



Find out what you're missing if you haven't seen *The Letter* yet.

see page 6



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THE CALIFORNIA TECH

VOLUME XCVIII, NUMBER 27

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 1997

Student Faculty Conference Discusses Student Life Issues

BY ELLIS MENG

There has been a lot of talk about the Student Life Committee presentation at the Student Faculty Conference and hopefully it is far from over. At the end of this article are comments from the audience that we feel are worthwhile to share with the entire campus. Please note that they are unedited except that those who wrote these responses will remain anonymous unless they wish otherwise.

Two weeks ago in the *Tech*, it was mentioned that the undergraduate members of the committee are not truly representative of the undergraduate student body. We would like to point out that each member of the undergradu-

ate community was given a chance to participate and yet only four undergrads responded. We feel that improving student life is above all the students' responsibility. If there is a problem, then by all means, let someone know about it! There are various committees that are specifically designed to address issues concerning student life. Although the Student Life Committee for the Student Faculty Conference will disband shortly, comments and suggestions are still welcome at fanchuin@cco.caltech.edu or cmee@cco.caltech.edu. Everything that is reported to us will be given to ASCIT and we will also submit a report that will be seen by the Deans and others. The Student Affairs Advisory Committee also works

closely with issues pertaining to student life. They can be reached at saffcom@ugcs.caltech.edu.

ACADEMIC: (I know, you're not the right people to contact)

(1) Could we get evening Ch3a sections, say M Th 9pm-midnight? I've been denied all of the four times I've tried to take the bloody class!

(2) Give advisors more info about classes...they need to know to help students...through meeting for advisors or some sort of booklet they should read.

(3) Improving the Advising System - Is there some way to formalize the role of upperclass students in the advising process? Maybe an advising "team" of a faculty member and 1 or 2

upperclass students?

BUREAUCRATIC:

(1) Why do we have the MOSH and the DRL? The DRL was formed when the person who was the MOSH became a lunatic and stalker. Keep the Vic Vasey fund and Don Shepherd fun fund but give the power back to the MOSH and get rid of the DRL, LIKE IT USED TO BE.

(2) About MOSH/DRL: It seems to me from talking to alums that when the MOSH had the power, students felt more respected. There was probably a reason in the 1st place that a tenured FACULTY member is the MOSH. The DRL is, I feel, more restricted in her

SEE SLC ON PAGE 4

Caltech students win an amazing number of national fellowships

BY LAUREN STOLPER

Next fall, the following Caltech students will be pursuing their interests abroad as fellowship recipients.

Senior Brian Bircumshaw won a Churchill Scholarship, a Watson and a DOD. He will be accepting the Churchill and in October will commence a year of study and research in mechanical engineering at Cambridge University which will lead to an M.Phil degree in mechanical engineering. At Caltech Brian has been involved in research with Professor Chris Brennan.

Senior Chris Chang has won a DOD and Fulbright. He will accept the Fulbright and will be spending a year in Strasbourg, France. He will be doing a project titled, "Experimental Studies of Electron Transfer Pathways," at the Universite Louis Pasteur. At Caltech, Chris has done research with Professor Harry Gray's group in Chemistry.

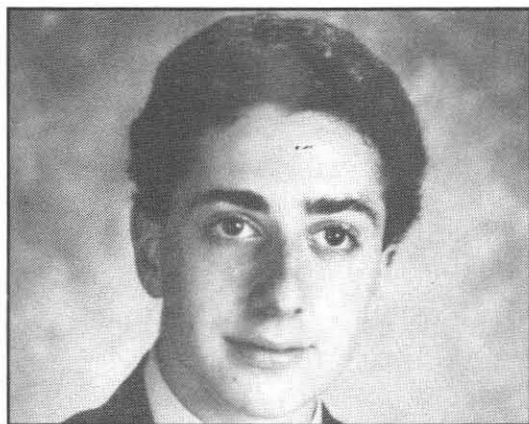
Graduate student Cindy Quezada has won a Fulbright to do a year of research in chemistry at Oxford University, England. Her research at Oxford will focus on NMR structural studies of novel enzyme inhibitors. Cindy will return to Caltech after her year

at Oxford to complete her Ph.D. in Chemistry. She is one of Professor Harry Gray's students.

Graduate student Steve Sanders has been selected as a Luce Scholar. The Luce allows recipients to spend a year in Asia doing a special project. Steve will spend a year in Japan doing research with the Mitsubishi Corporation. He will graduate with a Ph.D. in Applied Physics from Caltech this year and is one of Professor Paul Bellan's students. Steve was also selected as an alternate for the Fulbright.

Junior Jeanne Wilson has received an NSEP fellowship (National Security Education Program). This award allows undergrads to study in a non-western, non-English speaking country for a term or for the summer. Jeanne will be studying in Turkey this summer. Junior Zane Crawford was selected as an alternate for Russia.

In addition to the above awards which will send Caltech students and alums across the globe, we did very well in the competition for fellowships for



Senior Samson Timoner, winner of Hertz, DOD, NSF, TBII fellowships.

PHOTO COURTESY SAMSON TIMONER

graduate study in the sciences and engineer.

Seniors Sebastian Mauer and Samson Timoner have been selected as Hertz fellows and will receive up to five years of support for graduate study. Seniors Igor Plishchuk and Elwyn Uy and graduate student Michele Cucullu each received a \$500 Hertz Research Grant.

Jonathan Aldrich, Brian Bircumshaw and Chris Chang won Department of Defense (DOD) national Defense Student Education Grants to support up to three years of graduate study. Brian and Chris won't be able to take up their DOD awards as they cannot be deferred and will be on their respective Churchill and Fulbright experiences next fall.

Two Caltech Professors Honored with Sloan Fellowships This Year

BY AUTUMN LOOIJEN

Two Caltech professors have received 1997 Sloan Research Fellowships, which bring \$35,000 in unrestricted research funds to each recipient over a two-year period, plus considerable prestige. The professors, Jim Arvo and Emlyn Hughes, are two of 100 exceptional scientists who were named Sloan Fellows this year.

Professor Hughes is involved in high-energy physics research in Kellogg Radiation laboratories, working to develop new target technologies. Professor Arvo does research in computational vision, computer-assisted mathematical exploration and instruction, and

physically-based modeling and image synthesis.

Sloan Fellowships are designed to identify and support young scientists who are likely to make fundamental contributions to new knowledge in physics, chemistry, mathematics, neuroscience, economics, or computer science.

Fellows need not pursue a specified research project and are free to change the direction of their research at any time. Awards may be used for equipment, technical assistance, professional travel or any other activity directly related to research. Fellowships are sometimes extended for another two years.

SEE RELATED ARTICLES ON PAGE 3

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ONE FLAME A WEEK—MY PROMISE TO YOU.



BY AUSTIN COLLINS

One of the more annoying experiences I recall as a freshman was having to listen to upperclassmen voice their cynicism and disillusionment with Caltech and their respective majors. After several years, I've discovered that it is even more annoying to listen to this whining as an upperclassman. Thus, this week's topic is: **Caltech Bashing.**

Caltech is a challenging school. The classes are (ideally) hard. The better ones are very hard. Those who spent more than two hours researching their college choice knew this when they decided to attend Caltech. So, imagine my lack of sympathy with those who continually bemoan this well known fact.

Yes, Caltech is hard. That is, after all, while we decided to attend this particular school, right? Well, it should have been. The reason behind the palpable dissatisfaction that is

so commonly voiced is clear when you ask these people why they came here, and why they chose the major they did.

Answers for why they chose Caltech range from it's proximity (or lack thereof) to their family, to their desire to make lots of money. When asked why they chose their major, the most common answer I've heard (by far) is the desire to land a good job or make lots of money.

Surprisingly absent from people's motivations for their choices is a genuine love of the subject. Someone once told me, "Mathematics is what you do when you can't do anything else." A profound statement, really, I've always been so surprised at how few people here understand it. The man didn't mean that mathematicians weren't skilled enough to do anything else, of course. He meant that mathematicians pursued mathematics because they'd be **unhappy doing any-**

thing else.

That's why I'm a physics major — because I can't do anything else. As a budding theoretician, my job and salary prospects are far from rich. But I don't care . . . I'd rather make mediocre wages and do something I love than find a more lucrative profession. I chose to attend Caltech because, for what I want to study, Caltech is the top school in the **world.**

Think about that for a moment. We are at a school where the classes are taught by the single most talented collection of professors present at any university on this entire planet. Anyone who can be unhappy amidst such opportunity must place the blame upon themselves, for there are amazing opportunities crying out to all of us fortunate to attend this institution.

Far be it for me to discourage those motivated by money. That, in itself, is not ignoble. What is discouraging is the continual derision heaped upon this place simply because it's not geared towards boosting young egos. It's geared towards producing scientists.

People, you knew what you were getting into when you came here. If you didn't, it's your own damned fault. If you think the classes are too hard, go somewhere else. If you think there aren't enough women here, then go somewhere else. If you think you spend too much

time doing work, go somewhere else. There is absolutely no reason to put yourself through the things this place requires unless you either love what you do, or are willing to suffer now for money later.

There has not been a single day since I arrived at Caltech that I did not think to myself, at

If you think the classes are too hard, go somewhere else.

least once, "Wow am I lucky to be here." This is no exaggeration — not a single day has passed I didn't consciously wonder at how lucky I am to be here.

Sure, I've complained about how hard an assignment/class/term was going to be. But never have I confused this cognizance of difficulty with scorn for the Institute.

The other day, as I listened to a freshman physics major whine about how much he hated it here, I asked him why he was a physics major. "Well, you have to major in something," he replied. Motivational, isn't it? That is what state schools are for — people that have to major in something. Caltech is for the elite, for the **inspired.**

As of late, it seems this voice of apathy has been shap-

ing Caltech more and more. The removal of Ph 2c, the castration of Ma 2, seem concessions to this mediocre majority. In making the path easier, the journey is becoming less worthwhile.

I believe you shouldn't be able to pass a class without attending lecture. Not that profs should take attendance, but that the class should be difficult enough that without the insights of the professor it is not doable.

I believe Biology majors should have to take Ph 2c, and a full year of Ma 2. The average Physics major is far more conversant in basic biology than the average biology major is in basic statistical physics/thermodynamics.

We all knew what we were getting into by attending Caltech, and those that didn't found out quickly. Caltech is a phenomenal place, with amazing opportunities for those that look. Thus, there are only two sorts of students here: those that love it here, and those that should be somewhere else.

It really is that simple.

"Cyrano: So, this is your revenge?"

Compte de Guiche: Take this to mean that I serve my king and vent my spleen."

—Rostand

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EMLYN HUGHES

BY AUTUMN LOOIJEN



It's awfully quiet here at night, though. I'm sure it's different at the student houses, but in the [Throop and Millikan] pond area, it's incredible how quiet it gets. I'm not used to that."

Hughes has a lot of questions about Caltech traditions, and is well-known among the students. He used some of the interview to get in questions of his own: about the MOSH (why are the students so interested in who the MOSH is?), and about Interhouse (why was it stopped?). "[Interhouse] sounded like a nice idea," he said. "There are so many smart people here, we ought to be able to figure out a way to avoid the problems."

Hughes taught Ph 2b this year. "It was the first class I'd ever taught. ... I was terrified of coming here and teaching a bunch of Caltech students who are all smarter than I am. It's not easy to walk into Bridge and give a lecture. Being put up in front of Caltech students is scary."

He says teaching "a bi-

zarre experience." "Seeing the student reaction to my stories was interesting. ... I have no idea what I look like up there. Before I said something, I didn't know what the reaction would be, whether people would think it's instructional, funny or just plain stupid."

Hughes decided early on that he wanted to teach Ph 2b. What was the course's appeal? "Part of the reason I wanted to teach Ph 2b was that such a course isn't taught anywhere else in the country. Caltech is the only place where you could get away with requiring people who aren't physics majors to pass Quantum Mechanics to graduate."

Can you answer the question at the beginning of the article? If not, it's time to take Ph 2b.

It's 1 a.m. You're running an experiment that costs \$100,000 a day, and your target just blew up. Your graduate students are sobbing. What do you tell everyone to restore morale and save your project?

Emlyn Hughes challenged the Physics 2b class to answer the question — on the final!

Hughes, who does research in high energy and nuclear physics, is well-known by students, though he has only been on campus for a year. He has been very involved with the student Houses, going to student events "about every other weekend." He was surprised at the amount of funding for student-faculty interaction: "I skied with Dabney without paying a penny. Now, that's incredible. That wouldn't happen anywhere else," he said.

What are his impressions of Caltech so far? "I like it here — there's no question about it. What's different about Caltech is the students. I like that it's small, that everyone knows everyone. ...

great asset for research. I'm paying several undergraduates to do programming for me now, and I'm very impressed with what they can do. They're one of the things that make Caltech special."

Arvo enjoys teaching, but admits, "CS20 is probably more fun for me than

for my students." Some of his students seem to be having fun in class, though. "On Halloween, one of my students came to class dressed as Tom Apostol's calculus book," he told the Tech.

Though Arvo hasn't been involved with the student houses yet, he plans to visit at some point. "I'd love to go on a tunnel tour," he said. "I'm not surprised students have figured out how to get down there. If there's an odd way to get from A to B, you can bet students will figure it out."

Arvo spends some of his free time juggling. "I keep meaning to bring my clubs to my office," he said. He also enjoys athletics, especially racket sports like squash. As a grad student, he was very active: "I used to run a 10k every weekend when I was a grad student."

Arvo's cats also keep him entertained. "My two cats have very distinct personalities — they're absolutely polar. If



there's a big crash, one goes running off to hide in the closet; the other goes to see what made the sound."

Research projects take most of Arvo's time right now. "One of my projects right now is trying to figure out ways to make computers more useful assistants in mathematics. I'm also working on new ways of interacting with computers and new ways to use computers as a tool to do or teach mathematics.... I'm working with Pietro Perona (EE) on ways to make computers understand human gestures. It could be a much more intuitive way to interact with a computer. I'm also doing work in computer vision: teaching computers to see, to extract information from an image or sequence of images. For example, we're trying to teach computers to understand the geometry of something a camera is pointing at."

JIM ARVO

BY AUTUMN LOOIJEN

"I think undergraduates are one of the great pleasures in being here," said Jim Arvo, who is teaching CS20 this year. "I've been really impressed by them — they're fun to teach and a

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The Outside World

by Myfanwy Callahan

BEIJING, CHINA —

A senior Tibetan monk was convicted and sentenced to six years in prison for passing information to the Dalai Lama. The monk was accused of informing the Dalai Lama, exiled from China for the past 32 years, of the result of their search for the next Panchan Lama, the second most important religious leader in Tibet.

are still unaccounted for and may be victims of reported mass killings by Zairan rebels.

RIFT VALLEY, KENYA —

At least 77 cattle rustlers were killed or drowned when security officers attacked a group near the swollen Kerio river. Clan violence has increased in the area recently, and often involves cattle rustling.

FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE —

Skirmishes over the weekend between Sierra Leone Army Units and a militia of traditional hunters killed at least 80 people including 30 civilians. Fighting has broken out in the northern and eastern parts of the country.

NEW YORK —

Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook, long suspected of organizing terrorist attacks in Hamas, was released Monday after 22 months in a Manhattan prison and returned to Jordan. Both the Israeli and US governments had wanted to keep him imprisoned but had not found sufficient evidence to convict.

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL —

The United Nations Committee Against Torture summoned Israel to face charges of legalizing practices which violate international convention against torture. Israeli officials declared that "moderate physical pressure" was necessary in the interrogation of suspected terrorists.

UNITED NATIONS —

China threatened retaliation if UNESCO did not dissociate itself from the press freedom award it gave to journalist Gao Yu. Ms. Gao has been imprisoned since 1994 for reporting on how Communist Party leaders control government decision making.

KINSHASA, ZAIRE —

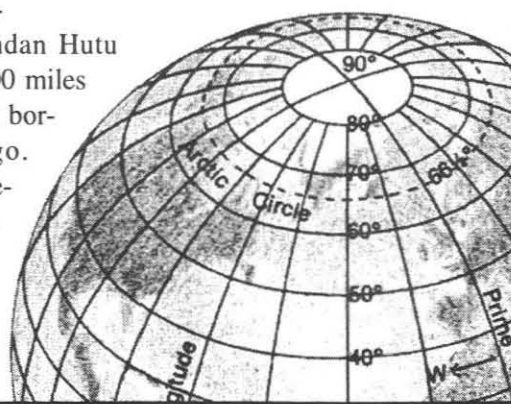
Africa's longest serving dictator, President Mobutu Sese Seko announced he will leave the country on Wednesday for health reasons, as rebel forces draw nearer to the capital. Rebel leader Laurent Kabila stated his intention to hunt down Mobutu and his closest supporters should he refuse to resign.

WASHINGTON, D.C. —

A US Government report announced Wednesday that the Swiss Government deliberately failed to return money which Nazis had confiscated from European banks and holocaust victims in WWII. The report also faulted the US for neglecting the issue at the time.

KISANGANI, ZAIRE —

Some 50,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees walked 1000 miles to reach the western border of the Congo. Meanwhile 80,000 remain in camps where the United Nations is trying to airlift them home. Some 40,000



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Students Win Big: Dean's Office Announces Scholarships

FROM THE DEAN'S OFFICE

Amy Herr Wins Bibi Jentoft-Nilsen Memorial Award



Amy Herr, a senior majoring in Engineering, is this year's winner of the Bibi Jentoft-Nilsen Memorial Award.

This prize is given in memory of Bibi Jentoft-Nilsen, Caltech '89, who was an exceptional student leader during her time at Caltech. Bibi was Director-at-Large on the ASCIT Board of Directors, President of Blacker House and was a student representative on the Curriculum Committee. She was one of the stars of the cross country, track and field and soccer teams. After her untimely death in 1990, a memorial fund was established by her family and friends to recognize outstanding student leaders.

Amy was honored at a luncheon on April 28 at The Athenaeum for the effective leadership she provided in her participation with the Caltech Y and participation on student/faculty committees. As the President of the Caltech Y and student representative to the Y Board of Directors, Amy has coordinated work on International Day, Earth Day, Semana Latina, and Y noon concerts. Amy's role with the executive committee has often

been one of facilitator and encourager. She worked hard to get others involved and helped them develop their skills. Amy has also participated on the Freshman Admissions Committee and the Women's Center Advisory Committee. Her service to these committees has made a difference to the quality of campus life for undergraduates.

Gretchen Larson Awarded Mabel Beckman Prize

Gretchen Larson has won the 1997 Mabel Beckman Prize. This award is dedicated to the memory of Mabel Beckman who supported Caltech as a friend and benefactor for over fifty years. The prize bearing Mrs. Beckman's name is



awarded annually to a woman student upon completion of her junior or senior year and is made in recognition of demonstrated academic and personal excellence, contribution to the Institute community, and outstanding qualities of character and leadership.

Gretchen was selected for the qualities of outstanding leadership and service she has shown her four years at Caltech. Her work as Senior Class President, and as upper class counselor

and social and athletic team member in Fleming House is particularly admirable.

The selection committee felt that Gretchen exemplifies the qualities that Mrs. Beckman valued. Her concern and support for her fellow students is greatly admired. Gretchen's desire to serve others in the Caltech community have allowed her to make tremendous contributions to Caltech.

Gretchen will be honored with the Mabel Beckman Prize at commencement on June 13, 1997.

Dave Bacon and Priya Rai Win Hinrichs Award

Dave Bacon and Priya Rai are the winners of the 1997 Hinrichs Memorial Award. Established by the Board of Trustees, this award is given in memory of Frederic W. Hinrichs, Jr. who served for more than 20 years as a

dean and professor at the Institute. In remembrance of his honor, courage, and kindness, the award bearing his name is made annually to seniors who have made the greatest contribution to the student body during their undergraduate years at the Institute. The award also recognizes students of outstanding

character, leadership, and responsibility.

Dave was selected for the exceptionally capable leadership and service he has provided during his years at Caltech. Dave has been Vice President of Ruddock House during his sophomore and junior years, Junior Class Secretary/Treasurer, and IHC Chair. He has also served Caltech by being a member of the Academic Research Committee, Core Curriculum Committee (including Steering Committee), Dean Search Committee, Earthquake Preparedness Committee, Quality of Student Life Committee, and Caltech 1a Committee. Dave's work as a member of the Core Curriculum Steering Committee and the new Caltech 1a Orientation Committee has been exemplary.

Priya was selected for her outstanding leadership skills and for the service she has provided to her fellow students during her years at Caltech. She has been President of the SURF Student Advisory Committee, Chair of the International Students Program Planning Group, Treasurer of the Organization of the Associated Students from the Indian Subcontinent (OASIS), and Treasurer of the Women's Glee Club. Priya's work during international student orientation has been very helpful to new international students.

Their dedication to service, their ability to lead broad groups with diverse viewpoints, and their strong interpersonal skills make both Dave and Priya valuable and influential members of

the Caltech community. They will receive the Frederic Hinrichs, Jr. Memorial Award at commencement on June 13, 1997.

Peter Stobbe Chosen for J. Zeigler Memorial Award 1997

Peter Stobbe has been chosen this year's winner of the Fredrick J. Zeigler Memorial Award. Peter is a sophomore majoring in applied mathematics. The award was based on the recommendations of his mathematics



professors, success in classes and interest in mathematics, which he exhibits to a high degree.

For the past two summers Peter has worked at the Rockwell Science Center in Thousand Oaks with the Flex Force Technical Personnel for Control and Information Management Department.

This award was established in 1989 to honor Fredrick J. Zeigler, a member of the class of 1976 and an applied mathematics major. The award is given to a pure or applied mathematics student in the sophomore or junior year who has shown excellence in scholarship as demonstrated in class activities or in preparation of an original paper or essay in any subject area.

SLC: What You Had to Say

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ability to back the students.

(3) The administrator's comment that student-administration relations are similar to child-parent relations invokes a sense of OUTRAGE in me. I am just as much an adult as the lady who made this comment. If the administration seeks to limit liability to provide for the "common good" then they should address their concerns to the currently SELF-POLICING student bodies (IHC, the BoC, etc.). This self-policing quality, more than the academics, is what makes Caltech special to me.

(4) On the same topic, I think that an integral part of instituting policies at Caltech should be discussion with students. Students need to not only be told explanations for policies, but also to have a hand in formulating them.

(5) Keys should be more accessible to undergrads (if the administration actually does trust us with them.)

(6) A central question seems to be: Who are the faculty accountable to? Until they are made responsible, turning to or relying on them is pointless if they don't take their assignments seriously.

EXCLUSION OF PERSONNEL:

(1) Since almost all Student Affairs personnel are staff, it does seem very strange that staff are not explicitly included in the conference.

(2) I think the minimal discussion about the lack of support for staff and their involvement in the Student Faculty Conference is important. I am a member of the Student Affairs staff and work very hard to support student needs

and interests...yet, no one from our area was involved in the planning of the conference even though such topics as admissions, DAPAC policy, Avery and Freshman orientation are a part of Student Affairs.

P.S. Also there were more Student Affairs staff in attendance at the conference than faculty!

OTHER:

(1) Let's pay \$20 a day to TFM and get food we look forward to!!"

(2) Get the little t out to grad students!

(3) LENGTHEN SPRING BREAK!!! Ten days is NOT enough. Push commencement back if necessary-an extra three days is worth it.

(4) IF YOU ADMIT ON SEX AND NOT ABILITY, I'LL TRANSFER.

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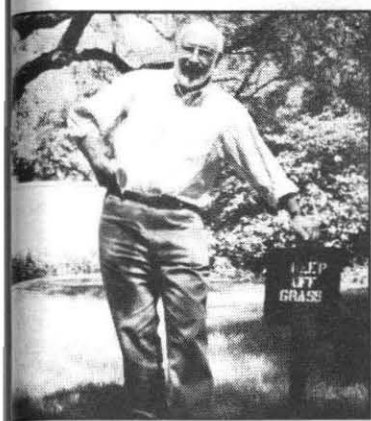
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Dean's Corner

13422 entries!!

by Jean-Paul Revel

Oh dear, oh me, oh me, oh my, oh oh ho, noooo!. I am absolutely flabbergasted by the turn of events I will tell you about it in a minute, assuming you keep on reading this. My ego is as flattened as if it had been run over by a steam roller. Flattened like a tortilla (oh Semana Latina!) or like a chapathi.

"Why," you ask, "why do you complain so?" — well, just wait a minute, another minute. I am trying to tell you why. It is because not a single student, not even a very small one, a lowly frosh innocent and fresh (I mean fresh like "Irish Spring" not like Jim Carrey) or even a senior with nothing left to do besides lazily waiting for Commencement . . .

up to the kazoo in midterms, and on grades yet, for the first time. They should probably be absolved; I can't really blame them. In their case, the behavior that has so crushed me may not have been caused by apathy, but by self interest, doing what must be done, teeth gritted, eyes glazed, nights wasted, daytime photons unappreciated.

Actually, come to think of it, maybe also I can understand the seniors. After all, they are busy stacking their stacks, tomorrow, tomorrow is the day — no, that can't be; tomorrow when you read this will be Saturday, and I would already know if it were today. But maybe tomorrow won't come, coz you might not read this . . .

So that leaves the Sophomores, but I guess they are just being sophomoric and why

should they care that things are as they are.

Leaving the juniors to blame. They have less of an excuse than anyone of course, but I guess they are getting ready to finish the requirements they have managed to postpone till now, because their advisor was out of town or hiding from them behind a big fat desk with a huge monitor on top, so they had to see his secretary instead, juniors getting all ready for a restful senior year, who can blame them after all? They have worked hard to get there.

So everyone has an excuse, are you still with me all of you?

Maybe that's a paranoid response. I should not take it personally; maybe I am to blame, I surely am to blame, me and no one else of course. First the buck stops here, that's one good reason. Second, maybe I misprinted my address (*revelj@cco*), I mean how can I expect mail to reach

me if I entered the wrong address and it was correctly printed, of course, of course, by the editors of the Tech, our own Tech . . . Oh I forgot to tell you what I am talking about . . .

Let me see, Page 1, well that's if you don't count the real page one, you know, the one only the students should see. Page 2, page . . . Ah, there it is, the thing I am talking about, that I still have not managed to mention, the Dean's Corner, and yes, at the end, right there, clearly printed is my e-mail address (*revelj@cco*), printed without a flaw . . . so there was no excuse for not writing to me except for apathy, or not reading Jean-Paul the II's column.

So what of it? Well, it is like this; stick with me, Techies, stick with me. I'll let you know in good time, I will, I promise. Word of horror I tells ya. That's what I feel: horror, revulsion, disappointment, sorrow, self-pity.

I asked for nominations from the great student polloi, the unwashed populace, oh you cream of the cream, top of the crop, the bestest of the best, I asked for nominations for the posh position of mosh and what do I get? nutting, absolutely nutting. Not a single one nutty nomination.

Eagerly on Saturday I read my mail, but nothing . . . well of course it was early, much too early, surely by Sunday thought I, I'll have an earful, or rather an eyeful . . . but no, Sunday passed without student controlled electrons coming my way, and so did Monday and now it's Tuesday and I am behind my deadline and I'd better send something to Autumn, or she'll send Wren after me, and so I decided to rewrite my column and question your apathy.

I know, you are not alone, oh you pathetic apathetic ones. I know because I checked "apathy" on the web (13422 entries) and came up with the feeling that it has spread far and wide.

Listen to this pearl: hardly anyone, well, maybe a few, but far too few people came to listen to and talk to the prospective President being interviewed publicly at the Univer-

sity in Laredo, Texas. There were also complaints about apathy in the Wayland MA High School Newsletter. Why, they even had to cancel the sock hop, no that was not there, in Wayland they canceled the Disco . . . and at Harvey Mudd . . .

I'll make a long story a bit shorter by reporting right away that at MIT, yes you read right, at MIT (but what do you expect) only a few hundred people out of 4000 (or was it 5000?) voted in student elections a couple of years ago. I quote, "that many people can't be all wrong." So is it like that there too?

Is it catching, slowly going around the globe like some flu epidemic starting from pigs and ducks in the Chinese hinterland? Are we all catching the "vote apathy, we don't care" (ibid.) disease?

In spite of being so down hearted I can't resist, while I am at it, I can't resist telling you the good news: we are way ahead of them. Their *Tech* of May the 2nd, 1997 announces: "Dilbert is here!!" and of course we have had Dilbert for a long time now, well, most weeks.

So even though apathy is rampant, a serpent in our midst, I don't get it. Your apathy flattens me like a chapathi.

Here is the chance to tell us what you'd like in a mosh, to propose names for a mosh with whom you all have empathy with, a person who you'll interact with a lot and you express no opinion? Does everyone feel so downtrodden that there is no point to even participate? One thing is sure, if you don't speak you won't be heard. May luck bring you what you desired.

Of course if you don't express your opinion that leaves you free to complain. I did not vote for it, sez you, don't blame me. And we all know that complaining is such sweet sorrow.

Apathy, oh apathy!
Your Deanish Chapathi! (I know chapathis are not Danish, you silly.)
A bientôt,

J.P. Revel

ELECTRIFYING EPICS OF ENTERTAINMENT FEATURING

ADAM VILLANI: MEDIA GUY

by Adam Villani

Ellen is Gay!

The Television Event of the Year is here, and it's that Ellen DeGeneres' character on her show "Ellen," conveniently also named Ellen, has come out of the closet and announced that she's gay. Not exactly a surprise, this was the most overhyped TV show in a long time, and the studio audience responded in kind with uproarious laughter and cheering any time a character on the episode so much as breathed audibly.

But maybe this wasn't overhyped, and it really was groundbreaking. It's easy for us young academians to think the whole thing is passé, but for the country as a whole, the facts bear out otherwise. In a nationwide KTLA poll, 48% of respondents thought that the subject matter of the episode was not appropriate for prime time TV, against 29% that said it was appropriate. Ideally, Hollywood wouldn't make such a big deal about homosexuality, but until people get used to it, it seems like a necessary move.

As for the show itself, which I had never watched before, it was mildly amusing, which is, I guess above average for a TV program.

The Orb, Orblivion

The Orb isn't as big on the electronic music scene as they were just a few years ago, but while this new album doesn't really offer anything new, *Orblivion* is still a very good album. After the great opener "Delta MKII," the first half of the album sort of goes on autopilot, though it's still quite listenable and not as unfocused as their disappointing per-

formance last year at Organic '96. They really come alive with the seventh track, "S.A.L.T.," which builds to an awesome climax as it samples a large part of David Thewlis' frightening rant about bar codes and the Apocalypse from the movie *Naked*. Following that is the single release "Toxygene," which features a luscious beat that rivals the classic "Little Fluffy Clouds," and is flawed only by being too short. While this album is excellent for use an ambience, it's rich enough to demand careful repeat listenings.

When We Were Kings

I didn't manage to get around to seeing this Oscar-winning documentary until recently, but I strongly recommend catching it before it disappears from screens completely. Filmed in 1974 but tied up for financial reasons until late last year, this movie rivetingly documents Muhammad Ali's phenomenal comeback fight in Zaire against a young George Foreman. While he does go a bit overboard with his interviews of intellectuals like Norman Mailer and George Plimpton, director Leon Gast's camera captures one of the most charismatic figures of the century at his best, defying all the oddsmakers and proving that his braggadocio was for real. Shaq, Dennis Rodman, and Tiger Woods look positively like wallflowers next to Ali in his prime. It's simply amazing to watch Ali mix politics with sports and whipping up crowds by being as agile with his tongue as he is in the ring. 23 years later, Muhammad Ali still makes you want to stand up and cheer.

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book review book worm.

BY DAISY JAMES

Danny The Champion of the World

Roald Dahl

I can not say too much about Dahl's abilities as a story writer. He can make a commonplace event come alive with humor or tragedy, and he rarely writes about commonplace events.

Danny is about a boy's life with his father, and the book is Danny trying to explain to the reader why his is the most marvelous and exciting father any boy ever had. Though it is never dwelled upon, they are obviously very poor, living in a tiny caravan next to the filling station that his father owns and runs.

I don't want to say too much about the plot, but the adventure begins with Danny learning a secret that his father has been keeping for years and is pulled into the biggest plot the town has ever known. The whole story is told with charming candor, and

I think that if I try to say more this will become just too saccharine to print.

A Puzzle for Fools

Patrick Quentin

If I get a bad grade on my O. chem. midterm I'm blaming this book. It was given to me to review while I was in the middle of studying and it caused some sizable breaks in my attempts to learn what a carboxylic acid is. Needless to say, I found it pretty engrossing, or at least more so than my textbook.

A Puzzle for Fools is essentially a country house murder, with the twist being that it's set in a mental hospital. It has the set group of people who could be suspects, the limited setting and basic interactions, the doctors who take the roles of hosts, the staff of servants, etc. that are typical of that classic genre of mysteries, but the setting itself give a flair of the unusual.

The story is narrated by Peter Duluth, a recovering alcoholic who is among the more sane of the inmates of the asylum. By virtue of his sanity, and the fact that he discovers the bodies, Duluth is taken into the confidence of the authorities and tries to solve the mystery on his own.

The murderer starts with a campaign of frightening various inmates and using their neuroses to his advantage. He (and I should mention that I'm using the indefinite pronoun here) then moves on to a particularly gruesome and brutal murder.

To criticize, I would say that the murderer is a bit too miraculous, and has too many skills that just happen to be perfect for the job at hand. It's not entirely believable and tends to the melodramatic. The other problem was that it got very confusing at the end, when I was certain that it had been stated that one person was the murderer, but then the very characters that made the statement seemed to ignore and forget it, leaving a welter of confusion that was never cleared up.

- ~~~~~ A Wonderful Work of Art
- ~~~~~ Slightly imperfect
- ~~~~~ Pretty darn good
- ~~~~~ Decent
- ~~~~~ Bad
- ~~~~~ Awful



TACIT PLAY REVIEW

The Letter

by Onureena Banerjee



REVIEW BY DAISY JAMES

This term, in addition to its usual performances, TACIT is presenting an original one-act play written by freshman Onureena Banerjee and directed by sophomore Diana Lavelly. It's a two person play, really more of a one-scene than a one-act, that's about eight minutes long.

The two characters are an elderly couple, played by Scott Van Essen and Tanya Tickel, who have just received a letter from their son informing them that he has a new job in a toothpaste factory, screwing on the caps (inspired, perhaps, by that being Charlie Bucket's father's job in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*?)

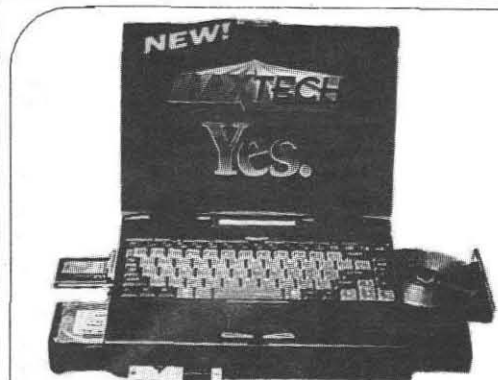
The husband is disappointed in and the mother is defending the son, at first. The conversation shifts to their own dreams and disappointments and eventually they resolve their feelings

about their son and their lives.

The acting is admirable, especially considering the difficulties of getting into a character with no backstage, almost no set, and settings such as the Coffeehouse and the Red Door, which are pretty far removed from a typical suburban kitchen, where the play is set.

My main criticism would be about the way that the was closed, with Tickel turning to the audience, putting her hands on the back of her head and saying, "Oooh, all done." I thought that this spoiled the moment left by the closing lines and I would have been happier with a simpler scene.

"The Letter" will be performed at the Coffeehouse on May 13 and 15 at 10:30 p.m. and at the Red Door Cafe on May 18 at 4 p.m. and on May 16 at 3:30, 4, and 4:30 p.m. All performances are free and tipping is appreciated.



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COMIC 4: ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT YOU INVENTED THE FIRST WEB BROWSER? NOT ALONE. I WORKED WITH OUR GARBAGE MAN. FLASHBACK: I WONDER HOW LONG PEOPLE WOULD SIT IN FRONT OF A COMPUTER WAITING FOR NOTHING. LET'S FIND OUT! WHAT IF THIS THING GETS OUT OF HAND? WE'LL BLAME IT ON SOME DRUNKEN COLLEGE KID.

COMIC 5: HEY, MOM, DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE TOP SPEED OF YOUR STATION WAGON IS? I HAVE NO IDEA. WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO TELL YOU? PETER, DOES THIS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HOW YOU MANAGED TO GET BACK FROM THE MALL IN UNDER THREE MINUTES?

COMIC 6: FLASHBACK TO THE INVENTION OF THE FIRST WEB BROWSER. WHAT SHOULD WE CALL OUR PRANK, DOGBERT? WELL, IT'S DESIGNED TO MAKE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE SIT AROUND WAITING FOR NOTHING TO HAPPEN... A FEW YEARS LATER HEY, I CAN ALMOST SEE A RECOGNIZABLE BLOTCH! THIS IS AWESOME!

COMIC 7: JASON, MOVE IT. I NEED TO USE THE COMPUTER. I JUST STARTED THIS GAME. A GAME? HAS IT OCCURRED TO YOU THAT SOME OF US HAVE HOMEWORK TO DO?! I'VE GOT A LAB REPORT TO WRITE AND IT'S DUE IN 14 HOURS! SAY, MAYBE IF YOU TURNED IN BLANK PAPERS, YOUR GRADES WOULD IMPROVE. YOU KNOW, I DON'T REMEMBER HAVING SUCH LOUD AND GORY SOUNDS. DID IT ALWAYS SQUEAL LIKE THAT?

COMIC 8: FLASHBACK: DOGBERT AND THE WORLD'S SMARTEST GARBAGEMAN INVENT THE FIRST WEB BROWSER AS A PRACTICAL JOKE. IT'S OUT OF CONTROL. I WONDER WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THAT COLLEGE KID WE FRAMED HE'LL BE OKAY. WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE THIS BUSHEL OF MONEY? STACK IT NEXT TO THE PHOTOGRAPHERS.

COMIC 9: SO, DAD, I WAS THINKING MAYBE I'D JOIN THE MARINES. THAT'S NICE. AND BECOME A VEGAN. THAT'S NICE. AND START DATING MARRIED WOMEN. THAT'S NICE. AND STAY OUT AN HOUR PAST MY CURFEW TONIGHT. THINK AGAIN, MISTER. AND HAVE "666" TATTOOED ON MY FOREHEAD. THAT'S NICE. ONE OF THESE DAYS, HIS FILTER'S GOING TO FAIL. SO, DADDY, I WAS THINKING OF CHANGING MY NAME TO A SEMICOLON. THAT'S NICE.

COMIC 10: WALLY, WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO GATHER THE PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS AHEAD OF TIME. I WANT YOU TO START DESIGNING THE PRODUCT ANYWAY. OTHERWISE IT WILL LOOK LIKE WE AREN'T ACCOMPLISHING ANYTHING. OF ALL MY PROJECTS, I LIKE THE DOOMED ONES BEST.

COMIC 11: GZRGRZGR GRZRGRZG I LIKE MY PENCILS CUTE. IS THAT A CRIME? WEIRDO.

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=====

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Events

* The Caltech Jazz Bands and the Caltech Concert Band, directed by William Bing, will be performing their **Bandorama** with special guest conductors Alf Clausen and Paul Asimow, on Saturday, May 10th, at 8pm in the Beckman Auditorium. Clausen is the composer of the music for "The Simpsons" and director of music for "The Mary Tyler Moore Variety Hour." Asimow is a graduate student in geology at Caltech. Admission is free and is open to the public without tickets.

* **Student Chamber Music Concerts** will be held on Sunday, May 11, at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, May 17, at 8 p.m. in Dabney Lounge. Admission free.

* **Diva Complex** (the women's quartet with Attitude!) will be performing a **Mother's Day Concert** sponsored by Caltech Women's Glee Club. The concert will be on Sunday, May 11th, at 3:00pm in the Dabney Lounge. Admission: \$10 general; \$5 student.

* Caltech's **Men's and**

Women's Glee Clubs will be featured in concert on Friday, May 16th, at 8:00pm and Sunday, May 18th, at 3:00pm in the annual **Spring Concert** in Dabney Lounge. The groups will each perform a separate section, then combine to sing "Zum Fest der heiligen Cecilia" (for the Festival of St. Cecilia) by Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (sister of the famous composer Felix Mendelssohn) and excerpts from *Liebeslieder Waltzer* by Johannes Brahms, in honor of the centennial of the composer's death in 1897.

* **TACIT** will be presenting **Don Juan in Hell** by George Bernard Shaw. Showing in Dabney Hall, on May 23rd, 24th, 30th, and 31st at 8:00pm, and May 25th, 26th, and June 1st at 2:00pm. General Admission is \$8 and student admission is \$5. For more information call x4652 or email tickets@caltech.edu.

Notices

Mints

* denotes a new announcement.

* **AACIT** will be holding a general membership meeting at 7:30pm May 14th. It will include the program: "Fly to work, or just a lot of work to fly?" featuring Bryan Allen.

Johns Hopkins University will be running a summer program for 7th and 8th grade students at Caltech this year. There are several openings for TAs, RAs, instructors, and office help. JHU will pay for room and board for the duration of classes and pay a stipend as well. The program will run from June 23th to August 9th. If you are interested in applying for these jobs, please contact Keith Counsell as keithc@cco, at x3320, or in the Housing Annex between the hours of 8:00am and 5:00pm.

* **The Student Services Process Engineering Group (STAR)** is soliciting participation in Focus Group sessions to share your experiences with student services and ideas for ways that we may better serve you in the future. Student Services, for the purpose of this project, encompasses the following Offices: Admissions, Registration, Financial Aid, Student and Em-

ployee Accounts, Housing, Fellowships, Career Development, Alumni Association, Residence Life, Counseling Center, Health Center, Graduate Office, Undergraduate Dean and athletics. We will be meeting with faculty, students, staff and alumni from May 19th, 1997, through June 6th, 1997. If you are interested in participating in a Focus Group, please contact Ellen Harris via e-mail at ellen@finaid.caltech.edu.

From the Counseling Center

Looking for a safe and supportive place to discuss issues such as coming out, being out, dealing with family, coping with a homophobic culture, and being GLB at Caltech? Want somewhere just to make new friends? You are invited to the **Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Discussion Group**, which meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 7:30pm till 10:00pm in the Health Center lounge. This is a confidential meeting and attending does not

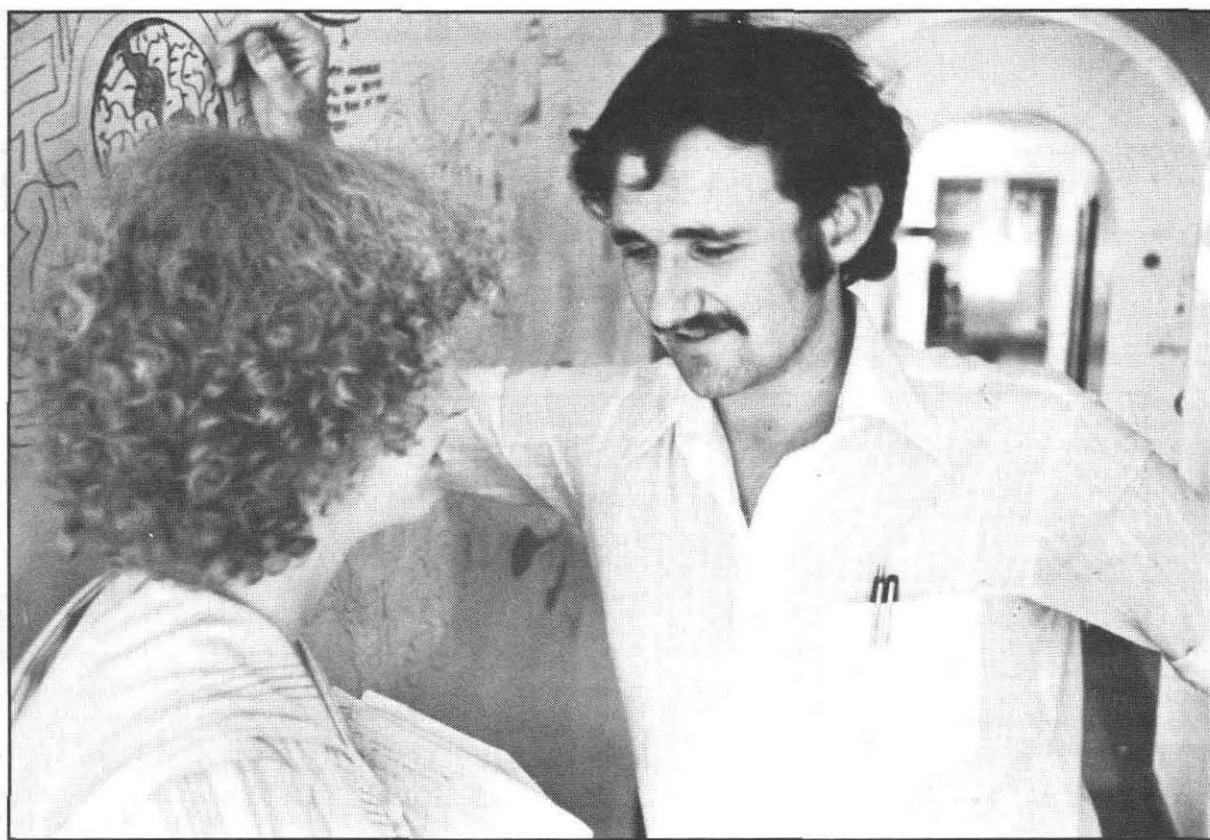
imply anything about a person's sexual orientation—only that he or she is willing to be supportive in this setting. The group usually discusses a particular relevant topic and then moves on to the general discussion. Refreshments are served. If you would like more information, please call x8331.

Fellowships and Scholarships

From the *Fellowships Advising and Resources Office*, x2150, e-mail lauren_stolper@starbase1.caltech.edu:

The **American Association of University Women** offers a number of fellowships to women who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents, including one year post-doctoral fellowships and special dissertation fellowships. The international fellowship is awarded to women who are not citizens of the U.S. or permanent residents who are engaged in full-time grade or post-graduate study in the U.S. A poster with a tear-off card that allows you to send for an application is posted on our main bulletin board.

From the *Financial Aid Office*, 515 S. Wilson, second floor.



"Hey, baby, what's your IP address?"

Will Working On The Tech Improve Your Love Life?

YES, say experts! Studies indicate that working on *The Tech* will improve your love life. This woman has just completed an article for *The Tech*. Her increased animal magnetism has attracted this man from all the way across the Olive Walk! Scientists in Beckman Behavioral Biology Building measured a factor of 1000 increase in her attractive potential. While we can't promise the same results for you, we do promise you that at least five eligible bachelors will be at the Friday noon Tech meeting in the Coffeehouse. This includes the voluptuous, curvaceous, attractive, and very eligible Ryan Cox, who became legal yesterday.

THE EDITORS WISH TO THANK CHRIS BROOKS FOR LAYING OUT THE ENTIRE PAPER THIS WEEK.

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Anna Karenina

Daily 4:20, 7:00, 9:35 p.m. Sat-Sun Bargain Matinee 1:40 p.m.

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