

## Editorial

# Money Should Go To Profs, Not Execs

There's serious on-going drama taking place during bargaining right now between two powerful and stubborn groups not willing to bend to the other's demands.

The California Faculty Association (instructors at the CSU campuses) and the California State University (the system that controls Cal State East Bay and the 22 other CSUs) are at a standstill in negotiations for a new contract between the two organizations that would allow these instructors to continue working at CSU campuses. Basically, the professors of the CFA want more money, smaller class sizes and increases in tenure-track hiring (among other things) while the CSU wants smaller pay raises, the same class sizes and the same amount of tenure-track hiring. If a compromise isn't reached soon, our professors could strike.

The CSU has already offered the CFA a 24 percent salary increase over a three-year period, which the CFA turned down. On one hand, the 24 percent money jump isn't a lot for these professors that are paid a lot less than instructors at comparable universities in other states, especially considering that the cost-of-living in California is so high.

On the other hand, 24 percent seems pretty good compared to their CSU counterparts: CSU staff members recently got only a 4 percent pay increase over the next four years while CSU students have had their fees go up 76 percent over the last five years. From a student or staffer's point of view, it hardly seems fair that professors should be crying about getting "just" a one-fourth pay increase.

But then there's the issue of CSU administrators, the hangup in this whole contract negotiation. CSU executives, including President Mo Qayoumi and all other CSU presidents, were recently given 4 percent pay increases for next year, something that came 18 months after these people were given 14 percent increases in salary. And we all know about the

millions wasted in mystery projects given to retired execs last year.

Given the absurd policy of the CSU to tax its students in order to make its richest even richer, it seems in reason that they would be able to give decent pay raises to the people who make our learning environments so successful. Pleasing the 23,000 professors who make the CSU actually worth attending would probably be a good idea for a group that has gone on a self-serving spending spree over the last couple of years. In other words, after a solid two-year money binge, it's time for CSU administrators to finally purge.

And for us students, who the CFA always defends, we need something to make this 10 percent fee increase seem somewhat worthwhile. We can say with certainty that we feel much more comfortable giving pay raises to professors so we can actually get qualified teachers who can make a difference in our lives instead of giving millions more to fat cats who sit in a Long Beach office all day dreaming about grabbing us students by the ankles, turning us upside-down and shaking us until all our spare change falls out.

But there is one CFA standpoint we don't agree with: the possible strike. We encourage the faculty to reach an agreement quickly so students don't get burned over a few extra dollars. If a rolling strike were to occur, a seemingly countless number of classes across the state would be cancelled, quarters and semesters would be pushed back into and beyond vacations and students would be graduating in summer. Furthermore, enrollment would almost surely drop for the semester following a potential strike, which would seriously damage all parties involved.

A strike would be the worst-case scenario for students, so we implore both sides to reach some sort of agreement, for our sake. Remember that without us, none of you would have a job in the first place.

## Soapbox

# Girls got (video) game, too

As Sony and Microsoft fight for the top spot in next-generation consoles, what is more interesting is that the Nintendo Wii has been attracting a lot of attention from people who normally don't play video games: women.

In the '80s the original Nintendo with Super Mario Brothers was the game that everyone and their grandmother played. As time went on, these classics faded and today the industry is bombarded with sports games, first-person shooters and anything else that involves animated violence. Video games have primarily been targeted toward a male audience—especially the 25-35 age group—because they grew up playing video games. Now that they're out of school and working, they're also buying a lot more games.

What some developers have begun to figure out is that there is a growing population of female gamers. Video gaming is a \$13.5 billion industry in the United States alone, and in 2006, five out of the top ten PC games sold were expansions for "The Sims 2," a game targeted at men and women.

The first game, "The Sims," was the best-selling PC game of all time with 60 percent of its fan base being female. "The Sims" is similar to a "digital dollhouse" set in suburbia where you control the lives of your Sim by having them eat, work, play as well as develop relationships. There are no goals in "The Sims;" these types of games are described as sandbox games where you're open to do whatever you like.

Nintendo recently has focused on their handhelds, which still draw in a huge audience; but a majority of Nintendo fans are usually kids and anyone else who grew up with Nintendo.

Nintendo's latest handheld, called the Nintendo DS, has also attracted a wide variety of players. With brain games like "Brain Age" and "Big Brain Academy," people of all ages have been playing puzzle games like Sudoku and other math-related problems in the form of a video game.

I have been playing video games for as long as I can remember. I got a hand-me-down Atari back when computer monitors only had two colors. I was instantly hooked. My brother and I played video games throughout my childhood years.

Sophia Tong

Most people seem surprised that I play video games, and even more surprised that I plan on going into the video game industry. It's an industry where only ten percent of the workforce is female. There are stereotypes regarding the type of person that plays video games. Everyone always thinks it's the dorky guy, but no one would think that someone like my sister, who is a dancer, also enjoys video games.

There is this other half of the population that people don't necessarily associate gaming with. Why is it that this form of entertainment mostly caters to males? I do like the occasional shooter ("Gears of War" is one of the few that I've played and enjoyed) but there are very few female heroes when it comes to video games. Lara Croft would be one, but we all know what her best features are. People like to relate to what they're playing, which could be why "The Sims" is really popular among females.

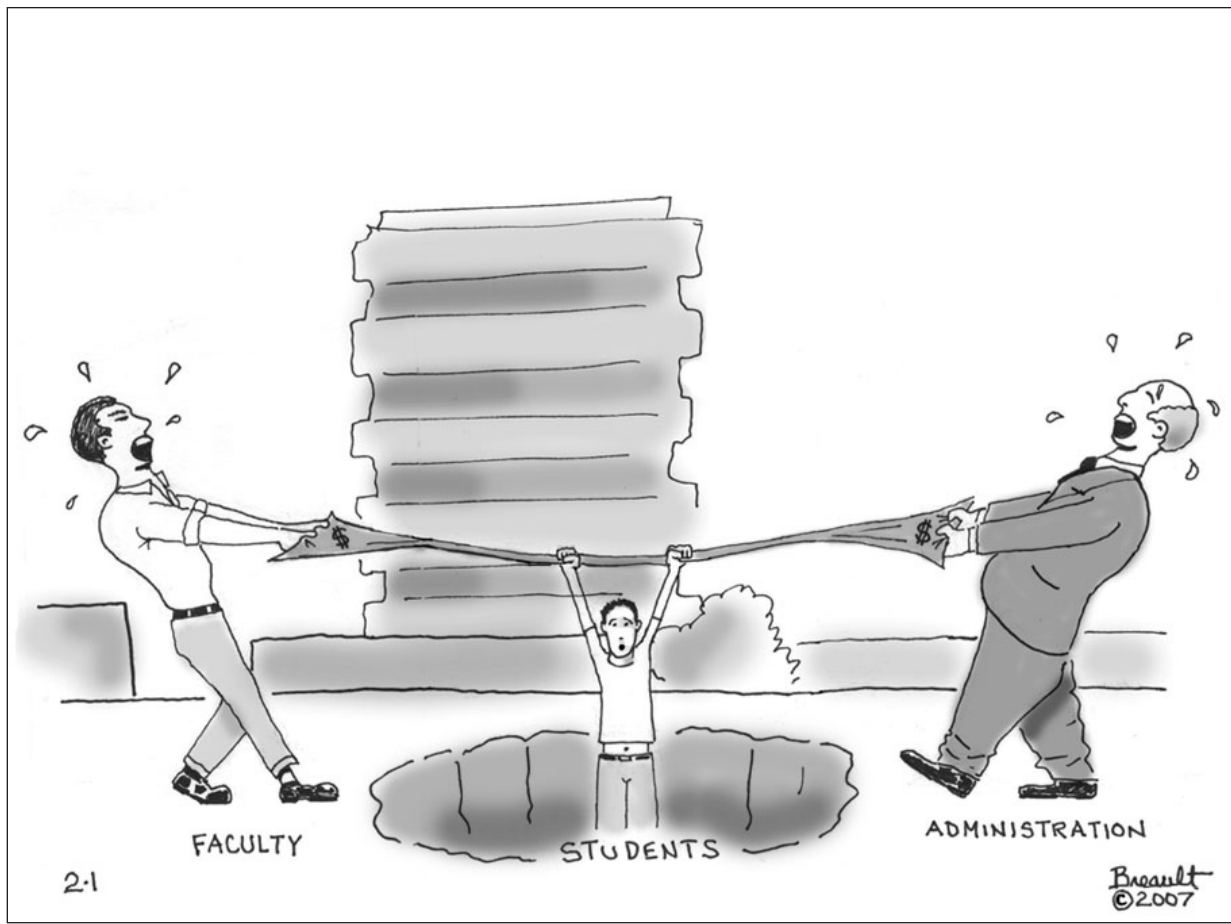
The adventure genre, in which the player points and clicks with their mouse to collect items and solve puzzles, was popular in the late '80s and early '90s. This is unfortunately a dying genre, but it's a genre that females tend to enjoy and a genre that Roberta Williams, one of the most influential female gamers of her time, made popular with her "King's Quest" series.

There are game developers that are now slowly realizing that the "casual" player, who enjoys games like Bejeweled and Tetris, includes both genders, and that it is a market that could potentially grow.

The new Nintendo Wii has been a hit with gamers and non-gamers alike. Instead of relying on hand-eye coordination with a few buttons on a controller, it involves full arm movement that is easy for anyone to grasp. It wouldn't surprise me if the female gaming population begins to grow with this step that Nintendo has taken.

The next few years should be exciting in terms of how the gaming industry will go. Maybe the growing female gamer population will help change stereotypes and everyone can enjoy video games without the strange looks, and with more options that don't always have to involve sports and violence.

Sophia Tong is a communications major who also enjoys reviewing video games on the side.



## Letter from the Editor

# The Most Harmless, Menacing Of Midterms

Mike Rosenberg

No matter how many midterms you take, there's always going to be uncertainty heading into this time of the quarter because you have no idea what to expect before you take your first test with a new professor.

While every professor has their own little way of testing what you've learned, there is a pattern of constructing exams. Every exam, midterm and final seems to fit into one of these categories, listed in increasing level of difficulty:

**The "As long as you show up with a No. 2 pencil, you're passing" Midterm.**

Tough to complain about these ones, when the professor does everything but give you an answer key to ensure you get an easy A. They might give you a sample test beforehand that ends up being the exact same test (professors aren't going to create two tests). Or they could give you "sample questions" from past tests that end up showing up verbatim on the real test. The other option would be to simply give a multiple choice test with wrong answers that are all jokes.

**The "50 percent correct means A+" Midterm**

This is when everyone on the test bombs so bad that the professor has no choice but to scale everyone's grades higher than CSU administrator's pay raises (ba-zing!). I actually scored a 42 percent on a midterm when I was a freshman and ended up with the highest score in a class of 30 students, which meant I got an A. These tests don't really teach you anything other

than the fact that you can be as stupid as you want and still be successful as long as everyone else is stupider.

**The "You get what you pay for" Midterm**

This is the standard, normal level of difficulty test where you get the grade you deserve based on how much you kept up with your work and studied beforehand. Pound-for-pound, this is the best type of test because you know you're getting a great grade and a whole lot of knowledge as long as you put in the work. It's also nice because you know your hard work paid off while Johnny Only-shows-up-on-midterm-day doesn't get the same grade you did just because the test was so easy.

**The "Chug coffee and prepare to get hand cramps" Midterm**

These are those blue book tests that require you to write non-stop for two straight hours to make sure all of your answers are complete. These essay exams are basically take-homes (see below) on crack. Additionally, these tests have likely caused more hand cramps for male college students than anything since "Girls Gone Wild" was released.

**The "If you think this is easy because it's a take-home, think again" Midterm**

Take-homes are always much harder than they seem because they take up more time than in-class tests and have to be completely leak-proof, unlike tests you take in class that

simply require you to pick the best available answer. Unlike in-class exams, you're not getting away with any lack-of-knowledge because you have to explain everything in painstaking detail. These circumstances, which also apply to most open-book tests, actually end up making take-homes more difficult than your typical scantron tests.

**The "You won't know how you did until the final" Midterm**

These are those frustrating tests that you don't get back until the ninth week of the quarter, meaning you can be going into the end of the course with no idea how you're doing in the class. This also means you have no clue how to change your note-taking and study habits for the final based on your midterm results, meaning you go into the final blind just like you did the midterm. These professors are basically the teaching world's equivalent to the procrastinating stoner student.

**The "You have no soul" Midterm**

This is when you get your midterm after coming to class all quarter and studying all week—only to find that the first question on the test is about 14th Century European history. And it's a biology class. Unlike most ethical professors who realize the test was too hard and scale the class's scores, these people are on a mission to lower your GPA a full point and won't stop until they see every last student crying the day they pass back the tests. Then they give you that evil, disturbing "Kevin Spacey from 'Seven'" after he

## The PIONEER

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chopped off Brad Pitt's wife's head" look.

My advice is to simply study hard and do your best with whatever your professors throw at you during midterms. More often than not, you'll get the grade you deserve.

And if you're taking your first biology midterm, it wouldn't hurt to buff up on your 14th Century European History. You know, just in case.

Mike Rosenberg is the editorial editor of The Pioneer.

## Letter to the Editor

# Forget More Parking, Use Public Transit

Dear Editor,

In response to an editorial that was penned by an anonymous writer:

Who would have the gall to write an editorial in favor of paving nature to put up a cement car dump, on the opposite page which promotes a viewing of "An Inconvenient Truth," and on the same page that avidly promotes, "using both sides of paper?" Here's another inconvenient truth: Your strife for convenience is exactly what's contributing to the suffering of the ozone and feeding the global warming demon of inevitable doom.

I'm aware that this campus is well known for—and prides itself upon—its number of commuting students. I'm one of them. And I ride a bike. I take the bus. I ride the free shuttle that transports students from the Hayward BART to Meiklejohn and Warren halls. But it wasn't always that way. I used to be one of those people who'd fork over \$30 every three months to have my oil changed; I'd cut a check for any "reasonable" amount it'd take to fix up my car and grant me more precious time in my comfort bubble of metal, glass and electronics.

After the tragic passing of my car to a better place, Dodge Heaven, I had an epiphany: I LIVE IN THE BAY AREA!! They pay people here to carpool for you! Perhaps you've seen them: They drive a big white and green automobile labeled "AC Transit." The 92 that takes you up to campus runs almost every 15 minutes from about 6:45 a.m. until 10:30 p.m. So check out [actransit.org](http://actransit.org) for more info.

To reiterate my point: It's wonderful that this campus' age demographic is so widely spread out, but the implications of having needy teenagers living in the Heights who need their ride pimped and the working men and women who swarm to campus in their single-packed cars begs for a more economic solution. NOT another parking lot, NOT a parking garage and certainly NOT a raise in fees to remedy a solution that is so easily found in taking public transportation.

So the shuttle doesn't run as often as you like? Once we have a larger student body actually UTILIZING the shuttle services, it could run more frequently, I assure you. So the 92 is peopled with Hayward High kids that won't move for you? God gave you elbows for a reason.

Besides, once you get on the bus or the shuttle you can plug in to your iPod and tune out. Don't you do that anyway, when I see you walking around on campus?

Crystal Mitchell

Fourth-year Math Major and Future Teacher

## Letter to the Editor

# Hayward Nature Center

Dear Editor,

In the Jan. 11, 2007 issue of The Pioneer, there was an article about an animal refuge in Hayward called Sulphur Creek Nature Center ("Animal Refuge Offers Cheap Entertainment"). The Center has an interesting history of a community working together to provide worthwhile recreational and educational activities for its residents and a sanctuary for animals displaced or injured by urban encroachment upon their environment.

It is one of more than 100 facilities operated by the Hayward Area Recreation and Parks District. In 1962 HARD bought property on D Street, which we know today as San Felipe Park. Through the combined efforts of local residents, community organizations and HARD representatives, an Art and Science Center was built there.

By the late 1960s the Art and Science Center needed more space for its expanding exhibits. Consequently, HARD acquired five land parcels of the Martin Williams ranch property along Sulphur Creek, also on D Street (In 1885 William Hayward, the founder of our city, purchased one of these parcels from the estate of Faxton Dean Atherton, after whom the West Bay city of Atherton was named).

Sulphur Creek Nature Center was completed in April 1970 and the Science Center from San Felipe Park was transferred there. Although the Center's initial goal was to provide recreation and environmental education, an unplanned goal became caring for orphaned or injured animals displaced by several years of drought in the 1970s. One year, residents brought in more than 1,000 injured animals. A new building was constructed to care for them. This animal hospital is funded by public contributions, including the food and trips to the vet. The International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council has accredited this rehabilitation program.

The Center has an animal lending library where small animals can be checked out for seven days. There are also wildlife programs offering environmental education and fun for all ages. Naturalists conduct more than 600 school and community visits each year. Other activities include the annual Spring Wildlife Fair, the Halloween UnHaunted House and summer day camps with hiking, adventure games and crafts. Sulphur Creek also provides a "Wild Things" birthday party, with activities that include presentation of live animals and a nature hike.

Sulphur Creek Nature Center, recognized throughout several counties, has a commitment to high-quality programs, the latest techniques in animal care and housing, and a caring and professional staff dedicated to California's legacy of preserving habitat and environmental education for future generations.

Kandace McClure

History graduate student

## Correction

In the Jan. 25 issue, the Campus Question of the week should be credited to Linda Ly.

In the Jan. 18 issue, the article on campus parking left the impression that Community Service Officer Eric Davis said parking was only a student problem. He said it is a problem for everyone, including faculty and staff.