

"We Do Not Apologize."

The Cornell Review

Limited Government. Traditional Values. America First.

An Independent Publication

Volume XXVIII, Issue 2

www.thecornellreview.com / www.cornellinsider.com

September 30, 2009

Comrades, Unite!

Resolution 4: A Postmortem

JOHN FARRAGUT / president

In its typical style, the Student Assembly has, yet again, failed to meet expectations. Boldly rebuking naïve hopes for a Cornell-style Animal Farm of sorts, the S.A. buried Resolution 4—the so-called “Community Clause”—in a four-in-favor eleven-against vote. Of all the bad resolutions our austere elected body passes, is it too much to hope that they at least pass those bad ones which are also fun? Apparently so, unless you consider the Asian American Community Center “fun.” (I don’t.)

S.A. president Rammy Salem ’10 and vice president Ola Williams ’10 tag-teamed as Squealer, putting on an amusingly vigorous performance, complete with amateurish charts and direct addresses to “the people” (all fifteen

of us). Awkwardly scrawled in his fifth-grade script were Rammy’s comically LSAT-esque “Three Ways to Discredit My Argument”; none included rejecting the ludicrous hypothesis that the only and best way to increase attendance at weekly meetings is to give everyone who shows up the right to vote. Fortunately this train wreck of a bill ended where it belonged—verbally wrecked by most in the Assembly and sent to the bad bill grave. In any case, a postmortem is in order.

You see, Rammy and Ola started with a dream. According to their campaign website, the duo charged with representing the student body pledged to “give dedicated members of the community the opportunity to truly make a difference by granting them voting privileges identical to those of elected representatives.” That means you and I—mere students!—would be able to vote

on important issues of all sorts. Not so in the bill presented to the S.A.

Bylaw 3.1.d.iv. reads: “The community clause [students’ right to vote] may only be exercised on final votes of sense-of-body resolutions pursuant to Bylaw 1.3.a.4, which excludes (1) funding and budgetary decisions, (2) amendments to the SA Charter and Standing Rules, (3) the ability to make motions, (4) creation/dissolution of committees (5) selection of officers, committee members, and liaisons from the popularly elected SA (i.e. allocation of the Student Activity Fee, SAFC appeals, approval of Parliamentarian, Liaison to the Provost, etc.)” This is what Rammy must have meant by “privileges identical to those of elected representatives.

Assumedly, sometime between the days of silly campaign promises

see *RESOLUTION*, page 2



Artwork by Milan Thakkar

The War on H1N1

LUCAS POLICASTRO / staff writer

A concerto of sternutation echoes throughout Bailey Hall every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The performers sit not on the stage, but in the audience: a thousand Psych 101 students, collectively spewing a nation of H1N1 virions into the air every passing minute. “Deep sleep is essential to healthy immune function!” implores the professor, Dr.

Jim Maas. His cry meets deaf ears, and the virions rejoice, scurrying off to nearby nasal passages.

It’s a great time to be a virus. Few in that audience realize the ease with which viruses toy with humanity. Much like churchgoers revere God, scientists revere viruses for their power, prudence, omnipresence, and mystery. I know at least one reputable scientist who has expressed desire to cheat on his wife with a lentivirus. (No wonder he was on the Cornell faculty.) Nonetheless, as Dr. Maas has taught his Psychology students, humans are eager to unite against our common enemies, whether we understand their motives or not. We have defeated a virus before—smallpox, which once killed

hundreds of millions, is currently corralled to two freezers. Modern technology increasingly empowers humans to position ourselves at the crest of the food chain, and the current swine flu epidemic is no exception.

Never before has the global health community responded so rapidly and thoroughly to a pandemic. In the weeks following

“Much like churchgoers revere God, scientists revere viruses for their power, prudence, omnipresence, and mystery.”

swine flu’s escape from Mexico, scientific journals were flooded with articles characterizing and discussing the virus. The virus was captured, strip-searched, and photographed nude, its entire RNA sequence posted online. Several pharmaceutical companies immediately went to work developing and manufacturing targeted vaccines that work with just one dose.

The men and women who made all this possible could do so because they know a war when they see one. While H1N1/2009 may be no smallpox

see *SWINE*, page 5

Fun With Socialism and Health Care

ANTHONY LONGO / staff writer

As I stood before the countless array of tables and chairs known as Clubfest, like many other conservative Cornellian freshmen I immediately darted towards the “Political” section. I almost instantly spotted a student holding a large sign with the words “Block” and “Health Care Reform.” I said to myself, “Thank God for conservatives at Cornell!” When I approached the guy, I instantly realized it was a big mistake. First of all, the sign said, “Who’s Blocking Health Care Reform?” The first few options were “Republicans,” “The American People,” “Town Halls,” et cetera. The sign was part of the Socialist Club’s advertising. Yes, folks,

there are actually people who still want socialism. I know it’s frustrating, but please read on.

When I checked off the last possible option, “DEMOCRATS,” hiding all the way down at the bottom, the socialist instantly became angered. He asked me, “Why did you do that?! Don’t you think health care is something everyone should have?”

“Of course I do,” I replied. “Everyone is entitled to health care. In fact, if you travel to any hospital, you cannot be refused care.”

The socialist proceeded with the obvious liberal rebuttal, “But don’t you want it to be affordable?”

Me: “In a perfect world, yes. But in today’s society, it’s impossible. First of all, this plan

see *HEALTH CARE*, page 5

Inside This Issue . . .

Page Four	Page Two	Page Eight	Page Five
Racist Food? Ivy Room makes questionable menu change	Tapestry of Possibilities in fact an oxymoron?	ASSclown award! Who got it and why? Find out inside.	Look to the past: Dep. Chair on current times

Resolution

...continued from front page

and the presentation of an actual resolution, something changed (sounds like Obama!). I conjecture that one of two things happened: (1) either Rammy and Ola realized what a bad idea their original promise was, or (2) they realized that a bill enabling aforementioned promise would never pass. Given the tour de force of “students’ rights, etc.” gibberish blared during the presentation of the resolution, I’m left to believe the latter. And yet, despite all attempts to garner passage—in particular, by ensuring that voting students had no more than PINO (power in name only)—the assembly killed the bill anyway. Apparently the Student Assembly relates more to the Manor Farm pigs than to the Manor Farm sheep (no word yet on who gets to be Napoleon).

But Resolution 4 was the lousy husk of an awful idea, and deserved to be voted down on its own merits.

Direct democracy is a bad idea, despite the frequent lip service paid to it, and would have been an especially bad idea in the case of Cornell’s S.A.

Essentially, every vote would have become the equivalent of an Ivy League ballot initiative. Ballot initiatives are close enough to mob rule—I say this as a supporter of most of the outcomes they produce, e.g. gay marriage bans—but in the real world, courts stand athwart “progress,” yelling stop. Certain bills are not allowed, regardless of how much “the people” support them. If democracy is two wolves and a chicken voting on what to have for dinner, then the courts are the ones saying, “but nobody’s allowed to be eaten.” Cornell doesn’t have its own junior varsity version of the courts; the potential problems are obvious.

Furthermore, the S.A. significantly impacts a small, proper subset of the student body, and the rest hardly at all. The narratives of a small minority

running the show write themselves. I can only imagine the uproar if the Cornell Republicans had succeeded in passing the concealed carry on campus initiative—Resolution 17 of two years ago—by stealthily packing the audience with its members and then introducing a bill (C.R. president Ahmed Salem ’08 was on the S.A. at the time). The threat of general embarrassment would also have been quite high; an official “Rammy Salem Appreciation Day,” anyone?

In reality, the legislation that Rammy and Ola presented was not nearly as foolish as their campaign website implied, though it was probably, somehow, even sillier. Resolution 4 represented the clownish vestiges of a juvenile proposition, the least offensive innards left after the ugly animal is gutted. The bill merited a resounding defeat, and the Student Assembly—

for once—fully delivered.

“

Direct democracy is a bad idea, despite the frequent lip service paid to it, and would have been an especially bad idea in the case of Cornell’s S.A.

“

John Farragut is a junior in the College of Arts and Sciences. He can be contacted at jdf222@cornell.edu.

Tapestry of Improbabilities

How an O-Week program meant to encourage unbiased discussion of race relations did just the opposite

EVAN RICH
STAFF WRITER

There are many unique programs that go on during orientation week, most of which are meant to break the ice and teach freshmen the importance of being tolerant of other members of the Cornell community. One event in particular, the Tapestry of Possibilities program, had many tense moments during its question and answer segment. Prior to this Q&A session there was a nice performance by the Ordinary People theatre troupe, which documented examples of various types of bias that one might see in daily campus life. After watching the Ordinary People perform, it seemed as though this program would be a very constructive way to discuss race relations. However, the events that followed the performance were in serious conflict with the intended goals of this program.

The Tapestry of Possibilities program is mandatory for all incoming freshmen, with the intention of helping new students engage in positive conversations about how students from different backgrounds can come together and find some common ground. It is sponsored by various departments such as the Dean of Students and Campus Life. “We try to open up a dialogue about diversity at Cornell [...] and have

a conversation about engaging with different perspectives,” explained Assistant Dean of Students Kiran Longaker. Ms. Longaker recognized that these conversations become very tense and often cause students to feel uncomfortable due to the potentially contentious topics being discussed in the forum. However, she feels that it is important that the dialogue “stretches the comfort zone” in order to help individuals “become more aware of the value systems of others.”

The discussion quickly strayed away from this goal, and took on a life of its own when a student mentioned that he had a white friend who was “stuck in Ujamaa.” “The moderator of the event allowed student after student to vilify and shame the Caucasian in Ujamaa, followed by crude jeering and applause,” explained Jon Weinberg ’13. According to Ms. Longaker, Tapestry does not have an official stance on the program houses, other than that people should have accurate knowledge of all the houses and understand their purposes.

Many students found it highly improper for the moderator to allow this sort of activity to go on. “The moderator should have toned it down and taken a more hands on approach rather than facilitating this riot atmosphere,” Weinberg

added. Unlike Mr. Weinberg, Ms. Longaker felt that the moderator “handled it in the best way that he could have.” Oren Jaspan ’13 also felt “uncomfortable, in a sympathetic way, for people who were spoken down to for voicing their own opinions.” However he acknowledged that it was “a fair forum to speak out in [...] and was in now way inhibited from speaking.” Jaspan took issue with the fact that the moderator didn’t want to change how things were going on. “The program is very liberal until you disagree with them, and then all of a sudden everybody’s minds close and it becomes the opposite of what [Tapestry] was intended to be.”

While many white students, such as myself, felt uncomfortable asking a question in this environment, Will Najar ’13 did not. “I talked about the possibility of program houses isolating minority students,” he said. Najar encountered a similar situation at the boarding school he attended, in which minority students did not socialize with white students due to the structure of the living quarters. It is important that Cornell and its diversity programs promote dialogue on the merits of the program houses, rather than embarrassing students who bring up these matters.

The fact that the Tapestry discussion, while a month old, is

still fresh in many students’ minds certainly says something about the importance of what was discussed in the forum. While many might attribute this to ‘bad publicity’ due to the uncomfortable tone of the Q&A session, Ms. Longaker believes that “Tapestry has been successful, and has caused a positive reaction among people” based on the range of reviews she has received on the optional surveys filled out by the students.

I believe that the program as Ms. Longaker intended it to run would be very successful in promoting valid discussion on race relations. However, the way that it was actually run created an even greater divide between students of different racial ethnicities. What is the purpose of putting students into an environment where they are bound to feel uncomfortable? There must be a better way to get students of varying races, socioeconomic backgrounds, and cultural backgrounds to exist together without forcing these sorts of awkward situations upon them. I couldn’t agree more with students like Jonathan Gartner ’13 who said “it felt like they were already chiding us for our beliefs, before even knowing what they were.” He went on to say, “even the most tolerant person went in there being told that they were

...see *TAPESTRY*, page 4

The Cornell Review

Founded 1984, Incorporated 1986

Volume XXVIII Number 1

Ann Coulter
Jim Keller
Jerome D. Pinn
Anthony Santelli, Jr.
Founders

William Lane
Editor-in-Chief

Kent Haeger
Executive Editor

John Farragut
President

Oliver Renick
Managing Editor

Raza Hoda
Treasurer, News Editor

Joseph Bonica
National News Editor

Dennis Shiraev
Campus Editor

Contributors

Joe Bonica, Anthony Longo, Lucia Rafanelli, Oliver Renick, William Lane, Kent Haeger, Raza Hoda, Dennis Shiraev, Evan Rich, Willam Wagner, John Farragut, Harry Beyel, Lucas Policastro

Faculty Advisor

Michael E. Hint
meh26@cornell.edu

Board of Directors

Christopher DeCenzo, Joseph E. Gehring Jr., Ying Ma, Anthony Santelli Jr.

The Cornell Review is an independent biweekly journal published by students of Cornell University for the benefit of students, faculty, administrators, and alumni of the Cornell community. The Cornell Review is a thoughtful review of campus and national politics from a broad conservative perspective. The Review receives no school funding.

The Cornell Review is published by The Ithaca Review, Inc., a non-profit corporation. The opinions stated in The Cornell Review are those of the individual author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the staff of The Cornell Review. Editorial opinions are those of the responsible editor. The opinions herein are not necessarily those of the board of directors, officers, or staff of The Ithaca Review, Inc.

The Cornell Review is distributed free, limited to one issue per person, on campus as well as to local businesses in Ithaca. Additional copies beyond the first free issue are available for \$1.00 each. Issues, rate cards, and other information about our advertising rates can be obtained by writing to the address below. The Review reserves the right to refuse advertising for any reason and to alter advertising copy deemed inappropriate for publication. The Cornell Review is a member of the Collegiate Network.

The Cornell Review prides itself on letting its writers speak for themselves, and on open discourse. We do not all agree on every issue, and readers should be aware that pieces represent the views of their authors, and not necessarily those of the entire staff. If you have a well-reasoned conservative opinion piece, please send it to cornellreview@me.com for consideration.

The Cornell Review meets regularly on Mondays at 5:00 pm in GS 160. E-mail messages should be sent to cornellreview@me.com.

Copyright © 2009 The Ithaca Review Inc. All Rights Reserved.

The Cornell Review
P.O. Box 4654
Ithaca, NY 14850

Big Red Apathy

Here at Cornell, the call goes out relatively frequently for increased participation for campus affairs. Here, we will do stupid things in the name of “student involvement,” from amended election rules to poorly thought-out applications of direct democracy. In theory, this is supposed to increase the stakes for students, who would then find a greater incentive to remain observant of campus goings-on.

However, the evidence present with existing policies indicates a far different reality. I had the singular joy of viewing the President’s Forum on Strategic Planning on September 17th. I was not alone, but when I arrived at Uris Auditorium ten minutes early, I feared I might be. Nor was I the only one shocked at the turnout—I overheard an administration official lament that they had advertised in myriad places around campus. In the end, about ten students arrived to hear any part of the address, maybe 7 of which were undergraduates.

Quite frankly, I was embarrassed for the Cornell student body, particularly those among us who work so hard to help students feel an incentive to remain active on campus. The reason for the low turnout—mind you, there was but one reason—was painfully evident.

An attempt to cite general schoolwork is hardly made *in terra firma*—it was the third full week of classes, so virtually nobody can raise the otherwise omnipresent spectre of prelims. Furthermore, as the aforementioned distraught attendee was right to bring up, the administration had gone through quite a few measures to ensure visibility to the community at large, between being easily accessible online from the events calendar to even having a few mentions in the *Cornell Daily Sun*.

What happened, to put it bluntly, is that Cornellians with one voice stood up and shouted to the world that

they didn’t give something, which rhymes with duck and may or may not be flying.

This display of student apathy, that immovable object which class after class of student leaders attempts to dislodge, is most appalling in light of the stakes for both people currently learning here and following generations of Cornellians. It’s not as though this were a minor Student Assembly meeting with a marginally meaningful resolution on the table. The Reimagining Cornell program is the university’s attempt to navigate the dire financial straits in which we find ourselves.

How does this affect us? Let me count the ways. This is no invisible process. Anyone here last year can recount the sweeping budget cuts (5% across all departments), the closing of the Physical Sciences Library in Clark Hall, and the numerous emails from President Skorton informing us of hiring freezes and construction moratoria. None of that has gone away.

The means of dealing with the challenges facing the university have changed to some extent. The language of cuts to individual departments has been dropped, with most of the focus now lying with ways of generally changing and improving the structure of the university at the most basic level. The change seems genuine, but as with any reorganization, there exists a certain dangerous possibility of certain pieces being lost in the scuffle. The administration no doubt will make changes conscientiously, but without students in a position to provide oversight, there is no real guarantee that something truly near and dear to us will not be cut.

For their part, President Skorton and Provost Fuchs have been remarkably open about the whole process. At the ill-attended forum, they laid out myriad ways in which they welcomed, even invited involvement from students and faculty. Fuchs mentioned town-

hall meetings, a Reimagining Cornell website, interactions with student groups and the public media, and presidential statements. Furthermore, they touted working groups currently being formed which would incorporate students in conjunction with faculty and staff working to streamline campus operations. The opportunities are there for students to offer feedback and even direct input regarding the attempts to increase university efficiency.

So why aren’t we flocking to these opportunities in droves? We give freely of our time not consumed by academics to all sorts of activities, ranging from athletics to performing arts to politics to glow-sticking. All of these have their merits, to be sure, but when push comes to shove they pale in importance to ensuring the university’s greatness through these critical years.

And it’s not as though the stated goal of Reimagining Cornell is mere survival. Skorton and Fuchs made clear several times that the campaign was not designed merely to keep the university solvent, but also to make sure that, when the clouds parted, Cornell University was stronger than it was before the crash. “Reimagining” is no mere tagline—they really are taking steps to redirect the university into a more cohesive and efficient body. Therefore, it really is our duty—I’d call it a sacred duty, but I don’t want to excuse atheists and agnostics—to keep the newly imagined Cornell in line with the one we have grown to know and love (and hate, from time to time).

So I issue a challenge to every person who picks up and reads this paper: fight the Big Red Apathy that sets in at prelim time. Shake off the “somebody else’s problem” mentality and realize that the university’s direction is everybody’s problem—and everyone’s opportunity for change.

- William P. Lane, for the editors

The Month of Backwards Racism

From the Ivy Room to Capitol Hill, some strange incidents of racism have arisen this September

OLIVER RENICK
MANAGING EDITOR

When Cornell administrators fringe on racist policies, pigs must surely be flying. And seeing as how swine flu is an airborne virus, that time has come. Earlier this month, the greatest eatery (previously) known to man, Ivy Room, went under some drastic renovations. And by drastic, I mean the food is now on par with that of Okenshields after Happy Dave has had his way with the mashed potatoes. (I jest).

More importantly, however, it seems that in their effort to financially restructure our dining program, C.U. Dining officials targeted specific racial groups by making the menu representative of the incoming class demographic. Here's a quote directly from the Sun about the new Asian 'Confusion' station that makes me raise an eyebrow:

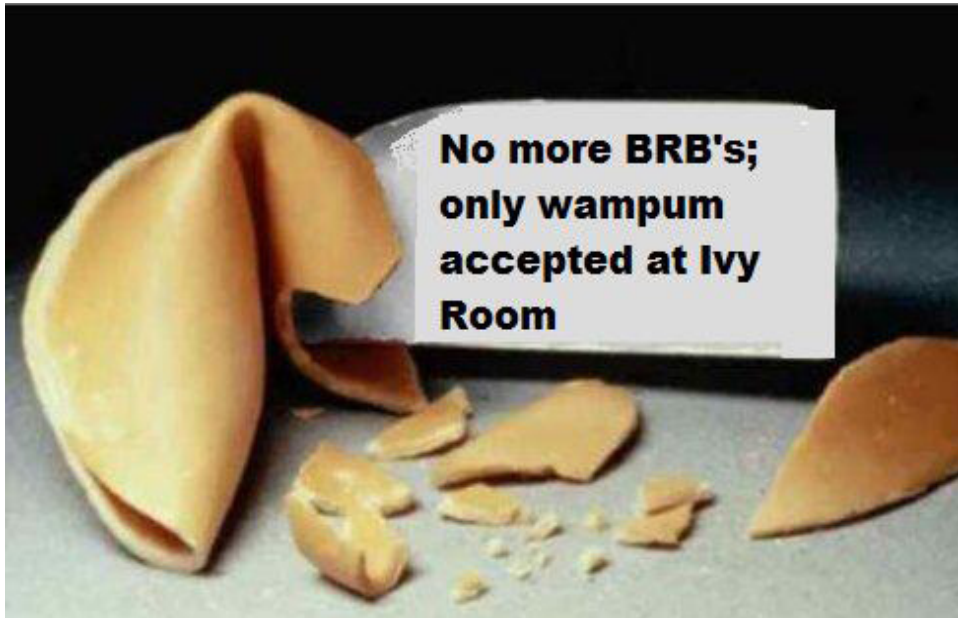
"C.U. Dining also looked at the demography of the incoming class and saw that there is a large Asian American contingent, spurring the creation of the Asian fusion station. The pizza and grill menus 'were not touched,' Finan said, and although 'there is a misconception that all the Mexican food is gone, it's not.'"

'Confusion,' indeed! Apparently dining officials never attended orientation week's 'Tapestry' diversity training. Such a presumptuous statement as the one above would undoubtedly warrant a red flag from many a freshman RA. So basically, dining officials are assuming that people will only consume food that lies in tandem with their race and geographic customs. Yet nobody saw this as the least bit peculiar? Sure, it's not actually racist, but I can hardly bear the thought of peoples' reaction if the Review, in an open attempt to attract Asian journalists, set out glass noodles, teriyaki, and Hello Kitty bracelets at our ClubFest table to lure them in.

My next question is: was it just the Asian contingent that was reflected in the new dining options, or did they take other races into account? Well, the once-dominant burrito and spinner station are hidden, so apparently the Hispanic population must have gone down. Is that why the big-screen TV was moved? Has it been proven that Asians and Hispanics would rather stare at a view than a TV?

The move towards healthier food must also have demographic implications – 2013 must have

a lot of vegetarians and skinny people. But, wait did I see an extra rack of MuscleMilk in the fridge as well? More jocks! Maybe we'll win a football game this year. Seriously, though, let's compare the demographics from the classes of 2012 and 2013 to cross-check my predictions (these



are actual stats obtained from the Cornell Admissions website). Class of 2012: Asian American: 17.8%, Caucasian: 45.2%, African American: 4.3%, Hispanic: 5.7%, Native American: 0.5%. And for class of 2013: Asian American: 16.1%, Caucasian: 43.4%, African American: 6.7%, Hispanic: 7.5%, Native American: 0.6%.

Go figure – after all that, the Asian-American population has actually decreased! Now, I'll be honest, I may or may not fancy Asian women (and by may not I mean 'do'), so this disturbs me. What I find more disturbing, though, is the apparent absence of intellect (or fact-checking) by the people over at CU Dining – it's no wonder they are losing money. If they would have actually researched their 'ulterior motive', they would have realized that the Caucasian population also decreased, and the number of Hispanics, Native Americans, and African-Americans all increased.

This explains a few things, but also raises more questions. At least it explains why the TV moved – now all those (fewer) obnoxious Nascar-watching Caucasians can pound their fists and down their Budweiser (Ivy Room has beer?) in an isolated location away from the more civilized folk. But then these facts also raise the questions: why is all the Hispanic comida hidden in a corner? And where is all the fried chicken? And why are we continuing to pay in BRB's and not wampum?

Idigress, but only to address a more serious and equally backwards 'racist' subject – Maureen

Dowd's (and other liberals') claims of Joe Wilson's infamous "you lie!" interruption during President Obama's health care speech as having racist motivation. The quote from her editorial: "Surrounded by middle-aged white guys — a sepia snapshot of the days when such pols ran

in American history. Maybe he had a problem relating to his white basketball coach or catching a cab in New York, but he never got beaten up for being black."

At least her expertise on race extends to her knowledge of how blacks were treated in Pacific 1960s towns. Saying that Obama did not encounter any major racial struggles seems like quite a presumptuous statement for a D.C.-born white female journalist. I personally would be a little offended if someone made such a sweeping statement about any aspect of my childhood.

What Maureen Dowd did was disgraceful. And aside from jokes, such a claim perpetuated by liberals only obscures and dilutes the more serious issues of actual racism and intolerance, and a legitimate health care debate. While Wilson was less than articulate as well, random claims of racism only stifle real progression away from intolerance.

Now where's that beer in the Ivy Room?

Oliver Renick is a sophomore in the College of Engineering. He can be contacted at ojr5@cornell.edu

Washington like their own men's club — Joe Wilson yelled 'You lie!' at a president who didn't. But, fair or not, what I heard was an unspoken word in the air: You lie, boy! The outburst was unexpected from a milquetoast Republican backbencher from South Carolina who had attracted little media attention. Now it has made him an overnight right-wing hero, inspiring "You lie!" bumper stickers and T-shirts."

Genius, Mrs. Dowd - how perceptive you are; what great ears you have to be able to hear in on non-existent words – tell us, what else did you hear? Are you sure you didn't hear the 'n-bomb'? I mean, if you're going to make up racially-injected words, why not go for the gold (on a scale of bronze being least offensive)? Tell me, did you also hear Joe Wilson predict Eli Manning's victorious passing scheme this Sunday?

I'm just curious as to how Mrs. Dowd came up with this story when she sat down to write Friday night. What exactly was the thought process there? Somehow she extrapolated an emotional outburst into a full page editorial about how Republicans are just so distraught over having a black president that it finally slipped out through Wilson? I think Maureen has had one too many beer summits with Henry Louis Gates at the Ivy Room (Ivy Room has beer?). If there's anything Obama would be racially offended by I think it may be one of her next paragraphs:

"Barry Obama of the post-'60s Hawaiian 'hood did not live through the major racial struggles

Tapestry, continued...

a hateful person, and that's a terrible assumption to make."

What went on during the Tapestry of Possibilities session was not in line with what Ms. Longaker articulated to be the main tenets of the program, but the way in which it was presented to the students made it difficult to see the conflict. Many students explained to me that in their view, the Tapestry program was insensitive to their viewpoints and glorified the program houses. Having researched this, I do not believe that these are the intended goals of the program. Therefore it is crucial that the University reviews the Tapestry program and makes sure that it follows its intended purpose rather than allow it to continue ostracizing incoming students.

Evan Rich is a freshman in the ILR School. He can be contacted at ehr25@cornell.edu

Nation Sympathizes with Flu-Ridden Cornell

SWINE

...continued from front page

or Spanish flu, Cornellians know better than anyone that it feels no remorse in taking a life. Through painful experience, our generation is learning that a bug as commonplace as influenza can take up arms anytime it wishes. The Class of 2013 came to Cornell expecting newfound maturity and responsibility; they can find these lessons in Swine.

Swine '09 disproportionately affects young people—in other words, Cornell students. Having seen over 700 reported flu cases so far, Cornell has invested generous resources into the fight, despite the budget crunch. Unfortunately, no matter how vigorously we fight, we are disadvantaged by qualm and uncertainty. Meril Pothen '13, a global health

enthusiast, was ambivalent on the University's handling of the flu. "The University really hasn't done much, but because it's such a large place, there isn't much you can do. When I had symptoms of what I thought was flu, I called Gannett... They call you and check on you every day. They're doing pretty good for a large place like this."

President David Skorton, in a letter to the community, was "confident that our measures related to medical care for students, our self-isolation strategy, support services in the residence halls, and our cleaning protocols and training plans are sound."

In other words, aside from distributing home-care kits, banning frat parties, and offering

make-up exams, there really isn't much to be done at the local level. Why fight a war that can't be won?

Feelings on the flu vary from nonchalance to surgical-mask-paranoia. One rarely goes a day without hearing idle speculation on swine-flu-this, swine-flu-that. Could the advent of winter's flu season do enough damage to close the university? Would we actually enjoy such an event as we formerly enjoyed grade-school snow days? In response to such questions, every day, we valiantly don Purell until our hands are a sticky, fragrant mess, without realizing that it is guaranteed to kill bacteria, not viruses. In facing a murderer, we are placated by half-effective, smelly glop.

Cornellians have fought and

died in wars. Indeed, this virus is genuinely more evil than any enemy that we have voluntarily fought. It is a form of life programmed to devour your lungs without hesitation—mistake it for nothing less. But our University, like so many other ancient institutions, has survived one and a half centuries of assault by every ornery little microscopic villain imaginable. They live on fear; it weakens the immune system. Let Cornell take the flu in stride!

Lucas Policastro is a freshman in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. He can be contacted at ljp74@cornell.edu

Barry Strauss Lays Out "Ground Rules"

History department chair implores concerned Americans to look to history

JOSEPH BONICA
NATIONAL NEWS EDITOR

On September 22, the Cornell College Republicans sponsored an open talk by Professor Barry Strauss, chairman of the History Department and teacher of a graduate-level seminar on ancient history. In a room filled with mostly members of the Cornell Republicans but featuring a decent number of outside turnouts, Professor Strauss discussed the important lessons that can be gained from history. First, he discussed some core concepts of history and its study; firstly, that it is completely non-partisan. Regardless of one's economic, political, or social beliefs, history affects all people, and is in the end of the same effect. No person or nation is ever immune to its effects. Since history is non-partisan, stresses Strauss, it does not have clear-cut lessons for one side or another. Each momentous event in history is claimed to have several different causes, each which teaches its own lessons to the generations that study it.

Despite variance in interpretations of historical events, all of history can be said to have three "ground rules". Firstly, history is cyclical; each generation is bound to make the same mistakes as the prior one. This is fairly self-explanatory; only someone under a rock has never heard the phrase "history repeats itself". However, there is always some progress with each generation, as each develops new technology, new knowledge, and in many cases new morals which

will serve as the framework for which history will develop. The reason that this progress is made despite history repeating itself, says Strauss, is that human nature has changed very little since ancient times. One can see the most ancient of Sumerian writings, says Strauss, and more often than not at least one person will be able to relate to the event described. People study history, therefore, to see what mistakes to try to avoid and how to fix what errors may have been made.

Finally, and most frighteningly, Professor Strauss stressed that, quite simply, nothing lasts forever. All civilizations, no matter how great, eventually fall, succumbing to the frantic tides of politics and war. Even our nation, great though it is, is one day destined to be swept into the dustbin of history. This notion is a disturbing one, which Strauss immediately recognized; however, a careful study of history proves that this is inevitable. This was followed up with a question that many modern historians have been asking of America, that being whether or not America is the new Rome. Indeed there are many parallels between the two, which Strauss brought to light. In the drafting of the Constitution, for instance, the founding fathers looked to the ancient structure of Rome's republic for inspiration on how to set up our own. Like Rome, America prides itself and has always prided itself as a republic,

and sees itself as a political and moral role model for the general world. Unlike Rome, America has great scruples when it comes to making war. While the Romans saw it as a way of life and in fact the only true way of life, America tends to view war as something only waged when absolutely necessary. To this, Professor Strauss posed another interesting question: Is America a stronger nation for being less enthusiastic about war, or a weaker one, unwilling to deal with troubles when spotted due to moral tethering? Finally, the all important question was asked what we as Americans can do to preserve the structure and values of this nation, or if in fact those values are worth preserving at all.

The subsequent questions focused on the nature of America itself. Firstly, what is it that holds America together? Clearly, it is not race, religion, sexuality, ethnicity, or anything of the like, as America is a nation that prides itself as being a "melting pot" of these beliefs. The easy answer to this question, obviously, is the values both laid out in the Declaration and the Constitution and passed to generations of Americans through its own proud history. However, poses Professor Strauss, is this enough to hold a nation together for a long time? Certainly, not everyone in America holds these values, and if there are enough chinks in the armor, will the mighty system fall? Is there anything else that can unite us? It

was these questions which ignited a most interesting discussion at the end of the talk, over which Professor Strauss presided.

What was most interesting about Professor Strauss's talk was that is offered very little in the way of answers to these questions; in fact, many more questions were posed than answers given. There is, however, no better way to teach history. In history, as Professor Strauss said himself, there are no clear answers. If there were not clear answers in the past, then the nature of history dictates that there be no easy answers in the present. Rather, it is up to the generation living here and now to answer these questions and then to act on the answers they provide, to continue to solidify America's place in history or, if they so intend, to sweep it into history's proverbial dustbin.

Joseph Bonica is a sophomore in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He can be reached at jmb582@cornell.edu

Jay Walker "Turns the Tables"

Guest speaker tells how to get a job and capitalize

HARRY BEYEL
STAFF WRITER

Nationwide recession. 9.6% Unemployment. 2.6 million jobs lost in 2008. Hardly the type of environment one might find a job in - but Jay Walker laid out his 'fail-proof' road map on how to get employed at his September 11 talk - appropriately entitled: "Pick the job you want. YOU'RE HIRED!" His secret? Make money. Walker started out his speech with a very bleak economic outlook. He noted the major changes and down-sizings occurring in today's businesses, as well as the macroeconomic problems the world faces. However, what was a rather depressing start quickly turned into a lively and passionate lecture when he boldly proclaimed:

"All you need to do to get a job is make money." This paradoxical statement garnered some blank stares and confused looks from the audience; Walker continued: "... If you have a way, and can prove it, to make a business money - no business-owner or decision-maker will turn you down." And, he made sure to clarify: "... These 'business-owners' and 'decision-makers' are your targets - they can hire you." He described this as an 'inside' approach to getting a job - careful research and innovation pertaining to one company will allow one to pitch a new money-making idea to a company, and as a result, get hired.

Walker continued on to talking about how workers should hold their jobs: "Your job does not define you; you define your job."

When hired, he said, job realities are often far off from the job descriptions - because workers will pick and choose their tasks, preferring things they are better at. When taking the 'inside' approach to getting hired, therefore, the hiree is at an advantage because he can define his own job from the start, and only need do what he is truly passionate about.

The second half of Walker's speech was on how the lack of capital and jobs can be turned to benefit entrepreneurs. His main observation was that every single job that was lost means that there is one more talented person available for hire. With the extreme cuts in company's work forces today, many seasoned professionals are getting pink slips,

not because they are ineffective workers, but simply because a company cannot afford them. "It's an entrepreneur's dream," he said, "... Great talent, low cost."

Regardless how you may take Walker's advice, our economy is in a unique (albeit malignant) state, which no doubt calls for unique actions. With all of his success though, it is hard to shrug off Jay Walker's insight and advice. Can't get hired? Perhaps entrepreneurship is the way to go.

Harry Beyel is a freshman in the College of Engineering. He can be contacted at heb47@cornell.edu

HEALTH CARE

...continued from front page

would put doctors and hospitals out of business by decreasing their reimbursements. Second of all, why should a majority of Americans give up their excellent health care options? I like my health care and the right to choose my doctor. Why should I pay more and give up my right to have choices in medical care?"

The socialist (in a calming tone): "No, no, no. Of course you're not going to have to pay. You know who is going to pay? The big businesses. The executives who go on million dollar vacations to expensive hotels with taxpayer money...they're the ones who are going to pay!"

My friends, this is what arguing with a socialist is like. You don't get anywhere, and all you hear is nonsense. The socialist continued to give me a brochure for the Socialist Club and invited me to "see what socialism is all about and why we need it."

I am an aspiring physician acquainted with many doctors (including two in my family), and I volunteer at a hospital every summer. Believe me, mentioning this topic in front of a few doctors and/or nurses causes an explosion of anger and frustration. And those opposed are not just a few that I choose to mention; I have yet to meet a doctor or nurse who supports this plan, let alone a single medical professional who does not vehemently hate the plan. Of course, most doctors believe the current health care system is imperfect, but the in-place system is being vilified by the current administration.

The proposed bill calls for cutting "fraud and abuse" to raise the massive amount of money needed to support Medicare. Does

the American public really think doctors and hospitals are "abusing" Medicare to the tune of \$500 billion and the government has previously done nothing? And now we're going to fix it? This is like letting a bank robber continue stealing from bank to bank and then saying a year later, "Oh, now we're going to stop you."

There are proposed cuts in Medicare reimbursements in 2010 on the scale of 20 to 40%. A massive cut in Medicare reimbursement to doctors simply translates to medical procedures and services being made financially unfeasible, resulting in rationing. Imagine this in the context of a sandwich shop. The sandwich maker struggles to make a living and sells sandwiches at \$10 apiece. With the imposed massive cuts in reimbursement to doctors, it is comparable to forcing the sandwich maker to charge \$5 instead. The problem is that a sandwich costs \$6 to make. Do you see the problem?

Now you can see how this is forcing doctors to make serious cuts and ration care. Doctors do not want to do this, but there is literally no other choice when a doctor is reimbursed \$50 by Medicare for a procedure that costs \$60 dollars to perform. Will physicians and hospitals be able to perform procedures that actually cost them money? Of course not. Inevitably, the government is setting up the doctor to be the bad guy. After all, the doctor is the one who is going to have to say, "I'm sorry, but we cannot perform the procedure...let's see how you do."

What a great incentive for doctors! Longer hours, less reimbursement, defensive medicine, unbridled malpractice lawsuits, upset patients, and government-dictated guidelines! When physicians have

to deal with more bureaucracy and more paperwork, they provide less care! What a surprise! And to what does the American public have to look forward? Rationed care, long lines, waiting lists, limited services, strained hospital systems, and care from frustrated physicians.

Okay, stay with me. This is where the worst part of the socialism comes in. Let me tell you a little about the "public option" that is causing a great deal of controversy. The so-called public option would call for a government-run insurance provider. To explain this, I'm going to stick with the sandwich example: The government has now decided that everyone deserves a sandwich (which is certainly a great cause), and it enacts a Public Government Sandwich Plan. The government creates its own sandwich company, competing with private sandwich companies that charge \$10 for sandwiches that cost \$5 to make. The government is going to put in \$2, (which is taken from taxpayer funds) of the \$5 to make the sandwich, and the government-run company then sells the sandwich for \$8. So, all the companies would profit \$5 from a sale, but the National Sandwich is cheaper. The problem? Who is going to buy sandwiches from Subway or Blimpies when the Government Sandwich is much cheaper? Don't forget, you've been forced to invest in the government sandwich anyway.

If the Government enacts the much cheaper "Public Option" for insurance, who will buy the private insurance? Won't Aetna or Blue Cross Blue Shield quickly go out of business? So, ultimately, what option will you have? Don't

worry, Cornell Socialists, the big evil insurance companies are finally going to be punished! And don't forget, if you happen to be insured by one of these companies, rest well knowing your tax dollars will pay for someone else's insurance, and you'll still have to pay for your own.

Health care for all is a noble cause, and it should be pursued. However, it has to be pursued with some semblance of reality. The President should not ram a bill undesired by the American people through Congress. We have to do the right thing: honor our senior citizens who built this country, worked hard, served in our armed forces, and paid taxes for decades! Don't strip these extremely deserving people of their hard-earned Medicare dollars. We cannot rush to establish a government-run system that is clearly doomed to fail. Our health care system is a great one. Yes, it definitely needs a tune-up, but destroying twenty percent of the economy and rebuilding it as a government-run entity hardly constitutes a 'tune-up.' What we need to do is partner with physicians who have built an amazing medical system and who want to make it better for all. Please—Mr. President and members of Congress—do the job right the first time around.

Anthony Longo is a freshman in the College of Arts and Sciences. He can be contacted at ajl272@cornell.edu

Socialists to the World: "We Have No Idea"

A freshman's first encounter with the Red Army far above Cayuga

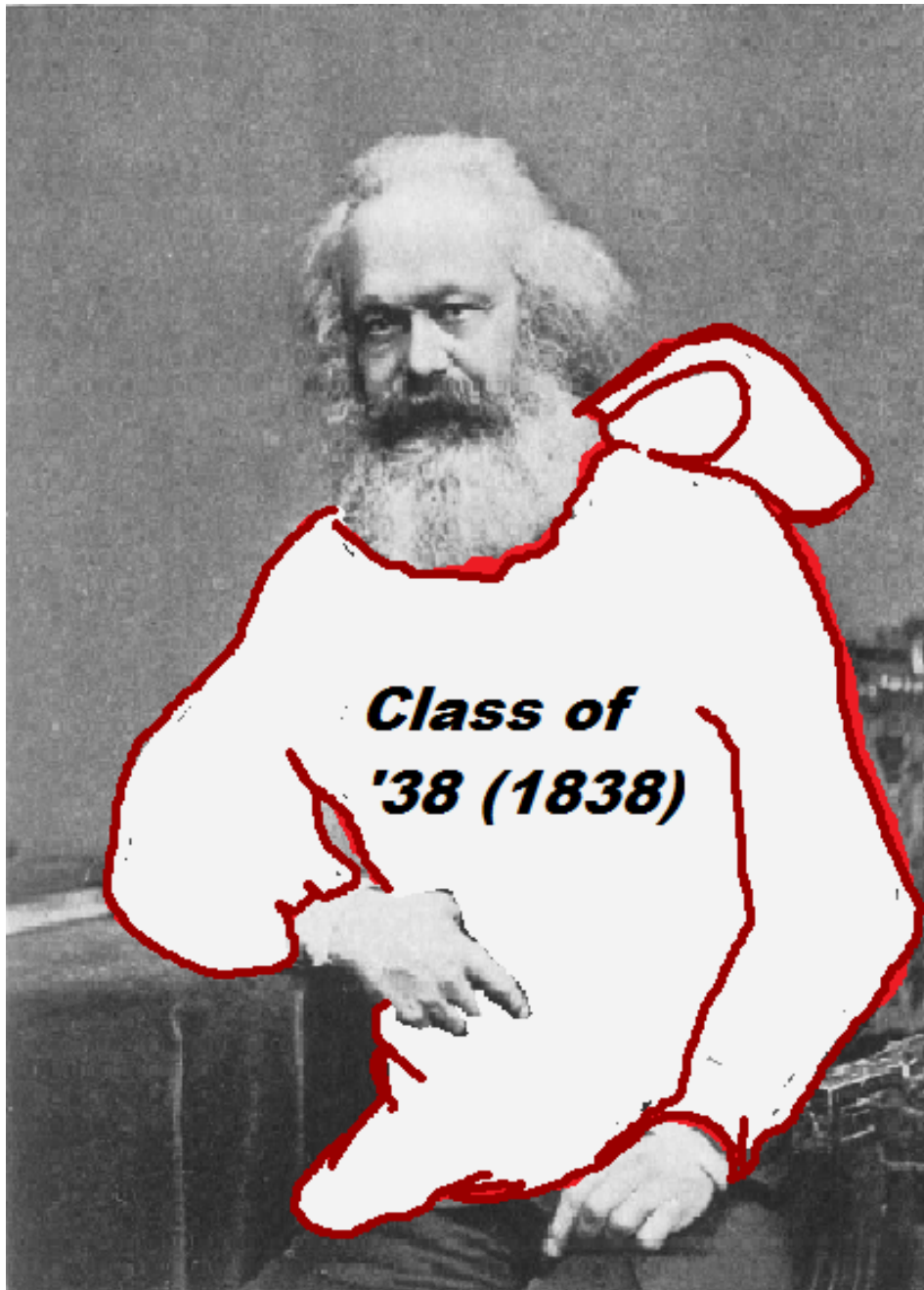
LUCIA RAFANELLI
STAFF WRITER

About two weeks ago, I was walking to Appel for dinner when I encountered some student representatives of Cornell's branch of the International Socialist Organization. As I neared the dining hall, one of them approached me and handed me a quarter card inviting me to their first meeting and attempting to dispel "widespread misconceptions" about socialism. Naturally, I was interested in discovering what kinds of political policies he advocated, and what he defined as "true socialism." As I came to find out, however, he didn't even know.

Sadly, this is not an exaggeration. Our socialist friend began explaining his philosophy, using excessively nebulous terms to describe his vision of the ideal society. He spoke much about the discrimination and oppression caused by capitalism, the corruption of our national political system, and his interpretation of human nature, all points about which we could have spent hours debating. But at the time, I was really only interested in one thing: how would his ideal society actually function. Indeed, during our conversation, he said that society should be run by a very simple system: when something needs to be done, the people should get together, make a plan, and do it.

Alright, I said to this, but how would this actually work? What would this society look like? Would the country host a gigantic, nationwide town hall meeting every time we needed to make a national security decision? I asked him this, and he responded, "I have no f***ing idea." Interesting. So here he was, advocating political action he himself failed to understand. He literally could not give me a description of the society he wanted to create, and, even more disturbing, that he was trying to persuade others to create. His argument at this point was basically that he was sure "people" could do a better job of running the country than those in the government now. This stance, though, fails to take into account two extremely important pieces of information.

First, believe it or not, those in the



Karl Marx rockin his freshman hoody like any proud Cornellian should (illustration by Oliver Renick)

government now are in fact people. Take a moment to absorb that. They are people, like the rest of us. They can be kind or mean-spirited, generous or greedy, right or wrong just like the rest of us. They are flawed like the rest of us. Further, government itself is a creation of people. Thus, its inconsistencies and its shortcomings, as well as its triumphs, are the work of people. Why then should we be so sure that people would do such a spectacular job of running society compared to the people who run it now? Certainly, one might argue that without the current political system different people would rise to power, and this would change the nature of governing, but there could be no guarantee of this. Moreover, even if different people did gain power, they would ultimately possess the same self-interested nature which all humans possess, and so be just as susceptible to

corruption as their predecessors. One might also argue—although it is probably worth noting that our socialist friend did not—that power without the current political system would be less concentrated, and more evenly distributed among the people. However, this is quite difficult to believe. The fact that millennium after millennium, civilization after civilization has established government to run its society is overwhelming evidence that, even if the political system of the status quo was completely abolished and the people were left to decide how to restructure the country, they would inevitably create some sort of government. Power would eventually be concentrated with relatively few representatives of the people, because the people would soon realize, as their predecessors had,

that without this concentration large-scale social decision-making would simply not be feasible. It would neither be efficient nor reliable.

Second, contrary to the socialist's contention, we could be a lot worse off. There are myriad of situations less desirable than the current one. For instance: despotism, martial law, dictatorship, genocide, extreme poverty, apartheid. The list goes on. Therefore, the claim that "people" could certainly do better than the present government is not really a sound one, particularly when apparently no one is able to define what kind of political system these people should establish. It certainly does seem that the socialists are advocating change without giving any consideration to what exactly should change and into what it should change. This, needless to say, is a dangerous approach to societal engineering.

Further, I think the American populous deserves better than a shot in the dark. If we have problems with our society, we can solve them through rational discussion, through thoughtful debate, and subsequent justified activism. This is how our democracy was designed. We are afforded rights, such as the freedoms of speech and assembly, that allow us to express our views, to act upon them, to have a say in how we are governed. We should not abandon a society that gives us so much to create a new one of which we know nothing. Rather, we should use these liberties as tools to address societal issues and make our world a more just place. Certainly, though, the first step in doing this is knowing what exactly makes this place just, something which the socialist movement has apparently failed to do.

Lucia Rafanelli is a freshman in the College of Arts and Sciences. She can be contacted at lmr93@cornell.edu

The Review welcomes and encourages letters to the editor. Please send questions, comments, and concerns to cornell.review@gmail.com.

October's ASSCLOWN Award

JOSEPH BONICA
NATIONAL NEWS EDITOR

As the academic year kicks into full swing, we here at the Review have once again assumed our duties as sentinels always on the watch for idiocy and hypocrisy on campus. This year, lightning has struck particularly early, and already we have our first recipients of the prestigious Asscrown Award. So, without further adieu, let me present this issue's winner, the entire news editorial staff of the Cornell Daily Sun.

One may ask what the campus's premier newspaper has done to deserve such an award. To find the answer, one need not look farther back than September 11, when the Daily Sun incorporated in their issue a September 11 article consisting of quotes from professors and students, about such things as cultural dialogue and racial profiling. At the Review, we think this is all well and good; a post-September 11th world needs to address such issues in order to improve relations

and maintain peace. This is not what riled our anger, and is in fact on its own a commendable

deaths of the innocent that day. Unfortunately, our hopes for common courtesy and

Sun? A small blurb on the bottom of the front page with a slight continuation on another page.

Such insensitivity towards an issue so important in the lives of so many students from the supposedly fair campus publication is reviling. In the Sun's defense, there was much going on during that period, especially relating to the swine flu. Despite this, the Sun refused to do anything memorial in nature on September 11th, and when they were given the chance to redeem themselves a few days later when a group did in fact host a memorial, they choked. We the students expected much more from our elite newspaper. So congratulations, Daily Sun: you guys have worked hard to earn this award. So drink and be merry friends, and don't let over 2,500 deceased innocent people put a damper on your fun.

Joseph Bonica is a sophomore in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He can be reached at jmb582@cornell.edu



article. What was noticeable and particularly disturbing to us was the lack of memorial for the victims of the terrible attack within the paper. Especially considering such a large portion of Cornell's population hails from the state of New York, and especially in areas near the city, one would think it would behoove the Sun to publish an article recognizing the needless

intelligence from the Sun were quickly dashed. They did not let the darkness of the day stop them from wasting valuable space with their typical vapid and brain-draining editorials. Thankfully, the College Republicans did a memorial of their own, attracting much attention and good will from other sensible students on campus. And how much coverage did this receive in the

For Now, Hockey Line is No More

DENNIS SHIRAEV
CAMPUS NEWS EDITOR

Swine flu has killed the hockey ticket line. The big room in Bartels where students camp out will be used by the University in the event of a larger H1N1 pandemic, and the administration is also concerned about the virus spreading during the actual event.

Sorry, freshmen! You're going to have to wait another year to camp out with new friends or awkward hall mates—many of whom aren't even interested in hockey and will spend most of the season asking what "offsides" means and how many more quarters are left in the game — to get your \$247 season tickets for Cornell Ice Hockey. You'll also miss out on the opportunity of participating in one of Cornell's greatest sports traditions.

Just kidding. Let's get real here: while Cornell hockey is a great university tradition, the ticket camp out really serves no useful purpose. Before I came to Cornell,

I was excited about this proverbial ticket line and looking forward to showing my commitment to the time honored tradition of camping out to get first dibs on good seats.

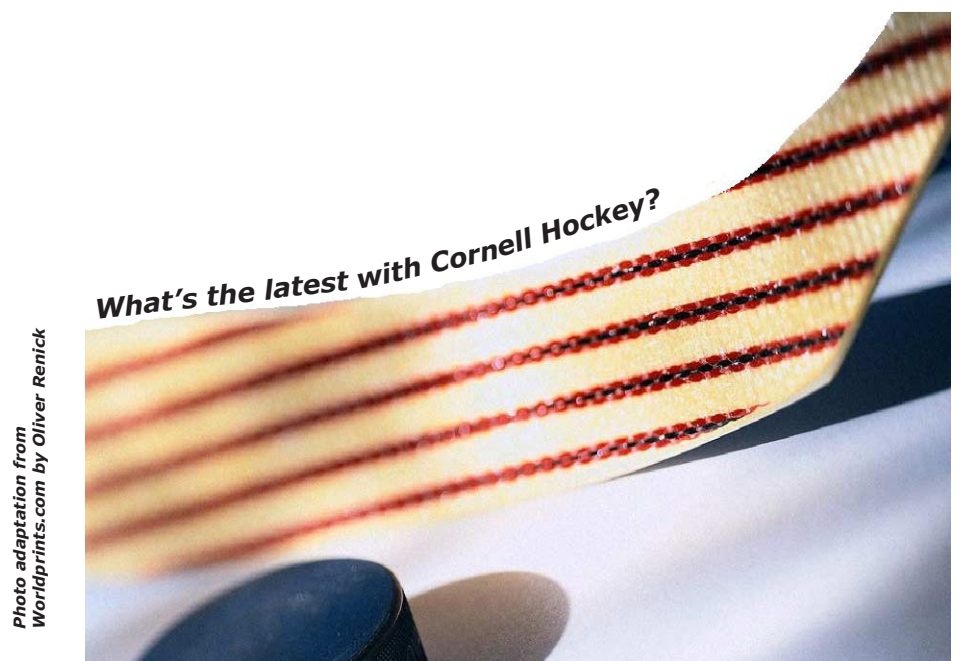
The real thing wasn't so glamorous. We showed up in the early evening and set up our sleeping bags inside a soccer goal, only to discover shortly that it was right next to the plug that 19 different people were planning on using for their big screen TVs and PS3s. It was hard falling asleep with dozens of people reviving the elementary school "yell the word for the male or female reproductive organs as loud as possible" game, and we were all rudely awoken at 7:00 AM by a loud bell to do "line number checks." I suppose the admins wanted to make sure that everybody who fell asleep in the room hadn't sleepwalked their way out of Bartels. Eight hours later, we finally got our tickets.

Everybody who signed up for the lottery last year got a ticket, so the

"camp out" was basically a small hurdle to check and see if you and your friends were committed enough to the seats to spend a night in some big room. What's the point, you ask? There was no point. The tickets could have easily been handed out after the lottery, as they will be this year. So no worries freshmen. Apart from the opportunity of getting sick for

three days—I actually did—or buying stale and overpriced slices of pizza after all other food sources have been depleted and doors have been locked at midnight, you won't be missing much.

Dennis Shiraev is a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences. He can be reached at des255@cornell.edu



Read the Cornell Review's Blog!

<http://cornellinsider.com/>

The Great Financial Crisis

What caused it? What is next? Lund Critical Debate panel tells all

WILLIAM WAGNER
STAFF WRITER

This was the second debate in the Lund Critical Debate series, entitled “The Great Financial Crisis: What Caused it? What is Next?” It featured Barry Eichengreen, Professor of Economics and Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley, Robert Kuttner, journalist, writer, and economist, and Eswar Prasad, Professor of Trade Policy at Cornell. The event was moderated by Jonathan Kirshner, professor of Government and Director of the Peace Studies Program at Cornell.

Professor Eichengreen began by saying that three main factors contributed to the financial crisis: an increase in competition and deregulation in the financial services industry, US monetary policy, and a global savings glut. The financial services industry was able to engage in increasingly risky and speculative activities fueled by loose money due to monetary policies and with the help of investors in countries such as China. He argued that these factors need to be understood from a historical point of view. After the Great Depression the financial system was tightly regulated, but over time restrictions were relaxed. Competition intensified

and institutions began to use more borrowed money, leading to instability. Over the past decade US Monetary policy has sought to target a low and stable rate of inflation to the exclusion of financial stability. This inflation targeting framework reflected the battle against inflation in the 1970s and 80s. The global savings glut refers to the large pool of savings in the world economy, much of which was directed to the U.S.

As for the recovery, Eichengreen said that we are going “nowhere fast.” There will be no quick recovery. The banks will not be lending, there will be an overhang of debt, and a combination of loose fiscal and tight monetary policies will not be investment-friendly. Furthermore, Eichengreen expressed concern that the critical window of opportunity for meaningful financial reform is now closing and that the sense of urgency is gone.

Mr. Kuttner agreed with Professor Eichengreen’s analysis. According to Kuttner, the financial industry became too complex to understand and too strong to constrain. High leverage ratios, often 30-1 and sometimes higher, increased the instability. Leverage ratios are the ratios of amount of borrowed money to cash. Over the past 30 years, he said, the financial industry

grew increasingly speculative as it fought for more deregulation. The lapse in regulation was due to ideology, corruption, and politics.

As the Great Depression grew distant, free market economics, or as Kuttner puts it, market fundamentalist ideology returned to popularity. Kuttner says that firms such as Goldman Sachs had a disproportionate amount of influence on the U.S. Treasury. Politics played a key role, as financial deregulation became the ideology and policy of both Republicans and Democrats. Kuttner even criticized President Obama for not doing enough to break with this ideology.

Professor Prasad pointed out there is a long list of villains complicit in the financial crisis. Not only was there regulatory failure in the U.S., but the rest of the world also provided easy money and fueled our consumption binge. Normally a large amount of borrowing would cause interest rates to rise. However, loose money from the rest of the world prevented these natural equilibration mechanisms from taking effect.

Prasad also pointed a finger at regular American citizens. The average American household was happy about the increase in financial wealth and allowed savings rates to drop to zero. To a very large

extent we are all responsible in the crisis. He states that the policy response was very aggressive but not entirely sensible. There remain impediments to a quick recovery. State and local governments are still hurting. The unemployment rate will likely rise this year.

Other economies, such as China, have begun to grow again. However, this is the result of the Chinese government forcing banks to lend money, resulting in the overbuilding of capacity in industries in which there was already excess capacity. China relies greatly on export to the U.S., but U.S. domestic consumption is not ready to absorb these Chinese exports.

Prasad also argued that the political will for reform is passing. Furthermore, the recent government bailouts have resulted in moral hazard. That is, firms will now be more apt to take on risk with the belief that the government will bail them out. There remains a large degree of systemic risk, and more needs to be done to prevent such a crisis from happening again.

William Wagner is a Freshman in the College of Arts and Sciences. He can be reached at wpw27@cornell.edu

New Fed Regulations on U.S. Banks

A POST BY LUCIA RAFANELLI, FOR CORNELLINSIDER.COM

Given the country’s current economic difficulties, the flurry of debate over how best to handle the problems faced by the financial sector is understandable. Americans are not only looking for a way to recover from recession, but also to avoid a resurgence of the risky lending practices on which many pin the blame for our economic woes. I propose that to do this, what we need is a return to good old-fashioned capitalist principles. Not surprisingly, the Fed disagrees.

In a New York Times Online article, the Times reports that the Fed is considering broad regulations on pay practices at US banks:

Fed officials will be scrutinizing whether the structure of compensation, like the use of bonuses based on the volume of loan origination, encourages excessive risk-taking.

Interesting. The last time I checked, we didn’t need the government to discourage

“excessive risk-taking”. The free market does that. That’s how capitalism works. Companies that take irrational risks are punished with decline and failure- that is, when Congress doesn’t step in and bail them out. In short, what the banking system needs now is not more public control of its pay practices, but less public subsidy of its failures. If banks knew they would face real danger of bankruptcy should they make overly risky investments, they would have greater incentive to avoid such risks. If they gave in and took unsuccessful risks anyway, they would go out of business or decline in prominence, and new, more cautious banks would rise to the top of the market hierarchy.

Far from moving the financial sector in this direction, however, the Fed’s proposed restrictions are simply one more step in the direction of a nationalized banking system. Under its new rules, the Fed would

even have the power to “evaluate each [bank’s] plan to see if the pay incentives properly balance goals of short-term sales and production against long-term risk-taking.” Once again, this is not the job of the government! It is a company’s job to evaluate the balance between short-term and long-term cost and benefit of a particular practice.

On an individual level, socializing such a job seems utterly ridiculous. For instance, I could study the weekend before finals, thus mitigating my long-term risks, or go to parties the weekend before finals, thus increasing my short-term enjoyment, but also increasing the longer-term risk of poor performance on my finals. Clearly, the choice between these two options is mine to make, and few people would argue that my peers should pay for a counselor to help me make my decision.

Further, if we wouldn’t, as a society, encourage such indulgence

with regards to a conflicted college student, why should we advocate it when it comes to our banking system? It is not the duty of the public at large to pay the salary of a guide for banks that refuse to control themselves, nor is it fair to the banks to have their free will stripped. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it is not fair to those that do control themselves for the government to assist their competition. So, rather than increasing government involvement in this area of US banking, we should instead put our trust in the capitalist system that has run our country for centuries.

Lucia Rafanelli is a freshman in the College of Arts and Sciences. She can be contacted at lmr93@cornell.edu

Legalization of Pot for Economic Gain?

OLIVER RENICK
MANAGING EDITOR
for collegejolt.com

Pot. Legalization. If you are over the age of 17 and you have not heard of the debate over marijuana legalization, then you must be walking, talking, and engaging in politically stimulating discourse in your sleep.

The subject of legalizing weed in the United States is a hot one. Unsurprisingly, many in the youth population are adamantly campaigning for the substance to be legal. Unsurprisingly, many in the adult population are doing the same. At very least, the sides are even; for all practical purposes, the opponents of legalization are obviously in the majority, as outlined pretty clearly by our existing laws. And these laws have created obstacles for many people. And to be honest, it is quite self-evident that it is in fact a “many people.” Just about any student in high school knows how surprisingly easy it can be to locate and obtain the drug. Every student in college knows how prevalent it is, even for those that do all they can in their power to avoid it. After most kids had left my dorm for a fall intermission break, I came back to find that my very neighbor had turned the building into, what smelled like, a well-harvested Sinaloan plantation.

So there it is – the elephant in the room is accepted. By no means, however, is the normality of getting high a reason for Dumbo to be legally stoned. The debate is much more multifaceted than that; it is a maze of economic, social, foreign policy, and humanitarian extrapolations, concerns, and maladies. Which is why when I read something as preposterously insulting as a recent Associated Press article on Yahoo covering the subject, I cringe in my seat and hope that our politicians have the discernment to think differently from Californian journalists and law-makers.

The article is quite long and anecdotal, so I will try to cover only the most hilarious and absurd parts. In essence, the piece centers on the idea that, in the wake of the economic crisis that is California, now is the time to legalize the green and start to cash in on the revenue. The idea here is that because the pot industry has been allowed to expand to its current size, the government should now accept it as a legal substance and begin to monitor and regulate its distribution, taxing wherever and whenever possible.

Stop.

The biggest problems with the stance taken by this article and the policy makers who advocate said stance appear within the first few paragraphs. Rather than nit-pick details or nuances, the problem here

is primarily conceptual; a sort of conflict of interests. If there is one time that the pot debate needs to take the backburner, it is in the middle of a major economic crisis. President Obama even hinted at this idea when he was first elected to office; when faced with the question of legalization, he answered ‘no,’ but in a manner that conveyed “I have an economy and a war to work out first.” In desperate times, people take desperate measures. So, although there could possibly be an income source for the state of California through pot, it should certainly not be a conclusion leapt to as a hasty last resort to save a crumbling state.

A quote directly from the article: “Local governments are malnourished and in need of revenue badly,” said Aaron Smith, state policy director for the Marijuana Policy Project, which advocates legalization. “There’s this multibillion-dollar industry that’s the elephant in the room that they’re not able to tap into.”

First issue: who wants to “tap into” an elephant? (see visual at right). Second issue: the very first sentence almost incidentally highlights the very problem of making this decision right now. The state is badly in need of money. Would it really be wise to take one side of a conflict at a very premature place and enact a history-making policy that could potentially be extremely detrimental to Americans, just to make a quick buck? The head of the legalization advocates said it himself: now they are doing everything they can to capitalize on the situation – stepping on a head when it’s drowning.

I promised hilarity; that wasn’t it. The funny part is that, even if this did occur, the state of California would then proceed to overload their people with MORE taxes. California’s taxes are already sky-high and at the same pace as New York’s. While obviously taxing the green would be the entire point, the irony here is rich.

A few paragraphs into the article, the author makes an excellent observation: “marijuana has transformed California.” So far so good. Continuing on, the discussion begins to revolve around the fact that the hash has become commonplace, is sold commonly in all kinds of dietary and thrift stores, and that anybody can get a prescription for medical marijuana as easy as they can a colonoscopy. Except that one of the procedures is a lot more popular,

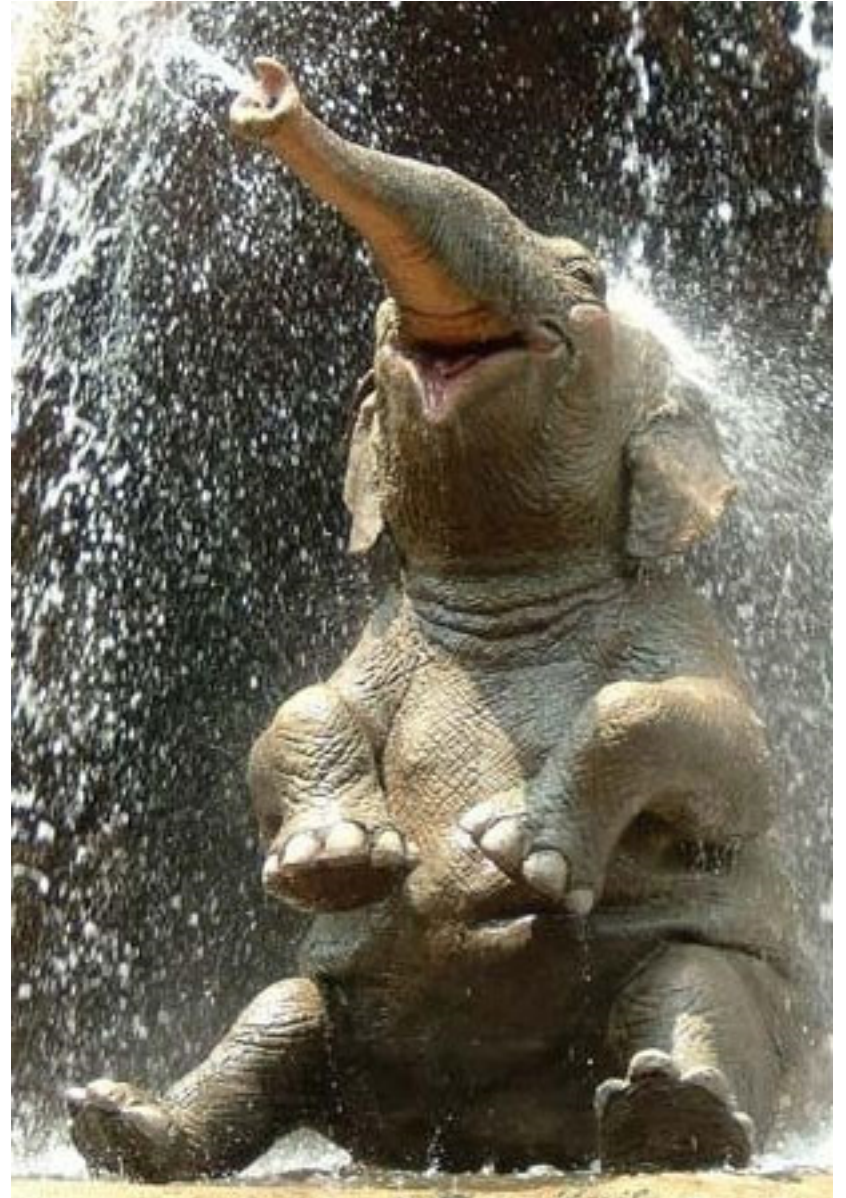


photo from babble.com

requires less paperwork, and does not involve a colonoscopy.

Now before I proceed any further, it is good to “rehash” what can already be known. There are a few dominant groups at play here on the pro-side of the debate. There are the potheads, who want to get baked, and do it without worries. Then there are the doctors and users, who desire the drug’s calming ability to soothe their pain, ability to think, etc. Lastly, there are those who realize the danger of both marijuana abuse and the trafficking involved, and desire a policy that will cause both to eventually dissipate. A long time naysayer of any kind of legalization, I now stand on the fence, though still tilted to the naysaying side, but with an open mind to the last kind of aforementioned activists.

The legalization of marijuana certainly has some promising aspects. With the private enterprises of weed competing and being distributed through bulks, the cost of growing and selling the substance would drop significantly, and ideally, eliminate the high-cost practice of black market and illicit drug dealing that is currently rampant. Concurrently, the government’s health department would do everything within its power to actively educate,

warn, and steer away potential users of the drug. The money saved from battling violent and nasty underground hash dealers could be used for advertising and teaching in the exact fashion that has assisted the country in turning around tobacco abuse.

In exploring the options surrounding this sticky situation, it is vital that participants do not succumb to the wayward and delusional visions of the extreme Bob Marley t-shirt toting pot activists that manipulate every argument for their own goal to abuse substances without reprimands. As one continues to read the article, it devolves from a discussion into what seems like a celebration.

The author goes on in great lengths to illuminate all of the fun, fascinating, creative facets of marijuana culture: the cool edible pot products (including gelato, olive oil, and soft drinks), using bat guano as fertilizer (guano = feces), the comfy community feeling created by working at a weed farm, the fact that chunks of money often reek of the plant, and a THC expo where models prance around covered up by only giant pot leaves. Sounds to me like a good idea for a third Ace Ventura.

Also, the miracle leaf has incredible healing powers:

...see *HIGH*, opposite

Because he got high...

HIGH

...continued from opposite

“He believes passionately in marijuana’s purported ability to treat the symptoms of diseases ranging from cancer to Alzheimer’s.” I have enough faith in the historical genius of our Nation’s doctors and physicians to believe that if toking up was as good of a method as chemotherapy, then they would have spilled the beans by now. Alzheimer’s has the infinitesimal possibility of having more relevance, as it is a mental condition, and most people are aware of the mental affects caused by weed. But let’s investigate this situation further and see how logical it seems. “Hi grandma, it’s me, Billy. You don’t remember me? That’s a shame, have a doobie. What’s that? You don’t remember how? Sure, I’ll do one, too.”

I remain skeptical. But, wait – the author does in fact point out the mal-effects of heavy marijuana usage:

“The plant’s prominence does not come without costs, say some critics. Marijuana plantations in remote forests cause severe environmental damage. Indoor

grow houses in some towns put rentals beyond the reach of students and young families. Rural counties with declining economies cannot attract new businesses because the available work force is caught up in the pot industry. Authorities link the drug to violent crime in otherwise quiet small towns.”

Really? Environmental problems? It is amazing what kind of sidetracking people will do to create the façade of weed being a harmless, fun pastime. Saying the worst part about serious weed usage is environmental problems, is like saying the worst part about the Salem witch burnings was that it took up too much gasoline, and it scared off newlywed couples from wanting to settle in the quaint little family town. What’s next? The worst part about human trafficking being the gaseous fumes emitted by trucks big enough to transport those obnoxious abductees?

What’s better though is the advocates mentioned in the article take care to point out that legalization would create many

fields in which revenue would be created – like advertising, tourism, and smoking paraphernalia. Advertising? One of the primary points of legitimate arguments to legalize pot, as mentioned before, is the fact that the government would then do all it can to launch an effective campaign against the use of the drug. Apparently the advocates mentioned here are on an entirely separate page – a page that wants to celebrate and popularize a drug culture rather than minimize it.

Seeing people’s motives when discussing this subject can be very easy with a keen eye. Unfortunately, it is often the case that these so called ‘green-rush’ advocates are in fact no more than marijuana users manipulating and twisting every situation into a scheme to freely use the drug. The problem with this is that it inhibits and slows down much-needed progress to be made in developing a solution to a pandemic.

So whether it is the author

selectively choosing interviewees, or the entire state of California being a clown show, it is articles like these that insult me as a reader and a progressive looking for a resolution to a very serious issue that is endangering many regions of our great country, both mentally and physically. I’m not entirely sure what was going on in the author’s mind while writing the article, but it seems he was a little caught up with the weed olive oil and sugar pot fairies prancing around in their cannabis bikinis.

In fact, I wouldn’t be surprised if he were testing out a little of the sticky green himself to make sure his assessments were “accurate.” I could easily see him reciting some Afroman lyrics to his editor: “I was gonna write an article...but then I got highh...” Lah dee dee daa...

Oliver Renick is a sophomore in the College of Engineering. He can be contacted at ojr5@cornell.edu

Cato Vice President Boaz Visits Cornell

DENNIS SHIRAEV
CAMPUS NEWS EDITOR
for cornellinsider.com

David Boaz, the Executive Vice President of the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., delivered a talk yesterday in McGraw 165 on the different ways in which freedom is under attack in American society. The talk was put together by the Cornell College Republicans as well as the Freedom and Free Societies program at Cornell. Boaz was introduced by Cornell History Professor Barry Strauss.

While Boaz was highly critical of the Obama administration’s current policies, he was quick to emphasize that the Bush administration also did much to restrict Americans’ freedoms over the past eight years. The Bush administration oversaw the passage of the Patriot Act, increased federal involvement in interstate commerce, passed new restrictions on core political speech, increased federal spending, and expanded the federal government’s ability to arrest a citizen without proper due process of the law. At the same time,

Boaz clearly stated his belief that the Obama administration using the financial crisis to take control of things not completely controlled by the government, like energy, education, and healthcare. (He quoted Rahm Emanuel, who said that Obama will not waste the opportunity of the financial crisis). The financial crisis was facilitated by government involvement in sub-prime mortgage lending as well as the government’s “too big to fail” policies, which allowed and encouraged financial institutions to take unnecessary risks without having to face the normal consequences of losses.

Despite the inevitable growth of government over the next four years, Boaz was optimistic about the growing popularity of libertarian ideas in American politics. Konstantin Drabkin, the President of the Cornell College Republicans, seemed to agree: “The spread of libertarianism has been staggering, especially



Photo by Dennis Shiraev

among students. I definitely see the Republican party heading in a more libertarian direction in the near future.”

Boaz ended by saying that there has never been a golden age of liberty and freedom, and, unfortunately, there never will be. This is why America

will always have a need for young conservatives/libertarians promoting the ideals of individual rights and limited government.

Dennis Shiraev is a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences. He can be reached at des255@cornell.edu

Find us on the web: <http://thecornellreview.com/>

Wisemen and Fools Pat Noonan

If you're an avid reader of the Cornell Review, then you probably recognize the back page as the area where the editors compile a list of quotes from wise men and foolish men. Well this time the only person here is Pat Noonan. Is he a wise man or a fool? You decide:

When I first came onto the Review staff a year ago, I wrote about the leftist intolerance I experienced while distributing copies of the paper throughout my freshman dorm, Clara Dickson Hall. An entire year later, although new freshmen were much more receptive, our peaceful and unintrusive distribution entourage (of 2 people) on Monday evening came to a startling end accompanied with arrest threats and acerbic tones.

Apparently, walking through dorms as a non-resident is a high-profile offence. While I acknowledge that this is in fact a rule, we were unaware at the time and were under the impression

that any Cornell student could visit other dorms. Given the numerous different club and sport representatives that knocked on my door and attempted to recruit me and my hall mates freshman year (including textbook buy-back, religious groups, charity, etc.), I did not think that such an act was a regularly enforced one that warranted such intense and volatile enforcement.

Regardless, our excursion ended on the fourth floor with hard-nose RA Pat Noonan. As we spoke with students sitting in hallways about our publication, Mr. Noonan listened in from his room and observed until stopping us in the hallway. Mr. Noonan then asked if we were residents in the hall, to which we politely replied, 'no.' Without ado, he told us to "then get out." In an extremely unfriendly and cold manner, RA Noonan reiterated that we must leave immediately and threatened to call the police. As we were escorted out of the dormitory, Mr. Noonan refused our offer of a free

copy of the Review, saying, "I am a senior, I've been here for four years. I know what the Review is." Just before leaving, Review representatives and Noonan decided it would be best to take up the matter with the RHD. After finding out the RHD was not in the building at the time, Review reporters left quietly and returned home.

While we now understand that entering a dorm as a non-resident without an escort is against policy, we cannot grasp any idea why we were met with such unwarranted hostility, anger, and threatened arrest. Had he kindly informed of us of dorm policy and asked us to leave we would not have to take issue with his behavior. However, this was clearly not the case and his apparent aversion to the Review organization makes it seem like this could possibly have been a politically-motivated action.

Members of the Review are now aware of dorm policy

that was made clear by Mr. Noonan and sincerely apologize to anyone who was offended or unhappy with our unescorted presence in the dorm.

“

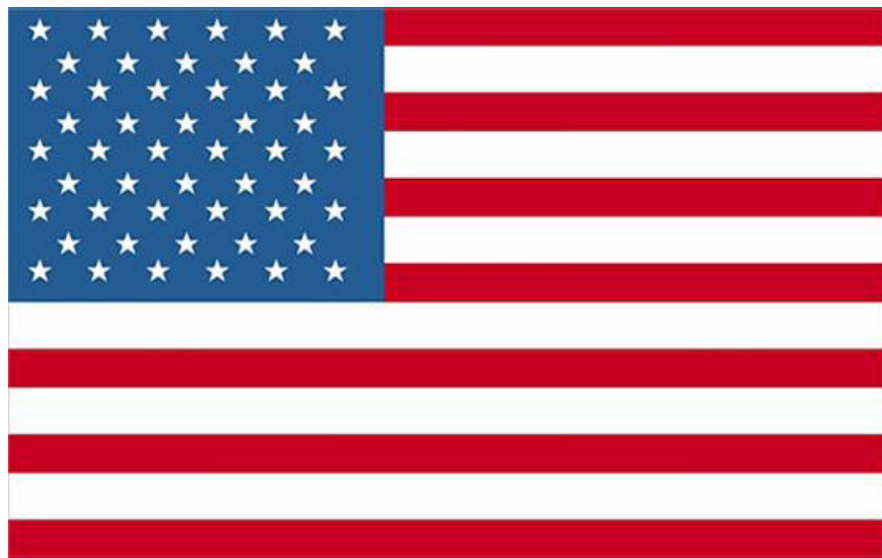
**Then get out...
I am a senior,
I've been here
for four years.**

**I know what
the Review is.**

“

- Dickson RA Pat Noonan

In your heart, you know we're right.



Join The Review

Send us an email at wpl5@cornell.edu or
come to GWS 160 on Mondays at 5:00