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The wait is over! Here, at long last, are the eight logos that met the department’s and the PLB’s exacting standards for inclusion in the logo contest (i.e.: someone e-mailed them to me). Now the fate of the department rests in your hands. You, gentle readers, must vote, and indicate which logo you would like to have represent the department on posters and mugs and cakes and various overcommercialized knick-knacks.

Remember, if you don’t vote, you can’t even sport one of those bumper stickers that says, “Don’t blame me: I voted for the other logo.”

Send vote to CMUPLB@hotmail.com
Feel free to include an essay on why you chose the logo you did.

All votes will be tabulated on February 28th, 2006. A winner will be announced in the March edition of the PLB.

Note: voting will not be audited by Jimmy Carter or the UN, so bribing a vote counter may be successful. Just in case you were curious. Cash, as always, is appreciated.

Bobby Klatzky: “Psy Rainbow”
The candidate that started it all...

Dan Mirman: “Absolut CMU Psychology”
The logo that says our psychology is 100-proof.

Jen Brace: Circles and Psy
Jen’s design bears a cool resemblance to an X-Wing pilot’s helmet. CMU: The Force is with us!
Rachel Diana: Plaid Brain
This is your brain. This is your brain on plaid. I can’t be the only person that would wear that shirt. Can I?

Jen Brace: Stylized Psy
A close relative of the logo from page 1. Note the difference in the way that the psyche symbol is realized, though.

Beau Stephens: Window #1
I feel like, if we asked Ingmar Bergman to design a logo, he might come up with this.
Kathy Majors, Deborah Brashear, and Ginger Placone: “Area Groups”
This was the last submission I received; you can see why it would take a while to put together!

A Recap of the Candidates
1) Rainbow Psy
2) Absolut CMU Psychology
3) Circles and Psy
4) Plaid Brain
5) Stylized Psy
6) Window #1
7) Area Groups
8) Window #2

Remember to vote for your favorite!
E-mail all votes to:
CMUPLB@hotmail.com

Votes must be received by February 28th.
The Land Before the Dawn of Time Forgot

The PLB’s Secret Source, Deep File Cabinet (not to be confused with the PLB’s Secret Sauce -- which is tastier, but less informative), has provided us with the results of an extensive archeological dig depicting the way things used to be in the department. For the first time, we are able to share these startling remnants of an older, long forgotten way of life. Though we can only speculate as to the purpose of many of these artifacts, we hope you find them as intriguing as we do!

This papery substance appears to have been the basis of some form of correspondence between offices. The PLB’s leading scientists remain puzzled as to why this particular method of correspondence was favored over faster, more efficient, less-wasteful e-mail. Our current belief is that the most common computer at the time (either the abacus or the Commodore 64 -- experts differ on this point) may not have been compatible with Andrew Webmail.

Apparently, multiple choice quizzes were invented BEFORE Scan-Tron, which has rocked the foundations of one of the oldest theories in education: that colleges began to use multiple-choice tests because Scan-Tron machines were invented and people needed an excuse to use them.
The PLB is slightly embarrassed to admit this, but we’re not sure what this form is about. Every time we try to read it, we fall asleep. There’s just so much text!

What manner of strange reminders these people employed, instead of just programming the experiment date into their PDA or cell-phone!

The PLB has been unable to uncover any other evidence confirming the use of this logo for CMU, so it may be apocryphal. We have, however, confirmed that years ago, it was popular to write out “Office Hours” on one’s office door, and change the slip every semester, instead of just posting them to Blackboard. The reason for this strange tradition remains mysterious.
As many of you may remember, there was an article about Brian MacWhinney’s CHILDES database on the CMU webpage some months ago, with a headline that read something like this: “Department of Psychology adds largest bilingual database to CHILDES.” Not too long ago, someone came up to me and said:

“Hey, you’re in the psychology department, right? I heard you guys had found the world’s largest bilingual child? How’s that going? How big is he, by the way? And what languages does he speak? Esperanto?”

The PLB has also overheard these exciting quotes from leading psychologists:

“Mmmm. I love bacon. It’s so tasty, it’s addictive. It’s like smoking a pork cigarette.”

“Why would you ever ban crotch-lifting?!!”

This month’s PLB Shout-Out goes to Dr. David Rakison, who has taken the lead in organizing the Developmental Core Course. Those of you who are in the Developmental Core Course will hopefully agree with me that David’s efforts in setting up the website, generally maintaining order, and working to get all of the developmental faculty organized (which is not unlike herding cats) has gone a long way toward making the course lively, informative, and fun. And all of the effort David has put in means that, from my perspective, I just have to show up ready to talk about some interesting things with interesting people. So thank you, David, for doing all the work behind the scenes!
Notable Dates in February
February 2nd: Groundhog Day
   (Whatever he says about the weather, just agree; you wouldn’t like Punxsutawney Phil when he’s angry)
February 3rd: Michelle Shiota Talk
February 14th: Valentine’s Day
February 20th: Erin Ingvalson dissertation proposal
February 1-28: apparently nobody’s birthday happens in February, to judge from the e-mails I’ve gotten. You people are killing me. But it’s not too late to get your birthday announced next year! Or next month!

Congratulations!
Both Marlene Behrmann and Lynne Reder were named Fellows of the Association for Psychological Science. The APS awards Fellow status to members who have made outstanding contributions to the science of psychology.

The PLB Presents:
Separated at Birth?
The Rakison Edition

Is David related to ice dancing legend Ben Agosto? YOU decide!
At the last meeting, the Senate dealt with two weighty issues. (Once again, I’m speaking in Senate-code: by “dealt with,” I mean, “discussed at length, eventually resolved to discuss more at a later date, and adjourned the meeting”). The first of these issues was a change to the student bill of rights. The second of these was the creation of a Public Arts Committee as a reaction to “Walking to the Sky.”

Currently, according to University policy, students have two special rights (in addition to all the rights of citizenship): the right to pursue an education, and the right to be recognized as members of the student body. Indira Nair, Vice Provost for Education, presented the Senate notice that the University is thinking about changing these rights. No, not removing the rights of citizenship, but adding a third right. The text of said right is as follows:

The third right of students is to be evaluated based on stated course criteria and appropriate knowledge of the subjects and disciplines they study.

The Faculty Senate, after much learned discourse, suggested that everything after “criteria” be deleted, because defining appropriate knowledge etc. is tricky.

At this point, one Senator asked, “When you finish making changes, and ask us to vote to approve it, if we vote no, could this policy change still be approved?”

According to Indira Nair, the answer to this question is yes. Even if the Senate doesn’t approve of it, the change to policy could go ahead perfectly well, so (apparently) the University just asks the Faculty Senate for its approval out of a vague sense of politeness. For the details of where, exactly, the Faculty Senate’s vote comes in the decision-making process, and a precise illustration of its impact, see page 9.

Issue Number 2: A Walk in the Sky

Remember a few months ago -- I think it was about October -- when, while you were walking from Baker Hall to the University Center, someone was digging a gigantic hole in the ground at the front of Hornbostel Mall, and filling it with cement?

Well, it turns out that the reason that they were creating said hole in the ground, and filling it with cement, was to erect a four-story (112 feet, I believe) pole, protruding at an 85 degree angle, with fiberglass people walking up it. It’s a work of art called “Walking to the Sky,” created by Jonathan Borofsky (a CMU alum).

As you can see, it’s tall. At the next meeting, the Faculty Senate may (or may not) resolve that we don’t approve of its current planned location. If you have an opinion on the matter, be sure to let me know about it.
I thought about changing the names of some of these boxes to make them funnier... but I could not.

Stages that have “No” and “Yes” are required for policy approval. Everything else is window dressing.

Note that the Faculty Senate gives input. What’s that, you ask? Does the input have to be positive? Why no, no it does not.

Actual flowchart handed out by Indira Nair at Faculty Senate meeting. THIS is the kind of fun you are missing out on by not coming.
Apparently, the Steelers are playing in some sort of game, some sort of “Super Bowl.” Have you heard about this? We asked ace reporter/quarterback Sheldon Cohen to investigate, and he filed this report.

Psychology Professor Sheldon Cohen was optimistic about our chances in the Big Bowl. Cohen, who had a quarterback rating of 205 (out of a possible 110 (playing statistics were the responsibility of Methods Class Students)) during the season, said that the combination of his accurate passing and an excellent group of receivers (senior members of the Development Core Faculty) made the passing game unstoppable.

With “Fast Feeney” at halfback and “Big Nick Yeung” at fullback our running game is also quite strong. He also likes the defense, particularly Rakison at safety, “if he doesn’t trip over his hair”. The real issue was whether the cognitive group could provide the line play needed to dominate the game. McClelland and Anderson, both Pro Bowl players, both have a history of injuries and are questionable for the game. Cohen says, “if we lose, it’s their fault.” Back-up quarterback Marcel Just, who received most of his experience in the Canadian Football League, was also optimistic, although his main interest seemed to be imaging Cohen’s brain after the game.

Cohen, who was born and raised in the Motor City, says that he is looking forward to going home and hanging with the other homies. He was heard to say “You can get a great corn beef sandwich in Detroit, and the weather in February is to die for.” Cohen was on campus to film a “Disney World” commercial. “You won the superbowl, what are you going to do now?”
According to CMU’s Graduate Student Survey (conducted in 2000) communication with advisers is one of the most important determinant’s of graduate student satisfaction. With that in mind, the PLB presents the Translate-o-Tron, a device that translates between grad-speak and adviser-speak. (Erin Ingvalson contributed all of the funny parts of this story)

**What your Adviser Says**

“I’m excited we’re working together”

“That is an interesting idea”

“I think this paper is nearly ready”

“How was your weekend?”

**What your Adviser Means**

“I’m excited you’re working for me”

“But mine is more interesting”

“Only 36 more drafts to go!”

“You worked the entire time, right?”

**Works in 2 modes!**

**Also translates from Advisee to Adviser!**

**What your Advisee Says**

“I’ll get right on that”

[Silent nodding and smiling]

“Thank you for your comments”

[Vigorous note taking]

**What your Advisee Means**

“You will forget you asked me by next week”

“I have lost track of what you are trying to say”

“You contradicted your comments from last week!”

“I am going to quote you in my next draft, and see if you still agree with this position. Think of it as a kind of experiment.”

**Not sold in stores!**

**Only sold by PLB!**
I don’t know about you, but I often find myself thinking that I don’t know half of our graduate students half as well as I should like. So that’s why we’re starting a new feature here at the PLB: the Graduate Student of the Month. We’ll start mostly with first year graduate students, and see where it goes from there.

Our first GSotM is Saudamini Roy. In fact, Saudamini provided me with part of the inspiration for this column, because in the time since my Immigration session, I had managed to convince myself that her name was really “Sunaina.” I repeatedly called her Sunaina, including several times during the Developmental Core Course, when she was sitting right next to her nametag. Saudamini very politely didn’t correct me, and responded to every question I asked “Sunaina.” Later, when I apologized for the mistake, she said, “It’s entirely my fault for not correcting you earlier... and Sunaina is a perfectly valid Indian name with a very nice meaning attached to it. Much better than if you called me Sue Harmony, or Larry!” So, as you can imagine, the PLB’s first interview with the GSotM was a very polite, graceful affair on the part of a near majority of the participants.

PLB: Tell us a little about your past. Where did you grow up, where did you go to school, that sort of thing?

SR: I am from India, originally.

PLB: There’s a lot of India.

SR: I grew up in the north of India, in a small town called Allahabad. Relatively close to New Delhi. No one will know where Allahabad is located, though it’s a historical place.

PLB: And did you come here to do your undergraduate work, or was that in India?

SR: I lived in India through college, and then I came to the US, in 2001. I did my Master’s (at SUNY Buffalo, in Behavioral Neuroscience) and then worked for one and a half years at Yale. I wanted to get some experience in the area of MRI. I was interested in neuroscience and Psychology.

PLB: So you had a really strong background before you came here!

SR: I don’t know about that! In India, people don’t get much research experience as undergraduates. I didn’t know what I wanted to do with my life when I was an undergrad, but when I see people here, undergrads, I am very impressed that they know what they want to do with their lives!

PLB: What was your major in college?

SR: Biology and Chemistry.

PLB: What drew you to CMU as a graduate student? Was it mostly due to the fact that Marcel (Ed note: Saudamini’s adviser) is so fantastic?

Yes, I wanted to work with Marcel because I was interested in his research and I had read his papers. When I went to Yale, I didn’t know if I wanted to do a PhD or not. I had the option of joining a pharmaceutical company. But knowing myself that I wasn’t cut-out for that industry and that I really like doing research, I chose to go back to school for my Ph.D. Using fMRI as a tool to explore the neural underpinning of the brain really excites me, how it can help one peek into the brain.

PLB: Can you tell us a little bit about your research? Just give us a little teaser for what your first year project will be about?

SR: I’m at a preliminary stage, still.

PLB: It’s exciting to hear ideas from the start, and see how they develop!

(Continued on page 13)
SR: OK. So... the past literature has shown that high functioning autistic adults are sometimes even better than typical adults in locating targets embedded in a figure. The theory is that they don’t process the global aspects of the figure like most of us do. They focus on the local aspects, so they’re able to locate targets very soon. So that’s what I’m interested in. Right now I’m making my stimuli! My experiment will be with normals and autistic people, too. We’ll see how it turns out! People with autism may use different mechanisms. With normals, the frontal regions and the parietal regions are more connected. People with autism, when they are looking for a target, have more occipital activation, rather than frontal and parietal.

PLB: Have you had any experience doing experiments with people with autism yet?

SR: Not yet. Though I’ve met a few people with autism. When I was at Yale, I was running a normal adult, and when we finished, the next family came in. The child was autistic. His mom, after he came out of the scanner, asked him, “Was your brain smiling?” And he had a very straight look on his face and said, “Brains don’t smile.”

My cousin’s son may be borderline case of high-functioning autism. He’s very bright. He did well in the Intel Science Competition and made it to the semi-final. We’re hoping that he makes it to the final. In spite of his intellect in things related to science, there are things he doesn’t understand when he’s talking with someone in a social setting.

PLB: If you continue in academia, you may meet a lot of people like that: very bright, but don’t always understand things in a social context.

SR: (Laughter). I’m very interested in that kind of thing – how strengths in one area can compensate for weakness in another. For example, I’ve heard that many mathematicians have a gift for music and that there is some sort of correlation between the two, and I would love to know more about that.

PLB: I’m pretty much tone deaf, so I can’t help you there. I’m no David Rakison.

SR: He was very good at the party! He sang very well. I think he is gifted in that.

PLB: So tell me a little bit more about yourself. Do you have any favorite foods or drinks?

I love Thai, Chinese, Italian and Indian food. I don’t like to drink alcohol that tastes like alcohol. I like something more like strawberry colada... it doesn’t taste like alcohol.

PLB: Are you related to Anna Fisher? Because you two have the same tastes. But imagine that you’re at home. What would you find you doing? Listening to music? Watching TV?

SR: Actually, I like cooking a lot. I think it’s kind of therapeutic. I like to cook, and do my dishes, and clean my place. It’s relaxing. I like talking to my friends on the phone. That’s not very creative, is it? But it keeps me connected to my friends, all over the world. I also like to read fiction and non-fiction books. I like working out as well. That keeps me active. And it releases endorphins! What else? There was a time when I played bridge...well, a little bit. Not so much now. I was only an average player.

PLB: Well, when that gets published, I bet lots of people will ask you to play.

SR: Yes, if they want someone to beat!
Bobby Klatzky helps bench science students like Bertram Unger perform applied research through Carnegie Mellon’s interdisciplinary education research program.

The following is an excerpt from GradPsych Magazine’s January issue (vol. 4, iss. 1), entitled “Making the Most of your Model,” by Tori DeAngelis.

Depending on your perspective, today’s psychology students can choose from either a wealth or a confusion of training models, from “extreme science” programs based mostly on lab work to practice-intense ones that see fewer quantitative moments.

Below are strategies to help you find a better fit within your program:

**Strategy 3:**
**Seek special opportunities**
Scout out hidden training gems within your own program.

Students in research-intensive cognitive science and cognitive neuroscience areas of Carnegie Mellon University’s psychology department, for instance, can tap on-campus programs to apply their training in practical ways, though they’re not pushed to do so, notes psychology professor Roberta Klatzky, PhD.

One such opportunity is the school’s new Program in Interdisciplinary Educational Research (PIER), where psychology students and those in other relevant disciplines such as human-computer interactions and statistics perform cutting-edge work aimed at improving the quality of the nation’s education.

To read more, you can check out the rest of the article online: [http://gradpsych.apags.org/jan06/model.html](http://gradpsych.apags.org/jan06/model.html)
According to a paper by Christenfeld and Roy, published in *Psychological Science*, dogs really do resemble their owners. Douglas Levine has written a rebuttal to their statistical model, also in *Psychological Science*, suggesting that their results are inconclusive. This is exactly the kind of meaty scientific-statistical media-friendly issue that we love here at the PLB. So in an effort to settle this dispute once and for all, we present you with the following feature: Pets of the Psychology Department. On the next few pages, you’ll see pictures of some of our cutest friends. Then, on page XX, you can find pictures of their owners. Try to match each owner with their pet(s)!

If you’d like, you can submit your guesses to CMUPLB@hotmail.com. The person who submits the most correct guesses (and gets them in first) by next month’s edition will win!
The Owners

A: David Rakison
B: Sheldon Cohen
C: Brooke Feeney
D: Erik Thiessen
E: Ashley Episcopo
F: Kim Murray
G: Ellen Conser
H: David “Young Fidel” Plaut
J: Jeffrey Horn
K: Erin Ingvalson