

CSB/SJU PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

THE GADFLY

Ex Nihilo Nihil Fit

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BEACH STAGES SURPRISE COUP (AGAIN)

Dennis Beach, scheduled to take over as Philosophy chair in January 2012, decided to take matters into his hands this week by staging an early coup. Moreover, he decided that he wouldn't be able to implement his master plan with such puny powers, so he also took over the presidencies of CSB and SJU. Armed with some heavy books and big ideas, he and a group of young monks stormed the executive offices at CSB and SJU last night. Beach issued a statement setting out his agenda: "From now on, we will read, read, read. The really good stuff, too. So for those departments out there that don't read the good stuff, I have a simple message—PREPARE to be boarded." Presidents MaryAnn Baenninger and Robert Koopman have decided to look on the bright side of things. Reached by text from a jazz club gig in St. Louis, Ex-President Baenninger was philosophical about it all, "Quite honestly, being a college president was a lot of work and music is a lot more fun. So Bob and I are taking our show on the road. He plays the piano and I sing my songs. We're having a blast. We tried to get Rita Knuesel to come along with her sax, but Beach wouldn't let her. He said we could have DesJardins, but Bob and I don't feel like doing Springsteen tunes." Presidente Beach had no comment.

ESCH PULLS A FAST ONE

The Philosophy department was under the impression that Assistant Professor Emily Esch would be coming up for tenure in the fall of 2011, but in a stunning move, Esch recently presented empirical evidence that she already has tenure and that everyone agreed to it last year. "Yeah, it turns out that people grossly overestimate what they know and don't know, and my department might be way worse than average on this. I showed them the data suggesting that I'd flown through the tenure process in the fall of 2010. They were stunned, but that's their problem," said a beaming Esch. Reached for comment, Tony Cunningham could only shake his head about it all, "Nice. Well, it's Presidente Beach's problem now. Let's see how much he likes it when she sets up a working brain lab in her office."



El Presidente Beach addresses the CSB/SJU community late Friday night.



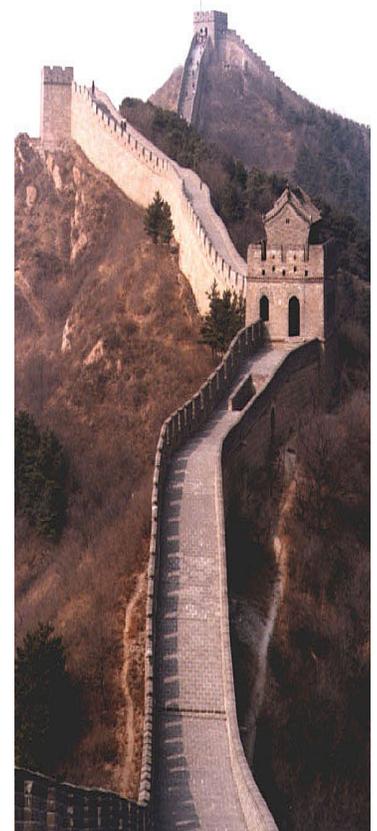
Emily Esch gloats over her recent clever move.

ROBINSON DOWN FOR THE COUNT

Professor Tim Robinson has retired. In the midst of his Ancient Philosophy class this week, Robinson suddenly threw himself to the floor. Concerned students were worried at first that he might have suffered a seizure or heart attack, but when they rushed to his side, they saw he was faking it. “Wow, that was really weird,” said one student who requested anonymity to protect her grade. Robinson gave a statement from the floor of Quad 344 before rising and cleaning out his office, “No mas. TKO. I surrender. I’ve done been knocked out, Georgia style. It’s all over now but the shoutin’. My moma didn’t raise no fool. Woo-hoo.” Asked what these things might mean, Steve Wagner had no idea, but when told that Robinson was gone, Wagner shook his head and said, “That’s terrible!” But when told that he could have Robinson’s office as a jazz listening room, Wagner changed his tune. “Sweet. Sweet,” said a smiling Wagner.

WRIGHT TO ASSESS CHINA

Charles Wright departed for China earlier this week. During his study abroad experience in China last fall, Wright reached an agreement with Chinese authorities to assess China. Wright could not be reached for comment, but ex-chair Tony Cunningham expressed his surprise. “When he first told me, I thought he was going to assess some philosophy courses at a university or something. Heck, like usual, I didn’t pay too much attention, to be honest about it. But after a little while, it suddenly dawned on me that he’s going to assess China. The whole country. Everything and everybody. Wow. Man, that’s a BIG job. He’s going to be one busy beaver,” said Cunningham. Before leaving, Wright filed a request with Richard Ice, the new Dean. He asked for a professional leave until 2036 and an office at SJU when he gets back. Ice said he would have to study the matter before reaching any decision. Wright’s spouse, Professor Jean Keller, was less than amused at the development. “He didn’t tell me anything. There was a note on the kitchen table saying there was an assessment emergency and he’d be back sometime after 2030 or so,” said Keller. In the meantime, Keller has knocked a hole through the wall separating their offices in the HAB. “Well, at least I get something out of the deal, I suppose. I’m going to see if I can sneak a GWST hot tub in here. I think we deserve it, and if we don’t, it’ll still be nice,” said Keller.



PHIL MAJOR RELATED TO FAMOUS LITERARY CHARACTER

Senior Philosophy major James Darcy recently received some exciting news. “It’s amazing. It turns out that I really am related to Mr. Darcy from *Pride & Prejudice*. All these years, Cunningham has been calling me Mr. Darcy, and now it turns out that I really am a chip off the old block,” said a surprised Darcy. Asked what difference this might make to his life, Darcy was uncertain, but he figures that graduate programs might see his lineage as a feather in his cap.



Quick-Draw McGraw Takes the Reins

After John Gagliardi recently stepped down as SJU football coach, St. John's was looking for a coach who might continue Gagliardi's commitment to building character and downplaying the violent aspects of the game. After a short internal search, St. John's has selected Rene McGraw as Gagliardi's successor. McGraw will continue to teach Philosophy and Peace Studies classes when he assumes his football duties in the summer of 2011. "I had a long talk with John, so I have a pretty good sense of what I need to do to take this team to the next level. We'll start with some Heidegger and sprinkle in a little Levinas during practices in August. If we work things just right, our players should be able to overtake the opposition with Gandhian love. I've designed a number plays where our quarterback will slowly walk the ball to the goal line and meet any resistance with love. Don't laugh. It can work. You'll see. Get ready, because here we come. That's my story and I'm sticking to it," said McGraw.



McGraw plans on a whole bunch of tricky plays in 2011.

LITTLE STONESTREET BOY PROGRESSING NICELY

Assistant Professor Erica Stonestreet happily reports that her son, Remington Stonestreet, is progressing nicely with respect to her John Stuart Mill social experiment. Via phone from London, where Remi was participating in a pre-pre-pre-school translation party of Virgil's *Aeneid*, Professor Stonestreet had this to say, "I thought James Mill did an absolutely fabulous job with little John Stuart for the times, but my husband and I thought we could do better in a modern age. I mean, we have I pads and all sorts of spiffy stuff. If things continue to progress at the current rate, little Remi should have his first Ph.D. somewhere between 3 and 4. Ancient Greek is going very well for him, though the communication isn't ideal since a 3 month-old child can't actually talk. But we work around the annoying facts of biology. You should see this kid play the piano." Stonestreet also noted that Remi can dance like a little madman. "I don't get it. No walking, but that boy can move. Hey, I'm not asking any questions. You have to take a child's gifts as they come," said an exultant Stonestreet.



Remi S. performing in the Dancing With the Star Babies competition in London.

CUNNINGHAM NABBED (AGAIN)

Tony Cunningham will soon have to face University fraud and theft charges. Cunningham went on a wild shopping spree at school expense after inheriting Gene Garver's old office. Officials in the Business Office allege that he had a wine rack built and then stocked it with over \$10,000 worth of wine. His plan was to open up a "Philosophical Saloon" on Fridays. Cunningham insists that it is a big misunderstanding. "I said 'Salon,' not 'Saloon.' It's team-building. If we are going to be a vibrant department, we need to talk. You know, In Vino Veritas," said Cunningham with a straight face. A B.O. official, speaking anonymously, differed with Cunningham's take. "Well, what about the big-screen tv and sound system? And the loft? Plato didn't have a loft. We finally have this guy," said the very satisfied B.O. person.

KELLER'S KORNER

WANTED: Really nice hot tub. Must be able to fit in an HAB office. Willing to trade all sorts of Philosophy books on Asian Philosophy, Political Philosophy, and Environmental Ethics. Will throw in various Aikido stuff for free. Willing to pay extra for inflatable, socially responsible toys for said hot tub. Price negotiable.

SCHMITZ:

WHERE'S THE BEEF?

Philosophy Department Coordinator Laura Schmitz will be selling beef in the flagpole lot today at 5 o'clock. Asked where she got it all, she replied, "Oh, funny story. My daughter, Madison, recently finished her gun safety training course and she just loved it. Well, I made the mistake of dropping her off at her grandparent's farm one day this week. My Dad came outside and saw that she'd dropped 20 cows in the field. He was annoyed at first, but he was proud about her shooting. And you know what, if you prepare dairy cow just right, it tastes like chicken. Come and get it," said Schmitz as she stood next to a refrigerated truck.

WAGNER SCORES TV ROLE

Steve Wagner has scored a lucrative job on *The Office*. "Yeah, I've been trying out for television shows for years. You've seen some of my work. Mostly commercials and crime shows. Did a lot of work for Charmin. And I got whacked in all sorts of ways on a bunch of C.S.I.-type shows. You'd only have seen my feet in those episodes. But now you'll get to see my face. I'm going to be the new boss of *The Office*. I beat out Will Ferrell for the job. Not bad for a boy from da Bronx. Yeah, I'm going to be a meanie, and I'm going to have fun with it," said Wagner. Not everyone is so happy. "I think some kind of fix was in," said a grumpy Tony Cunningham.

FARNHAM BUMMED

Dan Farnham, noted eudaimonist, recently got some bad news. "Yeah well, it turns out that the translation of 'eudaimonia' has been incorrect for over 2000 years. It's nothing like 'flourishing' and that kind of thing. Naw, Aristotle was actually advocating sitting on the couch and swilling beer. It turns out that 'eudaimonia' is our equivalent of 'couch potato'...Arghhh," said Farnham recently as he threw away his copies of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Eudemian Ethics*. "Shoot. I guess this makes me a Kantian. Who the heck wants to be a Kantian? First I was born in North Dakota. Now this. Some people never catch a break," bemoaned Farnham. Being told that he has a job in the department next year only lifted his spirits slightly. "I mean, I like food and shelter as much as the next guy. But give me a break. Now I'm a Kantian. It'll take more than a job to make me smile from now on," he said.



Some people in the department think Wagner's new job may be giving him a big, ginormous head. What do you think?