The G. S. A. NEWSLETTER

a publication of the
Graduate Student Association
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 3 MAY 2003

Episode IV: Return of the Medi

Derek Jantz

Editor's Note: The GSA regrets to inform you that regular correspondent Derek Jantz disappeared into lab at some point last summer intent upon completing his thesis and is yet to re-emerge. At great risk to their own safety, GSA Special Forces were able to obtain a copy of his lab notebook. It paints a disturbing picture of Derek's progress towards the Ph.D. degree and requisite descent into madness. Some of the highlights follow.

JUNE 14: We had a safety inspection today. The lab was fined because I had a coffee mug at my bench. Apparently, the cause of concern was not the fact that I was drinking coffee in the lab but that my coffee mug was inappropriately labeled as such and was, therefore, dangerous. Curiously, safety had no problem with the vials of crack on my desk as all of their labels were in order.

JUNE 29: Holy double standard, Batman! There's a couch in the women's restroom! How is it that this little exercise in sexual inequality escaped my notice for so long? It grieves me to think of the countless minutes that I have wasted commuting the half-mile to and from my apartment each day when an obvious alternative was hidden here behind the seemingly impenetrable barrier of social correctness. Well no more! I have found that, if I position the sofa lengthwise out a stall door, the toilet rim acts as a natural form-fitting pillow. My sinuses have never been clearer. I believe that a nice set of curtains, a few book shelves, and a mini-fridge will add a touch of domesticity to my stall-away-from-home while preventing the female inhabitants of this department from using my new bedroom for its intended purpose.

JULY 13: I have stopped eating. I can no longer afford the routine mental lapses that accompany the "food coma" and my cowork-

Continued on page 4

Q & A with Susumu Tonegawa

By Dan Gorelick

Born and raised in Japan, Professor Tonegawa received his PhD from UCSD in 1968. After a postdoctoral fellowship with Renato Dulbecco, he joined the Basel Institute for Immunology in Switzerland in 1971. It was here that Tonegawa discovered that frequent recombination leads to antibody diversity—a finding awarded the Nobel Prize in 1987. Three years later Tonegawa phased out immunology research in favor of neuroscience. For over a decade Tonegawa has studied the biological basis of learning and memory.

Q: In the last 13 years, you've generated over 13 genetically altered mice. What would you say to investigators squeamish of generating and working with genetically altered mice because they are worried that either they won't find a phenotype or the mouse won't model what occurs in humans?

A: There's always that risk. You just have to make a good guess. There are cases where the mice didn't pan out like we thought.

Q: Have you ever generated an animal with no discernible phenotype?

The NMDA receptor knockout is lethal, that's only useful for studying [its role in] development. We rarely use global knockout animals. Now it's always conditional: a specific area or cell type and/or a certain time in the animal's life. This way you reduce the chances of the animal dying. The more restricted the expression, the better your chances for a specific phenotype. The difficulty with this approach is it takes time.

Q: At the time you were transitioning from immunology to neuroscience, you generated the αCaMKII -/- mouse—the first knockout mice used in neuroscience research. Was there a race?

Not at all. Nobody was doing anything like that. Arcino Silva, now a professor at UCLA, came to my lab. He had some interest in studying mechanisms underlying memory. I also had a long-held interest in neuroscience, but wasn't sure how I could make a significant contribution in the field. We were using transgenic and knockout technology for immunology research [global knockout, not the current restricted systems]. So the technology was around in the lab, but nobody [in the field] was using these animals to study cognition. Arcino read the literature, and came up with CaMKII. Kandel came close, they got a *fyn* knockout mouse [a non-receptor tyrosine kinase] from a group in Seattle and showed impaired learning. But they published that several months after we did. Initially the neuroscience community responded very well. We were lucky to choose Chuck Stevens, a well-respected neuroscientist, as a collaborator.

Q: Did you need to write a new grant before this project began, or could you use existing funds?

I could use the existing funds. Being an HHMI investigator helped a lot—I used what I had. A year or two after our original CaMKII paper,

Continued on page 3

Upcoming GSA Meeting June 17

1830 Bldg, 2-108
Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 3PM

Upcoming Events

Medical Biological Illustration Graduate Exhibition Opening
May 16, 4-8PM
Houck Lobby Courtyard

❄❄❄

All Campus Party
May 19, 8PM–1 AM
Latin Palace

❄❄❄

Career Discussion Panel
3rd week of June

To Clone or Not To Clone?

Dan Cohen

It is one of the great ironies in the debate over human cloning that the scientific community has been caricatured as a bunch of zealots bent on playing G-d. Take for example the comments of J.C. Watts, during the debate over the Weldon bill (which bans all forms of human cloning), "This House should not be giving the green light to mad scientists to tinker with the gift of life. It is science gone crazy." And while charges of moral indignation launched from the Enron-tainted halls of Congress may sound hollow, the ethical standing of academic science is easily impeached in the public eye. For in as much as researchers have championed the public good of stem cells and SCNT (somatic cell nuclear transfer) based therapies, the scientific community has been ineffectual in articulating an ethical framework within which Americans may accept these technologies. As Philip O'Herron pointed out in his article in the previous GSN edition, both the semantic sleight-of-hand distinguishing therapeutic and reproductive cloning, and the ends-justify-the-means arguments are tenuous positions, and fatally imbued with a paternalistic, scientists-know-best, attitude.

However, the contention that human cloning is an indefensible act of experimentation on our own species, which devalues human life, represents an extremely skewed perspective that is utterly inconsistent with accepted norms of biomedical ethics. Dispensing with the controversies surrounding reproductive cloning (the nature of individuality, the soul, and the hazards of IVF), the debate over SCNT or "therapeutic" cloning amounts to nothing more than a specialized case of tissue transplantation. Namely, is it ethical to use vital tissue from one individual to save another? The answer, without a doubt, is YES. One need only think of the national organ donor network as proof of the widely held acceptance of this view. And this system can similarly inform us of the relevant medical ethics by two provisions required of organ donors: first, that the donor gives consent, and secondly, that such consent only applies to vital organs once a threshold of viability has been passed. How, then, do these guidelines pertain to a blastocyst generated by SCNT?

Consent is clearly problematic, but not insoluble, as the judicial system has established rulings on custody and fate of fertilized embryos from IVF. Although embryos produced by IVF and SCNT differ in the mechanism of their inception, by almost any definition of human life, they are functional equivalents. Therefore we can conclude the following about SCNT-derived blastocysts: 1)it is legal for biological parents to grant consent for their use in research and 2)destruction of the embryo is permissible without consent following a set period of time (e.g. five years of storage). The legal viewpoint is unequivocal—a zygote, whether the product of fertilization or cloning, is not entitled to special legal rights or standing separate from its creators; therefore, the criterion of consent for use of SCNT-derived embryonic cells for stem cell therapies can be readily satisfied by the individuals providing the oocyte and somatic cell.

The second ethical criterion of tissue transplantation, namely the threshold of viability, which prohibits harvesting an essential organ prior to a fatal insult to the donor, presents a much thornier issue (which cloning opponents readily seize upon) when applied to ex vivo embryos. It is an irrefutable fact that removal of the inner cell mass of a blastocyst to derive ES cells requires dissociation of the embryo. Such dissection kills the developing embryo, thus apparently violating the threshold of viability rule protecting the sanctity of life of the tissue donor. On this point the absolutists conclude the debate with the notion that no moral doctrine allows us to distinguish between the value of human life at different stages of development, and therefore destruction of an embryo for therapeutic cloning cannot be justified. While this argument embodies the "moral clarity" of conservative ideologues, a bit of reflection on human behavior and biology reveals the substantial fallacies within.

Take the example of conjoined twins- one fully developed and the other lacking essential organs, such as normal heart or lungs. The moral dilemma--if left to a natural course, both twins will die imminently; however, if the abnormal, inviable twin is surgically removed, the healthier twin survives, and the unhealthy one immediate forfeits her life. The solution endorsed by medical ethics? Sacrifice the unhealthy twin. The rationale? The unhealthy twin represents only a potential life, which if we place on equal standing with the normal twin, would force us to adopt the unacceptable outcome of two deaths. The critics countercharge that such a scenario cannot be compared to ethical pitfalls of human cloning, as cloning entails deliberate creation with the intent of destruction, whereas the aforementioned example the fatality can be assigned to an ill turn of fate. But here, too, human behavior belies the argument, as many a parent with a critically ill child will conceive a newborn in the hopes (or certainty, with appropriate genetic screening) that an immunologically compatible organ donor will be available to save the first child's life.

Our current ethical standards clearly permit the creation of new life for the purpose of organ transplantation and the sacrifice of potential life for the sake of preserving an existing, viable individual. The moral evaluation of human cloning is therefore contingent on the assessment of the value of the potential life in the ex vivo SCNT-derived embryo. And scare tactics from foes of human cloning aside, the potential for a cloned human blastocyst developing into a full-term fetus in an laboratory incubator is non-existent. So if we return to the hypothetical conjoined twins scenario, and now conceptualize a blastocyst derived from SCNT coupled to its twin (and parent), a female afflicted with early-onset Alzheimer's disease, we must ask ourselves, what is the ethical barrier constraining us from sacrificing the inviable twin?

Perhaps, for some, it is the idea that if life begins at fertilization, or division of a diploid oocyte, then the destruction of embryos denigrates the value of life for all humanity. I strongly believe that greatest hope of (and for) the scientific community is to construct a moral and legal system which affirms the value of human life while embracing the potential for new biological or medical discovery. At some critical juncture, the aforementioned definition of human life will critically fail. As recently as this month, breakthroughs in research have demonstrated the ability to generate oocytes from ES cells, which divide parthenogenically. As such, the ES cell is just a pre-oocyte, capable of producing a human being. And when we discover how to de-differentiate fibroblasts into stem cells, we can claim that these individual cells reflect the entirety of human potential, and insist on a moratorium on all human tissue culture experimentation. This is a recipe for moral and medical paralysis. Alternatively, we can place the philosophy back in Ph.D. and present a definition of humanity, in terms of physical development and consciousness, that preserves the moral distinctions between organism and tissue and honors our commitment to healing those afflicted by the vagaries of degenerative disease.

More information on the debate over human cloning can be found at the following URLs:

www.aaas.org/spp/cstc/issues/cloning.htm
www.aamc.org/advocacy/research/cloning/start.htm
www.stanford.edu/~eclipse9/sts129/cloning/home.html

Tonegawa Interview continued from page 1

my renewal came up. I was part of the immunology section, and initially they didn't like that I changed fields. They quickly forgot that when we started publishing good papers.

Q: One of your early mentors, Prof Itaru Watanabe, advised you to get your PhD in the US. After winning the Nobel Prize, you wrote to colleagues in Japan telling them to learn English. Do you still think it is necessary to learn English to succeed in science?
Yes. Absolutely yes. English is the universal language, especially in science.

Q: Would you council an aspiring Japanese scientist to leave Japan for the US or another Western nation for all or part of their education?
For grad school or a post-doc? Absolutely. Yes. It's important to interact with scientists from different sources. In the US system, you move around at all levels. At MIT, we don't usually accept grad students who did their undergrad at MIT. Most grad students at MIT do postdocs somewhere else. It's totally opposite in Japan. If you are a grad student at a university, it is considered an honor to remain, become faculty, and retire from there. I think this is hurting creative science in Japan.

Q: Do you ever think about returning to live in Japan?
It wouldn't be very easy to return to Japan now, to adapt to their system. I can't imagine being in a department where 98% of the people are of the same background. Compared to the US the Japanese system is different, not as open, not as international. They have a certain way of doing things with which I am not familiar.

Q: Which active scientist do you most admire?
Francois Jacob. As an undergrad I majored in chemistry. I had no intention of being a scientist. I was going to be an engineer, maybe a chemical engineer, in industry. When I started my senior year I thought engineering was too traditional, too established. I wanted something less explored. I never had a biology class. Somebody I knew, an older student, said that there's something called molecular biology coming up in the US and Europe. He suggested that I read some papers by Jacob and Monod. I read those and was very impressed, and I decided to pursue molecular biology. When I met Jacob, years later, I told him this story and he was obviously pleased.

Q: What is your favorite word?
Seriously? Creative.

Q: How about not seriously?
Red Sox. Garciaparra.

Q: What is your least favorite word?
Namaiki. It's a Japanese word.

Q: What turns you on creatively, emotionally, spiritually, or scientifically?
Anybody who does something original impresses me a lot. Somebody who is different from the rest. I really like risk takers. Life is too short not to take risks.

Q: What profession, other than scientific research, would you like to attempt?
In science, it's a great life if you're reasonably successful, but it's hard. The period of post-doc, then assistant professor is tough. On the other hand, I like science. I would try it again. I like architecture, and one of my good friends is the Japanese architect Tadao Ando. I sometimes think I would have a great time if I became his assistant.

What are the values that inform your research?

Nurjana Bachman

How could or how does science serve abstract values? How do scientists create research agendas that link to values? How do we discuss these values?

What role does the societal contract play in science and technology? What principles should direct the governance of science and technology?

If you have ever thought about these questions or your research in the context of these questions, you are not alone. Last year I had the opportunity to attend a very interesting meeting called "Living with the Genie: Governing the Scientific and Technological Transformation of Society in the 21st Century." Organized by the Center for Science, Policy and Outcomes (CSPO, www.cspo.org), the meeting brought together a wide variety of people from fields that normally do not interact with one another. Video footage of the entire meeting can be found at www.livingwiththegenie.org. Philosophers, scientists, artists, advocates, venture capitalists and public policy makers gathered to explore the abilities of societies to handle the consequences of rapid developments in science and technology, and methods for defining research goals in the future to maximize benefit for all. The discussions were grounded in sound philosophical framework, and the invited participants were stellar representatives from their respective fields, resulting in very informed and stimulating conversations.

The scientists who participated not only perform exemplary science, but also contribute to the development of socially responsible research goals. Dr. Carol Greider was on a panel; her lab here at Hopkins studies telomerase and she also served on the National Bioethics Advisory Commission during the 1990's. Dr. Eva Harris, from the University of California, Berkeley, not only directs a lab doing biomedical research on dengue virus pathogenesis, but also frequently travels to developing countries, helping scientists there build research capacity. Dr. Susan Greenfield is a neuroscientist and also director of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, whose mission includes informing citizens about scientific developments and including them in debates about research agendas. These are only a few examples of scientists at the meeting who not only have diverse interests, but have also chosen to pursue them professionally.

If you've lost your inspiration or your work seems useless and meaningless these days, thinking and talking about the societal role of science, scientists, and your own work can help nourish the energy needed to continue the endless journey into the unknown. The role of the scientist in society is becoming more important as the political and social landscape changes around us. We must be aware of the values that inform our work so that we may defend against its being misused and applied towards ends with which we disagree.

If you are interested in these issues and would like to discuss them further with your colleagues, please email me at nbachman@jhmi.edu.

Episode IV continued from page 1

ers are beginning to notice the regular disappearance of their lunches. Fortunately, my recent experience with the East Campus Salmonella Research Facility (*GSA Newslet., 2002*) cured me of my instinctual drive to seek out food. I have many times wondered how I continue to function in the absence of dietary sustenance and can only conclude that a sufficiently high concentration of methanogens in the gut, coupled with a tendency to sleep in the women's bathroom, is sufficient to maintain basal metabolic function. I shall publish my diet under the heading "The Stall." Atkins is an overeating pansy. Carbon-carbon bonds are the enemy!

JULY 26: Safety paid us another visit today. We were again fined for my coffee mug which, while it was clearly labeled "COFFEE MUG," failed to list the individual constituents of coffee and was, therefore, dangerous. Curiously, safety paid no mind to the loaded handgun on my bench, though all identifiable markings had long since been filed off. They informed me that any idiot could see that it was, in fact, a loaded handgun and clearly very dangerous, which made it extremely safe. I'll not stew on the matter, however, as today is Friday and I leave this evening for my vacation to Sarah's Bench. Bon Voyage!

JULY 28: Greetings from sunny Sarah's Bench. It's indescribably beautiful here. While the culture and language here do not appear to be all that different from my own bench, the indigenous occupants are clearly much more prone to tidiness and organization and big, loopy letters with hearts over the "i"s. I spent much of the morning sifting through the wealth of buffers and colorful office supplies available on the shelves and within the easily-broken-in-to drawers of this exotic vacation paradise. In the end, I decided to simply acquire them all and deal with customs on Monday.

AUG 19: Safety came by again. My coffee mug, clearly labeled and listing all components, was found not at my bench but in the hallway outside the lab. As such, it constitutes a "Hazardous Obstruction of an Essential Evacuation Route" and is, therefore, dangerous. Safety changes their rules more often than I change my underwear. This is as interesting a comment on my personal hygiene as it is on the erratic behavior of Safety. Curiously, they were not concerned with the prairie rattlesnake that has taken up residence at my bench. They believe that the animal's characteristic tendency to identify itself as "dangerous" moments before striking renders it completely safe.

AUG 30: The rattlesnake has learned to operate the handgun. This is extremely unusual behavior for this type of reptile given their notoriously poor eyesight and lack of limbs. Unfortunately, the beast's newly-honed skill was discovered moments too late and my labmate Greg has fallen prey to our reptilian marksman. Safety was quick to point out that Greg was wearing MY labcoat at the time and, as such, was inappropriately labeled and dangerous. They feel that the snake was merely acting out of self-defense and should not be held accountable for Greg's unsafe choice of apparel. Nonetheless, the events of this morning have prompted Safety to implement a Hopkins-wide ban on safety attire. I shall miss Greg's sense of humor and vast supply of well-made buffers. On a positive note, he had a complete set of shiny new Gilson pipettors and I scored his P-20.

SEPT 9: I've made the surprising discovery that alienating one's coworkers and severing all contact with the outside world can lead to an overwhelming sense of loneliness. Thank goodness I have Gilson here with me. I fear that, without his quick wit and ceaseless chatter, I might go completely out of my minds.

SEPT 32: The Dean's office just figured out that I've been selling patient information to insurance companies to pay for internet porn. They've decided to make everybody at the med school take some kind of online patient privacy training. Good thing nobody knows I had anything to do with it. This is just between you and me, notebook.

NOV 1: I walked in this morning to find the guy from University Pipette Services molesting Gilson. I left his body in a locker at the Cooley Center. I don't think anybody will mind.

DEC 12: My coworkers are beginning to grate on my nerves. Their incessant nagging to clean my bench and put pants on is creating an insufferably hostile work environment. It's like 10 troublesome voices in my head drowning out the other 10 voices that I'm trying to listen to. I fear that this relationship can only end in tears.

JAN 8: THE LAST STRAW! While on vacation at Jon's Bench, I received a telegram from Gilson informing me that select members of my lab were searching my shelves for items of "theirs" that I rightfully acquired under international salvage laws. They are now insisting that I deliver to them all of my chemical and biological reagents and turn over all instruments of mass determination. In response, I have mobilized the 2nd desk drawer infantry and called up reserves from the biophysics supply closet. Gilson is drafting a declaration of war.

JAN 10: WE HAVE TAKEN THE GEL ROOM! Early this morning, a small force composed of myself, the Rainin twins, and Admiral Eppendorf met up with paratroopers from Gilson's Airborne division to take and secure the lab's Center for Electrophoretic Mobility. Resistance was minimal and we have taken 4 hostages: 1 Benchmate, 2 Finnpipettes, and 1 LabCo (the fools have resorted to recruiting mercenaries from less financially secure labs). Thus begins the "shock and awe" phase of our campaign. This first strike should demoralize the enemy while at the same time crippling their ability to purify and characterize both DNA and proteins. I anticipate a swift victory.

JAN 14: The Allies are yet to mount a counter-offensive. Acting as Supreme Allied Commander is Dr. Jon Lorsch, Assistant Professor of Biophysics and this year's Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. I find his appointment something of a shock as I'm rather certain that I imprisoned Jon for life in a previous edition of the GSA Newsletter. Damn the failings of the American legal system! While most of the departments in the School of Medicine seem to favor a swift retaliation, Cell Biology and Pharmacology are holding out for a diplomatic solution. The fools squabble over bruised egos and provisional governments while, with each passing day, I strengthen my stranglehold on their supply of TBE.

JAN 17: We appear to have once again underestimated Dr. Jon Lorsch. His forces attacked early this morning from an undefended side door. My men fought bravely, but were already spread too thin to fight a two front war. I was forced to surrender half a dozen men and two boxes of tips. Familiar as I am with Jon's intelligence gathering capabilities, I can only assume that there is a mole within my organization. Only one man, aside from myself, knew of the existence of that side door...

JAN 19: This morning, Gilson was convicted of high treason by a 4 member militiary tribunal. He was sentenced to death and hung. His fate weighs heavily upon my heart as I have lost both a trusted friend and my ability to dispense volumes of less than 20 microliters. All subsequent experiments will have to be scaled up. As for my own

Congratulations 2003 Graduates!

Doctor of Philosophy

Jila Bakker
Nia Danielle Banks
Dennis Louis Barbour
Eric Christopher Bolton
Jonathan Robert Brody
Dennis Robert Chesire
Chih-Ling Chou
Wen-Chien Chou
Lisa M. Cimakasky
Emily Rana Corse
Adrian Huw Davies
David Andrew Elliott
Anne Marissa Ercolini
Michael Gustaf Erickson
Christine Evelyn Foster
Gregory Joseph Gatto, Jr.
Erika Rae Geisbrecht
Nicholas William Goffeney
Adam Seth Haberman
Jennifer Ann Hackett
Courtney Christine Harper
Kate Hsu
Lih-Yun Hsu
Piper Reid Hunt
Cynthia Anne James
Derek Neil Jantz
Monika Hermankova Jung
Kellie Bridgett Kelm
Aurora Esquela Kerscher
Anita Krithivas
Sanjay Kumar
Seung-Jae Lee
Xiaoling Li
Wei Lu
Yong Ma
Stacy Marie Mazzalupo
Deborah Greene Nguyen
Kakoli Niyogi
Lisa Erin Olson
Siew Loon Ooi
Karen Ann Pinco
Maryam Rettmann
Laura Kim Richman
Debra Lynn Silver
Maurice Anthony Smith
Mi-Ryoung Song
Ji Sun
Carlo Giovanni Traverso
Yien Che Tsai
Lisa Christine Turtzo
Qingliang Wang
Cheryl Dunbar Warren
Crystal Chanel Watkins
Sarah Jo Wheelan
Fred Yong-Tao Wu
Christopher Joseph Yeung
Joseph P. Yuan
Karen I. Zeller
Xiaobei Zeng
Gang Zhou

Master of Arts

Oscar Renato Baeza
Anne Marie Boustani
Bradford R. Cranston
Shariff Sa'id Dunlap
Katherine Irene Miller
Tracy R. Murray-Stewart
Cristina Perez de la Cruz
Alice Meredith Phillips
Christian Dana Rose
Emily Green Shaw
Tiffany Ann Slaybaugh

trial, my thesis committee was entirely unimpressed by all of my hard work over the last six months. I was told that I could not possibly accumulate a sufficient body of work to warrant graduation in less than 8 additional years. My previous 4+ years of research have apparently done so much damage to the world of science as a whole that it will take considerable time and effort to simply get things back to where they were when I started. Safety took the news even harder than I did.

MAR 13: Where my thesis committee has repeatedly failed, FOX network executives have finally prevailed. Tonight is the finals round on *Graduated By America*, a fresh pimple on the face of television in which the American public is given the authority to override competent oversight committees nationwide and vote a single graduate student into doctoral bliss. Owing to my quick wit and lack of disfiguring self-mutilations, I have progressed swiftly from episode to episode to arrive here on the verge of academic super-stardom. My sole remaining competitor is Chad, a swarthy MD/Ph.D. student (a Medi Lite) with a 3-page CV and a dimple in his chin. He has reached this point in the competition by being unnaturally cordial to all of the other contestants. Apparently, your average FOX viewer doesn't know a Medi kind trick when they see one. Tonight, we two will go head to head in a sort of "lab olympics" broadcast live from my lab. To the victor will go a freshly penned doctoral thesis entitled "Spectral Characterization of the Fermentation By-Products of *Lactococcus lactis*" in which the author (a Joe Millionaire rejectee) grapples with age-long conundrum of why cheddar cheese is yellow.

MAR 14: What an intense evening! Dimpled Chad and I split events in the Labathalon with him taking Biohazard Box Assembly, Data Massaging, and PI Avoidance. I was victorious in the Pipetting for Distance, Food Scav-

Continued on page 6

Episode IV **continued from page 5**

enging, and Evening Gown competitions. The "tire pull" event, so long my nemesis, resulted in a tie with neither of us producing a detectable change in the positions of our vulcanized foes. I suspect that this last event was included primarily for comic relief at the expense of hard-working scientists everywhere. When it came down to the final nationwide vote, results were evenly split. Voter turnout was low as the lack of physically attractive contestants on the program had reduced viewership to our immediate families. Chad's brother in Florida had been unable to comprehend the online ballot, which would have tipped the scales in my favor had my mom not voted for Chad. She has, at long last, bitter-sweet vengeance for 18 years of finding the toilet seat up. The evening would have ended in disappointment for contestants and viewers alike but for an event which will live on as a clearly-labeled beaker of validation for university Safety departments everywhere. Just as it was becoming apparent that FOX would once again fail to meet even the lowest standards for TV mediocrity, dimpled Chad was viciously attacked by my favorite Clontech Coffee Mug. The offending drinkware was eventually subdued and put down by an officer of Safety whose smug look said "we told you so," as though this was precisely the type of incident that they were trying to prevent. Chad will have to spend the remainder of the week in intensive care undergoing a battery of tests because, due to improper labeling, nobody in the lab knows if that mug has had its shots. FOX has already made arrangements to have an intern antagonize the remaining dishes and glassware at my bench to try and induce similarly aggressive behavior for a future reality program. As for me, with only one contestant left standing, America had no choice but to send into the world a brand new Ph.D. with a (slightly) overactive imagination. I leave here Derek Jantz, Ph.D., living, breathing proof that the system doesn't work.

MAY 12: TO DO LIST: 1) Finish newsletter story 2) Start postdoc 3) Learn to say "Go Blue Devils" with a straight face 4) Thank everybody for reading 5) Say goodbye.

-Derek

For submission information contact an editor:

Emily Overholser
eoverhol@jhmi.edu
Soo Hee Lee
shlee@jhmi.edu
Jaime Cheah
jcheah@jhmi.edu
Karen Pinco
kpinco@jhmi.edu
Amanda Yarberry
ayarberry@medart.jhu.edu

http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/gsa/news.html