Television Star Makes Case For Abolition of Capital Punishment

By ADAM SEARS

Mike Farrell, who played a witty Dr. B.J. Hunnicutt on the popular wartime medical comedy M*A*S*H, visited the campus Thursday to speak about his work with Death Penalty Focus to watch an interhouse committee survey that will all but seal the issue. Faculty Board is expected to recommend endorsed by the Interhouse Committee for approval. The survey was written in due course and administered online to graduate students in May-June, 2003. It covered a range of topics, from gender harassment into questions about the row of living and violations of the honor code, without dwelling in depth on any of them. The idea, according to Heather Cox and Steve Pracko of the Survey Committee, was to identify problematic aspects of life at Caltech, which could then be studied in closer detail and remedied as necessary.

The results for the gender harassment portion of the survey were quite surprising. Sixty-three percent of female and fifteen percent of the male respondents clung to have much confidence in any of four listed forms of gender harassment occasionally to frequency and 32% of the respondents did not believe that the issue was important enough to warrant further investigation.

Continued on Page 2, Column 3

Gender Harassment Survey Disappoints

By K. SZWAYKOWSKA

What with the “ratio” at Caltech and with the slow death of gender equality in our society, one would hardly be surprised to see, from time to time, some small instance of other gender tensions among the students. Like violence, such incidents happen all too often. People aren’t perfect. The surprising—and dismaying—thing is the number of such occurrences. A survey of graduate students last spring found that over 60% of the women and about 15% of the men, had experienced some form of gender-based harassment at least occasionally. The problem now is to figure out exactly what this tells us and what can be done about it.

The coming to light of the issue began at a meeting in the late summer of 2002, when graduate students decided to put together a large-scale quality of life survey to include “how graduate students perceive Caltech.” A joint committee of the Graduate Student Council (GSC) and Women in Engineering, Science and Technology (WEST) was put together and its role was to develop the survey and interpret the results, with some support from outside sources (including Dr. Miriam Feldblum, Special Assistant to the President and Prof. Michael Alvarez, who helped with analyzing data for the final report).

Continued on Page 8, Column 4

Gravity Wells Provide Efficient Travel Route

By WILLIAM FONG

On Wednesday, Caltech graduate student Shane Ross gave a talk in theEverhart Lecture Series titled “The Interplanetary Transport Network: Space Transportation Architecture for the 21st Century.” Ross received his bachelor’s degree from Caltech in physics in 1998 and expects to complete his doctoral degree in control and dynamical systems this June. In his short research career, Ross has already authored over 25 publications, spoken at over 20 conferences and written a book. He has also received a 2004 National Science Foundation Mathematical Sciences Post-doctoral Fellowship. Recently, President Bush has outlined broad objectives for the NASA space program, including a return trip to the moon and a manned mission to Mars. These missions will require the use of fuel-efficient rockets to carry the necessary payload.

However, the chemical rockets used by NASA do not meet this criterion. For example, the Apollo spacecraft used to land the men on the moon were 61% fuel by mass. The Pioneer/Voyager spacecraft launched in the 1970s had outer planets were 46% fuel despite using a rare 170-year alignment of the outer planets for gravitational propulsion. More recently, the Galileo project to study Jupiter was 42% fuel and the Cassini Mission to Saturn was 15%.

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Continued on Page 2, Column 3

IHC Survey Returns Expected Opposition

By KEVIN BARTZ

In a vote at its monthly meeting today that will all but seal the issue, the Faculty Board is expected to rubber-stamp the Student Housing Committee’s recommendation opening Avery House to seniors in 2005, despite a new IHC survey showing undergraduates at large opposing the measure by more than a five-to-one margin, including a majority of those living in Avery.

SHC head Kim Border will take six months to unpack his committee’s reasoning in a sev­ en-slide keynote presentation. After a two-minute rebuttal by IHC Chair Kirk Popendorf ’96, the board will break into general discussion, culminating in a like­ ly vote on whether to approve the recommendation.

“I believe that this agenda item has been carefully and widely discussed by all stakeholders,” explained Faculty Vice Chair Henry Lester, who’s charged with overseeing today’s proceedings. “And that the report to the Faculty Board will summarize these prior discussions.

Although a board vote approving the measure would fall short of commanding ultimate author­ ity, it would be unprecedented for student Affairs to ignore a recommendation endorsed by the Faculty Board. Popendorf’s two-minute rebut­ tal will emphasize the group’s outspoken concern that placing freshmen in Avery would remove an option for students dissatisfied with the seven houses, highlighting a recent IHC survey that shows undergraduates overwhelmingly opposed to the measure.

With those two minutes I will have time to make one, maybe may be referred to public attor­ neys who should not be expected to have the level of competency and motivation necessary for a capital trial. On the inside, Farrell noted, this bias is summarized as, ‘No greater task, no greater pay.’

Continued on Page 7, Column 1

Portrayal Of Latino Lifestyle Realistic

By ROYAL REINECKE

On the evening before Cinco de Mayo, nationally syndicated cartoonist Lalo Alcaraz came and spoke in Beckman Institute Auditorium as a part of Caltech’s Semana Latina. Alcaraz pro­vided techers and community members alike with witty and personal presentation on comics, culture and politics.

Although native to the La­tno people and culture, Alcaraz definitely makes it clear that he is “firmly against politically cor­ rect renotations.” Above all he strives to portray Mexicans and other Hispanic people “as they are.”

Both of Alcaraz’s parents im­ migrated to the United States from Mexico before he was born. Although his father died when Alcaraz was just thirteen years old, the car­toonist’s parents greatly influenced his views and work.

One of Alcaraz’s early pieces titled “How to Spot a Mexican Dad” stirred up much contro­ versy while on display in a gallery. The cartoon, based on Alcaraz’s own dad did not portray the man as “an a­ stronomist” or “a microbiolo­gist.” Alcaraz finds such protests silly because he notes that many Mexicans you see are laborers and yet they are still funny, worth­while people.

Even as a young child, Alcaraz would doodle on the margins of his papers during school. How­ ever, he really got his start as an

Continued on Page 8, Column 1

Mike Farrell, former M*A*S*H star, speaks with students before his talk about the problems with the death penalty and the reasons it should be repealed.

Shane Ross, a graduate student in control and dynamical systems, prepares to give his lecture on efficient interplanetary travel.
Task Force Formed To Address Gender Issues

Continued from Page 1, Column 3

Shane Ross presents one of his slides describing how spacecraft could make use of Lagrange points and gravity wells to conserve fuel. Ross expects to complete his doctorate this summer.

Comet Orbits, Lagrange Points Inspire New Space Travel Paths

Continued From Page 1, Column 4

L1, L2 and L3 (known today as Lagrange points). L1 is located between the sun and Earth, L2 is located on the opposite side of Earth (with L1 and L2 equidistant from Earth) and L3 is located behind the sun. Both L1 and L2 are stable points, thus a small perturbation applied to an object located at one of these two points would cause it to drift into the gravitational wells.

Joseph-Louis Lagrange added two more points of balance, L4 and L5, which were located periocentric to the sun and Earth and collinear with L1, L4 and L5 are stable points, thus objects such as asteroids would tend to collect at these points. Although initial interest was centered on L4 and L5 due to their stability, current research in interplanetary travel surrounds L1 and L2 because a small thrust applied to spacecraft located at these unstable points would send them rolling down the gravitational well and traversing a significant distance. It is by the use of low energy passageways through the gravitational well of Earth that allows Genesis to run on a small amount of fuel. After its launch from Earth, Genesis used a path that circled L1 and L2 many times before entering into orbit around L1 to collect its solar wind sample. Very little thrust is required to maintain this orbit. In its return trip in September, Genesis will once again exploit these low energy paths.

The gravitational well model can be applied to other pairs of bodies such as the Earth and the moon and the sun and other planets, with each of these systems possessing its own set of Lagrange points. By tracking comets and other space objects through the solar system, the interaction of these Lagrange points can be studied. Since small comets travel through the solar system without any energy source, it has been suggested that fuel efficiency can be improved by having spacecraft travel in paths similar to comets. Hence, an interplanetary path connecting multiple Lagrange points is more energy-efficient than a direct path.

Ross concluded his talk by mentioning that the success of Genesis has prompted NASA to consider the use of low energy paths and Lagrange points in future missions. The Terrestrial Planet Finder, the Icy Moons Orbiter, and the Terrestrial Planet Finder. The research done by Shane Ross and his collaborators has indeed laid the foundation for interplanetary travel in the 21st century.

Unwanted Attention Based on Gender

The光电质科技

Unwanted Attention Based on Gender

Male Respondents

Female Respondents

Unwanted Attention Based on Gender

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GSC Quality of Life

Gender Harassment Survey Results

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Ultracold Neutron Study Could Point Towards Supersymmetry

By ROBERT TINDOL

PASADENA, Calif.—Free neutrons are usually pretty speedy customers, buzzing along at a significant fraction of the speed of light. But physicists have created a new process to slow neutrons down to about 15 miles per hour-the pace of a world-class mile runner-which could lead to breakthroughs in understanding the physical universe at its most fundamental level.

According to Brad Filippone, a physics professor at the California Institute of Technology, he and a group of colleagues from Caltech and several other institutions recently succeeded in collecting record-breaking numbers of ultracold neutrons at the Los Alamos National Laboratory Center. The new technique resulted in about 140 neutrons per cubic centimeter and the number could be five times higher with additional tweaking of the apparatus.

“Our principal interest is in making precise measurements of fundamental neutron properties,” says Filippone, explaining that a neutron has a half-life of only 15 minutes. In other words, if a thousand neutrons are trapped, five hundred will have broken down after 15 minutes into a proton, electron and anti-electron.

Neutrons normally exist in nature in a much more stable state within the nucleus of atoms, joining the positively charged protons to make up most of the atom’s mass. Neutrons become quite unstable if they are stripped from the nucleus, but the very fact that they decay so quickly can make them useful for various experiments.

The traditional way physicists obtained free neutrons was by trying to slow them down as they emerged from a nuclear reactor, making them bounce around in material to get rid of energy. This procedure worked fine for slowing down neutrons to a few feet per second, but that’s still pretty fast.

The new technique at Los Alamos National Laboratory involves a second stage of slowing down that is impractical near a nuclear reactor, but which works well at a nuclear accelerator where the event producing the neutrons is abrupt rather than ongoing. The process begins with smushing protons from the accelerator into a solid material like tungsten, which results in neutrons being knocked out of their nuclei.

The neutrons are then slowed down as they bounce around in a nearly plastic material and then some of them are slowed much further if they happen to enter a birthday-cake-sized block of solid deuteronium (or “heavy hydrogen”) that has been cooled down to a temperature a few degrees above absolute zero.

When the neutrons enter the crystal latticework of the deuteron block, they can lose virtually all their energy and emerge from the block at speeds so slow they can no longer zip right through the walls of the apparatus. The trapped ultracold neutrons bounce along the nickel walls of the apparatus and eventually emerge, where they can be collected for use in a separate experiment.

According to Filippone, the extremely slow speed of the neutrons are important in studying their decays at a minute level of detail. The fundamental theory of particle physics known as the Standard Model predicts a specific pattern in the neutron’s decay, but if the ultracold neutron experiments were to reveal slightly different behavior, then physicists would have evidence of a new type of physics, such as supersymmetry.

Future experiments could also exploit an inherent quantum limit of the ultracold neutrons to bounce no lower than about 15 microns on a flat surface-or about a fifth the width of a human hair. With a cleverly designed experiment, Filippone says, this limit could lead to better knowledge of gravitational interactions at very small distances.

The next step for the experimenters is to return to Los Alamos in October. Then, they will use the ultracold neutrons to study the neutrons themselves. The research was supported by about $1 million funding from Caltech and the National Science Foundation.

Research Summarized

By MARK WHEELER

‘Zombie’ Behaviors Studied

Longtime collaborators Christoph Koch and Francis Crick (of DNA helix fame) think that routine behaviors that we perform constantly without even thinking—"zombie agents," they call them—are so much a central facet of human consciousness that they deserve serious scientific attention. In a new book titled The Quest for Consciousness: A Neurobiological Approach, Koch writes that only a subset of brain operations is to return to Los Alamos in October. Then, they will use the ultracold neutrons to study the neutrons themselves. The research was supported by about $1 million funding from Caltech and the National Science Foundation.

Historical Interviews Online

The Oral Histories Online Project began in the fall of 2002, and brings selected interviews to the public in digital text form. Approximately 30 in-depth interviews from the fields of biology, chemistry, geology, physics, astronomy, environmental science, and social science are currently online, and additional interviews continue to be added.

Beckman Receives Award

In the mid-1930s, Arnold O. Beckman, then an assistant professor of chemistry at Caltech, solved a problem confronting the California citrus industry: how to get a rapid and accurate measure of the acidity of lemon juice. His pH meter—a faster and simpler acid and alkaline measuring device—revolutionized instrumentation.

The development of the Beckman pH meter was designated a National Historic Chemical Landmark in a special ceremony at Caltech. The American Chemical Society, the world’s largest scientific society, sponsored the landmark program.
COMMEN1'ARY

When?

Catharsis

The Asian vs non-Asian perspective in the Far East Asian population is

4 THE CALIFORNIA TECH

This Week in ASCIT

Galen on Non-Academic Catharsis

By GALYN LORAM

Well, after a long hiatus from the writing block, I figured I would write about something a bit “lighter” than the normal overarching concerns of what the political winds of Caltech bring us. No, there will be nothing on house renovations or the Avery issue that the Faculty Board will decide today; I thought I’d encourage all of you (not just the undergrads either!) to get out and join a sport or a musical group. Picking your classes for first term is coming up soon, so I thought that now seemed as good as a time as any to write about it.

Let’s start with something about as trivially obvious as it gets: Caltech is hard. And stressful. You can’t escape from at least some people, at times monotonous, lots of science and math, a few student body, and a common disbelief in the existence of anything outside of the 50 foot radius exuding from the edges of campus that can start a dialogue. Sadly, as always (May 3, 2004).

So what can we do about Caltech being hard and stressful?

After all, if you had a chance to plow through the manifesto that was my summary of the Honor Code poll, you might have noticed that I attributed nearly half of all honor system violations to people cracking from stress, so clearly it is a problem. Not to mention that countless studies have demonstrated the detrimental effects on learning (for example, Newspaper, JW et al. (1999). Archives of General Psychiatry on memory and cognitive function, So it seems like it would be great if we could figure out some way to keep Caltech premittly stressful, though, perhaps not quite as stressful as it is now. Exercise has been shown to be incredibly good for stress relief (as opposed to appealing to a given source, as is the case of the first 10 on Google were anything that I put much more stock in than my herbal remedies). I just appeal to the fact that searching for “Effects of Exercise on Stress” gave 314 million entries on Google.

“I’ve even been statistically demonstrated that the athletes at Caltech, on average, have higher GPa’s than the non-athletes.”

I know that since the fateful day when within the same hour both my Math 1b TA and a friend encouraged me to start up Yoga, it’s been a dramatic shift. And I think that if you talk to virtually anyone who does a sport here, they’ll be happy to catalog the beneficial effects it’s had on their life. It’s even been statistically demonstrated that the athletes at Caltech, on average, have higher GPa’s than the non-athletes (and these people put in, 15, or more hours a week on their sport)! As a note, I think that we’re the only school in the entire world where it’s true that the athletes have higher GPa’s than the non-athletes, but still.

So, if you don’t want to go cold-turkey into 20 hours a week of sports, why not start yoga or basketball or swimming? A couple of hours a week goes a long way, and despite your screams about having no free time, I can assure you that nearly everyone here has two or three hours that could easily be recouped with the greater efficiency found when you’re happy (exercise also has dramatic effects on depression) and less stressed. Personally, I think that it’s a travesty that Caltech doesn’t require PE for every term for all four years. But I bet I’m in the minority there.)

But ok, I’m content to accept that there are people who just hate sports. While I bet half the school was “picked last in gym class.” I’m sure the experience was more traumatic for some than others. So then pick up music!

When I sat on admissions last year I was flabbergasted by the number of amazing musicians that we have here. People who were all state, who had won countless awards, were band president, etc. And then there are those of us (like me) who suck, but enjoy playing none-the-less. There are places for both of us; the concert-band is really low-strung, and just a nice chance to blow a few notes on your “horn (and it’s open to everyone—no experience necessary, sors, alums, staff, etc. We have all types, and even more diversity would be awesome); there are chamber groups for those with true musical talent. Not to mention choral groups (both glee club and a cappella), string orchestras, the whole gaudy. And the bands even have people from Ot (think, meeting new people! The excitement)

So, to make a long story short, it’s almost time to register for classes. When you’re signing up and thinking about take 77 units with this term, realize instead that you’ll be much happier if you take 45, and have six of those “pseudo-units” of band and PE. And remember, you only need an average of 40.5 units/term to graduate.

Letter to the Editor:

Discussion on Diversity Continues

After International Week, Debate Over Diversification of Ug Population Endures

Dear Editor,

While I am happy that the discussion on diversity is ongoing, it is disappointing to note its diminishing. Recent meetings and Institute Programs Committees are currently underway to address this issue that the Faculty Board will issue that the Faculty Board will

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**Dangerous Sport of Street RPS Gains Following, Fans**

By HAMILTON FALK

We do not condone street RPS. Why is this important you might ask? Hope to clear up just what street RPS is, and why it is dangerous, unnecessary and a drain on society. Some of you might have heard this recently, as the RPS craze is sweeping the nation. Street RPS (Rock, Paper, Scissors) and if you don’t get in on it you’re just not cool.

Not many people have been playing RPS for hundreds, if not millions, of years, but it has recently become popular in its current form, in which skill and athleticism are used to eliminate the chance to the point that a trained RPS player will defeat amateur RPS players at will.

This combination of gambits, reads and other advanced techniques a skilled player can use to win many of the contests that are decided by RPS.

For example, say you and a friend have found some buried treasure, and inside there is one large diamond, and a can of diet Coke. Sure you will resolve the who gets to have the large diamond and who is stuck with the sub quality soft drink through a game of RPS. With a winning strategy an RPS player can employ these kind of moves as well as do in professional RPS tournaments, perhaps earnative spots on the world RPS tour by one of the companies that uses professional players for advertising.

Unfortunately the rise of RPS as a professional sport is not all fun and games. A dangerous sport of street RPS has been adopted, known as “RPS.” Most of the RPS clubs here at Caltech, and the otherwise helpful stuff of the World RPS Society were unwilling to give me more information than that street RPS was being played on the streets for farm money, whatever you have and in general this mystical form of RPS is hard to define.

I did manage to interview one member of the Caltech RPS club who said “I lost my brother to street RPS. He was playing for drugs or farm money, whatever you have and in general this mystical form of RPS is hard to define.”

“RPS is a dangerous sport of street RPS. I know my paper doll gambit would defeat you!”

Player Two: You see right through you usually if playing at RPS you need not fear you.

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Your suggestion and

You didn’t win.

(They shake hands)

Player One: The tides have turned.

(They again spar, with player two resorting to rock once more)

Player Two: Ahh! I know my paper doll gambit would defeat you!...
THE CALIFORNIA TECH COMMMENTARY MAY 10, 2004

UCLA Summer Research/Study Pro UCLA Summer Research/Study Program:
Locations in Los Angeles or Fairbanks in Alaska (ALL EXPENSE PAID and weekend excursions to Denali Park and Arctic Circle, for Alaska location ONLY!!) Experience will compose of innovative, HANDS-ON science and engineering research related to environmental and communication technologies using spectrum frequency which includes lasers and microwaves. Both undergrads and graduates welcome, SEND resumes to SummerUCLARes@IFSHE.org.
Facility Board to Vote Today On SHC Proposal for Frosch in Avery

Continued from Page 1, Column 2

two, points," said Popendorf. "I'll present the numbers of how many are opposed from the survey, the main reasons why they're opposed and a brief summary of the other survey results."

Of a donor:colle.edu-record 442 student respondents, 341-78%—opposed opening Avery to freshmen in 2003, while just 61-14%—supported the idea. Only 11% agreed that Avery’s community would be healthy for freshmen, while 76% expressed concern that an Avery with freshmen would be a loss for students seeking an alternative to the seven on-campus houses.

"I think overall the IHC was satisfied with the results," said IHC Secretary Joanna Cohen ’05. "Our stand the whole time is that we were representing the students and that turned out to be the case. The purpose of the survey was to gauge student opinion."

Avery rights advocate Neil Tiwari ’05, however, said one must understand the reasoning those opposed before drawing any conclusions. "I think what matters most is not how many are against but the reasons why," he said. "Also, how many of the undergraduates are against the idea tells us little more than we already knew."

Likewise, many administrators already suspected to see results like these and had previously questioned the need for such a survey. Campus Life Director Tom Munson, for instance, said after the SHC released its recommendation that he didn't think a survey was a good idea. "What would you do, you're asked, 'That [students in the on-campus houses] don't like the idea? That's not new news.'"

Still, the sheer numbers of students against the plan may be difficult for advocates to overcome. Perhaps the most striking demographic was the ballooning within Avery, long thought to be a base of support, where 16 voted against the measure and just 13 in favor, with six indiffrent.

The result was the survey’s comprehensiveness in-house survey by the Avery Council which concluded that residents leaned solidly in support.

Supporters questioned the legitimacy of the IHC’s within-Avery results, given that it polled some what fewer undergraduate residents—37, compared to 60 in the council’s survey. "That result is meaningless because the sample size is too small," said campus pundit and council member Alex Shim ’05. "I believe the ratio who support it is somewhat higher," added fellow member Jason Yosi

Anecdotal credibility to his claim, many in Avery said the IHC’s survey was simply one poll too many. "I didn’t vote this time because I already voted the last time!" exclaimed Martin Suchara ’06, who said he would've again clicked in a tally of support. Others complained that the survey closed too early. "I put it off for a number of days so I could collect more numbers," said Yosi, "but then it closed at midnight Friday morning instead of midnight that night."

But IHC opponents said their figures backed up their own interpretation of the council’s results, which divided support and opposition into two levels apiece. Although many more expressed the milder of the two levels of support than the milder of the two levels of opposition, residents were about equally polarized among the extremes, with as many calling the plan a "horrible idea" as those tugging it a "great idea."

"The number they had on the lowest level of support was actually pretty close to the number they had on the highest level," said Cohen. "Similarly, our Avery numbers were very close to 50-50—pretty much an even split."

The survey was the result of collaboration between the IHC, Political Science Professor Michael Alvarez, Elizabeth Feniagüe ’05 and Tiwari, who hammered out particulars on wording and choice of questions.

Another interesting result was the breakdown of those with whom students have discussed the matter—97% have talked it over with someone, including 54% who’ve jibbed with the IHC, 24% with the Avery Council and a surprisingly high 12% with administrators. "It says a lot about how passionate students are about this issue," said Cohen.

Respondents also felt that the support of nearly all governing bodies, including a majority of undergraduates, is a prerequisite for moving forward with the plan. A commanding 74% felt that undergraduates should first vote to approve, 69% felt the idea should also win the IHC’s backing and 64% pointed to the Avery Council. Even the support of the Graduate Student Council, hardly a peripheral force in Avery negotiations thus far, is critical before proceeding, according to 31% of students.

The poll’s findings will underpin Popendorf’s address to the Facility Board today. "We did this because we have had response from a huge number of students who have expressed that the students are largely opposed to this plan," she maintained, "and they’re concerned that the administration would go ahead with this plan when so many students oppose. Hopefully this will carry some weight in showing that there is a large number of students opposed."

Tiwari will also be present at today’s meeting, although Lester did not allow him speaking time. "I primarily plan to defend the council’s positions in light of this survey," he said.

If the Facility Board votes for the measure today, the two-month-long debate on freshmen in Avery may finally come to a close. The IHC has no scripted plans to continue its opposition—nothing like the game plan it minted after the SHC handed down its initial recommendation. "If there’s still a motivated and active group of students who are opposed to the plan we would of course still be voicing that," explained Popendorf, "but we would also try to help Avery move forward."

And very few—not even Popendorf—expect the Facility Board to vote against the recommendation. "I don’t think that the faculty currently have any motivation to reject it," she said, "although my hope is that they will give some consideration to the overall view of the student body and that they have considered the impact it will have."

Administrators agreed too that the board is unlikely to ignore a plan the SHC crafted after long deliberation. "The point is not to re-enact four hours of discussion," even if the committee spent over four hours and I personally spent more than that," said Borde, "I’d like to think that yeah, it wasn’t a waste of time."

How Do You Feel About Opening Avery to Freshmen in 2005? Yes 14% No 70% Indifferent 0%

Current Avery Residents: How Do You Feel about Opening Avery to Freshmen in 2005? Yes 37% No 60% Indifferent 3%

Avery Would Have a Community That is Good for Freshmen Agree 11% Indifferent 12% Disagree 77%

Whom Have You Spoken To?

Other 4%

Administrators 3%

Faculty 5%

Graduate Students 5%

IHC Members 15%

Avery Council 6%

Off Campus 10%

Students Who Live in the Seven Houses 25% We Would Lose Avery as an Alternative for those who do not like the House System Agree 13% Disagree 11% Indifferent 76% We seek a motivation to reject it," she said, "although my hope is that they will give some consideration to the overall view of the student body and that they have considered the impact it will have."

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Lalo Alcaraz, artist of daily comic “La Cucaracha,” tries to offer provocative commentary through comedy. His comic is run in over sixty newspapers nationwide.

Alcaraz Avoids Politically Correct Ideas When Designing His Comic

Lalo Alcaraz: “Once I designed a cartoon where the drug culture was shown in a bad light. Someone from the Congressional Safe Schools Commission wrote me a letter, saying ‘Don’t do that.’ I thought that was absurd. If you have a comic strip and you are trying to show the problems of the world, I believe you should tell the truth, even if it offends someone.”

D. K. Kem/De California Tech

Death Penalty Unfair To Handicapped, Poor

Continued from Page 1, Column 3

“they that has the capital don’t get the punishment.” He also quoted Supreme Court Justice Ginsburg, who remarked, “People who are well represented at trial do not get the death penalty.”

Continuing with the lecture, he added that the death penalty system is prone to error. By nature of its permanence, there is a certain point at which newly discovered evidence of innocence cannot be presented. For this reason, the standard of conviction needs to be held extremely high. Yet, since the 1970s when the penalty was reenacted more than 100 have been convicted wrongly and 26 executed. Around 900 have died.

Farrell also decrites the execution of inmates convicted of child­hood crimes and the mentally damaged or retarded. Executing the insane has been ruled cruel and unusual punishment and is against international law. But the Supreme Court has allowed that defendants may be forced to take antipsychotic medication to be same for trial or execution.

The continued existence of the death penalty is “not about justice,” Farrell said. “It’s about politics.” Despite polls which indicate renewed opposition of around half the population, politicians wish to be seen as “tough on crime,” and may lose ground if they show weakness on the issue. Farrell mentioned that the situation was reversed in Europe, where he says strong leaders have made a difference, shaming their “perennially gutless” American counterparts.

But Farrell never really examined this function of the capital punishment in the service of justice during the talk, other than to discount the amount of closure it gives to victims’ families. The death penalty is currently society’s highest reparation for crime, beyond which anything else is inhumane or cruel and unusual.

It provides justice for the most heinous of offenses and its chief alternative is life without parole (LWOP). For every story about the wrongful conviction, 11th hour appeal, or years late exoneration, there are 9 more tales of horror being visited on innocent people. Emotional stories exist for both sides and all of them demand action.

Farrell argued that, “a human being is more than his or her worst act,” and this is undoubtedly true. In the case of most death row inmates this includes another felony and in 11th another murder. The death penalty is the only deterrence the state has for crimes committed in prison while serving LWOP or during an escape.

Depending on your viewpoint, there may be little difference between LWOP and execution: from letting “the state of California exercise its authority to extinguish a life” or simply hiding it under a concrete prison forever. If you ask what right a state has to execute a life, you must ask what right it has to silence one.

In his Treatises of Government, Locke acknowledged the right of a state to impose sentences up to death. However, most interpretations conclude that it is not required as the ultimate punishment.

Since the weight of alternatives is dependent on personal perspec­tive, the limit of authority given to the government should remain for the people and the states to decide.

Farrell concluded that the death penalty has become “part of the lore of America,” handcapping attempts to remove it. His argu­ments for the unfairness of the death penalty highlighted the problems with capital punishment today and the need for a morato­rium and perhaps even a referen­dum on its utility to modern soci­ety. But at the core, they are based on a personal choice which neces­sarily affects others and cannot be considered alone.

“If there is anything important about us at all,” Farrell affirmed, “it is life.”

The president of Death Penalty Focus, an anti-capital punishment group, responds to an audience member’s question.