

Cats No Longer Welcome in the South Houses

BY: CINDY KO

Recent rumors of the changing policy on the ability to keep cats has made students, even non cat owners and cat-allergics, upset and unhappy. Most of the rumors center around the fact that cats will not be allowed back into the new South houses when they open next year. Anything else that has been circulating around may or may not actually be part of the new policy regarding cats. The author personally had heard that Housing was 'phasing cats out of the North houses' as well, but this turns out to be untrue.

An interview with Senior Housing Director Tim Chang straightened out the facts about the policy. The new policy is as follows: no cats will be allowed to reside in the South houses, nor in Avery, but they are still being allowed in off campus housing options and the North houses. In addition, the Housing Office is not accepting any applications for new cats. (NOTE: The phrase, "not accepting any applications for new cats" does not imply that cats are being phased out, but rather that the North houses have reached their quota, and applications will be

accepted when a position eventually opens up.) The prior version of the cat policy was simply to place a cat quota for each house, depending on its size. Current South-house cat owners must either find an off campus living arrangement to keep their cat, or give their pet to someone in a North house/off-campus place before moving back in.

Many Caltech students regard the privilege of keeping pets—cats, in particular—as a favorable characteristic that makes the school unique and superior to other universities. "A deciding factor for me to come here was literally the ability to own a cat," states Vera te Velde, a junior. Wendy Chou, an alum, states that, "It's the one thing that made Caltech a unique school. When I came to Prefrosh [Weekend], I put on my form that I wanted a host with a cat... Everybody I knew was impressed that a school would allow people to have cats in the dorms."

Some students have mixed feelings about the cat policy: "Cats can be cool when their owners are conscientious of their whereabouts," says sophomore Rob Grogan, who experiences cat allergies. Where does the policy

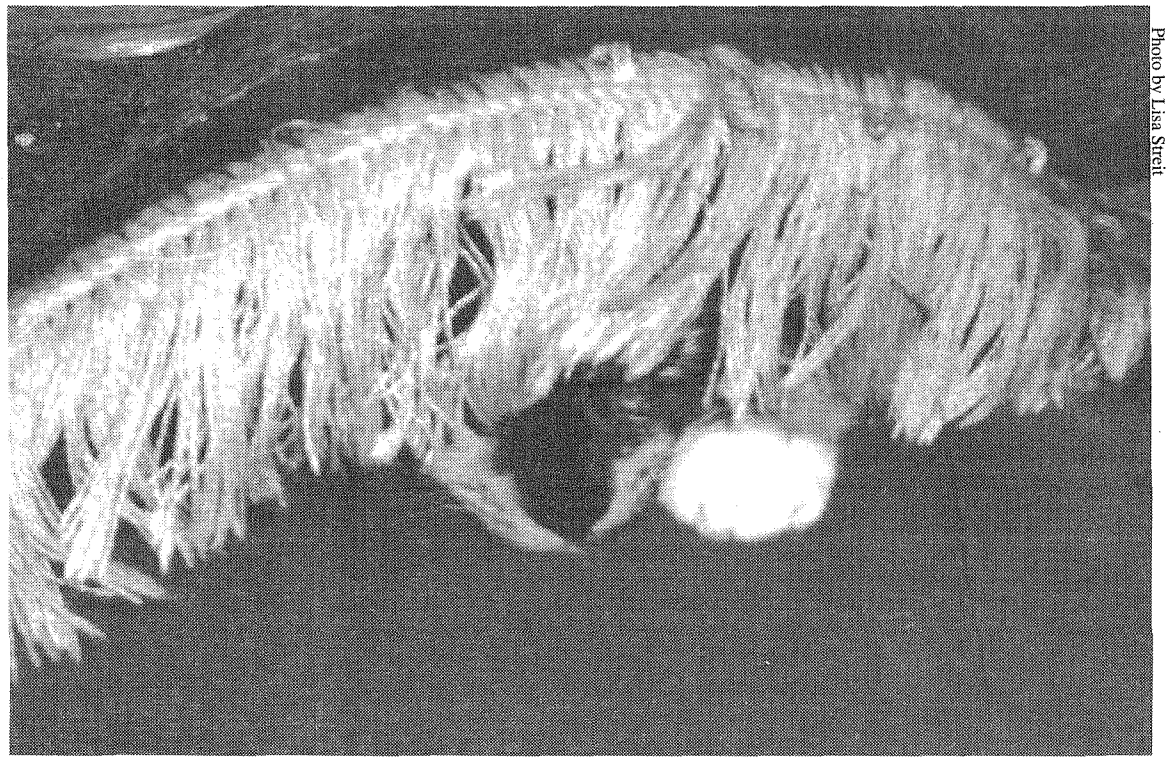


Photo by Lisa Street

Grainne, a former South House resident says, "Don't let housing find me!"

stand, exactly?

When asked about the reasons for including the new South houses as part of the cat-free zone, Chang stated that the idea was based on opening new housing

options—ie., the South houses—to students who were allergic to cats, in addition to Avery. Currently, Avery House is the only place for students with these allergies and they have little other

choice but to live there. Chang was adamant on pointing out that owning a cat was a choice that a student could make, but being restricted on housing options be-

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Passion of the Christ Producer Describes Movie's Unique Experiences

BY: DANIEL BIRT

On the Friday after Easter, Steve McEveety, producer of *The Passion of the Christ*, spoke at Caltech about his personal experiences in making the movie, working with Mel Gibson, and overcoming the controversy which almost prevented its release.

"I have been a Catholic my whole life", he said, "but I never spent much time reflecting on the Passion of our Lord ... Mel and I wanted to make the movie help others better relate to the suffering of Jesus Christ and understand the sacrifice he made to make possible our salvation."

McEveety, who has worked with Mel Gibson on numerous other movies including *Braveheart*, *What Women Want*, and *Payback*, actually began with speaking about the filming of a completely different movie, *We Were Soldiers*. During the filming of a particularly fierce battle scene, guns were blazing and men were falling as the North Vietnamese soldiers advanced on the desperate American troops. In the midst of the noise and smell of gunpowder smoke, Mel turned to Steve and said "I want to make a movie about the Passion."

Steve said he had no idea what Mel was talking about at that time. "I thought he was talking about a romance." Even after realizing that Mel was talking about the



Photo courtesy of http://www.thepassionofthechrist.com/

Visitors from around flocked to hear producer Steve McEveety talk about the movie at an event hosted by Caltech's Newman Center.

Passion of Jesus Christ, he said he had a hard time grasping the significance of such a project.

"The Passion" is the term that Christians use for the period of intense suffering described in the gospels between the arrest of Jesus and his crucifixion. They believe that through his suffering during the Passion, Christ redeemed the world.

McEveety spoke of how his experiences in producing the movie helped to affirm his faith. Many occurrences were so fortunate and unexpected that he couldn't help but believe that the hand of God was playing a role.

For example, one day they were filming a scene on top of a mountain as a storm was approaching.

There were many extras on the scene in their costumes so they filmed for as long as they possibly could before piling everyone into busses. At one point everyone was safe inside a vehicle except for an old woman and a young Italian stage hand who was holding an umbrella over her. As they were making their way to the buses, the hair on the young man's head began standing up just before a bolt of lightning struck his umbrella and traveled through his body to the ground. Amazingly, he only suffered some minor burns on his fingertips.

Then later, they were filming the scene of the Sermon on the

Continued on page 2

Caltech's Endowment

BY: SARA PEEK

If Caltech has \$1.3 billion up its sleeve, why are we worrying so much about budget cuts right now?

Directly related to Caltech's excellence in a variety of fields is the large budget relative to our small size. A major contributor to this budget is the payout of Caltech's \$1.3 billion endowment.

Caltech's endowment is meant to last the lifetime of the school, which is ideally infinite. To that end, rather than just being spent, the endowment is invested, and a percentage is paid out into the general budget every year.

So how much of the endowment is used each year? Currently, the endowment pays out 6.5% a year, computed from 12-quarter averages of the total worth, so as not to pay out anomalously at a momentary high or low. The endowment payout is meant to be fair to every generation of Caltech students and faculty in the future as well as now, and much thought is put into achieving this goal.

Most endowed schools pay out only 5-5.5% each year; this ensures that the current budget, and thus the current students and faculty, absorb the risks inherent to investment. Caltech differs from this norm, which allows the endowment payout to contribute about 16% of the half-billion dollar operating budget.

Since the endowment payout composes a reasonable fraction of the operating budget, it is im-

portant that the endowment be stable. Caltech's costs are largely fixed-- salaries, stipends, and maintenance, to name a few, so a dramatic reduction in the endowment could leave the Institute wondering how to come up with the money.

In fact, Caltech has faced this problem relatively recently-- historically, Caltech's endowment was largely invested in stocks and bonds; during the tech bubble, the investments earned returns that made diversification seem imprudent. As the bubble burst, the risk inherent in stocks was illustrated; at one point, the endowment dropped by 20%, which means that payout also dropped dramatically.

When the tech bubble burst, about 75% of the endowment was invested in stocks. Soon after, new strategies were implemented to deal with risk. A more diverse set of investments was made, including into real estate and timber, which are less volatile than normal stocks. Additionally, no more than 3% of the endowment is ever invested in a single stock. The varied assets that compose the current investment are not correlated in their worth, so an overall smoothing effect is seen in the endowment's worth over time.

The endowment is invested through professional money managers unaffiliated with Caltech to prevent changes in investments due to a personal or career-based

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Page House President speaks out
about the cannon.

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Movie Successful Despite Criticism

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Mount when another storm approached. Once again they tried to keep filming for as long as possible. The same young man was holding an umbrella over Jim Caviezel, the actor who portrays Jesus, when another bolt of lightning struck his umbrella and passed through his body with an offshoot appearing to pass through Jim's head. Neither Jim nor the young man was injured.

Noticing this was the only stagehand to ever be struck by lightning twice during the filming of a movie, Mr. McEveety began talking with him and learned that he was baptized by Pope John Paul II in the first baptismal ceremony he celebrated as Pope.

It turned out that his family was good friends with the pope, and he later helped the production crew convince the Pope to screen the movie, which was instrumental in helping to gain the support of the Catholic community while they were working to release the

movie.

McEveety also opened the floor to questions from the crowd and several were posed asking about the controversies regarding the release of the film. His answers clearly showed the frustration this caused him.

They were unprepared to deal with the politics. Many people did not want to see the movie succeed, and the production team had trouble gaining the support of the Catholic Church, a collaboration they were desperately counting on.

We faced critics accusing us of anti-Semitism and of capitalizing on Christianity. "We're not politicians. We're just dumb filmmakers" he said.

They obtained assistance in dealing with the controversy from members of a Catholic religious order known as the Legionaries of Christ. Two members of the Legionaries, Fr. Eugene Gromley, chaplain of the Newman Center at

Caltech, which hosted this speaking engagement by McEveety, and Fr. John Bullock, chaplain of the Newman Center at CalPoly, accompanied McEveety during his talk and helped answer questions regarding spiritual matters of the movie. They also mentioned the role of the Legionaries in giving advice to McEveety and Gibson for the movie.

A reception was held afterwards, but unfortunately McEveety had to catch a flight and couldn't stay. He left sporting a brand new Caltech baseball cap, a gift from the Newman Center.

The event was hosted in the Avery Library by the Caltech Newman Center, the Catholic student organization on campus. The library was packed with members from all corners of the Caltech community as well as Catholics from nearby parishes.

On May 19 the Newman Center will be holding another talk titled: "The Da Vinci Code: Fact

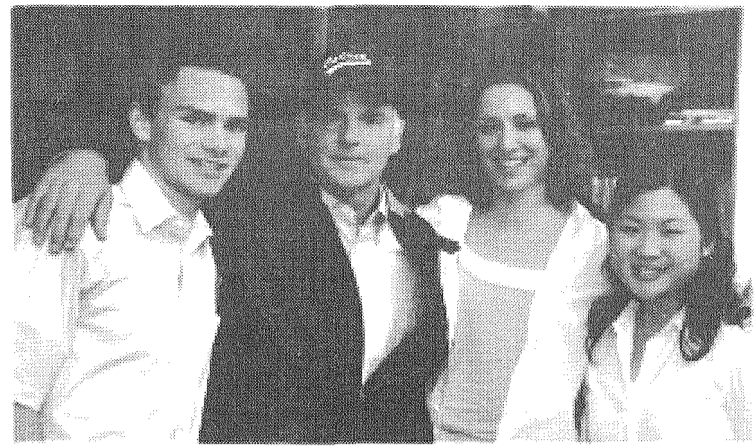


Photo by Chris Wetzel

Visitors from nearby parishes came to hear McEveety speak at the Newman's Center Friday meeting. From left to right in the picture: Tyler Ament, Steve McEveety, Joanna Doyle, and Maria Seo.

or Fiction?" in the Avery Library beginning at 7pm. Everyone is welcome to attend and admission is free. Father John Bullock, LC will discuss some of the claims that Dan Brown makes about the Catholic Church.

If you are interested in learning more about the Newman Center, you may join the mailing list by

submitting your email address at https://utils.its.caltech.edu/mailman/listinfo/newman_center. We typically have mass on Sundays at 5pm in the Winnet Lounge, weekday masses on campus on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, and hold events such as talks, prayer meetings and bible studies on Friday nights.

The Outside World News and More News

BY: HAMILTON FALK

Bush Calls for Increased Fuel Efficiency Standards

President George W. Bush asked Congress for additional powers to regulate fuel efficiency standards for passenger vehicles. The Department of Transportation already has raised standards for SUVs and light trucks and would like to raise the current standard of an average of 27.5 miles per gallon for a company's fleet of vehicles. Bush has also vowed that if the powers were granted to him, he would prevent automakers from compromising vehicle safety as they lighten cars to improve efficiency.

Republicans have proposed an amendment that would give the Transportation Department authority to issue fuel efficiency standards for passenger vehicles, expand tax incentives for use of hybrid vehicles, attempt to bring more research in alternative fuels and more effective usage of existing oil refineries, provide most American taxpayers with a \$100 rebate check to offset higher prices for gasoline, and open part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska to oil exploration. Many oppose the last portions of the amendment, and Democrats have been pushing their own bill that would roll back tax breaks for oil companies and investigate their business practices. Exxon Mobil reported

increased quarterly profits, claiming earnings of \$8.4 billion in the first quarter of 2006, leading many to ask if oil companies are exploiting high prices.

Neither bill is likely to pass, and short term relief for high gas prices seems unlikely, especially as the summer driving season begins.

Rebels in Nepal Declare Three-Month Cease Fire, Parliament Reopens

In the battered nation of Nepal, the leader of the Maoist rebels, Prachanda, declared a three-month cease fire to give the new government a chance to set up the assembly. In addition, after three weeks of curfews and demonstrations that killed at least 13 and left thousands wounded, the king agreed late Monday to reinstate Parliament, which he dismissed in 2002 at the request of the former prime minister. Negotiations between the King, the Maoist rebels and an alliance of seven political parties are expected to discuss a new constitution and weakening or even eliminating the Monarchy portion of the Nepalese government. The changes should help relieve problems in Katmandu, where 1.5 million people have dealt with shortages of food and goods caused by the government actions and rebel disruption of highway travel.

"A Day Without an Immigrant" Strike to Occur Today

Millions of immigrants without documents and their supporters who are legal United States citizens will refuse to go to work or school throughout the United States today. The strikers hope to achieve amnesty for the more than 11 million illegal immigrants that would allow them to become legal United States citizens. These citizens have entered the country illegally, but have since been law abiding members of society and contribute to the nation's economy without receiving the benefits of citizenship, which the organizers feel is unfair. Several major meat and produce companies are already planning to shut down operations today, expecting to lose too many workers to the walk-out.

Recent polls have shown that approximately four out of five Americans prefer allowing law abiding immigrants who entered the country illegally to gain citizenship. In Washington, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist and Minority Leader Harry Reid met with President Bush and said they were confident immigration legislation that would increase border security; establish guest worker programs and open options for gaining citizenship could pass their chamber by Memorial Day. The divided House of Representatives will likely have more diffi-

culty passing any legislation concerning immigration issues.

Mexico to Legalize the Possession of Marijuana, Cocaine, Opium and Heroin

The Mexican government has passed laws that would decriminalize the possession of up to 5 grams of marijuana, 5 grams of opium, and 25 milligrams of heroin or 500 milligrams of cocaine if intended for personal use, which are expected to be signed into law by Mexican President Vicente Fox. The legal changes will also decriminalize the possession of limited quantities of LSD, hallucinogenic mushrooms, amphetamines and peyote, a psychotropic cactus found in Mexico's northern deserts, but will prosecute anyone possessing larger quantities as narcotics dealers, with harsh consequences. The intention of the law is to allow law enforcement to focus on larger scale operations and those smuggling drugs into the United States rather than end users. Previously the law gave judges and local police discretion on what drug cases to prosecute.

Compiled from CNN, MSNBC and Yahoo News.

Summer Housing

Affiliated Housing: If you prefer to remain in your House (or affiliated off-campus alley/modular unit), you must participate in your House's summer room picks. Guidelines and procedures for summer room picks will be set by each House. Please consult the House officer in charge of room picks for more information. You are NOT required to turn in a 2006 Summer Housing Request/Lottery Card to the Housing Office. If you would like to participate in your House picks and the unaffiliated summer lottery, you may submit a card, but your name will be removed from the unaffiliated process if you accept a space in your House and your name appears on the summer roster.

Unaffiliated Housing: If you are currently living in an unaffiliated space (squatters), or have picked into an unaffiliated space for the fall (settlers), and wish to have that assignment during the summer, you must submit a 2006 Summer Housing Request/Lottery Card by 5:00pm on Monday, May 8th to the Housing Office. If you will be a roommate of a squatter or settler, you are also required to submit a summer card before the deadline. If you do not have an assignment in unaffiliated housing, but wish to participate in the unaffiliated summer lottery, you must submit a 2006 Summer Housing Request/Lottery Card by 5:00pm on Monday, May 8th to the Housing Office.

Unaffiliated Lottery this Thursday!

Winter 2006 will be given their checks.

6. ASCIT Teaching Awards
* Csilla reported that the ASCIT Teaching Awards banquet will be on May 11th. It will be catered by Burger Continental, and plaques have already been ordered. The ARC is expecting about 40 guests.

7. ASCIT Formal (and Beach Party!) - May 27th
* ASCIT Formal will be at the Portofino Hotel on Redondo Beach on May 27th from 7 pm - 12 am! The Social Team will also have a BEACH PARTY the afternoon before ASCIT Formal (of course, there will be places to change from a speedo/bikini to a tux/evening gown there.)

Respectfully submitted,
Vickie Pon
ASCIT Secretary

ASCIT Board of Directors Minutes from the Side Room of Chandler

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

1. Funding Requests

* Ekta from OASIS presented a funding proposal for OASIS's annual cultural show on the evening of May 11th. \$5 will be charged for dinner, and a free cultural performances show will be advertised to the entire Caltech and surrounding community. They request \$300 to help fund this event. A vote was taken to grant OASIS \$300 in special events funding: Vote approved (5Y/0N/1A).

* Justin and Dan requested \$300 to help with the cost of inviting speakers for the annual Capoeira Angola and Brazilian cultural event May 5-7th. A vote was taken to grant this event \$300: Vote approved (8Y/0N/0A).

* Chris M. requested Multihouse funding for Ricketts and Ruddock (as proxy for Tina Wang) for their broomball event on May 6th. A vote was taken to grant both Ricketts and Ruddock House their \$100 Multihouse funding for their upcoming broomball event: Vote approved (8Y/0N/0A).

* Kelrof requested additional funding of an additional \$90 to help with the unexpectedly large number of participants who have recently signed up for this year. A vote was taken to grant Kelrof \$90 for their event: Vote approved (6Y/0N/0A).

* Sean requested Multihouse funding for Page House for the upcoming Page+Ricketts Olympics. A vote was taken to grant Page House their \$100 of Multihouse funding for their olympics event with Ricketts: Vote ap-

proved (6Y/0N/2A).

* Debrah from Semana Latina requested the \$500 set aside in ASCIT's budget for Semana Latina, which will be May 8-12. This was granted.

* Ryan Bogner requested money to take Prof. Yavetz to lunch at the Ath with 2 other undergraduates. A vote was taken to grant funding for Ryan + 2 other undergrads to take a professor to lunch at the Ath: Vote approved (8Y/0N/0A).

2. Honor Code Survey

* Jean reported that the Honor Code Survey is in its final drafts, and will be printed very soon.

3. UDAL's Committee Report

* Nate is the undergraduate representative on the Caltech Alumni Fund Advisory Council, and attended their meeting over the weekend.

* Nate reported that the Alumni Fund is concerned about getting student volunteers for the Student Phone Program, since much less students are active in the program as compared to past years. They are looking into ways to increase participation in the program by looking into support from the Houses. Incentives may be provided. More discussion on how the BoD can facilitate the Alumni Fund in recruiting callers will happen at the next BoD meeting.

4. IHC Committees

* Craig reported that IHC committee signups are now up! Go sign up for committees!!!

5. Treasurer's Report

* The BoD discussed how far back in the ages of time should late checks be given to clubs and other people on campus. Clubs who request checks they haven't gotten from Spring 2005 through

Cat Policy Disappoints Some Students

Continued from page 1

cause of cat allergies was not a matter of choice. In the most extreme viewpoint, Avery could be seen as an enclave of people with allergies, which is something that Housing would like to avoid. Under the new policy, undergrads with severe cat allergies could potentially live in the same house that they hold membership.

It's fairly obvious that a restriction on previously allowed privileges would not be received well by the students, but it's also a question of being able to please and accommodate a large range of people. Chang noted that, in addition to receiving complaints about allergies, cats end up causing a fair amount of damage to housing property. He cited an incident where one house cat was repeatedly defecating/vomiting on house couches. The house members were at a loss for finding a responsible person to take care of the cat, since the original owner had long since graduated. (Eventually, the family of a graduating senior adopted the cat.)

Chang also added that some cat owners do not properly take care of their pets, neglecting to spay/neuter them, which eventually leads to an increase in the number of feral cats around the school.

Incidents like this have made it difficult for Housing to deal with the existing cats on campus, but Housing still supports the ownership of cats—just in restricted areas. Chang remarked, "I know that the act of having a cat is a way for students to relieve stress; this is why we still allow students to keep cats." He maintains that other universities have much stricter policies on pets, even "No pets" policies, but Caltech remains liberal in this sense, even after the recent changes.

A separate, but related issue is that RAs are allowed to have dogs, a privilege that all other students do not have. I asked Chang about the reasoning behind this, to which he replied that, "RAs do not have a choice in where they live: when they become RAs, we force them to live in their house. Therefore, they can't choose housing

that lets them own dogs. This is why we allow them the privilege of keeping that pet." This argument essentially gives the act of owning a dog equal importance to being an RA, but it remains the logic behind the policy.

Part of the resistance to the new change in policy can arguably be attributed to a misinterpretation of the new policy. Rumors are easily generated because there seems to be a general lack of central information. When the author asked Chang for an interview concerning "Housing's new policy on cats" he replied that, "This isn't news at all—it's been this way since the beginning of the school year, and we've been discussing it for several years now." When prompted to explain, Chang says that he has, "talked about the cat-free locations in Housing with students, via the IHC [InterHouse Committee] over the past three years."

However, there remains the overwhelming consensus that the most recent cat policy is still regarded as 'news' to many students on campus. How would an

average student know what the standing policy on cats would be at any given time? One place to look would be the yearly Fall Housing Contract, but this document fails to mention cats at all, never mind the specifics about where cats are and aren't allowed.

Nevertheless, this article will serve as a general, if unofficial, announcement made on the new cat policy at Caltech. Chang fully recognizes the discontent some students express about this policy, but it meets the goals of opening more housing options to students with special needs and controlling the number of cats on campus. However, he emphasizes

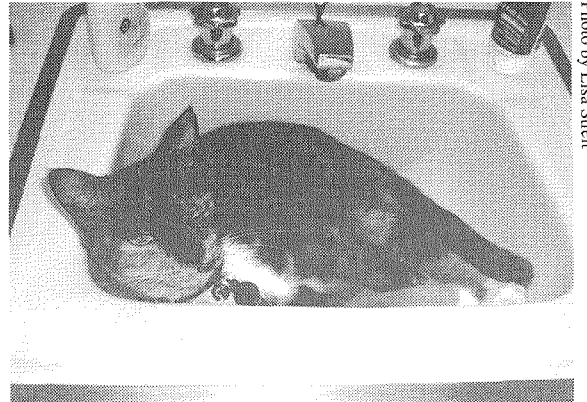


Photo by Lisa Streit

Grainne has a sinking feeling over this.

that he is, "flexible, if anything" about finding a policy that works for everyone. If a student can find a more suitable policy that everyone can agree on, then the forum is open for discussion and negotiation. Otherwise, the current policy shall stay as is.

(More commentary on pg 5)

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Explaining Role of Caltech's Endowment

Continued from page 1

stake in a given strategy. In line with this policy, assets or stocks donated to Caltech are uniformly cashed in and invested with the rest of the endowment.

A crucial part of investing the endowment, according to Currie, is the choice of managers. The best of the money managers tend to have closed funds, and Caltech's prestige is useful in gaining access to these funds.

Does all this have a direct effect on undergrads? You bet. All of Caltech's financial aid comes through the endowment, for example. Many alumni specifically endow financial aid, to "pay back" Caltech for their own schooling, and this aid is available in perpetuity to students with financial need. The thousands of dollars available for improvements to student life through the Moore-Hufstедler Fund, as another ex-

ample, are the payout of a much larger pool of funds invested as part of the endowment.

While the endowment and its returns are largely earmarked for specific purposes, some of these have a noticeable effect on Caltech students and on the overall health of Caltech's finances.

This is a summary of the second finance seminar out of six being presented by Dean Currie this term.

President Baltimore as Commencement Speaker

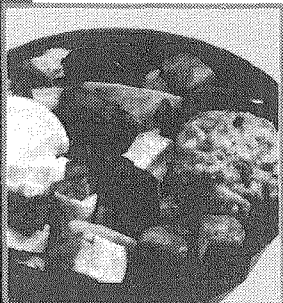
BY: DAVID CHEN

Last Sunday, an email was sent to the senior class announcing that President Baltimore would be Caltech's One Hundred and Twelfth Annual Commencement speaker. A large portion of the seniors are disappointed that despite voting for their own preferences, the ultimate decision was not theirs.

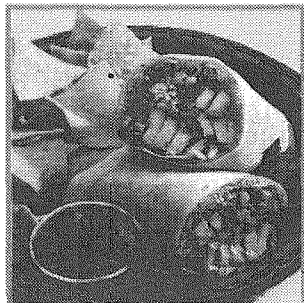
Many believed that the senior class presidents were responsible and had the authority to select the commencement speaker, but it turns out that these people serve an advisory role. President Baltimore made the final decision.

The two possible choices for commencement speaker were Condoleezza Rice and John Lithgow, but they declined this position.

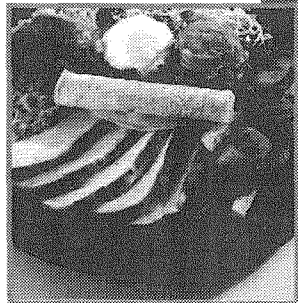
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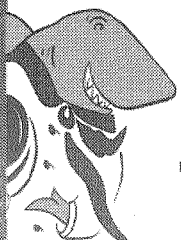
FAJITA BOWL



SHARKY'S BURRITO



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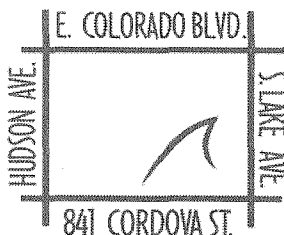


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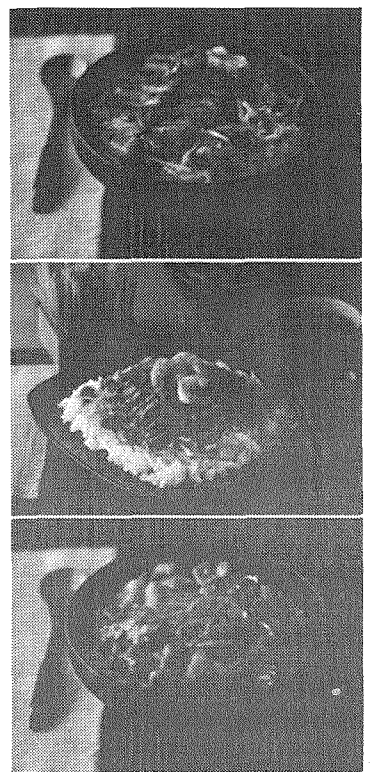
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Caltech Alum Makes it to the Big Leagues



Ari Kaplan (bottom right) poses with the Caltech baseball team

BY: JOHN MCNAMARA

A Caltech alumnus leads an extraordinary career after a home-run SURF project.

The physics final is not going to finish itself. You stare at the problems, but, to you, they all meld into the same question: why did I come here? Suddenly, an answer emerges and you scribble it down. A week later, you have passed with a 52%. You breathe a sigh of relief while the guy next to you fails with a 44%. If you had not had that one revelation or had one misguided thought, you would be in the class the next year, scraping enough points to move on.

With such swings and uncertainty, Caltech is a game of

baseball—a game that Pulitzer Prize winning columnist George Will called “the game of the long season where small incremental differences decide who wins and who loses particular games, series, seasons.” Like Caltech and your GPA, it is “a game that you can’t like if winning is everything.”

But one Caltech alumnus took this to a new level and pursued a career in baseball.

Ari Kaplan (B.S. '92) started this career in the summer of 1989 with a SURF project mentored by professor of political science D. Roderick Kiewiet. “I walked into his office and there was a calendar with baseball pictures on it,” remarked Kaplan on the first time he met Kiewiet. “We hit it off and we enjoyed it a great deal,” said Kiewiet.

Kaplan’s project sought to develop new methods to evaluate pitcher performance. Kaplan’s goal was to reevaluate the way people look at the earned run average, ERA, for assessing a pitcher’s ability. “Looking at the games, the pitchers that I thought would perform poorly were not as bad as I thought.”

“When he came to me with his SURF idea, I could see that had a good idea,” remarked Kiewiet. Kaplan developed the reliever effectiveness, best case ERA, expected ERA and worst case ERA statistics. These consider the case of inherited runners, runners that a pitcher leaves on base before a relief pitcher comes in.

If any of these runners score, the runs are charged to the starting pitcher’s ERA instead of the relief pitcher. Reliever effectiveness aims to show how well a relief pitcher can prevent inherited runners from scoring. Best, expected and worst case ERA shows how a pitcher’s ERA changes from the runners he leaves on base.

Because of this work, Kaplan was selected to be one of three SURF students to present to the Board of Trustees. During a question and answer session Eli Jacobs identified himself as the owner of the Baltimore Orioles and presented Kaplan with a job offer. “Do not let this man leave the room until I have his name and number,” Kaplan recalls responding.

From there, he began working for the Orioles the next summer. Following that, he moved to the Padres the summer after that. By graduation, Kaplan was faced with many choices. “It was hard, I had job opportunities, I got good grad schools, and the Expos wanted me back and I chose to go back to the Expos.”

After the Expos, his experiences programming their database software lead him to a job with Oracle and consulting ven-

tures with companies including Hallmark. He even worked on developing the website for Playboy Enterprises. “It was a very professionally run organization,” commented Kaplan.

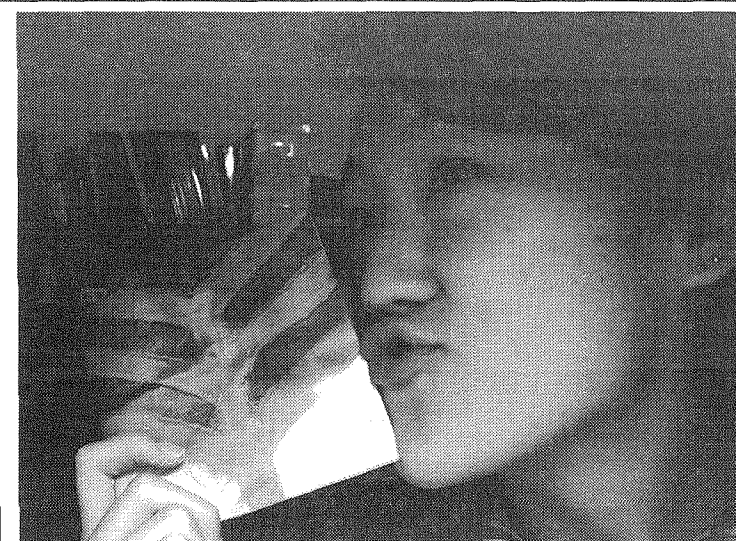
Kaplan’s database savvy lead him to social causes, as well. He is involved of the *Swedish-Russian Working Group on the Fate of Raoul Wallenberg*. Wallenberg was a Swedish diplomat who saved 100,000 Hungarian Jews during World War II before being sent to a Soviet gulag. Kaplan “developed the database and business and business intelligent software. Basically, [it] computerized hundreds of thousands of prisoner data.” This was to “confirm or deny several dozen eyewitness accounts,” according to Kaplan. Kaplan recounts, looking at prisoner data, “seeing that evil people were released while good people were given life sentence is a lesson in human justice”

Eventually, he started his own

company, Expand Beyond. It “ended up being the first mobile wireless companies out there,” remarked Kaplan. In the process, he hired several Caltech graduates. “There’s a good networking community among the alumni.”

At Caltech, Kaplan was Director of Social Activities in 1991. His baseball outings were attended not only by undergraduates, but by faculty such as Rudy Markis and Tom Everhart. As it is now, then, Kaplan admits: “it was a challenge to get anyone to do anything social.”

As for Kaplan’s future plans, he continues to pursue the dream of being a general manager for an MLB team. “That was one of my goals as an undergraduate and that is still is one of my goals.” While many of us may not strive for that goal, Kaplan advises us: “Keep following your passion—certainly Caltech has a strong emphasis on science and technology.” But, as Kaplan points out, that leads to “the whole emphasis on asking questions.”



Yeah Yeah Yeahs: Show Your Bones (2006)

BY: CINDY KO

Someday, Karen O will be regarded as a classic, iconic figure of musical history, on par with Debbie Harry or Patty Smith. She’s not quite there yet, but *Show Your Bones* is a step closer. Pretty much, she’s a musical genius and she’s awesome and I would switch teams for her (you know what I mean.) She’s also dating famed director, Spike Jonze, and they make a fitting couple. I hope she makes Sofia Coppola jealous.

The album is just as good or better than their last one, *Fever To Tell*, but with a notable change in style. Karen O does less of the experimental screaming and vocal utterances, and concentrates more on the melodic aspect of songs. Overall, she is being less offensive in her lyrics, which may or may not be a good thing.

Fever had a wonderful, untouchable quality to it, because its style was so outrageous and original. This album is a big shift away from that particular motif. I have the feeling that the overwhelming success of the last album’s single, “Maps,” had a lot to do with this change in direction. (“Maps” was *Fever To Tell*’s only love-song ballad, and it stood out from the rest of the songs in being coherent, melodic, and somewhat sappy in comparison. It’s a very well-written song that deserves all its praise, and a good illustration of the range of Karen O’s talent.)

I guess you could say that the attitude prevailing in this album goes more toward good songwriting, and less toward trying

to impress/shock the listener.

The songs on *Show Your Bones* take the calm and maturity of “Maps” and blend it with the usual Yeah Yeah Yeahs fare. Nearly every track is excellent. Karen O’s voice has both raw and refined qualities to it—to me, it doesn’t really matter what she’s singing, it always sounds good.

That is, her lyrics kind of don’t make sense but I don’t really care, either! When she sings, she can sound as young as 15 years old and as old as 50 in the same song. In terms of experimental vocals, this album doesn’t do anything that wild. On a few tracks, she records her vocals twice so it sounds like two of her are singing, and that’s just about it. The instrument lines are also very well laid: good drummin’, good bass and guitarwork. The production adds a lot of synthetic effects to the tracks, as well, but they sound pretty fitting and natural.

One of my favorite songs on the album is one called, “Phenomena.” The lyrics in the chorus are a throwback to an old LL Cool J/Puff Daddy rap song, “Phenomenon.” But it’s entirely different in a lot of ways. The Yeah Yeah Yeahs almost turn it into a dance track, but it’s hard to describe. You just have to hear it yourself. “Honeybear” is another good track.

If you are a Yeah Yeah Yeahs fan, this is a great album. You can hear that the band has matured a great deal since its last album, but it’s still undeniably and recognizably Yeah Yeah Yeahs. If you aren’t a fan yet, you need to pick this album up and have yourself a good time.

Good job Karen O. You get an

A

Drink o’the Week

Breaking the Seal

BY: BRIAN HANLEY

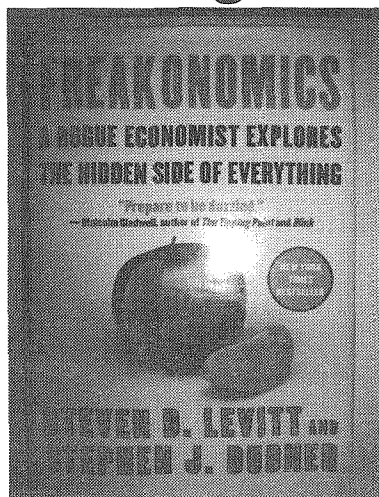
Everybody knows what happens when you drink. After a few beers, shots, or mixers, we all end up running to the urinal to release a stream like never before. “Oooooooooohhhhh,” we shout as our urine streams triumphantly and the pressure is released. After that first go, all night we run to the bathroom to relieve ourselves because we can no longer hold for as long. This drink helps to solve the problems of that first sprint, so that you will be prepared for the rest of the evening.

- 2 shots vodka
- 2 shots tequila (silver preferably)
- 2 shots rum (silver preferably)
- 2 gallons of water (in a jug or carton)

Get a glass, about a 20-ounce glass. Put all of the liquor in this glass. Fill the rest of the glass with water and then stir so it mixes thoroughly. Now drink enough of the water from the jug so that you can put the mixture in the cup in the jug. Pour the mixture in the jug, cap the jug, and shake. Drink very quickly, preferably out of a beer bong or similar apparatus. Remember, this is a drink for one person, so don’t share.

Book Review

Freakonomics Holds Delightful Surprises



BY: HAMILTON FALK

Cover: A
Book: B+

I know you’re not supposed to judge a book by its cover, but what if the cover contains a delightful picture of an apple that has a slice taken from it, but inside that slice it isn’t apple at all, it’s an orange! I think we can all agree that in that sort of situation, judgments of the book that don’t include its cover are a waste of time.

But not so much of a waste of

time that you should stop reading as I go on to write a review of what is inside the book.

Freakonomics is a collection of chapters offering up conventional wisdom, attempting to discover the real reasons behind why what happens happens, and show that the authors’ explanation is the correct one. Levitt is a young economist more interested in real world phenomena than monetary policy, and Dubner is a skilled journalist who befriended Levitt and is the reason the book reads like a New Yorker article instead of a scholarly paper.

It discusses why school teachers would cheat for their students, how the power of information brought down the KKK, explains the economic realities of crack dealing and what independent effect a name has on a person’s life. Perhaps most controversial is the suggestion that the drop in crime that occurred during the 1990’s was due to the legalization of abortion following *Roe v. Wade*.

Although the supporting evidence isn’t always quite as convincing at the authors suggest, and the lack of a theme takes away from the books flow, *Freakonomics* is a pleasure to read and provides some interesting insight into how the world really works.

Feline Residents to be Barred from South Houses

BY: LISA STREIT

When the renovated South Houses are finally opened again next winter, some of its former inhabitants will find themselves unwelcome to return home. Institute director of housing Tim Chang has asserted "no cats will be allowed in the South Houses." This decision will perpetuate the difficulties for members of the South Houses who have already struggled to make living arrangements for feline roommates during the renovations.

When questioned about the proposed crackdown on cats, Chang responded that the problem centered around allergies and damage, and that by removing cats from the South Houses, the housing office is looking to expand the ability of those with allergies to live in Caltech housing.

I question the degree to which "those with allergies" have been limited in their ability to live in the Houses because of the presence of cats. I myself have allergies to cats, yet I am a strong supporter of the rights of students to have cats on campus. If I don't take any medication and I pet a cat to which I am particularly allergic, I sneeze uncontrollably, my eyes get itchy watery and swollen until I can hardly see, my skin itches, and I have slight difficulty breathing. However, there are several preventative allergy medications on the market that eliminate or reduce the symptoms of cat allergies. I suspect that most people with cat allergies can live on the same hall as a cat as long as they take allergy medication and don't touch the cat or let it in their room.

Additionally, most people who have cat allergies are probably like me and also suffer allergies to dust and pollen. This time of year, when all the flowers on campus are in bloom and the warm spring breezes are laden with pollen, my allergies are terrible. Some days my eyes are so irritated I have trouble reading

the chalkboards during lectures.

Shouldn't Caltech create more options for those with pollen allergies? Shouldn't housing "create a more allergy free space" by cutting down all the trees and flowers near the houses? Of course not. The suggestion is ludicrous, but not too different from the decision not to allow cats in the houses. While it's obvious that cat allergens are more easily removed than pollen allergens, I still find it questionable that cat allergies have been singled out.

Among the reasons cited by housing was damage. I've never seen any damage done to the houses by pet cats. House cats are far less destructive and certainly much more hygienic than Techers. Once or twice I've seen a cat throw up in or around the house; whereas, there have been countless weekends where students have had too much to drink. And I've never seen (or smelled) evidence of cats urinating in the houses, which is more than I can say about students.

In explaining the move to eliminate cats from the South Houses, Chang reported "many complaints of feral cats and the problems that these cats bring with them." Housing may have problems with "many feral cats that cause significant damage to [their] Housing properties," but this is has nothing to do with student-owned cats (emphasis added).

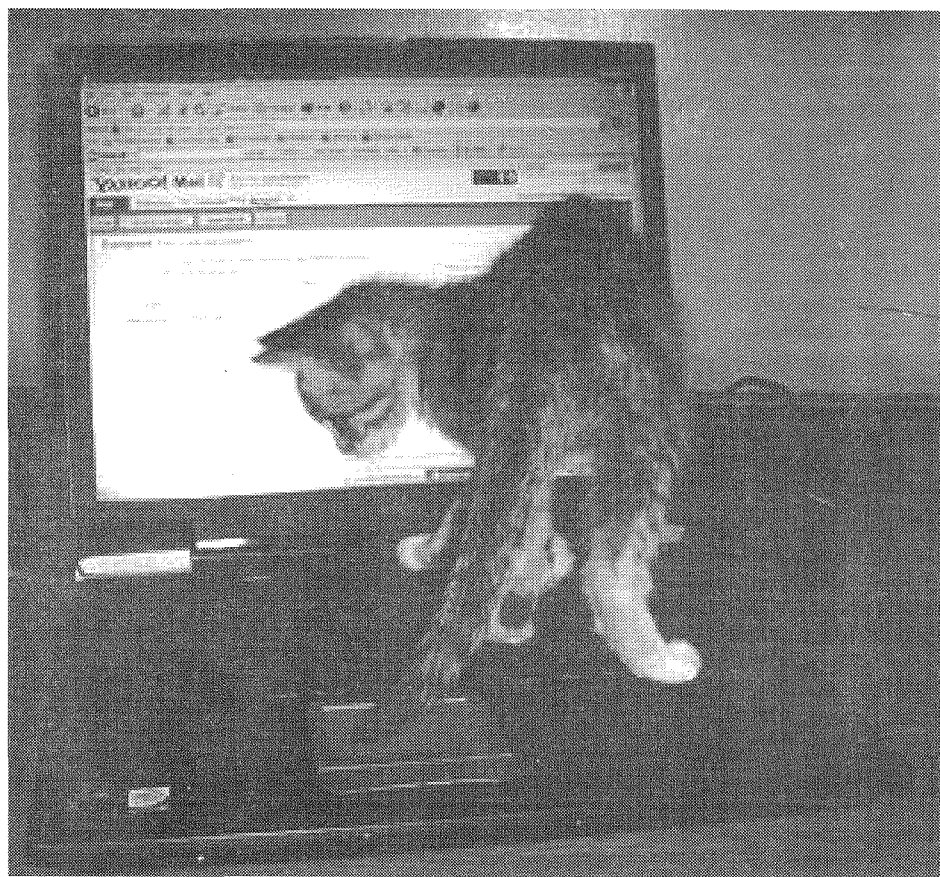
Student-owned cats are not feral. They are neutered or spayed, usually collared, and friendly (at least to their owners). There are many feral cats on campus, but I've noticed them mostly towards the west end of campus, farthest from the student houses, and there are even more feral cats a block or so west of campus.

Prohibiting student-owned cats in the South Houses does nothing to solve this problem. In fact, it could exacerbate the problem of feral cats. Cats are territorial and the presence of domestic cats around the South Houses could deter feral cats from entering the area. Further-

more, students who are no longer able to keep their cats in their rooms may be forced to keep their cats outdoors. If students have to leave food for their cats outside, this could attract even more feral cats.

While it's true that cat allergies can make you miserable, the Caltech workload makes students far more miserable than an allergic reaction, and sometimes cats are among the few things that can alleviate the symptoms. There have been times when I've been working late into the night, feeling on the edge of breaking down, and a half hour petting session with one of the house cats has been enough to keep me happy about being here and able to continue working without collapsing under the stress of the Caltech workload. If the presence of cats is a threat to the health of some people with allergies, I'm sure the lack of cats will prove a threat to the mental health of many more!

Just because I am strongly in favor of cats being allowed in the houses doesn't mean I don't think there should be compromise. A very current does not allow cats, and I think it's fine to keep it that way. There are other possible ways to work on the problems that accompany student-owned cats in the seven Houses. The Caltech housing office "strives to make our housing locations as open to people as possible."



Andromeda, a Fleming feline, painstakingly learns to type, perhaps in order to write an angry email to Tim Chang.

Photo by Lisa Streit

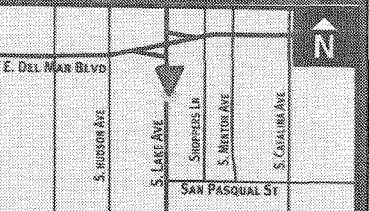
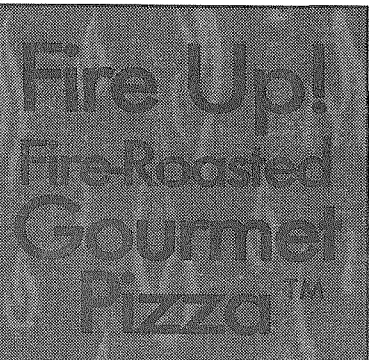
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take responsibility for trying to train the cat to stay out of cat-free zones, etc. Some people might be willing to acquiesce to the reasoning that most colleges don't allow students to have cats, but having cats is one of the things that makes Caltech wonderful and unique. The presence of cats makes students happier, and visitors enjoy seeing cats on the Olive Walk too. If we stand by the Caltech slogan, "there's only one," we need to defend those things that make Caltech special. We can't let anyone use that fact that "there's only one" to justify changes that will result in there being none.



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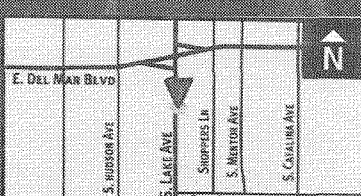
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Like Another School: Ruining Something Good About Caltech

BY: JOHN MCNAMARA

When I was here at Prefrosh weekend, I remember seeing a funny-looking Asian guy run out of Page House screaming, "Don't come here. Everything is a lie. Run while you still can!" I remember this every time I find myself up all night to finish a problem set, every time I experience "The Ratio" and every time I eat a CDS dinner. When I remember the cry of that fellow, I reflexively ask myself the question: "Why did I come here?" Thinking about it, I can say many of the negative aspects of this place have a positive side. The long problem sets makes us better at what we do. "The Ratio" reminds me to get out more and experience LA. Finally, the CDS dinners: there's nothing good about those. There has been some change, but dinner is still awful. What I can think about when I see something I will never feed to my neighborhood stray dog is the fact that I am not charged very much to be here.

From my own experience and speaking to many Prefrosh, Financial Aid at Caltech has been incredibly generous. For the 2005-6 year, the total amount of Caltech Grant and named scholarship distributed amounted to \$11,447,080. While this does not cover all expenses for all students, it is able to reasonably assist those

who need it. "Our goal is meeting full demonstrated need and need blind admission," remarked David Levy, director of the Financial Aid office. Sticking to this, the Financial Aid office provides assistance so that the cost of Caltech should not be a burden. If it becomes one, then the Financial Aid staff can work out the situation with you. "If families are finding the amount is creating a financial hardship, we encourage them to let us know," adds Levy.

But next year, the policy will change. For the next school year, these costs will escalate for incoming students. Tuition remains the same, but healthcare is an additional, separate charge. In addition, for students on financial aid, there is an increased requirement from the student contribution. Students are required to save a proportion of their summer income to go towards self-help.

While the separation of health care is covered by financial aid, many students are not covered by financial aid. 40% of the student body does not apply for financial aid. Factor in those whose expected contribution is greater than the student budget and over 47% of the student body does not benefit from financial aid at all. Consider those with arrangements for scholarships to pay full tuition or proportion of tuition. The new plan will require them to pay the

full cost of health insurance instead of using the scholarship to cover it. By having healthcare as a separate expense, those receiving merit scholarships are penalized. If someone is mandated by their family to take the entire cost

"The Perks of Caltech are a necessity to attract students who would be scared away from the daunting workload necessary to finish... If it was not for the generous financial aid package, I would have seriously considered going elsewhere."

of their education, then the \$2901 each year in student fees is significant.

While these changes may not be a serious burden on a large portion of the student body, it is the attitude in which these changes were made that causes concern. Tuition increases in the past years cannot be due solely to the increase in health insurance. Another factor

is the fact that Caltech tuition is so low in comparison to other "peer institutions." The push for waivers in health insurance and the resulting policy was considered in reference to "other schools."

While I raise concern about this now, in 2001, there was a similar concern in dealing with the administration. As Chris Elion eloquently put it:

"While the administration is busy getting rid of benefits that other schools don't have, they seem to be forgetting a few of the bad parts that are unique to Caltech. At other schools, more than 30% of the students are women. At other schools, students don't consider taking 'only' five classes to be a light course load. Life at Tech is so terrible that crippling depression is a perfectly appropriate name for a comic strip, not a reason to see a psychiatrist."

The perks of Caltech are a necessity to attract students who would be scared away from the daunting workload necessary to finish. I know I had doubts about coming to this place. If it was not for the generous financial aid package, I would have seriously considered going elsewhere.

Thanks to this aid, I know that when I graduate, a combination of SURF savings and lack of student load debt can buy me more time to search for a job. I know

that there are alumni who have shared the unique experience of Caltech that I can connect with. I know that whatever I do, I have acquired the skills to succeed.

But what do I know? I have not met many alumni. Perhaps the attitude of adapting to other universities has already set in. Tuition may rise to the point where the incoming freshmen may end up leaving with such a high student debt that they are forced to go to grad school to defer it. Perhaps Caltech has changed so much that alumni have abandoned it and do not want to have anything to do with Caltech graduates. And when we leave? Perhaps the curriculum has changed so much that it resembles that of an inferior place and graduates will not know their field.

"So speak up, or else the efforts to make Caltech like 'other schools' will make us worse than all of them," remarked Elion at the end of his article. With so many steps taken to make Caltech like other schools, we find ourselves with evermore reason to protest. If Caltech does not maintain its exceptionality, then the disadvantages of a small school will be the only thing that people see. Where else would a prospective student be faced with a screaming lunatic telling him not to come here, but then matriculate anyway?

U.S. Gasoline Hypocrisy

BY: SIMON QUE

With gas prices in the United States returning to around \$3 per gallon, many politicians have taken up their role as Saviors of the People by stepping in to intervene in the economy. To these folks, the bad guys behind all this are the gasoline companies and gas station owners who have decided to raise prices, to the detriment of the people. Only when government steps in can this crime be stopped!

No true conservative should be surprised to find the interventionist President Bush leading the charge. CNN quotes Bush as saying, "Americans understand by and large that the price of crude oil is going up and that [gas] prices are going up, but what they don't want and will not accept is manipulation of the market. And neither will I."

What these politicians don't seem understand is why gas stations are raising prices. Prices are the modern market's way of telling people how scarce a commodity is. When a commodity becomes less available, prices go up, telling people to consume less. When a commodity becomes more widely available, prices go down, telling people that they can consume more.

But prices aren't just some magical mechanism; they're the result of producers and retailers responding to the demands of consumers. If a seller suddenly finds his supply of gasoline restricted (perhaps due to rising costs of crude oil), but with no change in the number of willing buyers, he is faced with a choice. If he does not change the price of gas, or is prevented from doing so by the government's price controls, the willing buyers will ask for more gas than he has. This results in long lines at the gas station, and people who are willing to pay more for gas cannot bid up the price.

The only real solution to this



Photo courtesy of The Washington Times

crisis is the infamous technique called price gouging. The seller can make sure that those who need gas the most will get it by raising prices. When prices go up, some customers will decide that gas is not worth the new price. This leaves only the customers who are willing to pay that much. Although politically incorrect, this is how the market works due to the way people naturally act in response to changes in scarcity. Price gouging is the only course of action that make sense economically. And yet politicians call it "manipulation of the market"!

Of course, if crude oil becomes more readily available, the prices will go down. But government is incapable of decreeing more gasoline into existence. Nor can it change the way the free market works by altering human nature—the Communists have already tried that.

Government intervention is no solution to the "problem" of rising gas prices. In reality, it is part of the problem:

Gas tax – the federal government imposes an 18.4-cent tax on each gallon of gasoline. Customers would be spared 18.4 cents per gallon if this tax were repealed. More can be done at the state level, where governments impose an additional 7.5 to 32.1 cent-per-gallon tax. Cutting gas taxes alone would cut gas prices by 50 cents in many places!

The Democrats in Congress have headed in the right direction by proposing a 60-day federal gas tax break. But why stop after 60 days? Make it permanent.

Federal lands – the federal government currently owns land that contains oil deposits. The Alaskan Northern Wilderness Reserve Area (ANWAR) is one such location. If these places were all auctioned off to the highest bidder, oil companies could harvest their oil deposits, boosting the supply of oil and lowering gas prices.

Many of the politicians who wag their fingers at price gougers have also opposed opening

the ANWAR to oil drilling. Perhaps they have a soft spot in their hearts for the caribous that inhabit those oil-rich lands. Maybe the American people do, too. If the pristine wilderness were valuable, people would pay for it. But unless people were able to freely bid on the ANWAR, we have no way of knowing how much people prefer caribous to cheaper, more abundant gasoline.

Sanctions against Iran – Iran is one of the major producers of oil and has large oil reserves within its borders. However, Americans are currently unable to enjoy the benefits of peaceful trade with Iran, thanks to economic sanctions imposed by the US government on Iran (except for specific goods). If these sanctions were lifted, America would likely become a major importer of Iranian oil, having a large, wealthy population.

Neocons would flip out at such a suggestion; in their eyes, America would be helping to fund the terrorists. On the contrary, if the

Iranian government, which owns the oil industry, gains economic interests in America through trade, it would have much less incentive to supply terrorists with weapons. Destroying America would mean destroying one of Iran's major trading partners! Trade would foster more peaceful relations between the two countries.

To advocate further government intervention as a way of helping consumers is outrageous hypocrisy and can only make things worse. The price controls imposed on gasoline in the 1970's resulted in long lines at the pumps. Imposing fines on price gougers is no different, and we can expect similar results. And Bush and his cronies are calling for UN sanctions against Iran, which could drive up the price of gasoline further.

If politicians want to help out Americans, they can start by ending all of these poverty-breeding measures and leave gasoline producers and taxpayers alone.

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Track Prattle

Believe in Yourself, Because I'm Not Going To (Track is Over)

BY: MARK EICHENLAUB

A wise man (David Carradine) once said, "The taking of a life does no one honor." That is irrelevant, because this is an article about a track meet. More specifically, it is about the 2006 SCIAC Championships Track Meet, which was the sort of track meet where no one died, except in the metaphorical sense of their soul being broken by a crushing defeat. (To experience sole crushing de feet for yourself, just have a fat person stomp on your shoes.)

The championship meet represents the culmination of months of diligent preparation and grueling training. Overcoming earlier injuries, setbacks, defeats, and frustration, runners at last round into perfect form for one competition, where the full glory of their youthful athletic grace bursts forth. They wage epic battles, set records, and force back the very limits of human ability. Unfortunately for Caltech, most of the runners doing these things are from other schools, or in the Olympics or something. Still the Caltech men managed sixth place, beating La Verne and Whittier (and making them cry(I think (and hope (because I am mean (but not really (because I'm kidding (let's see if the eds let the parentheses slide))))))))) and scoring 42 points. If 42 points does not sound like many to you, understand that, sadly, in track and field points are harder to come by than in Tetris, which is why so many more people prefer the latter. The total was one half a point less than Matt Roberson, a single athlete from CMS, scored in the entire meet. On a more comical note, the women's team took eighth place. (That was funny because it wasn't comical.) While eighth may not sound great at first,

considering there are approximately 7,000 accredited degree-granting institutions in the United States, one quickly sees that the statistic I am currently describing is meaningless. (OK we got last. Heck, as far as team standings we'd have done as well not even showing up. That strategy would also have saved significantly on safety pin costs.)

Jeremy Leibs was not the star of the day. The star of the day was the sun, which was very hot and made my nose pink. Jeremy, despite the failure of his aspirations towards nuclear fusion, did pretty not bad, winning the 110m hurdles for the second consecutive year. Jeremy is a senior. He plans on hanging up the spikes in favor of bingo and shuffleboard, as there will be little time for running in his hectic career as Walmart greeter. Jeremy isn't done quite yet, though. He will attempt to lower his time of 14.96 seconds by a few tenths in order to qualify for the National Championships. If he is successful, it would be "cool", according to a nine year old I interviewed at the meet while he (Jeremy) tried to stab beetles with a javelin.

Speaking of the javelin, Helen Tai also excelled in the hurdles. She destroyed her own school record in the 100m version, running 15.36 seconds and taking third place. She



Jeremy Leibs believes that by hitting the hurdles, he ends up going faster because he extracts energy from them. He holds this belief because he is stupid.

also took fourth in the 400m hurdles with a time of 70.40 seconds, which is pretty good, for a girl. Tai also ran a leg on the 4x100m relay, which defeated Whittier (who failed to enter) and a leg on the 4x400m team, which defeated both Whittier and La Verne via similar tactics.

The busiest Beaver of the day was actually a human, Rene Davis, who competed in javelin, high jump, 400m, 4x400m, long jump, discus, and probably also jumped in the nearby baseball game for fun. Rene's best finish was in the javelin, where she took sixth place.

Caltech shone, literally, in the 400m, where a trio of high-octane-orange-haired sprinters including Tim Tirrell, Stuart Ward, and Patrick Boyle went 2-3-5. They were joined by the flowing, fluorescent

locks of Matt Kiesz in running 3:23 in the 4x400 to grab third place, behind some dorks who probably just work out all the time because they have nothing better to do. Kiesz also scored in the 800m, where he held off a late charge from his opponents and secured sixth place in 1:57.9999, approximately.

Mark Eichenlaub (hey, that's me!) decided that for the sake of the team, he would forgo the competition in his pet event, the hammer throw, and channel all his effort in the 5000m. He was rewarded with a lot of pain and an ignominious defeat at the hands of (or more precisely, at the feet of, since hands have little to do with running distance) a freshman Mudder named "Twerp", but he also scored one point for his sixth place finish.

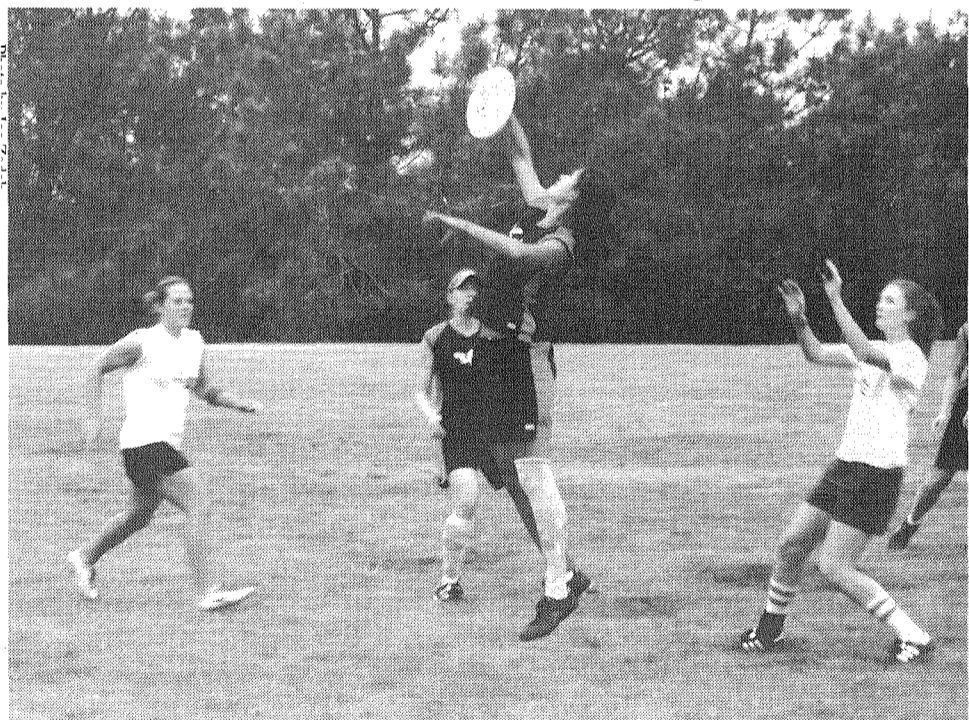
Jordan Carlson, an especially bouncy individual, cleared 6' 2.75" in the high jump. If you plan on clearing 6' 2.75", the high jump is an excellent choice of an event in which to do it, as that mark will not count for much in say, pole vault or steeplechase. It was good for third for Jordan. Jordan also competed well in the long jump and triple jump, which was a nice touch.

In all, twelve Techers made the all-conference team. They were First Team: Jeremy Leibs (110m HH)

Second Team: Tim Tirrell (400m, 4x100, 4x400), Stuart Ward (400, 4x100, 4x400), Pat Boyle (400, 4x100, 4x400), Jeremy Leibs (4x100), Jordan Carlson (high jump), Matt Kiesz (4x400, 800), Mark Eichenlaub (5000), Helen Tai (100h, 400h, 4x400), Natalie Szeweda (pole vault), Rene Davis (javelin, 4x400), Gina Gage (4x400), Angela Magee (4x400)

Some other Techers who set personal bests, competed well, and paid me bribe money to see their names in print, include Ransom Poythress and Kevin Noertker (javelin, racewalk), Will Shao (shot, hammer, burrito-eating), Katherine Breeden and Tyson Mao(1500m, 5000m, rubiks cube), David "Cupcake" Rosen (steeplechase, crabwalk), Eva Murdock, Kevin Dick and Bud Coulson (5000m, painful-face-making), Zack Higbee (pole vault, videotaping), Tencia Lee and Seth Hendrickson (100m, 200m, sleeping), Dima Kernasovskiy (200m, 400m, screaming), Sarah Stokes (1500m, fake event), and Anybody I forgot (someeventorother). Actually that's just everyone else on the team. They might not all have done well. Maybe some of them choked and I'm just not going to tell you. Sort of gives life a little flavor of mystery, huh?

Frisbee Team Retains Ninth Seed at Regionals



Tai Carvalho grabs the disc in a game against Claremont. Caltech's 2-3 record allowed them to keep their 9th seed ranking out of 15 teams in the Southwest Ultimate Frisbee regionals.

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HUMOUR

Fleming Cannon Returned Fleming Manages to Spend Five Times as Much as MIT in the Process; FEMA Vows to Learn from Big Stupid Babies

BY: SEAN MATTINGLY

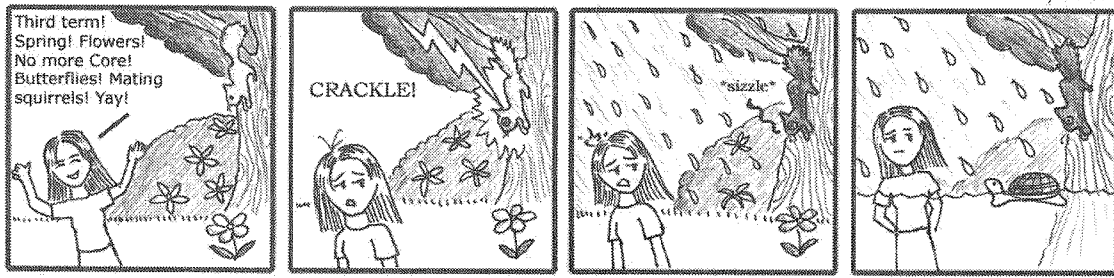
<Insert obligatory, inflammatory anti-Fleming text> <Insert tears of Fleming bitches – not their girls – here> In the most recent development of Fleming's recent foibles, the hoVse has decided to change their mascot to Mr. Hanky in honor of their Brownie-esque handling of the cannon fiasco.

The former FEMA Director, appearing on the Colbert Report, was quoted as saying: "I love these guys. We need to throw five times the money at all our problems to accomplish what could have been done with much less. For example, everything would fix itself if we gave Katrina victims five debit cards instead of one! Fleming really let the deed shaw

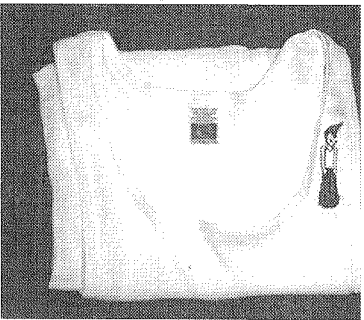
through their thoughtful and well-executed plan." The Big Stupid Babies celebrated the homecoming by spending an inordinately long time moving the cannon 25 feet.

Sean Mattingly is the President of Page House, and doesn't like the color brown-nose or red. He also thinks Flemings run like refrigerators.

Irrational Exuberance



Straightpril



Wifebeater: The international symbol of Straightpril

BY: MARK EICHENLAUB

I commend Zack Ramadan (*Gay Rocket Scientists*), Sonia Tikoo (*The Ratio of Doom*), and Brian Hanley (*Cramped Hands*) for their thoughtful editorials appearing in *The Tech* last week.

Zack's report on PRISM's planned activities for GAYpril was not only informative and personal, but also a paragon of tasteful restraint. Sonia captured her readers' attention with the killer opening line, "Being a woman at Caltech is an interesting experience." As soon as I read that, I knew I wanted to give it a shot. Brian's cunning insight illuminated the issues "at hand". His pithy synopsis of pornography reviewed resounded with undeniable truth: "This is ridiculous," he wrote.

As I leafed through these three discourses on Caltech life, relating, as they did, to LGBT issues, harassment, and the dire need of Pageboys to masturbate, I realized that while they all took different spins on a common issue of Caltech's sexual environment, none of them truly spoke to the issues most important to me.

Well, one of them did maybe. Or maybe two of the three (I take no participation in the masturbation of Pageboys). But I have to admit I felt excluded. If PRISM is putting on GAYpril, when will it host STRAIGHTpril?

When will I get to march through Los Angeles in a wife beater and boxers, eating microwaved pizza and watching "Cops" and "Baywatch" on TV to celebrate my single, heterosexual lifestyle choice?

The Ratios as provided by Facebook (men : women)

Straight 2.99:1
Straight and single 4.43:1
Single, straight, looking for a relationship 4.89:1
Single, straight, looking for dating 5:1
"Free for all" (total bisexual students) 34
Total gay men: 10
Total single gay men: 2 (well that solves that problem)
Total lesbian women: 19
Total single lesbian women: 4
Ayn Rand ratio (single and libertarian) 17:1 (no, she will not sleep with you, no matter how mean you are to poor people)
Rocky Horror Picture Show fans 4:7
Porn lovers 3:1 (includes the guy whose interest list says "definitely not gay porn")

I appear to be on the wrong side of the sexual harassment issue as well. Who would not prefer to be a "talented, hard-working" woman full of righteous indignity to a being a crude, testosterone-laden guy whose main method of rating films is based on specimen cups? Effective as they were, what Sonia, Zack, and Brian's articles lacked was hard fact. And so, as a way of killing three birds with one sexually repressed stone, I decided to research the facts of the Caltech gender-gap issues that seem to underlie the problems of several of the school's undergraduate demographics.

The first step in the process is an understanding of just what "the ratio" truly is. Common knowledge is that the ratio is 2:1, but this begs further examination. According to the Princeton Review, Caltech's student body is 913 strong, and "female: 30%". The ambiguity is whether this means that each student is approximately 30% female, or whether 30% of the students are wholly female. In the latter case, Caltech would have $.30 \times 913 = 273.9$ female undergraduates. Speculations as to who forms the 9/10 of a female student are welcome (send submissions to eicehla@caltech.edu).

Now think of Zack. As a gay man, he can't truly be said to have a "ratio", only an absolute size of the gay population at Tech applies. He does affect the ratio, though, by removing himself from competition with me for the favor of Caltech's fine young ladies. Thank goodness for that, because considering Zack's well-groomed appearance and painfully-courteous manner, I would stand little chance.

How is a young college student to find his true odds at Caltech? After a moment's consideration, the answer is obvious: Facebook. Facebook is a popular social networking website used primarily by undergraduate students for advanced scholarly demographic studies. For example, when I log on to Facebook I am informed that I am connected to 989 people. This reassures me, because I know that I will never be lonely, but it also makes me wonder if it may become awkward to go to the bathroom. Harnessing the power of Facebook, which is undeniably a perfectly-unbiased source of data, I have discovered the true ratios at Caltech, and provide them here for the edification of the community.

I believe this data is a strong first step towards a greater understanding of obstacles Caltech students face due to "The Ratio." Having done my part to get the ball rolling, I shall now graciously duck out. I would like to thank Mark Zuckerberg, for switching to guns, and Carmen Electra, for assisting with research.

Tech Poll Results

BY: JON SENN

Are some subject matters too offensive to allow discussion in the Commentary section?

Yes: 25.81% (80 votes)
No: 68.06% (211 votes)
I don't know: 5.81% (18 votes)

Are some subject matters (eg, pornography reviews) too offensive to allow discussion in the Humour section, regardless of the tone/language used?

Yes: 34.52% (107 votes)
No: 61.29% (190 votes)
I don't know: 3.87% (12 votes)

Should large degrees of vulgarity be curtailed in the Commentary section?

All of the most offensive vulgarity should be removed: 18.06% (36 votes)

All gratuitous vulgarity not contributing to the article should be removed: 41.61% (129 votes)

All vulgarity should be removed: 7.10% (22 votes)

No vulgarity should be removed if the authors prefer to keep it: 48.06% (149 votes)

Should large degrees of vulgarity be curtailed in the Humour section?

All of the most offensive vulgarity should be removed: 16.13% (50 votes)

All gratuitous vulgarity not contributing to the article should be removed: 36.77% (114 votes)

All vulgarity should be removed: 6.45% (20 votes)

No vulgarity should be removed if the authors prefer to keep it: 50.97% (158 votes)

Dear readers,

Firstly, I thank all of you who completed our Donut poll a week ago. 309 undergrads completed the poll, and we will certainly make use of your responses in our future editing decisions.

In addition to the multiple choice questions, we also asked two open-ended questions:

"Is there any additional feedback you'd like to provide regarding the subjects written about in *The Tech*?" and "Is there any additional feedback you'd like to provide regarding vulgarity in *The Tech*?"

Most of the comments against limiting material consisted of statements echoing calls of "Free Speech. See 1st Amendment," and "Fuck censorship!" Many of the comments were more detailed and indicated that content should not be offensive simply to offend, but to achieve a greater purpose.

One primary concern the students expressed was that much of the more offensive content we've published in *The Tech* is not material they feel should be sent to many parents and alumni. While this is to some degree a valid point, there are actually less than 200 total mail subscriptions. Furthermore, I point out that all of the subscribers are entirely voluntary readers of any of our content.

The original concern remains, however, in that certainly the biggest Caltech donors probably read *The Tech* regularly, and probably have been offended themselves by some

of our content. But I suspect that the majority of large donors love Caltech and love the unique style of its undergraduate population. Even if some potential donors are, surprisingly, scared off by only a few offensive student articles, I hope that other donors are won over by a student newspaper representative of all the freedoms that Caltech undergraduates have so fondly cherish.

Additionally, many students complained of a general low quality of writing prevalent in some of our articles. They insightfully point out that all material in our articles should effectively serve a real purpose, including the vulgarity. Any gratuitous portions of articles should be improved or eliminated, and we will try to better uphold this standard in future issues of *The Tech*.

The problem with much of the submitted vulgarity, then, becomes determining when material has enough purpose or is funny enough to enough readers. Establishing this line, however, is what you have entrusted us to do as Editors, and we will exercise our judgment as best we can.

"I am a Muslim at Caltech. When the cartoon controversy first came up in Europe, I knew that since a stupid cartoon would have no effect on my faith, there was no reason to go crazy about it, especially as long as I didn't see the cartoon. Sure, the material was obviously offensive and cruel to Muslims, but for a cartoon that wasn't even clever, it evinced a reaction far greater than it should have. I am offended that someone would portray the prophet of my faith even though it is forbidden, but I refuse to pass judgment on anyone in place of God.

So, I didn't want to see the cartoon. Any depiction of the prophet is prohibited in my faith, and I really didn't want to contribute to the already sizeable anger of the Muslim community.

In today's *Tech*, the argument was made that we don't have to read anything in the *Tech*. The fact is, I wasn't given the OPTION not to read the comic. It appeared in large print on the next page when I was reading another article. In my opinion, this was tantamount to putting pornography in a school newspaper that was read by feminists and others. Although only a small group of people would be offended, why would they want to read that material in the first place, and how would they know NOT to read it?

I am not objecting to anyone's freedom of speech, but I am defending my own right to ignore certain kinds of speech I don't want to see, just like not watching the *Playboy* channel on TV. If you want to print material that could be deemed offensive, that's fine. However, shoving offensive material in someone's face when they don't want it or expect it is just lame, and the *Tech* has enough difficulty with that as it is.

That being said, I think you've dealt with everything else rather well. In all other respects, keep up the good work!"

To this student, and others similarly offended, I offer my sincere apology. Even after I decided to run the cartoon in the first place, it was irresponsible of me to run it without a front-page warning and so largely. Given that I already knew the cartoon to be extremely offensive, I should have invested much more thought into the manner in which I published it. While I cannot revoke my original decision, I promise to exercise greater caution in the future.

Sincerely,
Jon Senn

The complete results to the poll can be found at www.its.caltech.edu/~senn/poll.html

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