Despite protests, cheaters must still wear red robes at graduation

SUM JUAN
Contributing Writer

Over 30 years ago, a frustrated Board of Control instituted a radical policy: students found guilty of academic violations of the Honor Code would be required to wear red graduation robes rather than the traditional black of a B.S. recipient. Today, this rule still stands, but undergraduate sentiment seems to have reached the boiling point. With complaints and appeals being lodged with all levels of the administration, is this decades-old policy finally up for retirement?

History

The BoC is charged with enforcing the Honor Code as it applies to Caltech's academics; violations are heard by the committee, which then issues punishments. Any student whose offense resulted in the loss of a full letter grade or more would be required to wear a red robe during commencement.

Current Situation

Each June, scores of robed students walk across a stage to receive their diplomas in front of family and friends. Most of these students wear the black gowns that Caltech has used for over a century, but each year, a handful of students are forced to don red. While students and Hawthorne fans know the implications of the color, scale-free guests are confused by the tradition. One confounding circumstance is that members of Fleming tend to wear eye-catching red shirts, even around graduation. Many parents associate the red robes with the House, which leads to confusion when the actual meaning of the gowns is explained. Fliers are now reminded via e-mail to avoid their House color during commencement, but mistakes are still made.

Today, some members of the Caltech community believe that this punishment is the single greatest deterrent to major cheating and that the BoC has never changed its stance. One professor stated, "When I was just a graduate student here, I'd notice multiple directly-copied sets per term. As soon as the robe punishment began, that number plummeted, and hasn't rebounded yet." Another professor, who has served on the BoC intermittently since before the policy was enacted, agreed. "We used to see cases where a student did not original work the entire term. Now, it's rare for a case to involve more than one problem set or quiz."

Some students argue that the robe policy reflects an unfair lack of trust from the administration. One BoC rep suggests that the penalty was created to cut the decline in cheating stems from a fundamental change in student mindset, not an additional penalty: "If you look at the data, cheating doesn't drop off as sharply as people claim. If robes were the reason, we would have seen a much different trend." Another student objected to the punishment on the basis of subjective grounds: "Sure, I can believe it makes students think twice before looking at their roommate's set, but it really worth it to everyone's graduation just for that?"

He's not alone. An informal ASCIT poll found that the majority of Seniors felt that red robes were disruptive and tasteless, or otherwise significantly detracted from the quality of graduation. Unfortunately, the administration's suggestion that cheaters be required to wear a scarlet F in lieu of red robes was met with heavy resistance from Flems, who felt that this compromise would cause even stronger negative associations with their House.

One sentiment shared by a non-negligible minority of professors and students alike is that, regardless of the results of the penalty, it has been in effect far too long to change. "Caltech is a university of strong traditions, and getting rid of something just because it looks 'old' or 'decrepit' would be a grievous offense."

While students continue their ceaseless struggles against red ties, other committees may be quietly attempting to follow the BoC's lead. One instantly tasty CRC member let slip that he had seen a draft of a proposal to force students convicted of non-academic Honor Code violations to wear yellow robes at graduation. A former UASH member admitted that her committee had discussed dressing students who had been reinstated at least twice in robes decorated with flames, but had rejected the idea due to cost. The ARC even suggested forcing professors with consistently low TQFR scores to wear neon green, but the idea was instantly shot down by the Faculty Board.

Will red robes vanish from the ranks of graduating seniors, or will future processions be painted with all colors of the rainbow?

Vishnu’s View

No.

Rebecca Black to perform concert

NEWS
It’s FRIDAY

OPINION
Lil’ B defends Lil’ Wayne (Woop, Swag)

HUMOR
FBI cracks down on housing

NACHO TARNJOSHI
Contributing Writer

After years of ASCIT paying enormous sums to recruit sub-par musical performers, it began to recognize that the student population, Caltech finally has a big-name star to call its own. Rebecca Black, a relative newcomer to the music industry, has announced that she plans to hold a benefit concert at Caltech. She intends to donate part of the proceeds to each house’s social budget, particularly to encourage weekend activities.

Commented the precocious young pop star, “It’s Friday...Friday! You gotta get down on Friday!” Historically, of course, Fridays have taken quite a contrary meaning at Caltech.

Said one sophomore, “Friday, Friday, gotta do more than just get a lab report done on Friday.”

However, he did admit that he was certainly looking forward to the weekend.

Though Black was originally slated to perform as a duo with the inspiring rap wordsmith (also her producer) featured in her music video, she recently announced that her tour would have a special guest. “My friend...will be by my right,” she stated mysteriously before adding, “but definitely not that chick who was on my left.” A tad bit of controversy had initially surrounded the event, with accusations that former IRC Chair Tim Black was trying to help a distant cousin succeed in the music industry. When asked if he was at all related to the young starlet, Black sighed and replied, “I wish.” Though mostly undergraders quietly attempting to follow the ‘Friday’ spirit as well. Said Physics Professor Stephen Feinbach, “I love the music video’s use of special relativity! By setting herself in the S’-Frame, Rebecca is able to move at a lethargic pace while everybody’s rushin’. Relatively, of course.”

He chuckled to himself, and then said the word “Dino-saaaawww.”

Though ASCIT is grateful that Black is willing to perform pro bono, some were confused by his motives. Clarified Black in a press conference, “I know what it feels like to be made fun of, especially when it’s your own talent that’s being ridiculed! If figure that anyone can empathize with me, it’s those nerds at Caltech.” Noting the date on his tour, Black’s producer ended the conference by giddily exclaiming, “Check my time, it’s Friday, it’s a weekend, we gonna have fun, c’mooon, c’mooon, y’all!” The pair then exited to a waiting convertible, at which point Black poignantly asked, “Which seat can I take?” Given that the car was a two-seater, she opted for the passenger’s side.

In the whole, it would seem that Caltech students are eagerly anticipating Black’s debut collegiate performance. So give us your best, SB.

We so excited.
ASCIT minutes

ASCIT Board of Directors Meeting - Minutes
March 29, 2010

Officers Present: Chris Hallacy, Laura Conwill, Juan Diego Caporale, Mario Zuhia, Margaret Chiu, Prakriti Gaba

Guests present: One or Two People

Call to order: 16:14:48.3 pm

Funding Requests: Guests only come to ask for money.

President’s report: Hallacy is meeting an administrator.

V.P. of Academic Affairs (ARC Chair): Chiu tried to ask professors to teach better, but they were busy doing research.

V.P. of Nonacademic Affairs (IHC Chair): Laura commented that she missed having Will at the meetings but had nothing else to add.

Director of Operations: Diego secretly told all ASCIT members the combos to the SAC rooms.

His announcement was set to the dubstep remix of Rebecca Black’s hit song, “Friday”.

Treasurer: Zuhia reports clubs that ask for money tend to get it. He then requested that he be allowed to skip all remaining meetings in order to spend the next two years preparing for medical school applications.

Social Director: Prakriti says all she can hear in her head is “Formal! Formal! Formal!” Other members don ASCIT-issued ear plugs and noise filters.

Secretary: An Unknown Person will write these minutes in the third person.

Scheduling: Many meetings will be held some time in the future.

Discussion: The BoD wants many things.

Meeting adjourned: 11:37:29.8 pm

Submitted by An Unknown Person
Future ASCIT Secretary

The California Tech

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Students were recently given a survey regarding the ASCIT body and the above picture was overwhelmingly the most popular response to the question “What does new ASCIT president Chris Hallacy look like?” Students agreed almost unanimously that “Chris” was male, but were much fuzzier on the specifics of his anatomy. He also seems to have a strong campaign association with men’s restrooms.
**Opinion**

**Lil’ girls should step off Lil’ Wayne**

**Brandon “Lil’ B” McCartney**

The Based God

SWAG Last week when I was recording another 676-song mixtape in Pasadena and chillin’ with my homies at Caltech, I stumbled upon an article entitled “Lil girls speak out against Lil Wayne.”

I was like, “Dang, these kids like Justin Bieber and Willow must be bringing a lot of young haters into the game. Man, these haters are only 5, 9, and 10 year olds. Why are they even listening to Weezy?”

The first thing I did was try to understand where these young rhymer were coming from. So you should all check out my new song, “Justin Bieber,” cause I really tried to get in the whole mindset. I was all like “55 Bieber swag off the meter/50 on my s*** cause I look like Bieber.”

First of all, Lil Wayne is obviously a romantic at heart. “You send a rose, I pick some flowers and send her those…With you, baby. With you and only you…We probably ain’t supposed to be together, but I wonder if our love affair could last forever…If everyone was like you, the world would be a better place.”

Second, as for continuing the April Fool’s edition because it has been distributed every year, read “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson. Seriously, read it before it is spoiled ahead up. It is a phenomenal short story.

Now that the story has been read, the point of bringing it up is that the stuff of “The Tech” should not be the townpeople in the story, stoning the dignity of the paper merely because they have done so as a tradition. In reality, the newspaper has an even smaller bias to kill their sense of reason than those people who had to destroy their neighbors.

The paper received a lot of letters for failing to keep up with his own innovative aggressive record, despite his attempts at teaching. Furthermore, Lil Wayne says that “she gives me a good brain like she studied at Caltech,” indicating his support of Caltech’s exchange program with Cambridge. A gentleman and a scholar, Lil Wayne epitomizes the modern day Tusano universelles.

With that being said, I would like to suggest that these three girls desist from drinkin’ more of that nasty haterade and get somewonton soup until they are older and can make developed and thought out decisions for themselves, instead of pulling publicity stunts like this.

As a fellow rapper, I have much respect for Lil Wayne (“Free Lil Wayne”) and can only aspire to be more like him. I try to be respectful towards females (“*** My **** and *** On My ****”) and mostly abstain from drugs since I’m so good-looking (“Pretty ***” and “The Pretty **** Is Back”).

In particular, I stay away from drugs cause I be lookin’ like Bill Clinton, JK Rowling, AND Justin Bieber. Lil B the Based God swag to the maximum, swag on a hundred thousand, hundred trillion. Check out my new website www.hoedworld.com and my new mix-tape Illusions of Grandeur. You can catch me at Coachella soon.

This is Lil B the Based God peac ing out.

Woo Woo Swag.

The humor page is hilarious, but allowing that humor to bleed into the rest of the paper will introduce bias...

“The Tech” is the primary source of real news for the events occurring around campus. To falsely cover that at any time could be catastrophic. If Millikan Library collapses early in the morning on April 1st, after the paper, which has an article about the building, has been sent to the printer, would that not be a tragedy for both the paper and its readers? Readers do not care when the paper was sent to the printer, they only care about what is in it on the day they read it. As a result, such an article would make the entire paper seem insensitive.

If someone failed to see the callousness of the article, the only bitter “bitch” you could see it as actual news. Would it not be a shame if “The Tech” made fun of the fact that no one liked him pertain to his lyrics (specifically references to drugs and female inferiority), but how many Weezy songs have they listened to? These girls be cherry-picking all day.

No to April Fools Editions!

**Dick Babcock**

Contributing Writer

Newspapers, especially “The California Tech,” are too dignified to participate in April Fool’s Day antics. Caltech’s paper should be as serious as often as the institution it covers: all the time.

“Lil’ B woo woo swagging at home.”

The 10-, 5-, and 9-year-old (in order from left to right) members of the group Watato from the Nile are pictured here as a attempt to add a little controversy to the rest of the paper. I flashin’ derogatory signs as taunts to rival rapper Lil’ Wayne. The youngest member refused to speak in the group’s first interview, ostensibly to send a message to Weezy that he is not worth her words. She is pictured in the middle, here sporting a scowl and the classic “Peace is Cheesy: We at War, Weezy!”-shirt, which the group has popularized.

- starcasm.net
Housing outed as criminal organization

SHAMOL BLAMOP
Whiny Caltech Student

PASADENA, CA—In an unprecedented crackdown by the FBI, more than 30 members of Caltech Housing face charges of extortion, and intrusion of solitude.

Prosecutors announced on Thursday that Caltech would finally be free of tyrannical housing policies as 34 housing associates were nabbed in one of the biggest organized crime stings to ever target a research university. While the names of those arrested were not released, the attorney general's office issued a statement implying that both high profile “officers” and lowly “soldiers” were charged.

The charges cover crimes spread over several years, including several instances of coercion against undergraduates.

One victim, who would prefer to remain anonymous due to fears that several housing “bosses” were not charged, described his terrifying encounter with housing. “During my freshman year, I replaced my uncomfortable, housing issued chair with a rolling computer chair that has actual back support, and I put my old one in storage. When I moved out and went to find my old chair, it had been stolen, and housing charged me $400 to replace it. When the charges were issued yesterday, the FBI told me that housing upper management had ordered their employees to move all the chairs they could find to the housing office so they could force people to buy them back.”

Another case of racketeering occurred over winter break, when Housing officers installed phone lines in all the houses. Allegedly, these officers ordered extra holes to be cut in the ceiling and then charged several houses for damage to institute property. One member of the FBI, who would like to remain anonymous due to the ongoing investigation, said that this particular offense alerted the bureau to housing’s growing power and impunity.

According to the attorney general, these rooms belonged to those students who had issued complaints against housing, skipped Math 1a, or showed signs of happiness for more than two days in a row.

This was particularly troubling to the FBI, as it indicates that members of the Caltech administration may be involved, although no charges have been formally issued.

The attorney general’s office would not comment on suggestions that housing was involved in the disappearance of the so-called “Undergraduate Dean,” stating ongoing investigations.

The Caltech president’s office issued a statement claiming rumors that the new Dean is a housing puppet are unfounded.

“Today, I left a fold-up chair in the hallway and nobody confiscated it,” said one elated Techer.

Of course, not all students will feel the same elation. The FBI announced that any student who feels they have somehow been victimized by housing should immediately seek counseling.

One student, who did not receive such counseling and began facing withdrawal symptoms, attempted to pay $8000 for a $20 bookshelf at IKEA.

Paramedics were called to the scene, and the student is expected to make a full recovery.

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While this can certainly be called a victory for the huddled Caltech masses, there are certainly darker days ahead. Caltech Dining Services, long suspected to be an accomplice of Caltech Housing, faced no charges in the sting.

Known to be quite clever in avoiding scrutiny and prosecution, CDS is expected to grow even stronger, now.

Students may face many an undercooked chicken breast before the true threat of organized crime is vanquished from the institute.

Cattywumpus
by Dr. Maxamilien Benedict, III

Happy April Fool’s Day!

-From all of the editors at The Tech

The California
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