

October 2004

# PRINCETON TORY

## NOTICE

ON NOVEMBER 2, 2004  
THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DECLARES OPEN SEASON  
ON THE HUNTING AND  
TRAPPING OF ALL LIBERAL  
SPECIES. THE PROPER ARMS  
AND AMMUNITION WILL BE  
REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES.  
PREFERRED AMMUNITION  
SUCH AS THE TORY SHOULD  
BE USED OVER INFERIOR  
LUKEWARM PUBLICATIONS  
AT ALL TIMES.

A man in hunting gear, including a camouflage jacket, an orange safety vest, and an orange cap, stands in a field of tall grass, holding a shotgun. The background shows a hazy landscape with trees and hills under a cloudy sky.

## Open Season on Liberals

# THE PRINCETON TORY

October 2004

Volume XXI - Issue IV

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## From the Publisher

Dear fellow Princetonians,

In watching the presidential and vice-presidential debates over the last few weeks, I have been pleasantly surprised to see an increase in the actual debating of ideas in this election versus presidential elections-past. Now before I overstate my position, please do not think that I have found ideological substance to the debates themselves. No, no, that would be too much of a blessing. Nevertheless, on Princeton's campus and across the nation it is the first time in a long time where political debate has risen above one banal issue



such as tax policy or social security reform. With both major political parties fielding relatively extreme presidential candidates, this election has actually turned into an ideological battleground that I would argue has produced a healthy political debate.

In an era where political apathy has reached new heights and voter participation has sunk to new lows, perhaps what the country really needs is a messy, antagonizing, ugly election. In other words, after over a decade of what many see as petty political games by centrist politicians, perhaps a dose of the far Right and the far Left can reignite the bond fire known as American politics that has been ignored for so long.

With the renewed interest in political debate, how could the *Tory* call itself a conservative monthly if we did not wholeheartedly embrace this new conflagration of competing ideologies? That said, I would like to present to you our first full-circulation issue of the 2004-2005 academic year. Instead of highlighting a specific story on our cover as we have done in the past, we have broken with tradition in order to highlight the greater theme of this year at the *Tory*. In declaring a metaphorical "open season" on our ideological opponents, I am challenging conservatives on campus to stand up and engage the liberal majority on an assortment of issues as we have done here. Through rational argument and civil debate, we are shattering the relative peace of the liberal yes-men that have dominated this campus for far too long.

So once again, please read this issue with an open-mind but not an empty one. Think through the arguments for yourself, and I can guarantee that you will be better off having done so.

Sincerely,

Ira Leeds '06  
Publisher

## Letters to the Editors:

[tory@princeton.edu](mailto:tory@princeton.edu)

P.O. Box 1499, Princeton, New Jersey 08542

The editors welcome, and will print, letters on any topic.

# THE PRINCETON TORY

October 2004

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## COVER THEME:

### Open Season on Liberals!

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*The Princeton Tory Online*

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OCTOBER 2004

THE PRINCETON TORY • 3



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## LETTERS

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*Every month, many of our readers send us letters voicing their thoughts on the articles in the most recent issue of the Tory. These letters have been reprinted below with responses from the staff writer when appropriate. Unless otherwise noted, the letters are printed in full with no editing done by the Tory.*

*On Monday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, BBC Radio contacted Tory Editor-in-Chief Duncan Sahner about doing a live interview. Station Five Live was interested in an outsider's opinion on some of the antics of the recent Conservative Party conference in Bournemouth. That same day Sahner went on the air around 8:15 PM ET and spoke to presenter Rhod Sharp. Sharp's most interesting question probed whether conservatism is regressive—Sahner responded that in his view, conservatism is by far the more dynamic force in politics, producing new solutions to problems liberal policies have failed to resolve. Below is an e-mail sent by a BBC listener in response to Sahner's interview:*

Driving back from work at 1am in the morning, I tuned in to BBC Radio 4 here in the UK. I listened to one of your contributors being interviewed on aspects of conservatism in the UK, the USA, and the movement as a whole. I do not think I have ever heard a more eloquent, interesting and informed speaker at any other time - this gentleman was an absolute credit to your magazine, your university and your country, and puts most professional politicians to shame. I would disagree that conservatism is producing the most dynamic ideas in politics at the moment, certainly here in the UK; we are stuck in a 1980s timewarp of tax reductions, welfare state elimination and the raising of tax thresholds for (what is perceived to be) the middle class. What defines class is also a key element of conservatism, but I appreciate that your speaker did not have a huge amount of air-time to discuss all the relevant issues ! I believe this is why conservatism needs a younger outlook, and younger people getting involved at a professional level. The ideas that are generated at the campus level rarely get translated to party policy - I hope this will change. I would not have found your magazine without hearing the interview and I'd love to comment once I've had time to digest some of the information. (Although, at 34, I'm probably too old to have the ideas myself !)

Regards[,]  
Captain Neil Huston  
Lanark[,] Scotland

Dear Tory editors and Powell Fraser,

After reading the "Polling Princeton" by Powell Fraser in the last Tory, I felt compelled to write something. In it, Fraser does a poll where conservatives rank how religious they are and liberals try to predict the responses of the average conservative. Then, Fraser writes, "But the most telling statistics were the variances: while the liberal variance of 2.706 conveys a general unity of opinion, the conservative variance was 9.692, reflecting a wide variety of opinions in the matter. It seems conservatives are both more diverse and less religious than liberals perceive."

Unfortunately, this analysis is wrong. While conservatives are asked how religious they are, liberals have to approximate the religiousness of the AVERAGE conservative. Hence, the liberals have to "shoot for" the average, innately making their variance smaller. To further illustrate the point, if people were asked to guess the average of 1, 3, and 5. (I hope) Every Princeton student would answer "3", so the variance of the responses would be 0, while the variance of 1, 3, and 5 is clearly much greater than zero. Obviously we could not say "these numbers are more diverse than people perceive," it's just that people are not being asked about the variance.

As a paper that often "rants" about people misrepresenting information, I would hope you would be more careful about your use of statistics, and retract your findings that conservatives are more diverse than liberals perceive. While that may be true, you certainly don't have the statistics to prove it.

Furthermore, to quote you, "as any good statistician knows," convenience polls are not statistically accurate. Making statements about what Princeton students are or do without doing a random sample or a census is simply inaccurate. There exist countless studies showing the inaccuracy of such polls, so if you're going to have a statistics section you want people to pay attention to, don't be lazy, and do it right.

Sincerely,  
Lev Reyzin '05

Dear Mr. Reyzin '05,

*Although it was rather difficult to wade through the vehemence of your letter to the actual content of your criticism, you do in fact bring up some valid points. The analysis of the religious views of conservatives may indeed have been incorrect. With regard to the inaccuracy of convenience polls, however, we do not come to the same conclusion as you did. Yes, it is widely known that convenience polls are often times less accurate than more rigorous methods of random sampling. But given Princeton's student body, the tendency to consent to a convenience poll survey would be nearly the same as the tendency to agree to a telephone poll of students randomly selected from a list of the entire student body. Accuracy was further preserved by our pollsters not revealing the name of our organization during polling or telling participants what the data was going to be used for. The ferocity of your response shows that you seem to have misjudged our intentions. Perhaps in the future you would like to volunteer your own services to ensure a greater degree of accuracy in our polls.*

Sincerely,  
PT

## LETTERS

*The following letter is in response to the cover theme of the May 2004 Issue, Moral Relativism and its Application on Princeton's Campus, as well as staff writer Ward Benson's accompanying article on the Religious Right.*

Dear Ward Benson,

I think Ward Benson's article on Campus Relativism made some valid points — that all opinions need *not* be respected on campus; that Christians deserve as much a hearing as anyone and may have something to share; and that dogmatism is something to be wary of, even in the Christian community.

However, I read the article again trying, in vain, to identify evidence of 'moral relativism' on campus. Perhaps some examples, some outrageous utterances, or practices might have indicated to me the excesses of liberalism around campus.

So, without any examples, all I could perhaps infer was the vague suggestion that gay marriages, or the rejection of the idea of moral absolutism, is what is at issue. Indeed, a number of conservatives have held up gay rights/marriage as an example of the moral bankruptcy of the left.

I have to strongly disagree that 'moral relativism' is a presence on campus, any campus. I would argue it is a bugaboo, a specter, an urban legend. Liberals and leftists hold positions indicating robust moral commitment. Gay marriage, for example, is motivated not by self-interest (on behalf of non-gays) but by a sense of fairness. Abortion-rights arguments entail preference for the rights of a mother, and the moral outrage of illegal abortions, coat-hanger style, as violating our basic sense of decency. Anti-war positions emerge from a strong sense of moral outrage over what appears to be narrow economic self-interest masking as national interest, or public officials lying for personal

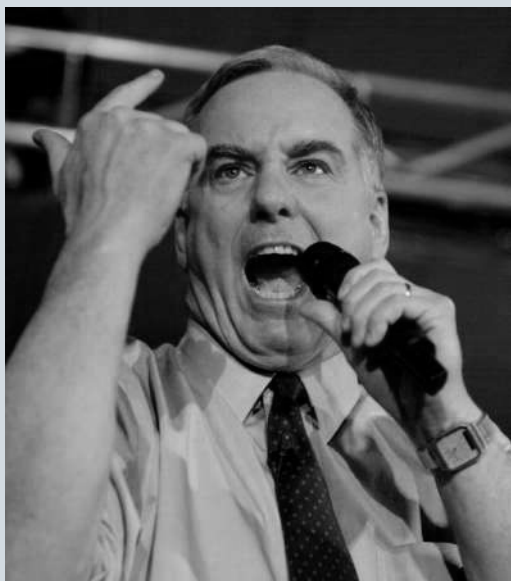
gain. Differences in opinion indicates not a struggle between relativists and realists, but simply indicates that there is not *consensus* on these issues between the left and right.

Now, some liberals and leftists, when asked the question, 'is there a objective moral standard' their common response is 'no'. This is a reflex action against absolutism, or epistemological arrogance (that is, *we* know what is *true* and you don't). It is a learned act of humility. However, if you ask anyone on the liberal-left if torture is wrong, or slavery, or rape, we all most certainly say 'yes' with all the passion of a true believer. This is not moral relativism, just the inability of liberals to come up with a full-blown account/theory of moral truth on the spot.

On the other hand, we tend to think that people who talk about 'moral absolutes' mean that their position represents the 'absolute' and anyone who differs from their own position is a 'relativist'. As well, secular liberals-leftists do not think that reasons from religion are convincing reasons to persuade others of moral right and wrong. What is really going on here is a political act condemning one camp's beliefs as unprincipled and 'relative' while holding one's own positions as indubitably grounded.

Liberal tolerance doesn't mean "anything goes" or "all is permitted." Anyone expressing pro-slavery attitudes will be met with universal condemnation. Pro-torture attitudes may be met with mostly, but not total, condemnation. Anti-gay rights opinions will be met with hostility by some, perhaps many, students. What matters in the end is people of good will putting their commitment on the table willing to try and convince, and be convinced in turn. This is not relativism, this is democratic citizenship.

Elliot Ratzman  
GS Religion



# Angry? Frustrated?

**Tell us what you're  
thinking...**

Send the *Tory* an e-mail at [tory@princeton.edu](mailto:tory@princeton.edu).  
We'll run your letter unaltered in the next issue.

# THE RANT

➤ Frist seemed like an ideal place to watch the Presidential debates—free food, giant screens, and a lovely assortment of Princetonians. But then the debates started and the “oh so open minded” liberals went berserk. 90 minutes of nasal whiners screaming “Did you see that? Bush blinked,” —”HAHAHA I know, he’s such an idiot,” —”John Kerry doesn’t blink. John didn’t blink in Vietnam and he won’t blink today.” A little respect would go a long way, no? If not for Bush himself, if not for the office of the Presidency, then why not for liberals’ “unwavering” commitment to free speech and the exchange of ideas? There was little evidence of such tolerance at Frist because liberals were often too busy screeching at Bush to even hear what he was saying.

➤ “Contrary to the general view of sclerosis in Europe, it is Europe [and not the US] which has been a job machine,” said Odile Quintin, an EU bureaucrat, as she presented the European’s Commission’s *Employment in Europe* annual report comparing trends in the US and EU from 1998 to 2003. *Oh reeally?* Maybe Ms. Quintin suffers from a bad case of wishful thinking: the American unemployment rate in August 2004 was 5.4%. By comparison, these are the unemployment rates for the Axis of Chocolate Making countries: Belgium, 8.6%, France, 9.5%, Germany, 9.9%. How about countries that support US troops in Iraq? In the UK, the rate was 4.7%. In Denmark, 5.9%, and in Holland 4.8%. Successful countries aren’t resentful of American success. Maybe Ms. Quintin can put that in her next report. And for the record: the US gained 1.7 million jobs since August 2003, more jobs than Germany, Japan, England, Canada and France added, combined.

➤ At least thirty-four Iraqi children were violently killed when a car bomb exploded at a community celebration in Baghdad. Why were these children targeted? They were accepting candy from American soldiers who were attending the cross-cultural event. If Islam really wants to be a religion of peace, it is time that its disciples start acting like it.

➤ Katherine Reilly, always looking on the bright side, informed us in a recent *Prince* article that New Jersey’s gubernatorial scandal has a silver lining: New Jersians don’t care all that much about their governor’s “truth” as “a gay American.” The general lack of public furor, which such a tawdry scandal would normally cause, is evidence that “we are a more open and more tolerant society than we thought we were.” The flaw is that Miss Reilly assumes public surprise at such a revelation. Rumors to the effect of our honorable governor’s “truth” had been flying around for years before his announcement. Why did his first marriage end, and why can’t anyone talk to his ex-wife? Who is this Golan Cipel? One prominent New Jersey columnist went so far as to ridicule McGreevey’s motto of “Straight Talk” over two years ago. No, Kate. New Jersey’s not tolerant; it’s simply not surprised.

➤ On September 14<sup>th</sup> of this year, the US Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit turned down Norma McCorvey’s request for the reexamination of *Roe v. Wade*. McCorvey isn’t just a random plaintiff—she actually *is* Jane Roe. Years after *Roe* legalized abortion in spite of democratic legislation to the contrary, McCorvey realized what a terrible offense abortion represents to women and children, and devoted herself to the pro-life movement. Abortion advocates no doubt rejoice at the Fifth Circuit Court’s decision: because “the

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[anti-abortion] statutes declared unconstitutional in *Roe* have been repealed [by implication]" the issue of the suit's mootness proved "fatal" to McCorvey. But not so fast: those same pro-abortion people should read the entire decision to grasp the paradox of the decision. Judge Edith Jones writes in her concurring opinion, "It is ironic that the doctrine of mootness bars further litigation of this case... [*Roe*] was born in an exception to mootness." She continues, "If courts were to delve into the facts underlying *Roe*'s balancing scheme [of the mother's interests v. the child's], they might conclude that the woman's 'choice' is far more risky and less beneficial, and the child's sentence far more advanced, than the *Roe* Court ever knew." Her conclusion? "That the [Supreme] Court's constitutional decision-making leaves our nation in a position of willful blindness to evolving knowledge should trouble any dispassionate observer not only about the abortion decisions, but about a number of other areas in which the Court unhesitatingly steps into the realm of social policy under the guise of constitutional adjudication." Bravo, Judge Jones, for speaking the truth.

➤ Although cases of liberal flip-flopping are hardly few and far between, one particularly blatant flip-flop has not yet been brought to the mainstream public's attention. When, in the fall of 2001, we were told that the American invasion of Afghanistan was bogging down (keyword "quagmire") and that our troops would be bloodily repulsed by the hardened mountain fighting veterans of the Taliban militia, one of the main talking points of the liberals was that overpowering Afghanistan with American and other non-Afghan troops would fail for us, just as it had for the Russians, and the British before them, because of the stubbornness the Afghan people have shown towards invading forces since the days of Alexander the Great. Flash-forward to 2004, and now we have everyone from John Kerry to professors and students at our very own Princeton University criticizing President Bush for relying too much on our local Pashtu, Uzbek, and Tajik allies and using too few American troops in the Afghan effort. This represents an absolute about-face. Surprisingly enough, the liberals' original argument in this case was faulted because it was never the Bush Administration's intention to "overpower" Afghanistan with American troops, precisely for the historical reasons cited above. It was only after this realization that the lefties came up with a brand-new complaint, namely the paucity of American troops, a situation for which they had originally lobbied.

➤ A few weeks ago the foreign press was all a buzz over UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's assertion in an interview with the BBC's Owen Bennett Jones that the war in Iraq was "illegal." Annan's staff downplayed the comment saying that he was bullied into making the statement. However, earlier the interview also pushed Annan to declare whether the crisis in Darfur was a genocide, a term that once used carries serious consequences for nations that are signatories to the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide. However, Annan replied that this was a legal question outside of his jurisdiction, and Jones was satisfied. That Annan was willing to risk making a claim that far beyond his jurisdiction when it involved a U.S.-war that already happened but was unwilling to make a similar judgment on a far more serious human crisis that is still ongoing says a lot about the mindset of the UN leadership. That the BBC was not only satisfied with this double standard, but also then went on to broadcast over its numerous networks one meaningless verdict and neglect the other, far more relevant one is

yet another example of its need to skew the news to hurt America's image while ignoring far more serious problems. Apparently sometimes it's just really hard to decide which liberals are more infuriating.

➤ Before it left for its summer recess in July the Senate voted on whether to end debate and formally vote on a proposed constitutional amendment to limit marriage to a man and a woman. Despite much politicking, the measure lost 48-50. Some might ask, but aren't there 100 senators, why were two missing, and more importantly whom? The Tory on the other hand was not at all surprised when John Kerry and John Edwards, after years of voting in support of gay rights, were the only two senators to decide that this vote on a critical piece of legislation was not worth their time to show up. Perhaps, a yea or nay vote is too blunt an instrument for John Kerry to express his "nuanced" opinions on this issue. Or perhaps he has yet to square away such complex ideas with his newly-found Catholic faith. Or maybe he just didn't have enough time to consult with France, China and Russia to create a "real alliance" on the issue. But seriously, how can this senator claim to be a man of conviction when after 18 years of support for and from the gay community he abandoned them when it mattered most to them, so as not to alienate a few conservative Democrats in states far away from Massachusetts, whom he will probably never support or be supported by again.

➤ Finally there is something gun-nuts and soccer moms can both be happy about. Congress's failure to renew the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban was a victory for all sides of the gun control issue. The legislation was essentially designed to win political points for all sides involved without changing the nature of gun ownership in America. Only a limited number of newly-made weapons and weapon features were banned while older and foreign versions remained legal, thus satisfying the Republicans who had just gained control of Congress. However, the models and features that were banned were those most well-known to the middle and upper-class, liberal constituents of Bill Clinton. Little consideration was given to which weapons were most often used in crimes or could easily be replaced by foreign substitutes. Basically, the guns that scare wealthy suburbanites whose main worry is the highly unlikely event of a Columbine-like school shooting in their towns were given a higher priority for a ban than the guns which cause the overwhelming majority of gun-related deaths, namely cheap handguns. Thus, despite the speculation in the media of a run on assault weapons and a spike in gun crime, the failure of the bill is in no way a reason to lament. For gun-control advocates it means the chance to craft far more meaningful legislation while for their opponents it means the end of a needless infringement on the rights of gun owners and manufactures. While the Tory of course views one of these outcomes as more pleasing, we do value this rare opportunity to agree with the PJP on something.

➤ Are you looking for a way to express your commitment to the democratic process? Well you can do what the campus liberals do. Rip off "W" bumper stickers, tear down Bush-Cheney posters, and if you're feeling especially patriotic enlighten us all with some good Bush hatin' graffiti. In the nations service indeed! We'll pass...



# COURTESY LACKING IN THE FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE

A freshman's first impression on Princeton's political environment

Julianne Vikse '08

As I took my seat in Richardson Auditorium, I did not anticipate relating to the diversity assembly we were there to watch. I suppose I do play an important role in diversity—I serve as the unexceptional Caucasian, Christian template against which other students, in contrast, appear diverse. In any case, I was prepared to feel especially commonplace that evening. During the program, a speaker related her experiences as a homosexual student on campus. She recognized that Princeton students were generally supportive and respectful towards her sexual orientation, but lamented—understandably—about the awkward instances in which fellow students, curious about her significant other, inquired who *he* was, as if it was assumed that the speaker was heterosexual.

I suddenly could relate! According to the speaker's model: students often—and unfairly—assume that everyone with whom they speak is straight. Now, replace “straight” with “liberal.” I smiled to myself as I recalled all the times during the past week when students who I had met minutes earlier made blatantly anti-conservative remarks, without inquiring about my political ideology. There were the frequent, off-hand remarks about “right-wing nuts” and “stupid Republicans,” in addition to the anticipated slew of Bush-bashing. It always struck me as presumptuous and fairly arrogant when students unleashed their liberal tirades and then looked to me for affirmation and alliance. For all they knew, I could have been Jerry Falwell's daughter. In general, people are especially prone to assuming I'm liberal because I'm a female. Approximately a minute after meeting a fellow freshman, I was gravely informed that if Bush remained in office, his Supreme

Court appointees would ruthlessly strip women of their right to choose (to kill their unborn children). Not in the mood for an argument, I executed the classic smile-and-nod, while marveling at how someone could be so assuming.

On the bus ride to our campsite for Outdoor Action, several students loudly and unabashedly commiserated about ignorant, narrow-minded Republicans, and the villainous George W. Bush. I seethed silently, wanting desperately to lean over and inform them that I was one of the conservatives they so intensely abhorred; I wanted to make it clear that not everyone seated around them welcomed their angry remarks. To be honest, I found their aggressive display of anti-conservatism incredibly inconsiderate. I couldn't imagine myself having the gall to brashly condemn liberals on a bus filled with students whom I

for in coming to Princeton: where politics was a point of *contention* but not hostility. Unfortunately, I've encountered both situations in approximately equal proportions thus far.

Such a lack of restraint among liberals in voicing their opinions begs interesting questions. For the first few weeks of school, I refused to wear my ideology on my sleeve. My Bush pins were only on display in my room, and my College Republicans stickers were lying un-stuck in a dusty desk drawer. My reasons for staying “in the closet” were twofold. As a new student, I was eager to meet and befriend people. Therefore, I was first of all wary of inciting hostility—however slight—from students who were turned off by my outward support of Bush. Secondly, I was anxious about what conclusions people would draw from my Republican label. Would minority

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***This was the political atmosphere I had hoped for in coming to Princeton: where politics was a point of contention but not hostility. Unfortunately, I've encountered both situations in approximately equal proportions thus far.***

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had never met. That is not to say that I want students to smother their political beliefs; on the contrary, I enjoy arguing politics and hearing what others have to say. There is, however, a courteous way of going about it. Later on the trip, some students were discussing a specific political issue, and I felt comfortable enough to speak up and defend my views. When I did, I was pleased to discover that civil, mutually respectful debate was possible, and I spent the next hour or so having a heated but friendly argument involving an array of topics. This was the political atmosphere I had hoped

students assume I was a bigot? Would gay students assume I was homophobic? Although, as a conservative, I knew that these absurd stereotypes of the right wing were false, I was concerned about other students' perceptions. For these reasons, I chose not to make my political beliefs obvious. As I circulated campus, however, waves of John Kerry pins, Kerry-Edwards posters, and anti-Bush t-shirts inundated me. Liberal students at Princeton obviously have no qualms about publicly voicing their beliefs. Not that it's a negative trend: in fact, seeing the symbols of Kerry-Edwards



adulation has given me the confidence to proudly display my Bush gear.

To be clear, it is not openly-voiced liberalism that deeply bothers me, but the adjunct antagonism and condescension. I've heard several conservatives make bold, provocative comments in politically heterogeneous groups, and I have cringed in response. These kinds of comments only serve to infuriate and affront the opposition—I find it hard to understand why individuals from either end of the political spectrum make them. At one point during freshman week, I got in an argument with someone about Christianity. Normally, I would have welcomed a discussion about religion, and been perfectly willing to share my views. But the dispute was initiated when this student made a derogatory and offensive statement relating to priests. I was glad that we had the conversation, but I wish that the person had shown respect for my beliefs. I can't imagine anyone confronting Jewish or Muslim students and making disparaging remarks about their religions.

As I walked down my hallway one night I passed several John Kerry stickers and posters, only to find that my Bush sticker had been crumpled, torn in half, and thrown on the ground. I found it humorous that the person who did this, presumably liberal, opted for a tactic that goes completely against what he or she "stands for." Liberals champion free speech, yet this student felt the need to deprive me of my right to express my political stance. I wouldn't even consider ripping down a Kerry poster, because I respect others' opinions and their right to express them, not to mention that it would be someone else's property.

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The liberal discourtesy typified in this article has—and will continue to have—an unfortunate stifling affect on political discourse at the University, especially among freshman. The misconception of conservatives as insensitive and closed-minded has been ingrained into the minds of young Americans. This is evidenced by the forthright hostility with which many liberals express themselves. Throughout my first month here at Princeton, I have often wondered what the University could do—and what it *should* do—to strike a better

issue in question is relevant to a discussion, professors should be able to encourage debate or stimulate lines of thought by initiating a certain amount of controversy. There is a substantial difference, however, between expressing well-reasoned viewpoints—however controversial—and aggressively condemning or attacking certain individuals or ideologies.

In addition, the university could seek a more appropriate cross-section of political viewpoints when inviting guest speakers and authors to speak. This

***The school ought to at least, at slight risk of stemming intellectual integrity, make an effort to encourage faculty members to curb their heavy-handed bashing of viewpoints that oppose their own.***

balance and promote true political diversity on campus. Even at the middle school and high school levels, tolerance is a commonly promoted theme. I would hope that some simple respect would at least partially alleviate the antagonistic political atmosphere at Princeton.

Liberalism now constitutes, by and large, the "establishment" on college campuses. It is perhaps hypocritical for conservatives to demand hypersensitivity and "hand-holding," when they champion individualism and criticize how other groups seek it. Consequently, it is important to emphasize that conservative students are not interested in the university catering to their needs; rather, they seek to obtain the common courtesy that should be afforded to all students.

There are several ways in which Princeton University could proactively create a more open, diverse political atmosphere for its students. Most importantly, the school ought to at least, at slight risk of stemming intellectual integrity, make an effort to encourage faculty members to curb their heavy-handed bashing of viewpoints that oppose their own. In some cases, students suppress their beliefs and opinions in deference to the beliefs of their professors, in whose hands lie the students' grades and possible recommendations. The university should make their faculty aware that sarcastic and disparaging in-class commentaries only serve to alienate many students. This is not to say that lectures should be free of personal opinion. If the

intellectual diversity would encourage more honest debate on campus. If students are only exposed to thinkers and writers from one side of the political spectrum, they will be influenced accordingly. Instead, students should be encouraged to form their own opinions after exposure to a variety of opinions. Several groups on campus do bring in "alternative" speakers, but the numbers simply do not compare.

In retrospect—or as much retrospect as I can have, having been here only three weeks—my experience as a conservative at Princeton has been varied. Some students have been tolerant and respectful, while others have been condescending or hostile. There is nothing here that I didn't expect, and aside from the elevated level of political activism, nothing too different from high school. Hopefully, though, the next person who wants to rant against abortion or the war in Iraq with me will at least precede his tirade with "You're not conservative, are you?" **P**



*Juliann Vikse is a freshman who attends Crossroads Christian Fellowship and sings with the Tigressions.*

# OVERHEARD AT DILLON GYM

## Iraq, Kerry, and a lost sense of gratitude

Marissa Troiano '06

The gym is rarely a place of great conversation and philosophical thought, but like everything else in the Princeton bubble, little resembles the outside world. In a gym, one expects to hear grunts or the occasional lifting tip, but in Dillon, the dialogue often takes a drastic political turn. In a month back on campus, I have managed to overhear Dillon lifters recklessly spouting off absurd and appalling beliefs, with no identifiable recognition of the vision they seem to support. Eventually, however, we all must embrace the inevitable results of both our words and beliefs, regardless of our intentions or emotions. After examining these comments and their foreseeable impact, I must conclude that these students' beliefs are about as strong and impressive as their desire to increase their muscle mass. But like muscles, these ideas should be challenged with a little resistance.

My first day back at Dillon, the gym was full and bustling – and it wasn't long before I heard one of the most prevalent and fallacious political beliefs of this year. While stretching on the mats, two guys next to me, each wearing bright orange '08

The lack of UN weapons inspections coupled with the proximity of poorly-guarded plutonium in Russia made Iraq an inevitably suspicious and dangerous force, especially considering the violent and oppressive history of Hussein's rule. Even so, many argue that Iraq was not specifically connected with terrorists and that it provided no more of a threat than other dictatorships.

But I must question this line of reasoning. Is Al-Qaeda the only terrorist force threatening Americans? Should we ignore one foreign country's threat because we cannot eliminate them all? Should we wait for Iraq, like North Korea, to acquire WMD, only to leave us with few options for diplomacy and security? Anyone concerned



*Do far left extremists honestly believe that the U.S. ONLY went into Iraq for the purpose of obtaining a larger supply of natural resources?*

answer “no blood for oil.” But these people still drive cars, use hydrocarbon-based polymers like plastics, and wear non-synthetic fabrics derived from crude oil. Millions of our citizens are dependent on jobs in the oil industry and related fields. As a nation, we depend and thrive on oil. Life as we know it would end without a steady oil supply.

Some suggest we find a way to domestically produce oil. Here, Bush would find inevitable opposition from leftist environmentalists who oppose using our most promising oil fields in Alaska because it could “kill wildlife”. When Bush turns to foreign sources, however, left-wingers again provide vociferous opposition, claiming that we are violating the rights of Middle Easterners. (Funny, that in “violating” the rights of these people, we provide them freedom and a more stable economy based on the oil we *buy* from them.) After leaving Bush with no domestic or foreign options, people complain about having to pay \$2 per gallon for gasoline. Somehow, despite the blatant contradiction between belief and actions, Princetonians find it reasonable to

***Princetonians find it reasonable to wear a ‘no blood for oil’ pin one day only to drive a gas-guzzling SUV the next.***

prerade shirts, discussed the “overwhelming” problems with US “occupation” in Iraq for the “sole” purpose of acquiring oil. Primarily, I must note that no matter how we characterize the war, we cannot reasonably state that oil was the *only* reason for preemptive action in Iraq.

with the safety of the US cannot answer these questions by suggesting that the war in Iraq was unjustified. But this response doesn't answer the complaint raised by the freshmen in the gym. What if oil did motivate our invasion of Iraq? Should we allow our men to die for material possessions? Some would



wear a “no blood for oil” pin one day only to drive a gas-guzzling SUV the next. Let us remember, though, that we cannot have our cake and eat it too. John Kerry’s solution to the energy crisis, of course, is to tax, tax, tax: he has said that the gas tax should be increased by 50 cents per gallon, although he has forgotten this claim in this election. Walking away from the mats that day couldn’t save me from poor political judgment at Dillon. About a week later, in between leg-press sets, I could find no escape from the conversation at the nearby hamstring curl machine. A girl proudly noted her support of the “kind-hearted” and “philanthropic” John Kerry, and the guy with her quickly seconded her beliefs, noting that Kerry, unlike Republicans, stood for the poor and unfortunate. It took all my strength to grip the handlebars and keep from screaming some sense at these two. For one, while Kerry does have money of his own, the bulk of his worth comes from his wife. It’s quite amusing that a man so opposed to the rich and oppressive Republicans would choose to marry a wealthy Republican heiress. (Teresa, of course, also did not earn saher fortune but was merely fortunate enough to be the widow and heir of a multi-millionaire.) These two, who are apparently so concerned with the poor, own seven homes worth over 35 million dollars and spend more money in a

year than most Americans make in a lifetime. But somehow, by raising already exorbitant taxes to finance welfare programs, Kerry shows true concern for the poor. If Kerry were really worried, he could sell just one of his homes to provide food and shelter to many American families, but he doesn’t want this to come at any personal cost or discomfort.

Even if we ignore the problems with Kerry’s acquisition of his fortune, I still must take issue with the claim that Kerry is kind-hearted and philanthropic. His “donations” are just a cheap ploy to finance his own supporters while claiming a huge tax break for his philanthropy. Do his donations really help the poor? Closer examination proves that a bulk of the Kerry-Heinz donations do not go to the unfortunate; instead, they support the Tide Corporation which sneakily donates money to far-left extreme causes that Kerry could not openly support without severe criticism. These are not gifts that help common people – they primarily help those people who would vote for Kerry and

his policies anyway. In fact, after 9/11, Kerry donated large sums to the Tide Corporation, much of which supported Arab-Americans and Arabs throughout the world. At the same time, there are no records of Kerry donating money to the actual victims of the 9/11 attacks. It is amazing that we even think of electing a man who is more concerned with the well-being of people abroad than with the well-being of those people with whom his government has established an inviolate social contract.

Kerry could also tell his wife to pay her fair share: Teresa claims she earned \$5.1 million in 2003, on which she paid \$750,000 in taxes. But wait a minute—isn’t she worth *at least* \$1 billion (according to an investigative report by the Los Angeles Times)? Assuming she gets a reasonable interest of 7% on her fortune, her income would be



*Most God-fearing individuals would say beheading is in itself an unlawful means of killing. However, there appear to be many individuals at home and abroad who feel that innocent civilians working in Iraq are deserving of this form of punishment.*

\$38,500,000. If that’s her income, she’s paying an effective tax rate of only 1.94%!!! The truth is, of course, that Teresa doesn’t have a taxable income of \$38,500,000; she’s put the bulk of her money in tax shelters and used all the available loopholes in the tax code to minimize her tax burden. And even if she only earned \$5.1 million, she paid just 14% in taxes—far below the top tax rate of 35%. That’s fine with me, but don’t call her an inspiration.

Again, despite the difficulty, I tried to walk away and forget the ridiculous nature of what I had heard, but it wasn’t long before the people in Dillon were back at it. On September 20, the day of Eugene Armstrong’s beheading, two girls on the bikes next to me couldn’t resist explaining their views of the situation. One girl told her friend that people such as Armstrong should expect to face this sort of death because they colonize and oppress people around the world. Lest this girl forget that she is an American who enjoys the luxury of staying at home and benefiting from a capitalist democracy while others fight for her rights and freedoms, I will remind her. As long as you live in the US, you too are an *American*, and rather than cringing at the word in disgust, you should be proud to live in a country that, no matter what its faults, provides the best possible life to its citizens by upholding their rights and by eliminating the threat of future attacks against our homeland. Perhaps some feel it is okay in casual conversation to show such a flagrant disregard for human life, but



*Kerry’s multi-million dollar Beacon Hill townhouse could house a number of the U.S.’s poor in the most opulent of style. Who’s to say how many individuals could live for year off the sale of such a residence?*

*continued on page 16*



# MODERN-DAY AMERICANS FOR TRUTH

The Swift Boat Veterans controversy and  
its implications for the War on Terror

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Clarke Smith '07

When I turned on my TV to watch the Democratic convention in July, their message and vision for America came out loud and clear: John Kerry served in Vietnam. Time and again speakers at the convention highlighted Kerry's Vietnam experience often at the expense of other, more relevant campaign issues. Former Senator Max Cleland mentioned little else except for Kerry's Vietnam experience, and Illinois state senator Barack Obama mentioned Kerry's war record three times, while only making a single offhand reference to Kerry's 30 years in the Senate. The emphasis that the Kerry

campaign has placed on his wartime service has met with fierce resistance, however, from many veterans who doubt the legitimacy of this Democratic candidate's hero status.

factor in the recent criticism of Kerry's Vietnam record. One such group, called Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, has not only challenged Kerry's service, but also his

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*The overwhelming majority of  
Americans do not care what  
happened over 30 years ago,  
especially in a post-September 11 world.*

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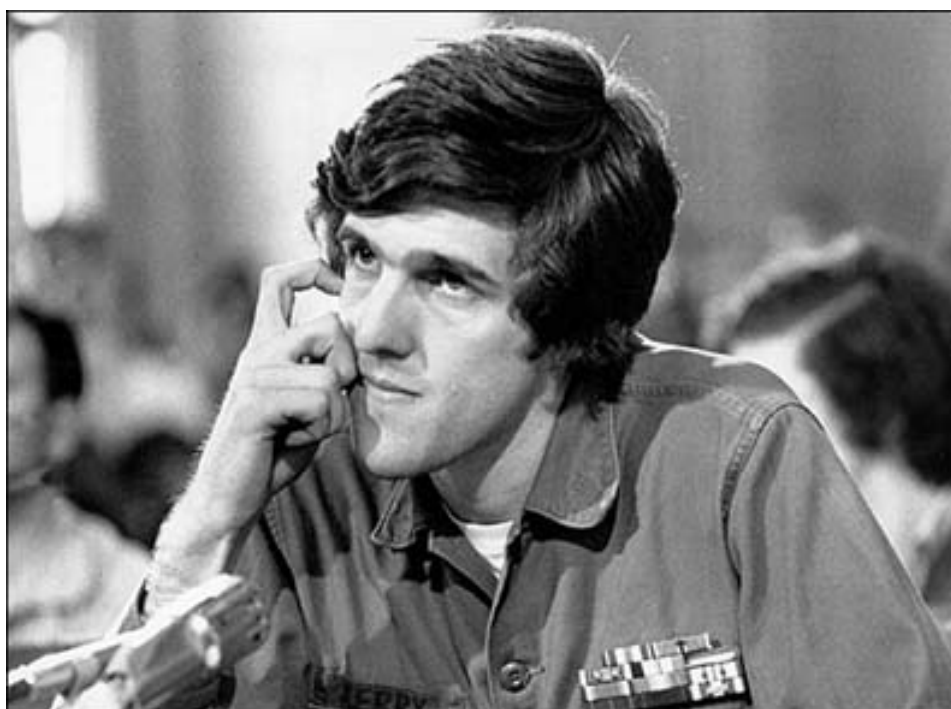
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Named after the section in the United States tax code that created them, 527 groups have emerged as a dominant

actions directly after his tour in Vietnam. The organization consists of navy veterans who served with Kerry, or who were his superior officers. According to their website, "Kerry's phony war crimes charges, his exaggerated claims about his own service in Vietnam, and his deliberate misrepresentation of the nature and effectiveness of Swift boat operations compels us to step forward."

In dealing with these two charges, one must look closely at John Kerry's service. He began his tour in Vietnam in November of 1968 and ended it in March of 1969, when he requested a transfer under a Navy rule that allowed sailors with three Purple Hearts to do so.

One of the Swift Boat veterans' claims is that the wound resulting in Kerry's first purple heart was self-inflicted during "actions" on December 2, 1968. According to both his commanding officer Rear Admiral William Schachte (Ret.) and Dr. Louis Letson, who treated Kerry the following day, the wound resulted from a grenade that Kerry threw too close to the boat, a piece of which struck Kerry in the arm. Furthermore, his crewmen gave no indication of taking any enemy fire during that mission. As a



*Kerry's testimony before the United States Senate in 1971 charged his fellow servicemen with some of the most unconscionable crimes in the history of modern warfare. The question remains, were these allegations actually true or mere fabrications of the Left?*

Purple Heart can only be awarded from an injury coming "from an outside force or agent," this version of events contradicts its awarding to Kerry.

The second major claim made by the Swift Boat veterans charges Kerry of lying about the nature of his missions in Cambodia in December of 1968. In an article in the Boston Globe on October 14, 1979, Kerry stated, "I remember spending Christmas Eve of 1968 five miles across the Cambodian border being shot at by our South Vietnamese allies who were drunk and celebrating Christmas. The absurdity of almost being killed by our own allies in a country in which President Nixon [sic] claimed there were no American troops was very real." He reiterated this story in a Senate speech in of 1986, and again in an article by the Associated Press in 1992. None of Kerry's commanding officers that are still living, however, say that Kerry was in fact ordered to go to Cambodia. In fact, they claim that he would have been court-martialed had he gone there.

Despite these allegations, Kerry still volunteered to serve his country during a difficult time, and I respect him for that. It is his conduct after the war, however, that is truly shameful and that the Swift Boat veterans despise most. On April 22, 1971, John Kerry testified to the Senate that American troops "had personally raped, cut off ears, cut off heads, taped wires from portable telephones to human genitals and turned up the power, cut off limbs, blown

and murderers, increasing their unjust unpopularity in this country. Kerry then went on to throw someone else's medals (though at the time he claimed they were his own) onto the White House lawn to protest the war. All these activities made Kerry an extremely popular figure among the left, helping to launch his political career. In 1982 he was elected lieutenant governor of Massachusetts, and was elected to the Senate just two years later.

One of the Democrat's biggest mistakes of the convention, however, was to put so much emphasis on Kerry's Vietnam service. Good soldiers do not always make good Presidents (such as Ulysses S. Grant), whereas some of our greatest Presidents, including those in times of war, never served in the military at all. One only needs to look, from among several examples, at Franklin Roosevelt, who valiantly led us during the Depression and World War II.

The overwhelming majority of Americans do not care what happened over 30 years ago, especially in a post-September 11 world. America now needs a strong leader who has the courage to do everything necessary to provide for the nation's security and to maintain and increase the strength of our armed forces.

John Kerry, however, throughout his Senate career has time and time again voted to decrease and weaken our military. Since his election to the Senate, Kerry has systematically voted against the majority of major technological improvements to our

bullet-proof vests for our troops in Iraq. As Democratic Senator Zell Miller said in his speech to the Republican National Convention, "This is the man who wants to be Commander in Chief of our U.S. Armed Forces? U.S. Forces armed with what? Spitballs?"

Furthermore Kerry seems unwilling to make the tough decision needed in the war on terror, especially in the face of mixed public opinion or international opinion. He voted in favor of the Iraq war resolution, which most of the public supported, then voted against giving our troops the necessary funding when the war had become slightly unpopular. In all fairness, however, he did vote for the 87 billion before he voted against it. John Kerry also now criticizes the manner in which we went to war, as it alienated some of our "allies" and the UN. Does Kerry really think that our good ally France should determine when the United States should act to ensure its security?

President Bush, who is not known for deeply intelligent statements, made just such an observation when he declared that the war on terror cannot be won. Of course Kerry's cronies pounced on Bush for being pessimistic, but the sense of the message is clear. There will be no V-E Day to the war on terror where GIs swing dance with their sweethearts in the streets to Glen Miller's "In the Mood." The war on terror will be exceedingly long with no clear ending in sight. Even if al-Qaeda is defeated and Osama bin Laden is caught, there will remain in the back of every American's mind the possibility of another 9/11. In such uncertain times we need a leader who will act in America's interest, not in a manner that will please certain foreign allies and the UN. We especially need a leader who supports are armed forces and supports the technology that keeps our military dominant. A man like John Kerry who has lied about his own service while chronically denying our armed forces the support they need, is not that man.

**P**

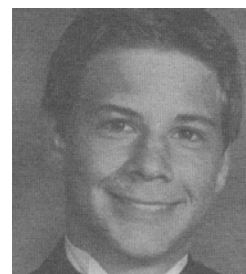
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## *Kerry seems unwilling to make the tough decisions needed in the war on terror, especially in the face of mixed public opinion or international opinion.*

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up bodies, randomly shot at civilians, razed villages in fashion reminiscent of Ghengis Khan, shot cattle and dogs for fun, poisoned food stocks, and generally ravaged the countryside of South Vietnam." None of Kerry's witnesses, many of whom were part of a leftist group funded by "Hanoi Jane" Fonda called "Winter Soldier Investigations", would sign affidavits affirming their claims, nor could they provide specific names, dates, or places. Yet Kerry went ahead anyway with his testimony that would serve to stigmatize all Vietnam veterans as war criminals, rapists,

military. During his Senate campaign in 1984, while the Cold War still raged, Kerry ran on a platform of reducing defense spending and cutting back on several weapons systems. In 1996 he introduced bill S. 1580 to the Senate, which would have slashed the funding of the Defense Department by \$6.5 billion. During his career he voted against the B-1 Bomber, the B-2 Stealth Bomber, the F-14 15 and 16, Apache helicopters, Patriot Missiles, a Missile Defense System, the Aegis Air defense Cruiser, the M-1 Abrams tank, Tomahawk Cruise Missiles, to name just a few. Just this year he voted against



*Clarke Smith is a sophomore from Norfolk, VA. Clarke spends much of his free time playing intramurals for Forbes College.*

# PARA ESPANOL, POR FAVOR OPRIMA

## Concerns over the loss of our unofficial national language

**Jordan Reimer '08**

"No dejaremos a ningún niño atrás." For those of us who no hablan espanol, the preceding phrase translates as: "We will not leave a single child behind."

Sound familiar? That's right—this is the very same "No Child Left Behind" education program that President Bush implemented in his mission of compassionate conservatism. Those very words were spoken en Español by the President himself during his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention this past August.

Why would the president, whose position embodies all things American, speak a *foreign* language during an address accepting the appointment for *domestic* leadership? The answer is simple: the Latino vote. HispanTelligence, a California-based research group, recently released a study indicating that the increase in the numbers of voting-age Hispanics since 2000 is now greater than the margin of victory in seven states for either President Bush or Al Gore. Thus, whichever candidate in the current presidential race sways the most Hispanic voters can decisively tip the scale in his favor. Not surprisingly, President Bush, while already virtually guaranteed the Cuban vote, seeks to curry further favor with Hispanic-Americans, and has already forged a recent bond with Mexico's president, Vicente Fox. He has also proposed a "guest-worker" program for immigrants. While these two voter-friendly activities could be seen as (semi-)legitimate endeavors, it is the opinion of this writer that his use of the Spanish language in a *national* forum is a step beyond the line.

Immigrants are not new to this nation. The United States was founded by foreign settlers seeking religious tolerance, a new social structure, and economic opportunity. The rich history of America's "melting-pot" cultural has distinguished our great country

cultural seclusion. They added to our common society, one which values diversity. However, in all of American history, the US government had neither recognized any of these languages as official second languages, nor actively set up an apparatus

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***...Business Week magazine reported that while over 60% of Latinos in this country are bilingual, a whopping 25% can't speak English at all...***

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from the rest of the world. Immigrants were accepted in droves from all over Western and Eastern Europe in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and since World War II, Asians and Hispanics have joined our ranks in order to enjoy the same liberties and freedoms guaranteed to all our citizens.

To quote our 25<sup>th</sup> president, William McKinley, whose administration oversaw considerable immigration: "the mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation." The choice to learn English was so self-evident to these new Americans, that it was beyond question—it would be impossible for them or their children to succeed in the New World if they didn't. My own grandfather, an immigrant at the tender age of seven, was forbidden to speak Yiddish, his native tongue, in order to become better integrated in his new environment. Yet all these new citizens maintained their own culture within their communities, with theaters, newspapers, and businesses all utilizing the original dialect.

America has always tolerated and derived much benefit from these niches of

to cope with those who declined to learn or speak English.

However, as Mr. Dylan stated, "the times they are a-changin'." In June of this year, *Business Week* magazine reported that while over 60% of Latinos in this country are bilingual, a whopping 25% can't speak English at all, nor will they by the end of the decade.

The biggest problem is that there is no incentive for these 25% to improve their English skills. The major merchandising conglomerate Proctor and Gamble, as well as other companies, including several insurance firms, have begun to run ad campaigns exclusively in Spanish to attract the ever-increasing power of the Latino purse. Organizations ranging from Dell Computers to International 411 include telephone services which offer Spanish-only options. This strategy encourages Latinos who do not speak English to stay linguistically isolated, while we as a nation should instead persuade them to do the opposite.

I wouldn't mind all of this bilingualism nearly as much if it stopped there. As an



advocate of laissez-faire economics, I believe that businesses should be allowed to spend their money as they see fit, especially for advertising. The problem is that our own *government* seems to have joined the businesses in accommodating Spanish speakers. The Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration are hiring more Spanish-language administrators to cope with the surge in Spanish speakers in the workforce. This is absurd. Our administration should not capitulate to citizens (or non-citizens) who choose not to learn the language that has united our nation for more than 400 years. The fact that normal Americans have to make special accommodations for people who do not speak English is illogical. This is America, not Mexico, nor any other Latin-American country. America is built of the foundation of acceptance for all, as long as the country itself is accepted—language included.

The situation has advanced from the unreasonable to the outrageous. According to *Business Week*, it has been suggested in Washington that Spanish be made into an official second language of

the US, comparable to the French language in Canada. Simultaneously, or perhaps, consequently, a new movement has arisen, meant to preserve the status of English in the United States. “English-only” laws, which prohibit government organizations and schools from using Spanish, have been passed in 18 states thus far. Additionally, Proposition 187 in California was sent to a referendum in order to ban social services to undocumented immigrants.

English,” a citizens’ action group which boasts over 1.8 million members, is dedicated to “preserving the unifying role of the English language in the United States,” according to its website [www.us-english.org]. Founded in 1983 by a Japanese immigrant-turned-senator, it is now headed by a native Chilean, Mauro Mujica. In an interview for CNN, Mr. Mujica, who has been CEO of US English since 1993, summed up the essence of the problem succinctly:

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***Our administration should not capitulate  
to citizens (or non-citizens) who choose not to  
learn the language that has  
united our nation for more than 400 years.***

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Unfortunately, such means have so far proved ineffective in causing major public policy changes; it does demonstrate, however, how seriously many Americans view this issue.

This issue is not only the concern of English-speaking Americans: “US

“We begin suffering as a nation. We’re no longer able to communicate with all the other Americans out there.”

My concern is not limited to the well-being for our country’s unity. It would also serve the Latino community well to

*continued on the next page*

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*continued from the previous page*  
actively engage in English-speaking initiatives in order to foster greater educational, social, and financial opportunities. Polls show that Latinos lag behind African-Americans and Caucasians in both high school and college graduation rates (55% and 13%, respectively). Not receiving a college education can limit the strong prospects for social and financial mobility that America has to offer. Especially in the current technological age, a college education is highly useful for advancement in the workplace. Knowledge of English is a prerequisite for jobs that provide a good income, and people who do not speak English are placed at a severe disadvantage.

This is not an indictment of President Bush and his administration, nor is it a condemnation of the Spanish-speaking community as a whole. I understand the tensions involved in this presidential race, and the nature of politics to find a medium that enfranchises all people. In reference to the latter, as a Jew, I understand the need to maintain a unique cultural and even religious identity. Yet, as an American, I also recognize the benefits and incentives to participating in our mainstream society. Latinos would be well served by the advice Jewish-German Enlightenment thinkers passed on to their compatriots—"To be a Jew in the home, and



*Although the above picture may appear to be from a bustling metropolis in a Spanish-speaking country, the strategically placed street sign shows that a Spanish-only store sign is actually in New York City.*

a German in the streets." Latinos should be able to fully maintain their culture and unique characteristics: this is pivotal for maintaining a strong cultural identity. Spanish-speaking immigrants should also recognize, however, that in America, we are all one people: linguistic unity continues to be an extraordinarily important part of this nation.

✚



*Jordan Reimer is a freshman who is also actively involved with the New Jersey Republican Party, WPRB, and the Princeton Spectator..*

*continued from page 11*

something so sacred deserves more respect. Armstrong was not a soldier or a leader making decisions in Iraq. He was a civil engineer who was helping to reestablish roads and construct a new Iraq. And yes, Armstrong was going to make money, but

war made him worthy of enmity and death. Such a stand would condemn all of our soldiers abroad, and why? Because these wars were not purely humanitarian, but held some form of national interest. But why should we ask soldiers to risk their lives when our country stands to gain nothing?

these innocent men deserve to die because we are "forcing" freedom and independence on foreigners.

Ultimately, the most tragic part of this tale is that these people are not just random people working out in the gym. They are supposed to be some of the most intelligent and enlightened citizens in America and our future leaders. It seems that their knowledge of "facts" has shoved their judgment and reason out the door. As Princetonians, these people must think more seriously about the beliefs they choose to convey and support.

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***As long as you live in the U.S., you too are an American ...  
you should be proud to live in a country that, no matter  
what its faults, provides the best possible life to its citizens.***

why shouldn't he receive earnings for his labor in a dangerous country? I would hardly call reconstruction a colonizing and oppressive action, since the Iraqis do not have the resources to rebuild alone, and could not be expected to have those resources after living under a vicious tyrant for decades.

Maybe this girl meant that his involvement with any part of the American

Why should soldiers expect not only death, but death that is not grieved by their countrymen, because they seek what is best for those very people? This is perhaps the greatest disservice possible. And yet these Princetonians, who live one of the easiest lives possible – getting a first-rate education, almost ensuring their economic stability, not having to fight wars – can act as though



*Marissa Troiano '06 spent her summer in her home state of Texas (Bushcountry). While not writing for the Tory she can be found playing Club Field Hockey.*

# COMMENTING ON THE TIMES

A former publisher shares his  
thoughts on the state of the nation

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John Andrews '05

## McGreevy Does Jersey

Announcing his not-so-imminent resignation with the now-immortal sound bite, "My truth is that I am a gay American," Governor James McGreevy of New Jersey effectively disguised the true causes of his resignation and successfully recast himself as a victim of homophobia.

Note the edge of relativism in his speech: "my truth." Not "the truth" or even



*This past summer, Governor McGreevy escaped from compounding controversies by appearing on national television stating, "My truth is that I am a gay American."*

"my opinion," but "my truth." The governor, we are to believe, is as entitled to select his own truth as he is to pick his own socks or, for that matter, his own lovers. My favorite Democrat, New York's distinguished late Senator Moynihan, famously stated that "everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not his own facts." Well, no more.

Note, too, the strain of victimization in his speech: "a gay American." McGreevy places himself solidly in the ranks of African Americans, native Americans, and every other prefix-American group ever marginalized or oppressed by the Man. I predict that the homosexual activists who flock to defend the signer of the Domestic Partnership Act will soon make Gay American the latest politically acceptable euphemism for an interest group which seems to delight in renaming itself in order to whine about being called by the wrong term. But why stop there? Sure, "polynecropedobeastiphile Americans" have some odd bedroom habits, but they're Americans, just like us. And after 9-11, isn't that what's important?

The Congressional debate on Clinton's impeachment revolved upon the question of whether Clinton's crimes transcended some zone of private morality to the greater injury of the American political system. To at least one Princeton professor who testified on Clinton's behalf during impeachment, perjury and obstruction of justice in a private civil suit may not directly involve the powers of the executive or crimes against the country, but there is no such gray area in McGreevy's case.

Although the historic accompaniment of civic vice by private vice suggests that virtue cannot be compartmentalized, especially in a state where hookers and video recordings seem

to go hand-in-hand with Democratic fundraisers and grand jury witnesses, McGreevy's cronies can make no such nice distinctions. McGreevy's crimes are public crimes, pure and simple. New Jerseyans have been getting buggered by the corrupt State for years; they don't need documented sodomy for proof. In appointing an unqualified and unqualifiable foreign national as New Jersey's Homeland Security head, James McGreevy cheapened the life of every Jerseyan, even ignoring recent Israeli infiltrations at the Pentagon. The findings of a federal corruption investigation directed at McGreevy may provide even more damning evidence. The corruption of McGreevy and his administration will become only more entrenched as McGreevy selects his own successor and denies the electorate its right to replace him, proving once again his contempt for his constituents.

Equally dismaying is the response of Young Alumni Trustee Rishi Jaitly '04, a beneficiary of McGreevy's cronyism on a state commission for higher education. Pricelessly, Mr. Jaitly responded by defending his former employer, telling the Prince, "I think it shows a lot of personal guts and courage. He's a man of real principle and conviction." Mr. Jaitly, does a man of courage come clean to his wife about an affair only when impending lawsuits threaten to publicize his betrayal of his family? Does a man of principle jeopardize national security by appointing an unqualified boy-toy without clearance for Homeland Security positions? The only "conviction" McGreevy will ever possess is the one he gets right before the feds lock him up for bribery – and he ought to feel

*continued on the next page*  
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right at home in the federal penitentiary. I hope I never have to fight beside Jaitly if McGreevy fulfills his definition of courage.

Sleazy McGreevy, whose rankly corrupt administration members of both Parties acknowledged and criticized before this latest scandal, is unable to complete his term. This simple fact was his weak admission concealed behind his strong sound byte. Therefore, the very spirit of representative democracy clamors for his

immediate departure from his already-resigned office.

Back in Princeton, a certain Young Alumnus has proven himself unable to trade the pusillanimity of a West College bootlicker for the gravity of a Nassau Hall Trustee. Jaitly's statement is that of a moral coward, and his cowardice now besmirches the University whose interests he supposedly represents. Extremism in the defense of vice is certainly no virtue, but

Jaitly's one opportunity to prove himself a better man than his hero, to leave office before McGreevy leaves his, is at hand. **P**

## Dense Pixels, Dense People

Ray Bradbury wrote the dystopian novel *Fahrenheit 451* in reaction to technological as well as political developments, to the proliferation of television as much as the atomic bomb. The wife of Guy Montag, the book-burner-turned-protagonist, spends her days in her "television parlor," where two walls have been replaced by giant television screens. She sits in the parlor and watches inane programs like the limb-lopping White Clown. She also has a TV "family" of actors and actresses who have conversations with pauses where she can deliver meaningless lines. To increase the mind-numbing, synthetic realism, Mildred begs Montag to buy a third TV wall. Montag, who has discovered the forbidden joy of reading poetry, asks her, "Millie, does the White Clown love you?" Mildred is incapable of understanding the question, and Montag turns resignedly to his books – and to his doom.

As televisions become flatter, larger, and sharper, the age of the television parlor has arrived. Experts acknowledge that the goal of HDTV technology is not strictly to enhance the sharpness of the picture, since the eye can't distinguish past a certain pixel density anyway, but rather to increase the percentage of the visual field contained by the image. Because the resolution is higher, HDTV is designed for viewers to sit closer to the screen than with a comparably tall standard television, while the wider screen occupies more of your peripheral vision. The digital signal practically eliminates interference. With 6-channel Dolby surround sound, HDTV is intended to present viewers with a more compelling "reality" than ever before. The implications of this intent, coupled with the federally mandated replacement of the color TV standard, are unsettling.

Obviously, HDTV will not fix what is fundamentally wrong with television. Many young Americans are, like me, fed up with television: Nielsen surveys indicate an unprecedented decline in television watching by 18- to 25-year old males. The reason we have quit watching television is not that the screen isn't wide enough or the



*Televisions such as this Sony HDTV set will soon become the standard in the modern home due to the FCC's coercive regulation requiring all broadcasters to use the new HD standard by 2006. This shift from analog to digital-only signals would make existing TV sets obsolete.*

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## THE LAST WORD

sound good enough. The reason we have quit watching television is that there isn't any good programming anymore. "Reality" television, which Bradbury predicted fifty years before "My Big Fat Obnoxious Fiancée" premiered on FOX, is not intellectually satisfying.

Although the FCC cannot enforce standards of taste or decency, it can still dictate to broadcasters the standards by which they must transmit the signal itself. Yes, we will now be able to watch the World Series like never before, but won't children be able to see gruesome violence like never before, with the screams of the innocent in 6-channel surround sound? Won't teens, who show tendencies to emulate what negligent parents allow them to see on TV, be even less able to distinguish "reality" from *reality* now that "reality" is even more visually compelling? Won't they be even more inclined to the couch instead of the book or bicycle? As our pixels become denser, won't our progeny as well?

Naturally, individuals have the right to purchase HDTV receivers if they want them. The problem is that the FCC decided that HDTV must replace the existing color

TV standard entirely. Flouting the notion that the government ought to have a compelling reason in order to interfere in the lives of its citizens, the government has forced people to buy adapters or new TV's, and even more importantly, forced broadcasters to spend a great deal on new cameras, editing equipment, and transmitters, leaving television companies with less money to produce quality programming or programming with fewer commercials.

Electronics manufacturers, needless to say, rejoice. Contrast the FCC's decision with the US's adoption of the color television standard, which was compatible with the existing monochrome standard – it basically added a color signal to the monochrome signal. Such augmented standards were rejected by the consortium commissioned to create the HDTV standard and dominated (surprise!) by the electronics industry.

We would do well to remember a speech by FCC Chairman Newton Minnow to the National Association of Broadcasters in 1961. Minnow invited broadcasters to watch their own networks for an entire day.

He assured them that they would find themselves in "a vast wasteland." "You will see a procession of game shows, violence, audience-participation shows, formula comedies about totally unbelievable families, blood and thunder, mayhem, violence, sadism, murder, western badmen, western good men, private eyes, gangsters, more violence and cartoons. And, endlessly, commercials—many screaming, cajoling and offending. And most of all, boredom. True, you will see a few things you will enjoy. But they will be very, very few."

Over forty years later, television is still a vast wasteland, and thanks to the FCC, we now see every grain of sand along the way. P



*John Andrews, Publisher Emeritus, is in the process of completing a B.S.E. concentration in Operations Research and Financial Engineering.*

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