Graduation 81: rockets, balloons...

...and Reg Murphy’s ‘Reality 101’

BY MIKE CARROLL
Co-editor

An overflow crowd of over 10,000 swarmed into Mustang Stadium during the sunny Saturday morning of June 13, preserving the economic health of the color film industry as they watched their friends and relatives become Cal Poly graduates.

As the Cal Poly Symphonic Band played “The Sinfonians,” 3,499 graduate-designates filed onto the football field during the 75th annual Cal Poly commencement ceremony amid the hail of firecrackers, balloons, skyrockets, streamers and beach balls that have traditionally symbolized the college-trained mind.

The commencement address was delivered by Reg Murphy, the editor/publisher of the San Francisco Examiner and former editor of the Atlanta Constitution.

“I am absolutely delighted to come to the home of champions,” Murphy told the audience of all ages, referring to the various athletic titles the university had won during the 1980-81 academic year.

The editor said the purpose of his talk was not to belabor the past but to provide a few lessons in Reality 101. “It’s a short course,” he added.

Murphy explained that there were inconsistencies in both the liberal and conservative schools of thought. Conservatives, for example, argue in favor of economy-heating tax cuts while at the same time ranking inflation as the country’s No. 1 problem, he said.
Activism reborn

Cal Poly in the summertime. It's an easy place to escape from the world. The beach, the ocean breeze and the hills beyond Poly Canyon are more inviting than ever. The mountains and ocean waves make it hard to stay on topic for long.

While exhibiting a tolerance for diversity, however, we will not deemphasize the things all people have in common. As John Paul II escaped assassinations by gun owners to shoot a friend or relative, gun control legislation to maintain the right to own a gun and shoot rapists, robbers and killers. We interpose this basic link is the fact that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's futures. And we all mortal.

On behalf of the Summer Mustang staff, we wish you success for an enjoyable summer quarter.

Gun control aids innocent

Gun control needs to be initiated today in order to stop the senseless killings currently being committed by an average 50 persons each day. Many people are opposing gun control legislation to maintain the right to own guns by those who register, robbers and killers. But why is this so important when it is more likely for handgun owners to shoot a friend or relative than it is for them to kill a criminal?

Handgun Control Inc. of Washington D.C. estimates that 50 Americans die each day from gunshot wounds. Recent President Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II escaped assassinations by handgun. John Lennon and Dr. Michael Hallowitz were not so lucky. Political assassination is not the main concern of the handgun control lobby. The senseless murders of innocent people out of the spotlight and accidental killings of people who do not make the headlines when they are killed, are of primary concern to the HCI.

Twenty thousand people are killed each year by handguns according to the HCI. Of course this statistic includes a percentage of persons invading places and doing things which would carry along with them a substantial risk.

Self defense seems to be carrying along with it a heavy price. Family members and friends of those wishing to defend against violent robbers, rapists, and children of a businessman who had a bad day at the office. Who is to say he was not bought a gun in order to feel safe in his environment. And there are plenty of adults of 15 year-old who had lived to maturity had the boy not been exploring Dad's new defense weapon.

Why is this country seemingly so against gun control? Or why hasn't Congress acted on some sort of control legislation? Currently a gun control bill being discussed is facing hearing position from the National Rifle Association. The Kennedy-Rodino bill (S.974 and H.R. 3200) would

- Halt the manufacture and sale of "Saturday Night Specials.
- Make tracing handgun ownership as quick and easy as automobile ownership.
- Check out handgun purchasers to make sure they didn't have a criminal record or history of mental illness.
- Put behind bars anyone who uses a handgun in a crime.
- Tighten control over the 170,000 handgun dealerships in America and get the loopholes out of the business of selling handguns.

Author Jeff Levy is a junior journalism major and Mustang staff writer.

Letters

Diablo meets safety requirements

Editor

I would like to comment on two of Mustang Daily's recent stories: The May 15 story on Andrew Baldwin's speech and the May 20 editorial on the NRC's low power licensing hearings.

First, regarding Mr. Baldwin's speech topic Diablo Canyon is the immediate concern. I'd like to believe that his comments in perspective. The Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant (DCNPP) was originally designed to withstand the largest expected earthquake along any known fault with an epicenter at the point on the fault nearest the plant.

As a margin of safety, DCNPP was also designed to withstand a 6.75 magnitude earthquake from a hypothetical fault with an epicenter directly beneath the plant.

When the Hosgri fault was discovered, PG&E and the U.S.G.S. began studying the effects it was likely to have on DCNPP's safety. PG&E determined that any earth motions from an earthquake on the Hosgri would be less than movements from the 6.75 magnitude earthquake which was originally postulated. When the Atomic Energy Commission evaluated PG&E's and the U.S.G.S.' data during Final Safety Analysis Report public hearings in 1973, they agreed that the plant could withstand an earthquake on any of the area's faults--including a 7.5 magnitude earthquake on the Hosgri.

Since the A.F.C.'s 1973 decision, the NRC has made design criteria more stringent. PG&E has made the necessary modifications to meet these new standards.

Second, regarding the hearings. Your editorial said, "Both PG&E and the evacuation plan doesn't meet NRC standards." It's important to recognize that this is an "emergency response" plan, not an "evacuation" plan. A general evacuation is the last step in responding to a radiological emergency. Preceding steps include listening to your radio for instructions or shielding in your own home.

A nuclear power plant operation at 5 percent thermal capacity is significantly different from one operating at full electrical capacity. The "worst case" accident at a plant operating at 5 percent thermal capacity would only have significant impacts on the low-population area (LPZ) within six miles of the plant. Sheriff George Whiting testified at the NRC hearings that his department could respond to an emergency within the LPZ and could, if necessary, evacuate those people. Although the County's Emergency Response Plan doesn't meet NRC standards for full-power operation, the County (Sheriff's Department) can effectively respond to an emergency during low-power test operation.

BYRON B. WOERTZ, JR.
Community Activities Coordinator

Summer Mustang

Assistant

This bill will not necessarily cut crime, but it will cut the number of fatalities and that is what the Handgun Control Inc. is after. If handgun control passes Congress, the number of death by "Saturday Night Specials" in existence will start to diminish.

The NRA uses the slogan, "Gun control will kill people. People kill people." Syndicated Columnist, Mike Ryko summed it up best saying, "Why don't we tell people about the water over the table, after all, poison doesn't kill people, people kill people."
Nuclear power: a part of our future?  
Yes---it's safe, crucial energy

"Diahlo Canyon—a Dangerous Neighbor." All around the San Luis Obispo community; those alarming orange billboards are posted on highway signs. The locals were frighted to shout "no nukes!"

The anti-nuke movement apparently has gusts swalloiled up on excessive emotionalism. Why the scare tactics? Perhaps it is because groups like Abolone Alliance have failed to show that the 74-year-old nuclear power establishment has proven, or will prove, to be fatal to our wellbeing.

Surely they must be aware of the federally approved safeguards in nuclear power plants, including with special added safety features, Diablo Canyon. Please explain how easy it would be for that radiation to make "The Great Escape" out of titanium control rods, an enclosed steel containment chamber and tree-twisted and one-half foot thick concrete walls laced with multiple rows of steel rods.

Shut-down systems and back-up shut down systems, as well as reserve electric systems, have more than enough potential to prevent a fantasized "nuclear next." Robert Carlin, a former Department of Energy Assistant Secretary for the Environment, said accurately that nuclear safety precautions imposed by the government have reached a "point of unreality."

Take a long look at the Summer Mustang's letter from the "community villagers." P G E. If the Atomic Energy Commission did rule, after reviewing a U.S. Geological Survey, that Diablo Canyon is safe, then why not operate this crucially needed plant? Diablo, even if built on top of the largest fault, has been scientifically certified to withstand an earthquake of 7.5 on the Richter Scale—what more do you want?

The biggest garbage bag that can be thrown at nukes is in the infamous 1979 Three Mile Island accident. Infamous, yes, but how many do you have to kill before you realize the accident was a disaster? Nuclear officials claim the reaction is as inconceivable as the government claims it.

Go live on an operating nuclear plant for an entire year and you shouldn't be alarmed—the death risk stands at one in 5,000,000,000.

It is 1984. The Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant has been licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and is in operation. Suddenly the impossible happens. A major accident occurs at the plant, causing large amounts of radiation to be released into the atmosphere. Seventy-seven radiation sirens set up by PG&E—all within a 20-mile radius of the power plant—sound. But it is tough to outrun radiation. The sirens are about as effective as trying to salvage the Towering Inferno with No Smoking signs.

The country's emergency evacuation plans are largely comprehensive on paper. Nuclear physicist Harry Susser, an engineer, says in his book: "...there is no emergency aid prepared. Property damage may run in the tens of billions of dollars.

It is the worst kind of disaster conceivable short of a nuclear war. It is the product of an insane notion that radiation caused by energy generation is somehow less poisonous than that reserved for World War II. "Atoms for Peace" has become, indeed, a contradiction in terms.

What are the odds of this scenario becoming reality? It is hard to say, but nuclear industry spokesmen have said the chances are one in a million per year per reactor—the same risk a person would have of dying while driving a car for, say, 60 miles. Yet drivers do it on our highways. And commercial nuclear power plants, given enough time, will face a major accident.

Nuclear power is a dying development, an economic as well as an environmental disaster that is based on the obsolescence of the population by the 1940s and 50s. It is the Vietnam of energy generation.

In every free market economy in the world, expansion of nuclear power has come to a virtual standstill. The reason is that the "soft," decentralized technologies that will shape our energy future—wind, geothermal, solar, nuclear power, pale in com-parison to the potential of nuclear power, passive and active.

Alternative energy proponents Amory Lovins, during his recent visit to Cal Poly, said these alternatives would cost 0.4 cents per kilowatt hour, while the cost of operating Diablo would amount to 2 cents per kilowatt hour. Furthermore, the energy efficiency techniques Lovins proposes will allow us to grow economically while using less energy than nuclear power.

The U.S. nuclear industry, however, in order to stay afloat, has required such massive amounts of federal subsidies that one would think it more at home in a socialist country. Indeed, the only two countries where nuclear power is expanding are France and the Soviet Union—both of which have centralized economic planning.

The biggest subsidy given to U.S. nuclear plants comes in the form of the Price-Anderson Act, which limits the public's protection for damages to $550 million. (It will be noted that lawsuits filed following the Three Mile Island incident exceed this amount.)

Price-Anderson raises some serious questions. First, if an accident is as inconceivable as nuclear officials claim, why don't utilities take full responsibility for the "theoretical" damages? Second, if industry officials believe an accident is more probable than they're letting on, why are we letting economics take precedence over human lives?

Nuclear power, in sum, was born out of the ashes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and it has all the destructive allure of the Soviet military. But with luck, the economic hindrances to nuclear power will cause its eventual phased withdrawal from American society.

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Graduation '81

From page 1

Liberals, according to the newspaper editor, believe in government intervention in people's "lives through government regulation. Yet when it comes to the environment, Murphy said, they stress the principle of non-interference with nature.

Murphy said there was terrorism, violence and mass interference with nature. Americans' belief in ever-expanding territory and opportunity, he said, was another largely a myth. It's time for us to start inventing and thinking again, Murphy declared—we must become the "writers of the memories of our time."

Cal Poly President Warren Baker, before conferring the degrees, noted that life is generally a race between education and catastrophe. Baker hoped the graduates would "cultivate their imagination and will" and would choose the right path.

Tim Kersten, chairman of the university's academic senate and a member of the president's party, posed a hypothetical situation to the graduates: When you're age 40 with a $150,000 mortgage, two children who need braces and a boss who believes working 60 hours a week is necessary—what would you do? Kersten asked.

"I realized that everything is generally a race between education and catastrophe. Baker hoped the graduates would "cultivate their imagination and will" and would choose the right path."

"I decided I didn't really want to be a P.E. teacher anymore," said Miskulin, the owner of the Dawn Boutique.

"I'm not sure if I'm a fashion designer," said Miskulin, "but I produce the clothes from beginning to end."

"I travel around Southeast Asia six months out of the year, and I produce the clothes while I'm there. First he buys the fabric, and then he bargains with factory owners over dyeing the colors and the designs on the material."

"I think it's popular because it looks good," said Miskulin. "It wears well on women, and it enhances each person's uniqueness. It's very conducive to California." Miskulin said he believes he's successful because "I never listened to anybody who said I was crazy."
Pro-nuclear seminar
Scientific panel puts radiation 'in perspective'

BY MIKE CARROLL

The dangers of radiation have been blown out of proportion by a sensationalistic media and a bureaucratic government that has indirectly heightened public fears about nuclear energy, a panel of scientists said during a symposium at Cal Poly on June 5.

The panel, which included Nobel Laureate Rosalyn Yalow, spoke to a sparsely populated audience in the Cal Poly Theatre that dwindled during the course of the 2½-hour presentation.

Before the symposium was under way, a representative of the anti-nuclear Concerned Cal Poly Faculty and Staff was passing out information outlining the alternatives and risks of nuclear power.

Yalow, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1977 for her work with radioactive isotopes, said newspapers have not concentrated on reporting about nuclear safety because media responsiveness depends on sensationalism. It is not newsworthy to repeat that something is safe, she said.

Robert Gatlin, who served three years working for the assistant secretary for environment in the U.S. Department of Energy, told the panel but attentive audience that safety of reactor safety appear to be too conservative. He said the nuclear safety precautions enacted by the government had reached "the point of unreality." The partial evacuation of Harrisburg, Pa., following the incident at Three Mile Island was carried out for an "excessive amount," Gatlin claimed, and thus caused "deliberate fooling of the people." "I'm living in a world of Wonderland' and contended such articles were a "compelling reality because of the recent NRC decision to shorten the appeal period after a license is granted from 80 days to 10 days."

Although we believe the overriding evidence warrants denial of a license for Diablo Canyon as soon as August 1, we, the Abalone Alliance, feel the urgent need to step up our organizing for the Blockade. As planned, the Blockade will begin within 10 days of the date the NRC grants an operating license for Diablo Canyon, and before the nuclear fuel is loaded into the plant.

In organizing this nonviolent Blockade/Encampment, our hope is that it will be attended by thousands of people from San Luis Obispo County, because it we have the most to lose if Diablo Canyon is allowed to operate. Our presence at the plant will clearly exhibit to decision makers locally, in Sacramento, and in Washington, the sincere commitment of local residents that Diablo Canyon never operate as a nuclear plant.

"There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but that one must take it because one's conscience tells him it is right."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Radiation risks low, panel says
From page 6

"These things put together suggest we need nuclear power," the Nobel laureate said.

There has been no loss of life caused by the radiation effects of nuclear power plants, she said, although there have been deaths associated with solar power—which environmentalists like to believe is the safest form of energy generation.

Rather than radiation, "the ultimate pollution is our people," said Yalof, who stressed that we must respond to a world of increasing population.

Dr. Jacob Fabrikant, who recently served as director of public health and safety for the President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island, accompanied his talk with a slide presentation. He said the authorities have a certain amount of scientific terms, "or else you shouldn't be in this room."

In the last decade, he said, scientists have measured radiation, understood its biological and health effects, and understood how to control it and know its effects at the level of cells and genes.

"Of course, we are all radioactive," Fabrikant said, explaining that man evolved from the primordial sea, an environment of radiation.

"It's not a question of what is safe but what is hazardous," Fabrikant said.

He noted that people face the same risks when they travel 400 miles by air, drive 60 miles by car, smoke 3/4 of a cigarette or simply live for 20 minutes after reaching 30 years of age.

"It's not a question of what is safe but what is hazardous," Fabrikant said.

"We respond to Poly "P" right up the hills behind the red brick dorms. Or, for more of a challenge, go west and conquer Bishop's or Madonna beach can be done within an hour. Or better yet, hop on a 10-speed and start pedaling in almost any direction. This county is a bicycling paradise. You have a genuine cowboy steak dinner this night at McKnight's, near Pismo Beach. You'd be surprised at the way their waiters pour your water. The rib-eye steaks are superb."

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Sunday comes and it's off in the car, down 101, to Paso, for some sun-bathing, sun-bathing and perhaps a horseback ride. Or maybe rent one of those bad little ATC-90's, the wonder three-wheel motorcycle machines that crew this motorized beach.

There are other beaches, such as Avila, Port San Luis and, for the uninhibited, Pirates' Cove, a nude beach. You might catch a bon fire party any summer night, at any of these beaches. Like to sail? You may decide to cruise out to nearby Laguna Lake or a little further south of here, Lopez Lake. Both are great for windsurfing.

Sunday evening approaches. The somber thought of early Monday morning classes envelopes your mind. So you take a drive down to the Wine Street Inn, for a delicious cheese fondue. There are also vegetable and hot melted chocolate fondue.

You would go to Tortilla Flats, but the thought of that monster physics problem simply won't go away. Good dancing, Mexican food and margaritas at the Flats—maybe next weekend.

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