Just 15 games into the 2008 campaign, Buff has reached his tipping point. And you can feel his pain in today's column. Buff hits on the historically poor start of C.C. Sabathia, the unthinkably successful debut of Tigers prospect Armando Galarraga, and David Dellucci doing what other Indians hitters seem uncapable of doing. Bartender!!!!! **FINAL SCORE**

Tigers (5-10)	0	2	1	0
Indians (5-10)	(T4th		4.5 GB CHW)	1

W: Galarraga (1-0) L: Sabathia (0-3)

The column will be short today because it is all I can stand.

1) Is it a "theme," or more of a "motif?"

On May 30, 2006, I wrote this :

*The phrase **tipping point** ... refers to that dramatic moment when something unique becomes common. - Wikipedia*

Permission to treat the witness as hostile, your Honor? - Any random

Law & Order episode

1) You lost me there

My emotional investment in this team has at best been halved after yesterday's dispirited 11-0 throttling at the hands of Javier Vazquez and the White Sox. There have been too many times this season when the players do things that smack of lack of concentration (baserunning, defense) or effort (Grady to Jhonny this weekend) or fire (yesterday, Kansas City). The team is inertial. The front office is inertial. The coaching is inertial. The ownership is inertial. This team does not appear to sense any urgency or importance or emotional component, and it's hard to be the source while they're the sink. (Google search: source + sink)

I suppose it helps to have some background here: I check the GameCasts of day games obsessively over the course of the workday. I do quick checks of scores and situations when I make an excuse to pass by the room in which my home computer sits, even as my daughter needs has soap in her eye or my older son is smacking the younger one with the cat. I ***care.***

Or, I did. Tonight, I'll probably flip on ESPN a couple times to check the score (the constant on-screen score is the greatest sports broadcasting invention since instant replay). Probably.

To be fair, it is not entirely the same thing. But it's the same thing.

2) Oscar Wilde was wrong

Not being talked about is not the only thing worse than being talked about. Being talked about because you have performed worse than any other Cleveland pitcher ever is worse as well. I understand the sentiment of Wilde's point (to be irrelevant is worse than a few barbs), but I don't think C.C. Sabathia would agree. Let's see if he calls any radio shows.

Seriously, I don't think any in-depth analysis is going to be much fun to read. It certainly isn't any fun to write. I'll leave you with a couple salient points:

a) In the second inning, both Edgar Renteria and Brandon Inge singled on two-strike pitches (0-2 for Renteria, 1-2 for Inge). In the 4th, Placido Polanco walked after being 1-2, Gary Sheffield walked after being 1-2, Magglio Ordonez walked after being
0
-2, Miguel Cabrera's two-run single came on an 0-2 count. When did C.C. Sabathia become Charles Nagy?

b) A challenge to the readers. I have seen Danny Graves' last stint with the Tribe. I have seen Dave Otto and Jack Armstrong in the same rotation. I saw Al Nipper's comeback reinvention as a knuckleball pitcher. My first vivid baseball memory is the Miracle Mets in 1969, so let's say I don't really remember anything about the Indians before 1970. Has anyone had a SUSTAINED run of putridity worse than Sabathia's four-game stretch? The last two starts have been especially horrific, but here are your parameters: a pitcher must give up more than

0.75 runs per inning per appearance, more than a hit an inning, and at least 0.5 walks per inning. Four appearances that bad in a row. Find me that man.

Note that I have lowered the bar to include all four starts. If I were using just the past two starts, I could be a lot more demanding. Like, I could demand he stop sucking rocks.

3) David Dellucci is a Hoopy Frood

I salute you, David Dellucci, for doing what no Cleveland Indian has been able to do for five games: strike the ball in such a manner as to cause it to travel, on a fly, over the outfield wall. Huzzah! Huzzah, I say!

I was not being facetious what I suggested that Dellucci was physically incapable of this. I really believed it. I am encouraged by this beyond belief. I was wrong, Mr. Dellucci, and I am proud of you. Honest, heartfelt kudos for you, sir. Thank you, and may future success be yours!

4) Everyone else

Sucked.

5) Wait, what about me?

Craig Breslow pitched 1 2/3 scoreless innings with a hit and a walk. Although the walk came with the bases loaded to let in Tom Mastny's run, let's run a quick comparison:

Sabathia: 4 IP, 8 H, 5 BB
Mastny: 1.1 IP, 2 H, 3 BB
Julio: 1 IP, 3 H
Kobayashi: 1 IP, 3 H, 1 WP

By this standard, Craig Breslow is our All-Star repesentative. Possibly our new closer.

6) Credit Where Credit Is Due Dept.

Rookie Armando Galarraga gave up the solo shot to Dellucci in the first.

In the first six innings, David Dellucci was the only Cleveland baserunner.

That's right: except for the homer, Galarraga had six PERFECT innings. He then hit two batters in the 7th and was relieved: Jason Grilli allowed one runner to score, but ... he allowed ONE HIT and ZERO WALKS in SIX AND TWO THIRDS INNINGS.

The "rookie always throttles us" bromide is a little stale, but ... boy, he throttled us. Nice work, youngish man.

7) Completely False Statement for My Spleen

Mark Shapiro is an ambisexual walnut. Fire everybody.