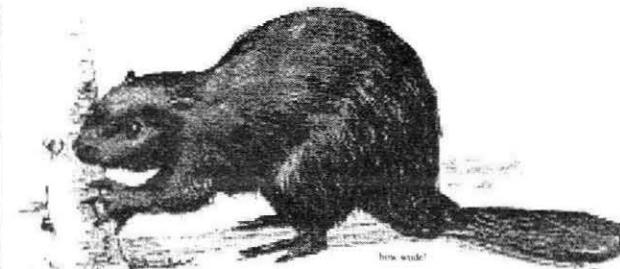


Ditch Day

cometh

see page 4-9



The Replacement Killers

baxter lecture hall
7:30, 10pm

THE CALIFORNIA TECH

VOLUME C, NUMBER 28

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

FRIDAY, MAY 21, 1999

TROJAN WOMEN PERFORMED BY TACIT

BY TECH STAFF

Euripides' *The Trojan Women* is opening this Saturday afternoon at Braun Amphitheater (that weird rock place between Church and Braun, near Mead Labs). The show starts at 4:00 PM. Set in the aftermath of the Trojan War, it chronicles the fates of both the victors and the defeated. Euripides is one of the most famous Greek Tragedians, and unlike those of his contemporaries, his plays are deeply concerned with the personal—individual human responses to the large-scale events which interested his contemporaries. At events where Greek dramatists competed for honors, judges generally considered elegant plot construction and attention to philosophical and religious problems more important than the portrayal of the emotional and moral complexity of individuals. Perhaps for this reason, in his lifetime Euripides' plays didn't garner the critical approval that they deserved. Much more than the work of Aeschelus or Sophocles, though, it paved the way for modern drama with its careful portrayal of complex personalities and psychological realism.

Playgoers should not expect physical realism, however. Although *The Trojan Women* is more modern than most Greek tragedies, it belongs to a highly symbolic, ritualistic form. The words and movements of the chorus, for example, are not understood to take place in the real world of the play, but to help the audience understand previous events or the emotional character of the scene.

But even if you're not interested in tragic form, you should come see *The Trojan Women*. Come to the Braun Amphitheater, sit back and smell the jasmine (it's blooming!), and settle down for an evening of sex, violence, and Greek gods. Although you could stay in your room and do homework instead....

Trojan Women is a TACIT production, performed by members of the Caltech community for your enjoyment. Tickets are \$15.00 per person.

Ditch Day hits Caltech in style

BY DAVID GUSKIN

Ditch Day is both an amazing annual tradition and a memorable occasion for water weapons and free donuts.

On Monday, May 17th, the campus froze for a day as undergraduates woke to the hoots and whistles of departing Seniors crying, "Ditch Day is Today!" Groggy and yawning, students rose from their beds to examine the available Stacks and set forward on an adventurous day away from classes.

The Stacks, as always, came as varied as their Senior creators. The selection ranged from brute force "Break-into-this-cinder-block-contruction-with-sledgehammers" stacks to the intricate conspiracy and puzzle stacks that left participants cheering for more. Some stacks were based on TV and film - stacks inspired by "Dr. Who" and "The Game" - and others with their own unique character, including one stack based on the short story *The Curious Sofa*.

The tradition of Ditch Day, which began in 1921, is basically a grand excuse for Seniors to leave the campus. In truth, however, the concept moves far

beyond its denotative meaning, bringing underclassmen into a stress-induced bonding atmosphere where they can revel in using their brains to defeat the Seniors at their own games.

The purpose of each Stack is to prevent undergrads from entering the authoring Senior's room. To accomplish this, the team of invading undergrads is sent on an elaborate themed mission, thereby incorporating them into the Ditch Day spirit.

As local media and administrators looked on, natives took out the Dean in an enraged tribal ritual. Many super balls fell from Millikan Library, announcing the coming of the Redhead Conspiracy. Bewildered students assembled a functional stargate on the lawn of Parsons-Gates. Competing gang members attempted to pawn off their herbal spices as drugs to unsuspecting students. And all the while, Seniors laughed and cheered from far off campus, enjoying their day off.

For more on the Ditch Day happenings and an amazing photographic spread, see pages 4 through 9. Forget Star Wars. Ditch Day is tomorrow, and Tomorrow never dies.™



The doors to Senior rooms hide clues to the way within - this Conspiracy Theory stack pits students against the world.



Undergrad Jason Chua revels in his new water weaponry and prepares to squirt his way through Ditch Day.

Phantom Menace reaches the world

BY TECH STAFF

The premiere of star wars was on Wednesday at 12:01 a.m., but the motion picture event started a lot earlier. The Starlight Foundation organized a line in front of the Mann's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, beginning on April 8th. Several Techers stayed out there to get the tickets and secure the best seats. In the end, there were 250 hopeful Star Wars fanatics on the list. So, when we got there on Tuesday afternoon, the line was already a block long. We joined the other Techers, some of whom had been there for 25 hours. Most people were sitting either on the street or on lawn chairs that they brought.

After getting something to

eat, we sat down too. The most interesting thing to do was to watch the weirdos there. Some of them were dressed as figures from the other three movies, such as Princess Leia, or a Stormtrooper. Others weren't dressed as specific characters, but instead carried around Star Wars props, such as a blaster or lightsaber. The Sith's double-bladed lightsaber was especially popular, as well as the whole dark outfit. Everybody was very relaxed and in a good mood.

As the actual movie time came closer, one could see more and more lightsaber fights on the street and the discussions about the movie became more and more frequent. At about 8 p.m. the ones who

were waiting in line with the starlight foundation, were called up and received a ticket that said their number in line on it. One former caltech student had waited in line continuously since April 8th had number two, right after the organizer of the group. Every time a person was called up the whole crowd shouted and

clapped for them. There was even a little boy, who waited with his dad. As it got closer to 10 p.m., the time when seating began, the line became longer and more crowded. More people showed up - some who didn't even have tickets, but just came to look.

The media was highly rep-

PLEASE SEE STAR WARS ON PAGE 2

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Human rights abuses continue in ASCIT

Hello all,

I suppose that times are changing. But I'm not happy about it.

I feel that it is my duty, as the ASCIT Movies chair, to tell you what's happening to the movies we show every Friday night.

At the ASCIT budget meeting some time ago, the Board of Directors decided to cut the movies budget in half, which would reduce the number of movies shown from 10 to 5 a term. Although many other projects received well more funding than some believed they deserved, the BoD declared that the movies, a supposedly unpopular institution, deserved much less than in the past.

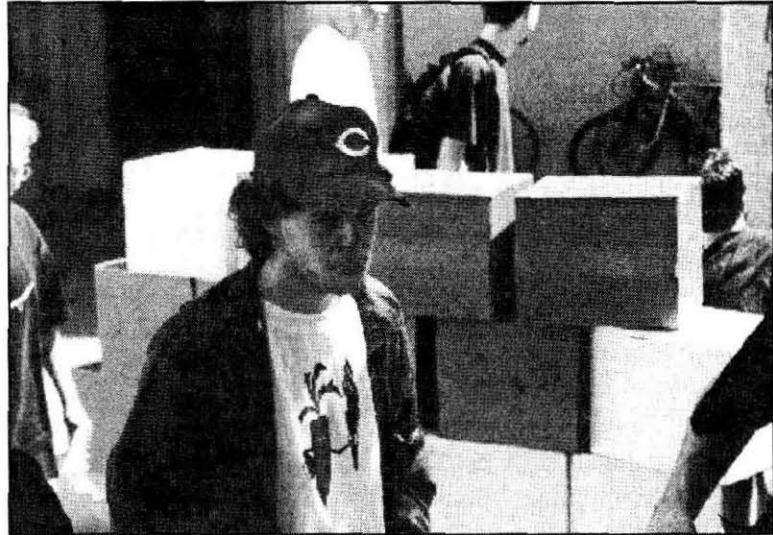
Due to general outrage at the budget, the BoD decided to reserve judgement on the fate of the movies until a student

survey on the budget had been sent out and the data processed.

This past Monday I went to the BoD meeting to find out what the Movies budget would be for next year. Thanks to the mixed responses and high cost of the running the movies, the BoD now felt justified in deciding to cut the Movies budget in half.

Once upon a time, people respected the movies. Now, it seems, people have lost interest in good, high quality, familiar classics. Apparently, everyone believes that "The Phantom Menace" is a better way to spend their time than a night at the ASCIT movies. Well, I can't really blame them. Jar Jar is pretty cool.

Some believe that Caltech students lack the filmographic knowledge to enjoy fine movies. But I believe that, as a species, Caltech students define themselves through misery and suffering. I simply wish to bring balance to ASCIT through the movies. Once we take control of your Friday nights, we will take control of you.



Don't forget that you too can help pick the movies that make the screen. If you feel you are being treated unfairly, you can come to the meetings we have and choose the movies you want to see. Of course, this assumes that there's actually a budget available to show any movies at all.

So, I am now writing to you to ask for ideas. Full funding is expensive. I am sure that some of you don't care one way or another about the Movies. But for those of you who do care, for those of you who want to continue this tradition, for those of you who believe in having

something to do Friday nights on campus every week, I send out a plea.

Come to the Movies, convince to BoD that the ASCIT movies are important, and tell me your ideas for stealing lots of money from Bill Gates. Especially that last one. Show the ASCIT BoD how wude they really are.

Have fun,

Tim Crosby
ASCIT Movies chair
crosby@cco

STAR WARS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

resented. Several reporters with cameras were walking around and interviewing people standing in line about their expectations for the movie and why they were waiting so long. We were also present when a CBS reporter got into a fight with an ABC driver about a parking spot.

At 10 p.m., security opened the doors and we could finally go in. First, of course, went the people who had numbers from the line. The tickets were checked four times and we were lead through a long aisle surrounded by people and reporters. Also present was a group of christian demonstrators

holding signs, reading "the force is a tool of satan" and other interesting phrases.

When we came into the theatre, the Techers who were in front of the line had taken over a whole row and therefore saved us some of the best seats. Now the party began. Some were shouting "we made it!" and hugged each other; others continued their lightsaber fights which they had practiced for a long time. Everytime someone with an extraordinary costume came in, he received applause. The atmosphere was very light and joyful - everyone was focused on the show, the premiere of episode I. About ten minutes before midnight, a few people standing in front of the screen started the actual countdown by shouting out the minutes

left. Five minutes before midnight, a guy who was joking around in the front picked up two girls and started running to the side. He fell and one of the girls hurt her patella. This was the only negative incident that happened the whole night, even though more than a thousand people were together in such a small space and some of them were practically hysterical.

then the lights went off and the screaming began. Through nearly all of the previews the noise didn't stop, especially during the trailer for a movie with Leonardo DiCaprio. The crowd was very disgruntled, but then the curtains closed again and the lights went out totally. Everybody was totally focused on the screen and when the sign

"Lucasarts" came on the screen, the music was not audible and people started randomly jumping up and holding their lightsabers.

Then the movie started and all the way through it was really silent except for a few spots when special characters or quotable quotes appeared. And the comments like "oh, that's so great."

The movie itself is a little different than I expected, but really awesome regardless. When the movie ended, the fans left with feelings of wonder and awe. The wonder didn't stop long after moviegoers left the theater and returned home to their less-than-Jedi existences, and the longer they thought about Episode I, the more they knew it was worth the wait.

Letters to the Editor

Please send submissions for letters to the editor to:
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Caltech 40-58
Pasadena, CA 91125

or by electronic mail to:
editors@tech.caltech.edu.

Deadline for submissions is Monday at 5 p.m. on the week of publication.

The editors reserve the right to edit or refuse to print any letter for any reason.

THE CALIFORNIA TECH

Caltech 40-58, Pasadena, CA 91125
editorial desk: (626) 395-6153
advertising desk: (626) 395-6154
editorial email: editors@tech.caltech.edu
advertising email: adv@tech.caltech.edu
ISSN 0008-1582

VOLUME C, NUMBER 29
MAY 21, 1999

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Unsolicited Articles

5 p.m. Monday

noon Monday

6 p.m. Tuesday

noon Monday

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I have a feeling this means we've picked up another pathetic lifeform.

You are weak, Tech Editor.



You can't win, Darth.
If you strike me down, I will become more powerful than you can possibly imagine.

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WORK FOR
THE TECH

The Outside World

By Erik Dill

Starwars. **Staarwaars.** **Staaarwaars.** Nerds across the nation rejoice (and shower for the first time in six months, but only after seeing Episode I ten or twelve times) How Wude.

Moscow, Russia - An attempt to impeach President Boris Yeltsin was defeated when over 100 members of Parliament failed to attend the vote. Of the 442 available votes, 300 were needed for the measure to pass. Charges against Yeltsin included allegations that the war against Chechnya in 1995 was illegal.

Kuwait City, Kuwait - Women were given the right to vote and hold Parliamentary office by the Kuwaiti Cabinet. This measure was supported by the Emir, ruler of Kuwait, and will allow women to vote in the 2003 general election if upheld.

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - After a brief interruption in the fighting, a border war between Ethiopia and Eritrea resumed. The Ethiopian airforce bombed Massawa, an Eritrean port city on the Red Sea. Damage caused by the attack was disputed by the two governments.

Jerusalem, Israel - Ehud Barak was elected Prime Minister, defeating incumbent Benjamin Netanyahu. Two candidates had withdrawn from the race on the day prior to the election. Barak, former head of the Labor Party, has expressed a strong interest in continuing Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

Washington D.C. - The Supreme Court ruled that state welfare programs may not discriminate against new residents. The 7-2 decision made

California's tiered welfare program and a related Federal regulation illegal. The California program restricts benefits of new residents to the level of their home state for one year after moving to California.

Sudan - In violation of a cease-fire agreement, the Sudanese government bombed two southern towns. U.N. aid efforts were disrupted, prompting Secretary General Kofi Annan to petition government and rebel forces to respect the cease-fire so that food and medical supplies could be delivered.

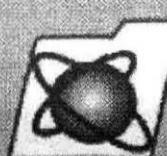
Chicago, Illinois - Ronald Jones became the twelfth death-row inmate to be exonerated in Illinois in the last twelve years. DNA evidence showed that he did not commit the rape he was to be executed for.

Detroit, Michigan - Tensions between African-American and Asian-American communities escalated into a four-day protest after an unarmed black shopkeeper was killed by two Arab gas-station attendants. Kelvin Porter, the shopkeeper, got into the fight after one of the attendants allegedly made an inappropriate remark toward his young daughter.

Neah Bay, Washington - Exercising rights from an 1855 treaty, the Makah Indian Tribe hunted and killed a grey

whale for the first time since 1920, when commercial whaling decimated populations. They resumed in 1997, after gray whales were taken off the endangered species list, and the tribe was given permission to hunt 20 whales through 2004. Tribal elders express hope that the practice will help restore valuable traditions to the tribe, which traces much of its culture to whaling-related ceremonies. The hunts have prompted numerous protests by environmental groups.

The Balkans - The eighth week of the NATO bombing campaign against Serbia concluded. Throughout the week, NATO explained and defended numerous incidents in which civilians were injured or killed. China continued to express outrage over the bombing of the Chinese embassy two weeks ago. Two Serbian soldiers held as prisoners of war were released. Clinton stated that he will not rule out the possibility of a ground war, but expressed hopes that Russian diplomatic action currently underway would prove fruitful. United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan criticized both NATO for acting without U.N. Security Council authorization and China and Russia for ignoring evidence of ethnic purges.



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Ditch Day May 17, 1999

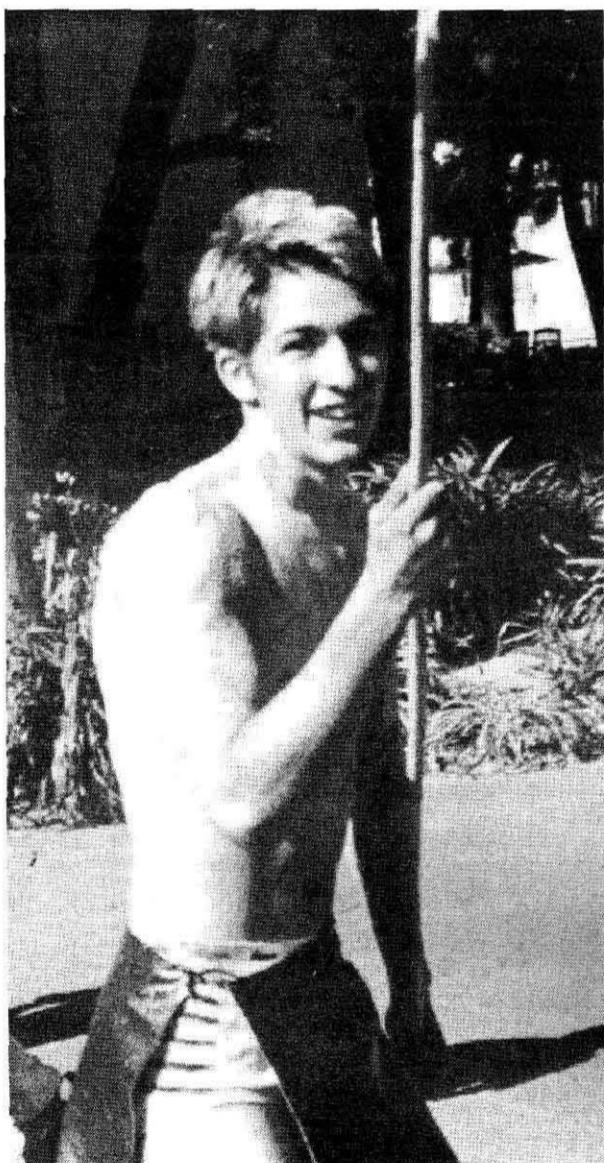
Quote of the Day from *The Tech's* First Amendment Calendar:

"The news is not something that can be rated. The news is what it is, and often it is gruesome and disturbing."

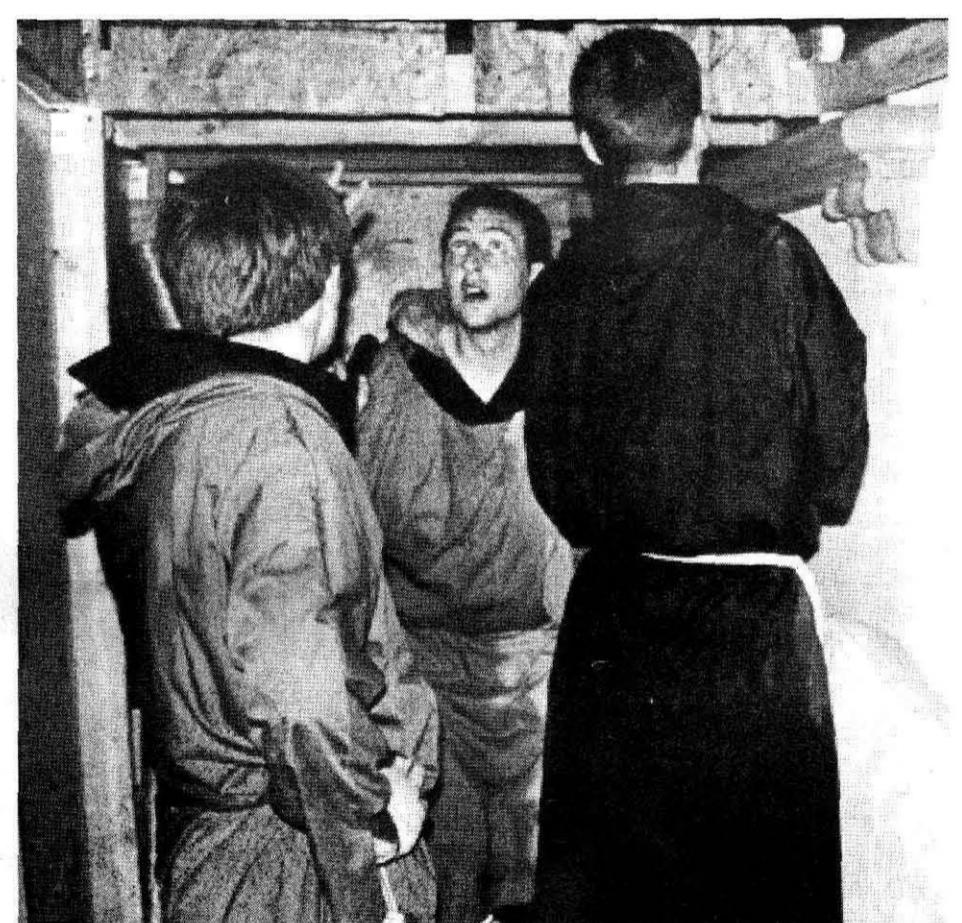
—Debbie Fry Wilson, Public relations director, MSNBC 1997



"Does anyone know how to drive a stick really well?"



"You can't beat our tribal magic —the bullets will pass straight through our bodies — fire, fire if you will!"



"This stack constructed by tired seniors! Be cautious!"

"If I fall, will you catch me?"

"I'll catch you on film."

Techer Male: "That was a girly throw."

Techer Female: "I recall yours going lower."



This is an example of brute force.

"We collect for about half an hour and get a ratio."

"People are walking off with the balls you know."

"Well, we hope the ratio stays the same."

"No man, we hope the ratio changes."



"Hey man, no recitation tonight right?"

"I think we destroy the world...or we save the world."

"I'm for destroying the world. Just on general principles."

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"Go Gung-Ho! Go! Go! Gung-Ho! Go!...Oh...He missed it..."

"Do you think it'll blow up?"

"I hope so."

"Is it time to start randomly pressing buttons again?"

"Who wants to take the implements of destruction?"

"I've lost the power!!!"
--Dean Jean-Paul Revel

"Aaaah! My Eyes!...That's better."

"The local media covers Ditch Day. As usual, they don't get it."



*"They just increased the ratio by two."
"They just don't have the hips for it."*



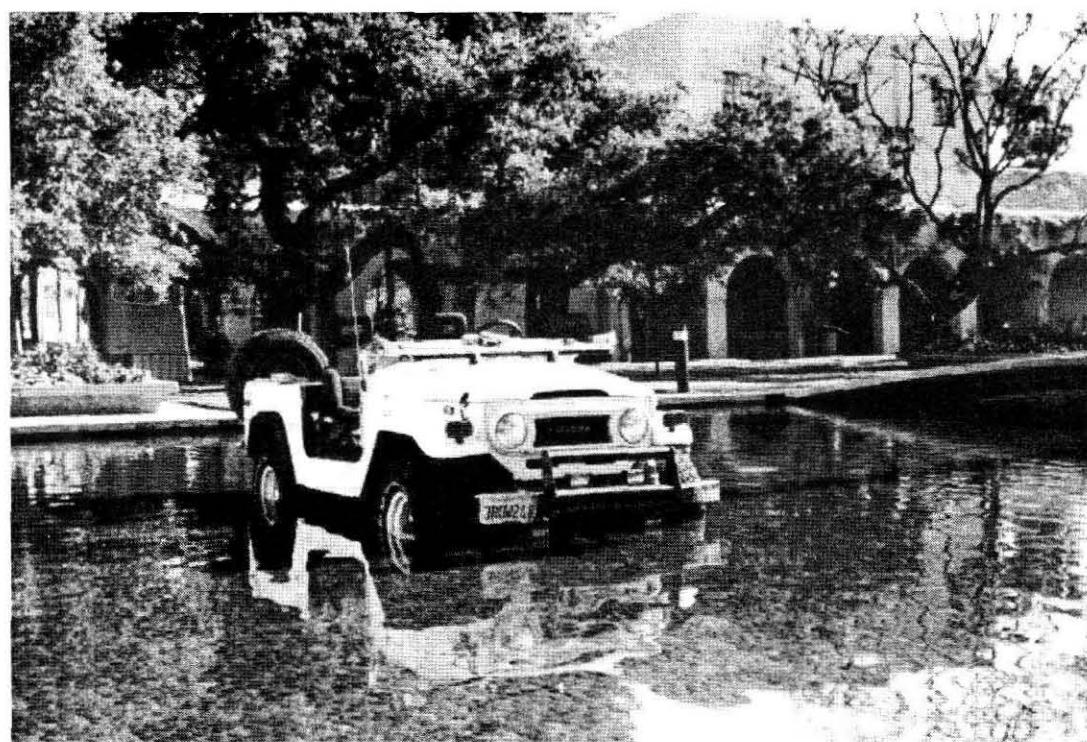
The Secret Service Squad

"You need to sign something that says we're insane."

"That's easy."

"Let him attack, there's no one up here."

"What sort of commander are you?"



Later in the day, Security was trying to figure out how to ticket this and get it towed.

"More fun than hitting a baby seal!"

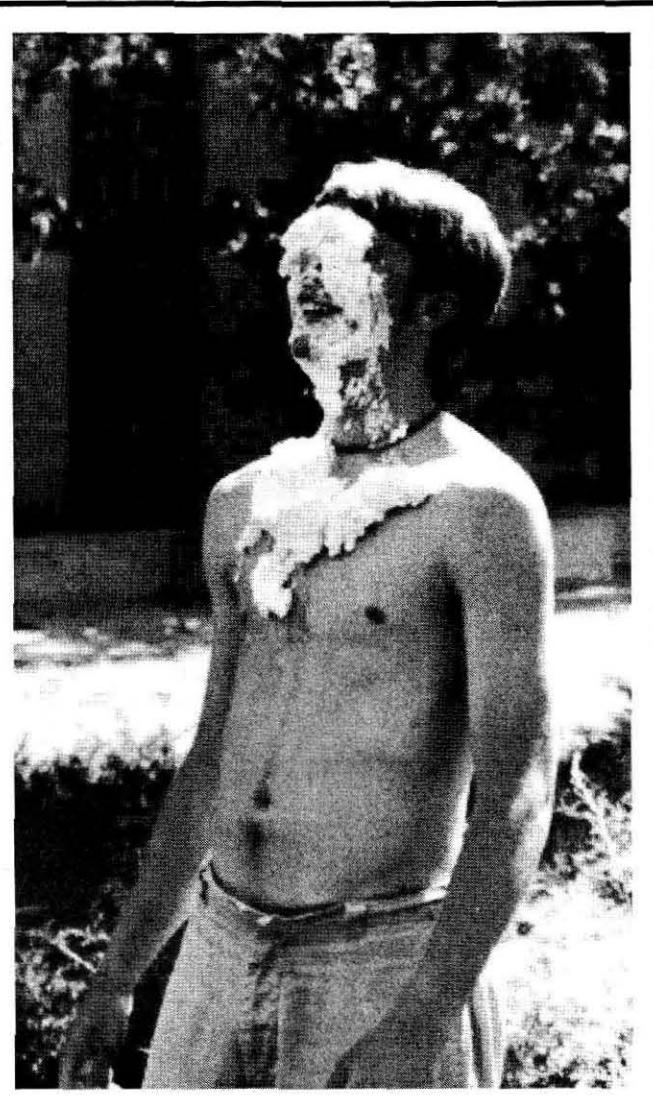
"You just ruined the pond!"



Keith Matthews and Chad Young battle with quarterstaves in The Fickle Fingers of Fate stack.



The X-MEN stack had swipe cards for all of its various members.



Matt Musik is Mr. Whipped Cream.

"We've got a gazillion of newspaper guys out here getting in the way."

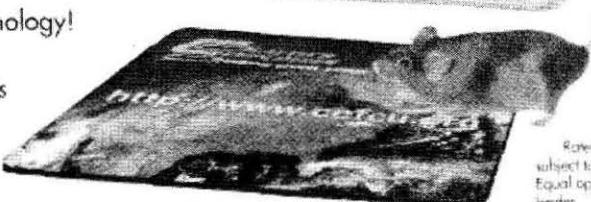
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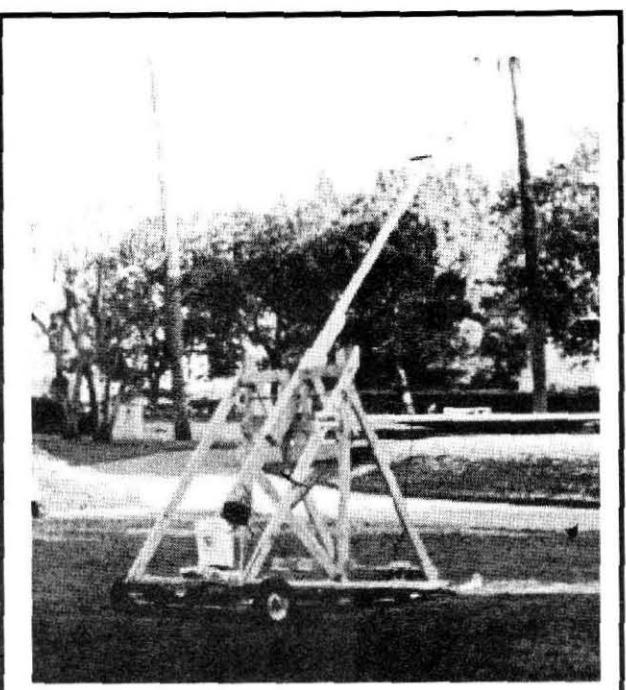
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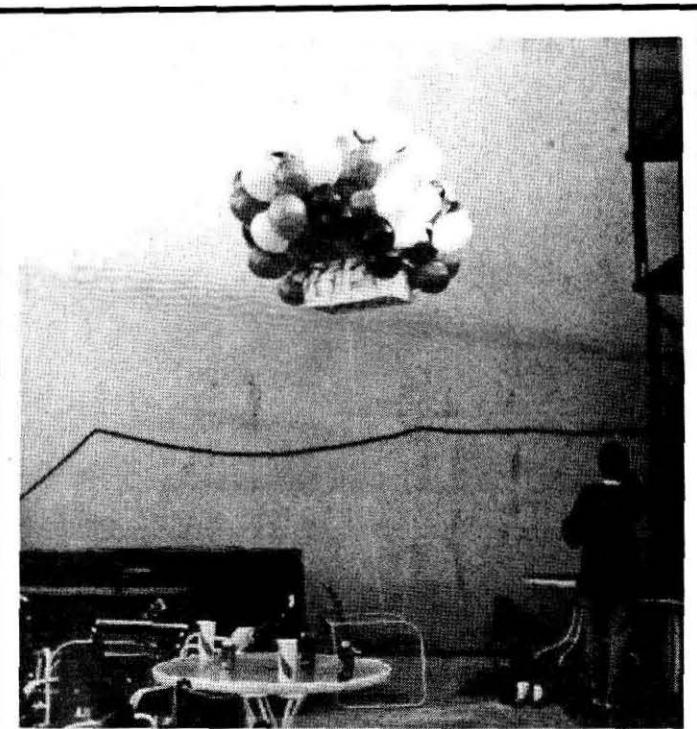
The Game: A mixed stack put together by seniors from Avery, Fleming, and off-campus living spaces



This catapult was mentioned in The Dean's Corner



Members from the Intelligencia stack on the move.

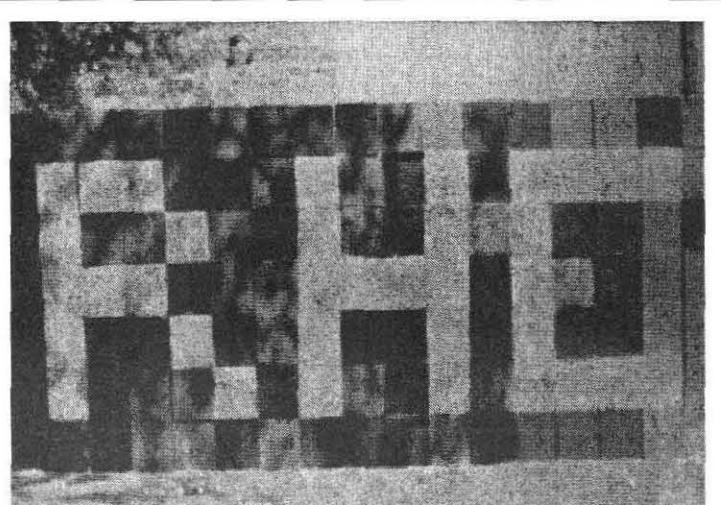


This floating object piqued the curiosity of many passersby.



"It doesn't do damage....much."

"I need someone to cover my back. Duke, where's Duke!"



"You have to think like a redhead."

"You mean run into walls?"

This photo was taken through a red filter.

"We didn't even get to destroy the world."



The fake that wasn't: Kurt Klein's stack involved a four day trip to hike the grand canyon.

*Special Thanks to
The Army of
Darkness*

Tristan De Buysscher

Robert Forester

Atiya Hakeem

Shanti Rao

Kevin Scaldeferri

Chip Sumner

Jason Surace

Sarah Yost



Cynthia Gong shows up at the end of the day to find out how her stack: The Wall, turned out.

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Kate Winslet HIDEOUS KINKY Daily [11:30] 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30
Penelope Cruz OPEN YOUR EYES Daily [11:45] 2:20 4:55 7:30 10:00
David Cronenberg's EXISTENZ Daily [12:45] 3:05 5:25 7:45 10:00
Robert Altman's COOKIE'S FORTUNE Daily [1:35] 4:25 7:15 10:00

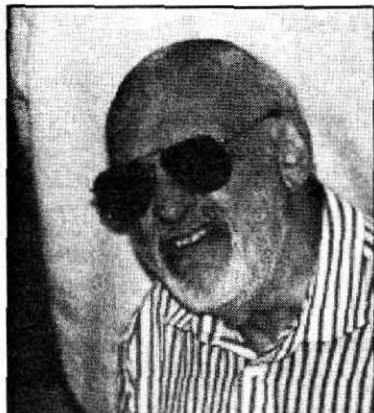
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Dean's Corner

Panic! Panic!

by Jean-Paul Revel



This is the day after ditch day. No actually it is not; it is the day after the day after Ditch day, but that day still reverberates.

Panic! Panic!

The panic is that just like what hits you guys, time marches on, deadlines approach, including that for this column, actually the deadline has past, other things intervening and here I am not knowing which way to turn next to try to satisfy, you mean you looked for your advisor and you can't find her? All the things that I have to do. And I have no one to ask for an E from. You see Ditch Day may have been great fun, but somehow we end up spending the day with our hearts in our throats hoping for no accidents, no catastrophes, none of the excesses that might endanger. Wish that had been completely true. I really had no time to come and admire everyone's handy work. I was too busy drying up. I mean trying drying my clothes.

But I am intrigued by the

catapult that is still parked on the Court of Man. I think it had to do with some of the volley ball nets erected at the other end of the lawn. May be I'll find out at Commencement. I never heard what happened to my niece Daci even though I gave the tough crew in search of her all the clues I had. And I am not sure what happened to me but walking along I was attacked by a band of misshapen Neanderthals. Actually they invaded my office too. I tried to speak to them but they don't understand my Elsasisch. (Actually no one else does). I say misshapen because they had no orbital ridge, no prognathous face, large canines receding forehead or hairy chests which I assumed was the hallmark of these creatures. So obviously they were misshapen. Of course they might not have been Neanderthals.

Oops, I remember my excitement when razzing down the Autobahn trying to get to Frankfurt to catch my plane I passed over a bridge (hardly noticeable as a bridge from

the highway) which said: "Neander". And then I realized that this was the Neander valley, Neander Thal, from where the first skeletons of our extinct cousins Homo sapiens neanderthalensis (was Homo neanderthalensis) were found in 1856.

Panic! Panic! No not panic, Neanderthal!

How do you spell that? I consulted the oracle at <http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/homs/spelling.html>, and lo and behold both spellings are right, -thal being the original and -tal coming into use a little later. There I also discovered that Neander is not a name whose origin is lost in the mist of time, but is in fact named after a minister, Joachim Neumann, who used to take walks there in the late 17th century. Neumann composed many hymns, some of which are still sung today. Wanting to use a Greek pseudonym, Neumann, whose name means "new man", chose "Neander", a translation of his name into Greek. By a strange coincidence, the

"New Man Valley" named for him after his death gave its name to a new type of human that was discovered there.

Panic! Panic!

Where was I, when I got lost in this valley? Oh yes in the Ditch, I mean talking about Ditch day. People on roofs of Millikan, and of Dabney Is that safe? This is a great center of research on gravity what with distinguished Profs. and huge enterprises like LIGO. But bouncing balls? Was that gravity research as well? And I am glad that the only falling bodies were inanimate. And the explosion in the garage? Was that a prank or a ditch day whatchamacallit? Actually one of the things I had to do was to proofread a new version of the Honor Code Booklet and there, in the section on Practical Jokes and Pranks it says they can be very enjoyable, but that one should "keep in mind a number of issues", including whether the "receiver(s) of the joke = think of it as humorous, or will they be upset?" I

heard that the experiment having been done, the receivers were upset, very upset. And so are the people from whom it seems that LN2 and or Dry ice was taken and so are... Besides no note was left.

So yes, Ditch Day looked like a great day and lots of people had fun, but some people need to think seriously about what is appropriate and what is not. Present Juniors take heed - but I am running out of room...

Panic! Panic!

A bientot!

Jean Paul Revel

Jean-Paul Revel

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