Vonnegut—
not funny

**Review of Books**

*By Paul Schindler*

This book is Vonnegut's 50th birthday present to himself, he tells us, as if he is going to liberate the monogerist that has served him well in his previous efforts, most especially *Elliot Rosewater and Kigore Trout*, a philandering-crazy and a science-fiction-writer-crazy, respectively.

In the past, it was possible to assume that Trupp was Vonnegut's humor, but since he himself appears in this story, that assumption is no longer valid. Thus, the author looks a little less crazy than usual in this novel.

Vonnegut's humor is the humor of context, so it is very difficult to pull a few lines from the book to illustrate this man's wit. Suffice it to say that he is funny in Breakfast... although less funny than in his other books (he expresses and develops a concept of nerves as bad chemicals, thus touching base with his science-fiction roots, which is where most MIT students probably know him from), and the book is worth reading. But as noted before, only if you've read one of his others.

**Breakfast of Champions?**

*By Michael McNamee*

I remember reading, during my time as a hard-core science-fiction fan, an interview with Kurt Vonnegut in which he stated something to the effect that the bad "started out as a semi-writer, bad at writing." At that time, I was outraged — this guy owed his position in literature to sci-fi and here he was scorning it, treating it like this!!! I've come to change my mind, however, as I've become less a rabid fan, and Vonnegut wrote his latest two books, *Slaughterhouse Five* and *Breakfast of Champions*. Maybe it's just as well — for Vonnegut, if he is no longer associated with the field.

Vonnegut's long suit, I always seemed to me, was surrealism and witticism, but nevertheless funny. It was a job that was reiated to both sci-fi and humor...