

THE
PRINCETON
TORRY

APRIL 2007



TAKING TIGER MOUNTAIN

HOW PRINCETON'S PROGRAM IN
CHINA BOUGHT ACCESS AT THE
PRICE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

ALSO INSIDE:

THE WRITING SEMINARS

BUSH'S BUILDUP: A LET DOWN?

THE PRINCETON TORY

April 2007
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From the Publisher

The Underside of Old Nassau

Princeton's presidents have always mounted the Chapel's pulpit to let off steam. Princeton's early leaders started a tradition of denouncing whatever plagued campus, with the devil and dandyism receiving the heaviest censure. During the Opening Exercises for the freshman Class of 2008, President Shirley Tilghman detected a different threat to student well-being. Tilghman feared that the Princeton-based novel *The Rule of Four* would prompt freshmen prompt freshmen to search for the campus 'steam tunnel' system, and so she told the newly-arrived class, "You can just forget about looking for those steam tunnels -- they don't exist!" This statement, it should be noted, was false. But during that tightly-scheduled orientation week, few of us had time or inclination to determine whether there was a labyrinth lying beneath our feet or a president lying to our faces. After all, there were girls and goals to chase; we were barely nineteen.

The lie that should have startled us then has since become just another unremarkable instance of administration double-speak. It is hard to see what prompted that first fib, but after three years it is apparent that the University often has an interest in hiding its activities from students and alumni. In 2006 the *Tory* exposed the underbelly of campus orthodoxies and administration agendas with reports on the University's destruction of human embryos, covert funding of anti-religious programming, and bizarrely elitist affirmative-action initiative. This year we will continue to dig up dirt and, perhaps, produce a few gems in our continuing mission of showing our readers the underside of Old Nassau.

I will always look back with particular relish on one gritty, subterranean trip through the tunnels that started in the Junior Slums and ended, of all places, in the boiler room of Icahn Laboratory. It is my wish that our readers will recall this year's *Tory* articles with similar satisfaction and no less surprise. Inside these pages lie forbidden lines of thought and hidden facts ready for your exploration. I hope you will take the risk of going underground. Your professors, parents and President have warned you of the dangers. I'll promise the thrill of digging into the issues and coming out into the light of a better—and perhaps most surprisingly—more conservative understanding.

Sincerely,
Matthew Schmitz '08



THE
PRINCETON TORY

April 2007

www.princetontory.com

IN THIS ISSUE:

POINTS AND PUNTS

4 **The Left fumbles again**

CAMPUS

6 **Freshman Disorientation:**

It's time to reform the Writing Program

8 **Taking Tiger Mountain**

Princeton professors face censorship from China

WORLD

10 **Minority Right**

The electoral future of the Republican party

13 **An Army for the Long War**

Too little, too late

17 **Times Select[ive]**

Brian Brown does the newspaper of record

THE LAST WORD

18 **Slandering the Grand, Blaming the Shameless**

It's time for the administration to embrace the clubs



POINTS & PUNTS

THE TORY TACKLES THE NEWS

Christians at Princeton enjoy the attention of thirteen University-recognized chaplains, but apparently for Jewish students, even two is too many. President Tilghman fumbled on religious freedom last month by barring Chabad, a Jewish ministry, from gaining official status as a campus chaplaincy. Rabbi Eitan Webb was denied recognition despite his active and dynamic representation of a distinctive brand of Judaism. Tilghman justified her decision by citing a University priority of running all Jewish activities out of the CJL. The Score: Christianity 13, Judaism 1, religious freedom, 0.

When one sees a plastic blonde dressed in a slip stranded on the Frist Lawn, it's usually just another casualty of the notorious Cottage lingerie night. This time, though, the busty babe (who was bound to a chair) was actually a blow-up doll. The doll was placed by Princeton Pro-Choice Vox in order to protest the so called "gag rule" that prevents America from performing abortions abroad. The campy bindings and slip were no doubt meant to be sexually suggestive, suggesting in turn that pro-abortion Princetonians are clinging to their view of women as politically and sexually desperate. Vox's victimized vixens, indeed.

Khalid Latif loves *The Da Vinci Code*. The anti-Christian novel is currently listed under the "Favorite Books" section on the Facebook.com profile of Princeton's Muslim chaplain. A moderate with experience at

NYU's chaplaincy, Latif has a reputation for defending Muslim interests and working closely with Jewish leaders. His record was marred, though, by an incident where he organized opposition to a roundtable discussion and display of the Danish cartoons. Latif condemned the event in a letter sent to Muslim political groups: "...these cartoons are inherently racist and Islamophobic and offer no contribution whatsoever to the discussion. Their only purpose is to insult Islam and incite hatred against Muslims. I doubt that NYU would ever want to be associated with anti-Semitic caricatures mocking Jews and Judaism or racist caricatures mocking black people." In light of his high-profile objection to the Mohammed cartoons, it is hard to imagine what appeals to Latif in a book that claims that Christ fathered a child and the Catholic Church is a deeply violent patriarchal conspiracy. One possible explanation is that Latif, like so many others, overlooked Dan Brown's anti-Christian, anti-Catholic screed for the sake of his shimmering, lyrical prose. The probability that Mr. Latif is simply a connoisseur of the finest literature is enhanced by his selection of Mitch Albom's *The Five People You Meet in Heaven* as another favorite. Maybe it's time to buy my chaplain a copy of *The Satanic Verses*?

Never underestimate the power of the almighty campaign contribution. On March 2, Barack Obama, at a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in Chicago argued that Israel is "our strongest ally in the region and its only established democ-

racy." This commendable rhetoric is in line with American public opinion and Bush's foreign policy. If only these sentiments were truly reflective of Obama's convictions. The pro-Palestinian website Electronic Intifada relates that the senator used to attend many Palestinian and Arab-American community events in Chicago including a May 1998 community fundraiser at which Edward Said was the keynote speaker. In 2004 he apologized for his pro-Israeli sentiments, stating "I'm sorry I haven't said more about Palestine right now, but we are in a tough primary race. I'm hoping when things calm down I can be more up front." Referring to Chicago Tribune columns critical of Israeli and US policy, he encouraged their author: "Keep up the good work!" While the US can arguably use a politician who brings a new perspective to the Middle East peace process, we definitely don't need another pandering politician who doesn't have the audacity to state what he truly believes.

On February 26, 2007, the New York Observer published an "undercover" article on the Princeton eating club scene, sardonically proclaiming, "They're keepin' it classy over at the Ivy League's New Jersey outpost." The Observer, one may recall, was recently purchased this summer by Jared Kushner, a Harvard grad featured in Daniel Golden's *The Price of Admission: How America's Ruling Class Buys Its Way into Elite Colleges* (2005), for being an "unusual choice" for Harvard to offer admission, because of a mediocre academic record.

Of course his father's \$2.5 million donation to the school didn't hurt. One may also recall Mr. Kushner's very classy announcement of his recent acquisition, "I own the New York Observer," delivered in a tone so smug and self-confident even those working on Wall Street would be jealous of. A Harvard alum criticizing Princeton? US & World Report inferiority complex, anyone?

And they say democracies don't go to war with each other. On March 1, 170 Swiss Army troops crossed the border into Liechtenstein, effectively ending its 500-year policy of neutrality. Decades of hopes for a conflict-free Europe based the prevalence of the European Union were dashed with this single invasion. Hopefully, Switzerland doesn't invade its neighbor France next, inviting the inevitable French surrender and the invocation of NATO obligations. US forces are stretched thin as it is...

Former Princeton professor, and current Princeton congressman, Rush Holt, is a primary sponsor for the Ensuring College Access for All Americans Act (H.R. 114). Strange then, that he has declined to help one high-school senior gain access to Princeton. Holt gave a speech to Congressional pages this spring and during his remarks, promised to write

a recommendation for any of the high school students who asked him. One student, a female seeking early admission to study at Princeton's Physics Department, contacted



Lenahan and Sullivan: contentious kitties.

Holt's office repeatedly over several weeks this fall, requesting that he send a recommendation to Princeton. After the applicant received no response to numerous letters and emails, she was informed that Holt wouldn't write a recommendation for her because Congressman Mark Foley's case had macontact with pages a liability. Apparently one man's readiness to harm can excuse another's unwillingness to help. Here's to the honorable Rush Holt.

The Tory notes with interest that two of this year's Young Alumni Trustee candidates have tangled before. While Lenahan tired administrators and students alike with pages of statistical analysis, Sullivan, the USG Academics Chair, actually praised and defended Malkiel's policy, with the result being that while one alienated administrators and the other offended students, neither managed to do both. Student government experience would be an asset for any trustee, but the decision to stake out strident positions on controversial issues will prove a liability. Trustee candidates are not allowed to campaign precisely so they won't have to fear the perception of 'flip-flopping' once elected. The battle scars these two acquired in the grade deflation fight might help them as trustess but their personal investment in the issues hardly will.

Who would Skipper choose? Nancy Malkiel's pet pooch is watching the Young Alumni Trustee with a great deal of interest and no small amount of ambivalence. Of the three candidates, one has relentlessly attacked his master's signature program, and another has, perhaps more gallingly, tried to replace him in her affection. Oh to be a lapdog.

In the pages of the Daily Princetonian Lisa Wynn of the Office of Population Research and Professor Lee Silver ask why the Anscombe society has 'chastened' them. Chastized by the chaste? The Tory abstains from comment.

Ann Coulter punchlines? we'll pass...

-- Compiled by the Editors



R. I. P.
 B. I. G.
Ten years this March.
 Christopher George
 Latore Wallace
 1972 - 1997

FRESHMAN DISORIENTATION

WRITING SEMINARS ARE A LESSON IN BAD POLICY

Leon Furchtgott '09

The Princeton Freshman Writing Seminar, the only course required of all Princeton students, holds noble aspirations—namely, to teach the art (and science) of academic writing to incoming freshmen. But unlike such peer institutions as Columbia or the University of Chicago, whose core curricula contain highly-regarded courses that are tailored to advance students' knowledge of the liberal arts, a Princeton's writing seminar is too often little more than an exercise in academic hazing—a unfocused, hardly inspiring, usually regrettable, and often useless requirement to be fulfilled before starting one's academic career in earnest. But is it really so useless?

To many, the writing seminars seem to taint the overall Princeton intellectual experience. Addressing the incoming Class of 2010 during the 2006 Opening Exercises, President Shirley Tilghman introduced Princeton as a university where one could write poetry with Paul Muldoon or cure malaria with Manuel Llinás. "Pursue your passions, venture where you have never ventured before, pace yourself, serve others, and have lots of fun," she urged students. Tilghman failed to mention that the grandiose academic career she was offering them would begin, not with a glamorous course taught by a famous professor, but with a burden-

some one rarely taught by faculty.

Tilghman's speech isn't just an empty boast, however; Princeton's pride in having real professors teaching substantive courses is well deserved. But the Writing Program seems to be the exception. As Professor John Fleming once observed, its faculty, consisting largely of recent Ph.D.s unaffiliated with any department, is "basically guaranteed second-class citizenship." This, for one of the largest academic programs on campus.

Writing seminar topics are problematic as well. While earlier generations of Princeton students would learn to write while studying Shakespeare or Greek mythology, today's freshmen are offered such academically suspect course options as "The Archeology of Sex and Gender" or "Global Pop Music."

The primary goal of the writing seminars is to turn students away from superficial writing consisting of summary and exposition, and push them towards scholarly work rigorously exploring interesting questions. This laudable goal, however, is in tension if not contradiction with the manner in which the seminars are taught. Asking interesting academic questions requires at least some knowledge of the subject at hand, which presupposes some degree of immersion in the discipline. But writing seminars spend more class time working on writing skills than absorbing significant academic content. In addition, although

the writing seminars wish to help students bridge the gap between high-school writing--typified by the five-paragraph essay--and a more personal and flexible academic style, they regularly resort to the same high-school-formulaic elements: thesis, motive, complication, and stitching, among others.

Centralized, required courses taught mainly by junior lectur-



The Princeton Writing Program at 91 Prospect

ers, the writing seminars thus do not fit the Princeton ideal. But these objections do not make a decisive case against the program.

Ultimately, it is necessary for the Princeton Writing Program to exist and function in the best possible way. Princeton faced a writing crisis in the 1990s, to the extent the faculty voted unanimously to go to a system of writing seminars in 2000. American secondary education generally does not prepare students for college-level writing. The writing seminars are an attempt to remedy the problem. Unlike chemistry or history, basic writing can and ought to be taught to all students.

The Princeton Writing Program, despite all its unsavory aspects, does manage to help students with their writing, an area where previous programs have failed. According to Kerry Walk, the director of the Writing Program, around 80% of students achieve the program's writing goals. In an interview she added that "students may be surprised to learn that only 4% of freshmen rate the overall quality of their Writing Seminar as 'very poor' or 'poor' (1 or 2 on a 5-point scale), whereas the vast majority—usually around 83%—rate it as 'good' or 'excellent' (4 or 5 on a 5-point scale)." The writing seminars as a whole have a rating of 4.2, which is the average rating of all Princeton courses. This is an impressive statistic for a required course.

The relative success of the writing seminars can be partially attributed, undoubtedly, to the Writing Program's emphasis on small classes and individual attention. This constitutes a marked improvement on the system of W courses,

which was in place in the 1980s and 1990s. The W courses

The Princeton Writing Program, despite all its unsavory aspects, does manage to help students with their writing.

were taught in a lecture-precept format, with famous professors lecturing and graduate students leading precepts. But the emphasis in W courses had been on covering a topic rather than teaching writing, and they had no consistent goals or standards. Students and their writing suffered under this system, and although the W courses had many advantages over the writing seminars—primarily, full-time professors and substantive material—it would be absurd

to return to them. The Princeton Writing Program is considered one of the best in the country, and in spite of the "negative buzz," it can be effective in improving

Earlier generations of Princeton students would learn to write while studying Shakespeare or Greek mythology.

Today's freshmen are offered such academically suspect course options as "The Archaeology of Sex and Gender" or "Global Pop Music."

the writing of some students.

The program, and its seminars, would be vastly improved by a clear articulation of scope and goals. Understanding the "elements of the academic essay"—what Kerry Walk views as the language of writing—instead of developing a recipe for writing essays, is perhaps the most important goal of the seminars. But it is also, unfortunately, lost on many students who leave the seminars faithful to formulae.

Perhaps the most salient negative effect of this misplaced emphasis has been to shift focus from filling out an argument to merely furnish-

ing requisite essay elements. Religion professor

Martha Himmelfarb has, for instance, noted a significant improvement in the quality and clarity of students' papers since the establishment of the writing seminars. But she also sees "a significant number of papers that argue for a thesis by providing three or four examples in support of it while ignoring all evidence to the contrary." For her the problem is contained but significant: "While I doubt that any teacher of a writing seminar tells students to ignore evidence that

doesn't fit a thesis, it is a problem that a significant minority of students take away this impression." This particular unintended effect may reflect the seminars' emphasis

on building a strong thesis—which may lead some students to think that opposing arguments are a sign of poor writing. But this, like the program's other weaknesses, is not beyond remedy.

Reluctantly, then, we must accept the writing program as a necessary part of the Princeton education. Without a question most find the seminars inconvenient, not only for their excessive papers and sometimes risible topics, but because of their longstanding reminder to us that even college students at elite universities lack basic academic writing skills. Weathering C's on papers or having to circle topic sentences may be painfully humiliating for any self-confident freshman, but to some extent the drastic and varyingly effective measures of the Princeton Writing Program are necessary evils. What has become clear is that Princeton's Writing Program, like that freshman, still has much room for improvement. ¶



Leon Furchtgott is a sophomore from Bethesda, MD. He is a Physics major active with Chabad.

TAKING TIGER MOUNTAIN

HOW PRINCETON'S PROGRAM IN CHINA HAS BOUGHT ACCESS AT THE PRICE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM.

Matthew Schmitz '08

Each spring students welcome the thaw of ice-encrusted Old Nassau. This year the melting snow was a reminder of the less visible yet more drastic warming in relations between Princeton and China, America's one-time Cold War adversary. Over the last twenty years the University and the communist state have forged increasingly close bonds exemplified by Princeton in Beijing, or PiB, the University's flagship language-immersion program. PiB sends scores of students to the Chinese capital to learn its language and culture. But as foreign officials have censored course materials and barred entry for Princeton professors, the Chinese policy of punishing its academic critics has hit home. Princetonians have discovered that in a land of knock-off polos and pirated DVDs, the price of free speech can be surprisingly high.

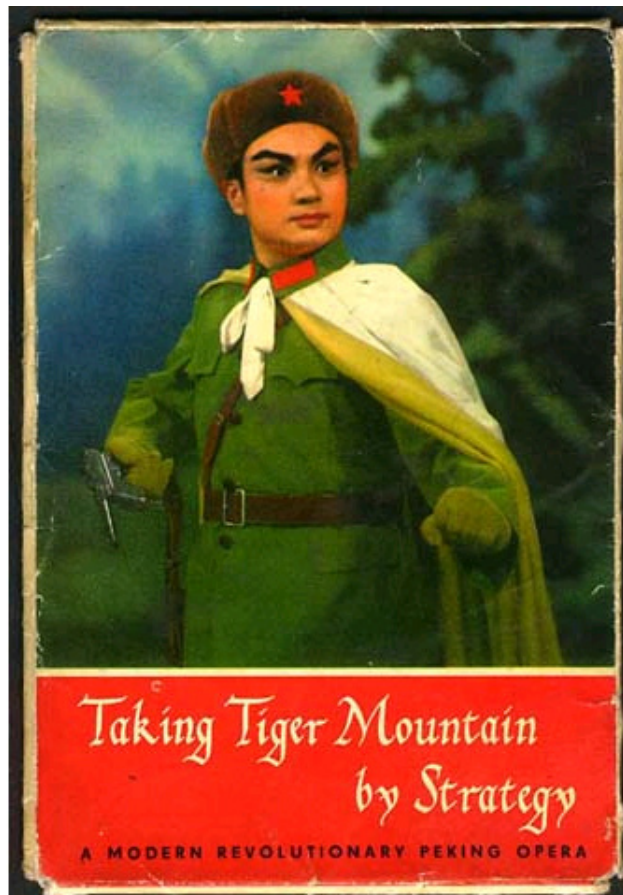
In the fall of 2004, President Tilghman visited China as part of a tour of Asia. The visit was intended to demonstrate that the once-brittle relationship had become a fluid, friendly exchange. Her visit, however, met with sharp criticism from some on Princeton's East Asian Studies faculty, who faulted her for not addressing China's efforts to control professors' speech. Professor Perry Link, the co-director of Princeton in Beijing, criticized Tilghman for not discussing with Chinese officials their 1996 decision to permanently bar him from entering the country. Link's exclusion from the country

is widely viewed as retribution for his vocal criticism of the communist regime. Instead of pressing Chinese officials on the decision, Tilghman informed Link that she would be

Men's Christian Association. Princeton in Peking operated according to a progressive ethic where religious, educational and scholarly aims were naturally advanced in parallel. In an era when morning Chapel attendance was mandatory for all students, Princeton planted its foot abroad by establishing a religious mission with educational goals. After the decisive victory of Communist forces in 1949, Princeton-in-Peking was forced to move its operations to Taiwan and other Asian countries. To reflect the change in focus, the program was renamed Princeton in Asia.

The University would not re-establish a beachhead in mainland China until the founding of Princeton in Beijing. Perhaps nothing speaks more to the breakdown of old barriers than the sight of the crumbling stone of the Great Wall, or "Changcheng," peppered with preppy Ivy-leaguers intent on snapping Facebook photos. For many of these student-tourists, the desire to learn the language is based on a steadfast belief that the center of gravity in the global economy is shifting to China.

In a relationship that has long been complicated by communism and colonialism, the latest chapter of Princeton - China relations is one of the most troubled. According to Professor Link, Chinese-American scholars often watch their words and work carefully, fearing retributions against relatives still living in China. Dr. Li Shaomin, a Hong Kong-based professor who received a Ph.D. in sociology from Princeton, was accused of being a spy and detained by the Chinese government. Dr. Shaomin was able



discussing the matter only with the American ambassador. Some believed Tilghman had passed on a one-time opportunity to speak directly to the Chinese officials that could reinstate Link's right to entry.

Princeton and China shared strong ties long before names like Mao and Malkiel appeared on the scene. In 1905 the Philadelphian Society, an exclusive religious fraternity dedicated to personal holiness, founded Princeton-in-Peking at the request of the International Young

to regain his position only by “lying low,” that is, by avoiding criticisms of the regime.

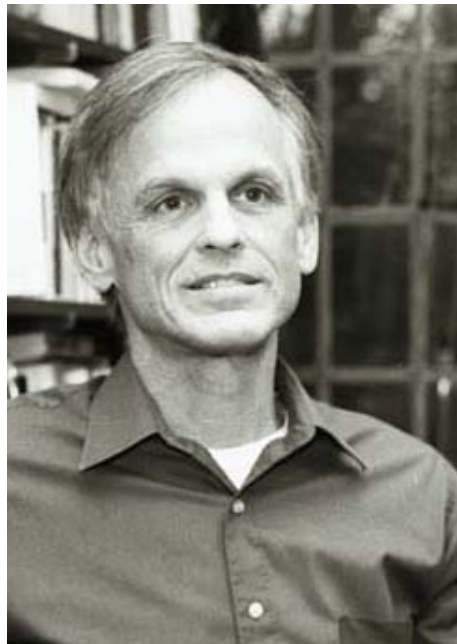
According to a *Princeton Alumni Weekly* article, when Link asked officials why he had been barred from the country, they said, “You know the answer.” Link’s colleague, Professor C.P. Chou, is still allowed in the country despite using texts that displeased officials at Beijing Normal University, Princeton’s partner for the language program. Chou’s program was sharply attacked by one Chinese national. The man, who had taught for PiB, published an attack article about the program called “The Infiltration of American Ideology Through Language, Through the Material of Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language” that suggested the Princeton program taught anti-government lessons. The government reacted by banning much of PiB’s course material, and Chou was forced to write a new, non-critical textbook that he entitled, with perhaps a touch of irony, “All Things Considered.”

Even American-based scholars can face career-ending retribution for writing critically of the Chinese government. In any field where firsthand observation is important, the lines distinguishing research field, office and classroom necessarily blur. By consenting to speech restrictions abroad Princeton has gained access to global power, but only by remaining silent before the sight of torn texts, intimidated faculty, and derailed careers.

Such trans-Pacific injustices could not seem further removed from the quietude of Old Nassau. However, for professors whose research is dependent on the goodwill of a foreign government, success means remembering that anything published will come under as much scrutiny if it was penned on the B-floor or in Beijing.

Though the imperative to bring students abroad must be weighed against foreign censorship, the increasing speech restrictions on American campuses should give us all pause, especially since the two are not unrelated. University administrators

who have hesitated to stand up to China, can sometimes seem even less willing to battle student groups that seek to restrict campus speech. In one startling episode this fall, for example, administrators at Columbia University failed to provide sufficient



Dr. Link: burnt visas give you so much more security to prevent students from rushing the stage and violently disrupting a speech given by a representative of the immigration-enforcement group The Minutemen.

Concerns that Princeton has grown too close to the Chinese regime boiled over in another campus incident in the spring of 2006. The crisis emerged when the International Center erected a photograph display in Frist Campus Center to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region. The display sparked outrage among faculty and staff who objected to its favorable portrayal of the Chinese presence in Tibet. They pointed out that it failed to mention the human-rights abuses that have stained China’s Tibetan policy.

The International Center obtained the photographs from the Asian Cultural Club of Edison, NJ, reported the *Daily Princetonian*. Shawa asserted that, “the Center is using [University] resources in a propaganda campaign for the Chinese government.” Professor Link also met

with Paula Chow, the head of the International Center, to urge her to take down the exhibit. Chow immediately acquiesced to their demands by the removing the display altogether. One wonders which was worse, the display’s initial one-sidedness or the rash decision to squelch it altogether.

The Tibet display incident crystallized the problems of free and fair speech, the University seemed to act with little deliberation in the exhibits’ erection or removal. First, Princeton’s perceived deference to the Chinese government apparently led to an uncritical acceptance of propaganda photos. It is a sad possibility that a disregard for free speech acquired in China was applied at home. Had the International Center acted with a vigorous regard for free speech, it would have supplemented the display with additional pictures rather than dismantle it altogether. Instead, the University moved to appease a group that objected to their speech, just as they have did in response to Chinese complaints. Censorship, it seems, can come from the top down or the bottom up.

By declining to advocate for faculty members overseas, administrators have enabled an unsettling curtailment of academic freedom at home. As the balance tips toward tighter restrictions on what we and our professors can read and say, the Orange Bubble has started to appear hardly as impenetrable as one might like. Torn texts, invalid visas, and dismantled displays are the artifacts of Princeton’s indifference. Supporters of academic freedom will find it troubling that some lessons learned by innocents abroad may end up employed back home. ¶



Matthew Schmitz is a Junior from O’Neill, NE. He is the Publisher of the Princeton Tory and a member of Tower Club.

MINORITY RIGHT

THE ELECTORAL FUTURE OF THE GOP

Brandon F. McGinley '10

On November 7, 2006, the American public went to the polls and sent a significant message to this nation's political establishment. Voters ousted thirty Republican representatives and six Republican senators in an apparent wave of liberal, anti-GOP sentiment. But in fact only the latter descriptor is accurate.

The 2006 elections were assuredly a reaction against both the frustrating ineffectiveness of the Bush administration's policy in Iraq and the Republican seeming-predilection for scandal during the preceding election period. In fact, exit poll data collected by CNN suggest that Washington corruption was a determinant for many voters, with 41% of those surveyed calling the issue "extremely important." It was cited more frequently than Iraq (35%) or national security policy (39%). The war, though, was clearly a close second and, when combined with terrorism worries, easily surpassed corruption concerns.

This trinity of influential issues produced a formidable force that swept the GOP out of Congress. It is not surprising that the Democrats took advantage of Iraq and corruption to rouse their base and sway independent voters. What is surprising is that among voters who found terrorism either "extremely important" or "very important," nearly half – more than 48% – favored the Democrat in House races. This could be attributed not to a national attitudinal shift toward a liberal, conciliatory foreign policy, but rather to the shift of the Democratic Party, through carefully-chosen candidates, toward the conservatism of the American people.

This new strategy appeared across the nation. A host of moderate to conservative Democrats was

vaulted into power, ousting moderate to conservative Republicans who, whether through ties to George Bush, Jack Abramoff, or the GOP in general, had become unsavory to their constituents.

Indiana alone elected three Democrats—Baron Hill, John Ellsworth, and Joe Donnelly—who could easily have passed for GOP standard-bearers in another time and place. As for the Senate, a pro-gun economic populist who favors a balanced budget, Jon Tester, was elected in Montana and a pro-life, pro-gun economic moderate, Bob Casey, Jr., won in Pennsylvania. One of the most prominent examples of the new Democrats is North Carolina Congressman Heath Shuler, a devout Southern Baptist and former NFL quarterback. But one candidate, Jason



Leading Couple: Pelosi and Reid are now in charge.

Altmire from Pennsylvania's 4th District, just north of my hometown of Pittsburgh, can serve as our case study of this larger phenomenon.

Altmire's previous moment in the national political spotlight had been his membership in President Clinton's

Task Force on National Health Care Reform. He pitched his health care experience to a region with a large proportion of senior citizens, but a look at his stances on the issues and the breakdown of the election results suggests that the people of southwestern Pennsylvania elected to national office not an elitist liberal but a local moderate.

A liberal Democrat cannot win the Pennsylvania 4th. Although partially Democratic, the district is

imbued with traditional values, particularly in its rural communities and steel towns. To win here a candidate must project conservative values.

Previously represented by three-term conservative Republican Melissa Hart (who was supposed to win reelection with relative ease), the district is an eclectic mixture of white-collar suburbs surrounding Pittsburgh, blue-collar steel towns along the Ohio River, and rural communities along Pennsylvania's western border. It has been represented by both Democrats and Republicans during its short existence



Republican Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. Is he up to the challenge?

but remains fundamentally conservative.

Hart comfortably won the suburbs and exurbs that make up the eastern portion of her district. In the north and west, however, where the union mental-

ity of the steel mills and the economic populism of the Roosevelt coalition still drive local politics, she was doomed by her ties to a distant, seemingly corrupt and disdainful Washington regime.

Jason Altmire won the two counties of the northern and western quadrants of the district by twenty and sixteen points. In 2004 those same two counties were split, with each presidential candidate winning one by a small margin. As much as breathless Democrats might attribute such a victory to some monumental shift in popular politics, it was the appeal of a moderate candidate that won the 2006 election.

According to his campaign website, Altmire is pro-life on abortion and strongly supports gun rights, increased border security, English as the national language, a balanced federal budget and "a strong national defense" to combat terrorism – "the top foreign policy issue facing this country." However, true

to Democratic form, he favors a degree of stem-cell research and, more importantly, has repudiated the President on Iraq and announced that "our current Congress has been engulfed by scandal."

These traditional, family values presented themselves time and again in the literature of many of the victorious Democrats. Their wins, like Altmire's, were the result not of a wave of liberalism sweeping the nation, but of well-chosen, likable candidates identifying more completely with the people than their seemingly aloof GOP counterparts.

So what does all this mean for the Democratic and Republican parties? What about for conservatives? And how will 2006 affect 2008?

The midterm elections, although a landslide for the more liberal party, shifted the nation's political center of gravity rightward. The election of moderate Democratic Maryland Congressman Steny Hoyer as majority leader, as opposed to Pennsylvania's Pelosi-backed John Murtha, showed the significant rift between the party's liberal leadership and its increasingly conservative membership. This schism will only expand as the Democratic congressional class of 2006 continues its work on the floor.

Whereas the Democrats have moved to the right, the Republican Party has remained politically unchanged. Not especially conservative, those Republicans who lost their seats were tainted by scandal, opposed by a particularly strong candidate, or simply blindsided. House Republicans, though, unwisely kept their leadership intact, even after the repu-

The midterm elections, although a landslide for the more liberal party, shifted the political balance rightward

diation of the people. While it is true that Hastert has stepped down from power, the numbers two and three GOP representatives, John Boehner and Roy Blunt, have moved to the party's current top positions: minority leader and whip.

An influx of moderate Democrats, strictly politically, does not seem to be good news for the GOP. These popular moderates, along with the party they represent, will be more difficult to brand in future elections as out-of-touch liberals. Candidates like Altmire and particularly Shuler, barring significant political bumbling on their part, should be able to take up permanent residency in Washington.

For conservative voters, though, the Democratic Party looks much more appealing than it did a few

months ago. Moderates will applaud the likely passage of the President's immigration bill, which favors a comprehensive solution that includes a guest-worker program and a path to citizenship for current illegal aliens, in addition to increased border security. Although hostile to the administration on Iraq, most 2006 Democrats eschew full withdrawal and support fighting until stability is assured. Most exciting for fiscal conservatives, a balanced budget is a significant plank in the platforms of these new Democrats. They promise to pull the purse strings more tightly than their GOP predecessors.

In order to regain power in 2008, the Republican Party must shake off the scandalous image that doomed it this year. No matter how conservative the country is now, the voters will elect a liberal Democrat who appears honest long before electing a moderate Republican whose party is tainted by scandal. This is the most frightening possibility for 2008: that a liberal Democrat like New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, or even Hillary Clinton, wins a lesser-of-two-evils election.

More likely, the fundamental conservatism that was demonstrated in the last election, provided scandal has been eradicated from the GOP, will elect a moderate or conservative to the White House. Even in the absence of significant improvement in Iraq, a savvy Republican, isolating himself from the current administration, could win the presidency.

A Washington outsider to the congressional scandals like outgoing Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney would be best suited for the position. Since his presidential announcement, though, Romney has bolted to the right with Olympic agility. The two GOP candidates who receive the most media attention, and deservedly so, are Arizona Senator John McCain and former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani. Of the two, Giuliani presents an image that may better suit the American political mood. He, like Romney, is a Beltway outsider. Giuliani is also extremely qualified and trusted by the electorate in the realm of foreign policy. If he can keep his rather liberal social opinions on abortion and gay marriage under wraps during the primary process, "America's Mayor" would make an excellent candidate for presi-

dent. He may be able to work around his abortion stance by pledging to support strict constructionist Supreme Court justices since, sadly, the power to effect change in the most basic facets of American moral culture lies in the laps of nine democratically unaccountable justices.

The Democratic Party, on the other hand, has yet to put forward a candidate with both the charisma and the potential for broad-based support that Giuliani presents. It is unlikely that either Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama will

What is surprising is that among voters who found terrorism either "extremely important" or "very important," nearly half – more than 48% – favored the Democrat in House races.

be able to expand their political base beyond the constraints of their party; neither, barring either extraordinary political maneuvering or significant setbacks in Iraq, will be able to motivate the moderate conservatives to punch their ticket on Election Day. If policy wonk Joe Biden can harness his charisma and present an intelligent proposal on Iraq, he may have the best chance to assuage the security concerns of the average American.

So, while the last election appeared disastrous for the GOP, the party should hold onto the White House in 2008 and regain the Congress on the coattails of the new administration. This is contingent on strict ethical conduct over the next year and at least minimal progress in Iraq. The 2006 election cycle, though, showed that the war is affecting party politics, not individual ideologies.

It also highlighted both the strength of American conservatism and the weakness of the party that represents it. Whichever party strikes a tone of moderate conservatism over the next several months while staying honest with the American people, as the Democrats did in 2006, will dominate American politics going into the second decade of the twenty-first century. ■



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AN ARMY FOR THE LONG WAR

BUT IS IT TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE?

Wes Morgan '10

The past few months have seen fierce debate over the course of the war in Iraq, with some related discussion of the state of Afghanistan. To the generals presiding over the fight, however, the notions of an Iraq war and an Afghan war are alien: in Ramadi, in Paktika, in Baghdad, and most recently in Somalia, the U.S. Armed Forces are fighting what the outgoing commander of CENTCOM, Gen. John Abizaid, termed the “long war.”

The phrase “long war” has caught on rapidly in the military; indeed, it can now be found in the official mission statements of most U.S. Army combat brigades. The idea, if not the term, of a protracted, dirty

fight, a “slog,” as Donald Rumsfeld once said before rapidly swallowing his words, has also been endorsed by the White House: in his State of the Union address this January,

President Bush declared to Congress that “The war on terror we fight today is a generational struggle that will continue long after you and I have turned our duties over to others.”

A few sentences later, but three years too late, the president at long last acknowledged a basic

truth of this long war: “One of the first steps we can take together,” he said, “is to add to the ranks of our military so that the American Armed Forces are ready for all the challenges ahead. Tonight I ask the Congress to authorize an increase in the size of our active Army and Marine Corps by 92,000 in the next five years.”

To many military officers, politicians, and defense experts, the president’s recognition that the long war would require a significantly larger ground combat force came as a relief. For an administration whose Pentagon has consistently advocated limiting spending on ground forces and relied on *ad hoc* measures to keep the force rotating through Iraq at a reasonable strength, the admission that the Marines and particularly the Army are simply not big enough for the job was startling and significant. Nevertheless, this shift in course almost certainly comes too late. While the larger pool of forces will be available in years to come and will no doubt both increase worldwide U.S. military readiness and benefit the struggle in Afghanistan, 2007 will be the decisive year in Iraq, and of the new units about to be built, the first will not be deployable until 2009 at the earliest.

It is worth noting that neither now, as fighting rages in Iraq and Afghanistan, nor once the coming troop increase is complete, will the Army be particularly large compared to its historical strength. Analogies are often made between the long war and the Cold War, yet in 1989, at the peak of the service’s Reagan-era buildup, the active duty Army comprised fifty-six combat brigades. (Brigades and regiments, 3,000 to 4,000 soldiers or Marines strong, are viewed as the basic building blocks of ground warfare). Today there are forty-one brigades in the force, albeit better equipped



The new secretary of defense has a long, hard slog ahead of him, but is hoping an enlarged army will turn Iraq around.

and more streamlined ones, and when the increase is completed there will be forty-eight, far short of any period in the last sixty years save the five years preceding the September 11 attacks, when, under President Clinton and Secretaries Perry and Cohen, the force dipped to a low of thirty-three brigades.

In late 2004, with the insurgency running rampant and accusations that the force in Iraq was too small flying in Washington, Secretary Rumsfeld famously quipped that “you go to war with the Army you



Brave, courageous, and disciplined. But is it too late?

have, not the Army you wish you had.” In terms of size, though, it is safe to say that when the United States went to war in 2003, the Rumsfeld Pentagon did not wish it had a bigger Army, indeed, it wished it had a smaller one. Until Iraq began to collapse in early 2004, the White House’s defense policy was largely dominated by Rumsfeld’s doctrine of “transformation,” favoring intelligence and airpower over ground forces. Before the September 11 attacks, it was even reported that the Pentagon, in its first year of Republican control since 1992, was planning to cut the Army even further from thirty-three brigades to an unheard-of twenty-seven, and in 2003 Rumsfeld and a variety of active and retired generals skirmished over how small a force could be sent into Iraq to depose Saddam Hussein. In the end eight brigades and four Marine regiments did the job, far fewer than the Army’s off-the-shelf plans had called for.

Although the fairly small force that drove through the Karbala Gap to Baghdad that April may temporarily have seemed to vindicate “transformation” to a smaller, lighter Army, the events of 2004 provided strong evidence even to Secretary Rumsfeld and his admirers that while a thirty-three-brigade Army might be enough

to knock down a regime or even two, it was not enough to control a hostile country. During that year, with the battles of Falluja, Samarra, and Baquba raging in Sunni territory and the Mahdi

Army in arms in Najaf and Sadr City, the Pentagon was forced to mass sixteen brigades in the country, nearly half the Army, merely to keep the war under control. A long-term strategy of building up the size of the Army was then in order; some retired officers such as Gen. Barry McCaffrey certainly thought so and made their views known, and the

Democratic presidential campaign that year, in a strange role-reversal of defense policy, agreed. Instead, the Pentagon embarked on a two-year-long program of unit reshufflings and reorganizations with the goal of building enough brigades to fight through 2007 without requiring a permanent force increase. At its most ambitious, the plan, announced in full in mid-2005, called for an increase of ten Army brigades, to a total of forty-three, over the next two years. While the new bri-

By the time this up-armored forty-eight-brigade Army is fully built and trained, the battle for Iraq will almost certainly already have been won or lost.

gades were built during 2005, National Guard units were deployed on an unprecedented scale

to pick up the slack; then, in 2006, the new formations continued the fight. In 2007, the plan devised two years ago assumed, the new units would rotate into the combat zone in smaller numbers as a drawdown began in Iraq.

Now, in 2007, the inadequacies of the 2005 plan are painfully obvious. First, building brigades by shifting and reorganizing instead of actually expanding the Army’s end-strength and equipment base has created obvious problems:

unit readiness has suffered and shortages in armored vehicles have appeared, leading the plan to be downgraded from a ten-brigade increase to a nine-brigade increase in early 2006. Second, and most importantly, the campaigns in both Iraq and Afghanistan now seem much longer and more costly than they did in 2005, and there has been a growing realization that the U.S. is indeed in a 'long war.' Under the drastic overhaul in strategy that has occurred on Secretary Gates's watch, U.S. strength in Afghanistan will have to continue to grow for the foreseeable future, while the much-maligned "surge" of troops into Baghdad under Gen. David Petraeus calls for eighteen brigades in Iraq for a year at least, more troops than have ever been in the war zone before, and, as in 2004, half of the existing Army.

Worse, the number of brigades participating in the surge, although doubtfully enough to serve their intended purpose, will, over the next year, wreak havoc with

the Army's deployment and training cycle and thoroughly deplete the nine-brigade-increase plan that has allowed the force to be sustained until now. During 2008, then, if the forces in Iraq and Afghanistan are to be maintained at even their current levels, let alone increased ones, the National Guard will have to step up once again, a frightening proposition given the damage wrought on the Guard's readiness and recruitment by the 2005 deployments. After that, the current force, although not broken as some fear, will be battered and badly degraded, in no shape to continue the kind of high-stress, long-term fight that solid, Petraeus-style counterinsurgency requires.

Enter the 92,000-soldier and -Marine increase the president announced this January after a month of consultation with Secretary Gates and the service chiefs. That with Secretary Rumsfeld gone the White House has so rapidly acquiesced to this large force increase is not surprising; Gen. Peter Schoomaker, the outgoing Army chief, and Gen. James Conway, the new Marine commandant, have both in recent months been unusu-

ally outspoken advocates of increasing the size of the Army and Marine Corps to achieve the



Reshaping the Army by putting more boots on the ground.

Neither now, as fighting rages in Iraq and Afghanistan, nor once the coming troop increase is complete, will the Army be particularly large compared to its historical strength.

strength they will need for protracted counterinsurgency operations. The Marines, a force of eight regiments for the past decade and a half, will now add a ninth, and will be replacing their Humvees with newly built, more heavily armored vehicles. The Army, more significantly, will grow from its current forty brigades not just by two, as planned previously, but by eight, with the difference made up in light infantry units, the mainstay of counterinsurgency. More money, too, will be devoted to "resetting" brigades after they deploy, that is, equipping the units with new armored vehicles and training them for the next rotation. These increases will not be *ad hoc* measures taken by reshuffling existing units, either, as they have been for the past three years; the force itself will be growing, with 65,000 soldiers added to the 512,000-strong Army and 27,000 to the 175,000-strong Corps. The force that is coming should be fully capable of fighting campaigns like the ones in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The catch, though, is that by the time this up-armored forty-eight-brigade Army is fully built and trained, the battle for Iraq will almost certainly already have been won or lost. The long

war will be, as the president said, “a generational struggle,” and at its current rate the Afghanistan campaign will still probably be undecided and only too ready for fresh infantry brigades in a few years’ time, but Iraq will not last that long: the fate of that theater of the long war will be decided

this spring, summer, and fall in the streets of Baghdad, and to a lesser extent Ramadi, as Generals Petraeus and Odierno marshal their twenty brigades and regiments to apply

the “surge” and the counterinsurgency doctrine behind it. The chances of American success in Baghdad, almost the entire Congress and retired officer establishment agree, are slim, even under the leadership of the widely admired Petraeus. Not for want of effort or will, of course, nor for want of sound doctrine, but, even now, for want of troops. The classic counterinsurgency theory in which Petraeus so strongly believes calls for a surge of not just five extra brigades, all that is available and all that the command in Baghdad will be able to add to the five brigades already in the city, but of nine, ten, or eleven, enough to appreciably alter the proportions of U.S. troops to Baghdad residents.

Under the president’s and Secretary Gates’s new plan, those larger numbers of combat forces will be available to us, by 2010 or thereabouts. In 2007, the decisive year for Iraq with the battle for Baghdad looming, those extra brigades and regiments are still a long way off, their soldiers and Marines not yet recruited, their training facilities not yet constructed, and their complements of tanks, armored fighting vehicles, and sets of carbines and Kevlar vests not yet on the manufacturing lines. In Afghanistan, where U.S. units have been fighting a steady campaign for more than five years now and where NATO is only beginning to enter the fray, there is time; the pace of the conflict there is slow and decisive tipping points like Falluja or the coming set of sweeps in Baghdad rarer. In the Horn of Africa as well, where small elements of U.S. ground forces have begun to operate to great effect in the past year, there is time. In the long war as a

whole, not just in those campaigns but in other ones not yet begun, there is time, decades of it. In Iraq, though, by far the theater of war where the stakes are highest and the costs worst, there is very little time at all.

While some of the new brigades that the

Some of the new brigades that the Pentagon is building will no doubt be patrolling the snows of the Hindu Kush four years from now, just as existing units have been since 2001.

Pentagon is finally planning to build will no doubt be patrolling the snows of the Hindu Kush four years from now just as existing units have been since 2001, and

while others will find themselves in the streets of other cities in other countries, though probably on a much smaller scale, in the years ahead, those new brigades will have no impact on whether grey-clad U.S. soldiers or Mahdi militiamen and Sunni extremists find victory in Sadr City and Ramadi. If the White House had reached its current decision when the unmistakable signs appeared, when Falluja and Najaf first erupted in 2004, the force available to our generals today would be a dynamic one, ready to surge and ready to win. Instead, the decision comes now, more than five years into the long war, four years into Iraq, three years into the Sunni insurgency, and one horrific year into the sectarian cleansing that has engulfed greater Baghdad since the Samarra bombing. For Iraq, President Bush’s decision to listen to voices other than those of Secretary Rumsfeld and fund a ground combat force built for counterinsurgency comes too late, years too late.

This year, and next year, and the year after that, we will be fighting the long war with the Army we have, not the Army we wish we had. ■



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The New York Times

WWII AS COVERED BY THE MEDIA OF 2007

Brian Brown '07

Paris – August 25, 1944

French citizens lined the roads as Allied troops entered the city today. Many were holding roses and calling to the troops as they passed by. Some Americans believed this was a good sign. However, not all were pleased by the turn of events.

“The Germans maintained order; the Allies are invaders,” said a local citizen, who wished to remain anonymous. She said she feared the chaos that would follow the loss of the Vichy government’s power. She also explained that in French culture, roses are given at funerals and insisted that the crowds were really telling the soldiers to go home.

As Allied troops continued to operate in the area, there were several reports of civilian deaths. Two American soldiers have been arrested in the wake of

the demise of a Frenchman with whom they were sharing a ninth bottle of burgundy. There have been rumors of similar atrocities across the area, and human rights organizations have vowed an investigation.

Paris - December 4, 1944

1,347 more American troops died today as fighting continued

The Germans maintained order; the Allies are invaders,” said a local citizen, who wished to remain any-

to rage across France. Many died at the hands of Germans along the Rhine. Two were reportedly killed by a roadside bomb while driving their jeep on patrol in the streets of Paris.

“The people hate us,” said an exhausted MP (name withheld on request) after a day on patrol in the city. He cited an incident in which a Frenchman had refused

to serve him another drink at the bar when he ran out of francs. “We came in as liberators but we are really just imperialists.”

As the war in France drags on into its sixth month, with no end in sight, the word “quagmire” ap-

pears increasingly in conversation. Many believe the war was started on false pretenses, with President Roosevelt citing WMDs and Hitler’s ability to disrupt the region. This Times reporter has seen no sign of the fabled V-2 rockets from his hotel window, or even from the bar down the street. And locals say the American interference has disrupted things far more than Hitler ever did.

Berlin - June 7, 1945

One month has passed since Truman declared the end of major combat in Germany, but violence continues to disrupt life. Five American soldiers were killed by a unit of SS insurgents in Austria, and 12 more died when their truck crashed into the vehicle of a German civilian.

More and more Americans say they are dissatisfied with the American presidents’ handling of the war, and rumors are beginning to surface that they got us into war without an exit strategy. As the death toll grows increasingly catastrophic, Senate minority leaders have introduced a non-binding resolution that would demand an immediate removal of US troops from Europe. ❏



European multilateralists. Also poorly applied Singer’s bioethics.



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SLANDER AND RETREAT

THE OBSERVER'S ANTICS AND NASSAU HALL'S FECKLESS RESPONSE

Rick Morgan '09

Yet another February draws to a close, and The Princeton Tory has experienced a changing of the guard. The former publisher, Juliann Vikse, after an admirable tenure, has passed the reins into the steady and sure hands of Matt Schmitz. Likewise, the previous writer of the Last Word, Will Scharf, has moved on. I hope the future writers of this column live up to the high standards he set for it.

As students across campus were settling into the rhythm of a new semester, Princeton's sophomores were finally beginning to recover from the exhilarating rush of eating club bickers and initiations festivities. For the first two weeks of spring semester, classes and problem sets receded into the distant corners of our consciences, and all our thoughts were directed towards the rumors and news emanating from our beloved Prospect Avenue. This year, while veteran revelers of each club meandered around campus welcoming their new initiates, our university's arcane and sacred traditions drew more scrutiny than the mere silent scorn of Nassau Hall. This year, the year of our Lord 2007, was the year the media decided that the inner-workings of the Princeton eating clubs were worthy of national attention.

The antics of the so-called professional media started when a New York Times reporter attempted to embed herself into Tower Club's pickups and photograph the event for posterity, or at least the next morning's education section. Fortunately, the members of this fine club were not fooled by the ruse. The reporter was driven from the raucous shaving-cream welcome of those lucky greenhorns who successfully completed bicker by chanted refrains of "no f---ing comment!" and "Wall Street Journal! clap-clap-clapclapclap."

But the media would not be deterred. With the New York Times beaten back and in dismayed disarray, the New York Observer stepped into the breach to enlighten New Yorkers and the world about the crucial events occurring on the sleepy avenue south of Nassau Street. With the help of a failed Ivy bickeree who

apparently felt that the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune had unjustly descended upon him, the Observer resorted to unethical journalistic trickery to publish a near libelous "exposé" of the eating clubs. Printing unsuspecting students' names, including a damning photo of two Cottage members with the faces only barely shadowed over, and using one-sided sources, Observer reporter Spencer Morgan (no relation to this article's author) did everything he could to portray Princeton's eating clubs in as unflattering a light as possible.

One obvious question that should be asked in light of the media's interest in our campus's events is why a journalist would see our culinary institutions as newsworthy subjects. Perhaps it was simply a slow news day, perhaps the New York Times grew bored of trading national security secrets for quick journalistic gratification, or perhaps the Observer was worried that their coverage of the Anna Nicole Smith "story" was starting to lose reader appeal. (In case you didn't hear, she died.) Speaking of which, the only story which could possibly rival the patently absurd un-newsworthy nature of a story about Princeton eating clubs is the macabre marathon of national coverage of the drug-addled, attention-seeking model's tragic passing. However interesting these issues may be, the dilapidated and pitiful state of our national media is a discussion for another time

When the eating clubs look bad in the press, it makes all of Princeton look bad. If the university allows the media to portray the eating clubs as elitist, sexist, and racist, like it or not, that portrayal will be brought to bear on Princeton itself.

A more important question for those of us at Princeton is why the administration responded so meekly to the Observer's encroachments upon our campus. When approached by

reporter Spencer Morgan, Princeton spokesperson Cass Cliatt flatly responded that "the university does not regulate the eating clubs. . . . The clubs are managed and operated by their membership. It's important to understand they're independent establishments, similar to a restaurant."

Yes, technically, this is true. The university does not run or manage the eating clubs, and there are a slew of reasons why this is a good standard policy. This university's administrations have always seen the clubs as potential liabilities, and the common

wisdom among the admissions staff is that their reputations for elitism and quasi-racism drive away accepted applicants and lower Princeton's yield. Therefore, instead of emphasizing Prospect's pluses, the university has effectively adopted a policy of gentle disownment. See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.

But imagine, if you will, President Tilghman's response if some media outlet had insulted and libeled an institution like the LGBT Center or an ethnic student association. There is no doubt that the response would have been aggressive and even pugnacious, and the offending media source, denounced as bigoted and close-minded. In the opinion of this author, such a response would have been not only justified, particularly if the media's use of sources were as unprofessional and unethical as the Observer's, but also vitally necessary to maintaining Princeton's prestige.

Princeton's worth is determined in large part by how people perceive this school. However accurate our more nobly humanistic hopes for it might be, a Princeton diploma is a product. And just like any company, this university must protect its product's image by protecting its own. The fact is, even though the eating clubs do not officially belong to the university, they are inseparable from Princeton, even finally warranting financial aid from a begrudging administration. When the eating clubs look bad in the press, it makes all of Princeton look bad. If the university allows the media to portray the eating clubs as elitist, sexist, and racist, like it or not, that portrayal will be brought to bear on Princeton itself.

Could it be that the administration's disdain for the eating clubs blinded them to this fact? It is no surprise that many of Nassau Hall's lofty officeholders sympathize in some ways with the Observer reporter and his wannabe Ivy interlocutor. For such loose-lipped gumshoes, eating clubs generally, and the bicker process in particular, are anachronistic vestiges of an evil past that would long ago have perished in the name of progressivism were it not for tirelessly retrograde alumni and student supporters. Or the clubs inspire a jealous resentment born from the desire to also be on the inside.

But are the bicker clubs elitist? Well, they are at least selective. Of the ten fine dining establishments lining the Street, five use a selective bicker process to admit students who they feel would contribute the most to their club. Anyone who chooses to apply to bicker must surely realize that his admission will be determined by the club's members. The embittered Ivy bickeree who aided and abetted the Observer's ambush journalism should have accepted that he was submitting himself to petty Ivy judgments and taken his rejection in stride, instead of viewing it as a personal insult worthy of media attention.

The foundation of the Observer's weird voyeurism is an unspoken belief that somehow the bicker clubs--anything elite, in fact--are better. This is simply untrue, and for a couple of reasons.

Many of the sign-ins are also unable to accept every student and some are excluded by a random lottery. Regardless of whether a student awaits the results of sign-in lottery or bicker club discussions, the clubs provide an opportunity for meeting students that one otherwise simply wouldn't have.

The eating club system is by no means a two-tiered hierarchy with the bicker clubs on top and the sign-in clubs below. Most people choose their sign-in club without having already been hosed, and these other five clubs are every bit as good as the bicker clubs (though Charter is clearly the grandest of them all). There is something for everyone on Prospect Avenue, and instead of buying into false stereotypes, the university should embrace the positive qualities of the eating clubs, which are here to stay.

While the administration and the various Deans can frown on what they see as the decadence and depravity emanating outwards from Prospect Avenue, unless they intend on implementing a gung-ho program of prohibition and mandated temperance, drinking is here to stay. For all their faults, eating clubs serve a purpose far beyond mere outlets for eating. Instead of a plethora of frat houses, hazings, illicit in-dorm drinking, etc., you've got the bulk of a university's underage drinking isolated to a location off-campus but not so far away that driving is involved, controlled by bouncers and club officers, and accessible to EMTs in worst-case scenarios. In addition, most of the club drinking is confined to beer rather than hard liquor, and any inebriated (or sober) activity is channeled into dancing and conversations under the supervision of peers and officials.

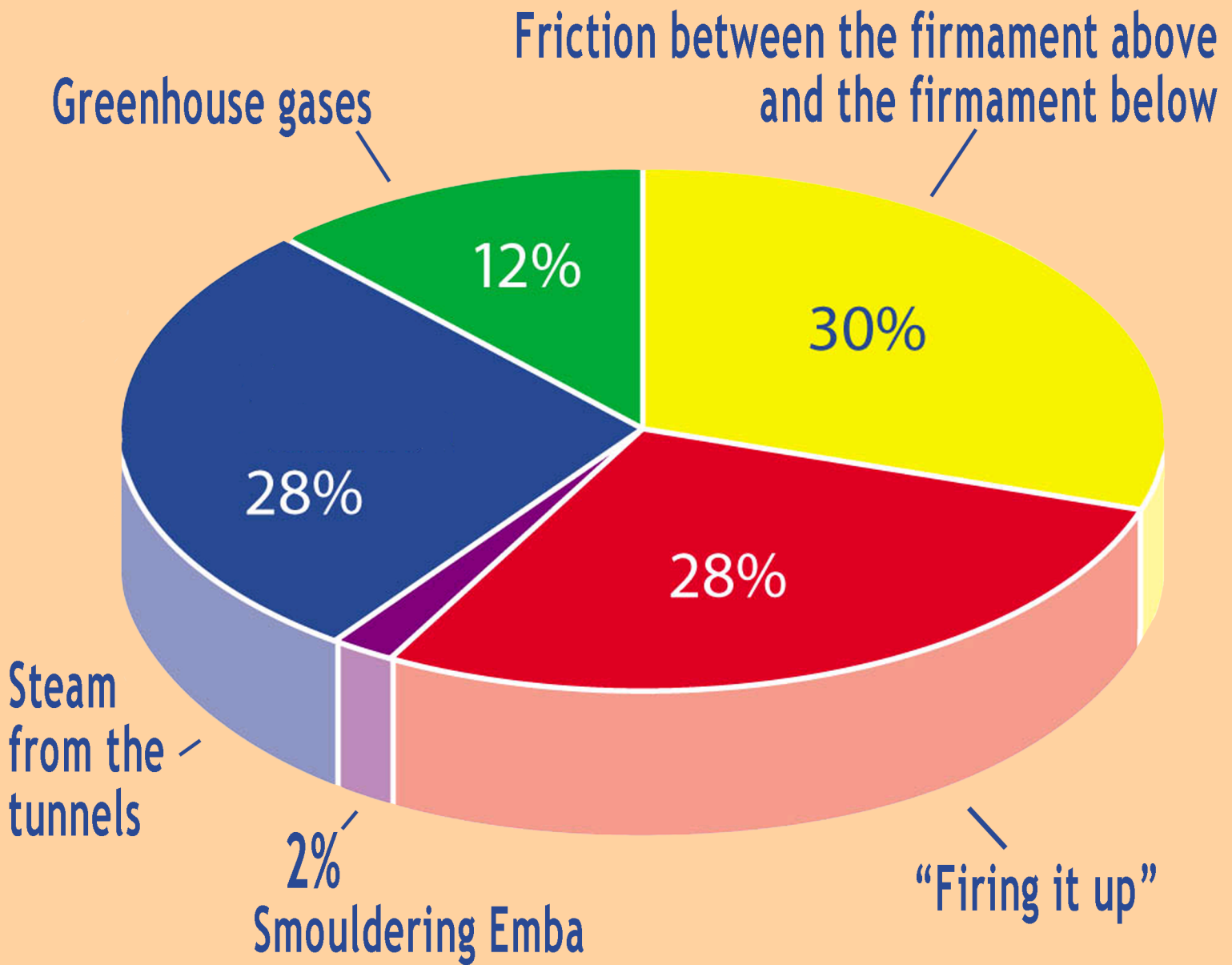
When the failed Ivy bickeree spilled forth his alleged grievances to the New York Observer, he was playing the role of the naïve fool who was manipulated by an opportunistic reporter with an axe to grind. In this case, the reporter probably set out with the intention of vilifying the eating clubs, and used the emotional immaturity and raw disappointment of one young man to lend his article an aura of objectivity. Sadly, the Tilghman administration allowed this amateurish act of journalistic mud-racking to go uncontested. For potential applicants, the negative portrayal of the eating clubs will only serve to reinforce the untrue stereotypes of this university that the administration should be working to counter. Perhaps next time Tilghman and her cohorts will defend the institutions and traditions that truly define the Princeton experience, for those both inside and outside our campus community. **P**



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The Princeton Guide to Global Warming

(Contributing Factors)



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