

# The Muddraker

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## HMC Students Attend PowerShift Conference

BY BEN KELLER '10

The weekend of February 28th may have been a typical one for many Mudders, but not for Claire O'Hanlon '09. She, along with Rob Best '10, Annika Eberle '09, and nine other Mudders, spent the weekend in Washington, DC attending PowerShift '09, a youth summit focused on national environmental issues. By their return to campus on March 2nd, the students had met dozens of fellow environmentally minded students and gained a unique perspective on environmental activism.

PowerShift '09 brought together college students from across the nation, drawing over 12,000 participants in all. The students attended workshops and panel discussions on a wide range of environmental topics, from the science of global warming to effective organizing tactics. On Monday, conference participants had the opportunity to lobby their Congressional representatives about environmental issues, giving many students a rare glimpse into the Washington political scene.

For some of the Mudders attending, the experience was not quite what they expected. Annika attended the conference because friends had spoken highly of a previous year's event. Since she is considering studying public policy after graduating from Mudd, she wanted to get a sense of national politics, and the way decision-making takes place in Washington. Her favorite talk of the event featured Bill McKibben, a writer and environmentalist who was promoting 350.org, a website urging international action to counter global warming.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROB BEST '10

However, she was frustrated with the content of some of the panels and workshops, as many of them had to cater to students from a non-technical background. On the whole, Annika was positive about the experience: "I learned a lot, but it wasn't what I expected to learn," she explained.

Reflecting on her time at PowerShift, Claire echoed these sentiments. While she thought that the focus of the conference was less scientifically focused than she would have liked, she enjoyed the talk on cap-and-trade policy, which took an in-depth look at the various options being considered by Congress. She said that the conference was a largely positive experience, although she described the conference's goal of providing manpower

for lobbying and rallies as somewhat different than her own reasons for attending. Claire also expressed regret about the increasing polarization of environmental politics. "Unfortunately, the environmental movement has become a partisan movement," she said, adding that ideally the movement would be more inclusive, catering to members of any political party or persuasion.

Rob Best '09, president of the HMC sustainability group ESW/MOSS, also thought that PowerShift was a unique experience. As an environmental organizer at HMC, Rob thought that it was very interesting to see "how environmentalism is done elsewhere." His favorite talk was on smart power grid technology, which covered both some basic technical aspects and the policy decisions that must occur within the next few years to make the implementation feasible. Rob wished that the panels and workshops were generally more technical, rather than merely a broad overview of the topics discussed, but he found it very useful to see the process of lobbying in action, as well as gaining a "broad exposure to environmentalism" that is rarely found elsewhere.

Despite the lack of a purely technical focus, future Mudders will likely head back to Washington for future PowerShift conferences. Regardless of the success of the young lobbyists at the conference, every HMC attendee is another hole in the Mudd bubble that allows us a glimpse of America's newest generation of environmentalists.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROB BEST '10

## New Orientation Program in the Works

BY BEN KELLER '10

Most students at Mudd remember their freshman orientation fondly, a rush of excitement that guarantees a memorable four days. Between exploring a new campus, meeting classmates for the first time, and getting a taste of dorm life, orientation certainly provides a wild ride for incoming freshman. However, many of us may not remember the following week quite as fondly. Without warning, Tuesday arrives, and with it, academic orientation. Sponsors disappear and proctors fade into the background. Suddenly, life is a blur of textbooks and scheduling. Academics, of course, are central to the Harvey Mudd experience, but fans of orientation would probably agree that the transition from orientation to life at Mudd is more than a little jarring.

Next fall, that transition may become easier. Chris Sundberg, the Associate Dean of Students at Harvey Mudd College, has been working with the orientation directors for the past several months to reorganize the orientation program so that it is more friendly and helpful to incoming freshmen. These changes revolve around tweaking the roles of the mentors that guide freshman through their first weeks and months at Mudd: sponsors, proctors, and academic advisors. By rethinking the importance and scope of these roles, the transition to life at Mudd will become a bit easier.

Wide-reaching changes to the orientation program have been in the works for years. While freshmen have generally been satisfied with the orientation program itself, they have consistently been unhappy with its limited relation to "real life" at Mudd. Currently, orientation sponsors are assigned four or five freshmen, essentially at random. This sponsor group participates in orientation activities together, and then disbands at the end of orientation. While the freshmen and upperclassmen in these groups sometimes remain in touch after orientation, they often just go their separate ways. This leads many freshmen to feel that they are "dropped"

*"Orientation" continued on page 1*

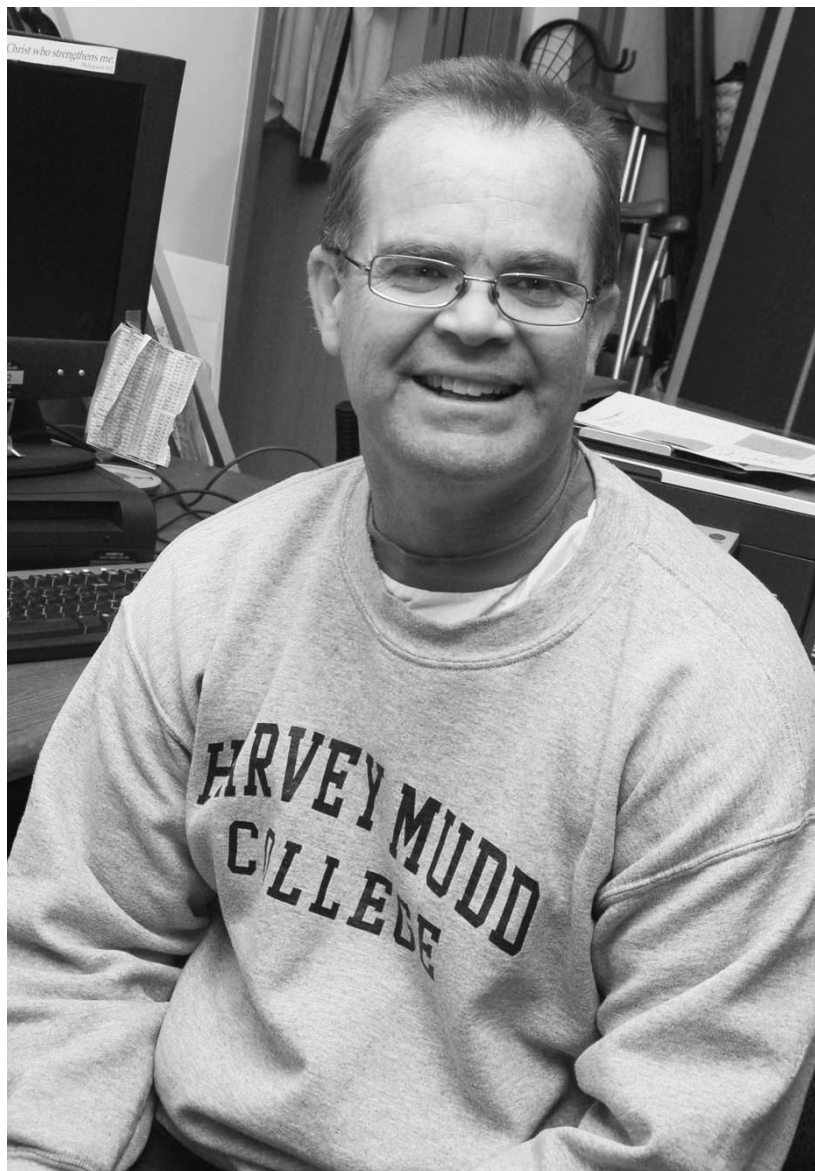


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Ask a Prof

Theresa Lynn



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Dear Professor,

I've always wanted to know what lies behind the smarts of professors at Mudd. Aside from your plethora of scholastic talents, what's your most interesting non-academic skill? What's the story behind it?

-Curious from Case

Dear Curious,

Thanks for ruining my entire week, as your question threw me into paroxysms of self-doubt. “Non-academic skill? Do I have any interesting non-academic skills? Do I have any boring non-academic skills?” Long lists of my colleagues’ extracurricular accomplishments instantly flashed into my head: Professor Mashek’s yoga guru status, Professor Eckert’s professional plumbing career, Professor Levy’s aerial acrobatics the list goes on and on. I have suddenly begun to suspect that I am the only faculty member on campus who cannot leap tall buildings in a single bound, project powerful force fields from my body, or at the very least shoot laser beams from my eyes. With two eight-year-olds and a toddler at home, getting everyone out of bed in the morning sometimes seems like my most interesting skill.

Who are you, Curious? I need to get you back for asking this question.

But now to answer your question (before I track you down and destroy your life, or at least your GPA). My skills, sadly, do not lie on the athletic field or in the gym. I watch college basketball does that count? I did co-coach my daughter’s soccer team this spring, but I think of myself as a soccer theorist; skills-wise, a couple of the seven-year-olds are way out of my league. I suppose the high point of my sports career was the year I captained the quantum optics intramural softball team in graduate school. We were called the Annihilation Operators, or A-hats for short (only physics majors will get it). We even had a theme song, written by a professor on the team and sung to the tune of “Be Our Guest” from Beauty and the Beast: “...We always stop at first, But still work up a thirst, The A-hats, the A-hats, the A-hats!” As the lyrics reveal, it was sometimes more about the BEvERages than the box score.

Where was I? Ah yes, non-academic skills. As it turns out, although I can’t write witty theme songs for sports teams, one thing I can do is sing them. Singing is a real, legitimate hobby of mine, perhaps even a skill. According to my mother, I was entertaining passengers on our daily bus route when I was two. More recently I’ve dabbled

in a cappella, starting Caltech’s very first (though now defunct) group. The Caltech a cappella scene is still alive and well, and I did leave a lasting legacy in the form of an annual “Love Sucks” concert sung in you guessed it February of each year. I’ve also tried a bit of chamber music, a bit of musical theater, and a very little bit of classical solo work. What I like best, though, is singing classical music in a professionally-directed choir. In other words, I like being a cog in the machine. Actually, when all goes well, singing in a choir is not a mechanical experience at all, but more of an organic one more like being a cell in a superbly healthy organism. I think it’s quite a high.

Perhaps I should end it here, before I stray onto even shakier ground. Soon I’ll be admitting that I can recite all the English-language poetry from The Lord of the Rings. Um, yeah. However, as a professor, I just don’t know how to leave a topic without pointing out the lesson. So, Lesson 1: Go join some groups and do some stuff, even if you’re not particularly good at it! Lesson 2: Never admire a musical group until you’ve heard them live take it from me, digital audio editing is pretty powerful stuff. Lesson 3: Curiosity killed the cat.

Have a great day (no, really!),  
Prof. Lynn

“Orientation” continued from front page

by the orientation process after orientation itself is completed. Furthermore, the lack of a designated mentor beyond orientation can lead to reliance on nearby dorm-mates for information, which can lead to a misrepresentation of HMC as a whole. The root of the problem, it seems, is that sponsors have no responsibilities beyond orientation itself, a flaw in the structure of orientation that isolates freshmen from essential early guidance.

To correct this problem, orientation leadership has floated the idea of a new orientation position with the working title of “super-sponsor”. Super-sponsors would be responsible for larger groups of freshmen than regular sponsors, and they would be friends and mentors for freshmen from their first day on campus through the entire academic year. In order to facilitate this interaction, sponsor groups will be grouped by dorm, with super-sponsors living in the same dorm as the incoming freshman for which they would be responsible. In this new system, sponsors would turn their freshman over to their super-sponsors near the end of orientation, allowing a larger group of freshmen from each dorm to meet each other and their super-sponsor before the academic year begins.

Another key change to the orientation program involves the role of academic advisors. Currently, the academic advisors to which freshmen are assigned are based solely on interest; these groups of freshmen are entirely distinct from the sponsor groups with which they spend most of their time. Furthermore, academic advisors do not spend much time with their freshmen once the academic year has begun; most students do not interact with their advisors more than once each semester, when their signature is required for course pre-registration. The new orientation system seeks to establish a closer relationship between the advisors and their freshmen. First, advisors will be associated with a particular super-sponsor group, and by extension, a particular dorm (there will probably be three to five faculty for each dorm). Advisors will play a more active role in the lives of their freshmen, both by monitoring their academic progress and by interacting with them socially. By connecting particular faculty members to specific dorms, interaction between the academic and residential sides of campus will be encouraged.

And how will the proctors’ roles be changed by the presence of several super-sponsors in each dorm? Currently, each proctor is theoretically responsible for the well-being of dozens of freshmen (not to mention the other students in their dorm). Practically, this means that they are unable to spend a great deal of time on any but the most troubled students. By making super-sponsors available throughout the year, proctors will be able to work with these other upperclassmen to do their jobs better.

Dean Chris and the orientation directors, Leo Altmann ‘11, Michelle Hansen ‘11, and Cassie Nguyen ‘11, have been working to implement a trial run of this new system for the incoming class of 2013 next fall. The pieces for the pilot program are falling into place as the current semester draws to a close. With the help of Dean Mary Cardenas, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, several presentations have been made to faculty members, who have generally approved of the planned changes. There have been plenty of super-sponsor volunteers among the current group of sponsors. Dean Chris stresses that none of these plans are set in stone, but he is hopeful about the new program. He hopes that the new system will ensure “cohesion and consistency from day one” through the entire freshman year. Of course, the orientation planners are open to feedback and suggestions. Dean Chris suggests that students with thoughts about the changes contact himself or the orientation directors.

Whether the changes in the orientation program will be effective in landing freshmen on firm footing remains to be seen. It seems likely, however, that future freshmen will have an experience that is substantially different than the four-day roller coaster that many of us remember.

Return of the Random Thoughts on the Passing Scene:

Kill it! Kill it With Fire and Censorship!

By KEVIN THAM '12

As I write this, Black History Month, a.k.a. February, is roughly three-quarters of the way through. Women’s History Month is next in March. Asian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month is in May, Hispanic Heritage Month goes from mid-September to mid-October, and there’s even an LGBT History Month and a Filipino History Month, both of which last through October. Just a few things to say here one, to take the absurdist tack, why stop there? Why not, say, a month for Palestinians, or for various religions, or for other ways of life (Computer Nerd Culture Month?). Two, and somewhat more seriously, why are these months recognized by groups like the U.S. Department of Education? If you are not interested in racial history, the designation of a special month as such is not going to change your mind; if you are interested, you’ll be looking for information well beyond the month’s end. So why do they exist?

The Vagina Monologues have come to and left the Claremont Colleges. It’s supposed to be about female empowerment and stopping violence against women, but... am I the only one who finds it odd that a show that’s supposed to be about the de-objectification of women puts the object that most men would objectify right in the title, front and center? Looking over the themes of the monologues, including one where the speaker plays a woman looking back fondly on underage lesbian rape, it seems odd that this piece of theater has garnered such pro-feminist attention. One would imagine women would want to be seen as something more than a vagina. Of course, the affair could be analogous to the “black men using the word ‘nigger’ as a form of self-empowerment” train of thought, but I find this idea somewhat specious.

I shall have to send a thank you note to Dean Kelly sometime for supervising the Multicultural Ally Project and preparing a commiseration board where students can write their woes on how others see them on four-by-six index cards. The notes people leave can be quite stimulating, and I recorded the thoughts I had reading one of them in an article in a previous issue. Now I’ve found another thought-provoking note. This one was from someone who feels like he’s lying when he checks the “Hispanic” box on those forms that ask for your race. He went to a private school and his family owns a good car, so what right does he have to affirmative action? First thought, humorous and schadenfreudey so all true Hispanics are poor? You racist! Second thought, more seriously what does this suggest about race-based affirmative action? That race is a rather silly criterion to base your financial, material, and

other aid upon?

Did you know that some political officers in several major countries in Europe are so Euro-hyper-nationalist that they could be labeled “fascist” without irony, and they occasionally get popular enough to get a say in their politics and a seat in their governments? It’s true! Two major examples from the previous decade include Jean Marie Le Pen whom you might remember got into a word fight with Jacques Chirac after coming surprisingly close to being elected president (for a blatantly racist septuagenarian) in 2002. The other is Geert Wilders, a Dutch parliament member who recently got banned from setting foot in the United Kingdom, thanks to his severe anti-Islamist stance and the recent release of Fitna. So do I like the guy? HELL NO. He takes anti-Islamo-fascism and turns it into European Fascism he wants Islam and the Koran banned, and simultaneously shrieks about his own right to freedom of speech. Hypocrite.

While we’re on the subject, it’s rather annoying how, invariably, people like Geert Wilders and Jean Marie Le Pen are referred to as “right wing” or “extreme right wing”. Admittedly, the term, much like “progressive” or “conservative” can have different meanings depending on era, country, or political climate, but “right wing” almost seems to invariably carry with it a sense of hyper-radicalism, a barely-suppressed spluttering rage at modern affairs. This is probably because I consider myself somewhat “right wing,” and enjoy all of the same modern vices of sleeping in and computer gaming as my colleagues, but also because, having so considered myself as such, I find myself in utter disagreement with the policies of the aforementioned politicians. Wilders, as stated, wants the Koran and Islam banned, and Le Pen is flagrantly anti-American and very nationalistic a Frenchies-over-all sort of man. So I, and probably a lot of other conservatives on campus, end up very miffed when I get lumped with people like these two.

I went down to Jay’s Place (alright, alright... the Muddhole) to buy some juice, and noted a news program on the TVs there. The title card, loosely remembered: “Barack Obama: The First 100 Days”. Uh, Obama has only been in office since 20 January; that’s 35 days if you’re feeling generous (at the time of writing but by the time you read this it’ll be closer). The only way to get to 100 days is to assume he ascended to power right after clearing 270 electoral votes in November. Why place the start of his term on election night if the President-Elect doesn’t officially take office until 20 January?



AN INTERVIEW WITH

SHAIMUS



Dave



Cam



Johannes



Phil



Evan

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MICHAEL HO

By MICHAEL HO '10 AND SEAN LAGUNA '12

Over spring break we had the chance to sit down with Shaimus, a band well known among Mudders for playing at big parties throughout the year. In our hour-long interview with them, we talked about their history, their new album “The Sad Thing Is, We Like It Here,” Mudd, Rock Band 2, and even illegal downloading. Dave, Cam, Johannes, Phil, and Evan were great guys and we can’t wait to see them again. Luckily, we won’t have to wait long since Shaimus will be playing on May 1st with a host of other student bands. Don’t miss your chance to check them out!

**Sean:** What do you feel like you accomplished more with this album than with the last one?

**Phil:** I’d say it’s a clearer reflection of the band, ‘cause everybody injected their own personality into it, and it was, uh, us. Trying to bring out every individual in the band. If they’re happy with their part, that’s good, but the complicated thing is: we can all play parts we like, but if we all do it at the same time, chances are, it’s not going to sound that good. So it’s the gelling of everything that that took us the longest. And that’s the arrangement - sacrificing an idea here or there for better interplay.

**Cam:** For the sake of the song.

**Phil:** Yeah, for the sake of the song.

**Johannes:** There was a lot of work in mixing, like trying to have it so you can hear everything out of two speakers, instead of on a stage with sound flying everywhere.

**Sean:** I’ve done a little bit of recording so I know how that can become a problem even with just five or six tracks.

**Evan:** We have three melody instruments, potentially lead instruments, playing all at the same time, almost always playing lines and thingies and doodads, and trying not to step on each other’s toes is hard enough when we’re writing the songs and writing the parts. But when it comes down to it, our hard work was over once we made sure that the parts worked with each other. Then when Johannes mixed the whole thing he had to make sure that you could hear them. We would go in and be like, “Dude, sounds good except why’s my part so fucking quiet, what the hell, that’s the best part of this part of the song. Turn that up!” and then he’ll turn that up and Phil will be like, “No, but that interferes with my vocals there, and the lyric is the most important part of that part of the song.” So everyone’s in their own heads and wants to hear their part, but at the same time, you’ve got to get it to be a cohesive whole. So with two guitars and piano, and drum and bass, and vocals, it becomes an arduous task for that man over there...

**Johannes:** I’d basically work on something until I got sick of it or couldn’t really listen to it anymore, or lost perspective or whatever and be like, “Okay, this kind of sounds like a song, check this out, guys, and let me know what you think.” Then most of the feedback from the band was excellent. They’d say, “In this part,

the guitar really needs to stand out,” or “During this section I think what Phil’s doing on the piano is interfering with the snare drum and is making it rock less hard than it could,” you know, that kind of stuff. So after a few rounds of going through that, everything started coming together.

**Phil:** We had to find the golden ratio for every bar of every song, which can be pretty difficult.

**Sean:** What was the inspiration for the album, and is there a theme?

**Dave:** The theme is for our demographic, basically the twenty-some year old people just living life. You’re not a college student, you’re not in high school, you’re not all

and then in college I kind of ironed that interest down a bit more firmly. I guess at that time I knew I was going to be doing this kind of stuff, not necessarily with this band, but writing songs and chasing after this dream. The band certainly helped that a lot, because people were coming together collaborating, which is one of the hardest things to do. When five people come together and they all think it’s possible then it makes it really possible because there’s a team. So when a team gets together and loves doing whatever it does as much as this band loves doing things together, then that point would be the realization.

**Cam:** In terms of music, we all went to

had just been finishing up this three song demo for the first album. “All of This” was one of the songs on there, and it seemed like the best candidate for a game where you could play guitar; it had a guitar solo in it, and it was bouncy and kinda fun to bop your head to or whatever.

**Phil:** We submitted that, and they liked it. And they decided to put it in the game. It was definitely a blessing. Harmonix was pretty small, so there weren’t many big names coming through and taking up all the spaces, so we got there first.

**Johannes:** It was also like, such an indie project at that point - we were all saying, “That’s cool, its a game where you play guitar... I would play it, but are people going to spend seventy bucks on this game?”

**Evan:** Yup. (laughter)

**Johannes:** It turns out that they were going to, and still are.

**Cam:** Its funny, ‘cause the song wasn’t finished yet. It didn’t have piano or Ev’s background vocals yet, and they told us, “Hey, we got a song in a video game,” and we thought, “Oh this is cool, why not.”

**Evan:** Every time they tried to explain the game to me, I was like, “This sounds stupid, what? I don’t even get it, I don’t understand what this is.” And then it came out and I said, “Oh, okay, it’s just like air guitar. People get to pretend to be a rock star. People are gonna like this!” And they did. They’re smart people who made that game.

**Phil:** Well, they’re from MIT.

**Evan:** They were such a tiny company and now they’re gigantic.

**Johannes:** They were like 60, and now they’re well over 200.

**Cam:** As for Rock Band 2, we just kept up the relationship with Harmonix. When Rock Band 1 came out we didn’t have any new material. We couldn’t jump on the first one, but we knew the second one was coming out, so when we were working on the CD we were like, “Oh man, we should see if we can talk to them,” and we were lucky enough.

**Evan:** We tried to get on Guitar Hero 2 also, ‘cause we thought, “This is getting popular; we should totally be in it again,” but we didn’t get into that one. So yeah, Rock Band 2 was good timing.

**Phil:** Yeah, it was perfect timing.

**Cam:** Especially since the song we had written really goes with the format.

**Phil:** I think there was somewhere while we were writing that song where we were like, “This would be a fun song on Guitar Hero or Rock Band.” (laughter) “Maybe we should do more of this stuff. Evan, play more notes.”

**Evan:** No problem.

**Michael:** The connection between Harvey Mudd and you guys, how did...

**Dave:** There’s a guy named Dan-boy Pivonka. I was best friends with him from first through fourth grade. Fifth grade we were in a different class, made some new friends, but first grade we were really good friends, and his dad was our baseball coach. He went to Harvey Mudd, liked the band, and was always saying, “Oh, you guys should come out and play; it would



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE FANTASIA

music school, so by the time we were in college, we had already made the decision that for better or for worse, that’s what we wanted to do with our lives. We slowly got together, just as a project that Phil put together - grabbed a ragtag group of friends and made some songs, and then we made the first album. Even when we made the first album it wasn’t completely decided that this is what we were gonna do, this is it. But slowly it went on and got better and better and became more of a real thing. I think Guitar Hero probably helped too. Getting a song on Guitar Hero was certainly a kick in the ass for us, which was nice. Kind of like, “Well, maybe this is a pretty good idea.”

**Evan:** It definitely wasn’t a foregone conclusion during that album that this was gonna be everybody’s focus or even main project.

**Michael:** Guitar Hero... how’d you guys get into Guitar Hero and Rock Band 2?

**Johannes:** We went on a vision-quest, and we won the vision-quest.

**Phil:** Yeah... well, Johannes and I worked for Harmonix, which is the developer for Guitar Hero. We worked there as game-testers for Karaoke Revolution Party.

**Johannes:** Which I’m sure you’ve played many times - many people... bought that... game.

**Phil:** The precursor to Guitar Hero. At the time they were finishing up Guitar Hero, and we were jealous ‘cause it seemed like such a cooler game; don’t tell my old boss. Johannes and I received an e-mail from the music supervisor/director, saying that there was an opportunity to submit some of our own music. And at that time we

super-emotional and ambitious and have all these things you want to do with your life, but you’re not thirty with 2.5 kids and living in Westchester... a suburb, for those who don’t know! You’re just in this giant in-between.

**Cam:** Yeah. That would be the thing that gels all the songs together, because they’re all about different things. Some are about girls, and relationships, and others are about...

**Evan:** Dudes...

**Phil:** (laughter) Yeah, just dudes. But it really is that ambiguous part in your life where you’re, you know, we all know what we want to do but it’s very difficult to get to the point where we can do it professionally.

**Evan:** The sad thing is, we like it here. Heh heh.

**Phil:** It is, because it’s an exciting time in our lives. We want to be somewhere already. We want to be touring all of the time, and we want to be at the top of our game all the time, but we can’t simply because we’re taking the steps we need to get to that point, which is why it’s such an in-between stage. That’s why most of those songs were written, and it’s certainly the sentiment behind the way we needed to get what we needed to get out.

**Sean:** When did you all understand for the first time that this was what you were going to do with your lives - producing music for people to listen to?

**Phil:** I think I kinda know what you’re talking about. Music is the general scope, and this band is something that pinned music to my future, somehow. When I was growing up, music became my interest,



be so cool,” so we said, “Okay, might as well,” and we did. There ended up being a lot of people, and it was a really good time, and we kept coming back. We played for Wet Season twice, the Wild Wild West party... just various events that they have over there, and they’d blast us an e-mail. But the thing I always think about is, growing up, Dan-boy was always a quiet guy and super nice, and his dad was super Catholic and really strict, and every time I would go to Harvey Mudd and mention Dan-boy people would say, “Oh my gosh, that kid’s crazy,” and they’d tell me stories about him and a banana-hammock and doing this and a stripper cage and deep fried Twinkies in no particular order or combination.

**Phil:** Everything fits into a “you only live once” Venn diagram.

**Cam:** Since we started playing there, the kids at Harvey Mudd have been... warm to us.

**Dave:** And we also just love academics. (laughter) So any chance to be on a campus...

**Evan:** We’re big fans of mathematics and engineering in general, so the two of us, hand in hand. Harvey Mudd. Shaimus. Peas and carrots.

**Sean: Speaking of that, if you had gone to Harvey Mudd or pursued that kind of education, what would your interests be? What would you want to do?**

**Evan:** Do you have physics?

**Michael:** We do.

**Phil:** I’d do some area in physics.

**Dave:** I’d do mechanical engineering and build monster trucks. (laughter) Or I’d try and build a speeder bike from Endor.

**Cam:** Am I allowed to go to any of the Claremont schools or just Harvey Mudd?

**Sean:** Uh... I wasn’t really thinking all too hard when I wrote the question.

**Cam:** I... am flat out going to say I wouldn’t get into Harvey Mudd.

**Phil:** This is a theoretical thing.

**Johannes:** Y’all got math?

**Michael:** Engineering, physics, computer science, biology, chemistry...

**Sean:** We have very few majors, there’s mathematical biology.

**Michael:** There are weird combinations.

**Evan:** I’ll take astrophysics and double-major in super theoretical math.

**Phil:** Cool.

**Evan:** That’s a new major they have.

**Phil:** There wouldn’t be parties; there’d be

communication and connection that happens makes it a two-way experience, and I live for that. If I had to play music for the rest of my life, then I would like to do it with an audience there. Somewhere I can see other people reacting.

**Evan:** I just like playing loud, man.

**Dave:** There’s a vast difference between the CD and the live show. People always say things after the show, and I’m like, “Oh cool, thanks,” but when someone has the CD and they really like it, but they say the live show is way better, then I think, “Okay, mission accomplished.” ‘Cause that’s how it’s supposed to be. A live show is supposed to be... like... way... incredible.

**Sean: What other bands or influences shaped your sound?**

**Phil:** I was gonna say we’re playing a five way tug of war, and wherever the center is, that’s basically what Shaimus is, and everybody else is just like, “I like this, and this is the way I want to hear it.”

**Cam:** And so each person coming from their different backgrounds brings something new to the table, whether it is in their ability or in the writing process, and... I forgot where I was going with that.

**Phil:** Just what you like about music.

**Cam:** Oh, the sound and direction of the band is constantly changing. When we first started playing songs, the way Phil was writing songs was a little bit different.

**Phil:** Jazzier.

**Cam:** The sound is continually progressing, and we’re getting better and more comfortable with it, but from the get-go it wasn’t just like “We’ll put on these kind of pants and play this kind of guitar and have this hairstyle and then there we go, we’re in that genre.” It’s always been a little bit more abstract.

**Johannes:** It’s hard to compare...

**Cam:** We’re not stuck in a genre.

**Evan:** We don’t know how to be stuck in a genre, we’re not good at that.

**Phil:** We all have different ideas that come from anywhere and we’re just like, “Alright, let’s try this in this song.” We’ll try the butt rock thing here and the smooth jazz weather report thing here.

**Sean:** I guess since there are so many influences, could each of you start and say your biggest influence. It’s okay if that’s a band or artist, but it could be anything.

**Phil:** Dave, why don’t you go first.

**Dave:** Uh... musically, probably Mark

Zeppelin’s ex-pro-wrestler. Trying to find mandolin strings in the summer in the middle of Austin. Also, Murray from Flight of the Conchords.

**Cam:** We start all our meetings out with roll call.

**Phil:** It was Kid A for me, but I think Rockin’ The Suburbs, Ben Folds were big influences on me and songwriting.

**Evan:** You have to mention that you come



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL HO ’10.

from a big jazz background. Pop-wise, those things were definitely big influences on you, but you come from years and years of playing jazz. There’s definitely a jazz influence in certain songs.

**Phil:** All right, I’ll tell you what then. The first, basically the musician who made me want to play music the most, was Duke Ellington. Our band covered Duke Ellington and we went to The Ellington Festival in New York.

**Johannes:** ...his high school band.

**Phil:** Yeah that’s right, the high school... (name of town)... I hate that town actually, so um, don’t print that.

**Cam:** You’ve said don’t print that like five times.

**Phil:** Duke Ellington and his arrangements and the way he wrote for specific members of the band... um... kinda the avant-garde soulfulness that he brought to the world was... It was the pop of the day, and it was dancy, but it was also very daring. I think that really turned me on to music. Yeah. So Duke Ellington and Ben Folds. (laughter) **Cam:** You can skip me, and come back to me. I don’t even know how to answer that question.

**Evan:** All right, I’ll answer for Cam, he loves Englebert Humperdink. For me if I had to simplify it to a short answer, my personal sound and influence would be a mixture of classic rock and 90s alternative. Melded together in a disgusting mixture concoction of awesome rock.

**Dave:** A disgusting brown mixture.

**Evan:** Right. That’s me. Brown. Yeah.

**Phil:** Classic ‘90s grunge rock, all synonymous now. But I know what you mean.

**Evan:** Well, classic rock in a technical sense, as in like, ‘60s and ‘70s blues-based jam rock and ‘90s alternative, particularly earlier ‘90s.

**Dave:** I’m just gonna say good stuff, like Eric Clapton and Soundgarden, not the Doors and the Gin Blossoms.

**Cam:** I just like rock music. Uh, I have slightly newer tastes than everyone else in the band, Muse, uh... um, what other stuff do I listen to? Cyndi Lauper, write that down, I love Cyndi Lauper. I’ve always wanted to play fast and loud.

**Phil:** Fast and furious.

**Dave:** Coming soon.

**Michael: Do you guys see or have any idea where your sound’s gonna go for the third or fourth album?**

**Phil:** We’re writing some new songs, but right now it’s very... there’s no fulcrum yet; we have no idea where it’s gonna lean.

**Dave:** I wanna follow the Zeppelin track. The first CD was cool, but not all of who they are. The second CD was ballsy, a lot of rock, and people wanted more of that for the third CD, but the third CD is the sensitive side. Then the fourth one is the masterpiece, and then after that we’re doing a lot of drugs.

**Cam:** Loooots of drugs.

**Dave:** A looot of drugs.

**Cam:** Seven-minute guitar solos... you

know...

**Cam:** But really, we go into the room, and rehearse, and we say, “Oh that sounds good, that doesn’t sound good,” and after about two hundred hours of that, we’ll have all the songs that we want. It’s not like we think of an album and then shape it around that so, you know, the album will just sound like... Shaimus, a little older, a little wiser.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE FANTASIA

symposiums.

**Evan:** I’d just be thinking all day; it would be like a thinking party. I’d set up my dorm suite with couches, and we’d just sit there and not talk, we’d just think.

**Dave:** I’m gonna major in telekinetics. (laughter)

**Cam:** Mindbullets.

**Sean: Do you want to show anything about your songs or music in general through a show as opposed to on an album? Is there a difference in how you present the music, or in what you want people to take away from it?**

**Phil:** Oh, I think the show is, you know, by far what we try to live up to with the album. It’s the purest energy that we have; playing live just speaks so much louder.

**Johannes:** Volumes.

**Phil:** It’s the live experience in that on a physical level, there are more than two speakers. Everybody’s playing something, so you’re already getting that difference, sonically. Then, the communication that happens between not only the band internally but also between the band and the audience there’s an amazing

Knopfler, from the Dire Straits. Uh... he plays guitar. (laughter) I think the ideas that I come up with sound most like what someone who listened to him a whole lot growing up would come up with.

**Cam:** And Def Leppard.

**Dave:** And Def Leppard. But my Facebook profile for favorite music says “tonal.” That’s my answer. Tonal music. I’ll listen to a lot of stuff across the board, so it’s hard to pin it down.

**Johannes:** I’ve been trying to think of how to answer this question, but, uh... if I said OK Computer, the album, that would be solid. ‘Cause it got me into music. Before that I was listening to a lot of hip-hop and stuff not to say that that isn’t music but somebody said “Oh, you should check out Radiohead, check out this album.” I listened to it non-stop for about a year, and I said, “Wow, this is crazy.” So the guy who produced that, and that band stuff that they do tends to be stuff that I like.

**Sean:** That’s a good answer.

**Evan:** Steve, what kind of managers are you influenced by?

**Everyone:** The dude from Spinal Tap. Brian Epstein. “No sex and drugs for me!”

**Michael: Where did your band name come from?**

**Dave:** So we went to this cemetery, sort of by where Cam and I live, Inglewood park mortuary and cemetery. We took a big water balloon launcher we used to take to the beach for parties and stuff, and we just said, “Let’s just launch this thing, and whoever’s name it lands on, boom, whatever headstone...”

**Phil:** We’re stuck with it, kinda like shooting an arrow.

**Dave:** So we did it and jumped the fence to go find wherever the water balloon landed. You know they leave the little things, the little butt. And it landed on some dude named Shaimus who died in 1937, so we decided, “Okay.”

**Sean:** That’s almost too cool to be true...

**Dave:** It is. It is. (laughter).

**Sean: What do you guys think of illegal downloading?**

**Evan:** I love it.

**Dave:** It’s the new legal downloading.

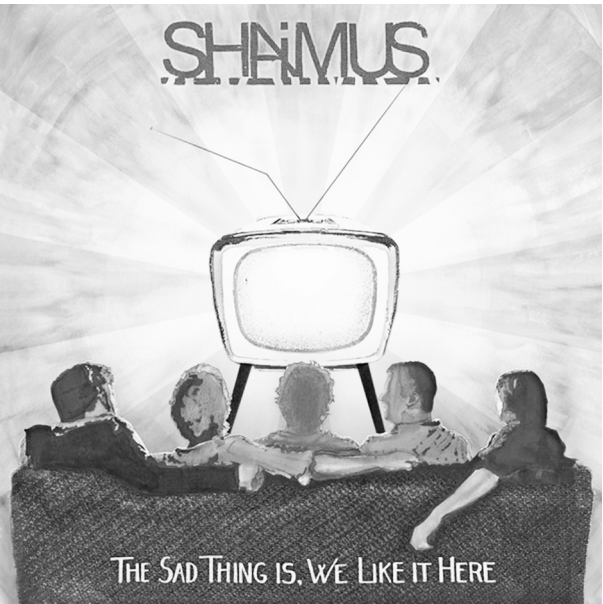
**Phil:** At this point I think we’re just happy that people, if people do download our music, that they get and want to listen to it.

**Evan:** If people ask us, oh man, where can I get your music, we’ll tell them the way to pay for it. But some people have come up to me and said, “I’m totally gonna download your album illegally online,” and I said, “Cool, spread it around to everyone you know.” Of course, I would prefer that you have it rather than not have it.

**Dave:** One of my dad’s partners who’s a doctor illegally downloaded our CD, and I told my dad to tell him, “Well, how ‘bout since he doesn’t respect what I do for a living, since I went to college for it and everything, how about I come by and get a little bit of free surgery and we call it even?” (laughter) What’re you guys majoring in at Mudd?

**Sean:** Um, I’m undecided, I’m only a freshman.

**Dave:** Well, say you’re an astrophysiologist, astrophysicist. If you want to download my CD, I’ll be like, “Hey, that’s cool, man. Anytime you want to build me a spaceship for free, you call me.” Until then you can give me twelve dollars.



SHAIMUS’ NEW CD, \$10:  
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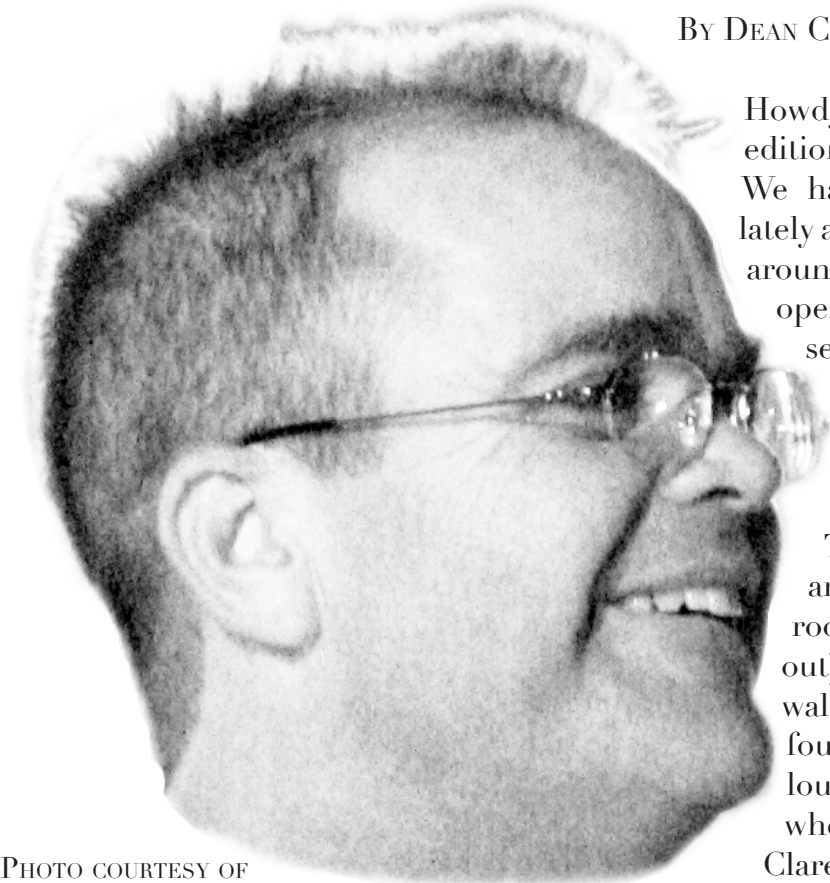


PHOTO COURTESY OF  
MICHAEL HO '10.

# Mudd Security Blotter



## The Presidency of Barack Obama

By the time you read this, you'll be talking about Barack Obama's first three months or so; as I write this, Obama has been the President of the United States for about a month, give or take a week. The new president is supposed to make history, so how has he performed now, especially in comparison to his much-hated predecessor Bush? The answer is not what you might be expecting....

Across the pond? Obama managed to piss off most of Europe talking about how to bring the American economy back on track. Something about "Buy American" and how the money in the stimulus bills would be restricted to American goods and businesses (or at least primarily to using said goods and businesses to rebuild), and how the European Union was threatening economic warfare until the Obama administration backed down. So much for reuniting the Trans-Atlantic Alliance. In the Middle East? Well, there are still air-strikes going on in Pakistan (only now they're labeled as killing "X people, including Taliban and Al Queda fighters..."), the war is still being fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, even though there haven't been any major media reports on the matter, and the rest of the world still enjoys (or chafes under) a reasonably strong U.S. military presence. Israel is still a hot spot, Iran and North Korea continue to pursue their nukes, and, in general, not much has changed in the world. On the bright side, he did recently decide that the U.S. would have no part in the ridiculously racist Durban U.N. World Conference on Racism.

How about on the home front? Well, the stimulus bill was signed into law. Even the most hopeful economists don't believe it will actually do anything to get the U.S. economy back in the positive side. Obama's desire to simultaneously transfer the U.S. energy grid to cleaner, newer renewable forms of energy hasn't helped either, as said forms of energy require almost \$25.00 in

By DEAN CHRIS SUNDBERG

Howdy and welcome to another edition of the Mudd Security Blotter. We have had a few things stolen lately and some strange folks hanging around campus so keep your eyes open out there. Call x72000 if you see anything even SLIGHTLY suspicious. Well, let's get right to it:

3/6  
The LAC now has a lounge area called the ReLACsation room (you all should check it out). Apparently, an older person walked into the LAC and was found "with his shoes off" in the lounge. He was also drunk and when Campus Safety and the Claremont police escorted him off campus, he gave a couple different names to them. Who really knows who he was? We know he was relaxed because his shoes were off, so he evidently felt the positive vibes of the ReLACsation room.

3/12  
It looks like the Platt living room is quite popular. Campus Safety found "a suspicious vehicle with 3 males and the smell of marijuana coming from the vehicle." One person came from inside the living room and later entered the car. All of them

were off campus folks, so feel free to tell people that are not Mudders to leave the Platt living room if they are disruptive or problematic. Or call Campus Safety and they can take care of it for you. Also, if you see these guys again, don't tell them about the ReLACsation room. Dude.

3/14  
A student reported his car keys (yep, keys, not car) as stolen after "he left his car running while he went up to his room to change. When he returned... his car keys were missing." Never fear, the proctors are here! Proctors Andrew and Elaine saw the car running and turned it off, slid the keys under the front seat, and left the door unlocked so the car wasn't stolen or driven off by a prankster. The keys were found and all was well.

3/16  
There was a fire alarm in Linde Dorm. It turned out to be "burnt food." Campus Safety reset the alarm and the cooking ceased.

3/18  
Two Mudders were turned in by the dean at Pomona as "two juvenile trick skateboarders in the IT parking structure." It turned out to be two Mudders who were skating around in a juvenile manner, hence the confusion. They were told to leave and they whined a bit (as juveniles often do) and skated away.

3/20  
Another fire alarm (more trouble in the kitchen), this time in Sontag. A Campus Safety officer found "a pot of burnt beans" and a lot of smoke. Proctor Hayden helped as they reset the alarm.

3/28  
An eagle-eyed Mudder saw a fellow Mudder's homemade skateboard in the possession of a few guys he didn't know. It turned out to be some folks from one of our sister colleges who made fun of the Mudder's ability to do complicated math and then claimed (to Campus Safety) that "... some (other 5C) students gave us the skateboard." Campus Safety returned the "given" board to the Mudder/owner and all was sort of well. Math envy rears its ugly head once again.

4/1  
A student reported a vehicle in the courtyard of West dorm that was believed to be an April Fool's prank. The vehicle was "in the middle of the courtyard with couches (as well as "Rummage Sale Today" and "Notel Motel" signs) packed on top it." It turned out to be a Mudder's car; it was driven off campus the next day... without the couches and signs.

Well, that's it for now. Remember, call x72000 if you see anything suspicious out there (especially as we come to the end of the year when the scavengers come out).

By KEVIN THAM '12



PHOTO COURTESY OF <http://www.flickr.com/photos/thecornballer/2943080820/>

subsidies per megawatt-hour at current investment rates. The resulting increased costs of energy from things like sealing off

up having to pay a larger percent of their revenues for all the normal uses of energy (electricity, heating, gasoline...). This says

*“One would imagine, based strictly on the campaign rhetoric and the fervency of his supporters, that Obama’s election would prompt a massive change in American politics, wherein we would all hold hands and advance the country’s, and maybe the world’s, vested interests together.”*

U.S. supplies of oil shale also harms people and families with lower incomes more than those with higher ones, as they end

nothing, of course, about the troubles Obama has had getting his cabinet in order, as his nominees have either had tax

issues or refused to serve.

And what of that bastion of torture and evil in Cuba, Guantánamo Bay? Well, it turns out, according to the administration's own investigations, that Gitmo isn't actually all that bad of a place. Reasonably well run, competent command still hasn't stopped Obama from signing orders to have the place closed by 2010. Some of the detainees will be transferred, perhaps to Europe; some will stand trial in civilian courts; but others will be released. Given that, depending on your source, around ten to twenty percent of detainees released for Guantánamo Bay promptly turn around and attack U.S. interests in the Middle East, what are the odds that a fairly significant portion of those released will do just that? And if you argue that it's a matter of American legality of setting a shiny moral example to the world in the hopes that they'll follow Obama has explicitly given his word that the practice of rendition (essentially, the outsourcing of intelligence operations and prisoners to other countries, possibly ones with less restraint on interrogations) is to remain. So America's regaining of its moral standing in the world isn't quite complete. (As an aside, the author opposes renditions on the grounds that American intelligence operations ought to be kept in house.)

So what has changed? One would imagine, based strictly on the campaign rhetoric and the fervency of his supporters, that Obama's election would prompt a massive change in American politics, wherein we would all hold hands and advance the country's, and maybe the world's, vested interests together. (Cough cough cough.) A scant one month after his election, however, Obama has revealed himself to be merely a politician, subject to, and possibly participating in, the Beltway's madness, unfamiliarity with the facts of predecessors, and tendency towards amiable unrealities.



*Mudd Slinger*

C was spotted taking an early morning walk up from Pomona in last night's clothes. Seems early for a new friend...  
A group of frosh got a good show as K tumbled down the stairs at a recent North party.  
Friendly strangers helped bring L to a safe haven after a rough night: in his own bathroom, next to the toilet...with a pillow.  
B and G were seen misbehaving at Mardi Gras and leaving together QUITE early.  
T is getting with more of the sophomorphs, while G was making out with more boy frosh once again.  
L made an epic shower appearance earlier this semester that those present will doubtlessly remember.  
H was premeditatedly seen in his attempt to set fire to the BFS in protest to the recent protests.

xoxo  
the community

P.S.: To contribute to the next round of gossip, please email juicy news to hmcmuddslinger@gmail.com.

Muddraker

Crossword Puzzle

By BOB SCHAEFFER

1		2			3		4		5		6			7
8							9							
10														
11					12	13					14		15	
					16									17
18											19			
20							21		22					
23														
24									25					

Across

- 1) A vesicle messed up mice rooms (9)
- 8) Input a high, holding state (4)
- 9) Toyota lost in FSU prank (5)
- 10) The donkey destroyed Dr. Mac's toe (9)
- 11) Talk show host found balance in broken tool (2,4)
- 14) Long's partner: "Do not finish late" (3)
- 16) Vegetable on a charged particle (5)
- 18) Smallest thing broke moat (4)
- 20) Potassium: it goes with caboodle (3)
- 22) Finishes the last parts (4)
- 23) The first woman held acceptable milk (5)
- 24) Right lane to the left of the kidneys (5)
- 25) Second behind attitude (4)

Down

- 1) Paper rewrote dud remark (9)
- 2) A procedure: put IV in, repeat (9)
- 3) Letter from Greece announced an arrangement (3)
- 4) One CSI mutilated a songbird
- 5) A bad temper website in Spanish is found in South States (9)
- 6) Greek exclamation in jeopardy (3)
- 7) E dorm (4)
- 12) Phosphorus (hot) on a particle of light (6)
- 13) He held Missouri back where the heart is (4)
- 15) Upcoming city in Arizona terminals (6)
- 17) Arranges second after 51st (5)
- 19) Animal sounded fresh (3)
- 21) 10 dB ringer can be heard (3)

Πυξζλε οφ τηε

Ισσυε

By MATTHEW WODRICH '10

“Recovering the Polynomial”

The Oracle at Delphi has in mind a certain polynomial (in the variable  $x$ , say) with nonnegative integer coefficients. You may query the Oracle with any integer  $x$ , and the Oracle will tell you the value of  $p(x)$ .

How many queries do you have to make to determine  $p$ ?

Taken From: WINKLER, PETER. MATHEMATICAL MIND-BENDERS. PAGES 75-78. ISBN 978-1-56881-336-3. A K PETERS LTD, 2007.

Solution:  
“As you may have already figured out, it only takes two queries: the Oracle’s answer to  $x=l$  (say,  $n$ ) tells you that no coefficient can exceed  $n$ . Then, you can send in  $x=n+l$ , and when you expand the Oracle’s answer base  $n+l+l$ , you have the polynomial!”

Senior

Entering...

The World



By JASON SANTIAGO

contributing muddraker

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