

The Muddraker

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Proposed Core Curriculum Changes Spur Debate and Discussion

survey results

SURVEY CONDUCTED BY
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From a scale of 1 (strongly oppose) to 5 (strongly support):

My opinion regarding reducing core from 50 to 37.5 units:

2.35/1.34
mean/standard deviation

Please rate the quality of the scientific foundation that the CURRENT Core curricula will give Harvey Mudd Students:

4.51/0.64
mean/standard deviation

Please rate the quality of the scientific foundation that the PROPOSED Core curricula will give Harvey Mudd Students:

3.10/0.97
mean/standard deviation

Would you say that these changes make Mudd easier?

No	Not Sure	Yes
4%	21%	74%

Back in the Day

While the Mudd curriculum may seem fixed to current students, it has been repeatedly altered since Harvey Mudd was founded. Below are some of the more drastic examples:

- When the school was first founded, the Core included two semesters of history, four semesters of English, and two units of mechanical drawing.
- In the 1960s, engineers were required to complete a drawing and shop class held in the two weeks immediately prior to the start of their junior year.
- In the early 1970s, the school experimented with a "Natural Philosophy" core course taught jointly by chemistry and physics professors.
- In 1980, engineering majors required 130 units to graduate, more than the standard 128 units required across all majors.
- Biology was not required by the Core until the mid-1980s.

On September 4th, Harvey Mudd students received an e-mail with the innocuous heading, "Proposal from the Strategic Vision Curriculum Committee". The email, however, contained the details of a plan that would make the most significant changes to Mudd's Core that the school has seen in decades. Most students were caught by surprise, unaware of plans to revise the Core, or even that the Core needed revising at all. What was this committee, and what was their motivation?

The Strategic Vision Curriculum Committee, or SVCC, was one of the many ideas birthed in the Strategic Planning session of 2006. Billed as a means of creating a strategic vision for the college, Strategic Planning brought together faculty, students, alumni, and trustees to discuss the direction that Harvey Mudd should take in the coming years. The result of this was the Strategic Vision, a wide-reaching document detailing six key areas in which the college should seek to improve. In light of this document, and especially its fourth goal, "nurturing and developing the whole person," the SVCC was formed in January 2007. The committee was tasked with "considering the entirety of the HMC curriculum", with the intent of promoting student choice and interdisciplinary learning. Chaired by Professor Su, the committee has worked throughout the past year to modify the curriculum so that it would better reflect the Strategic Vision.

It quickly became clear to the committee that if electivity were a goal, then the Core would have to be modified. The current HMC Core dominates the academic schedule of incoming freshman; barring advanced placement or other exceptional circumstances, freshmen have a full schedule for their first two semesters, with no true electivity built into their courseload. This severely curtails the ability of freshmen to explore their interests (academic and otherwise), as well as ruling out some subjects, like foreign languages, entirely. Ultimately, the committee settled on a concrete goal: the new Core should allow enough electivity that incoming students could study a foreign language for

both semesters of their freshman year.

Allowing freshmen to study foreign languages is not an unfounded objective. Recent surveys of Mudders had shown a very strong desire to study foreign languages (82% of students expressed interest in studying a language while in college), and many expressed disappointment that they were effectively barred from pursuing this interest until their fourth semester. Elec-

The Proposal

Below are some of the highlights of the newly proposed HMC Core, as it compares to the current Core:

- The Core drops to 37.5 units total (from 50 units).
- All student have an elective course for their first three semesters.
- Math core drops from 13 units to 9 units.
- Humanities 1 is replaced by a interdisciplinary writing half-course.
- The "lockstep" nature of the freshman Core is marginally weakened.
- Core labs are significantly curtailed, with one semester of chemistry lab, one semester of physics lab, and one semester of interdisciplinary choice lab.
- Biology 51 is now taken by all students in their second semester.
- Every major has at least 9 "free" units unconstrained by Core, major, or humanities requirements.
- Credit is given for required PE and colloquium courses.
- Integrative Experience (IE) requirement is dropped.

tivity has many other benefits as well; as Professor Su puts it, "Students will be better learners if they are pursuing their passions." Allowing for more flexibility in the first semesters at Mudd would allow students to take courses, technical or otherwise, relevant to their interests (or even to take a lighter courseload in order to adjust to Mudd's rigor).

Electivity, however, does not come cheaply. In order to free up freshmen's schedules, sacrifices would have to be made within the Core curriculum, one of the pillars of Mudd's unique education. Deciding what to trim involved "a lot of compromises," Professor Su admits. The extent of these trade-offs would become apparent when the full proposal was released to the student body on September 4th.

Many students greeted the SVCC proposal with shock and disbelief, and not without reason. The proposed Core is a full 25% slimmer than the current

curriculum, and structural changes are made to every Core topic except computer science (see "The Proposal," at left, for highlights of the changes). How, many students asked, could the Core maintain its integrity with such reductions? Was Mudd losing its trademark academic rigor? The results of a student survey conducted shortly after the news hit seemed to confirm the widespread murmurs of student skepticism; most students believed that the Core changes were taking the college in the wrong direction (see the "Survey Results," at right, for key findings).

Fortunately, the faculty members that make up the SVCC were prepared to defend their proposal. They immediately scheduled a Friday Forum presentation and discussion, and continued to hold open lunch meetings so that student input would be heard. These discussions were productive in explaining the motivations of the SVCC, and dispelling some of the rumors surrounding the proposal. They were also helpful in gauging student responses. Of course, many students had wide and varying feelings about the proposition, ranging from complete support to outright rejection. Many students expressed concern that the math core would be unduly weakened by the proposal. Others sought to address the weakening of the "lockstep" nature of the Core. Currently, freshmen are enrolled in nearly all of the same classes at once, encouraging a sense of camaraderie among

Continued on SVCC, Page 4

Nadia's Ugandan Summer

BY NADIA ABUELEZAM '09

My six weeks in Uganda were some of the most enlightening and motivating weeks of my life. I discovered more about a beautiful country called Uganda than I could have by any other means. The summer was rich in personal and extra-personal development and has shaped my vision of my future and my role as a citizen of the world.

Seanna Vine ('09) and I embarked on our journey in late May intending to help out an amazing NGO called The AIDS Support Organization (TASO). TASO supports individuals living with HIV by providing free counseling, as well as medical and social services. TASO helps more than 20,000 HIV positive individuals across Uganda. My intent was to witness firsthand how TASO functions and to try to improve the efficiency of their system using the mathematical modeling tools I have developed as a student of Harvey Mudd College. Little did I know I was stepping into the large and complex world of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa and would be expected to do much more as well.

Besides learning about the welcoming culture and attitude of the Ugandan people, I learned about how HIV has affected life and society in the "Pearl of Africa." I was able to go out with TASO staff to villages far away from Jinja, the town we stayed at, and administer surveys to women and men to better understand how much they know about HIV and AIDS. On an outreach to Mayuge village I assisted a lab technician with testing villagers for HIV. When cleaning up afterwards, it hit me that the fifty or so plastic tests splattered with

blood that I was throwing away were all positive. This was only one testing center, in one village, on one day, of one year. HIV was bigger than I could have ever imagined and it was affecting millions of people all around the world. At that moment, I knew that my life had changed. I was ready to commit myself and my future to combating the biological and social ramifications of HIV infection around the world.

When I wasn't out in the field, I was back at the TASO center in Jinja accompanied by hundreds of



At left, Nadia and Seanna cut a cake on their last day at TASO. At right, Nadia with a small HIV support group (Photos courtesy of Nadia Abuelezam '09).



Ugandans who travel huge distances to receive their treatment and counseling every month. I focused my attention on the data storing and filing systems that hold the important information that TASO collects each day. Besides helping out with data entry when the data clerks were behind, I also was able to diagnose the weaknesses in the database and filing systems. I designed two new forms that capture medical and counseling information that help save space in the ever-increasing paper file sizes TASO experiences. When not working with data, I accompanied the project's team to local schools and talked to middle school and high schools students about science, math and engineering and why they should pursue higher education. Interacting with the young Ugandan generation gave me hope for a bright future for the country.

Besides our work at TASO, Seanna and I enjoyed our stay in other ways as well. We spent a weekend in the country's capital, Kampala, marveling at the hustle and bustle of city life. We were able to spend an entire day kayaking down the Nile River admiring the beauty of the water and its lush surroundings. We also spent a weekend with TASO-supported kids who perform songs and dances at local school to sensitize kids to the danger of HIV/AIDS. I spent some time learning local dances with the TASO drama group, 25 HIV positive individuals who inform villages about HIV and AIDS. As a result of Harvey Mudd alumni connections, we were able to tour one of the largest sugar factories in Uganda, Kakira Sugar Works, and spend

a pleasant afternoon with the High Commissioner of Uganda to India, Nimisha Madhvani. I returned to Mudd in the middle of July with many mathematical modeling ideas I could pursue for my senior thesis, but you could say that I left my heart in Uganda. I left my thoughts and my prayers with my friends and colleagues, with all the young students I visited, with the openly HIV positive people I met, and with the millions I didn't meet but are living every day of their lives with the devastating virus. Every time I think of HIV I will think of Harvey Mudd College and the amazing opportunity it gave me to travel to Uganda and better understand my own role as a scientist in our huge and complex world.

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Who to Vote for, How to Decide, and Does it Matter?

BY PATRICK ESCHENFELDT '12

I know whom I'm voting for on November 4th. Chances are, you do too, especially if you're bothering to read this. Some percentage of the populace, however, is apparently unable to make the decision. Those of us who have already decided probably did so because we feel we agree with one candidate or the other on a majority of issues. With only two parties to aggregate all opinions, it's often not hard to see which party better fits your worldview.

The people who have trouble deciding, then, must be those whose opinions on the issues fall evenly between the two sides, either on individual issues or across the spectrum (i.e. they agree on equal numbers of issues with both parties). This conundrum leaves our divided voter in essentially the same spot as the most dangerous group of voters, the uninformed undecided. Both the person whose well-formed opinions (and knowledge of candidates positions) leave him short a definitive answer and the person who never bothers to consider issues have to find some new criteria with which to evaluate a candidate.

Campaigns try to create these pseudo-issues all the time, and the negative advertising and character bashing that abounds on all sides sickens the people who have already decided. We get to spend all of our time complaining about the tone of the campaign while others are actually still looking for something to lead them to one candidate over the other. More often than not, these pseudo-issues all boil down to some intangible measure of character or "ability to lead." It is essentially impossible to say what things are valid contributors to either of those traits, so many things get tossed in that most of the country thinks should be left out of the public arena.

The interesting thing is that the intangible things are actually much more important than anything else, or they would be if there were some way to define them. Does it really matter that much that you know Obama's exact energy plan or McCain's precise intentions for social security? On some level, it is vital, because individuals usually have their own opinions on these things and would like to see them implemented. On the other hand, hasn't history shown that campaign policies rarely translate well into the White House? The President may have more power than anyone else in the world, but hopefully the Constitution still limits him a bit; he cannot just wave his hands and say, "Look, the entire country now works exactly the way I think would be best. Good luck to all you peons." It is far more worthwhile to consider how the potential President will be able to lead the country in four years under circumstances that no one can accurately anticipate.

Sadly, this evaluation must in the end come down to a feeling, because there is simply no foolproof way to say, "This man will be a better President than that man over there because of x, y and z." It is very dangerous to base such an important vote upon a feeling because feelings are so easily manipulated, so many people try

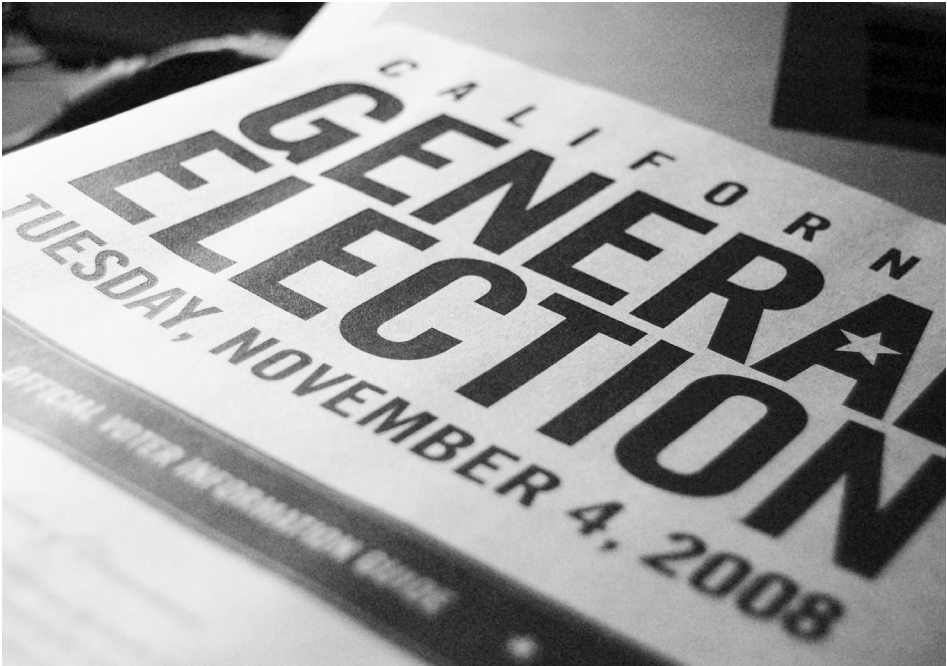
to be unemotional and choose the candidate who holds the "right" opinions. The party system, combined with the limited powers of the President, makes this a very tricky process, virtually doomed to fail. Even if you find a candidate who agrees with you about everything, policy positions in and of themselves are worth very little because they're so hard to implement. The voter is left trying to use broad philosophies as just another justification of character or leadership, saying that the candidate would be able to make good decisions because such and such positions indicate that he has the right outlook towards everything. In the end, everyone is voting on instinct; it's just a matter of how easy it is to interpret.

Is that inherently wrong? No. In fact, it's probably the best way. There is no experience that prepares someone to be President, and no test to show if he'll be ready to adequately deal with the challenges to come. The only real danger comes when feelings are manipulated by outright lies, so what everyone should fear is Rovian politics. When the people who know which side they support look at the undecided people, what they see is a mass that needs to be convinced at all costs. This invariably leads to obfuscation of information, including candidates' positions and facts about their histories.

One danger of elections is that every candidate has to fight for certain pockets of society, so they highlight aspects of their politics or history that those groups will like, and hide everything else. The reverse also happens, as the opponents "worst" policies and actions are repeated ad infinitum. This is what leads to the nearly inevitable "lesser of two evils" atmosphere of most elections, even between two excellent candidates like Obama and McCain.

Even more dangerous than the intense focus on tiny issues is the constant debate over facts. Debate over issues is invaluable. Debate is the heart of representative democracy and nothing could be more useful in ensuring all voices aren't hidden. Debate over facts, however, is the great danger of negative campaigning, when candidates step a bit too far in their statements about the opponent and the public is left confused and unable to trust anyone. Far too many instinctual votes are made based on factually imprecise information. This manipulability is what leads to the election of candidates who become widely reviled Presidents. They didn't convince the populace to vote for them because they were the right man for the job; they tricked them into believing the other guy would be worse.

There are no easy fixes to these problems. Ending negative campaigning would stifle true debate as much as it would stamp out falsehoods, and there is no way to eliminate bias from any human activity. That means that it will always be hard to tell what is truth and what is fabricated, so the voter may be left with a gut reaction to the question of the validity of a claim to guide their interpretation of politics. The important thing is to always remember to ask the question.



(Photo courtesy of Angus Ho '10).

In Defense of Mud(d)slinging

BY KEVIN THAM '12

Like the necessity of love, cutesy rodents, and lagomorphs, "unity" and "bipartisanship" are both Very Good Things You Aren't Supposed to Criticize, especially in political elections. Similarly, like liver, onions, and Karl Rove, "negativity" is a universal bad, to be avoided at all costs unless you want to be accused of "mudslinging" or "running attack ads." I say sod that, because running a negative campaign can actually be a Good Thing.

Let's get the obvious out of the way first: a political campaign without negativity would be boring, and the last thing we need is a boring campaign, what with average voter turnout over the last two decades being under fifty percent. To borrow a line from Christopher Hitchens, "...there is something idiotic about those who believe that consensus...is the highest good." He says that the truth does not always come about from compromise or the "golden mean" and so one who argues for the truth is going to be fairly combative. I agree, with the corollary that the act of debate is fun. Who would've guessed that Fred Thompson would end up something of an internet celebrity ("No hand shows!"), that Ron Paul's supporters could be so vocal, or that, after McCain mocked Obama for having a cult of celebrity, Paris Hilton herself would join the

fray as a joke?

Perhaps on a more serious note, this sort of conflict was actually intended by the Founding Fathers. Back when the Constitution was just being debated, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay wrote a series of essays (now known as the Federalist Papers), defending the Constitution on a philosophical level. One of the more famous ones, Federalist No. 10, discussed how to make sure the government didn't end up becoming a tyranny. And it turned out that one of the best ways to do that was to split the various powers of government and set them at each others' throats, so that any move towards consolidating power by one would be blocked by the other two ("checks and balances" in a more violent light, eh?). The plan was to have them so busy squabbling over governmental powers that the little guy (read: you) would be mostly unaffected. Hasn't worked too well in modern times, since absolutely stupid bills like the McCain-Feingold Campaign Finance Reform bill pass with regularity.

To summarize, whenever you hear a senator talking about the need for "bipartisan" reform or for one side or the other to stop "obstructing" business, RUN AWAY, with one hand on your wallet!

Large Hadron Collider

BY SUSAN TAN '12

On September 10, 2008, an outstanding ovation erupted from one of the control rooms at CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research. This was just a few minutes after scientists first turned on the Large Hadron Collider (LHC). As the largest and most complex experiment in human history, the LHC has drawn global praise and media attention. It was planned that the LHC would circulate its first beams on that morning, but, after an equipment failure, the LHC has been re-scheduled to begin full operation in Spring 2009. The results of this large-scale project promise to advance particle physics even further into the worlds inside atoms and the Universe itself.

The LHC is the world's largest and highest-energy particle accelerator. Located near Geneva between Switzerland and France, this US \$9 billion machine is buried 50 to 170 meters underground and is 17 miles (27 km) long. It represents a remarkable international effort of over 80 countries, over 8,000 physicists, and hundreds of universities. The effort is also filled with risks: many PhD students, post-docs, and associates are anxiously awaiting the completion of the major experiments in order to write their thesis papers, and technical errors and glitches in the system can delay the scheduled experiments.

The LHC will study the smallest of particles at their fundamental level. Two beams of subatomic particles called hadrons, made of protons or heavy ions, will be shot in opposite directions with 7eV of energy per beam. Guided by magnets, these beams move through the circular accelerator, increasing in energy until they collide with each other. Scientists expect to increase the speed of these particles to a point close to the speed of light. Theoretically, such conditions will create a miniature version of the moments after the Big Bang. The Big Bang is thought to have occurred 15 billion years ago, when an unimaginably small, dense, hot object spewed out matter that expanded rapidly to create the stars and planets that make up the Universe. At full capacity, the LHC will be able to accelerate protons to 99.99% of the speed of light, producing 600 million

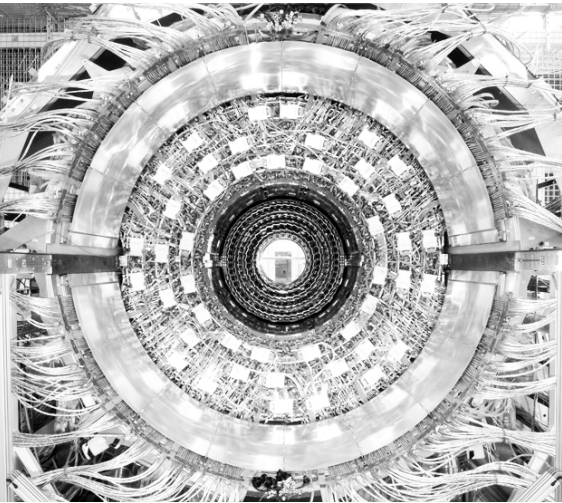
collisions every second.

When the beams are colliding, there will be a period of measuring and calibrating the data for four major experiments. International teams of physicists will analyze the particles created in the collisions. The data recorded by the LHC are extremely precise. For example, the location of the particles is measured in the millionths of a meter and the time is counted to a few billionths of a second. As part of the international effort, the data will be transmitted to computers around the world for scientists to review. Conclusions can then be made on how the particles collide, fly apart, and dissolve.

And then a new world of particle physics will emerge. The standard model of particle physics has been very useful in describing the fundamental laws of nature, but it does leave some gaps. Most physicists agree that this current model will undergo major revisions after the LHC experiments are completed.

The LHC may help answer some of the most perplexing particle physics questions. One of those include whether or not the elusive Higgs-Boson particle, or "God particle," actually exists. Named after the scientist who first proposed its existence in 1905, it is believed that these particles confer mass to other particles. By detecting the presence of such particles, the LHC can unveil the mechanisms of how matter has a specific mass. Another question is the nature of dark matter, which accounts for most of visible matter. The reason why nature prefers matter over antimatter is currently unknown. Many other questions are still unsolved, including those on gravity, quarks, electromagnetism, strong and weak nuclear forces, extra-dimensions, and super-symmetry.

The test start-up of the LHC has quelled public fears about the machine creating tiny black holes that would destroy the planet. The LHC has been frequently labeled as a "discovery tool" that will continue the scientific journey that started from the time of Newton's publication on gravity.



Instrumentation for the Compact Muon Solenoid experiment, which contributes to the search for the Higgs boson particle (Photo courtesy of Maximilien Brice, CERN).

Πυξξλε οφ της Ισσυε

by Kevin Tham '12

Proposed by xkcd.com

On an island, there are 200 logicians; 100 have blue eyes and 100 have green eyes, although each individual logician does not know the exact ratio, or even whether blue and green are the only eye colors represented (i.e., one can observe that 100 people have blue eyes, and 99 have green eyes, but conclude that his own eyes may be brown). They are very good logicians; if there is any way to logically (and correctly) derive a fact, they will derive it. There are no reflective surfaces on the island, and nobody is allowed identify to each other another man's eye color (e.g., one cannot say to another, "You have blue eyes"). There is also a chief of the island, separate from the logicians, who always wears sunglasses; we neither know nor care about his eye color.

Every midnight, a boat comes to the island to take the logicians home. However, it is under orders to only take on passengers who have identified their own eye color. So far, no one has.

At 11:55 PM on an arbitrary Day 0, the chief calls together the 200 logicians, looks out at the crowd, and announces: "I see a man with blue eyes."

If the upcoming midnight is considered Day 1, who leaves the island, and when?

Solution on Page 4

Students Study Sustainable Transportation in China

BY TANYA LEWIS '10

This summer, two HMC students, Benyue Liu and Tanya Lewis, travelled to Nanjing, China to study the transportation system. The project was funded by the HMC Center for Environmental Studies, a program headed by Environmental Politics professor Paul Steinberg. HMC students were invited to submit proposals for research projects related to sustainability, and Liu's and Lewis' project was one of several that were selected for summer 2008.

Liu and Lewis spent a total of six weeks in Liu's home city of Nanjing. The students experienced firsthand the various forms of public transportation in Nanjing and other nearby cities, making observations and gathering data to create a picture of the current transport situation. The students used their findings to generate recommendations to Nanjing transportation authorities in the form of a written report. The research project was supervised by Nanjing-based professor Xiaodong Zhu of Nanjing University and Claremont-based professor Patrick Little of Harvey Mudd College.

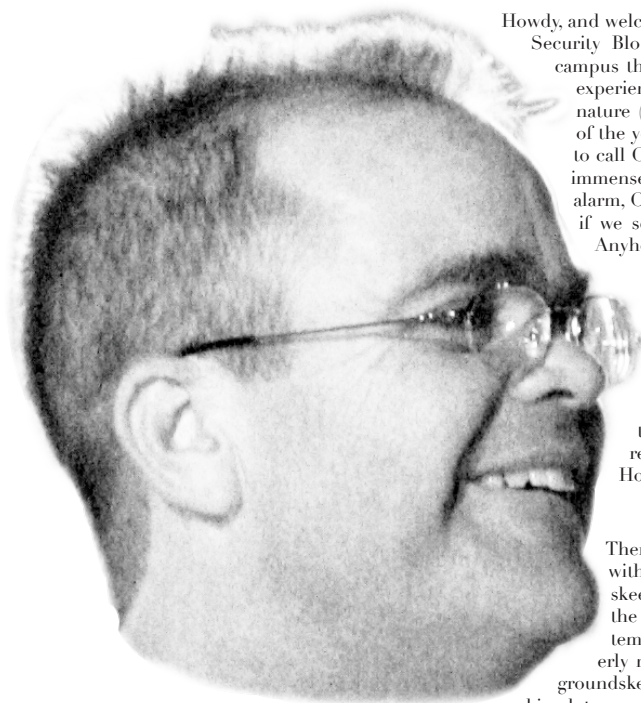
As part of their research project, Liu and Lewis evaluated a proposed roadway expansion project intended to relieve traffic. Many Nanjing transportation experts opposed the expansion proposal, which would include construction of a tunnel. The students completed a "case study" of the proposal, which involved conducting a public opinion survey. The case study highlighted the need for increased publicity about the proposed expansion and for further investigation of its potential social and environmental impacts.

Liu and Lewis also had the opportunity to visit other cities near Nanjing. In Hangzhou, a beautiful lakeside city in northern Zhejiang province, they tried out the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system and rented bicycles to assess whether these systems might benefit Nanjing. Next, they had a brief stay in Shanghai, China's most populous city. Shanghai has coped well with its growing transportation demand, largely thanks to its extensive public transport system. By night, Liu and Lewis explored the famed "Bund" district and took in the view from the world's third largest building, the Oriental Pearl Tower. Their next stop was the ancient city of Suzhou, the so-called "Venice of the East," famed for its many picturesque canals and gardens. After ultra-modern Shanghai, the students enjoyed the leisurely pace of Suzhou life, taking in the sights from aboard a bicycle rickshaw. Near the end of their visit, the students traveled to Beijing, where they were lucky enough to see some of the Olympics.

For Lewis, being fully immersed in a foreign culture was both challenging and refreshing. For Liu, it was a welcome return home. Both students were new to the field of transportation planning, but felt they completed their project with a better understanding of China's transportation issues. They remain committed to their goal of helping Nanjing develop more sustainable urban transportation.

Mudd Security Blotter

BY DEAN CHRIS SUNDBERG



(Photo courtesy of Michael Ho '10).

Howdy, and welcome to another edition of the Mudd Security Blotter. It's been a little strange on campus these first few weeks, but we are not experiencing many thefts or things of that nature (which is a good thing for the start of the year). Folks have not been hesitating to call Campus Safety (x72000), which helps immensely. Even if it turns out to be a false alarm, Campus Safety asks that we call them if we see anything suspicious on campus. Anyhow, let's get right to it:

9/9

An honest Mudder turned in a Blackberry that was found on the ground outside Linde dorm. Nope, he wasn't pickin' blackberries, he was pickin' up the expensive phone-type variety. Anyhow, the device was returned to its rightful owner and the Honor Code lives to see another day.

9/9

There was a report of "an elderly male with gray hair wearing generic groundskeeper clothing who was sweeping the parking lot." It turned out to be a temporary employee who was an elderly male with gray hair wearing generic groundskeeper clothing and sweeping the parking lot.

NOTE: It may sound silly to call on such a person but Campus Safety reminds us to let them determine who should be out there in the parking lots. We've had cars stolen by people who were thought to be temporary employees only to find out they were full-time weasels of the criminal persuasion.

9/9

A student crashed her bike on Platt and Mills. I left the DOS staff meeting to find one of my favorite students being treated for a minor arm injury. We sent her down to the health center and she came back wrapped up and ready to move on with her life here at Mudd.

9/10

A report of students "launching model rockets in front of the LAC." Matt Lawson took control... I guess you could say Mission Control, since he counted from 1 to 10 and told them that it was what he called a "reverse launch". He then told them to quit launching rockets and get back to work.

9/11

There was a report of "fireworks being fired in the vicinity of the Grove House." It looks like the launch-pad boys decided to lower the level of "rockets" being launched, which wasn't a very good idea, considering the Grove House is a 100 (or so) year old structure made of wood. Campus Safety caught "several HMC students" and advised them of policy. I received a call from the Pitzer dean who said he would be more than happy to prosecute to the full extent of the law if anything catches on fire. Take note, rocket launchers.

9/19

An HMC employee called in a "suspicious male... riding around on his bike on the south side of West dorm while looking into vehicle windows." Campus Safety

caught the guy who "lost his ID yesterday". They called CPD who figured out who he was, advised him of campus policies regarding trespassing, and then told him to leave.

9/22

A basketball hit the pull box in the LAC gym, activating the fire alarm. Campus Safety stopped by to disarm the alarm.

9/25

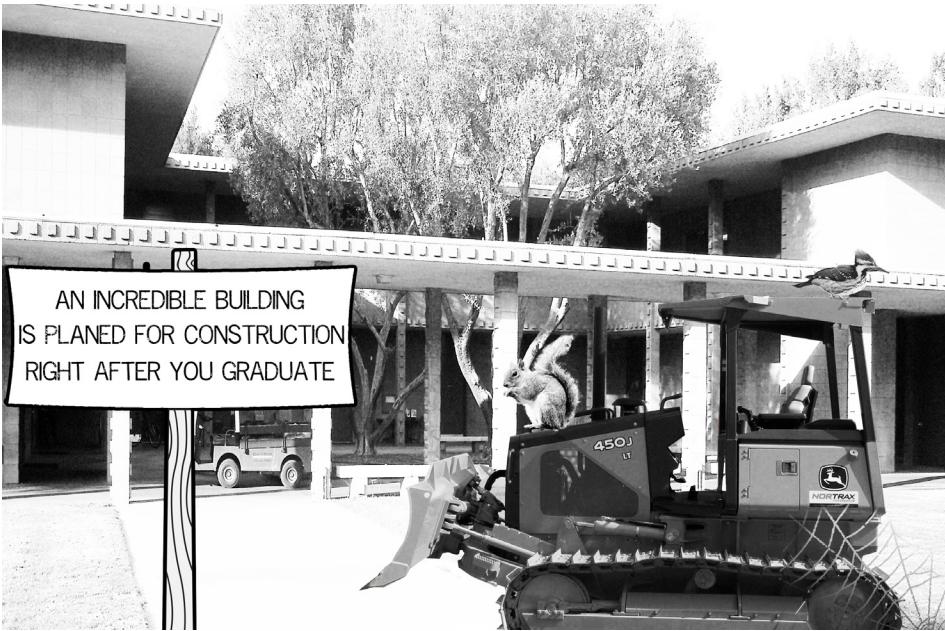
Proctor Hayden Gomes reported that "two subjects broke into Case Kitchen and stole a bottle of an unknown substance... one was carrying a lacrosse stick and wearing a ball cap while the other was skinny and had a mohawk." Campus Safety caught the "two HMC students" who were apparently involved in a campus-wide game. We've all heard of the game of "Steal the Bacon". This is the Mudd version, which includes stealing a bottle of an unknown substance while wearing a ball cap, carrying it around in a lacrosse stick, and rubbing the head of an HMC friend with a mohawk as you walk from Case dorm. It just adds that little Mudd twist to the game, that's all.

9/26

There was a report of West dormers "chopping up a wooden pallets with an axe." Campus Safety made contact with folks in West courtyard who said they "have not seen anyone chopping up pallets with an axe." They did say that they saw a couple of tractor wheels roll by, but that was it.

Well, that's it for now. Remember to call Campus Safety at x72000 if you see anything suspicious out there. Also, the DOS office has bike locks, so stop on by and get one if you don't have one already.

Thomas Garrett's Impending Doom



(Image courtesy of Ozzie Goosen '12).

BY SAM ETTINGER '12

At Convocation, HMC President Maria Klawe announced that Thomas-Garrett Hall will soon be demolished and reconstructed to better suit Mudders' needs. The projected completion time is anywhere between three and five years.

Thomas-Garrett, the oldest academic building on campus, is not always conducive to the learning process. The general consensus of an impromptu late-night survey yelled across campus was that its cramped, stuffy classrooms are the least-liked on campus.

T-G's replacement will do away with the familiar U shape in order to accommodate, among other things, a large auditorium with first-rate acoustics, suitable for lectures or concerts.

Classrooms will be "flexible," Klawe says, and ideal for studio teaching. The building is expected to include a "center for creativity and technology, in which we can synthesize different fields." Such a center would include facilities to promote artistic expression in

technical manners, such as in digital media or wearable interfaces.

On the question of financing President Klawe spoke only cryptically, though she asserted that raising funds would not be an issue.

Though it is far too early in the bureaucratic process to select a final set of blueprints for the new building, President Klawe already has some ideas. "My favorite building on campus is Hoch-Shanahan. I feel inspired when I go in there because it's spacious and it's bright. And I want classrooms like that." Whether or not the new building will be in keeping with HMC's trademark wart-centric architecture is still in question.

This reporter requested for consideration his own proposed building schematics, resembling a wicked awesome treehouse. The request was summarily ignored.

Overheard in the Classroom

"Debt is like eating a poisonous mushroom. It gives you a stomachache today, you feel fine tomorrow, then 3 days later you are dead."

-Professor Gary Evans

"Okay, so there's the pornographic theory of quantum mechanics..."

-Professor Peter Saeta

"You should always pay extra attention when your chem teacher brings in bags of white powder."

-Professor Hal Van Ryswyk

"When you break up into groups, I want you all to talk, because we don't want any non-communicative groups"

-Professor Dagan Karp



(Photo courtesy of Angus Ho '10).

Interests: Networking

BY SEAN LAGUNA '12

Upon arriving at Harvey Mudd College, I was immediately impressed by the technological prowess of my classmates and of the school in general. It was refreshing to see up-to-date Apple and Microsoft computer labs, to get a wired internet connection that was almost unnecessarily fast (not to mention wireless internet almost anywhere on campus), and to finally comprehend the sort of environment I would be part of for four years of my life. Actually, hearing so many people endorse Linux sort of scared me, but that is beside the point. The network was introduced to me

by a friend also going to Harvey Mudd. As he briefly browsed through the videos and movies available for anyone on the local area network, I felt as though my impulse to ravage through the network and take gigabytes and gigabytes of music at almost unnecessarily fast speeds was shared by many who had been in that position in the past.

The problem with setting up networks such as ours is the questionable legality of sharing files that fit the category of "intellectual property." In fact, the RIAA recently targeted the 40 college campuses that it believes engage in the most illegal file sharing. Shutting down networks would mean a huge inconvenience for people who use it for legal file sharing, such as allowing numerous people to access user-created files like PowerPoint slide shows and Word documents, and even original videos and songs. Technically, LAN connections are not illegal, and one can assume the difficulty the RIAA has in monitoring such connections; I don't think any Harvey Mudd students or employees are secretly spies working for the RIAA.

Regardless, the larger question is whether or not such a network of music should be legal or not. Many were devastated by the removal of www.oink.cd from the internet the invite-only website allowed for painfully easy and high-quality music sharing. Torrent users are sporadically prosecuted for using torrent clients to download music illegally during orientation the entire freshman class saw an example of this displayed in Galileo. Yet, the majority of people continue to obtain free music, and many argue that it is absurd to expect listeners to pay \$0.99 per song when it is virtually free to create new digital copies of songs. Filling

up a 160-gigabyte iPod at \$0.99 per song would cost around \$32,000 does the music industry really expect consumers to continue paying the same amount for a product that has clearly decreased in physical value?

Take a moment to ponder the future of the music industry. CDs are becoming obsolete; what will record labels turn to? I foresee unlimited access file-sharing websites, and even file sharing cafés, as the new way to exchange music. Imagine paying a fixed cost per hour to save unlimited music to your laptop, or iPod you walk into a music café, sample music through high-



The cover of Girl Talk's latest album, "Feed the Animals," which has hundreds of samples from other artists (Photo courtesy of Illegal Art).

quality sound systems on easy-to-use computers, and take whatever you want. Alternatively, you can go through the same process online in the comfort of your bedroom. The music industry will shift from providing a product to providing a service. The icing on the cake is that record companies can still exist

just as some people still buy records, CDs can become a novelty but that the distribution and proliferation of music will be done by the consumers themselves, making the process infinitely more efficient. File sharing allows for exposure of much larger quantities of music; it is simply more effective than traditional marketing. By eliminating record company executives and the bureaucracy surrounding music

production and sale, the artists reap more profit and the now unnecessary middleman in the music industry can finally be removed from the system.

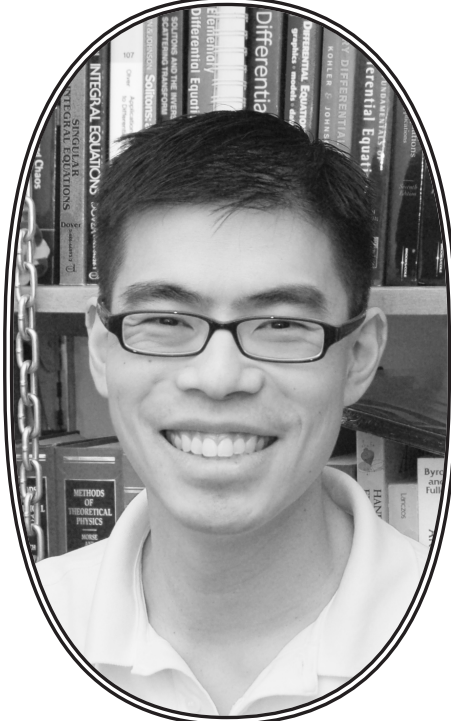
Some websites are already making this adjustment. For example, www.meem.com allows for users to upload songs to their server. Songs that have been artist-approved can be streamed in full-length, and all other songs get a 30-second clip played. Playlists can be created, and new songs can be auto-suggested based on the original song chosen. This exploits the Internet's ability to provide music without an actual file, circumventing the legal issues. Another website is www.last.fm, which is beginning to provide a similar feature. www.last.fm is better known for providing radio stations based on a song or artist, however, which allows for any song to be played because it was not explicitly selected by the listener. This website also creates data based on what music the user listens to, and

Continued on FIXING, Page 4

Ask a Prof

“Ask a Prof” is a regular section of the Muddraker that we’re introducing in this issue. Here, you’ll be given the chance to anonymously ask professors whatever you’d like. We’ll be rotating professors for every issue.

Darryl Yong



(Photo courtesy of Angus Ho '10).

Dear Professor,

Lately, I’ve been swamped with work. There were lab reports, papers, and midterms to do last week. Luckily, I’m done with all of that (for now) and have some free time to spare. What kind of fun activities do you like to do? Any cool new things for me to try out? What about good restaurants that most Mudders don’t know about?

-Adventurous Academic

Dear Adventurous Academic,

First of all, kudos to you for getting stuff done and making time to do something fun. Don’t let anyone give you a hard time about that. They’re just jealous. Nyah nyah nyah.

Make hay while the sun shines--that’s a principle I try to live by. There are so many things that are available to us at the Claremont Colleges and in the Los Angeles area, and I wish Mudders would get their noses out of their books more often to take advantage of these things. For example, there are so many interesting speakers, musical, dance, and theatrical performances going on all the time at the colleges. Try exposing yourself to new things as much as you can.

Where else besides Southern California can you go for a morning hike in the desert, go up to the mountains in the afternoon, then spend the evening at the beach? Incredible! And there are lots of things happening in the city all the time. I enjoyed the exhibits at the new Broad Contemporary Art Museum at LACMA during a recent visit.

If you have the time to take up a new hobby, try something totally new. I started learning how to sail two years ago and I’m totally addicted now.

OK, finally I got to your last topic: FOOD! Yum yum yum nom nom nom. In my opinion, Los Angeles has the greatest diversity of authentic food from different parts of the world. If you’ve not tried Korean food, Polish food, Ethiopian food, Vietnamese food, Lebanese food, Indian (North and South) food, Greek food, Chinese food, or Malaysian food, you should go to chowhound.com and find some recommended places. And of course, food from every culture and region in South and Central America are readily available in Los Angeles! Have you had a pupusa yet? (I just love that word.) Use the Leonard Fund to subsidize the cost of your meal by organizing a group of six to eight students and a faculty member.

I also have a few suggestions for places closer to HMC. First of all, I love Sanamluang and Mix Bowl probably as much as anyone else, but even I got tired of eating chicken pad see ew *every* *single* *night* at Mudd. Thank goodness a kind waitress at Sanamluang took pity on us (or maybe she was tired of seeing us) and told us to go a few more blocks south on Indian Hill to a wonderful Vietnamese restaurant, Pho Ha. Everyone should try eating there at least a few times (their menu is huge). Second, I think Sushi Cruise has gotten too expensive. Try Sho Sushi in Upland--the last time I was there, their all-you-can-eat sushi lunch was \$20 and just as good, if not better. Third, be sure to visit Guasalmex in Pomona when you want something more than the usual oversized burrito from you-know-where. Finally, next to Sushi Cruise is a small Persian restaurant called Darvish. I’ve enjoyed this restaurant here too and they often have coupons on their web site.

Yay!

-Prof. Yong

Would you like to “ask a prof” something? Send us your inquiries at muddraker@gmail.com (subject line “Ask a Prof”).

Random Thoughts on the Passing Scene (with Apologies to Thomas Sowell)

BY KEVIN THAM '12

• Despite articles from back issues of the Muddraker suggesting otherwise, West remains the “Mad Dorm” on campus. It retains its classic pyromania and alcoholism, and as a whole invariably seems to be spoiling for a fight, especially with another dorm. It’s all cheap taunting and chants, but people who aren’t aware of West’s taste for alcohol and fire (such as myself, initially) may almost consider it a rehearsal for a turf war.

• Karl Rove spoke at Claremont McKenna about two weeks ago (as of this writing), and naturally a big protest showed up to oppose him (and try to arrest him – so much for keeping things nonviolent). I’m fine with this part – enough students are politically aware enough to put on that sort of event. What worries me are what they call Rove – and not just at this event, either. He’s Bush’s brain, some sort of diabolical mastermind; he has plants in the Democratic Party that intentionally cause screw-ups; the very word “Rovian” implies all manner of diabolical false leads and insanely hyper-competent planning... and all this related to a man who no longer officially serves the President. A little ire may be understandable, but why must we ascribe semi-satanic influence and power to a balding political consultant?

• I was examining advertisements and flyers from the European Union Center and came across one that referred to a discussion of the Georgian crisis. The flyer read that the round-table would “include American, European, and Russian perspectives” on the topic. Anybody notice something missing from that list? Here’s a hint: it starts with “G” and ends with “eorgia”. And, if

you support Ossetian independence, South and North Ossetia are missing as well. Some “round-table,” eh?

• The banks and Wall Street are a mess, and now the government is considering a massive cash infusion to try to stabilize them. Forget the Keynesian undertones for a moment; that cash is tax money that comes out of any pocket that belongs to someone that works. I’m not a populist by any means, but why should taxpayer money be used to stabilize these institutions? The same applies to Fannie May and Freddie Mac, effective private mortgage companies whose losses were covered by the federal government (read: your taxes).

• WASHINGTON MUTUAL JUST CRASHED AND BURNED! JP Morgan bought up the deposits. This crisis is probably going to get a lot worse before it gets better, bailout or not.

• The presidential debates have kicked off today McCain vs. Obama on foreign policy. I don’t have any plans to watch, and not because of any political apathy on my part, since I’ll be reading the transcripts instead. Why? Because the structure is specifically designed not to set up a debate! Ninety seconds to answer, thirty to respond? The Lincoln-Douglas debates could last 120 times longer! I want a knock down, drag out intellectual brawl, dammit!

(And if all of the above are somehow resolved before this article is put to print, you can just laugh in my face.)

SVCC Proposal Fixing a Hole

Continued from Page 1

the students that is hard to replicate. The new proposal, by weakening this lockstep, might have a detrimental effect on class unity and pride, impacting Mudd culture in subtle but harmful ways. Furthermore, students wondered why they would not be represented on the implementation committee, which would be formed after the proposal was accepted to determine how to put it into action. These sentiments, as well as other common student concerns, were summed up in a statement ASHMC sent to the HMC faculty on September 24th.

The SVCC was not deaf to these concerns. Days later, the committee released a revised proposal that addressed some student concerns. While it did not modify the proposed changes to the math core, it did fix introductory chemistry and biology in students’ schedules, returning much of the shared experience to freshmen. It also increased the size of the implementation committee to allow for two student representatives. While the SVCC proposal still remained far from perfect in many students’ minds, the revision went a long way towards addressing some student concerns and making it clear that the committee was not ignoring student feedback.

While student responses were certainly important, the HMC faculty retain sole control over our curriculum. Although the faculty had certainly not been left in the dark regarding the proposal, their responses were as diverse as those of the students. Faculty continued to debate and discuss the measure right up to the faculty meeting on September 25th, where the motion to approve the revision was brought up for consideration. As debate raged over the course of the meeting, it became clear that a majority of the faculty supported the measure. However, a small but vocal minority continued to oppose the proposal, and others thought that debate and discussion regarding such significant changes should not be rushed. With these constraints in mind, the faculty voted to postpone the vote on the proposal until the next meeting, scheduled for October 16th.

Despite this setback, it seems very likely that the proposal will be approved and set in motion, possibly implemented for the incoming freshmen class. While some students and faculty remain skeptical of the proposal, the proactive advocacy of the members of the SVCC has, over the last few weeks, reassured many. The effectiveness of the changes will be carefully monitored, but current students may well be the last to remember the Core as we know it.

LATE BREAKING UPDATE: The faculty has approved the revised SVCC proposal. The faculty Executive committee will soon be assembling an implementation committee to determine how the changes can be realized.

To see the full proposal, go to: <http://www.math.hmc.edu/~su/svcc>

Solution to puzzle on page 2:

The 100 logicians with blue eyes leave the island on Day 100.

Consider the following cases – the rules on the island are the same as before, but there are 101 logicians on the island, only one of which has blue eyes. The 100 men with green eyes will all look and identify the man with blue eyes. The man with blue eyes will look around, note that everyone else has green eyes, infer that the chief must have been referring to him, and conclude that his own eyes are blue. He leaves on Day 1.

An expanded case – 102 logicians, 100 green-eyed, 2 blue-eyed (arbitrarily identified as “A” and “B”). A looks around the crowd, identifies B, and assumes that the chief must have been referring to B. Similarly, B looks around, sees A, and concludes that the chief was talking about A. So neither leave the island on Day 1. On Day 2, A looks at the logicians, notices that B hasn’t left, and concludes that the chief must have been talk-

ing about him. B also looks at the crowd, sees that A hasn’t left, and concludes that the chief must have referred to him. Both leave the island when the boat comes on Day 2.

If 3 people A,B, and C have blue eyes at the meeting, A will look around, identify B, and conclude the chief was referring to him; B and C will assume similarly, only with C and A as who they identify as the man the chief was talking about. On Day 2, A, seeing that B hasn’t left the island, will assume, therefore, that the chief was referring to C, and B and C will assume the same thing, shifting their “the man the chief was talking about” assumptions to A and B, respectively. On the third day, A, seeing that neither B nor C has left, will conclude that the chief was referring to himself; B and C will infer similarly, and all 3 will leave on Day 3.

This logic can be expanded by induction to any fraction of any eye color amongst a larger population of people of mixed eye colors – the N people with the identified eye color will leave on Day N.

Dear Editor,

Many at Harvey Mudd likely hold strong views on the morality of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The topic has been debated ad nauseum, and I’m sure the standard arguments are fairly well understood and accounted for. However, I’ve recently been exposed to a new and extremely convincing way of considering it.

If you take into account only the lives lost during the actual bombings, then it is easy to find worse atrocities, both during WWII and today. But what if we look at the potential, unseen effects of those bombs? The US’s decision to use nuclear weapons undoubtedly increased the chances of a future nuclear holocaust. Although there’s no way to calculate exact numbers, a one percent increase in the likelihood of a nuclear war and a billion people dead on average seems like a conservative estimate. If this were the case, then the use of the bombs indirectly caused ten million deaths when averaged over all possible scenarios.

This kind of analysis is not performed very often, but I think such results can be very powerful. Today, in particular, we can make choices that can have enormous consequences for the future. When we make such decisions, we have to remember that the results could cause undesired effects not only in the short term, but in the long term as well.

If you want to see more long term thinking like this, check out acceleratingfuture.com, ieet.org (Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies), and overcoming-bias.com.

Maksym Taran

Dear Editor,

I have a deep secret to share. I don’t actually have a past. All the stories I have told about my home town were made up. All the family and friends I have mentioned were made up. Their names were merely the first ones that came into my head.

Why, you ask? Because I am a clone. I am the result of an experiment intended to improve the human race by making clones with increased intelligence genes. After their success, my creators thought it would be best to give me a false identity and send me to a smart, accepting community. I appreciate their efforts, but they were wrong about one thing: my false identity has not helped me. Every time someone asks about my life, I have to lie. Whenever people talk about their friends from high school, their AP tests, or their childhood adventures, I feel a deep emptiness inside because I have none of that. Family is an especially touchy subject because I have never had a mother or a father, nor have I had any sisters or brothers, and I never will.

But I know that Harvey Mudd is a caring community. Please help me through this time of adjustment. Let us talk enthusiastically about Mudd life as if nothing else existed. I will tell no more lies. My life began a month before orientation, and I will tell you about it as such.

The most ill-adjusted freshman,
Zyzyva Lorentz

contributing muddraker

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