

SPARTAN DAILY

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INDEX

OPINION

View From the East
U.S. should treat prisoners more humanely p. 2



The Scratching Post
Professional athletes should also have moral character p. 2



SPORTS

Rugby
Profile of club sport p. 3



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Ask Ryan
The "Thrilla from Manila" takes a break from writing a column to answer questions from readers

Sparta Guide p. 2

Crossword p. 3

Classifieds p. 3

English majors unite to read

By Sarah Holcomb
Daily Staff Writer

Students who can't deny ever picking up a book at random to criticize its contents would fit in well with the English Society at San Jose State University.

The relatively new club is comprised of mostly English majors at SJSU who enjoy interacting with each other.

"There aren't many of us in the department, so we see each other in class a lot," said Andrew Weighlein, the club's president who is affectionately called Mr. President by the club members.

Weighlein said the club was founded a couple of years ago, but it died out. The new club members brought it back about a year and a half ago. Because the club is still essentially new, Weighlein and the other club officers are working together to get some structure to the club. The club officers are Vice President Gillian Hertzler, Treasurer David Montgomery and Secretary Charlotte Gutto.

"We're still figuring out the charters," Weighlein said. "Last semester was about reuniting the members and getting the room back. A lot of stuff is still iffy, unfortunately."

The pride and joy of the club is the English Society Lounge, located in the Faculty Offices building, room 113. The room is furnished with a couch complete with decorative throw pillows and



Colin Underwood / Daily Staff

Mary Williams, left, a junior majoring in English, Peter O'Sullivan, middle, a graduate student majoring in creative writing, and Jill Hertzler, a senior majoring in English, take time between classes to relax in the English Society lounge by talking about assignments, classes and movies. The lounge is located in room 113 of the Faculty Offices building.

four oversized chairs. The lounge serves as a haven for the members and allows them to relax and hang out with other members.

"We get to see everyone continuously and get to know them," Weighlein said.

The room also serves an administrative purpose, as it is the hub of the organization. The club officers have office hours that are posted

in case other officers or members need to speak with them. This makes it possible for Weighlein to run the club without having to hold formal meetings.

"We loosely have meetings. Everyone in the club comes to the room once or twice a week, so we handle things on the fly when we see each other in the room," Weighlein said.

A student can become a member by simply walking into the room and joining the conversation because much of the structure and procedures of the club have yet to be determined.

That is exactly how Peter O'Sullivan and Tanja Nathanael came to be members. The group

see SOCIETY, page 4

Professor emphasizes importance of participating in political activities

Lecture is part of 13-year-old tradition to bring guest speakers

By Ashley Johnson
Daily Staff Writer

Students and faculty members crowded into the Engineering building auditorium Thursday to listen to Emily Robertson speak on the role of universities in civic education, as part of the Francis Villemain lecture.

The lecture is a 13-year-old tradition that brings distinguished speakers to campus to engage in dialogue.

Robertson is an associate professor of education and philosophy

in the School of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences at Syracuse University.

"It's one of the few major intellectual rituals that bring students and faculty from different colleges into common intellectual dialogue along with their students," said Michael Katz, professor of secondary education in the College of Education.

Francis Villemain was the dean of the College of Education for approximately eight years and committed himself to promoting the values of social democracy, Katz said.

Emily Robertson commenced her lecture, titled "Democracy, Education and the Moral Life" by highlighting her interest in the topic.

"My interest in this talk was stimulated in part by the recent presidential election," she said. "There seems to be no true exchange of ideas but kind of talking past each other and a level of meanness and deception."

She continued by delving into the activities that citizens are called upon to engage in within the political sphere and the role of the university in those activities.

Robertson stressed the importance of everyday talk, the concept of group discussions involving matters of public concern.

This is an idea she borrowed from Jane Mansbridge, an Adams professor of political leadership and democratic values at Harvard University.

She explained the activities citizens engage in within the political domain by dividing them into three categories and explaining university involvement.

The first category she talked

see LECTURE, page 4

Faculty members discuss controversial classroom topics

By Mayra Flores
Daily Staff Writer

Faculty members discussed hot topics and civil discussion in the classroom Thursday at the Instructional Resource Center.

"San Jose State University is a school full of diversity, and that's one of our gifts," said Mary Breiling, interim associate director for the Center for Faculty Development and Support.

Hot topics that are popular in government, history and public speaking classes include abortion and the death penalty, she said.

"What's important is that we want to do the best we can to facilitate good discussion in the classroom," Breiling said. "We want to stress the necessity for understanding,

valuing and respecting our differences."

Breiling said diversity can make things a little tricky in the classroom.

"The diversity makes it more challenging because at the same time you want all viewpoints to be heard and all voices to feel comfortable in the classroom but the sensitivity issue," said Julia Hawker, a lecturer in communication studies. "How do you shape your viewpoint? How do you encourage people to find their voice — but not at the expense of somebody else?"

The discussion began with a series of questions to the audience.

"What are hot topics, and what makes us not like them?" said Mary Kirlin, assistant professor of public policy and administration at Cal State Sacramento.

Faculty members discussed

classroom topics such as taking things personally, absolutism, values, challenging one's perspective and politics.

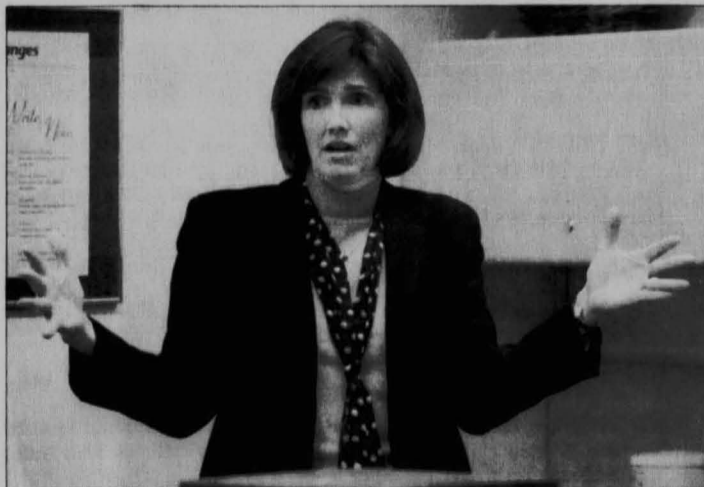
They also shared ideas on how to promote "civil" discussion and encourage students to feel safe to express differing viewpoints in the classroom environment.

"Why do we raise hot topics?" Kirlin asked. "It's part of the world around us, if you're teaching a class that has anything to do with the community, and in any other discipline."

Kirlin discussed different approaches faculty members can try with their students in order to make the class safe for all opinions and viewpoints.

However, she said, there will always be students who never raise their hands.

see CLASSROOM, page 4



Lorry Thomas / Daily Staff

Mary Kirlin, an assistant professor of public policy and administration at Cal State Sacramento, speaks about discussing controversial issues, such as the war in Iraq, in a classroom setting.

Online courses grow in popularity

By Jean Blomo
Daily Staff Writer

San Jose State University's online course resource for faculty and students, eCampus, provided more than 40 online courses to more than 1100 students last spring.

"(Computers) will be a key component in education for years to come, playing a larger role each year," said Steve Hinerman, a communication studies lecturer and online instructor.

This semester, eCampus offers about 45 courses that are instructed entirely online and 24 "mixed mode" or "blended" courses that are instructed both in a classroom and online, according to the eCampus Web site. More than 200 courses at SJSU require Internet access, according to the Web site.

Kristina Skinner, an undeclared freshman, said her online course in communications provided convenience.

"Many students work full time and have obligations to their family, work and community," said Corey Gin, academic coordinator for eCampus. "Some students feel they can accomplish more with their time taking an online course."

Gin said classes conducted via the Internet allow students access to the course at any time.

"(Students) can reach me usually within hours of having a question and get a detailed answer, and I'm much more available to them than I would be if I were just on campus two days a week," Hinerman said.

David Zhen, a junior majoring in industrial design, said his concern is the lack of interaction with faculty.

Mary McVey, an associate professor of child and adolescent development and an online instructor, said she finds an increase in interaction in her online courses.

"I find in most classrooms students come in, sit down, take notes and then leave at the end of the hour without saying a word," McVey said. "In my online courses, my students are required to post messages."

Some students said they feel that online courses are more challenging than classroom courses.

"You are forced to write more, think more and share ideas," Skinner said. "You can't just sit at the back of class and do nothing."

Online classrooms also allow students time to reflect on questions brought up in discussions on message boards before responding, Gin said.

Hinerman said online courses allow more students to become involved in class.

"I think very shy students love this — whereas they might not speak in class much, online they can say what they think about an issue and feel more confident," Hinerman said.

McVey said she finds online courses allow students to be more active participants in their learning.

"Students can really personalize their learning — they assume more responsibility for discovering and exploring," McVey said.

see ONLINE, page 4

VIEW FROM THE EAST

Freeing of prisoners a move toward peace

World peace. It shouldn't have to be just a wish breathily gasped by Miss America candidates.

The stalemate between Israel and Palestine is dissolving slowly but surely.

On Feb. 21, Israel freed 500 Palestinian prisoners, the first of 900 to be released over the next few weeks. This was the largest release in a decade, the last time being 1996 when 800 prisoners were released.

All it took was each side giving in a bit.

Israel plans to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, allowing Palestinian settlements to be built on the land.

In turn, militant Palestinian groups have agreed to a cease-fire.

But 8,000 Palestinian prisoners are behind bars in Israel.

True, none of the prisoners being freed have been found guilty of attacks that injured or killed Israelis. Israel will not release prisoners with "blood on their hands."

It's a distinct possibility that not all of the 8,000 Palestinian prisoners are innocent.

But while freeing 900 prisoners out of 8,000 is significant, there should be more done to maintain peace in the world.

Take Abu Ghraib as an example. The Iraqi prisoners were horrifically abused by the American guards who were supposed to liberate them.

Perhaps some of the prisoners belonged there, but none of them deserved to be humiliated by posing forretch-inducing pictures.

The American military police involved, most notably Lyndie England, have been whipped publicly by the press and by the public.

But no one speaks of the prisoners they abused for months.

Whether the victimized prisoners were freed is unknown. They could still be languishing behind bars, for all that's been said about them.

If the United States righted its injustices toward the prisoners, instead of lashing out at the military personnel involved, it could take a step forward toward ending the Iraqi conflict. The casualties of war could come down if America took measures to ensure peace, instead of antagonizing the Iraqi people.

But maybe Iraq is too removed from America to

merit media coverage.

Perhaps Guantanamo Bay is close enough to home.

This Cuban base has become a prison camp since detainees started arriving in 2002, after Sept. 11.

The injustice of Sept. 11 was hardly an American event — it was a world event. The World Trade Center housed international commerce, with citizens of my native Taiwan dying at the hands of zealots.

It doesn't enrage only Americans to see innocent blood spilled.

But that is all the more reason that Americans need to be above resorting to terrorist tactics. Stooping to their level, using measures such as extreme temperatures, sleep deprivation and other forms of torture, is not going to get back the 3,000 civilians who lost their lives.

Amnesty International shouldn't be completely ignored by Fox News.

For the detainees, who are not "prisoners of war" with legal rights, they continue to be a shadowy population within the legal and international black hole

they are trapped in.

The Pentagon will not release information on them, such as how many detainees there are.

Public information only goes so far.

In California, the prison population is well-documented for being large and expensive. The prison guards' salaries, with former Gov. Gray Davis' generous raises, are also well-chronicled.

It doesn't make sense that Guantanamo Bay's prison population, coming from a host of nations, virtually doesn't exist on paper.

It shouldn't be hard to figure out why the United States doesn't have many allies.

While it's an oversimplification to say that freeing prisoners means peace, it's a step toward peace, like Israel and Palestine's example.

Until the United States takes steps to make its policies more transparent and consistent, world peace is a hollow cry.



LING-MEI WONG

Ling-Mei Wong is the Spartan Daily opinion editor. "View From the East" appears every Friday.

ADAM THE BEAVER

NICK SCOTT



SPARTA GUIDE

Sparta Guide is provided free of charge to students, faculty and staff members. The deadline for entries is noon three working days before the desired publication date. Entry forms are available in the Spartan Daily office in Dwight Bentel Hall, room 209. Entries can also be e-mailed to spartandaily@casa.sjsu.edu titled "Sparta Guide." Space restrictions may require editing of submissions. Entries are printed in the order in which they are received.

TODAY

School of Art and Design

An art exhibition featuring student galleries will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Art building. For more information, call the gallery office at 924-4330.

Catholic Campus Ministry

Daily Mass will take place at 12:10 p.m. in the Catholic Campus Ministry chapel. For more information, call Father Mike Carson at 938-1610.

Shrunken Head Man

"Best of the Ottawa International Animation Festival 2003 & 2004" will take place from 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. in room 189 of the Engineering building.

SUNDAY

Catholic Campus Ministry

Mass will take place at noon and 5 p.m. in the Catholic Campus Ministry chapel. For more information, call Father Mike Carson at 938-1610.

MONDAY

School of Art and Design

An art exhibit featuring student galleries will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Art building.

For more information, call the gallery office at 924-4330.

College of Business Alumni Association

Tickets for the annual corporate student awards banquet will be available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in room 50 of the Business Tower building.

Career Center

"Resume 101" will take place from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in Building F.

Catholic Campus Ministry

Daily Mass will take place at 12:10 p.m. in the Catholic Campus Ministry chapel. For more information, call Father Mike Carson at 938-1610.

Counseling Services

An emotion management group meeting will take place from 1 p.m. to 2:20 p.m. in counseling services of the Student Services Center.

TUESDAY

REED Literary Magazine

A book and bake sale will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in front of the Spartan Bookstore.

Phi Alpha Theta

A meeting will take place at 3 p.m. in room 135 of Dudley Moorhead Hall.

THE SCRATCHING POST

Basketball player's benching the appropriate punishment

I recently opened up one of my boyfriend's Sports Illustrated magazines.

Past experiences in doing so had proven to provide interesting reading to an amateur sports enthusiast, such as this one.

In this instance, I found a topic of interest.

In the Feb. 21 issue, page 79, is an article titled "Iowa's Pierre Pierce: Guard's NBA Hopes Not Dead."

"Hopes Not Dead" sounded interesting. I envisioned an uplifting story of a college basketball player's struggle to come through, defy all odds and become a success.

Wrong.

This story is about a college basketball player's struggle. However, there is nothing uplifting about it.

Unless you are considered to be one of the voices of the league, or the Hawkeyes' assistant coach Craig Neal, who according to the article's author, Andrew Lawrence, has "an eye for talent and the ear of the league."

As the story goes, Pierce has been charged with first-degree burglary, two counts of domestic abuse/assault, assault with intent to commit sexual abuse, false imprisonment and fourth-degree criminal mischief.

This isn't the first time these types of charges have been brought against him.

Steve Alford, the head coach of the Hawkeyes, dismissed Pierce from the team on Feb. 2.

Alford made the decision and said, "Pierre has betrayed the trust we placed in him when he was given a second chance two years ago."

Amen. I am glad to see a head coach draw the line and stand by it.

I do not understand why a player with a history such as Pierce's should be allowed the opportunity to excel any further in the basketball profession.

Neal feels differently.

He said, "He's (Pierce) a great kid with a good heart. As far as talent and ability, he was by far the best player in the Big Ten. I've probably gotten 10 to

12 phone calls on him already."

Are you serious?

Someone who has the ability to be charged, not once but twice, with domestic abuse/assault is a "great kid with a good heart?"

Lawrence notes in the article that the police said Pierce forcibly disrobed the victim, threatened her at knifepoint and then trashed her home.

This behavior, the last time I checked, does not qualify as characteristic of a person with "a good heart" and who is "a great kid."

Neal is basically justifying such actions and thus leaves me with one question for him — what if it was his daughter or wife that Pierce decided to disrobe, threaten at knifepoint and abuse?

Would Pierce still be a "great kid with a good heart?"

I know this isn't the first encounter in sports where ethics and morals have been taken into question.

It will probably not be the last. It is disappointing to see people such as Pierce get a chance to thrive because of his talent in the game of hoops and the support of NBA executives and people in power positions such as Neal.

Pierce's hopes should be dead and he should not be considered for the NBA.

Thanks to Alford, my hopes are not dead either.

It is nice to know that there are people who feel this type of behavior should not go by without significant ramifications.

As far as I am concerned, Pierce should have not been the only person dismissed for unbecoming conduct.



CATHERINE BURMEISTER

Pierce's hopes should be dead and he should not be considered for the NBA.

Catherine Burmeister is a Spartan Daily production editor. "The Scratching Post" appears every other Friday.

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Students crash office, demand financial aid

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (AP) — About a dozen Yale students staged a sit-in at the university's admissions office Thursday while nearly 100 others rallied outside urging the school to offer more financial aid.

Some protesters called on Yale President Richard Levin to reduce by half the amount of money students on financial aid are required to pay. The students said families earning less than \$40,000 a year should not have to contribute any money.

A Yale undergraduate education, including tuition, room, board and other fees, costs about \$41,000 a year. About 40 percent

of Yale undergraduates receive financial aid.

The average package is more than \$20,000, Yale spokesman Tom Conroy said. He added that Levin already has said he will announce changes to the financial aid policy in coming weeks.

The sit-in began late Thursday morning. No action had been taken against the protesters by Thursday evening, but Conroy said students are not allowed to stay in the building overnight.

The student group that organized the protest is loosely associated with a group of graduate students trying to form a union.

CLASSROOM

continued from page 1

"I have them ask me questions via e-mail and then I try to work them in during class," Kirlin said.

Another way of getting people comfortable is by putting them into small groups, she said.

It is very important to know why a topic is brought up in class, Kirlin said.

"Is it hot because it's important, means something to the students, or is it hot because everyone knows something about it and have an opinion? What's the purpose of this discussion? — That is important," she said.

"We're here to teach our students, provide them with a well-rounded education, expose them to lots of different perspectives,

create tolerance of multiple perspectives," Kirlin said. "(If you don't agree) doesn't mean that they are valueless, and to extend that, you make the other people wrong."

The importance of tolerance makes students better members of society, she said.

"You're not always gonna win and you're not always gonna be right and sometimes you gotta learn to shrug things off," Kirlin said.

Society divides things into right and wrong, but not all things are like that. Sometimes it's not about winning or losing, it's about progress, she said.

"Conflict doesn't mean it's bad and it doesn't have to be a debate you're gonna lose," Kirlin said.

A new game ...



Ivan White, right, owner of the San Jose Ballers, discusses how the new International Basketball League will excel with its unique game play. There are 19 teams across the United States, seven on the West Coast, six in the Midwest and six on the East Coast. One of the rules the league has that is different from the NBA is the immediate inbound rule, which means the referee inbounds the ball right after someone scores or the ball goes out of bounds. The league will hold tryouts on March 27 in Oakland, and April 5 in San Jose. For more information, call 593-6989.

Zach Beecher / Daily Staff

LECTURE - Talk followed by Q & A session

continued from page 1

about was deliberation, which she explained as the balance of power.

"When students deliberate they come together to talk about what is the truth or the best course of action or policy," Robertson said.

She solidified her point by comparing deliberation to a jury seeking the truth and engaging in dialogue and assessing evidence to derive the truth.

"When we deliberate, we assume there is a truth to the matter and that discussion will bring us closer to the truth," Robertson said.

She took her second category of bargaining, accommodation and compromise and described each one as a separate entity.

She explained the role of universities in bargaining, accommodation and compromise by comparing the ideas from an administrative standpoint.

The third category Robertson touched on was activism and dissent. She offered several examples of social activism including the civil rights, feminist, gay rights and animal rights movements.

"I think universities have a big role to help us become more involved in the civic life and they can do a lot."

Ghaidaa Mousabacha, student

"I think that the university contributes most to developing the capacity and virtues instilled of deliberation and the capacities that underpin activism," Robertson said.

The lecture lasted more than an hour and was followed by a Q & A session and caught the interest of some audience members.

"I think it was an eye-opener and needed to be put forward," said Ghaidaa Mousabacha, an English major.

"I think universities have a big role to help us become more involved in the civic life and they can do a lot."

ONLINE - SJSU offers 45 online courses

continued from page 1

McVey said online courses allow her to assign readings, videos and projects that students normally would not have time to do in a traditional class.

The limitations of an online course are dependent on the content of the course, McVey said.

Last spring, online business courses made up 29 percent of the online and blended courses offered, while engineering made up 7 percent, according to the eCampus Web site.

Zhen, the industrial design major, said he was not aware of any online courses for his major.

"I might take (an online course) for a G.E. but not for a fundamental course in my major," he said.

Gin said eCampus would continue offering more courses as student demand grows.

"We will try to continue to

meet (student's) needs," Gin said. "Also, the faculty (members) are really enjoying teaching online courses."

Hinerman said comparing online and traditional courses is unfair.

"The question really is 'Can you get a good education online?'" he said. "And the answer from all the experiences I've heard from students, is clearly 'yes.' Good teachers and good

students will always learn no matter what the method is."

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SOCIETY - Most join by wandering into meeting room

continued from page 1

has approximately 20 to 30 active members.

O'Sullivan, a grad student, said he became a member when he "wandered" into the room. He said he thinks that is how most people join.

Nathanael became a member after a friend told her about the lounge. Nathanael said she stayed because she liked spending time with people of similar mind. She said they have a shared experience because they all appreciate the language.

While the club is mostly

English majors who are members, it welcomes anyone who appreciates laughing with or at the English language.

Mary Williams, a junior, said she finds the club useful when it comes to homework.

"It's helpful for us undergrads because people will read each others' works and give feedback," Williams said.

Aside from the antics in the lounge, the club is working on its presence on campus. On Feb. 8, the club put on a reading of the Grimm brothers' fairy tales. The idea for this event stemmed from a random act of boredom. Members were hanging out in

the lounge, and one got bored and grabbed a random book of the Grimm brothers' fairy tales out of the library in the lounge, and soon the members were laughing at the language used in the stories.

The English Society will also host a viewing of the three "Lord of the Rings" films a 10 a.m. March 12.

The movies will be shown in the Science building in room 142. Admission fee hasn't been decided, but it will be minimal, Weighlein said.

The club has decided to show the extended versions of the films, so the event will take approximately 12 hours.

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