

THE YALE

FREE PRESS

AUGUST 2004
VOLUME XIX, NUMBER 1

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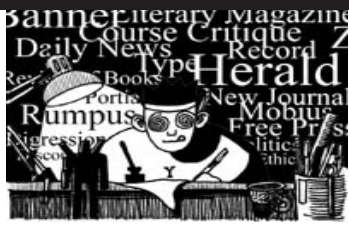
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Do you know where your
children are? We do.

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Under the table.

Above the law.

Beyond good and evil.

And somewhere to the right of Attila the Hun.

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"It is precisely in journalism that ... the expansion and the diminution of education join hands. The newspaper actually steps into the place of culture, and he who, even as a scholar, wishes to voice any claim for education, must avail himself of this viscous stratum of communication which cements the seams of all forms of life, all classes, all arts, and all sciences, and which is as firm and reliable as news paper is, as a rule. In the newspaper the peculiar educational aims of the present culminate, just as the journalist, the servant of the moment, has stepped into the place of the genius, of the leader for all time, of the deliverer from the tyranny of the moment."

—Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Future of Our Educational Institutions*

My President, the Org Kid

Redefining Virtue, One Twenty-Something at a Time

THIS WEEK, AS YALE STUDENTS DEPART FOR THEIR YEARLY EXODUS TO NEW HAVEN, the GOP prepares for a seminal rendezvous of its own — this time in the Big Apple. Last month, their opposition's antics wrapped up in Boston and enjoyed lavish media praise. But if the public, Yalies included, bought the hype — if they believe the RNC has a tough act to follow — they are gravely mistaken. In their most widely watched moment, the Kerry camp failed to present a coherent political vision.



Moral Guidance

Subsequently, as young people have continued to look for role models among their politicians, the men who aspire to lead the free world have failed to inspire us.

"Reporting for duty," John Kerry accepted the Democratic nomination with an appeal to family values. He spoke of "what kids go through," the need to "value families" and to care "for our children." This echoed Former President Clinton's opening night plea to help "our children to grow up in a secure America." Would that this lip service were true.

Beneath the veneer of superficial rhetoric, the DNC's message to young people is clear: leadership is merely a popularity contest. In the face of expediency, ideological conviction takes a backseat.

Despite being exiled in 2000 as a political liability, four years of nostalgia made Bill Clinton the 2004 Democratic campaign's biggest asset. But Clinton's speech, like his presidency, was laden with contradictions. "During the Vietnam War, many young men — including the current president... and me — could have gone to Vietnam but didn't," he declared. But John Kerry said, "Send me." Yet in 1992, Clinton insisted, "The fact that I didn't serve after putting myself in the lottery should not be disabling." Before the Senate in February of that year, John Kerry agreed: "What saddens me most is that Democrats, above all those who shared the agonies of that generation, should now be refighting the many conflicts of Vietnam in order to win the current political conflict. ... We do not need to divide America over who served and how."

Broader cultural trends may help to explain our admiration for Clinton and Kerry in spite of such inconsistencies. In 2001, David Brooks branded our generation the "organization kids." As we painstakingly organize our lives to ascend the corporate ladder, he observed, we neglect to engage in moral introspection. Thus, we admire leaders not for their moral principles but for the empty allure of their ambitious promises.

It is unsurprising, then, that students tend to overlook Clinton's

failings. One Brooklyn school teacher recalls, "The boys I teach think, 'Clinton was a pimp! That's the kind of president I can admire!'" But what of his impeachment for perjury and obstruction of justice? His pardoning of fugitive billionaire Marc Rich, the largest tax evader in American history—and a \$450,000 donor to Clinton's personal library? At a July signing for Clinton's memoir, *My Life*, I asked a Canadian college student these questions. "In the long run," she replied, "it doesn't matter. Personal morality should be kept separate from politics." Clearly, Clinton's personal and public failures are but minor details to many students.

Like Clinton, Kerry also courts the youth vote. Though they claim to be nonpartisan, groups such as Russell Simmons' Hip Hop Summit Action Network clearly lean left and help to magnify Kerry's appeal to young people. As one Yale junior recalls, "The first time I heard Kerry, he was

confessed to "seeing complexities." After all, "some issues just aren't all that simple." To *The New Yorker*: "You have to be careful of ideology clouding your decision-making." But not to worry; Kerry's myriad nuances are really a sign of wisdom. As Blakely Bundy explained in *USA Today*, "He doesn't think in black and white. He thinks in shades of gray because he is so knowledgeable."

Kerry promised never to "fight a war without a plan to win the peace." But although he voted in favor of war in Iraq, he opposed the postwar bill to fund Iraq's reconstruction. And at no point in his speech did he once mention his commitment to democracy in Iraq.

"Tonight I ... [am] returning to the role that I have played for most of my life, as a foot soldier in our fight for the future," Clinton said. "We must make the right choices. And we must have a president who will lead the way. John Kerry knows who he is

In the face of expediency, ideological conviction takes a backseat.

genuine and intelligent-sounding." This echoed campus assessments of Bill Clinton, whom another student described as "very attractive. It's easy for a young person to look up to him."

Kerry also campaigns on a Clintonian platform — one full of contradictions. Vowing, in his acceptance speech, never to "evade or equivocate" as president, he also

and where he is going." Later, he lauded the candidate for his "tough positions on tough problems."

Earlier this month, Kerry urged a Wisconsin crowd to "find out whether or not someone can lead this country with common sense and mainstream American values."

Here's hoping those values emerge sometime soon.

THE GIVEN ORDER

"Make up your mind to have / No regrets ..."

Recline yourself

Connecticut's then-Governor John Rowland got tri-state politics off to a rolling start—erm, grinding halt—this summer by announcing his resignation on June 21st. His decision to call it quits followed one day on the heels of a State Supreme Court order to appear before an investigative hearing on impeachment. Without much further ado, he slinked out of office on July 1st, a mere 10 days later.

What prompted Connecticut's first gubernatorial resignation under charges of misconduct? Apparently, state employees were helping him pay for renovations to his lakeside cottage. "I have never forgotten what the people of Connecticut have given me," Rowland announced. "I can only hope that when all is said and done, when the dust settles and time casts light back on our time in office ... people will see that we tried to give something back as well." Speaking of giving, Rowland allegedly accepted gifts from a host of state contractors and millionaires, but denied giving political favors in return. Then again, he also denied ever compromising his office, so take it as you will.

All in all, it was a pretty lame scandal — no dead prostitutes, no campaign espionage. Rowland's lieutenant governor, Jodi Rell, is now finishing out his term.

But Rowland has not left the public eye just yet. In early August, he wrote his supporters a letter begging for contributions toward his \$70,000 legal bill. "We can accept personal or business contributions ... in any amount. There will be no reporting requirements or public disclosure privacy at last!" he penned gleefully. And on August 17, the state legislature released the first set of documents surrounding the scandal — some 80,000 pages long. Asked why she did not review the papers, Rell explained, "I've got a lot of other things going on." Word on the street says the new governor accepted a steady stream of contributions from people closely associated with her predecessor — \$21,000 from 24 parties linked to the scandal, to be exact. Little wonder that Rell, who promised "to restore faith, integrity and honor" to the governorship, has been so busy.

Resign yourself

Amidst scandal, intrigue, and possible blackmail, New Jersey Governor James McGreevey announced

on August 12 that he would resign from office come November 15. McGreevey confessed to an extramarital affair with another man, declaring that he could not govern effectively while keeping his secret. Proclaiming himself as "a gay American" to loud applause, McGreevey essentially blamed homophobia for the pressures that forced his resignation.

Given the situation, he has played it smart, or at least devious. Up until his apparent lover demanded \$50 million in hush money, McGreevey was counseled to "ride it out" in hopes that he would be viewed in a Clintonian light, painting his problem as a private, bedroom affair, and muting public response to his revelations. Unfortunately for the Governor, his administration simply reeks of corruption. Aides, officials, and advisors of his are getting arrested left and right, and state prosecutors were clearly gunning for him. Ultimately, McGreevey's affair with another man did not force his resignation (though such behavior is indeed reprehensible); rather, he and his cronies stole a ton of money from the people of New Jersey. The spin-doctor who claims it's about sex should be punched in the mouth.

And what's the deal with the late date to leave office? Unsurprisingly, by resigning three months later than necessary, McGreevey would secure the big boy chair for the lame duck—the Democrat presiding in the State Senate. Warding off an election until 2006, this move is likely also to secure New Jersey's Democratic Congressional seats and electoral votes. Hopefully, McGreevey will buckle to pressure and oust himself more quickly, though as we go to press, nothing new has been heard. Even Yalies know it does not take three months to pack. How is he getting away with this?

You're through

Among Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, two of three governors have resigned. *The Yale Free Press* is crossing its fingers that RINO (Republican in name only) New York Governor George Pataki will also find a reason to vacate his office and let in a real conservative. It is unclear whether Lieutenant Governor Mary Donohue will be any truer to the cause, but a certain *YFP* Senior Editor and recipient of a loud shush from Donohue at the 2000 Republican Convention remains hopeful. Could Pataki have delivered such a mighty shush? Unlikely.

Letters to the Editor

Responses to Articles in *The Commencement Issue*

RE: "GIBSON'S *PASSION* EXONERATES THE JEWS: THE PHILO-SEMITIC MESSAGE OF MEL GIBSON'S NEW MOVIE"

Sunday, 8 August

Dear Editor,

If only Mel Gibson's *Passion* were as contemplative and thoughtful as Professor Wagner makes it out to be.

I went into the film with an open mind. In fact, I went into the film telling myself it would not be anti-Semitic just to avoid the trap that snares many critics, causing them to throw about accusations of Jew-hatred with paranoid frenzy. Because I conditioned myself not to overreact, my initial reaction was that it was not anti-Semitic. But upon further reflection, it is clear to me that *The Passion* conveys anti-Jewish sentiments.

First, Gibson portrays Pontius Pilate in a sympathetic light. The Roman prelate, responsible for the murder of some 250,000 Jews during his rule over Palestine, is depicted here as a caring, guilt-ridden, and, as coined by *The New Republic's* Leon Wiseltier, "ethically delicate" individual. Put Pilate up against the Jewish Sanhedrin priests, who do nothing but spit on Jesus and call for his death, and you come out rooting for the guy. Thus, Gibson's claim to show Christ's death as the responsibility of all mankind is ridiculous. According to this film, it was the Jews who killed him — via their puppets, the Romans.

Then there is the film's violence. After walking out of the theatre, I mentioned to a friend that the only thing I learned from the movie was that crucifixion hurts. Jesus' teachings, the most important features that we can take from Christ's life, are almost wholly absent, as Gibson allows his fetishistic obsession with violence to overtake all spiritual meaning. In one scene, he goes so far as to portray a crow pecking out the eyes of a thief hanging next to Christ.

Gibson's film is a highly selective rendering of Christ's death, and his selections bring us an utterly anti-Semitic rendering. Not only does his interpretation make the Jews blameworthy, but so too do his artistic choices, from Jewish characters who seem to be right out of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion down to the likeable Pilate. The tragic aspect is that a genuine attempt at conveying the lessons of Christ's teachings has been lost due to Mel Gibson's action-movie tendencies. This film is irresponsible, but how Mel Gibson will be judged is something only the Lord can know.

James Kirchick

The author, a junior in Pierson College, is a columnist for the Yale Daily News.

Friday, 13 August

Dear Editor,

I am glad Mr. Kirchick, in his perceptive letter, raises the issue of the portrayal of Pilate; I did not address that adequately in my article.

Gibson does indeed show Pilate as "conflicted" (to borrow a piece of modern jargon) and "guilt-ridden" (Mr. Kirchick's more accurate term). But "caring"? Only about himself and his career. ("Caesar has warned me," he whines. "Warned me twice." No promotion coming if there's another riot on his watch, see.) And "ethically delicate"? Hesitant, certainly, but hardly ethically delicate. He knows that putting Jesus to death is the wrong thing to do, but he does it anyway, for careerist reasons.

Think of the huge difference between Pilate and Caiaphas in this movie: Caiaphas does wrong, thinking it is right, while Pilate does wrong, knowing it is wrong.

Which is worse? We tend to view hesitancy as good and certainty as bad. We associate hesitancy with nuance and "delicacy," and certainty with cruel dogmatism. Given these biases, Caiaphas and Annas, the Sanhedrin priests, will come off worse than Pilate. But these biases are unlikely to be Gibson's, given what we know about his beliefs. He would be less likely to see evil in a traditionalist sacerdotal type like Caiaphas than in a "banality of evil" type like Pilate. Such would also be the view of Anglo-American criminal law, which ascribes more guilt to the one who knows his evil conduct is wrong than to the one who thinks it is right.

Two more quick points: (1) If one counts the Sanhedrin members "right out of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion" who rant against Jesus (and yes, they sure do), one must also count the two who speak up against Caiaphas's proceedings. If the former are, as they say, "no accident," then neither are the latter. (2) If one objects to the decision to make a movie about Christ's Passion rather than about the teaching phase of His ministry, fine — but one should remember that in Christianity, Jesus' suffering and death are not mere unfortunate codicils to his preaching career: they are the essence of his saving mission, even more important than his preaching, if one has to compare the two. Anti-Semitism is not the only, or even the best, explanation for a decision to focus on the Passion.

David M. Wagner

The author, a professor of law at Regent University, founded The Yale Free Press and is accessible at daviwag@regent.edu.



RE: "THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS: IT'S HIGH TIME WE REDEFINE THE TERMS"

Friday, 30 July

Dear Editor,

I am deeply troubled by your conclusion that we must "refrain from handing over a broken institution" to same-sex couples. Marriage may, indeed, be a broken institution, but this evaluation is unrelated to the decision to extend marriage rights to gay couples. You seem to believe that because

marriage may leave gay couples "unhappy" and "unfulfilled," they should therefore not be given the option to marry.

Gay marriage should be legalized because the option of marriage should be offered equally to all people, regardless of whether or not it will produce equal results. All couples should be allowed to choose whether or not the imperfect current institution of marriage would maximize their well-being. Homosexuals are no more harmed by entering into this "broken" institution than are heterosexuals; therefore, there is no excuse to withhold from them the same choice to marry. That is, of course, unless you believe that we should also "refrain" from heterosexual marriage until traditional values are restored.

Meredith Startz

The author, a sophomore in Branford College, is Vice President of the Yale Political Union.

Sunday, 15 August

Dear Meredith,

If we ought to offer marriage "equally to all people, regardless of whether or not it will produce equal results," does this mean results do not matter? It seems one of the chief duties of policy-making is to consider the likely results of proposed policies. To make sure the policy is as effective as possible, we should strive not just to grant everyone the same number of choices, but also to consider the costs and benefits of those choices to society.

Generally, I agree that marriage would not cause any more harm to a gay person than it would to a straight person. But marriage as an institution is unique because it makes us think beyond the costs or benefits to any one individual; rather, it brings two people into something greater than themselves. Legally, this means that the primary purpose of a marriage license is to help a third party: children. It is the most successful way we know to link both mother and father legally, physically, and indelibly to their child.

Since the main concern of legal marriage is children, same-sex marriage would actually generate further inequality. One child, raised by both birth parents, would have a clear privilege and opportunity that another child, deprived of his father or mother, would not share. Will a boy raised with two mothers grow up never yearning for his true father? Will a girl raised by two daddies never wonder why her mom is not around?

Tuesday, 17 August

Dear Editor,

Currently, marital policy in the U.S. is fairly unconnected to child welfare. Why should child welfare be taken into account in same-sex marriage, but not in heterosexual marriage? Because there has not been a significant number of same-sex marriages to study, there is currently no reliable way to say whether they would be particularly harmful to homosexuals and their children. There is, on the other hand, strong statistical evidence that factors besides homosexuality are

likely to create less than ideal results for married couples and their children. Poor people, less-educated people, and people who marry young all have higher rates of divorce, child abuse, and other negative marital outcomes.

If we should consider seriously such results in formulating marriage policy, we should begin by restricting marriages based on age, income, and education.

Furthermore, that kids would perhaps be better off if their gay parents were straight and happily married to someone of the opposite gender is irrelevant, because that is not an option. The right question is whether allowing same-sex marriages would increase welfare for gay people and their children. It is highly likely that giving gay couples the option to make an official commitment, securing legal and social benefits, will be good for them and their children.

Meredith Startz



RE: "FREEDOMS OF DEMOCRACY: WHAT AMERICAN ABUSE OF IRAQI PRISONERS REALLY SHOWS"

Wednesday, 28 July

Dear Editor,

While I have no love of pornography, I take issue with the suggestion that obscenity is somehow, even distantly, to blame for the atrocities of Abu Ghraib. I agree that the scandal belies unsettling gaps in the American moral fiber, but they are not to do with our views of sex. They are to do with our sense of justice, retribution, and compassion.

To those interested in domestic corrections policy, the news of Abu Ghraib was shocking. Though rape and humiliation are common, if unofficial, tools of our prison system, we cannot help but find them outrageous. Corporal Graner, the apparent ringleader of the abuse, took his ideas not from dirty magazines but from his experience as a prison guard here at home.

One third of Black boys growing up in America today can expect to be incarcerated, yet we pretend that American justice is equal across color lines and tax brackets. Is it any surprise that it falters at our borders, too?

If the soldiers in Iraq came from a country with a sense of justice that did not degrade the poor, the downtrodden, and the non-white, perhaps Abu Ghraib would be unthinkable. If Americans upheld the unimpeachable dignity of every man, woman, and child, perhaps Abu Ghraib would be impossible.

But these men and women came from a society that confuses racism with justice, mistakes retribution for mercy, and lives by the laws of Abu Ghraib.

Beth France

The author, a junior in Ezra Stiles College, is accessible at elizabeth.france@yale.edu.

Letters to the Editor

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Sunday, 8 August
Dear Editor,

While I have no love for the extremely small group of Americans who can still be identified as racists, blaming them for all of America's social issues is ridiculous. Further, it fails to explain adequately the Abu Ghraib scandal.

Though justice and retribution are indeed important systematic ideals, they are dependent upon a strong moral foundation, not the other way around.

While there are problems in the American justice system, we should not use them as a scapegoat. Saying that the number of blacks who are arrested shows racial inequality is inconclusive if we do not look at the number of crimes committed by different racial groups (a number that is far higher in the black community). It blows my mind that

the term "equality" has been so corrupted that we now use it to say that each racial group should be "equally" represented in the prison system. I have a better idea: how about the people who commit crimes get duly punished, with jail sentences if appropriate, and the others remain free, regardless of race?

I never claimed that allowing pornography in the United States directly caused the Abu Ghraib situation. Rather, what happened at Abu Ghraib is simply an example of the hedonistic moral relativism so popular in American culture. When society tries to delete words like "right" and "wrong" from its vocabulary, it is no wonder so many of its citizens, and servicemen and women, lack the moral clarity to make good decisions.

Jonathan Lindsey
The author is a sophomore in Morse College.

Friday, 13 August
Dear Editor,

Of course, problems in the justice system should not be used to scapegoat; they should be used as inspiration toward a higher notion of justice that criminalizes only what is necessary and useful and focuses on rehabilitation instead of retribution. I see no societal gain in punishment per se.

If Mr. Lindsey alleges that the current systems of criminal justice and wealth distribution are basically fair, if imperfect, then he must assert that the unequal outcomes in poverty and criminality we observe stem more or less from unequal morality and/or ability across races. I would be interested to hear how he explains differential outcomes without finding blame either in the system(s) or in race.

To what sorts of crimes does Mr. Lindsey refer when he says minorities commit more than Whites? Does he consider only street crimes bounded by the line of urban poverty, or does he think, too, of white-collar crimes, which produce a considerable drain on the economy and are disproportionately committed (and underpunished) by Whites? And I do hope he meant that minorities commit a disproportionate number of crimes, not more, or I beg him to check his facts.

I do not believe that this distorted sense of justice explains all of Abu Ghraib, but a system focused on redeeming and exalting the humanity of every individual would go a lot further toward preventing other such scandals than does our current focus on degrading and destroying that humanity.

Beth France

CAMPUS

The Year in Review

Jonathan Berry • *An Exasperated Recap of the Whole Sordid Affair*

SADLY, IT IS RARE THAT INCOMING FRESHMEN AND RETURNING STUDENTS are united by something other than the embarrassing pause that ensues upon being asked where they attend college. Since most of us did not attend prep schools with Anglo-sounding names and few of us have chums nicknamed Chet or Dink, it is safe to say that Yalies are no longer unified by similar backgrounds and upbringing. In times past, new and returning Yalies have found a common cause in smashing the Hun right in his pickelhaube, confronting Nixon with the atrocities of Vietnam, and grieving over the tragedies in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania. This past year, however, Yalies of all ages confronted a common cause right at their doorsteps – social justice had come a-knocking!

Banging on pots and pans with spatulas and sporks, the members of Yale unions Locals 34 and 35 served up a heapin' helping of awareness to students in September in place of the usual pasta and London broil. Their message of rebellion was frequently so powerful that it could not wait to be delivered at times later than eight in the morning, just outside student bedrooms, awakening our hearts as well as our minds. At other times, the unions' demands were so intensely felt that they transcended mere physicality. Their desire to "Clean Up Yale" was so powerful that the custodians of Local 35 felt no need to actually clean up Yale, much to the joy of those students who shared bathrooms with hairy athletes. Dining halls were closed, unburdening students from tradition and challenging them to experiment with new ways of getting to know their classmates. Not even the newly renovated Vanderbilt Hall could hide, despite

its gothic grandeur, from the plight of the mistreated Yale worker. Fortunately, Yale capitulated to the unions' demands, so nothing like this strike should happen ever again.

Sadly, the strike was not all pot-pounding and sunshine. The city of New Haven billed the University for the additional policing needed to cover the union protests. While Yale balked, understandably, at being labeled the provocateur, lawyers from the estate of Ayn Rand sued the city for ripping off the ideas of her villains. Furthermore, the labor strike caused the producers of *Jeopardy!* to delay their Yale campus taping until early October, giving Yale students even more time to build up their futile hopes of being on the show.



Welcoming

In another union victory, Ben Healey '04 was reelected as Ward 1 Alderman, defeating Dan Kruger '04 by a cringe-inducing 403 votes to Kruger's 128. Running with the full support of the New Haven Democratic political machine, Healey mixed liberalism and progressivism with an enticing dash of leftism. Successfully painting Kruger as a tool of the Yale administration, Healey neglected to discuss his own equally powerful

backers, including Local 35 President Bob Proto and several other large men no Yale student would want to encounter in a dark alley. It seems that Kruger's not-quite-as-extreme liberalism was just too moderate for Yale voters. Next time a surly union worker does a slipshod job of fixing a toilet or preparing food, say a little thank-you to Ben Healey for working to help make sure that no union worker can be fired ever again!

As December swept snow into the roads formerly frequented by Union protesters, Sound Runner made its grand opening on York Street, finally filling the Krauszer's-shaped hole in Yale's heart with...running shoes. Students generally reacted with indifference, instead of ecstatically sacrificing chickens to Moloch or whatever University Properties expected of their reaction. Apparently the "extreme" shoppers were not sufficiently appeased by Trailblazers, a store which at least has the courtesy to encourage its patrons to kill themselves via rock climbing or mountain biking. Krauszer's, as only the most super of super-seniors will remember, sold cheap food and lots of it at all hours of the day and night. *YFP* staffers have pledged to carry on its memory when taking out a second student loan to shop at Gourmet Heaven.

In February, the administration finalized the reinstatement of the Minority Advisory Committee (MAC), committed to "judging men not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." The irony, of course, is that for the MAC, color determines character. A top priority for the Committee will be to restructure the ethnic counselor positions. Perhaps the MAC will realize that counseling provided on the basis of ethnicity is insulting and

patronizing to those students who apparently need a little "affirmative action" to make it in this big, scary, white world, but this article isn't holding its breath.

Later on in the school year, Yalies lived, learned, and loved as John Kerry '66 defeated fellow Yalies Howard Dean '71 and Joseph Lieberman '64, among other people, for the Democratic presidential nomination. In the interest of having the least unprincipled man win, *The Yale Free Press* would have preferred Lieberman, though apparently most Yalies felt otherwise. Not exactly caught up in "Joe-mentum," Yale Students for Lieberman seemed to have been organized by a Speak'n'Say, with a membership of four students (three if one doesn't count the Speak'n'Say).

In happier news, April saw the announcement of the Yale College Center for Writing Instruction, aimed at integrating an intensive writing-based approach into as many Yale classes as possible. As a publication largely comprised of words, *The Yale Free Press* heartily endorses Yale's decision. Among other things, the *Free Press* hopes that Yale students will learn that the preceding usage of "comprised" is indeed legitimate.

In the next month, however, Yale saw a man of letters depart. Yale College Dean Richard Brodhead '68 left his longtime post to assume the presidency of Duke University. In parting, he gave a truly wonderful baccalaureate address to the graduating class of 2004. *The Yale Free Press* welcomes our new Dean, Peter Salovey, and hopes that his service will enchant the years ahead just as Dean Brodhead did the years past.

Jonathan Berry is a senior in Ezra Stiles College and Senior Editor of The Yale Free Press.

The World Needs To Get Its Act Together

Katerina Apostolides • *Iraq as an Experiment in International Cooperation*

FOR THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, ATTENTION HAS BEEN FIXATED AND opinions sharply divided on the war in Iraq. The recent outpouring of information on intelligence in Iraq has led alternatively to defenses and condemnations of the war. Many now argue against the Senate Intelligence report and claim that there is much evidence still indicating a link between Al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein. Did Iraq pose a significant threat prior to the March invasion? In the current tenor of discord, it is difficult to give an incontrovertible answer. Most probably, if the Senate Intelligence Report is at least half-right, it was not an imminent one. But while attempts to determine whether Iraq posed a threat have not come to a resolution, we have yet to address another question, one much broader and more pressing. How did the world handle the possibility of Iraq as a security threat — and how should they have handled it?

The revelations brought about in the aftermath of the Iraqi war have been largely disappointing. One of these is the gaping lack of dependable professional intelligence. The February 2003 presentation made by Secretary of State Colin Powell at the U.N. in favor of the invasion sounded weak even then. It now seems also to have contained a number of unwarranted assertions, including the claim that Saddam had retained and replenished his chemical and biological weapons program. At the same time, the United States, aware of the inadequacy of its own information, was unable to reach out to Europe, Russia or China, having, perhaps understandably, an even lower opinion of what their intelligence system could provide.

The Bush administration has been criticized both domestically and among indignant populations abroad for its failure to appreciate the value of multilateralism in the Iraq invasion. This criticism has some justice. Though a country should never fail to defend itself simply because other governments refuse to offer assistance, such a country will certainly be better off if it values the cooperation of other agencies and governments in both the intelligence-gathering stage and in subsequent action. Had the Bush administration given more credence to the analyses of non-American sources, it would have been forced to reexamine its own information and consequently the premises upon which it waged the war.

The U.S. dismissed the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) as naïve too easily when the latter insisted that the aluminum tubes Iraq had imported could not be used to make uranium centrifuges without modification. The IAEA added that they were instead intended to make artillery rockets. Likewise, we ignored former UN Chief Weapons Inspector Hans Blix, who complained that we had distorted the conclusions of

weapons inspectors in Iraq and that inspectors had stated only that they could not account for some remaining amounts of chemical and biological weapons in Iraq. An apparently minimal regard for contradictory information on the part of the CIA and the Bush administration meant that Bush did not need to investigate and improve upon the accuracy of his claims.

Other nations, particularly in Europe, were also at fault for failing to appraise the importance of multinational cooperation in order to eliminate potential global threats. The eagerness of French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder to ride the wave of domestic anti-Americanism made their positions seem ridiculous and the prospect of

Saddam turned out to be, in most respects, harmless — at least as far as concerns his possession of WMDs and his capacity to deliver them. But what if he had not been? Given that France and Germany seemed to think he had some form of WMD, it seems they were erring on the wrong side when they decided they could trust Saddam to disarm entirely — especially when there were several indications of his connections to terrorist groups. Several meetings between Ayman al Zawahiri, Bin Laden's closest adviser, and Iraqi officials including the Vice President, transpired between 1992 and 1998. While the United States' momentum may have alarmed Europe, they did not offer the assurance that they would step up their own efforts in dealing with

was most at stake emphasizes the extent to which European attitudes turned this into an issue of anti-Americanism, rather than an issue of identifying and eliminating actual potential dangers.

The other thing that should have been considered is the importance of joint cooperation upon the defeat of Saddam Hussein and the rebuilding of Iraq. Certainly, there would probably have been a strong and enduring resistance among the Iraqis, even if other countries had decided to increase their presence. Nevertheless, a multilateral war effort would have mitigated the impression that the U.S. was entering as an occupying force — which is especially dangerous in a region with a history of imperial powers treading its soil. In particular, the UN revealed itself as unreliable and cowardly when the bombing of its Baghdad headquarters a year ago prompted it to abandon the region and keep its distance until much later. Had it been a more active presence, it might have prevented the horror stories of Abu Ghraib before the Red Cross finally brought them to worldwide attention.

The deficit of cooperation on the international front is particularly abominable in an era in which it is most needed. That non-state groups are gaining access to increasingly dangerous weapons and have the intention of using them is a problem for everyone. The United States needs to show caution and be willing to take the arguments of other agencies and countries into account; it also needs to isolate itself more clearly from suspicions of imperial intention. On the other hand, Europe needs to step up and take its role in international security more seriously. This is particularly urgent now in Sudan, where our upcoming presidential election precludes a real involvement. It is also broadly relevant to the War on Terror, which countries the world over need to see won. Longstanding differences should recede, not gain prominence, if we are to wage a successful campaign against terrorism.

Katerina Apostolides is a junior in Silliman College and Co-Publisher of The Yale Free Press.



Eager

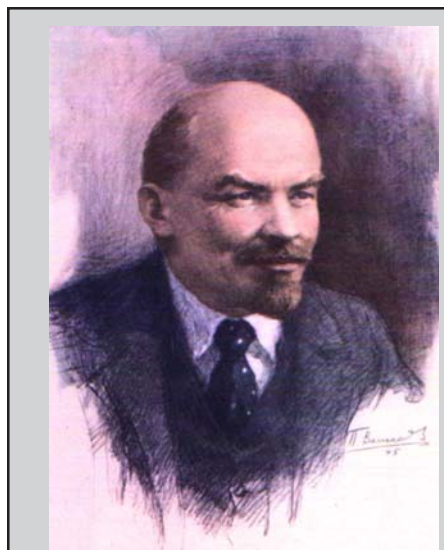
ever obtaining their assistance seem dim. Thus, they emboldened and even managed to justify the readiness of the administration to go to war without their participation.

Saddam. They might have offered, for example, to cut off sea, air and land communication with him, or by pursuing other methods that could force him into compliance.

Longstanding differences should recede, not gain prominence, if we are to wage a successful campaign.

Even though French intelligence also reported an Iraqi attempt to procure uranium from Niger, the French insistently avoided increasing the pressure on Iraq and showed a desire to remain blithely faithful in Saddam's good will.

Blair should never have had to justify his support of the war by saying, "The consequences for world diplomacy if the U.S. went solo were too awful to consider." The fact that global diplomacy, not global security, was what Blair thought



"Why should freedom of speech and freedom of press be allowed? Why should a government which is doing what it believes to be right allow itself to be criticized? It would not allow opposition by lethal weapons. Ideas are much more fatal things than guns. Why should any man be allowed to buy a printing press and disseminate pernicious opinions calculated to embarrass the government?"

— Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, *Political Power and the Press*

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Indian Summer

Lindsay Bliss • *Health Care Failures*

Over the summer, pre-medical student and YFP correspondent Lindsay Bliss traveled to Ludhiana, Punjab with Yale's Reach Out program. Lindsay entered the country on June 2nd to work in the charity health clinics of the Christian Medical College of Ludhiana. With other Yalies, she spent her summer observing the travails of the Indian health care system and gathering information on the prenatal care available to the country's impoverished women.

ON AUGUST 15th, INDIA CELEBRATED ITS INDEPENDENCE DAY, FIFTY-SEVEN years after it gained independence from Great Britain. Most of the world has praised India as the world's largest successful democracy and one that has finally started to improve the quality of life of its poorest citizens. But, now that the population has edged over one billion, many of those eligible to vote call into question the significance of Indian democratic elections. Living among them this summer, I realized just how far India has yet to go.

At the time of its writing, the Constitution of India was considered to be one of the first founding documents to reflect the needs of a modern country. It outlined many obligations for the government that would make socialists weep with joy, and with 395 articles, it is the longest governing document to date. The Framework goes so far as to reserve positions for members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes (those historically excluded from positions of power and of lower economic status, subjected to systematic discrimination before independence) in not only public universities, but even in the elected legislative bodies, ultimately trickling down to all levels of government. The document lists the fundamental rights of all Indian citizens, placing many social obligations on the central government. Chief among these is "the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health," as noted in Part Four, Article 47. The Indian national government has struggled for over fifty years to fulfill many of these obligations, but particular focus has been placed on improving the health

of its citizens. In health care, India is still in awkward transition from the status of developing to developed.

One of the promises made by almost everyone running for national office in India is to reform the public health system. Unfortunately, the public health sector is plagued by the same problems as are the majority of government areas. Corruption has crippled the expansion of the public health system and has stalled the public sector in completing the its obligations as outlined by the Constitutional Framework. Many in India's upper class have stopped voting entirely, leaving the millions who live in poverty to decide who gains political power. Unlike the United States, where an increasing number of citizens do not vote out of frustration with the similarity between candidates racing for the center, Indians are losing faith in the value of their vote because money, not the elected officials, makes the end decisions. Regardless of whether the Bharatiya Janata Party or the now-prominent Congress Party is in power, all government projects suffer delays due to embezzlement, nepotistic assignments of government contracts or, in the worst situations, politicians being paid by interested parties to deliberately delay approval and completion of projects. This corruption damages the effectiveness of the government in almost all sectors, including public health.

Over the past fifty years, the initiatives of the Indian government have made substantial gains in health care. Progress in both the public and private sectors has resulted in the eradication of small pox and guinea worm, a tenfold decrease in leprosy, a hundredfold decrease in polio, and an almost doubled life expectancy. These improvements, however, have led to a population boom that has brought about even greater public health problems. The largest increases in population are occurring among those who can least afford medical care. As can be expected with ballooning public services that outstrip tax revenues, these



Ballooning public services that outstrip tax revenues [are] ... incapable of growing as quickly as the population.

programs are unsustainable and incapable of growing as quickly as the population.

The Indian government did acknowledge in its 2002 *National Health Policy* that its goals should be pared down to make them more achievable, but this recognition has not changed politicians' rhetoric and promises. As a result, both the nonprofit and private sectors create policies expecting the expansion of public services and preparing to fit their services around a more socialized system.

The previously existing private hospitals have begun to cater only to the wealthy. They have embraced the training and equipment of developed nations while employing highly skilled doctors who provide large amounts of personal attention. This specialization has completely priced the poor out of the private sector. Insufficiently trained physicians (MBBS degree-holders years away from completing their MDs who enter private practice around the age of 22), seeing that private services no longer serve the poor or even the middle class, have opened up storefront clinics that provide often unsanitary and inadequate medical care at prices the poor can afford. Nonprofit hospitals and clinics have also suffered because of the government's unfulfilled promises of increased medical care. Money is not being aggressively invested in charity hospitals out of fear that

these charities will dissolve if the government does deliver, hindering both the quality and quantity of services being provided at low cost to the growing poor.

Thanks to government corruption and budgets insufficient for expansive social policies, the promise of increasingly socialized medicine by the Indian Government, as required by the Constitutional Framework, has not been fulfilled. The problem with India's health care system, however, extends beyond the inadequacy of government services. Charity organizations and hospitals are not expanding to meet the growing needs of the poor for fear of being replaced if the government does carry out its obligations. Private health care providers either specialize to serve only the wealthy by pricing themselves out of the range of poorer patients, or else they provide substandard care at prices all Indians can afford. The central government must abandon its unrealistic goal of comprehensive public health care and open opportunity in the market for a privatized, functional system that is affordable and accessible to all sectors of the population and worthy of the world's largest democracy.

Lindsay Bliss is a junior in Timothy Dwight College. See her travelogue at www.yaleindia.blogspot.com for more details about her journey.

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I N M E M O R I A M

IT IS WITH DEEPEST REGRET THAT *THE YFP* INFORMS OUR READERS OF THE PASSING ON July 29th of beloved Yale University Mathematics Professor Walter Feit. Professor Feit was one of the world's leading algebraists, and he was instrumental in the classification of finite groups. His collaboration with John G. Thompson on the celebrated Feit-Thompson Theorem, which explains the solvability of groups of odd order, earned him the American Mathematical Society's Cole Prize in 1964; he joined the Yale faculty in the same year. Dr. Feit was a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

FOR MANY YEARS, PROFESSOR FEIT WAS A FELLOW OF TRUMBULL COLLEGE. His ability to convey the beauty of algebra was an inspiration to many students to study the subject further. After taking a single algebra course with Professor Feit, many students would want to take all their other courses in the subject only with him. His passing is a great loss to the field of mathematics and to the Yale community. Professor Feit is survived by his wife, Sidnie Drescher Feit, a long-time Hamden resident, his son Paul, who lives in Texas, and his daughter Alexandra, a resident of Alaska. *The YFP* sends the family our sincerest condolences.

Чтоб земля ему была пухом.

May the earth be soft as a feather for him.

Yale's Bizarre Underworld

The Unauthorized Guide to Yale

IF ANYTHING MAKES YALE UNIQUE AMONG ALL OTHER COLLEGES AND universities, it is our vast array of undergraduate organizations. One may encounter a Yale student running to and fro, juggling back-to-back meetings, and stressing over the problems that plague his favorite organization as regularly as one might find a Harvard student studying for his final over vacation.

True to our overachieving, high school curriculum-kicking selves, Yalies create new organizations all the time. Whether it be power hunger or genuine creative spirit that drives them, the world may never know, but whatever their reasons, Yalies currently boast over 250 student organizations in total, and that number is growing every day. The Political Union, with its constant splitting and merging of parties, currently has not one, but two parties on the left alone, and three to the right of center. We have a constantly fluctuating number of papers, magazines and journals – currently about fifty undergrad publications. The Women's Center has over a dozen subgroups. The Dwight Hall Social Justice Network is just that – an umbrella network with a myriad of activist organizations. Students devote their Yale careers to activities as specialized as writing poetry about fly fishing and as broad as saving the poor.

But what all the other freshman-oriented literature you'll be skimming (or chucking into that tall stack in the corner) forgot to mention is that having all these groups is not necessarily beneficial. In high school, if you were anything like us, you may have run in and out of club meetings with members of many different social groups without thinking twice. By contrast, many Yalies form networks of friends all devoted to the same organization (read: cliques); the social, competitive nature of these groups can range from the exclusive to the downright nasty. Don't believe us? Try them for yourself. You haven't seen backstabbing until you've survived the backroom deals and intrigues of an end-of-the-semester Political Union election. You have not seen tough until you have seen a singing group pick one a-capella tap over another based on whether they liked her jokes during a one-hour lunch conversation. And you haven't seen brutal until you've seen the criticism swapped by editors of competing publications. (We at *The Yale Free Press*, however, know the value of *positive* campaigning.)

By now, you've probably picked up your share of mass email lists and pamphlets you'll never read and have formed a stockpile of contact people in the recesses of your mind. Yet you're probably still unsure what exactly you'll end up doing. Enter the Bazaar.

Very little distinguishes the Freshman Bazaar from a Friday night party. People scream seemingly random, sometimes amusing utterances. People try to impress you with alcohol – either by drinking a

lot of it themselves or offering it for your consumption. And each participant has just one thing on his mind: self-preservation through reproduction. Just like a party, some will be subtler than others about their want and need for you. Some will have good pickup lines; some will be clever. No matter the means, their goal is one universal, seven-letter word: recruit. Every serious member of every Yale organization wants you to join their ranks. They're trying hard. But as silly and obvious as they get, you might as well check out their offerings.

Remember, though, that freshmen are the most vulnerable to these groups' entreaties. It is not unusual for a dying group to recruit a freshman in the fall, appoint him to a nice-sounding position, and abandon the organization to him come spring.

The following brief guide provides some armament against such ploys. We may be biased, but at least we're honest. If you want to know what people think of us, hand this paper to a member of the Undergraduate Organizing Committee and ask them to read it over.

Then duck.

issues, invites guest speakers, and organizes events to increase campus awareness of libertarianism. This is where you will find students who truly believe that the government has grown too large and is stifling the free market, making them the few reasoned political aficionados in the campus political spectrum.

The Yale Political Union

Once considered the greatest political debate forum for college students in the nation, the YPU was founded in 1934 to provide students with a formal means by which to debate the most pressing political issues of the day. The PU has weekly debates featuring a prominent guest speaker who argues in favor of a preset resolution and then engages student debate on the same topic.

There are six political parties within the Union. From left to right, they are the Liberal Party, the Progressive Party, the Independent Party, the Conservative Party, the Tory Party, and the Party of the Right. Each has its own weekly debates with a unique style.

The YPU is infamous for hosting some of the most scheming future

mainly smile and nod. Dissent and intellectual probing are rare commodities, but *The YFP* has hope that this year's leadership may signal change. Take it for a whirl. Perhaps you could be the one to finally find a way to keep the Libs from marching out the door of every PU caucus before student debate even gets started. But be warned: it will be an uphill battle.

The Progressive Party

Loud makes right among the Progs, where nothing is taken seriously except the drinking. As a rule of thumb, the louder a Prog is, the more indisputable his claims or beliefs (as sarcastic as they might be). If interested, expect a potentially inebriated Prog to enter your room without knocking and follow you into the bathroom while talking about how cool his dog is, despite your best efforts to nudge him away and let you take your shower. Such Progs also seem powerless against the forces of inertia, so expect repeated incidents of this scenario until you act upon the culprit with due force.

The Independent Party

The most politically-correct party in the Union, the Independent Party spans the political spectrum from center-left all the way to center-right and claims to hear all sides. A cofounder of the Political Union, the Independent Party eschews definition, since that would be exclusionary. Their debates are markedly casual and confer a nonchalant but fraternal atmosphere upon the organization. There are certainly worse ways to spend one's time, though *The YFP* humbly submits that not all quests for meaning can be resolved by 10 p.m.

The Conservative Party

The nation's third largest importer of tweed, the CP was formed in 1996 by a medical student for reasons so sophisticated that they evolve on a yearly basis. The CP has the most academic orientation of the Political Union's six parties, giving its debates the feeling of section in suits. Intellectual history is generally preferred to personal philosophy; thus, one gets the impression that members are kept awake at night less by burning moral questions and more by that darned page number of Mill's *Utilitarianism* they can't recall.

The Tory Party

Founded in 1971 by traditionalists who felt that the Party of the Right was insufficiently reactionary, the Tory Party has a strict litmus test for membership. They permit a narrow range of specific conservative types, unless, of course, you have a British accent. Consequently, the Tories boast the least ideological diversity of any YPU party, with predictable results for the tenor of their debates. A five-member party as of our latest calculation, the Tories maintain virtually no presence at Political Union meetings.



Political Groups

College Democrats & College Republicans

Both groups will flood your inboxes with emails with opportunities for political involvement, but the only thing they are likely to actually coordinate is getting people to work the polls on Election Day. They are flooded with conscientious objectors to the YPU who would rather not take themselves "too seriously" – a goal they certainly fulfill. Active mostly in election years, both groups will likely emerge soon with a surge of advocacy.

College Libertarians

The College Libertarians are a group of students interested in decreasing the size of the government at all levels. The group holds discussions on libertarian solutions to common

elected officials in the country. Many hide their true colors until the highly competitive elections at the end of each term. But if you can stay away from the fray, the PU can be an extremely rewarding debating forum where you can learn about a variety of political and social issues, sharpen your own beliefs, and maybe even change a few minds.

Here are the six different parties from left to right and an explanation of how they differ.

The Liberal Party

When you and four other members of the Libs talking sedately over espresso at Koffee Too? is the most intense debating you'll do all year, something is sadly amiss in the leftmost party of the Yale Political Union. Wary of hosting "debates," the Libs opt instead for friendly "discussions" at which members

Undergraduate Bazaar 's Undergraduate Organizations



The Party of the Right

Party of the Right folks respect tradition, authority, and strong drink. They wear suits and are more than a little quirky. They also talk a lot of philosophy, but name-dropping tends to be rarer than it is among some of the other parties. Undoubtedly, the PoR fosters the most rigorous and challenging debating environment at the YPU and perhaps at Yale. Their high concentration of idealists insist that ideas have consequences and, for better or worse, keep trying to personalize them.

Activists

Committee for Freedom

Mayhem in defense of liberty is no vice is CFF's credo, who exists to prove that protests and activism are not solely the toolbox of the Left. Whether being threatened with arrest for protesting Yale's friendship with Communist China or dressing up as the Sexual Harassment Panda to protest Yale's sexual harassment policy, the CFF is the place for Yalies who find liberal orthodoxies more migraine-inducing than liberating.

Dwight Hall Social Justice Network

The Social Justice Network purports to fund student opinion groups of all leanings. They do some good volunteer work, but the SJN also supports many bleeding-heart groups with questionable achievements.

LGBT Co-Op

The only campus group with S&M workshops, the LBGT also instituted "Weeks at Yale" to explore "Trans" lifestyles, "Sex," and "Queer Pride." They run workshops on the use of pleasure devices as well as a popular dance party every fall.

Undergraduate Organizing Committee

This group of supporters for Yale's labor unions has peaked in the past few years as negotiations between Yale and its workers boiled over. Now that labor contracts have been settled for a long, long time, we await the emergence of creative UOC causes for mass organization.

Yale College Council

Despite their long tradition of irrelevance, the YCC has lately had some promising accomplishments. Two years ago, they revolutionized the way Yale students swipe in for dining hall meal, and just last year, they established wireless Internet on Old Campus. This relatively minor range of achievements does not stop the YCC from passing resolutions to combat global injustice. We do have to credit them for organizing the Spring Fling, which trashes Old Campus on a yearly basis.

Cultural Grab Bag

Asian-American Students Association

One of Yale's more radical ethnic advocacy groups, AASA also represents a network of sub-organizations such as the Korean American Students at Yale. Members challenge the stereotype of the passive Asian by yelling a lot and bemoaning the plight of Yale's second most overrepresented minority (after Jews).

African-American House

Comprised mostly of attendees of Cultural Connections (though that program thankfully integrated its ranks last year), the Af-Am House is fairly self-segregating if you make a habit of being there too often. Benefits include instant connections to all the other black organizations at Yale. As one *YFP* staffer put it, "To be perfectly honest, I still don't know what the Justice League is ... but, hey, it's nice being affiliated with it. I think." The House's \$25 membership fee is pretty steep if you only show up for the basketball game or free Popeye's.

Freestyle Dueling Association

Quirky swashbuckling abounds in the FDA (no, not the one with food and government, the one with the Renaissance), which puts on a showing in the fall and stages performances in Beinecke plaza, trying out their weapons and skills. If you are serious or just inquisitive about what they do, try them out—it probably won't hurt, although their swords might.

POP

Misunderstood Midwesterners, your comeuppance has finally arrived! Loyal to the culture of the Heart of America, this exclusive (read: tiny) group formed just last year. Members kick back over beer to discuss the "good ole" days of their youth, plan hoedowns and country fairs, and grill it up on Old Campus.

Publications

The Hippolytic

This new leftist magazine declares that journalism at Yale shouldn't be left to the "walrus-people of the Political Union." *The Yale Free Press* could not agree more, though we hasten to note that laissez-faire hunting laws have mostly solved the *YFP*'s walrus-person problems. Time has yet to tell whether or not *The Hippolytic* will mess with the best and die like the rest, but we sincerely hope it will be as worthy a foe as its initial issue last April promised. We'd appreciate the competition.

Light & Truth

Slick conservative journal; not too interested in talking to the Great Unwashed. *L&T* thinks words like "Yalensian" make you sound well-educated, but we'll let you be the judge. From the *Light & Truth* Fall 2003

Survival Guide: "The manager and owner of the shop [DelMonico Hatter], Mr. Joe DelMonico, has run the Hatter for the past 69 years. He can recall days such as Derby Day, when students would purchase 150 to 200 dozen hard straw hats." From *The Yale Free Press* October 2001 issue: "Speaking of absence, *Light & Truth* extolled the longtime proprietor of DelMonico's Hatters, Joe Delmonico, speaking of him in the present tense. Sadly, Joe passed away earlier this year..." That's right, folks, they still haven't changed it.

The New Journal

A good place to try your hand at story-telling journalism. The writing experience you get is pretty hard-core since *TNJ* goes through three rounds of editing for every article and assigns personal editors to every piece. Word of warning: the *YFP* often finds itself in disagreement with *TNJ* leaders' views or interests, but then again, they're not our only nemeses.

The Yale Daily News

Yale's oldest publication (and the oldest college daily in America), the *Daily* has its own castle on York Street. Though centrist for Yale standards, the *YDN* has become decidedly leftist in the past couple of years. The *YDN* lives up to its name: it's daily and it's news. But if you're looking for entertaining or insightful writing, look elsewhere. Read it for campus issues of the day and sports scores. It is current, if not accurate. As for writing for the *Daily*, that's another matter. *The YDN* is infamous for bitter elections and dirty politics.

The Yale Free Press

The YFP is the publication of Yale's small group of alienated conservatives.

We cover all the bases of conservatism: country club Republicans ("All's well with me and my BMW, all's well with the world!"), religious fundamentalists ("I possess the truth. I shall enlighten the world by any means necessary!"), amoral libertarians ("Hey, the market works. Just sit back, light up a joint, and let it flow, man..."), even lifetime Democrats ("Sure, I was liberal in high school. But then I went to a meeting where they wanted me to talk about my oppression as a dining hall worker. I couldn't take it anymore!").

This variety makes *The YFP* a lively publication. We are united by a common disgust with Yale's dominant, knee-jerk liberalism.

When *YFP* street preachers took to the Web, we also became the only campus publication with a web log for the reporting of Web Exclusives: www.yalefreepress.blogspot.com.

Come ask us, virtually or in person, about our many ties to the Vast Right Wing Conspiracy.

The Yale Herald

The Herald actually verifies quotes and manages to be funkier and more politically balanced than the *YDN*, but it only comes out once a week.

The Yale Lit

Requires little commitment for the majority of the semester up until selection week, when you can expect to sacrifice your nights to the literary muses for hours on end. If you're looking for a literary community, this is a good place to start.

Philosophy and Community

OSGAY

Disappointingly, not homosexual munchkins. Rather, the Objectivist Study Group at Yale is a weekly discussion group that explores and evaluates Objectivist philosophy as presented by Ayn Rand. It is a valuable way for students interested in philosophy to meet each other. A strong knowledge of or belief in Objectivism is not required; members often have neither. Above all, it is a place for students to think out their own ideas and opinions.

TIES

An expanding program that aims to provide assistance to neighboring elementary schools. They tutor kids who usually come from broken families and face difficult conflicts. A rather decentralized program, tutors try to strike an appropriate balance between teaching and mentoring. Meeting fellow Yalies may occur incidentally, but is by no means a key aspect of the group.

Yale Christian Fellowship

Love God, love neighbor. This chapter of InterVarsity is convinced that both require an intentional community. If you're looking for sporadic apple-picking excursions, profound relationships, weird videos, or a shirt featuring the Mystery Machine, join them for weekly small-group Bible studies and large-group meetings.

Sports and Music

Intramurals

Didn't make varsity? Not even club sports? Never fear: intramurals are open to everyone. Even if you spent your entire high school career not knowing that you're supposed to knock down all the pins in bowling, not avoid them, you can still learn in this friendly environment. And hey, if your college has a really bad team, you can become a sports legend in no time at all.

Yale Precision Marching Band

At their eccentric half time shows, giant dragons devour John Harvard. With a penchant for ubiquitous pop hits rather than dusty old standby tunes, the YPMB has something for everyone, from sax to snare to kazoo. They even harbor an entire section (the Squids) devoted to dancing and blowing stuff up. If you feel all that drilling and rehearsal just gets in the way of your music, the Band is probably a good bet for you.



A Coarse Critique

YFP Staff • Courses to Take, Courses to Avoid

SMART AS YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE IN HIGH SCHOOL, THE SAD TRUTH IS THAT IN all likelihood, nothing could really have prepared you for Yale-level classes. Fret not – everyone around you is in the same boat. You'll all be dabbling in various survey or introductory-level classes; some of these are great, others abominable, but all are available to freshmen.

The best way to select classes tends to be word of mouth, a venture for which late-night blue-booking is bound to provide a plethora of opportunity. We'd also like to provide some helpful tips to assist in your academic quest.

If your class offers Credit/D/Fail, always take it to leave your options open. You can change back at midterm with no penalty, but you cannot change a graded class back to a Cr/D/F. (Hint: Profs and TAs are often oblivious of your course status. Keep it that way; what they don't know can't hurt you.)

The "official" course critique is useless and out of date; don't trust it. There are, however, peer review materials on the online classes server – or so they tell us. Good luck finding them.

If you're up for a challenge and want to take a stab at a non-intro class, go for it. If it has prerequisites, ask to speak with the professor and explain to him why you're qualified. Students have even been known to send professors emails entitled "Top Ten Reasons You Should Let Me Into Your Class." Bottom line: you've got nothing to lose by trying.

In large lectures, check to see whether there is a required section. Your schedule may appear easy at the beginning of shopping period, but if you add several sections, life can quickly become less pleasant. Sections are also taught by TAs, which makes most of them a waste of time. In certain departments, particularly in math, computer science, and economics, you'll be lucky if they even speak English.

If, like most of our staffers, you're not scientifically inclined, it's never too early to start thinking about Group IV "guts" to fulfill your requirement.

Here is a brief review of some common freshman courses.

DIRECTED STUDIES

DRST 001 – Literature, Philosophy, and History & Political Thought

Three books a week, small discussion sections with (usually) top-quality professors, an overview of Western thought from the Greeks to the early 20th century, and a paper every Thursday night. For the hardcore among us, this series of classes should not be taken unless you're actually going to do most of the reading, roughly on time. But, hey, the finals are easy and you'll exit knowing where to start in any field you want to study. You'll also get a better sense of what all those names the trendy intellectuals keep dropping are all about, and, better yet, finally be able to call their bluffs.

ART

ART 114 – Basic Drawing

Two hours of drawing for credit: what more could an avid doodler want? With studios of 10 to 20 students, this beginner class retains some of the atmosphere of high school art with a more focused and dedicated attitude. Don't buy the hype: an artistic flair is not just for wielders of berets, striped shirts, and freedom fries. (Though if a YFP staffer sees you doing any such wielding, this sentence is hereby not responsible for his actions.)

BIOLOGY

MCDB 120 – Principles of Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology

A quick review of mostly high-school biology, with more detail (and much more of a rush). Lots of information you probably won't remember unless you continue in the field, but generally interesting. Professor Frank Slack is one of the more popular and focused; the rest vary in quality. Also, grades tend to be a bit of a scare at first, but start looking up later in the course.

CHEMISTRY

CHEM 118 – Quantitative Foundations of General Chemistry

An engaging lecturer, Professor Johnson makes attending class worthwhile. If you can make it to lectures, whose 10:30 time slot and non-Science-Hill location make it extremely convenient by Group IV standards, then completing the reading is unnecessary. Many students are placed into this course solely on SAT scores, which does not preclude the enrollment of many who have already taken AP Chem. This makes the curve steeper for those whose high school training was limited to the introductory level, a tendency that prevails in many lecture-style surveys at Yale.

CHEM 125 – Freshman Organic Chemistry

A mistaken belief that Freshman Orgo is a pre-med weeding class to be avoided has been circulating for some time: nothing could be further from the truth. Although lots of pre-meds do take it and are summarily weeded out, Professor McBride's class is one of the most challenging, fascinating, and enriching classes in any discipline one could explore in his or her first year. The lecture style, homework, and exams are oriented towards developing higher-order reasoning skills using chemical and other scientific concepts, eschewing the tactics of rote memorization. Dr. McBride also makes himself remarkably available to students' questions and makes a point of learning everybody's name during the first week of class.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

CPSC 112 – Introduction to Programming

No prior programming experience is necessary. The lecture notes on the website may be a luxury, but that luxury often destroys your motivation to attend class. Weekly

problem sets take some time, because you have to go over the program you have written ad infinitum until you figure out where you omitted that stupid parenthesis. You will get a good grade if you do the work, but it's not easy.

ECONOMICS

ECON 115 – Introduction to Microeconomics

Useful if you've never studied economics. You can generally take your pick between going to lecture and reading the textbook. Do not take this class if you have any previous background in econ; your time is better spent elsewhere.

ECON 116 – Introduction to Macroeconomics

A decent introduction, although teaching assistants are often of ambiguous quality. This course doesn't force a large workload on you, but if you want to actually get a good grasp of economics, you might have to force it on yourself. Professor Nordhaus, team-teaching this fall, is one of the better professors.

ECON 152 & 153 – Microeconomic Theory & Macroeconomic Theory

More than a few freshmen, still riding the high of an aced AP Economics test, have walked into this class thinking it only continues the common-sensical cakewalk of introductory econ. Consequently, more than a few freshmen have been punished for this belief. Take this class only if you are 1) interested in the academic pursuit of economics and 2) mathematically gifted. Do not confuse this subject material with political economy, which you can study in the Political Science department and by reading *The YFP*.

ENGLISH

Yale has one of the most fantastic English departments in the country, offering everything from "Doomed Love" to "History of the English Language." Freshman year is a good time to start, particularly if you can place into the 120s range by exploiting SAT and AP scores. Most classes are seminar-style and taught exclusively by professors. Amidst the great literature, you'll undoubtedly confront that bane of the English department: the annoying student who babbles in big words and tangential analyses. Don't be off-put – if you don't get what he's saying, chances are neither does he, the prof, or anyone else in the room.

ENGL 114 – Reading and Writing Prose

Forgot when to use a semicolon? No need to fear! You'll have a professor and about fifteen classmates scrutinizing the five drafts of every paper that you write. Not the class to take if you want to read much every night, but useful in jogging your memory for those rules you learned.

ENGL 120 – Modern Prose: Advanced Writing

Learn to write frequently and quickly, two things Yalies should



find indispensable. Outline, write, rewrite, rinse, repeat in a different format. This class is the vegetable course of the Yale meal. Eat it first, and the rest will taste even better.

ENGL 125 – Major British Poets

This class has something for everyone. You begin by learning to read and speak Middle English and memorizing the most famous 18 lines of English poetry (expect sudden bursting into chant of "Whan that Aprille..." to occur spontaneously). You proceed by traveling through Spencer's tales of prancing queens and despondent dragons and deconstructing John Donne's valedictions to women and sundry fleas. Come spring, prepare to get lost in *Paradise* with John Milton, ponder the nuances of Pope's *Strange capital Letters*, meander through Wordsworth's gardens, and return home to modernity with Eliot, Merrill, and the rest. If you've ever mused about the beauty of words, take this class.

ENGL 127 – Introduction to American Literature

The reading for this class is a mix of must-read American classics, overrated literature from the American cannon, and a few books to make fun of the first two types. While the reading can be rewarding, the class also includes some potentially mind numbing discussion, courtesy of your fellow Yalies.

ENGL 129 – The European Literary Tradition

Students usually find this a very rewarding and integrated course, even if each work is at least five hundred years removed from any other one. A lot depends on the professor, and, as in most English classes, you get the benefit of close interaction with a prominent scholar in the field. For people who are comfortable writing essays, the workload is not too cumbersome, and the reading, though sometimes a little heavy, is guaranteed to be interesting and fun.

HISTORY

Though a handful of classes are unavailable to freshmen by virtue of their popularity, almost all the others are free for the pickings. But watch out for the TAs: many sympathize with GESO and will ridicule you if you sway to the right.

HIST 173 – Early National America

Professor Joanne Freeman clearly loves what she does; her enthusiasm for early American history is contagious. Focusing on the period from 1790 to 1830, she leads the tour through this formative era in the kind of entertaining detail (learn about Aaron Burr, the first American super villain!) your AP U.S. History class could never provide. Take it this spring, since it won't be offered again for a while.

Getting Your Money's Worth

continued from previous page



HIST 202 – European Civilization, 1648-1945

A classic in the history department, this class always attracts a fair number of students. It provides a decent overview of a large period of history. Professor Merriman is mostly entertaining, but lectures are of varying relevance. He often drifts off into insignificant details, which can make him hard to follow. Conservative students will have to put up with some lefty remarks and socialist books, as well as Prof. Merriman's longtime love for France and its culture. Do the textbook reading to the midterm and then stop: you'll be given the possible questions for the final, so it will be early enough to look at the necessary parts in the textbook during reading period. Also, you get to write the final paper about anything you want that happened between 1648 and 1945.

HIST 205 – Introduction to Ancient Greek History

If you plan on taking only one history course at Yale, this should be it. Professor Kagan is a compelling lecturer with a passion for the classics that electrifies this course. Every year he offers students an expansive, engaging introduction to the birthplace of Western civilization, and, every year, students realize that they've signed up for one of "those" classes at Yale, the kind that belong in movies and memoirs. Kagan stands out in his field as a man who refuses to take the ironic post-modern torch to the subject he loves. While the reading is relatively heavy, the course is well worth it. Three lectures not to miss are the introductory explanation of Ancient Greece's relevance to the modern day, the interactive demonstration of Greek warfare, and the tale of the Battle of Marathon.

HISTORY OF ART

HSAR 112a – Introduction to the History of Art: Prehistory to the Renaissance

This class is ideal for those who plan to major in art history, or for those who simply want to be able to impress their friends in cocktail lounge conversations later in life. Vincent Scully is a legend. However, most of the course involves rote memorization; the rest is filled with post-modern mumbo-jumbo. But, if you're into hero worship, take it soon as naysayers have been spreading rumors of his retirement with greater conviction every year.

HSAR 112b – History of Western Art from the Renaissance to the Present

Professor Joselit's class brings the history of art to life. Students not only explore the factual side of the art world's images, inventions, and conventions; they get into the very passions of the artists, discussing the sentiments, the personalities, and the raw gossip tidbits that made them who they are.

LANGUAGES

Most placement exams are nearly impossible for nonnative speakers, so if you didn't get a chance to place out with an AP test, daily intro classes are likely to be in your future. In some cases, fluent speakers take the class just to raise their GPAs, so prepare to confront frustration.

GMAN 115 – Elementary German

German 115 is aimed at getting students with little to no knowledge of the German language to an intermediate conversational level within one year. Needless to say, the students' path in this endeavor is often strenuous. From the first day, this course is taught "auf Deutsch" (entirely in German). While the reading is clearly biased, focusing heavily on topics such as modern environmentalism, a strong emphasis on the basics more than makes up for this deficiency.

GREK 110 – Beginning Greek: The Elements of Greek Grammar

Expect the first handout to be an excerpt from Plato's *Republic*. Don't worry, though, after the initial scare, the class continues with the alphabet. Easy and interesting at first, it can be confusing towards the end of the semester. Charts are a big help. Knowing some Latin grammar is an even bigger help.

JAPN 115, 140, 150 – Elementary through Advanced Japanese

The teachers are all overwhelmingly friendly and will go to the ends of the earth to help you out with learning an admittedly difficult language, as long as you take the time to ask. Intermediate Japanese has the toughest workload and grading standards, so consider a summer in Japan or in Middlebury's language program instead so you can skip straight to Advanced.

MATHEMATICS

MATH 112 & 115 – Calculus of Functions of One Variable

These should be easy for anyone who took calculus in high school, right? Au contraire. Don't underestimate the difficulties caused by non-English speaking TAs, or the speed with which the classes move. Exams tend to be written as "learning experiences."

MATH 120 – Calculus of Functions of Several Variables

The course is an application-based approach to multivariable calculus. Weekly problem sets take a great deal of time, but if you can befriend the non-English speaking TAs, they practically do themselves. If possible, shop sections as there are vast differences in the English skills of the lecturers. Furthermore, be warned that exams will have questions like nothing you've heard before. If you want to avoid randomly picking an answer, play around with *Mathematica*.

MATH 230 – Vector Calculus and Linear Algebra

Last we checked, this class was

nicknamed "Suicide Math." Although you'll generally find a few sophomores there, the class tends to be populated by ambitious, mathematically oriented freshmen who want a challenge; they sure get one. Math 230 is more theoretical than Math 120 (the other way you could learn multivariable calculus your freshman year), and covers significantly more material. Those less inclined to think in abstract terms will definitely have a hard time doing the work – but an even harder time not doing it. The class is a very productive mind-training experience, but a fair share of mathematical talent, on top of sheer good will and diligence, is a must.

MUSIC

Take the theory classes (**MUSI 110– Introduction to Elements of Music; MUSI 209, 210, & 211– Elementary Studies in Analysis and Composition**) if you want to learn about the intricacies of music. You'll investigate the technical aspects of words most people drop without a second thought – harmony, tone, and counterpoint. Bonus points if you can remember, while serenading your Valentine, to tell her how her beauty croons like a nondominant seventh chord.

For a more general experience in what classical music has to offer, take some survey courses, such as **MUSI 131 – Introduction to the History of Western Music: 1800 to the Present**, for a rich foundation in the famous composers throughout history. Finally, watch out for those baton-wielding students in the class who often think they know more about music than they actually do.

PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 120 – Introduction to Ethics

Shelly Kagan will throw more counterfactuals your way than you've probably ever heard. His pacing around the stage in jeans and a T-shirt while frantically scratching his head over tough moral dilemmas is likely to grow on you. Affectations aside, be warned that Kagan has boasted in the past that he deliberately never studied Aristotle. He also rejects all forms of "egoism" and "self-interested" ethics as untenable from the outset, and proceeds to explore various strains of utilitarianism and consequentialism instead. Don't know what those words mean? Take the class and find out, but keep in mind that you may have to stifle your indignation at some of Professor Kagan's more egregious dismissals.

PHIL 125 – Introduction to Ancient Philosophy

This class changes professors more frequently than Michael Jackson changes noses, but the subject material practically speaks for itself. In years past, this class has done an excellent job of putting the works of Plato and Aristotle in a context that makes better sense of their words than a student could glean unaided. The *Republic* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* in particular become much

more intelligible to the modern reader with the help of a knowledgeable guide. Unlike its counterpart, this class affirmatively enhances the experience of reading its books, confronting students with the ancients' challenges.

PHIL 126 – Introduction to Modern Philosophy

Take this class only if you are required to as a Philosophy major. While very friendly, Professor DeRose does little to make sense of the texts or put them in an intellectual or historical context. Better to read the books for yourself and then to discuss or argue their ideas with friends.

PHYSICS

PHYS 180 & 181 – Advanced General Physics

First semester deals with mechanics, thermodynamics, and the like, with no prior physics experience required. In the second semester, topics become much more difficult (quantum mechanics, anyone?). Prepare to become best friends with the textbook.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

PLSC 111 – Introduction to International Relations

A rather basic introduction to international relations. Most people with some experience in Model UN, reading newspapers, or just generally being in tune with world affairs will find this course unnecessary and the reading list lacking. However, Howorth's anecdotal style makes it easier to get through the boring aspects.

PLSC 114 – Introduction to Political Philosophy

A great course with a very well selected reading list. Smith is an excellent professor; teaching assistants also tend to be well chosen. For anyone interested either in political science or philosophy and the ways they overlap to define our worldviews, this is a must-take.

PSYCHOLOGY

PSYC 110 – Introduction to Psychology

The only prerequisite for the psychology major, this class is always popular among freshmen. It will provide a strong overview of the field and insights about the most entertaining experiments and theories of psychology. Students consistently enjoy lectures and find most of the reading material palatable. Beware evil tongues that claim this class is a gut: most students spend a lot of time reading and studying for exams.

PSYC 150 – Social Psychology

After this class, besides all your new ideas about human nature, you will also have memorized tons of more or less plausible theories about the functioning of groups. Take it if you want to find out things like why nobody helped Kitty Genovese when she was stabbed to death in New York, even though dozens of people heard her screaming.

The WTO: The World's Most Democratic Institution

Mark Gutierrez • *Life's Not Fair, But Would You Have It Any Other Way?*

THOUGH IT IS TOO EARLY TO MAKE A FINAL CALL, IT SEEMS THAT THE WORLD Trade Organization (WTO) may have once again proven itself a worthwhile institution. It is a different question, however, whether that will satisfy its longtime doubters — and whether some of their suspicions are legitimate in the first place.

Newspapers ranging from *The New York Sun* to obscure New Zealand publications have praised this July's rounds of WTO negotiations in Geneva. Indeed, it seems that there is good reason to celebrate for free trade advocates and impoverished farmers around the world.

First, under pressure from Brazil, Thailand, and Australia, the WTO finally forced the European Union to downgrade its sugar subsidies. This will level the playing field of the sugar trade, improve opportunities for new competitors, and reduce sugar prices throughout the world, as (mostly) French sugar farmers lose the government financial support that gives them an unfair advantage over farmers in developing nations. Moreover, the decision is an important step toward peeling the label of hypocrisy long borne by rich nations in the WTO, who have engendered a double standard with their tendency to protect heavily their own industries while urging Third-World countries to reduce tariffs on their own goods. In the spirit of fairness, Brazil promised to reciprocate the EU's move by lowering its own sugar subsidies.

Second, a number of African nations heavily dependent on the cotton crop succeeded in pushing their case against U.S. cotton subsidies—a significant improvement since the previous round of negotiations at Cancún. Just last April, the WTO had told the U.S. to cut it out with the cotton subsidies. Though effective enforcement of both this order and the Geneva agreements may prove a long way off, the question has been placed on

the table and a number of key promises have been extracted.

Beyond these individual trade-equalizing measures, the parties at Geneva accepted a plan for liberalizing trade in a wide variety of products, including agriculture, manufacturing, and services. In addition to the usual business of fighting tariffs and subsidies, member nations have agreed to take a look at the extended bureaucracies that in many countries pose a significant cost to trade.

Despite making a unanimous commitment to liberalize agriculture throughout the world, the WTO's rounds in Geneva left room for improvement. An August 10 article in *The Globe and Mail* noted that the dairy, chicken, and turkey farmers most fiendishly protected by



Earth Lover

Canadian subsidies emerged from the negotiations unscathed. Yet, as evidenced by the Brazilian and African victories and worldwide enthusiasm, we may deem the round an overall success.

This is not the first time in recent history that the WTO has proven both effective and willing to go against the bidding of the fatter states in its membership. In a December 2003 article in *National*

Review, William F. Buckley, Jr. pointed out the elegance with which, in the face of heated debate over Bush's 2002 steel tariff, the WTO assisted nations hurt by the tariff by letting them agree on counter-tariffs against U.S. products. The steel tariff was promptly repealed a year and a half after coming into effect.

One would hope that this instance of happy news from the WTO, too, would elicit a positive outcome for all sides, but that is not quite the case. Even more surprisingly, the most common concern is not the obviously shaky quality of the WTO's enforcement abilities. Rather, leftist groups have long been singing the mantra that the WTO is a tool of big business, which uses it to increase profits by twisting trade policy. A frequent complaint is that the WTO admits no official representation from environmental groups and labor unions.

shared by a majority of citizens.

The growth of free trade is precisely such an interest. Free trade helps business by making labor and raw materials available at lower cost from abroad. It helps consumers by making foreign products available at prices that are not artificially inflated by tariffs and by forcing domestic industries to lower prices to compete with cheap foreign imports. Since businessmen and consumers of various stripes constitute the majority (if not the totality) of the population of most countries, one could not hope for anything better or more democratic than a policy that satisfies their needs.

True enough, democracy can be an unfair and ugly thing; it often neglects minority concerns. The liberal remedy to this tends to be interest-group politics. Fortunately, as the United States and other nations increasingly cooperate to

The World Trade Organization is ... actually quite fair to an unprecedented number of people.

The only bodies with a voice at the WTO are national governments. If they do not represent the interests of the environment or labor, that must be because those who love the Earth and the working man cannot muster up enough lobbying power to influence the course of WTO negotiations. This, in many nations, simply means that voters regard a strong economy as sufficiently superior to other concerns. Certainly, some corrupt governments would not give voters a chance to speak up against big business. But when a single government bureau represents an entire people, there is hardly a better outcome than the fulfillment of an interest, however narrow,

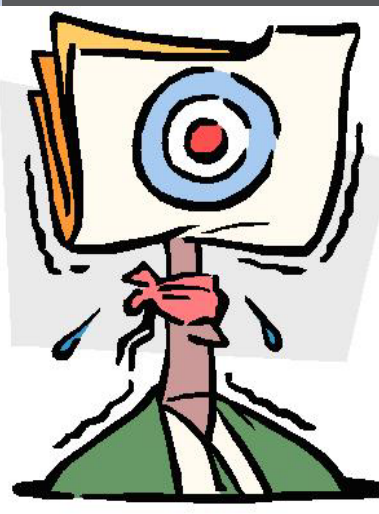
establish a more efficient and egalitarian world of trade, that approach is not doing too well on the WTO front. As demonstrated by the ugly 1999 anti-business protest against WTO negotiations in Seattle and its many smaller counterparts, this fact really angers some people.

Understandably so. Interest groups—particularly labor unions—are proudly and self-admittedly the spokesmen of minorities. Their staffs are paid not to mind the overall benefit of their fellow citizens, taking up costs and benefits into account, but to fight concessions to any concern outside their particular interest. If, as the Geneva rounds suggest, the WTO can operate above the selfish demands of particular industries for economic protection; if it can deal only with those environmental concerns visible and significant enough to affect entire nations by provoking governments to bring them up, rather than resorting to local interest groups; if instead it serves the most visceral interests of people around the world—the need for low prices and abundant products—that is truly reason to celebrate.

The World Trade Organization is not unfair; it is actually quite fair to an unprecedented number of people in both developing and developed nations. By virtue of being a coalition where so many citizens of the world are represented indirectly, the organization should hold the achievement of the greatest good for the greatest number as its only just goal. It is time to recognize that this common interest is about the economy, stupid.

Mark Gutierrez is a junior in Trumbull College.

Stop gun violence. Write for The Yale Free Press.



**To learn more, ask Diana:
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An American in England

Diana Feygin • Patrick Belton on Blogging, Politics, and Clam Chowder

PATRICK BELTON, WRITER AND PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONWIDE Nathan Hale Foreign Policy Society, is co-editor of Oxblog (www.oxblog.com), a highly popular electronic magazine. With a government, philosophy, and pre-medicine triple major and a minor in public policy, Patrick came to Yale and completed a master's in international relations in 2001. A Fulbright scholar, he is currently a doctoral candidate in politics and international relations at Oxford University.

Patrick has appeared as a political commentator on NPR, CNN, C-SPAN, CBS radio, and in the New York Times and Washington Post. In July, he was one of 20 bloggers credentialed to cover the Democratic Convention. Recently, Patrick chatted with The Yale Free Press from his Oxford flat about the ins and outs of the blogosphere and the political world.

YFP: You run a very successful blog. How do you find the incentive to write sophisticated, high quality, interesting work without pay?
PB: Well, it has really been a pleasurable experience, and I do it because it's enjoyable. The most rewarding dimension of all has been the opportunity OxBlog has afforded to hold a running, often very searching conversation with two of my closest friends from Yale and Oxford, whom I deeply respect

"The reason that we have got a superficial politics in this country is that we've got a superficial press."

intellectually and for their moral idealism. Also, given my trade as a writer, whether plied in academia or in writing books, then writing daily is a useful, perhaps the only, way to hone that craft. There is something holy in writing as a calling, and nothing in the least wrong with perfectionism as a writer—if words do actually matter, then you bloody well ought to be a perfectionist when it comes to choosing and placing them. But it must be a creative rather than a paralytic perfectionism, one that keeps you writing each day in respectful devotion to words and their power.

Every major communicative technology that has ever arisen has spawned a form of journalism. In the 16th century, you have the rise of printing presses in London, and Elizabethan journalism as a result. In the early 20th century, you have the introduction of broadcast technology, and, as a result, broadcast journalism, which later in the century expands beyond radio into television and other sub-genres. The Internet was fairly ineluctably going to spawn its own sort of journalism. Now that a few years have passed, we can begin to ask what is unique about blogs as a journalism indigenous to the Internet.

Blogs restore a personal voice to journalism comparatively absent since the Victorian period—though it still persists in some arenas,

particularly in the more conservative British press. When American newspapers adopted their contemporary form in the 1950s, they imbibed that decade's prevailing philosophy of knowledge. The epistemology of Karl Popper and positivism were in the air, and newspapers consequently began to assume that unique, authoritative representations of reality were possible, through the proper application of correct methodology. The presence of individual journalists was somewhat an embarrassment, though someone had to be there to apply the methodology.

This meant newspapers had to treat other newspapers with something of the disdain with which you would treat a mildly distasteful neighbor. It represents an assault on the entire enterprise that there could be different, competing interpretations, each claiming authoritative status. Meanwhile, we witnessed the gradual disappearance of the "I" from reporting and its subversion into the unsituated speech of page one and the editorial page's quasi-sovereign "we," with all its affectations of power.

Within the past twenty years, we have seen figures such as Jürgen Habermas trying to resuscitate and defend the promise of modernity and

Enlightenment against its post-modern critiques. This, for Habermas, was done rather by grounding truth in conversations among individuals, "I"s, who might share their perspectives with one another, challenging each other to articulate, then defend or rebut, their tacit assumptions—with truth and the promise of progress coming out of this running conversation of humankind, centered precisely on individual voices in dialogue to form a quite different "we."

This notion of inter-subjectivity captures what happens in blogs, where you have individual voices engaging with each other not in vitriol but in discourse. It comes quite close to justifying the project of Enlightenment and modernity, with their possibility of democratic governance, if a discourse of rational expression and communication can arrive at truth. The analogy I have been contemplating lately is scientific discussion. In science as actually practiced, you don't have these authoritative representations stripped clean of individuals who assert them, but rather an enormous number of individuals holding a running conversation, in scholarly journals and conferences, in which the defining marker of the prose style is, indeed, the name of the speaker followed by the moment of the utterance: Feygin (2004), for instance.

This seems fairly coherent with the model that structures the blogosphere, the first unique and new prose style produced by our cultural moment.

The more negative exegesis of the blogosphere at the moment is that it partakes of something of the character of an echo chamber, particularly on the ideological extremes, with speakers seeking not to engage other viewpoints in conversation, but rather to convince themselves and others of assertions with greater and greater degrees of quasi-religious conviction; it is like the recitation of a creed. But you also have another set of people who come from rather different points ideologically yet engage in running conversations with each other in discourses that rely upon fair-mindedness, argument, and evidence, those indispensable linchpins of modernity and liberalism. They are comparatively unique in public discourse in any medium at the moment, and they may well constitute the running conversation of the republic in our day.

The reason that we have got a superficial politics in this country is that we've got a superficial press. At the convention, journalists were the most attractive people — the brainiest, the most affable, the most conversationally insightful, the most fun to go to the pub with, in distinction to the fawning and sycophancy of the politicians — but the coverage that they produced was superficial, perfunctory, and wooden.

Newspapers ignored the fact that, for the purposes of filming a declining few minutes of "roll call of the states" footage, the Democrats had gone to the trouble of gathering in one place representatives of every ideological or personality-driven orbit of the Party. Instead, they wrote pro forma stories, either stringing together series of quotes from the grand speeches or, in the case of the *New York Times*, devoting half a page of precious national resources to a delegate from the South who was having her first clam chowder in Copley Place. They were not asking any questions about the role of ideas, or even strategy.

But as blogs are run by amateurs, not socialized into journalistic short-sightedness and not restricted by word limits, they allow coverage beyond the 5-second sound bite of the CNN prose style, and the communicative technology they're built upon is furthermore at its root bi-directional. In a print or broadcast publication, someone has to actually look up your email address on, say, the *New York Times's* website to write to you—and the only people very likely to do that are probably recent parolees from a mental institution. With blogs, it's remarkable how frequently you hear from policy experts at universities, research institutions, or government offices, development workers in Mazar-e-Sharif who went to Yale with you, all of whom provide analyses and overlooked bits of information which you won't read from the journalists who are loathe to leave their hotel bar



in Kabul. One of the great potentials of blogs is to elevate the quality of the conversation of the republic at a time when it's painfully diminished. Their running conversation is one of the few points which bridge partially the yawning partisan and ideological divides that have become quite ferocious.

Broadcast and print journalists are particularly wont to privilege process and mechanics over the role of ideas and trends in the longer term. The most interesting questions to be asked at the Convention were: "It's been four years since we've heard much from New Democrats or Clintonites, but they very well might be influencing a new administration in the White House come January. How has their thinking developed since we heard from them last, on foreign or social policy? What would the grand strategic considerations underpinning a Kerry administration look like?" These weren't treated at all by journalists, so ... you had a lot of clam chowder.

YFP: There has recently been some discussion of media bias, particularly in print and broadcast journalism. Given the blogosphere's irreverent, explicit acknowledgement of this bias, where would you say the two stand in juxtaposition? Do you see blogs working to make the media more responsible, or is that just an inevitable contrast between the two?
PB: I don't mean to be too harsh on print and broadcast journalists; there are an enormous number of them who do quite good work, often under demanding circumstances. Reporters do tend to focus on mechanics, processes, and the urgent event of the moment, neglecting the merely important long-term trends or the roles of ideas. There's also a distressing incidence of pack journalism, and the analytical or narrative assumptions that ingrain themselves in coverage are much more pernicious than any partisan predisposition among members of the trade. I'd be much more worried about a tendency to tell the same stories as the people on adjacent barstools in Kabul than any more blatant preference for one specific party. Famously, *The New York Times's* Andrew Rosenthal single-handedly created the story of the former Bush being astonished by the supermarket scanner, even though the consensus among other journalists at the time was that it simply didn't happen—and what's more, even if had, Rosenthal himself wasn't there to

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Belton: Of Politics and Clam Chowder

continued from previous page

cover it. All too often, the press manufactures a story to fit its own, often quite lazy prior conceptions or narratives, and it generally gets away with that practice more often than not. It was, after all, tellingly Bush and not the *Times's* Rosenthal who lost his job.

[...]

Blogs are more open with the reader about different forms of information and competing analyses, and they can also acknowledge the arguments, and existence, of other blog writers, which the splendid isolation of newspapers, each offering a purportedly authoritative account of reality, simply does not permit them to do.

Howard Kurtz writing in *The Washington Post* can't reach into page eight of the previous day's *Times* and say to Jenny Lee, "You know, Jenny, I'm a big admirer, but on this one point I'm not really convinced yet. Here's why." And Jenny Lee would have to respond the next day, either accepting his criticism or offering arguments against it—the very idea is ludicrous; it would never happen! But that's precisely how blogs work.

[...]

YFP: Where would you place yourself on the political spectrum?

PB: I try to be a centrist. The classical criticism of centrism is that centrists simply choose their positions based on convenient arithmetic means, but I believe there are a set of principles that might underpin a centrist politics, based on ideas such as increasing opportunity and promoting democracy overseas. I try to write, though, as an ideological agnostic, willing to consider ideas from either stripe on their merits. Centrism is an exciting position in many ways, as you need to think a great deal more and weigh both sides of each debate, since you can't get your ideas as automatically.

YFP: Are you a moderate because you find your policy preferences to be equally balanced between those proposed by the right and the left, or, as you mentioned, is it based on an ideological belief in the core philosophical truth to centrism?

PB: I do think there are a set of distinct principles which can characterize a centrist politics. In foreign policy, the commitment to assisting democrats in authoritarian countries and nations attempting transitions to

democracy has popular support and derives from a distinctive American political tradition in foreign policy that far antedates Kennedy's inaugural address. At home, increasing opportunity as a goal of social policy has an attractive potential to sidestep old struggles between egalitarians and libertarians [...] to exert a strong healing force in our divided public space, seeking a set of inspiring national projects that have a potential to unite and capture the imagination of both the blue and red Americas.

[...]

YFP: Why should anyone care about politics? What is the impact of voting or not voting, particularly in the upcoming election?

PB: Well, unless a great deal has changed on Old Campus in the past four years, you most likely don't have to convince Yalies to be interested in public affairs. This is a collection of people who since the cradle have been interested in affecting the public decisions of our generation. When you're talking about ethnic or linguistic groups who are historically marginalized in the political process, then you face a different set of questions. How do you

create an inspiring new politics that will bring residents of inner cities and marginalized ethnic groups into the public conversation? I haven't got any answers. But quite frequently young, creative political leaders can create a new politics in a community to overcome its feelings of apathy and marginalization and its factional tensions. Many of us were hoping that Cory Booker, YLS '97, would prove such a leader when as a Newark City Councilman he spent five months living in a motor home which he parked in the most drug-infested corner in Newark, as a Gandhian gesture to indicate solidarity with the neighborhood's residents and help them unite against the drug dealers who were making their neighborhood unlivable. [...] We can all do a great deal of good by finding people like that—and they might very well be your friends or classmates—and doing everything we can to support them. [...]

But you can still be optimistic for the future. And I think, incidentally, that a promising career as a creative statesman and orator all starts with reading great undergraduate publications.

The full text of this interview with Patrick is available online @ www.yale.edu/yfp

A R T S A N D C U L T U R E

Murder, Inc.

Roberta Hernandez • *Hollywood Technocracy Fails to Impress*

THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE DESERVED A SECOND LOOK, AND director Jonathan Demme's new remake comes close to giving it what it deserves. The reconceived plot is still gripping, the cast superb and the cinematography unimpeachable. Ultimately, though, the remake will last only if it has read the current moment well, and Demme's rendering does not see or speak as clearly as the original.

The original, released in the thick of the Cold War, centered on a plot by Chinese communists to install a puppet in the White House. The puppet was to be a buffoonish McCarthyite senator and the puppeteer to be the senator's wife, Eleanor, a secret agent of the communists. The plan centered on an assassination to be committed by Eleanor's morose and solitary son, Raymond, whose army platoon had been captured and brainwashed by the communists while serving in the Korean War.

No foreign government hovers over the remake. The new villains are

Eleanor. This time, however, the puppet is Raymond and the assassin Bennet Marco, Raymond's commanding officer in the first Gulf War.

Some of the changes serve the movie well. The elimination of the buffoonish husband and the refashioning of Raymond as the title candidate makes him more interesting and viewers more sympathetic. Raymond is still always a loner and sometimes a robot when being mind-controlled, but as a political pro, he now has scenes in which he demonstrates considerable public charm. These make it easier to believe that America could think him a war hero. In some of the new scenes, Raymond shows his innate decency; resisting his mother, his motives seem purer than in the first movie because he does so for political and moral scruples, not for bitterness at her for ruining his one chance at romance. Liev Shreiber shows his considerable range, effortlessly shifting between these modes. He makes the character more serious than sour.

Washington is both movie star and actor—everything the movie needs. That being said, I confess my nostalgia for the hipster affect Sinatra sometimes gave his Marco.

The new Eleanor, freed of the



Unhip

obligation to stand behind a political husband, is now herself a senator. If the role loses a little subtlety with the updates, it's still rich. Some have speculated that Meryl Streep modeled her Eleanor on Hillary Clinton; Streep protests that she modeled her on Bush advisor Karen Hughes and commentator/Reagan speechwriter Peggy Noonan. They are all wrong. Streep's Eleanor is Joe Kennedy in a skirt, and it works.

But the central conceit of the movie, the rapacious private equity fund Manchurian Global, is simply not plausible enough; here, Demme fails to capture the current political moment. Eleanor mocks the shadowy men who run Manchurian because they care only for money, and we are supposed to believe her. Yet if they are

exclusively consumed with greed, why would they spend over a decade pursuing a difficult political scheme with such an uncertain payoff? There must be a cheaper way to start a war! A rational firm worried about maintaining large annual dividends or strong annual growth would put its money into some other venture.

What the remake does not want to admit is that only ideas, not big business, could move people to undertake such a conspiracy, much less hold it together. Secular ideology, religious zealotry, some combination of the two—these are the things that inspire such reckless daring. A greedy, multinational, private entity would have been a better bogey in the 1990s, at a time when the country was enjoying an incredible economic boom and largely ignoring attacks by Islamist terrorists, yet a movie featuring such a monster would still have missed the point.


President Eisenhower warned of a military industrial complex and his worry was well-founded. Eisenhower knew, though, that Communism was a bigger enemy, and so did the original *Candidate*. The September 11th attacks were not caused by greed.

Roberta Hernandez graduated from Silliman College in 2000.

The Manchurian Candidate Directed by Jonathan Demme

the executives of Manchurian Global, a multinational private equity fund that controls a vast array of companies. The plot, once again, is to install a puppet President controlled by

As the new Major Marco, Denzel Washington is more troubled by his war memories than was Frank Sinatra in that role, and he is more believable as a platoon leader.

FOR
A GOOD
TIME,
CALL  6-3233

Media Watch

Best of Media Watch 2003-2004

Because, of course, you'll want to share with the other freshmen

"Before attending the sex talks, students should be sure to recall their sexual history (assuming one has been promiscuous in the past.)"
— *Light & Truth*, Fall 2003

And he smiled and thanked me, and we learned from each other

"But I don't shun [the scabs]. I treat them as if they were the members of Locals 34 and 35. I did not hesitate last week to ask the guy cleaning my bathroom to take a look at the clogged shower drain."
— Alissa Stollwerk, *YDN*, 09/05/2003

Filing away the world's troubles

"As the enormity of what happened [on Sept. 11th] became clear and the fact that we were going into a totally different relationship with the Arab world and the fact that we were probably going to have to change our foreign policy and defense posture [struck them], it caused [Dean Richard] Brodhead and [President Richard] Levin to organize things," Kennedy said."
— Phillip Rucker, *YDN*, 09/11/2003

A Yalie proves her brilliance

"Jacqueline Carter '07, who won the Saybrook YSAC election uncontested, said she knew she would be on the committee before the votes had been counted."
— Katherine Stevens, *YDN*, 09/11/2003

In fact, clothes stopped growing on people's bodies as early as 1878

"Nakedness at Yale is not a new phenomenon."
— Steve Abramowitz and William Sullivan, *YDN*, 09/12/03

What world are you living in?

"Coming off last year where we had a lot of success as a union..."
— Anita Seth on GESO, *YDN*, 10/23/03

News flash

"After the sun sets, visibility decreases and dangers to students increase."
— Alan Kennedy-Shaffer, *YDN*, 11/04/03

Typical politician

"Healey had been trying to attend to his school work, but his *Normative Ethics* book sat uncracked on the bench beside him."
— Charlotte Howard, *The New Journal*, November 2003

Really? In just six hours?

"So next time you're bored, walk around town, find a weird street name, then go into Sterling Memorial Library and spend six hours looking for random sources – bonus points if they actually pertain to the street – and then you will not be bored."
— Kevin Alexander, *YDN Magazine*, December 2003

Typical Yalie

"I love gays, but I love winning elections more."
— Zach Jones, *YDN*, 12/02/03

On accountability

"All hyperbole aside, rest assured that your own pitiful impropriety and lack of courtesy is not your fault. It is nobody's fault, the outcome of everybody's neglect."
— Helen Vera, *YDN*, 01/20/04

A great way to win arguments

"..Yes, that was me yelling [at the television], 'Abstinence-only education? Suck it, you hypocrite!'"
— Sarah Goff, *Yale Herald*, 01/23/04

Because sex is just another hobby

"Bicycle-riding is a valuable part of growing up, and I would hope that we could all agree that riding bicycles is fun. The same goes for mature teenagers who want to have sex."
— Sarah Goff, *Yale Herald*, 01/23/04

Who cares? We'll be safely on Mars

"Unilateral domination of space can only cause jealousy in other countries, corruption within the one that controls it, and ultimately, disaster for the whole Earth."
— Patrick McGill, *Yale Herald*, 01/23/04

Not all Yale intellectuals are *Light & Truth* staffers

"The traditional Yale intellectual is a disconnected, bookish, socially-inept human being who gets off on pontificating about political philosophy."
— Maureen Miller, *Yale Herald*, 01/30/04

Is that what those girls were doing?

"Valentine's Day is the perfect opportunity to wear your heart on your sleeve—let it all hang out, man."
— Daphne Miller and Katie Rockman, *YDN*, 02/13/04

Who cares about politics, anyway?

"John Edwards may not represent my politics, but it [sic] he represents my ethics, and in this moral debacle of a campaign, I'll take it."
— Brian Rose, *YDN*, 03/02/04

Nice to see someone take responsibility for his own ignorance

"My biggest complaint about my experience at Yale is that I wished my professors had grabbed me by the scruff of my neck and challenged me to think about these things."
— Jamie McElroy, *Yale Herald*, 03/26/04

Funny because people believed it

"Yale admits extra students, mistake."
— Daniel Levin Becker, *Yale Herald*, 04/02/04 [April Fool's Day issue]

And fat women have more rights

"The womb is a location in a woman's body and, as such, is a space inhabited by a woman's rights."
— Sarah Goff, *Yale Herald*, 04/02/04

Consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds

"I prefer to appear aesthetically as a man," she said. "But I still don't consider myself a man entirely – I don't want to be called by male pronouns."
— Annie Hung, *Yale Herald*, 04/02/04

Because on the surface, it looks like Yalies don't know English very well

"This spring, we urge the students admitted to the Class of 2008 must look beyond the surface to decide where to matriculate."
— News' View, *YDN*, 04/08/04

Imperialism with a smile?

"Kerry offers Americans... a multilateral, humanitarian, credible face on their hawkish instincts."
— Daniel A. Munz, *Yale Herald*, 04/23/04

There's no such thing as a stupid question – really

"*Yale Herald*: What is the most efficient way to ensure that terrorists will not be in charge?
Charles Hill: Kill them."
— Mark Hanin, *Yale Herald*, 04/23/04

Did you know Kerry was president of Massachusetts?

"On domestic issues, Kerry has worked hard to show that he knows he'll be president of the United States, not just president of Massachusetts."
— Daniel A. Munz, *Yale Herald*, 04/23/04

Everyone loved how slick Clinton handled Kosovo

"The Kosovo war showed that a war for human rights and against oppression, fought by a slick Democrat, plays far better with world public opinion than all that red-neck bull about dangers to national security."
— John Laughland, *Yale Herald*, 04/23/04

Best of Yale Notes 2003-2004

After last spring's disastrous vote by graduate students against unionizing GESO, the Graduate Employees and Students Organization lost credibility. Now, it is trying to bring Yale professors down to its level, with members whining to the Academic Labor Board that they were victims of harassment and intimidation. GESO, of course, knows nothing about such tactics.

The Yale Daily News ran a four-part series in December on the travesty of Yale University Health Services. Readers unconvinced by our cover article on health care that month (see also page 7 of this issue) can see exemplified in DUH the consequences of cost-free health care. (As cost-free as are dining hall meals, that is.) DUH sends home students with five prescriptions for a common cold, while sending those with pneumonia to sleep it off. What better example of mistrust and poor communication between doctors and patients could one find?

In January, Jesse Jackson called upon Yale to allow minority assets managers to manage at least five percent of Yale's assets. His argument? "[They] felt that once they get in the door, they can grow," Jackson said (*YDN*, 01/26/04). If only that worked at interviews: "I may be underqualified and inexperienced, but if I could just get in the door, I would not fail. Trust me on this one."

And in April, "committed heterosexual couples" at Yale received some of the same benefits as married spouses. Here we thought married spouses and committed heterosexual couples were the same thing, but apparently we were mistaken. Great! Now one can finally be recognized for a committed relationship without all the baggage of, you know, commitment. This "cautious first step" (*YDN*, 04/01/04) gives couples, among other things, 10% discounts at the Yale Bookstore. Nothing says true love like buying overpriced trinkets together.

Later that month, *The YFP* proudly announced Al Gore's campus visit. He spoke to Yale students about the "Climate Emergency" we will all face very shortly, ominously describing the coming collision between our civilization and the earth. Now that we have seen the light about the terror of human growth, should we starve the people in India and China who are using too much energy? These are children we're talking about! *The YFP* may also limit future publications to increase tree growth and decrease carbon dioxide levels.

Finally, the National Labor Relations Board ruled in mid-July by a slim majority that graduate students working as teaching and research assistants do not have the right to unionize. The long-awaited decision should be a healthy foundation for collaborative, not antagonistic, graduate and professorial relationships.

GRAPHIC VIOLENCE

BY WAY OF CLEARING OUT
OUR NOTEBOOKS FROM LAST YEAR:

As part of our ongoing effort to put the "compassion" back into "compassionate conservatism," *The YFP* took the liberty of cleaning up this picture of Allan Kennedy-Shaffer. No need to thank us, AKS—just return the favor by keeping our email inboxes clean come fall.



Original image © Rumpus, April 2004





The WORST-CASE SCENARIO Survival Handbook

CHAPTER 19: HOW TO MEET OTHER FRESHMEN

Your first days at Yale can be intimidating. The prospect of having to meet and engage in idle introductory conversation with tons of new people can cause even the most stoic freshman to wet his Yale pants. ("Yale Pants™: Even Though This Paper Just Made Them Up, They're Still Available at the Yale Bookstore in Every Shade of Pastel Imaginable for the Low, Low Price of \$69.95!") Thankfully, *The Yale Free Press* is here to help.

To that end, we hereby present a starter guide for the Class of 2008. Below are four freshman templates, representing the only four kinds of freshmen that exist. Each template charts the inevitable responses to the only questions with which one can get to know other freshmen. Upon spying an unknown freshman, consult this guide and figure out which kind of freshman he or she is. After completing this process for at least 100 people within your first week, you will find yourself socially adjusted.

Type of Freshman

	Athlete	Hack	Mr. "Making A Statement Now That I'm Not Living With My Parents"	Trendy "Intellectual"
Question	 <small>George Bush delivers illegal, but gratifying right hook to opposing ball carrier.</small>	 <small>I THINK IT'S BECOME CLEAR TO MOST OF US THAT THIS IS A HORRIBLE MISTAKE! AS FAR AS THE PRESIDENT'S CONCERN FOR VIETNAM MEANS NOT HAVING TO SAY YOU'RE SORRY!! YOU'RE REALLY CLIPPING TONIGHT YOU BORING PREPPE! YEA! CLAP CLAP! WRIGHT OW!</small>		
Where are you from?	"A place with a lot more pickup trucks."	"Washington, D.C. However, let me just take the time to say that wherever you live is great too."	"Middle America, where bigots raise their bigot children. Except for me."	"The East Coast – modernity's playground."
What college are you in?	"Saybrook. Someone told me I was a 'Ting recruit' or something."	"Trumbull, but I've filed multiple papers to transfer to one of the more successful residential colleges."	"Pierson, which, coincidentally, has also just completely reinvented itself."	"Morse, whose existence betrays the universe's true inanity."
What are you going to major in?	"Film Studies, totally."	"Either Economics or Political Science. I haven't decided if I want money or power."	"Anthropology, where I can study everyone else who's been misunderstood."	"Philosophy, since I have learned how to survive on smug self-satisfaction instead of food."

Congratulations! You now know everything that an awkward first conversation would have told you! Feel free to skip straight to second-semester freshman conversation, including such topics as making out and the weather.

WARNING! Do not, under any circumstances, engage in discussion of politics or religion with other freshmen. These topics should be deferred to a much later time, such as your 25th reunion.