PROMETHEUS

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From the Makers of Orientation 2002...

Residence selection report gets it half right.

By Scott Schneider

Killian Kickoff has packed up and buggered. With it have gone the steak and lobster dinners, the cacophany of fraternal activities, and (except for the occasional rickshaw) the shuttles hurtling freshmen to and fro. Times are different—more placid, certainly, but are we better off?

The Residence Selection Implementation Team[1] (RSIT) answers this question, for the most part, affirmatively. It frames the question objectively, based on its goals and perspective. Its analysis is thorough and it draws a number of important conclusions, but it does not compare the new residence selection system to the old one, and seems wholly ignorant of how dorm culture functions. Although RSIT had many student members, it did not assess how Orientation 2002 affected dormitories' cultures or the extent to which freshmen benefit from those cultures. This is why it misses the main student critique of Orientation—too little time for dorm rush—and makes the infamous claim that freshmen were "somewhat satisfied".

Jason LaPenta—Courtesy of The Tech

Captain tEp dances at the last Killian Kickoff next to a hack that reads, "So long and thanks for all the frosh."

RSIT's mission

RSIT was created to follow up on then-Chancellor Lawrence Bacow's *The Design of the New Residence System*[2], issued in December 1999. It was charged with six goals:

- Providing meaningful opportunities for freshmen to participate actively in the process of selecting their residence.
- Respecting the diversity of cultures that exist throughout the residence system with special attention to the status of the theme houses.
- Striking a balance between accommodating the desire of some students who wish to know where they will live immediately upon arrival at MIT, and the desire of others who wish to be able to visit dormitories personally before expressing final preferences.
- Ensuring that no student experiences rejection as their initiation to life at MIT.
- Respecting the existing house governance systems that match students to rooms, and in the process, help to create functioning communities.
- Enhancing the ability of parents and students to communicate during their first few days at MIT.

Over the last two years, RSIT created a detailed plan for residence selection and worked to implement that aspect of Orientation 2002. This year, it evaluated the success of the new residence selection process based on questions in the summer and fall housing lotteries and a freshman survey conducted last November.[3] The RSIT Report analyzed all of this data and drew conclusions about the residence selection process.

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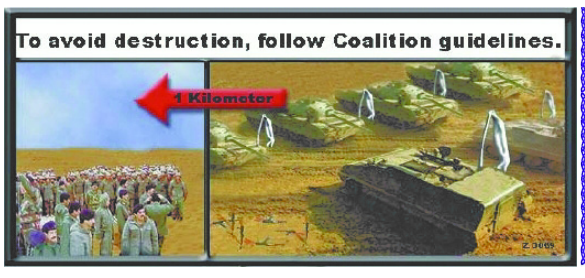
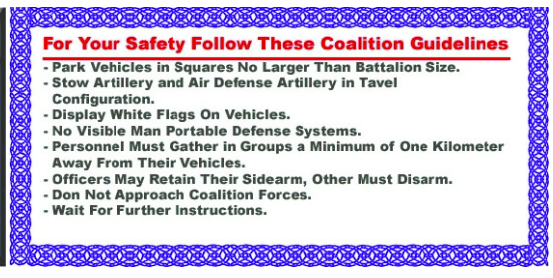
Winning the War of Words in Iraq

by K. Anderson-Veal





One in a series of Coalition leaflets indicating how Iraqi soldiers should cease resistance. In one case, these explicit directions backfired. Iraqi soldiers used this method to deceive American soldiers into believing they were surrendering before open-firing.

Sun Tzu's The Art of War:

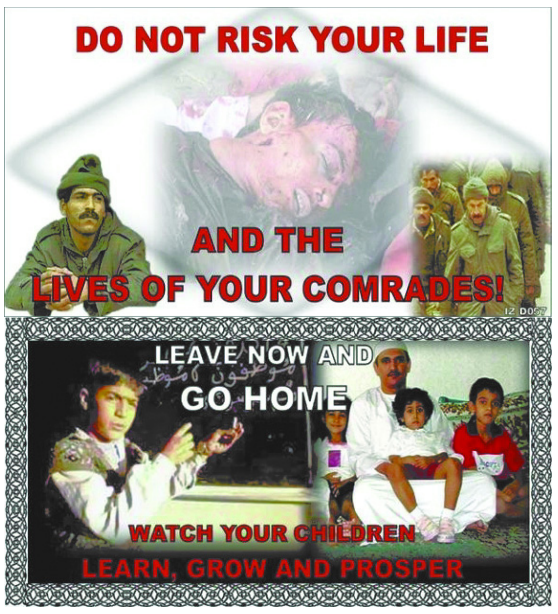
"To capture the enemy's entire army is better than to destroy it; to take intact a regiment, a company, or a squad is better than to destroy them. For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the supreme excellence. Thus, what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy. Next best is to disrupt his alliances by diplomacy. The next best is to attack his army. And the worst policy is to attack cities."

Slam bam goodbye Saddam? Almost. As the Coalition forces prepare to mop up Operation Iraqi Freedom, no one has been entirely able to pronounce the whole Operation a cakewalk. The number of US military dead now stands at 118 with 495 US wounded. Coalition soldiers continue to be picked off daily suppressing `pockets of resistance.' The Iraqi resistors have been out-gunned, out-maneuvered and out-manned, but apparently not completely out-willed. And that's what this war, any war, essentially comes down to—a contest of wills. To the extent that it is, the mind (or psyops, as the US Defense Department likes to call it) plays a powerful role in winning a war that takes three weeks instead of a bloody three months to win.

Right now, American leaflets are urging die-hards to 'do the honorable thing, stop fighting'–all part of what some might call Operation Iraqi Brainwash. Having spent a record budget on psyops for this war, according to the US Air Force, Coalition aircraft have dropped more than 26 million informational leaflets into Iraq since October 2002. That accounts for about 5 million more than were dropped in Operation Desert Storm. The largest leaflet drop to date was 1.98 million on March 18. Some Defense Department observers had quipped that the US Department of Defense had gone psyops crazy. But this was no accident. The US military had been studying Sun Tzu (see insert), employing some of the major axioms of this ancient Chinese war tactician: "One need not destroy one's enemy. One need only destroy his willingness to engage." The first formidable blow you can lay on your foe, and the cheapest, are words.

Americans Wage a War of Words on Several Fronts

The Americans started waging words early and often. Since last summer, logic, fear, desire and other `non-violent force' have been aggressively engaged to influence the Iraqi people. In typical fashion, the Americans prefer relying on the `truth' to persuade Iraqis not to fight, to surrender, to cooperate. According to Ed Rouse, a former specialist in Psychological Operations for the 1st SOCOM and Civil Affairs Psychological Operations command of the US Army Airborne Division, the truth, it turns out is a better weapon than lies. The notion is that only a real friend will tell you the truth (especially when it hurts). The Coalition forces are the true friend and liberator of the Iraqi people. That's our message and we're sticking to it. All our propaganda has been driven by this underlying perspective. This theme has been repeated over and over in emails, radio broadcasts and leaflets since President Bush started talking about invading Iraq.



Coalition leaflet urging Iraqi soldiers not to risk their lives. The leaflet appears in English on one side and Arabic on the other.

The Iraqis became victims of carpet spamming (or, what the military refers to as an `information warfare campaign') some six months before the first land assault. Senior military sources told CNN what a hacker for WiredNews corroborated: the email accounts of Saddam (equivalent to *president@whitehouse.gov*) and high-ranking Iraqi officials were deluged with love letters from the United States government. Brian McWilliams of WiredNews cracked the email of the Iraqi leader and discovered that Saddam's

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From the Editor

Lo! For I have birthed unto the MIT campus a new voice amongst the bedlam, and a new vector amidst the memetic free-for-all. With so many forums already discussing the same issues, you might ask why I even bothered.

I started *Prometheus* because although responsibility and freedom are the essential philosophy of MIT, few explicitly realize it. We see concrete versions of this truth all the time, in arguments about rush, war protests, TEAL, etc., but as a rule, MIT students are too busy *doing* to see the big picture. *Prometheus* will fill that gap. We will be a consistent voice for celebrating the unparalleled freedom that MIT students enjoy and the culture of responsibility that it fosters.

Prometheus will also consistently deliver well-reasoned and well-written articles. We will print anything that meets this standard, regardless of whether it relates to student life (e.g. Kamela’s essay on love). The quality of our articles is more important to us than any sort of party line.

Thirdly, *Prometheus* will attempt to narrow the gulf between students and administrators. MIT administrators cannot be filed neatly into one category. Many of them are friendly, though some can be overly defensive. Some appear to rule from an ivory tower because we, through the isolating effect of that belief, put them there. *Prometheus* will engage all of them on important topics of student life, and hold them accountable to their words. We’re not out to get them, but we’ll stick it to ‘em if they double-cross us, see.

Although *Prometheus* is written for students, we hope that administrators will turn here for a glimpse at student perspectives. A few administrators have suggested to me that rehashing old issues will only preserve bad blood and that students and administrators should instead look forward; however, we must learn from the mistakes that undermined communication in the first place. Even more importantly, most students know what their representatives are up to only through the occasional glance at *The Tech*. Orientation and housing may be old issues to student activists, but not to the average student. *Prometheus* seeks to engage these students, informing them and equipping them to improve student life when they feel the call.

I would also like to thank the UA and DormCon for coming through with funding at the last minute, and making this issue (and the pretty pictures) real. And last but not least, I’d like to thank the staff at Turley Publications (http://www.turley.com/) for being so awesome!

Dean Vandiver: Master of Space, Time, and Undergraduate Research

Interview by Vikash Mansinghka and Scott Schneider

We sat down with Professor J. Kim Vandiver PhD ‘75 for a one-hour interview, and wound up with a two-hour conversation that hit all the major topics of student life. Vandiver was emphatic in his belief in hands-on learning, candid with his opinions on housing, and generally easygoing and friendly. We left with the impression that to the extent that students communicate their concerns to him, he does his best to understand them and mesh them with his own views.

Prometheus: *To start off, would you mind describing your official position and what you do?*

Kim Vandiver: Okay. I’m the Dean for Undergraduate Research, the Director of the Edgerton Center, the Director of UROP, and the Director of Academic Services. Academic Services includes the ARC—the Academic Resource Center—and a couple other smaller operations like freshman advising. We’re the freshman department, so to speak, and we organize and run Orientation.

I care a lot about supporting hands-on, student-driven education at MIT, and I started the Edgerton Center as a place where students could pursue independent projects and clubs, like the solar car team, the ORCA autonomous underwater vehicle team, the Mars gravity team, and things of that kind. And then I was asked if I would become the faculty director of UROP, which to me is a perfect combination, because it means I have both the physical facilities and the financial resources to help students out.

PM: *Do you view educational hands-on experimentation as a supplement to traditional lecture-based education, or as an essential part of the MIT education?*

KV: My wife is a 6th grade science teacher, and we talk a lot about education. As you probably know, faculty at universities rarely get sent to ed school. We’re not taught how to teach. As a consequence we don’t get to take subjects like methods courses in education or adolescent psychology or things of that kind. You have learn techniques as you go, so some people never do.

Students have different styles of learning. Some might do just great in a chalk-talk/lecture/problem set/quiz environment, and others might do terribly, so in my view you have to have multiple ways of delivering information to allow students with different learning styles to succeed.

PM: *Is there a growing body of work in the education community on techniques that are applicable to college students in particular, or is most of it on elementary and middle school at this point?*

KV: During the last 5 or 10 years there’s been much more attention placed on improving learning at the university level.

Subject evaluation, historically, has had a lot of questions about the person’s board style, whether the quizzes are appropriate, and that kind of thing. These are not all irrelevant questions, but there haven’t historically been a lot of questions asking if you learned well.

In the last few years at MIT there’s been much more interest in the quality of learning... Steve Hall and others in Aero are using much more interactive learning tools. Professor Belcher in TEAL has made a huge investment in trying new teaching styles and new kinds of assessment to see if students are actually learning. We think too much about improving teaching, while we really ought to measure how well people are learning.

PM: *There’s been a lot of controversy over TEAL. Some people love it and some people hate it. What do you think of it?*

KV: Let’s go back 5 years and go to this time of the term and let me ask you what was the attendance in 8.02.

PM: *I’m gonna guess 40%.*

KV: Yes, it was on that order. If you actually hold it up against what we were doing before, a lot of things are being done much better.

PM: *As I understand it, there’s a substantial groupwork requirement to the course, for which attendance is mandatory. So although it’s increasing attendance, there’s some question of whether or not students would still go if the groupwork wasn’t mandatory.*

KV: Right. And if the students are unhappy because they’re being made to go, then they’ll be critics of the course. I do know that before spring break, they organized focus groups where outside leaders heard all the students’ criticisms. The instructors studied the feedback and, after spring break, told students “Okay, we heard you. We’re gonna make changes,” and they’re really trying to dynamically improve the subject as they go along.

This is the first term 8.02T has been offered to about 600 students, with six instructors—very different from their development mode. I think TEAL is doing very well, considering how ambitious it is.

PM: *Do you know what motivated the choice to bring all the incoming students under TEAL after the one semester trial?*

KV: I just don’t know.

PM: *ESG is a good example of a successful program with an emphasis on hands-on learning...*

KV: Oh yes, she’s been wonderful. ESG began in ‘68. I was the director for 5 years, and ESG was one of the best learning experiences that I’ve had. Many things that I do today—especially with students, things like Edgerton Center—were informed by ESG. The most important thing I learned in ESG is that when a couple of students come to you, really sincerely wanting to teach something, figure out a way to let them do it. I had never seen it done before becoming ESG Director, but the investment really pays off.

We did that in a spectacular way in two or three instances. A couple of students came to me around 1986 and said they wanted to teach chemistry in ESG. By the time I left, 5.11 was being taught there, brown bag chemistry take-home experiments had been invented, and were about to be adopted by the entire curriculum. The idea was eventually shelved because of liability issues. The Chemistry department had to back out of sending kids home with paper bags experiments with kitchen chemicals in them.

When a couple of students come to you sincerely wanting to teach something, figure out a way to let them do it. The investment really pays off.

PM: *Let’s talk a little about faculty-student interaction as a whole. What do you think the key issues are?*

KV: I was a member of what was called the the Task Force on Student Life and Learning which finished its work in 1998. One of the principal thrusts of that report is that there

Your comments go here

Dear Prometheus,

I enjoyed reading the first issue of your publication.
I am glad to see that someone is finally covering
these issues with an eye to the underlying ideas.
Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Transparent Stooge

I was wondering if you guys had thought of writing about this whole "community" thing and how it doesn’t really mean anything.

I was interested in what you guys are doing.
I don’t have any ideas right now, but can I join your discussion list?

j00 r /\/0+ 31337

Hey! I want to write about Go and how it’s like physics: "Make everything as simple as possible, and no simpler." You said you’dtake anything well-written, so... when are your meetings!

“Poppycock.”

hey, you guys messed up a reference to the RSIT S

prometheus - please include a notice about our committee meetings in your back page "What the hell is going on?" section... it’s not for everyone but some students might like it.

don’t see how that could be an issue of responsibility but not failed to take into consideration, so your point doesn’t hold.

Prometheus, I read your article suggesting we change our have actually been considering such a change in light of for interested students to attend and help craft a new policy. Thanks,

E-mail *prometheus-feedback@mit.edu*

@&#$ING PRETENTIOUS IDEOLOGUES WHO COULDN’T REASON THEIR WAY OUT OF

Hopefully, Tenderly, Fiercely

by Kamela Hutzley

"Why is the measure of love loss?....I am thinking of a certain September: Wood pigeon Red Admiral Yellow Harvest Orange Night. You said, 'I love you.' Why is it that the most unoriginal thing we can say to one another is still the thing we long to hear? 'I love you' is always a quotation. You did not say it first and neither did I, yet when you say it and when I say it we speak like savages who have found three words and worship them...."

-Jeanette Winterson, Written on the Body

These past few days, I have been furiously writing in my journal and in impassioned emails, trying to wrap my mind around a feeling. (When did rhapsodic email replace the handwritten love letter? With the advent of that level of speed in written communication, do we fall in love faster? Progress the relationship faster?)

Once again those three words have invaded my life: 'I love you.' Each time I say them to someone for the first time, I am forced again to consider what they mean. Why are they so monumental, when they are so overused? Why are they the specific words that press at the back of my lips, bursting to get out, when my feeling for someone becomes overwhelming? And how does it change when it is expressed to more than one lover?

How is it possible, Winterson wonders (as do I), that the same three words can be simultaneously worn-out and fresh, that these words are the only words for that strength of feeling? 'A precise emotion demands a precise expression,' she says, 'and if what I feel is not precise can I call it love?'

To me, and ultimately to her, the very imprecision and yet total individuality of the feeling is what makes it love.

'I love you' `is a place-holder, I wrote to both of my loves, a cipher standing inside our language, waiting to be filled with inarticulable feeling. One can say it to a hundred different people and have it mean a hundred different things, but the thing that links them, or should link them, in my view, is that the feelings behind the words are always complex and powerful. A good friend and I discussed that there should be as many different ways to say 'I love you' as there are Innuit words for snow: 'I love you and you're my best friend.' 'I love you and I want you to be my life partner.' 'I love you, and we can't be together anymore.' 'I love you and if I could fuck you all day and all night I would.'

Yet we use the same words. Is this sheer laziness on our parts? Surely the phrase has suffered from people using it thoughtlessly, distractedly: the sleepwalking sign-off at the end of a telephone conversation. Still others use it to manipulate and abuse: a lame apology for striking your wife in the face, a trump card used to end an argument, like an expensive but meaningless bouquet of words.

But when it is meant and is felt, the words display a complex of emotions, each individual to the person receiving them. A mother might say to her son as he goes off to war, 'You are the world to me, I'd die for you, and please be careful.' An old husband might say to his wife of 50 years, 'Your presence in my life gives me comfort, and I'm so proud to have shared this time with you.' New lovers might say, 'Your body is like a temple in which I worship, I wish I could consume you, or crawl inside your skin, your touch sears me like a brand.'

But instead they all say, hopefully, tenderly, fiercely, 'I love you.'

I believe that these words are not merely a shorthand but a kind of prayer, an invocation, a phrase of power that calls forth the deepest ways in which we feel for another. Whenever I say it I feel a moment of being lost, as if what I have said has fuzzed over the precise feelings in my head, and a moment of crippling doubt where I wonder if what I have said is truly what I mean. And then I know that I've said exactly the right thing, because it is that sense of danger that gives these words power, the moment where everything I feel for someone distills—without defining and thus diluting itself—into a kind of song.

Fear, when it is named, described, and understood, dissipates, said the author of an erotic story I read recently. So too with love, he fears: when it is pronounced, it loses its power. But I think not. 'I love you,' said reverently, saves us from that. Not from examining our feelings and desires, which is important, but from trivializing them by parsing them out: I feel this for you, but not that. I only give you this percentage of my heart, I legislate this love's boundaries. It is an offering, a way of saying, this I give to you freely, and without limit.

Kamela Hutzley (kamelathehut@excite.com) is an eclectic bundle of contradictions who received her MFA in creative writing from Emerson College last year and will attend Northeastern University School of Law starting this fall. Her work has been seen in Beacon Street Review *and in self-indulgent blogs across the Web. She falls in love almost daily.*

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ought to be more interaction between the triad of research, teaching, and residential life. What has historically developed is that once you cross Mass Ave, metaphorically speaking, the faculty and the residential side of living and learning at MIT parted ways, and we felt that we should do something about that.

That's one of the reasons why when students come to me and say, "We want to teach a LEGO robotics subject at Random. Will you help us do that?" I say sure. It's also why we have Residence-Based Advising in dorms. I think think it's important to get faculty to spend time with students in an environment that is much less threatening than the classroom.

Early in my career I was really amazed to have students tell me one-on-one that they were intimidated by faculty members, including me. But it's true, and it's to the detriment of both. Students are afraid to ask: "I'm looking for a UROP," "I'd like to join your group," and "Can we change the way we are doing something in class?" As a consequence, they don't find out that lots of times faculty would say yes. I think as soon as you get to talk with students in small groups, and have them ask how you got to MIT and made your life choices, they start seeing you as a real person. The next time they have an issue, maybe they'll come to you.

PM: *How successful do you think the House Fellows program is? How many faculty members participate in it?*

KV: I'd say it's on the order of 10. Now how successful they are... I'm a fellow at Random, and I don't claim to be terribly successful, because we still need to do more work to figure out how to help students connect with me. The last two years in a row, I've taken a couple hundred students from Random out to opening night for *Lord of the Rings*. Pretty fun, but you don't get to talk very much. But I had dinner at Epsilon Theta last night, and had a really interesting time.

We had to back out of sending kids home with paper bags with kitchen chemicals in them because of liability issues.

PM: *Students' reactions to Residence-Based Advising have been mixed. In some cases it's been difficult to involve faculty members in residential social events. What is your opinion on RBA?*

KV: It's worked extremely well in McCormick. It has been more difficult with Next House because there was a much larger freshman group than we had planned for, so we had to create 8 new RBA groups for Next at the last minute.

PM: *One of the controversial points about RBA is that students cannot transfer to another dorm once they are in RBA.*

KV: If a student is really unhappy where he is and he knows that right away, we'll move him. Usually it takes half a term to find out your roommate is a jerk or whatever. Would we find a way to take care of a student who was in a really difficult commitment? Yes, we would. You're only involved in mandatory programming for one semester. It does constrain students for the first term, but it's a good trade-off.

RBA works because the whole dorm is committed to it and elects to do the program. Because dorm residents self-select, that's okay. There are some residences where this wouldn't work, but I think it's good to give them that choice.

It isn't much different from Freshmen Advising Seminars. If a student pulls out for whatever reason, the quality goes down for them and for the remaining students and faculty... On the other hand, when you can look students in the eye and see if they're getting enough sleep, you can help them and intervene on their behalf.

PM: *You mentioned roommates issues for wanting to move. Do you think other considerations are important, such as finding the dorm with the right culture?*

Do I think that the I3 CD is adequate information? Absolutely not.

KV: Eventually students gravitate to the place where they feel most comfortable. I also absolutely think they ought to move around to find it. Should it happen? Yes. Does it need to happen during Orientation? No.

In the old days, back when we had R/O, students had inadequate time to make an informed decision about which dorm fits them the best. We would interview 100 students for ESG to get an entering class of 50. When we told them they had to make another decision by Thursday about whether to join ESG, they'd balk - they were totally dismayed at having to make another important decision with inadequate information.

PM: *If you don't think rush gave freshmen enough information, what about the I3 CD?*

KV: Do I think that the I3 CD is adequate information? Absolutely not. We should absolutely have a system where people have enough time to move. But only after you have enough time to look around.

I expect a fair number of students would want to move after having adequate time. I'd say at the end of the first term is enough time, because by then you've had time to do some exploring and get used to MIT, but that's just my opinion.

PM: *Do you think parental pressure is a factor in students' housing decisions?*

KV: There's a lot of parental pressure not to move into FSILGs. Is a student more likely to go against their parents in the first week or two on campus than they are after they've been away from home for a semester (once they've "cut the strings")? The longer they're here, the more independent they become.

If there's one message I'd like you to walk away with, it's that the whole system has to succeed. That means that fraternities have to succeed. We don't have enough beds on the campus to house all undergraduates. We have to figure out a way for students to find places to live, including getting sophomores to move off campus. We can change the way we do orientation, we can change the way we do rush, but the one thing we cannot back up on, at all, is the decision that freshmen will not be allowed to live off campus. That just goes way, way too high with lots of pressures from the Attorney General's office, among other things.

The system of residence exploration has to involve fraternities. I don't claim to know the right way to do this. We are not in dynamic equilibrium right now. It's a continuing experiment.

PM: *R/O used to be a little more than three uninterrupted days. It would start with Killian Kickoff, and then the lottery deadline would be 5pm three days later. Now it's two very interrupted days—*

KV: '02's Orientation should not be used as a standard of success. It was the first time all freshmen were supposed to be in residence halls, but it was crippled by one phenomenon. There was so much distrust between students and administrators that were making orientation happen that in 02 they were not able to pull together to accomplish these goals. When we can get over being so distrustful to one another and agree on goals, then we can start having more successful outcomes.

PM: *In fall of '01, students expressed concerns about wanting uninterrupted time. Administrators said that some things were nailed down."*

KV: The statements that some things were locked down is true. If you have speakers, you can't just move them around. You have to start locking things down in November.

PM: *Do you think this inflexibility plays a role in student distrust?*

KV: This is one thread only. Distrust started with Scott Kreuger in 1997. In summer of 1998 the president made the decision to move freshmen on campus, with the new dorm. That decision precipitated all of the events in terms of followed in terms of housing—the largest change in many decades. There was a tremendous amount of resistance to that. It got in the way of cooperation up until the last few months.

Although we run Orientation out of the Academic Resource Center, we don't run housing. Sometimes Julie Norman gets blamed for things because she owns the Orientation schedule. In fact, with respect to housing, some decisions are made as high as the President, and some are made by various Institute committees, not her office or mine.

Should students move around to find the place where they feel most comfortable? Yes. Does it need to happen during Orientation? No.

PM: *Do you think students should have gone along with the FOC decision? I remember when Professor Chorover withdrew his suggestion that freshmen live on campus after it precipitated student protesting. Given this, how could there not have been resistance?*

KV: Any group required to majorly change the way they do things are going to resist. Do I expect people to say, "Yep, fine"? Of course not. They don't work that way.

You try to put a process in place that gives students a voice. You try to get people on board and work as best you can. [FOC] caused a lot of confrontation between administrators and students, which distracted us from the positive things that we could do.

I think that we're starting to pull together. I met with ILTFP at this table with 8 students and came up with a list of objectives for orientation and residences that we all could get behind. And we all feel better about this.

PM: *What did you change?*

KV: We did not focus on making changes. We talked out our common goals for Orientation and Housing. We did clear up some misunderstandings and move some first day events from Sunday to Saturday to give REX more time. Every pre-orientation program had to change their schedule to do this. But it's not uninterrupted. There are advanced standing exams in the morning. So there are some conflicts, but nothing in the evenings.

PM: *How do you feel about dorm squatting: the ability for freshmen to be guaranteed a position in the dorm they chose over the summer?*

KV: Right now, it's a key to making our system work. It's strictly a matter of philosophy. Do you intend to have a situation in which the students don't have certainty about where they are going to live when they arrive on campus? In the old system, they had no certainty.

The old system had serious downsides. If you were a student in the old system... my oldest son, his first year, ended up with the bottom of the barrel in the lottery. He was in limbo for days. And that's not a fun place to be.

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Winning the War on Words

Continued from page 1

inbox contained over a thousand mails, all sent from June to August last year by the US Pentagon. McWilliams wrote that none of these mails, all in Arabic with the subject line "Important Information," had been read. In the first series of emails, Iraqis had been urged to turn away from Saddam and cooperate with the UN inspectors. Later there were warnings about the impending bombings, and of the personal fate of anyone using biological weapons.

Final in a series that shows what happened when an Iraqi tank kept fighting.

According to Ed Rouse, anything sent the enemy in the way of words or pictures falls into one of three Defense Department categories: tactical, strategic or consolidation. The first stage starts with tactical and strategic appeals targeted to the enemy military. "These are usually to induce them to perform a specific action that will affect the current combat situation." In the later stages consolidation appeals are employed "to assist the civil and military authorities in consolidating their gains by establishing and maintaining law and order, and by re-establishing civil government in an occupied or liberated area."

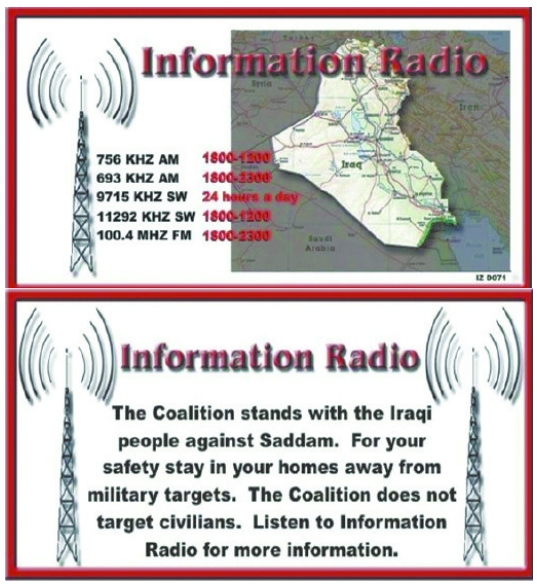
The US has employed tactical and strategic methods by dropping leaflets first stating the inevitability of Iraqi defeat, telling soldiers they would not be destroyed if they played the game the Coalition forces wanted them to play, and exactly how they should surrender. In the second wave of drops, Coalition forces showed them pictures of Iraqi officers who played the game. On the third wave, pictures showed those who did not. Iraqis were also warned not to use weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and were told that anyone who did would face serious consequences. Some are speculating that the reason we haven't seen any use of WMD is because the message hit home.

The idea in these appeals, Rouse asserts, had been to produce any one of a number of desired effects: "To reduce morale and combat efficiency within the enemy's ranks or to promote mass dissension within and defections from enemy combat units. They also support cooperation within resistance forces behind enemy lines.

Besides the ones above, other leaflets project dire warnings such as: ``Attacking coalition aircraft invites your destruction.'' Another missive sports a photo of slyly smiling Saddam in his palace juxtaposed with a photo of a vexed Iraqi women in black veil and holding a crying baby. The leaflet exhorts soldiers: "Saddam lives in splendor as your family struggles to survive. Who needs you more: your family or the regime? Return to your home and family."

The Americans have left nothing to chance in the way of getting across their message. Among the over 20 million leaflets dropped were those telling Iraqis to tune into Information Radio at one of several broadcast frequencies. To be sure, in between breaks of Celine Dion and Sheryl Crow the message was the same: stay away from military targets, don't use weapons of mass destruction and surrender now before it's too late.

Coalition forces as Big Brother.



Iraqi Propaganda Machine: Breaking Minds and Losing Hearts

With the Coalition so communicative these days, the question remains: What have the Iraqis been doing in response to all the American psyops? No doubt when it came to propaganda of the more traditional type, that is, lies, deception and mind control, Saddam was in the major leagues right up there with Stalin, his confessed hero. As for Saddam's message to the Iraqi people, his words made it quite clear that the Americans had arrived to do three things: occupy the land, plunder the oil and take the women.

As recently as April 5th Saddam hadn't changed his tactics. At the very moment CNN was broadcasting live pictures of American soldiers cleaning piles of sand off the runways at Saddam Airport (renamed Baghdad International Airport), in a radio address the Ba'ath Party Information Minister, Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf (nicknamed Baghdad Bob because of his penchant for telling whoppers) informed the people of Iraq and any media that would listen, "We have retaken the airport! There are no Americans there! The film they broadcast to you is a lie! I will take you there and show you . . . in one hour!" (He never did.)

Ed Rouse, who's been staying on top of US psyops, says that he received reports "that the Iraqis did prepare leaflets. But I have not actually seen any." He has read reports that British and American soldiers trading souvenir items have found both Iraqi and US leaflets so abundant that (he quotes his source) "most have been pressed into service as toilet paper."

"Considering that at no time the Iraqis had air superiority to disseminate leaflets, I suspect that a cache of these Iraqi leaflets may have been found by Coalition troops. During the Gulf War, Coalition troops found a large cache of Iraqi leaflets that were never disseminated in a bunker complex, " Rouse explains.

As for Iraqi radio propaganda, after six days, the battle had been just to stay on the air what with the US jamming Iraqi broadcasting with its own propaganda and aerial bombing raids of transmitting stations.

The Gulf War, however, was a different story for the Iraqis. Able to launch flights with relatively little bombing occurring in the country, Iraqi leaflets littered Kuwaiti oil fields and Iraqi messages filled Kuwaiti airwaves. "It started broadcasting through its National Radio and other relays in early August 1990 shortly after the arrival of the 82nd Airborne Division," Rouse explains. "The broadcast schedules were fairly consistent starting daily between 6:00

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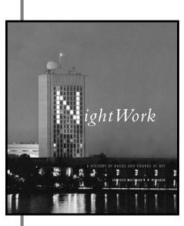

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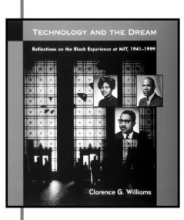

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PM and 7:00 PM and continuing to as late as 3:00 AM or 5:00 AM. The radio shows were taped and about two hours long.

"The radio personalities were a youthful woman dubbed "Baghdad Betty" and a male voice quickly nicknamed `Iraqi Jack.' Baghdad Betty's broadcasts were more frequent than those of Iraqi Jack. The shows were reported to have been broadcast from downtown Baghdad, with a format which typically included a mix of popular top 40 hits, oldies and some blues by contemporary artists." Rouse recalls that "the choice of music was excellent and was better than what was locally available initially for Coalition forces encamped along points both west and south of Kuwait."

"Unfortunately for Iraq, although the music selections attracted the target audience to listen, the content was not only considered humorous but absurd. The Iraqi propaganda machine forgot the number one lesson in preparing a psyop campaign, `know and understand your target audience thoroughly.' Iraq's propaganda developers had a jaundiced opinion of life in the United States and it clearly came across in their perception of American culture."

The comedy was consistent through out Iraqi propaganda media. Leaflets distributed by the Iraqis during the Gulf War had some American soldiers laughing instead of surrendering. The following leaflet reads: "Liberty Stadium cries for help because of your aggression and killing civilians. innocent kids, mothers and olds."

Iraqi propaganda leaflets collected and supplied by Ed Rouse

Iraqi war propaganda. Pidgin English and misnaming the "Statue of Liberty" only succeeds in exhibiting how poorly the Iraqis understood American culture.

The following leaflet tries to create doubt in the minds of Coalition soldiers (an American, Brit and Arab) about the advisability of dying for an oil-rich Kuwaiti sheik whose sole mission in life is to lounge around his personal harem, a women under each arm.

Not too effective against Americans. Coming from a culture of 1-800-WealthOpportunitiesUnlimited and 1-900-GirlsGirlsandMoreGirls, the morality angle of this leaflet probably wouldn't have been enough to get American soldiers to lay down their arms. The Iraqis may have hoped, however, that the Arab part of the coalition would see the Kuwaitis as having forsaken Islam for the moral corruption of their oil wealth, but it appears no Arabs surrendered either.

Propaganda As Irony: Razor-Edge Truth

More than ten years later, propaganda in Operation Iraqi Freedom has not been without its ironic twists on either side. CNN filed a report on April 3rd as the British were trying to win hearts and minds after almost two weeks battling for Basra. The Brits were dropping leaflets showing a stalwart Coalition soldier looking, what could be described as, well, dependable. The text read: "This time we won't abandon you," meaning the Coalition forces would stay in Basra. The Iraqis who had taken to burning leaflets might have chuckled at that while as many as could afford it packed up their taxis and fled for the border before the big `reunion.'

Some have been speculating as to whether a certain unknown Blogger writing a vivid weblog from Iraq might not have been an uncharacteristically clever operative of Iraqi psyops. The diarist, calling himself Salam Pax (*http://dear_raed.blogspot.com/*) had been filing daily first-hand accounts, ostensibly from Baghdad of what it was like living in a city besieged of American and British bombs. No one has figured out if he was real, but Web traffic of over 1 million to Salam Pax's blog briefly crashed the popular site at the time, running on a small, free Web server. Blogger.com, run by Google, kindly allotted space to Pax's blog, but the log stops on March 24th 2003. With the power grid now down in most locations in the city, it's not likely Pax will be logging any more updates.

More Iraqi war propaganda poses the question, "Is the sheik worth dying for?"

Baghdad Bob, or Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf, the now permanently out-to-lunch (Mis)Information Minister of Iraq gives one pause to reflect. Parodied on the Tonight Show and David Letterman for his jaundiced view of reality, al-Sahhaf has ended up with his own webspoof, www.welovetheiraqiinformationminister.com. Al-Sahhaf's now famous war propaganda (`We will slaughter them all !') is emblazoned on the website's t-shirts, and the Minister becomes a morality tale of what it means to establish a life, a country based on prevarication. No matter how convincing the words sound, commonsense serves a country, as well as its propaganda, that is, `when you lie, you only end up fooling yourself.' Americans should continue to keep this in mind as we wage words for hearts and minds not only in other countries, but also in our own.

K. Anderson-Veal is a Harvard grad student and a freelance-writer based in Metrowest Boston.

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Grilled Caesar Salad 6.75
A regular Caesar served with lemon garlic chicken & creamy homemade dressing.

Greek Salad 5.25
Season vegetable served with feta cheese.

Chef Salad 5.50

Chicken Tarragon Salad 5.25

Caesar Salad 5.00

Green Salad 4.50
A variety of seasonal vegetables.

Tuna Salad 5.25

Curry Chicken Salad 5.25
Green vegetables made with white raisins, walnuts, & curry powder.

Garlic Bread 2.50

Garlic Cheese Bread 3.00

Pesto Bread 3.75

Cinderella Garlic Bread 4.50
Prosciutto, fresh tomato, & mozzarella.

Spinach Salad 5.25

Shrimp Caesar 7.45

Chicken Wings (12 pieces) 5.50

French Fries 2.75

Onions Rings 2.75

Calamari 6.95

Soup 2.95

Mozzarella Sticks 5.25

Chicken Fingers (8 pieces) 6.95

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with choice of lettuce tomato, onions, mushrooms, green peppers, & pickles.

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Italian
Turkey & Provolone
Roast Beef & Provolone
Pastrami
Eggplant Parmigiana
Chicken Parmigiana
Hamburger
Egg & Pepper Sub
Ham & Provolone
Salami & Provolone
Tuna
Steak & Cheese
Vegetarian
Meatball
B.L.T.

Let us know what you like on your sub.
(Swiss, provolone, American, mustard, mayonnaise, ketchup)

CHEF'S SPECIALTIES SANDWICHES

M.I.T. Special 5.50
Turkey, spinach, mushrooms, Russian dressing, & melted Swiss cheese.

Harvard Special 5.50
Roast beef, spinach, mushrooms, Russian dressing & melted Swiss cheese.

Chicken Teriyaki 5.75
Chunks of chicken in teriyaki sauce with grilled mushrooms, onions, & Swiss cheese.

Grilled Chicken 5.75
Boneless chicken served with lettuce, tomatoes, & melted Swiss cheese.

BBQ Chicken 5.75
Grilled chicken with BBQ sauce, & melted Swiss cheese.

Steak Teriyaki 5.75
Fresh steak in teriyaki sauce with grilled mushrooms, onions & Swiss cheese.

Gyros 6.25

PLATES

Fish Special 7.95
Pollock filet breading served with salad & fries.

Broiled Chicken (Kabob) 7.95
Our delicious marinated chunks of chicken breasts come with salad & fries.

Wings Plate 7.75
Chicken wings served with fries and salad.

Steak Tips 8.45
Our delicious marinated steak is charcoal broiled & served with salad & fries.

CALZONE

The Greatest Calzones You'll Ever Try. One Size (7" Diameter)

Cheese Calzone 5.50
Fresh ricotta, mozzarella, & romano.

Proscuitto Calzone 6.75
Sliced tomatoes, proscuitto, onions, mushrooms, & a touch of garlic

Spinach Calzone 6.25
Fresh cooked spinach, mixed with chopped onions, garlic, romano & mozzarella cheese.

Chicken & Broccoli Calzone 6.75
Chunks of chicken breast, marinated with ricotta & mozzarella cheese.

Veggie Calzone 6.75
Eggplant, roast peppers, mushrooms, onions, mozzarella, & ricotta cheese with a touch of crushed pepper.
(All calzones come with mozzarella & ricotta cheese.)

DELIVERY 576-0280

PASTAS WITH CHICKEN

(24) Chicken Toscanus 8.95
(2) Chicken Cacciatore 8.95
Tender chicken sauteed in olive oil, garlic, white wine, fresh white mushrooms, onions, & sweet roasted peppers. Served with linguine.

(3) Chicken Marsala 8.95
Chicken sauteed in olive oil, with Marsala wine & mushrooms. Served with linguine.

(4) Green Peace Alla Pollo 8.95
Chicken and broccoli sauteed in olive oil, garlic, & a touch of lemon. Served with ziti & cream sauce.

(5) Chicken Carciofi 8.95
Sauteed chicken in olive oil, artichoke hearts, & black olives on cream sauce over ziti.

(6) Chicken Basilico 8.95
Chicken sauteed in olive oil, garlic with fresh mushrooms, & our freshly made pesto sauce. Served with linguine.

(10) Chicken Alla Cinderella's 8.95
Chicken sauteed in olive with fresh tomatoes, mushrooms, zucchini, onions, & a touch of crushed pepper and garlic. Served with red sauce & ziti.

(11) Chicken Scampi 8.95
Tender chicken sauteed in olive oil, garlic, white wine, & parsley. Tossed with linguine.

(14) Chicken Florentine 8.95
Tender chicken sauteed in olive oil with spinach & mushrooms in a cream sauce. Served with linguine.

(21) Chicken Allapignoli 8.95
Tender chicken sauteed in olive oil, garlic, & white wine with carrots, spinach, & pine nuts in a cream sauce. Served with Tortellini.

(22) Lemon Chicken 8.95
Lemon chicken sauteed in garlic & olive oil with a lot of lemon in white wine. Served with linguine & mushrooms.

(23) Chicken Parmigiana 8.95
Baked in Chicken Parmigiana over ziti or linguine in a red sauce.

(8) Combo Pasta 8.95
Combination of chicken & Italian sausage, sauteed in olive oil, garlic, capers, & rosemary with tomato sauce & a splash of cream. Served over linguine.

PASTAS WITH MEAT

(20) Meat Lasagna 8.45

(27) Beef Combo 9.00
Sausage, ground beef, roast pepper, onions, & mushrooms over linguine & tomato sauce.

(30) Meatballs 8.50
Meatballs with pasta can be over linguine or ziti.

PASTAS WITH VEGETABLES

(9) Vegetarian Pasta 8.95
Fresh white mushrooms, artichokes, broccoli, & carrots sauteed in garlic olive oil. Served with tortellini in a cream or red sauce.

(12) Pasta Primavera 8.95
Fresh white mushrooms, zucchini, artichoke hearts, & spinach sauteed in olive oil & basil. Served over cream sauce or red sauce with ziti.

(13) Linguine Melazana 8.95
Eggplant sauteed in olive oil, garlic white wine, Italian tomatoes, onions, & red peppers. Served with linguine.

(15) Tortellini Alfredo 8.95
Tortellini in alfredo sauce with romano cheese & eggs.

(19) Vegetarian Lasagna 8.45
Made from eggplant, zucchini, spinach, & mushrooms.

(25) Alho Oleo 8.50
This dish is made for garlic lovers. Lots of garlic, olive oil, broccoli, & anchovies. Served over ziti.

(28) Baked Eggplant 8.95
Baked eggplant served over linguine or ziti with a red sauce.

DESSERTS

Tiramisu 3.55

Cannoli 2.95

Vanilla Cheesecake Supreme 2.95

Double Chocolate Custard 2.95

Carrot Cake 3.25

BEVERAGES

Water 1.25

Pelegrino 1.75

20oz. Soda Bottles 1.25
Coke, Diet Coke, Orange, Grape, Dr. Pepper, Cherry Coke, Ginger Ale, Sprite, Root Beer, Iced Tea, Fruit Integration

Juices 1.50
Orange Mango, Orange, Apple Cranberry, Pink Lemonade, Lemonade, Passion Strawberry

Expresso 1.50

Cappuccino 2.00

Coffee 1.10

Milk 1.25

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Texana	9.50	13.25
Fresh steak with choice of green pepper, onion, or mushroom.		
All Arizona	9.50	13.75
Topped with delicious BBQ grilled chicken.		
Seafood	9.50	13.75
Marinara sauce, special touch of lemon & spices with clams.		
Garden	8.50	12.50
Topped with mushrooms, green peppers & mozzarella cheese.		
Milano	8.95	13.25
Imported proscuitto, fresh tomato slices, mozzarella, sprinkled with provolone cheese & oregano		
Ricco	8.95	13.25
Fresh slices of tomatoes, mushrooms, pepperoni, roasted pepper & mozzarella.		
Melazana	8.50	12.50
Fried eggplant, romano & mozzarella cheese with tomato sauce.		
Veggie Pizza	8.95	13.25
Topped with mushrooms, onions, green peppers & roasted sweet peppers.		
Neapolitan	8.95	13.25
Mozzarella cheese, ricotta, provolone, & romano cheese (No tomato sauce)		
Stuffed Pizza	8.95	13.25
Made with fresh spinach & broccoli with a white sauce.		
Picante	8.95	13.25
Made with crushed red peppers, Italian sausage & fresh mushrooms.		
Green Peace	8.95	13.25
Marinara chicken with broccoli, pesto sauce & mozzarella cheese.		
Tropical	8.95	13.25
Imported proscuitto, ham & pineapple.		
Home Town	8.95	13.25
Pepperoni, sausage, green peppers, mushrooms, onions & hamburger.		
Paesano	8.95	13.25
Sundried tomatoes, artichoke hearts, mushrooms & black olives.		
Mini Cheese Pizza (Personal)		2.75
Each Topping		.50

MAKE YOUR OWN PIZZA

	Sm 12"	Lg 16"
Cheese	6.00	8.95
Each Topping		1.50
Toppings with asterisk*		2.50

TOPPINGS

Pine Nuts
Extra Mozzarella
Crushed Red Peppers
Pesto Sauce
Zucchini
Clams
Artichoke Hearts
Anchovies
Feta Cheese
* Canadian Bacon
* Imported Proscuitto
Hamburger
Ham
Genoa Salami
Green Peas
Onions
Sliced Tomatoes
Fresh Mushrooms
Fresh Broccoli
Green Pepper
*Jalapeno Peppers
Pepperoni
Chopped Garlic
Fried Eggplant
Cooked Spinach
Roasted Pepper
Italian Sausage
Black Olives
* Chicken
Pineapple
*Sun Dried Tomatoes
* Shrimp

PASTAS WITH PROSCUITTO

(1) Proscuitto Boscaiola 8.95
Proscuitto sauteed in olive oil with white wine, mushrooms & pea in a cream sauce. Served with tortellini.

(17) Linguine Carbonara 8.95
Proscuitto sauteed in olive oil with onions, mushrooms & a splash of white wine, over a bed of linguine with eggs.

(18) Ziti Milano 8.95
Ziti topped with proscuitto, mushrooms, onions & crushed red pepper. Sauteed with vodka in a cream sauce.

(29) Tropical Storm 8.95
Proscuitto sauteed with mushrooms & pineapple over tortellini.

PASTAS WITH SEAFOOD

(7) Linguine with Clam Sauce 8.95
Sauteed clams served over red or white sauce.

(16) Shrimp Scampi 9.00
Shrimp sauteed in olive oil, garlic, white wine & parsley. Tossed with linguine.

(26) Shrimp Diablo 9.50
Sauteed shrimp in a red hot sauce served over linguine.

(31) Paesano 9.95
Sauteed shrimp with mushroom, sundried tomatoes, artichoke hearts, and black olives. Served over linguine.

From the Makers of Orientation 2002...

Continued from page 1

Forwards, not backwards

RSIT methodically assesses how well residence selection satisfied these goals. Its survey questions are targeted and fair, and its analysis is logical and to the point.

The RSIT Report does its best in analyzing the FSILGs' situation. It picks apart how freshmen got information about FSILGs, and the factors that made them more or less likely to pledge. Freshmen rated most sources of information, including Campus Preview Weekend, as mediocre, but freshmen temped at FSILGs during CPW attended FSILG events and pledged at much higher rates. Unsurprisingly, most freshmen who pledged did so because of the social atmosphere and people they met. Though 57%-60% of freshmen (whether they eventually pledged or not) discussed FSILGs with their parents, less than a fifth of those who did not pledge listed a parental influence against pledging. Freshmen reported that upperclassmen generally encouraged them to explore FSILGs. Finally, freshmen would have been more receptive to an earlier rush. (Administrators and the IFC have already arranged to begin next year's rush earlier, one week after Orientation.)

Information Source	% "did not read, receive, or attend"	Usefulness Rating, All Respondents (1-4 scale)	Useful Rating by Joiners (1-4 scale)
CPW	39	2.70	2.88
FSILG Overview Bk	25	2.43	2.26
FSILG CD	43	2.26	2.13
Summer Contact	69	2.16	2.33
Indiv. Rush Books	42	2.71	2.87
Rush 2002 Site	45	2.42	2.32
ILG Rush Site	43	2.16	2.16
Talking with students	**8**	**3.50**	**3.72**

Emphasis added. All table data is from the RSIT Report.

RSIT could have allowed administrators and students to amplify improvements and integrate them with elements of the old system that remain unsurpassed.

Another point that RSIT analyzed concisely and well is room squatting. It asked freshmen whether room squatting (the ability to keep the room assigned over the summer) would have helped them "to better acclimate to MIT." They tended to disagree (with an average of 2.36[4]).

Without looking back

The RSIT Survey and Report assess how well residence selection satisfies the goals laid out in Chancellor Bacow's paper. It executes this purpose precisely, effectively, and narrowly, mostly neglecting to compare this year's residence selection to last year's. (One exception is RSIT's close study of FSILG rush.) Residence selection cannot go back to the full-scale Rush/Orientation of old, so in this sense the question is moot. We also do not have similar data available from earlier years. Nonetheless, a hypothetical comparison of old and new residence selection systems could have informed survey questions that dug deeper. RSIT could then have analyzed whether each new feature of Orientation 2002 improved on the old rush, allowing administrators and students to amplify improvements and integrate them, where possible, with elements of the old system that remain unsurpassed.

The report states, for example, that most freshmen feel welcomed by MIT, and that the new residence selection process was therefore successful in "ensuring that no student experiences rejection as their initiation to life at MIT," but it does not even guess at the extent to which this was a problem in the past. This would be difficult, since we do not have similar survey data from previous years, but the question at least merits discussion.

Orientation 2002 was radically different from O/R 2001. It was the first year the Freshmen On Campus (FOC) decision took effect, changed the timing of Parents' Orientation, debuted dorm squatting, introduced a new structure for the whole of Orientation with far less time for dorm rush, vastly expanded the Residence Based Advising program, and relied crucially on the summer housing lottery. Much of RSIT's analysis touches on these topics, but other than FSILG rush, it does not home in on any of them to study their effects in depth.

RSIT had a few questions that touched on the new timing of Parents' Orientation. Freshmen indicated that parents tended to help with their housing decision (2.90). 47% of freshmen (not counted in this average) said their parents had no impact on housing decisions. RSIT also asked freshmen an open-ended question about why they moved or squatted in the Orientation Adjustment Lottery (OAL). Only 5% of squatters said moving was too much of a hassle or they were already settled, and only two students who requested a move indicated parental motivations.

This first result, at least, is useful and informative, and it is difficult to see how they could have gleaned more data. They did not ask specific questions (such as whether arriving with all their luggage made them want to stay put, or if parents directly helped evaluate dorms) because they feared they would be leading questions, and because the open-ended question already covered it. It seems highly unlikely that parents stuck around for an extra day, distracting freshmen from dorm rush, since dorm rush began with the Residence Midway on Sunday night. However, this question may be relevant next year, as Deans Benedict and Redwine have agreed with students' suggestion that next year's Residence Exploration (REX) start a day earlier, on Sunday afternoon.[5]

Dorm squatting, which allowed freshmen to stay in the dorm they chose in the summer housing lottery, was one of the more controversial aspects of Orientation. Students feared that freshmen would take the easy course through dorm rush, squatting rather than exploring. They also feared that a shortened, deemphasized dorm rush would exacerbate this problem, so the MIT Dormitory Council (DormCon) prompted RSIT to analyze freshmen squatting and residence exploration.

RSIT compiled data on freshmen squatting and visits to other dorms with the intent to consider moving.

Action in OAL[6]	% of freshmen
Active squatters	61
Passive squatters	21
Requested a move	18

Dorms visited	% of freshmen	% east campus	% west campus (excludes RBA)
0	41	13	35
1-2	28	62	54
3-4	21		
5-6	7	25	11
7-10	4		

The analysis of the time and effort freshmen put into residence exploration stops here. There are no questions on how much time freshmen spent at dorms, how many people they met, or how many floors and rooms freshmen saw.

The RSIT Report had no analysis of the Residence Based Advising program. This is an incredible hole, as RBA effectively took over Next House and McCormick Hall.

RSIT's analysis of the effort freshmen invested in the summer housing lottery is farcical. They asked the freshmen to agree or disagree with the following: "I took the housing decisions I had to make over the summer seriously." Freshmen agreed (3.53), of course.

Students wanted to know how broadly and deeply the freshmen looked into dorms over the summer. How many dorms did they read about? Did they read just the *Guide to First Year Residences*? Did they watch I3 videos and check out dorm websites? Did they contact upperclassmen, where they had the option? Whether freshmen took this decision seriously is a question of how much effort one thinks they should have invested, and there is obviously a difference in perspective between freshmen and upperclassmen.

Whither dorm culture?

Perhaps the greatest flaw in the RSIT Report is its lack of understanding of dorm and FSILG cultures. Patterns of interaction and hall traditions define these cultures, but they are so diverse that the only common element is that all cultures have them. Their strength comes from students' freedom of association, like seeking like without external incentives or rules. If dorm culture is to thrive, residence selection must let freshmen experience dorm cultures substantially before they finally choose a dorm.

This perspective is absent from the RSIT Report. They ask how satisfied freshmen are with their dorms, and whether they felt dorm rush was informative, without pondering the fact that freshmen judge these questions relative to their expectations. Freshmen never saw the three-day celebration of MIT culture that began with Killian Kickoff and continued through a string of parties and events that were all geared to get them talking with upperclassmen. So it is not surprising that they do not share upperclassmen's visceral dislike for the truncation of rush, and its implications.

The strength of Dorm and FSILG cultures comes from students' freedom of association, like seeking like without external incentives or rules.

It is important to ask whether freshmen are satisfied, but it is also important to assess whether freshmen actually experienced residence selection as upperclassmen think they should have. This was the main reason why ILTFP attacked RSIT's statistic that freshmen were "somewhat satisfied" with the summer and orientation selection process. Upperclassmen have no magical ability to divine what is best for any particular freshman, but, since they have been through rush, they have a better understanding of the opportunity it affords freshmen, on average.

RSIT asked whether freshmen felt sufficiently informed regarding dorm selection before and after Orientation. Unsurprisingly, the overall answer was: not very.

Freshmen had enough information	Agreement
For the summer lottery	2.74
For the OAL	2.86
(if dorm is a good fit)	3.15
(if dorm is not a good fit)	2.36

Information source	Rating
Guide to First Year Residences	3.43
Discussion with current/ former students	3.14
i3 CD	3.09
CPW	2.92
Residence activities	2.78

These questions give us some useful information about how to improve residence selection next year; however, given student concern about the shorter length of dorm rush, one would think RSIT would have zoomed in on it. Would more conversations with upperclassmen have been useful? Were the events fun? How much time did they actually spend visiting dorms during dorm rush?

The importance of rush to MIT's overall community, other than as a mechanism for residence selection, is entirely absent from the RSIT Report. Rush is a great chance for freshmen to meet people in dorms (and, formerly, FSILGs) all over campus. With the deemphasizing delay of FSILG rush and truncation of dorm rush, this must have been lacking, but we have no idea how much. How many upperclassmen friends did freshmen make (and keep) in the dorm where they live? In other dorms? How familiar are they with other dorms' cultures? Most MIT students have a close circle of friends within their living group, and a broad network of friends from many other dorms. The initial friends and living group tour during rush is vital, yet RSIT has overlooked it entirely.

RSIT's analysis of freshmen satisfaction rates were likewise flawed. They found that, on average, freshmen were satisfied with their dorm "to a considerable extent" (4.00 on a scale of 1 to 5). Active squatters were slightly more satisfied (4.21), and those who did not get a requested reassignment from the OAL were less so (3.57). They note that this average is the same as that of a survey conducted among students in April 2002, and implicitly conclude that residence selection is working as well as ever.

Freshmen, of course, judge satisfaction with their dorm relative to expectations. It is difficult to objectively judge the strength of a dorm's culture and the integration of a freshman within that culture, but some starting questions are not too difficult to imagine. How many friends do freshmen have in their dorm? How many of those are upperclassmen? Did upperclassmen help choose classes, help them study, and help them find extracurriculur activities and friends in other living groups?

Hosed and hog-tied?

More than half of RSIT's members were students. So why are students' perspectives so lacking?

More than half of RSIT's members were students. DormCon, the Interfraternity Council, the Panhellenic Association, and other student groups were all represented. So why are students' perspectives so lacking in the RSIT Report?

According to RSIT member and DormCon President Grace Kessenich, two familiar factors conspired to produce this effect: hosage and deadlines. Administrators wrote initial drafts of the RSIT Survey and Report because that was their job, whereas students had classes. Similarly, students were often too busy tooling to review drafts thoroughly. Short deadlines and meetings during the school day compounded this problem. Grace recalls one particular instance in which, during IAP, RSIT members were given only two days to comment on a draft of the RSIT Report before it was released. It is not clear how to assign blame for RSIT's failures, and it is also not important, so long as students and administrators learn from these mistakes.

Where do we go from here?

Residence selection continues to evolve at a dramatic pace, and our analysis should evolve in parallel. ILTFP and DormCon made breakthroughs in communicating student views on residence selection to adminstrators this year. Perhaps this article can do the same for its analysis, and, with luck, *Prometheus* will inform and energize student representatives in the years to come.

Scott Schneider '00 (scottsch@alum.mit.edu) says "back in the day" more often than is healthy. He would like to thank Grace Kessenich '03 (DormCon President and RSIT member) for her contributions to this article.

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1) http://web.mit.edu/dormcon/www/RSIT/
2) http://web.mit.edu/residence/systemdesign/
3) The Summer Lottery Survey, OAL Survey, and RSIT Survey are available at http://web.mit.edu/prometheus/www/, courtesy of Rick Gresh.
4) Freshmen were asked to rate their agreement with this question on a scale of 1 to 4. 1 indicated "strongly disagree", 2 meant "somewhat disagree", 3 meant "somewhat agree", and 4 meant "strongly agree." A neutral average response would be 2.50.
Unless otherwise noted, all other values in this article are on the same scale of 1 to 4.
5) http://iltfp.mit.edu/larrybenstatement.html
6) The OAL is the Orientation Adjustment Lottery, which freshmen could enter to improve on their summer housing lottery assignment. Active squatters entered the OAL to confirm their summer housing lottery choice. Passive squatters kept their choice by not entering the OAL.

Let Sleeping Frosh Lie

By Tess Diduch

The Freshman On Campus decision has stirred more controversy and raised more ire than the Big Dig. Okay, probably not, but the new policy has left many unhappy, many irritated, and many just plain confused.

The Tech has printed a slew of opinion articles, all saying essentially the same thing. Firstly, MIT is trying to phase out the frats and simultaneously gain more control over its students. Secondly, this process creates inconvenience and harm to the freshman and living group communities involved.

But we can pose more interesting questions. To highlight these, let us take an imaginary journey through a very hypothetical Rush 2002.

What the hell is going on?

with my student reps?

• If you're interested in starting a business in the Coffeehouse space, contact Reuben Cummings (reubano), the UA Dining Committee Chair.

• The administration is expected to begin signing off on Daytime Saferide service sometime this fall. Service would likely run Monday through Friday, 8am to 6pm, in November, December, February, and March.

• The Committee for the Review of Space Planning (CRSP) has tentatively approved $500,000 for a renovation of the Reading Room, which would include repairs and the addition of two soundproof group study rooms.

with Orientation?

• The recently resurrected student group ILTFP is involved in ongoing talks with administrators about housing, orientation, and rush. E-mail *iltfp* for more information, or *blanche -a $user iltfp-forum*.

• *The Tech* ran an article on April 18 on the likely schedule for Orientation 2003. Dorm rush runs from 3pm onwards on Sunday, 8/24, and 5:30pm onwards on Monday.

with dining?

• Simmons dining now serves brunch on Sundays from 11am to 2pm.

with my brain?

• As part of a UA-initiated drive to expand student programming, the Israeli Students club has sponsored the Israeli Network (Ch. 20) and the Italian Students Association at MIT (MITALY) has sponsored RAI International (Ch. 21). Both are available free of charge on MIT Cable.

with this feature?

• E-mail *prometheus-feedback@mit.edu* if you know what the hell is going on.

Rush begins. Alumni and alumnae help with rush as before, but their role has changed. What was once three days of reunion with old classmates and bonding with the undergrads becomes two weeks of various individuals stopping by, then disappearing again.

Many frosh, lulled into comfortable apathy by the security of a dorm room on campus, either do not rush seriously, or do not rush at all. Of those that do, some find a house and community that they enjoy, receive bids, and pledge. In years past they would cancel campus housing and move their belongings. But this year?

This year house and frosh struggle over the meaning of the dictum, "freshmen may not live at an FSILG." Exactly what constitutes "living"? Must a freshman leave, at whatever hour, for the sole purpose of sleeping in his or her dorm bed? This seems to be the only sensible interpretation, as waking hours are for socialization, and MIT certainly is not trying to mandate with whom frosh may associate.

Houses face two unpleasant alternatives. One option is to follow the rules scrupulously, even to the point of telling their freshmen not to visit the house quite so often. Another option allows socialization more akin to the type previously enjoyed, but might as a result imperil the future of the FSILG.

Some freshmen stay on campus, spending little time at the chosen FSILG. This inhibits the formation of traditional interpersonal and group bonds. Other freshmen accept an invitation and all but move in. They then live with the constant fear that the wrong person will say the wrong thing and trouble will be brought down on their new homes. Even when no rule is broken, impressions still carry danger.

Realistically, students will react to most situations in a manner that makes them happy, the administration be damned. FOC will nonetheless radically change relationships between FSILGs and their pledges.

Thus people ask a variety of questions, such as: what effects *will* this new system have on FSILGs? Will the rules be followed? Are FSILGs being slowly phased out? Will student traffic patterns vary as pledges return home each night from across the river? These questions are interesting, but most fail to address the most important concern.

The question to ask is this: are the intrinsic dynamics of the FSILGs being affected to a point where members must go against their better judgment in order to maintain the special relationships that the organizations were created to foster in the first place?

Sneaking and lying and paranoia can be the source of laughter and fun, but can also cause real fear and anxiety. No one believes that students, especially freshmen, need more of either of these. A critical evaluation of the impact of current policies might therefore be as important as the initial FOC decision itself.

In the meantime, one thing is certain: the times, they are a-changin'. And not only for the better.

E-mail Tess Diduch (diduch@mit.edu) with comments.

Vandiver on Housing, UROP, Ocean Eng.

Continued from page 3

The real advantage of the current system is that parents are much more comfortable. They know when they drop Mary or Johnny off that they have an address and a telephone number and that they'll be able to reach them.

PM: *Can you talk more about the role of parental concerns in housing?*

KV: The good news about last orientation was that they came in one weekend and were gone and dropped off all of their kids' stuff. In the old system, parents would call to say that Mary forgot her toothbrush and they couldn't reach her. They would threaten to call the police. That's an exaggeration, but they did use up a huge amount of staff time trying to track their kids.

If you tried to take UROP away now, you'd have open warfare.

This past orientation parents went away satisfied, knowing that their children were safe and where to find them. The students were better off because their parents were out of their hair. We can't have that without students knowing where they'll live.

The loss is in liquidity, which in the old system was the result of not having a certain place to live. This created a necessity for people to explore and to fight their way in to the place they like best.

Also, let's say you had the perfect rush system for the dorms. You're going to hurt the FSILGs.

PM: *Do you really think they have to fight their way in?*

KV: Kind of. In the old system, there were fraternities and selection and rejection—a lot of things that were not good for freshmen. Freshmen have much lower anxiety with the present system.

As to the upperclassmen question of whether or not students will live in the place that's most appropriate for them: maybe the new system won't do as well for the first few days or weeks. Ultimately, though, given the ability for people to move, it will work out fine.

You can't tinker with dorm selection without thinking of the consequences for FSILGs. You have to make the whole system work.

Also, let's say you had the perfect rush system for the dorms. You're going to hurt the FSILGs.

PM: *Do you think the role of the system should be to produce imperfections in the dorm assignments?*

KV: I'm not saying that. But you have to make the whole system work. You can't tinker with dorm selection and not think about the consequences for the FSILGs. So preserving a little turmoil (not having enough time, not having quite found your perfect place) is actually a little good for the FSILG side. But I haven't had much to do with those decisions.

PM: *I know that, in my experience, communities pick out other like communities - for example, THiRD EAst in EAsT camPUS tends to have friends in Pika and tEp. I can see someone coming on THiRD EAst and maybe being too rambunctious or whatever and having someone suggest that they look at tEp.*

I get no greater satisfaction than having a student come in and say he wants to do something and helping him do it.

KV: Sure. But I don't think you should think about optimizing the dorm system without thinking about FSILG consequences. That reduces incentive for people to even consider TEP. We cannot afford to have the FSILG system fail.

PM: *What is your role in UROP? To what extent is it centrally managed?*

KV: I make the occasional policy decision, and provide minimal supervision of a very good staff.

The MIT UROP program is the envy of the world, because we have 80% of our students participate, we put 7.5 million dollars annually in students' pockets, and we create opportunities across all the departments. We've figured out how to make research opportunities available to students in any area and how to fund it. We have the magic formula that makes the funding work.

PM: *What difficulties do other universities encounter?*

KV: There are two hurdles to introducing it. One: Faculty believe that it can't possibly work at their school. Two: How should it be paid for? It can't be made successful overnight. We started by having [MIT] subsidize UROPs. We still do. About 1.5 million each year comes from the UROP office.

The key is to get faculty to believe that it's a good thing. That takes time, but if you tried to take UROP away now, you'd have open warfare. Soon you cross a threshold where it starts to work, and then funding becomes easy, if you're a research university. It's a win/win situation, as professors get a highly talented and inexpensive workforce, and students get valuable experience. I also see the mentoring relationships. It's at least as important as the research.

PM: *What is the magic formula?*

KV: The departments pay for 80% of the research, and the UROP office subsidizes about 20% in situations where faculty don't have research funds to pay for it. The 20% becomes crucially important to students who want to do UROPs in fields where faculty members can't support them. There's also UROP for credit, which helps students get their foot in the door.

We're very close to having sufficient money to support every decent proposal to come in.

PM: *I've heard complaints from a lot of people that it's difficult to find UROPs on the UROP website, that the posts are often out of date...*

KV: That may be true. I consider the website as the place of last resort, or perhaps as a place to get some ideas as to what kind of openings are possible. However, most UROPs are found by students knocking on doors.

The most frequent UROP question that I'm asked is, "How do I find a UROP?" This is the hardest part. Especially for freshmen - they don't know people and don't have skills to sell. My answer is that it's a lot like looking for a job. You have to knock on doors and send email, put together a resume. It's good training. It's our job to help encourage people to do it.

PM: *The Tech recently published a statement about the possibility of removing the Ocean Engineering department. What can you say about it?*

KV: The motivating issues are primarily ones over size and efficiency. In these times of financial constraints, is the Ocean Engineering department's undergrad program efficient enough from a budgetary point of view to warrant continuing? To put it crassly, the exercise is trying to find a way of preserving what's important about an Ocean Engineering program at MIT and at the same time making it function in a way that's efficient enough that it meets certain standards in the Institute.

"We don't want MIT to become the Massachusetts Institute of EECS."

The options are: that the department stays independent or that it merges. I have a strong position on one thing: I think it's important for students to have a wide diversity of choices of major. Quoting somebody (I can't remember who), "We don't want MIT to become the Massachusetts Institute of EECS." There are a bunch of degree programs at the Institute with 5 or fewer grads per year. To suggest that we shouldn't have a degree program because we have a small number of graduates is inconsistent and unfair to students who wish to study Ocean Engineering and Naval Architecture.

Naval architecture is what really distinguishes the department from every other MIT department. I want to make sure that undergraduates have the opportunity to study it at MIT.

PM: *Is there anything else you'd like to say before we end the interview?*

KV: I place very high value on being able to develop relationships with students where you trust one another. It's the only way to get things done. I tend to give people the benefit of the doubt. I get no greater satisfaction than having a student come in and say he wants to do something and helping him do it.