

Freshman Issue

September 2004

# PRINCETON TORY

*Princeton University's ONLY Conservative Student Publication*



## Welcome, Freshmen!

Issues at Hand: The State of Conservatism on Campus  
*plus* Preserving Academic Freedoms  
*and* The Rant

# THE PRINCETON TORY

September 2004  
Volume XXI - Issue IV

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*The Princeton Tory* is a member of the Collegiate Network. *The Princeton Tory* gives special thanks to the Intercollegiate Studies Institute and Princeton Alumni Viewpoints.

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## From the Publisher

Dear freshmen,

Twenty years ago this month, a group of Princeton students led by Yoram Hazony '86, Daniel Polisar '87, and Peter Heinecke '87 decided that the rampant liberalism overtaking Princeton's campus had to be checked in some form. These enterprising individuals founded *The Princeton Tory* as a voice of moderate and conservative political thought to act as a counter to the liberal bias that had saturated the administration and many professors alike. The bad news is that today liberalism is still well entrenched in this educational institution. However, across the nation, liberalism is finding itself caught in a much harder fight to keep its predominance on college campuses. The growing campus conservatism movement is finally taking ground back from its Princeton's liberal overseers. The *Tory* was one of the first student groups to answer the call to arms, and we hold in high esteem those who came before us.



Even with the gains made by our predecessors we still have a lot of work ahead of us. As one of the most-read publications on campus and the only one with a true conservative lean, we have an obligation to further the discussion and debate of conservative ideals and their relation to the politics of the moment. For this objective, we need you. Yes, we need those individuals in the class of 2008 who came to Princeton thinking they would be accepted by their peers for their reasoned, conservative beliefs and instead found themselves isolated and spurned for what they saw as rational common sense.

Our two-fold purpose here is to act as a rallying point for the campus conservatism movement and to facilitate the exchange of ideas in the arena of political thought. For this, we need writers, copy editors, web designers, and people who just want to get out their and fight for a cause. Read the issue. The Freshman Issue is where we highlight some of our strongest articles from last spring and give you a look at what exactly the *Tory* does. If you like what you read, send us an e-mail or find us at the Activities Fair on Friday, September 10th. If you don't find yourself agreeing with our message, read on nevertheless. You'll be surprised how much one can learn from hearing the other side's argument.

With this charge, I proudly present to you the first issue of the *Tory* for the 2004-2005 academic year. I hope many of you enjoy reading it as much as we on the staff enjoy writing it. Welcome to Princeton! May your four years here be intellectually engaging and full of wondrous new experiences.

Sincerely,

Ira Leeds '06  
Publisher

## Letters to the Editors:

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

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THE  
**PRINCETON TORY**

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September 2004

www.princetontory.com

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**The *Tory*  
welcomes the  
Class of 2008!**

*The Princeton Tory Online*  
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# THE RANT

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- The *Tory* tips its hat to Mr. James Douglas of Crawford City, Texas for his even-handed response to Michael Moore's decision to hold a public screening of his most recent piece of cinematic propaganda. Douglas eloquently wrote, "To Michael Moore, from James Douglas, one pile of [expletive] deserves another." Who would have thought one could make such a well-put statement with eight hundred pounds of cow manure?
- A recent informal survey of journalists at the Democratic Convention by the New York Times shows they favor John Kerry for president over President Bush by a 3 to 1 margin, while reporters based in Washington, D.C., support the Massachusetts senator by a 12 to 1 margin. Journalists in Washington D.C. are just as left-leaning as Princeton Professors. No wonder there is such an incredible liberal bias in news coverage.
- The Democratic National Convention featured a colorful list of speakers. Beneath the veneer of good cheer was hostility, however. Speakers included billionaire Teresa Heinz Kerry, the wife of John Kerry and recent convert to the Democratic Party, and Senator Ted Kennedy, the socialist alcoholic warhorse from Massachusetts. Kennedy caused the death of his mistress and campaign worker Mary-Jo Kopechne when he plunged his car off a bridge into a river at Chappaquiddick in 1969 (almost certainly under the influence of alcohol). In 1975, when Teresa Heinz Kerry was married to Republican Congressman John Heinz, she said "I know some couples who stay together only for politics. If Ted Kennedy holds on to that marriage [to ex-wife Joan] just for the Catholic vote, as some people say he does, then I think he's a perfect bast—." No word yet on whether Teresa and Teddy have reconciled.
- Teresa probably regrets what she said in her 1975 interview as much as John Kerry regrets giving an interview to the Harvard Crimson in 1970, in which he said "I'd like to see our troops dispersed through [sic] the world only at the directive of the United Nations." That, Senator, would be nothing short of pure insanity and high treason.
- Hope AND help is on the way? This is almost too good to be true. What's next from the Kerry-Edwards duo, world peace, eradication of hunger, or perhaps hundreds of billions in new taxes to fund this 'hope and help'?
- At a time when Americans have made it clear they wish to see civil discourse in politics, the tirade of Democratic National Convention Director Don Mischer (aired live on CNN) was shocking: "Keep going! Come on, guys, lets move it. Jesus! We need more balloons. I want all balloons to go, G—d—n it. Go confetti. Go confetti. More confetti. I want more balloons. What's happening to the balloons? We need more balloons. We need all of them coming down. Go balloons- balloons? What's happening balloons? There's not enough coming down! All balloons, what the hell! There's nothing falling! What the f— are you guys doing up there?? We want more balloons coming down, more balloons! More balloons! More balloons!" The normal American does not appreciate such on-air profanity. But it hardly comes as a surprise after Whoopi Goldberg's profanity-laced anti-Bush tirade at a Kerry/Edwards fundraiser. The Democratic Party is completely out of touch with the mainstream American values which normal voters find so important.
- According to a July 29th Associated Press article, "Arab militias chained civilians together and set them on fire in Sudan's western Darfur region, where thousands have been killed and over a million displaced during a 17-month conflict, according to a report by an African Union monitoring team." Just as in the Rwanda/Burundi conflict in the 90s, the UN has stepped back and done nothing. When will the UN act to stop innocent killings? More than 30,000 black Sudanese have been killed by Arab militias (Janjaweed) and tens of thousands of black women have been raped. The UN's performance is, as always, unbelievable, especially for an organization which claims to help the poor and vulnerable in the world. The UN seems to be mostly interested in making life as hard as possible for the United States instead of helping those who really need help. In the Security Council, which socialist Europeans love so much, Russia and China (among other delightful regimes) have repeatedly blocked resolutions that would turn up the heat on the Sudanese regime to crack down on the Janjaweed militias. The UN, for the nth time, has proven itself incapable and unwilling of stopping genocide. The US should act to protect the citizens of Sudan if the UN, Russia and China don't.
- The magazine City Journal recently devoted an article to the general quality of life in New York City. The magazine reported that although crime, taxes, and welfare dependency all dropped in New York City from the early 1990s through 2001, under Republican Rudolph Giuliani, they have recently been rising, under Republican-in-name-only (RINO) Michael Bloomberg. Says the article: "The city's total tax burden has been rising—reflecting \$3 billion in tax hikes imposed under Bloomberg since 2002." Mayor Bloomberg: raising taxes has never been a road to prosperity. The NYC bureaucracy is bloated and inefficient. You won't have to look long to find the pork that can be cut from the City bureaucracy. Do what a conservative Republican would do and cut government!
- In the wake of Sandy Berger's inability to hold on to four separate, leather-bound editions of classified documents from the National Archives, there have been a number of D.C. Democrats who have defended the former National Security Adviser on the grounds that this misstep is business as usual for Mr. Berger. The Washington Post reported that many former aides of Mr. Berger actually found this behavior rather typical. "[Berger] was known as someone who would constantly lose track of papers or appointments without subordinates to keep him organized and on schedule." Now that Mr. Berger's management style (or lack thereof) is out in the open, how many times during the Clinton presidency did Mr. Berger endanger the American way of life because he had lost another one of those classified documents, again?

➤ The San Francisco Board of Supervisors recently voted 9-2 to give illegal aliens the right to vote if they have children enrolled in San Francisco's expensive but failed government school monopoly. The U.S. Constitution clearly prohibits non-citizens from voting. Illegal aliens should not be here and should be deported. They should certainly not be allowed to vote! The girlie men of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors need to be stopped in their tracks.

➤ The Court of Bordeaux, France, nullified the country's first homosexual 'marriage' in late July. In a ruling that infuriated radical activists, the court "declared the marriage conducted null." The mayor of Begles who had conducted the marriage, Green Party member Noel Mamere, had already been suspended from his post for a month by Interior Minister Dominique de Villepin on June 15<sup>th</sup>. De Villepin based his decision on a law allowing the suspension of mayors who "gravely misunderstand the duties of their office." Why can't mayors like that be suspended in the US?

➤ A recent paper by the Vatican, written by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (entrusted with guarding spiritual purity), attacked feminist ideology and accused radical feminists of "blurring the biological difference between man and woman". Moreover, notes the document, "Faced with the abuse of power, the answer for women is to seek power. This process leads to opposition between men and women ... which has its most immediate and lethal effects in the structure of the family." The document, which received the blessing of Pope John Paul II, also observes that radical feminism's view of equality "has in reality inspired ideologies which for example call into question the family, in its natural two-parent structure of mother and father, and to make homosexuality and heterosexuality virtually equivalent..." More than any other factor, radical feminism has contributed to the disintegration of the American family in recent decades. Fortunately, the Vatican is doing all it can to turn back the clock on radical feminism. Thank God.

➤ Kudos to the California Performance Review Board. According to the Associated Press, which obtained a preliminary copy of their proposal in late July, the Board will propose eliminating 12,000 state jobs and hundreds of state boards and commissions for a possible savings of \$32 billion over the next five years. Getting California back on track will not just require low spending growth; it will also require tax cuts for overtaxed Californians. There will only be room for tax cuts if spending is also cut, however, and this Report can be used for cutting spending where it needs to be cut.

➤ In a move that has infuriated France's communist labor union, the CGT, French Prime Minister Raffarin has said [gasp] that "we need to increase the total number of hours worked." France's mandatory 35-hour workweek has been blamed for worsening the country's unemployment crisis. Unemployment in France has stood at about 10% for decades and has been rising recently. But the true problem in France's economy is not the length of the workweek, but the extraordinary inflexibility in the French labor market. If companies in France want to lay off employees, according to analysts interviewed in the International Herald Tribune, they are "obliged to enter layoff negotiations with work councils. The negotiations often take months - and sometimes years - to resolve. These tend to involve costly severance and retraining programs." American-style flexibility in the labor market is what France really needs. France

remains the world's fourth largest economy and the No. 2 recipient of foreign investment in the world but getting the French economy growing again will require strong medicine. The French unemployment rate, about 100% higher than the American unemployment rate, leaves France no other choice.

➤ Shortly before Congress adjourned for recess, the House passed the Marriage Protection Act 233 to 194. This bill would deny "all federal courts, including the Supreme Court, jurisdiction to rule on the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act." This is a fascinating development; for the first time in many years, the House has used Article III, Section II of the U.S. Constitution, which allows Congress to put strict limits on the appellate jurisdiction of the Federal Supreme Court. For Americans opposed to left-wing dictates coming from unelected Federal judges, the House vote was a great victory. Federal Courts should not be able to push gay marriage on the American people.

➤ As wonderful as Senator Kerry's wish to rebuild international alliances seems, how does he intend to do this? With France's Jacques Chirac playing the 'I hate America with all my mind, heart, and soul' game in order to win re-election for himself in the future and Germany's Gerhard Schröder as his playmate, we find Senator Kerry's wish hard to realize. Maybe Kerry can take a portion of his wife's \$1 billion and buy Chirac and Schröder first-class tickets to the US, where he could treat the leaders of the Axis of Chocolate Making Countries to a day in his \$9.18 million summer home in Nantucket complete with a trip onboard his 42-foot luxury yacht, the Scaramouche. Then again, of course, he could decide to take Jacques and Gerhard skiing at his opulent \$4.9 million Idaho estate, or he could show them around Washington and invite them to stay at his \$4.7 million luxury Georgetown town house. It speaks of itself that John Edwards, the frivolous trial lawyer, could also house the dynamic duo for a night at his eight-bedroom, 6,672-square-foot, \$3.8 million Washington D.C. home. On second thought, Kerry and Edwards can't risk looking like the multimillionaires they are because they may offend those mere middle class mortals in their party. And of course, no good Democratic candidate can have that happen.

➤ In his book "Speaker: Lessons from Forty Years in Coaching and Politics," Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert (R) says he will push for replacing the nation's current income tax system with a national sales tax or a value added tax. "People ask me if I'm really calling for the elimination of the IRS, and I say I think that's a great thing to do for future generations of Americans." House Majority Leader DeLay, a long-time supporter of a national sales tax, already told a conference in March this year that that House Republicans will have hearings and push the issue in 2005 and 2006. The current Federal Income Tax Code is about 35,000 pages long. The Internal Revenue Service, in charge of making life very difficult for taxpayers, sends out 8 billion pages of forms and instructions each year. Laid end-to-end, they would stretch 28 times around the earth. Nearly 300,000 trees are cut down yearly to produce paper for IRS forms and instructions. Count on Democrats to ferociously resist abolishing the I.R.S. and sparing law-abiding Americans the cruelty of the tax man.

➤ Teresa Heinz Kerry as First Lady of the United States? We'll pass...

# POLLING PRINCETON

## Examining conservatism from opposing political perspectives

**Dateline: March 2004**

*Powell Fraser '06*

*While for years the Tory has been diligent about reporting the opinions of its writers and editors, we have discovered a newfound interest in general campus opinion. Each subsequent issue will contain an opinion poll administered by Tory staffers and analysis by an editor. We encourage you to take part in these polls whether you are liberal or conservative so that we can keep the Tory fresh and relevant.*

Upon emerging from Paul Sigmund's POL 304: Conservative Political Thought, I still felt as though one of my major questions remained unresolved. Professor Sigmund asked this question himself on the first day of the class that he claimed would span "from Plato to NATO," and urged that we all try to resolve it for ourselves: what is conservatism?

He proposed several possibilities. Perhaps conservatism represents a reactionary allegiance to the status quo and a militant opposition to any sort of change. This seems rather short-sighted, however, and lacking an ideological foundation. By the end of the course, I concluded that conservatives could be classified by their stances in five categories: social, economic, fiscal, defense, and foreign policy. At any given time, all five elements are playing a crucial role in American conservatism. But which of these issues truly drives conservative ideology?

While answering such a question on the abstract level could be Senior Thesis material, I decided that I could easily get a sense for what Princeton Conservatism is. Naturally I encounter what I perceive to be Princeton Conservatism on a daily basis in interacting with my Tory compatriots, but a poll would be far more effective in learning the true leanings of the average Princetonian.

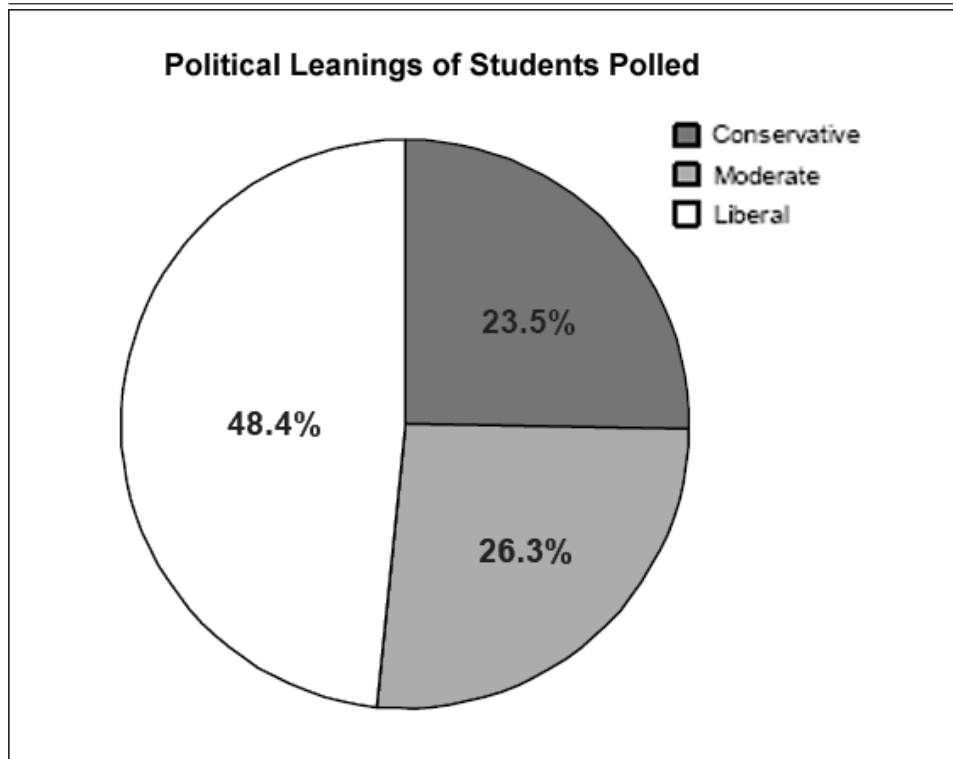
A recent poll conducted by members of the Tory and written by myself sought to define the political environment at Princeton. Students were questioned about

When asked about their political orientation, 25.3% of students identified themselves as conservatives; 26.3% identified themselves as moderates; and 48.4%

***"Perhaps it means that for the average conservative, social and moral concerns stem from something other than religion. What liberals may perceive as religious bigotry can be better explained as a genuine secular respect for the moral institutions of our country that have made it strong."***

their political leanings, their perceptions of conservatism, and their feelings about the Tory. The latter category was intended to inspire responses from ardent leftists who would usually rather die than help the Tory in any fashion but would jump at the chance to criticize it.

identified themselves as liberals. So Princeton students are liberal – we were positively shocked, shocked. Despite this bias, we also found that 57.9% of students polled reported reading the Tory. Simple arithmetic reveals that some liberals must be reading the Tory – score one point for



*An analysis of the survey shows that a greater number of Princeton undergraduates self-identify as "liberal" rather than "conservative" or "moderate."*  
 Source: Tory Convenience Poll, February 2004

## CAMPUS POLL

open-mindedness, or at least “know thy enemy.”

Participants then moved on to a series of questions about what conservatism means to them. 50.3% of students polled thought that moral and social policy was the most important aspect of conservatism, with economic policy coming in second at 29.5%.

Results were slightly different when students were asked what they thought the *second* most important item was on the conservative agenda. Here the winner was economic policy with 30.5%, followed by homeland security and defense at 22.1%. In general, results were more varied for this second question.

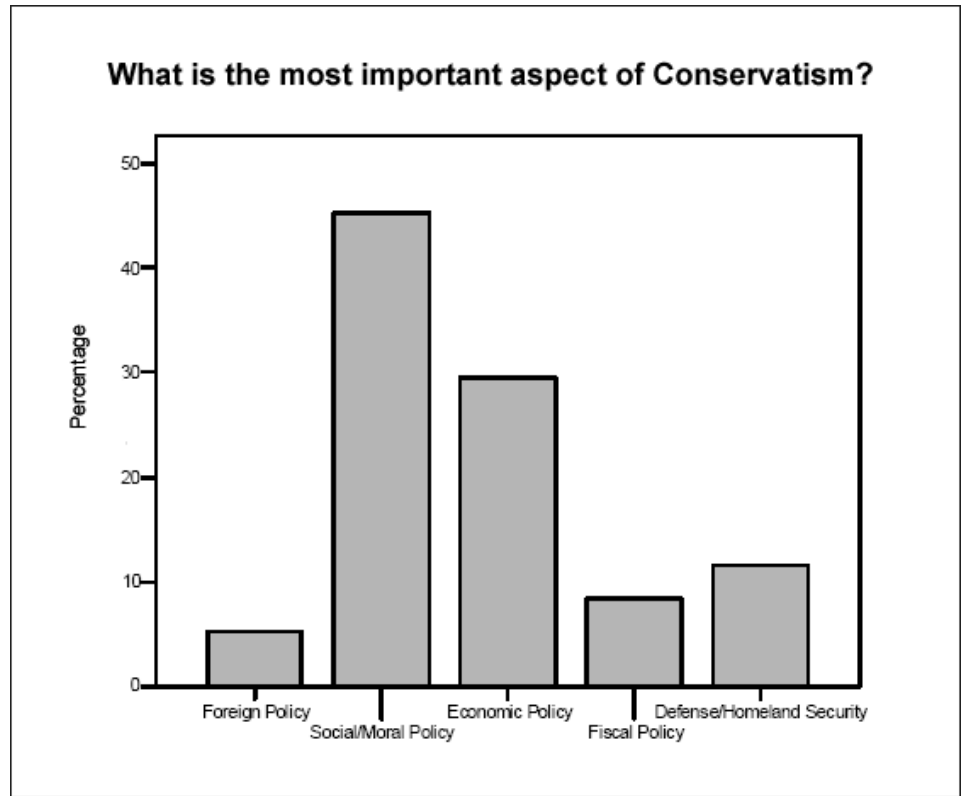
Breaking these responses down into categories based on the leanings of those surveyed, we found that social policy led in all three groups: 41.7% of self-proclaimed conservatives placed social and moral policy at the forefront of their ideology; 48% of moderates thought that moral policy was at the center of the conservative agenda; and 41.3% of liberals pegged morals at the top of conservatism. Economic policy placed second in all three groups in this question.

These results confirmed my suspicion that most liberals see conservatives as living in a state of perpetual moral outrage, kindled by the recent Lawrence v. Texas decision and the wildfire-style spread of gay marriage. I had been hoping to reveal a cer-

tain diversity of conservatism (pardon the contradiction in terms), while instead the poll only seemed to confirm the moral obsession of conservatism.

Like any good statistician, however, I knew that responses were based largely on how a question is phrased, so I asked a

similar question in different format later in the survey. Conservatives were asked to describe the role that religion plays in their political views on a scale of 1 to 10, ten being the highest, while liberals were asked to predict the response of the average conservative on the same scale.



*When Princeton students were asked, in their opinion, what was the first most important aspect of conservatism, social/moral policy overwhelmingly dominated the other possibilities. Source: Tory Convenience Poll, February 2004*

**YES!** I want to help *The Princeton Tory* keep conservatism strong at Princeton. I am enclosing my tax-deductible contribution for:

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<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500
<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000
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The conservative mean was 5.31, while the liberal mean was 7.46. In other words, liberals overestimated the religiosity of conservatives by about 2 points in this poll. The median values revealed a similar relationship: the conservative median was 6, while the liberal median was 8. 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 on the matter. It seems conservatives are both more diverse and less religious than liberals perceive.

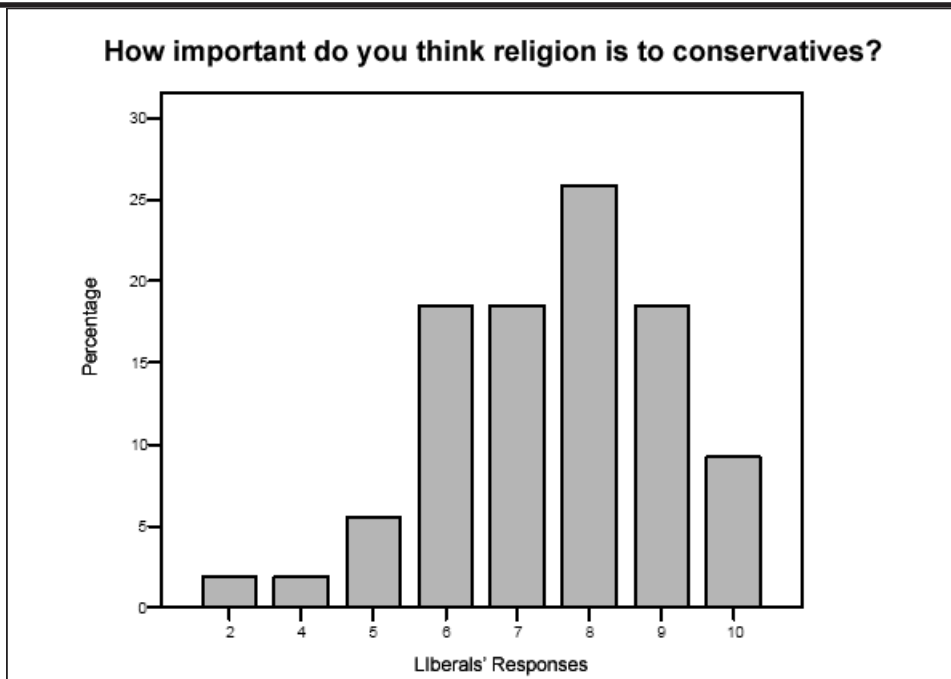
I was surprised to find how little conservatives polled seemed to care about defense and homeland security – only 8% ranked it as their #1 priority. Liberals, on the other hand, seemed convinced that it was paramount for conservatives at the rate of 20%. Similarly little attention was paid to foreign policy, which stood at the forefront of national debate prior to the Iraq war.

What, then, does this say about the types of conservatism? Perhaps it means that for the average conservative, social and moral concerns stem from something other than religion. What liberals may perceive as religious bigotry can be better explained as a genuine secular respect for the moral institutions of our country that have made it strong. Meanwhile, economic conservatism remains a powerful element in the right wing of today as conservatives support the economic institutions that have made our country prosperous.

In a time period that has been dominated by talk of terrorism and war, Princeton conservatives still seem ideologically focused on moral and economic issues. Princeton liberals, meanwhile, seem confused as to what drives conservative ideology. This poll leaves some major abstract questions unanswered as a result of its confinement to the empirical world – the Aristotelian approach to analysis. Anyone wishing to find true definitions to all these terms should consider the “Plato to NATO” course of learning and visit Professor Sigmund.



*Powell Fraser '06 is a Politics major from Atlanta, GA. The commodore of the Sailing Team, he interned this summer with a D.C. lobbying group.*

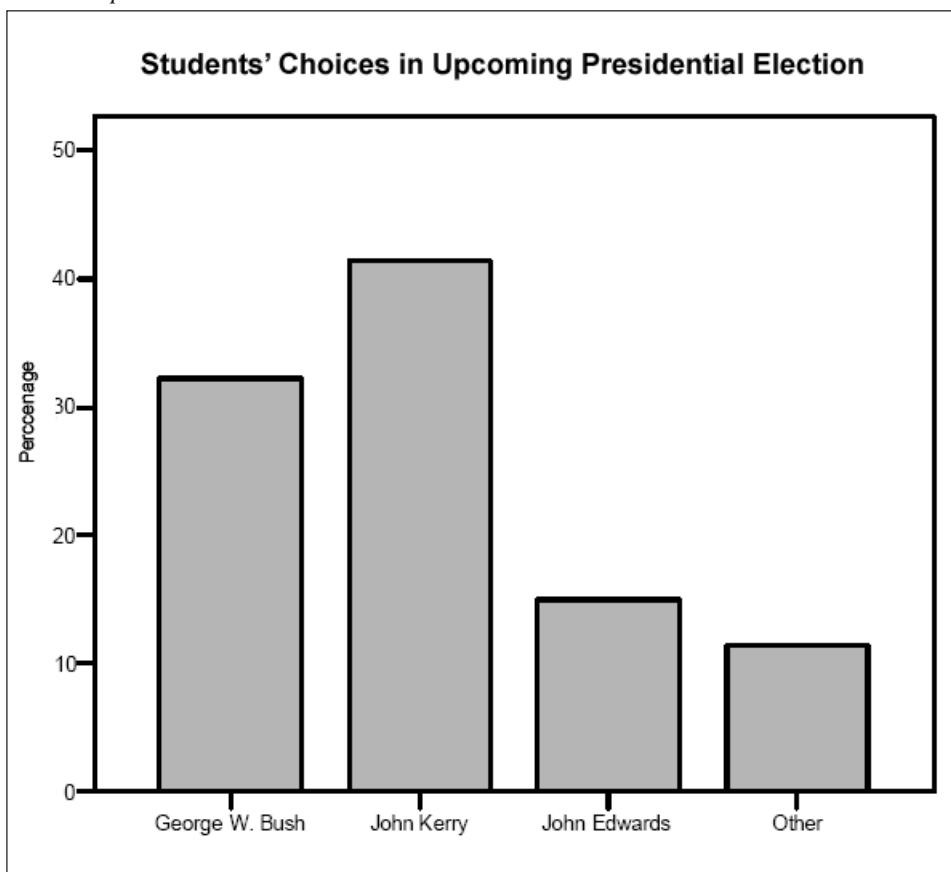


*When conservatives were asked to score the importance of religion in shaping their political views, there was significant variance across all values. When liberals were asked the same question, there was a clear consensus at the higher end of the range.*

*Source: Tory Convenience Poll, February 2004*

## More polling data...

*The Tory's most recent convenience poll also asked for students' opinions in regards to the 2004 presidential election.*



*Students were asked which of the above candidates they were most likely to support in the upcoming presidential election. It's nice to see that even on Princeton's predominantly liberal campus, George W. Bush still has a following.*

*Source: Tory Convenience Poll, February 2004*



# CENSORSHIP INSIDE THE IVORY TOWER

Speech codes and academic freedom on college campuses

**Dateline: March 2004**

*Clarke Smith '07*

At Princeton today, freedom of speech is under attack by a speech code embedded in the code of conduct. Cornerstone values such as free expression and tolerance of diverse intellectual ideas are threatened by restrictions imposed in the name of promoting tolerance and "diversity". These restrictions are extremely vague and there is a strong risk of arbitrary enforcement by an overwhelmingly liberal faculty and administration. Speech restrictions result in making the university intolerant towards controversial viewpoints, viewpoints that should be discussed in a respectful manner in a university setting.

In Princeton's *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*, in the section "Respect for Others," a speech code is explicitly imposed in broad language. This speech code fails to preclude subjective interpretation and, even worse, subjective and politicized enforcement. The Princeton speech code states that "Abusive or harassing behavior, verbal or physical, which demeans, intimidates, threatens, or injures another because of his or her personal characteristics or beliefs, is subject to University disciplinary sanctions." *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities* proceeds to define "Sexual Harassment" as "verbal or physical conduct [that] has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work, academic performance, or living

conditions by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment."

Speech that "demeans" or "[creates] an offensive environment" cannot be defined objectively; different people have widely different ideas of what "demeaning" speech consists of. The allegedly aggrieved party is empowered to identify anything inconsistent with his or her own orthodoxy as something creating a "hostile... environment." Restrictions are so vaguely defined that anyone who feels offended by someone else's opinion can claim that the opinion is offensive, and the offender should be punished. Such a speech code codifies the importance of an alleged victims' subjective response over the objective content of the offending speech. In this manner, any unpopular speech (read: conservative or moderate speech) can be silenced outright.

Princeton seems to be moving in the direction of even more restrictions and

censorship, with the prospect of the introduction of a so-called Social Honor Code. This code would require students to sign a statement that will limit their speech in order to promote tolerance and diversity on campus, as well as combat Princeton's "spirit of exclusion." Signing the statement would not only would show that student's approval of censorship, but also it would give the university more power to inflict stricter punishments.

Restrictions on speech, however, are by no means limited to Princeton and are a widespread problem at universities today. Indeed, at many other universities, speech restrictions are just pervasive as the Social Honor Code and enforced in truly draconian manners. According to the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, or FIRE, "Colleges and universities routinely punish students and faculty for their speech, their writings, and their membership in cam-



*Perhaps former Princeton President John Witherspoon's rousing lectures and sermons would have been deemed "offensive" by many modern day speech codes.*

pus groups.” Speech codes rose to prominence in the late 1980s, accompanying the rise of political correctness in society at large. Speech codes were based on the idea that the university environment had to be free from hateful or offensive speech in order to provide a comfortable learning environment for all students, especially minorities. The codes were also intended to promote general tolerance on campus. By the early 90s, the restrictions on speech took the form of a formalized code, and were common at both public and private universities.

In response to various racist acts by students, including distribution of racist material and racial epithets, for example, the University of Michigan enacted a speech code in the late 1980s. The code outlawed physical and verbal behavior that was threatening or created a hostile environment for minorities or involved unwanted sexual advances. Some violations of the code included excluding a minority from a study group, telling jokes about gays, laughing at a joke about someone who stutters, and displaying the Confederate flag. The University of Wisconsin also enacted a speech code in the late 1980s in response to racist behavior on the part of its fraternities. The content of this code was similar to that of the Michigan one, and any speech or behavior that met a set of four criteria was punishable. The code prohibited any speech or action that was “racist or discriminatory; directed at an individual; demean[ing to] the race, sex, religion, color, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or age of the individual



*What would the world have lost if its greatest academics had decided not to challenge the status quo ideology of their age? Could their philosophies have even come about without academic freedom?*

Michigan, a psychology graduate student brought about the case because he feared he would be punished for his studies about racial and gender-based biological differences. On September 22, 1989, Federal District Judge Avern Cohn ruled that the code was unconstitutional as it prohibited protected speech and was so vague that it could be arbitrarily enforced. In the University of Wisconsin case, the charges were filed by the student newspaper at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, the UWM Post. In the case *UWM Post v. Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin*, Federal District Judge Robert Warren ruled on

Despite numerous court rulings that speech codes are unconstitutional, colleges have continued to restrict freedom of speech. Instead of having open speech codes, colleges now insert restrictions on speech into general rules of conduct, much like Princeton has inserted speech restrictions into its *Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities*. Deceptively, public universities continue to restrict speech and private universities now hide their restrictions in general codes of conduct in order to avoid stigma.

Much like the code at Princeton, codes at other universities use extremely vague language that not only prohibits “offensive” speech, but also outlaws the creation of “a hostile environment.” The vagueness of the language prevents consistent or fair enforcement. Moreover, the speech restrictions promote a politically correct view of tolerance, so that politically-incorrect comments or comments objecting to leftist orthodoxy can lead to punishment.

There are some flagrant and truly disturbing examples of leftist enforcement bias. At Shippensburg University, a state school in Pennsylvania, last April, two conservative students felt that they could not express any of their views, as they would be suspended if they did. The unconstitutional speech code made the campus atmosphere so pervasive and intolerant that the students felt compelled to sue the school, with the help of FIRE, in order to eliminate the code. Across the country last fall, universities stepped in and shut down

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***Speech restrictions result in making  
the university intolerant of controversial viewpoints,  
viewpoints that should be discussed  
in a respectful manner in a university setting.***

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addressed; and create an intimidating, hostile or demeaning environment for education, university-related work, or other university-authorized activity.”

While there is nothing wrong with seeking to avoid the occurrence of racist incidents, speech codes can be interpreted so broadly that even criticizing the reparations movement can be considered “racist”. Both of the aforementioned speech codes were challenged by students who felt them to be violations of their First Amendment rights. In the case *Doe v. University of*

October 11, 1991 that the University of Wisconsin speech code was also unconstitutional as it “attempted to regulate the content of speech.” As Judge Cohn ruled in the Michigan decision, a public university could not “establish an anti-discrimination policy which had the effect of prohibiting certain speech because it disagrees with the ideas or messages sought to be conveyed...Nor could the University proscribe speech because it was found to be offensive, even gravely so, by large numbers of people.”

“Affirmative Action Bake Sales,” where conservative student groups sold cookies for one dollar to white males, for 75 cents to white females, for 50 cents to Hispanics, and for 25 cents to blacks, in order to protest affirmative action. The University of Washington, Southern Methodist University, and The College of William and Mary, and Colorado University all shut these bake sales down, censoring the conservative students involved. The president of the University of Washington defended his decision by claiming that “The statements of the UW College Republicans in putting on a bake sale about affirmative action were tasteless, divisive and hurtful to many members of the university community.” The College of William and Mary and Colorado University, under heavy pressure from FIRE and other free speech advocacy groups, eventually allowed the bake sale to go forward, but the administrations at both institutions refused to admit wrongdoing.

The restrictions on speech even pervade to speech inside the classroom so that some ideas may be taught and others may not, severely limiting academic freedom. In 1998 at Harvard, Stephan Thernstrom, a history professor, came under fire for offering a politically-incorrect but accurate definition of affirmative action. In the same vein, a law professor at Columbia was charged in 1999 with violating that school’s

sexual harassment policy for issuing a criminal law exam dealing with issues such as abortion and violence against women. Students are also often punished in the classroom for expressing ideas that go against liberal orthodoxy. Students in a criminology class at a Colorado University were told to write an essay on why President Bush was a war criminal. When one student instead wrote why Saddam Hussein was the war criminal, she was given a failing grade. At Metro State College in Denver, a student

wrote the book *It’s OK to Leave the Plantation*. In his book, Weaver argues that African-Americans are too dependent on government programs. A number of students who informally gathered in the center noticed Hinkle posting the flier and tried to prevent him from putting it up. They threatened to call the campus police when Hinkle offered to discuss the issue. After Hinkle left, the students called the police and filed a complaint against him. The Cal Poly Judicial Office took up the case and found Hinkle

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***Only when a free and honest exchange of ideas exists,  
without restrictions favoring liberal opinion,  
will the university be a place where truth  
can be actively pursued.***

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who was a Special Forces instructor and had served his country in Panama, the Gulf War, Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq was told by his professor that he was “racist” and “violent” and that his uniform was an “offense to the class.”

Students who sponsor conservative speakers also run the risk of facing disciplinary consequences: Gonzaga University officials placed a disciplinary letter in the file of the College Republicans after they posted flyers around campus advertising a speech by Dan Flynn and included the title of his book, “Why the Left Hates America.” Administrators claimed that the use of the word “hate” was “discriminatory” and could be considered “hate speech.” The students were also forced to modify their flyer to make it clearer that the phrase was the title of Flynn’s book.

At Cal Poly University, student Steven Hinkle attempted to post a flier in a public area of the campus Multicultural Center. The flier advertised a speech by Mason Weaver, an African American conservative who

was guilty of “disrupting a campus event” and was required to write letters of apology to the students he offended. The Foundation of Individual Rights in Education is currently suing the University in federal court for violating Hinkle’s First Amendment rights.

The university environment should be a place of academic freedom where free expression and a free exchange of ideas can take place. In attempting to create a tolerant and accepting atmosphere, those who create speech restrictions not only suppress free expression but also fail to achieve their stated intent of either creating a tolerant campus atmosphere or providing all students with a safe and comfortable learning environment. The restrictions end up making the university more intolerant, as views that are controversial (read: conservative) are not accepted, regardless of their possible merit. A free exchange of ideas is essential to a solid university experience, of course, and the university is the ideal setting for debates on controversial viewpoints. As they promote intolerance, restrictions on speech are ultimately self-defeating.

The restrictions send the message that controversial (conservative) views lack value and should be suppressed; these controversial viewpoints often challenge students’ long-held beliefs, however. Having one’s beliefs challenged leads students to acquire new knowledge or truth. By only allowing viewpoints that will not offend anyone to be presented, fewer students will be led to challenge their beliefs. This leads to a sterile and intolerant learning environ-



*Taken to their logical extremes, speech codes could one day be used to expel campus religious organizations for making other students “uncomfortable.” Will the chapel serve as a campus center annex?*

# AN OBSOLETE FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT?

## Revisiting the economics of financial aid

**Dateline: May 2004**

**Paul Thompson '06**

It's always great to hear and see Princeton University dropping the statistic that around half of the student body gets some form of financial aid and that none of that aid comes in the form of loans. Admission decisions at Princeton should certainly be made on a need-blind basis. But by allowing students to get the best undergraduate education in the world at a greatly reduced cost, these grants necessarily introduce a separation between costs and benefits. Separations of costs and benefits usually lead to problems by distorting behavior and creating inefficiencies. This phenomenon is not unique to Princeton, but is spreading everywhere and becoming a prominent issue in national politics.

Conventional political thinking holds that a college education should only cost full price for those who can afford it. During the Democratic primaries, John Edwards campaigned on a proposal to provide a free freshman year of college to students that would work a part-time job. His reasoning? It didn't hurt him to work in order to pay for his education. In fact, he implied that he is better off because of it. Maybe that logic flies at the Association of Trial Lawyers of America, but in reality, most *Tory* readers can figure out that he's pulling a fast one on them. John Edwards actually said that he strove to do better in college as a result of the hard work he had to endure while paying for it, evidence against his own policy proposal.

Although Edwards may be out of the presidential race, his ideas have found a place in John Kerry's platform. One of Kerry's new initiatives is the "Service for College Plan" in which he pledges to give four years of college tuition to a student attending a state institution in exchange for two years of government service on the part

of the student. Along with his "Service for College Plan," the Kerry campaign created a "Misery Index" which uses college tuition as one of its main components. According to the Kerry campaign's study that produced his "Misery Index," public university tuition has increased 13% from 2000 to 2003. That would be an alarming increase for any other good during a period when the Federal Reserve openly feared an outbreak of *deflation*. Underneath all the rhetoric, however, introductory economics is at work. What actually happened was that the true cost of a university education started to reveal itself when states finally realized that artificially low prices (tuitions) could not be maintained in a time of economic difficulties.

Curiously, private university tuition increased by only 5% during that period. This is further evidence that the large increases in tuition at public institutions aren't due to inflation; it is simply a shift in the burden of who is paying for it. In an economic sense, this shift of the cost burden is actually a good thing because it creates a stronger link between those who are paying and those who benefit.

Anyone who keeps up on past and present economic indicators knows that inflation has been quite low for the past four years (another reason for Kerry's new "Misery" metric). So in that light, even the 5% increase in private tuition sounds rather steep, right? Well, no. Higher education doesn't benefit the way normal businesses do from increases in productivity. Lectures and precepts are still at least fifty minutes long and it doesn't look as if they'll be getting shorter any time soon. The library is still going to buy scholarly journals that nobody reads. These are a couple of reasons why tuition increases faster than the prices of goods from businesses that actively seek new ways to stretch their dollars further. This contrast between the practices

of academia and normal businesses is the ubiquitous example used by intro textbook authors to show the economics of productivity at work in the students' own lives.

Looking back, remember Kerry's "Service for College Plan?" If you think about it, Kerry's plan would pay students in terms of college tuition. We know from the previous paragraph that such a form of aid is a wage that would grow much faster than the rate of inflation. Such a job is great if you can get it. Of course there is only one place other than academia that offers this kind of increase in pay without a comparable increase in productivity: government.

How is all this applicable to Princeton? We at Princeton have a similar separation that exists because of financial aid, and there are two main detrimental consequences: it discourages saving both before and during college and it reduces the prudence of those that control the university budget.

Given Princeton's and other top colleges' generous aid packages, what is the incentive to save before and after enrolling? Princeton essentially says that it will request portions of the assets that a student and his or her parents have and annually change the parental contribution based on changes in a family's financial situation. Right away, you can see that any prior financial planning or improvement in a family's financial situation will find its way into Princeton's coffers. The present system hits hardest those families and students who planned ahead for college by saving. These families are those from the middle class who choose to live modestly but have a mid to high net worth. At the other end, the families who get off easiest are those that have a moderate to high annual income, but rather than saving it, consume it. These families have a low or even negative net worth because of outstanding debt. The University encourages consumption further by

excluding a family's home equity from its aid calculations. Word to the wise: buy an expensive home before coming to Princeton.

As a reader who is skeptical of the *Tory*, you might be thinking the previous paragraph is a load of misinformation. To the contrary, a recent article in the *New York Times* (the preferred newspaper of skeptical *Tory* readers) about the increasing proportion of high-income students at top

colleges states: "Colleges have meanwhile increased tuition rapidly, causing the number of students on financial aid to jump and creating an impression that they are from a wider economic spectrum than in the past. In reality, financial aid simply stretches far higher up the income ladder than before."<sup>1</sup>

The statistics behind the article came from a study done at UCLA in 2000 that found that 55% of college students came from families with incomes in the top quartile of the U.S. population whereas only 33% came from families in the middle 50%. That is in stark contrast to a similar study performed in 1986, which found that the percentages of students from those same income categories were 46% and 41%, respectively.<sup>2</sup> At Princeton, a third of current aid recipients have household income of \$100,000 or higher.<sup>3</sup> From these data, one can see that financial aid is not solely the domain of the truly downtrodden. As a result, the current system of aid is even failing at its highest purpose, which is to further socioeconomic diversity of the student body.

The second consequence of Princeton's financial aid system is a lack of fiscal discipline on the part of the administration. When only the "lucky" students must pay for increases in the budget, there is little incentive to restrain increased spending—or tuition increases. *Tory* alum Brad Simmons took up this issue last year on the pages of the *Prince*, recommending that either a non-aid parent be granted a seat on the Priorities Committee or that the University tap into its largesse to greatly reduce tuition for *all* students. William Robinson countered Simmons with the "lucky" argument and that Princeton's tuition was comparable to that of its peers. Robinson's response was a nice way of saying that



Professor Robert Shiller

Princeton will simply rest on its laurels for the time being. That type of response to a valid concern is troubling for Princeton's future, not to mention to the "lucky" families whose good fortune is becoming harder to afford. Something must be done to change the status quo.

While perusing the *Wall Street Journal Online* last summer, an interview with Yale economist Robert Shiller grabbed my attention. Shiller wrote

the prescient bestseller *Irrational Exuberance*, published in 2000, in which he explained reasons the stock market's ascent was unsustainable. Shiller said that the funding crises that many states were facing in higher education could be prevented in the future by private funds that invest in college students. He mentioned the only currently existing fund called MyRichUncle (MRU). What MRU does is not complicated; in fact, it is so simple that it and other funds like it could revolutionize the way higher education is financed.

MyRichUncle grants students money (literally investing in them) to put towards the payment of tuition. In exchange for the investment, students agree to pay MRU a certain percentage of their future income for a fixed period of time. Once that fixed period is over, students are no longer obligated to the company for anything. Through this form of financing, what the student pays to MRU is exactly proportional to what he or she gained from college. An added bonus is that students will never have the crushing burden of debt from student loans because there is no principal to be repaid.

These investments in students eliminate the unfair consumption effect of traditional financial aid and shield students from poor budgeting on the part of administrators. They also open the door on a new way for states to fulfill their obligations to higher education. They could do the same thing as MRU by simply granting students a certain amount of money to be used at any accredited institution in the United States and then increase the students' post-graduate income tax rate. After implementing such a policy change, states could privatize their universities and allocate their resources elsewhere. This type of funding

structure would eliminate the need for the federal government to support the states through programs like Kerry's.

Since MRU is an investment fund, it is only natural that certain students will be more valued than others. Engineers and finance majors will probably have a smaller portion of their incomes taken by MRU than students who pursue the humanities. Many academics will lament this, but MRU and funds like it will naturally act as Adam Smith's invisible hand, nudging students into the areas which society values most.

The only barrier to accessing this windfall for college students is ignorance. My proposal to solve this problem would be for Princeton to establish a working relationship with MyRichUncle or a similar company. Such a relationship benefits Princeton by putting it on the cutting edge of college finance and it benefits MyRichUncle by putting it into contact with some of the most ambitious students in the country. At the very least, I hope the University would provide a link on its financial aid website to MyRichUncle to show current and potential students how they can leave Princeton without debt even if they don't get the aid they expected. You can check it out for yourself at [www.myrichuncle.com](http://www.myrichuncle.com).

Princeton has a chance to gain an advantage over its peers again in the college admissions battle and make attending this institution as affordable as it will ever be. Let's hope the ball starts rolling soon.



Notes

<sup>1</sup> Leonhardt, David. "As Wealthy Fill Top College, New Efforts to Level the Field." *New York Times*. 22 April 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Leonhardt, David. "As Wealthy Fill Top College, New Efforts to Level the Field." *New York Times*. 22 April 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Burdman, Pamela. "Dollars & Sense." *Princeton Alumni Weekly*. 23 April 2003. *Princeton Alumni Weekly*. 23 April 2003.



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# A LAMB GONE ASTRAY

## Kerry demands of faith and profession

Dateline: May 2004

Christian Sahner '07

Senator John Kerry, the incumbent Democratic presidential candidate, claims to be Catholic, yet he sure doesn't vote like one. In truth, Kerry's legislative record reveals a consistent tendency toward positions largely antithetical to Church teachings; and although Catholic America would no doubt appreciate another JFK in the White House (the only Catholic president to date), the morally dubious Kerry is quickly becoming less appealing to many Catholic voters. A staunch supporter of abortion rights and stem cell research, Kerry has also been predictably soft on issues involving homosexual marriage and contraception. While the US Catholic bishops have voiced unwavering opposition to these issues, their objections have fallen on deaf ears; Senator Kerry and other liberal Catholic politicians continue to support legislation contrary to the Church's position. The bishops, however, have begun to respond in a potent, albeit unconventional manner.

The controversy began in January following the appointment of Raymond Burke as the Archbishop of St. Louis. Frustrated by the failure of verbal reprimands to lasso in the radical voting of many Catholic politicians, Burke took action, promising to deny communion to any public servant who upheld abortion rights. Catholics believe that the Eucharist, consecrated at Mass, is the literal body of Jesus Christ with the power to forgive sins and restore grace. Accordingly, prior to receiving the Eucharist, the recipient must be free of sin. Otherwise, both he and the presiding cleric disrespect the Host, thereby committing a grave sin in itself. While transgressions such as infidelity, murder, and dishonesty immediately spring to mind as examples of sin, promoting an unethical

ideology or policy is an equal injustice—especially when it enables the disrespect of human life. Therefore, politicians such as Senator Kerry do a great disservice to themselves, the priest, the Church, and to God when they partake of the Eucharist while still living in a state of sin.

Not surprisingly, Bishop Burke's decision was met with mixed opinion. Liberal groups expressed outrage, crying wolf over his "insidious" efforts to "usurp" the political process; they decried Burke's transgression of the First Amendment, calling him a "fanatic" and "zealot." Traditional Catholics, however, voiced support for the bishop, among them Princeton's Robert George, who confirmed Burke's authority to deny Communion and praised his pro-active stance. No matter the

reaction, it was clear: the bishop's statement had struck a chord.

But in truth, did Burke's call to deny Communion to anti-life politicians cross the line? While some may object, Burke's decision was protected by both ecclesiastic and secular law. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the bishops "sanctify [the Church] by their example, 'not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock,'" (883). Furthermore, "the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop" (2179). In short, he has a mandated duty to guide and discipline and his congregation. Conversely, by choosing membership in the Church, a Catholic tacitly consents to follow the Bishop's word. Burke is not coercing



With a growing number of Catholic priests refusing communion to Catholic politicians disobeying doctrinal matters is Senator Kerry's right to communion in jeopardy?

politicians in any manner; rather, he is asserting that a condition for Communion, and thus for membership in the Catholic Church, is adherence to certain moral principles. Of course, neither federal nor state law obliges anyone to follow doctrine, but nor does it protect the right to receive a sacrament, nor enable the government to interfere with ecclesiastic administration: the First Amendment works both ways. Therefore, non-Church organizations have no power to censure the Bishop, nor any other ecclesiastic authority which acts within its own sphere of influence. In reality, to reprimand the Bishop would be a grave infringement of religious freedom, endangering Church-State relations more than Burke's current actions may or may not have done.

A Catholic's moral obligation to obey the Church is not purely an issue of following the rules; instead, it represents allegiance to universal truth. In other words, Catholic moral teaching is not valid *only* by virtue of its Catholicism, but also, by virtue of the objective truth vested therein, often called "natural law." Furthermore, natural law is accessible to everyone, regardless of denomination or creed. Thus theoretically, every politician—Catholic, Jew, Muslim, Hindu, and atheist alike—should understand and adhere to the natural law. But in the case of Senator Kerry and his ilk, they have explicitly chosen membership in the Church, and are consequently obliged to follow its moral teaching. As the Vatican's *Doctrinal Note on Some Questions Regarding the Participation of Catholics in Political Life* (2002) asserts, "For Catholic moral doctrine, the rightful autonomy of the political or civil sphere from that of religion and the Church—but not from that of morality—is a value that has been attained and recognized by the Catholic Church and belongs to inheritance of contemporary civilization." As the document later notes, imposing religion on state law inevitably leads to strife. But the pro-life, pro-family position is the same as our public obligation to the poor, elderly, downtrodden, and weak: they are not exclusively religious, but global. Simply because morality may be associated with a religious institution, its bearing on the general population by no means diminishes. The natural law pervades every realm of the public sphere: it instructs us to fight racism, to ensure freedom, to guard property, and to protect human dignity. Like the pro-life, pro-family position, these are Catholic principles, yet also public truths.

And as Pope John Paul II wrote in *Faith and Reason*, "Truth and Freedom are either joined together or together they perish in misery."

Judging from Bishop Burke's position, it would seem consistent to deny Communion to *all* those who supported an ideology against the grain of moral law. Indeed, that is what many of his critics have suggested. While it is integral that Catholics comply with the truth, the Church is also practical: for the average layman who has little bearing on legislation or policy, accordance with Catholic moral teaching is important insofar as it impacts his relationship with God, his life, and the lives of those around him. Thus, while these people must be in line with natural law, it would be unrealistic for a priest to root out dissent given the secondary impact these people have on state affairs. The Church is not the Gestapo.

As expressed in Luke 12:48, the Church instructs, "Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more." Moreover, as the Pope writes in *Evangelium Vitae*, leaders and lawmakers have a "grave and clear obligation to oppose" legislation which violates the moral law. A politician commits a personal and public disservice when he signs a piece of pro-abortion legislation—he has personally violated the natural law, in addition to enabling millions of others to do the same. As the bishop does, a politician must responsibility for his flock—the American people. For the sake of the most marginalized, impressionable, and dangerous people in his custody, those decisions must be morally upright.

An elected official's unique influence extends to popular opinion, as well. Thanks to constant media exposure, John Kerry has become America's most prominent Catholic of late. Accordingly, as the election proceeds, he will inevitably dictate public perceptions about American Catholics just as JFK did, perhaps misrepresenting and sullyng their name. More seriously, Kerry has the power to affect how others think and behave, putting them at moral risk, too. Though his primary influence may be on the Senate floor and in the Oval office, it also extends to America's youth, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. Therein lies Kerry's gravest responsibility: to positively impact the next generation so they become upright and ethical leaders. Therefore, Kerry has a duty to faithfully



Raymond Burke, Archbishop of St. Louis, has stated his intent to deny communion to any Catholic politicians publicly supporting abortion.

represent Catholic America, whether he likes it or not.

Of equal gravity is the Church's concern for its own legitimacy, too. In an era when orthodoxy has dissolved in favor of pluralism, Catholicism has resisted many dangerous trends. The Church, however, will remain credible insofar as it can defend its positions against the tide of the media and popular opinion. In a recent *National Review* column, Professor Robert George explained, "The Church cannot permit such [people] to pretend to share in the faith [they] so publicly [defy]." If the bishops continue to issue empty threats and apply only gentle pressure to radical politicians, they present themselves as a toothless hound: all bark and no bite. It confronts the public with the uncomfortable question, "Do they really mean what they say?" And as soon as the Church's defense of marriage, the unborn, and elderly falls into passivity, so will our progress against these public evils. Short of excommunication, denying Communion to a Catholic is the most powerful statement of severance from the Church, and may finally resound among these defiant politicians.

The crisis also reveals several alarming trends in today's political arena. First and foremost, many elected officials have corrupted the principle of political democracy to justify ethical pluralism. The diversity of opinion that fosters healthy discourse on economic policy, diplomacy, and social services has been extended to morally-relevant legislation as well. Indeed, as the *Doctrinal Note* observes, "Ethical pluralism [has become] the very condition for democracy." In reality, what enables

debate on the Senate floor is not moral relativism, but instead, a common, uncompromising moral standard. Perhaps the disintegration of this foundation in recent years can account for the extreme bipartisanship in Washington and for the activist jurisprudence of today's high courts.

Insofar as John Kerry is directly involved, statements from his camp explain that he is "personally opposed" to abortion, but publicly supports the freedom to choose. Furthermore, in a January interview with the *St. Louis Dispatch*, Kerry stated, "What I believe personally as a Catholic is an article of faith. And if it's not shared by Jew or an Episcopalian or a Muslim or an agnostic or an atheist or someone else, it's not appropriate in the United States for a legislator to legislate your personal religious belief for the rest of the country."

Senator Kerry's comment is dangerously two-faced. He simultaneously asserts a private morality in line with Church teaching, but justifies a divergent public morality for fear of trespassing the First Amendment. Consider the logical fallacy of delineating between these two ethical spheres: as voters, we must ask ourselves, "If Kerry doesn't vote as he really believes, then exactly *what* does he believe in?" He is either dangerously incoherent, or simply disingenuous.

Taken at face value, the Senator seems to have selectively muted his own moral compass in favor of accommodating his liberal constituency. And while it is important that his voting reflect the prerogatives of his supporters, when their wishes oppose objective morality, the politician has an obligation to uphold the truth. Nor should the association of a specific position with a religion intimidate a politician from supporting it. As countless others have noted, the situation is analogous to proclaiming, "While I'm personally opposed to slavery, mine is a religious objection I cannot impose on others." Or, "though I personally believe in civil rights, I do not want to trespass on either the law or the morality of my constituents." And while it seems self-evident to combat slavery and Jim Crow laws, they belong to the same natural law tradition that pro-choice, pro-euthanasia, and pro-equal marriage supporters denounce. I dare say that Senator Kerry would ever oppose any civil rights legislation, but as soon as moral law treads on issues of sexual "freedom" (birth control, abortion, marriage), he shrinks up in resignation.

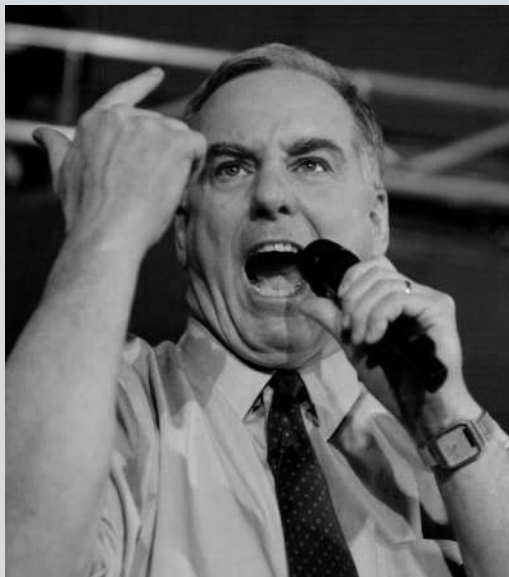
Judging by Kerry's own criteria, it would seem that any decision is bound to offend someone, and therefore, perhaps he will not be able to make decisions at all. The converse is equally plausible, that a

pluralistic attitude will prompt him to make conflicting concessions to many morally divergent peoples. Though these are extreme situations, they nonetheless underscore the impossibility of the senator's argument.

There is a great deal riding on John Kerry's presidency: Iraq, terrorism, fiscal spending, etc. However, his moral inconsistencies should be our greatest worries. In the absence of any strong moral voice in his campaign, Kerry should start listening to the Church he claims to embrace. Likewise, so long as the Senator continues to support dubious legislation, the Catholic Church has a duty to guide him, by rebuke and severance if necessary. This a momentous occasion for Catholic America—voters and politicians alike. Both Kerry and the Church should seize this opportunity to spread a "culture of life," not defile it further. P



*Christian Sahner '07 is a prospective Art History major from Maplewood, New Jersey. He traveled to Scotland this summer on an archaeological research team.*



# Angry? Frustrated?


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*continued from page 11*

ment where there exists only a static perception of truth. Whereas speech codes promote a false tolerance based on current biases, they fail to promote an absolute tolerance of controversial and different ideas that exist under the principle of free expression. Censoring controversial speech simply perpetuates politically correct sentiment, while often extremely liberal administrators are left to define what is acceptable to say. With speech codes, the categorical principle that one should have the right to express oneself freely, and then accept the consequences of that speech in a community which may disagree, is thrown out. Yet within an environment without speech codes, overtly racist or bigoted speech will be met with righteous indignation and thoroughly discredited. At universities with speech codes, however, subjective decisions prohibiting certain forms of speech are made on a case by case basis. These judgments should be unacceptable to a community which prides itself on truth and objectivity; these judgments favor the entrenched orthodoxy and don't allow truth to emerge through challenges to that orthodoxy. Only when a free and honest exchange of ideas exists, without restrictions favoring liberal opinion, will the university be a place where truth can be actively pursued.

Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of groups such as FIRE and Students for Academic Freedom, speech codes are being challenged in court. Incidents of censorship are increasingly being publicized. David Horowitz, the founder of Students for Academic Freedom, has written an Academic Bill of Rights that many universities are now considering adopting. The Colorado Senate recently held hearings on incidents of flagrant liberal bias at public universities in the state. Hopefully, as efforts to fight restrictions on speech multiply, colleges will gradually cease their shameful policies of censorship. Princeton, a school that prides itself on diversity and tolerance, should become an open environment of true tolerance and free expression by abolishing its speech code and not implementing the "Social Honor Code". 

*Clarke Smith '07 hails from Norfolk, VA. Along with the Tory, Clarke is also an active member of the College Republicans and the club soccer team.*



SEPTEMBER 2004

Public Service Announcement

## Students for Academic Freedom Princeton

**Interested in actively promoting academic freedom on Princeton's campus?**

**Evan Baehr '05 has established a chapter of Students for Academic Freedom at Princeton. This nonpartisan group hopes to challenge professors to build intellectual environments where individuals of every opinion can freely express their views without fear of ridicule or demonization. Unlike the national organization, the group's activities will primarily consist of starting dialogue with professors to discuss concerns regarding academic freedom in the classroom. If you are interested in learning more about this new student group, Evan Baehr would be happy to answer any questions by e-mail, [ebaehr@princeton.edu](mailto:ebaehr@princeton.edu).**

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# EMBRACING THE ENEMY

## Conservative Christians' problematic acceptance of relativism

Dateline: May 2004

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Ward Benson '07

In a recent opinion article in the *Prince* (3/8/04), Professor John Fleming voiced a concern that seems to be becoming increasingly prevalent among Christians at Princeton. He described an event that took place during a recent year's Opening Exercises. Several of the prizes for outstanding academic achievement had gone to students who were deeply involved with on-campus Christian organizations. Following the ceremony, Fleming claims that he overheard one participant of the event irreverently say to a companion "How can such smart people be so Christian?" Disturbed by what he views as a clear case of unjustifiable discrimination, he asserts that "this person never would have dreamed of wondering aloud how smart people could be so black, so gay or even so Pink Floyd." Indeed, as he explains for the rest of his article, there is a level of overt anti-Christian bias here at Princeton that would not be tolerated if it were directed at any other groups (though perhaps he neglected to consider conservatives).

From reading any of a number of student publications, most notably the *Tory* and the *Prince*, it is apparent that Prof. Fleming's experience is shared by many Christians here. Unfortunately, many conservative Christians also share his reaction to this experience. Theirs may be the understandable initial reaction to discrimination. However, as conservatives, they must realize that is also a complete acquiescence to the moral relativism espoused by the liberals on campus that in almost all other cases conservatives are trying to combat.

First, conservatives must remember, as indeed must everyone here, that no one has a right to have their opinions respected. Freedom of speech merely protects against censorship; it cannot guard a person's opinions from unpopularity or backlash. This subtlety is the basis of the concept of freedom of opinion on which we,

as Americans, base all our other freedoms of expression.

Moreover, the ability to oppose the views of others and try to disprove them is the basis of modern scholarship, science, and our entire university system. In such an environment, moral/cultural/religious relativism is most useful to those who search for absolute truths, not as an end in itself. Adopting a position of relativism may allow scholars to put aside prejudices which blind them to the truth. However, relativism for its own sake makes the search for eternal or set truths impossible as there is no way to distinguish between theories that are wrong and theories that are right.

As conservatives we generally agree that there are set and immutable moral truths. To be able to argue on behalf of these truths, we need an atmosphere that is not corrupted by the indifference of moral relativism. We, as conservatives, as a university, and as a nation, will never advance if every possible ideology, philosophy, religion, and lifestyle is viewed as unconditionally equal. The discrimination

This is not to say that everyone should whole-heartedly embrace whatever faith or worldview he or she currently holds and defend it dogmatically to the bitter end. The search for the truth requires an open mind and the ability to let go of long-held beliefs when they fail the test of reasoning. This too may be a hard concept for Princeton Christians to accept. As with most religions, Christian doctrine rarely holds up well against the unsympathetic eyes of pure reason. This is probably why Fleming said that he has met many students who claim to have their views assaulted by their preceptors. Faith and unquestioning belief are not acceptable grounds for argument according to the laws of reason. Given that rationality is – thankfully – the governing force of all academic disciplines at Princeton, it is understandable that students of faith might find their beliefs frequently assailed in discussion. At a certain point in any argument about faith, the limits of reason are reached. Christians here must either accept this limitation of their beliefs or forever be destined to feel uncomfortable

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that will result from this may be just as hard for Christians as it will be for every group that holds a minority position. However, the legitimacy that Christianity would hold in an environment of total moral relativism would be a false one, for its followers would be forced to acknowledge the equal legitimacy of any group whose views contradicted their own. An academic system devoid of any absolute truth would force campus Christians to lend legitimacy even to a satanic cult should one form at Princeton.

and disrespected in any academic setting in which they find themselves.

Further, it seems that Christians here, like members of all religions, forget that the whole point of faith is that you can never be absolutely certain that what you believe is right. Hence the phrase, “a leap of faith” during which one denies what his logic and intuition tell him, warranting Jesus' beatitude: “Blessed are they who have not seen and yet still believe.” Thus, no matter how sure Christians are of their faith, they must accept their own fallibility

## THE LAST WORD

and realize that they may still have something to learn about the world and its origins even if it contradicts what they have always believed. The other benefit to an environment of academic relativism is the possibility that even Christians may have something to learn when, through reasoned dialogue, new truth comes to light. After all, to paraphrase John Procter in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, God has never spoken into my ear and I doubt he's given any of you the privilege either.

Second, Fleming's argument that Christians should be treated with respect just like other minorities entirely misses the true problem. What is wrong here is not that people openly tell Christians how little respect they have for their religion, but rather that they do not feel comfortable showing such disrespect for all groups. The university's mission should be to seek the truth, and as conservatives we should ensure that it does so and does not fall into the trap of neglecting this goal in the name of political correctness.

Additionally, there is a distinction Fleming fails to make in his comment about how no one would say about a black or a

homosexual what they would about a Christian. People have a tendency to view discrimination as justifiable or not in black and white terms. For example, good discrimination is seeking to employ the services of the best doctor you can find before you undergo brain surgery. Bad discrimination, on the other hand, would be not employing the services of a doctor because he was black. In fact, discrimination must be viewed on a spectrum based on to what extent the quality that is the focus of the discrimination creates a meaningful difference. Clearly, the skill of a brain surgeon is a meaningful criterion, while the color of his skin is almost certainly not. The "interlocutor," as Fleming describes the anti-Christian commentator in his piece, would of course not suggest that it was odd for a black person or homosexual to achieve academically. These characteristics have little or nothing to do with intelligence. One's professed religious beliefs, on the other hand, speak volumes about a person's social and moral ideas and, even more importantly, their whole worldview. Frankly, it would seem rather logical to muse about the intelligence of a person who strongly

associates themselves with a doctrine that rejects reason as the ultimate path to truth.

As for the alleged official anti-Christian bias on the part of the administration and faculty, much of this stems from the relativist position of the liberals who dominate these two groups. For Christians, seeking the protection of liberal relativism in order to shield themselves from minor discrimination would only fortify relativism's hold on the university and in no way make university policy more open to Christianity. If Christians want to establish themselves as a powerful force on campus, they must first fight for an open atmosphere in which no opinion or belief, including any of their own, is accepted before proven acceptable, and then demonstrate why their beliefs are the right ones. P



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