

The EGG's annual

DEAD PIG ISSUE

U C Davis Ecology
Graduate Group

Winter 2004, Issue 3

the egg

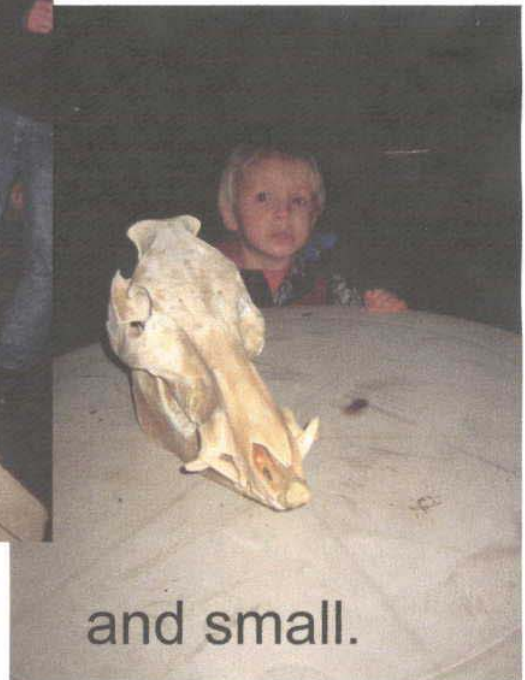
subscribe to the egg--
email your name and Dept.
to schillyer@ucdavis.edu

March 18ish

Wild Boar Luau & Steelhead Fundraiser

Co-sponsored by UCD AFS Chapter & IGERT

Fun was had by big . . .



and small.

Thank You All for Your Support!

The vegetarian editor of the EGG who is not a labmate of the person who coordinated the above event wishes to apologize to other vegetarians for the graphic depiction of death right there on the front cover. He also apologizes to avowed meat-eaters for this apology.

Editor's Corner

Stop Funding Ecological Modeling

Greetings, ecology fans. I write you today with another plea to help better the ecological community. I hope to call a halt to the ridiculous load of money being hurled at ecological modeling these days. Why exactly do NSF and other funding agencies believe that fashion has any sort of role in a better understanding of the natural world? Now I could understand if these modelers were wearing animal products like fur, or perhaps clothing made from hemp fibers. But I see these men and women in rayon, polyester, even nylon, with no attempt made to link the results of their modeling to ecological theory.

I can only assume that the modelers I see frequently on television are the very ones being funded with huge grants. (Or maybe it's that they're having fun with Hugh Grant? It's left quite unclear.) Show after show, these modelers parade down their purported "catwalks," upon which no felid has ever set a paw, and make pouty faces and swoosh their hair. Is this considered relevant to ecology because their makeup is "applied"? Or because these modelers are proud of their "figures"?

And what sorts of helpful equations could these modelers possibly generate? The relationship between waist size and time to starvation? Interpersonal competition for Revlon contracts? How nutrients flow through emaciated bodies?

Some are given enormous grants to flaunt their chiseled faces and perfect bodies on television and in print, yet I challenge anyone to name one important contribution these so-called "supermodelers" have made to our field. OK, they're pretty, but that's really more of a distraction. Plus, the journals they're published in are of the lowest quality! *Vogue*? Try *Vague*, considering its unclear relevance to ecology.

And from what I can tell, *Harper's* has little interest in the fine work of the noted textbook author and plant ecologist.

In a world of limited funding for ecological research, it's time we trimmed the waste that runs rampant in the system. Please join me in protesting the next "Victoria's Secret" web broadcast by turning off your computer and reading the *Journal of Theoretical Ecology*, where modelers who haven't had implants or Botox treatments should be published.

--Matt Schlesinger,
Editor, the egg

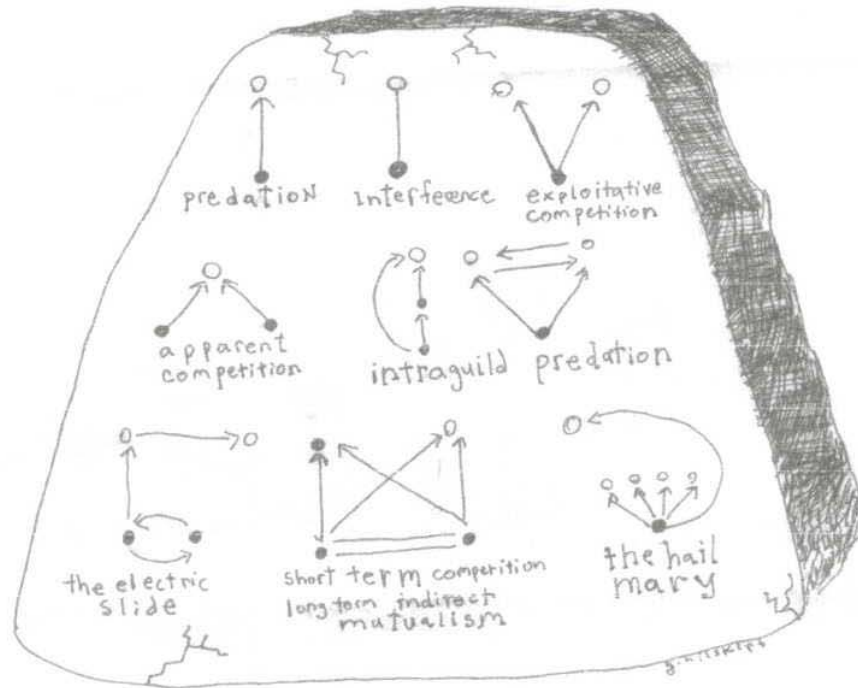


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The attempts at humor expressed in this newsletter do not reflect the more mature, much more mature, intellects of the Graduate Group in Ecology, or the students, faculty, and staff, therein.
Thank you for your understanding.



January 2002: The Rosetta Stone of Food Webs is discovered at last.

[Handwritten signature]

Thank you to all who made the 2004 Mardi Gras Masquerade Ball a smashing success!

Albertson's
 Armadillo Music
 Avid Reader
 Baskin Robbins
 Benzinger Family Winery
 A Better Place to Bear
 Bogle Winery
 Borders
 Chipotle Mexican Grill
 Cracchiolo's
 The Craft Center
 Davis Food Co-op
 De Colores
 Delta of Venus
 Evangeline's
 Home and Garden Beautiful
 Jamba Juice
 Ken's Bike & Ski Shop
 Kenwood Winery
 The Naturalist

Nestware
 Noah's Bagels
 Papyrus
 Peet's Coffee and Tea
 Pluto's
 Ravenswood Winery
 Safeway
 Shuz of Davis
 Signature Theatres
 Stevenot Winery
 Strelitzia
 Sudwerk
 Trader Joe's
 Travel and Trails
 UCD Bookstore
 UCD Environmental Horticulture
 Valley Wine Co.
 Village Bakery
 Wine Lush

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A very special thank you to Silvia Hillver, as usual, without whom this event could not have taken place!

Effects of Year on Mardi Gras Proceeds

Laura F. Rodriguez and Matthew D. Schlesinger
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Proceeds have been shown to vary with year in a variety of fundraising systems. However, the mechanisms underlying such changes in proceeds have rarely been explored, and this study is no exception. Year might affect proceeds directly, if contributors gauge how much to give based on the proximity to a leap year or the sum of the digits in the year. Alternatively, other factors that vary with year (El Niño events, age of current boyfriend of J-Lo, hours of reality TV broadcast on Fox) might affect proceeds more directly. We took advantage of a natural experiment, the annual Mardi Gras Masquerade Ball at the University of California, Davis, to test the hypothesis that a bunch of money could be raised for some cool charities. Proceeds in 2004 were \$600 more than proceeds in 2003, and \$1100 more than in 2002 (Fig. 1). We understand that the R^2 obtained is higher than any reported in any silly ecological journal. If this trend continues, certain insider graduate students should be able to pocket some money over the next few years without anyone noticing. Congratulations to all of you for this great fundraising success!

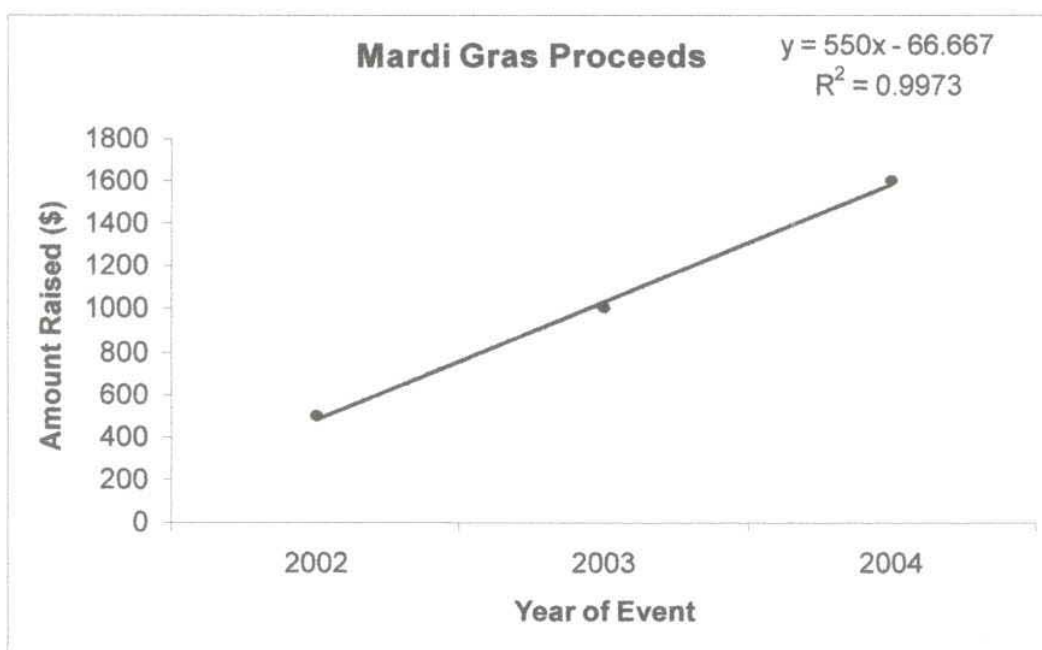
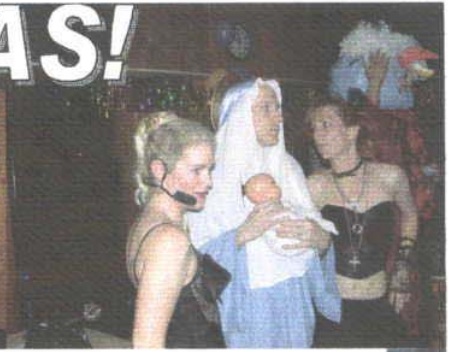


Figure 1. Amount of money raised for Mardi Gras as a function of year. Money was collected at the University of California, Davis, 2002-2004, for various local charities.

MARDI GRAS!



Best Costume: 3 Madonnas

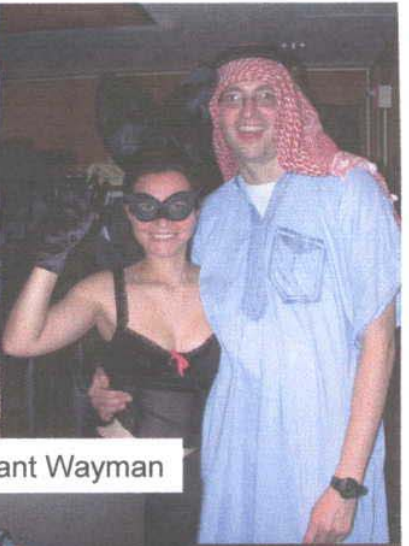
Tightest Trousers: Julie Garren



Best Costume: Matt Swarner



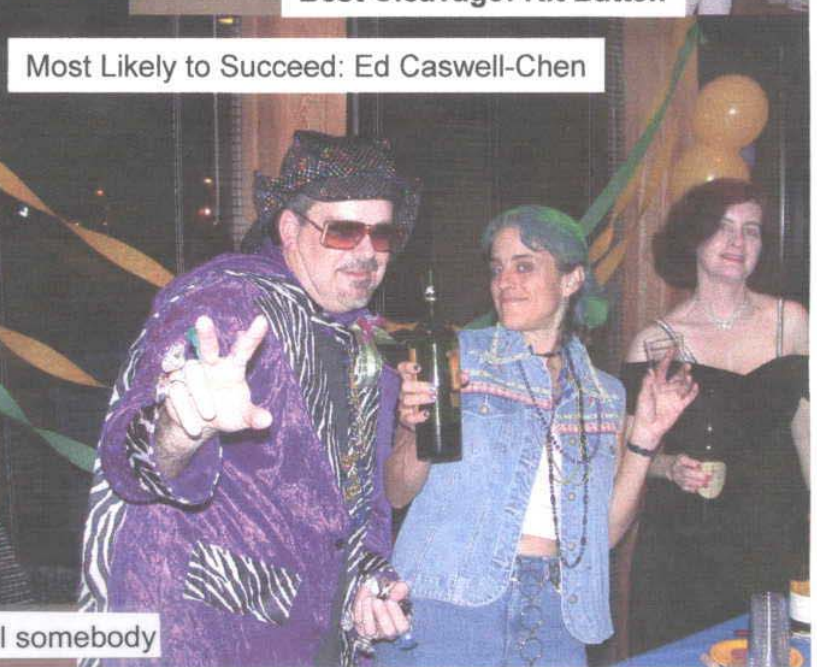
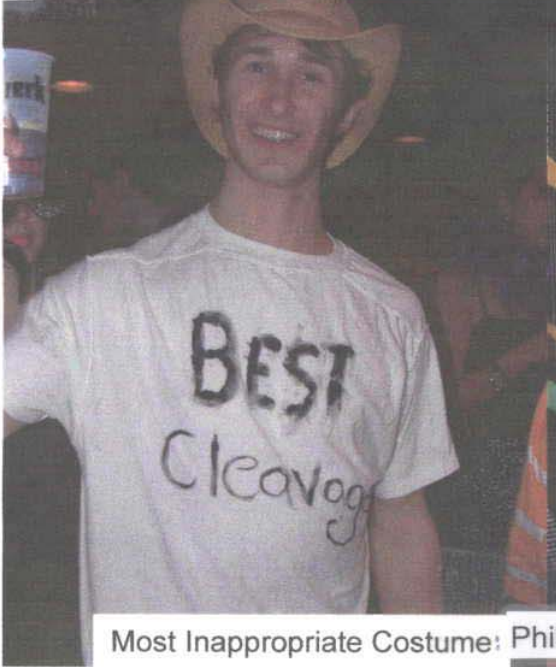
Most Popular: the plastic baby



Best Costume: Grant Wayman



Best Cleavage: Kit Batten



Most Likely to Succeed: Ed Caswell-Chen

Most Inappropriate Costume: Phil somebody

Best crossdresser: Andy McCall

(Not Steve N)