Still Raging Against Various Machines: Ralph Nader Comes to Caltech

By DAVID CHEN

In the latest installment in the Caltech Y's Social Activism Speaker Series, Ralph Nader, consumer advocate and former Presidential candidate, spoke last week about the growing influence of corporations.

He began by stating that "corporate science is taking over academic science," especially in the fields of computer science, biology, and the military engineering.

He described academic science as open, in contrast to corporate science, which is described as exclusive and often associated with narrow but commercially valuable problems.

Mr. Nader warns against this trend, because the university could possibly lose its independence, which he asserts would do tremendous damage to society.

As evidence of corporate power in the university, he described the plight of Ted Poloian, a professor at MIT, who has publicly written against the effectiveness of the missile defense program. In response, MIT's administration reduced his status, and no one is willing to debate him.

He claimed that “government has become an interested servant” of corporations and defined fascism as a government that is controlled by corporate power. As an example of this, he noted that the 1872 mining act, which allows the discovery of a precious resource on public grounds to purchase the rights at minimal cost, is still utilized. A Canadian company purchased $9 billion of gold for only $30,000 and according to Mr. Nader, taxpayers would need to pay to clean up the cyanide wastes after the operation.

At the beginning of the speech, Mr. Nader noticed that the audience actually had very few students, but still opened with his prepared remark, “You’re all very bright. So what?” Later, he questioned what objectives our brilliance will serve. In particular, Mr. Nader expounded on the importance of reducing the problem with mass transit, nutrition, the flu pandemic, and so forth.

Mr. Nader explained how he became interested in auto safety when he noticed his friends dying from automobile accidents, inspiring him to investigate the issue of crashworthiness. He said that engineers know the effectiveness of safety features, such as seat belts, but that the engineers’ employers had ordered them to omit such features.

According to Mr. Nader, employees at corporations are told, “Love your conscience at the front door,” meaning that, although many product defects are known before their shipment, employees’ promotions depend on their staying quiet about them.

He then described how we are "all growing up corporate," citing three main examples. First, he noted that we all sign contracts, when purchasing a car for example, without ever attempting to negotiate on the contract. In essence, we have resigned ourselves to the conditions that the corporations provide.

The next example was our modern emphasis on superficial beauty and body shape. Mr. Nader continued on Page 8, Column 1.

Kavli Nanoscience Institute Inaugural Symposium to be Held Monday on Caltech Campus

Theodor W. Hänsch, who earlier this month won the Nobel Prize in Physics, will be among the speakers at the Kavli Nanoscience Institute Inaugural Symposium. The one-day event will be held in the California Institute of Technology’s Beckman Institute Auditorium on Monday, October 24.

According to Michael Roukes, professor of physics, applied physics, and bioengineering at Caltech who is also director of Caltech’s Kavli Nanoscience Institute (KNI), the symposium will be an overview of the ongoing nanoscience research that includes the creation of extremely small devices, which will ultimately have applications in biomedicine, photonics, and many other areas.

Nanoscience involves the understanding of the rules of nature as they apply to devices with dimensions a few billions of a meter (in other words, a few nanometers). Roukes will begin the symposium at 8:30 a.m. with an overview of Caltech’s “Big Picture on Small Things.”

Daniel Ruiter, manager of nanoscience at IBM Almaden Research, will follow at 9:15 a.m. with “Scanning the Nanoscale: Past, Present, and Future.”

Hänsch is scheduled to speak at 10:30 a.m. on the promise of quantum optics on a chip. Steven Block of Stanford University will follow with a lecture on biological nanoscience carried out at the level of individual molecules.

Following lunch, Jim Heath of Caltech will speak at 1:20 p.m. on “The NanoSystems Biology Cancer Center and the KNI.” The other afternoon speakers, all from Caltech, will include Christina Smolke, “Programmable Molecular Switches and Sensors: Devices for Converting Biochemical Information into Biological Function”; Pat Collier, “Molecular Circuitry: Construction and Characterization of Coupled Biomolecular Dynamics”; Michael Elowitz, “Slow, Noisy, and Out of Control: Gene Circuits at the Single Cell Level”; Axel Scheeler, who will give an overview entitled “Frontiers and Applications of Nanophotonics at the KNI”; Oskar Painter, “Geometry and Scale in Photonics”; Erik Winfree, “Algorithmic Self-Assembly of DNA”; and Bill Goddard, “Functional Nanoelectronics Devices from Fundamentals (and Second Principles).”

The KNI was founded in 2004 with funding from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and the Kavli Foundation. The purpose of the institute is to foster innovative research at the frontiers of nanoscience and engineering, with special emphasis on efforts transcending traditional disciplinary boundaries to create new research opportunities to attract the best researchers and students worldwide; and to support the cross-disciplinary community through significant infrastructure investment and renewal.

According to Roukes, the initial work of the institute focuses upon nanobiotechnology, which merges nanodevice engineering with the molecular and cellular machinery of living systems; and nanophotonics, which employs new materials technology and nanofabrication processes to develop novel devices such as optically active waveguides and microarrays.

Caltech has had an ongoing interest and presence in astrophysics and nanotechnology—both research areas of Caltech—since the 1950s. In particular, the Institute’s most renowned researchers is credited with the origin of the concept.

In 1959, Caltech physicist Richard Feynman gave a now-famous lecture titled “There’s Plenty of Room at the Bottom,” in which he mapped out possibilities for extremely small devices, consistent with the principles of quantum mechanics. Since that time, research at the Caltech campus and other institutions has led to discoveries that are, step by step, bringing about a realization of Feynman’s early vision.

Founded by Fred Kavli in 2000, the Kavli Foundation supports basic research in the fields of nanoscience, astrophysics, and neuroscience, primarily through an international program of research institutes and the support of endowed chairs. In 2008 it will inaugurate the Kavli Prizes, three $1 million awards to recognize scientists who have made seminal advances in these three research areas.

The symposium, open although space is limited, more information is available at km.caltech.edu.
G.L.O.M. - Greg's Life of Misery

Hey Greg! I just heard Baltimore is stepping down! We should make a comic about it!
Really? Yeah
Oh.
Er... Whatever. There's always next week.
Procrastinators of the world unite! Tomorrow!

That's old news, it was in last week's Tech.

Visit G.L.O.M. on the web at http://www.its.caltech.edu/~colcappy/

By Nathan Lau

Irrational Exuberance

Arthur Lab Notebook, October 6th
Our rabbit intelligence enhancement project is going well.

Some of the experimental methods are inhumane, but we're getting results.

Alice left a mess again... what was that?

There is the slight risk that the rabbits will become vicious abominations if things go awry...

...but that will only happen if they are exposed to particularly noxious chemicals.

And what are the chances of that happening?

We can see you.

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!

To be continued

We Like Coquettish Kali-Tech Bread Life

By Adam Craig
YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY

CALTECH EMPLOYEES
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With one of the nation's foremost scientific communities as our membership base, it's not surprising that Caltech Employees Federal Credit Union provides some of the smartest financial choices in the nation.

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Your savings federally insured to $100,000 by the National Credit Union Administration, a U.S. Government Agency. Equal Housing Lender. Equal Opportunity Lender.
The campaign for homosexual equality most recently found its way into the public eye nearly two years ago with the marriages of homosexual couples in San Francisco. For many, this movement is the biggest social revolution of the present century, but more importantly, it has confirmed that homosexuality is something that society need not and should not continue to overlook. Despite many Caltech students’ apathetic attitudes toward politics and the events of the outside world, a number of students and faculty feel it is important to observe contemporary social issues and provide support for students who must deal with them.

It has been a goal to create a library that caters specifically to the needs of lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and questioning, LBGTQ, members of the Caltech community. Thanks to donations from Mr. Hilderbrand Fund and the President’s Diversity Initiative along with the coordination of several staff members from the center for student services and the Prism Club, just not a library has been established. The library is located in the visible yet adequately private lounge on the second floor of the center for student services. The check out system allows users to remain anonymous and relies on the honor code to ensure that books are returned.

The library contains over 200 books, DVDs, and magazines that pertain to all members of the LBGTQ community from the experimenting student to the supporting friend to the settled adult. Topics of the books include historical information, autobiography, politics, support, health, and fiction. While some titles, such as Mom, Dad, I’m Gay lend themselves to the typical macho and jocks associated with any controversial issue, these books provide a useful aid to anyone who is struggling with or knows someone who is struggling with her or his sexuality. Several titles tackle other serious issues faced by homosexual couples including Couples of Mixed HT-Status and Same-Sex Parenting.

For more information on library holdings, check out http://rainbow.caltech.edu.
Top Ten Reasons for Visiting the Health Educator, Jane Curtis

By JANE CURTIS

1) To find out what kinds of programs she offers that will help me achieve academic success.
2) Mid-terms are approaching, and I need to ask her about my study skills.
3) To borrow a book on exercise, self-esteem or nutrition and find out what other resources I can check out.
4) She is a confidential resource I can bounce ideas off of pertaining to roommate concerns, relationships issues, sleeping patterns, eating healthy, etc...
5) To pick up free health-related brochures, condoms and pencils.
6) To learn how she works with the Counseling and Health Centers to meet students' health needs.
7) Confirm when her drop-in hours and counseling hours are.
8) I think it would be smart to do so before I may need help.
9) To hear what other Student Affairs resources are available in the Center for Student Services building.
10) To say hi.

Jane Curtis, ext. 2961, jcurtis@studaff.caltech.edu
www.healtheducation.caltech.edu

Contribute to the Student Health Advisory Council

Monday, Nov. 7, 2005, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Health Educator’s office,
Center for Student Services Bldg., Room 248
RSVP: ext. 2961 or email jcurtis@studaff.caltech.edu

All students and ideas are welcomed!
HEY KIDS!

FREE MASKS!

Directions:

Sylvanus Griswold Morley Mask:
1.) Cut along dotted lines.
2.) Study civil engineering.
3.) Go on to attend Harvard University as an undergraduate.
4.) Make a significant contribution to the defining of a particular "Santa Fe" style of pre-Columbian architecture.
5.) Establish a trustworthy reputation with the local Yucatec Maya people around Mérida.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Mask:
1.) Cut along dotted lines.
2.) Create in the American people the faith of your students in particular a new consciousness of the literature of Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Norway, and Iceland.
3.) Marry Mary Storer Potter.
4.) Meet with an Oklahoma chief- man while doing research for your epic poem.

ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED!

THESE MASKS MAY INSPIRE STRONG LANGUAGE, ADULT SITUATIONS, AN INTERNATIONALISTIC WORLD VIEW AND CHIRROSBIS OF THE LATUS RECTUM.

The California Tech
Caltech 40-58
Pasadena, CA 91125

ASCIT Minutes

By PETER FOLEY

Mike went to a meeting. Tim is interested in the possibility of buying an industrial-strength blender for each house to make some deconcoction (virgin) margaritas. They might not be useful, though, so we’ll talk about it more. Warner asserts that I use industrial-strength blenders with my special place. This is not true. I don’t even know what that could mean.

“Early November is a time,” declares Warner. He then climbs to the roof over the mailboxes between Page and Lloyd (ie House of Chump-Bots). Without warning (though he is a Warren), the man leaps off said roof into the center of our wee lil’ meeting circle. Blood sprays over all the Bobders hot bods, and as the ambulances comes to drive the poor boy’s carcass away, a voice calls from the heavens, asking, “I didn’t get any on your back, did I?”

Why won’t Mike Turk just shut up?

Mike Turk asserts that “Beautiful people are better people.” I say he’s a shallow human being. I once saw him kick a child for having, in Mike’s words, “a moderately unattractive jawline.”

In the interest of time, I feel it necessary to comment on a poster that one of my ‘friends’ has in their ‘apartment.’ This poster is about 2 feet tall, about 1-1/2 feet wide, and is mostly a big picture of Hemingway in an awesome turbanlook sweat- er. He looks like a beast of a man. Underneath the picture, a single word is written: EN DURANCE. Mike Turk would never be put on a poster like that.

In the proper spirit of ye old minutes, here’s a poem: Rain rain go away, Don’t come back, I hate you. Open the pod bay doors, HAL...”

“I’m sorry Dave, but I’m afraid I can’t do that.”

Continued from Page 1

er claimed that this demonstrates the commercialization of art. He mentioned the people of China are now trying to emulate our aesthetic standards.

The third sign was the ownership of the commonplace and public goods. According to Mr. Nader, half of the federal budget outside Medicare goes to the military. He accused the military of creating more terrorists through its search for weapons.

Mr. Nader also criticized as complicated technological developments coming on, but that no watchdog groups are watching the usage of these technologies.

Mr. Nader contrasted this to the situation with nuclear missiles, which had many groups watching their development.

Mr. Nader also criticized aspects of modern popular culture. He proclaimed that we are living in one of the most insanely silly societies in history, highlighting the reality shows on TV as a prime example. He contrasted modern TV news reports with those from a few decades ago, when they still closely followed and reported the actions of civic leaders. In a hilarious passage, he parodied the line-up of a modern news program, particularly the time spent on weather forecasts.

He emphasized the importance of individual participation in democracy. He concluded that “half of democracy is just showing up” and that it is very hard just to get people to show.