SLLR Event ‘Shocks’ Campus Culture

By Justin Herdman

Members of the Harvard community gathered in the Ropes Gray room on Saturday, February 21, in order to sample venison meatballs, Manwich sloppy joes, and gyros supplied by local restaurants and campus organizations. To the displeasure of some attendees, however, an odor of disinfectant inlaid to blend with the aroma of baked goods and stewed meats.

The Society for Law, Life and Religion (SLLR) was able to overcome a flurry of last-second protests in order to hold this event, appropriately dubbed “Culture Shock.”

The beneficiaries of the afternoon’s proceeds were The Waltham Support Committee for Battered Women and A Woman’s Concern Crisis Pregnancy Center (AWC). While the inclusion of the Battered Women project was applauded by all, serious questions arose concerning the participation of AWC.

Advertisements across campus promoted Culture Shock as an event sponsored by SLLR, a conservative pro-life group. Some HLS students considered the description of AWC as a “Crisis Pregnancy Center” to be misleading.

AWC: Center of Crisis

Members of the Reproductive Freedom Project (RFP), which operates under the auspices of the Civil Liberties Union, provided Culture Shock attendees with a leaflet regarding AWC. Yori Juuds ’01, who serves as chairperson of the RFP, outlined the organization’s position.

“Our sole concern was that this event has been somewhat misrepresented among members of the Harvard community and even among the restaurants,” said Juuds.

The RFP’s claim of misrepresentation was not the only point of contention about the student experience. At the end of last year, Prof. Elizabeth Warren, chair of the Institutional Life & Structure Committee (ILC) which will oversee the McKinsey project, HLS hired McKinsey to collect data on student experience. The ILC has a two-year mandate formally initiated last October to “take the Law School into the next century,” according to Special Assistant to the Dean for Strategic Planning Janine Matho.

One of five planning committees organized under HLS’s strategic planning process, ILC recommended to Dean Clark ’72 that HLS hire McKinsey as part of the “student-focused phase” of the School’s planning.

The four full-time McKinsey consultants, who currently operate out of a “team room” on the second floor of Hauser, will act as factfinders in this evaluation of student life, said Matho.

“This is a highly iterative, open-ended process,” Matho said. “This is a time when we should be thinking about the world of the possible. The objective is to harness the things that make us good and amplify them to make us better. If we have problems, we should fix them.

“This is Harvard Law School. And we should be knocking our students’ socks off every day.”

Over the next several weeks, the entire student body will be invited to participate in a survey (which is currently under construction) and a series of focus groups in order to assess what issue matters most to students.

“There will be lots of questions on demographics,” said Warren, “since different subgroups may experience the Law School differently.”

By Janie Kim

McKinsey & Co. added another dimension to its relationship with Harvard Law School last month, the management consulting firm, which has long recruited prospective associates through the Office of Career Services, has now secured the Law School as a client.

HLS hired McKinsey to collect “objective, systematic information about the student experience at Harvard Law School,” said Prof. Elizabeth Warren, chair of the Institutional Life & Structure Committee (ILC) which will oversee the McKinsey project.

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Silverglate ’67 calls for repeal of Sexual Harassment Guidelines

Forum discussion touches on HLS’s divisive past

By Ben Lehrer

Noted civil libertarian Harvey Silverglate ’67 called the Law School’s Sexual Harassment Guidelines “a discredited method for policing speech and sensitivities” and advocated their repeal last Wednesday at a speech sponsored by the HLS Forum.

The Guidelines were adopted by a majority faculty vote in October 1995. They prohibit a variety of conduct and speech of a sexual or discriminatory nature.

“These Guidelines would undoubtedly be unconstitutional at a public university,” said Silverglate, who co-authored the 1998 book, “The Shadow University,” which details the movement of colleges and universities to adopt codes restricting certain categories of expression.

Prof. Alan Dershowitz, who introduced Silverglate, disagreed. He said that the Guidelines are narrowly tailored to cover actual harassment, and leaves protected speech— including obscenities and offensive speech of the kind at issue in the landmark Hustler Magazine v. Falwell case — untouched.

Born in Bad Taste

Silverglate linked the faculty’s approval of the guidelines in 1995 with the turmoil surrounding a 1992 parody of an unflattering draft article written by Mary Joe Frug, wife of Prof.


By Janie Kim

The Great McKinsey Hope: Law School hires McKinsey Consultants

HLS Seeks to Improve the Student Experience

By Janie Kim

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Harvey Silverglate ’67 takes on Prof. Dershowitz’s support of HLS’s Sexual Harassment Guidelines.

Please see MCKINSEY, p. 14

Internet Book Dealers Threaten HLS Law Book Racket

By Klaus Hamm

As an MIT graduate and a current joint degree student at Harvard Law and MIT’s business school, Chris Yang ’01 has bought plenty of books from the Coop over the years. But that doesn’t mean he enjoys it.

The Harvard Cooperative Society serves both MIT and Harvard, and after years of thinking he was paying too much, Yang decided to do something about it. At the end of last year, he founded Beantown Books, a Web-site business in direct competition with the Coop.

“It made sense. I was basically looking for a cheaper alternative to the Coop, because you know, the prices seem to go up every year,” Yang said.

Now thanks to Yang’s venture and a handful of others like it, students frustrated with the Coop’s prices do not have to resort to starting their own businesses. Instead, lower prices are available to anyone willing to purchase books over the Internet.

Indeed, growing numbers of HLS students, as well as other law students around the country, now do their book shopping in cyberspace. One Chicago-based online legal bookseller reported a 500 per cent increase in sales for 1998.

The Coop has noticed the decline. While it defends its pricing system, it acknowledges the rising force of online bookstores, particularly in the last two semesters.

To fight back, it plans to launch its own discounted Web site for the fall semester.

The Coop admits that despite some advantages over online bookstores, it simply cannot compete on what many customers feel is the most important aspect of purchasing a book: price.

For books and mortar stores and the Internet, there is nothing that is similar in terms of the economics,” said Allain Powell, the Coop’s corporate general manager.

The Coop’s additional costs include all the expenses faced by most traditional store-front business.