



The California Tech

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PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

MAY 23, 2005

Tomorrow Comes Tuesday



Aleksander Chechkin shows why Caltech calls Ditch Day "highly telegenic and photogenic."

Photo courtesy of pr.caltech.edu

Moles Dig In

By MAYRA H. SHEIKH

Blacker Hovse had its fair share of elaborate, cleverly themed stacks this year. T.V. shows and movie themes were popular. The themes had quite a range of moral content; everything from a stack based on a children's show, Mr. Rogers, to one based on the HBO series *Sex and the City*, which explores attitudes toward sex in modern society. There was something for everyone.

The characters from the land of make believe had to journey into the real world to find Mr. Rogers, who had been kidnapped. The characters had to be clever and use sign language and puppet shows to obtain information of the whereabouts of Mr. Rogers. Eventually, Mr. Rogers, played by a parent who flew down just for the occasion, was rescued. Mr. Rogers treated his rescuers to root beer floats and Pizza. Mr. Rogers made peace with his abductor after an apology and the day ended on a happy note.

The *Sex and the City* stack was very educational. A good portion of the morning was spent conversing with Jane Curtis, the health educator; Candace Rypsi, of the Women's center; and the Nurse Practitioners at the health center, about college, sex, birth control, and being responsible. The stack also included foot massages from the participants of the Pulp Fiction Stack, a fashion show relay race across the bridge over Mil-

Ditch Day: the Shocking Truth

By ADAM CRAIG

Every year, Caltech press releases trumpet ditch day as a prime example of Caltech student life at its most ebullient. In a May 17, 2005 release Jill Perry, a veteran press release author for Caltech, propounded on this "annual end-of-school day of highly telegenic and photogenic pranks and games," and even Caltech's most widely-read student-run campus publication, the California Tech, features accounts from the students themselves of how much fun they had in their rollicking antics. Sadly, we at the Tech have uncovered startling evidence that, behind the colorful stack names and garish T-shirts lies a far starker and more disturbing reality. The first sign that something was amiss came from our on-the-scene photojournalist Meng-Meng Fu: image after image of students frozen in statuesque poses. Students from Lloyd, Blacker and Ruddock stared back at us from the JPEG's with glazed, inert eyes, their hands hanging limply at their sides, feet planted flatly on the ground. Confirmation of our worst fears came a day later from staff photographer and Paul Miller correspondent Andrew Green posted an in-depth photographic study of the evolution of a pirate-themed Lloyd stack: forests of students transformed into inert mannequins. Even students who were not standing or sitting in a Caltech approximation of bolt upright slouched lifelessly against nearby supports or appeared bent and twisted into unnatural positions. In the face of such overwhelming photographic evidence, we could only conclude that, during Ditch Day, Caltech underclassmen enter a catatonic state in which they attain waxy posability. Seniors then take advantage of this moment of vulnerability to dress their victims in bizarre costumes and sometimes even place them in strange poses. In this issue of the Tech, we have compiled eye-witness accounts and photographs from staff photographers, official Caltech publicity sites and other sources so that you can decide for yourself what clandestine agenda lurks at the heart of the eerie epidemic of the static students.

Return of the Son of the Bride of Ricketts House: the Movement: the Animated TV Series: the Movie: the Musical: the Ride: the Video Game: the Stacks

By ADAM CRAIG

Putting a new twist on a tried-and-true title, Galen Loram and Ian Krajbich made mockery the mission of Jackass: the Stack. Freshman Yaer Ben Assa recalled that the merry band "dressed as hoboes, putting Cannabis Deodorant, Old soy sauce, skunk beer and rancid ketchup on our clothes, then went to eat at the Athenaeum for breakfast." In addition to random Ditch

Day activities, "we circulated a petition to end women's suffrage, telling people that we were trying to end the suffering of women. We got twenty-eight signatures at Caltech and more than forty total, mostly from young women. Well-dressed people at Borders and Penny Lane Video signed our petition, and only the two clerks at Penny Lane pointed out that suffrage

means the right to vote."

Aaron Plattner threw down the gauntlet for his youngers in Satanism: a race against time to uncover five five-digit codes that would release the pentagram-shaped lock on his door, revealing the mysteries within. "He just gave us the first one," recounted freshman Mary Wahl "The second we got by decripting a C program

Lloydies Swashbuckle Down

By JOHNATHAN MALMAUD

Yarr! Lloyd be having a vast array of non-scurvy stacks this year, with everything ranging from pirate to virus, from off-campus hoola-hooping to 3D mazes in staircases.

Capn' Jack Sparrow himself would have been proud of the first stack, a swash-buckling pirate adventure in the oceans of Tech campus. Pirates were equipped with swords, cool hats, and cute uniforms for the girls as they searched for a hidden treasure trove deep within the bowels of the school.

Next was Bond. James Bond. Bond, represented by a group of four or so, was most definitely shaken and stirred as he engaged in cross-campus espionage to stop the villains with the help of the Foxy Ladies, half of whom were not ladies at all. The men of mystery could be seen around campus sniping each other with wa-ter-gun pistols.

They're the first into danger. The last ones out. The Special Ops stack was divided into the special forces and the anti-bioterrorism group, who spent at least eight hours saving the American way with brainpower and water rifles that looked like they were out of Men in Black. The bio group was equipped with full-body hazard suits and the Special Forces had the unmistakable green anti-terrorism uniforms recognized by all Counter Strike players.

The only off-campus stack was

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Caltech Neuroscientist Receives Grant to Study How Autistic Patients Process Facial Information

By ROBERT TINDOL

Ralph Adolphs, a neuroscientist at the California Institute of Technology, has been awarded a \$120,000 grant from the Cure Autism Now foundation to study the way that autistic patients process information about other people's facial expressions.

The award will supplement Adolphs's ongoing work to understand the role of a brain structure, known as the amygdala, in certain disorders that make it difficult for sufferers to interpret other people's emotions. Adolphs is a professor of psychology and neuroscience at Caltech and holds a joint appointment at the University of Iowa College of Medicine.

According to Adolphs, the grant will lead to progress in understanding how the amygdala may be involved in autism, and also to possible ways for people with autism to improve their social functioning.

Earlier studies have shown that persons with autism have a hard time looking with sufficient attention at the faces of other people to read emotions. Yet, there is tantalizing evidence that the problem may not be entirely an inability to read facial expressions, but rather the lack of ability to focus attention on faces so that expressions can even be processed. Therefore, better knowledge of how people with autism look at faces could

result in intervention strategies where they could be coached to focus their attention on facial expressions, even though they have no natural inclination to do so.

The pilot research award will be earmarked for a two-year period. Adolphs says that the first year of funding will involve a close study of how subjects view faces, followed in the second year with fMRI studies using Caltech's new scanners.

"If our hypotheses are supported, the implications might be dramatic for rehabilitation," Adolphs says. "In a sense, we could be helping people with autism to see the world socially by telling them specifically how to look at the world with their eye movements."

Founded in 1995, the Cure Autism Now foundation is an organization of parents, clinicians, and leading scientists committed to accelerating the pace of biomedical research in autism through research, education, and outreach.

Since its founding, the organization has committed over \$23 million in research, the establishment of and ongoing support for the Autism Genetic Resource Exchange, and numerous outreach and awareness activities aimed at families, physicians, governmental officials, and the general public.

Caltech Instructor Turns Interminable Grad School into Interminable Laughter

By MENG-MENG FU

Crippling Depression may be the comic of choice of many Caltech undergrads, but since the brains behind that strip have long since graduated, a new comic superpower has emerged. Dr. Jorge Cham is the creative drive behind *Ph.D. (Piled Higher and Deeper)*. Cham received his Ph.D. from Stanford University, where he first started the comic. While at Stanford, Cham and his colleagues developed the Sprawl family of robots, purportedly one of the fastest and most robust running hexapods. He is currently a postdoctoral instructor and researcher of mechanical engineering here at Caltech. Cham has taught a number of courses here, including ME71 (Intro to Design), ME170 (Cartooning and CAD), and ME70 (Intro to Kinematics). His research now focuses on brain-machine interface technology for applications such as neural prosthetics. With all that, he still has free time to create a comic strip every week!

This Thursday (May 26) at 5:30 in the Beckman Institute Auditorium, Cham will be giving a talk followed by a reception, where he will sign copies of compilations of his comics: *Piled Higher and Deeper* and *Life is Tough and Then You Graduate*. The event is sponsored by the GSC and the Caltech Y. Copies of the comic books will be available for sale then courtesy of the Caltech Bookstore. One classic col-

umn, titled "Grad Student Etiquette" depicts a new grad student at a social function asking "How is your research going?" and "How long before you finish your thesis?". A knowing older grad student corrects the newbie with stern smacks on the head to convey that talking about the prospect of never-ending years in grad school is taboo. Part of what makes these years so endless is Cham's version of Newton's First Law ... of Graduation: "A grad student in procrastination tends to stay in procrastination unless an external force is applied to it". For those interested in more humorous anecdotes, surf on over to <http://www.phdcomics.com/comics/comics.php>.

For anyone who thinks that grad school is all fun and games, *Piled Higher and Deeper* offers a gleefully grim glimpse inside the life or lack thereof of a grad student. One classic col-

Sonne Rises Memorial Day Weekend

By MAYRA H. SHEIKH

Theatre Art at the California Institute of Technology (TACIT) is doing something new; TACIT is presenting "Sonne," an original play written and directed by a current Caltech senior, Nicholas Rupprecht. In the spirit of the works of Samuel Beckett and Thomas Stoppard, this tragic play poses questions about the differences between religion and fanaticism, nature, the existence of free will and the meaning of morality.

"Sonne" is the story of two friends, Alpha and Omega, who are hiking in Kentucky when they find themselves in a land without sun. The residents of this dark, barren land worship the sun as the sole deity and believe that someday he, the sun, will come back and deliver them from the darkness. Both Alpha and Omega find temptations to stay in the dark land: Alpha because he sees opportunity to be-

Powering the Planet

By JILL PERRY

Gasoline at \$3 a gallon is around the corner; greenhouse gases continue to build up from fossil-fuel consumption, and the relentless decline in available fossil-fuel resources continues. Where in the world will our energy come from, asks Nathan Lewis, the George L. Argyros Professor and professor of chemistry at the California Institute of Technology, and what would it take for the world to get away from fossil fuels and switch to alternate energy?

On Wednesday, May 25, at 8 p.m., Lewis will address these questions and discuss the challenges involved in breaking away from fossil fuels in his talk, "Powering the Planet," part of the Ernest C. Watson Lecture Series.

For one thing, it will take more than a willingness on our part to buy a hybrid car or have solar panels installed on your roof, he says. If we want to use wind, solar thermal, solar electric, biomass, hydroelectric, nuclear, and geothermal energy, it will take a lot of planning and willingness on the part of governments and industry. It will take R&D investment, a favorable price per unit of energy to get anyone to produce alternative energy, and plenty of resources to create those energy sources.

Lewis will discuss these and other hurdle--technical, political, and economic--that must be overcome before the widespread adoption of alternate energy technologies can be achieved.

Caltech has offered the Watson Lecture Series since 1922, when it was conceived by the late Caltech physicist Ernest Watson as a way to explain science to the local community. Seating for this free public event in Beckman Auditorium on the Caltech campus is on a first-come, first-served basis, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

For more information, contact events@caltech.edu, or visit www.events.caltech.edu. All lectures will be available online at Caltech's Streaming Theater, <http://today.caltech.edu/theater>.

come a God and Omega because he finds love. As the play unravels, the power hungry Alpha manipulates the faith of the natives of the dark lands, steering events toward a tragic conclusion that challenges many common assumptions about religion and morality.

Nicholas Rupprecht wrote "Sonne" specifically for this TACIT production. Shirley Marneus, Lecturer for the HSS department, usually directs TACIT productions. According to Nick,

Shirley originally suggested that he write and produce a play before his graduation in June 2005. Nick started writing the play last school year, 2003-2004, and made the final revisions to the play during the winter 2005 term. Though Nick has written many plays, "Sonne" is the first one to reach the stage. To ensure that it would, he engineered "Sonne" to fit TACIT's budgets for time, money and effort, relying on the talent and dedication of the cast to bring the story and characters to life. And so they did, as Nick reports that undergrads including Hannah Shafaat, Cecilia Yu, John Sadowski and Daniel McLaury understand their roles and perform them

magnificently. Nick has participated in theatre since high school, first as an actor and eventually as a playwright. Nick has been a performing member of TACIT since he began college and values immensely the encouragement and feedback about that he has gotten from the TACIT community. Though he has experimented with other venues of writing, such as short stories, he affirms that plays remain his forte.

In addition to being a dramatist, Nick is a math major and member of Dabney House. He will be continuing his studies in math next fall as a graduate student at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where he plans to continue acting in and writing plays in his free time.

The three-act "Sonne" will be playing in Ramo Auditorium, preceding a discussion with the author and cast members, during Memorial Day weekend. Showtimes are: 8p.m. Friday May 27th, 7p.m. Saturday May 28th, 2p.m. Sunday May 29th, and 2p.m. Monday May 30th. Tickets are \$3 for students. One can view the script for "Sonne" at tacit.caltech.edu/2004/sonne/

Science Writers Strive for Intelligibility

By CHRISTINE CHANG

Writing plays an essential role in communicating scientific discoveries both to other scientists and to the general public. Recognizing the difficulty of writing about science to non-scientists, Words Matter, Humanities and the Provost cosponsored the Third Annual Science Writing Symposium in Sharp Auditorium on Monday May 16.

Steve Youra, the Director of the Hixon Writing Center and Chair of the Words Matter Program, opened the night by explaining the etymology of the word "symposium," the Greek root of which means "drinking together."

"In the spirit of the Greeks, I hope this will be a night of lively

discussion," said Youra.

The panelists this year were Margaret Wertheim, a writer whose articles have appeared in publications including The New York Times and the LA Weekly, Caltech Professor Christof Koch and Leonard Mlodinow, who has written multiple books and even worked on shows such as Star Trek: the Next Generation. Each

Continued on Page 8, Column 1

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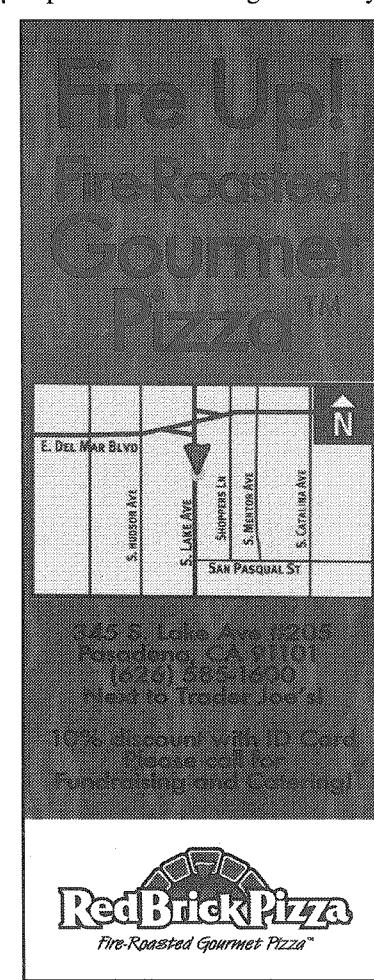
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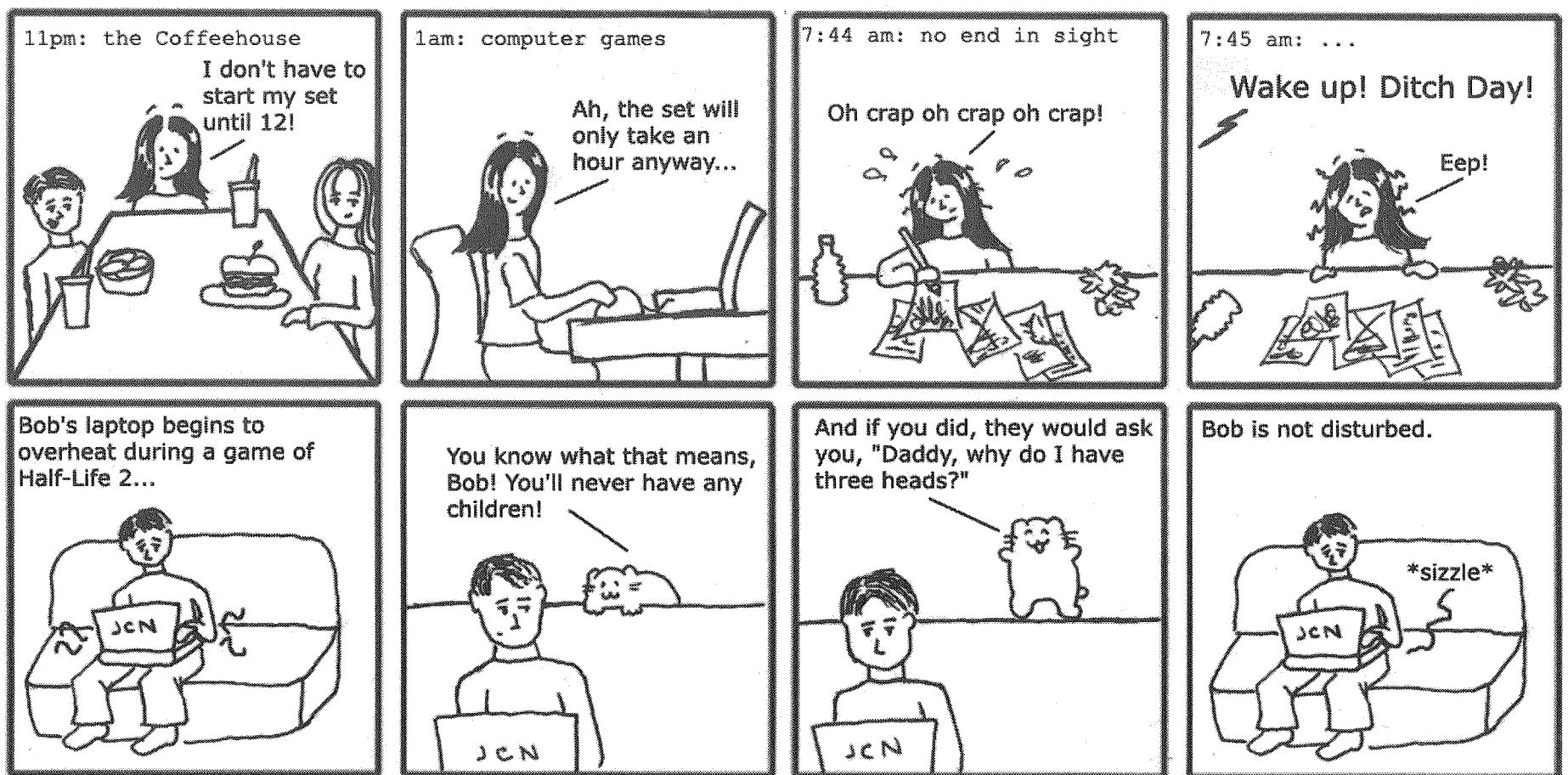
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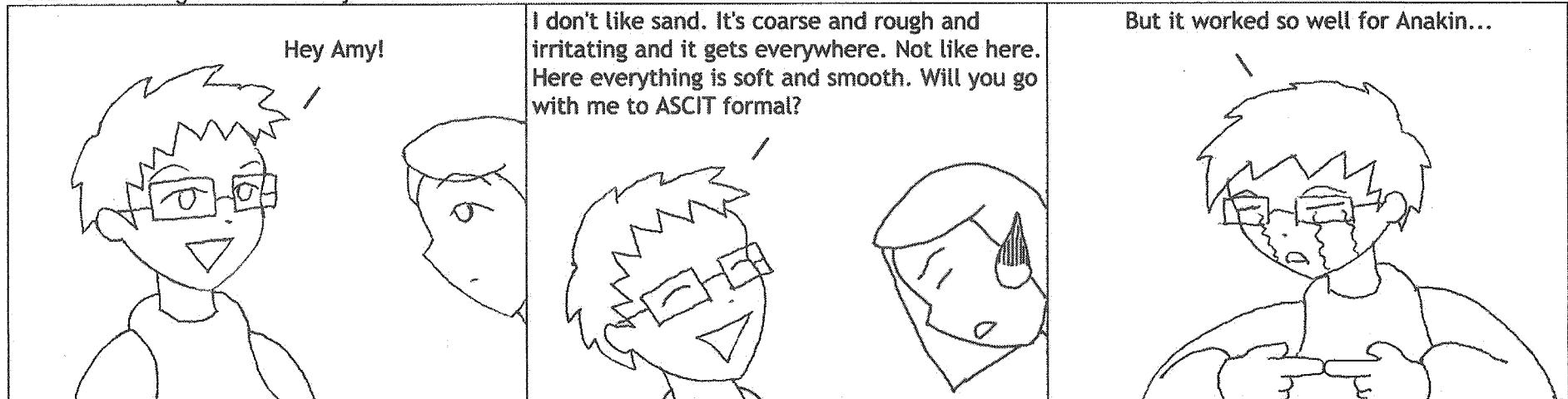
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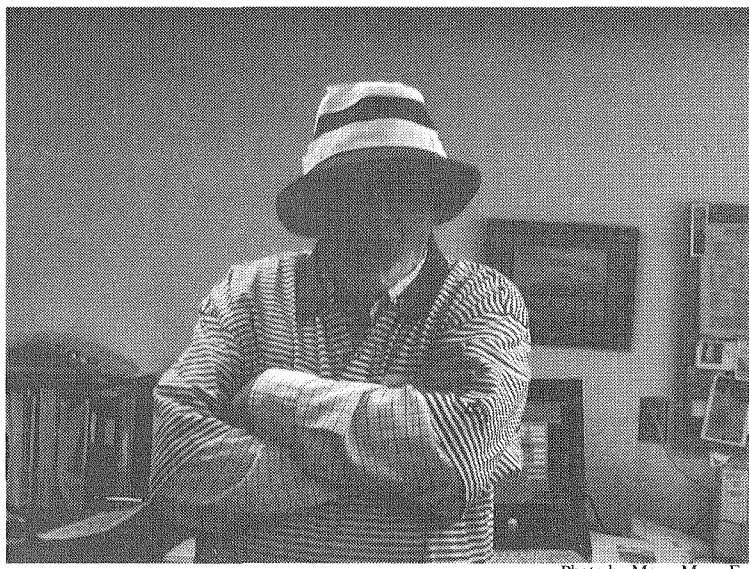


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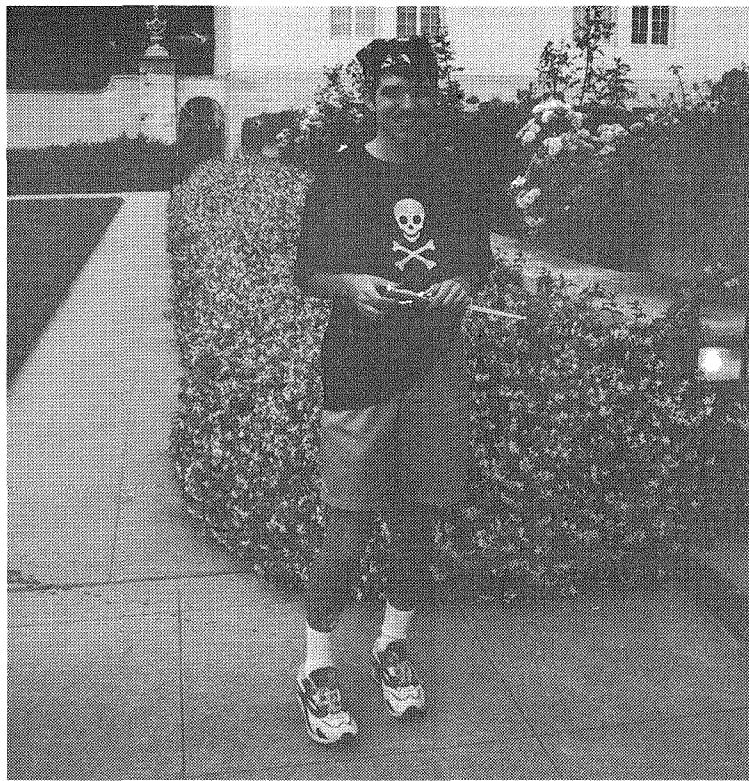


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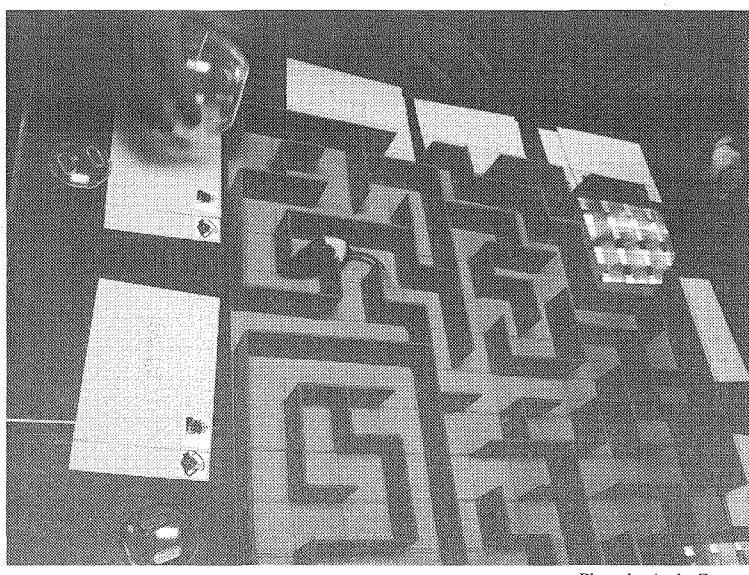
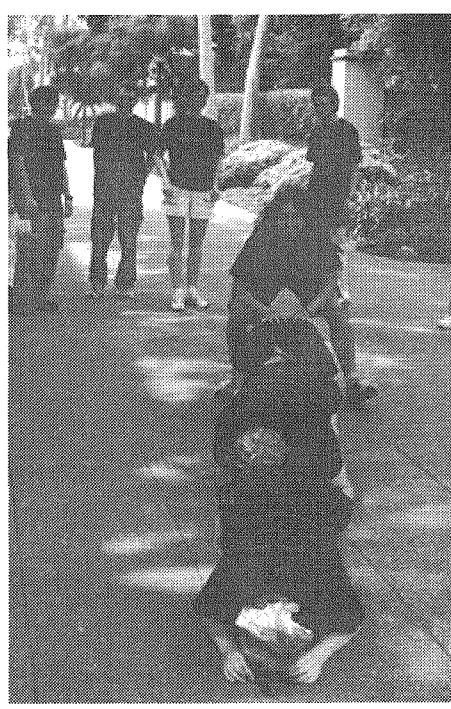
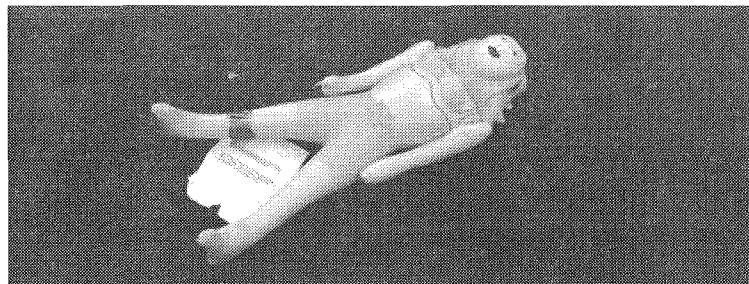
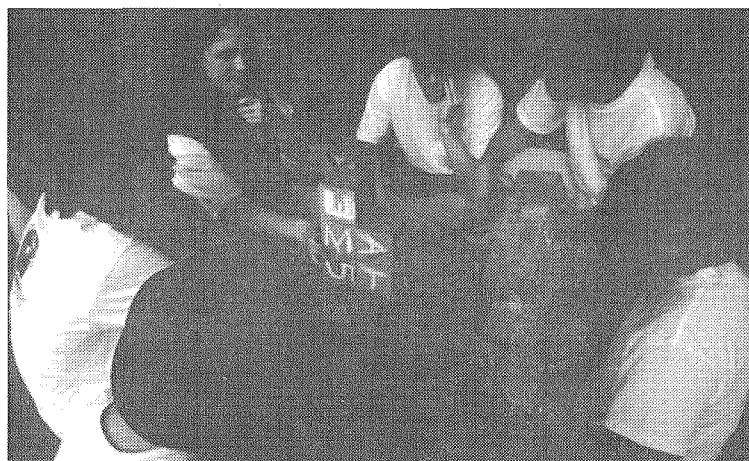


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DITCH I
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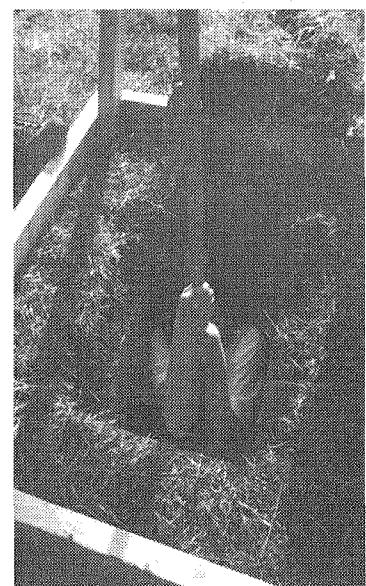
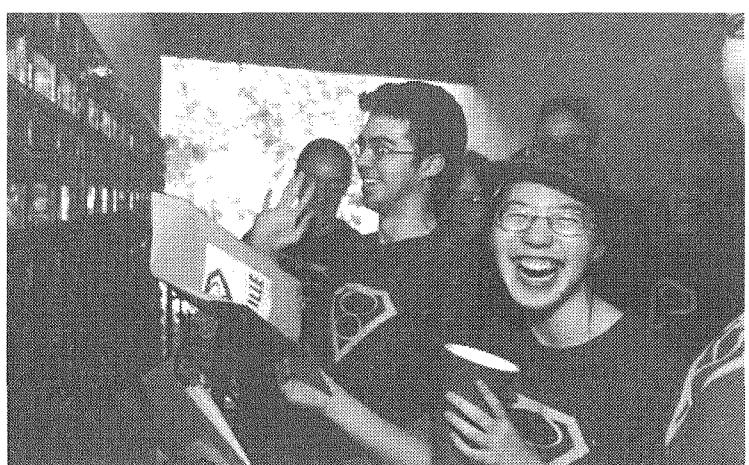
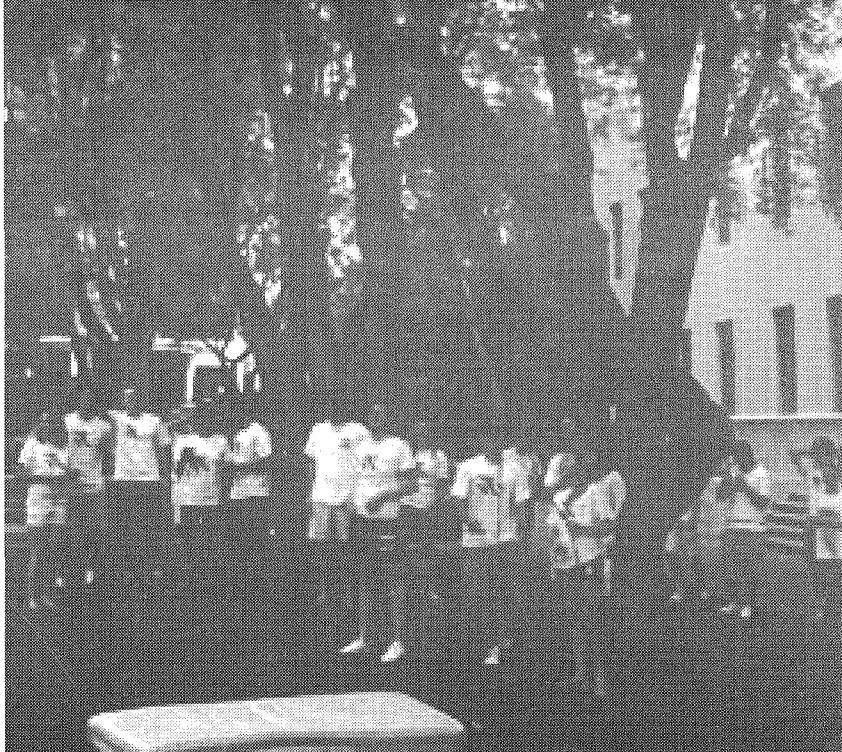
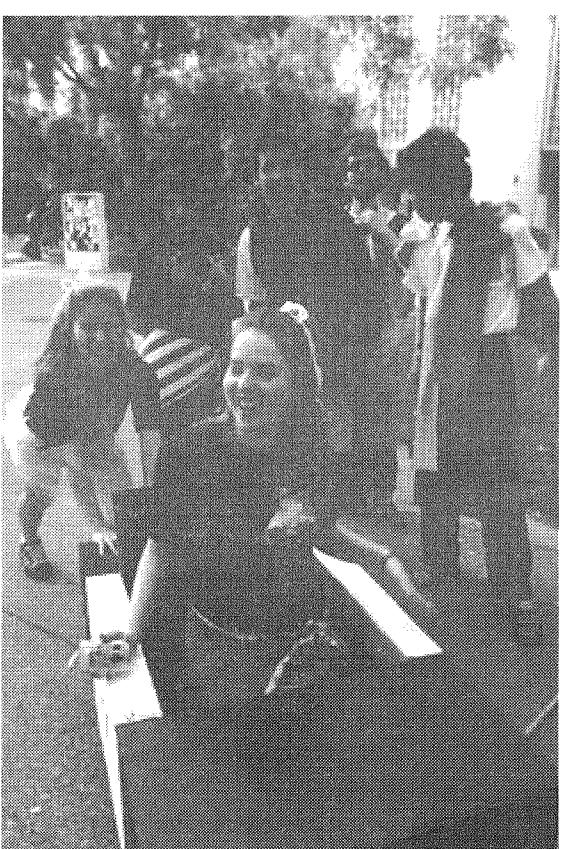


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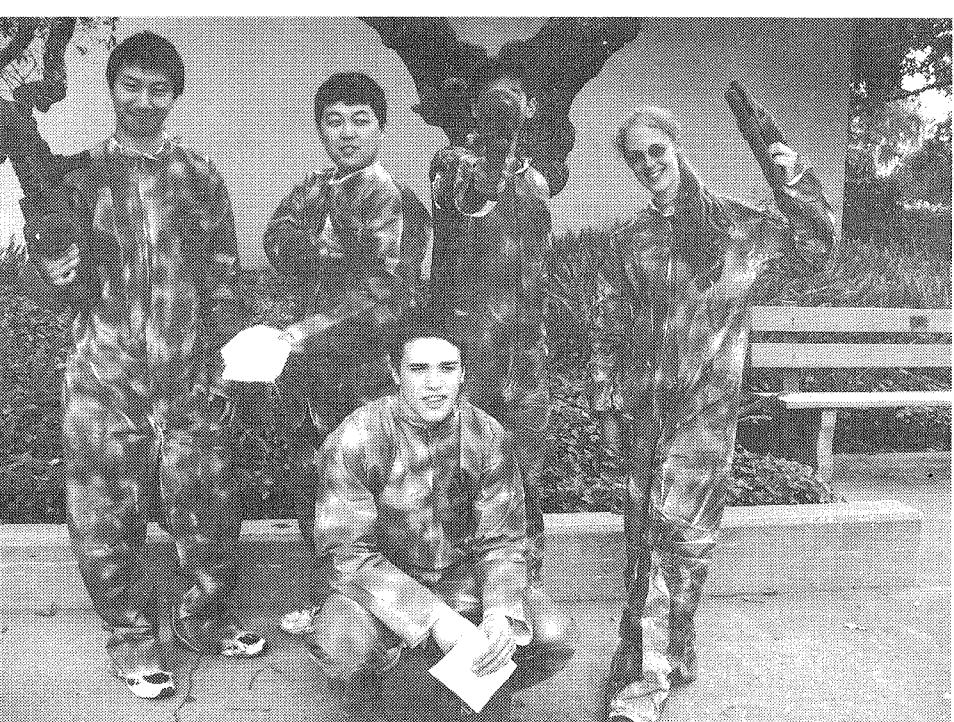
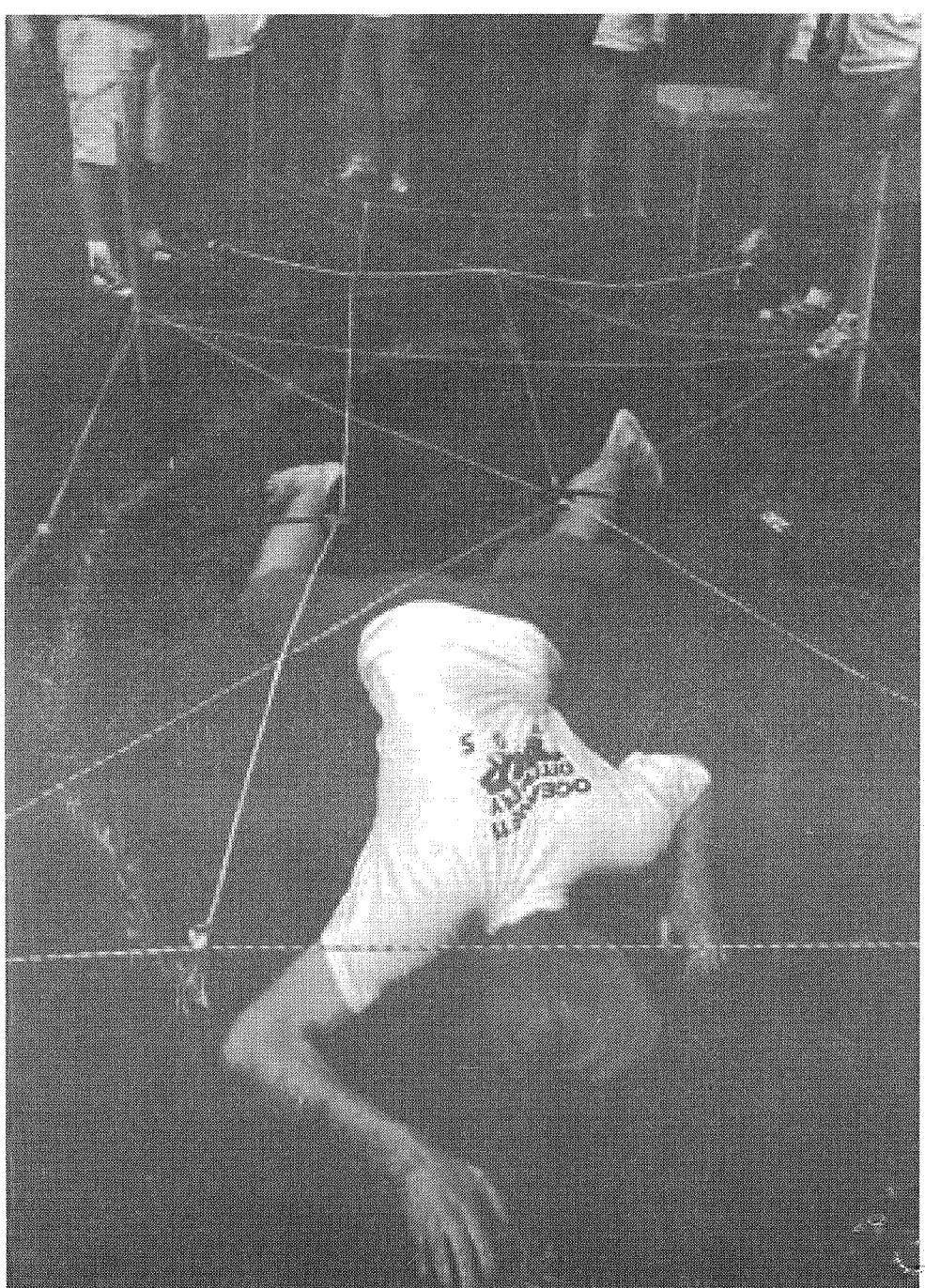


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Not Ditch Day

By JEFFREY PHILLIPS

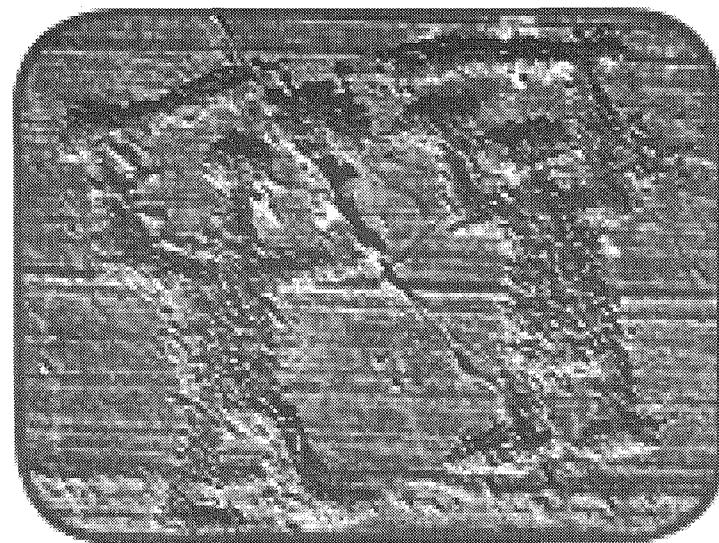
Ditch Day was a blast this year thanks to all the seniors who made it possible. More importantly, I would like to thank the Deans for dictating the guidelines for a safe and sane Ditch Day. I can assure you I followed them to the letter, unswervingly. It is important for me to state clearly exactly what did not happen, lest rumors to the contrary begin to spread.

No one in my stack climbed trees. No one rode vehicles across campus, especially not by hitching a ride on the back. We did not put dry ice in our drinks, especially not the one I took to Mannion's house for lunch. We did not play with fireworks. No one played with fire, and certainly no one set themselves on fire. We did not leave campus during any portion of my stack. We did not climb roofs, especially not to shoot people with water guns we borrowed from another stack. Drugs and alcohol had no part in my Ditch Day experience.

Although the administration never expressly forbid it, we also

refrained from counter-stacking a senior who built another stack by covering his floor with taped-down cups, and we filled these cups neither with water nor with any less seemly liquid. We did not learn to pick locks, and we did not steal any important documents from the institute, especially not Nobel Prizes. Nothing much happened for most of the day; we sat around, did math problems and memorized portions of the ASCIT bylaws.

I had a great time that made me look forward to building a great stack next year. My only regret is that my conscientious abstinence from the above prevented me from making time to not play with liquid nitrogen. Rest assured I won't not un-exclude these from my stack next year. Or maybe I will not fail to re-include them, whichever one does not get me CRACKED; that would be double-plus un-good.



A Space-Filling Diatribe

By A.R. SHEIVE

2002 UK Memo Claims Bush Planned to Invade Iraq Under False Pretenses

On May 1st, a classified memo was coughed up from the campaign-trail-worn throat of Tony Blair's administration. The memo, from July of 2002, described a meeting in which the head of MI6 reported that "Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy." He was also of the opinion that the National Security Council had "no patience with the UN route" and that there was "little discussion of the aftermath after military action." Britain's foreign secretary observed that although Bush was determined to go to war, "the case was thin. Saddam was not threatening his neighbors, and his WMD capability was less than that of Libya, North Korea or Iran." Blair's Attorney General then advised that "the desire for regime change was not a legal base for military action." The memo was a small scandal in the UK, but Blair dismissed its contents as "nothing new" and it did not prevent him from making history by leading the Labour Party to its third consecutive victory in a general election.

The Memo Is Almost Wholly Ignored in the United States

I came across *The Sunday Times* (timesonline.co.uk) printing of the memo and thought "Finally, proof that, almost nine months before the announcement

that the U.S. would invade Iraq, Bush's administration had decided to oust Hussein and dupe the American people with a ghost story about terrorist activities and weapons of mass destruction." I fumed with anger for a bit at this confirmation, and then waited for the news to cause a scandal in this country. As far as I can tell, this has not happened. I would have never seen the memo myself had Michigan Rep. John Conyers not drafted an open letter to Bush that was signed by 88 other congressmen. He feared that the memo would "fall down the memory hole during wall-to-wall coverage of the Michael Jackson trial and a runaway bride.", and it seems his best efforts have failed to prevent his fears from becoming reality.

The American People are Tired of Disbelieving

The only reason for this apathy in the face of corruption that I can fathom is that the public is divided between those who won't listen, and those who are tired of caring. The phrase "weapons of mass destruction" has Bush detractors and supporters alike turning the page. The Bush administration has perfected the art of attrition through denial. Whenever a concern is raised about their conduct, they deny the claims until those who disbelieve them are forced to go on with their lives. You almost have to admire it, if you can stomach the fact that this art is writing history books, and ending lives.

So You Say You Want a Revolution?

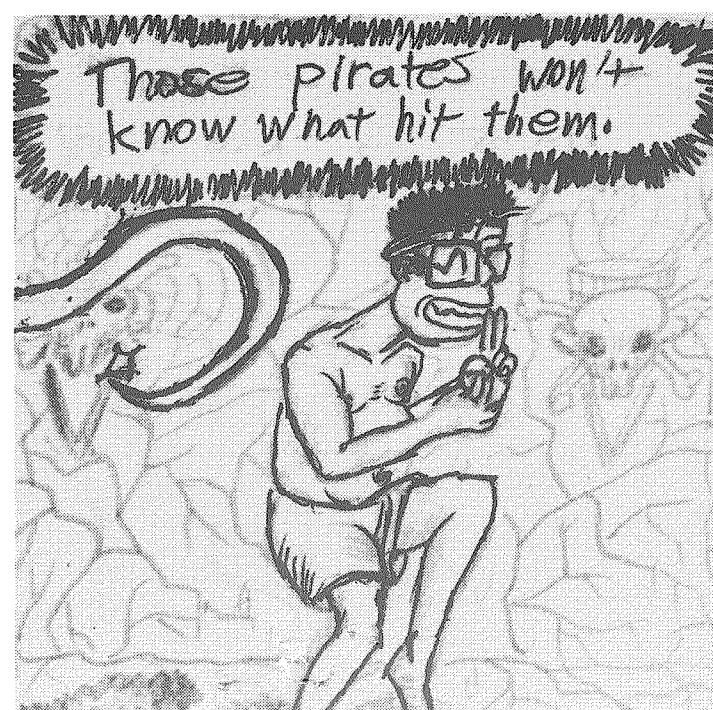
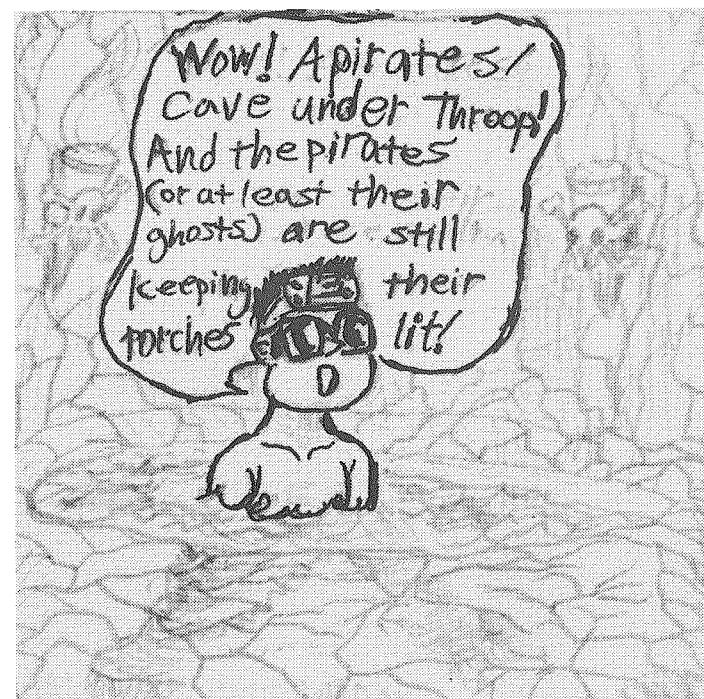
Bush's majority in the past election is deceiving if viewed in black and white. A significant portion of the losing minority not only would prefer another presi-

dent, but hold the belief that Bush is one of history's greatest monsters. They honestly think that he constantly lies to them in order to further an agenda of ruthless imperialism and revenge for the emasculation of his father. Yet, aside from the few whose belief system allows for civil disobedience verging on anarchism, none of them have the sheer will to fume over these beliefs long enough to act. Some liberals dismiss many Bush supporters as ignorant, gun-toting, patriotic hicks who cling blindly to outdated morals. Yet, were the red states to believe they were being ruled by an evil maniac elected in a farce, those very qualities make me confident that their disenfranchisement would be a bit more loud and bloody. The Civil War was not started by the industrialized north because slavery was wrong. The North wallowed cozily in its wealth and moral high-ground until the Southern states decided they didn't want to play if Lincoln was making the rules.

What's a Dissident to Do?

So, here we are with a government that brazenly cannot be trusted, and a news media that can't get enough of the people who believe them to put down their bongs and march. Perhaps it's for the best. Perhaps "We the People of the United States" are too undereducated to make decisions that "form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity". The people in the Bush Administration are qualified for the most part, and sure as hell know more about global politics and war than the vast majority of voters. They certainly wouldn't be stretching our budget and military so thin if they weren't afraid that a democracy and strong presence in Iraq was essential for us to maintain global dominance. I just wish that they'd be honest with those they represent, even if it's not what we want to hear. When the voters are fed misinformation by their government, a democracy becomes an oligarchy pacifying its citizens with the illusion of representation.

To quote Clinton (George), "You don't need the bullet when you got the ballot."



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By
Adam
Craig

April 28th, 2005

Present: Warner, Kelly, Peter, Ryan, Dima, Michelle,
Guests: Michelle's friend - Kimberly Russell, Ruby Feng, Helena Wang

Meeting Begins: 5:06 pm

People talked amongst themselves. The phrase "Meng-meng can't do Thursday" was mentioned, perhaps by Warner. <lies> They are clearly up to no good. Can we say corruption? The ASCIT bank account will soon be empty. There is nothing we can do to stop it.

There was fight between Dima and Warner, Warner was killed. Nominations will happen next week, elections the following Monday. </lies>

Approving the budget from the Saturday meeting was motioned by Peter, seconded by Dima, approved 5-0.

Warner got a call from Keris. He said "sure," "ok," "ok," giggled, "oh, alright", "yeah", giggled, "he's in the midwest", "I can come in tomorrow, what time do you think would be good for that. 3:30 is good, I can come in at 4 then, ok, ok, awesome. thank you very much, sure thing, bye-bye."

ASCIT Minutes Extravaganza

Meanwhile, Kelly thinks Dima's pants are stylish. Dima said they're just filthy.

Peter will send out an announcement about IHC sign-ups, Warner will send one for ASCIT sign-ups.

Dima asks about the -\$340 banner for the formal, asks for people's approval, it will be used for several years. Michelle is concerned that people walk around with their heads down. Ryan says to put it on ground, Dima says doormat. Dima motions for it, Peter seconds, 5-0 passes. We talk about the colors, red/white is flemish, yellow/black is ugly, we'll do orange/white, but not a neon. It'll be good and seeable, though.

Dima talk about printing cards and fliers, says we should print post-cards to save money, do 2500 cards instead of 1000 fliers for cheaper. They'd make it easy for people to mail them to friends and such. Dima will need help stuffing, Tech express can maybe distribute them for us.

Kelly asks if we'll have photographer? Dima and Ryan will look into it, talk to photographers and find someone.

We don't know where the SAC mailroom copier is. Ryan will probably try to find out more.

Michelle says don't cheat.

Dima, Michelle, and Peter still need to mail out our club funding letters.

Next week action items:
 People finish writing letters

Warner looks into sound system

Bylaw changes will be prepped by people.

Wuv,
 Peet-uh Foh-wee
 (Peter Foley)

May 5th, 2005

Present: Warner Leedy, Kelly Lin, Peter Foley, Todd Gingrich, Dmitriy Kurnasovskiy, Parvathy Menon, Meng-Meng Fu, Michelle Wyatt

Absent: Ryan Farmer

Guests: Angelina Crans, Richard Eager, Scott Medling, Barrett Heyneman

Introduction:
 1. Call to Order, 5:08 PM

Money Requests:

2. Barrett requests \$600 for Coffeehouse party.
 Vote: 6-0-0 (approved)

3. Angelina and Neha request \$100/house for multi-house event funding (Lloyd + Fleming = Love) for waterpark trip on Saturday.

Vote: 6-0-0 (approved).

4. Three undergrads (Richard Eager, Joe Wasem, and Alex McCauley) took out Professor Mark Wise to lunch at the Ath - requests ASCIT account funding of event. Kelly motions for a vote. Peter beats Todd soundly in motioning for a second... Todd bows his head in defeat but a clenched fist and a murderous glint in his eye let all know that this is not the last of Todd "Death-Tractor" Gingrich.

Vote: 6-0-0 (approved).

5. Scott requests \$100 for once-a-term BlueSlip Milkshakes and a pancake breakfast.

Vote: 5-0-1 (approved)

Other Business:

5. Meeting to discuss and propose Bylaw Changes - Friday, 3rd Floor SFL, 7-9pm.

6. Dima arrives on the scene

to call everyone's attention to the "wonderful, sexy" ASCIT formal banner. His next mission is to post fliers to lure grad students to come to the formal. Because grad students are hot...squared.

7. Dima requests help pasting fliers around campus. Warner complains that his scotch tape is see-through and thus, difficult to locate. Peter begins to sing praises of Sprement. "Spray adhesive... ohhhh... gawd, mmm... ho-hhh." Trembling in ecstasy, Peter reaches for Dima. Dima leaves.

8. Minutes and officers: look for updates on Donut... uh, soon. Also new Budget to be posted... soon.

9. Excuse to eat good food. Old BoD/New BoD dinner within the next month.

Important Dates

13. Mother's Day on Sunday, May 8th.
 Meeting adjourned 5:35 PM.

I love your mom,
 Parvathy Menon

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Michal Brown • Robert Walters

2005-06 Intel Foundation Ph.D. Fellowship Award Recipients

Brown and Walters were awarded Ph.D. fellowship grants from the Intel Foundation for the 2005-06 academic year.

- Brown's fellowship research uses X-ray diffraction to validate an optical measurement method called Coherent Gradient Sensing. Advisor: Dr. Ares Rosakis
- Walter's fellowship research will focus on understanding the physics relevant to novel silicon nanocrystal based optoelectronic devices, including optical memory elements, modulators, and nanocrystal LEDs. Advisor: Dr. Harry Atwater

This year, the Intel Foundation Ph.D. Fellowship Program awarded 43 fellowships totaling \$1.8 million to outstanding Ph.D. candidates pursuing leading-edge research at 17 U.S. universities. To learn more about Intel's commitment to higher education, visit: www.intel.com/education/highered.

Blacker Stacks Back

Continued from Page 1, Column 1

likan pond, fishing a chocolate cake out of a dumpster, and submitting a drawing of a vagina for an art exhibition.

The seniors who made of The Pirates of the Caribbean stack tasked the participants with raising a flag amidst the wreckage of the Iron Maiden. The stackers, however, were a step ahead of the seniors. Like true pirates, the members of the stack went beyond necessity. They constructed a boat from the wreckage provided, a completely unexpected twist to the stack. The flag was raised and a fun noodle attack from the other team ensued as planned.

Hogwarts came to Caltech this year in the form of a stack based on Harry Potter. The students spent their morning doing stuff for various classes; not math or physics classes, but magic classes. The students all had wands made of four different types of electronics: UV LED, IR LED, red laser, and flashing multi-colored LED. Each type of wand could perform certain tasks necessary to com-

plete the stack. In the afternoon, the students had to surpass fluffy, the three headed dog keeping sentinel near the gene pool, to retrieve the philosopher's stone and find their bribe.

The American Gladiators could be seen battling all over campus. They were seen on the Athenaeum Lawn with larger than life inflatable basketballs and hoops. Later, the red and blue teams were seen duking it out in platforms in Millikan Pond, with what appeared to be giant Qu-tips. The finale of the stack included an awesome zip-line running from outside a south facing Blacker window, to Blacker Beach.

Other Blacker stack themes were based on: Pulp Fiction, Samirillian, The Art of Gardening, and Gerdle, Escher, Bach. All the stacks were impressive: they were well-planned and fun. We will find out soon whether the next class can live up to the standards set by this year's stack because Ditch Day is Tomorrow: Go to bed early frosh!!

Science for Writers

Continued from Page 2, Column 5

panelist began with a short commentary on his or her experience with writing about science for the general public.

"My whole career has been devoted to trying to speak to people about science who are not the canonical science readers," said Wertheim. She explained how she tried to write especially for women and younger readers, even publishing pieces in Vogue while she still lived in Australia and writing an educational mini-series to appeal to teenage girls. Unfortunately, the American editors of Vogue refused to publish her scientific articles.

"The hardest thing was to write science for teenage girls," said Wertheim. She had to be supremely aware of the audience, remembering their interests and alluding to cultural references that they could recognize.

"How do we speak to people who bought A Brief History of Tim and never got past chapter one?" Wertheim said. Among the tips she gave, she indicated the importance of locating science in the wider cultural landscape of history, philosophy, theology, arts and other fields of thought. "There is this widespread public hunger to hear about the widespread beauty of science that isn't being met," she said. To satisfy this craving, the Institute of Figuring, a feral science organization that Wertheim founded, sponsors lectures that present scientific ideas to the public in an interesting and relevant manner.

Next, Koch stood to give his opening remarks.

"I find myself here to my surprise," he said. "I think of myself as a scientist and only as a scientist."

Yet, he did emphasize the importance of writing in science.

"It is essential to learn how to communicate cleanly and concisely," said Koch.

Koch acknowledged that writing for scientists was easier because they shared a language and jargon. Koch emphasized that. When writing for the general public, the clarity of the writing reflects the writer's understanding of the subject from all possible angles.

Furthermore, he emphasized

the importance of explaining why the scientific questions were important by connecting them to the rest of the universe. He noted that it was important not to talk down to the audience by imagining what the ideal reader would want to know. To make sure that the writing is understandable, people in many disciplines should read the manuscript and offer concrete feedback.

Later in his speech Koch emphasized that a science writer for the general public cannot please everybody. Because the writer has to simplify concepts to make them understandable, many scientists object to the resulting generalizations.

"You can't write for the experts if you're writing for the wider public," said Wertheim, agreeing with Koch.

Mlodinov then stood up to share his experiences.

"My motivation is to interest people principally not interested in science," said Mlodinov. "I want to excite people to the romance of science, excitement of science, passion of science."

He explained the importance of finding one's own style and caring about the subject.

"If you don't love what you're writing, you shouldn't be writing," he said.

Through Star Trek, he learned the importance of matching the writer to the audience, so that both care about the subject. This can be done by shaping the story and showing how dramatic it really is.

He ended by expressing his love of science:

"I write about science because I am in awe of all these ideas," he said.

Through the rest of the night, the panelist talked about these opening remarks with each other and answered questions from the audience. They discussed the society of America and its reaction to science and intellectualism, particularly the general public's ignorance of science, which affects policy decisions and many other areas of life.

As Wertheim summarized it, "Science is so much a part of our world."

Stacks From Lloyd Fill the Void

Continued from Page 1, Column 4

a retro trip to the beach as several Lloydies tried to get in touch with their inner Hippies. Along the beach, participants met a real-live psychic who sensed their future was to have a hoola-hooping contest at a 70's dinner, which they promptly did. Clues appeared in episodes of "That 70's Show" on a laptop they received.

In Fantastic Four: the Stack, five teams of four or five people, each representing Mr. Fantastic, the Invisible Woman, the Human Torch, the Thing and the nefarious Dr. Doom, competed against each other and against the evil space monster who wanted to suck out the life-force of all the people on Earth without becoming a Caltech professor first.

The fun began when Mr. Fantastic stole Dr. Doom's scientific breakthrough and bagel breakfast, causing Dr. Doom to become evil and ambush the Fantastic Four from Page roof with vast quantities of water balloons.

Mr. Fantastic then attempted to set up experiments in the sub-basements of buildings throughout campus. Dr. Doom could sabotage the experiments, long bars of wood, by pressing two buttons simultaneously on the wooden planks. Mr. Fantastic could re-enable his experiments by pressing the same buttons. Thus a furious hour-and-a-half passed with the Dr. Doom team running from basement to basement disabling experiments as

Mr. Fantastic tried to repair the damage, all the while with microchips glued to the experiments recording how much time each experiment was offline. When it seemed that Mr. Fantastic had won, Dr. Doom proved otherwise when he removed the battery from one of the experiment chips and applied a voltage to random terminals on it, randomizing the recorded data which had previously indicated Fantastic's victory.

After that the Four received a pair of headphones tied to an electronic receiver and were told to find the transmitter somewhere on campus. Upon traversing the entirety of the campus twice and hearing only static and an occasional Tetris-like theme on the headphones, which proved to be coming from the Steele physics building electronics, they found the non-functioning transmitter laying in Lloyd, one of the first places they looked.

Each team then had to play a Simon-says type on a circuit board with buttons and LEDs corresponding to musical notes (it was Mary had a Little Lamb) in order to reveal the next clue on an on-board LCD to visit the cave of Invisible Woman's monstrous seafaring lover. The cave turned out to be an elaborate pitch-black maze built in one of Lloyd's staircase. The maze required you to climb up, down, and sideways while looking for your next clue without bumping your head

into the ceiling. One member of the human torch team attempted to shine some light on the situation by spraying Lysol into the air and then activating his small flamethrower. That led to some scary moments when it was realized that the maze was entirely wooden and that it could take ten minutes to climb out. Luckily it didn't catch on fire.

Dr. Doom then united with the Fantastic Four to stop the larger space-faring threat by completing another type of maze which required you to slide a pair of connected wooden bars from corner of a table to the opposite the corner. The trick: the bars could only move through a complex pattern of grooves etched into the table that were concealed with a sheet. After a frustrating hour or so, the Fantastic Four finally completed it and received their passwords to the Fantastic Four headquarters computer. Dr. Doom obtained his password by releasing the Ultimate Power; i.e. opening a magnetically-sealed box by connecting a battery to it. Upon inputting all the passwords, the computer revealed the location of the dastardly monster whom we quickly terminated with vast, vast amounts of water from our guns. Our prize for completing this fantastic adventure: tickets to the movie.

Ricketts Snacks on Wacky Stacks

Continued from Page 1, Column 4

that would output the code." explained sophomore Nicholas Hutzler. "For the third, he sent us on a wild goose chase after a bucket of dried cement. Only after we found the bucket did we realize that the fourth clue was on the head of the sledge hammer we were carrying with us." chimed the two in unison. "The fifth he just hid in the remote control to the television, but we had to dive into a big pile of styrofoam beads after the last one. We then made a second burrito out of the styrofoam and some fabric," in reference to the original burrito, an ancient and hoary beanbag cushion held in fear and awe in Ricketts lore. After this long and frenzied quest, behind the door the weary code crackers at last found their reward: "a mini-fridge with crackers, cheese and fruit." Many

Chester, playing Battleship and driving an inflatable shark attached to a remote control boat.

Another stack that attracted many of this year's freshmen was Project Mayhem. First-time stack participant Natlie Szweda described it as "fight club-inspired mischief... putting up anti-Starbucks posters at star bucks, anti-Blockbuster posters at Blockbuster, giving T-shirts we had spray painted to a mainstream clothing store called Anthropology...We even did some binary code cracking." Of the stack's organizers, Christian Gutierrez, Lionel Jingles and Manuel Garcia, she noted, "They were really well organized. We had a little down time after lunch, then were very busy all afternoon."

Maria Ho and Andrea Kung introduced an element of roll play into Invader Zim: the Stack by attaching to their underlings the names the characters Dib, Gaz, Professor Membrane, Ms. Bitters, GIR, Tak, Tallests and Evil Death Bee from the stack's televised namesake. The episode "Zim Eats Waffles" inspired them to cook for said underclassmen a breakfast of waffles. They then set out to stop Zim's plan to destroy the world. As freshman Lauren Porter described it, the stack consisted of "puzzles, clues, hula, basketball with bowling pins and a football painted to look like flying pigs. It was a lot of fun." Of the stack-making process, senior Andrea Kung opined, "It's really fucking tiring. No matter what you plan, you'll still be working until the last minute. For instance, the cement in which we

hid a clue was still wet, so it took only five minutes instead of forty to get the clue out of it. We filled in the extra time by having them use twelve-foot poles to poke at people."

Senior David Griswold showed his underclassmen how to say, "No" to drugs in style with Reefer Madness: the Musical: the Stack. They began their day hanging up anti-drug posters before task-master Griswold showed them that becoming terrorists, a natural consequence of drug use, was hard work, forcing them to don terrorist uniforms and heave water balloons at Milikan Library. He then lead his troop of penitent terrorists to the student services building for anti-drug wisdom from Dean Revel. In the final challenge of the first half of the day, each student set out to find his or her anti-drug, be it the Bible, ham or bits of string. The second half focused on homages to the off-broadway musical production of Reefer Madness with karaoke, clips from the new motion picture version of the musical and brain-shaped gelatin snacks. At the end of this mad rush, the errant youths retired to a wading pool in the Ricketts bar. Griswold described the stacking experience as, "exhausting...but up there as one of my most fun experiences at Caltech."

Sarah Wilhoit chose a more manageable, intimate strategy by limiting her stack to six people. At the end of the day, none of these people had returned to Ricketts and, as such, none were available for comment.

The California Tech

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ROUTE 3

Archives

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