Skalak’s speech gets mixed reviews

Hannah Croft
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The Cal Poly Performing Arts Center will welcome General Stanley McChrystal and his lecture, titled “The State of International Affairs and the Security Challenges Facing America,” tonight in the Christopher Cohan Performing Arts Center (PAC).

McChrystal, a four-star general and former Green Beret, first gained notoriety for his leadership in Afghanistan and then for his criticisms of the Obama administration. Director of Cal Poly Arts Steve Lerian said he has wanted to step up the level of speakers on campus for a long time.

“It’s been a project of mine,” Lerian said. “To bring in well-known people who are part of pop culture. We don’t really get enough of that on campus.”

He said McChrystal’s presentation will hopefully start a trend of prominent speakers on campus. Lerian said McChrystal will be well-received on campus, and his presence will bring something new to campus that will hopefully raise a lot of interest. He said he hopes to draw people from all over the community — both supporters and opposers of McChrystal.

“He is a somewhat controversial figure,” Lerian said. “Some people are very enthused to listen to the lecture because they are pro-military, and some are very enthused because they are anti-military.”

McChrystal attended the United States Military Academy at West Point, and held multiple titles in the military, including his final as the head of International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. He held the position from June 2009 until his resignation in June 2010. McChrystal resigned after an interview with Rolling Stone, in which he openly criticized the Obama administration, was published. He said Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was the only one in the White House who knew what she was doing, and then McChrystal resigned from his position and soon after announced his retirement from the United States military.

Political science professor Shelley Hurt said McChrystal did the right thing in stepping down. If he had remained a prominent figure in the military, the armed forces would have lost more civilian support, she said.
SSDs and UEfis: The Revolution is nigh

David Dynes is a computer engineer-

ning freshman and the Mustang Daily

Technology columnist.

Computers nowadays are becoming

so fast there is a new bottleneck start-

ning to rear its ugly head: Hard Disk

Drives (HDDs). Processors, graph-

ics cards, memory and transfer rates

are all becoming so fast that the lon-

gest time is spent actually searching

for, reading and writing data on the

HDD. No one likes waiting on file trans-

fers and loading, and luckily there is a so-

lution: Solid State Drives (SSDs).

Basically a large flash drive used

as a hard drive, these new storage
devices offer performance at unbe-

lievable levels. Whereas HDDs have

mechanical parts, SSDs have none, which speeds up its ac-

cess times and reduces possibility of shock damage. Hard drives also

have a spin-up time, which requires a large power draw as well as a few

seconds (from hitting the power but-

ton to login screen). This is extremely

impressive, and it is clearly the next

step in data storage development.

Don’t get me wrong though, HDDs

will be around for quite a while lon-

ger due to cost and size limitations of

SSDs.

There is another major change

coming to the computer world and it is

something that has remained static

for more than 20 years, which is a long

time in the technological world. Basic

Input/Output System (BIOS) is what

the motherboard loads at startup,

which checks the hardware and then
calls the operating system to start.

While this system works fine for now, there are some problems with it. The

most up-and-coming problem is its

inability to read storage devices more

than 2 keyboards, which are becoming

more and more common. The BIOS has

never been easy to use, especially for

those who do not know the settings

well.

Unified Extens-

ible Firmware In-

terface (UEFI) is

set to replace some of the BIOS func-
tions that are con-

sidered legacy. One

major change will be the addition of a Graphical User Interface (GUI)
beyond just a text-

based cursor menu. This will make

changing settings a lot easier, as well as

improving users’ ability to trouble-

shoot problems occurring at a pre-

operating system level.

While I can’t expect everyone to

be excited about these changes, they will

be affecting you all fairly soon. For

those of you with an Apple computer,
you are already using an EFI boot sys-
tem, and the new standard MacBook

Air comes with an SSD instead of a

HDD. These changes are coming and

coming for the better.
General
continued from page 1
"I'm an advocate for citizenship and involvement with the military," said I. McChrystal not been removed would have been detrimental to the
tactics.
Hurt said she is very interested in public service, whether
in Afghanistan." She said students are at least sub­
consciously aware of the war going on. That awareness, she said, makes
them more intellectually curious.
"A lot of my students are really interested in public service, whether
it be in the government, police force or otherwise," she said. "I think this is
a very important lecture for them to attend." Political science freshman Na­
athan Billings said he's looking for­
ward to the presentation.
"After reading the 'Rolling Stone' story, I'm really interested in what
he has to say," Hurt said.
Before attending, Hurt said stu­
dents should be aware of the con­
troversies McChrystal has been in­
volved in.
"Students should know how influential he has been in shaping policy in Afghanistan," she said.
"And they should be aware of the controversy of U.S. civil military
relations."
Hurt said anyone interested in international relations or public policy should attend.
Lerian said he hopes to draw a broad audience from both on and off campus. Cal Poly Arts has ad­
vertised the lecture as a community event as well as a student event.
Student rush tickets will be avail­
able for $10 at 6 p.m. the evening of
the presentation. For regular seat­
ing, visit the Performing Arts Cen­
ter box office or call (805) 756­
2787. Regular seating ticket prices range from $25-$100.
"General McChrystal is kind of a
big deal," Lerian said. "I really hope we get a lot of people to come out and listen.'

The project opened Beverly's eyes
to San Luis Obispo's rich history, she said.
"There's so much more history out there that (people) don't even
recognize," Beverly said. "That's
something that we need to change.
With Tour de SLO, we're hoping we
can accomplish that."
Isom also hopes those who attend
the event walk away with a different
senscte of what San Luis Obispo is as
well as how the town came to be like
today, she said.
She illustrates this using Japantown as an example of ethnicity that
has disappeared.
"(There were) a number of business
and arts that had a significant number of Japanese farmers," Iom said. "What
we lost was the Japantown community
that used to be here."
Communication studies sopho­
more Heather Parks will present the
Japantown portion of the tour. It will be held at the intersection of South
Street and Figueroa Street where a strip of Japanese businesses used to be.
"There were internments of the Japanese, which is almost as devas­
tating as the internment of the Jews," Parks said. "But we don't really talk
about that much in our history
textbooks, which is really interesting. You never hear about the Japanese
internment, but it's just as bad."
The tour will provide historical
background to Japantown as well as
other various people of San Luis
Obispo, including all the people who
made a difference in the country: the
Chumash Indians, the Spanish mis­
sionaries, the Germans, Jewish
and Chinese immigrants, the African­
American settlers and the mixed Mexican-European families.
Isom said she hopes those who attend will leave the tour seeing
the city a bit differently.
"We sort of joke around the cam­
pus and the city about how 'white' we are," Iom said. "And yet, we have this
crazy, rich ethnic history. It'd be won­
derful to completely illuminate that."
Gregory Karp
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Imagine you’re walking in a shopping mall and a man is following you. He might not know your name, but he’s taking notes on everywhere you go, what you look at and what you buy.

That’s essentially what happens when you surf the Internet, and websites serve up information about you to advertising networks.

It’s no coincidence that you might see an ad for flights to Philadelphia on a music blog site after previously searching for just that flight on a travel website.

It called behavioral advertising, and the U.S. government on Wednesday took its biggest step yet toward regulating it.

In a highly anticipated report, the Federal Trade Commission advocated safeguards, including a “do not track” list that would give consumers the option of keeping their Web surfing private.

It has similar intent to the do-not-call list that helped curb telemarketing phone calls.

While the purpose of “do not track” is similar to “do not call,” it’s unlikely to be a centralized registry maintained by the government.

Instead, it would be a function of Web browsers that would send notice to website trackers, essentially saying, “Leave me alone.” It might be a feature on browsers to be turned on or available as a plug-in piece of software.

The FTC report reflects frustration with the pace of self-regulation in the online marketing industry, officials said.

They also worry about an escalating technological “arms race” as advertising networks circumvent privacy protections that consumers use, said FTC Chairman Jon Leibowitz.

“Consumers today bear too heavy a burden for protecting themselves online, the FTC report said.

“Although many companies use privacy policies to explain their information practices, the policies have become long, legalistic disclosures that consumers usually don’t read and don’t understand if they do,” the agency said.

Also not working, according to the FTC, are voluntary industry efforts, such as the tool offered by the Network Advertising Initiative to allow consumers to opt out of behavioral advertising offered by its members, which include Google, Microsoft and Yahoo.

The report said that some companies use consumer information reasonably, and some uses of targeted advertising might appeal to consumers who would not opt out. Others, however, are “reckless,” the report found.

The FTC gave examples of how consumers’ privacy might be compromised. If you:

- Browse for products and services online, advertisers might collect and share information about your activities, including your searches, the websites you visit and the content you view.
- Participate in a social networking site, third-party applications are likely to have access to the information you or your friends post on the site.
- Use location-enabled smartphone applications, multiple entities might have access to your precise whereabouts.

More concerning than targeted ads are other potential uses of surfing history, such as employers using Web histories to make hiring decisions or health insurers checking browsing history of medical information sites before deciding to insure you, privacy advocates say.

Privacy advocates cheered the FTC report as a good first step toward protecting consumers’ privacy, though some want immediate legislation and a new federal privacy agency.

Those in the industry say they are making strides toward many of the goals the FTC laid out in the report.

The industry recently started putting icons on some behavioral ads with a link to a site explaining how they work. And two weeks ago, it created an opt-out page at aboutads.info.

Mike Zaneis, general counsel for the Interactive Advertising Bureau, said the industry intends to regulate itself.

“We actually think we’re building out a program so the FTC won’t need to,” he said. “It’s a bit of a race, but the push by the FTC is not a bad thing for us.”

Zaneis emphasized that targeted ads can be a good thing for consumers.

“Non-targeted advertising, by definition, is spam,” he said. “Who wants to get irrelevant ads on a website?”

A spokeswoman for Google, a primary player in online ads, said the company is reviewing the report and will work with the FTC.

“We agree with the FTC that people should be able to understand what information they share and how it will be used.”

“That’s why we simplified our privacy policies earlier this year, offered control through our privacy tools and explain our approach to privacy in plain language and through YouTube videos in our privacy center,” said spokesman Christine Cheng.

The FTC doesn’t have the authority to mandate a do-not-track list. Instead, it would have to be an act of Congress, Leibowitz said. The FTC is asking for comments on its report to be submitted by Jan. 31.

The Commerce Department is also preparing a report about online privacy, and a House subcommittee will hold a hearing Thursday looking at whether Congress should require a do-not-track option for consumers.

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San Francisco judge questions prison’s stock of discontinued execution drug

Carol J. Williams
Los Angeles Times

A San Francisco judge has given state corrections officials until Tuesday to explain how the department obtained fresh stocks of sodium thiopental, the key drug used in lethal-injection executions that is no longer available from the sole U.S. manufacturer.

The state reported in October that it had acquired 12 grams of the drug — enough for four executions. On Nov. 22, the office of California Attorney General Jerry Brown reported that the state had ordered an additional 521 grams and expected delivery this week. That would be enough to put to death more than 170 other inmates on California’s teeming death row.

The origin of the drug has infused the capital punishment debate with new controversy and legal challenges, as death penalty states across the country face lawsuits by condemned inmates claiming the sodium thiopental supplies apparently acquired overseas aren’t approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and could inflict unconstitutional pain and suffering.

Arizona acquired the drug from a British source in October for the lethal injection execution of convicted killer Jeffrey Landrigan. British officials last week announced they would bar further exports of the drug for use in executions, which all European nations have renounced as human rights violations.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California filed a public records request last month, deeming the issue of the execution drug’s source a matter of important public interest.

“When the business at hand is execution, there could hardly be a more compelling argument for transparency,” said Michael Risher, a staff attorney for the rights group.

San Francisco Superior Court Judge Charlotte W. Woolard on Tuesday ordered the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to comply with the request for all records of its “acquisition, use and destruction of sodium thiopental.”

An attorney retained by the corrections department, Kenneth C. Menncemicr, responded with an objection to that deadline, urging postponement until Dec. 14 to give officials time to collect and evaluate the requested documents, including whether some of that information should remain confidential.

The nationwide shortage of sodium thiopental has delayed executions in a number of states, including Tennessee, Ohio and Oklahoma.

State corrections officials scheduled what would have been the state’s first execution in nearly five years for Sept. 26, but had to call it off when a federal judge reviewing recent revisions to the three-drug lethal injection procedures rejected the state’s timing of the execution to beat a Sept. 30 expiration date for its last few grams of sodium thiopental.

California has 715 inmates on death row, the largest in the country. Only six have exhausted all appeals and could be subject to death warrants once the new lethal injection procedures are cleared in federal court, likely early next year.

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about the role of a comprehensive university and the importance of the liberal arts," Leveson said. "And right off the bat in the first minute he covered it. He made it very clear that he understood the concept of a comprehensive polytechnic university, so on that level I was very pleased to hear what he had to say."

At the open forum for students, Skalak addressed the issue of Greek life. Skalak is familiar with Greek life at UVa. He has been to many Greek rush activities and is an advisor to one of the fraternities.

"I am a big believer that the sense of community that (Greek) life can create is very important," Skalak said. "I think it's one of the ways people express their natural sense of belonging in a given community with a shared vision and a shared commitment — gaining trusted personal relationships that you're going to have hopefully the rest of your lives. It's very important."

President of the fraternity Delta Chi and business administration senior Daniel Ferras is looking for a candidate who is willing to reach out to Greek life at Cal Poly.

"It's true what he said about bringing guys together with the same vision — it's a bond of brotherhood," Ferras said. "We help out the community a lot too and a lot of people don't see that."

"We feel like administration in the past didn't really reach out to us and they didn't notice what we actually do for the community outside of being 'troublemakers,'" he said.

Ferras said he was impressed that Skalak recognized the importance of Greek life.

"The other guy that came yesterday (Robert Palazzo) didn't really say anything that impressed me because he was just saying the most generic thing," he said. "But this guy (Skalak) knows about fraternities, which is awesome because that other guy didn't really know that much."

Assistant to the Dean for Student Success Penny Bennett was also more impressed with Skalak compared to Palazzo.

"What I like about this guy is he had a desire to implement a vision and move forward on what's already been done," Bennett said. "I think he sees that Cal Poly is great and is doing a lot of great things but we haven't reached our potential. I think he has the desire and the ability to take us to a higher level. I didn't see that as clearly from yesterday's candidate."

However, some remained skeptical. Landscape architecture senior Christian Boehr said Skalak seemed experienced and well-rounded but Boehr doesn't like to put much credence on the forum.

"You come out here and say all kinds of different things — you're a talking head until you actually do something," Boehr said.
Music department to host Fall Jazz Concert

The Cal Poly Music Department will bring its three jazz ensembles to Alex G. Spanos Theatre once again on Friday night for the Fall Jazz Concert.

The three ensembles on display are University Jazz Bands No. 1 and No. 2 as well as the Cal Poly Jazz Combo — will perform pieces of both standard mainstream and contemporary modern jazz.

Director of jazz studies Paul Rinzler said the audience can expect standard classic pieces from the University Jazz Bands — or big bands — which have about 18 people each, to highly improvised modern pieces from the smaller six-member combo.

"The big band has a printed score, and there's places for improvisation, but in the combo their printed score is very minimal, usually for the opening and closing melody, and then improvisation is focused on a lot more," Rinzler said.

Music junior and bassist Patrick Bang, who is in both the University Jazz Band No. 1 and the combo, said he enjoys playing in the combos because of how close the students are to each other and the freedom students get with improvising.

"It's more intimate so you can be more creative," Bang said. "Paul picks some of the music for us, but we get to pick our own music too. So we get to be creative with it so we can put our own twist on charts and stuff. But in jazz band, Paul picks all the music, so it's set."

However, Rinzler said the big bands were created originally to play set jazz standards with little improvisation.

"When those jazz standards were being composed, the big band was being created at the same time," Rinzler said. "So those two fit together very well. The more contemporary stuff comes about from later in jazz history when jazz composers began to look at the big band more like a classical composer would look at the orchestra."

For the University Jazz Band No. 2, Rinzler has planned a few interesting pieces, from standard to creative big band numbers, such as "Cute" by Neil Hefti and "Caravan" by Duke Ellington, he said.

"(Caravan) is a great example of really creative big band writing," Rinzler said. "All the instruments at points — they're all doing different things. He kind of tries the tune apart to bring it back together. That's a great example of cutting edge reimagining for big band."

University Jazz Band No. 1, on the other hand, will perform big band pieces on a different scale. Rinzler said he enjoys one piece, "Great Northern Express," is innovative in terms of big band repertoire, much like "Caravan," yet it sounds completely different.

"There's aspects of 'Great Northern Express' that are almost like new age jazz," Rinzler said. "The rhythm in this piece loses a beat every four bars. So it's like you've got a train rolling around and every four seconds, it skips the track and then gets back on the track. So that's really interesting musically to do."

And for the combo, Rinzler said "Sugar" by Stanley Turpentine is one of the highlights because of the interesting improvisations the combo has created.

"It's kind of more of a groove tune — it has some slight rhythm and blues," Rinzler said. "But what the combo has done is to put kind of a hip-hop rhythm behind that and the piano player changed some of the chords to make them more interesting. It's a great example of how a combo in jazz really should take a traditional piece and do their own thing with it."

Bang said he agrees, and said one of his favorite parts about improvising is turning a piece into something unique — without really knowing the direction.

"The person who is improvising — it's their full creative input in the moment so they're totally putting their soul into the music," Bang said. "It just happens and you don't really know what happened, and it's a blur. Looking back, it's like, 'Wow, that was tight, whatever that was.'"

Aerospace engineering senior Bill Sorensen, who is also in the combo and plays saxophone, said he enjoys how the small group is student-run.

"We have an hour a week with Paul, but everything else is basically to our discretion," Sorensen said. "A lot of times in rehearsal, we try something, if it works, we work with it, if it doesn't, we try something else. We do some crazy shit, but at the same time it will eventually come together.

Kelly Cooper
KELLYCOOPER.MGMAIL.COM
Patrick Goldstein

LOS ANGELES TIMES

If there were ever something that Hollywood should be embarrassed about, it's that Pixar has never won an Oscar for best picture — despite making 11 consecutive commercially successful and critically acclaimed movies. In fact, until last year, when the motion picture academy enlarged its best picture nominee list from five to 10 films, the animation house had never even landed a nomination in the category. It finally broke through with "Up," but the movie was never successful or critically acclaimed about, its that Pixar has never won other cinematic delight, "Toy Story 3," which has made more than $1 billion around the world and garnered An Envelope (published by the Los Angeles Times) attempting to woo away the studios boss, Rich Ross, has publicly announced that, instead of settling for a best animated film Oscar, he's going for the big enchilada.

Ross boldly laid his cards on the table. "We're going for the best picture win," he said in a recent interview with insider showbiz news blog Deadline Hollywood. "For years, Pixar has never even landed a nomination in the category. It finally broke through with "Up," but the movie was never a serious contender for best picture, which was an event to "The Hurt Lockes." This year, Pixar has spawned another cinematic delight, "Toy Story 3," which has made more than $1 billion worldwide. Disney, which bought Pixar in 2006, is so frustrated that the studio's boss, Rich Ross, has publicly announced that, instead of settling for a best animated film Oscar, he's going for the big enchilada.

Ross is putting his money where his mouth is. In the past, Disney has often skimped on its Oscar campaigns, but the studio has launched an ad blitzkrieg in the trades and in The Envelope (published by the Los Angeles Times) attempting to woo Oscar voters by linking "Toy Story 3" characters to familiar images from past best picture winners. I have to break the news to Ross, but he's wasting his studio's money. Even worse, if Ross keeps boasting about how he won't rest until he's scored a best picture statue for Pixar, he's going to end up like Harvey Weinstein, who staged a similarly noisy campaign for "Gangs of New York" trying to win a director trophy for Martin Scorsese, who'd never won an Oscar. That backfired. When he finally won for directing "The Departed," Scorsese didn't campaign at all.

Although "Toy Story 3" represents another great chapter in the Pixar history book, the film doesn't have a prayer of winning best picture. Because Ross is a relative newcomer to Hollywood, I guess I should explain to him how this whole circus-like Oscar process works. (No one at Disney, from Ross down to Tony Angelotti, who handles the studio's animated film Oscar campaigns, would talk about the studio's award season efforts.)

Still, Ross raises a fair question: Why shouldn't his film win? Ross has every reason to complain about Pixar getting the short end of the stick. "Wall-E" didn't get a best picture nomination in 2009, even though it was just as good as "The Reader." Dito in 2008 for "Ratatouille," which was just as good as "Anomalisa," or "The Incredibles" in 2005, which was just as good as "Finding Neverland."

But here's the sad truth. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences doesn't appreciate, much less understand, animated film. Everyone else points the finger at the actors' branch of the academy, which represents by far the largest chunk of members — presumably members who are voting actors, would never vote for a film that has no actors on screen. But the problem goes much deeper.

The real issue is that Oscar voters over the last few decades have completely lost touch with their original mandate, which was to reward the films that best represented the craft of filmmaking.

see Pixar, page 11

Motion picture company Pixar — creator of "Toy Story 3" — has never earned the title of best picture at the Oscars.
Malfoy leaves Hogwarts behind

Geoff Boucher

Los Angeles Times

In the first "Harry Potter" film, released nine years ago this month, there's a signature early moment at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry with the Sorting Hat ceremony, in which a sentient magical hat is placed on the head of each student to judge them for membership in one of the school's four houses. In the scene, the hat—which has a face inside the folds of its brown, furrowed peak—hesitates with some students but makes an instant decision when it touches the blond hair of Draco Malfoy, who clearly belongs in the sinister ranks of Slytherin.

On a recent blue-sky afternoon in Burbank, the hat and Malfoy were reunited on the Warner Bros. lot. "Oh, I remember this old man," actor Tom Felton, now 23, said as he picked up the floppy hat that is part of a "Potter" props and costume exhibit for tourists. The London native started to put the hat on and then, of a "Potter" props and costume exhibit for tourists. The London native started to put the hat on and then, with a wary expression, decided it was best to just put it back on with the other museum pieces.

"A little later he said: 'We're all ready to go on. The experience has been amazing, to say the least, but it's exciting to go on to something new.'"

The opening weekend of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows—Part 2," the seventh film in the series, pulled in a $339 million in world wide box office, and fans are already excited for the "Potter" finale. The month before the release of "Deathly Hallows—Part 2," Felton will star opposite Steve Kloves, who wrote seven of the eight "Potter" scripts, said Felton leaves the franchise as one of the sparest graduates of the magical set.

"I've taught the students, instilled in them what the jazz outlook is and we've rehearsed it and practiced it, then it's the instructor's job—to some extent—to let go a little bit and say 'You've gotta be on your own, cause we're talking about improvisations—this is jazz,'" he said. "In order for me to be completely in control, I need to not be in control at some points."

The show will begin at 8 p.m. Tickets are $10 for general admission, $8 for seniors and $6 for Jazz Federation members and students. They are available for purchase at pacolo.org, by phone at (805) 756-2787, or at the Performing Arts Ticket Office.

Actor Tom Felton, who played Draco Malfoy in the "Harry Potter" movies, said he plans to move on in his acting career now that the film series has ended.

"Sometimes the struggle within directing improvisation is the ability to let go and let students be their own directors. "Once I've taught the students, instilled in them what the jazz outlook is and we've rehearsed it and practiced it, then it's the instructor's job—to some extent—to let go a little bit and say 'You've gotta be on your own, own cause we're talking about improvisations—this is jazz,'" he said. "In order for me to be completely in control, I need to not be in control at some points."

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Jazz

continued from page 8

Rinzler said one of the biggest challenges about directing the jazz groups is the improvisation itself, both for the student and director. For the student, he said, it is the inevitable make-it-or-break-it chance that each musician must face.

"When it comes time to do it in the moment, there's a chance to hit on a really incredible idea that the audience just screams at (I've heard it), and there's a chance to do something that the improver says, 'Oh I wish I didn't do that,'" Rinzler said. "Yet for the director, Rinzler said the struggle within directing improvisation is the ability to let go and let students be their own directors.

"Once I've taught the students, instilled in them what the jazz outlook is and we've rehearsed it and practiced it, then it's the instructor's job—to some extent—to let go a little bit and say 'You've gotta be on your own, own cause we're talking about improvisations—this is jazz,'" he said. "In order for me to be completely in control, I need to not be in control at some points."

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Pixar

continued from page 9

If you look at Oscar winners from the 1930s through the 1960s, they were often crowd-pleasing films that were rewarded for their entertainment value, not necessarily for any weighty drama or social themes. The winners list includes such popcorn fare as "Gone with the Wind," "Casablanca," "Annie Hall," "Rocky," and superman vision of America's best Picture." Even as late as 1976, "Rocky" earned our eternal cinematic gratitude for its filmmaker. But no director of an animated film has ever won a nomination, and it's hard to imagine things being different this year.

When it comes to best-picture glory, Pixar has gotten the shaft over the years because, with often quiet but thrilling redemption of the soul. He's respectful of the written word and applies it with serendipity that put together a cast of young actors who meshed so well and he said it was hard to say goodbye to the movie set. The only way an animated film will win a best picture Oscar is if the academy changes its mindset about what represents a great film.

For now, if you're Pixar, you've earned our eternal cinematic gratitude for making movies that appeal to our childhood sense of wonder, awe and delight. But you still haven't earned the right to be taken very seriously by the motion picture academy.

Autents can be many things but not co-directors. If Ross wants to throw money at his Oscar best-picture problem, he should start taking out ads promoting Pixar's roster of stellar filmmakers. "Driving Miss Daisy" is the only film since the early 1930s to win best picture without earning a best director nomination for its filmmaker. But no director of an animated film has ever won a nomination, and it's hard to imagine things being different this year.

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The following editorial appeared in the Los Angeles Times on Monday, Nov. 29.

Americans 'reluctant' to face own deaths

There is a way of making one's last weeks on earth something more than just "do not resuscitate" orders — a directive could just as easily instruct doctors to take heroic measures to sustain life. Even so, a directive can be daunting to complete. Each state has its own standardized form; some of them ask only for the name of someone authorized to make medical decisions on a patient's behalf, while others invite people to declare when their doctors should switch from trying to prolong their life to reducing their pain and suffering.

For example, California's form asks people to choose between telling doctors to take all "generally accepted measures to sustain life" or to not prolong their life if they're close to death, in an irreversible state. And yet, Americans also are notoriously reluctant to confront the realities of death itself. In particular, how is it that so few people have taken steps to ensure that their wishes will be respected if they're too sick or injured to speak for themselves? That question is squarely posed by a recent study of end-of-life care for cancer patients. Researchers at the Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care looked at the treatment of Medicare patients over age 65, focusing on those suffering from especially lethal versions of the disease. They found that "many hospitals and physicians aggressively treat patients with curative attempts they may have not, at the expense of improving the quality of their last few weeks and months."

In Los Angeles, more than 40 percent of the cancer patients studied died in a hospital or intensive care unit — a setting few people would choose. They may have stayed in the hospital instead of shifting into a hospice program because they hadn't given any instructions on when to stop aggressively treating their illness. Or perhaps the instructions they gave weren't clear enough to overcome the institutional bias in favor of using all available medical means even when there's little to be gained.

There's nothing wrong with people insisting that doctors keep trying to hold back their death with aggressive interventions, no matter how bad the side effects may be or how diminished their faculties. It should be up to each individual to strike the right balance between prolonging life and maintaining its quality. What the Dartmouth study shows, though, is that there is no consistent pattern of care or evidence that treatment patterns follow patient preferences.

In other words, unless people strongly assert their preferences, their end-of-life care will largely be determined by the prevailing customs of their communities. Those customs vary widely; for example, the study found that patients in Minneapolis were four times less likely than those in Los Angeles to receive aggressive life-sustaining treatments during their last weeks on earth.

There is a way of making one's preferences known: It requires completing a form called an advance directive. And under federal law, hospitals have to tell their patients about these forms and ask if they've filled one out. But only about 25 percent of the population has done so. One reason is that advance directives have a gruesome image. They're ed” measures to try to prolong their life, or to not prolong their life if they're close to death, in an irreversible coma or more likely to be hurt or burdened by the treatment than helped. It's a chillingly stark choice. The "Five Wishes" form developed by the nonprofit organization Aging With Dignity, which is accepted in California and many other states, offers a more flexible set of instructions to doctors, but it forces people to make far more decisions about their future care.

More alternatives would be welcome. In particular, rather than focusing on treatment preferences, advance directives should let people express what they'd like to achieve through treatment should they become terminally ill. Those goals — such as seeing a child graduate from high school or simply having the chance to put one's affairs in order — change as people and their families age, so advance planning has to be an ongoing process.

And yet, Americans also are finding the right advocate for this kind of planning. Health insurers don't have the requisite credibility given their obvious interest in cutting costs. Doctors and hospitals, meanwhile, have little incentive to do so. Medicare pays more for aggressive treatment than for "palliative" care that's aimed only at relieving pain and reducing symptoms. And physicians can't seek extra dollars from Medicare for the time they spend counseling patients about end-of-life options; when Democrats included such a provision in the healthcare reform bill, critics said they were trying to create "death panels."

Still, Medicare is encouraging doctors to offer end-of-life counseling as part of their patients' annual "wellness" visits. And states are giving them a bigger role in advance planning. More than 30 recognize "life-sustaining treatment" orders that physicians fill out in consultation with patients. Ultimately, though, the burden rests with individuals to explore their options, decide how they want to be treated as death approaches, and make their preferences known — ideally, as part of their regularly updated medical record. Those who do not make those decisions themselves will leave it to others, with uncertain consequences at the most trying times.
Americans aren't alone in battling tough economic times

Lewis W. Diuguid is a member of The Kansas City Star's Editorial Board.

My first trip abroad exposed me to people and things that felt uncomfortably like home.

On the cruise ship, a woman serving at a restaurant explained that she was a young mother of a pre-teen son, but she had an engineering degree. The cruise ship job away from her Asian nation home was the best she could find.

Back on the cruise ship, a woman said that she was a young mother of a pre-teen son, but she had an engineering degree. The cruise ship job away from her Asian nation home was the best she could find.

The U.S. deserves praise for financing the lion's share of both HIV treatment in Africa and HIV prevention research.

Seth Berkley is the CEO of the non-profit International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, which he wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.

The recent announcement that a pill currently used to treat HIV infection can also prevent it was an important milestone in the effort to keep people from getting the virus.

The breakthough utilises a strain of pseudovirus that is not dangerous for those using it. It is similar to a strain used in the study of the virus.

The HIV drug's success in a Phase III trial is one of several recent breakthroughs in HIV prevention. None of the approaches, which also include a vaginal gel and an AIDS vaccine, is perfect, but all are promising. Together they add momentum to the growing body of evidence that, if properly focused and funded, can deliver effective methods of preventing HIV. And the advances mean that children born as the virus is making its way around the world could live longer and healthier lives.

This new normal is no longer a framer of hope for the future. It is real, and there is no secure or comfortable safe harbor for anyone from the economic storm, which is upon us.

Improvements continue in HIV prevention options

MARGARET SCOTT NEWART

The new normal is no longer a frame of hope for the future. It is real, and there is no secure or comfortable safe harbor for anyone from the economic storm, which is upon us.
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Kiffin says Barkley will play against UCLA

Gary Klein
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES — As a high school and college quarterback, Lane Kiffin was known for his football acumen than his passing or footwork. But USC's coach showed Tuesday that he knows how to dance in the pocket, especially when pressed to address quarterback Matt Barkley's status for Saturday night's game against UCLA.

Barkley was sidelined last week against Notre Dame because of a left ankle sprain. The sophomore practiced Tuesday, but he was limited.

"I plan on it," he said.

So does Kiffin, apparently, though he scrambled throughout the day that he knows how to dance in the pocket, especially when pressured.

Ultimately, Kiffin said Barkley's mobility would be the determining factor and that it might be a gametime decision.

UCLA Coach Rick Neuheisel, however, anticipates that the Bruins will see Barkley, who has passed for 25 touchdowns with 10 interceptions.

"I would expect nothing less," Neuheisel said.

And even though he slowed down in the second half, he found a way to get some huge hits. The Giants will pursue a backup shortstop to compete with Emmanuel Burriss this spring. But they aren't expected to rekindle talks for Barlett or any of the other front-line shortstops on the trade market.

The Giants haven't closed the door on bringing back Edgar Renteria, their World Series MVP. But he has said he'd rather end his career with the St. Louis Cardinals or Florida Marlins. Like Uribe, Tejada is a recognized leader, he is sure-handed despite limited range, he provides steady if not heavy right-handed power, and he is known to perform in the clutch.

The notable downsides: Tejada is five years older than Uribe, he is a poor on-base presence who seldom walks, and he is a station-to-station runner. Tejada also has led his league in hitting ground-ball double plays in five of the past seven seasons. He'll fit in just fine with the Giants, who grounded into 158 double plays last year to break a 71-year-old franchise record. Sandoval led the NL with 26 while Uribe had 20. It's looking as if the Giants will put off that younger, more athletic lineup for another season, but at least Tejada can be counted upon for his durability. He has played all 162 games in five of his 13 full major league seasons, and appeared in 156 games last year.

I thought he was impressive. He played every day, he swung the bat, and he convinced me he could still play shortstop.

— Bruce Bochy
San Francisco Giants manager
Early offensive problems hinder men’s basketball in nonconference play

Brian De Los Santos

The Cal Poly men’s basketball team (2-3) is still searching for its offensive identity — three weeks into the season.

The reason? Inexperience, said head coach Joe Callero. Players like redshirts Chris O’Brien and Drake U’u — as well as freshmen Maliik Love and Jamal Johnson — are still trying to get into the flow of the game time atmosphere.

“This season, we would say our rebounding gets an ‘A’ and our defense gets a ‘B’ and our offense gets a ‘C’ — that’s where we need to work,” Callero said. “It’s about game time experience. We just need more games under our belt.”

Cal Poly men’s basketball is a young team, with two-thirds of its players being freshmen. O’Brien and Drake U’u are the only seniors on the roster — guard Shawn Lewis.

The team ranks last among all nine Big West Conference teams in scoring offense, field goal percentage and 3-point field goal percentage.

Both Johnson and Love have tried to help on the offensive end, but neither have scored double digits in any of their first five games. Both seem capable.

At Madison High School in San Antonio, Texas, Johnson averaged 10 points and 5 assists per game as a junior. Love averaged 20 points per game and close to 10 rebounds per game at the Bishop’s School in La Jolla, Calif.

For both, that success hasn’t translated into the college ranks just yet.

“They’re at a point in their career to just run the team, take care of the ball,” Callero said. “What I am looking for from them is improving their assist-to-turnover ratio. That’s the most important area they can continue to work on.”

Even though the Mustangs lack experience, they still have some offensive playmakers on the roster. The team includes talents like Lewis, forward Davidd Hanson and center Will Denhardt this season in scoring threats on the court. All three have combined for 26 of the team’s 302 points this season.

Many thought O’Brien would be part of that scoring group this season. But to this point, he is struggling to find his scoring touch. O’Brien, who transferred from San Francisco two years ago, is a 6-foot-4 guard who would add size to a relatively small Mustang lineup. He said he believes he can be one of the team’s top scorers this year, but he just needs to keep things simple on the court.

“I think I was playing too fast, too anxious, too excited,” O’Brien said. “It’s been over a year and a half since I’ve played in an actual Division I game. I think each game I’m getting more and more comfortable playing and it’s opening more opportunities for me scoring. I think the last couple of games I’ve finally been settling in and I’ve figured out what I need to do.”

Hanson — who played for Cal Poly as a true freshman — has done his part to try and help O’Brien and other inexperienced players become familiar with their surroundings this season. He has been in his teammates’ shoes, he said.

“I try to lead by example,” Hanson said. “I try to let them know that I, and the rest of the team, have confidence in them so they can perform the best way they can.”

In turn, getting his teammates going might be what the Mustangs need to get rid of the inconsistencies on the offensive end, Hanson said. While Hanson is generating most of the offense, he said he tries his best to get O’Brien — and guard U’u — comfortable enough to excel on the court on a consistent basis. The two could add another dimension to Cal Poly’s offense.

“In order for us to win games, we need (O’Brien and U’u) to perform at a high level on a nightly basis,” Hanson said. “We need huge contributions from them.”

For now, low point totals and the team’s combined .377 field goal percentage continues to plague the Mustangs. And with a limited roster due to injuries, there aren’t many options for Cal Poly to turn to. As the season goes on, and players get more experienced, hopefully points will follow, O’Brien said.

“Each guy, once through 15, needs to realize their own role in order for us to be successful,” O’Brien said. “I think each day it has gotten better. Hopefully, we can put good basketball together come conference, make a run at the tournament and see where that takes us.”

Brian Misiak — Mustangs Daily