ON THE UTTER IRRELEVANCE OF LPL GRADUATE STUDENTS: AN UNBIASED SURVEY
BY STEWART OBSERVATORY GRADUATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

We present a new analysis of the irrelevance of Lunar and Planetary Laboratory (LPL) graduate students at the University of Arizona. Based on extensive Monte Carlo simulations we find that the actual number of useful results from LPL graduate students is 0 ± 0.01 (5σ). Their irrelevance quotient far surpasses that of string theorists.

Subject headings: Humor – irrelevance

1. INTRODUCTION

In a recent astro-ph submission, Barnes, O’Brien, Fortney, & Hurford (2002) claim that the Lamentable Pathetic Lackey (hereafter LPL) graduate students are dominant over Steward Observatory graduate students. These findings are found to be completely false, indeed laughable, in light of the evidence. LPL graduate students are found to be utterly irrelevant - more so than magnetic fields in most astrophysical settings.

The theoretical groundwork for LPL Graduate Student Irrelevance (LGSI) was originally laid down as Fermat’s Lamest Theorem (Fermat 1637; see also Carrot-Top 1998 and references therein). The theorem was later included by Einstein into a general theory of “irrelativity” (1918), in which all beers taste the same independent of reference frame. While much theoretical work has been done on the subject, only recently has empirical evidence been found to convincingly demonstrate LGSI.

2. DATA

2.1. Sports

Barnes, O’Brien, Fortney, & Hurford (2002) claim LPL athletic superiority over Steward graduate students. They conveniently forgot to mention that two events were to be scheduled: Volleyball and Ultimate Frisbee. LPL graduate students have consistently displayed shameless fear when asked to compete in ultimate frisbee. Loss of bladder control was witnessed on at least one occasion (D. O’Brien, priv. comm.).

2.2. Felonies

As shown in Figure 1, LPL graduate students have a commanding lead over Steward in terms of drug-related felonies. A Yakov-Smirnov B-S test confirms this result at the 99.9997% level. While this evidence does not clearly demonstrate that Steward is cooler than LPL, it does demonstrate that LPL grads are fairly slow, and easily caught.

2.3. Core Curriculum

The academic core courses tackled by LPL graduate students have been found to be farcical.

LPL Core Curriculum

| Code | Course Description |
|------|--------------------|
| 501  | Introductory Rock Identification |
| 502  | Intermediate Rock Identification |
| 513  | Advanced Rock Identification |
| 514  | Graduate Level Rock Identification |
| 520  | Futurama Viewing |
| 521  | Futurama Lab: Getting the Humor |
| 542  | Astrobiology: The Chia Pet as an Unsustainable Ecosystem |
| 565  | Dodge-Ball® & Paddy Cake |
| 597B | Bratfest Greenhouse Gas Emission Laboratory |
| 600  | “Doctoral” Nap-Time |

(a) Due to popular demand a new Dodge-Ball-intensive Planetary Sciences minor will be offered starting in 2004.

2.4. Time Usage

A pie-chart of LPL graduate student time usage is illustrated in Figure 2. We define the number of useful papers from LPL grad students \( N \) using the famous “Drake equation”: \( N \) equals the number of students \( n_g \) divided by the volume of bad beer consumed \( V_{Bud} \) times the hours each
student is awake $f_{zzz}$ (negligible to first order). We originally calculated this to be unity, but later concluded that Barnes, O’Brien, Fortney, & Hurford (2002) did not merit recognition as a useful paper.

Readers need not be reminded of Steward graduate student contributions such as the epic “Super Huge Interferometric Telescope: A New Paradigm In Optical Interferometry” (Rudnick et al. 1999), and the “The Effects of Moore’s Law and Slacking on Large Computations” (Gottbrath et al. 1999).

Fig. 2 Mmmmm... pie.

2.5. Enrollment

Only 2 students joined the LPL graduate program in fall 2001, compared to 10 at Steward Observatory. Only through begging and pleading on behalf of LPL bigwigs was the Lunar & Planetary Lab building spared reallocation of office space to new Steward graduate students.

2.6. Spelling

Barnes, O’Brien, Fortney, & Hurford (2002) contained misspelled words such as “dotoral” and “illigitimate”. This demonstrates the inability to run a standard spell-checker. We later found that their paper was spell-checked, but with a Speak-And-Spell. A standard Speak-And-Spell contains 80 vocabulary words and 14 barnyard animal sounds, so they were unable to check the spelling of their longer words. We can not rule out the possibility that the root of the word “dotoral” is actually “dolt”, however.

3. Conclusion

The utter irrelevance of LPL graduate students has been empirically demonstrated.

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