Supporters for immigration reform unite in demonstrations in Boston and across U.S.

James Moreau
Journal Staff

The voice of the immigrants, as well as people from Suffolk sympathetic to the cause, was heard over five thousand strong throughout the Boston Commons and at Copley Square on a temperate and sunny Monday evening.

The throng of protestors came out in force in a demonstration focusing on the issue of legislation that is currently being discussed in the House of Representatives and the Senate that addresses immigration. The House bill would increase penalties for illegal immigration to the U.S. and would also punish those who assist them.

Seven students from the Suffolk University Hispanics Association, along with three Sophomore James Jimenez and SUHA president Emily Torres were present at the demonstration.

Jimenez, who the weekend prior had attended the Latino Student Leadership Conference at Dartmouth College, said, "This was my final protest, ever. It was really positive." Torres commented on the attitude of the event in saying, "There was no point in being nervous. We're just trying to show them we're out here and that we support each other."

Members of SUHA, along with the other demonstrators, enjoyed the protest which Jimenez described as having "a lot of good vibes. It was like a big party."

Other Suffolk students included sophomore Jim Bodlignon of the Suffolk University Students for Peace and Justice.

"There's a really positive vibe here," he said. It kind of reminds me why we became activists in the first place."

The makeup of the crowd was diverse, with the marchers representing many different nationalities and ethnicities. Although much of Massachusetts' respective ethnic and cultural groups were represented, many with their country of origin's flags. American flags were seen in higher numbers than any other.

Drawing closer to the gazebo at the Commons, protestors could be heard speaking to the crowd in various languages, with responses from the audience swarming "Si se puede," which translated means "It can be done." Another popular chant was "El pueblo unido jamás será vencido!" meaning "Immigrants fighting cannot be defeated."

The atmosphere was enthusiastic but peaceful. Scores of signs with slogans written in both English and Spanish flowed above the crowd gathered around the gazebo. One sign read, "Boston, it's time that the government understands that U.S. immigrants are U.S. citizens."

One sign used in the march was an excerpt from the Bible, reading, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." The crowd also chanted "We march today, tomorrow we vote."

Though the atmosphere was largely quiet for the pro-immigration demonstrators, some protestors who were also in attendance were present in relatively small numbers.

The demonstrators who were supporting tougher enforcement of immigration laws held signs with sayings such as, "No taxation without deportation," and "I support family reunification; send them back to their families."

Denis Coull was a man wearing a Transnet's exhibit and a sandwich board sign reading "Support H.R. 4437," referencing the House bill. "I'm just a regular citizen coming out here today, trying to protect our country," Coull said. "[Our elected officials] are not representing our citizens... How come an illegal immigrant has better health care than our elders and veterans?"

The demonstration at the Commons and Copley Square were just some of many across the U.S. in protest of the House bill and in a show of solidarity for immigrants' rights. Other states, such as New York and California hosted tens of thousands of protestors. See PROTEST, page 2.
SU transgender students become fully covered in health insurance policy

Rose François
Journal Staff

College students surely concern themselves with the topic of health insurance, often leaving the matter to parents. Most college students do not have to worry about not being covered by insurance companies. While Suffolk prides itself on diversity, for a group of students, their differences were overlooked by the health insurance plans offered by Suffolk. The overreach was corrected as of March.

Until recently, transgender students attending Suffolk were not covered for hormone treatment under Suffolk’s health insurance plan. The university requires that all students use the health insurance plan that is offered, unless they have their own plan.

Coverage will become available starting August 15 for all transgender students. “I’m really pleased,” said Suffolk’s GLBT president, John D’Agosta.

The policy covers the student’s medical expenses in the form of hormones and psychiatric care, something that had not previously been offered.

Though the policy does not cover surgical procedures, it is something that D’Agosta feels is necessary for GLBT students because the policy does not cover surgery for other students.

Director of Health Services Sharon Yardley commented on the new services to be covered by the health insurance.

In an article published by Bay Windows, New England’s largest GLBT publication, Yardley admitted that she was not aware of the lack of coverage for transgender students until a student raised the issue.

“It was brought to my attention in September by a transgender student on campus that we had an exclusion in our policy (that I hadn’t noticed),” said Yardley. “And once it was brought to my attention I felt it was discriminatory because it names a whole class of people who can’t get hormone benefits.”

In October of 2005, Suffolk Law and The Massachusetts Lesbian and Gay Bar Association held a panel to discuss discrimination of transgender individuals.

From that point on, the gaps of change have been filling and the results were announced in March. D’Agosta stated that it was nice to witness the support that Suffolk offers.

“Suffolk University has done a lot,” said D’Agosta in regards to the steps that the university has done for GLBT students on campus.

He pointed to the recently created President’s Commission on the Status of GLBT Faculty, Staff and Students and their efforts to create awareness of GLBT issues.

D’Agosta added that the fact that there is awareness of the GLBT community at Suffolk, “means that there is something in place and a way to be heard.”

Marching for immigrants’ rights

PROTEST from page 1

Thousands of protesters.

Coming to head is the issue whether or not the immigrants, which make up a large portion of American society, will be represented in the government, despite their living status here being technically “illegal.”

Professor Christopher Rodriguez remarked the event as, “An impressive showing. This hasn’t been planned for long; it’s a spur of the moment thing.”

He added, “We’ll have to see if our elected official pay attention to this underrepresented but growing minority. Coming from California, it’s much more of an organized affair; it seems like the beginning of something.”

On May 1, there will be another protest throughout the country. Demonstrators are encouraged to either stay inside their houses and boycott or travel to march and add their local demonstrations. There will also be a large protest in the commons on that day.

Freshman Kristina Cruz, who was at the demonstration, emphasized the mood of the day, stating “At the end of the day we’re all Americans anyway.”

Chris DeFilippi contributed to this report.
Women in media, credibility is key

Taylor Beckett
Journal Staff

The media and journalism field is constantly changing these days, and for a long time the broadcast field had been a field dominated by men. Today, however, the media field has evolved to accommodate both men and women. 

Nina Huntemann, a professor of the Communication and Journalism department, acknowledged that the industry has become more evenly accommodating for both men and women.

"In a way, however, she says there is a backwards form of sexism," Huntemann said. "Television is easier to break into for women than men, but eventually you need to make your way into journalism, and it is also up to a broadcast or journalist to be able to deliver a story in a timely and honorable manner. On top of proving to your audience that you're credible, you need to prove yourself to the networks that you are capable of doing your job." 

Nix went on to say that although the media business is cutthroat and highly competitive, "If one network might hate you, and the next may think your name for themselves in the media field. It is important to be able to keep yourself in the loop with what is going on, and what changes are going on and also tips. You just can't take rejection at all." 

Wendy Nix
Sportscaster

The Suffolk Journal is a new online student publication being planned at Suffolk University. The Suffolk Journal is the brainchild of sophomore Michael Miccoli. According to Miccoli, he started the Journal so to compete with The Suffolk Journal at the expense of the media and journalism field's challenges to the field. "The Suffolk Journal is the voice of the student body in the communications field, but also in the management sector of the communications field. The Suffolk Journal is the voice of the student body in the communications field, but also in the management sector of the communications field.

Women are not just in front of the camera positions.

Huntemann said. Women are revered for their looks, and in depth student and staff profiles. They are able to be able to write the online publication after signing up and logging on. Miccoli feels that there has been a lot of buzz going around the school and has had several people in line to contribute to the new student newsletter. When asked about how he felt about the new found interest in the Voice, he says, "Now I know how musicians feel when they hear their music on radio."

While there have been rumors about the Voice, little specific facts are known by the student body in general. "I haven't heard much about The Suffolk Journal except for rumors of another newspaper is starting up," said freshman Mathews DeRosa-Santos. "I think it's a good idea to have a variety of opinions as long as they're done in a respectful and open minded manner."

The Voice will not be writing articles or reporting on events dealing with SGA. The Voice is a publication that will explicitly state that they cannot address issues occurring in SGA. A large percentage of its Executive Board will be SGA members in the fall.

Failure to follow the Constitution would result in their status as a club being suspended. The Suffolk Journal at Suffolk expressed a few issues about the start-up of The Suffolk Journal. Dan McGugh, the associate director of student activities, is currently the program advisor for the Journal, has talked to Miccoli and other members of the Suffolk Journal. In an e-mail sent by McGugh to Dean of Students Nancy Nix, Stall, other student activities members, SGA and The Journal, he said, "The Suffolk Journal is being started by Michael Miccoli as an opportunity for him and others to be published as well as some feel they have been "burnt" by the staff at The Suffolk Journal...

He wants The Suffolk Journal to be a publication that is open to all and will award students the opportunity to write articles that the Journal may not cover or print."

As for funding from SGA, the Voice has requested $20,000, roughly the same budget as the Journal. Aurelio Valente, director of student activities and service learning, has some hesitations about giving The Voice this amount of funds. "I would suggest that they exist for a minimum of one year as an online edition only," said Valente in an e-mail response. "The same thing happened at Bentley and that's the route I would like to see," he added. "I am serious about divesting money in an untainted way...They can use the same online publisher as the journal at no cost."

It is still not clear how The Voice will distribute their articles and whether they will receive funding from SGA.
We hate to break it to the student body of Suffolk University, but apparently Beacon Hill doesn’t like us. In hindsight, there were a couple of clues.

There were the terrified elderly bluebloods who recoiled into their apartments, trying to escape the roving gangs of career-oriented 20-somethings discussing current events and cafeteria food. There were the disapproving looks we got from the Boston Brahmins as we recklessly decimate property values by milling around in our generic-brand pants.

And most recently, there was the letter to the editor in The Beacon Hill Times calling on all Beacon Hill landlords to deny housing to students.

Many believe that with students living in apartments on the Hill, as well as the possible introduction of a new dormitory, we will turn this neighborhood into a party haven. (Only 18-year-olds know how to party.)

Suffolk’s partying image has been projected upon us by a few bad apples. The entire student body of Suffolk has been reduced to a few embarrassing moments perpetrated by a few. We are not seen as the hard-working students we are, swimming in debt, sometimes going so far as to juggle full-time jobs and full-time classes.

Really, we wish we were having as much fun as the Beacon Hill residents think we are. Most of us barely have enough time to complain about how little time we have (but we do, because we’re brave little soldiers like that).

We address these points to two groups. Of course, there are the people on the Hill, who have made an unfair and frankly hilariously inaccurate accusation against the students here. We work hard here, and a little respect for that might be nice.

The second group is the students who are representing us so poorly. It’s because of them that the people on the Hill have the impression they do about the rest of us.

We got it, you have some money, and at this juncture, you don’t have many responsibilities. You’ve got the winning hereditary lottery ticket, so congratulations.

But try to show a little class. Don’t flaunt your recent good fortune by making a royal spectacle of yourself and screwing up their street cred of the rest of us. It’s because of them that the people on the Hill have the way they do about the rest of us.

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We got it, you have some money, and at this juncture, you don’t have many responsibilities. You’ve got the winning hereditary lottery ticket, so congratulations.
GOT GAME?
SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY
"DREAM TEAM"
VS
THE HARLEM ROCKETS
Wednesday, April 12, 2006
7:00 PM
Regan Gymnasium
Tickets available at
The Hub for
$2.00
Seating is limited, so purchase your tickets early!
The event will include prizes, giveaways, contests and a special half time show.
Interested in playing?
Please contact Max Koskoff at max.koskoff@suffolk.edu

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Graves commented "Of course. I had to approach it like training for a sport." "Even though you may not be in the space for a private moment you have to imagine one, and that's an art." Franke Nardiello My Life with the Thrill Kill Kult

Dinner Theater serves up mullets and murder

Suffolk students and members of Performing Arts strut their '80s stuff in the Donahue Cafe for Dinner Theater.

Daniel Johnson Journal Staff

Musicians face several difficult tasks: focusing on performances, earning or maintaining a record contract and keeping their fan base. However, keeping fit is not expected to be a main priority.

When contacted, however, several musicians stated not only the pros of staying healthy, but also how music has helped them in this endeavor.

Emmett Patrick Murphy of the band Dinosaur Jr. said, "We're pretty physically intensive and especially me being the drummer, my job is the most physically intensive... I have to approach it like training for a sport."

While being prepared for pressures may be helpful, artists’ preparation for such occurrences often cannot be attained. Michele Grues, who was just 20-years-old when he became the lead singer of the Misfits, faced one such dilemma.

When asked if he felt any stress upon joining the Misfits, Grues commented "Of course, absolutely there was a lot of pressure. I was a 20-year-old kid who never performed at that level, never did business at the level that those guys did, so definitely there was a lot of stress," said Grues. "All of them were 10-years-older than me, in fine physical form."

Music itself can also work to combat being faced with sudden stress, as Franke Nardiello of the band, My Life with the Thrill Kill Kult, remarked, "[Music] usually works nice [and] keeps you fit on your toes, alert for the most part."

Perhaps the most important issue musicians must be aware of is the constant touring schedules facing them.

During these journeys, which can last from a couple of weeks to a couple of years, immunity is not granted to a touring act either in terms of injury or sickness.

Murphy went on to say, "Getting sick for any musician touring, is like a big thing. You do everything you can to try to counter the effects of just being worn down and you know the different environments you're in, you're exposed to many different elements and germs and the space for a private moment you have to imagine one, and that's an art."

Aside from their music careers, many artists often have dual roles such as taking another job in the entertainment industry or sharing their political beliefs.

Graves, who is a founding member of the Conservative Punk Movement, has most recently participated in the Almost Home 2006 Spring Tour. The two-month-long event is currently working to promote Damien Echols’ new book, "Almost Home," which details what many believe to be his wrongful conviction in a 1993 murder case.

Graves said about his political activism, "When I receive negative opinions from it, obviously it affects me negatively," but also went on to say, "It's just like anything else, the good helps me, the bad makes me stronger."

With interest in music continuing to surge, health looks to be as important a factor as ever in the lives of musicians.

Kristin Morrell Journal Staff

Remember the days of teased hair, heavy makeup, mohawks and those awful fringed dresses at prom? On April 5, 6, and 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the Donahue Café the members of Performing Arts and Suffolk students put on a Dinner Theater show made up of humor, mystery and lots of '80s satire.

The sold-out crowd consisting of students dressed in '80s attire were greeted by the two "geeks" of the prom, dressed appropriately in tacky prom dresses, who explained the night's events.

The room was decorated in the theme of "Romance in Your Face," with pink, red, and white balloons, streamers and heart centerpieces on the tables. There was even a place to take your picture with your date, or your friends, to remember your "Prom of 83" experience.

"It was really funny how it goes back into the '80s music and the funny jokes," said Clarence Flanders, a Suffolk sophomore in attendance.

The night started out with some audience participation with the characters asking the audience to dance with them.

The characters included the football captain, "Crunch" Hockenberry (sophomore Mike Miccoli), his head cheerleader girlfriend, Susie Miccoli (junior Danielle Kerins), the bad girl of the school, Debbie Deebolt (freshmen Kaillin Jordan), her date and poetry man on a motorcycle, Lyle Burdette (senior Brendan O'Halloran), the geeks of the school, Kenny (Junior Chris Chartier) and Kiki Keiser (freshman Katie Hickey), and the chaperone and teacher, Mr. Drummond (sophomore Jared Cnin).

After being welcomed to the prom, it was time for the three prom queen candidates, Suzie, Kiki and Debbie, to give their speech, and the audience members got to vote who they wanted to win. During that time you got your first course of salad and rolls while the prom queen candidates walked around and tried to get their votes from the audience.

Kiki was crowned, the lights go out and a gun shot is heard. Kiki is lying on the floor dead. With the audience left in suspension, the next part of the meal came and the audience was told to complete a crossword puzzle and choose who they thought killed Kiki.

The show continued after the second course finished, they opened with a short dance number to focus the crowd back into the show and then questioned the audience to find out who really killed Kiki.

Mr. Drummond was called to the witness stand first, followed by Kenny Keiser, Kiki's brother. Susie was third to testify and said, "I would do anything to be prom queen but it had disappeared out of his pocket, and the last one on the stand was "Crunch."

The audience once again got to vote for see THEATER, page 8.
Webcomic ‘Achewood’ knocks out ‘Penny Arcade’

Janssen McCormick
Journal Staff

Four and a half years ago Phillipe was standing on the manual to Teodor's drum machine; today he is attempting to retrieve the couch he grew up on from the Achewood City Dump. As a lonely, little stuffed otter, who is five, the odds might be stacked against Phillipe. But this is no ordinary stuffed animal (he did befriend a french fry), and Achewood is a whimsical yet raunchy burgh where household pets and stuffed animals lead 9-to-5 lives in the "Underground."

If the premise sounds odd, well, it is. Following the lives of a nebulous crew of anthropomorphic stuffed animals and cats in ambitious and suspenseful story arcs, Chris Onstad's "Achewood" is easily the finest webcomic ever written. Much of the credit can be given to Onstad's superb wit, drawing on a seemingly endless reserve of obscure references (a favorite being the 5/3/04 strip's introduction of The Isosceles Lock.)

Unlike other webcomics such as the inexplicably popular "Penny Arcade," "Achewood’s" cast is not a list of shallow archetypes (although the 1/17/05 strip skewers webcomics to great humor). Rather the characters are rich and loveable, like the classic characters of print strips such as Calvin & Hobbes and Bloom County.

Unlike the disposable one-off nature of most webcomics, "Achewood" is a serial with individual storylines weaving in and out of the strip over a few months.

Recognizing that such story arcs can put off first-time readers, Onstad has put a menu on the site that allows readers to jump directly to the first strip of each of the strip's arcs. Such arcs build incredible tension. The most recent arc "The Great Outdoor Fight" in which two cats named Ray and Roast Beef enter a three-day, 3,000-man free-for-all (begins 1/11/06), proved so popular that the site crashed and Onstad was unable to update as readers furtively refreshed the page in hopes of catching the outcome.

In another arc, the aforementioned Phillipe ran for president on a platform of reducing sadness and "all the good ideas of the Republicans and Democrats and none of the bad ones." Ending his ads with "Phillipe for America: He is Five" his presidential campaign wended its way throughout the 2004 strips.

While Phillipe's naivety is entertaining and charming, "Achewood" truly shines in its examination of Roast Beef and Ray Smuckles' relationship.

Friends since childhood, Ray has always been the "rich cat," made even richer when he sold his soul to Lucifer for the multi-platinum success of his single "Ass In Your Pants" (11/5/02), while Beef comes "from circumstances" always unsure of himself which is expressed in the smaller font of his voice.

In one of the most memorable Beef & Ray arcs, "Lucifer Collects His Due" (12/10/03), Ray goes to Hell whereupon he is given the keys to a 1982 Subaru Brat, the only car available in Hell.

Ray checks into Hell's Best Western; getting drunk with the lounge act, legendary blues man Robert Johnson. Meanwhile in Achewood, Roast Beef consults the Butterball Turkey Hotline for suicide advice, vomits into a light socket and tracks Ray to Hell's Best Western.

In a humorous aside, when the characters in Hell attempt to call home their messages are transformed into telemarketing calls. Leaving Hell, Beef and Ray utilize a Friendly's Restaurant.

A simple magic eye collage on the back of the menu explains that Friendly's act as Hellmouths, allowing passage between Hell and Achewood.

To the uninitiated, Achewood can be quite daunting and cryptic. The best way to get into the strip is to check out some of the one-off strips.

Upcoming Film

“X-Men: The Last Stand”
Kelsey Grammer plays Beast, one of the newly added characters to the "X-Men" movie franchise. "X-Men: The Last Stand" premieres in theatres this summer on May 26.
Dinner and dancing

Theatre from page 6

who they thought was the killer using the ballots they were given over dessert of coffee and chocolate cake.

While using an Ouija board to find out who killed Kiki, she reaped and revealed to the audience that it was her own brother Kenny who shot her and the gun was placed in the punch bowl. After everyone was surprised, they all danced '80s-style off the stage.

“Fantastic,” said Emily Holliman, Suffolk freshman, who also added, “My favorite part was when Kenny asked Jill (an audience member), if she went ‘all the way.’”

With a show of fun, excitement and mystery it was definitely a success among all of the students. They were clapping, getting involved and laughing right along with the characters all night.

James Moreau

Journal Staff

So far in 2006, things are in fact going better with Rhymesayer Entertainment and Definitive Jux Productions. Soul Position, the pairing of Rhymesayer's Blueprint and Def Jux's RJD2, has been very busy with collaborative and independent projects over the past six years. However, they have come together to create an album true to Midwest hip-hop and a die-cast of what hip-hop of other areas should aspire to.

The April 2 release of Things Go Better with RJ and AI will be the second album for the pair since 2003's 8 Million Stories (Fatbeats Records). Things Go Better with RJ and AI is a step back from the heavy-handed and sometimes brooding 8 Million Stories. Though their first album was a phenomenal and critically acclaimed debut, the sophomore effort has proven to be a display of two masters of their crafts having fun.

RJD2 samples and scratches over old funk and soul tracks, leaving a lighthearted background over old funk and soul tracks, leaving a lighthearted background.

Staff Sounds

Lark Rissetto - The Essential Leonard Cohen, Leonard Cohen - The man is a classic poet and his deep, eerie voice is hypnotic.

Amanda Bellamy - A Fever You Can't Sweat Out, Panic! At the Disco - More of a guilty pleasure than an exercise in educated listening, their first single “I Write Sins Not Tragedies” is catchy.

Kevin Du - Between the Heart and the Synapse, The Receiving End of Sirens - My friend forced me to listen to the CD and she wouldn't talk to me if I didn't.

Rose Francois - Dance Factory, Louie DeVito - It helps me run.

James Moreau - Self-titled, Eyedea & Abilities - The Midwest really is that cool.
Screamo boys Thursday to release new album

Kevin Du
Journal Staff

With the rapid popularity of screamo and post-hardcore bands, the mainstream is flooded with its next generation of boy bands: boys who scream, cry and cut their wrists because their girlfriends broke their hearts. Soon, an explosion of pre-teen and misguided youths will be sporting undersized jeans, tiny vintage shirts and haircuts that are cheap rip-offs of Japanese pop stars.

Besides their clothing styles, most of the bands that fit this genre tend to all sound the same with constant screaming, repetitive riffs and a high sense of melancholy. But there is hope.

There are such bands that lay low from the mainstream radar, but are still advancing as musicians and maintaining a loyal fan base. Thursday is one of them.

Even though Thursday is categorized in the screamo genre, their music concentrations and lyrical inspirations tend to draw them away from their fellow colleagues. Past albums, Waiting (Eyeball Records, 2000), Full Collapse (Victory Records, 2001) and War All the Time (Island Records, 2003), have touched on a variety of subjects. One of their main messages and influences are their political and social views, thus helping them build a strong and loyal grassroots following.

The song "Counting 5-4-3-2-1" has been recently released as the band's first single off their second major label album, A City by the Light Divided (Island Records), which is scheduled to hit stores on May 2.

Geoff Rickly's voice sounding less scrappy, the song tells a story of someone running away from their past. Trying desperately to break free from his surroundings, he unwillingly is pushed back to where he started.

"All his life, he lived in the same house/Same white fence surrounding him/He swore he would get out but he can't 'cause his foot got caught in between the rails/And all his friends are up ahead."

However, the new single has been getting mixed reactions according to Rickly. "There are a lot of longtime, diehard Thursday fans that are not psyched about the single," Rickly said to MTV news. "I wish all these kids could hear the record so they can see where the song fits."

Rickly's vocals have always had a "multiple-personality-like" style. However, in the new single, he sounds very tame, especially with his screams. At first listen, the song sounds as if Thursday had toned down their highly aggressive style, but after a few more listens, it quickly grows on you. With the new addition of a keyboardist, the sound is solid and the lyrics are well written.

"Any time I hear anybody say anything that's less than positive...it's really heart-breaking, because I really care what the kids think," said Rickly. The band is currently touring with Minus the Bear, the Number 12 Looks Like You and We're All Broken for The Shirts for a Cure Tour. The tour is to benefit the Shirts for a Cure charity, which supports breast cancer research by selling t-shirts aligned with all sorts of bands. For further information go to www.shirtsforacure.com.
The Theatre Department at Suffolk University presents:

A workshop production of a new musical

BEGIN AGAIN

music by Jenny Giering
book and lyrics by Laura Harrington
directed by Marilyn Plotkins

April 20, 22 and 23 at 7:30pm
April 21 at 5pm
April 22 and 23 at 2pm
Tickets are free but seating is limited, call 617.573.8680 for reservations.
Media denies hockey, but fans still fill seats

HOlOEY from page 12

do they get any "love" by Stuart Scott and the gang on ESPN's flashy flagship "SportsCenter."

As for the network's stellar "National Hockey Night," it experienced its own bout of sudden-death once the lockout took hold.

Even on ESPN Classic, where you could catch an occasional glimpse of those mighty '80s Edmonton Oilers teams, hockey seems to have vanished from the program schedule all together.

Network-wide, when it comes to ESPN it seems pucks are replaced by poker and paintball and no one even noticed.

For the NHL, still one of the continent's four major leagues, that's some pretty harsh treatment from "the worldwide leader in sports."

An entertainment tycoon if there ever was one, ESPN decided against renewing their broadcast deal with the NHL during last season's lockout.

Once hockey came back last fall, it was relegated to yes, as Komheiser put it so well, the Bicycle Race network - actually the Outdoor Life Network (OLN).

Of course, Komheiser only calls OLN such a name because it has indeed covered the Tour de France (that means the Lance Armstrong Show).

Everyone knows who Lance Armstrong is, so it's fodder for Komheiser. Such a mentality is very apparent on "PTI," and also evident in Komheiser's "Hockey is dead" argument, even if it led him hard-pressed to name the NHL's top handful of scorers this season.

"The biggest NHL story all season was the accusation that Wayne Gretzky's once-hot actress wife was betting with Gretzky's bookmaking assistant coach," Komheiser said in his column. "The games go unnoticed."

Unnoticed by you Tony, but the roughly 14,000 fans filling the Garden here in Boston every week for B's games have found something other than the media-fueled "Operation Slap-Shot" scandal to amuse them.

It's called ... hockey. And it's back for good, with or without any significant help from major media outlets and high-profile pundits.

Even with the lowly Capitals in town April 11, the Garden was abuzz during pre-game warm-ups as many stood in awe of electrifying rookie-sensation Alex Ovechkin.

Even Komheiser isn't oblivious to the feisty Russian winger, who scored his 100th point of the season in overtime against the Bruins, becoming just the sixth rookie in NHL history to do so.

Calling him "maybe the [best] rookie of the last 10 years," Komheiser would be well-suited to pay a little more attention to his own city's crown jewel (pending former-Yankee Alfonzo Soriano doesn't become the next Hank Aaron with the baseball's Nationals).

The NHL is in good hands when it comes to young studs like Ovechkin. Its fans are as loyal as they come.

The owners may not be making as much money as they'd like, but the fans, and there are plenty, have come back for good. Hockey's dead, you say?

Well, consider ESPN an accomplice to the "murder." You'll have trouble disputing that notion with anyone who cares.

They'll be too busy watching the Bicycle Race Network air the Stanley Cup Playoffs.

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NHL not dead, on life support

Brian Messenger
Journal Staff

The headline certainly didn't mince words: 'Bruins lose again,' read page 17 of the April 5 Metro. No news there. With 80 contests down and only two to go, Boston's pro hockey team failed to muster even a modest four-game winning streak this season.

Had your eyeballs taken a gander at the top corner of the page, however, just above the seven-paragraph Bruins game summary (a 5-3 loss in Montreal) was another bit of hockey-related journalism - a quote from The Washington Post columnist and sports TV talking-head Tony Komheiser.

Best known for his work on ESPN's rapid-fire sports talk show "Pardon the Interruption," Komheiser was, remarkably, making a comment about the National Hockey League. But much like his on-air persona on "PTI," he wasn't mincing words either.

"Hockey is so dead in America, the players may as well still be locked out," remarked the veteran sports scribe. "You can't find hockey anywhere on television unless you're looking for the Bicycle Race network."

The quote in the Metro was an excerpt from a Komheiser column that ran in the April 4 The Washington Post, under the clever headline, "He Shoots, He Scores, America Snores."

Komheiser claimed people cared more about the University of Maryland women's basketball team competing in the NCAA title game than they did all 74 games the NHL's Washington Capitals have played since the regular season began Oct. 5.

"And when was the last time they came up at all in conversation?" snapped Komheiser of the straggling franchise. "Not just the Caps, any NHL team?"

For those who forget, the NHL endured a brutal labor dispute that erased the entire 2004-05 season. After the players and owners came to a new collective bargaining agreement over the summer, the league began its renaissance in the fall with new rules geared towards increasing scoring. All in all, the comeback should be considered a success, no matter how marginal hockey's place in today's "SportsCenter"-centric athletic landscape may be.

Komheiser would disagree with such a preachy appraisal of the sport's current situation, chiefly because he's speaking from within the belly of the beast.

As co-host of ESPN's "PTI," a half-hour-headache of a show that provides him the ultimate soapbox, Komheiser rambles on mainstream sports blabber at an alarming rate alongside fellow Post columnist Michael Wilbon.

Because of the show's ADD-inducing nature, however, only the juicy (i.e. light-on-substance) stories get thrown onto the commentator's plates before they spit them back out to the audience.

Too busy with the National Basketball Association (NBA), the ever-intriguing NFL combine, and all-things college basketball, fringe sports like hockey don't even get mentioned on "PTI." Nor see HOCKEY, page 11.