

## Trust the experts

### *Economists should have more say in shaping economic policy*

DR. MIKE HEMESATH, *Economics*/guest opinion

**E**lections can be depressing times for economists. During the election season economists too often find themselves on the outside of policy debates looking in, with political candidates uninterested in the advice that the profession can usefully offer.

When discussing policy, economists are not completely naïve. We realize that political considerations play an important role in almost all policymaking at all levels of government. What is depressing is how quickly, and even joyfully, economists' thoughtfully conceived and empirically supported policies (at least in our own view) are thrown over for the easy populist position or the intellectually dishonest promise of a free lunch. And we are not talking about subtle and nuanced policies like the benefits of the earned income tax credit or criticism of taxing corporate profits. Politicians are happy to ignore some of economists' most treasured and widely agreed upon policy wisdom: free trade is good, budget deficits in a full employment economy are generally bad, or the market capitalist system is generally an efficient way to allocate scarce resources.

It is hard to take personally since the behavior is so bipartisan, but it is still depressing. Not only do these discussions ignore important economic considerations, but they also fail to help

inform the public about the difficult choices and trade-offs policy decisions typically entail.

One would hope in the political marketplace that there would be at least some demand for the thoughtful, honest policy wonk from someone who would address the full complexity and costs of various policy positions. Alas, no. Since economists generally believe markets work, even political markets, I guess we'll have to accept the fact that political consultants will not be knocking down our doors anytime soon asking us to stand for office. The dream of an

economist president will probably not be realized in our lifetimes.

And yet...

I was recently reflecting on the policy discussions during the last presidential campaign and was feeling particularly depressed about the way trade policy was addressed: Benedict Arnold CEOs on the one side and costly but politically expedient tariffs on the other. But shortly after the election I came across two stories that reminded me that not all was lost.

First, I came across an interview with Nobel Prize winning economist Ronald Coase on the *Reason* magazine website. In the interview Coase recounts how his work (and that of other colleagues) on the efficiency of markets was received when it first came out. At the time, the late 1950s and early 1960s, he was at the University of Virginia, not exactly a hotbed of radicalism, yet as Coase reports, "They thought the work we were

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## Math department hiring process hurts quality

AARON WEINER/opinion

**T**here has been a decision made in one of our departments that has hurt our school, hurt our academics, hurt our community, and hurt every single one of us. The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, chaired by Professor Samuel Patterson, recently made a hiring decision for a tenure track position, and they made a truly grievous error.

Ms. Tina Garrett has been a Visiting Assistant Professor here for four years. The normal course of a visiting professorship is only two years, but her performance was impressive enough that the department asked her to remain for another 2 years in 2003. I honestly and truly thank God that they did because Tina has been the single greatest positive influence I have had academically at Carleton.

Tina Garrett did her undergraduate work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, after which she obtained

her PhD from the University of Minnesota. Since her graduation in 2001, she has had two scholarly publications (this does not count the one she co-wrote in 1999) with three more currently in various stages of review. Additionally, she has presented on topics in her field (Combinatorial Theory, for those of you keeping score) to her peers. But beyond, and arguably more important than, her credentials, Tina is an enthusiastic and effective teacher, a stunning asset as a professor.

I am far from the only student who holds this opinion. A petition was started late last term by Ashley Rall '06 in an attempt to appeal the decision made by the Math Department. Although over 35 students (mostly math majors like myself) signed the petition, it has since disappeared and no change has taken place.

A significant portion of the support Tina has (deservedly) received from

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# [response]

## POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

I was disappointed to see *The Observer* printing the political contributions of various professors. Any student can look this information up online, and while professors strive to be fair and balanced in class, you've chosen to expose political orientation, as if it has some substantive meaning that can be applied to coursework and teaching.

It is tremendously ironic that conservatives, who complain constantly about liberal bias in higher education, would make such a brazen attempt to inject politics into the classroom. This was gratuitous.

—PAUL CAINE, '08

I was quite surprised and displeased to learn today that *The Observer* decided to publish information about my political contributions and those of several of my colleagues in your [4/8/05] edition. There are any number of reasons why this is problematic from a moral standpoint, to say nothing of the factual inaccuracies and misrepresentations involved.

—DR. LOUIS NEWMAN,  
Religion

Though I call myself a liberal, I am still an avid reader of *The Observer*. It is a thoughtful sheet that unabashedly presents opinions rarely heard around campus. However, I had a mixed reaction to the article containing the political contributions made by Carleton faculty, staff, and students. There is nothing wrong with giving money to political causes.

To the contrary, money allows political campaigns to do all of the things that make democracy vibrant. Political contributions may be functionally important, but information on the identities of contributors is highly overrated.

As an anti-corruption mechanism, politics ought to be accurately and openly accounted. We are citizens, and have the right to access public knowledge; however, personal privacy must still be maintained, and professors' political views are an irrelevant component in the academic tower. But the *Observer's* move has tempted my skeptical side to speculate that its presentation has a purpose. It is 'evidence' that accuses Carleton (and academe in general) of a liberal bias, betraying its duty to objectively propagate and pursue knowledge. This conclusion is flawed on two levels: there were only 15 contributors who met the minimum limit to be published, which is hardly a representative sampling of the campus political climate. Furthermore, political donations are a poor surrogate for political feelings, and even less a determinant of whether these feelings affect their work on campus. Sitting in classes, I've found that my education may be as damaged by a strange accent as by politics. I'm glad that some CPA-inclined students at the Carleton Conservatives Union are happy to check that \$250 political favors are not being purchased, but I worry that they may conflate bean-counting with punditry.

—DAVID WICZER, '06

## CSA BUDGET

I was startled and appalled at [the 4/8/05] issue. While I agree that CSA needs to allow more transparency in its budgetary allocations, I do not think this was the proper or responsible way to go about it. Printing what was requested and allocated is one thing, but showing the completely out of context percentage is completely irresponsible. For example, in Spring Allocations we do

not give Honorarium money and perhaps a group only asked for Honorarium money so we gave zero. Showing a 0 percent for their request is completely out of context and implies a judgment was made on the group itself. I am extremely upset by this irresponsibility and would have preferred being consulted in this project rather than your organization going ahead and printing the numbers without any additional information.

—LAURA MONN, '06  
CSA Treasurer

## Economists' voice in policy

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doing was disreputable. They thought of us as right-wing extremists. My wife was at a cocktail party and heard me described as someone to the right of the John Birch Society. There was a great antagonism in the '50s and '60s to anyone who saw any advantage in a market system or in a non-regulated or relatively economically free system."

Coase's work fundamentally changed the way economists and others look at the world and has become absolutely essential and mainstream in economics departments, law schools and other social science departments, yet at the time it was so "disreputable" that the University of Virginia, to its regret and shame, let Coase leave for the University of Chicago, where he continues his work as one of the most important economists of his generation and maybe of all time.

The second story was a news story from Europe. Earlier this year the controversial Kyoto Protocol went into effect. The United States has not signed the Protocol and is unlikely to do so anytime soon, but the 25 members of the European Union are signatories. Among

the provisions of the Protocol, one basically assigns a fixed amount of carbon dioxide emissions per year to each country. The country must then allocate these emissions among the various sources of CO<sub>2</sub> within each country. To allocate this scarce resource, these emissions permissions, the European Union created an Emissions Trading Scheme (EU-ETS), literally a market where a fixed volume of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are traded among the various producers of these emissions. We have an efficient market-based solution being used in the service of an environmental (some would even say green) initiative. The price when the market opened was about \$10 a ton.

Whose work is the basis for this Emissions Trading Scheme? The once disreputable, extremist Ronald Coase, of course.

So when I have the policy blues, I console myself: in the long run we may all be dead, but we can also be hopeful that we are making progress, election cycle silliness notwithstanding, toward a policy world, where thoughtful, efficiently designed economic policy will rule the day. ■

## the observer

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### THE CARLETON OBSERVER

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# Public info should be public

## STAFF EDITORIAL

In our last issue we printed a chart of the political contributions of Carleton faculty and staff. The decision to print these contributions has inspired a bit of controversy and a great deal of discourse on campus. Some have asked what purpose we wanted to serve and many have pointed out what seems to be a glaring lack of context. After all, we printed the numbers with no explanation – no story, no declared reason, and no standard of comparison. Should we have included context? Perhaps.

Should the information still have been published? Absolutely. It was our assessment that printing facts alone was both necessary and responsible; we stand by our decision.

Why did we print the po-

litical contributions of faculty, staff, and students? There were two main reasons. First, we believe that fair, clean, and open elections are an essential part of democracy. Part of having clean elections is knowledge of not only how candidates, parties, and organizations spend money, but also of who contributes money: knowledge of who gave, how much they gave, to whom they gave, and when they gave is fundamental to democratic principles.

The Federal Election Commission and the United States Congress (in passing the Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Law) maintain that political campaign contributions ought to be a matter of public record. So do we. Keep in mind that published information was obtained from the Federal Election Commission website ([www.fec.gov](http://www.fec.gov)), an agency that makes records of political contributions publicly available.

Second, we believe it is important for Carleton students to be aware of the political climate on campus. Carleton is an undergraduate liberal arts institution, a place of learning. The faculty occupy a prominent place as teachers and mentors – a place from which they undoubtedly influence the minds of students. It is important for students to be aware of the possible effect of political beliefs on what happens in the classroom. This is not to say that faculty should not be political; of course, we all have the right and the responsibility to participate in our democracy. But we also have the obligation to acknowledge the effect our political beliefs may have on others. We believe that giving money to a political cause is a significant statement of support for that cause

and information concerning such support must be made available to students.

But why no context? Why not explain why we printed the numbers? Both at the time of publication and now, it has been our assessment that reporting the facts by themselves was the most responsible decision. It was not then, and is not now, our intention to use the information to claim certain faculty and staff are biased in their teaching, to prove that Carleton has a liberal political climate, or to voice disapproval for donating money to political causes. In fact, our goal was not to imply anything. That's right – nothing at all. Strange as it may seem, we believe that you as our readers can use the information we provided to draw your own conclusions. Our only intention has been to give you the facts. The rest is yours.

Whatever your opinion of our decision to print the political contributions, we hope that you will understand why we made the information available without much context. Perhaps we should have included more information, stated our purpose, or compared Carleton to other institutions in terms of donations. Perhaps we were wrong to believe that our readers would take the time to dig deeper. Perhaps we should have run the risk of drawing false conclusions by explaining the numbers. But instead, we left the final step to you. Hopefully, by doing so, we succeeded in generating discussion and promoting diversity of thought at Carleton. If that is the case, then we fulfilled our mission as a publication. ■

*The staff editorial represents the majority opinion of the editorial board, comprised of the editors-in-chief and opinion/copy, columns, news and design editors.*

## [editors' note]

The past two weeks have been an exciting time for us. As you can see, we have totally revamped our design scheme, making *The Observer* a more attractive and readable publication. Our base of writers has broadened to include new talent. We now have copy and layout editors. And the improvements will only continue – in addition to quality opinion editorials, our remaining two issues for this academic year will feature news and investigative stories that will be sure to catch your attention.

We are seeking talented writers of all political orientations, especially liberals. That's right – liberals. This is not a conservative publication, and as part of our quest to improve, we want your talent and opinions. Though this issue may be lacking in this respect, want you to help fill that void in upcoming issues.

This is not to say that our mission has changed. *The Observer* is, and will continue to be, a high-quality publication that promotes a diversity of thought and celebrates freedom of expression. As much as we can improve ourselves from within, our success ultimately hinges on contributions made by our readership and the larger campus community. So whether you want to become a staff writer, send in a brief response to an article, or just read our paper so often, we ask for your help in making *The Observer* the best it can be.



FROM LEFT: Bitsy Perlman '06, Brennan Taylor '07 and Becky Dernbach '08 participate in a mock filibuster on the Chapel Lawn. The Carleton Dems aim to "filibuster" for 100 hours.

# Last stand against majority tyranny

WELLS HARRELL/opinion

Tommy Walker '08 should be applauded for his efforts to raise campus awareness of the Senate filibuster and the "nuclear option" to abolish it. This is an issue worthy of consideration by every member of the Carleton community because the filibuster is the last dam holding back a disaster in Washington. And it's starting to crack.

In his article, which appeared in *The Carletonian* last week, Walker ends up on the right side of the debate, but he comes to the filibuster's defense from the wrong angle. First, the fight to keep the filibuster should not be based on specific policy concerns. Keep in mind that the filibuster is a procedure, not a policy, and it shouldn't be treated as if it were another piece of legislation up for debate. The reason? Deciding the best team is different from changing the rules of the game to give your side the upper-hand. It's not a matter of whether ten of the

President's nominees should be appointed to the federal bench, but whether Senate rules should be changed to prohibit Senate Democrats from blocking their appointment. These are two distinct issues that must be kept separate – the former is a policy question concerning what kind of judges we should want, while the latter a procedural question that deals with the scope of the minority party's power.

In addition, couching the pro-filibuster argument in terms of democratic rule is self-defeating, given that the filibuster is itself a "threat to democracy," as Walker puts it. It is an institutional feature whose sole purpose

is to impede the will of the majority; it makes it more difficult for the Congressional majority to pass laws on behalf of the national majority. Remember that Americans reelected a Republican president and further solidified the Republican majorities in both the House and the Senate by electing additional Republicans to represent them. In November of 2004, the majority of the country said narrowly but decisively that it wanted the Republicans to remain in power. Since the filibuster gives the minority party the power to block the majority party's agenda, it is accurate to call it "anti-democratic" in nature.

Why, then, should we care about the filibuster's possible demise? Because as Walker aptly points out, the filibuster is an integral component in our federal checks-and-balances system. As anti-democratic as it may be, it is one of many anti-democratic features of our national government designed to keep the majority will in check. The Framers made it very difficult for one party to have total control over the national agenda, and for good reason – no one party should ever have that much power. "Tyranny of the majority" is a dangerous yet real possibility if the filibuster were successfully eliminated.

Consider what might happen if Senator Frist's push for the "nuclear option" were successful. President Bush would likely see his remaining judicial nominees confirmed, and he may get every one of his agenda items, from tax cuts to Social Security, "rubber stamped" by the Senate, despite the fact that the Framers never intended for Congress to give the President's policies an easy ride. If the Republicans have truly built a lasting national majority, we could expect their agenda-power to grow exponentially over the next several years, leaving

Democrats with little, if any, voice in the national policy process. If you believe that good policy requires at least some representation of minority

views, you might need to be prepared for bad times ahead.

Though many Carls would consider this outcome disastrous, it pales in comparison to the greater danger – total

Athletes can't change the rules mid-competition. Why should we allow our nation's leaders to do so?

government shutdown. The filibuster is not the only way to stop legislation from reaching the Senate floor and, for several months now, many Senate Democrats, including Minority Leader Harry Reid, have pledged to use other avenues to halt all legislation if the filibuster is abolished. Instead of unbridled one-party control of public laws, few if any laws would be enacted if Democrats make good on their promises. There is a possibility that these threats are nothing more than bluffs made to deter Senator Frist from following through with his proposal. But when critical policy issues, from the federal budget to anti-terrorism legislation, must be voted on in the Senate before having a chance to become law, is this a bluff that would ever be worth calling?

We also have to worry about the precedent that abolishing the filibuster

would set. Killing the filibuster sends a clear message to those seeking greater legislative power – if you really want to win, just change the rules! From gerrymandering in Texas to ideologically-motivated court-packing, we've seen countless modern examples of politicians advancing their agendas by biasing the whole political process in their favor. Many tactics once considered "uncivil" or "extreme" are now regularly relied upon for partisan gain. Whereas in the old days, Franklin D. Roosevelt could never have gotten away with adding seats to the U.S. Supreme Court, politicians these days seem far more concerned with victory than with good policy, making them more likely to use any and all means necessary to win.

The fight to keep the filibuster is about more than judges and procedures. It's about ensuring that politicians don't

abuse the system for politics' sake. In the midst of a divided nation, the last thing we need is both sides trying to redraw the end zones instead of just playing the game. Athletes can't change the rules mid-competition, especially not because they're losing. Why should we allow our nation's leaders to do the same?

If killing the filibuster is being seriously considered, we as a nation have more to worry about than some conservative judges getting seats on the federal bench. The debate on the issue shouldn't be about blocking the President's judicial nominees, just as it shouldn't be about getting his nominees on the bench. The stakes are indeed much higher – this is a historic decision with historic ramifications, and we must treat it as such. The future of good lawmaking hangs in the balance. ■

# Conservatives should support the filibuster

PETER FRITZ/opinion

While Democrats wish to unduly expand the power of the Senate beyond the traditional role of advise and consent, that does not excuse the Republicans' politically incompetent and morally reprehensible "nuclear option" to change Senate rules and effectively kill the filibuster.

The detrimental implications to the Republicans' own self-interest are clear. Though Republicans may want to kill the filibuster so that the President's remaining judicial nominees are confirmed, in four years the situation could easily be reversed. Consider a scenario with President Hillary Clinton and a slim Democratic majority in the Senate. In the least extreme case, President Clinton would be able to appoint liberal activist judges with impunity, knowing that Senate leadership would be able to

easily overcome Republican resistance. In a more extreme case, politically enterprising Democrats might use this rule change as justification for other changes to the Senate's role. If Republican Senators strongly objected to the ratification of a treaty, they would be almost helpless to oppose it. This change may even begin a steady erosion of the protocols and traditions that make the Senate an effective body.

The second and more horrifying aspect of the "nuclear option" is its assault on the time-honored norms of the Senate. Though opponents of the "nuclear option" talk about "saving democracy," the Senate is not democratic. Each state, regardless of population, hold two seats. However, its undemocratic nature is one of its greatest

strengths, and this strength is as important to the overall system of checks and balance as any other aspect. George Washington is said to have explained the Senate's func-

One senator obstructing the business of the Senate can be as important a duty as passing legislation.

tion as "cooling" House legislation, in the same way a saucer cools tea. The filibuster is one of the most important elements of this undemocratic body. One senator obstructing the business of the Senate can be as important a duty as passing legislation.

This unique duty may seem to be a small cog in the vast workings of American government, but it should

not be underestimated. The Frist-Miller proposal is akin to identifying a slight inefficiency with a machine and tearing it apart without full knowledge of its inner workings. Just as a mechanic would realize that such an intemperate course of action with a car is extremely foolish and downright dangerous, our representatives, those men and women who are most intimately connected to the process of American government,

should prefer to approach any structural change, in a sober and responsible manner. Among Senate Republicans, this is clearly not

the case. Those partisans in favor of the "nuclear option" are committed to making the same mistakes of the feminist revolutionaries, forsaking any consideration of consequences. This hasty and shortsighted effort – a dereliction of the moral duty set upon our representatives to preserve the nation – is reprehensible and, with any luck, will not succeed. ■

# Controversial conservative

## *Coulter stirs modern culture of ignorance*

RAWDON BERGQUIST/opinion

Last Sunday evening, the much loved and much loathed Ann Coulter proceeded to rant and rave at St. Olaf. The nicely attired Boe Memorial Chapel, with its stained glass and multitude of international flags, was desecrated by not only this conservative witch but also her embittered opposition, consisting of a ragged collection of jeering Carls and Olies. Many, like myself, probably just came to see what all the hullabaloo was about, but we left sorely disappointed. I do have at least some (grudging) respect for the malevolent Coulter; she is paid at least \$25,000 an hour to tell the world why liberals are treasonous and should be oppressed. And it is touching to see the 1st Amendment in action; it certainly brings a tear to the eye. There is a market for controversy, for stupidity, and for ignorance in this great country of ours, and I fear that it is growing. Perhaps it is the market forces themselves that deserve my respect, for it does not take a great deal of talent to insult someone nor make sweeping generalizations about history.

Her rant, entitled "Liberalism and Terrorism, Different Stages of the Same Disease," was not about social or political ills. The slim thesis was along the lines of 'liberals help evil communists and terrorists, therefore they should be oppressed.' Mostly it consisted of 'facts' and 'logic' about liberal treachery, foolishness, pessimism, and general stupidity. If you are a believer, maybe liberals have made the Faustian bargain, but it seems that the talk itself was a symptom of a larger problem in these United States. The contest between Coulter and the audience – how many people she could slander versus how many expletives a college student can string together - was decidedly one sided. Credit must be extended, for Coulter is skilled at evasion, misdirection, and counterattack. I had a fleeting glimpse of something deeper, resembling actual thought, in response to an actual question from a fellow Carl. But it was not to be. The half hour question period following the half hour tirade was a disappointment; I, for one, was expecting the pies to come out even though she was surrounded by security, but the

questions posed were terrible and reaction from the audience even more so. A person like Coulter lives on angry retorts and catcalls, fuming liberals, slander, expletives, and sheer hatred from her audience. Her selling point, her successful marketing plan, as sad as it is, is the controversy, the shock, the outrage, the hatred and contempt. Without it, what would she be besides another ideologue and talking head? Even sadder is that she sells.

People like Coulter across the political spectrum (for they thrive in a multitude

of environments) prey off rigid partisan divisions and ideological warfare; they exist to tend the bonfire that is consuming political discourse and pocket the excess change. There are not many things one can do with these parasites. You can fall into their trap, shout, and increase the general level of noise, or you can not go and be accused of not listening to the other side. But do not be drawn into that argument, for she does not represent the thoughtful part of that side. Without controversy, politics becomes stale, dull and ineffective, but it must also be moderated lest the whole enterprise becomes hopelessly saturated with such abuse and the house remains divided. One Carl I talked to afterwards said he walked out halfway through because he did not need to hear any more of it. Amen brother. ■

# Promotion essential

## before spring allocations

NICK HOWARD/opinion

Tempers flared, negative epithets were hurled and mass craziness ensued. During Carleton Student Association (CSA) allocations last spring, organizations did everything from saying they would set up their own financial networks to demanding that the budget be overturned and redone in their favor. In turn, they were told by Senate that they should better adhere to the bylaws and to try again next year.

This year, I hear little to no mention of these organizations. They are not working to publicize themselves in preparation for the justifications they will have to give in the budget meetings; few of them are doing work around campus to truly justify the budget requests that we all know they are filing. Should the budget committee give out money like they did last year if few of the organizations on campus are truly doing all they can with what they were given?

As participants and leaders in these organizations, we should all work to better publicize ourselves and what we do for the campus community. No organization should assume that, simply because of its name or "historical place" on campus, its purpose and goals are

widely known. This thinking created the allocations mess last year. All of the organizations on campus assumed that serving their own members would be reason enough for reward. In doing this, they forgot one of the golden rules of lobbying: you absolutely must make known your purpose and the good you can serve for the wider community in order to have funding guaranteed for your cause.

Be they not as controversial as last year, the allocation decisions will still anger some and cause finger-pointing. But most of the blame will be misdirected. If we are dissatisfied with the results in the budget, we should blame only ourselves and the lack of effort and ingenuity exhibited on our parts.

All organizations who wish to be granted their full requests should let the community know what they are doing. While the work that organizations do for their members is great and should continue, most senators will not be members of your respective groups. When the Budget Committee sees proof of the work that you do for the community, then, and only then, will they be truly convinced to listen to the request that your group is submitting. ■

*"Truth is the most sacred virtue of the human heart."* -SENECA THE YOUNGER

## CSA budget ought to be public

ANDREW NAVRATIL/opinion

As part of the Comprehensive Fee for 2004-2005, every Carleton student paid the \$165 Student Activity Fee. The revenues from the fee – over \$280,000 – were distributed to student organizations by the Carleton Student Association (CSA) Senate. Senate is charged by the student body to responsibly and fairly distribute this money. Generally speaking, Senate does a good job. What is lacking, however is accountability: the budget passed by Senate each spring is not readily available to the student body. This is not an inevitability, however, and only by making the entire budget available can Senate fulfill its obligation to be accountable to the student body.

The CSA budget lists all sources of income and expenditures. In addition, it

shows the amount allocated to each organization Chartered with Funding. This information is far too important to be hid from the eyes of the larger Carleton community. The CSA takes in and spends more than \$300,000 each year. Knowing how and where that money is being spent is of the utmost importance. The students have the right to know exactly how their money – and yes, it is their money – is being spent. It's like paying taxes to the federal government. In return, you have the right to access the entire federal budget. Students have the right to know how the money is being used, and Senate has an obligation to provide that information.

Publishing and posting the budget would make Senate more accountable to the student body. Senate should be accountable to students for spending. Only after knowing how the money is being spent

can one protest it. However enlightened we Senators sometimes think we are, we do not always hold the same perspective as the average student. In allocating money, we ought to keep this in mind. We cannot accurately represent our constituents if they do not have the information – the budget in this case – needed to form an opinion.

The most commonly offered argument against publishing and posting the entire budget is that the numbers cannot be understood without appropriate context and it is impractical to provide that context. Budget Committee and Senate have resisted publishing the budget for fear of students misunderstanding the numbers, drawing out-of-context conclusions, and laying blame on Senate. If publishing the budget in the Observer did one thing, it destroyed this argument: there has been no outcry against

Senate. In fact, the only results have been positive, an increase in the number of questions directed to the Treasurer and Vice-President of Senate.

The Senate must publish and post the complete budget, including allocations to organizations, starting now. Only by doing so can Senate meet its obligation to be fiscally transparent and accountable to the student body. The arguments against publishing the budget simply do not hold water and the evidence necessary to support that claim is not there. Now is the time for the officers, the Budget Committee, and the Senate to come clean and show the numbers. Continued hesitation and secrecy reflects poorly upon the Senate and deprives students of their fundamental right to know how and where the Student Activity Fee is being spent. ■

## Garrett shortchanged

*continued from pp. 1*

her students is a result of her conduct outside the classroom. Her ability to communicate on an individual and personal level with every student she has taught marks her as a singularly laudable professor. As an instructor, her ability to teach material is incredible, but her ability to motivate and encourage students is unparalleled.

In light of Tina's phenomenal performance as a professor (if you want more verification I strongly urge you to read her review caucus postings) and her unflappable dedication to her students, you would imagine she would be a shoe-in for a tenure track position. So did I. After all, Carleton is, according to our Academic Catalogue for 2004-2005, "[An institution that] strives to provide a liberal education of the highest quality," (The Purpose of the College, 1, emphasis added). It would appear the school's pri-

mary concern is to teach us; that seems to suggest that the strongest teachers ought to be sought after and, when they are found, kept here. If Carleton's purpose, distilled to one key sentence, is to provide "the highest quality" education, shouldn't the departments be seeking the highest quality of educators in order to meet their students' needs?

In my experience, the greatest weakness of Carleton students (myself included) is that we are hesitant to ask questions that make us feel stupid, or to meet with professors when we do not understand something. I have never been uncomfortable bringing a question to Tina during class or her office hours. Nor has anyone else, for that matter.

But despite her phenomenal record thus far and her potential to be an outstanding tenured professor at Carleton, the Department of Mathematics and

Computer Sciences chose not to offer the position to Ms. Garrett. Carleton has just lost a professor whose skills and teaching style work to alleviate our single greatest weakness.

The Math Department has done an unforgivable disservice to a phenomenal instructor; worse yet, the student body has lost one of the single greatest assets the department had to offer. Each and every one of us has suffered a loss because of this decision; each and every one of us has been hurt more than we may ever realize. Their reasons are beyond me, but I intend to find out. Why would a professor of four years of pristine experience at Carleton not be asked to continue here? Why in the world would the department deliberately lose a professor whose interactions with students have been universally and uniformly positive? Why, instead of choosing a tried and true teacher with sterling credentials, would the department hire someone with less experience from Gettysburg College? Did I mention that the professor hired in her place was a Carleton alum? ■



# How I became a radical conservative

JOSH MARKOWITZ/staff

I was neither born nor raised a conservative. I suppose I began to pick up on my mother's support for the Democratic Party sometime during high school and also learned that professing liberal views is the mainstream way of thinking among urban Jews, particularly in large northern cities like my hometown of Chicago. On the eve of the 2000 presidential election, I even cheered when we saw Al Gore win Florida's electoral votes and clinch victory. But although I was saddened when Florida eventually went for Bush, I was far from devastated, unlike some of my peers. In fact, had I not gone out of my way to explore the world, philosophy and history of conservative thought – and taken it seriously – my political beliefs could have never shifted from their moderate liberal origins.

So where did I find the desire and wherewithal to become a leader of the conservative movement at Carleton? I would say I became a conservative – or, perhaps, discovered that I am one – some time between mid-senior year in high school and winter break of freshman year. My introduction to conservatism actually came from reading Ayn Rand. I read her novels *The Fountainhead*, *Atlas Shugged*, and most of her books of essays.

Many say that Rand was a heartless woman who had no concept of a society working together, people caring about anything beyond the tips of their own noses, or the concept of bettering humanity. They are, basically, correct. But their criticisms, to her, sound like the highest praise. She claimed to make judgments with her mind (i.e., reason), not her heart (i.e., emotion or whim), and believed that people are naturally self-interested and competitive (though by convincing, not forcing, and with respect for one another), and that attempts should not be made to force them to think or behave otherwise. To be sure, I too harbor some skepticism toward Rand's teachings. I have found that there

is, indeed, essential room for the heart, and even faith in the thinking, goals, and decision-making of a “rational” individual, and that public goods and collective action problems are much more real than she gave them credit for. These criticisms notwithstanding, her critiques of progressivism and of mainstream conservatism led me to investigate matters further and to see if anyone, including myself, could prove her premises wrong.

Here are my thoughts so far: I love the world, life, myself, my family, my friends, liberty, and free, constitutional republics like America, Israel, and even Germany. I also love that I was fortunate enough to be born during this era. Our society has improved its lot infinitely over just the last 200 years. This is not to say that I believe early modern, medieval, or ancient

people were less happy than we are. But just as they could not conceive of the motor vehicle, they too could not conceive of feeling confident in living a long life; eating good, healthy food; exercising their minds to the fullest potential, or even of having as much sex as they wanted with someone they loved without getting pregnant or sick, if they took proper precautions. And just as I believe they would speed off merrily in a rusty Chevy, if only they had the chance, so too would they opt for the lifestyle we have created – even for the poor – if they knew it were possible. Their happiness was but a distant cousin to the kind we can experience today, and I believe that the latter allows much fuller actualization of human potential in every stage of life.

Finally, I believe that we achieved this society – despite the cataclysmic pains of genocide, warfare, totalitarianism, and all the pressing though often overstated problems of today's world – by unleashing the power of the individual and her mind. We have progressed through the combined efforts of millions of individuals who discovered their moral right to be free and happy, beginning with Aristotle and culminating some time in the future when, hopefully, all people in the world will also sense that their lives belong to no one but themselves. The genius of the human race is that its members trade with one another. And they do not only trade what is in their hands. In fact, they are increasingly trading what is on their minds, which is now much more valuable than any rocks or metals they have ever found in the earth. This trend relies, of course, upon the continued sophistication of manufacturing and supplying what our bodies need. But I believe that nothing will better raise the standard of living for those producing these essentials than continually adding more value to their work and making it more skilled

and satisfying. And this does not come from raising the minimum wage or applying “protective” tariffs – though these “solutions” temporarily make some kinds of work more valuable at the expense of others. The only solution that can clean up the

environment, eradicate AIDS, make the poor rich, and feed whoever is still starving, is to let these people trade with one another and to trade with them in kind.

The world needs as many good minds as it can get, and it is this sort of trading that best encourages their training. I believe my thoughts speak for themselves and I assume that everyone else does, too, with regards to theirs. I strongly encourage anyone who would like to learn more about my “radical worldview” to contact me. I also love to listen. ■

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