History professor Morgan Kousser featured in The New York Times editorial

NEERA SHAH
Editor-in-Chief

On April 18, The New York Times published an editorial, “Voting Rights, by the Numbers,” which cited the research of Caltech’s own Morgan Kousser, the William R. Kenan Jr. professor of history and social science. Upon seeing his research as part of the lead editorial of the Sunday NYT, Kousser was both “surprised and delighted.” He has previously been referenced in a few op-eds in the Los Angeles Times, two articles for Reuters and briefly in a NYT editorial, but, as Kousser put it, “nothing has been this big.”

After the 2013 Supreme Court Case Shelby County v. Holder, Kousser had the opportunity to publish a report in a special issue of a French journal of American studies on the Voting Rights Act. Although it has not been published yet in the journal, Kousser was able to upload a pre-print to the Social Science Research Network, where it was posted on April 12. Within one day, a NYT editorial writer contacted Kousser with several in-depth questions. A subsequent correspondence led up to the final article at the end of the week. The editorial itself examined similar questions as Kousser’s study and referred to Kousser as a source of “a fresh trove of empirical evidence to refute [Chief Justice Roberts’] assertion.”

Kousser’s report titled “Do the Facts of Voting Rights Support Chief Justice Roberts’s Opinion in Shelby County?” focuses on the claims of the majority opinion of Shelby County, which struck down the “most important provision of the most successful civil rights law in U.S. history,” according to Kousser. The extensive study was conducted from 2009 to 2013 with the help of SURF students Adam Adler and Matthew Smalley and pre-fresh Judy Mou. According to Kousser, Mou and Smalley “turned [Kousser’s] somewhat vague vision into reality” by developing three-dimensional maps to present data on voting rights issues. These maps emphasize Kousser’s claims and provide visual evidence that easily shows that voting rights violations are already beginning.

Katherine Guo
Page Editor

Caltech juniors Jihoon Lee and Webster Guan, the president and secretary of Caltech’s Engineers Without Borders chapter, respectively, tell all about their upcoming trip to Nepal and their spring conservation project.

How did the Caltech chapter of EWB get started, and what is your project exactly?

It started in 2012 and how we decided to do a project in Nepal, Justin Rolando, president of the University of Colorado Boulder chapter of EWB, informed us that they were working on a spring protection program in Ilam. He thought it would be a good place for us to start, since we were a very young chapter and it was easier to follow in their footsteps instead of coming up with a completely new project and getting it approved. So we got into contact with NCDC, did the paperwork and got the project approved.

What stage are you at in the project?

We actually have enough money to go to Nepal this summer for the beginning of our implementation phase. We’ll probably be taking six students plus our engineering mentor, Gordon Treweek, to Nepal in June. Justin Rolando, president of the University of Colorado Boulder chapter of EWB, informed us that they were working on a spring protection program in Ilam. He thought it would be a good place for us to start, since we were a very young chapter and it was easier to follow in their footsteps instead of coming up with a completely new project and getting it approved. So we got into contact with NCDC, did the paperwork and got the project approved.

Just how serious is Caltech about water conservation, anyway?

Casey Handmer
Contributing Writer

California has at least a decade of ground water but is consuming water much faster than reserves are replenished. National hand-wringing over water is more locally in almond-focused guilt-tripping and bizarrely self-unaware emails from the Caltech Housing Office are referenced. The students of Caltech are more concerned about living water, namely concrete. According to Sustainability at Caltech, around a third of Caltech’s water consumption is in irrigation, a fair trade for an environment of living plants, provided the resource is managed.

As a graduate student lacking any semblance of a work/life balance, I often ride through Caltech late at night when the sprinklers are operating. It is no exaggeration that I can meet personal hygiene standards passing between mis-aimed sprinkler heads that spray torrents of water on roads, paths, buildings, ears, pedestrians, stray cats — anywhere, it seems, except the grass. And where the water does hit plants, they are frequently drowned.

Recalibrating the sprinklers and reducing the volume of flow is hardly a technological capability of Caltech, yet since the waste occurs when no one sees it, it apparently does not exist.

I’ve sent numerous emails to the Caltech Housing Maintenance Office specifying particular sprinkler areas that need addressing, mostly without even acknowledgement. Caltech can surely talk the walk when it comes to sustainability. Now credibility demands it is time to walk the walk.

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TRACK TEAM BREAKS MORE RECORDS

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THINK A LITTLE MORE ABOUT YOUR EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONS

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Kousser’s voting rights research cited in The New York Times

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have not decreased as Roberts asserts they have. The research for this project began in 2009 after the Supreme Court decided Northwest Austin Municipal Utility District v. Hodel, in which “Chief Justice Roberts openly threatened to declare Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act unconstitutional unless Congress changed the coverage scheme.” Kousser worked with researchers two summers with Adler to compile a database of more than 4,000 voting rights cases filed in court, ranging from 1957 to 2013. Kousser systematically examined evidence on the patterns of (legally proven) voting rights violations over time and space. By doing so, he was able to show in his report that Chief Justice Roberts was not correct in his claim that voting rights violations now congested the coverage scheme.” Kousser argues that the decrease in recorded violations was not because the problems that existed at the time of the original enactment of the Voting Rights Act no longer exist today, but because the Supreme Court has made it more difficult to win lawsuits on voting rights.

This data-driven approach is especially important because, as Techers may very well know, a comprehensive understanding of data is necessary in order to accurately assess conclusions made from the evidence. Kousser’s argument superimposes the dates of cases on a series of timelines of the number of cases and other voting rights actions in each year. In creating this database, Kousser is the first to demonstrate that “when the Supreme Court issued opinions that made it easier for voting rights lawyers and civil rights activists to win, more cases were filed and won, when the Court’s opinions made it harder to win, fewer cases were filed, and many of them were lost.”

The Supreme Court majority took advantage of the fact that there were fewer Section 5 objections by the Department of Justice to claim that discrimination had declined. Kousser recognized this and said that “by rendering decisions that make it easier or harder to bring in and vote rights cases or make objections, the Supreme Court can, in effect, manipulate the evidence of discrimination, which it can then use, in a second stage, to justify a decision to further weaken or strengthen the tools. It can create the reality that it subsequently reacts to.” He notes that it is important to know that the number of voting rights “events” does not simply measure discrimination but rather the “nature of the Supreme Court opinions that influence how many cases get brought and how many objections are made.”

According to Kousser, the 5-4 ruling in Shelby County is but one in a series of cases which “crippled and finally killed” the “brilliantly successful” Voting Rights Act.

“According to Kousser, the 5-4 ruling in Shelby County is but one in a series of cases which "crippled and finally killed" the "brilliantly successful" Voting Rights Act.”

Continued from page 1

talked to the locals ... pretty much to get a feel for if the project was feasible. Since it was, we created a design for the spring protection scheme. Very recently, we met with MWH Global, which is an engineering firm that focuses on water protection, storage and so forth. We have an engineering partnership with them, so they helped us refine the design.

Where is your money coming from? We’ve been continuously fundraising for the journey bringing the spring protection benefit dinner here, applying for grants from rotary clubs and water/environmental-related corporations, appealing for private donations and partnering with companies.

What are you doing to prepare for the trip? Well, I (Webster) hope to learn some basic conversations in Nepalese. Last time, on the assessment trip, I had Jhonne’s co-president, Nauman Javed, who was able to speak in the local in Hindi, but this summer Nauman and I will be taking separate “shifts” of our implementation trip, since we were the only two on the assessment trip last time. A lot of the time, you’re on your own since NCDC doesn’t provide a translator. NCDC is much for us, though. They organize the transportation to Ilam, which consists of a flight to Kathmandu, a bus ride to the Ilam district, and then a long jeep ride. They set up homestay arrangements for us with the families associated with NCDC, and they provide food for us. It’s an amazing experience and I’m really excited to fly out again this summer. This implementation trip will involve more overseeing and participating in construction of the spring protection.

Looking forward, what are your next steps in the project? Since the project is about a five-year voting rights violations, we’re going to have to monitor the spring protection site in the coming years and make sure it’s being used properly. We’ll stay in contact with the NGO to check in on the community. We’ll also definitely have to do more fundraising for when we make future trips.

According to Lee, the NCDC was not critically affected by the recent earthquakes in Nepal.
Presidental race of 2016 begins: What’s in a nomination?

SEAN MCKENNA Contributing Writer

I was trying to find the best way of complaining that candidates have already entered the race for president in 2016, given that we’re not yet six months removed from the 2014 midterms. Then I realized that candidates throwing their hats in the ring this early means I have more time to be cynical about every single action they make.

So, come along for the ride over the next 18 months as I sporadically laugh at, agree with or pity those who have the guts to run for the right to run this country. Today, I’ll explain the two political realities which candidates are currently facing: state primaries and fundraising, which bog down the early parts of every campaign.

Hillary Clinton is the first candidate to look at. She announced her campaign on April 12, and she could not have been off to a more predictable start: she started with a good ‘ol American road trip from the East Coast to Iowa, and then she took a tour of New Hampshire, which was followed by a brief stop in Ohio where she is the Republican candidate who has the best chance of defeating Clinton. This is the second unfortunate political reality which takes candidates’ energy away from focusing on the campaign issues. As money grows to be more important in politics, this energy sink detracts even more from the overall quality of politics in America.

Clinton is currently in a position of national politics like I am, let’s focus on the only 2016 positive election news: Waka Flocka Flame has announced his intention to run for president. Does anyone really care that he’s not old enough to be president? Constitutional aside, he’s the ideal candidate from a fundraising and name recognition perspective: he already has enough money to pay someone $90,000 a year to be his blunt roller, and he has more followers on Twitter than any of the Republican candidates.

Election 2015: The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload

Free Admission

Beckman Auditorium
Call campus x 4652 for information

The California Tech

April 27, 2015

NAILEN MATSCHKE
Contributing Writer

was certainly an interesting...

NAILEN MATSCHKE
Contributing Writer

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CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

CHARLES AND THOMAS LAURITSEN MEMORIAL LECTURE DIVISION OF PHYSICS, MATHEMATICS, AND ASTRONOMY

Tuesday, April 28, 2015 / 8 p.m.

Daniel J. Levitin
New York Times Bestseller

“The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload”

Free Admission

Beckman Auditorium
Call campus x 4652 for information
Killing the small talk: Meaningful conversation matters

KSHITIJ GROVER
Contributing Writer

I find myself thinking all the time that I wish I had more meaningful conversations, especially over a meal or over coffee with someone. It’s hard.

Getting to know people, and starting the conversation, is one of the most invaluable traits you can possess. There is, of course, the classic question you can resort to when you’re first getting to know someone: What do you do? (or where do you go to school?) This makes people uncomfortable. To me, it doesn’t show that you really care about the conversation.

Next time you really want to discover something about the person sitting across the table from you at dinner, here’s what I’d ask:

Brag about something.

This catches people off guard. Some people genuinely don’t. Others are hugely emotional. This question gives you insight into how willing they are to open to you. More importantly, it pushes them to recount a situation in which they were vulnerable — certainly not easy for most.

What are you obsessed with?

This touches at another end of the spectrum. How do people highlight their day? Though most people react similarly in times of tragedy, celebrations are often where we’re most different. You’ll get to know their personality quirks, friends groups, and even how thoughtful they are about milestones in their life.

Who are you obsessed with

Everyone has an obsession. Yet, this question isn’t just about people’s priorities. It tells you how they perceive obsession. Do they see it as passion or something negative? How personal do they get in their responses? There’s a lot you can learn if someone answers “chocolate” or if someone answers “my children.”

Where do you go to school?

This touches at another end of the spectrum. Everyone worries — often for good reason. This will usually lead to either a really emotional response or a rather dismissive one — either way, it’s revealing.

Who holds you back?

The people in your life are most important. There’s good reason this question is negatively phrased. The positive phrasing “Who motivates you?” often lends itself to an easy answer (i.e., friends, family, idol). This one encourages people to think more about who they’re afraid to disappoint. Who keeps them from achieving success?

When would you quit?

This is a purposely open-ended question. Quit what? What’s been the most intimidating? Most people are taught that quitting is wrong and that we should persevere. How do people deal with difficulty? Where is the line for them when it’s not worth it?

What makes you tear up?

Some people genuinely don’t. Others are hugely emotional. This question gives you insight into how willing they are to open to you. More importantly, it pushes them to recount a situation in which they were vulnerable — certainly not easy for most.

How satisfied are you?

People will take this all sorts of different directions. That’s the magic of this question. Society attaches a lot of stigma to this — either you should always be full of passion and never content with your position, or maybe you should be happy with what you have and not be jealous. Where do they stand on this topic?

Describe the smallest form of happiness.

This “question” is powerful. Most people are scared of happiness because they’re led to believe there’s some sort of almost too-good-to-be-true goal in life. Downplaying that to “smallest form of happiness” really forces people to take a step back and see what guts smiles on their faces.

Who cares most about you?

This question makes them step out of their own boxes. It makes them think about which people depend on them. It’ll give you a good sense of their perspectives on relationships.

Don’t get me wrong — these questions are by no means conversation starters, especially with someone you’re just meeting for the first time. Yet, if you’re really trying to dig deep, you can’t go wrong with these.

Check out other posts at http://medium.com/@kshithappens.

Annual International Food Fair and Culture Show celebrates diversity

FEATURE

THE CALIFORNIA TECH

April 27, 2015

It’s getting hot in here: A review of Earth Day performance Two Degrees

MICHAEL L. WONG
Contributing Writer

Despite it being a chilly, overcast evening, the atmosphere inside Ramo Auditorium last Wednesday night was boiling hot. Two Degrees, the keynote performance of Caltech’s Earth Day events, struck hardest at the theme of needing to drastically cut carbon emissions within the next few years to prevent suffering from dire, lasting consequences for decades to come.

The title of the play comes from the scientific view that increasing global temperatures by just a 2°C from pre-industrial levels will be the tipping point toward unhealthy, irreversible damage. Ocean acidity, glacial recession rates, the frequency of extreme weather phenomena and the severity of regional droughts are all menacingly sensitive to temperature.

Two Degrees follows climate scientist Emma Phelps (Brenda Vardar) on her trip to Washington, D.C., where she must navigate a landscape of crisscrossing motives and uncertain allegiances. On Capitol Hill, Dr. Phelps meets Senator Louise Allen (Kik Kikui) and her assistant William (Bryan Brophy), as well as a mysterious patron of politics named Clay (Joshua Wolf Coleman). An innimediary brew simmers into existence when the anxious undertook of academia mixes with the designing mayhem of policy. Dr. Phelps quickly discovers that Washington is a confusing and frustrating arena — who stands for what, when is “climate change” politically correct and when is it blasphemous, and why does it suddenly matter so much what she’s wearing?

Two Degrees was the first performance of MACH 33, a series of new science-driven plays at Caltech. After the show, playwright Tira Palmquist, MACH 33’s second performance of Two Degrees weaves science into a pathos that runs straight to the heart. As Dr. Phelps struggles to convince a congressional committee of the dangers of inaction, she simultaneously learns to face the hauntings of her own past decisions. During the post-show discussion, one member of the Caltech community summed up the play’s potential: “As scientists, we are trained to interpret information, but most people don’t respond to information. People respond to stories.” In a brilliant and novel way, Two Degrees delivers a critical message to the public via a truly captivating story. After the show, playwright Palmquist was joined on stage by actor/director Coleman and the play’s science mentor, Jennifer Walker, to answer questions from the audience. An environmental science Ph.D. student at Caltech, Walker was instrumental in making the play both accurate and believable. “After we gave the first draft to Jennifer, she sent us back pages and pages of notes,” said Palmquist. One critical contribution of Walker’s was freeing Dr. Phelps from her just-another-scientist lab coat. Originally a nondescript researcher with nebulous academic goals, Dr. Phelps’ character crystallized under Walker’s gaze into a passionate ice-core-drilling paleoclimatologist.

Prior to the show, “Community + Climate Conversation” broke the ice between audience members. Climate researchers from JPL led discussions about the science behind Two Degrees, enhancing the uniqueness of the playgoing experience. Meanwhile, volunteers roamed the Ramo Auditorium patio carrying iPads loaded with SKIES, a collaborative learning app developed at Caltech. The crowd connected to one another via cyberspace: anyone could post a question about climate change, and anyone else could answer that question or add a follow-up thought. This technologically hip discourse sprouted a “tree of knowledge” that was projected and reviewed in the auditorium just before the lights went down and the actors brought the heat to the stage.
Derek Kearney pitches a super rad baseball game

GOCALTECH.COM Actual Sports Content Editor

PASADENA, Calif. (Apr. 22, 2015) – Senior Derek Kearney (Carlsbad, Calif. / La Costa Canyon) turned in one of the best pitching performances in program history as the Caltech baseball team took SCIAC-leading University of La Verne to the wire in a 3-1 defeat on Wednesday afternoon.

Kearney tossed his sixth complete game of the season, allowing just one earned run while striking out four and recording a whopping 14 groundouts over the full nine innings. A pair of unearned runs made the difference as La Verne improves to 21-14 overall and 18-7 in the SCIAC, while Caltech dips to 2-36 (0-25).

The senior ace for the Leopards a message early, coaxing a groundout to first base and whiffing two in the top of the first inning. He worked out of a jam in the second after a one-out walk and single put runners on the corners, picking off the man on first and getting another groundout to junior Dylan Schultz at shortstop to end the inning. Kearney tried to help his own cause at the plate with a two-out single in the bottom of the frame, but would be stranded.

La Verne threatened again in the top of the third inning with a one-out single, stolen base and sacrifice bunt advancing a runner to third, but Kearney induced a high fly out to right field to escape unscathed. The Beavers turned right around to nearly get an insurance run in the fourth inning, but Kearney’s performance was by far the top team, Caltech responded immediately to tie the game in the bottom of the fourth.

Senior ace Garrett Levine (Columbus, Ohio / Columbus Acad.) reached on an error to lead off the frame and was joined on the basepaths as Schultz drew a walk. A fielder’s choice erased Schultz at second but put runners on the corners with just one out and Kearney stepping to the plate. The veteran continued to help his cause with a sacrifice fly to centerfield, plating Levine and chasing La Verne starter Javi Iniguez from the game.

The Leopards barely scratched out another run in the top of the fifth. A leadoff infield single was followed by a stolen base and passed ball, with the go-ahead run scoring on a groundout to shortstop. Kearney was not charged with the tally, though, as he recorded a fly out and groundout to end the frame. Choo struck out a two-out double to left center in the bottom of the inning, but could not be brought home.

Kearney worked his way around two singles in the sixth and Levine led off the bottom with a single. Two batters later, Leopards shortstop Woody Reyes made an incredible play ranging to his left behind second base to nab a well-struck ball by freshman David Watson (Fort Collins, Colo. / Windsor) and flipping the ball straight from his glove to the second baseman to start a double play that ended the inning. Jacobs pulled down a sharp liner to record the third out with a man on second in the seventh inning, but La Verne would score an insurance run in the top of the eighth after an error allowed the leadoff man to reach base. A sacrifice bunt moved the runner into scoring position and a sharp double down the right field line that just snuck under the outstretched glove of the diving Watson plated him. The Beavers were retired in order in the eighth and La Verne put runners on the corners with just one out and Kearney stepping to the plate. Kearney would fittingly have the honor of representing the tying run with two outs, but whiffed on a high fastball to end the game.

Kearney’s performance was by far the best on the mound this season, bringing his season ERA down to 6.72, which would rank third all-time at Caltech.

How do I begin to explain Matt Lappin? Matt Lappin is flawless. He has two Fendi purses and a silver Lexus. I hear his hair is insured for $10,000. I hear he does car commercials ... in Japan. His favorite movie is Varsity Blues. One time he met John Stamos on a plane and he told him he was pretty. One time he got out of my team members concussed ... I almost fought him.

 Track updates school records

How do I begin to explain Matt Lappin? Matt Lappin is flawless. He has two Fendi purses and a silver Lexus. I hear his hair is insured for $10,000. I hear he does car commercials ... in Japan. His favorite movie is Varsity Blues. One time he met John Stamos on a plane and he told him he was pretty. One time he got out of my team members concussed ... I almost fought him.

Do you like sports? Are you witty? Do you believe in the Illuminati?? Then YOU should become the sports page contributor! Email tech@caltech.edu for more details. Do it for America; your country needs you.
ASCIT Minutes

ASCIT Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes for 21 April 2015. Taken by Sean McKenna.

Officers Present: Connor Rosen, Catherine Jamshidi, Connie Hsueh, Patrick Nikong, Annie Chen, Sean McKenna

Guests: Anne Dorsey, Ciara Ordner, Elliott Simon

Call to Order: 12:03 pm

President’s Report (Connor):
- The ASCIT election happened. Results will be released tonight pending no protest.
- Connor is looking for written comments on the new UASH policy. People were concerned about the delay in communicating ineligibilities. ASCIT will see if we can the registrar to automate the process.

Officer’s Reports:
- V.P. of Academic Affairs (ARC Chair: Nima):
  - The ASCIT teaching awards nomination form has been sent out. Nominate people! Nominations close May 3rd. The ASCIT teaching awards ceremony will be held in the beginning of June.
  - ARC is working on peer advising for next year. Freshman would have 2 or 3 UCC peer advisors from each house with CTLO/Deans training. Sophomore house advising for options could happen too. This could improve upon the “option mentor” system.
  - Nima will be analyzing the library survey data.
- V.P. of Non-Academic Affairs (IHC Chair: Cat):
  - Rotation schedule will probably be the same as last year, but there are still some details to work out before finalizing.
  - Transition retreat happening this weekend. On top of transition stuff, graduation rates and interest surveys will be discussed. IHC will come up with projects for the year.
- Director of Operations (Connor):
  - ASCIT Movie night will happen on Friday 1 May.
  - Avengers will be shown at 10pm on Thursday 30 April.
  - Choose Trivia moved to 10pm on Wednesday 29 April
- Treasurer (Patrick):
  - Reimbursements finishing up.
- Social Director (Annie):
  - Dachshund event happening this Saturday 25 April. Bus leaving at 12:30.
  - Harvey Mudd party probably will not happen this year.
  - Puppies will come on Saturday 6 June at 6pm.
  - Aquarium trip on Saturday 9 May from 10am - 4pm.
- Secretary (Sean):
  - Secretary signups due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday 29 April.
  - Midnight Donuts on the night of Wednesday 6 May.
  - Meeting on Monday 11 May.

Reminders:
- Installation will happen immediately following the IHC Meeting on Monday 11 May.

If anyone has any questions or concerns about a section of the minutes please email the appropriate officer. We are happy to answer any questions. The next meeting will take place on April 28th at Noon in the Winnett Common Space.

Meeting Adjourner: 12:37 pm
The girl that cried wolf: Gender discrimination is a two-way street

BRAD CHATTERGOON
Contributing Writer

Hi, Caltech. It’s week five, which means just 10 more days before I blow this Popsicle stand! The anticipation is real. Unfortunately, however, it also means that we have midterm standings this week so don’t forget to study for your exams. Also, Avengers premieres this week, so that makes life worth living.

This week saw the revival of a rape accusation case at Columbia University. You may recall a story out of Columbia that received quite a bit of media coverage which featured a visual arts student who was carrying a mattress around campus. That student was Emma Sulkowicz. Her actions, which she eventually converted into her senior thesis called “Mattress Performance (Carry that Weight),” were in response to what she claimed to have been the unjust failure of Columbia to find the accused guilty of rape and prosecute him with expulsion. The revival of the case comes in the form of the accused, Paul Nungesser, suing Columbia for damages for behavior that allegedly “significantly damaged, if not effectively destroyed Paul Nungesser’s college experience, his reputation, his emotional well-being and his future career prospects.”

Why is this important? As part of the suit, the lawyers have released in detail a full recount of the incident including Facebook messages between Sulkowicz and Nungesser, information regarding the hearing held by Columbia for the accusation, and the unique way that The Village Voice covered the case.

The general theme of the exchange was that Nungesser and Sulkowicz started out in a platonic relationship which eventually bloomed into a sexually casual one with consent from both parties. After some time, Nungesser moved onto relationships with other women, at which time Sulkowicz began showing signs of extreme unrequited emotional attachment to Nungesser, followed by a filing of the accusation quite a number of months after the highlighted incident. As far as this author is concerned, the plottine of the relationship gives credence to the old saying “hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.” Of course, I again invite readers to review the evidence themselves and draw their own conclusions.

So where does the gender discrimination come into play? Despite Columbia’s own internal investigation confirming the same to women. Society confidentiality agreement signed by all parties, Columbia went on to support Sulkowicz’s mattress performance and her branding of Nungesser as a rapist and provides no recourse for her breach of confidentiality by continuing to publish Nungesser’s name and story in various media platforms. In fact, many hail Sulkowicz as an “idol” and “symbol,” as reported in an article for The Washington Post. This is where the discrimination arrives. As a society, we discriminate against men as rapists. We are ready to launch an attack against anyone who has a finger pointed at them. What truly makes this worse and discriminatory is that we continue to attack even after they have been cleared. We treat those who have been exonerated with any doubt of their innocence as underserving of being recognized as innocent. Some decades ago, we viewed women as less capable or less deserving, and even when successfully providing evidence defying that misguided notion they were still seen as underserving of being recognized as such. We have made long strides toward gender equality in America since then, but it seems that the struggle for gender equality was only one side of the spectrum.

To be sure, we are praising someone for allegedly falsifying accusations against a bystander proven to be innocent and continuing to celebrate her after those accusations have been determined to be unfounded. The mattress is not a symbol of survival but a symbol of a social agenda that propagates victimhood.

Media platforms such as Thought Catalog would have women believe that they are victims (although from my citation one would think that only Thought Catalog is culpable), that somehow their lives are harder than it should be, that life is in some sense “unfair” for them, usually in comparison to men. But I believe that women are not victims. They’re strong. They’re independent. They can take control of their own lives. The problem with the media convincing women to embrace victim syndrome is that it suggests everything is always someone else’s fault. Do you compare yourself to fashion models and feel subpar? It’s society’s fault for thinking that models are attractive. Did not get that promotion at work? It’s the patriarchy and their gender discrimination. The most relevant part for this article, though, is He’s seeing other women after we slept together? He must have raped me. It is important for me to stress that if there is gender discrimination or if there is rape, those are serious issues and need to be addressed. I cannot stress that enough. However, those types of accusations should not be the first conclusion that gets proposed unless it is clearly such, and if declared unfounded then they should be never spoken of again unless there is a new case. I recently spoke to a retired attorney from the Los Angeles District Attorney’s Office, and he related to me that around 70% of sexual discrimination cases get dismissed right away because of how frivolous they are. Sexual discrimination suits have lost their seriousness. They have become the new form of the career whirler.

In the story of the boy who cried wolf, the villagers refused to believe the boy after he lied to them. In this story of the girl who cried wolf, the villagers have instead raised her into an idol. What sorts of incentives are we setting?
Acquired Taste

Dear aspiring writers: The deadly advice is on this week, so I can add some truth.

This 24-25-26 policy is great! No longer feel the overwhelming pressure to graduate early.

Sure, this places a greater financial stress on me and my family, but definitely less net stress overall. I also appreciate the transparency of this policy; it is clearly designed to help manage stress, and not just to get more money from students.

I also think the C-store prices are reasonable and that the health center keeps convenient hours.

Dr. Z

Ask Dr. Dirge

Subtitle

(Editors note: the subtitle left “Subtitle” is intentional. Apparently it’s funny...)

Once I graduate and I’m an adult, how do I make friends in the real world without the mechanism of becoming artificially becoming close to my house through proximity?

Great news! You’ll still be close to people through proximity, although whether you want to make friends with them is another matter.

How do I get into CS grad school? Why would you do that?

Where do we go when we die? Into a hole in the ground. (Or into the air if you’re cremated.)

I’m trying to start a column but no one wants to send me questions. What should I do?

I don’t know, have you tried putting an unfunny meta-question in your column?

Send questions to askdrdirge@gmail.com and I guarantee that they may or may not be answered.

Answers to previous Sudoku

| 7 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 4 |
| 2 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 8 |
| 4 | 9 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| 5 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| 6 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 5 |
| 1 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 7 |
| 3 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 2 |
| 8 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| 9 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 1 |

Answers to previous crossword

SHAPE
AGENT
RAGE
PLANE
GUN
ASSESS
INSTANT
CONFERENCE
SLEEP
EIGHT
PAIR
STIMULATION
DART
INGENIOUS
EVE
 DETAILS
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