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FREE, AS IN BEER

Talking About Religion

A Non-Christian's Reflection on Christian Articles

Jared Kirschner
Alumnus Contributor

As all Olin community members are invited to submit articles for publication in *Frankly Speaking*, the content of its articles tends to reflect the passions of the Olin community. Thus, it should be no surprise that *Frankly Speaking* has published several articles reflecting the religious and spiritual beliefs of our Christian community (e.g., *Things Not-So-Well Known*, Article 2, Sarah Strohkorb, October 2013; *Foundations of World View*, Jeff Hart, April 2013). Herein is a reflection on my mixed reactions to such articles as a non-Christian member of our community.

Jeff's article expresses a deep sense of love for the world as it exists now, and as it could be if we accept forgiveness for our past mistakes, our imperfections, and try our best to follow in the footsteps of a moral standard incarnate. Sarah's article shares some of the thoughts of her greatest teacher, inviting others to ponder such thoughts themselves, seeking

answers to their own questions. I thank Jeff and Sarah for sharing something of such great personal importance. It would be hypocritical of me to do otherwise—I have submitted such an article to *Frankly Speaking* in the past (*Invest Yourself in the Earth*, Jared Kirschner, February 2013). The author's intent behind each of these messages is certainly positive, but this intent is not always perceived by non-Christian members of the audience.

When a difference of thought arises on topics which are not matters of opinion, in order for what I think to be wholly correct, what the other person thinks cannot be wholly correct. (And I doubt that many people would label their religious and spiritual beliefs as "matters of opinion".) For most topics, this isn't an issue—I have no deep, personal attachment to my understanding of statistics (sorry, Allen!) or the physics of various classes of transistors (sorry, Brad!). But for some of us, our core identity is inseparable from our beliefs regarding religion and spirituality. These beliefs

shape so many aspects of our lives—a point well-articulated in Jeff's *Foundations of World View* articles. Thus, we have a significant stake in maintaining the correctness of our own beliefs.

There are times when I actively engage in opening my own beliefs to questioning and evaluation, such as when I consult sacred texts, listen to sermons, or willingly discuss religious or spiritual concepts with others. But, in the event of unsolicited encounters with a broadcast of differing religious and spiritual beliefs, there are two options: (1) both sides acknowledge that both beliefs can be wholly "correct", or (2) at least one side feels, or is perceived by the other side to feel, that in order for their own beliefs to be wholly "correct", the other's beliefs cannot be wholly "correct." My personal experiences as a non-Christian in a predominantly Christian society have biased me to default to option #2—if the broadcaster is casting his or her own beliefs as "correct," the implication is that mine

continued on next page

must be “incorrect.” With option #2, the broadcast message can be perceived as a threat—a declaration of dissent against the foundations of my identity in the guise of persuasion—even if the encounter is a well-intentioned article in a school newspaper. Unfortunately, anger is often the first line of defense.

As Sarah’s article posits, it is quite possible that I would derive personal value from a thorough examination of Jesus’ teachings. However, there are countless other sources of religious and spiritual thought for which I can make identical claims, and which can—perhaps more applicably—be labeled as “not-so-well-known” within our community. I question whether the author would be receptive to such a claim regarding a non-Christian source. While I do appreciate some of the concepts conveyed by Matthew 5:43-48 as transcribed in the article, I do not appreciate the contained question “Do not even pagans do that?”, which ascribes a moral inferiority to pagans and suggests that such a claim from a “pagan” source would not be welcome. While the article can

be interpreted as a neutral mention that a study of Jesus’ teachings might benefit my own religious and spiritual learning, it can also be interpreted as a claim that Jesus’ teachings are superior to my current sources of choice.

Jeff’s article explicitly frames the discussion as a safe space in which differences in beliefs can be mutually-respected—expressing interest in the world views of readers while offering his own. Unfortunately, this framing faces limitations due to its medium of communication. Despite an explicit call for responses in future Frankly Speaking publications, none were given. I personally did not feel comfortable expressing my own worldview in a public, written response, nor in a private audience with Jeff because I had no established relationship with him at the time. Through no fault of the author, the proposed reciprocal exchange of ideas felt, in reality, more like participating in a debate without having a chance to speak. The author claims rational, scientific, historical, and philosophical, and pragmatic evidence in support of the Christian

worldview—can we both make such claims in support of our differing worldviews without devolving into a zero-sum game? I certainly found it difficult to do so in the context of a newspaper article, despite Jeff’s neutral, welcoming tone.

My conclusion from the introspective process of writing this article is that general-purpose newspaper articles are not well suited to fostering a constructive exchange of religious and spiritual ideas. Even with great care exercised by the author, those with differing beliefs may approach the author’s broadcast as an opening move in a zero-sum game which the audience is coerced into playing. To my Christian kin, please understand why non-Christians might react negatively towards your message, even if you have the best of intentions. To my non-Christian kin, please understand that not every offering of a Christian perspective is intended as an attack on your differing perspective. I hope that, as a community, we can understand and empathize with those who have differences from us, religious or otherwise.

Criticism of Project Learning

Elizabeth Mahon
Contributor

Olin’s goal is “to be an important and constant contributor to the advancement of engineering education in America and throughout the world,” which requires

constant innovation and a willingness to spread said innovation. One of the key beliefs many people seem to hold about the advancement of engineering education is that project-based learning is essential, innovative, and even superior to traditional

learning. However, I must disagree. In the course of my time here, I have found that all of my favorite classes, the ones I remember the most from, were traditional classes.

As you probably know, there are many different

types of learning styles. Not just how the information is best received, auditory, visual, kinesthetic, but how it is mentally organized and which concepts are mentally emphasized. One model has two components – abstract versus concrete, which means either focused on concepts or facts, sequential or random, which means either learning linearly or in chunks. I am abstract sequential – I focus on concepts, and like my learning to be orderly. This combination means that traditional learning is much more effective for me than project-based learning as project-based learning inherently focuses less on concepts and is not as linear. I'm certainly not the only one who learns in this fashion, making universal project-based learning an imperfect proposition.

Project-based learning is definitely good for teaching some things – flexibility, planning, teamwork, and processes among them. But there are some things that I believe are difficult, even impossible, to learn from a project-based class. Any kind of equation or constant will be difficult to learn that way – while experimentation could be used to derive it, experiments are prone to error. In my own experience, I've had results that are less than half of the expected value, and calculated the value of gravity to be 9 m/s. Better experimental setups or more time allowed for multiple trials would reduce the error, to be sure, but it's less efficient from both a time and

money perspective. Furthermore, some equations and values just need to be memorized, best done through repetition – not something project-based learning lends itself to.

"Some equations and values just need to be memorized."

One argument that I often hear in support of project-based learning is that it is more engaging for the students. In my experience, that's not necessarily true. While projects may give some people the opportunity to engage with topics they are interested in, that's not true for everyone. Part of the engagement of students for projects may be a desire to not let teammates down.

"Making a project-based class may not be innovative if it has already been tried."

Something I have learned from taking classes these past two and a half years is that it's much easier for project-based classes to crash and burn than more traditional classes. A class with a couple lectures and a homework set each week does not necessarily need to be planned more than a week in advance. Yes, doing that

can make the connections more apparent, which helps in learning. But the lectures and homework will still be effective. However, trying to do the same with projects tends to not go very well. For a long-term project, any supplemental lectures or readings need to be timed appropriately, else they'll not have the intended effect. Similarly, if the project depends on knowing something, that piece of knowledge can't be one of the last ones taught. The best projects tend to have regular, well-defined deliverables, which requires quite a bit of planning ahead.

In the end, Olin's goal is to stimulate innovation in engineering education, with the goal of producing effective engineering education, not just here, but everywhere. Making a project-based class may not be innovative if it has already been tried – as it has been for the past ten years – and in some cases, project-based learning may not be the most effective approach. Furthermore, changing engineering education outside of Olin will require an appreciation for how the circumstances in other places differ. Olin students know coming in that they will have many project-based classes, and applicants self-select based on that. This makes Olin's student body different than that of more typical universities. Also, Olin's curriculum is limited to only a few types of engineering. It's worth asking whether what we do here can be applied to other disciplines.



GREEN SPACE*

GrOW's Current Initiatives

Green Space is for anyone who wants to contribute to or learn about green initiatives at Olin and the world.

Solar Updates

GrOW has been working with SunBug Solar, Boston Solar Company, and Borrego Solar to come up with a few options for a solar carport system in parking lot A. Boston Solar already has a rough proposal which can be viewed in the public GrOW folder under the name "Olin Proposal 1/10/14." Boston Solar's current design would only provide about 9% of Olin's annual electrical consumption, but that's not a very trivial number when you consider the \$1,689,797 total savings and 10,019,154 lbs reduced greenhouse gas emissions over 20 years. We've been talking to them lately about improving the design and increasing the system output, so more updates on that next month! SunBug and Borrego aren't as far in the process of making proposals. Both companies are still exchanging info with us, and are probably still a bit skeptical

of GrOW's sincerity in making the project happen. But let it be known that we are very sincere, and we intend for this to happen.

"President Miller told me that for anything like a solar installation to pass, we need student support."

It recently dawned on me that sustainability really isn't a priority here at Olin, and President Miller told me that for anything like a solar installation to pass, we need student support. I don't know if you've noticed, but the weather throughout the US (and other parts of the world too) has been pretty scary lately. Wet getting wetter, dry getting drier, and the polar vortex leaking into southern states has, sadly, proven a lot of environmentalist doom-sayers correct. California, one of the most important agricultural centers of the US, recently declared a state of emergency during the most severe drought in the states recorded history.

Rainfall in the Southeast in 2013 was the second wettest year recorded so far. Outside the US, Australia is among the scariest; The dry, hot weather is providing a perfect climate for massive forest fires, which are apparently so bad they create clouds that somehow produce lightning that starts even more fires (google it!). Climate change is happening, buddy, and as a student of Olin, I hope you'd want to help out in whatever ways you can. So watch out for more updates on how you can support the Solar at Olin initiative!

Swap Shop

Have stuff you don't want? Want to get stuff you do want? GrOW is going to be hosting a Swap Shop, where you can trade your unwanted stuff for stuff that you want! By sharing what we already have, we don't need to buy more things, and everybody ends up with more space and more money! Keep an eye on your email for more details soon!

Ruby Spring, David Pudlo
Contributors

A Parody of Risky Business

Chris Joyce, Michael Resnick
Contributors

If you haven't seen the latest email from Nick Tatar, you may not be aware of the new precaution that administration at Olin has decided to take. They hope to both protect Olin from the onslaught of lawsuits that come from its students each semester and to educate students about the dangers of activities usually assumed to be harmless, such as yoga and eating breakfast.

"I agree to assume and accept full responsibility for the inherent risks with the activities in which I choose to participate."

"I assume and accept full responsibility for myself for bodily injury, death or loss of personal property and expenses as a result of those inherent risks and dangers."

As we all know, with each passing year, the endowment struggles to stay afloat due to Oliners' constant barrage of successful lawsuits about death and dismemberment resulting from participation in risky activities at Olin, such as ice hockey and fencing.

While Olin's mortality rate from such activities has remained relatively constant, the resulting lawsuits appear to only be increasing in frequency and amplitude. This past semester alone, Olin took a \$3 million hit from a coalition of parents in a class action lawsuit regarding paintball accidents. The parents also demanded that

a new form called the Risky Business Form (henceforth RBF) be created. The parents' wish was fulfilled, and the college saw the RBF as an opportunity to reduce their liability.

"I understand that Olin does not want to frighten me or reduce my enthusiasm for these activities, but believes it is important for me to be informed of the nature or risk in the activities that are available to me at Olin College."

We were heartened to read that "participation in these activities is purely voluntary, no one is forcing [students] to participate..." Quite frankly, I am relieved that no one is being forced to partake in risky activities such as using power tools at an engineering college. After all, the idea that one who designs things needs to understand how to build them is simply preposterous.

Although it is not necessary to fill out a form for activities that are not "high risk," knowing the dangers of other activities you perform may some day help save a limb or even a life.

Yoga, a "medium-risk" activity, has a wide range of potential harms, from contortion into a position of no return to anxiety over your inability to touch your toes.

Reheating food is another "medium-risk" activity. The conventional microwave oven is a powerful machine that commands -- nay, demands -- a watchful eye and

respect. Putting metal in it has the potential for energy release of 3 kg dynamite per 20 g of metal. Heating food for too long may cause burning of the tongue, gums, and throat, which at best would be an annoyance, and at worst, could cause swelling in the esophagus and choking to death. Even eating breakfast, a "low-risk" activity, poses the danger of choking, and, if performed in excess, high blood pressure.

One essential question we must also ask ourselves is: How does risk combine? If I were to reheat my breakfast while doing yoga, is that a high-risk activity? I am taking on the risk of a microwave, the risk of yoga, with an egg-and-cheese bagel thrown in the mix, and quite frankly that terrifies me. As college students, we should not be encouraged to use good judgment, exercise common sense, or transition into the ability to look after ourselves. We should instead have highly regimented and formulaic lists of what we can and cannot do.

Given this, we propose that all students be confined to their dorm rooms for 23 hours a day, be fed lukewarm oatmeal twice a day, and let out for one hour of individual, supervised exercise on a stationary bike. This still obviously contains risks, but we believe it is a sensible compromise that will protect safety without encroaching on the educational mission of the college.

Popping Olin's [Social] Bubbles

Graham Hooton
Contributor

A lot has changed since I first arrived at Olin in the fall of 2009. There are so many things to celebrate and remember fondly. I actually couldn't even begin to list them, because I'd run out of pages before I ran out of memories and that's not the point I want to make with this article (though it would be nice). No, I want to say this: I have just one more semester at Olin, and I want to use it to help make this place better for us all.

Before I say anything further, I'd like to recognize the many outstanding examples of closeness, camaraderie, and understanding between students, faculty, and staff. For instance, last week, I played SpaceTeam with my SCOPE advisor, there are a staggering number of co-curriculars this semester, Build Day is a cool thing that happens in May... and I'm only scratching the surface.

But, more generally, the social spheres of students, faculty, and staff no longer intersect as much as they used to. Through no particular fault of our own (I could list a half dozen theories as to why), we have developed routines that are distinctly independent from one another. We stay in our own buildings, plan our own events, and sit at our own tables. While we work well together on academic and administrative levels, we've grown un-

comfortable in each other's spaces. It's uncommon for students to socialize in offices and very rare to see faculty or staff in the dorms. We're hesitant to reach out to one another, as well. I find this strange; not too long ago, we were comfortable dressing in drag around each other, sharing the stage at Express-O, relieving stress with bouncy castles, having Big Conversations, and much more besides.

"The social spheres of students, faculty, and staff no longer intersect as much as they used to."

Granted, we're all busy people, but I know there's a comfortable middle ground that we can all appreciate. Imagine a quiet knock on the door followed by a short but earnest conversation towards the end of the work day. Imagine sitting down with two or three new friends over lunch to chat, to construct something from a kit, to learn or share a simple skill, or to do some arts and crafts. Imagine heading out as a group - students, staff, and faculty all together - to play lawn games, to take over the Babson ice rink for an hour, or to sing karaoke at a nearby establishment.

I know that everyone has

different levels of interest, investment, and comfort. Whatever they are, I promise to do my best, in my position as student activities chair, to cater to you. This past week, I spoke with a dozen members of the faculty and staff. Every single one expressed an interest in getting to know students better and engaging in enriching social time with us. One mentioned, "There are a lot of staff members on campus who never get to interact with students, and that makes me sad, because that's the highlight of my job!" A friend of mine from the third floor of Milas Hall (whom I met last year during my campaigns for Build Day and various SAC events - I'm lucky to have had so many excuses to stop into people's offices in the past) immediately lit up when I mentioned my ideas for different types of interactions. Everyone gave me enthusiastic responses, their own recommendations, and some sage counsel.

It made me wonder why we aren't able to enjoy the kind of connection we might wish for right now. Then I had a perplexing experience in a faculty member's office. She asked me if I thought students would be at all interested in hearing about an event that she helps organize every year. She worried that we wouldn't want to go. I couldn't help but smile, because I knew that her fears were unfounded.

Let me say to her and to all faculty and all staff now:

We would LOVE to be invited to your events. We would LOVE to have you at our events. We respect you. We value the time you choose to spend with us. We spend a lot of our time trying to be as good at things as you already are at them. We want to get to know you better, to learn from you outside of classes, and to find ways to contribute to your lives in a positive way.

As we know, the restaurant kick-outs always fill up immediately, and the students clamor for more. Build Day's "Candid Conversations" was the first opportunity for many students to peek behind the curtain of professionalism that faculty and staff normally maintain. We ran out of seats for that activity and had to run more sessions! We pack into your co-curriculars and cheer for you wholeheartedly when you participate in our events. Please don't doubt that you are welcome at our events or that we would want to come

to yours. Ok? Ok. Now we just need to arrange the details.

"I hope I can use my position on SAC to help foster a stronger Olin community."

From my conversations, I learned that it will be impossible to please everyone, but that won't stop me from trying. SAC will be hosting weekly events that rotate through the days of the week backwards (F, Th, W, Tu, M, F), with two sessions of that week's activity per day- one at 12:30 and the other at 4. Our first activity will be the Cheese Club event, on Friday. The week after will feature a crafting activity on Thursday. After that, who knows! There's so much we might do. Please let me know if you have ideas! Always feel free to write to

SAC@lists.olin.edu with any feedback or suggestions.

I hope I can use my position on SAC to help foster a stronger Olin community with accessible and rewarding weekly events. However, I can't help but think about a host of other intriguing opportunities for other groups with different interests: What if we had a blended singing group or an open-to-all intramural sports team? Couldn't we regularly bake alongside one another in the dorms or ideate about various aspects of Olin culture? Students could invite staff members to lunch at a mutually agreed-upon time and treat them using a guest pass. A few small efforts can have large payoffs.

I'm excited for this semester and the progress to come. I believe that by doing things we enjoy with people we appreciate, we will be creating a stronger community that we will all benefit from. Let's make it happen, together.

A Puzzle by Midnight Math

You have a pizza, but your slicer is only good for 10 cuts. You want to serve as many people as possible before your slicer gives out. How many is this? What about if your pizza slicer was good for n cuts? Put another way, what is the maximum number of partitions a circle can be partitioned into by making n chords?"



Midnight Math is a club run by Ian Hoover '15 who just returned from studying away in Spain.

Send in your solutions (with proofs) to midnight.math@outlook.com. If you are correct, you will be given the highest of accolades: your name mentioned here, next issue.

When Damage is Done

Anonymous
Contributor

When the career fairs come around, everyone gets pumped for all the free gear along with the snazzy beacon of new attire: the t-shirt. Every company has a t-shirt to offer. Go to events, get a t-shirt. Go to conventions, get a t-shirt. Have a party, make your own t-shirt colorfully hippie tie-dye. I've heard people bragging about their whole closet being replaced with just company t-shirts. These t-shirts are just a basic closet staple. However, as all these glorious giveaways are offered to me like I am a deity to be appeased, it is often with a heavy heart that I turn them down. Why?

Because I can't wear t-shirts in public. It is not like they don't fit. It's not like I have some self-righteousness preventing me from it (though I generally strive to not wear things with logos).

I can't wear t-shirts because I was carefully taught that appearance was everything. I can't wear t-shirts because they are too "trashy." I can't wear t-shirts because they make me look like a slob who does not give a flying fickle about how I look. I can't wear t-shirts because I was given one too many raging lectures about why that kind of thing was ruining my life. That people were judgmental, and it was my problem. That people assumed I was sub-par, and it

was my fault. That wearing things like t-shirts in public would one day hurt me, and the only person I had to blame was myself. I can't wear t-shirts because somewhere over the course of my life a lock slammed shut in my brain making it almost psychologically impossible.

The sad part is, I honestly do not know how true anything I've been told is.

Once upon a time, I was told I had too much acne. It was the classic trademark of a kid who was going through puberty. It was actually not a lot, just there. My not so enthusiastic attempt to get rid of it was translated into rebellion, that I did not appreciate anything done for me. That my face, reflective of neglect, would hurt me one day. It would hurt me, and the only person I had to blame was myself. That of course I was alone. I was alone because my face was too repulsive, no one wanted to be around me.

Once upon a time, I was told that I should smile more. That I had no reason

to do otherwise – I had a good life. That because I was not always chipper, it made the people around me unhappy. That any "problems" I had were just an illusion, that I wanted attention, that I should never talk about things like "phobia" or "depression" because then people would get the wrong idea. That I did not want to be associated with "those types of people." I should ignore the fact that I both physically and psychologically abused myself, because I had long since substituted fear for passion as my life source of motivation. No one ever knew, because then they would think I was crazy, that I was difficult, that I was pathetic. And people knowing that would hurt me. It would hurt me one day, and the only person I had to blame was myself. No one wanted to be around someone like that.

Once upon a time, I was told that Olin did not want people like me. That it would be surprising if I even got accepted with my personality. A solitary personality, I

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an issue yourself, let us know at
Fix-ItSociety@lists.olin.edu

was often warned, would hurt me – that I should never ever be myself because how I really am is.... I was told to lie. If I wanted to be accepted, then I had to lie – lie about who I was – lie and say the things people wanted to hear, if it meant that I could obtain a dream I had been waiting for my whole life. I never did lie. But with each passing interview, with every single rejection from the jobs I get, I kept on wondering whether maybe I should put on that façade. If I did not, it would hurt me. When it did, the only person I had to blame was myself. Because no one would ever accept something like me if they knew how I really was.

Once upon a time, I was asked what happened to me. I used to be happy. I used to be nice. I used to be a better person. Once upon a time. Once upon a time. What happened to that perfect little

child who put on plays and enjoyed posing for the camera? What happened to that child they keep asking me to see again? What destroyed it? Once upon a time, when did that child ever exist?

I don't care what I look like. I try very hard to not care about what I look like even though I know it is hurting me – hurting me every single day of my life. Because my entire self-esteem is torn to shreds. Because I learned it was better to doc up and lie to meet other people's standards, to get what I want, or at the very least, shut them up. I know there should be something wrong with doing something like that. There should be something wrong. I am not supposed to care what I look like.

However, I can't wear T-shirts in public. I can't have any "deformity" on my face without hiding it behind hair or my hand. My voice disap-

pears completely when I talk to strangers unless I speak through a smile. And maybe, just maybe, I do sprout a bubbly, extroverted persona without even knowing I do in some subconscious hope that people won't hate me. That I was a good person. That they did not go back behind closed doors and roll their eyes wondering why this idiotic humiliation bothered to try in the first place.

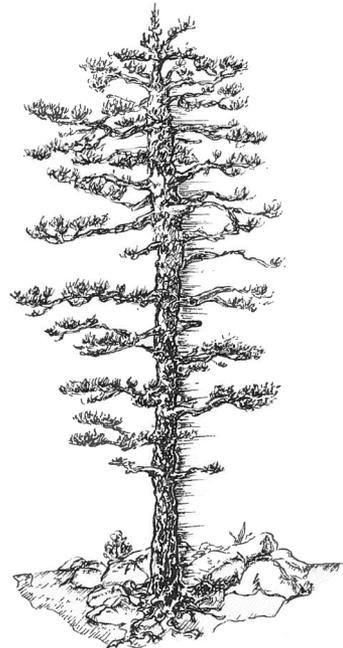
Appearance is the only thing that matters after all, right? Either I don't care enough to make an adequate one, or I am just not doing something right, so everything is just my fault. It's all my fault. I just need to be a better person – whatever that's supposed to be. I don't know. All I really want is for just one day maybe, just one day maybe, I won't think it is so strange when even the people I call my friends say "Hi."

Airplane Approximation

This month's question: "What percent of humans who have ever lived on earth have flown in an airplane?"

Submit your responses through a link to be

sent out to the carpEDIEM mailing list on February 4. If you are not on carpEDIEM, please forward your responses to submit@franklyspeaking-news.com or any of the Frankly Speaking staff.



Epic Video Game Trivia

Elizabeth Mahon
Columnist

Video game history is in a sorry state. We don't know the release date of one of the best-selling video games.

Super Mario Brothers, for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), sold more than 40 million copies, including those that came with an NES. It secured Nintendo and the NES's place in the video game market, revived video gaming in North America, and inspired generations of games and game-makers. But the exact date of its release in the United States is fuzzy, and no one is quite sure when it was. Indeed, discussion of this problem has exceeded 10,000 words on Wikipedia.

We know when it came out in Japan – September 13, 1985.

Let's set the scene to explain why we don't know the US release date. It's 1985 in the United States. Two years ago, consumers stopped buying video games – the market was oversaturated with several consoles competing, all with the same games and similar graphics. Toy stores won't even listen if you say you're selling a video game system. Enter Nintendo of America. At the time, it was known only for Donkey Kong, a popular arcade game. Across the Pacific, Nintendo was much bigger. The Famicom – the Japanese

equivalent of the NES¹ – sold more than 500,000 within the first two months from its Japanese introduction in May 1983. Back in Japan, the president of Nintendo at the time, Hiroshi Yamauchi, surveyed the wreckage of the North American video game market and saw an opportunity. Kids everywhere are kids, after all. What's popular in Japan has a pretty good chance of being popular in the United States, right?

Nintendo didn't have the energy to release the NES at the same time across the United States, so they went to New York, for as they say “if you can make it there, you can make it anywhere.” In October of 1985, Nintendo held a test run of the NES in New York. Official Nintendo sources, such as Super Smash Brothers Brawl, set this day as October 18th. This gives us an early bound for the release date of Super Mario Brothers. The same official Nintendo sources list Super Mario Brothers as one of the games released on that day. However, this database is known to be inaccurate for some other early NES titles (specifically, Soccer is listed in the database as a 1987 release, but is known to have come out during the launch period), lending uncertainty to the date. Not only that, Nintendo themselves also say that Super Mario Brothers was released in March of 1986²....

What other information do we have? Well, a column in the Milwaukee Journal (of all papers) previewed the NES on October 5th, and listed Super Mario Brothers as an upcoming game. A Super Mario Brothers cartridge with a production date of the 42nd week of 1985 (October 13-19) has been found³. The US copyright office lists September 14th for the game, October 19th for the box, and October 31st for the instruction manual. And a New York Macy's ad on November 17th lists Super Mario as one of the games they have. This points to Super Mario Brothers being intended for a launch during the New York test run. So, October 18th? Perhaps not. But there is a strong possibility that it came out sometime in the New York test run.

A Target ad in the Los Angeles Times on March 13, 1986 also lists Super Mario Brothers. This would be the second trial run of the NES, this time in the Los Angeles area. It seems safe to say that March 1986 is our absolute late bound for possible release dates.

What does this mean? It points to the difficulty of retrieving information if detailed records are not kept. That even an incredibly popular game, that they had reason to believe would be popular, has an unknown release date, shows us how easily information can be lost.

1. *The Ultimate History of Video Games*, Steven L. Kent

2. <http://iwataasks.nintendo.com/interviews/#/wii/nsmb/0/2>

3. http://themushroomkingdom.net/smb_release.shtml

The Olin Library

Uncovered

Did you know the library:

- Has a new interim Director? Please stop by and say hello to Hope Tillman. She's in Dee's old office and we are really excited to have her with us!

- Has a website with a catalog: library.olin.edu
- Can get you any book or article in the world, through our Inter Library Loan service? It's true, just ask us.
- Loans out tools? Right

now we have power drills and hammers, but our collection is growing. Stay tuned...

- Has a materials samples collection? Use it to find information on sample composition, manufacturing process and applications. We have over 100 in stock.
- Loves feedback? Please let us know your library thoughts.
- Employs awesome stu-

dent workers? Thanks Josh, Carly, Lyra, Emily and Liani for all your hard work!

Who we are:

Hope, Library Director
 Lydia, Public Services Librarian
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 Columnist

NOT XKCD by Kai

FOR THE LOVE OF LOGIC!

SO IF $x^2=0$, THEN $x=0$ THUS $y=0$. RESULTING IN ABSOLUTE GENDER EQUALITY BUT DEATH TO ALL HUMANITY AS WE KNOW IT.

WAIT - WAIT -WAIT. WHAT?

YOU JUST CAN'T MERGE SCIENCE, LANGUAGE, AND MATH WITH CONVENIENT VALUES TO DEVELOP A THEORY ABOUT SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS.

THE FOLLOWING PANEL HAS BEEN REMOVED BY THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE LAWS DUE TO ITS INACCURATELY VIOLENT DEPICTION OF HISTORY.

WE APPOLGIZE FOR THE INCONVENIENCE

(MY FAVORITE PSEUDO-MATH INVOLVES USING NUMEROLOGY TO ESTIMATE THE DATE OF THE APOCALYPSE)

MEET THE OLINER



Abe Kim

Class of 2014
 From Irvine, California

- Took two month long backpacking trips alone through Europe and Asia
- Owns two cellos named Aurora and Sass
- Scared to live on the east coast because he doesn't have a winter coat

Jessica Diller
 Columnist

Clubs and Student Activities

"Why do you choose to participate in the clubs and student activities that you do?"

They're fun. I learn a lot. They're great for my resume.

Also, at this point, I'm a bit too invested in them to get out.

Anonymous
Contributor

Olimprov spawned partially from selfish reasons. I have experience with miming, role play, voice impressions, etc. I was a bit famous for them when I was a kid. I lived my life according to predetermined conversations and predictable actions, and I could barely talk to people in person if I had not known them for years. Humor became a cover up for feeling socially awkward and nervous. But, in some ways, it was also a salvation. When I saw my friend doing improv, I knew it was something I wanted to and should do. And if you make a person's day brighter with a joke or little bit of silliness, there is

no better possible affirmation that you are doing something right.

Kai Austin
Contributor

I participate in Open because as much as I believe in having a sense of identity developed through individual experiences and choices, I recognize the need for community. I was never openly gay in high school, so when I came out at Olin, I really sought a better sense of my identity. Open was my connection to the LGBTQ community within and outside of Olin. This really helped me to get out of my comfort zone, be more social, and make friends outside of Olin.

Colby Sato
Contributor

At this point (junior year) I've narrowed it down to just a couple clubs that I really like and enjoy. For the student team that I'm on, it's really a matter of loyalty, because the team is sometimes great and sometimes really

difficult. I always come back to the team, because it's such a strong experience that I'm invested in.

Anonymous
Contributor

I am interested in the projects being worked on and I enjoy working with the people involved.

Anonymous
Contributor

I participate in them because there are so many incredible opportunities at Olin to do things I've never had the chance to before--like building a robotic sailboat, spinning fire, or singing in an a cappella group. I personally participate in a ridiculous number of groups because I can almost never choose any single thing to concentrate on – everything at Olin is so cool!

Jennifer Anderson
Contributor

For next month: "If you could choose one skill to rock at, what would it be? Why?"

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