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# The California Tech

VOLUME CI, NUMBER 1

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER 8, 1999

## New Core unveiled

BY DAVID GUSKIN

"It's what most educated people do," said Professor Andrew Lange on science writing. "Once you've stripped away everything else, we're really just communicating with each other."

In an effort to drive this point home to Caltech undergraduates and teach them that the ability to communicate one's thoughts is as important as the thoughts themselves, the Core Curriculum Steering Committee (CCSC) has solidified the science writing core requirement. The CCSC has brought in a professional editor, Gillian Piece, to administer the course to Caltech juniors.

The new class is required of future Juniors, but labeled as optional for current Juniors. Since the course is currently in development, this allows cur-

rent Juniors to take the class as part of a pilot effort, but does not require them to do so. The course itself is a two-term series, with one unit offered for the first term of draft writing and two units for the second term and final paper. In Lange's words, the course is basically "a milliunit a word."

"We encourage current Juniors to take the course, but they don't have to," remarked Lange and Pierce. "The course is offered both Winter and Spring terms this year to provide current Juniors the option of taking it."

Each student finds a faculty mentor to aid them in the editing of their paper for scientific content. Though the quality of the science is important, it is second to the fitness of the paper for publication in a scientific journal. Since each stu-

PLEASE SEE CORE ON PAGE 3

## Coffeehouse improvements continueth



*The ASCIT Coffeehouse, seen here in a state of disrepair and development. Note the distinct lack of toothpicks. Work on remodeling the Coffeehouse is underway, and will hopefully be completed soon, allowing students to enjoy creamy shakes once more.*

## Caltech honors Feynman

BY RANDIE KIM

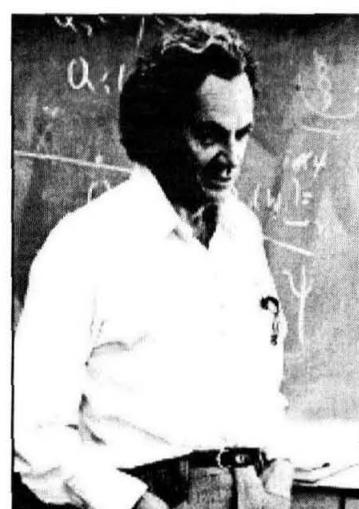
It's been over ten years since the scientific community suffered the loss of the brilliant Richard Feynman. Yet, his legacy lives on. Wednesday, in front of 300 people, who filled the Beckman Institute Auditorium to its maximum capacity and more, four noted professors sat, not to talk about themselves, but to share their personal experiences and encounters with irrepressible Feynman. Scanning the audience, one could see copies of "Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman" and "The Pleasure of Finding Things Out" everywhere. The generation gap was bridged for a brief hour as Caltech undergraduates, graduates, alumni, and other members of the community united to pay their respects to this great man.

Feynman was not just the man for whose lecture we had to pay an extra \$50 at the bookstore. He has touched the hearts of many. His accomplishments include a Nobel Prize in Physics, working on the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos, investigating the Challenger space shuttle

explosion, and being one of the most influential theorist in the field of quantum electrodynamics. But these are not the reasons why people have joined his fan club. The self-professed "curious character" brought passion into all he did. He made science fun, he made science exciting, he made science accessible to those around him. Breaking stereotypes, Feynman never let titles or awards feed his ego, nor did he let them distort his unique perspective on life.

Caltech's Professor Kip S. Thorne, UC Irvine's Professor Gregory Benford, Daniel Hellis, and Caltech alum David Brin all told Feynman anecdotes. Representative was one anecdote Daniel Hellis told. Laughter rang through the auditorium as he related a tale of when Feynman used some suave moves and stole his date at a Page party in 1969. An added delight to the lecture was the presence of Feynman's sister Joan who shared some heartfelt stories and insights into his world.

Afterwards, members of the audience were eager to share their own experiences and stories. In order to illustrate Feynman's powerful oratory



Professor Richard Feynman

skills, one woman who ran a local newspaper some years ago told of a student she sent to cover a Caltech graduation where Richard Feynman happened to be speaking. The student grumbled and complained for being assigned to such a boring assignment. On his return, however, he sat dumbfounded for half an hour before requesting a transcript of Feynman's speech and demanding it to be printed verbatim into every newspaper.

Cosponsored by the Friends of Caltech and Vroman's Bookstore, the entrance to the auditorium held a table with Feynman books galore. After

PLEASE SEE FEYNMAN ON PAGE 3

## Housing finds room

BY JON FOSTER

In the world of Housing, there is always a little uncertainty (never less than  $h/4\pi$ ). This summer, however, there was more uncertainty than usual.

Over the summer, 35 undergraduates were notified that they had been placed on a waiting list for housing for the upcoming school year. The anxiety students on this list felt was only slightly less than the trepidation a suicidally depressed lemming feels. Where would all these people live? Possible options seemed to be cardboard boxes or a massive increase in deaths due to paper cuts. Luckily, a solution was found in the nick of time and a housing crisis was averted.

The Residence Life office came to the rescue and con-

verted three existing Caltech properties into student housing. These three buildings are 555 S. Catalina, 250 S. Chester, and 240 S. Michigan. The former two had been houses previously, while the latter had been a childcare center, but had been zoned in a residential section and was easily upgraded. Yet to call the upgrade easy is to nullify the sacrifice of the brave men and women who toiled on the project. Residence Life did not find out about the potential housing crisis with a lot of time to spare, and a heroic effort was required to transform these bland properties into palaces fit for undergraduates.

By all accounts, the new houses are very nice. Tom Mannion, director of Residence Life referred to the house on Catalina as "A place

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# Editorial

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### *Rotation ends, and a new House life begins*

#### To the Freshmen:

Rotation is over. You all have been spread throughout the seven undergraduate Houses. Some of you got into one of your top choices. You will soon discover that there are really sucky people in your House. Some of you got into one of your bottom choices. You will soon discover that there are really cool people in your House. Neither of these things should be a surprise. Sucky people and cool people are a universal phenomenon, so don't worry about it. How you ranked the

Houses and where you did and didn't get into doesn't matter now. You are in the House that you are in for a reason. A lot of time and consideration went into finding the best match between you and your House. You are now a full and equal member of a House and that House will treat you as such. You should also give that House a chance.

Pretty soon the Houses will start with their annual initiations and traditions. All of these being completely voluntary, of course. If you do not want to participate in any of those activities, tell an upperclassman, the House President, or the R.A. Remember, these activities are meant to welcome you into the House. They are also meant to help you meet the upperclassmen and vice versa. These

things will help you get rooted in the House.

While all this is going on, don't forget about the other Houses. I'm pretty sure that the friends you made during Rotation didn't all end up in the same House as you. Try to maintain these friendships. A common regret I hear from upperclassmen is not having done this. It's not hard to do, it just requires some effort on your part. Oh no, the "E" word. Whatever, you can still go to their House dinners, do your homework together, or become a social member. There are plenty of things that you can do. Just remember, there isn't an invisible barrier between your House and the other Houses.

I would like to mention one last thing about Rotation. It is not a perfect system; however,

we find that it works pretty well for what it tries to do. There is room for improvement, though. To that end, a Rotation Survey will be coming out some time next week. Please take the time to fill it out and return it. Once the data has been collected and published, the IHC will be hosting some sort of open forum. This will allow both the freshmen and upperclassmen to express their concerns, offer suggestions, and/or just make comments. The IHC is always looking to improve the process and we are open to just about anything. Thanks,

Jaideep Singh

Chairman,  
Interhouse Committee (IHC)

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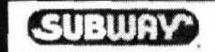
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# News

## CORE: Course develops writing skills

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

dent in the Junior class must take Core 1ab, professors must mentor one — but no more than one — student if asked. The CCSC stipulated this restriction as a way to prevent undue workload on a portion of the professorial faculty.

To aid students in the communications aspect of their scientific writing, Gillian Pierce will work one-on-one with each student to develop their skills in effectively com-

municating ideas. Whereas professor-mentors focus on the "science" component of the paper, Pierce will focus on the "writing" component.

"Our intent is to teach the art of writing," said Lange.

To prevent classic Techers procrastination syndrome, the course has been layed out in a way that budgets students time spent writing. The course sets guidelines for just how much time one can spend on the pa-

per and when such time should be spent. For instance, outlines, drafts and edits created by the student are read and commented on by the professor-mentor and Pierce throughout the two-term course.

"This course is meant to be fun," concluded Lange. "We believe [science writing] is an integral part of any Techers education."

### The Outside World

**By Katharina Kohler and Cheryl Forest**

**BEIJING** - The Chinese government released Liu Xiaobo, a famous dissident, after he fulfilled his three-year labor camp sentence. He had been convicted without a trial after writing a petition in 1996 that called for self-determination for Tibet and the impeachment of China's president Jiang Zemin. Liu Xiaobo has been in prison before. He was arrested after leading a hunger strike among students democracy protesters in 1989 and served 18 months in prison for his role in these protests. In China, citizens can be sent to a labor camp for up to three years without trial.

**WASHINGTON** - German industrialists and the government offered to pay \$3.3 billion in compensation to victims of Nazi-era forced/slave laborers and their survivors. The amount would be shared between approximately 250,000 people. The money comes from 16 German companies, including BMW and Siemens, which decided to set up a

fund. The American side denounced this as far too low and one of the lawyers said that the Germans just wanted to buy moral forgiveness at bargain prices. The German defenders said that the amount was considerable given the budget constraints in Germany.

**CENTRAL MEXICO** - At least 131 people have died in the past few days due to flooding and mudslides in ten states in this region. Torrential rains coupled with the destabilization of the earth due to last week's earthquake have caused the current disaster. Six of the ten states have been declared disaster areas, and more than 157,000 people have been forced from their homes. Health officials are already reporting many cases of water-borne infections, and agriculture experts have warned that the loss of so many acres of crops will create major food shortages in the area.

**NEW YORK** - Health Officials have identified 37 known cases of West Nile encephalitis in the last

weeks, which the vast majority occurring in New York City. This outbreak of the West Nile virus, which has caused the deaths of at least four people, is one of the first of its kind in the Western hemisphere. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, the virus is transmitted by the bite of mosquitos, which in turn pick up the virus by feeding on infected birds.

**MINNESOTA** - It is a sad, sad day for Minnesotans everywhere. Their beloved governor, Jesse "The Mind" Ventura, has stuck his gubernatorial foot in his very large mouth. In a recent interview in Playboy, he called "organized religion a sham and a crutch for weak-minded people who need strength in numbers." Additionally, he said that overweight people "can't push away from the table." Finally, he stated that if he "could be reincarnated as a fabric, [he] would like to come back as a 38 Double-D bra."

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## HOUSING: Crisis averted?

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

I would want to live," (although he has yet to move in) and said that "everyone, including the administration, was impressed with the job that was done." The neighbors around the new houses were also quite enthusiastic about the prospect of having a bunch of Techers living next to them.

What does the future hold for these houses? They are not merely a make-shift measure to alleviate the problem for this year. "They will become nicer as people live in them," said Mannion. The house on Chester will certainly remain undergraduate housing, while the future of the other two will depend upon the housing demand for next year.



New acquired housing at 250 S. Chester.

## FEYNMAN: Caltech pays tribute Caltech faculty praise his genius, wit

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

buying old favorites like "Surely You're Joking," and "What Do YOU Care What Other People Think?" or new ones such as the most recently released book compiled by Feynman's children, Michelle and Carl, the professors were available for book signings and individual questions.

Feynman has touched many people, even those who never met him. As one Caltech undergrad said, "Feynman is my hero and role model."

## The last challenge of a socially conscious society?

Depression strikes millions— indiscriminately. Depression is simply a suppression of brain activity that makes life unbearable. And even though depression is readily treatable, only 1 in 5 ever seeks treatment. Why do so many just drag themselves along or eventually seek relief through suicide? First, there's the lack of awareness of depression— as an illness and as the threat that it is to each and every one of us. Second, there's the unwarranted negative stigma attached to it. You know, the 'mental' thing. It's time to collectively face depression. To know it's an illness, not a weakness. And it's a challenge that's long overdue. It's taken too many of us already.

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## Opinion

# Bloody Coup rocks East Timor, Caltech affiliates

BY BYRON PHILHOUR

On August 30, 98.6% of the registered voting population in East Timor cast their ballots on the question of integration with, or independence from, Indonesia. Four in five voters chose independence, despite a direct and highly credible threat from the Indonesian occupation army (the TNI) and their Timorese proxy forces that doing so would lead to the wholesale destruction of their country. Once the election results were announced, a military campaign planned long in advance began, and East Timor was literally destroyed.

Two people affiliated with Caltech were in East Timor on August 30th as United Nations-accredited election observers. Physics post-doc Ravinder Bhatia spent three tense weeks in Maubisse, a town controlled by the Mahidi death squad. As leader of a diverse, five-person field team for the International Federation for East Timor (IFET), Ravinder compiled nightly and weekly reports which he sent to the main office in the capital, Dili. The family he stayed with lived right next door to the Mahidi leader. John Roosa, a historian of Indonesia who taught Asian studies classes here at Caltech last year, spent two months in East Timor as an IFET coordinator. On September 5, he was literally forced out of East Timor after the office he was staying in was attacked: "With nearly 40 Indonesians and East Timorese, I lay silent on the floor as the bullets whizzed overhead and the windows crashed down," he later wrote, "We expected the militia to enter at any moment, but after an hour of heavy shooting, the militia passed on to other targets."

Both Ravinder and John knew what they were getting into. Before he left for East Timor, John spoke at Dabney House about the Indonesian invasion in 1975 and the subsequent genocidal occupation which, according to Amnesty International and the Catholic Church, wiped out 200,000 people — nearly a \*third\* of the pre-invasion population. He spoke of the active support of the U.S. government in the form of soldiers trained, weapons sold, and U.N. Security Council resolutions declared. He showed an Australian documentary about the impending vote and associated violence: East Timorese and international human rights organizations, the Australian press, and others were collecting and disseminating convincing evidence that the Indonesian military (TNI) was planning to destroy the country should the vote not go their way.

By using East Timorese proxy forces to carry out the violence, the TNI would count on the illusion of civil war to confuse the public abroad and thereby lessen pressure on Western governments to act against their friends in the TNI. To counter this, the East Timorese resistance army obeyed a cease-fire that lasted through and beyond the campaign period. The Los Angeles Times, however, fell victim to the ruse, making a laughable election-day claim that Indonesian President Habibie's offer of a referendum on independence "set off a wave of violence as unruly militias, particularly those supporting independence, set out to intimidate the opposition." (Emphasis mine.) Under pressure from local activists, the Times later published a correction.

Despite clear evidence gathered by electoral observers such as Ravinder's team, the United Nations, numerous human rights groups, and the international press that all of the systematic violence and intimidation in the weeks preceding the election was coming from pro-Indonesia "militias" (death squads) under the control of and infiltrated by the Indonesian military, the Clinton Administration continued to call on the TNI to "control" what the Los Angeles Times ridiculously described as "militia warfare." Thus the East Timorese became the new Rwandans, intentionally abandoned by the Clinton Administration at the peak of the slaughter. Much too late, an international force was deployed, allowing Australia, the U.K., and the U.S. the chance to take credit, for both the occupation and the liberation. The majority of the U.S. public reacted with uninformed concern and confusion.

As reports trickle in, it appears that almost the entire country has been levelled. Most buildings have been destroyed and most towns emptied. The United Nations coordinator for humanitarian affairs is unable to account for 600,000 people — 70% of the population. It is hoped that they are all in hiding. 50,000 East Timorese have trickled back into the capital city. An additional 200,000 people are stuck in West Timor in camps guarded by the death squads who forced them there. Leaders of the independence movement are disappearing from the camps. Nobody has any idea how many people have died but, ominously, the massacred include elderly nuns and children. We'll know roughly how many fairly soon. Guesses are in the thousands to tens of thousands — approaching decimation of

this small population.

At the height of the crisis, the Los Angeles and Pasadena chapters of the East Timor Action Network sponsored a demonstration at the Indonesian consulate in downtown Los Angeles. More than twelve Caltech students and staff were there — more than from UCLA. Representatives of the Catholic Church and other religious organizations spoke out against the Indonesian military and the complicity of the United States. More than one hundred and fifty people came; one was arrested for jaywalking by some officers from the notorious Rampart division (no priests were arrested, although they were equally guilty of jaywalking.) A woman whose American sister, a nun, was at that very moment hiding the family of East Timorese guerrilla leader Xanana Gusmao from the death squads, spoke movingly of her outrage and concern. Four local news channels and a few newspapers came after countless faxes and phone calls.

A half dozen election observers talked to the press about their experiences on the steps of the consulate. They spoke about their first-hand evidence for the war crimes tribunals. Ravinder spoke about his worry for the family he stayed with: Amada and Gaspar da Costa, and their young kids. He explained

Indonesia's involvement and the U.S. and Britain's bald-faced complicity. One local news channel gave the demonstration a few seconds coverage between their "Canine Crooners" feature and a long story on a woman who claimed to have lost twenty pounds by wearing a magnet on her wrist.

Those of us working on East Timor have much left to do. Allan Nairn, the last U.S. journalist in East Timor, official 'enemy of the state' of Indonesia, and recent prisoner of the TNI, is coming through in a few

weeks on a speaking tour, which we need to organize. We're also organizing speaking and media events for Ravinder and other observers, relief collections at churches, congressional office visits, benefit shows, press conferences, etc. If you want to get involved or donate to the relief effort, visit [www.etan.org](http://www.etan.org), [www.easttimor.com](http://www.easttimor.com), and write [bjp@astro.caltech.edu](mailto:bjp@astro.caltech.edu). Ravinder can be reached on campus as well.

*Byron Philhour is a grad student in physics at Caltech.*

## CS1 reformats programming

BY MAYANKA PRASAD

Complaining about classes is a time-honored Caltech tradition. This year has a new target: CS1.

Curriculum is the main source of dissatisfaction about Tech's introductory computer science course. The curriculum has already departed from past years with the addition of Java Junior to the course. Java Junior is an introductory programming language developed by the course's instructor, David Epstein. Lecturer Epstein is a new addition to the Caltech faculty this year.

So far the CS1 curriculum has undergone many changes. Originally the course involved

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# Sports

## CALTECH ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Eagle Jones, Water Polo (Ashland, Ore./Ashland) - Junior water polo player Eagle Jones scored seven of Caltech's 19 goals in three matches last weekend. Four of his seven came in Caltech's loss to Occidental while he also tallied a hat trick against Cal Maritime. For the season, Jones has 40 percent of the Beavers' goals (eight of 20).

## Recaps from Caltech Games for the week of September 27-October 3

### Men's and Women's Cross Country

In the men's open division, senior Ian Shapiro led Caltech with an 8K time of 27:03, good for 36th place out of 200 runners. Senior Adrian Seymour took 81st place with a time of 27:48 while senior Arjun Mendriatta finished 95th in a time of 28:07. In the women's open division, Caltech competed as a team for the first time this season. Sophomore Amy Kelly paced the squad with a 5K time of 22:01, good for 199th place out of 255 runners. Junior Paula Whiten finished in 24:01 while senior teammate Hanna Kim was right behind her at 24:03.

### Men's Soccer (0-6-1, 0-3 SCIAC)

The Beavers dropped a pair of SCIAC matches last week to Occidental and Redlands. Sophomore goalie Craig Vieregg made 18 saves for the week, including 11 vs. Occidental last Wednesday. Freshman Tyler Kakuda took nearly one-half of the team's shots for the two matches last week (eight of 20).

### Women's Volleyball (0-10)

The volleyball squad had two of its best matches

of the season last week, despite the two losses. The Beavers notched a season-high 17 kills on Wednesday against Whittier and tied their previous season-best with 15 kills on Saturday against Occidental. The team also continues to improve on defense, recording a season-high 18 digs against Occidental. Sophomore Karen Lam tallied team highs of nine kills and eight digs in the two matches. Sophomore Dana Vukajlovich set a season-high with 12 assists in each match last week.

### Water Polo (0-4)

The water polo team dropped three matches last week. Junior Eagle Jones was named to the all-tournament team at the Caltech Classic on Saturday (see athlete of the week). Fellow junior Tom Daula scored six points on four goals, including two two-pointers against Occidental. Sophomore Adam Thomason added five goals for the week while senior Francisco Valles (three points on two goals) and freshman Sask Byerly also scored for the Beavers.

Sophomore forward Fernando Campos (San Antonio, Texas/Marshall) headed in a pass from junior defender Nathan Flowers-Jacobs (Arcadia, Calif./Arcadia) with 30 seconds remaining in double overtime as the Caltech men's soccer team won at Whittier on Wednesday, 2-1. Caltech improves to 1-6-1, 1-3 SCIAC, while Whittier falls to 0-7-1, 0-5 SCIAC.

Whittier opened the scoring at the 23:25 mark on an own goal by Caltech, but the Beavers evened the match at 1-1 less than a minute later as freshman midfielder Tyler Kakuda (Stockton, Calif./Edison) posted his second goal of the season at the 24:20 mark. The match remained 1-1 until the 119:30 mark, when Campos' goal gave Caltech the win. Sophomore goalie Craig Vieregg (Wheaton, Ill./Wheaton Warrenville South) continued his superb play, stopping a season-high 15 saves in the victory.

Caltech next travels to Cal Lutheran on Saturday for a 1 p.m. start. The next home match is Wed., Oct. 14, versus La Verne at 4 p.m. Caltech home soccer matches are held on the North Athletic Fields, just outside the Braun Athletic Center. Admission is free.

### LAST WEEK IN CALTECH ATHLETICS

Date	Sport	Outcome
Wed., Sept. 29	Men's Soccer	L, 0-3
	Women's Volleyball	L, 0-3
Sat., Oct. 2	Water Polo	L, 3-13
	Men's Soccer	L, 9-19
	Women's Volleyball	L, 0-7
Sun., Oct. 3	Water Polo	L, 0-3
		L, 10-17

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## Entertainment

# The Ticket Stub

By Justin Ho

### **The Minus Man — B-**

(rated R for portrayal of an unsympathetic killer, a druggie doing her druggie thing, much drinking but no drunken revelry)

It's hardly surprising that a lurking serial killer can take the form of a soccer dad, family man, neighbor next door. Objectively speaking, chronically nice people are sometimes the least decipherable, and with few exceptions, news reporters uncover a naive community accompanying the exhumation of bodies from a backyard belonging to someone they always thought of as a trusty neighbor. My surprise is that gentle min-

ions still concede that "That serial killer was a nice guy" however warped their definition may be in the company of someone as insane and manipulative as the serial killer who manages to blend in so well while undertaking actions which would otherwise place him so far apart. While insanity may escape the common lot of us, it is something that happily found a residence in the mind of Vann Siegert (Owen Wilson). Speaking with an unfeigned cluelessness which suggests ignorance, the title character nevertheless eludes authorities as he hops, ostensibly aimlessly from nameless small town to nameless small town. His ability to stay unknown to the law allows for a psychoanalysis rather than a fugitive story. Altering nothing as he arrives except for performing a few homicides camouflaged as mysterious disappearances, food poisoning, or drug overdoes, he defines the emotional emptiness that attracts dysfunctional people to craft him into the missing piece of their fractured lives. And surprisingly enough, places in the middle of nowhere have an inordinate share of those. Alas, there are those unfortunate enough to share his nothingness, and they lack the few minutes to meet Vann not as a complete stranger but someone whom they would blindly characterize him as a quiet, polite wallflower no one would suspect of wrong-doing. A swift sip of poison-spiked amaretto quenches the delusions Vann's public hold.

As the anti-hero of the film, there is some commiseration for Vann's wretched misguidance. His motives lack the malice that even normal people are prone to display. Specifically, Siegert targets others who have no purpose, most evidently those who drown their sorrows and indolence in liquor, making his MO very effective and

requiring minimal effort on his part. His approach to the anti-murderous rampage is almost placid, and exceedingly well contrived for an aspiring part-time mail carrier.

With regards to the title, it appears that the makers deliberated to form a name that escapes cheesy. With "Psycho" and first name references (as in "Carrie") taken, the alternative seems to be the ambiguous "Minus man." Ultimately, the rather non-descriptive epithet is free to several interpretations but hardly fitting for someone whose introspection cites himself a "cipher, a zero." Therein lies the intrigue of the movie: depictions of internal monologues which haunt a serial killing wallflower, though Hannibal Lecter's conversations were more informative, they were much less profound, and his spiel alone would be more deserving of an R-rating. Vann Siegert, unfortunately is just a confusingly insipid, wussy guy.

Among Siegert's destinations is a sleepy town where he settles for the duration of the hour and a half or so. His placidness makes him a very suitable addition to the already emotionally devoid house shared by masochist Doug and his sentiment-drained wife, Jane. The middle-aged couple proceeds to make him the son they never had, and to fill the void that their daughter created when she left their little pocket of dysfunction. Siegert and his absent personality is most happy to oblige, while offing the miserable denizens of the anonymous village. To blend into his surroundings, Siegert finds a job in the largest-employed business in town- a post office where he is courted by sheepishly insecure Ferrin (played by Janeane Garofalo), besides loading bags onto a truck. Though he is apathetic, she nevertheless pursues him with a style that is both awkward and comical, once blurting out "ummm, I'm going to make you dinner" to start a conversation. Again, Siegert's impersonality makes him mal-

leable to other people's desires as well.

Perhaps there is something missing in his life, though the affection of the nice girl is certainly inadequate. Instead, Siegert has an encounter with a morbid lady who imbues self-immolation and paints disturbing pictures, literally. Out of respect for her cause, which would make her not a zero and not worthy of the amaretto, he leaves her, and likewise a chance of starting a relationship with someone depressed as well. Thus the movies doesn't seek to explain the basis of his motives, only that he draws others' momentums toward him. There is, however, his constant awareness that he is doing something wrong, or at least something deserving of the bad attention of the FBI. Stalked by two officers inside his mind who seem to be closing in, the movie suggest that not even serial killers are safe. Plagued by dreams in which the officers turn progressively more violent, he is interrogated about his system of murder, and frequently beaten for failing to do so. Siegert's imagined torment causes him to start straying from his self-defined rules of homicidal conduct. First, he allows himself to subdue a friend; later his pacific means of murder turn violently awry though he eventually ceases and cowers in fetal disbelief; and he succeeds in offing a guy who eats dinner alone in a diner, though potentially not a momentum-lacker. The finale confirms his paranoia, and despite the threat that he poses, there is almost a desire for him to escape his second encounter with an equally creepy police officer: besides, he is a serial killer.

Perhaps the movie fails to foster hatred for one who destroys the innocent in this era of desensitization or succeeds in eliciting sympathy for a normal guy who would otherwise represent the underdog, loner guy in other movies. But two weeks afterward, my only real impression remains "That weird guy was a serial killer."

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# Entertainment

## ADAM VILLANI: Media Guy

BY ADAM VILLANI

### *Sensation*

If you're keeping up on the news, you should have heard about this art exhibit in Brooklyn that's caused a lot of controversy, most notably from New York mayor Rudy Giuliani. A lot has been written elsewhere, so I just wanted to say a couple of things about it. First of all, Giuliani and the press are greatly exaggerating when they say that Chris Ofili's *Holy Virgin Mary* painting (which is viewable at [www.davidbowie.com](http://www.davidbowie.com)) has feces "thrown" onto it. The elephant dung in question is actually one clump placed quite carefully, as if it were a brooch. Moreover, Ofili, who says he was inspired by a trip to his parents' native Africa, incorporates elephant dung into most of his paintings these days, including portraits of Diana Ross and Muhammad Ali. Anybody with half a brain should know that the public isn't going to react well to poo, but Giuliani's description of the painting is a great distortion. I don't really know what Ofili was going for, but it's obviously more complex than protesters have made it out to be.

Behind the scenes, though, it's quite interesting to note that the

Brooklyn Museum of Art knew very well what it was getting into with this show; well-publicized ads warned that the show may cause shock or vomiting, and that those suffering from heart palpitations should consult a doctor before attending. Furthermore, the exhibit was curated by the man who owns the works, Charles Saatchi. Saatchi is the wealthy advertising guru and contemporary art collector who helped put Margaret Thatcher in power and has a reputation for doing anything he can for stirring up interest in artists whose works he happens to own. Curiously enough, *Sensation* is sponsored mainly by Christie's, the auction house that has received big commissions for selling pieces from many of the featured artists. In other words, the real obscenity is that a public museum is spending its tax money to pump up the value of Charles Saatchi's private collection, rather than to provide the public with a meaningful art exhibition.

### *Romance*

More explicit than even Nagisa Oshima's *In the Realm of the Senses* but a far inferior film, Catherine Breillat's *Romance* is a positively dreadful affair that, if it had been directed by a man, would

be branded as terribly misogynistic. Caroline Ducey's Marie, our "heroine," has masochistic sex with a lot of rotten men while maintaining a tedious and banal pseudo-philosophical voiceover filled with both self-hatred and man-hatred. Marie, obviously a surrogate for the director, seems to think that her hell-hole of an emotional state should be a liberating goal for all women. Why can't anyone make an erotic film that has anything positive to say about sexuality?

### *Caligula*

This absolutely wretched film was Penthouse publisher Bob Guccione's big-budget attempt to give porn movies legitimacy by attaching some big name actors (Malcolm McDowell, Helen Mirren, John Gielgud, and Peter O'Toole) to a historical subject, namely the short first-century reign of the debauched, insane Roman emperor of the title. The problem is that Guccione had no idea how to make a quality film and decided to make up for it by showing you some of the vilest, most revolting behavior ever shown in a theatre. The result was a 2 1/2-hour bore with lousy photography, editing, and direction that subjects the audience to decapitations, torture,

mutilation, evisceration, incest, and anal fisting, not to mention a few sub-par orgy scenes. Occasionally we can see shades of Gore Vidal's original script, which may have had potential, but Guccione completely gutted it and instead turned it into the awful mess we see on screen. Guccione still considers this dreck a masterpiece, but I consider it the worst movie I've ever seen.

### *American Beauty*

This is a very good movie, but I don't think it lives up to the hype people have been building around it as the best picture of the year. Writer Alan Ball's and director Sam Mendes' theatrical backgrounds show through a little too much; the movie seems a bit more deliberate, exaggerated, and self-confident than necessary. I would have preferred something a bit more naturalistic. Nevertheless Kevin Spacey is exceptionally good as an average salaryman suddenly trying to shed as much responsibility as he can. The rest of the cast is also top-notch, with newcomer Wes Bentley very moving as the creepy kid next door. If not for all the hype, I'd be doing nothing but singing the praises of this movie's fine story, acting, and technical qualities, but I just don't

think it's quite as good as the buzz around town might have you believe.

### *Three Kings*

More a politically-charged action movie than a war movie, *Three Kings* is not only good at the things we expect Hollywood to be good at—action, humor, and sentimentality—but is also good at the things Hollywood's been pretty lax in lately—being thought-provoking, having characters you care about, and feeling politically relevant. George Clooney, Mark Wahlberg, Ice Cube, and video director Spike Jonze play four G.I.s who go on an unauthorized mission into Iraq just after the end of the Gulf War. They get in over their heads when they find an anarchic, bewildering country with a populace eager to rise up against Saddam's army but left to hang out to dry by George Bush. Writer/director David O. Russell (*Spanking the Monkey, Flirting with Disaster*) deftly blends tense action scenes with flip humor and Mark Wahlberg, surprisingly, turns his standard frat-boy American into the strongest performance in the movie. The brief moments of violence are shocking and explicit, but it's in the service of a movie with a real conscience.

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Laura Elliott  
Daniel Fabrycky  
Clayton Featherstone  
Jeffrey Fonck  
Jonathan Foster  
Julia Greissl  
Maki Hattori  
Glenn Jones  
Vikki Kowalski  
Robert Lion  
Nora Mullaney  
Steve Paik  
Jesse Pino  
Colin Rundel  
Michelle Swann  
Sean Szeja  
Kaisa Taipale  
Sarah Teegarden  
Christina Telles  
Jonathan Toomey  
Jared Updike  
Sarah Warren  
Grace Wildanger  
James Worcester  
Nathan Wozny

**DABNEY**

Elisabeth Adams  
Michelle Allis  
Sangeeta Bardhan

Maria Brumm  
James Chadick  
Paul Choi  
Ameera Chowdhury  
Sara Cina  
Andrew Conner  
Lilli Davis  
Jason Frantz  
China Hanson  
Jonathan Harel  
Emily Johnsen  
William Johnson  
Timothy Jones  
Alastair Kusack  
Janessa Link  
Mark Rudner  
Elisabeth Sciaroni  
Daniel Somen  
Michael Souder  
Elizabeth Stameshkin  
Oana Tocian  
Marcus Williams

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Carlos Baldoceda  
Jonathan Bird  
Saskya Byerly  
Oscar Jay Carlton IV  
Laura Chasman  
Wee Chua  
Craig Countryman  
Will Farr  
Nathan Fung

Ilya Fushman  
Andrew Gadtke  
James Hansen  
Andrew Homyk  
Matthew Hughes  
Ted Jou  
Randie Kim  
Kevin Ko  
Miguel Lemus  
Vikram Mittal  
Collin Moshman  
Arjun Narayanan  
Vi Ngo  
Elaine Ou  
Marc Popkin-Paine  
Michael Rizk  
Juan Rodriguez  
Jennifer Schurr  
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Neha Soni  
Martha-Helene Stapleton  
Eino-Ville Talvala  
Rachel Thessin  
Kevin Tse

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Susan Ayer  
James Burgess  
Clinton Conley  
Sarah Davis  
Luke Ekkizogloy  
William Findley  
Teresa Gonczy

Nicholas Guise  
Jora Jacobi  
Matthew Jones  
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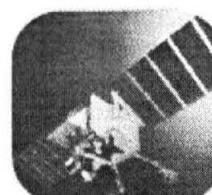
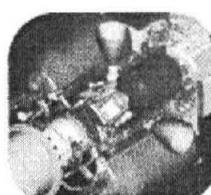
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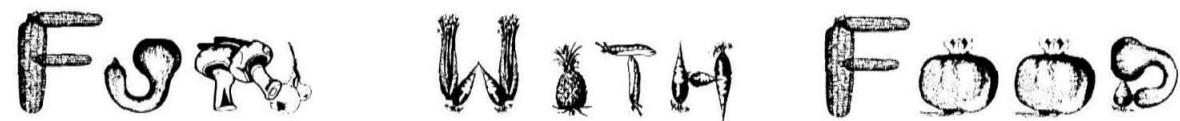
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# Frosh and Food



by Ian Swett

Thanks to your survey responses, there are some improvements to the menu this year. The menu has been revamped to take into account the most loved and hated entrees, how many people eat different meats, and what ethnic cuisine people prefer. Since a large number of people don't eat pork or lamb, those meats will come up less often, though still present. We've reduced the variations on the Beef Stroganoff, and replaced them with two entree salads. As for style of food, people generally agreed that there was a little too much Mexican food on the menu, and that Middle Eastern was a big loser. For those who enjoy the Vegan bar, there is less tofu and more

complete protein in the form of lentils and beans. In hopes of providing a higher quality dessert, there will be premium scooped ice cream Monday thru Thursday, and Novelties on Friday. Also in response to survey comments, the coffeehouse is undergoing an expansion and major overhaul of the look, music, and menu.

Congratulations to the Caltech Dining Services Board Program, which won 3rd place in the nation among all Colleges and Universities of Medium size. Hopefully the improvements to the menu will allow CDS to further improve this year.

Contact Ian Swett  
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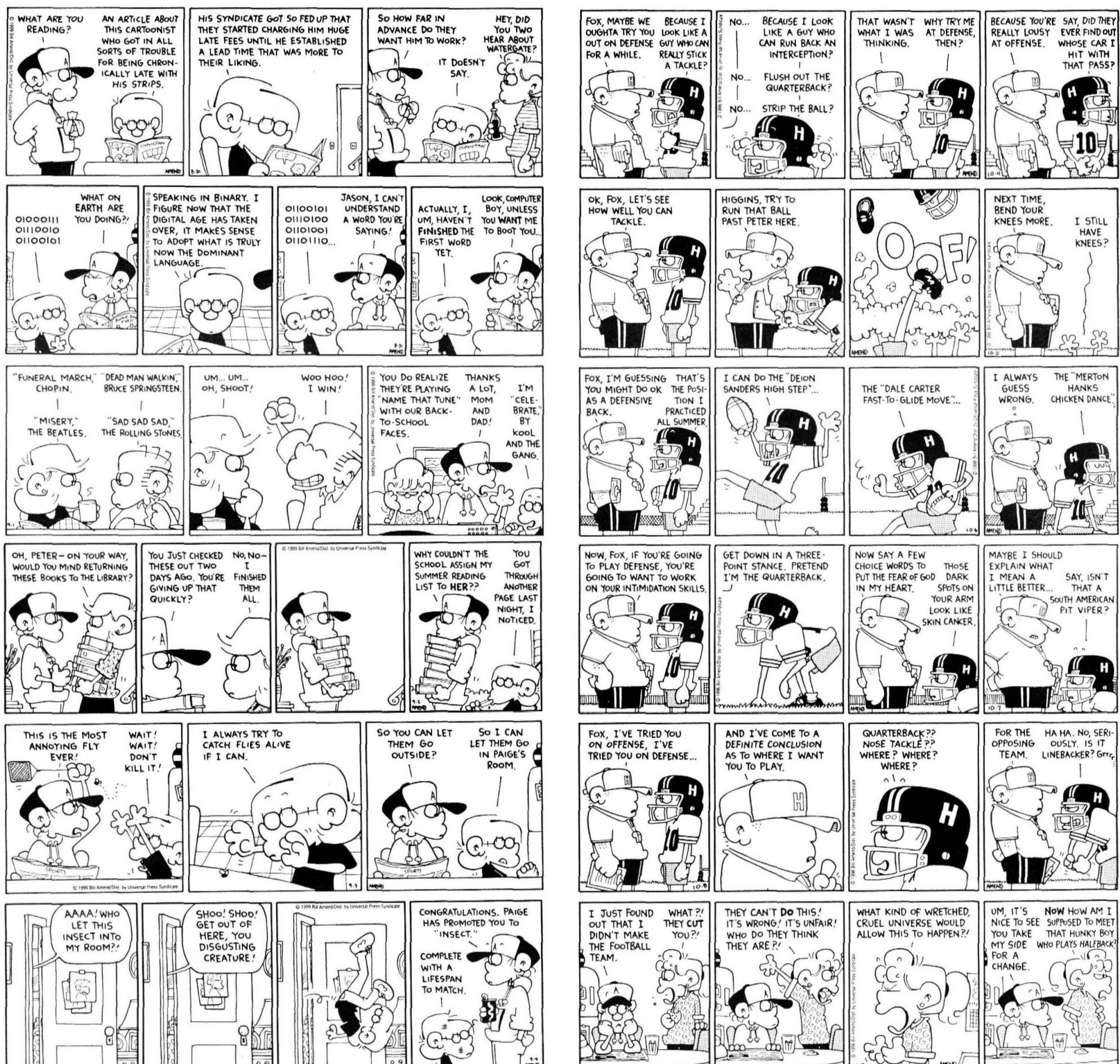
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## Dean+

## Dean's Corner

## Son of Peleus and Thetis

by Jean-Paul Revel

(see!)

He did have a leg up) she immersed him into the sacred waters. Problem was, she forgot to dip him a second time while holding him by his other ankle and so the poor fellow ended up with a vulnerable heel. Injury to the undipped heel could be fatal. And since what can happen, usually does happen, Achilles' heel was injured and then he died. Which reminds me, just last weekend the fire department ambulance had to come on Campus to take a student to the hospital. Their task was complicated by misparked cars blocking the way. Time to remember the safety talk...yeah, or else you'll die! (M. Bennett @ Frosh Camp, personal communication)

Achilles' fate is reflected in all human affairs. All of us are vulnerable, and even in the best of possible circumstances, things go awry. Take for example the very thing that we are all so proud of, (besides our scholarly achievements), the code of conduct that we have all

agreed to live by. It is good to believe that in

fact everyone of us will always adhere to this code, but you know that this is hubris, a very misplaced pride. Sadly, some of us will not be able to live up to this demanding standard. If not because of a willing breach of the covenant, then because of a misunderstanding, or of a different interpretation of what constitutes "taking advantage of other Caltechers". Application of the Honor Code to our daily lives requires constant vigilance and thought. One of the most difficult problems is what to do when one observes someone behaving in an inappropriate way, breaking the Code. No one feels good about having to tell on a friend, a neighbor, a member of the same alley or house. It is indeed a hard problem, which goes beyond the confines of college, and carries on into the world in which you'll live your adult lives. It is easy to look down at traitors, yet wise to recollect that one person's double-crosser is likely another's hero. A less extreme case is the "us" against "them" syndrome. Whoever is involved when

something inappropriate goes on, a complaint must be lodged before anyone can tell that there is a wrong to be redressed. The problem is what to do if upholding the code means denouncing friends and associates.

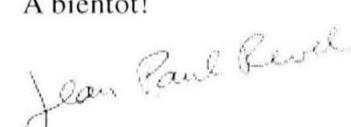
Last week the TV program "60 Minutes" reported on the thin blue line in Police Departments, an unsaid rule which prevents officers to tell about the misdeeds of others in the force. A couple of officers who had crossed the line, one in NYC and the other from Riverside, were interviewed. After much soul searching both had reported abuses committed by their colleagues. A direct consequence of this courageous (that's what I call it) behavior was that they were made to feel so uncomfortable and felt themselves in so much danger, that they left the force, one of them after many years of service.

Our honor code can be hampered by a similar problem. Not reporting an infraction of the code that you have been aware of is a violation of the code. After all you are condoning an activity harmful to members of the community, so that even if you are not actively participating, you nevertheless become an accomplice. On the other hand, we are all naturally reluctant to turn in friends or colleagues.

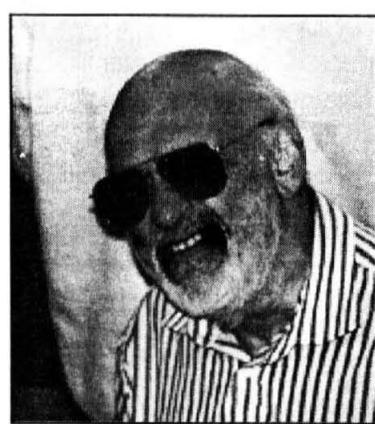
There are no hard and fast rules which can guide us in this dilemma. To speak up or not to has to be a decision arrived at between you and yourself. One way to mitigate the distress one feels might be to encourage "offenders" to turn themselves in. Explain to them how their actions are jeopardizing us all. For yourself reflect on the consequences of all of us keeping silent. Is that not what we reproach the ruthless and evil soldiers of the other side? Surely remaining silent, being passive, letting the Honor Code be violated will lead to the downfall of this hallowed tradition as surely as violating it actively....

Oh Thetis, what have you wrought? Why did you not think of the consequences of your incomplete dunking? Come to think of it, Techers, you better take care of your incompletes (and Es too) in time, you hear? It is another one of your vulnerable spots. For we poor mortals certainly have even more vulnerable spots, than the son of Thetis and Peleus.

A bientot!



Jean-Paul Revel  
Dean of Students



This is about Achilles, he of the famous heel and how what happened to him haunts everything that humans do. There can be fatal flaws in the most carefully laid plans. You must have heard that a Mars Orbiter was lost a couple of weeks ago... because the engineers, without realizing it, were not all using metric units? And remember the Hubble Telescope near-fiasco? But back to Achilles' story. Thetis, his mother, was a Goddess, a Goddess of the sea no less, and apparently also somewhat of a scatter brain. Still, having a Goddess as mother should have given the fellow a leg up and she did, after a fashion. You see, Achilles' daddy was a mere mortal. Because of this mixed heritage Thetis thought it prudent to take appropriate steps to insure her son's immortality. That was done by dipping Achilles in the river Styx, which separates the world of the living and that of the dead. Grabbing her baby by one leg

## Annoying advertising creeps up

BY DAN LIEBLING

Even though I live off campus, I occasionally have the pleasure of using one of my house restrooms. Unfortunately, any peace that I might have found was instantly destroyed when I, after entering a stall, found a gaudy yellow flyer glaring back at me. Now, ordinarily it wouldn't upset me to see, say, a flyer for the Glee Club posted on the rear of the stall — I mean, how many places can you stick a flyer and rest assured that Techers will read it? But this one begrimed me for several reasons. Allow me to elaborate.

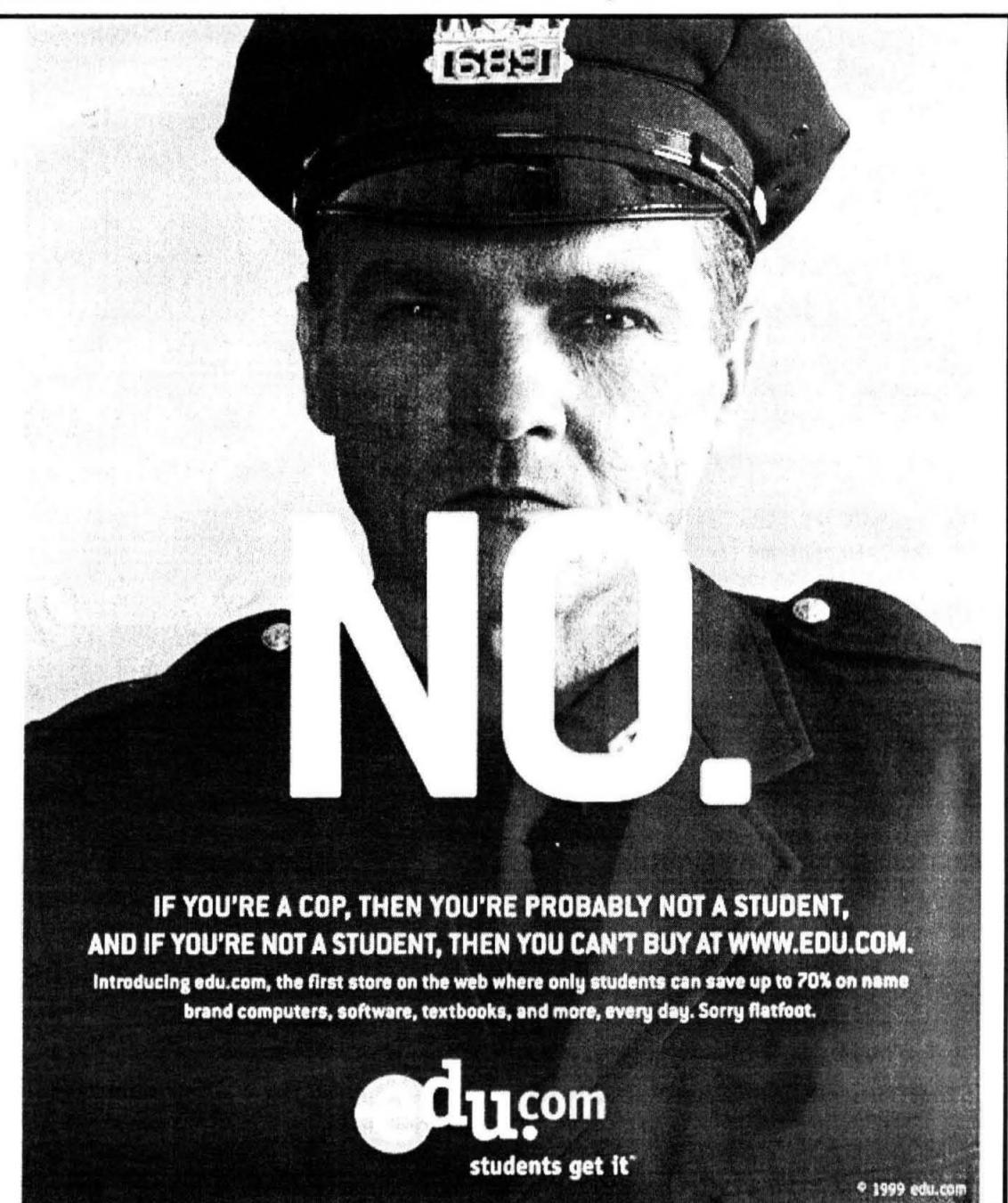
"Go to lecture and get paid!" said the flyer. Well, that sounds like a great deal until you realize that it's \$7/hr, and damn, I might as well do work study if I'm actually going to get out of bed and do something for pay. Varsity.com, said the flyer, was my one-stop place for all my college needs — be they lecture notes, textbooks, etc. Varsity.com is "dedicated to providing students with the tools they need to enrich their academic experience." I managed to get along just fine with a TeX viewer and Acrobat reader. (On the otherhand, maybe 'Tech is just a technically-

with-it school).

But I digress. The point of my rage was simply commercialism of the college campus, from pushing mastercards in front of Winnett (which I don't really mind) to get rich quick schemes on the Lloyd bulletin board, to the ultimate in-in-your-face advertising, placing cheaply made flyers on the back of stall doors.

It's corporate coercion of the student body. At some point we need to question our principles. Even I was offered such a job by varsitybooks.com (who actually sold Tommy I more than the bookstore when I visited their site). They called me one day — I had just posted my resume on headhunter.net. I was excited; after all, varsitybooks.com was a new internet company and that's my bag. But I gave up all hopes of a cool job offer when they asked me to go to class 10 minutes early and write their URL on the chalkboards of our lecture halls. Oh, they'd pay me — starting at about \$10 per week. But I decided, acting on principle, that although my bank balance was red, I'd rather forgo a little green to preserve the sanctity of Orange.

And that, my fellow students, is what I ask of you.



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# Mints

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Discussion Group:** Looking for a safe and supportive place to discuss issues such as coming out, being out, dealing with family, coping with a homophobic culture, and being GLB at Caltech? We invite you to the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual Discussion group, which meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 8:15 p.m. until 10:15 p.m. in the Health Center lounge. This is a confidential meeting and does not imply anything about a person's sexual orientation -- only that s/he is willing to be supportive in this setting. The group usually discusses a particularly relevant topic and then moves on to the general discussion. Refreshments are served. For more information, call x8331.

**The California College Republicans** are currently expanding across campuses in Los Angeles County. It is a volunteer organization that works to get Republican candidates elected, while focusing on issues and putting on events that are of interest to college students. If you would like to start a chapter at Caltech in time for the 2000 election, email Amanda Gregory, Southern Vice Chair California College Republicans, at [agregory@usc.edu](mailto:agregory@usc.edu), or call her at (562) 425-8509.

**Volunteer record label intern position** open: Learn retail - Radio - press - clubs - Internet. Looking for a self starter with motivation to learn the business. Hours are flexible, can work from home. Contact us @ 626-583-4717 Email [vrichter@netcom.com](mailto:vrichter@netcom.com)

**The Dean of Students Office needs tutors** in all areas -- help is especially needed with the main Institute requirements e.g., MA1, MA2, PH1, PH2, CH1, etc. The pay is \$8.50 per hour. A strong understanding of the subject matter, patience, and the ability to communicate well are the qualities needed as a tutor. If you are an upperclassman and would like to be a Dean's tutor, please stop by the Dean's Office to see Sandra located in 102 Parsons-Gates.

**Case Practice Group** for people interested in practicing Business Cases and in pursuing Management Consulting, meet on Wednesday Nights at 6:30 p.m. in the Sherman Fairchild Library. For those who wish to join this group, send e-mail to: [Majordomo@cco.caltech.edu](mailto:Majordomo@cco.caltech.edu) with "subscribe cpg" in the body of the message. Also check out our website: <http://www.its.caltech.edu/~mcpg>

## EVENTS

Wed., Oct. 13, 4 p.m. - Men's Soccer v. La Verne, North Athletic Field.

Fri., Oct. 8, TBA - Women's Volleyball at Southwestern Tournament (Phoenix, Ariz.)

Sat., Oct. 9, 9 a.m. - Cross Country at Cal Lutheran Invitational (Thousand Oaks, Calif.)

Sat., Oct. 9, 1 p.m. - Men's Soccer at Cal Lutheran (Thousand Oaks, Calif.)

Sat., Oct. 9, TBA - Women's Volleyball at Southwestern Tournament (Phoenix, Ariz.)

Tue., Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m. - Women's Volleyball at Pomona-Pitzer (Claremont, Calif.)

Wed., Oct. 13, 4 p.m. - Men's Soccer v. La Verne (North Athletic Fields)

Admission to all Caltech home events is free.

**The J. Paul Getty Museum presents Meredith Monk**, widely acclaimed for her originality and extraordinary voice, Tue., Oct. 12, 8 p.m. in *A Vocal Offering*, \$25 per ticket and Mexican American vocalist Lila Downs in *Spirits of the Cloud People*, Wed., Oct. 13, \$20 per ticket. Contact Karen R. Nelson, 310-440-6470.

The alternative world music group **Vas** will perform Thu., Oct. 14, 8:00 p.m. at the Skirball Cultural Center. To purchase advance tickets call Tickets L.A. at 323-655-8587. Tickets are \$15 (General), \$12 (Skirball members) and \$10 (Students with valid ID). Contact Joana Fisch, 310-440-4578, [jfisch@skirball.com](mailto:jfisch@skirball.com).

The Skirball Cultural Center presents a screening of **The Goodbye Girl** (1977, 110 min.) Tue., Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m. at the Skirball Cultural Center - 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., LA, for tickets call Tickets L.A. 323-655-8587. Contact Joana Fisch 310-440-4578.

**Indian and South Asian Culture Show.** Sunday, October 10th at 5 p.m. in Baxter Lecture Hall. The show will include skits, dances, fashion show, instrumental music, literature recitals, and songs, performed by

members of the Caltech community. Indian dinner will be provided after the show at a cost of \$3. Arrive early because dinner is guaranteed to only 100 people on a first come - first served basis, due to budget limitations. For info, visit [www.cco.caltech.edu/~oasis](http://www.cco.caltech.edu/~oasis) or call (626)395-6892.

Caltech Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences presents **Dr. Rebecca S. Eisenberg**, Robert & Barbara Luciano Professor of Law, University of Michigan and Visiting Professor of Law, Science, and Technology Stanford Law School, Competition Between Public and Private Sector in Genomics, Room 25 - Baxter Building, Fri., Oct. 8, at 4:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served. For information, contact Marion Lawrence at (626) 395-4087 or [marion@hss.caltech.edu](mailto:marion@hss.caltech.edu) or visit our website: <http://www.hss.caltech.edu/se/s/SEPP.html>

**Fall Fellowship Meeting:** Science/Engineering fellowships such as the Hertz, NSF, and DOD and the Luce (year-long internship in Asia) and Churchill (year at Churchill College Cambridge University) will be discussed. Graduate students who have won fellowships such as the NSF will provide their insights on writing a winning proposal and essays. Friday, Oct. 15 at 12 noon in Winnett Club Room. We will be serving lunch so please RSVP so that we can plan food properly: [fellowships@caltech.edu](mailto:fellowships@caltech.edu) by Thursday Oct. 14. If you have questions call ext. 2150 or come to SAC 25 Fellowships and Study Abroad.

**Join The Avery Council, Entrepreneur Club and Women's Center** for the first 1999-2000 Avery House Entrepreneur in Residence Program on Wed., Oct. 13. The speaker for the evening will be Lounette Dyer, Co-founder of Cogit Corporation and Alumna Trustee. The talk will commence at 5 p.m. in the Avery House Library with the speaker joining the Avery Community for dinner afterwards. Dr. Dyer will be available for discussion at a dessert reception at 7 p.m. in the Library. All are welcome!

## SCHOLARSHIP

THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE HAS APPLICATIONS AND/OR INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS. ALL QUALIFIED STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO APPLY. OUR OFFICE IS LOCATED AT 515 S. WILSON, SECOND FLOOR.

**The Hispanic Scholarship Fund** (formerly the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund) is accepting applications for scholarship awards ranging from \$500 to \$2,000. Applicants must be U.S. Citizens or permanent residents of Hispanic heritage, full-time undergraduate or graduate students, and already completed at least 45 units of undergraduate work with a minimum 2.5 GPA. For further information about HSF, informative links, and tips for applying, visit their website at [www.HSF.net](http://www.HSF.net). Applications are available in the Financial Aid Office. Entries must be submitted by November 26, 1999.

Students and faculty are invited to submit proposals to the **National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance** (NCIIA) by December 15 to fund student projects and faculty courses and programs that enable students to pursue the development and steps leading to commercialization of their innovations. Two types of NCIIA grants are offered: Advanced grants of up to \$20,000 to student innovators provide support for the development of new products and technologies with commercial potential and Course and program development grants of up to \$50,000 to faculty to provide support for the creation and operation of classes and programs. Please contact the NCIIA to obtain additional information at [www.nciiia.org](http://www.nciiia.org) or by phoning Phil Weilerstein, NCIIA Director, at 413-587-2172.

To submit an event for the Mints, contact [mints@tech.caltech.edu](mailto:mints@tech.caltech.edu) or mail your announcement to Caltech 40-58 Attn: Mints. Submissions should be brief and concise. The editors reserve the right to edit and abridge all material. Deadline is noon Wednesday. Unless specifies, all mints will run for two weeks.

**THE CALIFORNIA TECH**  
Caltech 40-58  
Pasadena, CA 91126