

## Vice President of Student Affairs Addresses Controversy Over Discontinuing Rotation Events

**Maxwell Montemayor,  
Michael Gutierrez**  
News

There has been a lot of buzz about the vague spectre of “admin” banning undergraduate house events, both during and outside Rotation this year. In continuing this discussion between tradition and inclusivity, the *Tech* interviewed Dr. Kevin Gilmartin, Vice President for Student Affairs, to get his perspective on the matter. Our conversation focused on two specific issues: Blacker Hovse’s Potato Cannon, and Ricketts Hovse’s Rotation Dinner Skits.

Blacker’s Potato Cannon, built for a Ditch Day stack in 2002, is a compressed air tank attached to a ~10ft pipe which fires whole potatoes into a wall at point-blank range in the Blacker Hovse courtyard. The showers of potato fragments and loud firing sounds have delighted and entertained two decades’ worth of prefrish – but not everyone. According to Dr. Gilmartin, multiple students have come to him to express concerns about the violent, weapon-like nature of the cannon.

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“We live in a country where shootings associated specifically with schools are an ongoing trauma,” Dr. Gilmartin told us. He emphasized Student Affairs’ consistent philosophy of supporting students and fostering safe spaces, especially relevant when wars start, in light of the recent outbreak of violence in the Middle East.

With this in mind, for this year’s Rotation, Dr. Gilmartin personally instructed Blacker Hovse leadership to discontinue firing their Potato Cannon. They complied, but not without backlash from hovse members, who felt like this has harmed student traditions and freedoms, and were unhappy with the fact that Dr. Gilmartin’s instructions were given on very short notice.

“This change was super unexpected as we found out the Friday before rotation,” said Jade Millan (ME ’25), a Blacker Social Team Chair. “We had to submit NEW event proposals for a backup event, but it was the weekend so admin wouldn’t even see it until Monday at the earliest.” (Rotation started the following Wednesday.)

Regarding the short notice of the cancellation of these events, Dr. Gilmartin apologized and

said that “In the future we will give more advanced notice for what is approved for rotation.”

Of course, the Fleming Cannon still fired at the end of Rotation, as is tradition. Given that the Fleming Cannon is significantly louder when fired, members of Blacker felt that they were being subjected to a double standard.

“I feel that if the concern really was that students will be traumatized to see something that resembles a weapon, then the same treatment should be applied to the literal war instrument every student walks past on the Olive Walk every day,” Blacker Hovse President Aditee Prabhutendolkar (CNS ’24) told the *Tech*.

In response, Dr. Gilmartin explained during our interview that the Fleming Cannon is an exemption. He said it is an “institute-wide tradition [and] legacy activity,” so he is unable to hold it to the same standard as individual house traditions, despite confirming that it also receives similar complaints to the Potato Cannon.

Ricketts Hovse also faced restrictions on their Dinner Skits, which are short, chaotic performances put on by Skurves during Rotation Dinners. According to Dr. Gilmartin, students have also complained to him about some of these skits, which is the reason they have come under scrutiny in the first place.

For example, during “Joyous Celebration”, a piñata full of spaghetti is whacked open and a cake is dropped on the floor. Dr. Gilmartin described this skit to the *Tech* as an “irresponsible performance of privilege in a world where food insecurity is real.” He added, “A ritual exercise of house culture that ostentatiously takes advantage of this shows our privilege and is extremely inappropriate.”

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He also mentioned that he expressed disapproval for this skit during previous Rotations. “A few years ago, I expressed concerns to the IHC about food waste... I made it very clear to the IHC that this needed to stop. So this year I did what I told them I was going to do.” (Regarding rejecting Ricketts’ event proposal.)

However, Ricketts Hovse President Meg Robertson (GeoCh 24’) told the *Tech* that she had no knowledge of these previous talks with the IHC.

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## The Honor Code is Falling Apart. We are the Problem. We are the Solution.

By: HEIDI REDMOND - BoC Co-Secretary; ALEX BURR - ARC Chair  
With Help From: GABI TWOMBLY - ASCIT President; JONATHAN BOOKER - ASCIT Treasurer  
MICHAEL GUTIERREZ - Tech Editor in Chief; ALEXIS WANG - BoC Co-Secretary

“Students run for the Board of Control so that they can acquit their friends of Honor Code violations.”

“Faculty think I’m lying when I say I’m sick.”

“Houses send out answer keys so that everyone can get the answers.”

“Students sit down in large groups and collaborate on exams.”

“Professors intentionally create tests and problem sets which are impossible to finish.”

“Administrators are actively working against students.”

### WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

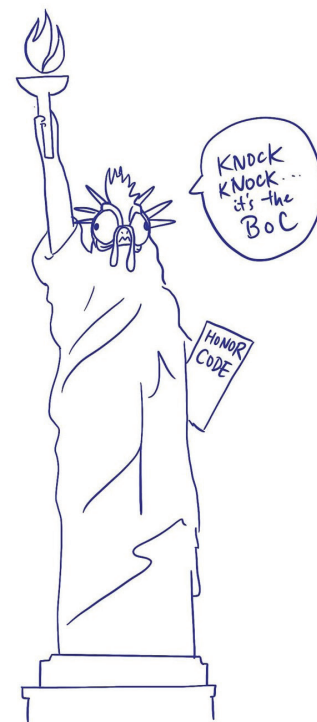
These rumors above, which the Board of Control (BoC) Leadership has heard from faculty and students, are indicators that some Caltech Community members believe that other community members inherently operate against the Honor Code. What does this say about the state of our Honor System? Can we have an Honor Code where only some people believe in it? Do we have an Honor Code if no one believes in it? No.

Caltech Faculty members have begun reevaluating the relevance of the Honor Code in their classrooms because they are losing faith in the ability of the student body to fulfill their responsibilities to the Honor Code. Students are worried about the state of the Honor Code because they think they are the only ones following it, believing faculty and administrative offices on campus are not held accountable for honor code violations. The number of reports of honor code violations has been elevated since the 2015-16 academic year, but during the year of online learning, reports of honor code violations further increased to 3 to 4 times the baseline case

load. While the number of reports of honor code violations has fallen to the 2015-16 level, the stress placed on the Board of Control pushed it to the verge of failure. The BoC system implemented almost 100 years ago was not built to process this high case load, not built to withstand the ire of distrustful members of the Caltech community, and not built to protect a community, who, whether due to disinterest, fear, or overworkedness, is in some part negligent of the implications and applications of the Honor Code.

### NEW CHANGES

In order to survive, the Board of Control turned to the Dean’s Office for support and further illuminated its proceedings and philosophies to faculty. This necessary and important transparency has come at the cost of the BoC remaining fully autonomous and student-run. Though all decision-making continues to lie in the hands of student leaders, the Undergraduate Dean’s Office and the Faculty Board have issued requirements for the continued existence of a student-run BoC, which have been implemented as of this term (fall 2023). These changes include alternative resolution processes, such as the Early Resolution Option (ERO), which decrease the urgency for assembling full boards for hearings. We have also developed new methods of evidence collection and dissemination to the BoC representatives and designated roles for faculty within the Board of Control process. As a result of this, BoC cases are now almost always resolved within 1 term and generally in ~5 weeks. Additionally, the BoC has updated its reporting procedures such that whom-ever submits a report or concern of an honor code violation is now always notified of the outcome of the case (previously this was only opt-in), to further increase the transparency of the BoC’s proceedings.



Art: Emily Choe

On top of these changes to the proceedings of the BoC, there are more widespread changes being considered by faculty at the department level regarding course policies as a result of inflated concerns of “widespread” cheating and decreasing faith in the Honor Code at Caltech. (Students are left out of many of these discussions). We’ve already seen the beginnings of these changes in our classes. Course syllabi are becoming more stringent about the rights of students. More and more exams are becoming in-person and proctored, to the detriment of both students and faculty. While in-person exams are not an honor code violation, their increasing presence highlights the decreasing faith in the honor code. Moreover, if these proctored exams are not implemented properly, e.g. taking into consideration scheduling conflicts of students and TAs, accessibility concerns, and temporary illnesses & other unforeseen events, they can easily give some students an unfair advantage over other students. All of these additional considerations waste the time and energy of faculty, students, and TAs, and most notably, these considerations are unnecessary with take-home exams. By implementing changes such as moving to in-person, proctored exams, we move towards a system which sacrifices the autonomy we hold dear in order to protect the Caltech Community.

It should be noted that there exists a subset of the current undergraduate body which has proclivity for cheating, a small, but non-negligible portion of current students. The BoC is working to publish its case statistics on Donut ([https://donut.caltech.edu/lib/BoC\\_Statistics](https://donut.caltech.edu/lib/BoC_Statistics)).

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### Rotation Events

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"This was definitely portrayed [to me] as a new policy," she said.

Also canceled was the Mama Bird Baby Bird part of the "Nature is Beautiful" skit, in which a Skurve would chew up food, then spit the half-chewed food into another consenting Skurve's mouth. Dr. Gilmartin asserted that this concept is "disgusting".

"Spitting food in one another's mouths - this is not the first time I've had to sit in a room and articulate why that's unacceptable," he told us. "If this is a pivotal activity to a house's personality, then that is the real issue."

Many students fear these encroaching restrictions will

**"If this is a pivotal activity to a house's personality, then that is the real issue."**

continue the pattern of further limiting house freedoms.

"It's infuriating," says David Melisso (EE '23), who helped organize much of Blacker's Rotation. "When I was a freshman many years ago, the seniors told stories about how more and more events were being prohibited. Now, having seen this trend continue, I can't imagine what will be left four years from now."

However, Dr. Gilmartin emphasized the difference between Student Affairs' views of and intentions toward Rotation events and everyday house activities.

"As VPSA, it's my responsibility to ensure that the traditions are consistent with Caltech values, particularly during Rotation, because it's expected for all students to be involved. There must be a higher threshold for what's appropriate to welcome new community members. It might be a little different from the normal house community... I know, individual houses feel strongly about their traditions, but these are institute facilities. Anything that represents Caltech faculty and students needs to have some sense of social responsibility."

In response to a previous article in the Tech about the Blacker Potato Cannon, we received messages from Caltech alumni expressing disappointment with its discontinuation. "I'm just gonna passive aggressively send this article in response next time I get an email asking me to donate," wrote Alejandro López (BS '21, Ricketts).

But, as Dr. Gilmartin pointed out, the same thing happened

**"I'm just gonna passive aggressively send this article in response next time I get an email asking me to donate."**

in 1960 when Caltech started admitting women for the first time. That upset a lot of alumni too; it was an established 70-year-strong tradition to only admit men. That change was forced on the students whether they liked it or not. But looking back, it was obviously the right thing to do.

Dr. Gilmartin believes that changes in tradition come naturally with a changing world. "Traditions are part of the present. They evolve and change over time as communities do."

## Embracing the Joy of Loss: A Heartfelt Reflection on Dabney's Spirited Interhouse Basketball Season

Lilia Arrizabalga  
Sports

Interhouse basketball just finished, and I would like to reflect on the season. Dabney showed up to a full 3 out of our 7 games and proudly lost all of them. Personally, I scored a whole one point for my team which is more than I ever could have imagined given basketball is my least favorite sport and I don't actually know all the rules.

Despite all this, I still had a lot of fun. Sure, getting dunked on repeatedly across two 15 minute halves might not seem appealing, but I managed to enjoy myself throughout all the losing we were doing. Interhouse sports are a fun way for me to get exercise and relax from doing my sets. They are a set 2 hours a week (or, let's face it, maybe 1 hour every other week if I'm lucky) during which I can just have fun, exercise, and not have to worry about my sets. Exercise is a great way to destress and helps keep me sane. I might be bad at basketball, but even so I still spend my time running up and down the court trying in vain to stand in front of people at least a foot taller than me to stop them from scoring.

The other reason I enjoy interhouse sports is the community, or if you'll forgive me the cliché, the people. I get to play sports with 5 other darbs who I enjoy hanging out with in a non set based environment. Some of my first social interactions with people in my house back when I was a frosh were from playing dodgeball with them. Losing badly, together, is probably one of the best bonding activities out there, aside from maybe actually winning.

And the social interaction doesn't just come from within the house, after all, it's called interhouse for a reason. It is fun to see people from other houses and play sports with them, especially when I know them and get to chuck a dodgeball at them. But even beyond that, the community of people who show up to interhouse sports is incredibly kind and inviting. Multiple times people who are not in Dabney have come to play with us because we were short people, or they just wanted to play. And many times, after it's clear Dabney has lost anyway our opponents will lend us players. I think it's a microcosm of the collaborative Caltech spirit, even if you can really collaborate on a basketball game. The people just want to play basketball and they'll do it even if they're technically on the opposing (losing) side.

Maybe this article will convince more darbs to play sports but I'm not hopeful. Darbs are not the most athletically inclined of people even despite my affirmation that you don't have to be good at a sport to play. Still, I look forward to interhouse frisbee next term next term and interhouse frisbee. With any luck we might manage to win a game! (Although the odds of that happening are incredibly low.)

## Winter Wonders: Non-Alcoholic Beverages to Brighten Your Break

Ankita Nandi  
Food

What's more joyful than having a little fun beverage as you're winding down for the term and about to go on winter break? All the following drinks are non-alcoholic and unless otherwise stated, vegan. Enjoy! Feel free to make them a little extra special if you're so inclined ;) Some are common drinks, some are taken from the Page Happy Hour menus, some are made up on the spot. Submit your reviews to the next issue of The Tech.

**Screwdriver**  
Orange juice. That's it. Get your Vitamin C!

**Pomegranate Fizz**  
• Pomegranate juice  
• Sparkling apple cider  
• Lemon juice

A perfect blend of sweet and sour, this drink is a nice refresher with the hints of pomegranate and apple lighting up your taste buds. The lemon juice adds a little extra kick. If you don't want sparkling apple cider, club soda or tonic water will also do the job of making it "fizz."

**Vampire Kiss**  
• Cranberry juice  
• Raspberry syrup  
• Lemon juice  
• Grenadine

From the Page Halloween Happy Hour menu, a red drink for you to fill your bloodthirsty needs. Though maybe it's closer to a Mistletoe Moment now?

**Daisy Mint**  
• Grenadine  
• Lemon juice and tonic water or lemonade  
• Mint garnish

Named after the nearby Thai restaurant, a little sweet drink. Not many actual ingredients, but you'll get sweetness from the grenadine (and maybe lemonade), and some necessary acidity from the lemon(ade).

**Mango Smash**  
• Mango pulp  
• Tonic or soda water

Another simple drink, nothing else to it. Use tonic instead of soda water if you want some flavor aside from carbonation.

**Spiced Apple Cider**  
• Cloves  
• Cinnamon  
• Apple juice or apple cider

Sprucing up normal apple cider for the holiday season! The perfect warm drink to cozy up in your pajamas on the couch. Or cold if you would rather. Heating the cider on the stove and adding cloves and cinnamon helps add some flavors to otherwise ordinary apple juice.

## Caltech's Undergraduate Challenge: Balancing Rigor with Well-Being in an Intense Academic Culture

Skye Ruedas  
Editorial

Caltech's rigorous academic environment is well-known, but to shed some new light on the actual daily grind of undergraduates.

At the California Institute of Technology, a campus known for its intense academic focus, the life of an undergraduate is often seen as a mystery of time management and intellectual endurance. To understand this better, I decided to conduct an unofficial survey (N=12) to shed some new light on the actual daily grind of undergraduates. It focused on their academic workload outside of class hours, unit enrollment, and sleep patterns.

My survey, comprising responses primarily from junior year students across various departments, reveals a fascinating yet challenging picture of student life at Caltech. On average, students reported dedicating 5-8 hours each day to their studies outside of their scheduled classes. This time commitment fluctuates based on the proximity of deadlines and the intensity of their coursework.

A crucial aspect of their academic life is the number of units undertaken. Most juniors are currently enrolled in 39-48 units per term, a testament to their academic ambition and the institute's demanding nature. Balancing such a heavy course load with research, extracurricular activities, sports, job hunting, and personal time is an impressive challenge.

Another critical factor in the life of a student is sleep, often sacrificed at the altar of academic rigor. However, the survey results are somewhat reassuring in this regard, with students averaging 6-8 hours

of sleep per night. This range, though variable, is close to the general sleep recommendations for adults and indicates a level of balance in the lives of these students.

"The workload can be overwhelming, but it's just part of the school's experience," said Rachael Kim (CS '25, Fleming) reflecting on this balance.

A significant number of students also voiced concerns about the impact of this workload on their mental health. While striving to do well in their classes, many reported feelings of stress, anxiety, and even depression.

So what does this mean for the Caltech community? For undergrads, it's validation of their hard work and time management skills. For graduate students, administrators, and professors, it provides insight into the challenges and needs of their younger peers. It also raises questions about the long-term implications of such an intense academic schedule on students' mental and physical health. As the institute continues to foster a culture of excellence, this data may serve as a guide for developing strategies to support student well-being, ensuring that the workload does not come at the cost of personal health.

In conclusion, this survey offers a glimpse behind the curtain, showcasing both the remarkable dedication of these students and the ongoing need for supportive measures to maintain a healthy balance. While hard work is crucial, ensuring it doesn't compromise student well-being is just as important. As the community reflects on these findings, the hope is to foster an environment where intellectual rigor and personal health can coexist.

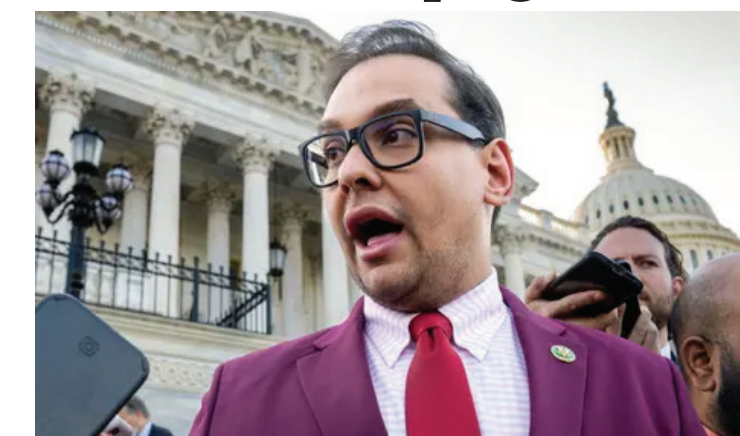
## U.S. House of Representatives Ethics Committee Probes Congressman Santos Amidst Fraud Allegations and Lavish Misuse of Campaign Funds

Jonathan Booker  
The Outside World

In a shocking development that has significantly impacted the political scene, Congressman George Santos from New York's 3rd congressional district is under intense scrutiny due to allegations of fraud and deceit. This situation has led to a thorough investigation by the House Ethics Committee. George Santos, the first openly LGBTQ+ Republican elected to Congress, has been engulfed in controversy following the discovery of his fabricated biography and employment history. Investigations have revealed numerous false statements about his education, employment history, criminal record, financial status, ethnicity, and religion. Santos faces legal issues in both U.S. and Brazilian jurisdictions. In Brazil, he is confront-

ing rekindled charges of check fraud from 2008. In the United States, he has been involved in legal matters including eviction and personal debt cases. In 2023, Santos pleaded not guilty to 23 fraud-related charges in federal indictments. Despite these issues, he survived two expulsion votes in Congress but announced he would not run for re-election after a damaging report by the House Ethics Committee. This report found that he used campaign donations for personal luxuries, including a lavish trip to Atlantic City, botox treatments, OnlyFans subscriptions, and other extravagant expenses. The House Ethics Committee, tasked with maintaining behavioral standards among House members, initiated an investigation into Santos' actions. This probe focuses on his false statements, legal challenges, and the implications of the federal indictments. The complete

details of the Committee's findings are pending, but they are expected to significantly affect Santos' congressional future. Expulsion from Congress, an extreme and infrequent action, necessitates a two-thirds majority vote and has only occurred five times in U.S. history. The process involves an exhaustive investigation, a report, and a vote by the full House. If it results in expulsion, the Santos case could create a notable precedent in congressional history. The media has been pivotal in exposing Santos' false background, underscoring the importance of diligent journalistic investigation in politics. However, the media's failure to detect Santos' actions before his election is noteworthy. Politically, opinions vary, with some advocating for his immediate resignation, while others await the results of ongoing investigations. Surprisingly,



some House Republicans support efforts to expel Santos, despite their narrow majority. The Santos controversy has ignited a wider debate on political integrity and the efficiency of congressional oversight mechanisms. It raises important questions about the conduct standards for elected officials and the public's trust in them. The ongoing saga of Congress-

man George Santos marks a pivotal moment in American politics, highlighting the difficulties in upholding ethical standards and accountability. As the investigation by the House Ethics Committee progresses, the nation eagerly anticipates the final decision regarding a congressman whose career has been riddled with unprecedented controversy.

## Caltech's Couch Catastrophe: Renovation Efforts Undermine Student Collaboration, Comfort, and Experience

Lily Coffin  
Opinion

The most fundamental tenet of a Caltech undergraduate education is training students to collaborate effectively in order to solve the most difficult problems in science and math today. And yet, the sanctity of every common lounge space in every undergraduate house, the home of collaboration, is at risk due to a recent renovation effort by the Housing Office.

House stewards are students responsible for facilitating communication between the houses and the Housing Office. Stewards were initially very excited by the news that the housing office was planning a full remodel of many common lounge spaces including new couches,

tables, carpets, and paint. An email was sent out to house stewards by Associate Director of Housing, Joe Bennethum on July 20th, 2023, which expressed a very tight timeline for ordering the couches for all residences. Stewards were given a window between 3:14pm and noon the following day to stop by the housing office and choose color samples, with no additional opportunities to weigh in on supplier, quality, style, material, or delivery date.

Due to safety regulations relating to fire hazard (among other things), the Housing office is required to adhere to fairly strict guidelines regarding any furniture put into public spaces. The office chooses furniture selections from a particular catalogue and supplier to be sure any furniture purchased meets

the guidelines. Allegedly, the new couches in particular were selected because they are the most comfortable in the catalogue, though the standard of comfort must be difficult to communicate through a written catalogue.

When Blacker Hovse finally received the replacement couches last week, everyone was disturbed to realize the extent of the damage caused by this "upgrade." The new couches are very small and uncomfortable. They have single handedly transformed our beloved homes into stuffy corporate lounge spaces. Imagine settling in after a Tuesday night power hum to work on your sets for the week, and in the place of your favorite cushy leather couch is a roughly one-half scale replica; rough uphol-

stery stretched neatly over what must be a large stack of plush cardboard. Given that mental health at Tech is on the decline and cheating on the incline, the loss of nearly every comfortable space to work collaboratively or decompress socially in the undergraduate houses is sure to raise students' frustrations. This disregard shown to the quality of student experience is horrendously unbecoming one of the most prestigious academic institutions in science.

Where is the failure in the chain of command that allowed for the destruction of student run, house owned spaces at such a large scale? This incident is indicative of a much greater legacy of Caltech admin offices refusing to maintain any accountability to student leaders or the student body they rep-

resent. According to Ricketts House Steward Daniel Amelinez-Robles, "we were told we can't have them back...they're going to get swapped no matter what." Old couches were presumed to be tossed out in the dumpster, but Administrators have alluded to couches in good condition being repurposed in non-house spaces across campus. Hopefully in the coming weeks, stewards will receive more answers about the relocation of student couches, and a solution for the new universally abysmal seating options across all undergraduate houses.

Blacker and Lloyd have already suffered this fatal blow to comfort, and now the rest of us must wait with bated breath until the rest of our homes are butchered.

## The Friday Nights At Freddy's Movie: A Fan and Moviegoer's Perspective

Ai-Dan Le  
Culture

For long-time fans of the Five Nights At Freddy's (FNAF) franchise, the creator Scott Cawthon's departure from video games as a medium to film was a highly anticipated one. In between false positives and speculation, the FNAF movie finally released on October 27, 2023, just in time for the Halloween season. While generally positively received, there was still some controversy surrounding the movie regarding changes to the canon storylines of the original game, and a low rating from the film critic community. Regardless, the movie still managed to pull through with its references to the games, community, and pre-existing meaning established in the games.

Even in a vacuum, the movie is worth a watch - for those who were dragged along by their friends to a movie about a franchise you know nothing about, the FNAF movie is still a fun experience. For my fellow horror movie fans - while more of a comedy mixed with a horror, you'll still find joy in the dread-building that Blumhouse is so well known for,

just as much as those who were dragged along by their friends to a movie about a franchise you know nothing about, the FNAF movie is still a fun experience. For my fellow horror movie fans - while more of a comedy mixed with a horror, you'll still find joy in the dread-building that Blumhouse is so well known for,

Note: the following detailed review will include spoilers for the movie, including changes to the story, cameos, and references.

First and foremost, for fans of the movie, their enjoyment/opinion of the movie will depend almost entirely on how much they are willing to let go of the main storyline for the sake of a fresh one separate from the original canon. While the inclusion of Vanessa as William Afton's daughter can be interpreted as an attempt by Cawthon to shoehorn in the canon of the newer games into the old ones, it is also an interesting choice that allows long time fans to stay on their toes during the movie. By deviating from the games, the movie keeps FNAF fans and non fans anticipating what's next, and ultimately putting both audiences on an equal playing field.

The choices made in chang-

ing the story are interesting ones; firstly, Mike Schmidt being an entirely separate entity from Michael Afton (who may not even exist in the movie's version of events) is one of the most controversial ones. While many details of his life remain the same, such as having lost a brother and having a younger sister, crucial elements are missing. Within the original games, Mike Schmidt existing as an alias for Michael Afton serves as a driving plot point - a search for answers due to what is almost an inherited burden.

On the other hand - it is also obvious why this choice was made - the lore of the games is both incredibly convoluted and also covers far too long of a timeline to be appropriately covered within a single movie, much less 1 hour and 50 minutes. The new storyline, in comparison, still manages to maintain some core characteristics of Mike's personality, alongside making him a character that you can truly root for on screen.

However, the movie manages to make up for this loss of understanding by adding in small details that would only be visible from the eyes of a fan. For example, a major cameo from MatPat, a behemoth in the FNAF theory community,

and his signature catchphrase, "that's just a theory!" elicited gasps and pointing fingers from the audience when the movie first screened. Along with this, there were subtle nods towards the contributions of the community - songs, creators, and small details only revealed through years of theorizing.

In conclusion, if you don't mind the canon being changed

too much for the sake of a good story, or even if you're a person who knows nothing about FNAF, the Five Nights At Freddy's Movie is very much worth a watch. As a person who enjoys both the original games and horror movies in general, the elements of the story, production, and characters manage to captivate and leave a hefty impression.



**THE CALIFORNIA TECH**  
**LLM-FREE SINCE 2023!**



# Gayboys.docx

Editor's note: This letter was emailed to the Tech's business address with the subject line "Letter to the editor (okay to publish)" from one ulela@yahoo.com. The yahoo.com should have been enough to justify deleting the email immediately. So should've the first sentence of the article. But upon googling the guy, and reading the first result: "Heterosexuals Organized for a Moral Environment (HOME) is an American pro-heterosexuality, anti-homosexuality organization founded by Wayne Lela and...". I realized that this is far too funny not to publish. So without further ado, enjoy.

We used to be able to count on younger generations to challenge and question older generations, challenge and question the status quo, the establishment, the powers-that-be. You might say it was their job, their function. And that urge to challenge is probably natural. Just looking at the animal kingdom, where younger animals, for example, will challenge older animals to see who gets to lead and reproduce ("survival of the fittest"), so young people are probably naturally driven to challenge older people.

The current younger generation, however, is a disappointment and almost an embarrassment [sic.] to previous younger generations. Instead of challenging the establishment, it is letting the establishment walk all over them, letting the establishment impose its very questionable and arguably corrupt values on them. The younger generation doesn't seem to be able to see that it's being lied to, misled, manipulated, and indoctrinated by the establishment.

(It should be noted that the current establishment is very left-wing. Left-wingers dominate the news media, the educational system, the entertainment industry, social media, many government bureaucracies, and even many corporations.)

Perhaps the best example of the Big Lies the left-wing establishment has successfully spread is the "Born That Way" propaganda. There never was any solid science to back that up. Nobody has ever found a "gay gene" in humans yet. Indeed, the latest science basically proved there are NO gay genes in humans. But so many people have fallen for the specious propaganda that heterophobic homosexuals are born that way.

The younger generation needs to wake up and see what's really happening. So many of them are being cheated out of a proper education, are being indoctrinated instead of educated. Sad to say, but they are being played for fools and don't even know it. Sincerely, Wayne Lela

## Response Editorial Lilia Arrizabalaga

Lela claims there is no "gay gene". Well if that's the case, explain this picture:



My DNA (2023, colorized)

It is ironic in a way that Lela is himself telling the younger generation to challenge the older generation as that is, in essence, what is happening here. Lela (a member of the older generation) is telling the younger generation (college campus) how homosexuality is immoral. Should we not then take his advice and challenge this notion? Indeed, support for gay rights has always been more popular with the younger generations than the older ones and many of the pushes for gay rights have come from younger generations.

In fact, the Stonewall riots (often cited as a major part of the early gay rights movement) was composed of mainly the younger generation (at the time). If one argues that the legalization of gay marriage (still relatively recent) is part of the establishment and status-quo that needs to be challenged by the younger generation, then surely the foundations of our entire nation ought to be reversed every generation. The continuing obstacles for gay rights are primarily put in place by the older generation and this is what many young gay rights activists fight against.

Lela claims that the establishment is indoctrinating the younger generation but quite frankly if that were true then the amount of people who identify as something other than cis-het (straight and cisgender) would be a lot higher than 7.1% (Gallup, 2021). Perhaps Lela believes that gay people existing in public and teaching children it is okay to be gay is indoctrination. However, if this is indoctrination, how would Lela describe the heteronormative sex education that was the norm for many years, and indeed still is the norm in many places (the sex education I received

in Indiana was explicitly abstinence only and heteronormative). Teaching children it is okay to be gay is not going to turn straight children gay, but it will help them not live in fear and feel more accepted.

Lela claims the latest science supports his claim that there is no gay gene and gay people are not "Born That Way" however neglected to cite any source. In absence of a source to back up this claim, one must conclude the science does not support his claim. A large-scale study from 2019 found a definite link between certain genes and homosexual behavior. While this is not a single "gay gene" that can determine your sexuality, it nonetheless refutes that homosexuality is entirely a choice. And while 2019 is more than 4 years ago, there is no more recent science which refutes it.

doi.org/10.1126/science.aat7693  
Interesting to note also is the terminology used here. Lela uses the phrase "heterophobic homosexuals" seemingly to refer to the entire gay population who claims to be "born that way". However Lela has also stated on the website for his organization (home60515.com):

Before we close this section, some words on the mean-spirited use of the term "homophobic" by those who love to call people like this writer pejorative and inflammatory names. Homophobia doesn't really exist.

It would seem then that while Lela does not like being called a homophobe for calling the homosexual lifestyle immoral and wrong, he is fine labeling gay people "heterophobic" for simply stating they were "Born That Way".

If discussing non-cis-het identities means cheating young people out of a "proper education" then clearly Lela's definition of a proper education is one that makes young kids feel othered and unsafe. Gay sex is just going to be a fact of some people's lives and refusing to teach people how to be safe about is not going to stop people from doing it. A proper education should be the one that makes sure people can feel safe both in their identity and exploring it. As someone who both identifies as queer and got what Lela would consider to be a proper education it only left me feeling more insecure and confused about myself. Education about queer identities would have helped me a lot in discovering my identity.

The following quotes are taken from Lela's website, home60515.com: Members of our group have debated many homosexuals and their supporters over the years and we are stunned at how many of them hold this hypocritical and contradictory position: it is okay to "discriminate" against sexual deviants like exhibitionists (e.g., people who masturbate or have sex in public) and incestuous couples, even if these deviants are consenting adults and even if they aren't hurting anybody; but it is NOT okay to "discriminate" against homosexual and bisexual deviants. They try to rationalize this absurd position by saying things like "Exhibitionists offend people." We point out that tens of millions of Americans and several billion people around the world are offended by homosexual activity, such as public homosexual kissing and hand-holding.

The difference between people being offended at exhibitionists and people being offended by homosexuals existing in public (and h\*nd h\*lding or kissing, activities heterosexuals do all the time) is clearly too subtle for Lela. So let me recontextualize this: I don't understand the French language and quite frankly this offends me, people shouldn't be speaking French in public, especially in France. However, this is not a reasonable argument for people to not be or speak French, in fact if I truly believed this you could make an argument for calling me racist. (Please don't hate me French people). Society will never be able to appeal to everyone, some acts are always going to be offensive to some so why should we cater to homophobes getting offended at seeing relatively minor acts of homosexual affection.

The only difference between a homosexual couple kissing in public and a heterosexual couple kissing in public is that one couple has a much higher chance of sharing the same set of genitals. And if seeing a homosexual couple is making you think about their genitals I would argue the problem is you and not the couple. Can we justly discriminate in favor of some unreasonable deviations and against others? No. If we tolerate deviations from reasonable sexual standards, then we will fairly have to tolerate deviations from other reasonable standards because all of the different kinds of deviates will demand consistency from us and nondiscriminatory equal treatment.

I don't know why I'm bothering trying to refute someone who so easily falls down slippery slope fallacies, if I keep writing this article, I'll end up fist fighting every homophobe I find. Because of course one cannot



+ ratio + don't care + didn't ask + you go to Caltech + you're in booty house + you live in Braun + you were on the roof + you fell off + you're probably a CS/BEM/QF + if not you're probably an English major or something + you don't even go to lecture + dark matter might as well be avocados floating through space + she lattice on my lecture till i + walk some olives on deez nuts + the hvse system violates the honor code + it's hazing too + the scientific project is fundamentally a negative dialectic + civilizing project too + blue hair and pronouns + the average caltech student takes more than the required number of hums + dean nye deez nuts + your best is not good enough + Email not displaying correctly? View it in your browser + humans are not optically transparent + liness on the wall + acetone can't melt steel dumpsters + isopropyl alcohol can't melt smelly pants + water pong is a drinking game + if you or a loved one has been diagnosed with mesothelioma you may be entitled to financial compensation + Get Outlook for iOS + there are no roofs at caltech + rethink your values + Violations of this Policy may result in investigation and disciplinary action by any of the following including but not limited to the Housing Office, the Conduct Review Committee, the Dean of Students, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Dean of Graduate Studies, or the Graduate Review Board + I hope you will take time to consider your actions and their effect upon the Caltech community + the tech needs more writers + we pay why wont you write + its really fun you get to write fun stuff + i promise its fun + please + on quarter system so you can't see friends from home + negative time to go off campus + exist purely on cds caffeine + you probably still think the CRC is a drug + nooo tunnels?? + venerable rhymes with buttock + the couches will soften + if you still call it millikan then you're a eugenicist + frosh is a gendered term + office of student experience + we're thriving + my hall is lit + pay for your laundry in quarters only + open kitchen more like closed kitchen amirite + stop DDOSing regis + are you on the anytime plan + pick up your drinks folks + chicken outside the quesadilla + timely warning your catalytic converter has been stolen + slice of bread too + knock knock it's the boc + there's no way for faculty to violate the honor code + imagine how it would reflect upon Caltech if a story about "underwear dance parties" in our residences was picked up by the LA Times + no reasonable adult would think it was okay + no one does drugs at caltech + the ath wedding says your interhouse is too loud + your exit signs are belong to me + i stepped outside for 30 minutes to take a phone call + we lost your ladder training records + all your grades were in moodle + they are gone + sent from my iPhone

# Olive Garden Big

## Devourer, Big Food Reviews

Life. Food. Family. Home. These are what Olive Garden seems to symbolize to the American public. And according to the SNL Olive Garden sketch (sketches? I don't know how many have been made). But if I had to choose one word to describe Olive Garden, it would just be 'big'.

Firstly, it's a big chain. There's multiple outlets across the country (a quick search reveals there's 894 outlets across the country, which is 0.0665277571 times the number of McDonald's in the US, but also 894 times the number of Red Doors in the US). So this firstly makes it big because it's widespread, and also they're all just big actual places. It's also like Cheesecake Factory, another super big thing. And isn't big just another part of the American Dream? So Olive Garden is peak American and also just Big™.

just say "if we allow x, then we're just going to end up allowing y, where will we draw the line?!" because of course there will be a line drawn. Allowing women to vote didn't lead to allowing lizards to vote, so why would allowing people to marry who they want lead to allowing public sex acts? Immoral desires obviously should not be acted upon, whether they are natural or instinctual or in a way man-made. (To go to extremes to clearly illustrate a point--what if some poor guy felt a "natural/instinctual desire to have sex with a consenting sheep--are we supposed to allow a human-animal sexual relationship? [...] And what if there is a necrophilia-gene? Having sex with dead people doesn't "hurt" anyone. How ridiculous and bizarre are we supposed to allow the world to get?)

Anyone who can claim a sheep to be consenting clearly does not understand consent. A sheep does not have the ability to consent, just as a minor does not have the ability to consent, clearly these activities are not comparable with a relationship between two consenting adults who happen to be the same gender. Necrophilia is more complex as a corpse is but an inanimate object, we ascribe special meaning to because it used to be alive. However, just as we do not extract organs from people after they

Secondly, it's also big because all the food there is so big. Like I have never been to an Olive Garden and been able to finish all my food. Not even the food, I've never even gotten close to finishing the water. The glasses are just so big and there's far too much ice - which also melts and then just proceeds to give you more water. And then they say you can get either a salad or soup before you actually eat your meal and those bowls are also biiiig. So you have a



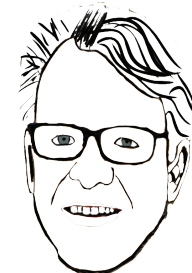
pre-meal that's massive, and then you also have a massive actual meal, so by the end of it you're just staggering out of the restaurant barely holding onto your own tummy. So that's properly insane.

Thirdly, I'm not sure what's left to say, and unlike Olive Garden, I will try to keep this article Not Big. But the next time you go to Olive Garden, I hope you think of this article. And then I hope you think 'that's what she said'.

die without their consent from when they were living it is reasonable to grant the dead the dignity to not be used for sex after death (I for one don't care what happens to my body after I die, I won't need it anymore). "Who are you to judge others?" we have actually been seriously asked by homosexuals. If we stop judging others we have to legalize murder, rape, theft, etc.--obviously ludicrous things to do.

This metaphor is missing a crucial

# MAD LIBS



1. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
2. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
3. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
4. (VERB ENDING IN -ING) \_\_\_\_\_  
5. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
6. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
7. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
8. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
9. (PAST PARTICIPLE) \_\_\_\_\_  
10. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
11. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
12. (ADJECTIVE) \_\_\_\_\_  
13. (VERB) \_\_\_\_\_  
14. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
15. (NOUN) \_\_\_\_\_  
16. (VERB) \_\_\_\_\_  
17. (ADJECTIVE) \_\_\_\_\_

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# Caltech MAD LIBS



From: Dean of Undergraduate Students

Date: November 28, 2023

Re: Institute Policies on \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN)

The \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN) and \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN) of our students is our priority at all times.

Recently, the Dean's Office has received a number of reports about students

\_\_\_\_\_, including a very dangerous \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN) this past weekend.

This is extremely concerning and strictly prohibited by \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN), including

the \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN) and \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN) for safety reasons.

Moving forward, anyone who is found to have \_\_\_\_\_ (PAST PARTICIPLE) without express

permission will either lose their \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN) or be placed on involuntary

\_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN). Please consider this to be a \_\_\_\_\_ (ADJECTIVE) warning.

I'm also asking that the person or persons who \_\_\_\_\_ (VERB), causing

damage to the \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN), come forward of their own accord in order to

avoid these \_\_\_\_\_ (NOUN) when they are otherwise identified.

Thank you for your help as we \_\_\_\_\_ (VERB) to keep everyone

\_\_\_\_\_ (ADJECTIVE).

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# Mario, the Idea vs. Mario, the Man

Phil Jameson  
Philosophy 101

Everyone knows Mario is cool as fuck. But who knows what he's thinking? Who knows

why he crushes turtles? And why do we think about him as fondly as we think of the mystical (nonexistent?) Dr Pepper? Perchance.

I believe it was Kant who said "Experience without theory is blind, but theory without experience is mere intellectual play." Mario exhibits experience by crushing turts all day, but he exhibits theory by stating "Lets-a go!" Keep it up, baby!

When Mario leaves his place of safety to stomp a turty, he knows that he may Die. And yet, for a man who can purchase lives with money, a life becomes a mere store of value.

A tax that can be paid for, much as a rich man feels any law with a fine is a price. We think of Mario as a hero, but he is simply a one percenter of a more privileged variety. The lifekind.

Perchance.

# Squirrels Unleashed

## The 15th F\*\*king Person to Submit an Anonymous Article about Squirrels This Term Squirrels

Alright, let's talk about the real VIPs of Caltech – no, not the Nobel laureates, I'm talking about the squirrels. These little guys are the unsung heroes of campus comedy. Seriously, you can't walk two feet without tripping over a squirrel plotting its next big move.

First off, these squirrels have zero chill. They're not your average 'see a human and run' kind of critters. Oh no, they're more like 'see a human and let's hang out' type. Walk by them, and they'll look at you like you just interrupted their TED Talk on acorn dynamics.

And have you noticed how they're practically everywhere? In the trees, on the pathways, and if you're lucky, you might spot one in a lecture hall, probably understanding quantum physics better than most of us.

But here's the real kicker – make a clicking sound, and bam, you're suddenly in a Disney movie. These squirrels will chase you. It's all fun and games until you're sprinting across campus with a squirrel squad tailing you.

Let's be real, these squirrels are the unofficial mascot of Caltech. They're just as much a part of this campus as the labs and libraries. They might be a bit nutty (pun intended), but hey, aren't we all?

So next time you see one of our furry friends, give them a nod. They're just trying to make it through the day like the rest of us – with a little bit of fun and a lot of nuts.

Photo Credit: Joe Kim



# Clairvoyant Digest

## Necromancy guild celebrates legislative victory

Politics  
Adam Frankenstein

The long-awaited S.E.A.N.C.E. Act (that's "Standards Enabling Authorization for Necromancy in the Contemporary Era") has passed into law, finally bringing our legislature up to speed with modern values. No longer will ethical uses of necromantic arts be persecuted solely because they are off-putting to the general public. Science has become a little less beholden to the whims of pearl-clutchers – and personally? Many people complain about loneliness, but I think you don't have a right to whine about your romantic life until the government has made it literally illegal for you to get a girlfriend. Today, that changes.

## Geoscientist pays off student loans by selling cursed ring to Bay Area startup

Local  
J.R. Mole

CalTech GPS graduate student Evelyn Zhang was in middle of field work when she stumbled across an extraordinary artifact entombed in a geode – a cursed ring said to grant great power, at the cost of corrupting its bearer into evil.

The ring, which is believed responsible for at least two regicides, three civil wars, and a major religious schism, has been given many names over the ages. It was last recorded as the Ring of Discord by scholars under Emperor Martinez's reign.

The Ring was thought destroyed when the Emperor's successor ordered it cast into a volcano, but it has now resurfaced.

"Well, of course I tried it on," Zhang admitted. "Being a Cal Tech student is so depressing, I figured I could really use a little 'going mad with power', as a pick-me-up."

California legislation grants discoverers the right to found arcane artifacts, but UC Tech's guidelines state that potentially dangerous objects found during university activities must be surrendered to administration. Zhang, however, refused to give up the Ring – nor did she keep it for personal use. Rather, she recruited volunteers and ran a series of double-blind studies on the effects of the Ring, citing Cal-tech's notoriously slow and incompetent bureaucracy for her violation of protocol.

Once the first experiments were completed, however, the data proved difficult to interpret.

"I started with tests of traits like generosity or empathy. Simple, quantifiable trials. Give the real Ring or a replica to participants, then set up an opportunity to donate to charity. That kind of thing. But we couldn't find a clear effect. When we tracked individual participants across trials, we could see the Ring had an impact – but some people got 'less evil' and some people got 'more evil', and it varied across different scenarios too. People tipped delivery drivers less but were more willing to pick up litter."

Zhang ran trials on aggression and impulse control, still with mixed results. Eventually, she struck gold a second time.

"We ran a replica of the Asch conformity experiments – that's the study where you present a question to a participant and

several actors, and the actors all agree on a blatantly wrong answer, and you observe if the participant chooses the correct answer or goes along with the group – anyways, those with the replica followed demographic trends, but participants with the true Ring **never conformed** to the wrong answer!"

Further investigation confirmed the results. The Ring increases contrarianism and decreases suggestibility, while appearing to facilitate creative thinking – explaining the unique insight the Ring was believed to grant. Zhang added that, in retrospect, it makes sense why the Ring was said to turn wearers evil: a sudden willingness to dissent undoubtedly provoked conflict.

Zhang's results are undergoing review for publication. As for the Ring?

"I auctioned it off. Got enough money to pay off my undergrad loans, and then some! Last I heard, it went to a startup from the Bay Area that wanted it for brainstorming. I believe they renamed it 'Ring of Disruption.'"

## SPACEX SEEKING TELEKINETICISTS

Can you move objects with your mind? Do you want to be an astronaut? Apply now at [spacex.com/careers/jobs!](https://www.spacex.com/careers/jobs/)  
*Qualifications: Class A3 or higher telekinesis certification – 3 years piloting experience OR Class B1+ technomancy certification – Infohazard resistance OR born during solar eclipse*

PUSH PAGE KATAWARDS TO READ MORE >>>

## Pasadena News Column

Alicia Zhang  
Outside News

Looking to get your holiday light fix? Check out these locations:

**Holiday Light Spotting in the Neighborhoods:**  
*Christmas Tree Lane*  
Free, drive or walk  
5:30 pm - 12 am  
Santa Rosa Avenue, Altadena, CA

Come enjoy the true holiday spirit at one of the oldest Christmas light displays in a tradition going back over a hundred years. The all-volunteer group bedazzles nearly a mile of the street with lights lining all the trees in a beautiful display of community. Be sure to come to the Lighting Ceremony and Winter Festival on December 9 at the Altadena Public Library.

**Harbeck Lights Christmas show**  
Free, drive or walk  
Opens December 2, nightly  
5:30 pm - 10:30 pm  
1215 Tropical Ave, Pasadena, CA 91107

Come see the house voted Best Lights in Hastings Ranch for their Christmas Light Show featuring over 100,000 channels of RGB color changing pixels! The show is a true Light Show that runs on a 16 minute loop with the lights synced to both classic and new Holiday

songs. You can watch and listen to the show from the comfort of your car while tuning the radio to 99.1 FM to watch the lights synced to the music, or enjoy the show closeup on the sidewalk with a front row view.

**Upper Hastings Ranch Neighborhood**  
Free, drive or walk  
December 9 - December 31, nightly 6 pm - 10 pm  
3725 E Sierra Madre Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91107

Come see the whole neighborhood decorated in a festival of lights and driveway displays in a tradition that began in 1951. Drive through the themed streets while listening to your favorite holiday songs.

**Tree Lighting**  
Friday, December 1, 2023  
5 pm - 7 pm  
Pasadena City Hall  
Pasadena Mayor Victor Gordo will light the Pasadena Christmas tree at 6 pm, so come by bundled up and ready to feel the festive spirit. There will be local singers and dancers, crafts for kids provided by Armory Center for the Arts, and light refreshments.

**Snowfall at the Grove**  
*The Americana at Brand, Glendale*  
10 am - 10 pm  
If you happen to be around at 7pm or 8pm, don't be shocked when snow starts falling down.

Enjoy the farmers' market underneath a towering Christmas tree and lights everywhere you turn, the Grove is the perfect place to get your holiday light fix while window shopping.

**Westfield Century City Mall**  
10 am - 9 pm, check for specific days  
10250 Santa Monica Blvd, Los Angeles, CA  
Enjoy live performances, snowfall, and complimentary gift wrapping at the beautifully decorated Holiday Village at this mall in downtown LA.

**Lightscape**  
> \$29 tickets  
Now until January 2, 5:30 pm - 10 pm  
LA Arboretum, 301 N Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA 91007  
With food trucks and hot chocolate, marvel at the new nature-inspired installations such as a fiery garden, extended arch of light, dancing palms and the famous crystalline cathedral made of light.

**Animals Aglow**  
> \$29 tickets  
Now until January 7, 6 pm - 10 pm  
Los Angeles Zoo  
The Los Angeles Zoo has set up incredible lantern sculptures of wild animals among plants and trees creating a beautiful, festive walkthrough to celebrate the holidays.

**Pasadena Rose Parade**  
January 1, 8 am - 10 am  
If you're in town on January 1st, be sure to check out the Rose Pasadena, which has occurred nearly every year since 1890. It begins on the corner of Green Street and Orange Grove Blvd. in Pasadena. The parade travels north on Orange Grove Blvd., then turns east onto Colorado Blvd., where the majority of the parade viewing takes place and finally ends on Villa St.

Staying over the holidays? Here's some recommended food places compiled from fellow students! (sorted top to bottom in terms of distance from campus)

**New York Chicken & Gyro**  
11 am - 10 pm  
961 E Green St, Pasadena, CA 91106  
Featuring 100% Halal Middle Eastern food, this is a fire recommendation from many students. Be sure to try out their New York style gyros, but they also have platters, burgers, and sides.

**Kokoroll Cafe**  
11 am - 9 am  
1299 E Green St Suite 100 Pasadena, 91106  
This place has great poke bowls, sushi hand rolls, and acai bowls, and taiyaki - all available just a quick 10 minute walk from campus, the same distance as Afters.

**The Hat**  
Closes 11 pm  
491 N Lake Ave, Pasadena, CA 91101  
Famous for its pastrami, and open decently late, this place hits the spot if you're looking for a bite to eat while going to see the holiday lights around town.

**Chick in a Box**  
8 am - 8 pm  
950 E Colorado Blvd #101, Pasadena, CA 91106

Come check out this locally owned business featuring Korean corn dogs, Korean street food including generously spicy teok-bokki, and deliciously flavored fried chicken. Wash it down with their boba or tea. Highly recommended!

**Upcoming Events: PCC Flea Market**  
December 3 and every first Sunday monthly  
8 am - 3 pm, FREE  
Pasadena City College parking lot

**Rose Bowl Flea Market**  
December 10 and ever second Sunday monthly  
9 am - 3 pm, \$12 regular admission  
1001 Rose Bowl Drive, Pasadena, CA

## Restaurant Reviews with Tom Mannion: Full House, Chinatown

Joray Pieper  
Local

Experience:  
TLDR: Great Seafood restaurant not too far from campus. Go try some lobster!

Located in Chinatown, Full House is twenty minutes from campus by car. Visiting on a Tuesday night, parking was readily available although it could be more scarce on busier nights. From the moment we entered the restaurant the service was exemplary and it was evident the waiters brought their "A game". A teapot was placed in the center of our table followed by a tiny cup of nuts for each guest. Waiting for our appetizers to arrive, I was amused trying to pick up and eat nuts with chopsticks. Soon, the onslaught started as dish after dish quickly covered our table. I captured a photo of each entree: the Lobster, Oysters, and Duck as they arrived from the kitchen.

Appetizer:  
Crab Meat with Fish Maw Soup - If you love seafood this is a real treat to start the evening as an appetizer. I recommend adding a splash of red vinegar to the soup (provided on the table). The red vinegar combined with the soup created an interesting and refreshing blend of flavor unlike anything I have ever tasted before.

Main Courses:  
Braised Lobster with Pepper and Black Bean - I always wanted to try lobster and this

worthy first time experience definitely did not disappoint. Every part of the lobster had meat inside, although often a challenge, working to find your food made the reward all the more deliciously satisfying. The claw provided the easiest meat to get as it just slid out when you cracked it open. I was delighted that Tom helped me discover hidden lobster meat near the head of the Lobster. The restaurant let me take a photo with the lobster before it was cooked as well.

Peking Roasted Duck - Super unexpected taste overall left me shocked. I had never imagined eating a duck before but after eating it just left me craving for more. In addition to the duck, bao buns and a special sauce were provided. The duck on its own was great, but I had fun making little sandwiches with the buns, duck meat, and the mystery sauce.

Steamed Sole Fish - This fish was an interesting eat, done right the skeleton of the fish will just slide off and provide a great meal. However, it can be a really tricky meal. I found it challenging not to swallow bones and only swallow the fish. Overall, the fish was great and I had a fun time eating it.

Oysters with Ginger & Green Onion - Completely different from regular oysters, I highly recommend trying this dish if you want to experience a very unique flavor that you can't get from just regular oysters. I was so fascinated by the taste that I looked it up after dinner to see

how the dish was made. Frozen oysters are put with green onions and ginger (obviously). However the rest is listed on this website and I recommend anyone who is debating whether to order this to definitely check it out. (<https://susansavourit.blogspot.com/2015/08/oysters-and-ginger-and-green-onions.html>)

Honey Walnut Prawns - This was like a sweet treat completely distinct from every other food offered on the table. It was like eating little shrimps covered in honey, but it reminded me of eating sweet popcorn in the movie theater. Every time you took one prawn you just wanted to take another one, and another one. Eating the walnuts in conjunction with the prawns was great as well, giving another avenue of flavor to experience.

Finale:  
The service was amazing. I didn't have to wait for water once, and the food was spectacular. My favorite food was definitely the Peking Duck but I would for sure have the lobster again if I had the chance. At the end of our meal we all got fortune cookies and oranges calling to a close this wonderful evening. I'd like to provide my email address and phone number below if anyone has any other questions about this restaurant, or has some requests about how I can improve my food reviews.  
jpieper@caltech.edu



Want to be the next lucky Techer to win a meal with Tom Mannion, for the low low price of a *Tech* article? Email [tech@caltech.edu](mailto:tech@caltech.edu)

### Amazon Skymall

Welcome back to Amazon Skymall! In this column, we hold a raffle where we [not] randomly select one of our lucky readers and give them the item of their choice from these hand picked selections!

Enter this week's raffle by using the QR code or the link below:

**MOST RECENT WINNER**  
SANTIAGO ADAMS (PAGE, MA 25')



"Topology" Crossword Solution from our 10/31 issue



"Gene Pool" Crossword Solution from our 11/14 issue



\$14.98      \$16.99      \$8.99      \$29.63      \$23.99

**NO**  
Free

The California Tech

## CalGuesser

#4

Every issue we'll show you a different location on campus. Find the place and find the QR code hidden there to sign the log book and win a fabulous prize!?!?



Last week's winners! >>>

### CalGuesser #3 - November 14, 2023

Congrats, you found it!!!  
Leave your name/pseudonym, year/department, and date found!  
John Chapman, g4 cce, 14:35 11/14/23

## CHOOSE YOUR OWN MYTH/ADVENTURE

by Ellie Chen

Congratulations/I am so sorry! You are now a character in your very own Greco-Roman myth. Write your story and happy/devastating ending through a fun, Choose Your Own Adventure-style quiz!

- You are a poor shepherd who lives in a dilapidated cottage on the outskirts of a bustling city. One day, an old woman comes to your cottage. She is hungry... for sheep soup! She points out your favorite sheep and asks you to kill it and serve it to her. You think:
  - What if my guest is a god in disguise? I kill my sheep. Go to question 2.
  - No way! That sheep is my best friend. I refuse. Go to question 3.
- You were correct! Your guest was a god in disguise! Unfortunately, your guest is Pan/Faunus, the god of the wild, shepherds, and music, who is very offended by your lack of care for your sheep. After he reveals himself, you:
  - Apologize profusely. What have I done? Go to question 4.
  - Spit in his face. Who cares about sheep? Go to question 5.
- Turns out your guest was a god in disguise! He is Pan/Faunus, the god of the wild, shepherds, and music, and he is very impressed by your dedication to your sheep! He offers to give your sheep magical powers.
  - I refuse. Ending E.
  - I accept. Ending A.
- Pan/Faunus decides to give you a second chance. He brings your sheep back to life and offers to give one of you magical powers: either you or your sheep. The choice is yours.
  - I choose myself. Ending C.
  - I choose my sheep. Ending D.
- Pan/Faunus is infuriated. He brings your sheep back to life and asks if you have anything you'd like to say to your sheep.
  - I'm sorry! Please forgive me. Ending B.
  - Shame I didn't get to eat you. Would've been delicious. Ending C.

Ending A: Your sheep is blessed with the ability to talk and the thickest, best-quality wool. You use its wool to spin bedsheets, which you sell to rich urban clients. You and your sheep become rich, and the tale of your legendary friendship becomes more lasting than bronze.

Ending B: Pan/Faunus blesses your sheep with the ability to talk and curses you to obey every one of its commands. The two of you live like this for the rest of your lives.

Ending C: You die promptly and end up in the Fields of Punishment. Your punishment is to be suffocated by sheep wool for eternity. Be better. (Your sheep lives happily ever after.)

Ending D: The sheep is blessed with wings. It flies away, to a better place without you.

Ending E: Your sheep is a bit miffed that it missed out on magical powers, but it still loves you. Your lives carry on as usual, and you die with your sheep by your side.

### The Honor Code is Falling Apart

continued from page 1

In the last academic year, there were ~45 cases in which an undergraduate student(s) was convicted of an academic honor code violation. Assuming that each case has only one respondent, this constitutes ~5% of the student body who were convicted of academic honor code violations during the last school year. 45 reported cases is far too many! That's 1 out of every 20 Caltech undergrads committing an honor code violation, and this statistic does not account for cases with multiple respondents. **Any intentional honor code violation is a serious injustice done to the community. We should all be striving towards having Zero Honor Code violations.** Faculty (and students too!) feel that they have an obligation to protect the Caltech community against the devaluation of a Caltech education. Faculty (rightly) will continue to take matters of academic integrity into their own hands if we do not have a serious reckoning with what we want to see out of ourselves and our community.

#### WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

You, a member of the Caltech community, must be involved in protecting the Honor Code. We must protect the privileges that we currently experience under it, such as:

- The ability to leave doors unlocked and access buildings after-hours,
- The freedom for faculty to focus on research and teaching and not have to monitor students or proctor exams,
- A collaborative and non-competitive approach to research and academics,
- Flexible work hours for research,
- Take-home exams,
- Collaborative problem sets,
- The ability to walk around campus and not fear for our safety,
- And the assumption that everyone is operating in good faith - to name a few.

**In short, we are privileged to have the space to focus on what matters - learning and doing cool science - not wasting energy being vigilant in protecting your ideas from being taken, your belongings from being stolen, or yourself from those who would undermine you to further their own careers.**

**The BoC leadership needs you, yes you, to enthusiastically recommit to adhering to the Honor Code.**

#### HOW CAN YOU RE-COMMIT TO THE HONOR CODE?

**First, re-commit to having faith in the Honor code.** The privileges that

are fundamental to Caltech's success as a scientific institution can only exist if everyone buys in. The vast majority of students are following the Honor Code. The vast majority of faculty are following the Honor Code. Administrative Offices want to help you, not penalize you. Trust that everyone around you is trying to act in good faith and **report suspected honor code violations to the BoC and CRC!** Have faith that the new changes outlined above and more have made the system robust enough to handle all reported cases. The BoC and CRC prioritize the protection of student privacy, and have confidentiality agreements and procedures in place to protect reporters from the potential harassment of respondents.

**Students, do not be afraid to hold your fellow students accountable!** If they violate the Honor Code, you (and your friends) are being disadvantaged by their behavior. Faculty, the changes that have already been implemented by the BoC make it so that we can fully process all cases in which you think students have committed an Honor Code violation in your classes. The BoC provides a fair and equitable process for resolving Honor Code violations with a reversal of any advantage gained and real consequences for students who violate. The BoC is equipped to fully gather information regarding the context of a situation to provide an unbiased investigation, a right to which every student and faculty member is entitled. When faculty take suspected academic honor code violations into their hands, they risk generating an inequitable system where certain students are unfairly persecuted. Additionally, the BoC and the Dean's Office can identify repeat offenders for removal from the Caltech Community, a unique ability that **faculty take away by trying to resolve Honor Code violations by themselves.**

**Second, do not violate the Honor Code.** This does not just mean "don't cheat". The Honor Code states that "No member of the Caltech Community shall take unfair advantage of any other member of the Caltech Community". This philosophy means that ALL members of the Caltech community, undergraduate students, faculty, administrative offices on campus, etc. need to operate in good faith and not take advantage of anyone else's time, energy, or work. The beauty of the Honor Code is its simplicity, but a hidden downside to this is that it is possible to take advantage of someone without realizing it. **Seriously ask yourself what it means to take advantage of your fellow Caltech community members.** Are you, unintentionally or intentionally, taking advantage of your students, peers, professors, or TAs?

**Students, for goodness sake, Do. Not. Cheat.** Our actions are under a microscope, and every fracture in the system is another strike against the viability of the Honor Code. At this point, if you cheat, you are choosing to risk every student's autonomy at Caltech for a short-term gain that will be harmful to you in the long-run. If you are in the trenches, reach out for help - your fellow students, the BoC leadership, faculty, and the Deans can help support you. Do not take what looks like an easy way out at the expense of your future self and your peers.

**Third, students, run to be a BoC Representative at the end of Winter Term.** Being a representative of the BoC can no longer be a bottom-of-the-barrel role relegated to frosh who don't even have two full terms under their belts. The BoC representatives need to be a diverse subset of the undergraduate community from all years who will apply themselves to the position, seeking out ways to be of service, as opposed to hesitantly doing the bare minimum at the forcing of BoC Leadership. We need to prove that as a student body, we are committed to fulfilling our responsibility of regulating the Honor Code, and to do this we need a vibrant BoC.

**Fourth, faculty, we need you to be more involved in the BoC process.** Report all instances of suspected honor code violations to the BoC. We also need your help in collecting evidence in cases of suspected Honor Code violations. The BoC has reached out to faculty for more evidence regarding their cases and has received no reply for at least 7 cases just this term. Submit fuller reports which directly point to the responses you want investigated and provide enough evidence to support your allegations (solution sets, gradescope reports, canvas access reports, lecture notes, etc). Real violations without sufficient supporting evidence will unfortunately be dismissed. This helps no one. We want to identify Honor Code violations occurring, adjudicate them quickly and properly, and ultimately allow you to get back to what you want to be doing - research and teaching - not dealing with academic misconduct. We need your help to make this a smooth and efficient process. In addition to this, the BoC is implementing a new role - the Faculty Liaison. The Liaisons will work to establish transparency with the Faculty about the BoC and will help procure expert testimony for BoC cases. The BoC Leadership wants your opinion and expertise to help guide our procedures. When the time comes around, **apply to be a Faculty Liaison.**

**Fifth, everyone should attend events held by the BoC!** In the past, the BoC has held trainings and seminars throughout the year to

engage the Caltech Community with the philosophies of the Honor Code and the Board of Control. We are going to bring back events like these, but this requires the attendance of students AND faculty to be worthwhile. Keep these events on your radar and show up! If there's something you'd like to see, maybe a training on a specific topic, or a discussion of a particularly gray area of collaboration, let your BoC reps and the BoC Leadership know (boc@caltech.edu). We want to cater to the needs and interests of all members of the Caltech community.

**Finally, educate yourself and your community about the Honor Code!** You don't need to wait for the BoC to do something to "reinvigorate" the Honor Code - we need you to be actively asking questions about the Honor Code and discussing them with your community members. Ask your BoC reps why they ran. Ask your peers and colleagues about their views on the Honor Code and its implementation in academic matters. Come up with hypothetical honor code violations and tease out their nuances in your houses, classrooms, and labs. The workings of the BoC should not be and are not a secret! The information about how the BoC is run is on Donut (donut.caltech.edu) - go see how it operates. There you can see how the BoC processes cases, its procedures, the BoC caseload statistics for the last decade, and answers to frequently asked questions. The more educated we are as a community about the Honor Code, the easier it will be for us to recommit to it.

Student leadership hopes that this article has made clear the current fragility of the Honor Code. **We, every student, faculty and staff member, are the manifestation of the Honor Code. Therefore, we must be the solution to strengthening it.** The current trajectory of the Honor Code is dismal. Student leadership hopes that through a re-commitment to the mandate of the Honor Code, everyone can uphold and protect its value. **It's not too late. You must take charge! The viability of the Honor Code and the continuation of its numerous benefits are in your hands.**

The University of South Africa has the following statement by Nelson Mandela inscribed on the entrance to their campus:

*"Destroying any nation does not require the use of atomic bombs or the use of long range missiles. It only requires lowering the quality of education and allowing cheating in the examinations by the students."*

*Patients die at the hands of such doctors.*

*Buildings collapse at the hands of such engineers.*

*Money is lost in the hands of such economists & accountants.*

*Humanity dies at the hands of such religious scholars.*

*Justice is lost at the hands of such judges...*

*The collapse of education is the collapse of a nation."*

ME: i trained this chicken to talk

HER: let's see

ME: what's a male deer

CHICKEN: buck

ME: what's Caltech's undergraduate student-run body which investigates allegations of undergraduate academic dishonesty

CHICKEN: boc

ME: how much is 200 pennies

CHICKEN: buck buck

HER: this is stupid

ME: it gets better

CHICKEN: it gets way better, Susan

# ARC Tip of the Week:

## Last day of classes is this Friday December 1st!

### Research List

The ARC is compiling a list of professors who are looking for undergrads to work in their labs. The Research List is now available here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FVjsRcLJ7sLjxnIzzO5rCpOQNRC8MV8DeqQsf9Q2A/edit?usp=sharing>. These are great professors to reach out to about doing research during term and for SURF! We will be adding to this list as we get responses from more faculty.

Disclaimer: The research list is not a complete list, and it contains a mix of summer and during-term opportunities that may be updated as the year goes on. Please check that the position you're looking into is accepting students in your year and for the term you're interested in using the information on the sheet.



Research List



SURF Tips



Course Concerns Form



Updates on Course Concerns



How to Report Course Concerns



11/26 Meeting Minutes

### How to Reach Out To Labs About SURFs

SURF application season is approaching! SURF applications are generally due at the end of February, but students tend to start reaching out to labs about potential research opportunities from now through January. The ARC's website has MANY resources to help you find research, write your SURF proposal, and learn more about research. The first step is sending a potential mentor an email to express your interest. Please read our tips and example email here: [https://sites.google.com/site/arc/caltech/resources/research?authuser=0#h.p\\_2ZELu6cp4D\\_t](https://sites.google.com/site/arc/caltech/resources/research?authuser=0#h.p_2ZELu6cp4D_t)

### Course Concerns Form

If you have a concern about a course, please fill out this anonymous form: <https://donut.caltech.edu/feedback/arc>.

We will do our best to get back to you in less than a week. Updates / progress on course concerns can be found here (note - this is intended for undergraduate eyes only): [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-YaBhyU7ld2cF-oq-y\\_zAK-ME9ZdTdAVCCv-XvJ8edFI/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-YaBhyU7ld2cF-oq-y_zAK-ME9ZdTdAVCCv-XvJ8edFI/edit?usp=sharing).

Please see this flowchart for more information on how to report a course concern: <https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/1gbPK65NI9yMhA82aoZyIHn-LqmpT97vpuXm4JKiYJ24/edit?usp=sharing>.

### Minutes

November 26th, 2023 Public General Meeting Minutes: [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UZ6ieqg9oT\\_qWozimRii\\_rmUPTNubQmLGu9CUrqtUCo/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UZ6ieqg9oT_qWozimRii_rmUPTNubQmLGu9CUrqtUCo/edit?usp=sharing)

# ASCIT Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2023, 7:00 PM; Hameetman Conference Room  
Call to order: 7:15

**Officers present:** Gabriella Twombly, Jonathan Booker, Alex Burr, Ava Barbano, Ankita Nandi, Snigdha Saha  
Guests: Heidi Redmond (BoC Secretary), Tom Zhang

**Minutes Taken By:** Ava Barbano

### BoC Leadership

- \* PTA for BoC?
- \* possible through ASCIT
- \* funding:
- \* offer to pay BoC
- \* alternative: funding for events
- \* merch? raffles?
- \* bylaw: new faculty position on board, alternative case resolutions
- \* propose to ascit, go to revcom, approval, vote to ug
- \* student education on voting option
- \* admin boc secretary position
- \* see links in ascit chat
- \* job description vs actual boundaries

### President's Report (Twombly)

- \* CHASE
- \* conflicts in dates of events
- \* send out calendar
- \* send out this week
- \* ose steven fund
- \* dates in the works
- \* follow up on consistency
- \* ASCIT committees
- \* Bump on activities, calendar, and benefits
- \* Extracurricular committee

- \* athletics included (enjoyment vs negative impact)
- \* support from athletics for athletic club use
- \* Fund docs
- V.P. of Academic Affairs (Alex)**
- \* Deans/Ctlo meetings:
- \* Recap of Nov 8th meeting
- \* CTLO is going to step in for CS1
- \* not as useful for HSS
- \* working on card access to student spaces: update on 27
- \* honor code and grades: proposed putting I or E if pending BoC case, before faculty board in Dec
- \* considerations for proctored exams
- \* Agenda for Nov 27th meeting
- \* core and course concerns, following up on SFC
- \* Student Faculty Lunch and Student Faculty Athletics
- \* Recap of this week's events
- \* volleyball game:
- \* went well! difficult to book room; had to go through Betsy
- \* start early, email wade and heather on same email
- \* 20 students, 4 faculty
- \* Option advising - today 3-5pm! + recap:
- \* went well; popular advising
- \* good frosh questions
- \* every quarter!
- \* ARC Office Hours this week
- \* Research List + SURF Advice for Underclassmen
- \* will be out after thanksgiving
- \* sfp collab: ankita
- \* Ongoing and new course concerns

- \* V.P. of Non-Academic Affairs (Sophie)
- \* IHC is meeting w/ VPSA on Tuesday
- \* AGENDA:
- \* Successful Rotation! But wtf on deadnaming three years in a row
- \* We're meeting w/ CCID again to make sure something is being done about this and to establish AdComm routines

- \* Reconfiguring room picks (each house gets a certain number of Bechtel room picks guaranteed or we create House hallways)
- \* Reviewing Caltech Up Close
- \* We have a meeting scheduled w/ Admissions to discuss how things went/limiting the number of students admitted to CUC and we also plan to start planning Discotech so everyone is on the same page
- \* expanded number of students admitted due to donation
- \* payment not distributed yet
- \* The Ath is a problem (this is mostly Meg's thing)
- \* Talked to Kausal about IHC elections, he says we'd have to amend the bylaws :)
- \* Why tho? I was not elected per the bylaw schedule...
- \* one time fix vs permanent change
- \* Alex and I met w/ Isabel to discuss Problem Set Workshops, location/frequency is being updated to better fit the needs of frosh & comfort of houses
- \* moving locations, accommodating interhouse construction
- \* Twombly, Ankita & I met w/ Michael again; exciting stuff!
- \* arts committee: add activities, student feedback for committee
- \* I sent DJ instagram to chat; lmk if we like him
- \* He's done frat parties at state schools and stuff so like he should be ok??
- \* If so, he's available and said he'd be totally down to do formal for us. I think he also has his own set up and we wouldn't have to pay as much...
- Director of Operations (Ankita)**
- \* sac screening room form
- \* unsure where lights are - moving head lamps, only found one but supposed to have six
- \* inventory inconsistent with

- what we actually have
- \* some houses may have ascit stuff
- \* go through social closets of houses?
- \* Going through the different social closets?
- \* List of stuff we don't want for B136
- \* Donut DevTeam - good things
- \* individual check ins
- \* Big T
- \* payment sorted; estimated date for 2022-23 issue December
- \* mid summer completion for 2023-24 yearbook
- \* shared calendar
- Treasurer (Jonathan)**
- \* Final Budget Review
- \* Notion Update
- \* sign up with school email account
- \* Fundraising via Publications Logistics
- \* once enough revenue to publish for year, we get overflow
- \* yearbook already funded by ads already; division pages
- \* Meeting with Julia updates
- \* screen printing project -> will contact
- \* covered breadth of ascit duties
- \* arc option advising
- \* Peard logistics
- \* set up receipt upload
- \* folder in Jonathan's drive
- \* include budget on ascit website and donut
- Social Director (Snigdha)**
- \* ASCIT formal:
- \* historically, ascit formal on same date
- \* pdf of ascit calendar with dates on it sent out
- \* OSE added family weekend after we set a date for formal, communication had happened in June, OSE and VPSA Office are now trying to move ascit formal
- \* soft going well; logistics in progress
- \* Waiting on VPSA Office; been ready for weeks. Still not have heard back.

- \* Halloween:
- \* Cleanup Complete
- \* Pics sent out
- \* Grubhub for Costume Contest Winners
- \* Jonathan will manage
- \* Purchasing 300 tickets
- \* Should we get more?
- \* happening on sunday
- \* Figuring out exact show details still
- \* Off Campus Programming
- \* Should I reach out to OSE with results of the survey?
- \* honor our side of the arrangement
- \* Personal Goal to have the newsletter up and running by beginning of Winter!
- \* Winter Lights / Event
- \* decorate olive walk (light event same day as midnight donuts)
- \* trees: treats, turn on lights countdown
- \* send ornament or candy cane candy gram?
- \* alt interhouse next weekend: new location
- Secretary (Ava)
- \* Met with Jason Trevor from the physics department (manages physics project setups/facilities for the department? Idk his exact role but former caltech student and supporter of SAC)
- \* He will communicate directly with Raymond Merlin (facilities project manager) to coordinate timing
- \* Department has storage for materials; likely will not run physics 8 this year and have a lab space remodeled for it for next year
- \* Will take any chairs/tables/cabinets we do not want, but otherwise can keep them
- \* Tried to schedule a meeting with Jim and Tom but Tom has been a busy bee this week; reminded him at alternative interhouse
- Adjourned: 9:10**

**Housing Office**

As you may have heard, the Class of 2027 broke enrollment records. While this is a significant achievement, it does tighten accommodations and housing. 32 upperclassmen had to look for surrounding housing options because of this new housing crisis, and administration has decided that it is only fair that 32 current first-years are asked to do the same for the 2024-2025 academic year.

One of Caltech's most important values is meritocracy. In order to determine housing eligibility for the 2024-2025 school year, we have decided to administer a closed-note, closed-book exam. Your score on this exam will determine your housing lottery number for 2024-2025.

This assessment will be one of the factors used by administration to gauge whether to guarantee you on-campus housing or to help you secure off-campus residential options. Other factors are recorded honor code violations and the demand for housing in your particular house or residence.

In the spirit of the collaborative environment in our institution, discussing high-level ideas is allowed, but taking the test with another individual, discussing answers, or over collaboration is strictly forbidden. The honor code is in effect and multiple cheating detection measures are put in place.

# A Note About the Housing Eligibility Exam Prank

Sanvi Pal & Sam Foxman  
Letter to the Community

The exam includes 11 free-response questions, with a three-hour time limit. The exam is available on the Housing Office's assessment website, <https://canvas.housing.caltech.edu/fa2023/housing-eligibility-assessment>. It is due Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 7:00 AM PDT.

Administration has decided that select upperclassmen will be grading the tests. If you have questions about preparation, the type of questions being asked, and any concerns, you may contact head graders Samuel Foxman <[sfoxman@caltech.edu](mailto:sfoxman@caltech.edu)> and Sanvi Pal <[spal2@caltech.edu](mailto:spal2@caltech.edu)>.

Failure to complete the exam will result in an unfavorable lottery number for housing in the Spring. Late submissions will not be accepted and extensions will not be granted.

We are happy to have you as a member of the Caltech community! Good luck on the exam and we hope to see you on campus next year.

Thank you,  
Caltech Housing  
Mail Code 160-86 | Pasadena CA 91125 | (626) 395-6176 | Caltech

On Friday, October 13, 2023, all freshmen received an email from "uhousing@caltech.edu" with the subject "ACTION REQUIRED: UG Housing Eligibility Assessment for 2024-25 School Year." This email led students to believe that there would be a merit-based assessment to decide what proportion of the freshmen class would live on campus and what proportion would need to search for off-campus options next year.

This was a prank and we take full responsibility for it. We intended it to be a harmless prank that would propagate prank culture. However, we can see how this prank can be interpreted as targeting housing or targeting freshmen. We didn't do this prank to intentionally target anyone. Hazing culture is bad and this prank does not support it. Pretending to be the housing office, an important group in Caltech administration that does so much for this institution, was also wrong.

We want to underscore that this prank was poorly executed. It was poorly executed not only because it didn't follow prank protocol but also because of how it possibly made the housing office or freshmen feel distressed. For those respective groups, we extend a genuine apology.

We really want fellow readers of the Tech to realize that while prank culture is dying, we must not get carried away with any spontaneous prank idea that comes across our minds (which is what we did). It is very important to search up the proper Caltech prank protocols, inform yourselves of the many guidelines that exist regarding registering pranks, and most importantly think of the consequences of your actions before acting. We are deeply embarrassed that we failed to do these things and we acknowledge our mistakes.

We know for those that were most negatively impacted by our actions, this apology may be too little or too late. If you want to talk to us directly about how our actions impacted you, we want to hear from you and please reach out to us. We hope that every student in this school knows that we are willing to do anything to repair the damage, distress, or trauma caused by our actions.

The beloved author of The Chronicles of Narnia, C.S. Lewis said, "Every uncorrected

error and unrepented sin is, in its own right, a fountain of fresh error and fresh sin flowing on to the end of time". Let those words sink in. We want to make sure we correct our errors. The last thing we want is for there to be a chain reaction of similar poorly executed pranks following ours. This chain reaction is what Lewis warns would be the "fountain of fresh error and fresh sin flowing on to the end of time". This is not the legacy we intend to leave behind at Caltech.

Does this article mean that we don't support prank culture? Yes and no. We support prank culture if it is properly registered. In order to properly register a prank, you must reach out to the prank committee, the group of undergraduates that leads the Prank Club. The prank committee will approve the prank and communicate with Caltech admin and/or security on a need-to-know basis to ensure the prank runs smoothly. However, there is no way currently to register a prank as the submission form is outdated. Thus, if you want to participate in pranks, we highly encourage you to become a member of the Prank Club. As a member of the Prank Club, you can spend time planning pranks that are yet to be executed (and also enjoy some free pizza!). It would also be best to plan such pranks in the Prank Club because this would align with the collaborative culture of this institution and also because the Prank Club will ensure that 1) no prank protocols are being violated and 2) administration is well aware of the prank that will happen. Going through this regulated process is very important to make sure that unlike our poorly executed prank, a prank you may participate in has been approved by faculty, administration, and students in positions of power so that enough people know the prank will happen before it happens.

With these remarks, we hope to have conveyed our deep regret regarding what we thought was a prank (but it was so poorly executed that we cannot label it as a prank). We also hope we have successfully conveyed the necessity of properly registering a prank and the repercussions of not doing so.

Go Beavers and Happy Holidays!  
Warmest regards,  
Sanvi Pal & Sam Foxman

# Unleash Your Inner Prankster with Caltech's Official Prank Club!

Hey Caltech! Ever wanted to mess with MIT, the city of LA, or the entire school but never knew how? Look no further than the Caltech Prank Club—pranking the Mid Institute of Technology since 1891! (probably)

### What do we do?

- \* Pranks! (Duh) Caltech has a long history of prank culture: <https://www.admissions.caltech.edu/why-caltech/student-life/traditions-pranks/pranks>
- \* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caltech%E2%80%93MIT\\_rivalry#1984\\_Rose\\_Bowl\\_scoreboard\\_prank](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caltech%E2%80%93MIT_rivalry#1984_Rose_Bowl_scoreboard_prank) (lol get pranked, u can't click on the links—just google it lmao)

In recent years, pranking has unfortunately died down a bit, but we're looking to revive that! Come bring glory back to Caltech pranking!!!! Look out for an email from us soon ;)

### Here's a fun little blurb bingo bongo: WHY JOIN US?

Dive into a world where cunningness knows no bounds! The Caltech Prank Club is your ticket to a community of masterminds who transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. Our pranks are legendary, and our laughter is contagious. From harmless hijinks to mind-bending setups, we redefine the meaning of fun!

### UNLEASH CREATIVITY

Break free from the lab, put down those textbooks, and join a society that values the art of creative chaos. Whether you're a budding comedian, a prank prodigy, or just looking to add a spark of levity to your academic journey, we welcome minds of all mischief levels.

### LEAVE A MARK ON (Caltech) HISTORY!

Expect the unexpected, because we thrive on pushing boundaries. Our pranks are crafted with precision, designed to leave a lasting impression on both campus and memory. Join us, and be part of the legacy that keeps Caltech a hub of intellect, innovation, and irreverent humor.

Ready to finally add a splash of laughter and some fun to your Caltech experience? Don't miss out on the hilarity—join the Caltech Prank Club today! Because at Caltech, we believe in equations, experiments, and extraordinary pranks!

Look out for an email from us soon ;)

### HOW DO I REGISTER MY PRANKS?

Please make sure to submit the prank registration form and get approval BEFORE you execute the prank.

**NOTE THAT THE FORM ON THE OSE WEBSITE IS OUTDATED AND WILL NOT WORK. Pranks now go through the Senior Director of Campus Activities and Engagement, Tom Mannion**  
Instead use this new link: <https://tinyurl.com/prankregistration>



QR code above. Note that you would need to register your prank so then we can help you obtain funding and all the necessary authorizations. Also note that if you submit this form, it's mainly saying that you have the prank mostly figured out yourself and you don't need any help from the club, only funding and authorization. If you want help from the club to flush out your idea, use the other QR codes!!

### HOW CAN I JOIN EXISTING PRANKS / SUGGEST NEW PRANKS?

Now if you want to be a part of the prank club just join our mailing list, we will send out meeting times so just come then! Here is the QR code:



If you have any prank ideas that you need help with executing and you think the prank club could help you, then submit them here and come to our meeting! QR code:

### QR CODE TO SIGN UP FOR THE PRANK CLUB MAILING LIST!



**Caltech Prank Registration Protocol 2023-24**

Pranks have long been a part of undergraduate life at Caltech. When planned with consideration for the rest of the community, they can be very enjoyable. However, badly thought out pranks can take unfair advantage of the community. All pranks must be cleared through the Senior Director of Campus Activities and Engagement Tom Mannion. Consideration for prank planning and execution are available in the Honor Code Handbook, pg. 6, 6b, *Unregistered Pranks*.

As the Catalog confirms, Caltech students are allowed to plan and implement creative and safe pranks. The following protocol is designed to help make this possible through a prank registration and communication protocol. Pranks are officially managed and approved by the Senior Director of Campus Activities and Engagement. All pranks, including House pranks must go through this process.

Prank committee is a student committee that meets regularly to discuss possible large campus wide and off-campus pranks and possible funding for future efforts and presents them to the Senior Director of Campus Activities and Engagement for consideration and improvement. The committee is trained on this protocol and is informed about prank applications.

- Caltech pranks must be registered through the Senior Director of Campus Activities and Engagement. Pranks must be submitted at least 6 weeks before the actual prank. In person prank reviews will happen Wednesday evenings from 8pm to 10pm in the Campus Activities and Engagement office on the Jive walk. Students are free to propose pranks at other times if the Senior Director is available.
- As part of prank approval, measures will be taken to facilitate the health and safety of those involved. The form to register pranks is <https://tinyurl.com/prankregistration>. Please bring this form to your initial in person review. When a prank is approved a letter will be issued that outlines the approval, the exact details of what is approved and when and where the prank will take place. Houses are encouraged to submit a list of any annual/traditional pranks at least six weeks before the start of the academic year.
- Information in the registration includes the nature, location, time of the prank, contact information of the people responsible, the funding of the prank, and the measures that will be taken to manage Caltech policies as well as uphold local and state laws.
- The Senior Director of Campus Activities and Engagement alongside Caltech student leaders will inform relevant parties of the approved prank and activity. This includes, but is not limited to the ASCIT president, the IHC chair, House President/Chancellor and members of the administration. The goal is to inform and promote awareness, safety, support for the prank, not to limit Caltech's prank tradition. All efforts will be made to limit advance notification to only those who need to know in advance in order for the prank to proceed and to be completed safely and within Caltech's policies, procedures, and community standards.
- All pranks require those responsible to leave a note identifying themselves. The note must be prominent, legible, and permanent (i.e. it will not blow away in the wind or get washed away). The note must include a contact name(s) and phone number. The prankster(s) needs to make sure that they are available to answer any calls to the phone number during the duration of the prank.
- If a prank is unregistered, the parties accept responsibility for the prank and the possibility that it may be ended, cleaned-up or dismantled. If those involved violate policy they may be subject to the Caltech conduct process.
- There are some items on campus that may not be pranked. This was established by previous student leaders and may change periodically (see IHC Resolutions: <http://ihc.caltech.edu/resolutions.html>). These include:
  - Avery House Canvas Murals
  - Blacker House Dining Hall Tapestry
  - Dabney House Tarot Card Murals
  - Fleming House Bell
  - Fleming House Cannon
  - Fleming House Flag
  - Lloyd House Gong
  - Lloyd House Portrait
  - Page House Nixon Poster
  - Page House Portrait
  - Ricketts House Pool Tables
  - Ricketts House Brake Drum
  - Discobulus Trophy

# ASCIT's Movie Night Explores Snow's Rise in 'The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes'

Eileen Zhang  
Category



of the tyrannical President Coriolanus Snow, the originator of the state of the Games that we saw in the main franchise. For ASCIT's annual free movie night held on November 19th, 2023, Caltech students were teleported into the world of the twelve districts and the Capitol to follow along as Coriolanus goes from ambitious student to cold-blooded manipulator.

### General Plot Overview and Movie Overview:

The narrative follows the life of Coriolanus Snow from a brief snapshot of his childhood experiences during the war, including starvation and witnessing cannibalism, to his fervent efforts in early adulthood to escape poverty. The film shows the essence of a man pushed to the brink, fueled by ambition for power. The portrayal of Coriolanus, sometimes affectionately nicknamed Coryo, skillfully navigates the thin line between evoking sympathy and condemning the actions he eventually perpetrates. As Cole Shimokaji (Ph '24, Avery) notes, "I almost felt bad for him, but then I remembered he becomes President Snow and murders a bunch of people."

For a generation familiar with

the original Hunger Games trilogy, "The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes" teleports us back to an older, less grandiose version of the Games. The battle royale to the death is still there, used as a fear tactic for controlling and punishing the Districts. The film pretty closely follows the book released in 2020 (or so I'm told), but it occasionally falls to a high level of predictability, introducing familiar tropes such as the overly moral nonconformist close friend and "the one that got away". As a prelude to the rest of the series, the movie (and the book) don't leave much room for future installments, especially as there are no other books at this time.

The film's soundtrack complements the narrative seamlessly. The theme song, written by the ever-popular Olivia Rodrigo, although not in the movie itself, adds depth to the overall experience of the movie's release. The Songbirds motif shows itself in the music credits as the main character, Lucy Gray Baird, leans into her identity as a singer and performs multiple times throughout the movie, putting actress Rachel Zegler in the top artists on the official album.

### Analysis:

On a level similar to a high school sophomore's English class, "The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes" presents a variety of symbols and themes to analyze. The dichotomy of songbirds and snakes, the nuanced characters embodying both, and the symbolism behind Lucy Gray's affinity for snakes offer ample material for exploration. The film prompts reflection on trust, familial influences, and the human capacity for both good and evil.

The intricate details, such as Cornelius Snow's conflicted relationship with firearms and the echoes of his father's fate (shot in the woods), contribute to the film's depth. Cousin Tigris' acknowledgment of Coriolanus becoming his father, the interplay of snakes and poison, and the overarching question of the purpose of the Hunger Games and how Coryo's answer changes also illustrate how President Snow reached his chilling breaking point.

"The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes" ultimately is a classic dystopian thriller, providing a look into the origin story of the seemingly unreadable main antagonist of the main Hunger



Games series, and making the audience wonder - in the end, isn't there at least a little bit of songbird and at least a little bit of snake in each of us?

## "Blacker Thanksgiving Dinner" by Eloise Zeng



CALTECH STUDENTS AFTER DROPPING ALL THEIR CLASSES ON WED., NOV 15<sup>TH</sup> @ 5 PM.

## "Pipe Dreams" by Thanhthanh Nguyen



Tea Time - Emma Isella



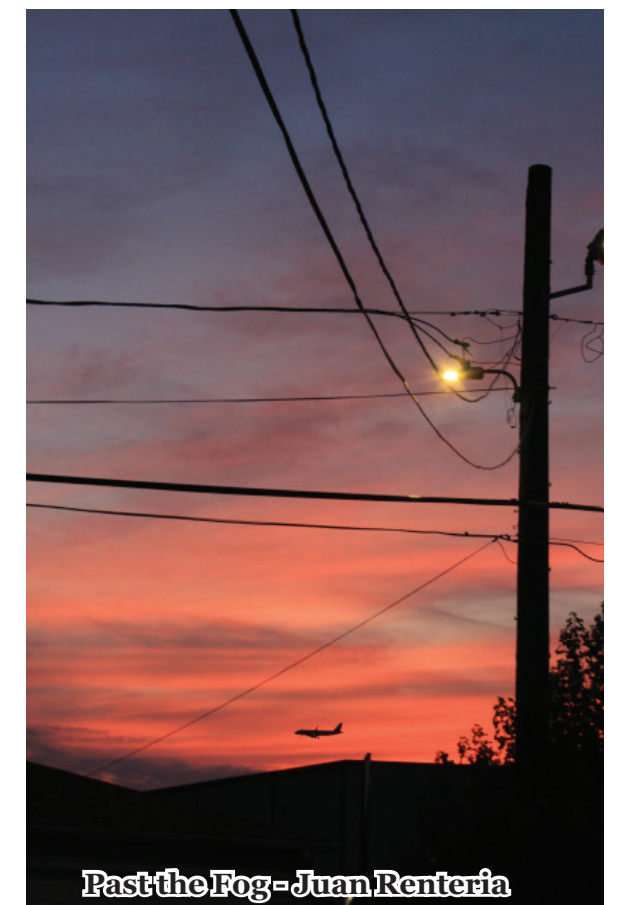
Night Drive - Audrey Wong



Sunspot - Lucas Ancieta



Fiery Caress - Abraham Belayneh



Past the Fog - Juan Renteria



Eons Ago - Juan Luchsinger



Big Sur Sunset - Sylvia Wang

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The California Tech  
Journalistic Principles

**The News-Opinion divide**

All articles shall be clearly and explicitly labeled as either News or Opinion/Editorial.

News articles report on topics that have been thoroughly researched by Tech staff writers, and should be impartial to any one point of view. In a News article, the writer shall not insert their own personal feelings on the matter; the purpose is to let the facts speak for themselves. The Tech assumes full responsibility for all content published as News.

In contrast, Opinion articles (including Letters to the Editor) may be written and submitted by anyone on any topic; while the Tech will edit all published Opinions to ensure no wrong or misleading information, we do not otherwise interfere. Again, the role of the Tech here is to help the whole campus communicate their ideas and share their stories, not promote specific ones. Content published as Opinions do not necessarily represent the values of the Tech or our staff.

An exception to this is Editorials, which are written by Tech staff and represent official opinions of the Tech. Any information and sources in Editorials shall be held to the same standard as News reports, but there is no promise or expectation of impartial coverage.

**Fair Reporting**

All facts of major significance and relevance to an article shall be sought out and included.

If an assertion is made by a source about a specific person or organization, they shall be contacted and given a reasonable amount of time to respond before publication. In other words, no second-hand information or hearsay shall stand on its own.

**Quotes and Attribution of Information**

Facts and quotes that were not collected directly by Tech reporters shall be attributed. Articles shall clearly differentiate between what a reporter saw and heard first-hand vs. what a reporter obtained from other sources.

Sources' opinions are just that — opinions. Expert opinions are certainly given more weight, as are witness opinions. But whenever possible, the Tech shall report facts, or at least corroborate the opinions. A reporter's observations at a scene are considered facts for the purposes of a story.

**Sources**

All sources shall be treated with respect and integrity. When speaking with sources, we shall identify ourselves as Tech reporters and clarify why we would like to hold an interview. Sources for the Tech will never be surprised to see their name published.

In published content, we shall put our sources' quotes into context, and — as appropriate — clarify what question was being answered.

We always ask that a source speak with us on the record for the sake of journalistic integrity. We want our audience to receive information that is credible and useful to them. Named sources are more trustworthy than unnamed sources because, by definition, unnamed sources will not publicly stand by their statements.

That being said, we realize that some sources are unwilling to reveal their identities publicly when it could jeopardize their safety or livelihood. Even in those cases, it is essential that the Tech Editor-in-Chief knows the identity of the source in question. Otherwise, there can be no certainty about whether the source and their quotes were falsified.

This also applies for Letters to the Editor and Opinion submissions to the Tech. If the author requests that their piece is published anonymously, they must provide a reason, and we shall consider it in appropriate circumstances. No truly anonymous submissions shall be published. Conversely, no submissions shall be published without their consent. When we choose not to identify a source by their full name, the article shall explain to readers why.

**Corrections Policy**

We strive for promptness in correcting all errors in all published content. We shall tell readers, as clearly and quickly as possible, what was wrong and what is correct.

Corrections to articles will be immediately updated on the online version of the Tech at [tech.caltech.edu](http://tech.caltech.edu). If appropriate, corrections will also be published in the following Tech print issue.

**Honor Code Applies**

In any remaining absence of clarity, the Honor Code is the guiding principle.

Write For the Tech

Lilia Arrizabalaga  
Editorial

If you are a friend, an enemy, or even a vague acquaintance of mine, you have likely heard me tell you to write for the Tech. And yet my research has shown the vast majority of you have never written for the tech! What utter disgrace, frankly I'm disappointed. So in an effort to convince more of you to write for the tech I have written a very comprehensive guide about how to write for the tech.

**Step 0.** Find a topic (optional). Find something you're passionate about or something you think people need to know. No longer do your rants have to be confined to your preferred messaging app or 2am in the lounge, now all of campus can see it! Want to write a Tech article anyway but don't know what to write about? We have a page for that, [tech.caltech.edu/write](http://tech.caltech.edu/write). Snag an article from there and write to your heart's content. Indecisive or just need to be told what to do? Find an editor and tell them you want to write for the tech, if they don't find you an article to write please report them to the editor in chief.

**Step 1.** Decide what type of article you want to write. We have so many options for you! You could write a letter to the editor

complaining about the last issue. You could write an opinion piece about anything you have opinions about, or even about things other people have opinions about that annoy you. Or you could write the news! Write about things happening on campus! You could even just write about how great your house's social events are to make everyone else jealous.

**Step 1.5.** Research (optional). If you're writing news, you should probably do some interviews. It's very easy I promise, all you have to do its email the relevant people "interview for the tech pls 🙏" and hope they get back to you before your deadline. If you're writing an opinion piecewriting opinion, you might not need to do research, but it would probably help you know what you're talking about. We here at the Tech have a very strict "no publishing garbage lies" policy that you might run into if you try to write an opinion piece with no true content in it.

**Step 2.** Write. My preferred way to write an article is to go into a brain fugue for about an hour clickity clacking my keyboard. This method does not work for everyone. Articles can be whatever length you want, but if you're a numbers sort of person around 300 to absolute max of 2000. Clar-

ity and concision are important, as is grammar, but this is what we pay editors for. Ideally you would do this step before the deadline. Don't make our editors sad that they are easily frightened.

**Step 3.** Submit. Give us your words. Please we crave the words. You can submit articles at [tech.caltech.edu/submit](http://tech.caltech.edu/submit), send your article to an editor or tape it to the wedding cake between 11pm and midnight every Thursday after we publish. Please note if you do this you will not be paid and probably won't be published.

**Step 4.** ??????

**Step 5.** Profit. We pay people to write! Please please write please we pay.

Now to address some common concerns I have heard.

**I'm not good at writing.** Nonsense. If you are literate, we'll take you. The tech is not a literary journal we do not publish based on skill with the English language. I mean look at me, I don't even know how to words.

**It doesn't matter/It won't make a difference.** Maybe you have been complaining about something going on around campus but don't want to write for the tech because it "won't fix the problem". Nonsense. Do you think the journalist covering the tree that fell by red door last year expected their words to unfell the tree? News needs to be covered for the good of the populous, not just to enact change. Plus, how much change do you expect to come about from not writing the article? Documentation is important. Don't let someone 10 years from now who wants to know what the climate was like now down because you wouldn't write about your complaints just because "it won'twont matter". Also, it could make

The California Tech

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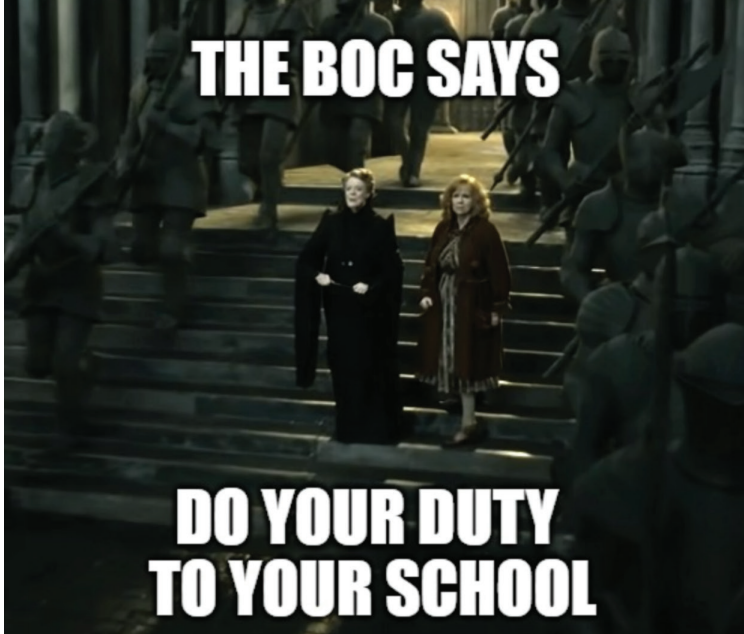
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oh god how did i get here i am not good at computer

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**THE BOC SAYS**

**DO YOUR DUTY TO YOUR SCHOOL**

a difference. If a change is enacted on campus that is unpopular and written about in the tech it is possible it will be rescinded. You cannot generalize to say your article will not make a difference. Oop-sises my shitpost got a bit serious. Back to your regularly scheduled babbling.

**I don't have time.** Well this one is probably true, and I can't really magic you more time. Maybe you should try procrastinating your sets by writing for the tech? Although if you do manage to find more free time you should use it to play interhouse sports.