

LETTERS to the EDITOR

Princeton's class-and-caste system

I FOUND Robert Campbell's article "When building becomes 'branding'" (Arts/Entertainment, Aug. 4) fascinating, especially since I was a Brooklyn-born-and-bred kid who, by a fluke, ended up in the Princeton class of 1964.

Campbell has Princeton pegged rather well, but there's more to the tale. The Gothic buildings were part of Princeton's class-and-caste system when I was there. The wealthy students lived in the Gothic dorms. The scholarship students were all segregated in the non-Gothic dorms. The symbolism was clear. Everyone knew where he stood at Princeton by the dorm he lived in.

The rents for various dorms differed. The Gothic dorms were the most expensive. The non-Gothic dorms were cheaper. A scholarship student's budget had to be based upon the cheapest ac-

commodations, which is why all the scholarship students ended up in the same few dorms, all non-Gothic.

There was no need for racial segregation at Princeton back then; there was only one American black in my class, and he was the son of an Air Force general; the other nine or 10 blacks were sons of African princes or dictators or presidents. The only two Arabs were sons of Saudi Arabia's Prince (later King) Faisal. There were no women except for a couple of special students sent there under a CIA-sponsored program to learn critical languages (Russian and Chinese back then).

Architecture played an important role at Princeton in telling everyone who was where on the pecking order.

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Alternatives to runway plan

REGARDING ADRIAN Walker's Aug. 8 column, "Runway fight doesn't fly":

Because of the configuration of the new runway, flight patterns would be reconfigured to force almost all traffic crossing land at low elevations above South Shore towns every 45 to 50 seconds, day and night. There are alternatives that have been suggested by concerned citizens and experts:

■ Using the mouth of the harbor as primary runway access. That and similar modifications have been discussed with Federal Aviation Administration representatives who concurred that they were logical and workable solutions.

■ Other mitigations suggested earlier by environmental affairs secretary Robert Durand. Those included peak-period pricing and

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sive, struck the complacent Allied