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Mass Grave Found in Georgia (USA)

"I don't know what's worse, him dying, or this"

All over the world, newspapers, magazines, radio stations reported yesterday on a crematorium in the small town of Nobel, Georgia that had been reportedly stockpiling rather than cremating bodies for an indeterminate period ranging from three to twenty years.

Bodies were found scattered in the woods, and stacked in storage sheds around the 16-acre property.

The secret was exposed when a dog unearthed a human skull and brought it to its owner. Authorities have found a hundred bodies so far and expect to find more.

Some of the corpses are said to be upwards of twenty years old while others are just out of the hospital morgue (many still had tags on their toes).

The manager (Mr. Marsh, 28) of the crematorium was arrested and charged with five counts of "theft by deception" for taking payment for cremations he did not perform.

When asked why the bodies had not been cremated, he said the incinerator was not working. No other explanation was given, nor one accounting for the fact that the manager was almost as old as some of the bodies.

Perhaps most interesting are quotations from families of the dead and others related to this story, which range from emotional to something stranger. Some of these quotations are compiled here, in a sort of inventory of a distinctly American reaction to bizarre, less-than-violent circumstances of death and the macabre.

"He was stacked in a barn," Neva Mason (about her husband) was quoted by the New York Times as saying. "We don't know if he was stacked on top of people or with people stacked on top of him. We don't know if he was wearing clothes. I don't know what's worse, him dying, or this," she said.

"We have laws against desecrating graves, but we can't find one against desecration of bodies," Vernon Keenan said. "I guess nobody in the Legislature ever thought something like this could happen."

She said: "I've got someone in an urn, or something. I don't know what."

"I'm sick over it," said Dustin Oliver, 19. "You wouldn't even do
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I DEMAND A CORPSE RECOUNT!



Reading Between the Lines: Major Media fails to represent the realities of civilian casualties. Above, screen shots from (clockwise) NBC News, CNN.com, ABC News and CBS' "The Early Show".

Bard in NY students challenge U.S. Gov., NGO's and Major Media over civilian death toll in Afghanistan

Rafi Rom

There is no shortage of grainy, distant photographs of bombs landing on Afghanistan's rugged terrain, or shots of military units marching courageously across the desert.

But with all the bombs falling ground troops moving, one image remains out of sight: civilian casualties, which, according to a study conducted by Bard students, could be over 2,500.

In an attempt to shed light on this blackout of coverage concerning Afghanistan, a group of Bard students compiled a lengthy study analyzing the role of the United States government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the media, in filtering content. The

study focused on the number of civilian casualties resulting from United States attack since the beginning of the war, reaching a conclusion that the "minimum number of casualties" is around 1,901.

The students, Sarah Parady, Vincent Valdmanis, Matt Aho and Danielle Brown, were all participants at Bard's new globalization program in New York City last semester, where they researched
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Chilton and Neussner Retell the Story of Ancient Israel

Emily Schmall

Two thousand years ago, Israel was at peace. The division among cultures, religions, and peoples did not occur until later, approximately 60 years after the birth of Christ.

In their recently released book, *The Brother of Jesus*, Bard professors Dr. Bruce Chilton and Dr. Jacob Neussner examine the words and works of one man who embodied the nation of Israel before the great faith-based divide.

James, one of the siblings of Jesus, is a cusp figure between Judaism and Christianity, according to Dr. Chilton. He added, "James was a lens in which both Jews and Christians could see one another."

The book takes a critical look at one of theology's most controversial figures. The professors engaged students during their several-year-long process of writing the life of James by hosting a series of lectures and presentations. "It was as a result of working with students in researching James that an initial stumbling block would be the notion of Jesus having a brother," Chilton said.

Faiths vary in their consid-

eration of James, which makes the authority of the information about him debatable. "All New Testament problems are controversial," Neussner explained. Some fundamental Christians would argue that Jesus had no true siblings, but The Brother of James suggests that James was not only legitimate, but that, because of his relationship to Jesus, he has an authoritative voice about the historical, social, and religious practices of the time.

The premier scholar on the subject, John Painter, answers the question of who James was, based on the perspectives of several ethnic groups in Israel. While his relationship to Jesus will always be arguable, Neussner believes the life of James can be viewed as a historical window, clearing up uncertainties about social and cultural aspects of ancient Israel. "James will always represent a figure of culture, whether he comes to be institutionalized or not," Neussner said.

Through the life of James, clues about the climate of first-century Israel can be seen. As Neussner discusses in the book's introduction, "Whether from the
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Bard Student Fighting in Afghanistan

First-Year student brings it straight to Al Qaeda

Kerry Chance

For Mike Castillo, the end of last semester involved a trip longer than most students were taking. Part of the Marines for several years, Mike and his unit had been summoned to Afghanistan. In an e-mail interview, Mike spoke with us about his experiences in the hotbed of post-Sept 11th attentions.

When and where are you going, and what are you going to be doing there? How long will you be there? How does what you are doing relate to the Marines' larger mission there?

I'm on full active duty with orders to report to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina any day now. While in Lejeune I will be working in my field of specialty, food service, I am a cook. My orders say I am to serve approximately 18 months, and out of those 18 months, six will be overseas. Possibly Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, or wherever the government feels we are needed. My mission has always been to feed Marines. Wherever the infantry Marines go, me and my Marines are right there with them making sure they have all that is needed to fight.

Why were you called onto active duty at this point in the war?



At all times a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) is patrolling the world, ready to deploy and storm any country's coast. The MEU's work in tours of six months. The MEU that is handling the situation overseas is getting ready to come back to the US, they have been deployed since May or June. My unit has been called to serve as a replacement.

What is your position in the Marines, and what does it mean
continued on page 3...



A Night to Remember: HRP Talk on Memory, Violence and Human Rights

Lora Jaramillo

In a recent lecture in Olin, Princeton University sociology professor Elizabeth Jelin explored the relationship between oppression and the memory of political events. In the February 15th lecture, entitled "Contested Memories of Repression in the Southern Cone: Commemorations in a Comparative Perspective," Jelin explained that the commemoration of political events is shaped by who is in power, which makes the memory of political oppression tenuous.

Jelin heads the Memory Project at Princeton, a program dedicated to finding institutional and cultural answers to political oppression. Jelin studies the individual and collective subjectivity of memory. "Memory is never linear," she said. According to Jelin, in a climate where opposition is silenced, there is great disparity between the private and public memory. She explores how people remember political oppression, and discussed how political propaganda can affect the way in which people commemorate historical dates. People can repress memories, and then have them resurface years later when it is safe to remember.

Public dates become an object of conflict after political coups. Jelin used Chile's September 11th, 1973 military coup d'état as a case

study, comparing it to coups in Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil. The overthrow of the socialist government in Chile in 1973 raised many questions about who gets to commemorate political events and how. Chileans are divided as to whether socialist president Allende committed suicide or was killed during the storming of La Moneda by the right-wing military regime. "In Chile, September 11th is considered a day of liberation from the Socialist yoke, while the left considers it a shameful political event," said Jelin.

The language used to describe political events is important and. In her interviews with officers of Pinochet's military regime, Jelin was careful use the word "revolution" instead of "coup," because to the right it was a revolution. The appropriation of leftist political vocabulary often occurs. The military emphasizes their role as saviors of the people, anti-Marxist, and pro-nationalist.

Jelin said, "Performative acts are very important in the beginning," when free speech is limited. In a repressive political climate symbolic acts are the main forms of resistance. In Chile, every September 11th women would go out into the streets dressed in black and walk past the door of the Moneda where Allende had exited, to commemorate the day the socialist government was overthrown. Before Chile became

socialist again, a wall was put up outside the symbolic door, preventing protesters, who were in opposition of Pinochet's regime, from marching by the spot. During Pinochet's dictatorship, he was never present at the palace on September 11th. When the regime fell and Lagos, a socialist president, came to power, he stayed in La Moneda on September 11th.

As another example: Brazil's military coup occurred on April 1st (April Fool's Day) 1964, but the new regime declared that it actually happened on March 31st. The actual date, too charged with the Brazilian cultural significance of humor, was changed, rerouting public consciousness.

Jelin raised questions which are yet to be answered: "Can youth, who in reaction to the earlier generation become apathetic or militaristic, productively question the actions of their predecessors?" "How can the State take responsibility for past actions?" Jelin emphasized the role of the Human Rights Movement in helping to shape State policy. She ended by saying, "Symbolic commemorations will not cover lack of justice."

In an on-going lecture series, the Human Rights Project will be presenting Professor Christopher Fynsk (SUNY Binghamton) on Feb. 19th, John Fout (Bard) on Feb. 26th, and Judith Butler (UC Berkeley) on March 19th.

Complaints of Reckless Shuttle Driving Apparently Ignored

Jonah Weiner

Last semester a new Red Hook-Tivoli-Campus shuttle driver was hired, and quickly became the subject of some controversy on campus. Complaints piled up rapidly and vehemently, both in informal discussions at Kline and, formally, with Ken Cooper at Security and Ed Smith at the Transportation Office--students generally cited excessive lateness and gross non-adherence to the posted shuttle schedule. Many students reported and continue to report that, on several occasions, the shuttle driver would take unscheduled "dinner breaks," show up anywhere from five to 15 minutes late at pick-ups, and, at least two times over intercession, was actually found napping on the job while students were presumably waiting in places as nearby as the CCS and as far off as Red Hook. On one such occasion the shuttle driver remained parked in front of Manor Dormitory for approximately 40 minutes, refusing to drive the shuttle because a truck, though presenting no obstacle, was stopped twenty feet ahead on the road. When a student called security to ask if this was in accordance with official policy, an officer was sent out to "investigate" the situation; only then did the shuttle driver start up again, nearly an hour off of schedule.

That something was amiss with the new driver first reached the attention of Ken Cooper and Ed Smith last fall, when a group of students filed a report that the shuttle driver had driven recklessly on Annandale Road, almost hit-

ting them and responding to their cries by turning the shuttle around and, as several students waiting at Kline reported, driving back to confront them. The shuttle driver contended that the students had appeared out of nowhere, "jumped out of the trees," and rushed out at the fast-moving shuttle in a gesture of antagonism. Despite the severity of the report, Ken Cooper started no investigation of the matter, nor did Ed Smith, until reporters from the Free Press made an appointment to discuss it. At that time, Ed Smith assured the Press that appropriate measures were being taken and that the driver would be "gone after January." An article about the accusations of reckless driving was shelved in the face of what seemed to be a final, albeit inexplicably late, response to an increasing array of complaints.

This semester, however, the shuttle driver is still driving and, as a brief survey of shuttle-goers indicates, the problems have hardly disappeared. Most students spoken to suggested that the problem seemed especially dramatic because of the relative reliability and timeliness of other shuttle drivers. Strangely, the promised action on Smith's suggestion that the driver would be removed has not materialized, despite several incidents that have occurred since the alleged case of reckless driving and endangerment--most notably over intercession. Students are encouraged to call Ed Smith at the Transportation Office and Ken Cooper at Security with any questions or comments.

"I've got someone in an urn, or something. I don't know what."

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that to your dog, I mean, dump them in the woods like that."

"You have a hard enough time when you lose somebody you love. This is like losing them all over again," he said. "At this point, I don't know what there is we can do except pray for them that done it."

Dr. Phil Spears, 28, said the discovery was hardest on those whose loved ones may be among the piled-up corpses.

"All I can think of his body lying out in a shed with a bunch of dead people," Pat Higdon said. "Four months, rotting away. No respect to him at all." "He looked like a corpse for two months before he died. He just laid there with his mouth open and his eyes open," an emotional Higdon said. "I can't bear to think he still looks like that, only he's lying in a shed or a creek somewhere."

Walker County Coroner Dewayne Wilson said, "The worst horror movie you've ever

seen? Imagine that 10 times worse. That is what I'm dealing with."

Georgia Gov. Roy Barnes, who declared a state of emergency at the 16-acre site, met with distressed family members, some of whom brought urns of what they were told were the ashes of the deceased. "I feel terrible and I wish I had a magic wand to make it go all away," Barnes said.

compiled from major media outlets.

The Bard Free Press

freepress@bard.edu
Campus Mail Box 792

http://freepress.bard.edu
845-758-7079

The Free Press reserves the right to edit all submissions for spelling, grammar, and coherence. It protects the student journalists' First Amendment rights and accepts the responsibility which accompanies that freedom. Content decisions are made by the student editors and the staff. The Free Press will not print any material that is libelous in nature. Anonymous submissions are only printed if the writer consults with the section editor or editor-in-chief about the article.

All articles in the Opinions section reflect the opinions of the author, not necessarily those of the Free Press staff. Responses to Opinions articles are welcome, and can be sent to freepress@bard.edu

Contributors: Brandon Welfel, Allison Forbes, Ellsabetta Zellinka, Matt Dineen, Sarah Dopp, Cinta Contl-Cook, Rachel Chatalbash, Kent Johnson

Editor in Chief
Chris Downing
Rafi Rom

News Editor
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Special Thanks
Theresa Desmond

Mike Castillo, Student and Marine

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in terms of what you're trained to do and/or specialize in?
I am a corporal of Marines. I work directly under Marine sergeants and make sure that all the orders that are given out by the sergeants are carried out by the privates and new joins. As of June 2002 I'll be promoted to the rank of sergeant as well.
How did you come to join the Marines, why did you want to, and what experiences have you had in your time serving?
I joined the Marines right after turning 18 years old. I had gone to college for one semester and decided that college was not for me at the time. I did not want to stay home or work some boring job, so I decided to join the Marines and go to college when I completed my tour. After seeing Kubrick's "Full Metal Jacket" I knew the Marines were the place for me.
Why did you choose to come to Bard after being on active duty in the Marines?



istan so far?
It does not matter to me how people feel the US military's relationship with Afghanistan or any other country is. Things need to get done. I am a professional and the military is paying me to do a job, and allotting me money for school as well, so you better believe if I am ordered to carry out an order it is going to be carried out.
What is the most memorable experience you have had with the Marines?
There are too many memorable, unforgettable moments I have had in the Marines. I can not start yet to put them on paper. Maybe when I get back. But.....
If I really told you why I joined the Marines you will not print it. I became a Marine because I wanted to shoot and blow shit up.

I came to Bard because I heard it had a good photography program. It was the only college I applied to and after being denied access into the school twice I was accepted on my third try. I didn't like attending school in the city and I needed a change of scenery. My younger brother is also a junior here, and I wanted to be close to him.

Do you want to go on this mission, why or why not?
It does not matter if I want to go on this mission or not. I am a Marine first, before I'm a college student, and have been ordered to participate on a mission. Marines carry out missions, that is what we do. Bard will have to wait, Bard will be here when I get back, and I will be back. To you tell you the truth, it really does not bother me participating in this mission though, I am pretty excited. Those who know me know that I am not wrapped too tight. In a sick kind of way I miss military life. When I come back from wherever it is the government sends me I am pretty the

sure the pictures I produce will be the most interesting people have seen in a while, it is pretty hard for me to produce pictures up in Annandale. Nothing motivates me here.

How are you preparing for this, mentally and physically? Why

It does not matter if I want to go on this mission or not. I am a Marine first, before I'm a college student, and have been ordered to participate on a mission.

do you feel ready or not?
I am really not doing much to prepare. Since September 11th, I have been prepared to leave. I was surprised that it took so long for them to call me, I thought I would have been called

back onto active duty September 12th.
Some people have protested or expressed dissatisfaction with the military's relationship with the worsening refugee problem in Afghanistan, and have raised questions about the bombing of the prison camp a few weeks ago and, more recently, the bombing of the so-called Taliban envoy. What do you say to these people? Do you personally have any reservations and/or problems with the military's actions in Afghan-

I also wanted to do something different and travel out of NY, but the bottom line was I wanted blow shit up. I wanted to be tough, I wanted to be hardcore. When I was young I would ask my father if I could play with his guns and he would reply "Son, if you want a gun join the ARMY or become a cop, then no one one can tell you anything". So I joined the Marines and now I have an M-16 and a grenade launcher. Where else can you walk around with heavy guns, talk shit, and blow shit up while getting money from the government?

What about "Full Metal Jacket"?

In "Full Metal Jacket" there are two characters by the name of Joker and Rafter Man. They are both combat correspondents. I want to be like them. Roam with a camera and a gun. Also, the Drill Instructor in the movie was incredible. I wanted to see one in person, up close and find out if it was like the movie. It was and I loved it.

The Free Press would like to wish Mike the best of luck and safety in his new assignment and hope he comes back to Annandale soon. Photo's courtesy of Danny Castillo.

WSEXBC Lives

Bard Radio, Finally On Air and On Line, gets Raunchy this Spring

Dan Lichtblau

Finally, after countless years of emo-beset music hours and Dungeons & Dragons talk shows whose bandwidth struggled to reach beyond the Manor Lounge, Bard radio is beginning to look like a respectable institution.

This semester the Bard radio station, WXBC, will begin internet-broadcasting a variety of allegedly diverse music and talk shows through the WXBC website. Another first for WXBC is that, thanks to some high technology improvements, its 540AM broadcast is actually audible now, loud and clear, on radios across campus. Soon the station will stream outside of the Bard Network, says WXBC music director Eli Lehroff.

In addition to this broadcasting change, the Bard radio station itself has undergone a notable clean-up and remodeling. The station now has two separate booths, a new lounge/performance space, and an improved library space complete with an expanded and

updated music collection.

Also this semester, WXBC will be continuing to sponsor concerts in the red room. Currently in the works is a possible show with The Seconds, The Ex-Models, and Les Savy Fav. It seems as though Bard radio is indeed changing for the better, and maybe its time that Bard's underwhelmed listening public give it a second chance.

In the words of Eli Lehroff, "Listen to your radio. Love your radio." And, in a totally random and limited grouping, you can tune into Patrick Farrell's show 8-10pm on Sunday evenings for a tour from jazz through hip hop with detours through soul. Shugie Otis mixes into Bobby Digital. And on Sunday nights from 10-12 Dan Brunnemer tries his hand at a comedy talk show with bad lounge music accompaniment. Mondays from 8-10 DJs Tiger Schulmann and Male F.U.E.L. spin adult contemporary, electro, and beats to bang in the jeep. "Mannheim Steamroller, Fabolous, and everywhere in between," said Tiger.



student.bard.edu/wxbc

- [monday] 12pm to 2am everyday.**
- | | |
|--|--|
| 12 PM : Ciprian Iancu | [tuesday] |
| 2 PM : Bjorn Quenemoen | 12 PM : Mary Wilson |
| 4 PM : Josh Sautter | 2 PM : Eli Lehrhoff |
| 6 PM : Andrew Steinmetz | 4 PM : Lacy Simkowitz and Alex Dumonte |
| 8 PM : Jonah Weiner and Huffa Frobes-Cross | 6 PM : Thomas Quigley |
| 10 PM : Adam Conover | 8 PM : Seth Mabbott |
| 12 AM : Aaki Bermiss | 10 PM : Dan Cummings |
| | 12 AM : Jon Dilks |
- [wednesday]**
- | | |
|---|--|
| 12 PM : Mike Nason | [thursday] |
| 2 PM : Jean Pesce | 12 PM : Ross Norman |
| 4 PM : Connor Gaudet | 2 PM : Jeff Eastman |
| 6 PM : Brian Schneider and Tavit Gudelekian | 4 PM : Ben Wadler |
| 8 PM : Jason Jones | 6 PM : JW McCormick |
| 10 PM : Jon Feinstein and Tonio Hubilla | 8 PM : Shaun Winter |
| | 10 PM : Gabe Rey-Good latte |
| | 12 AM : Lydia Willoughby and Kim Pereira |
- [friday]**
- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 12 PM : Boris Izraelyit | [saturday] |
| 2 PM : Matt Dineen | 12 PM : Alex Cannon and Mike Lerman |
| 4 PM : Jacob Pritzner | 2 PM : Ben Popik, Alex Hale, and Jon Capone (featuring the "South Hall Crew") |
| 6 PM : BJ Crucima | 4 PM : Michael Martin Jr. |
| 8 PM : Evan Gregg | 6 PM : Tucker Porder |
| 10 PM : Josh Buzzell, Matt Wellins | 8 PM : Jennifer Ronald |
| 12 AM : Jonathon Weed | 10 PM : Matt Hurst |
- [sunday]**
- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 12 PM : Ged Gengras | |
| 2 PM : Jael Makagon | |
| 4 PM : Molly Schoemann | |
| 6 PM : Drew Gray | |
| 8 PM : Patrick Farrell | |
| 10 PM : Dan Brenemmer | |
| 12 AM : Ryan Muller | |
- Contact Eli Lehrhoff at el659@bard.edu**



WXBC's library or music reviewer Tosh Chiang's record collection? Look very closely and you can see his copy of the new Shakira album. Hmm...

Behind the Scenes at Big Media

source: www.FAIR.org



"Special Report with Brit Hume" (11/5/01)



CNN Chairman Walter Isaacson said, it "seems perverse to focus too much on the casualties or hardship in Afghanistan...As we get good reports from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, we must redouble our efforts to make sure we do not seem to be simply reporting from their vantage or perspective. We must talk about how the Taliban are using civilian shields and how the Taliban have harbored the terrorists responsible for killing close to 5,000 innocent people."

In a follow-up memo from Rick Davis, CNN's head of standards and practices, that suggested sample language for news anchors:

"We must keep in mind, after seeing reports like this from Taliban-controlled areas, that these U.S. military actions are in response to a terrorist attack that killed close to 5,000 innocent people in the U.S.' or, 'We must keep in mind, after seeing reports like this, that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan continues to harbor terrorists who have praised the September 11 attacks that killed close to 5,000 innocent people in the U.S.,' or 'The Pentagon has repeatedly stressed that it is trying to minimize civilian casualties in Afghanistan, even as the Taliban regime continues to harbor terrorists who are connected to the September 11 attacks that claimed thousands of innocent lives in the U.S.'...even though it may start sounding rote, it is important that we make this point each time."



A memo circulated by Ray Glenn at the Panama City (Florida) News Herald and leaked to Jim Romanesko's Media News warned editors: "DO NOT USE photos on Page 1A showing civilian casualties from the U.S. war on Afghanistan. Our sister paper in Fort Walton Beach has done so and received hundreds and hundreds of threatening e-mails and the like.... DO NOT USE wire stories which lead with civilian casualties from the U.S. war on Afghanistan. They should be mentioned further down in the story. If the story needs rewriting to play down the civilian casualties, DO IT. The only exception is if the U.S. hits an orphanage, school or similar facility and kills scores or hundreds of children."

Objective Civilian Casualty Figures M.I.A.

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the report, titled "The Right to Know: One of the Many Casualties in Afghanistan."

The students hope to update the project and then publish it. The entire report will also be available on the web shortly.

The first part of the study reports on how various actors have influenced the coverage of the war. They found that "it seems as if the governments involved are working hard, if not to conceal this information from the public, then, to divert public attention away from it. The media, acting more as a 'fourth branch' than a 'fourth estate' does the same."

Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, and his colleagues at the State Department, rarely mention civilian casualties. Instead, Pentagon briefings concentrate on technical aspects of war, such as satellite photos of destroyed targets that "show the effectiveness of the military's efforts." These briefings are designed as "an optimistic update of the war in Afghanistan coupled with an ominous warning that the threat of terrorism still hangs over the world."

The study also criticized NGOs in Afghanistan for keeping many tallies confidential. "For the most part," the report reads, "it appears as if officials from NGOs prefer to discuss casualties, if at all, with members of the news media, who then pass their reports on to the public." The report also criticized the media for paying so little attention to civilian casualties.

The second part uses quantitative research to tally the total possible number of civilian deaths, a job usually undertaken by various major media outlets. The numbers vary from a conservative estimate of 837 deaths to 2,518 casualties.

This project also critiqued University of New Hampshire Professor Marc Herold's report, "A Dossier of Civilian Victims of United States' Aerial Bombing Afghanistan." Professor Herold's study is the only other civilian body count available.

Besides updating the report through the rest of 2001, the Bard

project examined the flaws of Herold's study.

"Though he claims to use non-Taliban sources," the Bard study reads, "the majority of his numbers are in fact quotes from Taliban officials, reported by the sources he cites...it is misleading to give them more credibility than they merit by reporting them to be non-Taliban claims."

Many of his reports were also duplicates. Between Bard's most liberal tally and his there still lies a 500 number discrepancy.

Parady, a junior at Simon's Rock, said, "We have sought to discredit Herold's research not to

Taliban numbers (which are much higher than U.S. figures) and various anti-American agencies. Other sources included witness reports and research done by human rights watchdog groups. In total, over 30 sources spanning the globe were referenced.

The four students embarked on the research project after noticing a lack of concrete information available from any international news sources. They hope their findings will contribute to the ongoing debate around military intervention.

"Anything that reminds people of the cost of military

[the numbers]

First tally: 837 (western press, independent organization, eyewitnesses)

Second tally: 1,901 (includes non-

Taliban Afghan Islamic Press agency tallies)

Third tally: 2,518 (includes Taliban and other somewhat questionable claims)

[through December 31]

disprove the fact that a grotesque number of civilians have died in Afghanistan, but rather to prove beyond all doubt that they have. Keep this number in your mind: 837. That's the number our government should no longer be able to deny."

The data collected was organized into two charts. The first gives a day-by-day account of military attacks, casualties, and international reactions. The second is a critique modelled after Herold's study that categorizes the credibility of the sources into seven levels.

The students acknowledge that the study is far from conclusive. Valdmanis, a junior at Bard, said, "this was a difficult endeavor because the various parties involved have interest in withholding or exaggerating information. All sides spin numbers to suit their needs." The four tallies have different thresholds of information included. The most conservative estimate relied heavily on mainstream news sources and U.S. government estimates, whereas the most liberal tally included some

action is important - I'm not endorsing or condemning American military intervention - but citizens of a democracy with the world's most powerful military need to have accurate information about what their government is doing," said Valdmanis. He added, "Obviously Donald Rumsfeld isn't going to solicit input from hippies at Bard, but we hope our report is a small contribution to public knowledge about what's going on in Afghanistan."

The study was in part inspired by the rash of reports detailing the guidelines of major news organizations either outrightly censoring or limiting news of Afghan civilian casualties. Governmental officials and news executives have pressed for either a total blackout of this coverage, or reminding the television and print-media audience of the events of September 11th. Indicative of this stance was General Myers comment on the Arab news station Al Jazeera. He said, "when I think of civilian casualties I think back to September 11th when we had over 5,000 intentionally targeted civilians."

Back to biblical basics

...continued from page 1

perspective of that sector of Christianity which, from then to now, insists that its faith fulfills the faith of Israel and its revealed Torah, or from the perspective of that other sector, that insists upon the opposite-a Christianity autonomous of Israel and in no way a species of the genus Judaism-James remains a focal figure."

According to Karl Donfried, a religion professor at Smith College and author who spoke at the February 13th book signing of The Brother of James, Neusner dispels a major myth: it is widely believed that there was a single Judaism and a single Christianity in the first century. Neusner claims that there were several Judaisms, which Donfried said, "leads to a new conceptualization about the

relationship of Judaism and Christianity." The separation of faiths was not as clear-cut as it is today.

The book proposes that James is a representation of Israel clutching to cultural customs and embracing new religious practices. He seems to struggle with a desire to maintain the Hebrew practices of his heritage while emerging in what Donfried calls the "Jesus movement," which was the earliest form of Christianity. Though James centered his worship on the Temple, which was later destroyed by the Romans in the year 70, he also propagated the teachings of Jesus, and is now documented by Chilton and Neusner as one of the leaders of the new Christian church.

The Christianity which emerged midway through the first

century relied heavily on the ancient, ritualistic traditions of early Judaism. "James said keep the Torah and believe," Chilton said. It was this version of Christianity that was predominant until the time of James' death in the year 62, according to Chilton. Only later did diverse forms of Christianity branch out according to varying interpretations of the Scriptures.

"The separation of religion and culture is a very modern development," Neusner said. "Economics, politics, religion and culture permeated the lives of all."

The interrelationship of Jewish culture and what became Christian religion is explored more fully in Chilton's book, Rabbi Jesus.

Bard Destroys Wall Street!

World Economic Forum protestors descend on NYC

Emily Schmall

It is fun to be in a city on the brink of action. An air of anxiety and excitement drifted through subway stations, clothing stores, and supermarkets, where conversation frequently turned to the well-publicized, much anticipated World Economic Forum meeting, and the expected hefty counter-movement which would meet the world's wealthy with an angry march through much of mid-town Manhattan. During the first weekend in February, the virtual leaders of the free world were met with thousands of marchers who protested the city's extravagant accommodations in penny-pinching times and the idea of the Forum itself, which even most major news services acknowledge as elitist and exclusive.

Despite a spirit of unification, attendants and outside analysts viewed the success of the weekend radically different. Some complained there was no action while others saw the event as being a quiet success. Sixty Bard students went to the event, and among them, the perception of success varied greatly.

The city was only somewhat aware of the paralysis of protest, and many city dwellers looked on to the sea of political organizations, anarchists, college students and other activists as if they were merely a passing parade. As Dan, an activist from Sarah Lawrence College, explained, New York is very used to disruption. A native of New York, Dan was angered about the tall budget allocated for the event.

"The city is spending so much money when it is in so much debt. That money should be going towards social programs, not dinner parties," Dan said sarcastically.

The city's comfort level was both liberating and restricting for Dan and the several thousand other activists united in a shared disdain for the so-called crimes of capitalism.

It was reported that the event, usually held in the small, reclusive village of Davos in Switzerland, was transferred to New York because the Swiss were unwilling to assume a higher financial responsibility for post-September

11 style security. The city reacted to the activists' plans with a tightened fist. Dave Meek, a junior at Bard, and a member of Student Action Collective, or S.A.C., said tactics of the protestors also reflected a climate of troubled times.

"There is a pre-September 11 and a post-September 11 protest. People are still really off-balanced from what happened, and not as willing to take risks. The same kinds of things that were used in past protests don't fly now."

Though New York saw much less direct action than have other cities that have hosted economic forums of this caliber, Meek does not dismiss the protest as a failure. "Because of the state of affairs, it was successful because so many people came down."

Eli David Freedman, also a junior at Bard and a member of S.A.C., believes that the destruction of the city was not the goal of most attendants, and violence would have disguised the true reasons for having the protest. "Having a really confrontational protest wouldn't have been to the point. Right now, people are afraid of being viewed as unpatriotic."

A display in patriotism did not seem to be on the agendas of many activists, who angrily veered against the inequalities and injustices of the WEF through spoken poetry and art. Brightly colored paper-mache people representing different economic classes and different races signified struggles occurring all over the world. "We are all Argentina-wounded by world exploitation," one sign read. While awaiting the march to commence, several speakers took the stage.

David, of the "Art and Revolution Collection", rhymed: "In every nation we're losing patience with corporations. Who has more power: 1,000 elites, or 100,000 visionaries in the streets?"

To his rhetoric, the crowd responded with cheers, banging pots, and further restlessness.

The 1999 WTO protest in Seattle drew the attention of worldwide media, focusing on the black bloc efforts of anarchists and activists. This year, however, has not seen quite as much action. Many participants attributed this to the thick line of police and

the narrow terrain allowed for the march, which missed the Waldorf-Astoria by about ten blocks.

The heavy police presence seemed to dampen the plans of many affinity groups, whose itinerary for action could be found online. Not many protestors were willing to test the line.

Curtis Dahn, an activist from upstate New York and the brother of a Bard student, has participated in a number of marches, rallies, and protests. He believed people's unwillingness to risk arrest or violence was what undersized the success of the event. "I don't really see breaking windows, writing with spray paint, and instigating cops as being entirely effective. However, I also think that people who attend protests should look at what they're doing, look at it tactically and not moralize it."

Dahn is an advocate of direct action and believes that protestors who condone violence may not have authentic reasons for participation. "I think refusing to do violent action is a really privileged thing to say and it's a little bit naive. When you start to look at how the violent power structure exists, the necessity for change becomes apparent. Unfortunately, the ones who are in power are also the ones with the means to violence."

"Another World is Possible", a New York based organization, hosted the event, working in conjunction with Columbia University and the United Nations to prep participants about nonviolent tactics of protest. The protest was arguably better planned than Seattle, with three months of information available online to anyone interested prior to the actual meeting and march.

The New York Police Department was among those interested. According to the New York Times, police staged pseudo-protests, hiring people to act as rowdy activists on which to practice forms of disengagement. All of their preparation was not put to much use. Out of approximately two-thousand participants and four days of action, thirty-six people were arrested Saturday and one-hundred fifty were arrested the following day.



Photographs by Joanne Steele and Ali Tonak

Keep Joseph Luders!

Student challenges decision to fire political studies prof.

Allison Forbes

Coming from a home where the newspaper was used for either one of two things: a) a coaster/ashtray or b) a reference to movie and restaurant listings I was reluctant to enroll in my first Political Science class. As government can be both an overwhelming and intimidating field of study for the student whose knowledge of U.S. domestic policy plummets post Articles of Confederation, Professor Joseph E. Luders makes American Politics both homey and inviting. He is not just a professor, he is a teacher. Aside from being informative and knowledgeable, he is able to turn abstract theories into empirical exercises. Prior to my college career, I never thought I'd have to differentiate between educating and teaching, but now that I've experienced three and one-quarter semesters of collegiate study I realize there is in fact a distinction to be made. Graduating Summa Cum Laude from a top tier institution is not synonymous with being able to lead a class of twenty to provocative and insightful conclusions. Fancy titles and sexy publications do not guarantee approachable and considerate professors.

Now this is not to argue the evaluation process or to declare accomplished resumes the enemy. This is merely to declare that we

should not be made to settle. As students annually paying a hearty five-digit sum for a liberal arts education, we deserve the best. However, when I realized my education was being penciled in by 'rock stars' and other professors who spend more time in transit than they do in the classroom, I felt the need to react. When the position of professors like Joseph E. Luders is at stake, I cannot help but be bitter. Dedicated and inspiring teachers are replaced every semester by more widely published and publicly acclaimed professionals in hopes that prospective students and parents alike will tingle from a single glimpse of the course catalog.

In knowing Joseph Luders I am a better and more conscientious person. And after taking his class, I am certainly a better and more informed citizen of this country. It pains me to think that future generations will not be able to make the same conclusion. It also pains me to think that Bardian politics are subject to the same injustices which we students are taught to identify with American democracy. The more I interpret the matter, the more disillusioned I become. While in Luders' PS 122 class, I was made to believe that the American system was approachable and capable of change. In a class full of twenty-something year old cynics and rad-

icals he led us to think that things are not as bad as they appear. Quoting an essay written last semester I unfortunately am forced to witness the naiveté behind a college sophomore's ideals: "the politics at Bard unveil the tangibility of the world, making it a less exclusive place." I would still like to think that my opinion and vote do assist the way in which the processes of the world and of Bard do function, but it is difficult to remain hopeful when Professors such as Joseph Luders continue to be displaced against the wishes of the student body. The revolving door of certain professorships at Bard has to stop.

In an institution as small as Bard, continuity is imperative. As moderation and senior boards serve as major aspects of Bard's criteria, relationships with particular professors built over the course of four years are essential and for many, quite beautiful. Luders' farewell will be a major disappointment for many students who have benefited from Professor Luders unparalleled commitment to teaching. It seems crucial to Bard's ethos that professors make their students, not their research, the top priority. And Professor Luders more than any other Bard professor I know of spends more time in his office meeting with students. And this is important, especially to first and second



Where were you Sunday evening at 7:00 pm? Prof. Luders, hard at work in his Aspinwall office.

year students who greatly benefit from Professor Luders' patient and meticulous manner of teaching inside the classroom and out.

In his dismissal and rehiring the administration might argue that there is a student committee elected as well as opportunities for students to write in and/or be present for oral testimony when a pro-

fessor is elected for tenure track. This is true, but in the realization that Luders will most likely not be present for the Fall 2002 term, I cannot help but question, is it enough?

Waxing Poetic about the Cape: A Travelog

Brandon Welfel

I arrived on Cape Cod late one night with the winter winds burning my skin and my breath clinging to the surrounding air. The Plymouth-Broton line dropped me in an empty town center. The snow I noticed, catered to the image of New England towns in the midst of winter, burying the shoe prints of the town's 2000 occupants. All records of previous journeys made through the town erased by the ever-diligent snow.

I arrived a semi-broken man, almost overwhelmed by the suffering of the year. The first semester at Bard had resulted in a severe outbreak of depression. I was a wraith for those lonely months, having the same consistency of the cigarette smoke that constantly stems for me. I only emerged tangible strictly for the benefit or easing the burdens of my peers. Never for myself. The depression had reached a point where it acted as a warm blanket; I gained comfort from it because I was so familiar to it.

The shoulder bag was creating great pain in my collarbone. Although I had very little clothing, three packs of cigarettes, and a dead cell phone, the large of amount of traveling had worn a rut in the muscle. It had been days since showering; a light shine of sweat began to take up resi-



Where's the Symbolism? photo by Jon Feinstein

dence on my back, an unwelcome and embarrassing squatter. I had spent most of the day on buses from Amherst. Transferring endless, chain-smoking whenever the brief respite was offered. I don't think I spoke for the entire course of travel, buying my tickets in brief incomplete sentences: "One way to Boston, One way to South Wellfleet." I had sheltered at friend's houses, sleeping on couches, and

eating little for days. My friends cared for me the best they could. They love me deeply and unconditionally, without regard to the depression they feared was consuming their friend. For this I am continually thankful.

My Godparents own a small cozy cottage in Wellfleet, containing two floors, eight rooms, two showers, and an endless supply of books. Every wall has a bookshelf

located somewhere in its vicinity. They did not know why I had suddenly appeared in Wellfleet, of my suffering and depression. Unaware that I had come to their home bent upon healing myself. Doug and Cindy did not ask many questions, sensing my inability to answer them, intuition enforcing a strange tranquility of silence. Doug, my godfather, instead spent his time laughing, his deep gray beard trembling each explosion. Sharp, intelligent eyes lie behind his steel rimmed glasses, taking in all around him. It has been years since anything in his environment escaped those eyes. I would assume the surrounding life has given up trying. Doug is a radical anarchist, his ideologies acting as his religion. He used to invade the administration buildings of Boston University during the 60s, visiting John Silber's office with other like-minded individuals. He never went to the office under legal circumstances.

Cindy, his wife, is a terrifically intelligent woman, perpetually seeking happiness, never abandoning or doubting her relentless search. She is incapable of giving up hope; it is her only truth in a suffering world. She asks little of me, inquiring only after school and books. Cindy somehow innately knows that going past that point would drive me further away. So she, in her love, stays quiet and removed. I can

never deliver enough thanks for her kindness to me.

Let me now explain to you how I came to hear a beautiful symphony in a quiet house, on a silent street, where the stars burn shock white every night. Late at night, when every light was out for miles, I would walk out of the house. The purpose was to smoke and enjoy the night air. Nothing else was expected. I would walk out filled with memories of good intentions gone wrong, regrets, and dreams long dead. Misplaced hopes have been a long-standing habit of mine, I often mused over the thought they keep my cigarettes company in their packing.

The moment I stepped out the wind picked up, pushing against my body, setting my blue coat tails ajar, hair at a horizontal angle, and guiding tears to my eyes. The pines imitated, bending and changing, then returning to place. I stared at those pines for a time and then the epiphany spread itself their reacting branches. Its meaning seized my being and I began to understand the symphony contained the silence. The music is set in the chords of life, echoing simultaneous causes and reactions, independent and dependent alike, showing the unity of life. Suffering was everywhere granted, balances overthrown for a time, but the branches of the pines always returned to place.

continued on next page...

Protesting in the Aftermath of September 11

Matt Dineen

"Where do we go? Where do we go now? Where do we go?"
-Guns n' Roses

The recent demonstrations against the World Economic Forum in New York City illuminated a question that has been festering for the past five months: What are the prospects for the global justice movement, particularly within the United States, after September 11th, 2001?

The weeks that followed that tragic day were filled with widespread confusion. This was particularly the case within the flourishing protest movement that had spent the previous months organizing and anticipating mass actions against the planned meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in late September. This confusion was due to the appropriately emotional reaction to the violent attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon and the fact that it was completely unprecedented in U.S. history. How does a movement effectively react to something of such magnitude that does not compare to anything it has ever faced?

Two weeks following September 11th thousands of activists descended on Washington D.C. to promote peace and justice, countering the Bush administration and the corporate media's rhetoric of war and revenge. Those of us who attended that inspiring demonstration, which was held during the same weekend that the postponed IMF/World Bank meetings were scheduled, became aware

that the movement was no longer confused. That demonstration set the tone for the post-9/11 global justice movement: integrating the critique of global capitalism with a greater focus on peace. This development proved one of the greatest strengths of the so-called 'anti-globalization' movement: a systemic approach to social change, recognizing how interconnected all these issues really are.

The most common criticism of the movement voiced by political elites is that we are "against everything" and not for anything. This myth was shattered last winter when the first World Social Forum, in response to last year's WEF, was held in Porto Alegre, Brazil under the slogan "Another World Is possible." This year's WSF saw over 70,000 participants from all over the world seeking to create a vision for a world that truly is based on democracy, equality, and justice in place of the present global, free market dictatorship. This is significant in that the movement is starting to seriously articulate and struggle for what it is for and not simply what it is against, and also that it is taking a pro-active strategy: "Go ahead and have your exclusive economic forum for the rich and powerful. We'll be there to protest it, but we're also going to have our own fucking forum that will represent the people of this world and its environment, not just increasing the flow of capital!"

Getting back to the effects of and responses to September 11th, it is hauntingly clear that this movement is more necessary now than ever. Many don't feel

this way, believing that to dissent is unpatriotic. The flaws in that delusional mentality are too obvious to be worth mentioning. More importantly, we should ask: why is it so essential that we dissent in this era that is beginning to feel so much like 1984 (sort of a synthesis of Orwell's dystopia and Reagan's reality)? The concepts of permanent war, new McCarthyism and ethnic internment are no longer just conspiracy theories or leftist clichés. This is serious shit. These are urgent times. Fortunately we are not alone, and the USA Today poll declaring Bush's 90% approval rating is really just a propaganda tool. There are so many committed folks everywhere who are working to protect our fragile civil liberties, proposing viable alternatives to war, and providing critical independent news coverage of the current state of affairs.

So what can we do at Bard? In past years most organizing has revolved around off-campus activities, which is fine, but now there has to be more energy put into our local community while maintaining a global perspective.

For instance, less than two weeks after 9/11 there was a peace rally held on campus in solidarity with hundreds of other colleges across the country. There were impassioned speeches given by Bard students, professors, and community members against Bush's proposed war. This created a consciousness on campus that unfortunately seemed to dissolve after the war actually began. Many students believe that it is futile to be active in such a way on



campus, and that the real struggle is, well, not here. But this is where we spend most of our lives and we truly can make changes here. How about our effect on professors? The faculty here are different in many ways than at the average American college, but most Bard professors have remained silent. Silent, despite the thousands of innocent civilians killed in Afghanistan by "Operation Enduring Freedom," despite the inhumane and illegal treatment of prisoners of war in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and despite the hundreds of illegally detained immigrants within the United States. "Well, it's just Bard professors" you might say, but again this is where we can make a difference. Academics have incredible influence in national debate and their silence or acceptance, as the case may be, is in a way promoting these very policies that we are

opposed to. It is also important to support and work with those faculty members that have been brave enough to speak out.

Even if we cannot actually change things on campus it is absolutely essential that we at least teach each other about these issues through discussion, debate, and more creative ways too. We also need to resist the feeling of alienation because of our beliefs and always put our actions and ideas within the greater context of the global justice movement that continues to grow. Through our struggle on campus and our involvement with this international movement we can help create that proverbial world that is possible, even in these conservative times.

photo by Joanne Steele

Woods, con'd

...from previous page
They moved with the penetrating wind, adapting a temporary metamorphosis. They never broke or became overburdened.

It was then that I came to accept suffering, forever on tenure in my life. However, suffering is incapable of being the all there is. The Buddhist got it wrong, you see, there are thousands of amazing elements in the background of life. We are blessed to be alive, to be able to communicate, to consume foods, regardless of awful nature of Kline. To be alive is to experience an indescribable spectrum; a symphony seldom heard or lived by. The search for answers, for redemption, for meanings is pointless. It comes regardless; let us just react to what comes, and relish the fact that it appears at all.

The Political Legacies Shrouding Romania

Ellsabetta Zelinka

As an international student from Romania, the United States seemed very "different" to me from the very first moment when I landed on US territory—different from Europe and different from the European image of the United States. But this is not the point of this article. The point of this article is that this December, when I went home after just four months in the USA, Romania itself was different.

What happened to Romania during these four months I spent abroad? Or, what happened to me? The fact is, that my first impression was that something was... different, something had changed. And that was not due to the gloomy, murky December weather that welcomed me, nor to the worsened economic crisis, which I was expecting. It was something in the eyes of the people, in their mindsets. It took me a while to figure this out.

The first days it was just a weird feeling that "something is wrong," that I "don't agree with almost anything of what people said," it was just "why are they thinking in this way." Here I am thinking about the foremost issue of the Romanian society, namely the fact that we are still struggling with the remainders of the ex-



communist regime, imposed on Romania by the former Soviet Union. And these remainders are abhorrent: economic crisis, unemployment, corruption reaching an alarming peak and venality.

Should I stop here, I would ignore the biggest harm that 50 years of dark communism have stamped on the Romanian society, namely the psychological impact of communism. Although the communism regime fell about 12 years ago, 12 years were (by far) not enough for this society to get over the psychological impact of this regime. Like any tyrannical system, it operated with fear, terror, by striking fear into the people, so that they would not dare rebel against their oppres-

sors. Fear and terror as such are of course gone, there is freedom of speech and freedom of action in Romania, still there are their leftovers. For over 50 years people were kept in fear, any kind of political and social awareness and incentive being out rooted in its embryo form (that would have implicitly lead to revolution and attempts to overthrow the tyrannical system).

And this lack of initiative, this (I would dare call it) political and social vegetation still persists, as part of the post-communist Romanian society: no one dares speak up against the present neo-communist Romanian government, no one dares take action, even though they are allowed to do all these,

to form an active and constructive civil society. The general perception is this: "Why should we try to improve anything, why should we try to fight—it's a mere waste of time and energy. Nothing can be improved anyway, this country is doomed! We are never going to have a better life!" The whole society has sunk into a general state of vegetation, hopelessness and (which is the worst) reconciliation with the harsh present status quo. This is what bothers me so much: that there is no more hope left, that the society gave up all hope for a better present and future and that no one tries to take initiative and improve the situation.

I might be accused of overreacting or of being too ambitious, but I cannot accept, (I simply cannot) that the Romanian society, or any society in the world, should reconcile itself to the problems it has. That is definitely not the way to improve things. Taking action might be extremely hard, improvement in the general welfare might take a lot of action and energy, but at least you give yourself a chance. What the Romanian society is doing is denying itself this very last chance.

"Requiescat in pace" hope, "requiescat in pace" better future for Romania!

Yet ANOTHER Article on the Magic of Harry Potter

Daria Solovieva

Yes, it's been over four years since the release of the first book. But, hey, the Russians always take twice the time to get places (yes, I am being a smart alec about Communism), so it was just last Friday that the first Harry book, *The Sorcerer's Stone*, magically appeared in my hands. The school work still allowing me time to breathe, I finished the first two books and am now starting the third one, while all other hobbies are sobbing and cuddling in the corner, completely forgotten. What's so peculiar about that? Nothing, except that if somebody told me to read it last year I would have smiled innocently and thought: "children's book" and gone on with my oh-so-grown up activities.

The question is: what's so addictive about Potter books that makes usually diligent college student procrastinate their work just

to read another chapter about a fucked up thirteen-year-old with stinky hair?

The New Magical World. Rowling succeeds in

creating something really different from *The Wizard of Oz*, *Star Wars* and even *Lord of The Rings*, which are just way too familiar magical settings. Your grandparents read it, your parents read it, you read it more times than you can remember, and your love-hate relationship with these books is having progressively more and more of the hate mixture in it. And so you end up loving the fucked up thirteen-year-old because the fucked up thirteen-year-old is something new.

The Feeling of Being Spe-

cial. There is no denying it: reading Potter makes you feel you are special. *Fight Club* preaches that you are "all-singing, all-dancing crap of the world," but Row-

ling says differently. Harry Boy has a lighting scar on his forehead and no matter how fucked up things get, he always get out safe and

sound because... you guessed it, he is special. Vicariously, through Harry, we get our sip of being special. Cunning, huh?

The Escape Factor. No matter how wonderful your life is, everything gets old. Sooner or later everything becomes "a copy of a copy of a copy," a recurring Groundhog Day nightmare or something even worse: a second-semester freshman year at Bard College, NY. And then it occurs to you: you need an escape. The next thing you know Darwin's "survival of the

fittest" band starts playing. Everybody comes up with a coping mechanism of their own to the best of the best of their abilities. You go work out, you go to watch

a movie, you get a girlfriend but it always ends the same, like a Shakespearean play. No, nobody dies, but you get bored. Now let me be a filthy capitalist for a second and use article space for a short advertisement: Harry Potter books are the best batteries in the world that guarantee you the longest escape EVER. So stop fooling around with movies, Harry Potter is the answer you need.

The last factor that makes Potter books addictive is a prerequisite for the first three, but it's so rare and important and special that it needs some respect and differentiation. The Potter books are simply damn well written. There is no denying that.

Well, so much for the break. I've got to run and read *Harry*.



How I spent my Intersession...

Sarah Dopp

The six week break was nice--don't get me wrong. I don't want to be the one who asks for more homework cause she's bored, and consequently pisses off the entire class. That said, let me now complain. Five would have been plenty.

I suppose getting out a week before our friends gives us time to reflect, and going back a week after everyone else gives us time to prepare. I suppose this is "quality time" with our parents whom we are able to avoid during the semester. I suppose it's time to work, time to intern, time to take January Intersession classes that no longer exist, time to forget our vocabulary if we are taking a language... time to get very, very lazy.

Yes, it's time to use or abuse, and I understand that. I realize

that I can be productive or waste six weeks of my life away. I tried to be productive. I worked full time for the first five at a job that reduced my value as a person to the level of a toy-selling monkey. But that last week, it was just time to go back. I couldn't, though. I wasn't allowed. Tired of my house and family, I ended up driving around the Northeast for a week, wandering cities by myself and sleeping on the couches of scattered friends. I was practically begging for homework--something to do that would make me feel like I was getting somewhere. Instead, I was bored out of my mind.

When Sunday rolled around, I drove to Bard with glee, embraced my classmates and settled back in. All was wonderful, the unseasonably warm weather. And then...I had two more days to kill.

What's New for BPI in 2002

This spring the Bard Prison Initiative is hosting a series of lectures, poetry readings, and workshops, as well as engaging 40 Bard students in educational programs at three different correctional facilities in the area.

Events for this semester begin with a lecture by Christian Parenti, author of *Lockdown America* and writer for *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, and other magazines, who is coming to lead a discussion on the global private prison system and the overall impact that globalization has had on the world's prison systems. The event, "Imprisonment and Globalization" will be on Thursday, February 21 at 7:30pm in the Multipurpose Room in the Campus Center.

Other events coming up in March include a presentation by poet Tory Sammartino about women's creative writing programs in New York State on March 1; a film screening about the Rockefeller Drug Laws on

March 20; and a workshop by San Quentin Correctional Facility creative writing teacher and author of *Disguised as a Poem*, Judith Tennenbaum, on April 10. There will also be a lecture by political prisoner Susan Rosenberg, and the annual Words Over Walls poetry reading by the women's facility volunteers, joined by poet Hettie Jones, on May 13.

In addition to the student volunteering and campus events, the Prison Initiative began one of the few college programs offered in New York State correctional facilities last November. Sixteen prisoners at a men's facility have begun college work in literature, writing and history classes that are accredited by Bard transcripts.

Student volunteer programs include:

o Jazz in Jail, Bard students and prisoners are putting together a jazz ensemble at a men's facility

o Words Over Walls, students facilitate a creative writing workshop at a women's facility

o GED mentoring, students act as GED mentors both in a men's and a women's facility

o New York Theological Seminary, volunteers participate in theological classes five days a week in a men's facility

Information on prison issues can be gathered at the Charles P. Stevenson library either through books or through the journals *Prison Legal News* or *Journal of Prisoners on Prison*, on the second floor. Anyone interested in finding out more information, please visit us on the third floor of the Blithewood Gatehouse or email bpi@bard.edu.

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Budget Forum 2002. photo by Jon Feinstein

suicide and the metaphorical depths of water; explored in a talk by photographer **RONI HORN**

reviewed by rachel chatalbash

A few hours before Roni Horn was to give her lecture I was asked if I would write a synopsis of her talk. I immediately said that I couldn't, that I wasn't sure I knew how. I had been studying her photographs for months and was only coming up with new questions, never conclusions. However, after hearing Horn read selected text and briefly discuss her ideologies, my mind was put a bit more at ease. Why? Because I realized the last place Roni Horn would wish to send her viewers was to a realm of answers, conclusions, finality or closure. Rather, Horn would prefer her viewers to drift in her constructed sea of ambiguity, an endless stream of motion, instability, and metamorphosis.

Horn began her lecture by saying that she doesn't really give lectures anymore, that she doesn't feel she is in a place to present her work in a descriptive manner. Instead, **she chose to read the text that runs in footnote form underneath her images of the Thames.** The text and photographs presented are from her book, *Another Water*. In the book, the footnotes form

an endless loop, running from cover to cover, through every page, including the binding. One of the footnotes, self-referencing, states: **"These notes, rootless, flowing, one into another, are crumbs of cognition: connections that frame the view, connections that name the view."**

Horn's photographs, in their visual depiction, are of the surface of the Thames. Yet, without ever leaving the surface of this body of water, Horn is able to wind through its depths by way of her text. She tells of the River's history, of its suicides and murders, of hidden treasures, of bacteria and dysentery. She speaks of blackness, opacity, reflection, materiality, and sensuality. She repeats lines from Emily Dickinson's poems, verses of songs written by Gershwin, and others sung by Aretha Franklin. Horn takes her subject, water, something so familiar and elemental, and recreates it. While Horn's photographs are solely of surfaces, the surfaces are not still nor are they flat. Rather they are segments of interrupted motion, chameleon-like in their materiality, frozen only by



the camera.

Horn states that the central idea behind her work is the idea of the multitude in one. **Water becomes Horn's metaphor for the world as she demonstrates her notion of the falsity of a singular identity.** Seen in this way, the possibility of knowing, of knowing the Thames, of knowing water, and ultimately of knowing who Horn is, or even knowing one's self, becomes an impossibility. Horn reads: "Is water you? If water is you, what are you? Or, if water is you, who is water?" The multiplicity within is too vast and too great to ever be fully understood.

Horn resists categorization of

any kind. As a result, although she takes photographs, she does not consider herself a photographer, a point she made quite clear. Rather, she prefers to reside outside definition. Following the creation of *Another Water*, Horn produced an installation titled "Still Water," and then a show by the name of "Some Thames." Each of these works uses the same photographs. Both *Another Water* and *Still Water* use the same text while *Some Thames* has no text at all. The fact that Horn uses the same material to create three different works mirrors her concept of the multiplicity in one; one set of photographs and one created text result in three separate and different works.

Now, many hours after hear-

ing Horn read, her words still resonate in my ear, the images of her photographs imprinted in my mind's eye. I know little more today than I did a few days before about Horn's photographs, or about Roni Horn herself. However, Horn has challenged me to stop and consider the nature of meaning and to revel in the seemingly inaccessible depths of relation, complexity, and change.

Note: The photo above, as it appears in Another Water, is extensively footnoted (the notes appear beneath the image). This something that might be missed in newsprint reproduction.



Adjmi Bonevardi Acconci artists envision the future of **GROUND ZERO**

reviewed by huffa frobes-cross

Despite the almost instantaneous memorialization of the World Trade Center site there has been an almost as instantaneous desire to find a way to cover the site, and rebuild over it. This sparked discussions as to the type of structure that should be built there, discussions that largely revolved around a question of whether to remake the commercial center or create a reminder of its disappearance. The recent show of design proposals for the WTC site at Max Protetch gallery attempts to walk the middle-ground with regard to that debate. Most of the proposals integrate both commercial and memorial desires.

The most talked about design which made its way into the show was Gustavo Bonevardi and John Bennett's "Tower of Light", consisting of two shafts of light pro-

jected into the air to the exact dimensions of the former buildings. This would be a temporary project that the architects describe as "a reclamation of New York City's skyline and identity; a tribute to rescue workers and a mnemonic for all those who lost their lives," proving that their way of conceptualizing a WTC memorial is no less common than their proposal, which has also been put forward by several other architects.

Other less likely projects include Kas Oosterhuis's fanciful morphing super-building. **The building would literally remake itself daily to suit the needs of its inhabitants and every year on September 11 turn into a full-scale replica of the two towers.** Also Vito Acco-

nci's architecture firm has put forth an idea to build a kind of already ruined building complete with gaping holes. Morris Adjmi's building would appear **three American flags waving proudly one on top of the other, a project that could only be taken seriously during a period of great mental fatigue.**

Several of the projects incorporate parks and open public space. Frei Otto's small sketch and accompanying texts describes a design necessitating a kind of return to nature as urban park. Stipulating specifically that no steel or concrete could enter into the space. A project which seems to have little to do with the events of September 11 but might be nice to see built nonetheless is Eytan

Kaufman's "World Bridge." Consisting of a huge pedestrian bridge modeled of the Ponte Vecchio in Florence in its incorporation of residential and commercial space into the bridge itself and a small human rights education center on the site itself, the proposal gives an alluring utopian vision of the area.

Most of the other projects are very tall, very large structures which house a massive combination of offices, stores, and apartments. Foreign Office Architects and NOX Architekten submitted buildings of this type composed of weaving, connecting smaller buildings that combine to create one large structure. These projects and the others like them for better or for worse seem to most closely function as a compromise between the competing ideas surrounding the rebuilding of the site

by in some fashion memorializing the site if only through size and audacity and not reducing the areas economic relevance.

It is quite likely that none of these designs or anything resembling them will be built after all the competing groups resolve their ideas of what should be built on the site. However, the show remains much more interesting as kind of revue of the ways in which people would like to treat the memorialization the WTC up to this point.



*Music BRIEFS



DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE.
The Photo Album.
Barsuk.

It's like you're about to shatter and the moment is so fragile or detached that you can be held together only by melodies and musical epoxies of the brooding quality. "The Photo Album" is sad and yet sometimes it glimmers with a more than melancholy tune. Frontman/singer songwriter Ben Gibbard bleeds out his vocals with the breathy-weakish sound of longing. His lyrics as well are bitter-sweet and detached. One can get an image of him crafting songs late in the night amongst cigarettes and lost times--gripping his guitar with a care to create fragile felt sounds.

The band itself has a very minimal, near acoustic sound which rides comfortably behind Gibbard's centerpiece vocals. His creative melodies carry this band. And on up-tempo songs such as Why'd You Want to Live Here and Blacking Out the Friction, a hopeful subway-riding atmosphere pops in--those times when you're staring at the riders and thinking that everything is simply dandy with yo' headphones on.

Yet the whiny indie-pop loser boy sound gets a bit irritating and makes me think of melting "The Photo Album" into virgin-vinyl for something better--maybe a re-issue of "Pet Sounds" which, of course, did the same kinda thing (Wouldn't it Be Nice & God Only Knows) better and first. This isn't to discredit Gibbard, his band is quality. It's just that sometimes there are bands that are good but that aren't necessary; they do what they do well but don't cover much if any new ground. Of course I can't argue against people who love to make their music; Gibbard honestly comes off as this kind. But think: you're in a store and there's a different version of your favorite drink along side the original--you might try it and like it better, or maybe just stick with the old reliable. In the case of "The Photo Album," I'd stick to the tried and true. But for many of you, I'm sure that Death Cab For Cutie can strike a lowly impulse of delight. **TOSH CHIANG**

POINT by CORNELIUS

CORNELIUS.
Point.
Matador Records.

The first half of Cornelius' new *Point* LP plays in a continuous mix, a near-seamless sequence of more or less relaxed, multi-layered tracks in which acoustic guitars and samples of sloshing water, fragmented and looped though they may be, prevail and maintain a mood characterized by its clear structure and thematic consistency—not the phrase that came to mind when critics wrote about Cornelius' US debut *Fantasma* and its cut-and-paste juxtaposition of, among other things, Vivaldi and Black Sabbath; the collage here is a much less disjointed one, working with a definitively '60s pop sound, borrowing most noticeably from genres like lounge and bossanova, and updating them subtly ("Drop" is can be imagined as an acoustic disco song) with electronically synthesized drum beats and processed vocals that variously evoke contemporary dance music as well as the Sea and Cake and Tim Kinsella's OWLS project: the start of the album speaks a mouthful with a limited range of influences, and succeeds at effacing the edges between the influences it has reassembled and placed alongside each other in a markedly pleasurable arrangement (and yes, the start of this review has so far been all one sentence).

The reverie is interrupted by "I Hate Hate," the album's eighth track and the only one in which electric guitars, though used elsewhere, are so noticeable as such. "I Hate Hate" is an unexpected run through incarnations of metal, with momentary nods to fast tempo hardcore, bleepy post-core, and Don Caballero math. The song, upbeat and over too quickly to be anything that serious, leads into "Brazil," and we are back to bossanova, with the eerie difference being that the title song of Terry Gilliam's film of the same name, filtered through a "talking computer" effect, plays over the beat, bringing the album's play between decades-old organic influences and digital electronic sounds into an interesting relief.

Being the self-proclaimed pop album that it is, nothing sounds very unfamiliar on *Point*, and Cornelius, three parts composer and two parts curator, ends with an LP both his own and everyone else's at the same time. **JONAH WEINER**



MU-ZIQ.
Tango N' Vectif.
Rephlex.

Boingy 'lectric sounds flash in and out while drones of noise and distorted drums push on through. On *Tango N' Vectif* Mu-ziq certainly demonstrates that he's had some good tricks up his sleeve for quite a while. His formulaic music is characteristic in that it always builds upon itself--new aspects of the song come in one after another and usually add something good if not at first awkward; Phragmal Synthesis pt.1, 2 and 3 is an excellent example of this--three songs which morph to form one. Also of note is Caesium^, which has a nice dancy feel and a full sonic-barage of shiny sounds to twinkle in your ears. The fun bass-pop sounds (like smacking the side of a large blue plastic container filled with a pool of water) on the Mu-Ziq theme are really quite cool as well-- an 80's synth-riff also meanders in the background.

Tango N' Vectif is a 2-disc archive reissue which has some great songs. Criticism could arise in that there are some tunes which are too drony, ongoing and seemingly never-ending--almost techno in fact!. Nevertheless, that only makes the other songs seem like real jewels. For you gotta remember that most of this stuff is Michael Paradinas's (Mu-ziq's real name) early stuff. And though it doesn't always demonstrate the level of creativity of his later work, it's still very well done. One can surely sense that the talent is there. Oh, and one more thing: the liner notes are really worth a gander! They've got a hefty amount of quirk to match the music...but hey, the music does speak for itself! **TC**

EXPLOSIONS IN THE SKY.

Those who tell the truth shall die, those who tell the truth shall live forever.
The Temporary Residence Limited.

I like to call this "Godspeed You Black Emperor! meets 4 guys with different fuzz pedals minus a string section in Texas." It's hard to tout this band as anything really new or significant in that they not only follow the GSYBE! formula to the T (speedy marching band drumming, low-volume riffs leading to noise showers) but that their liner notes are also cryptic if not more colorful--seemingly centering on the twilight between life and death. The first song, Greet Death, intros from silentish guitar wallowings to a wall of Korn-fuzzish noise with crystal-linked guitar lines in the front. It then proceeds with a somewhat transcendent flow through clean guitars and nice tones (yes there are some good sound textures here). Yasmin the Light also has some nice energetic builds via guitar music-box sounds and echo-pedals. And Poor Man's Memory really has a rocking drum-slammin' bit. In fact the upfront mixing of the drums was a nice touch to this album.

The LP aside, EITS is probably quite a visceral live experience; they've got talent and good ears--there's some tuneful playing here. Yet nevertheless they still come off as a group of guys who aren't taking chances, who are just following knocked-off recipes with less feel--too much imitation and not enough inspiration, not enough spice (where's the flavor!). Also Have You Passed Through This Night? is pretty much GSYBE!'s monologue piece on "f#a# infinity." But I wouldn't dismiss this band completely. If you really have an itch for any more Mogwaish, GSYBE! type music, then by all means hunt this record down. Furthermore, keep an eye out for these Texas kids--they might do better things in the future. **TC**



PRINCESS SUPERSTAR
Is.
Phantom.

I'm not friends with them wack cats whose styles sweat Eminem, but every now and then an emcee can rework trends; in this case Princess Superstar, a white rapper, pretty faced, on some UK shit; the rhymes she spits can switch it on ill Prince Paul beats (plus Herbaliser, High & Mighty, and Kool Keith producto credits).

Explicit lyrics will call for Wal Mart edits, 'cause Princess talks dirty like she was Spank-master meets Peaches-- a bit too trendy and too facetious to be controversial. She flows with many words per minute like she was a Micro Machines commercial.

Alternating between hip hop showboats and anecdotes about masturbating, "Bad Babysitter" quotes Em's "97 Bonnie and Clyde" obliquely, freakily with little kid voices and accounts of pornographic negligence of a minor. And for the record my last name is pronounced "Weiner."

So in the final analysis I give props to a jokey album with ill verbal twists and I guess there's no reason to hate on a skill that can narrate different story-lines and personas from track to track all the while giving herb mcs boners: self-sexualized from cover flicks to press pics looking trashy but crazy flashy with the Gucci fisherman's cap, ironic perhaps but the way this girl's lips flap when she drops raps will leave any head happy (with or without his or her hands buried in his or her lap). **JW**



..with what is
hands down the best record to come out of
the hip hop underground
in years
CANNIBAL OX
reinvigorate non-radio rap..

by jonah weiner

Cannibal Ox
The Cold Vein
Definitive Jux

With Rawkus Records, the whole “if you’re rhyming for the loot then you’re a prostitute”-era was short lived. Any pretensions the ‘underground’ hip-hop label may have had at becoming a stronghold of the anti-mainstream went out the window with the release of the second *Soundbombing* comp, at which point Rawkus was enjoying not only Eminem guest spots on their records but extensive Hot 97 and MTV airplay for tracks by Mos Def, Pharoahe Monch, and Talib Kweli. All three had little more than fleeting moments in the pop spotlight but in any case **the jiggy epoch had been ushered in with open arms**, Jay-Z and Puff Daddy album sales were making marketing executives think twice about the viability of “urban music.” In contrast, ‘underground’ mcs and labels were sent back underground to do god knows what in obscurity.

The major label hip-hop industry—already burgeoning but now more profitable than it had ever been—became the most interesting and vital thing in the music mainstream. Why else would Timbaland and the Neptunes receive such acclaim in magazines as far off as *The Source* and *The Face*, stores as far off as Virgin Megastores and Other Music, clubs as far off as Speed and Passerby? Why else would perhaps otherwise discriminating

critics at *Rolling Stone* and *Spin* eat up the unremarkable music the Strokes put out? (Because, as any college record reviewer will tell you, it could only be next to wack radio rock from Creed and the Calling that the Strokes could seem at all interesting). And next to wack radio rock, radio rap not only comes off like a blessing but actually engages in fresher (if limited) kinds of experimentation and vaster cultural quotation. Pop becomes worthy again in the largely unironic esteem of those far too cool to have set foot in a Sam Goody since 7th grade—so much so that the Neptunes start making beats for Britney Spears, Justin Timberlake starts wearing trucker caps and tight faded jeans, and before you know it even new singles by No Doubt and Blink-182 start to sound pretty cool...

All this said in the way of establishing the strange conditions into which the new Cannibal Ox record was released, without question one of the 10 best hip hop releases in the last ten years. Various referred to as “independent as fuck” and an “anti-bling king,” El-P of Company Flow will not be appearing on TRL or the Teen People Choice Awards anytime in the near future. This notwithstanding, the Queens-bred MC and producer has come up with the freshest-sounding, most intricately produced and thematically cohesive rap albums to emerge from “the underground” (a term counter-intuitively denotative of predominantly Caucasian

fans who may or may not choose to rock Triple Five Soul on their college campuses) in God knows how long. No boring evocation on *Cold Vein* of that mythical hip-hop space in which hyper-verbose emcees spit conspiracy theories, mathematical formulas, and graffiti/breaking/rapping mantras over scratched piano loops and funk samples. Cannibal Ox engage in no uninspired defiance of flamboyant, bling-blinging counterparts who drive Escalades over dance tracks topside. Though certainly not produced in a cultural vacuum, *Cold Vein* sets its sights elsewhere.

El-P’s production thaws out GZA’s “Cold World” from the cryogenic realm of fond memory; outmoded organic parts are replaced with cybernetics as conceived in mid-eighties robot movies. Overcast, grainy, and often epic compositions mix shuffled and syncopated drums with sampled synthesizer effects; the latter sound salvaged from a beaten vinyl copy of some weird post-apocalyptic space-the-final-frontier soundtrack. Not hokey, the album’s best songs reference outer space, but not the stupid kind where travelers zap martians and navigate the cosmos, but the kind where Megatron kills Optimus Prime and massive mechanical planets rot (in his Village Voice review of *Cold Vein* Simon Reynolds writes that the beats sound like they’ve been corroded by “the metallic equivalent of cancer”).

On “Iron Galaxy,” the album opener, **one such sci-fi-escapist beat is juxtaposed with less-than-escapist lyrical subjects**, provided by Can Ox emcees Vast Aire and Vordul (“And if there’s crack in the basement/ crack-heads stand adjacent/ anger displacement from food stamp arrangement/ you were a stillborn baby/ mother didn’t want you/ but you were still born”). The tension between the album’s fantasy references and graphically literal narratives makes for much of *Cold Vein*’s poignancy, especially on tracks like “A B-Boys Alpha,” “Battle for Asgard,” “Raspberry Fields,” and “Pigeon”—part of this is the album’s cover art, a marriage of graffiti character- and Japanimation-styles.

So somehow Cannibal Ox’s first LP, released on the respected but relatively tiny Def Jux label, makes a powerful entrance in a hip-hop climate where “underground” seems to have taken a backseat to the “mainstream.” The reason why this is the case has more to do with the amount of talent that bursts through every measure of *Cold Vein*’s production than the skills of its emcees, though the latter are hardly amateur. Vast Aire is the stronger pres-

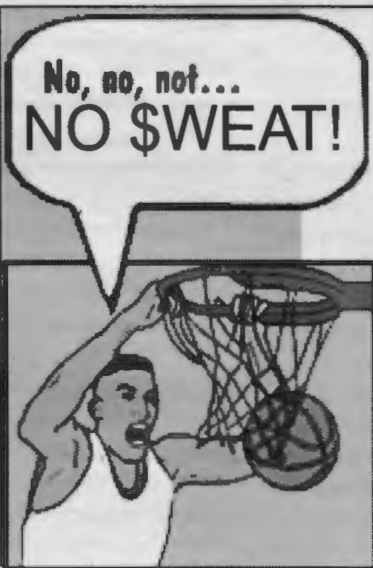


ence of the two, his voice more quickly likeable and his rhymes a bit more clever (“the beats trying to sex me and marry me/ I’m talking white picket fence and a family”), while Vordul holds his own with a style that, with few breaks between lines, is harder to distinguish. Vordul can be likened to that eighth or ninth Wu-Tang member who’s pretty good but whom you can’t consistently identify whenever he raps.

In this respect *Cold Vein* takes a lead from the rising mainstream trend to focus on producers rather than vocal personalities. On these terms, though, Cannibal Ox make the case for the ongoing life of sample-based, non-mainstream hip hop tracks. In a scene dominated by singles, *Cold Vein* would be a strange fit at a dance party; but it would have everyone nodding their heads in (or on) ecstasy.



Playing their 1,073rd show, Jesse and Matt of Alphabet Soup of Thugs do their crazy thing in the infamous “Red Room,” which is officially the hottest weekend spot this semester, sources have reported.



**EXHILARATION
STAMINA
BOEING JETS
SUCCESS
DIKEMBE MUTOMBO**

**with REDBOXBLACKBOX
+ others**
red-room sat 23 10pm
free admission

*FILM reviews



John McTeirnan's "fantastic realism" has had more influence on American action cinema than may be fully appreciated. The idea is that while Bruce Willis is put in cartoon-like situations in *Die Hard*, these situations have serious consequences and are reacted to in serious ways. So it is impossible, even ridiculous, for Bruce to explode off of a roof, swing to safety on a precariously dangling fire hose, shoot through a window and Tarzan his way into the 50th floor of a skyscraper. Despite the absurdity of the sequence, Bruce has taken such a physical beating throughout the film that we accept his actions

as possible, even probable. Most of the tension of the roof/window scenario is created when we are allowed to see Bruce's badly cut feet smearing blood on the window as he tries to kick through it. McTeirnan displaces the tension, making what is essentially a *Goonies*-level stunt appear believable.

McTeirnan's latest, a remake of *Rollerball*, attempts a similar dichotomy, with mixed results. It seems as though McTeirnan has decided that *Rollerball*, the sport, will be the fantastic element of the film, taking place in a relatively realistic former U.S.S.R. state. Unfortunately, the game is

chris klein ll cool j rebecca romijn ROLLERBALL

by tyler stevens

portrayed as so overly complicated and impossible that the tension does not hold. The game is too preposterous to sustain McTeirnan's efforts to make you believe that the players are real people in real danger. The movie's PG-13 rating doesn't

help matters either. Perhaps **if the rollerball (a nine pound steel ball used to score points) knocked out a few teeth or shattered a couple of skulls, we would be more willing to accept the sight of L L Cool J driving a motor bike up a ninety degree incline.**

McTeirnan also saw fit to include a number of scenes involving some sort of massive conspiracy of vague post-Cold War media tyrants, plotting insidious cable deals with North American exec-

utives. The idea that *Rollerball*, essentially an underground Eastern European death sport, might be (gasp) corrupt and immoral, apparently did not occur to any of its participants until it was too late.

The original Norman Jewison film uses exactly the opposite strategy: *Rollerball* the sport is completely plausible, yet it takes place in an almost *Barbarella*-type future as seen from the early seventies. Jewison allows us to understand how the game is played, so that when things start going wrong, we actually care. Of course, this does make watching the original *Rollerball* a bit like watching an actual sports event, but the presence of James Caan, Stacey Keach, and excessively wood-paneled interiors make up for it. We get to enjoy the spectacle of guys on roller skates knocking the hell out of each other



instead of muddling through a lot of politics, coal mines, revolutions, and Chris Klein's incredulity. Ultimately, McTeirnan's *Rollerball* is a nicely understated action film with some hazy areas of lousy writing/casting. Unfortunately, understated is one thing that *Rollerball* should not be. What worked for an eighties audience in *Die Hard* does not work here, and needs to be applied to a topic less spectacular than *Rollerball*. Cameos by Pink and Slipknot were a step in the right direction, but woefully short.



BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF

by kent johnson

The Brotherhood of the Wolf marks the greatest French catastrophe since *Waterloo*. This over stylized piece of trash is a mesh of horror, action, romance, and traditional Gallic sleaze, which unfolds in a torturous two and a half hour span.

Set in 18th century France, *Brotherhood* (based on "actual" events) documents the hunt for a demonic 'Beast' that terrorizes women and children across the countryside. Two mysterious outsiders are enlisted to trap the monster: a Fabio-lookalike knight/botanist, Gregoire de Fronsac (Samuel le Bihan), and his 'blood brother', Mani (Mark Dacascos)—an enigmatic, Mohawk Indian with a flamboyant knowledge of martial arts.

On their quest to track and kill this computer-generated 'Beast', they meet several sickly French noblemen, a creepy pastor, an insignificant romantic interest, and Monica Bellucci, in her second attempt at American stardom (the first being the 2000 film, "Malena"). Bellucci, who has been hyped as Italy's greatest gift since Sophia Loren, plays a prostitute-spy sent by the Pope to observe the supernatural events in rural France. Though her performance is forgettable, she is the focus of the most tasteless shot in the film, in which the camera dissolves from a low-profile shot of Bellucci's breasts into a sweeping

pan of the French Alps.

Of course, the main attraction of this movie is the violence, and with every footstep sounding like an avalanche, one would expect the battle scenes to have a Carthage-esque grandeur. Sadly, the fight choreography is as impressive as, say, *Tae-Bo*, and the weaponry, which seemed so promising, has been better used by the likes of the *Ninja Turtles*. The 'Beast' itself looks like a German Shepherd with a football helmet strapped to its head. The film also overuses the slow-motion/fast-motion technique ad nauseum, and its cliché tribute to the 'Spaghetti Western' is so poorly done it makes the viewer want to vomit.

The film ends with an ambitious explanation of the 'Beast' as a product of French religious fanaticism, and de Fronsac triumphs over the last minute addition of incest to the plot. The 'Beast' is killed, Mani dies, and in true *Waterworld* fashion, hundreds of thousands of dollars are wasted on an unnecessary shot of de Fronsac cradling his insignificant love interest as they sail away on a clipper ship and dump Mani's ashes into the ocean.

"*Brotherhood*" could have worked if it was given to any capable Hong Kong film director, but with its complex overload of plot-twists and melodrama, the film sinks and takes the viewer along with it. *Sacre bleu!*



jim caviezel guy pearce THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

by daniel lichtblau

After a series of guffawable turkeys including *187* (1997), *Waterworld* (1995), and *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991), Director Kevin Reynolds has finally made something worth seeing. That is to say, he has finally made a film in the 'so bad it's good' category of films rather than the 'so mediocre it's bad' category. His latest film, based on Alexandre Dumas' classic novel, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, is a gem.

Set in post-Napoleonic France, James Caviezel stars as Edmond Dantes, a merchant sailor of plebian background who is framed for being a traitor by his jealous childhood best friend Fernand Mondego, played by Guy Pierce, and sentenced to life in prison. In prison Dantes meets the old priest Abbe Faria, played by Richard Harris, and together they dig a tunnel to freedom. Once free, Dantes, with the help of Jacopo, played by Luis Guzmán, finds the hidden treasure of Monte Cristo, which he uses to revenge Mondego, who by this point has married Dantes' fiancée and is a wealthy and respected noble in Paris.

Caviezel was just over-the-top and melodramatic enough for the role, and Guy Pierce's villainy was outstanding, (especially considering his catastrophic previous performance in *Memento*). However, the most memorable

acting in the film is on the part of Luis Guzmán. Guzmán, whom you probably remember as Carlito's chubby, often impatient, and loyal little sidekick, Pachanga, in *Carlito's Way*, plays the role of Jacopo, Dantes' chubby, often impatient, and loyal little sidekick. In spite of being set in France, one can't help but notice when watching the film that all of the actors have British accents. That is, all of the actors except for Guzmán, who has the speech mannerisms of a contemporary Puerto Rican New Yorker, strikingly similar to his accent Carlito's Way. One of the most memorable of his lines comes right after they find the treasure and Dantes is pondering what to do with it. Guzmán says, "Dantes", I say we kill this guy, I can run up to Paris, bam bam bam, I'll be back before weeks end." Indeed, Guzmán's performance was anything but mediocre.

One of the films big flaws is its serious lack of good swashbuckling. The poorly coordinated, often lethargic and drawn out sword fights would easily be enough to make John Barrymore turn in his grave. The Count of Monte Cristo is one of the all time classic swashbucklers. Although it has some degree of literary value, the story is centered around the action of the sword fight. This is something that was apparently not taken into consideration when

hiring the stunt coordinator, Paul Weston, who is best known for his work on the James Bond films. He has either worked as a stunt man or stunt coordinator on almost every James Bond film from *You Only Live Twice* (1967) on, and, unless you count the knife throwing German clowns in *Octopussy*, has probably never before choreographed a fight with swords before.

This is, unfortunately, quite obvious and takes a toll on the film. At one point, during the final sword fight between Dantes and Montego, the swashbuckling is so bad that they actually need to resort to slapstick action of Dantes loosing his sword, being chased around in circles by Montego, and finally throwing a rock at him, in order to make it not seem to be a complete waste. At the end of this scene, we see Montego impaled by the sword in a shot so anticlimactic and phony looking that my only response was, "Oh, the old sword under the arm trick.... Oldest one in the book."

The Count of Monte Cristo, won't win any Academy Awards or Golden Globes for the simple reason that it just isn't any good. However, instead of trying to cover up its flaws, it decorates them with silver bells and ribbon and screams out to be chuckled at. No, it's not a good movie, but it's one of the most entertaining movies I've ever seen.