

MUSTANG DAILY

CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY



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Volume LXXIV, Number 24

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

www.mustangdaily.net

Block scheduling meant to get freshmen on the right track, but some stumble

Kate McIntyre

MUSTANG DAILY

When landscape architecture freshman Marissa Mondon arrived at Cal Poly, she expected to be handed a schedule, just like every other freshman attending. But she didn't receive her schedule because her high school hadn't sent her transcript in time. The stress most freshmen probably felt at their first day of class was amplified when she had to crash all four of her courses.

"I felt isolated, because no one else was in the same boat," Mondon said.

Over the summer, 3,820 freshmen were scheduled into their fall quarter classes. The block-scheduling program worked, as evidenced by feedback from freshmen and by an increase in the average unit load freshmen take - from 12 units last fall to 16.

History freshman Liz Goralka said most of her friends are only taking 12 units, but she's taking 16 because a professor at the summer orientation program SOAR advised her to.

"Most people I know except the honors students are in 12, but I signed up for 16 anyway. It's kind of stressful, but not the worst thing in the world ... It sucks that other people can go out and have more fun than I can," Goralka said.

It will be easier to stay at 16 units than to transition from 12 to 16. Plus this way she won't have to catch up later on, she said.

"I might as well start hard and let it get easier. It's manageable; it's not like I want to kill myself every night."

Provost Koob presented the idea of block-scheduling each freshman's fall quarter classes last winter. Using information submitted by each department about what classes each major should be taking in fall, the provost's staff assigned freshmen their classes over the summer, instead of letting them register for classes like continuing students and like they have done in the past.

Associate Registrar Debbie Arsenau said the point of implementing this new program was to keep students from falling behind by not taking prerequisite courses early on.

"The goal was to get students started on the right track to graduate on time," she said.

Given the short time frame for implementing the block-scheduling, most feedback from the freshmen and colleges about the program was relatively positive.

Associate Dean Roxy Peck said the College of Science and Math was happy with the block-scheduling process and its results.

"We have had very few calls from students who weren't able to get classes this fall—even continuing students. There have been noticeably fewer calls from unhappy students and parents, which I think is a sign that we did a better job of getting both continuing students and new students into classes. The first week of classes was unusually

quiet for us in that respect," she said.

Peck said she asked freshmen what they thought about block-scheduling, and the response was uniformly positive, even from students scheduled into 7 a.m. classes.

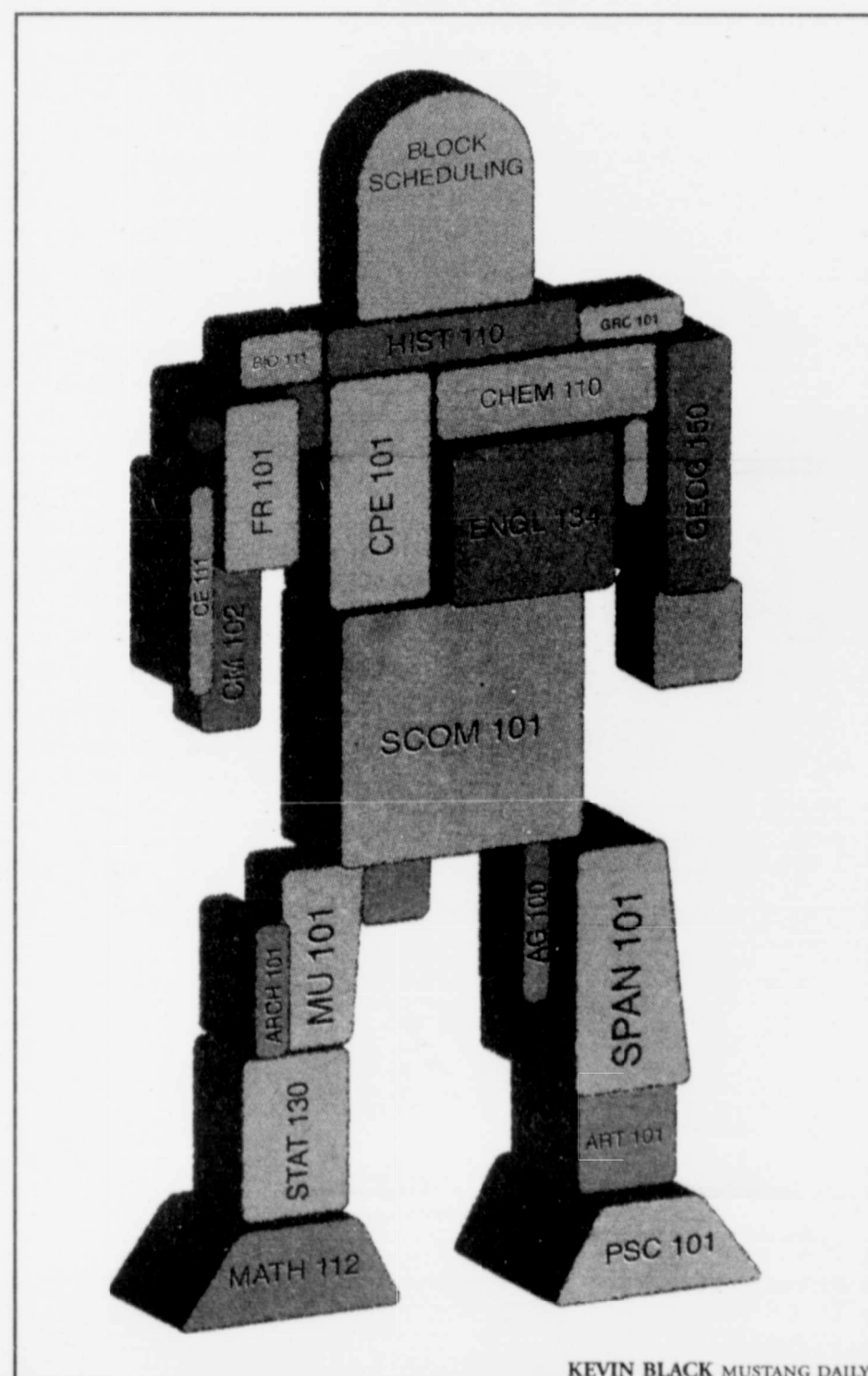
"Two students told me that they had friends that were attending other universities that were having a lot of difficulty getting classes and that they really appreciated having a full schedule," she said.

However, there were a few issues with the process, including the scheduling of students with AP credit and those with extracurricular activities, College of Liberal Arts advisor Wendy Spradlin said.

"We have students coming in with numerous AP exams passed. If the university doesn't receive their scores in time, they can easily be scheduled into classes that they don't really need," Spradlin said. "That defeats the purpose of the effort!"

Spradlin said that block-scheduling works better for majors that are heavily specified, where students have to take certain classes to fulfill a requirement, but for students who have more freedom in their curriculum, like CLA students, it doesn't work as well.

It results in students being assigned a course to meet a GE area instead of getting to choose the course they'd like to take to fulfill that particular area. For example, a student might be assigned ECON 222 for D2 but really would have preferred HIST 213, she said.



KEVIN BLACK MUSTANG DAILY

Cal Poly making room for "serious" students

Sean Hanrahan

MUSTANG DAILY

Cal Poly is now operating with new policies issued from the California State University (CSU) Chancellor's Office that limit the number of incomplete, withdrawal and repeat grades students can accumulate per academic record to "make room for serious students," said Bradford Fely of the Office of the Registrar.

The office of the registrar notified students via e-mail on Sept. 18 addressing Executive Order 1037 that includes these new policies, but many students are still unaware of the changes, as school had yet to begin when the e-mail was sent.

"The concept of throughput is important in understanding the rational behind the policy changes", said Fely. "(These policies) should discourage students from planning poorly ... it will also be harder to get out of a class."

The four major changes in Executive Order 1037 involve incomplete grades, course withdrawals, course repeats for grade forgiveness and course repeats for grade improvement.

Incomplete Grades

Students will not be able to re-enroll in a course for which you have received an "I" (Incomplete) grade. Instead you have to work

out how you will complete the work with your instructor.

Withdrawals

Students will be able to only withdraw from up to 28 units during your undergraduate education here at Cal Poly. They will start with a zero count towards your 28 unit withdrawal limit as of Fall 2009. Any medical/emergency withdrawals after the end of the seventh week of classes will not count towards your 28 unit limit.

Repeats for Grade Forgiveness

Students will be able to repeat up to 16 units for grade forgive-

ness (where the new grade replaces the old grade in Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation). Students' existing number of repeat units (that they might have accumulated prior to fall 2009) will be carried forward in calculating your repeat totals. If students have already reached the 16 unit limit, they will not be allowed to register for additional repeat courses. They may repeat a specific course for grade forgiveness one time only. If a course is taken after being repeated once, the second and third attempts will be averaged into the GPA. Note that the second grade will replace the first grade only if the second grade is equal or better than the first grade. If the second

grade is worse than the first grade, it will not replace the first grade and this attempt will not count towards the 16 unit limit.

Repeats for Grade Improvement by Averaging

After students reach the grade forgiveness limit, they can repeat an additional 18 units for grade improvement by averaging, where consecutive attempts are averaged into GPA.

Executive Order 1037 arrives just after the introduction to a university registrar, a new position to Cal Poly. The Office of the Registrar, formerly known as

see Policy, page 2

Policy

continued from page 1

Academic Affairs, appointed Cem Sunata early last summer, replacing Tom Zuur, who retired in December. Sunata comes to Cal Poly from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas where she worked for more than 10 years.

A Cal Poly news report to faculty in August said the new position would play a key role in attaining graduation, enrollment and retention goals.

Sunata is responsible for insuring the integrity of student academic records by requiring that students have a clear path to graduation.

Instructors are now required to produce a contract with a student who receives an incomplete grade to prove that the student knows exactly what needs to be done to fulfill the course and students will have a harder time dropping classes after the withdrawal deadline.

With the 1037 policies just taking effect this quarter, it isn't noticeably apparent to anyone that students are experiencing relevant problems. However, the Office of the Registrar is anticipating grievances later in the year. The Cal Poly Portal will not alert a student about hitting a limit.

Patients can challenge and negotiate through the maze of costly hospital bills

Diane Stafford and Alan Bavelly

MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — A mild heart attack put Lee Hircock in the hospital for a couple of days last year.

He recovered just fine.

But the sky-high hospital bill Hircock got afterward was enough to send even the stoutest heart into cardiac arrest.

Two days in the hospital, a stent in a coronary artery, plenty of high-priced medications ... \$84,498.60

"Those numbers are staggering," said Hircock, 45, of Shawnee, Kan. "Yes, I know they have high-tech equipment, and a stent is a medical miracle. But you think about \$40,000 a day."

Hircock joined the ranks of countless patients who confront complicated billing codes, long lists of charges, unfathomable language about insurance coverage and sometimes sums they simply can't pay.

But what Hircock knew — he's a professional patient advocate — is that medical bills can be challenged.

Take the time to educate yourself about the mysteries of billing codes. You can catch errors and point them out to health care providers and insurance companies.

If you don't have the money to pay an eye-popping bottom line, you often can negotiate discounts with your doctors or hospital.

(You also can ease some of the pain up front by finding out how

much a procedure will cost and how much your insurance will cover. Look at alternatives. Shop around.)

Don't expect health care reform to make this easier. Whatever plan Washington comes up with, patients will face confusing, complicated bills and potentially large out-of-pocket medical expenses.

The health care industry, for its part, said billing problems were rare and certainly unintended.

But mistakes were made.

Medical Billing Advocates of America is an association of professionals who help consumers with billing problems; its members find errors in eight out of 10 hospital bills they examine.

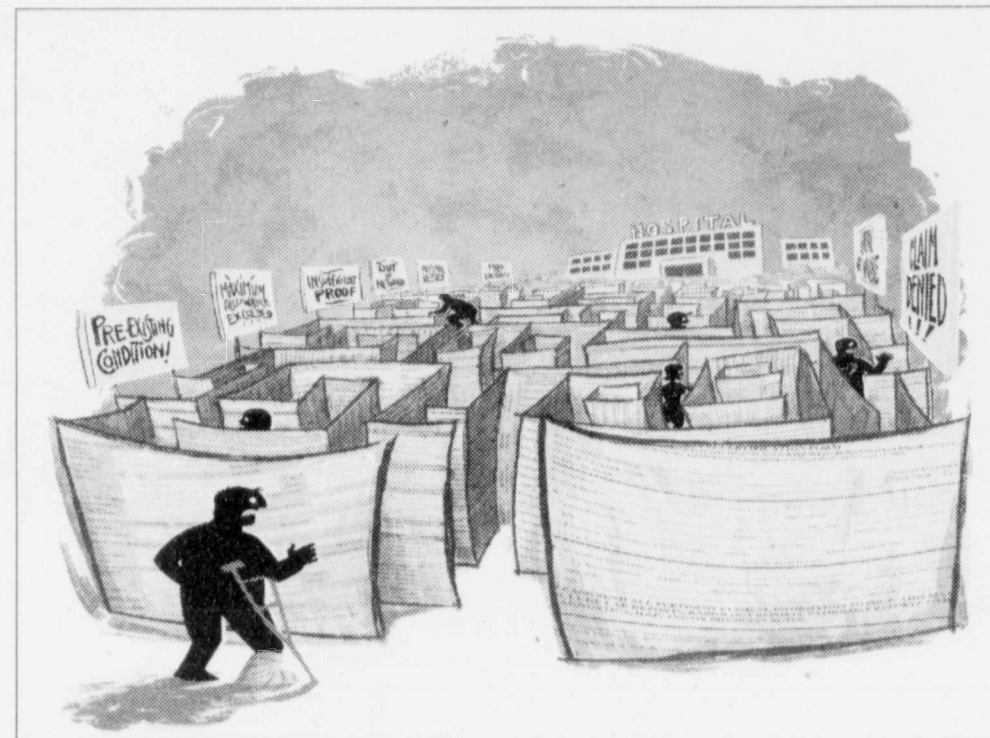
With medical expenses contributing to nearly two-thirds of bankruptcies, reduced charges and affordable payment plans could prevent financial ruin.

"Ask, ask, ask. Advocate, advocate," urged Mark Rukavina, executive director of the Access Project, a nonprofit organization that helps patients work with doctors and hospitals on financially crippling bills.

Don't be discouraged when a customer service representative explains over the telephone that your policy doesn't cover a procedure or a hospital can't discount your bill, Rukavina said.

Insurance companies have an appeals process. Most hospitals have policies for providing charity care.

"Health care providers generally are willing to deal," Rukavina



said.

Consumer activists are pushing health care providers to be more transparent about their fees and billing practices — a godsend for patients who've encountered items like the "disposable mucus recovery system" on their bills.

For the uninitiated, that's a box of tissues.

"Hospitals can charge \$15 for a box of Kleenex and say that's what it costs them to provide it," said Steve Luptak, an expert in deciphering medical bills. "And they can charge one price to the insured and a different price to the uninsured. It's not easy, but it's important to understand the system."

Luptak operates HealthCare Advocacy in Kansas City, a service designed to help individuals navigate the health care billing and insurance waters. He's part

of a growing cottage industry of people who have worked in hospital billing departments or insurance companies and have switched sides to work for consumers.

The first step in challenging bills, Luptak advises, is to remove emotion from the process. Especially when you're ill or recovering, it's easy to get frustrated, angry or despondent, he said.

"It's so important to be calm and diplomatic and pursue your questions until you reach the right person," Luptak said. "If you can't afford a lawyer or other professional, I always recommend turning to another family member, a friend, or someone who can be one step removed emotionally in fighting for you."

Problems with a doctor's or hospital's bills should first be addressed with the billing office. A second step is to ask for help from a hospital social worker or patient advocate on the hospital staff.

Some people find help by asking around their churches or neighborhoods for someone who has worked in the industry.

Failing that, consumers are hiring professional advocates.

Hircock, an accountant by training, got into the advocacy business after working as an internal hospital auditor. He saw firsthand how billing errors occurred.

"Most consumers don't have much leverage (over high bills)," Hircock said. "They don't hold any trump cards."

But Hircock the advocate knew how to scrutinize the hospital charges of Hircock the patient.

He asked for an itemized copy of his bill and combed through it line by line. He discovered that the hospital had charged twice for his stent procedure, both as an inpatient and an outpatient.

Hircock also checked what Medicare would pay. The government program reimburses hospitals based on their reported costs. By Medicare standards, his procedure was worth less than \$12,000, Hircock said.

"Unlike any other industry in the world, there is very little correlation between (hospital) charges and what it actually costs," Hircock said. "That (bill) had a lot of profit built into it."

He took the bill back to the hospital.

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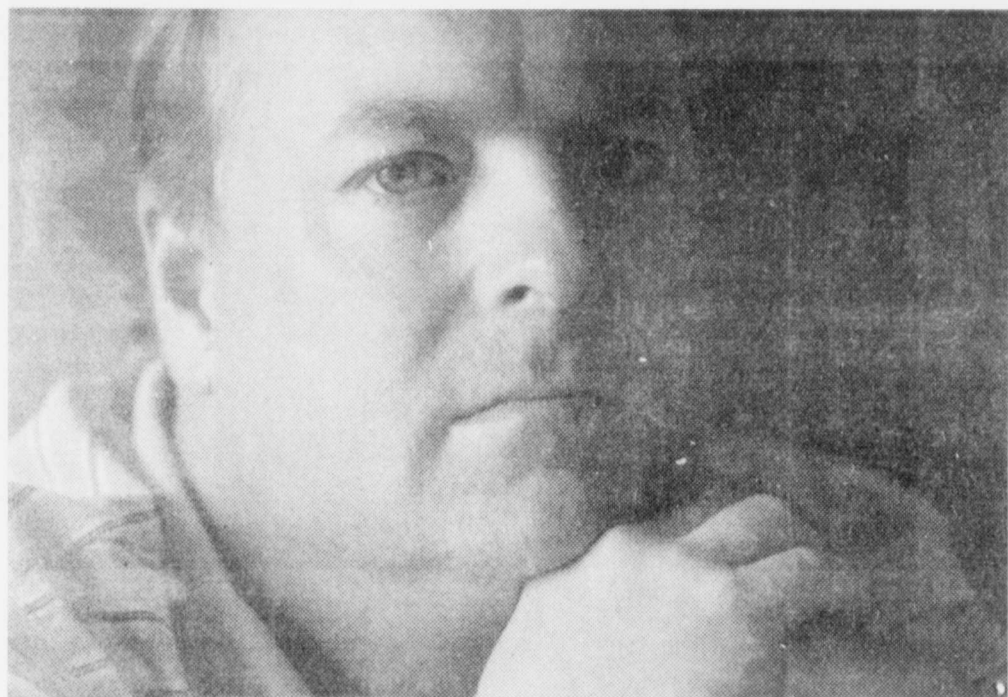
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Health care

continued from page 2

"I showed them in no uncertain terms where they had double billed," he said. "Initially, I was met



MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE
Lee Hircock, who works as a patient advocate, received a shock when he received an \$85,000 bill for a two-day hospital stay.

with resistance and defense."

He also told his insurance plan, which had paid the inflated bill.

"You guys realize you overpaid? Do you even care?" he asked. "They got very defensive: 'How would we know?'"

Ultimately the hospital did refund the overpayment, Hircock said.

The need for professional bill-deciphering services can be headed off, said Corrie Edwards, executive director of the Kansas Health Consumer Coalition. But patients need to become better-educated consumers of medical services.

When Edwards recently had diagnostic tests at a hospital, she caused a ripple effect at the admissions desk. As other patients overheard her calling her doctor's office and insurance company asking for cost information, they whipped out their cell phones and made similar calls.

"Go in well-informed," Edwards said. "If you're talking about elective procedures, make sure you understand what your doctor is ordering, the names of the tests, and get the procedural codes from your insurance company."

Patients also should find out from their insurance company what's covered and what out-of-pocket expenses they can expect.

"If you know your co-pays and coverage, there shouldn't be any surprises (on the final bill)," said Blake Williamson, senior medical director with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City.

If you think your health plan should have covered something it didn't, you can file an appeal to the insurance company, Williamson said.

"Frankly, mistakes can happen. But it's a rare event. Ninety-nine percent or more of things are covered the way they are supposed to be."

Patients also can ask the hospital to review bills when an error is suspected.

"We'll get down to a line by line, nitty-gritty with (patients.) Our interest is to get it right," said University of Kansas Hospital spokesman Dennis McCulloch. "...With all the computer coding these days, sometimes it's simply someone keying in a wrong num-

ber."

But the more common challenge for consumers is paying what they owe when the bill comes due.

Doctors and hospitals are increasingly willing to write down

their charges now that the health care reform debate has put them in the spotlight, consumer advocates said.

"If the patient is willing to provide information (about their financial need), they're generally willing to negotiate," said Rukavina of the Access Project.

"The bottom line is they want to get paid something," said Luptak, the professional patient advocate. "But if you negotiate them down, you need to follow through. If you set a payment plan, you need to stick to it. If you work with them, they will work with you."

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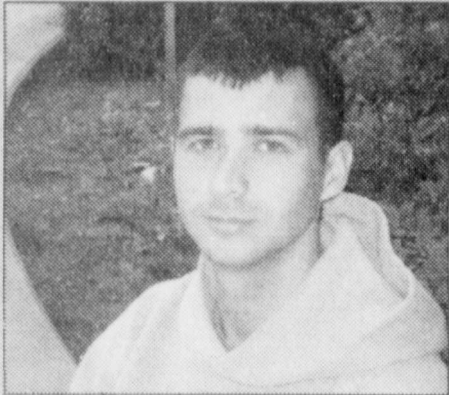
WORD ON THE STREET

“Do you think block scheduling will help students graduate on time?”



“Maybe, because they get some that are harder to get since you start off with more impacted classes. Maybe that will give them a head start.”

-Julie Uccelli, food science sophomore



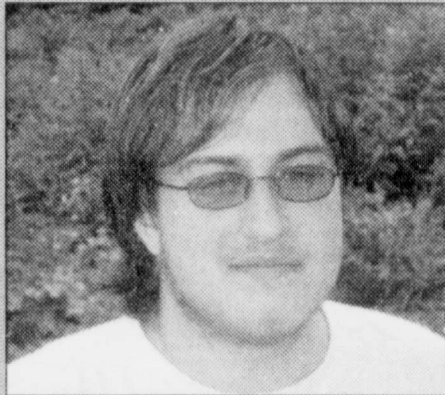
“No, it may help freshman but may have potential to set back upperclassmen and cost them more money.”

-Alex Maggini, ag-business senior



“Yes, because it just makes freshmen get on the right track earlier.”

-Ashley Ogden, ag-business senior



“Not really, especially some of the engineering paths have so many required units they'll take more than four years.”

-Andy Richardson, aerospace engineering senior



“It probably would. It won't let you ignore graduation requirements. If I were a freshman I'd be frustrated that I had so little choice.”

-Kevin Finn, computer science senior



“Probably, because they don't know what classes they need to take. If someone tells them they will be more likely to get it done.”

-Becky Robles, liberal studies junior

COMPILED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY JENNIFER TITCOMB

MUSTANG DAILY'S

NFL Pigskin Picks

Circle the winner of each game

Ravens @ Vikings

Texans @ Bengals

Browns @ Steelers

Giants @ Saints

Cardinals @ Seahawks

Eagles @ Raiders

Bills @ Jets

Titans @ Patriots

Bears @ Falcons

MONDAY NIGHT **Broncos @ Chargers** TIEBREAK GAME

Score ____ - ____

Name _____
Number _____
Email _____

* One entry per person. Must submit by this Friday at 5 PM to the Mustang Daily newsroom (26-226)

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California's ban on gay marriage back to court

Howard Mintz
MCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

SAN JOSE, Calif. — The legal showdown over California's ban on gay marriage heats up again this week as a federal judge considers an attempt to short-circuit the challenge to Proposition 8, the voter-approved law putting a halt to same-sex weddings in California.

On Wednesday, Chief U.S. District Judge Vaughn Walker will consider a motion from Proposition 8 backers that would scrap plans for a January trial and put a quick end to the effort to overturn the anti-gay marriage law. Proposition 8's defenders say U.S. Supreme Court precedent and the historical underpinnings of the definition of marriage negate the need for a trial, an argument strongly rejected by same-sex marriage advocates who vow to present strong factual evidence that Proposition 8 denies gay couples federal equal protection rights.

Based on Walker's comments to date, Proposition 8 backers may have an uphill fight to avoid a trial, even with what some legal experts say are several strong legal arguments. The judge has indicated on numerous occasions that he believes the case warrants a trial to develop a full record for higher court review that many predict could reach the U.S. Supreme Court.

A newly formed legal group, headed by former Republican U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson

and prominent trial lawyer David Boies, sued to overturn Proposition 8 earlier this year, representing two same-sex couples seeking the right to marry. The lawsuit has proceeded in the wake of May's California Supreme Court ruling, which upheld Proposition 8 but left intact an estimated 18,000 same-sex marriages that were licensed before voters approved the law in November.

Proposition 8 backers say the case can be dismissed on legal grounds, without the need for trial.

"They simply can't win under relevant controlling law here," said Jim Campbell, a staff attorney with the conservative Alliance Defense Fund.

Lawyers for the couples, as well as the city of San Francisco, argue otherwise, saying in court papers that "Prop. 8 is uniquely irrational." They want to go to trial.

"We think we have very strong arguments on the legal issues," said Theodore Boutros Jr., one of the lawyers working with Olson. But "we really took our guidance from the court's comments early on. To us, it makes a lot more sense to develop a factual record."

Proposition 8's defenders are relying on two central arguments to get the challenge tossed out of court. The first argument is that the lawsuit fails to prove a violation of any constitutional rights because of what Proposition 8 defenders insist is a deeply rooted tradition of reserving marriage for heterosexual couples.

State

SACRAMENTO (MCT) — California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has signed two gay rights bills, one honoring late activist Harvey Milk and another recognizing same-sex marriages performed in other states. In the last of hundreds of bill actions taken before midnight Sunday, Schwarzenegger approved the two bills by state Sen. Mark Leno, D-San Francisco.

WALNUT CREEK, Calif. (MCT) — If you drive on the new Bay Bridge's east span after it opens in 2013, you will be safer because of an innovative bridge piece designed to flex, bend and break so the main structure does not in a big earthquake.

Once the inevitable Big One finishes shaking the Bay Area, Caltrans crews can replace any broken fuses to restore the bridge to full strength — much like an electrician replaces a fuse that blows out.

The \$6.3 billion east span from Oakland to Treasure Island is the first bridge to use the breakable metal fuses for added protection against earthquakes, Caltrans officials said Monday during a tour for media members that was tied to Saturday's 20th anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake.

National

WASHINGTON (MCT) — Two Americans won the Nobel Prize in economic sciences Monday for their research into the way economic decisions and transactions are made outside of the market.

Elinor Ostrom, 76, a professor at Indiana University in Bloomington, Ind., became the first woman to win the prize for economics since it was established 40 years ago.

She shares the \$1.4-million award with Oliver Williamson, 77, a professor at the University of California-Berkeley. Ostrom and Williamson were cited for their work beginning in the early 1970s that helped to expand economics beyond the traditional analysis of market prices.

MIAMI (MCT) — A convicted Cuban intelligence agent who infiltrated the Boca Chica Naval Air Station in Key West, Fla., — but didn't obtain or pass along state secrets to his handlers in Havana — could see his life sentence reduced to 20 years on Tuesday.

Antonio Guerrero, convicted of espionage conspiracy in the highly publicized prosecution of the so-called "Cuban Five" spy defendants in 2001, has reached an agreement with the U.S. attorney's office to lower his sentence.

International

BAGHDAD (MCT) — Iraqi security forces seized a top aide to the most wanted man in Iraq, capturing him Sunday in a helicopter raid in Diyala province, an Iraqi security official who participated in the raid said Monday.

Ayad Jalal Abdulwahab has been working closely with Izzat al-Douri, the vice president under the regime of the late dictator Saddam Hussein, the security official said. Douri is still at large and is viewed by U.S. officials as Saddam's successor in the resistance movement. The Iraqi force that captured Abdulwahab turned him over to U.S. forces, which brought him to Baghdad, where he's undergoing interrogation, Iraqi officials said.

KABUL, Afghanistan (MCT) — The Afghan government's appointee resigned Monday from the commission that's investigating allegations of fraud in the country's scandal-plagued Aug. 20 presidential election as the Obama administration struggles to craft a strategy to curb the Taliban-led insurgency.

Maulavi Mustafa Barakzai said "foreign interference" was the reason for his resignation from the United Nations-sponsored Election Complaints Commission. His departure suggests the panel could be prepared to toss out enough suspect votes to force President Hamid Karzai into a runoff in his quest for a second five-year term.

MEN'S SOCCER

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 14TH
VS. CAL STATE FULLERTON,
ALEX G. SPANOS STADIUM
7:00PM

SCARF NIGHT
Free scarves for the first
250 fans (limit 2 per family)

WOMEN'S SOCCER

THURSDAY, OCT. 15TH
VS. UC DAVIS,
ALEX G. SPANOS STADIUM
7:00PM

SUNDAY, OCT. 18TH
VS. LONG BEACH STATE
ALEX G. SPANOS STADIUM
1:00PM

SENIOR DAY

VOLLEYBALL

FRIDAY, OCT. 16TH
VS. UC DAVIS,
MOTT GYM
7:00PM

MOTT MADNESS
directly following the match
- Be there for the first
opportunity to see the
2009 Men's and Women's
Basketball teams in action.
Meet the teams, check out
the 2-ball challenge,
3-point shootout, and dunk
contest - FREE for all fans!!

SATURDAY, OCT. 17TH
VS. PACIFIC,
MOTT GYM
7:00PM

FOOTBALL

SATURDAY, OCT. 17TH
VS. SOUTHERN UTAH,
ALEX G. SPANOS STADIUM
6:00PM

HOMEcoming GAME

Football game preceded by fan-
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WE ARE THE MUSTANGS

ASI & CAL POLY ATHLETICS PRESENT:

WHAT IS FANFEST?

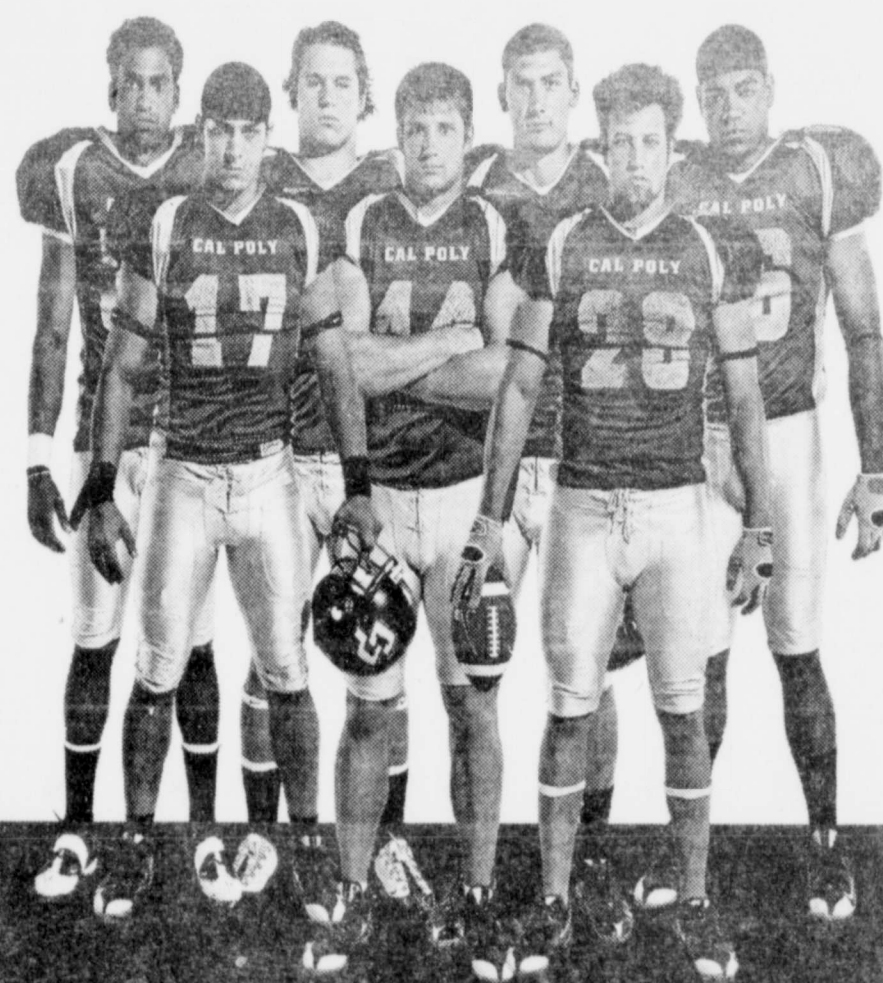
a FREE interactive experience for Cal Poly students featuring live music, inflatables, large flat screen TVs showing all other college football games, face painting, food, games, free stuff, & more.

WHEN IS FANFEST?

3:00PM - 6:00PM before each home football game.

WHERE IS FANFEST?

Chase Lawn, College Ave., adjacent to the student entrance to Alex G. Spanos Stadium.



OCTOBER 3RD

(YOUTH DAY)

6:05PM KICK-OFF

Cal Poly vs. South Dakota State

Tribal Seeds
(tribalseeds.net)

Mike Pinto
(mikepinto.net)



OCTOBER 24TH

(PARENTS WEEKEND)

6:05PM KICK-OFF

Cal Poly vs. Dixie State

Young Dubliners
(youngdubliners.com)

The Janks
(myspace.com/thejanks)



OCTOBER 17TH

(HOMECOMING WEEKEND)

6:05PM KICK-OFF

Cal Poly vs. Southern Utah

Matt Costa
(mattcosta.com)

Nothing Ever Stays
(myspace.com/nothingeverstays)



NOVEMBER 14TH

(ARMED FORCES DAY)

6:05PM KICK-OFF

Cal Poly vs. South Dakota

The B Foundation
(thebfoundation.net)

Chase McBride
(chasemcbride.com)

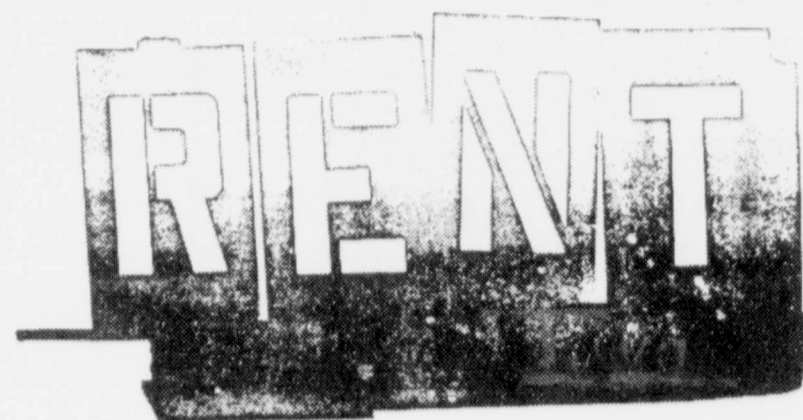


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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2009

ENTERTAINMENT

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR: CASSANDRA KEYSE



TO ROCK SPANOS THEATRE STAGE

Katie Koschalk

MUSTANG DAILY

The Spanos Theatre stage will transform into the Lower East Side of New York, complete with cake-faced drag queens, reckless heroin addicts and starving artists when award-winning rock musical RENT comes to Cal Poly on Oct. 15.

Co-directors Erik Austin and Kristen Towers-Rowles of Kelrik Productions, a San Luis Obispo theater company, will bring to life the story of seven friends, all of whom are living as impoverished young artists and musicians and struggling with the physical and emotional impacts of AIDS.

"AIDS is still a huge epidemic, but it's just not talked about as much anymore," Austin said. "The message of RENT is to live for today no matter what is going on. It's about friendships and love and just living your life."

RENT is the seventh-longest running show in Broadway history and has made about \$280 million during its time on Broadway. After being in production for 12 years, winning a Tony Award for best musical and receiving a Pulitzer Prize, the musical stopped production in September 2008, Austin said.

Maria Chavez, the ticket office supervisor of the Performing Arts

Center, thinks that because the musical was so popular on Broadway, people will be excited to see RENT in the San Luis Obispo community.

"A lot of people who have come to buy tickets seemed to know a lot about the Broadway version, so they may be hoping to get that Broadway experience from this show," Chavez said.

Lauren Feinstein, a business junior, is interested in seeing the production, because she thinks it will be a fun event.

"My high school did a production of RENT, so I think it would be cool to go and see another rendition," Feinstein said.

Although the story of RENT is not new in the musical theater world, it is the first time that a professional theater company will present the production in San Luis Obispo.

Kelrik Productions received legal permission through Musical Theater International, an agency that issues licenses, scripts and musical materials to amateur and professional theatres worldwide, to present RENT in San Luis Obispo.

"It's a different kind of show for San Luis Obispo," Austin said. "It's so raw and the lyrics and music are so deep and meaningful."

Not only is it a new kind of

show for the San Luis Obispo community, but RENT is also a step in a unique direction for Kelrik Productions.

The company originated in Indiana as a small local theater group established by Austin and his sister Kelly, hence the name "Kelrik." Both pursuing their passion for theater, they moved to San Luis Obispo in 1988 and began producing family-oriented musicals while they were still in high school.

"I remember one incident in particular where I had to have my parents sign a contract for me because I wasn't old enough. That was pretty funny," Austin said.

While all Kelrik Productions' undertakings are musicals, RENT is unlike previous productions, including Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, Alice in Wonderland and Peter Pan.

"This is the most different production we've ever done," Austin said. "It's racy, not family-oriented, and it's a rock musical. It's not happy and perky like most of the stuff we've done in the past. I'd say it's a PG-13 show."

Despite RENT being a new direction for the company, Austin found the fast-paced production process challenging, yet rewarding.

The 16-person cast consists of eight lead actors from Los Angeles and eight ensemble members from San Luis Obispo. Over the past five weeks, Austin has traveled back and forth between Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo to rehearse with the lead actors Monday through Wednesday and the ensemble actors Thursday through Saturday.

"Sunday is my rest day. It's when I go have brunch," Austin said.

On Oct. 11, the eight actors from Los Angeles came up to San Luis Obispo and the cast united as one for the first time to prepare for opening night on Oct. 15.

"The biggest challenge is going to be loading everything into the theater and blending the two companies," Austin said. "Everyone is very excited and ready, so hopefully it will go smoothly."

While the cast brought up numerous props with them on Sunday, the majority of the set has been built over the past three weeks.

"It is a series of stairs, catwalks, scaffolding and platforms as well as hanging fences and abstract junk street pieces," Austin said.

Despite nerves about the final touches of the process, Austin found that it was very gratifying

see RENT, page 10



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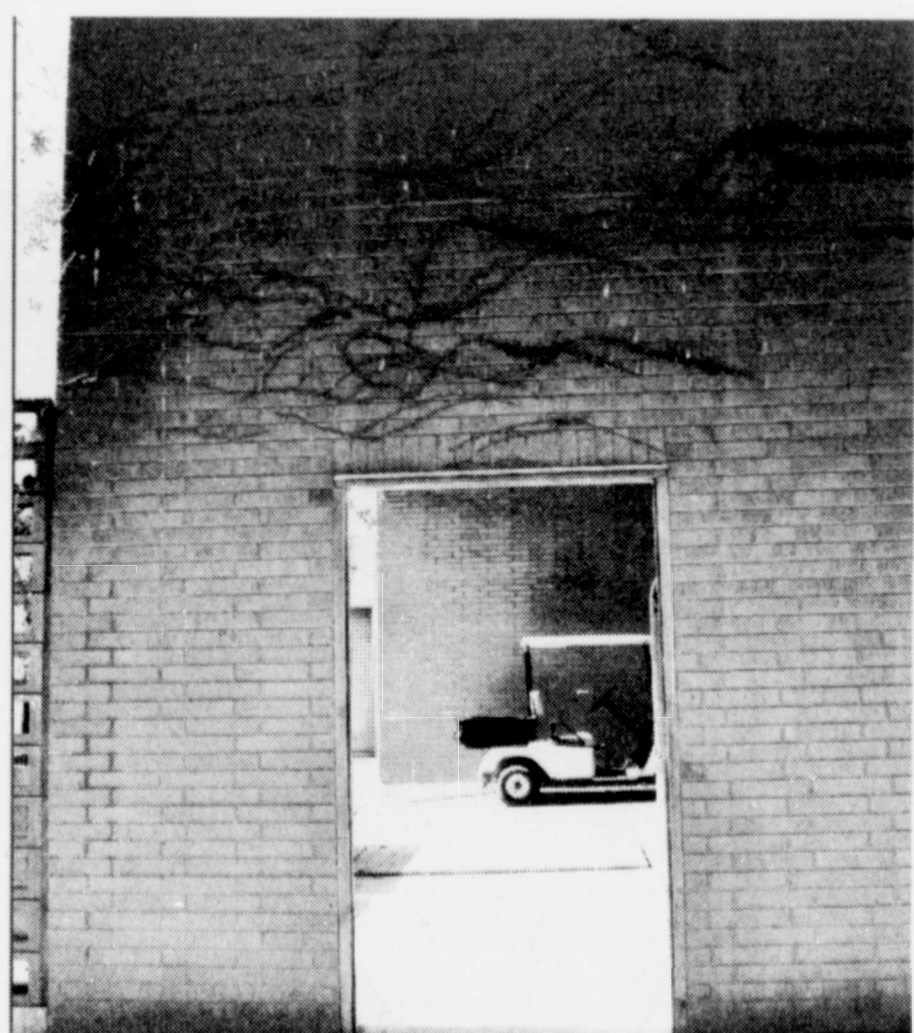
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picture of the day
by Daniel Triassi

"Through Open Doors"

relationship column

"We're on a break..."

Decoding the stage between happy couple and the inevitable break-up



Isn't it funny how romantic couples decide they need a "break" from one another? It's amazing how someone could want a relationship and claim they love a person, but then decide they need to go on a break for a period of time just to test the relationship.

Isn't the whole point of a break to get away from your significant other for whatever amount of time, and wouldn't that signify that you are having problems, or maybe even that the relationship should be over?

Couples often defend this concept of a break by saying, "We just need time to figure things out," but in all honesty, maybe the relationship just isn't meant to be. And not only that, but why do you have to go on this "break" at all?

It seems a little over dramatic to be "on a break." Sure, you may just need some alone time, but by putting this title on it, you're making it more difficult for yourself and your partner.

The title and amount of time isn't the only issue with the break

concept. Another issue is the rules that people form for their so-called "break," which make this period much more ridiculous.

There are rules such as, you are allowed to date other people, but you're not allowed to sleep with them. Or you can't date at all; it should only be a time to think.

In reality, if either partner is contemplating dating other people, the relationship really shouldn't exist in the first place.

Another way people try to justify their break experience is that they've met someone else who they believe might be a better fit for them, or they just want to mess around a little. You know, get that college experience. But the reality of it is that people, both men and women think about messing around

with other people all the time, but actually wanting to follow through with that act should feel completely wrong if you're truly in love with your partner.

Furthermore, if you are

thinking about going on a break to see if it would be possible to live without this significant other, then there are bigger issues to deal with, and it seems a bit unfair to your partner to put their emphasis in your life on trial.

I have seen many couples go through this break up and get back together trend. It turns into one of those annoying relationships that has everyone turned off to dating completely.

It only seems like the best of both worlds: you could go out and mess around, and then after you're done with that, you could come back to this person who is just waiting for you. In reality, that type of setup is poisonous for everyone involved. No matter the case,

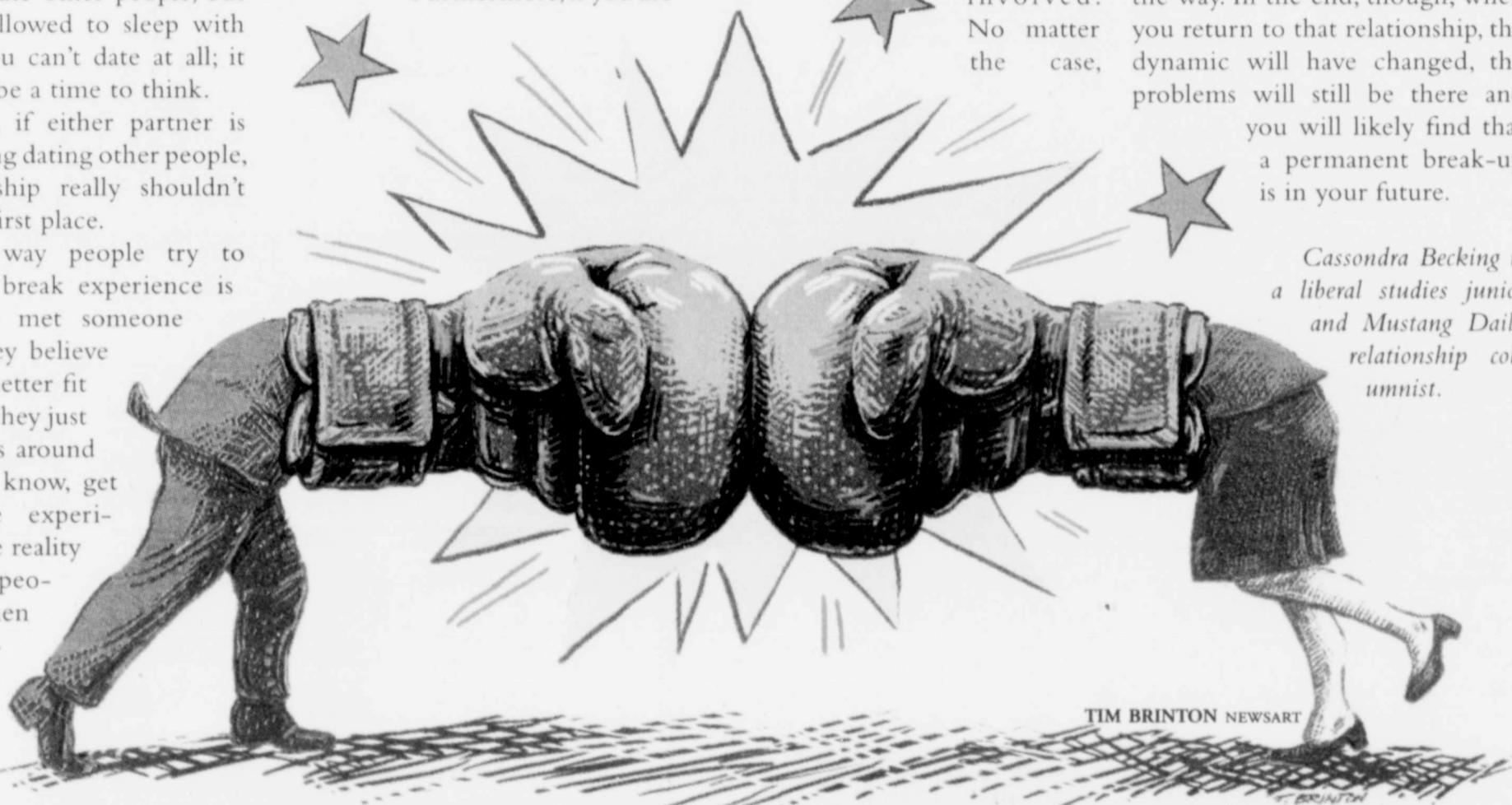
with any type of "break," someone gets hurt.

Here are a few hints that should alert you to an impending break:

1. The relationship has become distant.
2. Little fights break out over nothing.
3. You find yourself wondering if there are other fish in the sea.
4. Avoiding one another becomes a regular occurrence.

A break might help to temporarily avoid problems or it might even get that one-night-stand with that hot girl from the gym out of the way. In the end, though, when you return to that relationship, the dynamic will have changed, the problems will still be there and you will likely find that a permanent break-up is in your future.

Cassandra Becking is a liberal studies junior and Mustang Daily relationship columnist.



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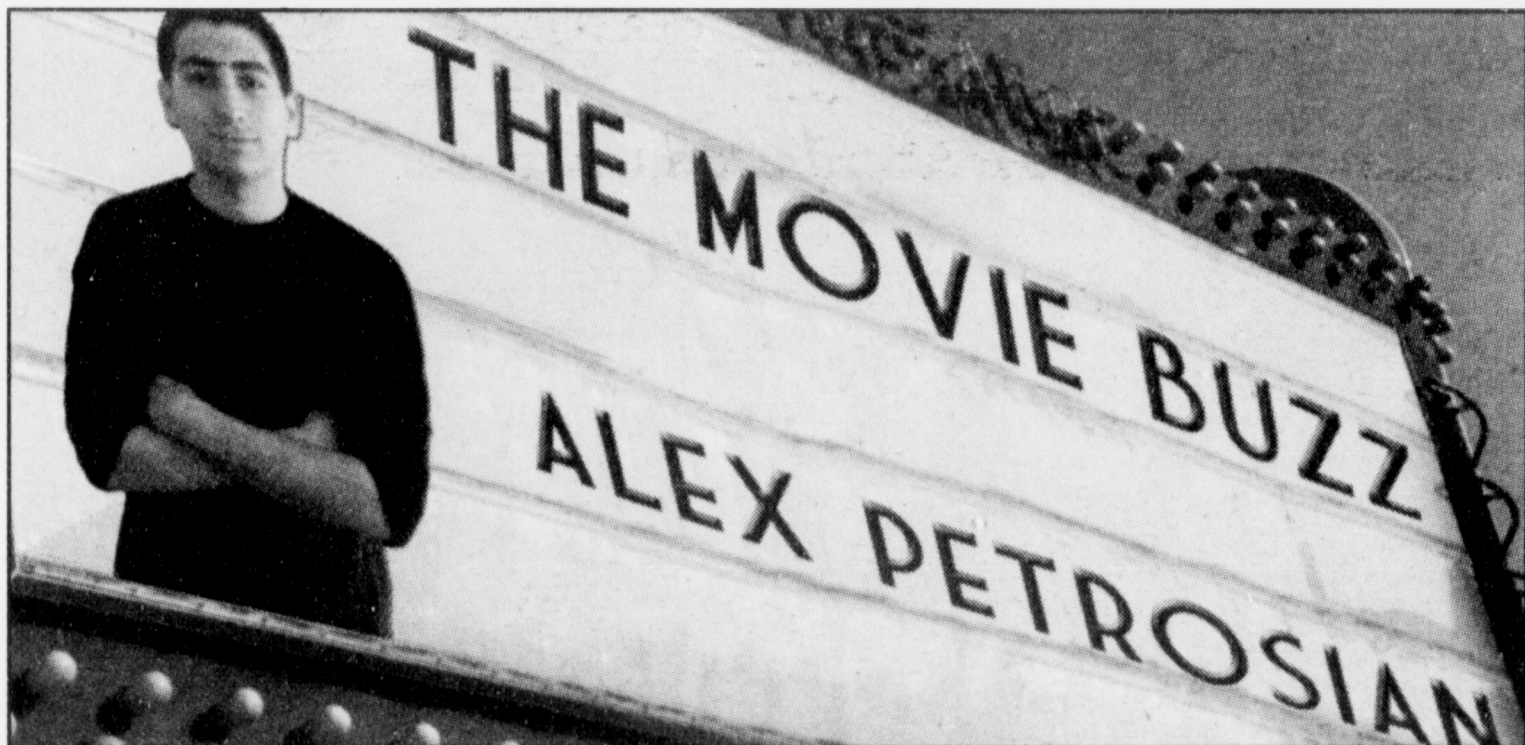
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movie column

All-star cast can't carry "Couples Retreat"



Couples Retreat [2009] ★★ Director: Peter Billingsley
Starring: Vince Vaughn, Jason Bateman, Jean Reno, Jon Favreau, Faizon Love, Malin Akerman, Kristen Bell, Kristin Davis

The second film from director Peter Billingsley (Ralphie from "A Christmas Story"), "Couples Retreat" deals with four pairs of friends who reluctantly travel to a resort designed for helping troubled couples. The film stars an ensemble cast which includes Vince Vaughn, Jason Bateman, Kristen Bell, Jon Favreau, Jean Reno and Ken Jeong ("Knocked Up," "The Hangover"). Unfortunately, despite a few amusing moments, even the star studded comedic cast couldn't save what eventually developed into another predictable failure.

In denial and believing their problems are simply petty feuds, three of the couples seem happy with where their relationships are headed. They receive a wake up call when their friends Jason (Jason Bateman) and Cynthia (Kristen Bell) reveal that they are contemplating a divorce after frustrations with failed pregnancies, and what they believe to be their only chance comes in the form of

the Eden Resort in Bora Bora. Upon analyzing their own misfortunes, the rest of the group decides to join in, initially expecting the resort to serve as an excuse to take a vacation in paradise.

Eden is managed by martial artist and love expert Monsieur Marcel, portrayed by the much under appreciated French film legend Jean Reno ("The Professional," "Ronin"). When thinking about both the premise and its notable faces, the story could have easily been translated onto the screen in a humorous and creative manner.

The movie opened at No. 1 at the box office this weekend, and is sure to make a reasonable profit in weeks to come, mainly because of word of mouth between people in search of easy laughs and cheesy comedies. None of the characters are effectively developed, and most of the actors seem to be playing themselves.

The story was written by Dana Fox, a screenwriter with a body of

work that contains other generic comedies like "What Happens in Vegas" and "The Wedding Date." However both Vince Vaughn and Jon Favreau also surprisingly contributed to the foreseeable plot, whose other writing collaborations include amusing scripts like the cult-classic "Swingers" and box office hit "The Break-Up."

While it's easy to spot what the filmmakers intended to be the movie's high points in terms of comedy and suspense (irritating shark attack scene), the only aspect that may make it worth watching is Vince Vaughn's signature dark humor and sarcasm. To my own dismay the film turned out to be exactly what I expected, a cheap comedy that hoped to rely on an impressive cast rather than an adequate script.

Alex Petrosian is a biological sciences sophomore and Mustang Daily movie columnist.

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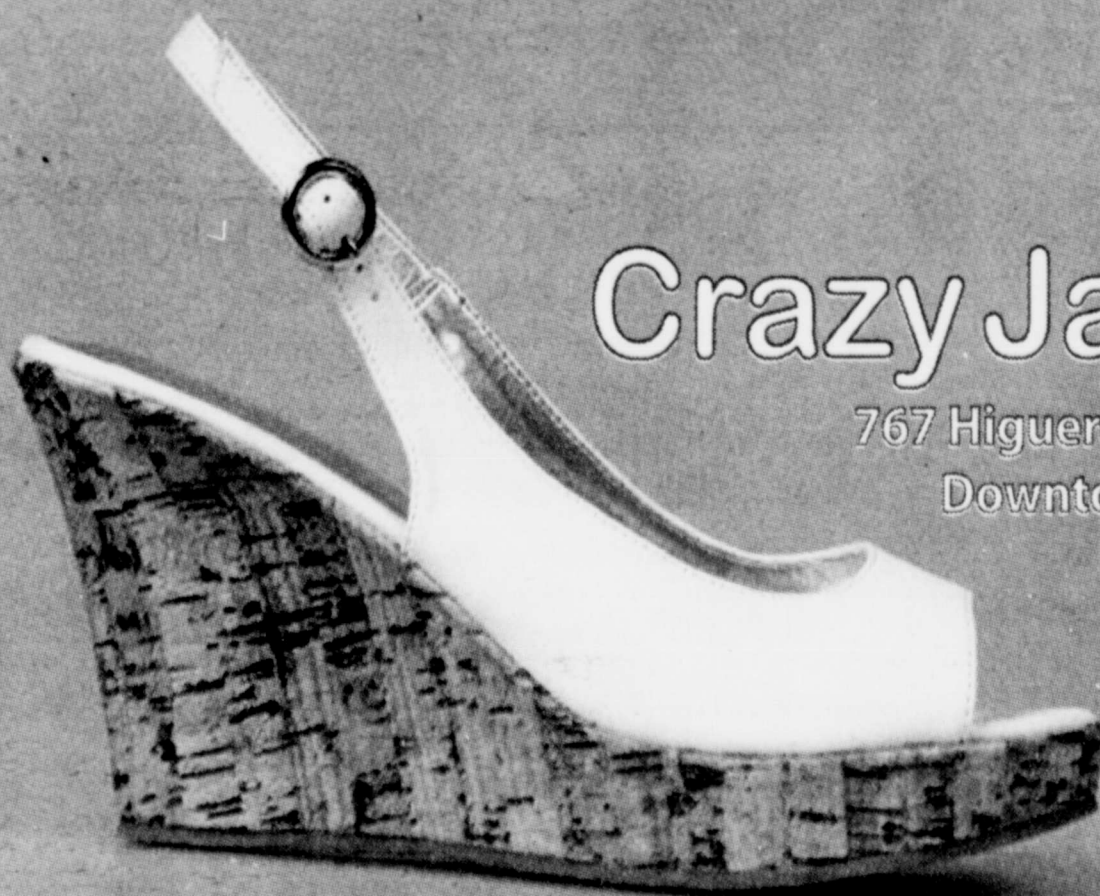
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE

Universal Pictures' latest comedy "Couples Retreat" follows eight friends on a vacation to a resort to try to save one couple's marriage.

The audit of Cal Poly Foundation's financial statements for FY 2008-09 is complete.

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Crazy Jays

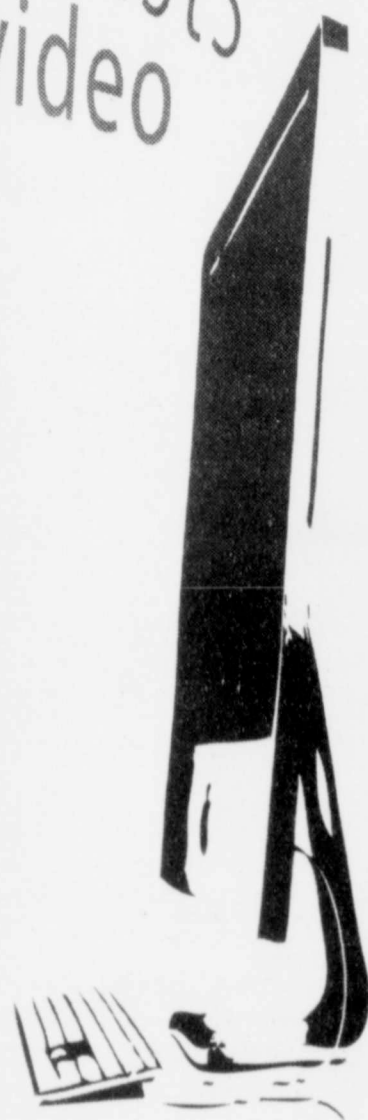
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New how-to book guides students through college life

Alma Bahman

DAILY 49ER (CAL-STATE LONG BEACH)

Bookstores dedicate a majority of their square footage to self-help books because anybody who can write a decent sentence can publish a "Guide to This" or another "Men are from Mars." The people at WTF? shamelessly fall under this category.

The newest edition in their series, "WTF? College: How to Survive 101 of Campus's Worst F*#!-ing Situations," lifts self-help to a new level. The pocket-sized book holds every scenario the college student could possibly face, from dorm problems to woes over professors and girlfriends.

Just like the first day of a new semester means reading syllabi for every class, the introduction summarizes the book in a similar fashion. Forget everything you heard about college from anyone else because "the truth is that they were lying."

Writers Gregory Bergman and Jodi Miller are your instructors, drawing from their drunk, drug-induced college days to drop pearls of wisdom into the laps of unsuspecting freshmen. What makes this book valuable is that Bergman and Miller, like any good writer or instructor, know their audience: trouble-making pompous a-holes who think they know everything when in reality they know nothing.

The guide is separated into 10 easy chapters, starting with orientation, to graduation and ending with a final exam and an answer key — they know they're dealing with shmucks who will just flip to

the back for answers. In each chapter, clearly numbered situations are listed followed by steps or options to remedy said situation. Granted, some of these situations and relative solutions would not happen, even in a parallel universe or dimension, to the average student. But running with the tongue-in-cheek tone of the book, it's fathomable there is someone somewhere who could benefit from Bergman and Miller's advice.

Situation No. 59 says "You Need to Build Your Resume But You Hate People." In general, this isn't something a regular, sociable young adult has to deal with. But there is the occasional angry, awkward teen who despises this world of pathetic debutantes who refuses to sign up for extracurricular activities. Resolution? Suck it up and join a club.

Bergman and Miller offer suggestions like volunteering for a suicide prevention hotline. "Misery loves company ... And since you hate people anyway, you'll probably get a kick out of it."

Other suggestions include joining chess club to mingle with other loners, working with animals to avoid human contact or simply lying on your resume. If you're thinking of starting your own club, the authors also offer helpful titles of "clubs not accepted by the student government board," like Waterboarding club, Kill Whitey club, My Girlfriend is a Whore club and Inquisition Re-enactment club.

Each situation is more ridiculous than the last. The solutions are particularly hilarious. Free-flowing curse words, stereotypes, generalizations and sex, drugs and rock

WTF? COLLEGE

How to Survive 101 of Campus's Worst F*#!-ing Situations

GREGORY BERGMAN AND JODI MILLER

COURTESY PHOTO

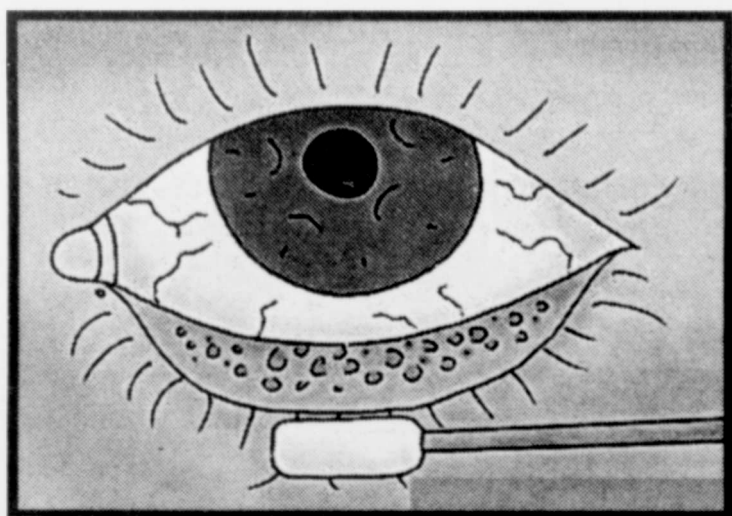
"WTF? College" was released July 18 by Adams Media Publishing.

and roll ooze out of this survival guide.

This book makes me wish I could go back in time, live at the dorms, clog the only working stall on my floor and try steps one through four to see if they actually work. Listed options start with "Take off." Run away and let someone else take the fall. Option two, "Close the lid and pray." Pray and pray hard that the "mountain of feces" doesn't overflow and put an "Out of Order"

sign on the door. Third option, "Trash the bathroom." Make it look like drunken hobos destroyed the place and report it. You're now the dorm hero. Last option, "Mark your territory." Own what you did. Smear that shit all over the place. The only downside is no one will go near you again.

"WTF? College" may be an unrealistic view of college life that is irrelevant to 99 percent of students, but man is it funny.



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RENT

continued from page 7

overall.

"I have enjoyed meeting all these new people," he said. "I only knew two of the people on the cast before the show. I'm excited to be able to put on a big musical like this and to be the first to bring such a touching show to San Luis Obispo."

Additionally, since the message of RENT centers around the impacts of AIDS, Kelrik Productions

will partner with the AIDS Support Network (ASN), a local non-profit organization. All money donated to ASN at the performances will help San Luis Obispo residents who live with AIDS.

The production of RENT opens on Oct. 15 at 8 p.m. at the Alex & Faye Spanos Theatre and will run through Oct. 18. Tickets are \$25.50 for seniors and students and range from \$25.50 to \$27.50 depending on seating for general admission. Tickets can be purchased through the Performing Arts Center at Cal Poly.

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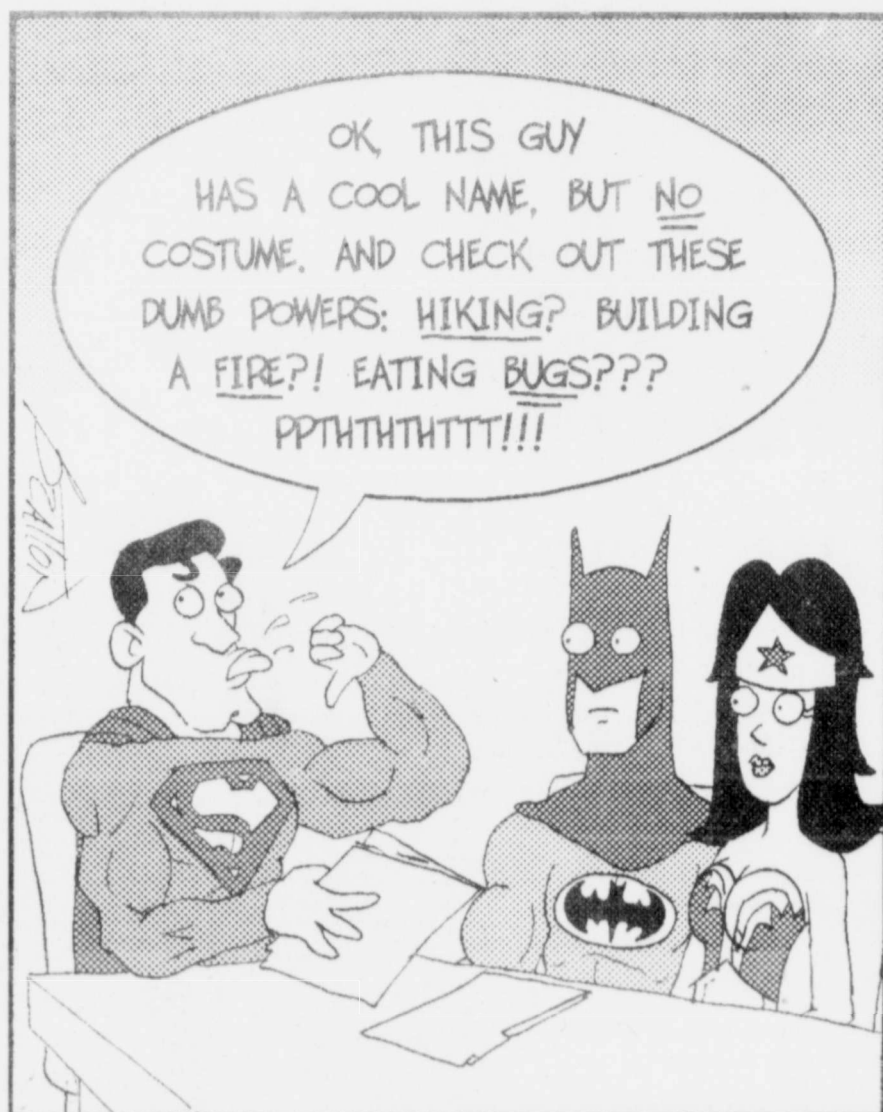
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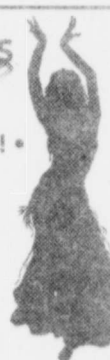
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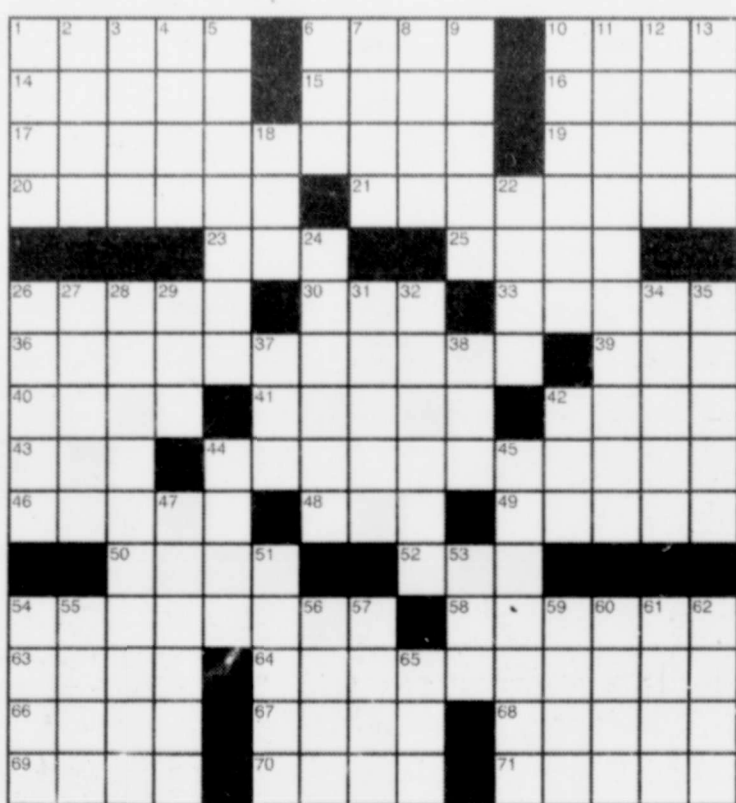
- Across**
- 1 Tight spots
 - 6 "Pronto!"
 - 10 Part of a Latin 101 conjugation
 - 14 Family tree member
 - 15 "Yikes!"
 - 16 Ankle-length, maybe
 - 17 Borrower's limit
 - 19 Up-front
 - 20 Hard to rattle
 - 21 Joe Six-Pack's protrusion
 - 23 Lake former, perhaps
 - 25 Kemo (the Lone Ranger)
 - 26 Little devil's opposite
 - 30 "a Rock"
 - 33 Chips go-with
 - 36 Harmless-to-humans slitherer
 - 39 It may be floppy or pointy
 - 40 Hit a serve past
 - 41 ___-Grain (breakfast bar brand)
 - 42 You can't escape it
 - 43 "That's all ___ wrote"
 - 44 Typical visitor to Cooperstown
 - 46 ___ Vecchio (Florence landmark)
 - 48 Night sch. class
 - 49 Gut course
 - 50 Neeson of "Kinsey"
 - 52 Self-importance
 - 54 One cause of deforestation
 - 58 Star, in Paris
 - 63 Visitors to the manger
 - 64 Conflict settled by the Treaty of Paris in 1856
 - 66 Queens tennis stadium
 - 67 1965 Beatles song or movie
 - 68 Use more 3-in-One on
 - 69 "West Side Story" gang
 - 70 Works of 9-Down
 - 71 Word that can follow the ends of 17-, 21-, 36-, 44-, 54- and 64-Across

Down

- 1 Popular ballpoints
- 2 Concerning, on a memo
- 3 Pirate or Padre, for short
- 4 Miami-County
- 5 Bernie Madoff job
- 6 Co. offering a Buddy List
- 7 Send via DHL, say
- 8 Cornerstone word
- 9 Keats and Horace, for two
- 10 Pseudopod-forming organism
- 11 Canadiens' rival's
- 12 Jump on the ice
- 13 Facetious nickname for a giant
- 18 Samovar beverage
- 22 Military site
- 24 Apply incorrectly
- 26 Visibly shocked
- 27 Cheesy snack
- 28 Go-ahead
- 29 J.F.K. posting: Abbr.
- 31 Starts the kitty

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P U E B L O A L D A C E
S I M E O N P A L M T R E E
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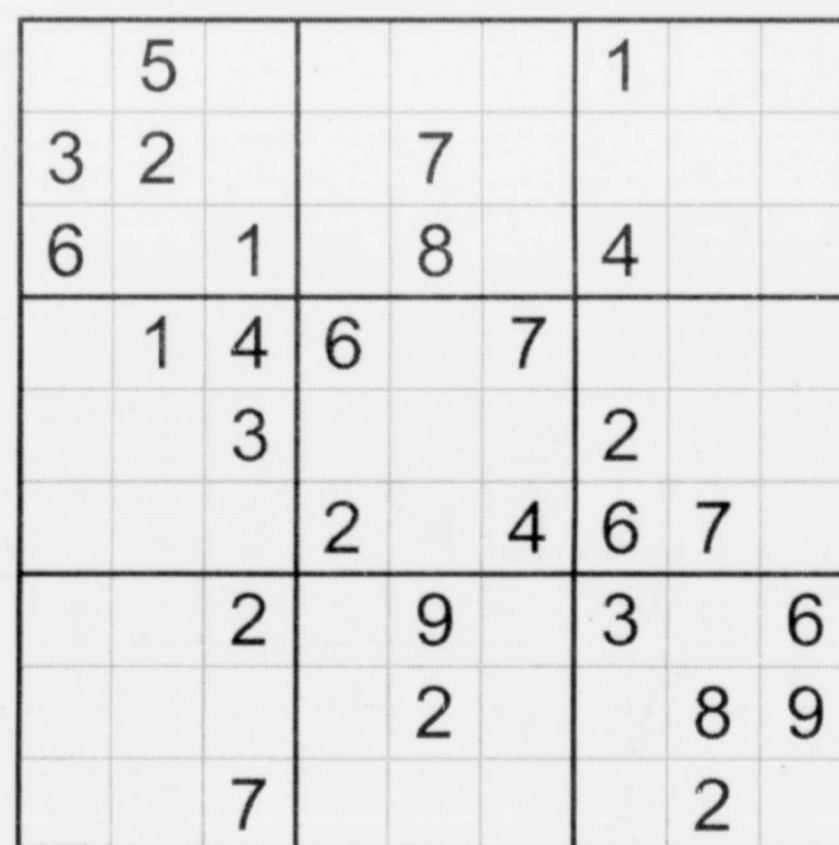
Puzzle by Alan Arbesfeld

- 32 Venus de Milo material
- 34 Kewered Asian fare
- 35 Concert venue
- 37 Genetic letters
- 38 Sedona and Sorento automaker
- 42 Atlantic state in two time zones: Abbr.
- 44 Put up with
- 45 Trapeze artist's attire
- 47 Straightens (up)
- 51 Like many a Clint Eastwood character
- 53 "I didn't know that!"
- 54 Key with three sharps: Abbr.
- 55 Item on a docket
- 56 Ticked off
- 57 Aswan's river
- 59 Fit to serve
- 60 Lottery player's cry of elation
- 61 Of the flock
- 62 Writer Stanley Gardner
- 65 "M*A*S*H" cops, for short

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Mustang Daily

"My Casey Blake crush is unbearable."

OPINION/EDITORIAL

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

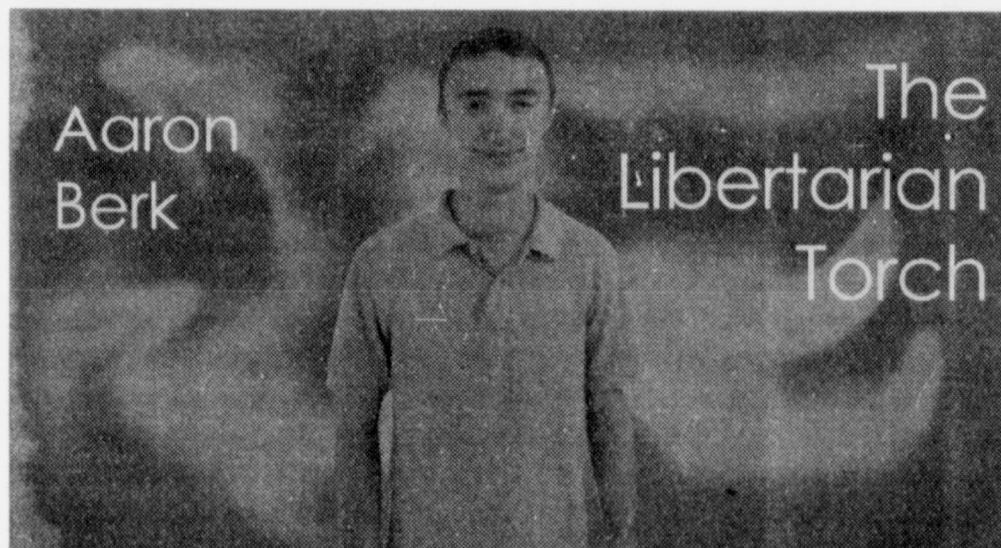
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Americans should avoid labels, be their own people



I'm willing to guess that the most common way to start a political discussion is with the question 'are you a Democrat or a Republican?' From there, the discussion all too often goes downhill.

People generally like more about either the Democratic or Republican party and your inclination might be to answer with the party you most associate with. It's a quick way to identify yourself in a sea of views and relate to millions of other Americans.

If you find yourself in the company of a fellow party member then you're in luck; you can commiserate about the insanity of the other party and its members.

But maybe you find yourself with someone of the other party. This situation has the potential to lead to a great amount of sharing of different views, and both learning as well as growing from them. You can have a genuinely constructive discussion in this scenario, but all too often the process gets derailed by the labels "Democrat" and "Republican."

It's as though answering with a political party automatically means you stand for anything and everything anybody of your party has ever done. What a big burden that is; it's probably not what you were asking for when you answered their question but it's nevertheless the situation you find yourself in.

You're a Republican? Well then Bush must be your biggest political hero, you must not care about the poor or infirmed, and you certainly don't care about the environment at all. You're a Democrat? Well then you must hate the wealthy, you must think we all should have to drive hybrids, and you must definitely be a socialist.

See how constructive the conversation has become? It's a bloody nightmare! How can you have a peaceful discussion with all of these stereotypes flying around? It's as though saying you're a Democrat or Republican has given the person the illusion of being able to read your mind — and yet what they're seeing is almost entirely wrong.

Among the Democratic and Republican parties there are many differences of opinions. Many of

them are minor differences, but for some, they can be earth-shattering. Some Republicans are pro-gay marriage and some Democrats don't believe that global warming is human-caused. Americans don't simply fit into two categories. There is so much more depth to the American public than two layers that it's a shame we all too often act as though it's the case.

In my case, I find not answering the question surprisingly easy, as I really don't see myself leaning to-

wards one party or another. First off there's the fact that so many politicians don't seem to represent the people that elected them — but let's leave that thought alone for now.

What I believe in is freedom and liberty, plain and simple. People should have the right to choose what they want to do with their own lives, so long as it doesn't infringe on other people's ability to do the same. Life is too short for people to be telling others how to live their lives; I want to make my



own choices. Freedom should be both economic and social. To me, the parties seem to each have one but not the other.

My money should be just that: mine. I'm a generous person and have no problem being charitable on my own. I want to choose where my money goes and give it only to the places that I really think help people. Should I not feel like giving to charity, well then are you really helping by forcing money from me and giving it to what you deem to be "good causes" or is that stealing?

My life choices should be my own. The government shouldn't be involved in marriages, nor should the government be involved in dictating what drugs people can or can't put into their own bodies (so long as it doesn't put other people at risk, e.g. drunk driving). My private communications should be private and nobody should be held indefinitely without a trial, labeled a "terrorist" or not.

Please don't confuse me with an anarchist. I strongly believe in the rule of law. As James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution" put it: "the powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation and foreign commerce."

So next time you find yourself faced with the dreaded "are you a Republican or Democrat" question I'd encourage you to try to define your own views, whatever they may be, without using the words liberal, conservative, Democrat, or Republican. See how many stereotypes you can avoid by staying away from those four words and see how it forces the discussion to be on what your ideas really are — not what the other person guesses them to be from overly-broad labels. Perhaps this way we can have more constructive political discussions that we actually enjoy and feel like we learned something from.

Aaron Berk is a computer science junior and Mustang Daily political columnist.



"What state workers and civil servants at all levels yet to realize is that the compensation packages (specifically their pensions programs) are inconsistent with those of the private sector. This is exactly what's breaking the system.

In the private sector, workers pay

virtually 100 percent of their pension programs through 401K contribution and are not allowed to collect a paltry amount from social security until 67.

In the public sector, civil servants earn pay equal to the private sector, pay next to nothing into their retirement programs and can retire after 30 years of service (usually in their early 50s) allowing them to collect 70-90 percent of their working salaries until they die.

If the compensation programs of civil servants at all levels are brought in line with the private sector, the state's

budget problems will be resolved overnight. Until then, furloughs, cuts, fee increases, closures, etc. will be the norm."

—Robert

Response to "Q&A with Provost Koob"

"I really liked the exhibit. Kudos to the seniors who put it on."

—Kate

Response to "Plight of migrant workers on display in library"

"This article should have been about all acids, not just citric acid. All acids "sharpen" flavors and can make any dish a bit more zesty."

—Harold

Response to "Zesty food will liven your diet"

NOTE: The Mustang Daily features select comments that are written in response to articles posted online. Though not all the responses are printed, the Mustang Daily prints comments that are coherent and foster intelligent discussion on a given subject.

Defining 'reasonable' isn't easy when it comes to limited free speech in public schools

Linda P. Campbell

MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

Judge Richard Talman wrote this for the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in the case of *Nurre v. Whitehead*:

"Once again we enter the legal labyrinth of a student's First Amendment right to free speech. There exists a delicate balance between protecting a student's right to speak freely and necessary actions taken by school administrators to avoid collision with the Establish-

ment Clause. ... The District had a legitimate interest in avoiding what it believed could cause confrontation with the Establishment Clause. Its requirement that all musical selections be secular was a reasonable action taken to avoid confrontation with the Establishment Clause."

The upshot: Officials in Everett, Wash., didn't violate a student's free-speech rights by telling members of her wind ensemble that they couldn't play an instrumental version of "Ave Maria" at Henry Jackson High School's graduation.

What could possibly have been wrong with student musicians playing a composition not for its religious significance but because they considered it a pretty piece of music?

I posed this question to my reasonable, thoughtful and, like me, Catholic husband — and started an argument.

Linda said: I understand why the officials were skittish. They'd gotten complaints the year before when the choir sang a song with God, heaven and angels in the lyrics. But the ensemble wasn't going to invoke Jesus' name or even ask anyone to bow their heads.

Geoff said: Of course the ensemble wasn't going to invoke Jesus' name verbally. But it was going to offer musical praise to Mary. I'm not a Latin scholar, but I do know that *ave Maria* means "hail Mary." The music itself, in my mind, is inextricably tied to Catholicism and is religious in nature. When's the last time you heard "Ave Maria" on "The Edge"?

Linda said: Then I guess the Abilene High School band shouldn't have played "Faith of Our Fathers" last Friday night as the flags were carried onto the football field for the national anthem. That's an identifiably Protestant song to me. You know, I don't believe public schools should force prayers on

the audience at football games or graduations. Coaches and teachers shouldn't be leading students in prayer; that's our job as parents. But the Supreme Court's test from *Lemon v. Kurtzman* says government action violates the Establishment Clause when its purpose is religious, it has the primary effect of advancing or inhibiting religion and it creates excessive entanglement between government and religion. I don't see how allowing the instrumental would have done any of those things. I just think the district's administrators were worried for no good reason this time.

Geoff said: Funny you should mention Abilene, which is the buckle of the Texas Bible Belt. Surely you know the uproar that would ensue if the band had played "Ave Maria." Perhaps the reason the Everett district's administrators were worried is because they understand that music, like a national flag, carries enormous symbolic value.

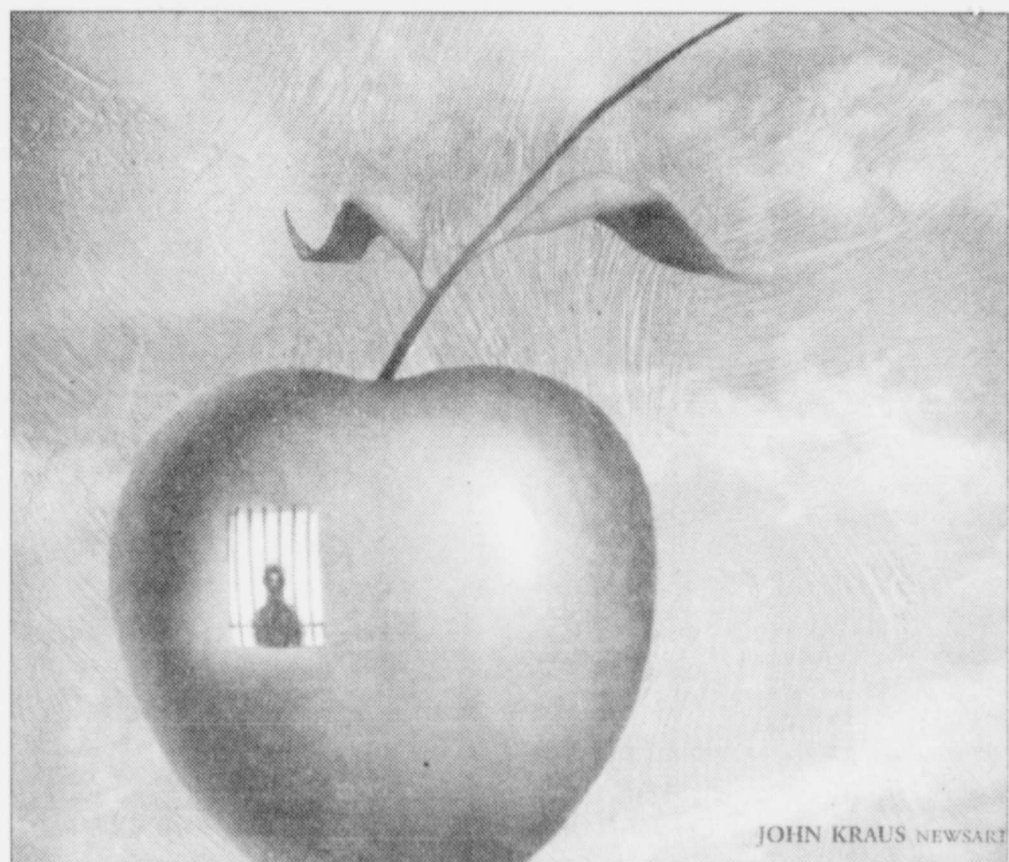
Linda said: True, but in this case, the reason the students wanted to play that particular piece was that it showed off their skills. That's why the student who sued claimed administrators suppressed her free-speech rights in the name of avoiding religious endorsement. You're usually a free-speech advocate. Shouldn't there be some protection

for students' right to play the music of their choice in a limited public forum?

Geoff said: I know. William O. Douglas rocked. He took the Constitution literally where it says Congress shall make no law abridging freedom of speech. But it pains me to have to say this: He lost. And the law of the land is such that the First Amendment is not absolute. It's regrettable, but our courts have held that students in particular do not enjoy full speech rights. As a matter of fact, none of us do. Talman indeed expressed sympathy to the students' point of view but in the end concluded that "when there is a captive audience at a graduation ceremony, which spans a finite amount of time, and during which the demand for equal time is so great that comparable non-religious musical works might not be presented, it is reasonable for a school official to prohibit the performance of an obviously religious piece."

Linda said: This really is a labyrinth. Even Judge Milan Smith, who disagreed with the court's main holding, said school officials "often find themselves in a Catch-22, subject to criticism and potential lawsuits regardless of the position they take."

Reasonable isn't as easy to define as it should be.



JOHN KRAUS NEWSART

Cold realities reveal a complicated conflict in Israel

Frida Ghitis

MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

A trip to this Palestinian town can shatter preconceptions and compel the mind to dream about the possibilities of peace — and then awaken to the cold realities of a complicated conflict.

You may expect to see squalor and desolation in the city that serves as the capital for the Palestinian Authority. Instead, you have to work your way through a bustling downtown of crowded streets and impenetrable traffic jams, complete with vibrant commerce. You can admire the designs of bright new buildings or stop for coffee or a cool "smoozy" at Stars and Bucks.

Amid the global recession, the West Bank is enjoying an economic boom unlike any it has seen in years. As many have noted, prosperity is not a substitute — nor a guarantee — of peace, but it conjures images of what peace could bring.

Just imagine it: normalcy.

Ramallah is booming, but it is not a normal town. On posters still affixed to downtown walls you see the distant look in the faces of Palestinian suicide bombers, glorified for carrying out acts of murder that our minds can scarcely comprehend. Beneath the surface lies a maelstrom of ideology and politics that won't easily disappear.

Practically all the men here wear Western clothes. The much advertised secularism of Ramallah, however, is much less visible among women. By my estimation, well over 90 percent of

the women wear some type of hijab, the Muslim head cover. Others, especially among the young, wear modern clothes and then a scarf over their hair.

That religiosity is not how I remember Ramallah from many years ago, when going into the West Bank required little more than a short drive from Jerusalem. But times have changed, and then they changed again.

Until 1967, Jordan controlled Ramallah and the entire West Bank, which it had captured in the 1948 war that followed Israel's declaration of Independence. In the 1967 Six Day War, Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan, and suddenly Palestinians could travel to Israel, go to the beach and find jobs. Israelis too came to Palestinian towns to buy groceries and drink Turkish coffee. When the wave of terrorism started, however, some of those crossing to Israel went for the sole purpose of killing Jews. The resulting security arrangements made life much harder for everyone.

Now you have to cross Israel's separation barrier, an ordeal for Palestinians. Nobody likes that barrier, which is a fence in most places, but near Ramallah is an ugly, disheartening wall. Palestinians despise it, and Israelis tend to look down when they talk about it. The reality is that it helped bring an end to suicide bombings that made life in Israel a heart-pounding nightmare. Israeli guards at the checkpoints still stop would-be attackers. In the dream of peace, the wall becomes unneces-

sary.

The current boom in Ramallah may mark the start of a long-lasting trend. But it could just as easily prove short-lived. In a recent trip to Washington, Palestinian Authority head Mahmoud Abbas told *The Washington Post's* Jackson Diehl that he would refuse to talk to Israel until Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu agrees to a complete freeze of all construction in East Jerusalem and in West Bank Jewish settlements.

Because times are good, he said he could refuse to negotiate with Israel and would also not help President Obama persuade Arab governments to make conciliatory gestures toward Israel. Netanyahu has made some concessions, but he has rejected the full freeze that would bring down his government. Obama's peace push looks stalled.

In the meantime, Abbas is reportedly close to signing a reconciliation deal with his bitter rivals of Hamas. If the agreement comes, Palestinian elections may follow. That would mean Hamas and Fatah campaigning for popular support where there is no better way to motivate voters than by defying and taunting Israel. Interesting times lie ahead for a place where times are never dull.

Ramallah's prosperity shows how much everyone has to gain from peace. But a closer look reveals that, tragically, lasting peace remains a dream.

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Send us a letter to the editor!

All letters must be 250 words or less and are subject to editing for spelling, grammar and style.

E-mail us at:

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Fletcher ties school record with 70 in Lady Aztec Classic

SPORTS INFORMATION REPORT

CHULA VISTA, Calif. — For the third time in her four-year Cal Poly women's golf career, Maddy Fletcher has tied the school record with a round of 70.

The senior from Los Alamitos,

Calif., finished two under par with 35s on both the front and back nines Monday at the Lady Aztec Fall Classic being held at the Salt Creek Golf Club.

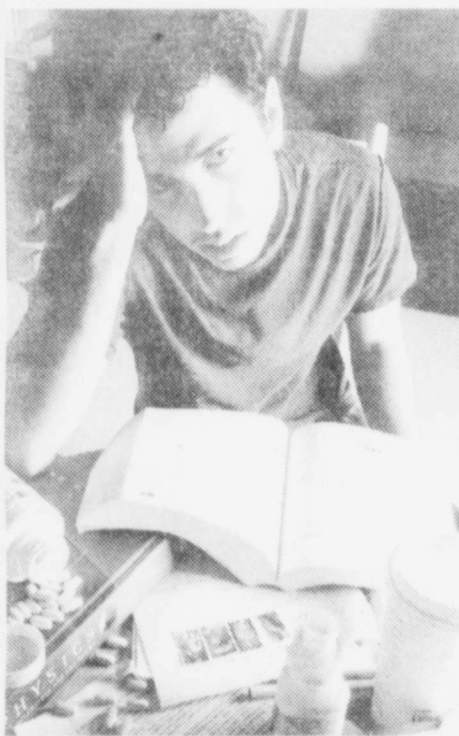
Fletcher, who also carded a 70 as a sophomore and junior, leads a quartet of golfers by four strokes heading into Tuesday's final round. She was one over par on the par-3s, two under par on the par-5s and led the field with a one-under-par total on the par 4s.

Fletcher carded four birdies, 12 pars and a pair of bogeys on the 6,167-yard par-72 layout. Last week she finished second in the Firestone Grill College Invitational at Monarch Dunes.

Rebecca Norris and Hannah Brabb also shot 70s in their Mustang careers. No Cal Poly woman golfer has yet to break 70.

Fletcher helped Coach Scott Cartwright's Mustangs to a share of second place with UC Riverside, both with 19-over-par 307 totals, just six strokes behind leader Cal State Northridge.

In addition to Fletcher, other Cal Poly scorers were Julia Heath, in eighth place with a 77; Stephanie Yocum with an 80 and a tie for 14th place; Miquela Pendleton, also with an 80 and a tie for 14th place; and Kristin Locke with an 84 for 26th place.



mustangdaily.net

Quarterback

continued from page 16

rett in his sleep.

While Garrett may be on Jones' good side now, the grass is always greener on the other side. As soon as he takes over for Phillips and they struggle, he'll become just another expendable item for Jones' checkbook to write off.

Luckily for Phillips, little-known wide receiver Miles Austin saved his job by catching a 60-yard touchdown in overtime to seal the win for Dallas.

Opportunity Knocking

Cleveland Browns running back James Davis is out for the season after he participated in what ESPN's Adam Schefter said the team referred to as an "opportunity period."

What is that you wonder?

Apparently it's a drill in which a padded linebacker takes on an unpadded running back. Imagine Cal Poly head coach Tim Walsh telling 5-foot-7, 170-pound Jono Grayson, "Hey bud, take off your pads. You're going heads up with Marty Mohamed. We're going to give Mohamed an 'opportunity' to end your career."

Is that hard for you to imagine also?

If Schefter's report turns out to be true, the Browns organization needs to be punished heavily. Draft picks should be taken away, and whoever came up with this idiotic drill should be fired, whether it's Eric Mangini or one of his coordinators.

NBA taking steps to protect players against H1N1 virus

Josh Robbins

THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

The NBA and its teams say swine flu won't take them by surprise.

The signs of precaution are everywhere.

A bottle of Germ-X hand sanitizer sits on the security keypad that Orlando Magic players use to enter RDV Sportsplex.

The San Antonio Spurs have placed sanitizer dispensers throughout their practice facility: on their court, in their weight room and in their locker room.

At league headquarters in New York City, league officials hired an expert in infectious-disease control in March to advise them and have been in contact with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Let's face it, we all live in close proximity all year long," Magic Coach Stan Van Gundy said. "You take the necessary precautions, and you deal with it when it comes up."

Teams across the NBA have made provisions to guard players against the H1N1 virus, more commonly known as swine flu. Symptoms such as fever, body aches and fatigue can be debilitating. Having one marquee player get sick or several role players become ill could hurt a team's performance.

Magic athletic trainer Tom Smith spoke to the team about swine flu and general health guidelines earlier this month, Van Gundy said. Smith asked players to notify team medical staff immediately if they start to feel sick or are exposed to a family member with the illness, because doctors can prescribe an antiviral medicine such as Tamiflu.

Smith also reminded players to wash their hands frequently.

"I just wash my hands, that's all," said Magic power forward Brandon Bass. "We have hand sanitizer everywhere."

The NBA has been in constant communication with its teams about the H1N1 virus, said Tim Frank, the league's vice president for basketball communications.

Frank said some misinformation was reported in recent weeks about the ongoing dialogue between teams and the league. He said it wasn't true that the league had asked players and coaches to use a fist pump instead of a handshake when greeting each other to avoid passing on the virus, as one newspaper reported. He said that the league did not send a memo to teams suggesting that players shouldn't shake hands with fans, as another newspaper reported.

But the league has created an extensive swine flu contingency plan, just as it did when the avian flu was a concern a few years ago. Frank would not disclose details of the new plan.

"It deals with everything you

can imagine: if you have to cancel a game, if you have to play a game without fans or the bare minimum, if a lot of players get sick," Frank said.

"It's obviously a hard thing to predict, but that's why you put a plan together and deal with as many circumstances as you possibly can, because I don't think any of us know what direction it'll go."

So far, there have been only a few reported cases of swine flu in pro sports.

Houston Texans rookie tight end Anthony Hill was hospitalized with the illness in the days leading up to the Texans' fourth game, and it was the first confirmed case in the NFL this season. Pitcher Vicente Padilla contracted swine flu in late July while playing for the Texas Rangers. Los Angeles Galaxy and U.S. national team soccer player Landon Donovan contracted swine flu in August; he experienced mild symptoms, but members of the U.S. team delegation who came in close contact with him were advised to take a 10-day course of Tamiflu.

The Florida Gators football team was cautious when Tim Tebow, Joe Haden and Major Wright were suffering from flu-like symptoms before their Sept. 26 game against the Kentucky Wildcats. The players flew to Lexington on a separate plane from the rest of their teammates.

All Gators football players received a nasal spray vaccine for seasonal flu after running back Jeff Demps and two other key starters developed fevers last month, a Florida athletic department spokesman said.

The Magic offer seasonal flu shots to their players, coaches and their traveling staff and have planned to offer the swine-flu vaccine.

Lennox Archibald, the hospital epidemiologist for Shands Hospital at the University of Florida, said the H1N1 virus can be spread directly, for example, when someone with swine-flu symptoms sneezes or coughs on someone else. He said it also can be spread indirectly, such as when people touch a surface with the virus and then touch their eyes.

In the NBA, in which one regular-season win can be the difference between having home-court advantage in a playoff series, teams are taking no chances.

"Team management, and that includes coaches, team physicians and trainers, need to be proactive, and they need to make sure that their players are free of symptoms, and in a pandemic situation, you have to ask," Archibald said. "Those who feel unwell or have upper-respiratory symptoms or flu-like symptoms ... should be advised to stay at home or referred to appropriate medical management. Basically, you do not come to the locker room."



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Alex Rodriguez brings his A-game to the playoffs

By Bob Klapisch

THE RECORD (HACKENSACK N.J.)

MINNEAPOLIS — No one wants a piece of him now, not starters or relievers, opposing managers and certainly not the Angels who are next on Alex Rodriguez's hit list. The man has been many things in his six years in New York, from clubhouse outcast, to Page Six chump to confessed cheater but the metamorphosis is complete now.

A-Rod has become "the One".

Crazy, isn't it, how effortlessly the Yankees' offense has become his. Rodriguez treated the division series like batting practice, 5-for-11 with six RBI and two home runs which is terrible news for the Angels. When Rodriguez is hot, he does more than hit home runs, he sends pitchers to therapy.

It was A-Rod who hit a massive home run off Carl Pavano that finished off the Twins in the division series, a 4-1 victory that delivers the Yankees to Phase 2 of their plan to conquer the world. The score, however, doesn't begin to tell the story of the futility of the Yankees, who for 6 1/3 innings were helpless against the late, unpredictable movement of Pavano's sinkers and change-ups, one bad at-bat rolling into the next.

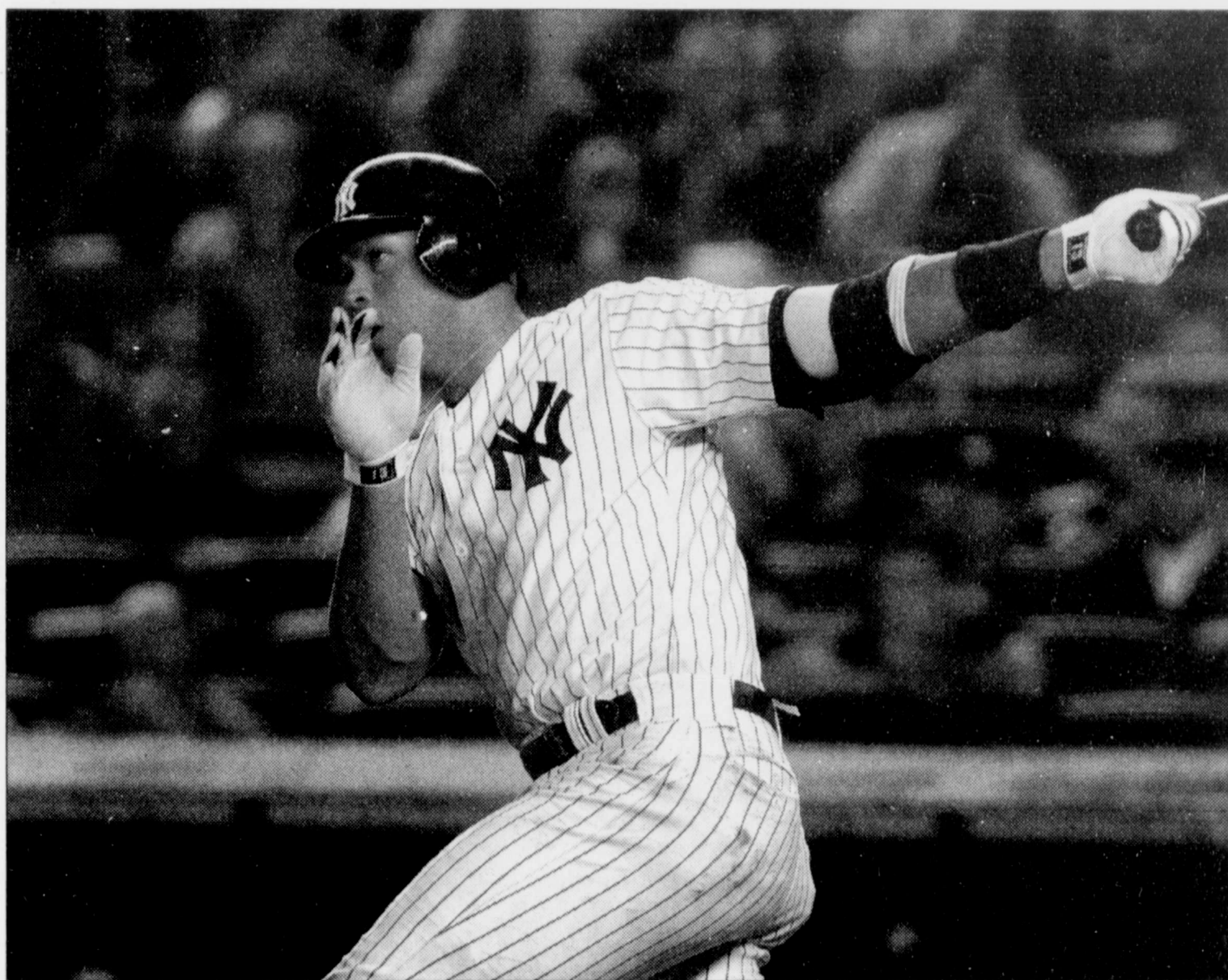
You knew Pavano was loving every swing-and-miss, each one was a "Take that" to the team that hated his guts (and vice versa). Pavano was outpitching Andy Pettitte, an alternate-universe triumph for a team that was supposed to get flattened Sunday.

But it didn't happen that way. Pavano spent the night overmatching Johnny Damon and Mark Teixeira, taking apart Robinson Cano and neutralizing the damage when Derek Jeter lashed a two-out double in the fifth inning.

Pavano calmly struck out Damon to end the rally, as the Yankees inched closer to defeat. That is, until A-Rod stepped to the plate in the seventh inning. He actually was behind in the count, 0-2, ready to be turned into another one of Pavano's victims. But he kept the at-bat alive, refusing to chase any of the next three pitches that were just off the plate.

At 3-2, A-Rod fouled off a sinker before proving why he's become the Yankees' most dangerous October asset. He crushed a fastball over the outer half of the plate, sending it towering over the right field wall, tying the game at 1.

The Twins may not have known it at the time, but they were dead the moment A-Rod touched home plate. Suddenly, the mystique of Pavano's sinker had been stripped



MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE

In this year's postseason Alex Rodriguez holds a .455 batting average with two home runs and six RBI.

clean, as Jorge Posada homered to left two batters later.

With a 2-1 lead, the Yankees deepened the Twins' wound, scoring two more and giving Mariano Rivera all the room he needed to nudge the Yankees a little closer to the ALCS. Of course they had help along the way, Joe Nathan, umpire Phil Cuzzi, the Twins' stupidity on the base paths, but the Yankees now find themselves braving for an entirely different type of struggle against the Angels.

The Yankees have a dark history here: They were knocked out of the playoffs by Mike Scioscia's team in 2002 and 2005. In that last series, Rodriguez stood in front of his locker after going 2-for-15 and said, "I played like a dog."

That seems like a million years ago now. Rodriguez has become a remade hitter, a new man, drug-free (we assume) and one with his teammates. There was a moment Sunday night that spoke volumes about Rodriguez's communion with the Yankees. It was in the ninth inning when the game was halted as a fan ran onto the field. He started from behind home plate, near the on-deck circle, and took off on a crazy sprint — targeting no one and everyone.

For the briefest instant, the fan looked like he was heading toward Rivera. The closer was too shocked to move, but Rodriguez reacted instantly, covering the distance be-

tween third base and the mound in a half-second.

A-Rod was there to protect Rivera; all he had to do was stand there and the fan zigzagged away. He eventually was caught at the center-field wall, but A-Rod wasn't taking any chances. He remained on the

mound until the cops, a dozen of them — had subdued the trespasser.

That's one of the many little signs of the Yankees' unity. As Pettitte would later say, "We have a good team, we have a good bunch of guys who are really enjoying this."

The Bombers are the team to

beat now, and that includes anyone the National League can throw in their path. But the Yankees will face a unique challenge in the ALCS, facing an Angels team that believes they, not the Yankees, are driven by destiny.

Anyone who saw the way they celebrated after clinching the West knows what's fueling Scioscia's players. They've dedicated the season to the memory of the late Nick Adenhardt, whose image is imprinted on the outfield wall in Angel Stadium.

After the clinching game the Angels congregated at the wall, each one of them touching Adenhardt's face in a moving, spontaneous ceremony. One major league executive who saw the replay on TV said, "That's pretty powerful stuff; that's the kind of emotion you can't really defend against."

The Red Sox found out the hard way that talent alone isn't the only currency that reigns in October. Something else is usually required, something Rodriguez thinks he's found.

It's called inner peace, and it manifests itself in the way A-Rod's swing has trimmed away the excesses. He's keeping his hands back, his head doesn't move as his bat comes through the strike zone.

Of course, none of this says the Yankees' work is finished, or that Rodriguez is ready to replace Reggie as Mr. October. But A-Rod, the man, has turned into "the Man." Who saw this coming?

LEVEL

LEVEL STUDIOS

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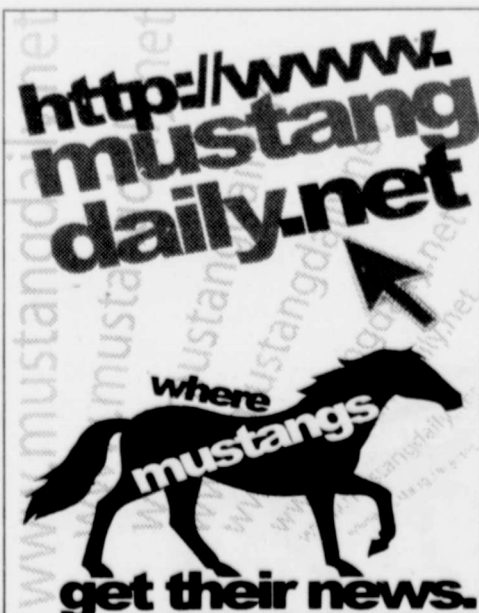
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TODAY'S SOLUTIONS											
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Tuesday Morning
Quarterback

COMMENTARY



Bad beats last Sunday

Scott Silvey

ON THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Every once in a while, a gambler takes what they call a bad beat. In sports gambling, a bad beat entails a freak play that causes what you bet on to not come true.

Let's just say, my first column last week turned out to be a bad beat. Two of the three things I talked about in length were proven wrong.

Despite what I consider one of the worst statistical games in NFL history, Derek Anderson "guided" the Cleveland Browns to victory on Sunday after I said they could go winless this season.

I use the term guided loosely, as Anderson finished 2 of 17 for 23 yards and an interception in the win. Take a moment to reflect and read that again. That was the stat line of the winning quarterback.

There's nothing in the world that could possibly be more freakish than that line for a game-winning quarterback.

I also said Denver would "plummet to earth" against New England. Well, after a game in which Kyle Orton outplayed Tom Brady and the receiver tandem of Wes Welker and Randy Moss caught only as many

passes as Eddie Royal himself, the Broncos remain sky high.

The Broncos won the overtime coin flip, which, correct me if I'm wrong, means they just call the game over and go home? (On a related note, when are they going to change this outdated overtime rule to something more fair?)

So the bad beat I took during the Denver game was that the Patriots' captain didn't realize that tails never fails.

On to some other thoughts of the week that was.

Vegas oddsmakers aren't watching the games

While the aforementioned were some bad beats, Vegas made it a little easier for the hardcore sports gambler to recoup some lost coin with two of the other games last weekend.

As of Saturday afternoon, the Rams were 10 point underdogs at home to Minnesota. This is a Rams team that may not score 10 points the rest of the season, and they're given just 10 points to the score-happy Vikings?

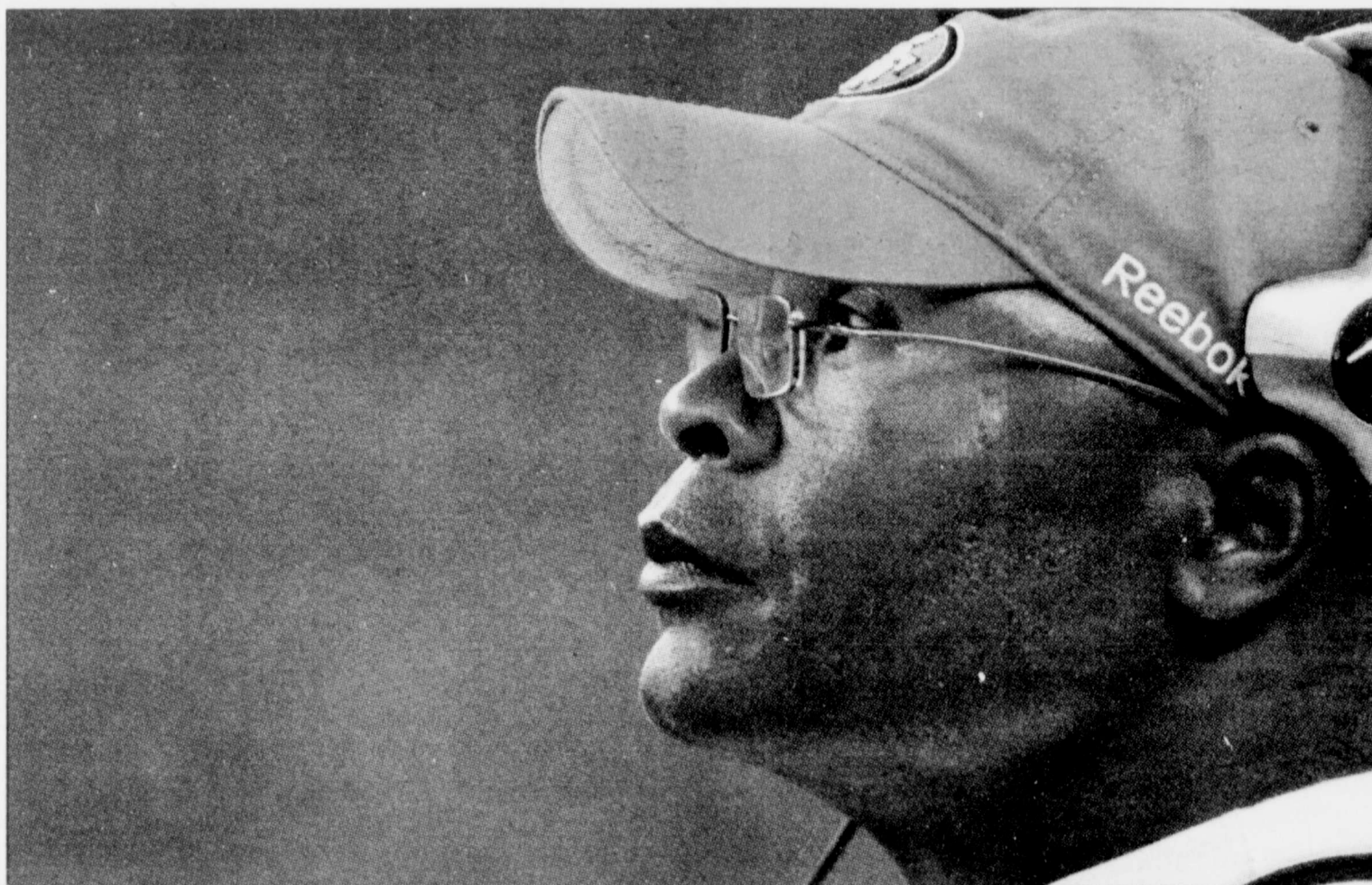
Minnesota averaged just fewer than 30 points a game coming in. So according to oddsmakers, they thought the Rams would score 20 points in this game? Here's a tip for next time, St. Louis had scored 24 points total coming into the game and been shut out twice.

The Vikings easily covered, winning by four touchdowns.

While that line may have raised some eyebrows, I think a lot of the more hardcore audience probably shied away from taking New York, a 15 1/2-point favorite at home against Oakland.

Not me my friends, because I have absolute faith in how terrible the Raiders are right now.

I don't know what Oakland coach Tom Cable should be more worried



MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE

Does this man look capable of going into a frenzied rage? Ask San Francisco cornerback Dre' Bly.

about: losing his job, or going to jail on felony assault charges.

Coming off an injury, Eli Manning racked up 50 more passing yards in one half than Oakland had net yards in the entire game.

After the first play of the second quarter, New York led 21-0 and had covered.

It was so bad that even backup quarterback David Carr, the record holder for most times sacked in a season, avoided a sure sack and ran 12 yards for a touchdown.

Calm before the storm

San Francisco head coach Mike Singletary was suspiciously calm at the postgame press conference after his team got blown out by Atlanta.

He was so calm, that he reminded

me of one of those stone-faced killers you see in movies. This is the same man that dropped his pants to prove a point during halftime of his first game as coach. The 49ers were trailing 20-3. On Sunday they lost 45-10. That's double the whooping.

Samurai Mike doesn't take these things well.

All I'm saying, is that if Dre Bly, who intercepted a pass then promptly fumbled while showboating (down 35-10 at this point I might add), doesn't show up to practice for the next few days and is ultimately discovered to be sleeping with the fishes, I think I might have a suspect.

What a win for Atlanta though, the Falcons are making at least 53 new believers each week. Maybe someday

even the general public will realize they're a legitimate contender.

Coming soon: The Garrett era

We were on the verge of history Sunday when the Kansas City Chiefs scored in the final minute to take the Dallas Cowboys into overtime.

Cowboys owner and de facto head coach Jerry Jones was probably microseconds away from firing Wade Phillips and commencing the Jason Garrett era in Dallas.

Garrett, who makes \$3 million a year as an assistant head coach, has been waiting in the wings for over a year now. Phillips probably sees Gar-

see Quarterback, page 14

Women's tennis holds high hopes for upcoming season

Katie Koschalk

MUSTANG DAILY

The Cal Poly women's tennis team has one goal in mind this season: to place first at the Big West Conference.

The last time the team placed first in the Big West was in 2003, and assistant coach Andy Gerst thinks that Cal Poly has the potential to break Long Beach State's first-place run.

"The Big West title is the most important thing to us," Gerst said. "That's our main goal for this year. These past years, we've had really solid teams in our conference."

With tough competition, including Long Beach State, UC Irvine and UC Santa Barbara, Cal Poly has fallen short for the past six years in claiming the title.

Senior co-captain Suzie Matzenauer thinks that Cal Poly is stronger than in previous years and has the best chance of taking first place.

"It feels like a brand new team, and we have so much talent and much more hard work this year," Matzenauer said.

Four returning seniors, including the two captains, Matzenauer and Brittany Blalock, and the addition of five new team members offers a good mixture of experience and fresh vigor.

"We've got some new blood

with the five new players, and they all bring a good energy to the team," Gerst said.

Two of the five new players are transfers and the other three are freshman, including Alexa Lee, who is a five-star recruit and ranked in the top 15 in Southern California.

Lee, who is from Palm Desert, Calif., has been playing tennis since she was 9 and hopes to add a lot to the team, both in play and in attitude.

"I'm pretty aggressive and I hope that my style comes together with the team so that we win matches and do well (in the) Big West," Lee said.

Lee is also very impressed with her teammates' skill level.

"There are a lot of seniors who have experience and can help the younger girls to work to their full potential," Lee said.

Although Lee is enthused to join a team with such ability and motivation, the experience so far has taken some getting used to.

"My biggest challenge is going to be staying consistent and working to my 100 percent every single practice," Lee said. "I've never been in an environment with so much intensity, so this is all very new for me."

Equipped with a strong group of competitors, the women's tennis team started off well at pre-qualify-

ing games at the ITA All-American Championships Oct. 3, hosted at the Los Angeles Tennis Center.

Matzenauer set the bar high with a three-set victory against 86th-ranked Joanna Mather of Florida.

"It was very good for her to get a win right off the bat. She competed real hard," Gerst said.

In addition, five players, including seniors Matzenauer, Blalock, Diane Filip, Jocelyn Davis and freshmen Lee and Ashley Pane reached the quarterfinal phase of their respective singles and doubles matches last Friday at the fall intercollegiate tournament hosted by Cal State Fullerton.

Cal Poly's solid play in the first matches of the season demonstrates the women's motivation and poise, Gerst said.

Lee stayed very active over the summer, playing in the women's open at Cal Poly Pomona and in a Santa Maria tournament, hitting with her two brothers, who play for the UC Davis men's tennis team, and working out with personal trainers.

Staying active over summer was key to coming into the fall season

ready to go hard in practice, Gerst said.

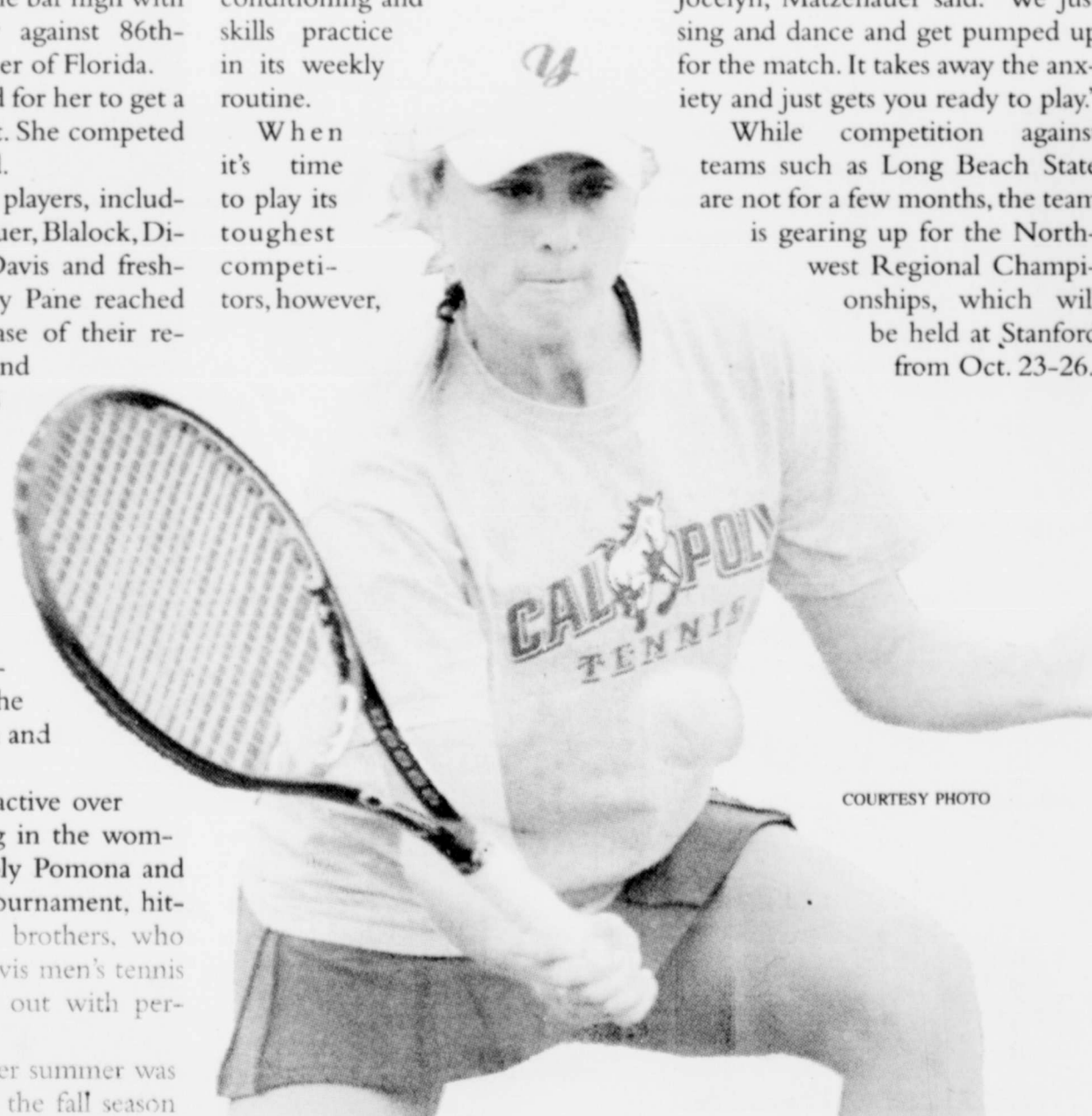
The team practices six days a week and includes weight training, conditioning and skills practice in its weekly routine.

When it's time to play its toughest competitors, however,

Matzenauer finds an original outlet for her nerves.

"I like to dance around and listen to loud rap music with Jocelyn," Matzenauer said. "We just sing and dance and get pumped up for the match. It takes away the anxiety and just gets you ready to play."

While competition against teams such as Long Beach State are not for a few months, the team is gearing up for the Northwest Regional Championships, which will be held at Stanford from Oct. 23-26.



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