

THE MONTH AT CALTECH

BIOLOGY CHAIRMAN

On April 1 Robert L. Sinsheimer, Caltech professor of biophysics since 1957, became chairman of the Institute's division of biology. He succeeds Ray Owen, who has held the position since 1961.

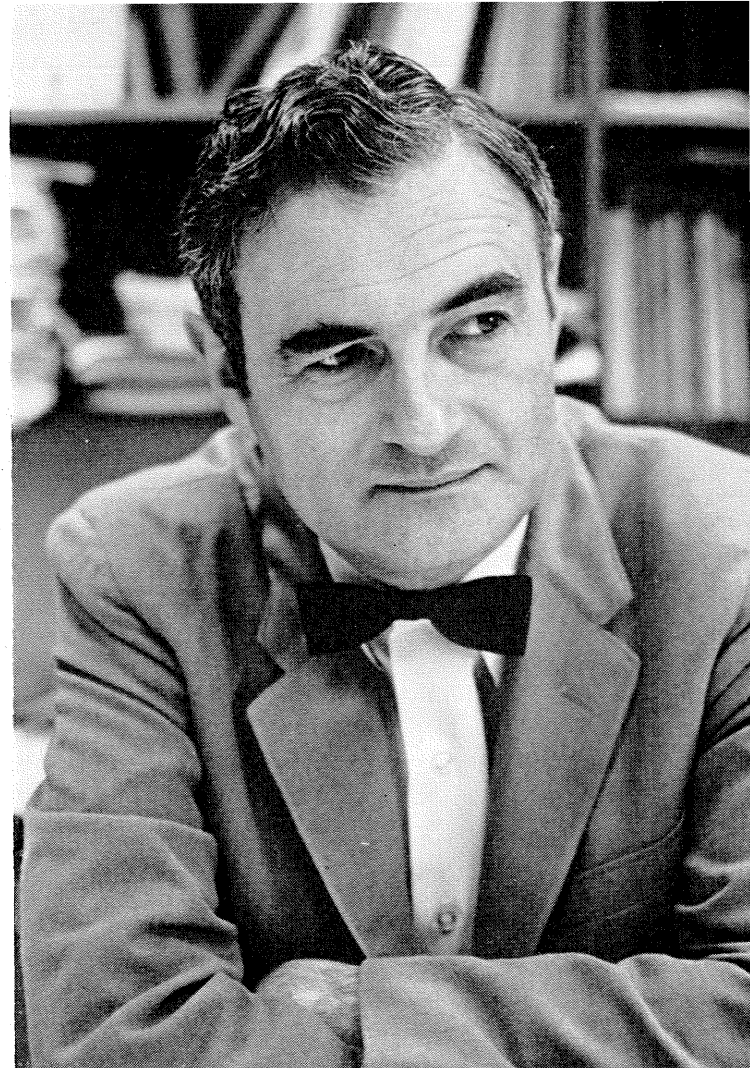
When Dr. Sinsheimer came to Caltech from Iowa State College, he continued his studies in biophysics and molecular biology, investigating the genetics of the virus Phi X 174. This work resulted in two significant discoveries—of the first single-stranded DNA and of the first ring-shaped DNA—both in Phi X 174. A more recent outcome of his work with Phi X 174 is the first artificial synthesis of active DNA from the virus—a collaborative effort with two Stanford University researchers.

While quietly and unobtrusively working toward this now widely publicized achievement, Dr. Sinsheimer has also been distinguishing himself in other areas.

It was not until 1965 when he gave his address, "The End of the Beginning," at the Institute's 75th Anniversary Conference that most of his colleagues became aware of his compelling prose style and his prophetic concept of the future.

On another level, his work with his large research group and on administrative committees both on campus and off has brought a recognition of his social consciousness and of his abilities to organize and direct action toward the solving of problems, meanwhile engendering goodwill in those working with him.

This goodwill is expressed by his colleagues who describe him as "a perceptive and deeply concerned intellectual leader" and as "a man with a great sense of responsibility for the



Robert Sinsheimer, chairman of the biology division

roles of science, of higher education, and of biology in particular" and by Dr. Owen, who says that Dr. Sinsheimer's appointment had "the enthusiastic support of the personnel of the division and of the administration."

As resigning chairman Dr. Owen is looking forward to freedom from the heavy burden of administrative duties. He plans to return to his research in immunology, and he will spend more time teaching. He also will rejoin the admissions committee, and he has a number of external obligations which include the chairmanship of the National Science Foundation's advisory committee in biology and medicine and of the National Institutes of Health's immunology study section, and vice-chairmanship of the World Health Organization's committee on transplantation antigens.

Appearances to the contrary, Dr. Owen insists, "I'm going to *deescalate*. I'm going to enjoy what James Bonner calls a 'moderate reincarnation.'"

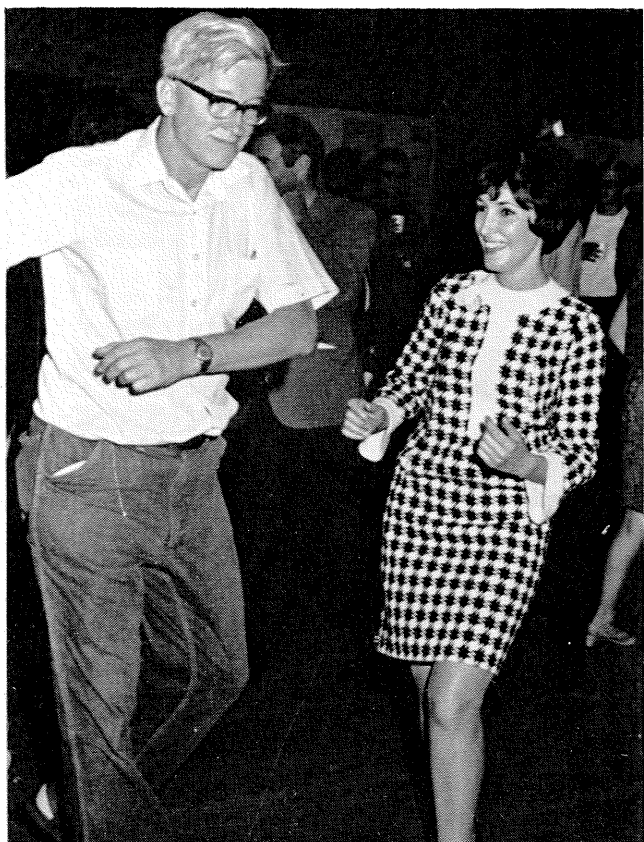
BIOLOGY'S BALL

Officially he became chairman on April 1, but Robert Sinsheimer actually started his "reign" over Caltech's biology division at an informal and lively Inauguration Ball on April 6, organized by the division and advertised as "celebrating the accession of Prince Heimer to the throne of King May." (translation: Prince Heimer—Sinsheimer; King May—Ray Owen.—Ed.)

The entertainment highlight was a presen-
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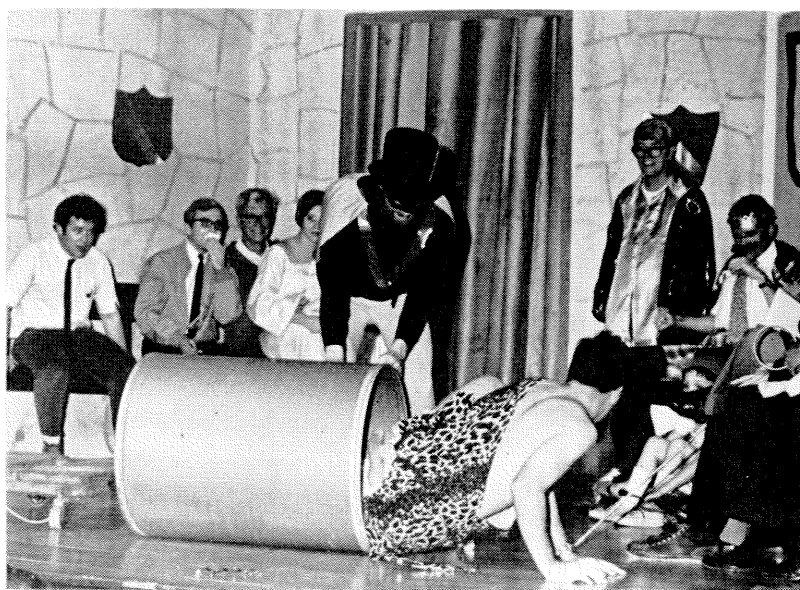
First-nighters Owen and Sinsheimer applaud the players.



Biology's Max Delbrück and Yvonne Harrington swing out.



Hero of the drama, Prince Heimer, makes magic in an oversized beaker and—poof—



—creates a "sort-of primitive vital structure" in a leopard skin, bringing King May to his feet with praise and—

—earning, thereby, the right to the crown and to hear the King's rousing finale, "It's not my problem now."



tation by the biodramatic seminar of a musical fairy tale, *All the King's Men*, in which the monarch (played by professor of biology William Wood) calls together the princes of his kingdom to determine which is worthy to inherit the throne. In a satirical portrayal of the princely figures of the biology division (Princes Dullbrick, Boner, Retardi, Vinegar, and others—alias professors Delbrück, Bonner, Attardi, and Vinograd) each tries to prove himself in dramatic hilarity, but only Prince Heimer succeeds (by creating life in a large beaker) and wins the crown in a highly unconventional coronation.

A thank-you to the offstage Ray Owen was emceed by Max Delbrück, professor of biology, who presented a "lecture in bio-astronomy" and with it a gift to Dr. Owen from his colleagues—a 30-lb stainless steel sundial. This spectacular engineering feat is the result of much research and collaboration by Institute astronomers, physicists, biologists, and engineers, and is inscribed: For Many Rays of Sunshine—To King Ray from his Princes.

MCCARTHY IN ACADEMIA

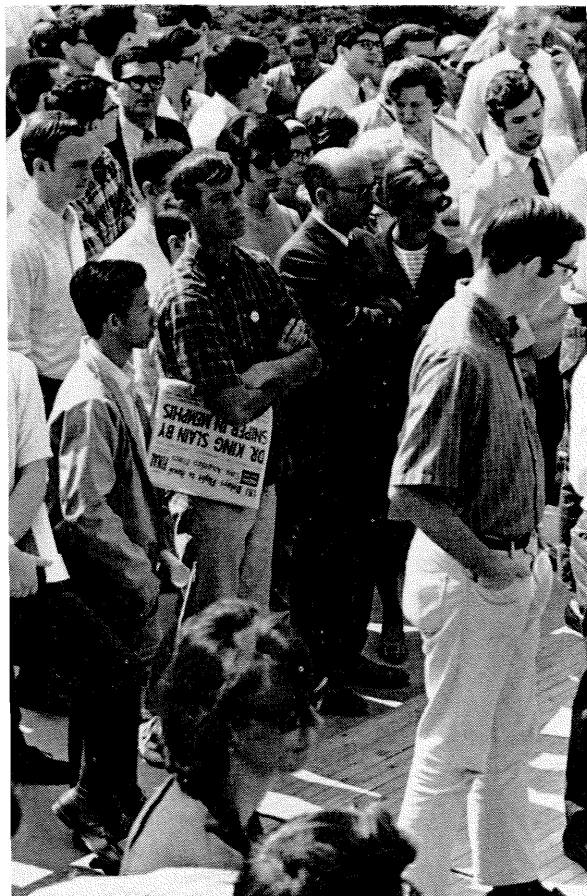
The occupants of three sleeping bags at the foot of the speaker's platform on the Olive Walk were the vanguard of a crowd of more than 3,000 who gathered at Caltech on April 5 to greet and hear Senator Eugene McCarthy.

Bodies in trees, on rooftops, hanging out of windows, and filling the hollow between Firestone and Winnett made up the assembled crowd of students and faculty and the politically active and curious of Pasadena.

Warm sunshine and the crowd's good spirits produced an enthusiastic welcome for the senator, who is the first presidential candidate to accept the invitation of the Caltech YMCA to its candidates' forum. The welcome was the most exuberant part of his visit, however. Eugene McCarthy smiled and waved with a reserve that characterized his entire appearance. He spoke of a "new politics of reason" and was himself the personification of the phrase. His words were supported by persistent applause which never broke into real en-



Eugene McCarthy answers the call of the Caltech YMCA and opens the presidential race on campus.



"The highest form of patriotism is to serve your country . . . in the name of truth."



thusiasm. The strongest response came when Senator McCarthy spoke in support of alternative service under the draft and of granting amnesty to those who leave the country.

From his opening, "This is the most pleasant setting I've spoken in in this campaign" to his closing, "If we do well in 1968, we'll just skip 1984," Senator McCarthy's was an academic appearance in an academic setting drawing an academic response.

HONORS AND AWARDS

H. Russell Bintzer, formerly vice president for development, has been named vice president for institute relations. Curzon Fager, the former development campaign coordinator, is now director of development.

Harold J. Wayland, Caltech professor of engineering science, has been named an associate editor of a new scientific journal, *Microvascular Research*, aimed at fostering communication among the physical, engineering, biological, and clinical sciences.

George S. Hammond, who is Caltech's Arthur Amos Noyes Professor of Organic Chemistry and acting chairman of the division of chemistry and chemical engineering, has been awarded the American Chemical Society's annual James Flack Norris Award for his research in physical organic chemistry.

HAROLD BABCOCK 1882-1968

Harold Delos Babcock, who was a member of the Mount Wilson and Palomar Observatories staff from 1909 to 1948 and father of Horace W. Babcock (the present director of the observatories), died on April 8 at the age of 86. In his many years' work as a solar astronomer, Dr. Babcock discovered that the sun's magnetic field reverses periodically. He also did significant work on the spectra of sun spots, especially in the infrared wavelengths. Much of his research was done with a small telescope at George Ellery Hale's private observatory near the Caltech campus. Dr. Babcock, although officially retired 20 years ago, worked at the observatories until very recently.