



THE PRINCETON

# TORY

OCTOBER 2008

## *Rethinking Green:*



Escaping the Cult of  
Sustainability  
at Princeton

ALSO: YOUR ELECTION 2008 COVERAGE  
HOW THE LEWIS CENTER FAILED TO PERFORM  
WHAT'S WRONG WITH WHITMAN COLLEGE

# THE PRINCETON TORY

October 2008  
Volume XXV - Issue IV

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## *Letter from the Publisher* Everyone's Got One

It is common for civilized debates to conclude with one participant saying to the other: "Well, I guess that's just your opinion and you're entitled to it. I respect that." Alternatively, the person losing the debate might fall back on the following weak rhetorical crutch: "Look, I'm just saying that this is my opinion. I'm not saying that yours is wrong or anything." The implicit assumption in both of these statements is that everyone is entitled to their opinion simply by virtue of the fact that they are a fellow human being.



But should we accord respect to the opinions of others without something more? I would venture to support a different formulation: a person is not entitled to his opinion until he has made a good-faith effort to adequately familiarize himself with all the major arguments on any given issue and sincerely sought the truth of the matter. Of course, this does not mean that he must become an expert in an area before having the right to his opinion, and surely there are many areas in which the wisdom of real-life experience suffices to bestow a stamp of legitimacy upon a person's view. But as a general rule, on controversial issues where reasonable people of equal intelligence and goodwill disagree, a person should educate himself before coming to a definitive conclusion. Otherwise, we too often present ourselves as uninformed buffoons.

I should know; I have often seemed like a nincompoop myself. I look back with increasing alarm at some of the foolhardy opinions I have espoused within the pages of the *Tory*. For example, it is with marked horror and shame that I consider what I wrote in the spring of my freshman year for the Reunions issue of this magazine in an article entitled "Brood of Vipers." The editorial—a blistering diatribe against certain elements of the so-called "religious right"—is stunning in its lack of intellectual rigor and unabashed willingness to generalize and insult whole groups of people. It was a judgmental exercise in poltroonery, for no person with the intellectual courage to consider alternative arguments could write such an article. It is an essay I eagerly renounce.

Yet one year later I was still no better, blindly writing an article for the May issue of the *Tory* called "A Matter of Prudence." The editorial makes the case for aggressive government action to combat the effects of global warming. While I stand by the thesis of that article, there was one paragraph where I came close to affirming a cap-and-trade system on carbon emissions, a position I hesitantly held at the time. Such a reckless opinion was born of ignorance on my part, which a summer spent at the American Enterprise Institute studying and researching energy policy for former Speaker Newt Gingrich soon cured. What I had failed to do on my own was imposed on me at the Speaker's office: examining the full range of facts on the issue of controlling carbon emissions. It was only after I had taken the time to carefully inform myself of what the various options were for dealing with this problem and had thought through the problem that I could come to a mature and educated position worthy of respect.

This letter may, in the end, appear to be nothing more than a blatant attempt at a mea culpa by the publisher of this magazine. Well, yes, that was part of the motivation for writing this. But what was far more important to me was that others not make the same mistakes I made, and I thought it was best to use myself as an example of the humiliating and unfathomably foolish opinions that can result from an uninformed mind. We all have opinions, but the question is whether they are all worthy of respect. I firmly believe that the answer must be no, and that, with the exceptions mentioned above, only those opinions rooted in a full understanding of the issues and arguments put forward can be considered worthwhile. Otherwise we are left with empty rhetoric devoid of intellectual rigor that makes people seem like fools. I should know; I have played the fool many times.

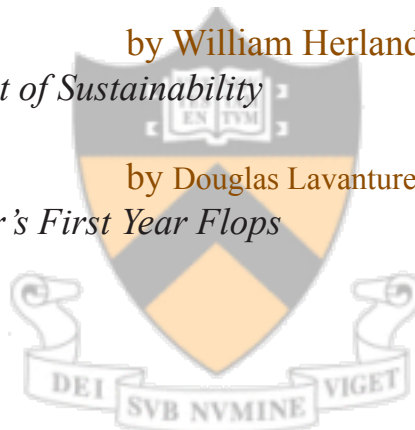
Best,  
Joel Alicea '10

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 4 - **POINTS AND PUNTS**  
*Staff*

### CAMPUS

- 6 - **The Whitman Experiment: Can It Ever Work?** by Joelle Birge '11  
*The Struggle to Build "Community" at Whitman College*
- 8 - **Rethinking Green** by William Herlands '12  
*Escaping the Cult of Sustainability*
- 10 - **Arts Initiative Tanks** by Douglas Lavanture '09  
*The Lewis Center's First Year Flops*



### US & WORLD

- 13 - **The Credit Crunch** by Kyle Smith '09 & Johnny Love '09  
*Government Regulation a Major Cause of the Mortgage Crisis*
- 14 - **Faith, Feminism and Sarah Palin** by Shivani Radhakrishnan '11 & Stuart Chessman '12  
*On the VP Nominee's Battle with the Feminist Left*
- 16 - **Pakistan: That OTHER Election...** by Matthew Sanyour '11  
*A Pakistani Student's Perspective on the Future of Pakistan's Democracy and Relations with the US*

### LAST WORD

- 18 - **The Unencumbered Mind** by Brandon McGinley '10  
*Musings on Princeton as an Intellectual Battleground, the Horrors of Abortion, and Senator Barack Obama's Corrupt Philosophy*

# POINTS & PUNTS

*The Tory staff, perhaps particularly embittered by this year's election season, are left to their own devices to discuss Facebook friendship, white supremacy and that politician who refuses to just go away.*

As of this writing, it has become clear that Senator Obama is likely to win this election. In an effort to cope with the potential ramifications of this travesty, the *Tory* has sought to find some sort of silver lining in Barry's election. True, it's likely Americans will face the largest tax increase in American history, but we can all agree it's a good thing that America will elect the first Muslim-American president of the United States. The historic nature of a president taking the oath of office with his hand on the Koran will be enough to make even Michelle proud of America. And yes, President Obama will have a chance to shape the direction of the Supreme Court for decades to come. But at least now we'll have a former terrorist ally fighting the War on Terror and a former druggie fighting the War on Drugs. It's kind of like having an insider's advantage, right?

Speaking of absurd characterizations, Princeton Politics Department Professor Melissa Harris-Lacewell's assertions on her blog "The Kitchen Table" place her in contention for this year's "Most Insane Professor of the Year" award. Her uncanny ability to make baseless and intellectually bankrupt comments is exemplified by statements like: "The Right is so ridiculously predictable. Their absolute commitment to white supremacy used to just peep out like a hanging slip, but now they are wearing their racism front and center... Let me be clear. I am not saying that every person who chooses McCain-Palin is a racist. I expect Republicans to vote for the candidate nominated by their party. I am making a judgment about the collective outcome. **This election is a referendum on white supremacy.**"



Well thank God she cleared that up. We were beginning to think she was making a blatantly false and reprehensible accusation that has no basis in reality and can only be construed as

reverse-racism. Clearly that's not the case. But seriously, Melissa, why the harsh words? It's not like the delegates at the RNC were wearing Klan outfits or anything. We suggested it but John and Sarah thought that was sooo 1950s.

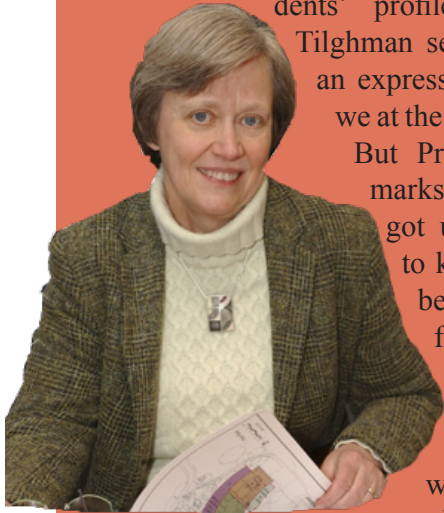
**Hey, McCain, what are you afraid of—seatbelts?** The Princeton Independents have posted flyers all over campus urging students to consider voting for Ralph Nader, using several hundred sheets of paper made from old-growth rainforest trees. These ubiquitous posters encouraging support for the environmental activist and perennial candidate have blown off of walls and signposts, leaking toxic chemicals into the water supply and suffocating dozens of baby squirrels in the process—rendering the posters almost as irrelevant as Nader's own candidacy.

The left wing blogosphere was sent into an uproar some weeks ago following an interview by Sarah Palin with Charlie Gibson. In response to a query from Gibson about her opinion of the much-maligned but multifarious and diffuse Bush Doctrine, Palin asked for a clarification: "In what respect, Charlie?" This was taken as a damning confirmation of Palin's foreign policy naïveté, fueling the now-familiar narrative about her stupidity compared to Barack "57 state" Obama and Joe "Three-state Iraq" Biden. But consider what Princeton's own Anne-Marie Slaughter had to say when confronted with a question about the Bush Doctrine. Asked interviewer Alan Johnson:

What are the central differences, and what are the elements of continuity, if any exist, between "the Bush doctrine" and the "grand strategy of forging a world of liberty under law"?

How did Slaughter respond? "Tell me what you mean by 'The Bush Doctrine'." Sorry, Daily Kos. On this issue, **Sarah Palin is at least as qualified as the dean of the Woodrow Wilson School.**

The *Tory* was shocked to learn that President Tilghman, by her own admission, has been scouring Facebook and reading Princeton students' profiles. Perhaps President Tilghman sees stalking students as an expression of endearment, but we at the *Tory* find it plain creepy.



But President Tilghman's remarks at Opening Ceremonies got us interested in getting to know our administrators better on Facebook. We found a Facebook profile for Shirley Tilghman, complete with a presidential photograph, but we were prevented from seeing it by the privacy settings. We did see her list of friends, though, and Facebook told us "Shirley has no friends." Yes, **Shirley has no friends.**

### *Say it ain't so, Joe!*

Although the vice-presidential debate certainly didn't provide Americans with any memorable Biden gaffes such as describing of Barack Obama as "clean," Good Ol' Joe proved once again that political years of Senate experience only encourage logorrhea. When asked about foreign policy intervention, Biden responded that "when a country engaging in harboring terrorists and will do nothing about it, at that point that country in my view and Barack's view forfeits their right to say you have no right to intervene at all." In case you missed it, Joe's statement was actually an endorsement of—you guessed it—the Bush Doctrine! Or, at least, one of the now growing number of Bush doctrines. Even if Sarah Palin might not know a definition of the Bush Doctrine, at least now we know that Joe Biden supports one version of it. Of course, it could just be that he doesn't know what constitutes the Bush Doctrine either. Either way, Senator Biden said enough in support of the Doctrine for both himself and Sarah Palin. Maybe even enough to make Charles Krauthammer proud.

So what did we learn from the COMBO survey? Students who self-identify as upper class say that they are happier. Bicker clubs and Greek organizations attract wealthier students. Lower class students are more concerned about their finances. **Whoop-dee-do.**

The reaction to COMBO was a ridiculous exercise in self-righteous bellyaching as columnists and editorial boards tripped over themselves clambering to most strongly denounce pernicious social segregation. Take this gem from an editorial in *The Daily Princetonian*: "The University community must discuss these issues, for only by recognizing publicly that the Princeton experience is not equally positive for all students can it begin to fix the problem. This discussion may be unpleasant and uncomfortable for some, but the problems identified must be solved rather than left to grow and fester." All hail the editors of the *Prince*, defenders of the downtrodden, crusaders against inequality, bastions of unencumbered arrogance.

In all seriousness, though, the administration's campaign for four year colleges will only serve to exacerbate the natural social structure identified in COMBO by siphoning members from Prospect Avenue's sign-in clubs, leaving the bicker clubs unscathed. The result will be a completely stratified social hierarchy between patrician eating clubs and plebian residential colleges—far worse than anything COMBO could imagine.

As consummate anglophiles, the *Tory* is intrigued by the discussion in Britain over the acceptance of Islamic Law, the Sharia, into its jurisprudence. We think that honor killings for fornication could be a positive development for the hook-up culture as well as the purity of our women.

### **Thoughts, Anscombe Society?**

POINTS & PUNTS, representing the opinions of individual writers, were compiled by the editors.

# THE WHITMAN EXPERIMENT:



## Joelle Birge '11

Last September, hundreds of students flocked to the southwest corner of campus in anticipation of Princeton's newest celebrity—the recently constructed and optimistically received Whitman dining hall. Despite Whitman's immediate success, however, one of the college's points of distinction soon became problematic: Whitman's innovative circular tables were largely inefficient. Although intended to foster conversation, they simply could not accommodate many trays and were never fully-filled. Rather than facilitate interactions, Whitman had turned each dinner into a game of musical chairs. This year, expecting larger crowds during the Butler/Wilson renovations, Whitman quickly swapped the small round tables for more traditional (and efficient) rectangular ones. Besides being better suited to cumbersome trays, as Whitman resident Rebecca Kaufman '11 pointed out, "the new seating lets you sit down next to someone without feeling awkward" because of space constraints.

So why the circular tables in the first place? An answer lies in the dining hall's strategic choice of name: Community Hall.

This deceptively generic choice is actually an explicit assertion of Whitman's central goal. According to the college website, "Whitman College is forging new traditions to further strengthen the deep sense of community that characterizes educational life at Princeton." The name Community Hall was no chance decision. Rather, it was one small (but calculated) step toward transforming Whitman College from a mere residential hall into a unique four-year "community."

As the failed debut of the circular tables shows, however, trying to instill community by artificially forcing friendships has its limits. The trials of the Community Hall point to Whitman's fundamental problem: the ineffectiveness of its desperate attempt to forge a sense of community. Whitman College is unique in its attempt to bring freshmen, upperclassmen and even graduate students together under the same neo-gothic roof. The administration hopes to mold this diverse student body into one cohesive "learning community," as its website calls it. The goal of integrating "sage" upperclassmen with younger students is certainly an admirable one, but as the failed dining system has exemplified, such an idealistic utopia is far from readily obtainable.

Many Whitman students find that while they may live nearby students of other ages, befriending them is another matter. Katie Mumma '11 commented that while "friendships between upperclassmen and freshmen do exist... the hallways don't make for very easy social interactions." On a similar note, Jessica Westerman '12 admitted that she "hasn't really had any formal contact with upperclassmen other than her RCA." As Jessica pointed out, most freshmen agree that "only a select few upperclassmen make the effort [to meet younger students]." As for grad students, Jessica "hadn't seen one since her first day."

This perception of an invisible barrier separating freshmen from upperclassmen and grad students is a difficult one to overcome. Upperclassmen draw into Whitman with pre-established groups of friends and usually are not looking for new acquaintances. Freshmen, meanwhile, are simply too intimidated to approach older students, especially those who do not reach out to their hall mates. Although Whitman may be able to house a variety of students together physically, meaningful interaction is much harder to obtain and tends not to magically occur simply because of proximity. Much as Whitman tries to become a cohesive social unit, its holistic approach to commu-

nity ignores the natural generational bonds that link members of the same class and inhibit cross-class exchanges. Moreover, by defining its community through shared geography, Whitman loses sight of students' individual priorities.

Inherent to Whitman's dilemma is a conflict of interest between the administration and students. The administration seeks to set Whitman apart as an integrated learning community; students, on the other hand, remain interested in more tangible assets. Five-room quads and pizza ovens are more pressing concerns than a vague concept of "community."

To overcome these obstacles, the Whitman administration has sponsored a number of community-building, Whitman-only events. Last month's Whitman Olympics tried to motivate people from different hallways to compete in several team-building activities. Although well-publicized, the event was poorly attended, free T-shirt giveaways notwithstanding. The week-long "Whitmania" of last spring experienced similarly mediocre participation. If indeed Whitman residents are disinclined to bond with their fellow Whitmanites, then the administration's sought-after community will remain in name only—much like Community Hall.

One idea, however, that so far has succeeded in engaging Whitman students is the weekly College Nights program. Many residents relish this opportunity to enjoy elegant tablecloths and smaller crowds, but other students question its exclusivity. College Nights at other dining halls are open to all students; even the popular Rocky/Mathey dining hall stops short of restricting

access to its weekly events. Whitman-only events contribute to the residential college community at the expense of encouraging resentment among students in surrounding colleges such as Butler and Wilson. To these "outsiders," Whitman's exclusivity is seen not as an opportunity for bonding, but as an assertion of one college's superiority. Placing stress on an intra-college community concurrently damages inter-college perceptions and enhances social segregation.

Adding to this strain on campus dynamics is the tension created between four-year residential colleges and eating clubs. The four-year residential college epitomized by Whitman looks to supplant eating clubs by offering an alternative source of social belonging. However, what a Whitman-style system must realize is that the eating clubs have been successful in large part because their members self-select their social surroundings. Students choose to be a part of those communities because they share common interests with the clubs' members. When one instead brings together students of disparate interests who interact only in passing, a naturally cohesive community is not feasible. Although upperclassmen elect to live in Whitman, most do so because of its up-to-date facilities and spacious rooms, not social fulfillment. Whitman College Dean Rebecca Graves says that "it is too early to know if Whitman has been successful in creating a sense of community." Perhaps, but the early evidence suggests that the administration's quest for a self-focused, socially independent college community may be unattainable. Worse yet, it runs

the risk of alienating, rather than uniting, fellow students.

Dean Graves insists "there is no contradiction between a strong residential college community and a strong Princeton community." But do not restricted-access residential college events undermine the Princeton community by excluding other Princeton students? Weekly Whitman-only events may be popular with some Whitman students, but they send conflicting messages about Whitman's role, seeming to elevate the college rather than incorporate it into campus. More importantly, the administration of Whitman still have not conquered the social obstacles of the four-year residential college system. So far, such events as College Nights and Whitman Olympics have made little progress toward scaling the communication barriers preventing underclassmen from mingling with older students. Ultimately, to be successful, Whitman must view its own community in connection to the larger Princeton community. Is a potentially unobtainable Whitman family worth balkanizing the campus? **P**

Joelle Birge is a sophomore from Chicago who intends to major in English.



## Angry? Frustrated?

Tell us what you're thinking...

Send the *Tory* an e-mail at [tory@princeton.edu](mailto:tory@princeton.edu) for a chance to have your letter published unaltered in the next issue.

# RETHINKING GREEN

## ESCAPING THE CULT OF SUSTAINABILITY

William Herlands '12

Over the past few years, the sustainability and environmental movements at Princeton have been growing at an exceptional rate. From student organizations such as Students United for a Responsible Global Environment (founded in 2003) to new educational programs such as the certificate in sustainable energy (created in 2008), this new movement has established itself in the culture, academic philosophy, and administrative policy of the University. Such expansion reflects a broader, international trend, as presidential candidates now debate the most effective sustainability strategies and the world's nations plan to assemble this December for the UN Convention on Climate Change. While the desire to heighten our fast-paced civilization's awareness of the importance of environmental protection is laudable, critical analysis of national and University policies is necessary in order to determine their long-term viability.

During the late 1980's and early 1990's, the global sustainability movement gained legitimacy when the unusually hot summer of 1988 and the United Nations' first Earth Summit conference in 1992 sparked the public's attention. While there are many competing definitions of the idea of "sustainability," the movement's general goal is to foster the development of a society which, as the UN's Brundtland Report puts it, "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." To this end, the movement's organizations have sought to establish "green standards," a nebulous term that describes the environmental neutrality of a product or policy based on a varying list of ecological criteria. The sustainability movement also stresses the need to stem the proliferation of greenhouse gases in order to



*Some of the sustainability investments will go towards expanding the "natural areas" on campus.*

secure humanity's survival.

As noble as its intentions are, the movement's recent activity has been criticized by conservative and moderate commentators as politically polarizing and counter-productive. Claims of human-caused climate change have taken on a dogmatic zeal, with environmental leaders such as Pulitzer-Prize-winning journalist Ellen Goodman, former president Al Gore, and leader of the Green Party of Canada Elizabeth May, vilifying those who do not conform to their scientific theories and political remedies with the use of explicit Holocaust analogies, such as Ms. Goodman's famous quote, "Let's just

*Critical consideration of tradeoffs and sober fiscal analysis risk being sacrificed for the sake of good PR.*

say that global warming deniers are now on a par with Holocaust deniers."

Additionally, many of the zoning policies advocated by the sustainability movement in order to maintain "green space" or sustain "smart growth" have led to inflated housing prices and the dispos-

session of the urban poor. This phenomenon is seen in the exodus of tens of thousands of blacks after the implementation of such policies in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Monterey, which has become the least affordable area to live in the United States, according to the National Association of Home Builders' 2008 affordability rankings (see Thomas Sowell's Applied Economics for more details on this). The extremism of the sustainability movement and its frequent refusal to consider other consequences has caused acute economic and social damage. Given these serious concerns, Princeton students must determine whether such tendencies could infect the sustainability movement at Princeton, preventing meaningful reforms and stifling academic discourse.

In 2006, after years of discussion and student advocacy, the Office of Sustainability (OOS), managed by Shana Weber, was established in order to advocate and coordinate the various sustainability initiatives on campus. In the fall of that same year, the Daily Princetonian blasted the University in an expose', claiming that its "commitment to green building has been lukewarm," and citing Whitman Col-



lege's conspicuous lack of basic sustainability standards as the flagship of failure. In the interim, the OOS, in conjunction with student groups and the administration, has developed the new Princeton University Sustainability Plan, a comprehensive proposal which outlines near and long term objectives, including commitments to "decrease campus carbon dioxide emissions to 1990 levels by 2020," and to "convert to 100% Green Seal or equivalent cleaning products by 2009."

Among the most controversial and promising elements of the proposal is the pledge not to purchase carbon offsets, a strategy which, they claim, has "little (or no) impact on the emission of greenhouse gases." The OOS correctly notes that the money generated by carbon offsets, which "give the purchaser the right to continue emitting greenhouse gases," in truth "never actually get used to pay for environmental improvements." The recognition of the ludicrous nature of such a policy is particularly laudable given the national sustainability movement's infatuation with offsets, as evidenced by the proliferation of dozens of newly incorporated companies offering carbon offset strategies to individuals, companies, and communities. Additionally, the rejection of offsets encourages students to learn how to practically deal with environmental issues after graduation, when most of us will not be cushioned by a \$16 billion dollar endowment. The OOS's decision suggests an openness to new environmental approaches that is needed in our time.

Other aspects of Princeton's environmental effort, however, are not so promising. The spirit of competitive "greening" should be particularly troubling to any proponent of reasoned policy. This spirit is exemplified by "RecycleMania," a competition in which 400 colleges from around the country strive to amass the largest amount of recyclables and the least amount of trash over a ten-week period. Following in this trend, almost every article written about Princeton's sustainability efforts uses comparisons with the accomplishments and sustainability statistics of either Harvard or Yale as an impetus for Princeton to act. This competitive mentality endangers responsible sustainability efforts by encouraging the institution of poorly analyzed policy, which is rushed through the approval process in order to be printed as a bullet point on the next informational pamphlet and showcased to upstage Princeton's Ivy brethren. Critical consideration of tradeoffs and sober fiscal analysis risk being sacrificed for the sake of good PR.

An example of this can be seen in the form of the "voluntary carbon tax." Before the new sustainability plan, all energy-efficiency initiatives were undertaken based on a straightforward cost-benefit analysis: the gross cost of these initiatives was measured against the gross cost of the wasted energy that Princeton would incur without them. According to the new policy, however, the gross cost of failing to pursue efficiency initiatives will now incorporate both the true energy cost to Princeton and the vaguely defined

external, environmental cost of the carbon that this energy would emit into the atmosphere (the "tax"). This artificially reduces the net cost of any prospective energy efficiency initiative, creating a situation in which Princeton may pursue initiatives whose costs exceed the actual energy savings to the University. Whatever environmental benefits the OOS may conjure up to justify its decision, the bottom line is that Princeton will be spending more money—money that could go to alleviating students' college costs—with no clear promise of future financial benefit.

The new sustainability plan also pledges to "substantially increase the percentage of sustainably produced food items." With the real cost of college at a record high, and as most students attempt to learn how to economize, the University's push to offer only expensive, sustainable food is a dubious move. Demanding that students pay Whole Foods prices at

such spots as Café Vivian limits students' freedom of choice and disproportionately impacts the less affluent subsection of the student body, which cannot afford to be environmentally conscious at such luxurious prices. The sustainability plan claims that the food program is geared to "educate the campus community concerning the environmental, social and economic impact of their food choices." Regrettably, it seems as though only some students can afford this education.

In its frenzied attempts to "out-green" the Ivy League, Princeton's sustainability movement has thus unwittingly fallen prey to the same willful blindness of municipalities' efforts to establish ever-increasing amounts of "green-space." Just as the fiscal brunt of these municipalities' policies was forced upon the poorest segment of the population, so too, at Princeton, poorly thought-out "sustainable" and "environmentally responsible" initiatives

have the potential to disproportionately burden students on financial aid. These programs require thoughtful consideration, careful analysis, and prudent planning in order to mitigate their adverse consequences, and achieve lasting results.

To establish a truly effective sustainability

policy, we must not cling to a dogmatic ideology, nor allow college rivalries to dominate our decisions. Instead, we must foster an intellectual culture that understands that sustainability concerns must be incorporated into decision making without occluding rational judgment. Only by paying attention to the fundamentals of science, sociology, and economics can we create policy that ensures an effective approach to sustainable living. ■

*Demanding that students pay Whole Foods prices at such spots as Café Vivian limits students' freedom of choice and disproportionately impacts the less affluent subsection of the student body.*

**William Herlands** is a freshman from New York, NY. He is a resident of Bloomberg Hall.



# ARTS INITIATIVE TANKS

## THE LEWIS CENTER'S FIRST YEAR LEAVES MUCH TO BE "ASPIRED"

Douglas Lavanture '09

*A Broken Philosophy*

Last semester an amazing thing happened. I saw, for the first time, a theatrical production crash and burn.

Having been involved with student theater groups such as Theatre Intime and the Princeton University Players for the past four years, believe me when I say that I have seen my fair share of close calls—near disasters that left the members of the all-student boards of both organizations biting their fingernails, calling their lawyers, praying, cursing, often until the house lights went down on opening night. I was even involved on the artistic end of a couple of projects which fell into this category. But the students involved always, always stepped up and did what was necessary to prevent impending doom. The shows always went up, and what resulted was often, believe it or not, good.

But which student group was responsible for that production last semester that actually crashed and burned? Well, here's the surprise: A student group didn't produce it.

It was produced by the Lewis Center for the Art

Almost three years have passed since Peter B. Lewis announced his 101 million dollar donation—the single largest in Princeton history—to fund an “arts initiative” at the University. Shirley Tilghman, President of the University, lauded the gift as one that furnishes an opportunity to fulfill the University's aspiration to “create a distinctive educational model that seamlessly integrates the creative and performing arts into an undergraduate liberal arts program that is second to none.”

Princeton has been given an incredible opportunity to re-

energize one of the few ailing programs of this University. Even President Tilghman admits, “None of the programs [in the fine arts] has a sufficiently large teach-

*It is difficult for a student to appreciate a collaborative production that doesn't showcase the student participants.*

ing faculty to meet—or, indeed, come close to meeting—the demand for instruction.”

But other than a massively improved website and the addition of a few personnel, students in the creative arts programs here at Princeton have seen little, if any, change in the depth, variety, and quality of the courses and opportunities the University offers. Some recent productions have left many students

feeling alienated and confused about the direction the Center is heading. The Arts Initiative has, so far, failed to deliver.

The term Arts Initiative has become a kind of catch-phrase. It is as prevalent as Going Green or Change. The problem with catch-phrases, however, is that they are powerful, easily-remembered and regurgitated linguistic devices that carry a wealth of rhetorical power but a dearth of explicit meaning.

This is the issue with The Arts or an Arts Initiative. Perhaps it is because to define the arts themselves is nearly impossible, as they encompass and embrace so many aspects of the human creative spirit. Perhaps to question funds allocated to the arts is in its very nature to be anti-art. And, besides, what could possibly be wrong or go wrong with massively increasing funding for the arts?

The answer is a lot.

This brings us back to the aforementioned failed production, which was produced by the Princeton Atelier, a program which exists under the umbrella

of the new Lewis Center for the Arts. The production was Wind-Up, created by directors of the Headlong Dance Theater and Pig Iron Theatre Company, David Brick and Dan Rothenberg, with scenographer Mimi Lien, performed by both Princeton Atelier students and professional performers.

According to the Lewis Center, the Princeton Atelier program exists to foster the “creation of new and exuberant performance works that defy easy categorization” by “bring[ing] professional artists to campus for intensive collaborative work with students and faculty.”

While in the classroom setting there was undoubtedly a wealth of collaboration between the students and the Atelier coordinators, the student performers had miniscule stage time. The audience was packed with Brick and Rothenberg’s New York and Philadelphia cronies, but when the performance ended and the final light cue faded, after only approximately 70 minutes, the audience began to applaud only when urged by Brick and Rothenberg. It is impossible for a performance piece to succeed when it fails to take the audience on a journey, and it is difficult for a student to appreciate a collaborative production that doesn’t showcase the student participants. As a production for and by students, it was a failure.

But it certainly was visually stunning, and that it was so

pretty on stage was a direct result of the massive resources the Lewis Center invested in the three coordinators and in the technical aspects of the production. Theater historian Peter Brook states in his book *The Empty Space*, “The theatre has often been called a whore, meaning its art is impure, but today this is true in another sense – whores take the money and then go short on the pleasure.” This production was a indeed “money-whore,” and it was not the only one under the Lewis Center.

So how can a program that is so well-funded allow a collaborative project with arguably brilliant artists and dedicated students collapse into a debacle that one Atelier student

dubbed, “quite possibly the worst experience of my life?”

It’s simple. The Center funded them immensely but failed to hold them accountable for the quality of the product.

Another case in point: This past summer, three students received a Joint

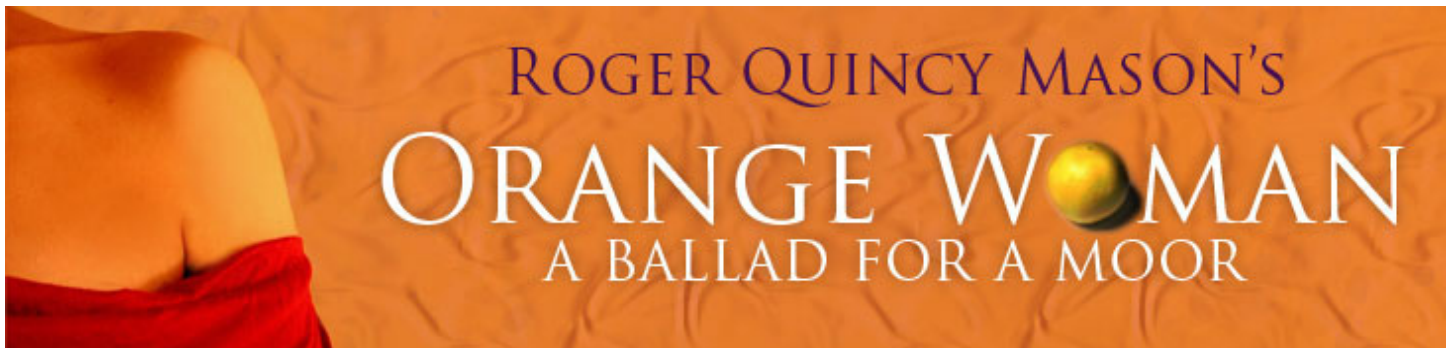
Summer Fellowship Award of an undisclosed amount from the Lewis Center to develop a new musical called *The Nightmare*. Theatre Intime, a student group and one of the oldest student-run theaters in the country, picked up the show as part of its 2008-2009 season.

Intime subjected the then-unfinished *Nightmare* to a rigorous series of reviews as part of its season-building process. Each production proposed for a season must undergo the same scrutiny.

Despite the project’s endorsement by the Lewis Center, which promised a product of the highest artistic merit, Theatre Intime canceled the production in early September because of disagreements between the collaborators and a lack of progress. The Lewis Center provided no oversight on the project after pumping it with funding. The money was wasted and the project still sits unfinished.

And last April, Princeton witnessed Roger Q. Mason’s *Orange Woman: Ballad for a Moor*, a production heavily publicized by both the department and Mason himself, but in much the same vein as the previous two projects, one that utterly failed to deliver. Lucas Barron eloquently summarized this fiasco in the April 2008 issue of *The Nassau Weekly*. The production’s most blatant atrocity was “the plain fact that, for

*How can a program that is so well-funded allow a collaborative project... collapse into a debacle that one Atelier student dubbed, “quite possibly the worst experience of my life?”*



*The over-the-top promotion of Mason’s senior thesis “Orange Woman” highlighted The Lewis Center’s perverted prioritization of appearance over substance. It is only one example of Center’s misappropriation of its funds.*

all its munificence, Princeton has failed to make good on its only true promise to Mason: to make him write a play. Instead of forcing him to address the same basic problems as other thesis-writing seniors, [...] the product [was] dressed up in costumes from the Met and thrown triumphantly on stage”.

It is not abnormal to see one flop in any organization’s artistic season, especially in the university setting where the producers of the shows are students who are still willing (thankfully) to experiment. But three utter catastrophes produced by an organization called upon by Tilghman to “establish itself as a global leader in the quality of its offerings” is abysmal.

### *An Ineffective Administration*

The failures of the Wind-Up, Nightmare, and Orange Woman projects point to more troubling macroscopic issues which face the Lewis Center. As the organization strives to strengthen its relationship with the university and the global arts community, it is crucial that its primary focus be on promoting an image of itself that is not only attractive to patrons and prospective students, but also one which is true.

Take a look at the season poster for the Program in Theater & Dance. An attractive black girl and a handsome white man in beautiful, luxurious period costumes grace the page. The photograph is seductive, alluring. It is poster from the aforementioned Orange Woman, and more importantly, a symbol of the ineptitude of the Lewis Center.

This image presents, to anyone who saw that production, an image of the Lewis Center as an organization more interested in promoting a stylized, but ultimately untrue, version of itself than endeavoring to produce material that is in keeping with its mission statement – performances which will draw patrons and students with a passion for the arts.

In the short term, the Lewis Center does not need a new facility or even increased funding. The Center must be composed of an administration whose sole aim is to support its students and to produce material of the highest quality. To be successful, relevant, and responsive to the needs of its students, the Center should seriously consider dismantling and rebuilding its entire administrative branch, to establish a clear hierarchy of power for each of its respective departments, and to make clear to its students what responsibilities each faculty or staff member wields within the organization. The Center as it exists today does not have a transparent administrative body composed of personnel addressing students’ specific and varied needs. At times members of the Center are utterly unap-

proachable. This is irresponsible and violates the liberal arts ideals of the University.

Tilghman believes that “Princeton ought not to follow the lead of those institutions that have chosen to offer conservatory-style, professional-school education in the fine arts to a cadre of students focused on vocational goals.” And while I agree with her push for inclusion, the Lewis Center must nevertheless be held to the same standards a conservatory holds for teaching and preserving the craft of art, not just creativity.

And for the performance arts especially, perhaps an academic is not the best person to have in charge of constructing and promoting a season of the scale the Center envisions in the future. The Center has already taken massive strides by hiring the non-academic Marguerite d’Aprile-Smith to publicize its events and the professional Production Stage Manager Carmelita Becnel to serve as liaison between students in the Theater Certificate Program and the Center itself. The Center, however, should take another step before construction on the new arts neighborhood begins: it should hire a production manager

who is directly responsible for ensuring the quality of the productions and exhibitions the Lewis Center sponsors. But even before even that, it must critically assess how and why it spends its new monetary gift, and to organize itself in such a way that those monies are spent responsibly.

Arts rely on risk-takers, people who live on the edge. Duke Ellington once said, “Art is dangerous. It is one of the attractions: when it ceases to be dangerous, you don’t want it.” This sense of danger attracts the most unconventional thinkers, ones who can step outside

of the box. Such thinkers are the kinds of students the University desperately wants to add to its ranks.

For the Lewis Center to accomplish this goal and to become a hub for the Arts on campus and in the academy at large, it must not only embrace this sense of danger and encourage its students to take risks, but it must have the necessary tools at its disposal to take action when failure is imminent and the institutional accountability to ensure the presentation of productions that do not just look impressive but are impressive. **P**



*Mr. Lewis was thanked with plenty of pomp, which is all that his investment into the arts has so far amounted to.*

**Douglas Lavature** is a senior in the English department and is pursuing certificates in East Asian Studies and Theater & Dance. He was born and raised in Bristol, Indiana.

# THE CREDIT CRUNCH

## MISGUIDED GOVERNMENT POLICIES EXACERBATE MORTGAGE CRISIS

*Johnny Love '09 &  
Kyle Smith '09*

As one financial institution after another fails or enters a merger to avert disaster, many of us wonder how we got here. For many Princeton students, the decision to go into investment banking was merely a formality, but now career options are shifting. Why is all this happening?

While many factors are implicated in the current financial crisis, one major culprit was risk mismanagement. A number of investment banks had a significant part of their assets in mortgage-backed securities, which are formed by lumping hundreds of mortgages together to reduce the risk of holding them. To understand why a bank would do this, consider a person who does not have good credit and has a chance of defaulting on his or her mortgage. Buying the mortgage alone, that is, buying a claim to the cash flow generated by the mortgage payments, ordinarily involves taking an unnecessarily high risk. However, holding a security that is based on the payments from a hundred of those mortgages in theory significantly reduces the risk. While a few of the mortgages in the latter case might default, the security will not lose much value since the vast majority of mortgages in the pool on which that security is based will not default. In theory, this practice is sound and can explain why a combination of high-risk mortgages can increase the grade of a mortgage-backed security.

However, the problem into which many banks fell is that they seriously underestimated the risk that a high number of subprime mortgages would default nearly simultaneously. Among many reasons, the rapid decrease in housing prices left thousands of people unable to pay their mortgages and suddenly unprepared banks had to cover losses that were never seen as a realistic possibility.

Even though the underestimation of risk has been a huge factor in starting the crisis, misguided government regulation likely has increased the severity of it. Fair Value Accounting, the way the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) tells companies they have to value their assets, contributed to banks like Lehman Brothers posting such huge losses. Fair Value Accounting requires that firms price their financial instruments on their balance sheet at market price. This

*In the midst of the swirling debate about bailouts and economic policy, Congress needs to pay attention to and fix these entrenched policy mistakes.*

practice sounds reasonable, but in times like the present, when temporary financial turmoil reduces the market price of mortgage-backed securities well below the reasonable discounted value of the payments one would receive by holding the security, it forces firms to report massive losses that are not real in any permanent sense. Those securities are at that low price for now, certainly, but they are not going to stay that way in the long-term, and, therefore, companies are still forced to post unrealistic losses. An alternative system would be, in times of crisis when a financial instrument has a market price a certain percentage below its value derived from a discounted cash flow analysis, to use this latter valuation method to protect the firm from being forced to report temporary large losses that unnecessarily make a firm insolvent.

Another misguided government policy is the tax code's treatment of debt versus equity. Right now, equity is subject to more tax than debt, which creates perverse incentives for firms to hold relatively more debt. Holding more debt relative to equity means that a firm becomes more leveraged, putting it at a higher risk for losses. Banks like Merrill Lynch and Lehman Brothers were very highly leveraged, which mag-

nified their profits in the boom years but also made them more susceptible to large losses when things turned for the worse. While banks ultimately made the decisions to keep their leverage levels high, the tax code certainly did not (and still does not) encourage safe leverage.

Government regulation is not necessarily inherently bad. Limited government regulation can be a good thing, and in some cases it is very much needed for markets to function properly. As we have seen with this financial crisis, the worst in generations, even seemingly minor problems in government policy can exacerbate major financial distress. This is not necessarily to say that the government is the primary

cause of our problems, but rather that the severity of this crisis would most likely not be as significant had there been better policy in place, such as a more aggressive SEC, which could have helped sniff out many reckless financial practices. In the midst of the swirling debate about bailouts and economic policy, Congress needs to pay attention to and fix these entrenched policy mistakes while ratcheting up oversight so that the market can work properly, but under the watchful eye of a vigilant government.

Some might seize upon this financial crisis as an opportunity to attack free markets, but it should not be seen as a reason to turn our backs on their inherent vitality. Rather, in light of a better understanding of our financial system, the current crisis provides an opportunity for reform, making our markets more efficient and trustworthy engines of economic growth. ■

**Kyle Smith** is a senior in the Economics Department from Oakton, VA

**Johnny Love** is a senior in the ORFE Department from Baton Rouge, LA.

# FAITH, FEMINISM, AND SARAH PALIN

## THE UPHILL BATTLE FACING A WOMAN OF PRINCIPLE

**Shivani Radhakrishnan '11 & Stuart Chessman '12**

In his 2004 speech to the Democratic National Convention, Barack Obama famously declared that “there is not a liberal America and a conservative America— there is the United States of America.” But for all his supposed commitment to unity and inclusiveness, his supporters on the Left have taken a very different approach. In their treatment of Sarah Palin, they have displayed a disappointing penchant for divisiveness and disdain. They have mocked Palin for being from rural Alaska

and criticized her for her lack of polish or elite education. Such juvenilia is to be expected in the rhetoric of the angry Left. But their treatment of Palin’s approach to two issues—faith and feminism—is revealing.

The Democratic Party has taken great pains to paint conservatives as impervious to the needs of the blue-collar worker and the middle-class American. Given their portrayal of Republicans, their response to Palin’s religion, a response echoed by their many friends in the media, is of particular interest. Liberal media sources (as well as many mainstream ones) have raised numerous questions about Palin’s

faith, insinuating that her views are far too radical for the American people. The urban, professional, secular bias of liberal sources such as the *Huffington Post* is evident in its apparent surprise at the fact that Palin’s “world view is deeply impacted by religion.”

In suggesting that Palin’s belief in basic tenets of Christianity such as baptism and miraculous healings are somehow bizarre, the Left insults the over 76 percent of Americans that identify as Christians. Her views might seem wholly shocking to many Democrats and much of the mainstream media, but to the average Christian, they are

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quite normal. This reveals a troubling distance between modern liberalism and the average American. Liberals criticize conservatives for being oblivious to the needs of the middle class while simultaneously failing to understand the importance of faith to a majority of Americans.

The Left has been similarly out-of-touch on women's issues. Feminists have worked enthusiastically to convince the country that, despite the historic nature of her candidacy, Palin's ascension to higher office would not represent a major advancement for women and their rights. As Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, writes, "we are not against a woman being on a ticket for president. We wish it was a ticket that stood for women and women's rights. Since it doesn't, we're opposing that ticket." Sarah Seltzer echoes this view in the *Huffington Post*, complaining that "[i]t's as though the McCain Camp believes our irrational she-hormones will lead us, like sheep, to pull the lever for any candidate who looks like us, even if she has a strong record, as Palin does, of standing against women's interests." Here, as with middle-class and blue-collar Americans, the Left claims that it has the true interests of women at heart.

The mainstream feminist definition of these interests, however, is strikingly



*Sarah Palin has become a victim of the ever-hypocritical leftist feminists.*

*Feminists have worked enthusiastically to convince the country that, despite the historic nature of her candidacy, Palin's ascension to higher office would not represent a major advancement for women and their rights.*

narrow, constrained by the agenda of the modern Left. Feminists are particularly vexed by Palin's staunch pro-life record and her opposition to the expansions of government that they call for. Sarah Palin's nomination has the potential to take feminism beyond its obsession with *Roe v. Wade* and tax-and-spend policies,

allowing it to encompass other issues and perspectives. This potential is grounded in Palin's own life. She has had to handle the stresses of raising a family while working a strenuous job, and these experiences have taught her that curtailing the size of government and lowering taxes are the best policies for middle-class working moms. She understands that government shrinkage and tax cuts will remove obstacles to women's success; she recognizes that women, no less than men, can be trusted to make economic choices without the "help" of the state. It is no surprise that the people of Alaska, men and women alike, have given her the highest approval rating in the nation, supporting her efforts in stamping out corruption in Alaskan politics and slashing costs in three hundred construction projects across the state.

The criticisms directed at Sarah Palin—the claims that she is out of touch with the very segments of the American public that she belongs to and personally identifies with—stem from a profound sense of fear. Palin's detractors fear that voters will see her as one of them,

and recognize her deep understanding of their anxieties and values. They fear a future in which the faith of a vast majority of Americans is acknowledged and celebrated, and in which "feminist" is more than just shorthand for "liberal female." In the end, their incessant attacks have only proven how distant they really are from the beliefs and concerns of those they claim to speak for. **P**

**Shivani Radhakrishnan** is a sophomore from Mt. Hope, NY and a prospective philosophy major.

**Stuart Chessman** is a freshman and prospective Classics major. He is a committed and thinking paleoconservative.

# PAKISTAN: THAT OTHER ELECTION...

## A CONVERSATION WITH PAKISTANI STUDENT FAAEZ UL-HAQ '11 ABOUT THE FUTURE OF U.S.-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

**Matt Sanyour '11**

Pakistan has loomed large in recent months as it has undergone a wrenching transition from nearly a decade of military dictatorship under General Pervez Musharraf to the inauguration of its first democratically elected president since 1999, Asif Ali Zardari, leader of the Pakistan People's Party and widower of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. The first presidential debate featured a heated discussion of the reliability of Pakistan as an ally in the global war on terror, suggesting that this issue will be central to the next administration.

Where will the U.S.-Pakistan relationship go over the next four years and beyond? What does its transition to democracy mean for this relationship? To answer these questions, an examination of Pakistan's troubled history and unsettled current situation is called for. In addition to my own research, I sat down with Pakistani student Faez ul-Haq '11 to discuss his own perspective on these issues, as well as his opinion of the two candidates' divergent approaches to U.S.-Pakistani relations.

Pakistan is a relatively young country. It has only existed as an independent entity since 1947. As I began my conversation with Faez, he emphasized this particular point several times. "America," he said, "needs to understand the history of the

region. You cannot begin as if every day is a new day."

The Pakistani nation, originally a part of the British Raj, broke away from a newly independent India as a result of religious strife between Muslims and Hindus. Pakistan witnessed the outflow of



*Musharraf has been more likely to support the US in word than in deed.*

its regional Hindu minority and the mass immigration of Muslims from Hindu-dominated regions in modern-day India. For this reason, Pakistani nationhood has long been shaped, for better or worse, by its antagonistic relationship with its majority-Hindu neighbor to the west.

Pakistan and India have continued to dispute territory located near the 1947 border, most notably in the province of Kashmir, a region that has inspired no fewer than four wars. Relations between India and Pakistan worsened when both states conducted weapons tests signifying their nuclear power status in 1998. For all these reasons, Pakistan's brief history has been marked by periodic wars and alternating currents of democratic reform and authoritarian crackdown, culminating in the collapse of the most recent military regime. Faez observed, "We have not had a continuous stretch of democracy for more than ten years. Because it has been interrupted, the civil society has not developed properly."

And, despite its political youth, Pakistan is also a land of ancient civilization predating the political strife of the twentieth century and including both eras of great achievement, and times of troubles. The nation still bears the scars of ambitious empires long since fallen, a problem that has contributed to its tribal unrest.

Musharraf's commitment to the prosecution of the War on Terror has always been a source of controversy. While he stepped forward as a U.S. ally after 9/11 at great risk to himself and his government, prior to 9/11 his regime was one of only three nations to recognize the Taliban as the legitimate Afghan government. Pakistan's government initially aided U.S. efforts in the nearly impregnable Hindu Kush region along the



Afghan-Pakistani border, only to fall back in 2006 due to security concerns within the country and sign a peace agreement with the rural resistance that called itself the “Pakistan Taliban” in exchange for an end to hostilities. Though a firm ally of the United States in words, the Pakistani government has often struggled to match this commitment in practice.

With Musharaff’s decline, prospects for the future of the U.S.-Pakistani relationship remain uncertain. Although Pakistan is making strides towards democracy, it retains many features of a troubled state, particularly in the forms of corruption and nepotism.

In a controversial verdict reached in April of this year, Zardari was acquitted of several counts of murder in the homicides of a retired judge and his son in 1996, and a Pakistani steel tycoon in 1998, all of which were believed to be politically motivated. The undeniable nepotism in Zardari’s succession to the leadership of his wife’s party is also troubling. However, Faez said that despite Zardari and his party’s history of nepotism and corruption, “[i]t is very important to support the process and the institutions; democracy and the courts.”

Prospects for Pakistan’s role in the War on Terror are also unclear. While President Zardari pledges support for American efforts, he is in a difficult position to offer very much assistance.

*Prospects for Pakistan’s role in the War on Terror are unclear. While President Zardari pledges support for American efforts, he is in a difficult position to offer very much assistance.*

To the contrary, Pakistan remains dependent on American aid as it battles an increasingly bellicose secessionist movement in Baluchistan, the tribal province in which infamous 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (KSM) was born and raised. For too long, the Pakistani government has neglected these regions, treating them as little more

than “buffer zones” against terrorist activities in Afghanistan, to use the term Faez applied to the attitude of the central government toward Baluchistan.

Yet Pakistan has shown promising development in these past several months. Though, as Faez said, Pakistanis “knew the transition would not be an easy time,” fears of a political meltdown in one of the world’s most unstable nuclear powers were assuaged. U.S. aid is crucial to building on this promising foundation, but this aid must be provided with an awareness of Pakistan’s political and bureaucratic realities. As Faez stressed, American funding “must be made public and transparent, not through the I.S.I. [the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence, Pakistan’s primary covert organization with strong ties to the outgoing military regime].” He pointed out that, despite the incentives to corruption that sending aid money through parliamentary channels would provide, the use of such channels is worth the benefit of weakening the ISI’s hold on much of the government.

In light of this complex situation, it is worth closing with a review of both presidential candidates’ stances on Pakistan and what they promise for the next four years.

Faez’s comments on the candidates suggest that Pakistanis are ambivalent on the future: “Obama was correct to say America should not have supported Musharraf against the people—a 21<sup>st</sup> century power should not do this... But there is a glaring contradiction in Obama’s foreign policy—the air strikes. The [Pakistani] people will not be with you if you violate their sovereignty.”

Of Senator McCain, he said, “McCain is right when he says Pakistan is a failed state... That is obviously a failed state because the primary purpose of a state is to ensure the safety of its citizens. McCain is totally right.” Faez went on to say that McCain’s contention that Pakistan’s government is a US ally that is hindered

by “what may be called the problems of a failed state” in infrastructure, hierarchy, and civil institutions is an important distinction to make, in contrast to Obama’s less sympathetic posturing toward Pakistan.

*Although Pakistan is making strides towards democracy, it retains many features of a troubled state, particularly in the forms of corruption and nepotism.*

Faez’s assessment was relatively even-handed, offering that both candidates had their strengths and weaknesses. However, Senator McCain’s stance seems to indicate a more acute awareness of the issues facing Pakistan in its difficult transition and of the sensitivity required in dealing with these issues. Obama’s baffling belligerence risks sending the wrong message to the Pakistani people at exactly the wrong time, endangering Pakistan’s progress and thus endangering the prospects of its development into a stable, reliable ally in the War on Terror. Whoever becomes president, however, it is clear that, in dealing with our embattled ally, he will face an exceedingly difficult task. ■

**Matthew Sanyour** is a sophomore from West Chester, Pennsylvania, planning to major in Politics.

# THE UNENCUMBERED MIND

## MUSINGS ON PRINCETON AS AN INTELLECTUAL BATTLEGROUND, THE HORRORS OF ABORTION, AND SENATOR BARACK OBAMA'S CORRUPT PHILOSOPHY

**Brandon McGinley '10**

People who know me well have heard me speak of a strain of anti-intellectualism that runs through me and my worldview. By this, I do not mean that I harbor some sort of passive-aggressive disdain for my professors or that I eschew the marketplace of ideas and intellectual discourse that is the lifeblood of the university. I have, though, for many years, maintained an intense skepticism for the life of the mind untethered to, unencumbered by, and unintegrated with the life of this world and its emotional and physical realities.

This was precisely the reason that, two and a half years ago now, I seriously considered rejecting Princeton's offer of admission in favor of that from the University of Notre Dame. At the time, I more coarsely defined my anti-intellectualism as the preference for practicality over theory, but in retrospect I recognize that my current formulation explains my sensations toward the two universities. Princeton was to me solely the realm of the mind where thoughts and theory carried the day regardless of their ultimate connection to the reality of our experience. Notre Dame, although certainly a place of fine thoughts, seemed to ground itself in a world that I recognized, one defined by the sacredness of personal

relationships and the transcendent power of faith.

But here I am, and it is a decision that I do not regret for a moment. Rather than a colony of high-minded eggheads (although they're certainly still around), I found here at Princeton an intellectual battleground on whose front lines this

*There is a tendency... to lose oneself in the life of the mind, to entangle oneself so thoroughly in the thickets of theories and criticisms that the vital connections to the human experience are severed.*

magazine fights. Rather than being surrounded and eventually swallowed by the unencumbered mind, I have joined the struggle against its excesses.

For there is a tendency, perhaps even a temptation, and I do not know from where it originates, to lose oneself in the life of the mind, to entangle oneself so thoroughly in the thickets of theories and criticisms that the vital connections to the human experience are severed. Reason is certainly one supremely important, some would say sacred aspect of our humanity. But the mind, untethered to such touchstones as human dignity and compassion (products, it must be said,

themselves of reason), may take us to very inhuman places. This is what I feared coming to Princeton; this is what we fight.

All of these thoughts came flooding back to me over the course of one day in early October. October 5 was Respect Life Sunday, a day dedicated, as Pastor

Matt Ristuccia so eloquently explained at the interfaith service that afternoon, to remembering those innocent victims of the horror of abortion, reordering our priorities in our hearts and minds, and recommitting to the struggle of the cause. It is on days such as these that we are poignantly and concretely reminded that our work at Princeton is not merely an intellectual exercise in argument for argument's sake, but an effort in defense of the

very lives of those millions each year who are far too weak to defend themselves.

Later that afternoon at the Pro-Life, Pro-Family reception for students and faculty, Professor John Londregan spoke the words that were the primary impetus for this essay. He reminded the audience that, when a child emerges from the womb, the toddler into whose family the new life is born invariably recognizes his sister as a baby. She is not a particularly well-developed fetus. She is not a drain on the family's emotional and financial resources. She is not an "it." She is a sister; she is a daughter; she is a child.

The statement was devastating to

those who would claim that the infant is a non-person, as the toddler immediately, instinctively recognizes one of his own. To take her life as she first sees the light of this world by sucking out her brain with a vacuum would be recognized by her brother as an act of inconceivably inhuman brutality. To deny the personhood of the helpless infant is a denial of every intuition written on the hearts of man, whether by his Creator or by nature, and can only be reached by the mind which has lost itself in theory, unintegrated with the finer truths of our human nature.

Most distressing this October, though, is that the phenomenon of unintegrated intellectualism, often thought to be primarily confined to the academy, has risen to national political prominence in the person of Senator Barack Obama. Senator Obama voted four times in the Illinois State Senate to deny those infants who survive botched abortions, termed aggravated assault or attempted murder in every other circumstance, their right to life. A Chicago nurse who had been ordered to leave a child to die in a hospital's utility closet and watched him perish in her arms

began advocating for the legislation that Senator Obama consistently opposed.

Such abject cruelty can only be countenanced by a person whose mind has hurdled the obstacle of moral intuition. The senator's official explanation is that the legislation was written so broadly that potentially, at some point in the future, it could be construed to limit some types

*The mind that can justify the slaying of live infants based on the ideology, the theology, of choice is not one that is conducive to general political moderation, as the senator is selling himself to the American people.*

of abortion. This points to a disturbing moral prioritization of ideology over basic human dignity.

An intellect and a philosophy unencumbered by the reality of the human experience, including the moral intuition of dignity and compassion, cannot simply manifest itself in life issues, which is what

makes Senator Obama's candidacy so disconcerting. The mind that can justify the slaying of live infants based on the ideology, the theology, of choice is not one that is conducive to general political moderation, as the senator is selling himself to the American people. The fact is, we do not know what exactly Barack Obama thinks, save for rare moments of ideological candor, such as his aforementioned votes in Illinois and his infamous "clinging" comment. The unintegrated intellect is pernicious enough in the ivory towers of the academy; its effect in the White House will only be able to be accurately measured by history.

And so my original simplistic anti-intellectualism, born back in the angst-filled days of conservative adolescence, has not only survived more than two years of Princeton, but has morphed and matured into an idea, dare I say, a theory, that informs my politics, my ethics, my life. It is the purpose of the university student to experiment with ideas and to engage in the life of the mind. But the questions must always be posed as we delve deeper into the thickets: Does this comport with my experience? Does this comport with the human experience? If the answer is yes, then by all means press forward, keep digging, search for that truth. If the answer is no, then it is time to turn around, to find a new path, to reconnect with the touchstones of our humanity before it is too late. **F**



*Senator Obama's stance on abortion reflects an alarming apathy towards the human condition.*

**Brandon McGinley** is a junior majoring in Politics from Pittsburgh, PA. He is a Managing Editor for the *Tory*.

# *In Memoriam*

Sgt. 1st Class Daniel R. Sexton	September 10, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Pvt. Michael W. Murdock	September 11, 2008	Hostile Fire
Senior Chief Petty Officer John W. Marcum	September 11, 2008	Hostile Fire
Chief Petty Officer Jason R. Freiwald	September 11, 2008	Hostile Fire
Chief Warrant Officer Michael Slobodnik	September 11, 2008	Hostile Fire
Chaplain (Col.) Sidney J. Marceaux, Jr.	September 14, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Sgt. Wesley R. Durbin	September 14, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Staff Sgt. Darris J. Dawson	September 14, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Lt. Col. Ralph J. Marino	September 14, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Staff Sgt. Jason A. Vazquez	September 17, 2008	IED
1st Lt. Mohsin A. Naqvi	September 17, 2008	IED
Capt. Bruce E. Hays	September 17, 2008	IED
Sgt. Joshua W. Harris	September 17, 2008	IED
Pfc. Leonard J. Gulczynski I	September 17, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Capt. Darrick D. Wright	September 17, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Staff Sgt. Brandon W. Farley	September 18, 2008	Hostile Fire
Lt. Col. James L. Wiley	September 18, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
1st Lt. Robert Vallejo II	September 18, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Cpl. Michael E. Thompson	September 18, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Chief Warrant Officer Brady J. Rudolf	September 18, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
1st Sgt. Julio C. Ordonez	September 18, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Sgt. Anthony L. Mason	September 18, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Sgt. Daniel M. Eshbaugh	September 18, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Chief Warrant Officer Corry A. Edwards	September 18, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Sgt. Jerome C. Bell, Jr.	September 19, 2008	Hostile Fire
Capt. Bruno G. Desolenni	September 20, 2008	IED
Third Class Petty Officer Matthew J. O'Bryant	September 20, 2008	Hostile Fire
Pvt. Joseph F. Gonzales	September 20, 2008	IED
Staff Sgt. Nathan M. Cox	September 20, 2008	IED
Maj. Rodolfo I. Rodriguez	September 20, 2008	IED
Staff Sgt. Matthew J. Taylor	September 21, 2008	Hostile Fire
1st Lt. Thomas J. Brown	September 23, 2008	Hostile Fire
Capt. Michael J. Medders	September 24, 2008	IED
Staff Sgt. Ronald Phillips, Jr.	September 25, 2008	IED
Pfc. Jamel A. Bryant	September 27, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Sgt. William E. Hasenflu	September 28, 2008	Hostile Fire
Sgt. 1st Class Gary J. Vasquez	September 29, 2008	IED
Sgt. 1st Class Jamie S. Nicholas	September 29, 2008	IED
Capt. Richard G. Cliff, Jr.	September 29, 2008	IED
Spec. Christopher T. Fox	September 29, 2008	Hostile Fire
Pfc. Christopher A. Bartkiewicz	September 30, 2008	Hostile Fire
Spec. Jason E. von Zerneck	October 2, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident
Pfc. Tavarus D. Setzler	October 2, 2008	IED
Sgt. William P. Rudd	October 5, 2008	Hostile Fire
Col. Michael R. Stahlman	October 5, 2008	Non-Combat Related Incident