Suicide study focuses on colleges

Self-inflicted death is the second-leading cause of death among college students — after accidents.

Cal Poly and other colleges can attest to the tragedy of student suicides.

A report by Alan Lipschitz of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention found that suicide is the second leading cause of death among students — after accidents.

Yet, according to the student-college students do not commit suicide more often than other young adults.

"It is a cause that is exceedingly difficult to investigate: Because few college students commit suicide, the small or otherwise limited studies that examine college suicide can suggest only some very tentative findings," Lipschitz wrote. "Despite their limitations, some of these studies make the disturbing suggestion that certain student groups may have considerably higher rates of suicide, and that suicide may be more preventable."

see Suicide, page 2

DEATH

Student's body found in Stenner Glen apt.

Devin Kingston and Brian Koser

Michael Sutton Blitz, a 20-year-old computer science junior, was found dead in his home Monday after an apparent suicide.

Housing staff at Stenner Glen found the deceased following a report by Blitz’s parents to check on their son after he had missed a doctor’s appointment. Staff entered the residence and found Blitz had hanged himself. Staff members then contacted the San Luis Obispo Police Department.

No note was found at the home; however, “there’s no reason to believe that the death was anything but self-inflicted,” he said. SLOPD Public Information officer Rob Bryn added that Blitz had recently been under the care of a doctor but did not know what type of care he was receiving. National statistics have shown a correlation between suicides and college students; they are often related to academic pressures.

“The faculty who had Mike in class are extremely saddened by his death,” Tim Kearns, computer science department chair, said. “His teachers said he was a good student and an active participant in class.”

SLOPD officers arrived at the second floor of the complex’s building No. 3 around 9 a.m. Monday. Bryn said Blitz had hanged himself in the home with a rope. "Mr. Blitz came up this morning and said he had decided to take his own life," said Blitz’s roommate, Bryn. The police dispatched a crew to the residence to perform a complete investigation of the scene. The circumstances of the death will be investigated by the San Luis Obispo Sheriff’s Department.

Blitz, a 20-year-old mechanical engineering sophomore, was under the care of a doctor but did not know what type of care he was receiving. National statistics have shown a correlation between suicides and college students; they are often related to academic pressures.

“It is a cause that is exceedingly difficult to investigate: Because few college students commit suicide, the small or otherwise limited studies that examine college suicide can suggest only some very tentative findings,” Lipschitz wrote. “Despite their limitations, some of these studies make the disturbing suggestion that certain student groups may have considerably higher rates of suicide, and that suicide may be more preventable.”

SUICIDE, page 2

Word on the street

We asked: Do you plan on subletting this summer?

"You have no real reason to stay here unless you’re going to work."

— Stephanie Franco

"I work, I’m in a lease, I might as well stay in town."

— Kyle Nau

Renowned writer to lead slam poetry

Nikki Giovanni will headline "Another Type of Groove" at Yosemite Hall on Thursday

World-renowned poet, author and activist Nikki Giovanni will headline this month’s “Another Type of Groove,” a free poetry slam taking place Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Yosemite Hall lounge.

Yolanda Cornelia “Nikki” Giovanni, 63, was born in Knoxville, Tenn. She attended Fisk University in 1960 and later went to graduate school at the University of Pennsylvania.

During the 1960s, Giovanni was involved in the Black Arts movement, a group of African-American intellectuals who wrote both artistically and politically radical work promoting black rights and racial equality, as highlighted in her poetry collections “Black Feeling,” “Black Talk” and “Black Judgment,” both published in 1968.

In her long career as an author, she has published many volumes of poetry that have confronted topics ranging from civil rights to life as a single mother. She was honored for her work with the NAACP Image Award for Literature in 1998, 2000 and 2003 and has been named the woman of the year by numerous magazines, including Essence and Ladies Home Journal.

Giovanni is currently a professor of English at Virginia Tech University and recently underwent surgery for breast cancer. Joining Giovanni at the poetry slam will be Rachel McBebbens from New York, known as R.C. McBebbens is a member of The Bullhorn Collective, a group of about 30 very successful and highly ranked poets. Her poetry has been described as brutally honest and intense.

McBebbens has earned such titles as the Orange County Slam team’s 2003 Grand Slam Champion and a third place overall finish in the 2004 Individual World Poetry Championships. In addition to the nationally known artist, local artists will be able to participate in the poetry slam by signing up for a spot in the open mic portion of the show.

“Another Type of Groove” gives people an opportunity to speak in an INSIDE

Softball’s guiding light

Senior leads young team through action

IN SPORTS, page 12

Women held to higher standards

Murder trial raises equality issues

IN OPINION, page 6
Blitz continued from page 1

and took all of his son's belongings out," Kershner said. He also said that the event is "a personal family tragedy," and suggested on-campus counseling services for those who have been affected by the death.

University Police informed representatives of Cal Poly of the Monday during the weekly Care Team meeting, by Vice President of Student Affairs Michael Hott.

The Care Team, Martin Bragg said, director of Health and Counseling Services, said the group was formed to help students and families during emotionally troubled times. The group is made up of officials from Housing and Residential Life, Health and Counseling Services, Student Life and Leadership, Disability Resource Center, UPD, Judicial Affairs and Academic Affairs.

"We have contacted Steenner Glen about providing counseling services to residents there," Bragg said. "It's also routine for us to contact faculty and parents about the return of fees and the student's department if there is a need for counseling within the major. It's important for people to know that there is help on campus even if you just need someone to talk to." Bliss came to Cal Poly after graduating from high school in Valencia, where his family still resides. Despite his listing as a junior, his anticipated graduation date was this quarter.

Suicide continued from page 1

lent among students attending some elite schools in the United States, England and Japan."

The news should alert Cal Poly faculty and staff primarily because it is considered an elite school.

Cal Poly has been named the best regional university in the West by Carnegie's "Academic Nationalizations." The university boasts top-ranking departments, such as architecture and engineering.

"Many college students feel chronically depressed, worthless and rejected by their families, and they struggle to gain some measure of acceptance and worth through academic achievement or athletic success," according to the study. "Academic drudgery in the service of winning parental love perpetuates these students' connections with their parents, even as it threatens these connections by edging the student closer to graduating into an autonomous life."

Lipschitz notes that college students who can commit suicide show different personality traits than nonstudents.

"Many young adults who commit suicide have impulsive, high-risk-taking personalities, and the abuse of drugs and alcohol is frequent in this group," he said. "College suicides, by contrast, are largely depressed, quiet, socially isolated and young people who not abuse alcohol or drugs, and who draw little attention to themselves."

The students association suggests schools prepare plans in case a suicide does occur on campus. It advises offering ongoing support to student survivors and managing the information provided to the press and public to prevent more suicides in response to the event.

Subleasing continued from page 1

money and pay while not living in the rental.

Psychology freshman Sean Krezanowski is offering people interested in subletting his room a discounted rate in order to "get an edge" on his competition. "I thought it would maybe get more people interested in my place if I lowered the price."

Psychology sophomore Rachel Dillon is doing the same. "I dropped money off of the rent," Dillon said. "I'm going to be paying some of it — and the electric bill — because I don't know if there are going to be a lot of people needing housing this summer."

Other students have a more positive outlook on the issue of summer subleasing. "I don't think (the lack of summer school offered) is playing a big factor on me finding a person to sublet," animal science senior Catherine Mi said. "A lot of people have looked at my place but most of them want to share a room and this is way too small." Dillon has also had students express interest in her summer sublet.

A girl was interested but she could only live there for two months and I need someone to sublease for three," Dillon said. Depending on the location, size and price of various rentals around town, some students may have more luck than others. Getting competitive and offering discounts on the rental price, paying utilities or offering other perks may help students who want to sublet get the property off their hands, but some students find that, despite their concessions, there is simply more supply than demand. "I really don't know what I'm doing — I'm not too optimistic," Krezanowski said.

Poet continued from page 1

"Atmosphere of respect," said Katrina Delacruz, student programs coordinator for the Multicultural Center. "It has also inspired a lot of people to begin writing."

Delacruz said "Another Type of Grooves" has been very successful, routinely attracting a diverse group of between 100 and 150 people from throughout the community. It regularly becomes a venue for the discussion of controversial subjects that "challenge the norm."

"Another Type of Grooves" poetry slam normally takes place on the first Thursday of every month. The series will conclude with a final slam on May 21 and will feature many nationally known artists.

During her visit to Cal Poly, Giovanni will also speak to faculty and staff over breakfast as a part of "Provocative Perspectives," a year-long lecture series intended to provide different points of view on issues of diversity on campus.

"Nikki Giovanni is nothing if not provocative, and she will be a great capstone to our series this year," Vice President of Student Affairs Correll Morton said in a press release. "She is an outstanding poet and a stimulating and engaging speaker. We are indeed fortunate to have her visit our campus."
State Briefs

SACRAMENTO — California’s prison system, already under fire for hundreds of millions of dollars in annual overspending, also does a poor job in contracting for expensive outside medical care, a state audit said Tuesday.

Most contracts are awarded without competitive bids; the Department of Corrections employs “fixed negotiating practices,” and some contracts don’t include information the department needs to monitor promised services, auditors found.

Other contracts violate the department’s own policies by exceeding standard rates, the department spends beyond what the contract allows or prison ignore guidelines intended to contain costs.

SAN FRANCISCO — A small company’s bid to greatly expand its genetically engineered rice operation has brought the international debate over biotechnology home to California farmers, who largely have avoided the issue in recent years.

Monsanto Bioscience of Sacramento is pushing hard to gain government approvals to expand its planting of rice engineered with human DNA to produce medicine in a matter of weeks.

LOS ANGELES — A child’s ability to heal from cuts, burns or infections could be slowed by exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke, a new study shows. The study by researchers at the University of California, Riverside suggests that parents who smoke around their children could cause a range of health-related issues for youngsters.

LOS ANGELES — The nation’s first retail-style hydrogen vehicle fueling station will serve city and airport vehicles at Los Angeles International Airport. Airport commission chairman Monday approved the hydrogen station at the airport’s west end. It could also serve vehicles from other public and private agencies, according to a report. The hydrogen station will be a joint project involving the Danbury, Conn.-based chemical company Praxair, British Petroleum, the South Coast Air Quality Management District and the U.S. Department of Energy.

National Briefs

WASHINGTON — The hair, saliva and sweat of federal workers could be tested for drug use under a government policy proposed Tuesday that could set screening standards for millions of private employers.

The proposal will expand the methods to detect drug use among 1.5 million federal workers beyond urine samples. It is being implemented with an eye toward the private sector, however, because it would signal the government’s approval for such testing, which many companies are awaiting before adopting their own screening programs.

NEW YORK — The author of a letter that contributed to the mistrial in the Tyco case told police he thought a mistrial already had been declared when he wrote it, a police official told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

The signed letter expressed anger at juror Ruth Jordan for appearing to favor the acquittal of two executives charged with looting Tyco International. The juror also received a phone call, perceived as intimidating, that police believe was from someone other than the letter writer.

The communications prompted Justice Michael Obus to declare a mistrial Friday in the six-month case after 11 days of deliberations, citing outside influences on the jury.

WASHINGTON — American Civil Liberties Union’s officials declined to comment in advance of their planned announcement Tuesday that they would file a class-action lawsuit challenging the list of travelers the government has barred from flying because they’re considered a threat.

The civil rights group is representing seven plaintiffs. Airlines are instructed to stop anyone on the “no fly” list that is compiled by the Transportation Security Administration. The ACLU contends, though, that some people are wrongfully put on the list.

WASHINGTON — Higher spending for Medicare does not necessarily translate into better care, says a study that found patients got less effective treatment in states that spent more on medical specialists.

Dartmouth College researchers studied how often doctors caring for Medicare patients used high-quality, low-cost treatments proven effective for most people.

World Briefs

VILNIUS, Lithuania — Lawmakers narrowly ousted Lithuania’s scandal-ridden president Tuesday for abuse of office, ending the Baltic state’s worst political crisis since it gained independence from the Soviet Union.

The ouster of President Rolandas Paksas in a secret ballot came less than three weeks before the country joins the European Union on May 1.

AMMAN, Jordan — Eight of Al Qaeda-linked militants were convicted and sentenced to death Tuesday in the murder of a U.S. ad employee in 2002, but six of them — including a Jordanian terrorist chief — remain at large.

The slaying of Laurence Foley in 2002 stunned Jordan, a close U.S. ally and peace partner with Israel. A subsequent police crackdown exposed a terrorist cell that had allegedly planned Foley’s assassination as the first of several attacks inside the Arab country.

A U.S. Embassy issued a statement thanking Jordanian authorities for “bringing those responsible for Larry’s murder to justice” after the 10-month trial.

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide’s interior minister was arrested Tuesday on suspicion of orchestrating the killings of several people viewed as Aristide opponents, officials said.

The arrest of Jacomere Privert — the highest ranking official to be detained since Aristide’s departure on Feb. 29 — comes amid complaints from former government leaders and members of Aristide’s political party that Haiti’s interim leaders are targeting them.

NAJAF, Iraq — Coalition forces fought on two fronts Monday, battling a Shiite-inspired uprising in southern Iraq and Sunni insurgents in the violent city of Fallujah in clashes that have killed 20 American troops and at least 100 Iraqis since the weekend.

Backers of fiery anti-American Shiite Muslim cleric Muqtada al-Sadr attacked coalition forces in three cities — Italians in Nasiriyah, Britons in Amarah and Ukrainians in Kut — after a weekend of fighting that was especially intense in the poor Shiite neighborhood of Sadr City in Baghdad.

Another Fee Increase?

Why you should consider Voting no on the ASI Athletic Scholarship Fee increase

Students have had insufficient time to make an informed decision—the fee referendum was not even announced until dead week last quarter.

The University has not told students how much they pay already to support athletics—in addition to the $4.15 ASI fee, there is also $46.20 for athletics from the Instructionally Related Activities Fee that we pay each quarter.

As student fees rise, the burden of paying for education shifts from the state to the students. It is the CSU’s mission to provide a quality and affordable education to California’s students.

Higher fees limit access to education for underprivileged groups. As fees creep skyward, we can only expect less diversity at Cal Poly.
Kits claim to help choose baby's sex

CHICAGO (AP) — Sex-selection kits would have you trying in the privacy of your own home. Or so the Internet sellers of sex-selection kits would have you believe.

The latest fad in babymaking offers guaranteed, worry-free gender selection for just $199 plus shipping. Some experts call it "snake oil."

But that hasn't stopped entrepreneurs from trying to capitalize on demand among some prospective parents.

The phenomenon first gained attention when some U.S. fertility clinics began offering gender selection for non-medical reasons, said University of Pennsylvania bioethicist Arthur Caplan.

The only two medical procedures that experts say are legitimate — a method requiring in vitro fertilization and the experimental MicroSort sperm-sorting technique — have raised ethical concerns about design­er babies and gender bias.

A Fertility Clinic of America, which offers the $2,300 MicroSort technique recently in the national newspaper ad seeking to recruit patients with the headline, "Do you want to choose the gender of your next baby?"

But home-use products that guarantee results with things like douches, vitamins and do-it-yourself artificial insemination kits pose different ethical problems because "they're promising things they can't deliver," Caplan said.

"There absolutely is an audience of people who are interested in gender selection," said Richard Rawlin, a professor of obstetrics and gynecology research at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. "The old standby is 'caveat emptor — buyer beware.'"

One home-use product is the GeneSelect system, featuring boy and girl kits offered over the Internet at $199 plus shipping. It is touted as being 96 percent effective if properly used. GeneSelect patents were approved earlier this year, said Dr. Scott Sweazy, a South Carolina urologist who helped create the system. The kits include a thermometer to help predict ovulation, special douches and "gender specific" mineral and herbal pills.

Sweazy said thousands of kits have been sold worldwide since the Web site started three years ago and that business has tripled in the past year. He said he did not have information on how many babies of the desired gender have been born with GeneSelect, and a spokesman said sales figures are confidential.

Study: Frequent sex doesn't increase prostate cancer risk

CHICAGO (AP) — Contrary to some research, frequent sexual activity does not increase the risk of developing prostate cancer and might even reduce the danger, a study of nearly 30,000 men found.

Some previous studies have suggested that men who have frequent ejaculations — whether through sex or masturbation — might be more prone to prostate cancer. One theory is that loss of sex exposes men to certain germs and viruses that somehow lead to prostate cancer.

The latest study should be reassuring to those men who may be more active than others," said Dr. Durado Brooks, prostate cancer director for the American Cancer Society.

The study involved 29,342 healthy professionals ages 46 to 81 who were asked about their ejaculations in their 20s, 40s and during the previous year, 1991. During about eight years of follow-up, 1,449 men developed prostate cancer.

On average, the men overall had four to seven ejaculations a month. No increased risk of prostate cancer was seen in men who reported more frequent ejaculations, and there appeared to be a decreased risk in men with the highest reported level.

The two highest activity levels — 13 to 20 ejaculations a month and at least 21 a month — were linked with decreased cancer risks of 11 percent and 33 percent respectively.

One theory is that frequent ejaculations help flush out cancer-causing chemicals or reduce the development of calcifications that have been linked with prostate cancer.

But relatively few men in the study reported heavy sexual activity, so more research is needed to establish whether there is, in fact, a link, said Dr. Michael Leitmann, a researcher at the National Cancer Institute who led the study.

"It's too early to suggest that men should change their sexual habits to alter their prostate cancer risk," he said.

The study appears in today's Journal of the American Medical Association.

The theorized connection between frequent sexual activity and prostate cancer is not entirely far-fetched, Dr. Michael Leitmann of the male hormone testosterone can cause a strong sex drive and can also fuel the growth of cancer cells.

The study involved mostly white men. Leitmann said it is unclear whether similar results would be found in blacks, who have much higher prostate cancer risks than whites. But he said the biological mechanisms that might explain the results probably do not differ by race.

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in men, after skin cancer. One in every six men will develop it. The American Cancer Society estimates that this year, 230,000 new cases will be diagnosed and that about 27,000 men will die from prostate cancer.

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Women shouldn't be held to higher legal standards

Commentary

The fight for women's reproductive rights has been a perpetual struggle, and the issue continues to divide society into two opposing sides. As we witness a new twist in it: can women who don't engage in prenatal care or don't agree with doctor's orders during labor be tried for murder if their babies don't survive?

Let me make one thing clear before going any further. Pregnancy is not to be taken lightly. If a woman is deciding to take a pregnancy to full term, she should abide by health decisions like not drinking, not smoking, not doing drugs, getting health exams regularly and taking care of herself and her unborn child. It is a moral obligation to start thinking about her child first, and that's when the baby is in the womb.

However, the fact that refusing a Cesarean-section during labor can lead to a murder trial, as in the case of Melissa Ann Rowland, raises an equality issue: Is society prepared to raise the legal standard for women more than men?

Rowland is being prosecuted on murder charges in Utah for refusing a recommended C-section by doctors. One of her twins was stillborn, the other lived.

For many people this raises the question of whether or not a fetus is considered a person, the basis of the abortion debate. For argument's sake, let's assume that a baby in labor is considered a living person.

But as a free and equal society, could we really require parents to be responsible with their prenatal care before giving birth? The surviving twin had cocaine in her system, and the doctors feel that her mother was not responsible with her prenatal care before giving birth. The surviving twin had cocaine in her system, and the doctors feel that her mother was not responsible with her prenatal care before giving birth. The surviving twin had cocaine in her system, and the doctors feel that her mother was not responsible with her prenatal care before giving birth.

Conversely, if parents are required to donate organs or bone marrow to their children, and to live, even though they would hope that the parent would love their children enough to do so. But as a free and equal society, could we really require parents to endanger their own lives for the sake of their children? Can we require women to undergo a painful and sometimes dangerous procedure such as a C-section?

As for the question of who is responsible and whether or not parents are responsible with their children, and whether or not they are responsible with their unborn children, and whether or not they are responsible with their own health.

That's why they brought a law that said that some sector of the population - defined by race, gender or national origin - must undergo a particular surgical procedure, involving all of the risks and pain after-effects of surgery and anesthesia. Such a law would be objectionable and obviously unconstitutional no matter how helpful to others, including children of the targeted group, said columnist Sherry Coll in a CNN article “Crying murder when C-section refused.”

Enforcing a law that would make women more legally responsible for the birth of their children would segregate a particular population - women — to carry a burden that the rest of the population could avoid. Would that truly be equality?

According to news reports on the Rowland case, Rowland was not responsible with her prenatal care before giving birth. The surviving twin had cocaine in her system, and the doctors feel that her mother was not responsible with her prenatal care before giving birth. The surviving twin had cocaine in her system, and the doctors feel that her mother was not responsible with her prenatal care before giving birth.

In Rowland's particular case (mental illness, previous children in foster homes, drug abuse) she shouldn't be allowed to keep her child. However, it is her decision, as she should have been conscientious enough to use birth control. But, the isolated issue is that she refused a C-section. Surely, a law that refuses to consider a woman's individual circumstances is unconstitutional, and therefore invalid.

In Rowland's particular case (mental illness, previous children in foster homes, drug abuse) she shouldn't be allowed to keep her child. However, it is her decision, as she should have been conscientious enough to use birth control. But, the isolated issue is that she refused a C-section. Surely, a law that refuses to consider a woman's individual circumstances is unconstitutional, and therefore invalid.

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The law is unconstitutional and therefore invalid. But, the isolated issue is that she refused a C-section. Surely, a law that refuses to consider a woman's individual circumstances is unconstitutional, and therefore invalid.

Ashley Wolf is a journalism junior and a Mustang Daily staff writer.

Homosexuality not a choice

Guest commentary

Jane Doe awoke this morning and had an epiphany.

Deciding to be homosexual, she turned off the main-stream and define herself as a unique individual, she grabbed her Abercrombie clothes and threw them out the window. Jane then chased her flip-flops and slipped into a pair of Birkenstock sandals.

She dashed out the door, filled with newfound confidence and screaming to the world, “Damnit, I’m gay!”

Yeah right.

Contrary to the beliefs of many in this nation and even at Cal Poly, gays and lesbians do not choose to be homosexual. Their sexual orientation is by no means a way of proclaiming their independence in society.

Gays and lesbians do not decide who they are attracted to, but rather are born with natural attractions. Maybe you are naturally fascinated by the opposite gender. But for gays and lesbians, it is natural for them to be attracted to those of the same sex.

Knowing the acceptance and hostility await homosexuals on the other side of the closet door, no human would choose to subject him or herself to such mistreatment.

Purist, prejudice, discrimination.

People argue that homosexuality among homosexuals is a "special right" they do not deserve.

Marriage is in no way a "special right", nor is it a privilege — it is a right that every citizen in this country deserves. To deny certain people the right to marry because of something that is out of their control is as unreasonable as denying people their basic rights based on skin color or race.

If gays and lesbians wish to marry, let them — they have just as much a right to that as any other parent. If two gay men wed in San Francisco, it will not directly affect your life today.

Take the higher ground and be accepting of the world around you. You will be there no matter what your biases don't allow you to accept.

Emily Rancer, Emily Kietter and Amy Asman are journalism freshmen.

Knowing that intolerance and hostility await homosexuals on the other side of the closet door, no human would choose to subject himself or herself to such mistreatment.
Next president must find a fuel solution

Commentary
As students return to campus for the start of spring quarter, record-breaking gasoline prices are squeezing their pocketbooks. (As outlandishly high textbook prices and Gov. Schwarzenegger's five hikes into students' budgets haven't been enough on students' limited finances.)

Gas prices, which have risen to a record national average of $1.80, have also sparked fierce rhetoric from President Bush and Sen. John Kerry. Unfortunately, for the American consumer, the accusations and lofty promises both candidates have made regarding the gas issue are mostly hollow.

Bush's major energy proposals
ack a serious approach to dealing with our country's dependence on foreign oil. His biggest policy initiative, which would open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil drilling, would somewhat increase the amount of domestically produced oil. But this quantity would be small compared to the mammoth amount of oil the United States consumes. Another one of Kerry's proposals is to tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserves to help decrease prices. Former Vice President Al Gore supported a similar plan during his 2000 campaign. However, this kind of action would only have a limited effect on gas prices for a very small period of time. Additionally, the Strategic Petroleum Reserves were only meant to be used during emergencies like the oil embargoes of the 1970s dealing with pric­spikes like the current one.

At full capacity, the reserves would only generate about 60 days' worth of oil if all imports were suddenly cut off. Most importantly, this kind of action only encourages the political procrastination that has been taking place when it comes to dealing with national energy issues. Releasing oil from the reserves would not get to the root of the problem with the United States' energy image.

One of Kerry's proposals that does offer some hope is a plan to simplify the myriad of regional, state and local regulations relating to the production of gasoline. These regula­tions have created dozens of mar­ket "islands" across the country, where gasoline must be produced in a certain way according to a certain formula. In other words, gasoline is not standardized.

These regulations create artificial barriers separating the oil markets and serve as trade barriers that block the flow of cheaper gasoline.

One of the biggest examples of these market islands is our very own state of California, where prices hit as high as $2.69 per gallon over the weekend in places like San Diego, compared to a national average of $1.82 per gallon and as low as $1.43 in places like Lake Wylie, S.C. If all these different rules were simplified to reduce the number of market islands, refiners would be subject­ed to increase competition which would help to balance prices across the nation.

Reducing the number of isolated markets would also limit the effect of shortages on gas prices. For example, if a refinery in California were to shut down by fire or for repairs, stations could import gas from refiners outside the state, pre­venting shortages and price increas­es.

But while this is a good mid­term solution that could help stabi­lize prices, it wouldn't reduce our dependency on foreign oil.

Ultimately, that is what the next president must focus on. Hopefully, both candidates will embrace energy efficiency and alternative fuel sources.

Until then, individual citizens can do some good by buying fuel-effi­cient cars and using alternative modes of transportation like motor scooters, bicycles and public trans­portation. But I somehow doubt most Americans can get over their fascination with gas-guzzlers unless the federal government inspires them with some sort of carrot (or stick).

For now, we can hope prices will go down. But for the long haul, the United States must come to grips with the reality that the world's oil pumps will eventually run dry. It's not too soon to prepare for that day.

Mike Bitondo is a writer for the Daily Mustang at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Mustang Daily needs a color cartoonist
The opinion section needs a splash of color. If you can reliably contribute a weekly color cartoon, bring a sample with your name, phone number and e-mail address to Laura in bldg. 26, room 226.

letters to the editor
Another 'sharkey' for students to kill
Around this time last year I con­tributed a letter warning of the evils of the great white shark. For those who read that particular piece, know this: My disgust for the vile creature remains steadfast. But after watching a particularly disturbing clip of the great white shark, I was compelled to write in and warn the readership of a new threat — the great white zombie shark.

The undead have mocked soci­etial conventions for far too long, and it's no matter of time before they set their cold, dead sights on the bounteous feast we call the Pacific Ocean. Though we all know zombies prefer the human flesh, what putrid, reanimated corpse could resist the cartilage-y hide of the great white? One bite and the already evil great white would become one of the evil dead.

The great white loves to bite stuff. Shoot, with three rows of readership of a new threat — the undead certainly don't have a need for precious, live-giving oxy­gen. So why not a bite and the bounteous feast we call the great white? One bite and the already evil great white would become one of the evil dead.

The great white loves to bite stuff. Shoot, with three rows of

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N.E.R.D. breaks mold with '70s flavor

Steve Hill

Pharrell Williams, it seems, is everywhere. Just check the music videos. His own videos. I think I even saw him in a Heineken ad recently.

What this all boils down to is that Williams is a busy man. Not too busy, though, to release the second album from N.E.R.D., his side project that completely deviates from the work of his day job as half of the much-lauding duo The Neptunes.

Along with his Neptunes team­mate Chad Hugo, with added help from Shae Haley, Williams composes his way along a 1970s-style ride with N.E.R.D.'s "Fly or Die," the follow­up to 2002's critically acclaimed but dawdling "In Search Of..."

Let's see, we're talking about putting out music in a non-dolmestic situation. A guest spot from Joel and Benji Madden (of Good Charlotte fame) provokes awe on the surface, but by the second chorus adds the necessary extra voice to Williams' story.

First single "She Wants to Move" was a smart choice to promote the album; it is, by far, the most infectious and driving track on the record, with a perfect blend of tribal drums, rumor and soulful, piano interludes and Haley's energetic interjections of "She's on fire!"

But following this formula, but I'm still singing about "chickenpox," the band has ditched backing band Synth and picked up its own instruments, with results like the title track. With a slight guitar crunch and three-chord progression, "Fly or Die" sounds like something from the Neptunes.

Duly singing, but I don't hear Usher singing, but I don't hear Usher, sounds like something from the Neptunes.

vocal harmonies are seemingly ripped from recording sessions past and pasted on top of the 12 tracks that make up Tantric's third release. But the timing is off and the mystique of making grunge music has gone the way of Rick Derringer. This isn't to say there aren't some good things going on with "After We Go" — there just isn't anything that hasn't been rifled to death by the past 10 years. The guitar delay effects get tedious, leading near-identical openings on a few songs and floating through a couple more bridges, adding nothing to the album other than more nostalgic tedium.

Tantric would be better off exploring their own musical talents, rather than attempting to revive a genre that has been ridden harder than Britney Spears' comeback.

Tantric's gift for rhythm is obvi­ously, particularly on "Falling Away" and "Change the World." The open­ing track, "Chasing After," shows a great sense of harmony and an advanced understanding of song structures, but their melodic leanings are unfortunately overshadowed by Howard's Lapine Staley impression — which rarely changes tone from song to song. The "Chamber of Lost Souls" vocal har­mony, a technique that has been used by nearly every band since Alice in Chains to signify darkness and depravity, is once again in full force here. Tantric might as well put an end to that sound. The "Chamber of Lost Souls" is all about famous people. But his delivery is so flat, and the details so non­specific, that either it's a2a in a row, not even voyeurism keeps me interested. God, Usher, how many ballads do you really need?

Unsure is he really confessing how low he is on ideas, "Confessions" needs a new title.

"Throwback" is just that, with Usher sound good.

Not even Usher can do that any­more.

Usher is a fine singer, a fancy dancer and always seems like a nice guy when I see him interviewed. Since I'm not usually in the business of buying Usher records, I've ever heard the man do worse, all of which have been great. You know what I'm saying? "I Don't Have to Call You".

Like Usher. And I love "Yeah!" It's the kind of totally unshy, shrink-wrapped R&B Usher knows better than to get into, but man, you play that track and the party is on. Usher's absolutely kills his verse, Lil Jon continues to further Dave Chappelle's career and Usher... well, Usher is the singer on that song. It could be anybody.

And that's the thing about Usher. Back when he wanted to leave the one he was with and start a new relation­ship with me, I thought, hey, I could do worse. And when I reminded him of a girl that he once knew (which, he reassured me, was why he just couldn't get with me). I was surpris­ingly cool with it. But on "Yeah!" just as he is throughout his new album, "Confessions," I hear some­body singing, but I don't hear Usher coming through. It could, I just, like I said, be anybody.

The Jet Blaze-produced stand­out track: "Brothas in a Throttle" is just that, with Usher on a serious Freddie Jackson trip throughout the whole track. I can even care what Usher's saying on the other highlight, "Take Your Hand." All I can hear is the beat. There are 17 songs on "Confessions," and only three of them are good. Their success is entirely in the production. You've got it bad, Usher. I don't mean that in a nice way.

Sure, there's a lot of stuff that may or may not be about Usher's recent breakup with Chilli (of the late, not-so-good TLC) on "Confessions." And hey, I watch "Celebrities Uncensored," I love hearing dirt about famous people. But his deliv­ery is so flat, and the details so non­specific, that either it's a2a in a row, not even voyeurism keeps me interested. God, Usher, how many ballads do you really need?

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ARTS & CULTURE

Wednesday, April 7, 2004 9

Two separate proposals
1. Increase Health Services Fee
2. Increase ASI Fee supporting student athlete scholarships

have been approved for a student referendum on April 14th and 15th

The following Open Forums have been scheduled where students can ask questions and learn more about these two important proposals

Wednesday April 7, 3:00-4:00 p.m.
Thursday April 8, 3:30-4:30 p.m.
Monday April 12, 1:00-2:00 p.m.
Location: UU 220

Additional information including an Objective Statement & Financial Analysis, Pro and Con Statements, sample ballot and polling times and locations is now available on the web, by clicking on the link located on Cal Poly's home page (www.calpoly.edu).

Muse finds voice, growth via ‘Absolution’

Brian Duff
THE LAVON (HOOSI STATE UNIVERSITY)

COLUMBUS, Ohio

"Absolution," the third album by Muse — a British three-piece — has the band finding its voice and style in a perfectly paced, well-written anthology of an atmospheric struggle with reality.

The prowess of vocalist Michael Bellamy on keyboards makes him among the most dynamic front men in alternative music, even though his vocal stylings are often reminiscent of Thom Yorke of Radiohead.

This album quickly moves near the top of the "best-of-the-year" list, but it isn't perfect. The juxtaposition of fast and slow tracks in "Absolution" lends an uneven quality that upsets the tender balance created in the better songs, and the songwriting teases a dangerous line between gorgeously earnest and curiously overwrought.

However, these complaints fall by the wayside in the face of the generally excellent music available on the album.

The single "Time is Running Out" is full of cool keyboards and is ready for rock radio — although perhaps not vice-versa. The macabre piece titled "Apocalypse Please" is gorgeous and haunting, and "Falling Away With You" is intimate and sweet.

Second Annual ENVIRONMENTAL CAREER SYMPOSIUM & RECEPTION

Tuesday, April 13, 2004
Panel: 4:15 - 5:45pm Phillips Hall (PAC-Hall 124)
Reception: 5:30 - 6:30pm Fisher Science (Room 245)
A panel of guest speakers will be speaking about how they prepared to work in their current field, what their work entails, and how they feel their career impacts the environment on a daily basis.

FREE Climbing every Tuesday!
Spring Quarter unlimited climbing pass on sale for $20
Is your club looking for a fun recruitment activity? Group booking rates are available for all Cal Poly Clubs.

Every Wednesday night is Women's climbing Night. Learn to climb in a safe environment. 5-7 p.m.
Free instruction from Cal Poly's expert climbers.

For more information about the climbing wall contact 756-5388.

MUSTANG DAILY is looking for a new Editor-in-Chief for the 2004-2005 school year.

MUSTANG DAILY
Office: Bldg. 26 Rm 226
Phone: 756.1796

Here's the deal:
- You must have two quarters of Mustang Daily experience
- Submit a cover letter, resume, proposal and clips to Andra Giberly by April 30th

REALLY WANNA DRESS FOR LESS?

15 Higuera, SLO • Open Daily

designer fashions • name brands
 funk to formal • casual to cowboy
shoes
accessories
furniture
radios

Got a party? Need a costume?
Goodtime costumes at Goodwill prices
880 Industrial Way • SLO • 543-0997 at the Goodwill Outlet store

get a discount on a used item by bringing in your used clothes!

GOODWILL
15 Higuera, SLO • Open Daily
Santa Cruz band no longer Expendable to San Luis Obispo crowds

Rachel Musquiz
MUSTANG DAILY

The Expendables themselves pigeonhole their style. As a band out of Santa Cruz, The Expendables have eased their way into the local scene in San Luis Obispo. The band performs Thursday during UU Hour.

Followers of The Expendables have compared the band to Sublime, although not for a similar style. The band revels in a post-

"We're just trying to make a living by making music. We're doing what we love to do. We're not trying to make it huge."

-ADAM PATTERSON
The Expendables drummer

The band started playing for fun, and still proclaims the same ambition. "We're just trying to make a living by making music," Patterson said. "We're doing what we love to do. We're not trying to make it huge."

The Expendables are not signed with a record label now, but they are working on creating an independent label in association with Santa Cruz Surf Shop. The label, SCS Records, will boost the Expendables and other Santa Cruz bands.

Playing in their hometown of Santa Cruz at venues such as the Catalyst (capacity: 1,000), the band often garners sold-out shows as its fan base continues to grow. But traveling helps build this base even further.

The Expendables play regularly in San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco and now perform monthly in San Luis Obispo.

"San Luis Obispo is our second-favorite place to perform," Patterson said. "We have lots of friends and fans here. It's always a good crowd.

The band recently returned from a multi-state tour with Eek-a-Mouse, which included stops in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Montana, Utah, Washington and Oregon.

Since the tour wrapped, the band has played fewer shows in order to focus on writing and recording its third album, which will be released in July. In addition to Thursday's UU Hour show, The Expendables will play an all-ages show April 14 at SLO Brewing Co. at 8:30 p.m.
The one thing I do better than him is shoot 3-pointers and we've spent hours after practice going back and forth until we were at least one.

"I've met his dad, too," Anderson added, "and I'm pretty sure that's where he got most of it." Whatever the source, the rest of the college basketball world never quite found a way to cope. Okafor began drawing attention in the middle of last season, becoming faster and stronger as the games marched on, and by tournament time, he was arguably the most dominant force in the sport.

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz

No. 225

**ACROSS**
1 5-Across handle
2 31 Across victim’s The Times Machine
3 62 Fragrant oil
4 64 Does come
5 69 Things to kick
6 89 Can dismiss
7 108 13-Down "Am I sort of a genius?"
8 128 "I'm doing great..."
9 154 "Okay..."
10 187 "I'm off to the races again..."
11 217 "You're an idiot..."
12 228 "No..."
13 248 "I'll have to do it again..."
14 267 "I'm..."
15 286 "You're a liar..."
16 353 "It's over!"
17 362 "I can..."
18 381 "You've just..."
19 400 "No..."
20 415 "I can't..."
21 434 "I won't help you..."
22 453 "I'm going..."
23 472 "You're just..."
24 491 "I won't be..."
25 510 "You don't..."
26 529 "I'm..."
27 548 "You'll..."
28 567 "I won't help you..."
29 586 "You won't..."
30 605 "I'm..."
31 624 "You..."
32 643 "You..."
33 662 "You..."
34 681 "I'm..."
35 700 "I won't help you..."
36 719 "You can't..."
37 738 "I won't help you..."
38 757 "I won't help you..."
39 776 "You won't..."
40 795 "I won't help you..."
41 814 "I won't help you..."
42 833 "I won't help you..."
43 852 "I won't help you..."
44 871 "I won't help you..."
45 890 "I won't help you..."
46 909 "I won't help you..."
47 928 "I won't help you..."
48 947 "I won't help you..."
49 966 "I won't help you..."
50 985 "I won't help you..."

**DOWN**
1 140 Things to kick
2 169 Things to kick
3 198 Things to kick
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8 303 Things to kick
9 322 Things to kick
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39 892 Things to kick
40 911 Things to kick
41 930 Things to kick
42 949 Things to kick
43 968 Things to kick
44 987 Things to kick
45 1006 Things to kick

**SOLUTION TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE**
29 "The Immoralist"
25 Cathedral city
20 See 13-Down
14 Mozart

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**Okafor continued from page 12**

Okafor played while he sat in their living room.

"It took me a couple of minutes to figure out," Calhoun said. "They were competing a lot with each other, where they're naming streets, from all over the world, I think, and then spelling them, rapidly-free. His father is just like him."

"Competitive," teammate Rashad Anderson said, finishing the thought. "Other than me, Emeka is the most competitive guy I've ever known.

**Golf continued from page 11**

good place to find some answers.

No one has ever played the Masters on a course this long this year. While the fast fairways should generate some of the length, the greens will accept only the best shots.

It doesn't necessarily favor the longest hitters or the shortest shot games, but simply the best players. "A guy that feels good about his game this week, he's got a good chance to win," Els said. "It's pretty open.

Woodies already noticed some severe differences.

He could reach the par-5 second hole with a good drive and a 3-wood the last few years. During a practice round Monday, he got there with a 6-iron.

What really got his attention was the precision required this week. Playing the third hole on Tuesday, Woods marked Mark O'Meara hit a slight draw and watched the ball run through the green. He approached it with a soft fade that landed in about the same place, only Woods' ball stayed on the green. "If you don't hit the proper shot this week, you're really going to pay the price," Woods said. "The landing areas are that much smaller now. It's going to become more apparent who is really hitting the ball as the week goes on, because you can't get away with having a bad-strike day.

Then again, Woods can't get away with a bad day at anything, especially with the competition nipping at his heels.

Mike Mickelson, leading the PGA Tour money list for the first time in six years, won the Bob Hope Classic and has finished in the top 10 in all but one event.

Vijay Singh has closed in on the No. 1 ranking. Els has already won twice this year.

"Clearly, it's the year to be Adam Scott, the guy who swings like Woods, is coming off a victory in The Players Championship and is suddenly regarded as golf's next star.
CAL POLY'S RONI SPARRLEY

Unquestioned leader

Softball's Sparrely having standout season at the plate after making the switch from second base to shortstop

Amy Kocot  
MUSTANG DAILY STAFF REPORT

behind Cal State Northridge's seventh place after a final-round 213 at La Purisima Golf Course. She shot a three-round total of 79th with a 239 total.

306.

Bite/Pacific Coast Intercollegiate, placed last in the Matador Spring Tournament with a 643 total. Mustang team-

this season. She said she is improving each year, which she credits mostly to assistant coach Ali Viola.

Her hard work has definitely paid off this year. She is hitting .396, more than 100 points higher than the next-best Mustang. In further statistical dominance, she also leads the team in runs scored, hits, doubles, triples, home runs, slugging, walks, on-base percentage and stolen bases.

"We have a lot of new players on the field, and our pitching has been good," Sparrely said. "We have been putting the ball in play, but we were not getting hits in. Now with Ali helping us out, we are in good shape."

This will be Sparrely's last season as a Mustang. She said her love for the sport will always stay with her and that graduating and finishing her career will be involved with the sport.

She stated she plans to go into coaching after next fall; she is currently looking for schools that have open positions.

The recent 5-game losing streak has not brought the team's spirit down, and Sparrely and her teammates agree that they have high hopes and determination for their next game.

agrees that the young team has been maturing, thanks especially to Sparrely's outstanding leadership.

"We have been doing well and improving throughout the season," Miller said. "I would say Roni is a silent leader. She leads the team more through her actions on the field and by showing up to practices."

Softball's Sparrely having standout season at the plate after making the switch from second base to shortstop

...Roni is a silent leader. She leads the team more through her actions."

- TERESA MILLER  
Mustang outfielder

ON THE FAIRWAY

Bertoni wins title; women last at CSUN

Doug Ferguson  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUGUSTA, Ga. — One green jacket and Tiger Woods already was being compared to Jack Nicklaus.

Four straight majors, and the competition climbed higher — to himself.

The lofty standard facing the No. 1 player in golf was never more clear when Woods arrived at Augusta National. He is the betting favorite to win the Masters for the fourth time, and yet there is a feeling this major has never been so ripe with contenders.

He has won eight majors — none of his peers have more than three — but Woods is facing sharp scrutiny because he has gone the last six majors without winning.

"It's different for me versus any other player," Woods said Tuesday. "Some other player has a bad week, misses the cut, it's no big deal, he slips through the radar. Whereas, if I shoot one bad round, it's a little."

But even Woods concedes that his swing is not the same as it was in 2000, and there are times when he no longer feels as fast as he did in his game that he is trying to solve.

One week he drove the ball to all corners of the golf course, and the next missed the fairway by a good iron play. The next week he was short of props, and he could never get it close to the hole. He hit the ball great on the practice range but there are moments of doubt on the first tee.

"It's not easy to trust your swing if your mechanics are not quite sound," Woods said. "That's one of the things that I've been trying to work on, trying to get my fundamentals of my golf swing more sound so I can go out there and don't have to think anything except for why I should hit the shot." He said he is learning more about the state of his game, his split with swing coach Butch Harmon and the pursuit of Nicklaus' 18 majors that no longer looks as easy as it did two years ago.

Augusta National should be a

Masters: Woods handles expectations

see Okafor, page 11

Doug Ferguson  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

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