

democrat. Both Mrs. Rell and Mr. DeStefano are good candidates. But they have real differences.

Mrs. Rell has shown a good sense of priorities. She put billions of dollars into transportation, a pressing but long-ignored need. She put money into pilot programs to provide preschool to poor children and promises to expand them. She has kept state bonding in check and used a large budget surplus this year to reduce pension liabilities and state debt.

Mr. DeStefano, the underdog, has encouraged a real discussion of the state's many problems. He wants to provide health coverage for the uninsured by closing corporate tax loopholes, a priority for the leaders of the Democratic-controlled Legislature. He's talked about a windfall profits tax on energy and about lowering residential property taxes.

office by showing the potential to be a great governor as well as a popular one. Her record has a few flaws. Mrs. Rell, for all her emphasis on high standards, adopted a see-no-evil approach to a lapse in ethics of her chief of staff. Her election campaign has been lackluster. She hasn't wanted to risk her lead by debating the big issues, and she hasn't appointed enough of her own people to top jobs.

When Mrs. Rell decides an issue is worth fighting for, like campaign finance reform, she's impressive. But so far her vision has been too modest. It would be a real tragedy if Mrs. Rell wasted her popularity by just tinkering with the state's big problems. She should not squander the opportunity to aim high. With that admonition, we endorse her for governor of Connecticut.

## Brown University's Debt to Slavery

A long-awaited report on Brown University's 18th-century links to slavery should dispel any lingering smugness among Northerners that slavery was essentially a Southern problem.

The report establishes that Brown did indeed benefit in its early years from money generated by the slave trade and by industries dependent on slavery. It did so in an era when slavery permeated the social and economic life of Rhode Island. Slaves accounted for 10 percent of the state's population in the mid-18th century, when Brown was founded, and Rhode Island served as a northern hub of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, mounting at least 1,000 voyages that carried more than 100,000 Africans into slavery over the course of a century.

The Brown report is the latest revelation that Northern businesses and institutions benefited from slavery. Countless other institutions might be surprised, and ashamed, if they dug deeply into their pasts as Brown has over the past three years.

The Committee on Slavery and Justice, composed of faculty, students and administrators, found that some 30 members of Brown's governing board owned or captained slave ships, and donors sometimes contributed slave labor to help in construction. The Brown family owned slaves and engaged in the slave trade, although one family member became a leading abolitionist and had his own brother prosecuted for illegal slave trading. The college did not own or trade slaves.

The hard question is what to do about it. The committee makes sensible recommendations — creating a center for the study of slavery and injustice, rewriting Brown's history to acknowledge the role of slavery, creating a memorial to the slave trade in Rhode Island, and recruiting more minority students. Other proposals are more problematic. But the value of this exercise was to illuminate a history that had been “largely erased from the collective memory of our university and state.”

## Puerto Rico, an Island in Distress

After decades of economic progress, Puerto Rico is struggling, and the mainland has both missed this horrific economic slide and contributed to it through benign neglect.

Poverty on the island is rampant. The per capita income is just about half that of the poorest state in the United States. Nearly one-third of the population was unemployed in 2000. And a good quarter of all employment is in government jobs. If the goal is more than survival, the bloated public payroll will need to be significantly pared back.

The bleak picture is set out in a long-overdue, exhaustive study — “The Economy of Puerto Rico: Restoring Growth” — from the Center for the New Economy, a nonpartisan Puerto Rican research group, and the Brookings Institution.

Much of the blame can be put on Washington,

which has been tone deaf to the island's needs and has miscalculated where help was needed. Even a good idea, like the Section 936 program of tax incentives, was mismanaged. Before it was phased out last year, it had succeeded in bringing many pharmaceutical concerns to the island, but produced relatively few jobs and at so high a cost that a \$40,000 position cost the government \$70,000.

The study is spurring a debate over welfare and other social programs. Some of the economists' prescriptions are harsh, including curtailment of food stamps. But part of the mission seems to be shock therapy. That may work and might even help to get policy makers on the search for solutions. The key to the island's future will be charting a direction that includes capitalizing on the island's open economy to create jobs for home-grown talent.

need to focus as much on providing children with increased opportunities for active, stimulating and creative free play as on changing the way they eat.

FRANKLIN H. STONE  
Executive Director  
Common Good  
New York, Oct. 19, 2006

To the Editor:

Re “Disney Says It Will Link Marketing to Nutrition” (Business Day, Oct. 17):

I applaud Disney for announcing its commitment to decreasing childhood obesity. I disagree, however,

### Rosy Hedge Funds

To the Editor:

“Closing In on Hedge Funds” (editorial, Oct. 20) notes that the potential spectacular returns from hedge funds are not so spectacular if we factor in risk at the time of investment. You also note that an Oct. 16 front-page article suggested that insider trading might also be contributing to the high returns.

But there is another factor that might also be contributing to the high returns: high valuation of nonpublicly traded property held by hedge funds.

Last month I testified before the Department of Labor's Erisa Advisory Council on pension fund investments in hedge funds, as did Damon A. Silvers, the associate general counsel of the A.F.L.-C.I.O.

Both of us noted in our testimony that many hedge funds hold nonpublicly traded, sometimes illiquid, investments. The hedge funds have to value these investments.

What assurance do we have that these valuations are not made by appraisers who first donned their rose-colored glasses?

NORMAN STEIN

Boston, Oct. 20, 2006

The writer is a professor of law at the University of Alabama.

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Should purchasers of these products be punished?

Further, it is risky to assume that there is a positive correlation between homemade meals and their nutritive content. Many meals made in the home contain considerable amounts of fat, salt and preservatives, particularly those that came out of boxes, cans or freezer packages.

The solution should be greater national attention toward healthful food preparation and choices, not a focused attack on fast-food drive-throughs.

MEREDITH GREIF  
Cleveland Heights, Oct. 19, 2006

### 'Bad Girls'? Says Who?

To the Editor:

Re “Good Girls Go Bad, for a Day” (Thursday Styles, Oct. 19):

You write about the overt sexuality of women's Halloween costumes. But the article itself falls prey to a pervasive female stereotype: the concept of “good girls.”

The author Linda M. Scott is quoted as explaining that Halloween is a night when “even a nice girl can dress like a dominatrix.”

Who qualifies as a nice girl? Why do we refer to grown women as girls?

And what's dirty or “bad” about female sexuality?

Until we stop dividing women into strict categories of nice versus naughty, our sexuality will continue to be taboo — only expressed in extreme and specific arenas, like Halloween.

SUZANNE JOSKOW  
Los Angeles  
Oct. 19, 2006

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My daughter needs an M4/T4 rating. But M4/T4 is available only in the C.D.M.A. technology and not in G.S.M., which my daughter will need this summer in Europe. C.D.M.A. does not work in Europe.

Two G.S.M. providers, Cingular and T-Mobile, have said M4/T4 is not achievable. But one has to wonder if cellphone carriers are allocating sufficient resources to overcome this hurdle. How come they are able to put a camera, MP3 player and every other imaginable device in a cellphone, but they cannot overcome this hurdle?

While the network issue may be confusing for Mr. Sharkey, at least he has options. People who wear hearing aids do not.

JANICE SCHACTER  
New York, Oct. 17, 2006

### My Picks for the Nobel

To the Editor:

Re “Orhan Pamuk's Nobel Prize” (editorial, Oct. 16):

The Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to the Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk, meaning that once again the literature Nobel was awarded to a writer who is not an American (the last American to win was Toni Morrison in 1993).

Orhan Pamuk is a great writer. I can't argue with this choice, even if it appears to be political. Still, it is interesting that a number of great American writers who may be nearing the end of their careers are likely to be passed over completely. This is not meant to disparage an award that is subjective, but it does raise questions to me about the meaning of the award.

The literary critic Harold Bloom has listed Don DeLillo, Cormac McCarthy, Thomas Pynchon and Philip Roth as the four major American writers still working today. Each of these writers is a legitimate candidate for the Nobel Prize.

Other great American writers who are still working today and have not won this award are Norman Mailer, Joyce Carol Oates, Cynthia Ozick and John Updike.

If there is any consolation, though, if each of these great writers is passed over they will join an illustrious group not awarded the Nobel Prize, including James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and Mark Twain.

PAUL PALLEY  
Scottsdale, Ariz., Oct. 16, 2006