

The Gaming Lab is Open for Open Play.

Monday	9:00 AM til 1:00 PM then 6:00 PM til 12 Midnight
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	9:00 AM til 12 Noon then 6:00 PM til 12 Midnight
Thursday	Closed
Friday	9:00 AM til 12 Midnight
Saturday	12 Noon til 12 Midnight
Sunday	12 Noon til 12 Midnight

Use you hornet card for Pay-2-Play during Open Play hours. You could also buy $5.00 day pass and $20.00/20 hour open play cards. Special Game Hive Counsel member cards will be introduced later. You can Add money to your hornet card at the business office.

m@spsu.edu for contact information.

Writer?

Sean Fine
Editor-In-Chief

Are you interested in writing? Do you have a fun time in covering news, expressing your opinion on local or current issues, reviewing movies, games, or the newest devices on the market, or do you just love to write?

Come by the Sting Office, A252 in the Student Center, preferably on Fridays around 12:30 (maybe a little later) for the sake of 'that's when the editor will be there'.

We accept all students from any major, with the minor requirement of passing English 1101 and you can come and write almost about anything you may desire.

Come by our meetings and meet the rest of the staff and we'll explain how everything works. Who knows, with enough time and effort, you could end up as editor of our fine news paper.

The Buzz

Melanie Allen
Staff Writer

A new organization called "The Buzz" had it's first meeting February 6, 2009 with the goal of bringing more live music to SPSU's campus. This group, headed by Blake Sanchez and Ben Moss, is asking for all who play instruments, work with sound equipment, or love to attend live music concerts to support this group by signing up.

The concerts would be held at the long neglected amphitheater, bringing a great new place for students to socialize in a vibrant atmosphere on campus. They plan to host small local bands, and would love to eventually host more popular bands. They'd like to invest in sound equipment, lights, and decor to improve the concert experience. Their first event would be the Battle of the Bands, where student bands of any genre on campus could compete against one another in front of their peers for a prize. The bands will register to compete by emailing the group.

This group will not be able to be successful unless people on campus show an interest. This group is so serious about making campus life more fun that they are actually having their members sign a statement saying they will work towards this effort. So all who want live music on campus, keep an eye out for fliers from "The Buzz" or contact them at the.buzz.spsu@gmx.com to learn more or give them your support.

AITP

Marcus Guidry
SPSU AITP President

Southern Poly's AITP Chapter Making a Positive Impact on All Students

Southern Polytechnic's AITP (Association of Information Technology Professionals) Student Chapter is reaching out to students campuswide. And their student members are doing it in a big way. After being an inactive chapter for the past two years, a group of students from the IT department were able to successfully revitalize this technology club with the help of Dr. Andy Wang, the department chair of Information Technology. The SPSU AITP Chapter has grown from no members in December to over 30 members in less than a month. And its membership is still growing. The big draw to this technology club is the quality of its guest speakers coming to the campus from the IT industry. The group also has weekend socials, campus events, and does volunteer work for non-profit organizations like Habitat for Humanity and Computers for Youth. The chapter holds its meetings bi-weekly in the Atrium Building (conference room J-381). Students from all majors (especially in IT/CS/SWE) are welcome to join. This student organization is open to all students campus-wide.

SGA - Get involved

Tom Samford
SGA Election Committee Chair

The Student Government Association will be holding elections for next year's officers and council this semester. The SGA represents you to the SPSU administration, faculty and staff as well as to the Board of Regents. Among others duties they also decide how to spend the $41.00 Student Activity Fee that you pay every semester. This year this amounted to over $375,000.00.

You can make a difference by running for one of the open positions on the SGA next year. We will elect a President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer and Ten Council Members. Applications are available in the SGA Office. You can apply for a position from Monday February 23, 2009 until Friday March 6, 2009. The campaign begins Monday March 16, 2009 and the election begins Wednesday March 25, 2009 at 12:15 AM and runs through Tuesday March 31, 2009 at 11:50 PM.

This year we will be voting electronically on campus. To vote, go to http://vote.spsu.edu

from most computers connected to the SPSU campus network including a VPN connection. Here you will be challenged for your BANNER login and password. Make your selections and press Vote! Once you have voted, a random number will be displayed that ties to your vote. Write this number down or print the screen. This number will

allow you to verify that your vote was counted.

We will be hosting two candidate debates this year before the elections; the first will be in the Student Center Auditorium on Tuesday March 17, 2009 between 12:00 noon and 1:00 PM. The second debate will be held in Room J-106 in the Atrium Bldg on March 24, 2009 between 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM.

Qualifications for SGA Officers are a 3.00 GPA and Council Members require a 2.50 GPA. See: http://sga.spsu.edu/NEW%20Constitution%20&%20Minutes.htm for more information. The deadline for applications is Friday March 6, 2009.

Open Season
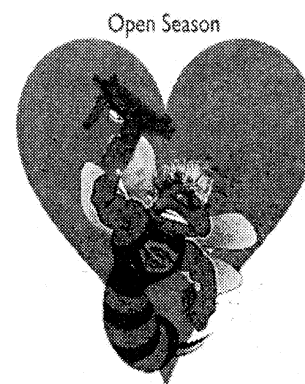
This year Cupid has bullets!

AUTOCAD – ENGINEERING STUDENT Project Work at Home – Take off dimensions from a folding table and reconstruct as 3-d / moveable drawing files to provide manufacturers 'as built' drawings needed for quotation. I can send a picture to interested parties. Contact Scott at tableworx@att.net for details. Student must have computer, software, and measuring equipment.

THE TENSTONE PAPERS
THE YEAR OF THE BLACK MAN: It is time for some political incorrectness.

Jarrett Bell
Staff Writer

For the first time in my life I have never seen at one time so many black people, particularly black men, become players in the public field like I am seeing now. First, we have President Obama. (Technically speaking, Obama is half black and half white. However, since he identifies himself as black, for the purposes of this article, we will consider him as such.) Secondly, we can point out his nominee to the Justice Department, Eric Holder, who is now the Attorney General- the first black person to hold the position. Also, we need to point out Michael Steele, who is now the Republican Party Chairman (and while I feel he is a pawn on the chess table and was chosen to make the Republicans more inclusive, nonetheless, Steele's election is significant.) Given these prominent figures, this year, at face value, appears to be the year of the black man.

The first day into Obama's presidency- I was at home watching the National Prayer Service with my mother. We were taping it and for the first time that I can remember, since I started watching these events when new presidents come in, have I seen so many black preachers in attendance and participating in the service. However, what truly was amazing was when a children's choir, comprised of all black children from inner city Washington, sung with heartfelt spirit with a gospel feel.

We watched in awe and elation to see that these children finally have an opportunity to demonstrate their talents in front of the President at the National Prayer Service. The fact that these children were present shows that you can grow up in the inner city and not fall into the stereotypical trap that those better off have about you; that children who grow up in the inner city, while they will face more obstacles to success, can be just as successful, if not more successful than suburbanites and those who believe they are better than children that grow up in ghettoes and other less desirable places. These obstacles that these children overcame was the source of our elation as we watched this prayer service.

Is this a big deal? Yes! To me I feel that many black people, particularly black men, are written off as lazy, incompetent, always expecting a hand-out, etc. Those that grow up in the inner city are written off as future jailbirds, drug dealers, pimps, what have you- every disparaging future profession one can think of. Finally, with the negative portrayal of black men as a whole on television, radio, and other forms of media, these stereotypes are solidified in society. This is grossly unfortunate and in fact is detrimental to society to have such a stereotypically-geared mindset that is exhibited and is capitalized on.

What many people who hold the stereotypes of black people do not realize is most black men want the same thing as any other man wants- a successful career, a home,

and a family. Why would any average man not want that? Why would any man not want to be successful and lead a decent, drama-free life? However, due to the negativity portrayed, it may be easy for one to think that the average black man does not want that. However, those who believe the average black man does not want to live a decent, successful life then they are choosing to not think for themselves and be rational.

Case in point: I have been a victim to such a stereotype at such a young age. I attended a public middle school in New York City that was a mix of students with a proclivity to white students. In fifth grade, I was told that "I act white" from a white girl that I considered a "friend." The same "friend" in twelfth grade, in AP English class, made a comment that was much worse than the first one- "You are too smart to be black." Rarely am I at a loss of words- but at that particular moment, I could just look at her and see how nauseatingly ignorant she was. To this day, I am flabbergasted that I still run across people with "too smart to be black" not being said but written all over their face.

So why is it that black people, and in particular black males, are typically relegated to the position of dumb, know-nothing individuals with no talents? Whatever the answer may be, here is one thing I can say conclusively- that Obama ascended to the White House on his own merit. Eric Holder was chosen because of his own merit. Steele,

after six rounds of voting- and even though I believe that he was chosen for putting a new face on the Republican Party as a strategic move, I feel that he would not have been in the running for chairman if it was not for his own merit. There are so many black males out there that are just as capable, not looking for a handout, working on their own merit and can be just as powerful as these three men. There are so many black males out there that do not fit the typical stereotype of how a black male conducts himself and what he will end up doing in his lifetime, yet many end up relegated into this substandard position that is degrading and detrimental to their development and success.

Hence, on a personal note, I have never let myself subscribe to or be subscribed to such stereotypes. As a black man, I refuse to give off the image that I'm a thug, as some people look to capitalize on it and think 'just another thug destined for jail.' I am not interested in giving anyone ammunition to clump me in to a group that I do not want to be clumped in with and that I know I do not belong to. As with statement from the so-called "friend" who said I'm "too smart" to be black, I refuse to let someone tell me just because I'm black I am predestined to be stupid, a crack addict, a chronic recipient of welfare, a drug dealer, a pimp, a rapper, a jailbird- whatever they want to dish out that they feel black men stand for. However, if they are willing to dish it out, they had

better be ready for me to send the boomerang back at them- that they are divisive, ignorant, stereotypical, condescending, judgmental, and dimwitted.

Given how Obama is now President, Holder is now Attorney General, and Steele is Republican Party chairman, I hope that perceptions can begin to change. I hope that people will see that there are many black men out there that are successful that know the meaning of working hard to get where they want to go in life; that there are many out there that strive for success and happiness; that there are many out there that know life isn't easy and nothing is given on a silver platter; that nothing in life is free and you have to work for it. I also hope that for us black men that we do not give those who have those deep seated stereotypes ammunition to run with. The portrayal of glorifying thug life is not unseating the stereotypes but rather putting super glue on the seat. It's time to close the ammunition shop, as providing the ammunition only means more rounds from the gun being fired. However, when the ammunition runs out, the gun goes dead.

So it's time to pull the plug of life support off of stereotypes. Stereotypes need to die, once and for all- and in the process, I hope there will be an advent of a better image for the black man.

ENTERTAINMENT

The GOP, the Stimulus, and the Great Depression

Adam Myers
Senior Staff Writer

The first major confrontation between President Barack Obama and the Republican opposition in Washington ended last week when both houses of Congress approved a $787 billion economic stimulus bill. While Obama and his Democratic allies in the Capitol could claim an overall victory, the president was hobbled in his attempt to gain bipartisan support for the bill: none of the 177 Republicans in the House of Representatives voted for the bill, while only 3 Republicans in the Senate were in favor.

GOP lawmakers have proceeded to make much noise over their display of solidarity in opposition for the stimulus package, taking it as a victory for their party. I look at the turn of events and wonder, exactly what is there for them to be proud of?

While the bill earned zero support from House Republicans, it still passed by a 246-183 margin. In other words, for all of their posturing, all of their opposition, all of their obstruction of the stimulus, the final vote wasn't even close, and the House Republican Caucus now has nothing to show for their efforts. Meanwhile, those three Republicans who voted for the final bill – Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins of Maine, plus Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania – proved to be among the key figures in the vote's passage, and are receiving far more media attention than any of the 38 GOP sena-

tors who voted against it.

In their unequivocal opposition to the stimulus bill, the Republicans have hedged their bets on further economic calamity over the next two years, resulting in American voters wishing they had never voted Republicans out of office overwhelmingly over the last two election cycles, leading to a third conservative revolution in three decades in the 2010 midterms. There's an old saying, one that certain prominent politicians have a hard time understanding, which goes like this: "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." After the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and the GOP takeover of Congress in 1994, the question must be asked: upon whom does the shame fall when one is fooled for a third time?

One fact that is very clear in the aftermath of the debate over the stimulus is that Republicans not only lack an elementary grasp of the fundamentals of economics, but hide that fact through acute intellectual dishonesty. For proof of this, just take a look at their interpretation of the Great Depression.

Their key argument, which has been repeated constantly by Republican legislators and their spokespeople, is that Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal didn't work, because the U.S. unemployment rate in 1940 was still at 15 percent. What they neglect to include with this statistic is that in 1933, when FDR came into office, the unemployment rate was at 25 percent.

The GOP talking point argument that the New Deal was a failure is based entirely on an isolated piece of data taken out of context: 15 percent is a seemingly high number, but in reality, it represented a 40 percent drop in the unemployment rate over the course of the New Deal.

Not to be deterred by factual evidence, conservative commentators have taken the tired argument one step further by claiming that the New Deal itself caused the Great Depression. Simply doing a Google search for "Great Depression graphs" and clicking on any of the links on the first page of results illustrates the lunacy of that hypothesis. Year-by-year analysis of any relevant economic indicator – unemployment, gross domestic product, money supply, bank failures – reveals a severe downward trend from 1929 to 1932 with no signs of tailing off, with a sharp turnaround coming between 1933 and 1934. Who was president between 1929 and 1932? Herbert Hoover. Who assumed the presidency in 1933? Franklin Roosevelt. Not only is it incredibly unlikely that Roosevelt was responsible for a depression that began four years before he took office, but any rational person can draw a conclusion between his inauguration and the beginning of a long road to relief. Of course, today's Republican Party has a well-documented tendency to create its own reality, which manifests itself in their account of the Great Depression.

The truth is that though the

programs and reforms introduced by FDR helped immensely to restore confidence in capitalism and stabilize the American way of life, the New Deal ultimately did not put an end to the Great Depression. That honor goes to World War II, which conservatives love to point out. But the depression didn't end simply because we dropped some bombs on German cities and Japanese warships. The depression ended because of unprecedented government intervention in industry, directing all of America's economic might towards a single cause. The war effort created virtually full employment while restricting consumership, giving workers a chance to accumulate savings and eliminate personal debts. For the first half of the 1940s, the United States was effectively a centrally-planned economy. Therefore, when conservatives declare that World War II ended the Great Depression, they mean that socialism ended the Great Depression. I don't know if they've figured that out yet.

On the other side of the ideological spectrum, many liberals are disappointed with the President for having $287 billion of the final stimulus package consist of tax cuts, meant to attract congressional Republicans who, as it turned out, had no intention to support the bill to begin with. Tax cuts, preferably to corporations and the wealthy, are the alpha and omega of GOP economic policy; to them, the half-trillion dollars of spending that appears alongside the tax cuts in

the stimulus is about $500 billion too much. In fact, the GOP alternative introduced on the Senate floor by 2008 presidential runner-up John McCain was all tax cuts, no spending.

The problem with tax cuts as stimulus, though, is that there is no way to ensure that they actually stimulate anything. Remember that tax rebate rolled out by the Bush administration, the one that was supposed to kick-start the flagging economy? Well, it didn't exactly work. The idea was that Americans would flock to their nearest Circuit City, rebate checks in hand, to buy a new flat-screen TV. But with the middle class financially drained, they used the money to help pay off debts, and Circuit City is now out of business.

Tax cuts for businesses are even less effective at improving a troubled economy. While a favorite of proponents of trickle-down economic theory, the fact remains that supply-side policies don't work in a market economy, which is driven by consumer demand. While supply-siders think that by lowering corporate taxes, those companies will then hire more employees. But businesses don't hire workers because their tax rates make it convenient; they hire workers because consumer demand requires it. In the current economic climate, with the average American's wallets exhausted, there's no consumer demand, and that causes the private sector to contract jobs, not create them.

On ABC's This Week, new Republican National Committee chairman Michael Steele made the claim that government can't create jobs, only temporary "work," but that the private sector alone can provide employment that lasts. (Try telling that to the nation's police officers, fire fighters, postal workers, and teachers, or to the 2.5 million Americans who have lost their jobs in the last six months.) What this country badly needs is to get money moving in the marketplace once again, and the only way to do that right now is through government spending.

One final point: while congressional Republicans are going against the Democrats and even many Republican governors (Florida's Charlie Crist even stood next to Obama in support of the stimulus at an event in his home state) in hoping that the stimulus doesn't help the economy, there is reason to believe that their ambitions are not at all far-fetched. After being re-elected in 1936, and with economic figures at pre-depression levels, FDR took the advice of conservative advisors and slashed New Deal programs for 1937 in an attempt to balance the budget. The result was a recession that lasted just long enough for Republicans to gain enough seats in the 1938 midterm elections to form a coalition with conservative Democrats in order to block further New Deal spending. These electoral gains came despite the fact that it was their advice that led to what caused the recession in the first place. So there's hope for the GOP after all.

Import Review - Melty Blood: Act Cadenza

Sean Fine
Editor-In-Chief

System: PS2
Genre: Fighting

This may come as a surprise, but do you know text-based games? The kind that are more about puzzle solving and finding out what to do next rather than full out combat and action? They're actually pretty popular over in Japan and while an import of games like that might involve a big English patch or mastery of the Japanese language, certain text-based games can be so popular that they invoke spin-off titles. Such is the case of Melty Blood, a fighter based off the text-based game Tsukihime.

Story: Fighting game stories are pretty weak usually and while Melty Blood is a spin-off of a text-based title that is more about story than anything, Melty Blood doesn't seem to take any major advantages in presenting its story. Not to mention, Japanese language is a difficult language to read. Basic plot seems to follow that one villain, a Draculaish character named Warachia has taken the fears of the main cast and put them in physical form, such as a blood-thirsty, murderous version of the main vampire character, or revived villains from previous titles. One thing that benefits the story is that the characters are given full voice acting for every bit of title they supposedly say, so in that regard, the story is fine. Not great, but fine.

Gameplay: Sporting over

20 characters, Melty Blood has a wide cast and while it may seem at first that the characters might have duplication syndrome, it's surprising how different a good and evil version of a character can be, where one version has a teleporting move, while the other can chain special moves together.

If they do have a duplication problem, it is that the inputs for most of the moves are pretty simple. Almost every character has a basic 'Hadouken' input for one move, a 'Shoryuken' input for another, and even a down-down input for another special move. I can only assume it was designed this way so that players can easily switch between characters if they desired.

The moves may work differently, but with identical inputs, it somewhat ruins the wonder of learning a new character. Simply put, it sometimes feels more like switching from Ryu to Ken rather than switching from Ryu to say Vega or even Zangief.

This brings up another problem in terms of characters "super specials". To perform said specials, you have to build up a magic circuit bar, which is fine and dandy, but to perform the super specials, all it requires is, I kid you not, the SAME input as the normal moves except pressing circle instead of another button. This not only makes you accidentally waste magic energy, but it feels like they were just lazy in making the specials so easy to perform, especially when trying to come up with combos for each

character.

The game also presents special well... I suppose you can call them 'forms', that can regenerate health and give you access to an even more powerful unique special, which is a fresh change of pace. However, one of the main control buttons is designed to be a parry button, which uses up your Magic circuit just for pressing it and half the time it's really difficult to time it to parry a attack, though mastery of it is necessary to use each character's ultra move, the Last-Arc.

Despite complaints about how similar some of the characters appear, the game is fun in its simplicity, the characters are fun in their own regard, and while hardcore veterans might wipe the floor against newcomers, the ground isn't as wide as in other titles.

Graphics: As a Dreamcast port from back in 2002, Melty Blood isn't going to win a graphics award, the characters are very pixilated in appearance. Regardless of that, the animations for the character pretty lively with dresses bellowing in the wind and characters rolling across the ground, slipping behind opponents and throwing them over their heads. Also, the animations for some of the moves are vibrant and colorful, though I feel some of the designs are a bit plain: Oh, a school boy who is a vampire hunter fights in... his school uniform... that's... exciting... On the other hand, we have a mecha-maid so the character designs sort of balance out.

In the end, I feel indifferent

towards the graphics of the game. My final decision is when some character sprites look like they're so lazy in design, such as major villain Warachia's eyes just look like sleepy closed lines, it takes away from the effect of the characters, so I give them a C for "Come on, guys. Really?" Yet I give them credit because the animation of the characters are something of a sight to see, it gets exciting to see them move so fluidly from one move to the next.

Sound: Music in Melty Blood is pleasing to the ears, utilizing a mix of piano and techno to make a music that is light on the ears, though memorable and at times, pretty catchy. It's pretty good and some themes just strike a chord in me. I especially have a thing for the 'Blank vs. Blank' music before each battle.

The sound effect department is where the game shines with powerful sounding hits that fit the attacks they represent, and the use of the sound really brings out how much damage you're doing in comparison to everything else. Voice acting is Japanese and is pretty nice, especially since everything the characters say is played vocally. It's a nice touch.

Overall: Melty Blood is a simple fighting game that can be fun for some romps and despite a few designs, the characters are interesting looking enough to invoke some repeated plays if only to spend so many days just to try out the next character. 8/10