

October 2006

PRINCETON TORY

new

THE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE



**NO WAR
FOR OIL**



INSIDE:
Why the Left
should be thanking
"God the Mother" for
the ORL's monetary
misappropriations...



VIKSE

ALSO: Early Decision, Conservative Confessions,
Midterm Elections Preview, Internships, & Iraq

THE PRINCETON TORY

October 2006
Volume XXIV - Issue II

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From the Publisher

Dear Princetonian,

During a discussion with interested freshmen at our open house, there was mention made of the *Tory's* reputation for reactionism. Some students fault the magazine's perceived tendency to unleash a harangue against any change our administration attempts to impose. In their eyes, this publication is a backward-looking one that routinely associates any sort of progress with the degradation of traditional values and a slippery slope to mass havoc.



To these students' credit, mechanical, knee-jerk aversion to change in a college environment is not only misguided and impractical, but also largely self-defeating. I would guess that most—if not all—of the significant changes that Princeton has instituted throughout the last century have faced at least mild opposition by one student group or another. Yet, many of these social and academic adjustments have vastly improved student life over the last few decades, far beyond the obvious expansion of student demographics. What role, then, should a magazine such as the *Tory* play in the campus dialogue?

I concede that a substantial portion of the magazine is usually dedicated to critiquing recent decisions and University developments. In typically conservative fashion, we're known to lament the abandonment of established institutions (for example, *Early Decision*- p.18), an annoying prevalence of political correctness (as exemplified by the ORL's new agenda- p.7), and what we view as the rejection of important traditions and moral precepts. However, I contend that this function is an essential one, for the simple reason that not all change is good change. This past spring, we published articles that analyzed the role of the USG in student and community affairs, Tilghman's dealings with stem cell research proponents, and the potential pitfalls of the proposed Arts Initiative. Rather than simply compose resentful diatribes, the authors not only critiqued the actions and decisions made by the University, but also proposed alternative, more realistic means to reach similar ends.

What we hope to bring to the table is crucial: viewpoints that are too rarely articulated. By addressing topical issues, thoroughly researching the University institutions in question, and conducting interviews with students and administrators, our writers hope to convincingly express a collective voice of reason that is normally inaudible over the chorus of overzealous campus progressives. We hope that you will find our arguments sensible and compelling, if not entirely persuasive. Even if agreeing with us is about as likely as a President Hillary, please at least read the viewpoints we present and, if so inclined, send a well-reasoned explanation as to why we're wrong.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,
Juliann Vikse '08
jvikse@princeton.edu

Letters to the Editors:
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 2006

www.princetontory.com

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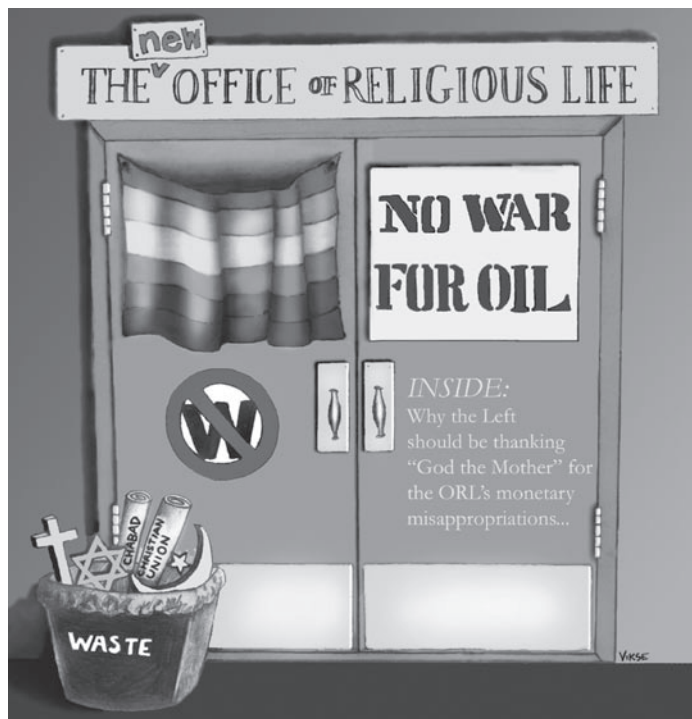
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POINTS & PUNTS

➤ The freshman elections are taking place in October, and it's clear that they are an exercise in how not to run a democratic election. The candidates won't be speaking to the class, and their campaigning is limited to either putting up posters no one will read or greeting people in a manner that will determine the fate of their candidacies. In short, the entire election will come down to the candidates' statements, which people will probably disregard before casting their votes. Why don't we ask Hugo Chavez to pay us a visit and teach us how to run elections? They would likely be more democratic...



Mark Warner

➤ Mark Warner, former Democratic Governor of Virginia, just announced that he will not seek his party's nomination for the Presidency in 2008. Warner said that he wants to spend time with his family. I went to high school with two of Warner's daughters and interviewed the former Governor myself: He certainly is a family man, but it stretches my imagination to believe that politics did not factor into his decision. Warner has been preparing for this campaign since he left the Governor's office and perhaps even earlier. Reporters and pundits have been talking him up as a centrist alternative, who worked with the Republican Virginian legislature to solve the state's looming budget issues. He certainly looks a lot better than Governor Bill Richardson of New Mexico, who is known to "touch" his aides and even the Lieutenant Governor. The fact of the matter is he doesn't stand a chance against Hillary in the primaries; why should he anger the beast by campaigning against her? Instead, he's putting himself in an excellent position to join her on the ticket as the VP candidate. As the race heats up and the primaries edge ever closer, keep your eyes open and you'll see Warner strategically courting Hillary. The *Tory* wouldn't be surprised to find his name on the ballot coming voting day, or to hear that Bill Richardson was found crying in a corner in Santa Fe.

➤ Now that gas prices have fallen for twelve straight weeks, the Dow Jones Industrial Average has broken its record high, and we are at statistically full employment, perhaps the Democrats should scrap their claim that Republicans have mishandled the economy. In response to the record breaking Dow, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi issued a statement encouraging voters not to overlook President Bush's "failed economic



Is Pelosi grasping?

policies." Unfortunately for Pelosi, the voters will decide if this really what economic failure looks like.

➤ At the grand opening of the LGBT Center in Frist Campus Center, as reported by the Daily Princetonian, Shirley Tilghman stated that "We were named among the top 20 universities in the country for LGBT student life... which was more important to me than the U.S. News mention of Princeton as the top university in the nation." There is nothing wrong with the existence of an LGBT center; but is Tilghman placing more importance on the improved comfort of one sect of the student population than on the advancement of the student body at large?

➤ Though it seems highly unnatural, the *Tory* must applaud a recent action by Chicago's long-time Democratic Mayor Richard Daley. In mid-September Daley vetoed legislation passed by the Chicago city council that called for a minimum wage hike that only applied to so-called "Big Box" corporations—mainly national retail chains such as Wal-Mart. Daley rightly asserted that such a bill, essentially a discriminatory tax on economically important but widely unpopular corporations, would dissuade the retailers from locating in Chicago and thus harm the economic interests of the poor and minority Chicagoans whom the bill was intended to help. Supporting his decision is the fact that while his veto drew criticism from numerous liberal groups and leaders such as Jesse Jackson, the city council members representing the mainly minority and low-income districts were the only ones who opposed the bill. Thus, while the *Tory* may have many issues with Mayor Daley, we are proud to support him in this effort to maintain free market forces in the city of Chicago, especially when it is everyone's economic interest.



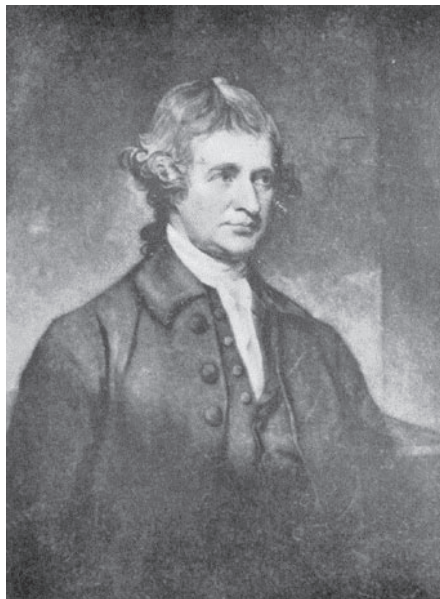
Daley in the right?

➤ The recent debate over the Office of Admissions' decision to end the Early Decision program has largely focused on issues of equality and convenience for graduating high school seniors. However, it is important to note an alternative take on the decision. Every year, hundreds if not thousands of high school students will send off applications to every Ivy League school, and each will claim that every school is their "top choice." Given this situation, it is difficult to determine which students are truly interested in a Princeton education and are likely to become the most loyal and dedicated students and alumni. The Early Decision program was the single measure by which the Office of Admissions could truly measure a candidate's commitment to Princeton—it was a risk many students would not take unless they were sure that Princeton was their top choice. Early Decision may not have been a perfect system, but at least it did more than anything

else to tease out who really wanted to live the rest of their life in orange and black, and would not have just as easily settled for crimson or blue and white. (*Read an extended argument regarding Early Decision in the "Last Word," p. 18-19.*)

➤ Aside from the predictable coverage on FoxNews, the recent disruption of a speech at Columbia by members of an anti-illegal immigration organization known as the Minutemen received less attention than it deserved. When students violently charged the stage and engaged in a protracted scuffle with members of the group, they crossed the line between legitimate protest and thug-gish behavior. The students chanted, "Minutemen, Nazis, KKK!" as the Minutemen tried to engage in a dialogue with members of the Columbia community. Much of what makes the Minutemen movement distressing is the fact that it supports a vigilante approach to justice that may ignore individual rights. No matter how much Columbia students may dislike the Minutemen, they should not adopt the group's own tactics to fight them.

➤ Every day in Iraq, dozens of civilians are murdered execution-style or blown up in mosques and marketplaces, coalition forces are targeted by IEDs, and the political system becomes increasingly dysfunctional. Yet despite the clear failure of the US to establish a liberal democracy after the fall of Saddam, the Bush administration continues to call for regime change by any means necessary in Iran and North Korea. Bush seemingly does so without regard to what the likely outcome would be if these regimes fell without an orderly transition. Surely, these regimes, especially that of Kim Jong-Il, are among the most vile and repressive in history, and of course the *Tory* supports the spread of liberal, democratic ideals and institutions throughout the world. However, if the Bush Administration is to stay true to its supposedly conservative philosophy, the *Tory* suggests that it consult the man who many believe to be the founder of conservative philosophy—Edmund Burke. In his work *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Burke makes two critical points that are relevant to our current situation. Firstly, while a value such as



How would Burke view Bush's policies?

democracy might be good in the abstract, the circumstances of individual political systems determine whether a particular society's approach to democracy is, in fact, good. Secondly, political change must be made through the existing political and social system because it represents the society's collective wisdom on how politics is best conducted given their unique historical circumstances. These two points have broad implications for the Bush

Administration's foreign policy. While we may want to see the spread of democracy, we must remember that not all democracies are created equal and given the situations in many countries in the world, democracy, at least at this point, may not always be the ideal form of government. Moreover, if we are to spread democracy to countries such as Iran and North Korea, we must be far more willing to work through established political institutions and leaders. We should not simply call for mass revolutions by the people. Failure to do so will not only doom our attempts to spread democracy, but probably lead to anarchy and violence on the same scale or worse than what we have seen in Iraq.



➤ And finally, in another example of politically correct hypocrisy, a friend of the *Tory* at Northeastern University in Boston reports that as part of the University's gay pride week, university funds were used to hire male strippers to strip for gay male students at a university event. During a discussion session (read: reeducation session) that followed, the student objected to the event, claiming the hiring of strippers for students of any sexual orientation was not an appropriate use of University funds. He was roundly condemned by his student advisors as a bigot and homophobe, despite his repeated insistence that he would have been just as opposed to the hiring of female strippers for male students.

-Compiled by the Editors

Did you know the *Tory* has a website?

Check out www.princetontory.com for early access to issues as well as the most current organizational news.

Events, My Dear Boy: Thoughts on the Mark Foley Scandal

Rick Morgan '09

When former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan was asked what posed the greatest challenge to a statesman, he famously responded, "Events, my dear boy, events." When he was then asked what would determine if he would win reelection, he again answered, "Events, my dead boy, events." This simple, yet profound statement drives home a fundamental truth of politics, namely that unpredictable circumstances more often than not decide the victor and the loser. Nowhere is this truth more evident than in the recent scandal involving former Representative Mark Foley that has rocked the Republican Party.

On September 29, Mark Foley, a powerful and influential Florida Congressman, suddenly resigned. From the onset, it was obvious that something was very wrong. Politicians never simply relinquish power without putting up a fight, without trying to spin their way out of trouble. As more details about the lurid and sexually explicit emails and instant messages became available, it became apparent why Foley left in such a hurry. While it seems clear that not everything happened exactly as it was reported - some Democrats, for example, might have known about this much earlier, but sat on the knowledge until election season, and Foley's original messages were not with a minor, but with an eighteen year old page - the undeniable fact of this controversy is that Foley's actions were unequivocally wrong and an absolute disgrace to himself, his party, and his country.

This raises the question of who is to blame for this. Many have argued that the Republicans should have been more watchful of a not-so-secretly gay Congressman who was sending "overly friendly" email messages to Congressional pages. They even argued that Foley should have been forced to resign his committee chairmanship when the first emails came to light in 2003. While forcing him from his committee would have been an overreaction at the time - the original emails seen by the GOP in 2003 were not that damning - it is undeniable that they should have been more careful. However, whether or not the GOP deserves blame is irrelevant. The Republicans have a majority in the House, they were the ones in charge of monitoring their own members and the page program, and most importantly, most voters will see this as a Republican problem, not a Democratic one. Although some Republicans have been trying to spin this issue in such a way to place some of the blame on the Democrats, the fact is that this most recent scandal is only symbolic of the GOP's failure to control the members within its own party.

When Newt Gingrich led the Republic Revolution in 1994, Republicans promised an end to the corruption and cronyism that had paralyzed Congressional Democrats. They pledged to end pork barrel spending, to make government more transparent, and to hold no party member above the law. Unfortunately, it seems as if the old maxim of "power corrupts" has taken place here, and the Republicans have become what they once fought against. They have become at least to some extent, like the Democrats.

Rather than a balanced budget and responsible spending, we have seen corruption and pork barreling rise to new heights in Congress. We have passed an ineffective and bloated Medicare bill that will cost upwards of \$1.2 trillion over the next ten years. We have received a \$250 million dollar bridge to nowhere in Alaska, courtesy of Senator Ted Stevens. We have seen a large swath of Republic Party leadership, from Tom Delay, to Bob Ney, to Duke Cunningham, to Mark Foley, cut down by indictments, prison sentences, and sex scandals. If one had just woken up from a thirteen-year coma, you would think that Bill Clinton was still in office and the Democrats in control of Congress.

The current hot topic is whether or not Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert should resign. The answer is probably yes, though not because of the Foley scandal. Although the House has been better at passing conservative legislation than the Senate has, that is not saying much, and Hastert is still the one who has presided over the general incompetence and corruption that prevailed in that chamber. More likely though, Hastert will be brought down because the Republicans, now having essentially forfeited Delay's seat and Foley's, are quite unlikely to maintain their majority in the House. The Mark Foley scandal was quite tragic for the Republicans. Up until then, they had the political momentum behind them and looked like they might be able to just barely hold on to their power in the House. However, as Macmillan once noted, it is "events, my dear boy, events" that determine the outcome of elections, and sometimes, the events just don't bounce your way.

SHIRLEY'S ANGELS:

THE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE AT PRINCETON

Matthew Schmitz '08

It's time to shake off that hangover and meet the priests. Let me introduce the Rev. Dr. Thomas Breidenthal, and the Revs. Paul Raushenbush and Deborah Blanks. They are your deans of religious life. This trinity of divinity, this trifecta of perfecta, reports to two higher powers: God and Shirley Tilghman. Your university pays them to preach, protest and proselytize. Their gospel, though cast in traditional religious terms, is something much more banal and familiar than any real faith. It is the tired ideology of the 20th Century left. Get ready for the revival.

First on the field is the Reverend Dr. Thomas Breidenthal. Charged with juggling the often-conflicting demands of the different constituencies of the Office of Religious Life (ORL), Breidenthal has perhaps the least enviable job on campus. As an administrator he is described as "competent" and "humane." He is expected to regularly go on the record on contentious matters, balance antagonistic parties and implement a controversial agenda.

Second on the ticket is good-old boy and reformed stoner Paul Raushenbush. Raushenbush, who boasts a religious pedigree second only to Sophie Neveu of *Da Vinci Code* fame. Instead of citing Mary Magdalene and Christ, he traces his bloodline from two distinguished great-grandfathers, Walter Raushenbush and Louis Brandeis. The first was a wildly successful evangelist and one of the main founders of the Social Gospel, a progressive Christian movement that stressed the importance of implementing left-wing policies to change society in addition to reforming souls. On the other side of the family tree is Justice Brandeis, a liberal lion of the judiciary and the first Jewish member of the Supreme Court. Such are the radical icons who begat Princeton's number one Bible-based blue blood.

Rounding out the roster for the collared ballers is Reverend Deborah Blanks, former-

ly of Cornell and the U.S. Navy, whose main responsibilities include serving as chaplain for *Hallelujah!* a worship service in the African-American tradition. But wait—there's one other member of Shirley's Angels who should not be forgotten.

The name of the fourth member of the Office of Religious Life's dream team appears nowhere on any ORL website or literature. She is a shadow figure, operating in cloistered concert with her religious-life teammates. She is as loyal to her radical agenda as Silas was to toppling Tom Hank's little secret about Jesus. Her name is Deb-

views of numerous faith traditions which exist at Princeton. If the LGBT director were salaried by another university office, and the pulpit used for preaching instead of propaganda, there would be no rat to smell. To preempt my critics, let me be clear that the ORL should not be using its funding to promote conservative issues like the Bush tax cuts or the NSA wiretapping program, because these things have no immediate connection to religion.

To give some background on the current state of affairs, we must go back to the beginning. The inception of what was, through

The overwhelming problem with the ORL's agenda is that it has pursued these goals to the detriment of its religious duties, funneling funds away from faith groups so that it can sponsor non-religious events, events which are indeed hostile to the normative views of numerous faith traditions which exist at Princeton.

bie Bazarsky and she is the director for Princeton's comma-despising Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center. An administration source informed the *Tory* that half of Bazarsky's salary comes from an Office of Religious Life endowment. The fact that her job has nothing to do with religion has not prevented the University from compensating her with the ORL's funds.

The agenda of the Office of Religious Life is pervasive and unmistakable. It extends from the syncretistic Religious Life Council to the dubiously-religious LGBT Center, and it shares, almost plank for plank, the same platform as that of the political left. The ORL opposed the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and supported gay marriage. There is no contesting these claims, which are the sad reflection of facts.

But why sad? Sad because the *Tory* is conservative and Princeton is liberal? No. The overwhelming problem with the ORL's agenda is that it has pursued these goals to the detriment of its religious duties, funneling funds away from faith groups so that it can sponsor non-religious events, events which are indeed hostile to the normative

many changes, to become the controversial Office of Religious Life occurred in 1824 when students founded a secret Christian fraternity called Chi Phi. To become a member of Chi Phi, students had to testify to a personal conversion experience and uphold a strict, pietistic morality.

This all-male, all-Protestant, and albino-white fraternity soon changed its name to the Philadelphian Society, and actively promoted its views on campus by distributing literature and sponsoring speakers. The society also started the program today known as Princeton in Asia (then referred to as Princeton in Peking) with the goal of evangelizing China. Such was the beginning of the elite and aggressive Princeton University Office of Religious Life. Though their mission has changed, their enthusiasm in pursuing it remains.

By the latter half of the 20th Century the Philadelphian Society had lost its prestige and influence and was replaced after World War II with the Student Christian Association, which in 1967 abandoned its explicitly religious mission and was renamed the Student Volunteers Council.

Today, the exclusive spirit of Chi Phi has returned in the form of the Religious Life Council, an application only group with closed meetings that asks applicants to attest to their experiences of religious difference and understanding. What distinguishes the Religious Life Council (RLC) from its precursor lies in its stated goal. Instead of existing to promote a certain brand of orthodox Christian piety, its stated purpose is to “To deepen understanding and cultivate respect among all religious faiths.” Although members recount positive experiences on the council, the RLC has been criticized for its syncretistic approach to religion. Don’t believe it? Take a quick look at RLC director Paul Raushenbush’s book, *Teen Spirit: One World, Many Faiths*, which advances a cafeteria-style, consumerist approach to religion for the young, encouraging readers to pick a custom-made faith that suits their whims and loosest convictions.

Students, however, have noticed a sustained liberal tendency in the Office of Religious Life that extends even to its ostensibly pluralist group. During the run up to the war in Afghanistan, for instance, the group decided to take out a ‘peace advertisement’ over the objections of its members who believed there was a just-war rationale for invading Afghanistan. When the dissenting members pressed their concerns the group ‘compromised’ by issuing a peace poem made by alternating peace texts from various scriptures. Switching the group’s statement from prose to poetry made it less explicit, but hardly changed its content, which was

resolutely anti-war. This betrays a surprisingly widespread liberal bias in the ORL. The very group premised on difference in opinion – the RLC – plunged headfirst into the partisan fray, guided, it seems, by an irresistible institutional impulse from on high.

The Office of Religious Life also waged a relentless propaganda war against the

events that address views of the other side. That, of course, has not been the case. The urgency of the ORL’s leftwing campus crusade has led it to forget the reasons for which it was established: supporting campus religious life.

Consider, for example, the recent difficulties faced by the orthodox Jewish

The employees of the Office of Religious Life have also politicized the pulpit, using the University’s official, though sparsely attended, Sunday service (where the choir used to sing hymns to “God the Mother”) to make thinly-veiled political endorsements.

second Iraq War. It sponsored a lecture by Michael Walsh, the editor of the leftwing magazine *Dissent*. Walsh condemned the war as unjust. He also noted that “Every member of Congress should undergo water boarding,” a controversial interrogation technique where suspects are subjected to a simulated drowning.

The employees of the Office of Religious Life have also politicized the pulpit, using the University’s official, though sparsely attended Sunday service (where the choir used to sing hymns to “God the Mother”) to make thinly-veiled political endorsements. At one chapel event, Dean Briedenthal told students, “In the present climate, while our culture tends to say ‘Blessed are those who will vote in favor of a war with Iraq,’ Jesus says ‘Blessed are the peace makers.’” Saying that Jesus does not bless one’s political opponents is not quite like cursing them from the pulpit, but it comes close enough for a Christian minister

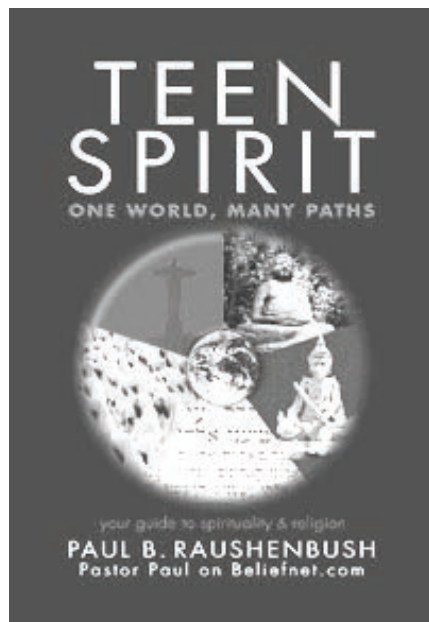
In 2003 Dean Briedenthal declaimed, “The whole of Christian tradition stands against the policy this [Bush] administration is pursuing,” reported John Andrews in that year’s February *Tory*. I suppose Islamists who compare the War in Iraq to the Crusades would disagree. They, it would seem, find it quite Christian indeed. More moderate minds might note there is nothing un-Christian or essentially Christian about spreading democracy.

The Office of Religious Life has used its budget as mad-money jar that can be cracked open whenever there is an event in need of cash. There is nothing objectionable whatsoever in sponsoring liberal-leaning events if they contain some substantial religious component, or if the ORL also sponsors

group Chabad, which has been denied recognition as an official university chaplaincy for several years – under pressure from liberal constituencies in both the ORL and the Center for Jewish Life. Meanwhile, in the spring of 2005, students affiliated with the evangelical group Christian Union were refused both Chaplaincy status and recognition as a student group. Only after the legal advocacy group FIRE (Foundation for Individual Rights in Education) stepped in did the university retreat from its discriminatory policy. Whether the ORL would have reacted any differently had it been approached by a Wiccan coven or another Buddhist club is tough to say, but judging from its reaction to religiously conservative groups like Chabad and Christian Union, it seems like the ORL is only selectively inclusive.

Similarly, the Office of Religious Life was one of the main funding sources for *Common Sense*, a now-defunct atheist student magazine. It has also sponsored events (see back cover) like *The Joys and Toys of Gay Sex*, which have nothing to do with any religion. Whatsoever.

So, it’s time to take down the tent, cancel the choir and call of the revival. The Office of Religious Life should abandon its radical gospel or leftwing politics and monetary misappropriation. **P**



Matthew Schmitz '08 is an avid sportsman and the Weekly Projects Administrator for the Student Volunteers Council. He hails from O'Neill, NE.

MY CONSERVATIVE CONFESSIONS

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CLASS OF 2010

Emely Peña '09

Dear Class of 2010,

My freshmen year began like any other – I cried myself to sleep every night missing my mom, my dad and my dog. I attended every study break imaginable helping along the freshmen-15 I would gain by June; I promptly read all my assignments, attended every lecture, and took an hour to get ready

experienced my first brush with readin', writin' and liberal dogma. Indeed, my pre-K teachers were less than shy in expressing their undying support of Bill Clinton, perhaps unaware that the unsuspecting four year olds who sat at their feet were hanging onto their every word – political ramblings included. But as I advanced from my ABC's to simple sentences, and from my 123's to division problems, so too did I exchange the old axiom of "Bill Clinton is always right!" for its logical converse, namely that "Re-

I stepped through the Fitz-Randolph gates on the defensive, armed to the teeth with my New York Times in one hand and a Starbucks latte in the other. And I didn't step outside my comfort zone when choosing courses either. Instead, I signed up for Latin and Math, my two potential majors at the time, along with a course on Early Christianity taught by Professor Elaine Pagels and a writing seminar on the Culture Wars, for which my arsenal of epigrams stood ready for battle. But for the first time

Reason forced me to challenge the liberal tenets I had grown up with in New York City public schools, and by the end of the year, managed to push my views to the right.

for each of them. By the end of the year, a few of these routines had changed for me, but something more significant happened too, a change of worldview: to put it one way, I would never been writing in this magazine one year ago. So as you continue to struggle through courses, relationships, and extra-curricular activities, I'm sure more than a few of you will experience both trivial and far greater changes like those I underwent over the course of the past year. I write to you not as an expert on Freshmen Year survival – as mine was far from perfect – but as someone who experienced significant transformation.

For around this time last year, my brain declared war against itself. Reason forced me

to challenge the liberal tenets I had grown up with in New York City public schools, and by the end of the year, managed to push my views to the right.

To understand where I stand today, I have to take you back to where it all began: P.S. 79 in the Bronx. It was there that I

publicans are always wrong!" After a three year period of intellectual stagnation in M.S. 45, I arrived at DeWitt Clinton High School where I encountered great liberal rhetors shelling out pithy one-liners – classics like "No Tax Cuts For The Rich," or "Redeate Bush in 2004." Public school demagogues like these brought to completion the project that had begun in nursery school, giving inner-city Latinos like me the intellectual ammunition and political savvy to get into small liberal arts colleges. There, it was hoped that our minds would be sharpened by a liberal knife, and our smugness would

Around this time last year, my brain declared war on itself.

flourish. This plan was perfectly realized for most of my friends, who were shipped off to places like Wesleyan, Bard, and Haverford, but perhaps by some divine intervention, I ended alone up at sleepy Princeton, where I could not have anticipated the changes I would undergo.

in my academic life, I was forced to actively think for myself rather than passively internalize my teachers' opinions. I began to slowly realize that the intellectual tradition that

had formed me did not possess a monopoly on absolute truth, but in fact, possessed an inherently flawed perspective on the truth. As I thought about it more, the plan which my liberal schoolmasters had laid out for me was beginning to go awry – if I had gone to a college like Grinnell or Smith, where conservative thought is utterly stifled, I might have continued on the straight course, but as I was quick to discover, the ideas of right-wing Princetonians – especially the trio of conservative boys in my writing seminar, my orthodox Jewish roommate, and magazines like the *Tory* – not only carried currency on

campus, but they made sense. Their arguments shot actual bullets while my liberal allies and I continued to shoot blanks. But I still stuck to my guns, continuing to fight with hollow weapons, and fearful of where my nascent doubts would lead me.

A few incidents, however, forced me to

stop and think. The first came in my seminar on the Culture Wars during a discussion about legalizing marijuana. At the time, I argued that “yes, marijuana should be legalized” – the drug, I reasoned, had some medicinal value, and if the government could step in to regulate it, black markets and drug-related violence might end while taxation might create extra revenue for positive government projects like education or wel-

l- catholic Christianity – in shaping the early Christian period. Instead, she forced the Gnostic gospels on us in order to advance her own decidedly modern, liberal agenda. For example, in one such gospel, Mary Magdalene is depicted as Jesus’ favorite apostle, and this, in Professor Pagels’ opinion, provided justification for women in the priesthood. But rather than turn me away from religion with her anti-Catholic views,

in the corner of my block who complained about government apathy, yet racked up their welfare checks and the food stamps to sell to local bodegas. I felt no sympathy for their condition, knowing well enough that hard work could have moved them from those street corners; I in fact felt ashamed that my country would fund such laziness and corruption. But most of all, I felt betrayed by my smug upper-class high school teachers who,

As I advanced from my ABC’s to simple sentences, and from my 123’s to division problems, so too did I exchange the old axiom of “Bill Clinton is always right!” for its logical converse, namely that “Republicans are always wrong!”

fare. One girl in the class, however, pushed me further, challenging me to explain why all drugs shouldn’t be legalized. It seemed like a no-brainer to me: why encourage a stoner nation? Why enable people to destroy their own lives and the lives of others through drug abuse? But she was resolute in her idea that drug intake was a personal choice, regardless of its moral, social and political repercussions – if a person utterly destroyed his life, she said, that was his own choice and we had no right to stop him. I was appalled, to say the least. Such an extreme, al-

beit logically consistent view, forced me to rethink my position on the drug wars – it was going to be cocaine, heroin, and marijuana or no drugs at all. Having come from a neighborhood that is crumbling under the weight of local drug wars, I realized that there was no middle ground between the views of my drug-happy classmate and the case for criminalizing all drugs, and I was sold on the latter, more conservative view.

she sparked an insatiable curiosity about my faith, awakening the dormant Catholic within me. As I moved towards my second semester, my family (fearful for my job prospects after Princeton) attempted to push me away from the Classics Department and towards Economics: I reluctantly took Econ 100, a course which would ultimately complete my conservative transformation. During my first few weeks of class, Professor Harvey

in spite of the lethargy and corruption around them, viewed the struggles of the poor through a idealistic, yet profoundly skewed lens, concerned more with liberal indoctrination than academic knowledge.

But I rejected their ideas and my own politics shifted – I swapped liberal ideological one-liners for sound conservative principles and I exchanged cold secular reason for the truth of my Catholic faith. I cannot possibly retell in a couple of pages all the experiences which in so short a time changed my perception of the world, the countless epiphanies and discussions, or the

For the first time in my academic life, I was forced to actively think for myself rather than passively internalize my teachers’ opinions.

A second experience occurred in Professor Pagels’ course, in which I plunged into religious texts for the first time with a truly critical eye. The course asked us to check our faith at the door, implying that Christian religious commitments were incompatible with scholarly historical criticism. To my surprise, each time I examined an orthodox gospel, my Catholic self overpowered my intellectual rearing and I found significant meaning in each line. Pagels, however, continued to disregard the significant influence of institutional religion – namely orthodox,

Rosen introduced me to the principles of fiscal conservatism, using reason alone to demolish many ideas I had been taught from childhood. Tax cuts, to give one example, as many of us already know, are actually a legitimate way to improve the economy for both corporations and consumers. I, on the other hand, had been taught that tax cuts were simply a Republican ploy to make their constituents wealthy and keep the poor downtrodden. Capitalism wasn’t the force preventing certain Bronxites back home from achieving something greater, it was a quasi-egalitarian system which continually punished the hardworking and rewarded the lazy.

By May, I was shocked and angry. I realized that I had been brainwashed to blindly believe, to fight for unfounded tenets taught as unwavering truths. I went home last summer continuing to question everything, skeptically glaring at the very people who had taught me and the friends I had grown up around – especially the ghetto people

chance meetings with those who would bring me to fine organizations like the *Tory*. I still question the views placed before me, and I will continue do so throughout my years in Princeton for this “conservative transition” is far from over. But in short, class of 2010, ‘09, and whomever else will listen, the moral of this story is a hackneyed one – keep an open mind, for a university (even a liberal one like Princeton) is a place where opinions are traded, beliefs reformed, and worldviews realigned. ■



Emely Pena '09 is a sophomore from the Bronx, NY. She is a resident of Butler College and hopes to major in the classics

THINK TANKS 101

AN INSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE ON WHAT THEY ARE AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Brian Extein '08

It was about 9:30 AM on Wednesday and I was sitting in the corner office belonging to the President of the Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C. I did this on a regular basis as the head of Hudson spent most of his time at Hudson's New York location.

Think tanks, however, are different from universities in the purpose of their research: while much of the scholarship generated at places like Princeton is done simply for its own sake, think tanks look for direct applications of their research.

So imagine my surprise when in walks the man himself. I was facing away from the door and didn't notice his presence until he walked up next to me and picked up the phone. Feeling like a thief caught in mid-act, I jumped out of the chair and said something like "Oh, sir, I'm in your chair." "Just gotta check my voicemail and I'll be out of your way in a minute," he replied nonchalantly. His disarming response failed to disarm me and I left the room thinking that I had violated a fundamental rule of the unwritten intern code. So goes a typical atypical day at a Washington think tank.

Last summer, I interned at the Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C. Along with a number of other college students, recent graduates, and a few graduate students, I had the opportunity to get a bird's eye view of public policy, politics, and government in the Nation's capital. As it turns out, think tanks have an influence on just about every controversial issue that enters the public debate in this country. Think tanks draw on the research methods of a university professor, share the goals of a DC lobby-

ist, and oftentimes wield the power of a congressional office. Studying think tanks provides a revealing window into the political process, the intersection of private research institutes and government, and the way policy is made in America. They are also great places to work.

Despite the prominence of think tanks in our nation's political culture, few people

know much about them. As an intern at one of these institutions, I hope to shed light on the way in which think tanks operate internally, the strategies by which they achieve their policy goals, and the opportunities that exist for Princeton students to get involved.

A think tank, known formally as a policy research institute, is a marketplace of

Scholars at these institutions study events that are pressing in the world right now. Their ultimate goal is to influence policy, usually that of the United States government.

ideas. Think tanks are most like universities in that they focus on the development of original ideas supported by rigorous research. Think tanks, however, are different from universities in the purpose of their research: while much of the scholarship generated at places like Princeton is done simply for its own sake, think tanks look for direct applications of their research. For example, academic disciplines like English, Art History and other fields in the Humanities and Social Sciences are studied in order to advance the frontiers of academic and

cultural knowledge. This is indeed a worthy goal (I myself am a History major), but in many cases the information produced at universities does not have a broad society-wide utility, but rather, is oftentimes impractical and theoretical, even in the most ostensibly "real-world" departments such as Politics or the Woodrow Wilson School. Most research done at think tanks, though, *is* practical.

Scholars at these institutions study events and issues that are pressing in the world right now. Their ultimate goal is to influence policy, usually that of the United States government.

Policy institutes are marketplaces in another sense as well. They are private organizations that face a form of market driven competition. Many conservative think tanks, especially, seek to apply free market solutions to real world problems, but all think tanks are fundamentally private institutions that "sell" their ideas on the open markets of Capitol Hill and the White House. Scholars at places like the Hudson Institute

don't literally sell their ideas for money, but they do compete with their peers in a contest to influence government policy. This competition takes the form of a fight for space in policy journals, airtime on radio and TV, and the attention of the nation's lawmakers. The purpose of think tanks is thus twofold: to generate persuasive ideas and to present these ideas to individuals in a position to act on them.

Think tanks have come to play an important role in the lawmaking process, but this wasn't always the case. In fact, many

of today's most influential think tanks came into being just a few decades ago. While some say that the Hudson Institute, where I worked, was the first organization to be known by the term "think tank," it was not

a junior from California who took her internship very seriously, dutifully approached the couple and asked "Can I help you?" As he continued to walk away from the reception area and toward the offices, the man replied

internships available but they are, of course, not permanent positions.

Other well known conservative policy institutes such as the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute

Many conservative think tanks, especially, seek to apply free market solutions to real world problems, but all think tanks are fundamentally private institutions that "sell" their ideas on the open markets of Capitol Hill and the White House.

have a broader range of positions within the organization and a greater opportunity for less experienced scholars to work. The system varies significantly from group to group.

the first policy research institution. One of the oldest and best known think tanks is the Brookings Institution. Brookings is a liberal giant in the think tank community, but despite its size and relative old age the balance of power in think tanks circles has leaned toward the GOP for some time.

In their 2005 book, Death by a Thousand Cuts: The Fight over Taxing Inherited Wealth (Princeton University Press), Yale professors Michael Graetz and Ian Shapiro credit conservative think tanks with having led the fight to repeal the estate tax. In particular, they stress the role that several of the large conservative think tanks played in the promotion of this and other issues. As Graetz and Shapiro explain, the American Enterprise Institute would undoubtedly rank at the top of most lists of powerful conservative think tanks in Washington. Founded in 1943, AEI is respected for its avowedly conservative scholarship. The Heritage Foundation, founded in 1973, takes a more active approach than AEI and many other policy research organizations. Heritage has a more centralized agenda and functions more like a lobbying firm in the way that it advances its ideas. Finally, the CATO institute, started in 1977, represents the leading libertarian think tank in Washington.

It is not surprising that most think tanks can be found in Washington, D.C. As the Nation's capital, Washington is where the action happens. Policy research institutes want to be near the center of power so they can see first hand what the government is doing. The location is also important for another reason. Many former government officials make their way to policy research institutes after they retire from government service.

As a case in point, I was talking with some of my fellow interns one afternoon near the entrance to Hudson's offices when an elderly man came through the door with a woman who seemed to be his wife. Kristin,

"I work here." It must have been apparent that we interns were still confused because the woman looked over her shoulder and said in a conspiratorial half whisper "Judge Bork."

Most of the interns knew that Judge Robert Bork is a Senior Fellow at Hudson but few of us had actually seen him. Another Hudson notable is Scooter Libby, Vice President Cheney's former Chief of Staff who is currently facing charges in the Valerie Plame affair of last year. While think tanks are private institutions, they make use of government contacts to add prestige to their list of scholars and a true insider's perspective on their research.

Different public policy institutes are structured in different ways. Hudson is known as being conservative but there is no central ideology governing the work done at

I have had several internships in Washington and last summer at Hudson was by far the best. First and foremost, the work that I did as an intern was entirely substantive. Many DC internships, such as those on Capitol Hill, involve a great deal of "secretarial" work like answering phones, filing, and making copies. I did none of these at Hudson and after speaking with other interns, I discovered that such menial tasks are actually the norm at many think tanks. The difference lies in the fact that all of the work done at policy research institutes is substantive in nature. Think tanks don't have vast amounts of mail to respond to or a large number of constituents calling in on the phone. Their main job is research and writing and that is what they need from interns.

Thus summer, I worked on research projects dealing with military reserves,

The purpose of think tanks is thus twofold: to generate persuasive ideas and to present these ideas to individuals in a position to act on them.

the Institute. On the contrary, each scholar has a great deal of freedom to pursue his or her own research interests. The hierarchy in the office is hardly apparent to the employees. Hudson is composed of a number of policy centers such as the Center for Future Security Strategies (where I worked), the Center for Employment Policy, and the Center for Eurasia Policy. Each of these research centers is composed of just a few experts in the field. The advantage of this system is that each Senior Fellow has a great deal of autonomy. The disadvantage is that it is very hard to find a place at Hudson for those who are not already well recognized experts in their fields. There are very few junior staff. There are plenty of unpaid in-

oil and natural gas production in Central Asia, the use of science and technology in Homeland Security, and a number of other issues. In one instance, my boss at Hudson was asked to appear on TV to discuss the release of a tape by Al-Queda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. With only a few hours to prepare for the appearance, he asked me to pull together all the information I could get my hands on relating to this tape.

Another great aspect of working at a think tank is the community. Part of a policy research institute's mission is to disseminate the ideas produced by its resident scholars. To that end, policy research institutes host conferences, lectures, and discussions on a regular basis. Think tank interns and staff

are encouraged to attend these events whenever they can — at other think tanks as well as their own.

Occasionally, an organization will host an especially interesting conference such as Heritage did on June 23 of last summer. The event was titled “24 and America’s Image in Fighting Terrorism: Fact, Fiction, or Does it Matter?” The lecture featured Rush Limbaugh, Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, and best of all, President Logan, Chloe O’Brien, and Tony Almeida from the cast of the show “24.”

Being an intern at a DC think tank is also a great way to network. There are a lot of college interns working at policy research institutes like Hudson. Through formal and informal gatherings, they get to know each other. Playing softball on the lawn of the National Mall is a Washington tradition and a great way to meet other students while winning glory for your home think tank. There are also events specifically geared towards interns. Last summer, the Center for Strategic and International studies hosted an intern debate with a number of organizations participating. My debate partner, a senior at the University of Michigan who hosts his own Rush Limbaugh-style conservative talk show, and I were unjustly defeated a few times but the event was productive and enjoyable.

Several Princeton students work in think tanks each summer. In talking with some of them, it became clear that many of the positive elements of my experience at Hudson are common among internships at other think tanks. At the same time, different policy research institutes offer a broad variety of research areas, contact with senior scholars in different fields, and intellectual life.

Jordan Reimer ‘08 worked at the Shalem Center in Israel, a think-tank founded by same Princeton graduates who chartered the *Princeton Tory*. . He worked directly with the president of the center in researching education in democratic countries. Jordan enjoyed the research and the contact with high level scholars. He noted that the work was more academic than the policy oriented research done at most Washington think tanks.

Cassy DeBenedetto ‘07 had a more typical Washington think tank experience last summer at the Heritage Foundation. She worked for ten weeks on the effect of religion on family life, specifically on parenting, sexuality, and marriage. Cassy’s research

Some of conservative Princeton students’ favorite Washington, D.C.-based think tanks to work for:



focused on cultural and values related issues, as compared to the political research of the type that Jordan and I did at our respective think tanks. Cassy further emphasized that “the summer internship program at Heritage is just as much a *program* as it is an *internship*. Heritage organizes “field trips” to local sites in D.C. such as the Pentagon and the Supreme Court. We even had the chance to talk to Justice Clarence Thomas for a good hour and a half.

There are a lot of different opportunities available in the think tank community in Washington and elsewhere. The best way to find out about these opportunities is to write directly to the organizations themselves. Columbia Books publishes a directory entitled “Washington: A Comprehensive Directory of the Area’s Major Institutions and the People Who Run Them.” It’s a great resource for contact info of pretty much every think tank in the city. TigerTracks list of think tank opportunities merits a good

look but isn’t extensive enough by itself. Combining Princeton’s listings of think tank opportunities with an outside list is the best way to cover all the bases.

Think tanks provide an interesting opportunity to examine politics and policy in America. They draw on diverse methodologies and resources in order to bring about policy change. As such, they are fascinating places to work as well as interesting objects of study in their own right. ✚



Brian Extein ‘08 is a junior from Washington, D.C. He is a member of Colonial Club and the College Republicans and is majoring in history.

QUARRELING ELEPHANTS

THE BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF CONGRESS IS THE BATTLE FOR THE SOUL OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

Joel Alicea '10

“The Republican Party is a divided, lost, and intellectually deficient group that has destroyed the budget and will soon lose control of Congress.”

A statement like this would normally be expected to have come from Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid, or some other liberal lion attempting to gain an advantage in the upcoming election, but the man whose words are paraphrased above is none other than former Republican Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich. As shocking as this may seem, Gingrich is part of a growing segment of the Republican Party has become disgusted with Congress and the president for what it sees as a betrayal of the principles of 1994's Contract with America. A struggle

the Room: Evangelicals, Libertarians, and the Battle to Control the Republican Party. Such sentiment is certainly a breathtaking indictment of the current Congressional leadership and the Bush Republican voters who support them, but it is also understandable when viewed in the context of what the Gingrich Republicans stood for in comparison to the current Bush Republicans. After all, the Contract with America advocated balanced budgets and a smaller and more efficient government above all else. Currently, though, the U.S. is faced with record deficits, unbalanced budgets for the foreseeable future, and a government bureaucracy that has blossomed into a red tape behemoth recalling the days of President Lyndon Johnson. That assessment is drawn from a policy analysis by Stephen Slivinski of the Cato Institute entitled *The Grand Old Spending*

licans have traditionally wielded an edge or run only slightly behind the Democrats. With disapproval numbers so high, it is impossible to say that Democrats and independents are the only Americans who disapprove of the President's performance. Clearly, some traditionally Republican voters are also angry over the current budgetary situation. Additionally, the nomination of Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court, the profound mismanagement of Hurricane Katrina (which many Republicans viewed as a case study in ineffective government bureaucracy), the Dubai Ports deal, and President Bush's insistence on a comprehensive immigration package including guest worker permits have all combined to fan the flames of Republican discontent.

There is now a palpable anger within the party that Newt Gingrich is giving voice to, and it has reared its head in Gingrich's own personal turn of events. His 2005 book *Winning the Future: A 21st Century Contract with America* was an instant bestseller, reflecting the mobilization and growing interest among Gingrich supporters. Gingrich has become exceedingly popular among Republicans fed up with the current state of affairs. All the actions that precipitated his downfall in the late nineties have been forgotten as he tours the primary states of Iowa, New Hampshire, and other early battlegrounds for the 2008 Republican presidential nomination. As John Fund noted in his editorial for the *Wall Street Journal* on September 25, Gingrich was “given a rock star's welcome” at the recent Family Research Council hosting for potential 2008 contenders. His popularity continues to rise, and the Gingrich Republicans continue to grow in numbers.

Meanwhile, the Bush Republicans remain committed to a new Republican Party platform, one that differs very much from the Contract with America. Over the last six years, President Bush's “compassionate conservatism” has led the party in a strikingly new direction that blends ideas from across the political spectrum. The

It is apparent that contrary to public perception and Democratic attacks, President Bush has actually led the party in a much less conservative direction than he could have, and this trend has the Gingrich Republicans furious.

has begun between Bush Republicans and Gingrich Republicans for the heart and soul of the Republican Party, and the upcoming midterm congressional election represents the next great battle in that fight. The results of this election will have a real impact on the future of Grand Old Party and, consequently, the future of the country.

“I think the Republican brand is in trouble. People forgot why they were doing what they were doing... The party is confused as to its identity... The real breakthroughs we need require a level of intellectual depth that is not one of the strengths of the Republican Party.” This is the actual statement Gingrich made in an interview with Ryan Sager for Sager's new book *The Elephant in*

Party: How Republicans Became the Party of Big Spenders. Slivinski, along with libertarians who have traditionally supported the Republican Party, have thrown their support behind Gingrich's faction of the G.O.P. in advocating a return to the days of disciplined and lean government.

This faction is not a small or insignificant portion of the party. Indeed, the Gingrich Republicans are a force to be reckoned with. An *NBC News/Wall Street Journal* poll conducted earlier this year showed that fully 70% of the electorate disapproved of Bush's handling of the budget, and a separate *NBC/WSJ* poll found that more Americans now trust Democrats over Republicans on matters relating to taxes. These are startling and damning figures in areas where Repub-

results are domestic and foreign policies with which Gingrich Republicans strongly disagree. Bush Republicans embrace Big Government (a liberal ideal) when it comes

and Democratic attacks, President Bush has actually led the party in a much less conservative direction than he could have, which has infuriated Gingrich Republicans.

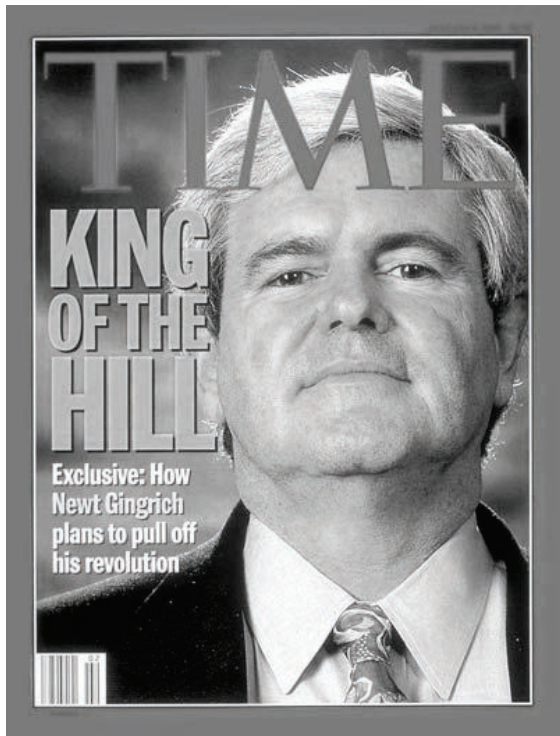
If the Republican vote, specifically the Gingrich Republican vote, is depressed because of the malaise that has gripped the base of the party, Americans can expect to see Speaker Nancy Pelosi being sworn in come January.

to national security policy and a prescription drug benefit for Medicare while at the same time supporting deep tax cuts and privatized Social Security (conservative tenets). They advocate spreading democracy across the globe and engaging in nation-building (neo-conservative) and simultaneously push for a guest worker program for illegal immigrants (liberal). In short, there is a wide gulf between the White House and the new guard in the GOP on a wide array of issues,

Why is the significance of this anger and division among Republicans? The answer is simple: midterm elections are decided by which party is more capable of energizing its base. The exit polling data on this point are widely known. Midterm elections simply aren't very interesting to the average American. Only truly motivated voters actually cast ballots in a midterm election, and those voters are almost always the die-hard bases of the respective parties. Thus, if the base of the Republican Party is divided and apathetic come Election Day, the result will be a very bad morning for Republicans on November 8. Republican leaders know this, and have already expressed anxiety over the lack of energy in the Republican base this year. Mike Allen and James Carney's *Time* magazine article from October 1, "The G.O.P.'s Secret Weapon," states that "Republicans acknowledge one ominous vulnerability: for more than a decade, the party has benefited from an intensity gap. Stoked by hatred of Bill Clinton or love for George W. Bush, GOP voters have been more certain to vote than Democrats—meaning that the party tends to perform better than the final opinion polls suggest. Representative Rahm Emanuel of Illinois, head of the House Democrats' campaign committee, recently told *Time* that gap had counted for as much as five to

upcoming election will answer is not who will win control of Congress but rather, whether the Gingrich Republicans will turn out to support the Bush Republicans of Congress with whom they disagree. The House and Senate are both on the verge of falling into Democratic hands, and the only power that will keep this from happening is a united Republican base. Therefore, if the Gingrich Republicans come out in force to stand behind the Bush Republicans, then the GOP will likely retain control of the Senate and have a shot at keeping the House. The most noteworthy outcome would not be that Republicans avoided losing the election, but rather, that the fissure within the Republican Party would not yet have reached the critical point at which the party's electoral dominance would be in jeopardy. However, should the Gingrich Republicans stay home on Election Day and the GOP lose control of one or both Houses of Congress, the time will have come for the party to decide between the two factions, and there is only one way to settle that dispute—the 2008 GOP presidential nomination. In short, the results of this election will determine the conditions for 2008 and for the future of the Republican Party.

The GOP is now a party divided between those who adopt President Bush's new vision those who support the ideas of former Speaker Newt Gingrich. The differences between these two blocs are substantial and, in many cases, irreconcilable. With the GOP control of Congress hanging by a thread, the only chance for Republicans to retain their majorities is if the Gingrich Republicans, by far the most disgruntled and depressed group of the party base, turn out to vote on Election Day. If they do, the party may keep control and stave off internal warfare. However, if the Gingrich Republicans stay home on November 7, they will have announced to the rest of the party that the 2008 presidential primary season is going to be a showdown for the soul of the party. It all comes down to November 7. P



from entitlement programs to foreign policy, where Gingrich Republicans would prefer to see a tougher approach taken with Iran and North Korea. Even in areas where they find common ground, such as the religious conservative agenda, Bush Republican congressional leaders don't want to use the political muscle to pursue it seriously. It is apparent that contrary to public perception

seven points for the Republicans. But he thinks this election year might be different." If the Republican vote, specifically the Gingrich Republican vote, is depressed because of the malaise that has gripped the base of the party, Americans can expect to see Speaker Nancy Pelosi being sworn in come January.

The truly significant question that this



Joel Alicea '10 is a freshman from Andover, MA. He is a resident of Butler College and member of the College Republicans. He hopes to study politics.

A SUMMER OF DECISION FOR U.S. COMMANDERS IN IRAQ

Wesley Morgan '10

This September, Gen. John Abizaid, commander of all U.S. forces in the greater Middle East, made a long-awaited announcement, perhaps the most crucial (and dangerous) decision affecting American military strategy in Iraq since the summer of 2004. Since last spring, General Abizaid's immediate subordinate, Gen. George Casey, the commander of military forces in Iraq, had delayed offering a resolution to this most difficult dilemma: with the insurgency as strong as ever in the western Anbar province but apparently petering out in the north of the country, should the overall number of American combat troops in Iraq be reduced, or, with civilian death tolls soaring amid rising sectarian violence in and around Baghdad, should forces instead be directed into the capital in an effort to stem the Sunni-Shiite conflict? In the starkest terms, the choice was between continuing to treat Iraq as a battlefield in the war on terror - with U.S. troops keeping up the fight against al-Qaeda and other fundamentalist Sunni insurgents while Iraqi forces dealt with the internal strife - or committing American units to a whole new campaign - bringing calm to a city that has descended into a state of civil war.

The U.S. commanders in Baghdad dragged the decision out across the summer, using every stop-gap measure available to slow their decision, but by mid-September it was clear that the generals in question had committed the U.S. military force in Iraq to the open-ended, dangerous mission of subduing Baghdad, at the expense of the more essential counterinsurgency effort in Anbar. Now looking ahead to the future, if this course is maintained, the only remaining question is how many American servicemen will lose their lives in another nation's civil war when they could and should be fighting Islamist terrorists.

This careful but misguided strategy was the end product of a personnel change in Iraq made over two years ago: the creation of a

heavy-duty four-star command in Baghdad. General Casey and his newly assembled staff, drawn from among the best and most experienced officers in the Army and Marine Corps, arrived in Baghdad in June 2004 during the aftermath of the broad insurgent offensive that had seized Falluja and stretched U.S. and allied capabilities to their limits across the country. Replacing the poorly prepared command that Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez had led since the initial invasion, this new headquarters was forced to devise a completely new strategy to defeat the largely Sunni insurgency in Baghdad, Mosul, and the rural towns in Anbar, Salahuddin, and Diyala provinces.

The effect of the new command was twofold. First, its strategy prompted a shift in counterinsurgency tactics among field commanders in Iraq, a new attitude typified by the British-inspired counterinsurgency academy in Taji. In addition, the new command made major alterations to the strength, posture, and organization of U.S. forces in preparation for a long campaign of "clearing and holding" insurgent strongholds across the country. That summer and fall, the number of U.S. Army brigades and Marine regiments jumped from twelve to fifteen, and by late 2005, to a peak of eighteen - almost all of them poised to launch the new campaign in Sunni areas of the country. Disparaged by Senator John McCain as "a game of whack-a-mole," the "clear and hold campaign" (which began at the battle of Samarra and the second battle of Falluja) proved long and bloody, but over the course of two years, it has yielded positive results. In the insurgent-dominated Anbar province, one Marine operation after another retook Falluja, Haditha, Qaim, and other towns, sealing the Syrian border by late 2005, and by early 2006, confining the worst of the still-potent insurgency to a stretch of the Euphrates valley near the long-contested urban battlefield of Ramadi. Today, despite the progress, more casualties lie ahead, with enemy attacks in the Ramadi area escalating and the commander in the region, Maj. Gen. Richard Zilmer, predicting on that troop lev-

els in Anbar would need to remain steady in the foreseeable future.

But in other provinces once dominated by insurgents, "clear and hold" seems to have been a successful strategy. In Diyala province, for example, the U.S. presence has been cut in half since the autumn of 2004, and in August, a large portion of the province was handed off to a different command, signaling that a full brigade would no longer be needed in the area around Baquba. In Salahuddin province, the story is much the same. Despite major setbacks in some towns and accusations of unnecessarily harsh tactics against Col. Michael Steele's brigade, U.S. troops have gradually worn out the insurgency in Samarra, Baiji, and even Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit. Finally, in the vicinity of Mosul, the city of Tel Afar - once feared as "another Falluja" - has largely overcome its insurgency thanks to a highly successful 2005 offensive led by Col. H. R. McMaster, one of the Army's best-known officers. In Salahuddin and farther north, U.S. troops have made great strides with the security situation; in July, the commander in northern Iraq, Maj. Gen. Thomas Turner, went so far as to say that in places like Mosul, Tel Afar, and Tikrit, "Security is [finally] at a level where we can begin worrying about economics, about projects," instead of the intense combat operations that have characterized the Iraq campaign since the fall of Baghdad.

In Anbar, while U.S. soldiers must remain in their present numbers to fight a ferocious insurgency near Ramadi, in Diyala, Salahuddin, and the far north, the "clear and hold" campaign that General Casey initiated in 2004 is drawing to a close. The immediate consequence of this long-awaited success is an opportunity to cut the number of U.S. combat troops in the provinces north of Baghdad. In December 2005, the growing success in Diyala allowed U.S. commanders to cut the force in Iraq from eighteen brigades and regiments to fifteen, with a sixteenth brigade (now stationed in Baghdad) on standby in Kuwait - the first major cut from the peak force level that ac-

accompanied the December elections. Meanwhile, in light of the strong security situation in Tel Afar this June, General Turner allowed the brigade stationed in that city to be reassigned to the Marine command in Anbar. For the first time in the war, it seems safe to say that brigade-strength U.S. combat units could be pulled back from northern Iraq without the chance of its lapsing into insurgency hands.

This summer, the crucial question for the military headquarters in Baghdad and for lawmakers in Washington was where, as battalions began to leave the north, would the units scheduled to replace them go? During the tense summer months, with the White House requesting its first National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq since mid-2004, commanders in Baghdad quietly but fiercely debated this question. To delay the decision, General Casey employed every stop-gap measure at his disposal, from shifting U.S. forces within Iraq to constantly and erratically altering deployment schedules. Only in September did General Abizaid end the summer of uncertainty when he announced that troop levels would not dip below seventeen brigades and regiments as before spring.

The internal debate at Baghdad headquarters was between the two prevailing schools of thought among the veteran counterinsurgents on General Casey's command. To some officers the answer was clear: if a number of units in the north have finished the two-year campaign of clearing and holding, having made deep enough dents in the insurgency, then they should not be replaced when they leave. By crippling segments of the insurgency, they reasoned, the brigades had fulfilled their deployment orders and should return home (or at the very least, be repositioned to Kuwait and put on standby in case of emergency). Several times in May and June, General Casey hinted that a plan for some kind of withdrawal during 2006 was in the cards, and for supporters of this strategy, a June article in the *New York Times* suggested that this school of thought might be prevailing. As the military acknowledged soon after the report was published, General Casey had briefed the National Security Council on a possible drawdown to twelve brigades and regiments by the end of 2006, followed by an additional drawdown to six or seven by late 2007, with additional brigades placed on standby in Kuwait. The prospect of such drastic drawdowns shrank in late July with the announcement of the

new rotation plan and the extension of the Stryker brigade's deployment in Mosul. By September, with the announcement to keep seventeen brigades and regiments in the war zone well into 2007, these plans had vanished entirely.

The announcement that troop levels would remain high into the spring shows that the second strategy among Iraq's senior military commanders has won out. Unlike those who wish to withdraw units once their counterinsurgency missions have succeeded, this second school of thought is a more idealistic one. Calling for the large-scale movement of American units into greater Baghdad to quell civil strife between Shiite and Sunni groups, this strategy sees a halt to sectarian violence as essential to protecting American personnel as well as bringing peace and order to the Iraq's fracturing center of gravity, and in turn, and to the rest of the country. Needless to say, this strategy is long-term and, for the U.S. military, it is very risky; as General Abizaid himself stated in August, Baghdad's sectarian violence, brutal as it may be now, is only beginning.

Yet to equate the optimism inherent to this approach to the naiveté that tarnished the first summer of war under General Sanchez would be ridiculous. After all, Lt. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, whose strategy is now the blueprint for at least the next half-year in Iraq, is one of the most adept and experienced counterinsurgents in the ranks of the officer corps. Moreover, he shares his viewpoint with many of the most successful officers in Iraq over the past two years, including Lt. Gen. David Petraeus *87, Lt. Gen. Martin Dempsey, and Col. H. R. McMaster. Throughout his tenure as second-in-command in Iraq, General Chiarelli has advocated deploying large masses of U.S. troops to demonstrate commitment, employing minimal violent force, and taking part in highly visible reconstruction programs. When applied in the past on a smaller scale, as in McMaster's Tel Afar and late-2005 Falluja, this strategy has brought order to chaotic urban battlefields, but as the U.S. casualty rolls demonstrate, this order comes at a heavy price. Moreover, the results so far are not promising: although in the wake of the reinforcement of Baghdad, both U.S. military and Iraqi civilian casualties dropped, by September, the rate of sectarian killings had risen yet again despite the deployment of additional troops.

The U.S. command in Baghdad had a chance this summer to begin its two- or three-brigade drawdown; indeed, with mis-

sions in Salahuddin and Diyala complete, brigades could have been cut from the force rotation, with remaining units focusing on the difficult but essential task of isolating and defeating Islamist insurgents in Anbar cities like Ramadi. To the detriment of the U.S. military and possibly Iraq as well, Generals Casey and Abizaid chose not to follow that course. Instead, troop levels will be maintained through the spring of 2007 at least, though several of brigades will be devoted to patrolling the streets of Baghdad. If General Chiarelli's plan succeeds and the extra manpower does in fact quell the strife in the capital, then there may be hope for order central Iraq within the next year, and even for Iraqi democracy.

As the recent spike in civilian casualties in Baghdad shows, the plan now being implemented is a long shot. Moreover, flooding Baghdad with more U.S. combat troops will come with two certain costs. First, the U.S. military will suffer a steadily growing casualty toll. Second, the Baghdad campaign has already begun to suck battalions out of Anbar, where the essential battle against Sunni fundamentalists still rages in half a dozen war-torn cities. If this trend continues, as it seems likely to do, it will not be long before the brigade in Ramadi and the regiments elsewhere in Anbar find themselves even more undermanned than they already are and incapable of holding any area for more than a few weeks at a time. Albeit with the best of intentions, Generals Casey and Chiarelli have turned down the best chance yet at drawing down the unsustainable number of combat units in Iraq in favor of a massive gamble. The stakes of this gamble are high – both the stability of Baghdad and Iraq and the continued effectiveness of a U.S. Army and Marine Corps are on the line. But most of all, our generals risk any possibility for victory against the Islamist terrorists who have flooded Anbar and the Euphrates valley since 2004. These are stakes with which no general should gamble. ¶



Wes Morgan '10 is a freshman from Watertown, MA. He is a resident of Forbes College and hopes to major in military history

THROWING CAUTION TO THE WIND

PRINCETON FUMBLES AGAIN BY ENDING EARLY ADMISSION

Will Scharf '08

For those of you who are new to the *Tory*, welcome, and for those of you, our faithful legion of returning readers, who are veterans of Princeton's journal of conservative political indignation (now available electronically as well as in print), welcome back. This first *Tory* of the academic year marks the first anniversary of my ascension to this particular chunk of column inches known as "the last word", a significant milestone by any system of measurement, so I'll try to make this column especially good.

The fall has been a politically tumultuous one for the Princeton political scene, and, at the risk of appearing to have startling tunnel vision, I am going to dispense with commentary of any sort that might interest people not living between Faculty Road and Nassau Street and instead discuss some

in this case Admissions Department data to undermine Nancy Malkiel's justification for grade deflation. The crumbling, ivy-covered façade of the once-monolithic Sorority of Evil is testament to the political skill of our soft-spoken leader. Kudos, Lenahan, and keep up the emails!

Although I'd love to comment on the four-year college system, and lambaste Nassau Hall once again for waging a senseless war on the peaceful drunkards of Prospect, Burstein and Co. have yet to present an honest and well-articulated plan for the implementation of the college system, so there is really not all that much to say. It is worth noting, however, that the almost laughably overdone residential college public relations offensive – launched this fall with the intent of convincing gullible underclassmen that they can have more fun listening to poetry readings in a college common room than they can in Cottage's newly renovated

end of Dillon Gym.

Hyperbolic speculation aside, however, there is one on-campus issue that has not received attention commensurate to its devastating impact – namely the hastily announced decision to follow the Crimson leader and do away with the early admission process in its entirety.

Special attention needs to first be paid to the timescale of this shocking move. Harvard announced its decision to drop early admissions on Monday, September 13th. Two days later, Dean of Admissions Janet Rapelye was quoted in the *Prince* as saying, "I literally can't predict what we're going to do, or maybe we won't do anything. We don't have a plan in place." On September 18th, exactly a week after Harvard's announcement, President Tilghman declared that Princeton would be following Harvard in doing away with early admissions. In four days – from the 14th when Rapelye made her clearly flustered, equivocating, unsure, and damned unmanly statement to the *Prince*, to the 18th when the decision was announced – including a weekend over which our pampered battalion of deans were assumedly

It's worth interjecting that the last decision Nassau Hall made which was accompanied by pronouncements of "well, everybody's going to do it too" was grade deflation, and as is commonly noted, not a single other school has since set A-range quotas à la Dean Malkiel.

startling developments that certainly merit concern and, indeed, outrage.

Credit must go to Alex Lenahan, first and foremost, for having the guts to say what we have known all along: we are smarter than our alumni parents were, and we deserve every last A-range grade that we can wrest out of the struggling hands of disgruntled grad-students with no social life to speak of. Joking aside, it really is great to see a USG President playing elements of the administration against each other, using

taproom complete with its gigantic plasma flat-screen – would not have been launched if the fledgling implementation plan for the colleges wasn't something to be worried about. Personally, having suffered through two years of Forbes's vaunted fare and leaky bathrooms, nothing short of a prophetic vision or a freak gasoline fight accident would make me leave the indestructible walls of Charter Club for some newfangled Whitman quad complete with anti-social roommates and scenic views of Spellman and the back

not in the office – a decision was made to throw into the dustbin of history a selection process through which approximately half of current Princeton students were admitted – a hasty move to say the least. It seems that Nassau Hall had a relatively unformed plan to move on the early admissions issue before Harvard did so, and I find myself wondering whether we were just trying to beat the rush of schools that would assumedly follow Harvard's lead. I suppose in this respect we were successful in that we beat UVA

to the punch, but I'm hardly comforted by this honor, particularly since the number of elite universities who have done away with EA/ED can still be counted on half a hand. It's worth interjecting that the last decision

if applications magically appear in West College, and then a set proportion of early and regular applications are passively accepted by some sort of supernatural force. This ignores the fact that it's Rapelye's

just apply early somewhere else to get the insurance provided by an early admit? How about economically advantaged, well-qualified students who will similarly look for the assurances of a letter in December? Is the

quality of our student body going to suffer to the advantage of peer schools like Yale, Columbia, or Brown?

I do not know the answer to

these questions, but neither do Rapelye and Tilghman, and that is why I am angry with this decision. Had early admissions been scrapped after a year-long in-depth study into application patterns here and elsewhere, I would not be writing this column. But this decision was made in a week, and was prompted purely by something one

If the administration were truly concerned by the proportion of rich kids “gaming the system” through EA, then there would be a very simple solution to this--reducing the number of rich kids getting in early by reducing the number of students admitted early, or by more actively screening for early applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds so that they too could do absolutely nothing during the winter and spring trimester of their senior year after getting the thick letter.

Nassau Hall made which was accompanied by pronouncements of “well, everybody's going to do it too” was grade deflation, and as is commonly noted, not a single other school has since set A-range quotas à la Dean Malkiel.

Hastiness aside, though, even the University's rationale for doing away with early admissions makes absolutely no sense. In her statement announcing the policy shift, President Tilghman proclaimed, “We believe that a single admission process will encourage an even broader pool of excellent students to apply to Princeton”. I'm left wondering exactly how broad a pool we need. For the class of 2010, we had 17,478 applicants for an estimated 1,220 spots. That's over 14 applicants for each desk. You can't tell me that there aren't qualified students already being turned away, and I really don't think that increasing the number of applicants to 25,000 or 30,000 would produce a true qualitative difference in future matriculated classes, and I'm even granting President Tilghman the benefit of the doubt on the question of whether or not cutting EA/ED altogether will produce an increased number of qualified applicants.

The second rationale relied on illogical class warfare-like rhetoric that is neither productive nor honest. President Tilghman justified the decision by saying that Early Admissions unfairly favored economically advantaged students, and that disadvantaged students were thus further disadvantaged by the policy since their rich neighbors were getting a leg up through early admissions. I find this argument fundamentally flawed. Tilghman and Rapelye make it sound as

own Princeton Admissions Office that is responsible for the various ratios of applications to admissions and early or regular acceptance rates. If the administration were truly concerned by the proportion of rich kids “gaming the system” through EA, then there would a very simple solution to that – reducing the number of rich kids getting

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in early by reducing the number of students admitted early, or by more actively screening for early applicants from economically disadvantaged backgrounds so that they too could do absolutely nothing during winter and spring trimester of their senior years after getting the thick letter. Above all, if Princeton has difficulties admitting smart minorities, it's an image problem – in order to diversify, West College has to spread the word better about our superior financial aid packages and work to dissolve Princeton's reputation for elitism. But these are public relations problems, not early admission problems.

I'm all for socioeconomic diversity, but the goal of socioeconomic diversity was not necessarily served most effectively by scrapping the whole early system. How about well-qualified, disadvantaged students who in past years would have applied early, gotten in, and therefore been bound to Princeton, but who will now apply to multiple schools and perhaps choose elsewhere or

of our rivals did. I am reminded of Coca-Cola's disastrous attempt at modernizing their formula to match Pepsi, which led to plunging sales and a rapid reintroduction of Coca-Cola “Classic”. If only we could bring back “Admissions Office Classic” with Dean Fred Hargadon – the father of the early admissions system at Princeton – at the helm, now that would be something. And that's the last word. P



Will Scharf '08 is a history major originally from New York. An officer at Charter Club, Will is also involved in a number of conservative political and Jewish religious groups on campus.

TOP TEN EVENTS

Sponsored by the Office of Religious Life

- 1. Healing a Village: Compassionate Action and Community Empowerment –**
A talk led by Bruce French, band chef for The Rolling Stones and Pearl Jam.
Compassion, community, healing... and Mick Jagger.
- 2. Networking for Your Job Search and Beyond**
The social-climbing gospel: Grandpa Raushenbush would be proud.
- 3. "What can the Council for International Graduate Students (CIGS) do for you?" A Lunch Discussion.**
No idea. Really. Can we get a lifeline?
- 4. Pride Sunday: Worship at the University Chapel**
Rainbow vestments are so fabulous.
- 5. Chinese Women and Their Images on Screen**
Dean Breidenthal reveals his long-hidden Asian-fetish.
- 6. From Top to Bottom: Everything You Want to Know about Gay and Lesbian Sex**
Still sad I was out of town that weekend.
- 7. Winter Holiday Festival at the Carl A. Fields Center**
Sponsored by the Office of Newspeak Euphemisms for Faith-Based Life.
- 8. Queer Pulp: Perverse Passion in the Golden Age of the Paperback**
Alluringly and alliteratively titled: extra credit for creativity.
- 9. What Matters to Janet Rapelye and Why**
We already know—how do you think we got in?
- 10. The Joys and Toys of Gay Sex: A Panel Discussion**
Less alliterative, even more offensive.

-Compiled by Matthew Schmitz

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