

# The California Tech

## Physicist David Hsieh wins Packard Fellowship

**KIMM FESENMAIER**  
Caltech Media Relations

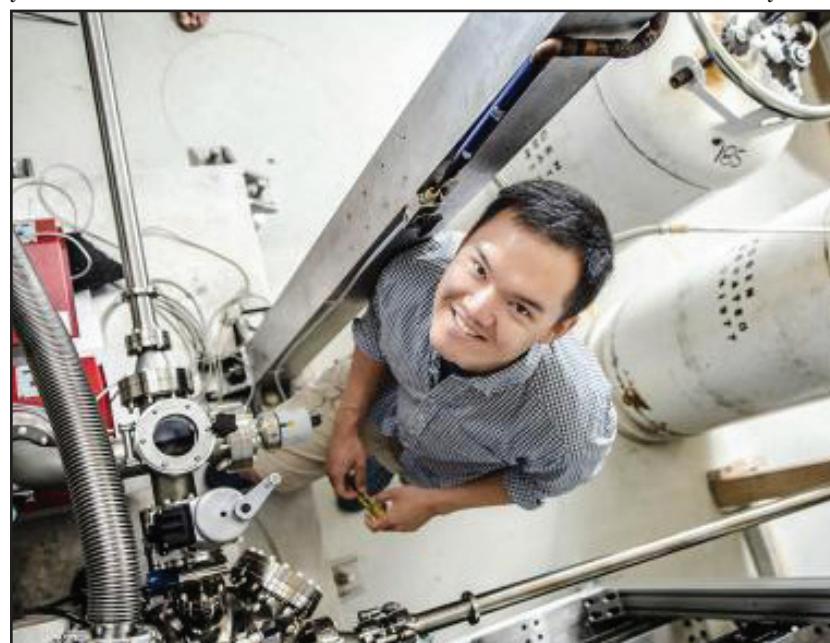
*This article was originally published online at [caltech.edu](#).*

Caltech physicist David Hsieh, who devises and builds new laser-based instruments in order to identify, understand, and manipulate novel phases of matter, has been awarded a Packard Fellowship for Science and Engineering. These fellowships, awarded annually by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, "provide early-career scientists with flexible funding and the freedom to take risks and explore new frontiers in their fields," according to the foundation.

Hsieh, an assistant professor of physics, is one of 18 new Packard Fellows who will receive individual grants of \$875,000 distributed over five years.

Hsieh received the news that he had been selected as a fellow at a casual meeting with Fiona Harrison, the new chair of the Division of Physics, Mathematics, and Astronomy, at the Red Door

Café on campus. He was completely caught off guard. "I thought we were just meeting to talk about how things were going," he says. "Then partway through our conversation, Fiona's phone rang, and I asked if I should leave to give her some privacy. She said, 'No, you should stay. This person wants to talk to you.'"



Physicist David Hsieh was awarded the Packard Fellowship this year.  
Photo Courtesy of Lance Hayashida/Caltech

On the other end was Xiao-Wei Wang, Packard Fellows program manager at the Foundation. Hsieh recounts that Wang asked if he was sitting in a comfortable place and then told him the good news.

Hsieh says he is honored by the recognition and excited about the freedom that the grant will provide. "Both the sum and the flexibility

with which these funds can be used gives me a very unique opportunity to pursue the riskiest branches of physics that I'm interested in," he says.

He plans to explore the possibility of using light to alter the electronic phase of materials in order to manipulate their macroscopic properties. For example, he says, "Can I use electromagnetic radiation to change something from a metal to an insulator, or from a magnet to a nonmagnet?" If such tailoring of materials properties with light is possible, it could open the door to the creation of more powerful and more versatile electronic devices, potentially at a lower energy cost.

"I'm thrilled that David has won this prestigious award. It will give him the flexibility to pursue high-risk, high-reward projects," says Fiona Harrison, the Kent and Joyce Kresa Leadership Chair of the Division of Physics, Mathematics, and Astronomy and the Benjamin M. Rosen

Professor of Physics. "Being there when he heard the news was definitely a highlight of my job as division chair so far."

Hsieh earned his BS in physics and mathematics in 2003 from Stanford University and his PhD from Princeton University in 2009. He was a Pappalardo Fellow at MIT before joining the Caltech faculty in 2012.

He joins 23 other current Caltech researchers who have been named Packard Fellows since the program's inception in 1988. To date, the Packard Foundation, a private family foundation created in 1964 by Hewlett-Packard Company cofounder David Packard and his wife, Lucile, has awarded \$362 million to support 541 scientists and engineers from 52 national universities. Each year, participating universities are invited to nominate two faculty members for consideration by the 12-member Fellowship Advisory Panel of internationally recognized scientists and engineers, which recommends nominees for approval by the Packard Foundation Board of Trustees.

## News briefs from around the globe

*A brief list of events from the past week, compiled by the editors*

### Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan to open non-profit school

1st school started by couple, to serve K-12 students in education and health care [[CNN](#)]

### Record-breaking Hurricane Patricia hits Mexico, leaves little damage

200 mph winds observed at peak, but weakened quickly to tropical depression [[TIME](#)]

### Obama administration asks Congress to help Puerto Rican debt crisis

\$72 billion debt puts territory on verge of 'humanitarian crisis' [[BBC](#)]

### Lincoln Chafee drops out of presidential race

4 Democrats remain after the proponent of the metric system ends campaign [[TIME](#)]

### Indonesia to evacuate children due to high smoke levels

2 months after smoke reached hazardous levels due to illegal forest fires, residents prepare to evacuate [[BBC](#)]

### Boko Haram suspected in two Nigeria bombings

42 people were killed and 100 injured in Yola and Maiduguri [[BBC](#)]

### Russian airstrikes continue in Syria, attack hospitals

12 killed after latest strike in suspected string of "double tap" attacks on hospitals, first responders and civilians, raising concern for safety of hospitals around Aleppo [[CNN](#)]

## Caltech Chinese Association hosts Moon Festival Gala

**NANCY WEN**  
Contributing Writer

On Oct. 24, the Caltech Chinese Association (Caltech C) hosted the Moon Festival Gala in Ramo Auditorium. The live show followed a buffet with authentic Chinese food from local Chinese restaurants. The event was widely attended by all members of the Caltech community, ranging from undergraduates to faculty. Since 1995, the Caltech C has hosted this annual celebration to bring together all Caltech students

to celebrate one of the most important festivals in the Chinese lunar calendar.

Every year, the live show portion of the Galaisan eclectic combination of dance, singing and comedy acts. This year's performances lived



First-year graduate students perform the opening dance.

Photo Courtesy of Ida Huang

Zhu). Their performance was paralleled by the performance after intermission with a girls' group (Jiawei An, Tao Liang, Chujun Lin, Mengchen (Hayley) Pei, Xinying Ren, and Erya Yu) performing a

*Continued on page 2*

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ARTHUR MILLER'S "ALL MY SONS" AT A NOISE WITHIN

# Caltech Y Column

CALTECH Y

The Caltech Y Column serves to inform students of upcoming events and volunteer opportunities. The list is compiled by Neera Shah from information given by the Caltech Y and its student leaders.

Founded by students in 1916, the Y was organized to provide extracurricular activities planned and implemented by students as an opportunity to learn leadership skills and discover themselves. The mission of today's Y remains the same—to provide opportunities that will prepare students to become engaged, responsible citizens of the world. The Y seeks to broaden students' worldviews, raise social, ethical, and cultural awareness through teamwork, community engagement, activism, and leadership. More information about the Caltech Y and its programs can be found at <https://caltechy.org>. The office is located at 505 S. Wilson Avenue.

The Caltech Y Social Activism Speaker Series (SASS) and the Keck Institute for Space Studies (KISS) present a public panel on:

Profits in the Final Frontier: Entrepreneurial Pursuits in Space

With panelists:

Rob Hoyt, Tethers Unlimited, Inc.

Michael Rubel, Planet Labs

Chris Vorhees, Planetary Resources

Moderator: Sergio Pellegrino, California Institute of Technology

The past few years we have seen the emergence of several space startups private companies with the ability to make a profit while operating extraterrestrially. These companies can be divided into three categories: Earth-based companies developing products for space, space-based companies providing services back on earth, and companies that operate entirely off-world. All face challenges associated with the operating in space, but each has unique difficulties when it comes to securing funding and developing a business plan.

Tethers Unlimited, Planet Labs, and Planetary Resources, who represent the entire spectrum of space startups, will discuss what is needed to succeed as a space company. Topics to explore include risks and rewards within each category, how to work with minimal existing infrastructure, and how to secure funding when the average return on investment timeline is much longer than for a typical startup.

No registration required, seating is available on a first come, first served basis. Visit [www.kiss.caltech.edu](http://www.kiss.caltech.edu) for more information.

### 3. Adventure 101 - Great Hikes in the Greater LA Area

Wednesday | October 28th | 12:00 Noon to 1:00 PM | Lunch

Provided, Space is limited

RSVP Required: <http://goo.gl/forms/pim9et9EMj>

Los Angeles has a vast array of great hiking - from the immediate San Gabriel Mountains or Griffith Park areas to the Santa Monica Mountains near the beach - there is a seemingly unending supply of hiking options. Come learn from student Y-Outdoors Leaders as they share from personal experience about some of the great venues you might want to explore on your own. Location details will be included in the confirmation.

### 4a. Pasadena LEARNS

Fridays | 3:00 - 5:00pm | Pasadena

Come volunteer at Madison and Jackson Elementary School! We are partnered with the Pasadena LEARNS program and work with their Science Olympiad team or do regular tutoring along with occasional hands-on science experiments. Transportation is provided. For more information and to RSVP, contact [vkkumar@caltech.edu](mailto:vkkumar@caltech.edu). Eligible for Federal Work Study.

### 4b. Hathaway Sycamores

Wednesdays | 5:30-8:00pm | Highland Park

Volunteer at Hathaway-Sycamores, a group that supports local underprivileged but motivated high school students. There are a variety of ages and subjects being tutored. The service trip includes about an hour of travel time and 1.5 hours of tutoring. Transportation is included. For more info and to RSVP email Sherwood Richers at [srichers@tapir.caltech.edu](mailto:srichers@tapir.caltech.edu). Eligible for Federal Work Study.

### 'ONE OF THE BEST FAMILY MUSICALS EVER PENNED'

-CHICAGO TRIBUNE



# Annie

THE TONY AWARD-WINNING PRODUCTION

Photo Courtesy of Caltech Y

### Upcoming Events

#### 1. Annie - The Musical - Caltech Y Explore LA Series

Friday, October 30th | 8:00 10:30 pm | Hollywood Pantages Theater

Transportation not provided | Cost: \$33  
Sales begin 12:00 PM, Wednesday, October 21st at the Caltech Y (505 S. Wilson)

Overflowing! Big, warm-hearted and funny! – *New York Post*

The world's best-loved musical returns in time-honored form. Directed by original lyricist and director Martin Charnin and choreographed by Liza Gennaro, this production of ANNIE will be a brand new incarnation of the iconic original. Featuring book and score by Tony Award®-winners Thomas Meehan, Charles Strouse and Martin Charnin, ANNIE includes such unforgettable songs as It's the Hard Knock Life, Easy Street, I Don't Need Anything But You, plus the eternal anthem of optimism, Tomorrow.

This offer is for students only; however students purchasing tickets are permitted to purchase tickets for up to one guest each and that guest can be a non-student. There are a limited number of seats available as supplies last. Explore LA is coordinated by the Caltech Y. The Caltech Y is located in the Tyson House 505 South Wilson (Bldg. 128).

#### 2. Profits in the Final Frontier: Entrepreneurial Pursuits in Space

Tuesday, October 27th | 8:00 PM | Hameetman Auditorium, Cahill Building

# Moon Festival Gala celebrates family, showcases local talent

Continued from page 1

pop dance. Other musical performances included a song solo by Jize (Jizer) Yu, a flute and piano duet by Zhongzheng Fu and Shuo Wang, a piano solo by Sean Gao and a guitar solo by Zhu Liu.

In addition to musical performances, the two stand out acts were the comedy

sketches. The first comedic act was "Caltech Life 3.5," which focused on Caltech culture and life as an international graduate student. The group of four students performing the sketch used a technique called "three and a half phrases" where the first three people in the group recite rhyming lines and the fourth person gives a shorter and unexpected line. The second comedic act was crosstalk, another traditional Chinese style of comedy that is akin to stand-up comedy with two people.

Beyond the good food and entertainment, this year's Moon Gala was unique in that it

combined both elements from the past and future. The current Caltech C President,

Chengcheng Fan, invited the founding member of Caltech C, Jason Wen, to give a talk about his experience as a graduate student at Caltech in the 1980s. Wen's presentation explained the founding of the Caltech C (like how the name of the club is



Zhongzheng Fu and Shuo Wang perform "Thinking of You" as a flute and piano duo.

Photo Courtesy of Ida Huang

actually derived from the Caltech Y) and the impact that the club has had on providing a "home" to international Caltech Chinese students. As Wen spoke of the past, the gala showed its transition to the future by displaying live-streaming WeChat (a text service popular in Asia) messages on the wall next to the stage. For the first time ever, audience members watching the show could text their messages through WeChat and see them appear on the display, similar to a live Twitter feed. Through this year's celebration, the Caltech C recognized its origins while also looking forward to the future.

## Caltechlive!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2015 / 8 PM

# Good Lovelies

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## Loma Prieta brings variety, new skills to hone on new record *Self Portrait*

NAILEN MATSCHKE  
Contributing Writer

Generally speaking, a surefire way to grind any metal fan's gears is to refer to his or her favorite band as "screamo," thanks to the public's co-option of the term to refer to any music with harsh vocals. As a result it was almost refreshing to hear my friend describe San Francisco's Loma Prieta as such an artist recently, since for once the band's mix of hardcore and emo made the term an accurate descriptor. Still, calling the band screamo alone would be underselling not just the breadth of other styles that permeate the band's records, but also the overwhelmingly violent extremes that make them exhilarating to hear. Just one listen to 2012's *I.V.* should be more than enough to convince anyone of this fact, as it crams 13 tracks into just 25 minutes of larynx-shredding vocals, blast beats, post-rock interludes,

deceptively layered guitars and even triumphant choruses. Basically, if someone else has combined it with hardcore punk, then Loma Prieta has as well, producing ultra-condensed albums that never outstay their welcome.

It would have been tough for the band to top *I.V.*'s fervor with the next album, in part because of the dauntingly high bar it sets, but also because the band intimated that *I.V.*'s writing occurred during particularly transitional and difficult times, a situation that is not likely to be recreated. Thus, it seems inevitable that Loma Prieta's new record *Self Portrait* would take the group in a bit of a different direction, and it certainly has. Clocking in at almost 32 minutes, it's easily Loma Prieta's longest work, and yet I find it to be the most engaging the whole way through. It's easy to chalk much of this up to yet another increase in the variety of the band's music, diving further into influences and sharpening the lines between segments evoking different styles, rather than letting them all mix in a boiling cauldron of sound. The resulting songs all take on their own characters and bring something interesting to the table, and I never found myself losing focus on the music. The post-rock instrumentals such as those on "Nostalgia" are given space to breathe and evolve, while the emo flavor of songs like "More Perfect" is easier to pick out and similarly gets more time in the spotlight. In addition to this reinforcement of its existing wheelhouse, Loma Prieta also tries some unexpected

things like the oddly danceable end of "Merciless" or just the simple mainstream punk riff that appears a couple times throughout "Net Gain." The band brings a good level of variety and willingness to experiment to this record.

Of course, not quite everything is executed perfectly, and *Self Portrait* is a little rough around the edges. While Loma Prieta does a great job of incorporating and fleshing out all these different styles, the fact remains that on

have some trouble expanding them to a longer form. Still, we're only getting three or so minutes of music per song, which isn't too out of the ordinary for comparable hardcore acts. All in all it seems as though Loma Prieta encountered the same issues with expanding its sonic palette here as Deafheaven did on its most recent release. Both acts are clearly well-versed in the music of their influences, but writing at a competent level in such a variety of genres and then piecing them together cohesively simply takes practice. I'm all for bands trying their hand at a more progressive style of composition, but achieving it successfully never comes without growing pains.

By this point Loma Prieta members have demonstrated that they are modern masters of writing explosive and diverse hardcore music, advantage comes from how lean its albums are, lacking the filler that holds back a staggering number of works. With *Self Portrait* the band has set a new high-water mark, not just delivering more music than ever before but expanding its scope as well. The result isn't perfect, and on a song-by-song basis I think *I.V.* has *Self Portrait* beat, but the project as a whole is enthralling and just needs some fine tuning more than anything. If you enjoy harsh, emotionally intense music, you can't go wrong with this album.



<http://www.deathwishdirect.com/lomaprieta-selfportrait/>

a technical level they have to be musically connected, and this turns out to be a major stumbling block. Throughout the album the band makes abrupt jumps between restraint and chaos with no warning, a tactic which has its place but starts to wear on the listener when it's the only way the band knows how to make transitions. I would attribute part of this to the average song length on *Self Portrait* being much higher than that of the rest of the band's discography, since naturally a band used to writing bite-sized, focused tracks would

## Will the real House Speaker please speak up?

SEAN MCKENNA  
Contributing Writer

slumber and announced that he would run for the speakership. On the previous day, a relatively new caucus of House Republicans, the "Freedom Caucus," announced that a majority of their members supported a Ryan speakership. This, combined with support from other Republican factions, convinced Ryan that he held a winning hand, so he tried to extract a few concessions like increased time spent on TV, decreased time spent on fundraising and further restrictions on unseating the speaker. Barring any excitement between now and Oct. 29, Ryan will be the new face of House Republicans and their "commonsense conservative agenda."

Having a fresh face in the leadership is a fantastic way to broaden the appeal of an otherwise stale agenda. When I describe my own political beliefs, one characterization I like to use is that

"I really want to be a Republican, but the GOP is just too awful for me to support them." Many people my age would probably agree; I'd guess that a plurality of Millennials would describe themselves as "fiscally conservative and socially liberal." The new speakership was a chance for Republicans to refresh their brand, increasing their appeal to my generation. Democrats have already had the first female

Speaker of the House and will likely have the first female presidential candidate in 2016. Republicans had the chance to elevate an obscure female (or even more radically, non-white) congressperson to become the new face of their party. Instead, they chose a white male who already lost a presidential contest in 2012. I'm interpreting this as a sign that what's to come from Republicans will be more of the same.

*"Having a fresh face in the leadership is a fantastic way to broaden the appeal of an otherwise stale agenda."*

not have the backing of enough Republicans to avoid serious brown-nosing or disappointment.

No one seemed to know what would happen until Oct. 22, when Paul Ryan emerged from a political

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## Team effort fuels men's water polo to victory over LA Trade Tech

GOCALTECH.COM  
Actual Sports Content Editor

LOS ANGELES (Oct. 17, 2015) – A multitude of stellar performances fueled the Caltech men's water polo

thanks to a hat trick from junior and three assists by senior James Blackwood. Freshman Shaurya Gilani slipped between the posts for the second half and dominated, surrendering two goals in the third

netted five goals and made one assist. Freshman Eshan Govil and senior Patric Eck turned in impressive performances as well, each netting twice along with an assist and seven combined steals. Freshman John Lloyd made four saves over the first half.



Freshman Shaurya Gilani has an unusual advantage in that his left hand is a ball. However, this can make it rather difficult to eat.

Photo Courtesy of Bob Palermini

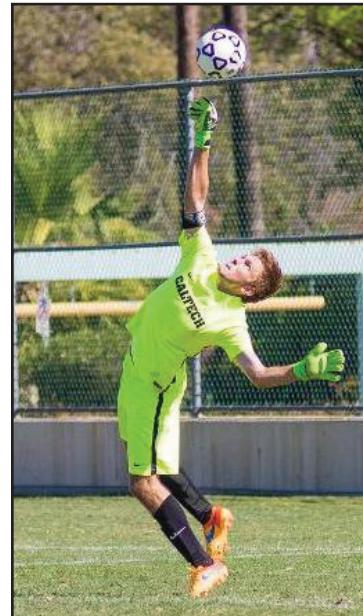
squad to a 12-5 win over LA Trade Tech on Saturday morning.

The Beavers improve to 7-9 overall heading into SCIAC play.

LA Trade Tech hung with Caltech to escape the first quarter still tied at 2-2, but the Beavers took over in the second with a 5-1 advantage

quarter but shutting out the hosts in the fourth while making 11 saves. Caltech mustered another five goals over the half to depart with the decisive 12-5 victory.

Blackwood tied the program single-game record for a second time with six assists while Bradley



Since the theme of today's pictures seems to be "athletes gracefully reaching for balls," here's a photo of men's soccer goalkeeper JD Feist doing just that.

Photo Courtesy of Michael L. Wong

## Jamshidi moves closer to kills record against Redlands

GOCALTECH.COM  
Actual Sports Content Editor

PASADENA, Calif. (Oct. 23, 2015) – Senior Cat Jamshidi smacked six kills to pull within three of the Caltech women's volleyball career kills record as the Beavers fell to the University of Redlands, 3-0, on Friday night.

Jamshidi has amassed 551 kills over her career, needing just three to tie Paige Logan's 2013 mark.



Cat Jamshidi delicately hands the ball to the players waiting on the other side of the net in this nail-biting episode of "Hot Potato + The Net is Lava."

Photo Courtesy of Michael L. Wong

## All My Sons premieres with powerful performance at A Noise Within

NEERA SHAH  
Editor-in-Chief

Pasadena's A Noise Within theater held the opening night for All My Sons, directed by Geoff Elliott, on Oct. 17 in honor of what would have been playwright Arthur Miller's 100th birthday.

Miller began writing the play in 1941, and it was first performed in 1947. He tells a compelling story that leaves the audience thinking about morality and asks important questions about what it means to be conscientious a citizen of this world. *All My Sons* won the New York Critics' Circle Award in 1947 and continues to have a significant impact on audiences even today. (Some of you may have heard of the contemporary musical duo twenty one pilots, which took its name from this play and often cites it as inspiration for the band's career.)

For those unfamiliar with the play, it is set in the 1940s after the end of World War II. Joe Keller is a businessman who had a government contract for manufacturing airplane parts during the war. He was accused of knowingly shipping defective airplane parts that were responsible for the deaths of 21 pilots overseas. His two sons, Chris and Larry, fought in the war but only Chris returned home safe. Larry fought as a pilot, which causes the family to struggle to find the truth behind his disappearance after he was reported missing in action. Joe was exonerated in a trial after blaming his business



George Deever (Aaron Blakely), Kate Keller (Deborah Strang), Chris Keller (Rafael Goldstein) and Ann Deever (Maegan McConnell) remember the days when they lived next to each other.

Photo Courtesy of Craig Schwartz/A Noise Within

partner for the defective parts. The play follows Joe and Chris as they both struggle with honesty, albeit in different ways, and deal with the war's effects on their family. A turn of events is sparked by Ann Deever, Larry's former girlfriend and the daughter of Joe's old business partner, when she returns home to marry Chris.

In addition to the story itself, the cast's performance was moving and powerful. Most notable was Rafael Goldstein's acting as Chris Keller. With every facial expression, hand gesture and vocal intonation, Goldstein won over the audience's hearts. Elliott starred opposite Goldstein as Chris' father, Joe Keller. Elliot and Goldstein

had a great onstage chemistry and exceeded expectations of portraying the emotional father-son relationship that was central to the story.

Of the two main female roles, Maegan McConnell's superb performance as Ann far surpassed that of Deborah Strang as Joe's wife, Kate Keller. McConnell brought out her character's sweet and sincere personality and won the favor of the audience. Strang's acting seemed somewhat forced or overdone at times, but still gave a strong performance overall. Goldstein and McConnell had an on-stage chemistry that

brought life to the relationship between Ann and Chris.

The rest of this amazing cast includes Aaron Blakely as George Deever, Jeremy Rabb as Jim Bayliss, June Carryl as Sue Bayliss, E. K. Dagenfield as Frank Lubey, Natalie Reiko as Lydia Lubey and Vega Pierce-English as Bert.

Several audience members were in tears by the end and rose to give a well-deserved standing ovation to the cast after their phenomenal show. The cast gave it all on stage, and the play

certainly sparked a moment of self-reflection. The story's themes are timeless, and as Elliott said, "It asks [the] questions: What responsibilities do we owe each other, and what do we owe to society at large? Where does our personal identity begin and end? ... What and whom are we responsible for? Am I being selfish now? and How are my actions going to affect the future?"

If you have the time, I highly recommend this great local production. A Noise Within is located at 3352 E. Foothill Blvd., only a couple miles from Caltech. *All My Sons* will be running on weekends until Nov. 21; it is 2 hours and 15 minutes long, including an intermission. Tickets are available for \$20 with a student discount. More information can be found at [www.anoisewithin.org](http://www.anoisewithin.org).



Joe Keller (Geoff Elliott) and Kate Keller (Deborah Strang) talk while waiting for their son to come back home after running off earlier that evening.

Photo Courtesy of Craig Schwartz/A Noise Within

# ASCIT Minutes

## ASCIT Board of Directors Meeting

Minutes for 23 October 2015. Taken by Phillip An.

**Officers Present:** Nima Badizadegan, Phillip An, Robin Brown, Jay Pelekari

**Call to Order:** 2:05 pm

**Guests:** None

### President's Report (Nima):

- Spoke to Joe Shepard regarding career center and athletics at Caltech
- Will continue conversations with both parties
- Working with IHC to put together student representatives regarding alcohol policies at Caltech

### Officer's Reports:

- V.P. of Academic Affairs (ARC Chair: Jay):**
  - Frosh ARC Rep Interviews this weekend.
  - Fill out surveys that will be sent regarding core
- V.P. of Non-Academic Affairs (IHC Chair: Cat):**
  - Absent
- Director of Operations (Sean):**
  - I will summarize the applications in a document that we can look at on Sunday.
  - I'll send out an email tonight with details of any applications that require additional screening or attention. Please look at that before Club Funding on Sunday
- Treasurer (Kalyn):**
  - Absent
- Social Director (Robin):**
  - Come up with potential social events for Caltech
  - Page Interhouse is November 7th
- Secretary (Phillip):**
  - Club Funding Proposals will be reviewed this Sunday, 25th
  - Proposals will start at 11:00 am and end at approximately 5:00 pm, so ASCIT members should be at SAC 15 at around 10:30 am.

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.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 2:30 pm

## REMINDER FROM COUNSELING CENTER:

### Meditation Mob

(drop-in mindfulness meditation group)  
Meets every Tuesday, 12:00-12:50 p.m.  
Bottom floor of Winnett

## VICE PROVOST'S OFFICE HOURS

Vice Provost, Chief Diversity Officer and Professor of English, Cindy Weinstein, offers weekly office hours beginning Thursday, October 15, in Room 104 Parsons Gates. She views these hours as an opportunity for undergraduates, graduate students and postdocs to meet and discuss whatever you'd like to talk about. Professor Weinstein oversees the Council on Undergraduate Education, Caltech accreditation, the Staff and Faculty Consultation Center, Student-Faculty Programs, the Center for Teaching, Learning and Outreach, the Caltech Diversity Center and the libraries.

There are four appointments per hour, 15 min. each. Sign up the day of the meeting in 104 Parsons Gates, Vice Provosts' Offices (x6339).

### Fall Term Hours:

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 12pm-1pm

Monday, Nov. 23, 12pm-1pm

Thursday, Nov. 5, 12pm-1pm

Tuesday, Dec. 1, 12pm-1pm

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 12pm-1pm

Wednesday, Dec. 9, 12pm-1pm

Thursday, Nov. 19, 12pm-1pm

The highly dramatic, almost bipolar *Symphonie Fantastique* of Hector Berlioz anchors the November 13th concert by **Pasadena Community Orchestra**. The work moves from love, a pastoral country scene and a ball to a delightfully snarky march to the scaffold and witches' dance – it has it all! Also on the concert is Franz von Suppé's rollicking *Light Cavalry Overture*, with its bold fanfares and cantering-horses' rhythms. Rounding out the evening is the hauntingly beautiful *Intermezzo* from Bizet's popular *L'Arlesienne Suite*. **Friday, November 13, 8:00 p.m. at First Church of the Nazarene**, 3700 E. Sierra Madre Blvd., Pasadena. Admission is free, and no reservations are necessary. For more information, contact 626-445-6708 or publicity@pcomusic.org, or visit us at www.pcomusic.org. Find us at https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pasadena-Community-Orchestra/125809577468516, and follow us at https://twitter.com/PCOrchestra.

## The California Tech

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## On gender roles and bad writing: A *Twilight* 10th anniversary retrospective

**HELEN EVANS**  
Contributing Writer

On Oct. 5, 2005, in a more innocent time, Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* was first published. No one knew then that the novel would become the new smash hit to inherit *Harry Potter*'s throne. (Arguably, its fame took on a nature closer to the Arnold of Benedicts than the eggs, but let's not quibble on details.) It spread like a plague as virulent and all-consuming as bubonic among the world's teenage girls and their mothers. It spread to the point where even today, name recognition and some baseline understanding of plots and memes for the series are near-ubiquitous among those of a certain age.

Now here we are, a little over 10 years later. Really makes you feel your age, doesn't it? Just typing this, I imagine phantom creaks in my finger joints, withering away with arthritis. *Twilight*'s heyday has come and gone; newer series have taken its place in the public imagination, but nothing can quite

compare when you've seen what we've seen. And you and me, we've seen some poor quality things in our day. What passes for drama nowadays is mere child's play compared to what we underwent in our youth. Modern ship wars

surrounding *Hunger Games* or its sickly younger sister *Divergent* feel quaint, like slings and arrows compared to the intensely life-ruining wars between Team Edward and Team Jacob. Complaints about the a b s i v e portrayal of relationships in *Twilight* f a n t o n -

turned-bestseller *Fifty Shades of Grey* are old hat when you remember how widespread the criticism was that *Twilight* was anti-feminist. In some ways, it is hard not to be nostalgic for the "good old days" when everyone shared a common trash favorite.

And what would our society be if there weren't people happy to capitalize on senile old farts like us? They have the perfect excuse: a special 10th anniversary edition of *Twilight* released in a handsome

obsidian hardcover. Hardly remarkable or worth the money, especially if you already have a copy from 10 years ago, except for what it's packaged with — *Life and Death: Twilight Reimagined*, a gender-bent version of the original novel. It took her ten years, but Meyer finally realized that she too can milk the cash cow that is *Twilight* fanfiction.

In *Life and Death*, we meet Beaufort "Beau" Swan, a normal 17-year-old who moves to the gloomy small town of Forks, Washington, to live with his father after his mother remarries. In another life, he might have been Bella Swan, a girl bearing a suspicious physical resemblance to the woman writing about her. Here, though, he is a pale, blue-eyed boy who is tall and gangly, constantly tripping over himself. He is less catty than his female counterpart, not making nearly as many snide internal comments about the nice, normal schoolmates who befriend him as Bella does, but he does retain Bella's low self-esteem. Still, I find that Beau is a much more relatable hero than Bella. Though he's shot up recently, he describes himself as having been a shrimp of a boy in his formative years who was bullied because he was poor and physically weak. How can you blame a kid like that for finding social acceptance weird and awkward? Frankly, sympathizing with a boy who has good reason to be uncomfortable with people is much easier than

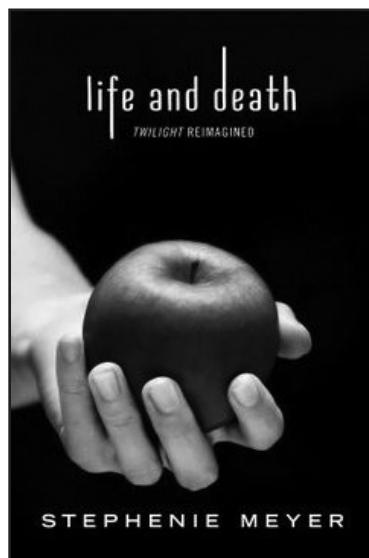
with a girl who seems to have made it her life's mission to complain and hate everything.

Among a crowd of new faces, the one that stands out to Beau is Edythe Cullen's. Yes, Edythe with a "y" — Meyer was never known for her good naming sense. Edythe is mysterious, devastatingly beautiful and alluring, but incredibly hot and cold in her interactions with Beau. Despite an instant inexplicable attraction between them — Beau stares at her all the time and never shuts up about how perfect she is — she, like her male counterpart Edward, constantly warns him off. We've heard it all before: she's dangerous; he's her own special brand of heroin; the usual litany of excuses. In a perverse way, having a female Edythe who leads Beau around by the nose is delightful, particularly when compared to the male version's oft-creepy paternalism. Swapping the genders makes simple gestures like a note left by her for Beau in beautiful cursive to "Be Safe" feel sassy and tongue-in-cheek, and you can almost (almost) understand why we're supposed to find her attractive.

Don't get me wrong, *Life and Death* is still terribly written. The prose isn't great. Meyer has edited a little in an attempt to improve *Twilight*'s chunkier parts, but she just isn't a good writer. Many of the problems with the original novel, particularly regarding plot, are preserved in *Life and Death*.

With a few exceptions in the second half, much of its plotline remains identical to or differs unnoticeably from *Twilight*'s. It is just as frustrating now as it was in the original novel when characters and other aspects that could have been interesting are completely left by the wayside once we learn Edythe is a vampire (spoilers) and she and Beau enter a relationship. Once the forbidden romance shtick enters, the readers are treated to scene after scene of wooden, stilted interactions between characters whose chemistry has completely evaporated. The issue might be that I'm just not part of the target audience anymore, but I'd rather hear about Beau's relationship with his parents, his implied nascent interest in marine biology, or even how he navigates his awkward interactions with his school chums than all this vaguely pedophilic, eternal love mush. Yeah, there's also probably a point to be made about how Beau's relationship with Edythe remains an unhealthy one, but that's a whole other kettle of worms.

Writing about *Twilight* again feels odd, as if I'm gunning for an easy target to make fun of like Justin Bieber or '90s fashions. It's long ago had its day in the sun, and the anniversary edition's release only makes the series feel more dated. Still, if you're ever in the market for reminiscing, *Life and Death* is a marvelous blast from the past and a fun guilty pleasure read.



-<http://twilightsaga.wikia.com/>

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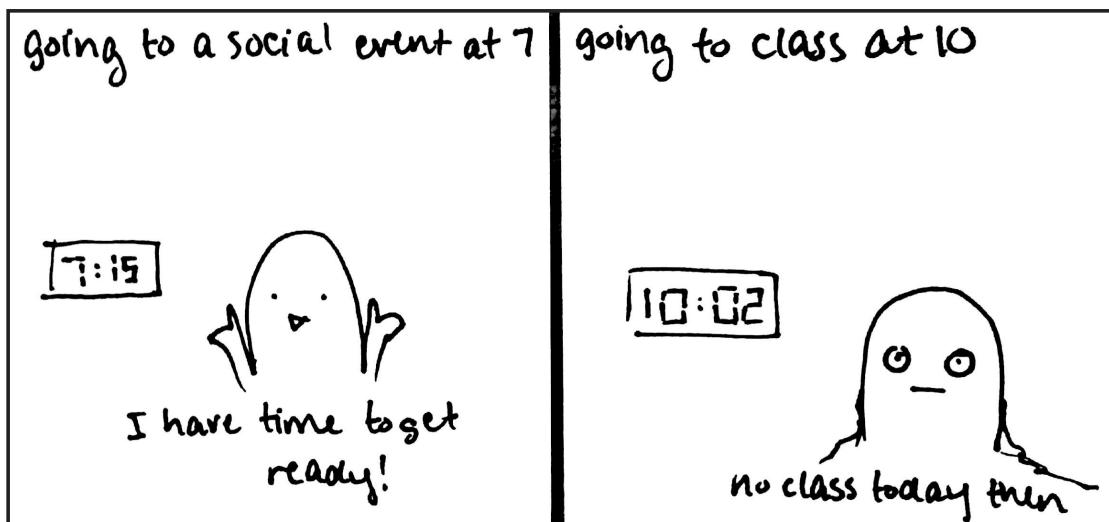
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OCTOBER 26, 2015

THE CALIFORNIA TECH

Gooooo

G. Kuo



good luck on your midterms



here is that picture of nicolas cage that is a meme but I couldn't think of a joke for it, oh well



Niva, Slava, Lazarina.

Answers to previous crossword

S	P	I	C	E		V	I	A		F	L	O	W	
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