

# Nuclear power plants resist innovation, cause unnecessary harm to marine life



**Melissa Truong**  
STAFF WRITER

For newly hatched salmon near California's coast, drifting too close to one of the 19 nuclear power plants situated near the coast, such as the San Onofre location 50 miles north of San Diego, can mean an abrupt and violent death.

Sucked in with the 16.3 billion gallons of ocean water used as a coolant for the reactors at these plants, the hatchlings are battered against the pipes, putting a sudden end to their already short lives. Not only fish, but endangered species are also being threatened by the power plants. The water is so strong that numerous seals, turtles and sea lions are trapped on the screens every year. Four species of endangered and one threatened species of turtles, like the Loggerhead and

green, are being endangered by power plants. Not only turtles and fish, but aquatic mammals, like manatees, sea lions, and seals are also getting injured by the power plants.

The San Diego *Union-Tribune* reported that fish caught by the screen are locked there by the force of the water. A stream of water knocks the fish back into a trough, which is redirected back into the ocean or river. There is a solution for this, however. It's called closed cycle cooling, which is mostly used in newer plants. Even if water is being drawn from oceans or rivers, the plant uses the water over and over again. Plants who employ the closed cycle cooling method have reported a sharp reduction of sea life death than plants that continuously draw in water.

Spokespeople for the plants say that the barriers are effective because the fish are still alive when they are put back into the oceans or rivers. That doesn't hold true though. The Millstone plant in Connecticut is responsible for a 50 percent decline in the Niantic Wir Flounder.

Just because the

fish can swim away, doesn't mean that they don't have injuries and will consequently be able to survive in the wild. As the number of fish decline, the predators of the fish will also decline, disrupting the ecosystem.

Most of the casualties are fish eggs. The U.S. Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) says that the number of eggs and larvae killed each year at the nation's largest power plants would have grown up to become approximately 1.5 billion 1-year-old fish.

A California state report says that nine million full-grown fish are caught on the nets every year.

The technology, for more environment friendly cooling towers is available to reduce these killings by up to 90 percent. Newer plants have implemented cooling towers that allow water to be recycled instead of continuously pumped in. Newer plants are required to use the cooling towers, but older plants, even ones in California, are continuing to resist change.

At the Indian Point in New York, owner and spokesman Jerry Nappi, for Entergy Nuclear Northeast said that talk of insisting on cooling towers is

a ploy by environmentalists to close down the plant for good. At Indian Point, officials are maintaining that the population of sea animals is stable, despite studies that show that 10 out of 13 species are declining.

The officials are saying that the loss of the marine life is insignificant, but also that retrofitting the plants with more environment friendly cooling machines would be too expensive. According to the *Union Tribune*, existing plants are resisting any push to convert, citing the huge cost and claiming that most fish and larvae are doomed anyway.

Some plants don't even need to concern themselves with sea life at all. PSEG plants in New Jersey have cooling towers that can take treated wastewater from sewage plants, instead of drawing in billions of gallons of water from the oceans and rivers every day.

We shouldn't listen to the power-hungry investors who want to disregard killing wildlife, just to make money.

By insisting that older plants use closed cycle cooling, we can save thousands of fish, turtles, and other sea life.

## iPods: next generation of learning tools

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Many students use their iPods when doing homework or taking tests. And many of these students have their iPods confiscated by teachers.

While using iPods during class has been depicted as a heinous crime, the real wrong lies not in this. Rather, the actual crime is the deprivation of such a useful tool.

The iPod has already been proven as a versatile tool, but students might listen to music, play games or browse the web on these gadgets, but they could also be listening to a book on tape or a podcast on how to analyze a text.

The iPod has already been proven as a versatile tool, but what if PUSD were able to make the iPod into the ultimate learning tool? Sounds crazy, right? Believe it: this is the future of learning.

Schools across the country have already joined this iPod fad by adding it to their curriculums. Even prestigious universities such as Duke and Stanford have started using iPod technology to benefit their students. In fact, 93 classes at Duke require the use of an iPod.

This idea sparked after students at Duke used their iPods to record themselves for a class presentation. These colleges also use iPods to contact students about canceled classes or tests, or to post podcasts of class lectures.

Today, schools use iPods mostly to learn English as a second language and foreign languages.

Many non-native English speakers have learned to speak English through watching American television or listening to American music on these iPods.

Listening to music expands a human's vocabulary. For example, when a native Spanish speaker listens to American music, it provides them with a better understanding of the English language.

Likewise, the iPod could be used in Westview's own Spanish, French and Filipino classes.

If the foreign language classes were supplied with iPods, the teachers would be able to post podcasts for students to listen. Students would also be able to listen to music in the foreign language that they are learning.

Putting iPods into a school's curriculum can also make learning more interactive and entertaining.

Studies by Pedro Noguera, a New York University sociology professor, demonstrated that an increasing number of schools are trying to connect with students through the use of technology.

Some teachers have even designed educational games for students to play.

Some colleges are providing their students with iPods to use during class. At Abilene Christian University in Texas,

more than 600 iPhones and 300 iPods were purchased for the students, although students themselves had to foot the iPhone utility bill. The list of colleges providing iPods and iPhones is growing.

Some elementary schools are also providing iPods for their students. Last year, 300 iPods were given to New Jersey schools in the state's poorest school system as a part of a \$130,000 experiment to see the benefits of iPod usage in school.

The experiment showed that non-native English speaking students were able to switch out of their bilingual classes after just one year of using iPods.

By contrast, the average time it would have taken ranges from four to six years.

It is possible students will use iPods irresponsibly. If these slivers of technology are distributed by the school, the iPods can be set for strictly class use. Students would not have the opportunity to use these iPods on tests and cheat.

The use of iPods can be seen in education from elementary schools to colleges. However, iPods in high schools seems to be the missing piece.

Technology is the future of academics and the world. That is inevitable. Time will only tell when Westview and PUSD will choose to join in on the next technological revolution.

### Letter to the Editor

## No contradiction of due process in Proposition 8

For three volumes and four issues I have read the publication of *The Nexus*, a student newspaper worthy in all aspects of its prestigious awards. For these years, articles have come and gone, some seem frivolous, yet all were an interesting read. I come now because I can no longer maintain control over my discontent with the column written by Will Ellis in Issue 4.

There's a rational argument in support of Proposition 8, and through this, I would like to present such argument. This issue of defining marriage comes to two questions of legality and one of equality.

Under the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment to the United States Constitution, Americans have derived the Equal Protection Clause, as well as Due Process Clause. Though the 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Amendments, the Supreme Court has recognized an implied right to privacy. Finally, antagonists to Proposition 8 attacked the discrimination and inequality of this law. In the subject article, the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment is used out of context.

In its entirety, the clause states that, "no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges and immunities of the citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

Therefore in lieu of the author's argument, the constitutionality of this act comes to the qualifications of due process of law.

I ask then, does the voting majority of the residents of California, in multiple occasions, qualify as due process of law? How then does the majority opinion become expressed through the appropriate methods of the due process of law?

Therefore, if Proposition 8 is unconstitutional, then we must imply that citizens are found to have their privileges and immunities abridged without due process of law. In that light, I wholeheartedly feel that the voting of Proposition 8 is in itself, due process of law.

Let us now turn to the other famous provision of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the Equal Protection Clause. In order to effectively measure the qualifications of Equal Protection, we must observe the conditions of marriage.

Therefore, without equal protection of law, we are implying a lack of defense and an exposure to harm.

I ask then what standing does a marriage certificate, the stirring focus of this controversy, have to 'keep safe, defend, and guard from harm' those affected by this measure anymore than when they do not have said certificate?

I stress that a marriage certificate will do no more to protect a homosexual couple from harm and discrimination than they currently are subject to. I find that there is no harm to be had in this new definition of marriage.

- Jim Allen (12)

## Nuclear Iran poses no major danger to U.S.

**Will Ellis**  
STAFF WRITER

President Bush recently renewed his commitment to keeping Iran free of nuclear weapons, stating that it was grounded in the "safety of our people, and the safety of the world."

A day after Bush's statement, Mohamed ElBaradei, chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that the attempt to hinder Iran's nuclear ambitions was "a failure."

With announcements, the fear of a nuclear Iran once again emerged, a fear that may indeed lead to another war in the Middle East, even though it still lays quite a ways away.

Looking purely at Bush's statement, one would believe that we should go to war, with Iran should they gain nuclear capabilities that our lives and the lives of those around the world would be put at stake with such a rogue nation obtaining nuclear weapons.

Really a nuclear Iran is not a major threat to the United States or our close ally, Israel.

To instigate a war with Iran would harm

future possibilities of harmony between the United States and Iran.

The seemingly obvious solution of the United States' military powers being put to use in Iran would not be a wise choice for our country's livelihood. Certainly, it wouldn't be ideal for Iran to obtain nuclear weapons, but it wouldn't be the end of the world if Iran were to obtain some.

If the United States were to attack Iran for obtaining nuclear weapons capabilities, we would be forcing the pro-American Iranian populace to go against their better feelings so as to protect their home country.

And for those who fear for the welfare of America in a world with a nuclear Iran, let your fears be eased.

All you need to do is refer back to the cold war. Among the paranoia of a nuclear attack from the Soviet Union during the cold war, it became apparent that as long as the Soviet Union still wished to exist, it would not bomb the United States, as we too had nuclear weapons.

That is because both countries became aware of the basic law of nuclear entanglements, the edict of M.A.D.

M.A.D. stands for Mutually Assured

Destruction. This means if the Soviet Union were to instigate a nuclear war with the United States, the United States would fire back and both countries would, in turn, be obliterated. The same concept stands for tensions between all nuclear countries of the world today.

Even If Iran wished to harm the United States using its nuclear weapons, they wouldn't dare to, seeing as though they would be obliterated.

And yes, certainly the thought of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is a frightening concept. But the frightening scenario of Ahmadinejad lobbing nukes into Israel simply isn't rooted in reality. To be president of Iran more of a figurehead position than one of power; it would not be Ahmadinejad making the calls on how the nuclear weapons were to be used. That power lies in the hands of the still deplorable, but much more rational Ayatollah Khomeini, Iran's supreme ruler, who takes less powerful stances against Israel.

And even if Ahmadinejad were to have full control of the nuclear weapons, he simply would not use them against Israel. Israel is the home of Islam's holiest monument, the

### Iranian Nuclear Timeline

- 1970- Ratified Nuclear Non Proliferation Act
- 2004-Blueprints discovered for centrifuge, previously withheld
- 2015- Year that NIA predicts Iran could manufacture a nuclear weapon

Sidebar by Will Ellis  
Source: fas.org

Dome of the Rock, along with many other important Islamic landmarks.

With his extreme devotion to Islam, Ahmadinejad could not bring himself to attack Israel with nuclear weapons since it would have the very possible effect of destroying an Islamic landmark.

Let's stop this spread of fear about a nuclear Iran. Iran does not pose a major military danger to the United States, unless we were to instigate a military war. The fate of Iranian-U.S. relations lies not in the hands of Iran, but those of the United States.

### Perspectives

### Would podcasts of class lessons discourage students from going to class?

#### The Facts:

- Some teachers record lessons and post them on YouTube to help absent students
- These videos may also be used for general review

#### The Breakdown:

- Of 324 students polled, 165 students agreed while 159 disagreed

"No, I think it would actually help. This will give students the chance to study, review and get help for [upcoming] tests. It would also allow them to learn the material if they were absent."

- Ryan Lovelace (9)



"Of course it would. If you can get the same lesson at the comfort of your own home, then there is no incentive to go to school. Personally, I think I would still go to school, but I think many others would ditch."

- Austin Fox (10)



"Yes, but I also think it would be a useful tool for the students who had to miss class for legitimate reasons. I think that students should be responsible enough to attend class in the first place so as not to take advantage of the teacher's time."

- Courtney Strickland (11)



"Yes, I think podcasts of classes would discourage kids from going to class because our society has become so dependent on technology that a lot of students would see podcasts as being easier both academically and practically than class."

- Rachel Lofton (12)



"No, because podcasts serve to reinforce the lesson rather than replace it. Podcasts aren't as beneficial as actual classes, where a student can interact with the teacher. Therefore, students will still attend lessons."

- Lucy Chen (10)

