

4-26-2002

Bard Free Press, Vol. 3, No. 9 (April 26, 2002)

Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/bardfreepress>

Recommended Citation

Bard College, "Bard Free Press, Vol. 3, No. 9 (April 26, 2002)" (2002). *Bard Free Press - All Issues (2000-2018)*. 24.

<https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/bardfreepress/24>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Bard Free Press, 2000-2018 at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bard Free Press - All Issues (2000-2018) by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@bard.edu.

news
opinions
& e

2
6
13



Anti/Counter
Globalization

page 6



Mr. Ken Habarta
rocks the Red Room

page 9



Mr. Ken Habarta
rocks the Red Room

page 15



Resident Evil,
Oscars and the
results in film.

page 16

What is really happening in Palestine?

Activist and journalist Kristen Schurr speaks to the Free Press about her work, the conflict, and the media

by ali tonak

As CNN covers the violence in the West Bank from a hotel in Tel Aviv, Kristen Schurr has put herself in the frontlines and has become part of the story she is covering.

Schurr, 33, is currently enrolled at New School University working for her doctorate in Middle East politics.

A member of the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), Schurr is one of several dozen internationals who make direct action a crucial component of their reporting on Israeli attacks. The Seattle Weekly described these activists' "intent is to be foreign, nonviolent witnesses to the occupation—human cameras doing the work U.S. media mostly isn't, who could show their solidarity through their presence, through protests, through house rebuildings and olive tree plantings, and then return home to tell their stories and nurture their new friendships."

Schurr's eyewitness accounts of various West Bank cities and refugee camps have circulated on the Internet and have been published in magazines with the help of other activists based in the U.S., who keep in touch with her and others in the West Bank via cell phone.

In an account she wrote two weeks ago from a refugee camp outside of Jenin, she described the condition of the war torn area. For instance, when people are arrested at Jenin Refugee Camp, she writes,

"They are beaten and tortured and taken to the checkpoint where they are held for usually about three days without food. One guy told me he asked for water and was given a cup of urine to drink... Usually then they are dumped off 200 meters from the checkpoint and the people in these two villages, Ramani and Taiba, come by in a truck and pick them up and bring them into these two towns and take care of them. They've got a school set up as basically a refugee center for the refugees that are re-refugees. You can realize how just horrifying that is that people in a refugee camp are refugees again."

continued on page 3...

Anti-Everything Protest Converges on DC

Globalization protestors unite with pro Palestinian activists; Other rallies focused on Plan Columbia and IMF/World Bank

by matt dinnen

Between 50,000 and 100,000 people congregated this past weekend in Washington D.C., uniting globalization protestors with Palestinian self-determination activists. Other causes, addressed from Friday April 19 to Monday April 22, included an end to the Bush administration's 'war on terrorism' at home and abroad and its support for 'Plan Colombia,' closing the School of the Americas, and abolition of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, as both global financial institutions were meeting. The seemingly broad range of demonstrations was united by a common thread: an uncompromising challenge to current policies that benefit an elite minority, political and economic, but have an adverse affect on the people of the world.

Friday was primarily spent preparing for the main marches and rallies on Saturday as thousands began pouring into the capital from all over the country and beyond. Throughout the day there were a number of educational, protest-related activities ranging from non-violence and anti-oppression trainings to teach-ins on globalization, the 'war on terrorism,' and the current crises in Israel, Iraq and Colombia. In the afternoon there was a vigil to close the School of the Americas at Upper Senate Park, followed by a Critical Mass bike ride "to fight State terror." Out of the 100 participants in the unpermitted bike ride from Capitol Hill through downtown rush hour traffic 40 of them were arrested by police. "We kind of got to the

continued on page 5...



Above, anti-Sharon protests take to the streets.

photo's courtesy of indymedia.org

Judith Butler on America's "War on Terror" and Camp X-Ray

Feminist Scholar and Philosopher Speaks with the Free Press

by kerry chance

Delivering a talk at Bard last week entitled "Infinite Detention," philosopher and noted feminist Judith Butler warned against the evasion of international human rights law, as well as the inadequacies of that law to address America's new "War on Terror." The Bush Administration announced on Monday plans for drafting "new legal doctrine" that would allow prisoners at Camp X-Ray to be brought before a military tribunal without specific evidence of committing war crimes. Another decision among many that Judith Butler has said will indefinitely suspend Guantanamo prisoners in a limbo of human rights violations, and expand the Bush Administration's attempts to make extra-legal practices appear legal.

Butler is a Professor of Comparative Literature and Rhetoric at the University of California, Berkley, and well known as a theorist of power, gender, sexuality, and identity. Some of her most notable works include Gender Trouble, Bodies that Matter, and Excitable Speech.

In the following interview, Butler discusses the climate and conditions of the "War on Terror," as well as the place of the 'human' in human rights.

You've noted that explanation has been confused with exoneration in anti-war sentiment. What advice do you have for activists in getting out of this trap, especially for Bard students converging on Washington for an anti-war protest? Is this type of action effective, what other approaches might be taken?

Well, I think this action is very effective; it's really important. The problem with demonstrations is that it depends on how the media cover them, how they estimate the numbers, where they place the reporting. And I've been in enough of them over the years to know that there are a lot of politics in who estimates, and how much they estimate, and how they estimate. And then also its a matter of where the demonstration is - will the demonstration be on the front page of The



New York Times or The Washington Post or will it be on A18 on the bottom left corner? And in a way, the effect that a protest has on government officials to take stock of public sentiment has to do with how it's publicly portrayed.

But the demonstration clearly has another purpose, which is to bring like-minded people together, or, at least, to bring people together who are agreed on the necessity of ending US military actions at this time, or people who are generally opposed to war.

And I think that's really a crucial function right now because many people who are critical of the war effort feel that they are

continued on page 4...

The Smoking Debate Continues

Will Bard become a smoke-free campus?

by ariel bardi

A recent meeting to further the ongoing dialogue concerning Bard's smoking policy was comprised of Dean of Students John Kelly, chair of Campus Student Safety Policy and Review Board (CSPRB) Robert Lee, Barbara Jean Briskey of Health Services, and several concerned students.

"We're not supposed to technically sanction smoking in any public place," Kelly clarified. "Lounges, doorways, hallways...according to state law, there's no smoking allowed." However, smoking in private dormitory rooms will continue to be permitted, provided that the dorm in question is not designated as smoke or substance free.

Speaking on behalf of administration, Kelly asserted, "We don't really have a slant on it [the issue of smoking]. As a community we can come up with some kind of middle ground solution...We have to approach it from a health perspective."

"Over thirty-percent of kids at Bard have asthma," said Briskey

continued on page 8...

Whiteness Forum Turns Out to Not Be a Supremacist Organization

Bard students organize to address questions on whiteness, privilege

by **lora jaramillo**

You may have seen fliers up around campus saying, "Do you want some cheese with that, Cracker?" "Why do all the white kids sit together at Kline?" or "First rule of the white club: don't talk about white club."

At first glance these fliers may seem like inflammatory statements about reverse-racism or advertisements for a white student organization.

In truth they are meant to advertise forums intended to raise awareness of whiteness as a racial category and address the problem of whiteness as a normative standard in America. The forums are part of Professor Amy Ansel's course on the Sociology of Whiteness.

"We're looking at how whiteness functions as a privilege and a norm and how that affects identity," explained sophomore Caitlin Pearce on why students in the class decided to set up the sessions. The group hopes to examine

whiteness through people's personal accounts of racial experience, statistical research, and theoretical readings. It is not a white support group or intended to perpetuate white unity.

The first meeting drew a large number of people from different backgrounds. About half of those in attendance were white. Subjects discussed included white guilt, white privilege, and what or who constitutes "white."

One of the issues discussed at the first forum was segregation at Bard, a college that preaches integration but remains relatively self-segregated, according to the forum's organizers. Some attributed it to a difference in interests, while others questioned how different the interests of students of color really are from those of white students.

"It's important that this study is coming around, and more specifically that it's happening at Bard, which is considered a liberal place,

because we experience some of the same race problems as any other university," said Pearce.

The language of the fliers concerned some meeting attendees, but most said they came because they wanted to discuss the issues being raised in the group rather than because of the fliers.

"The whole idea of whiteness as this thing that doesn't need to be talked about is brought up by the play on words of the Fight Club title," said first year Chris Pollina, a student in the class.

The forums are run as informal discussions with optional readings and are open to all students. The group meets Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m. in the Campus Center until the end of the semester.

New Media and Human Rights Professor Hired

Luce Grant Committee hires freelance journalist and author Ian Baruma

by **emily schmall**

With the appointment of Professor Ian Baruma, who assumes the Henry R. Luce Professorship of Human Rights, Democracy, and New Media, Bard's Human Rights Project is one step closer to departmental status.

While other schools such as the University of Chicago, Swarthmore, and Tufts University offer opportunities for students to study human rights, Bard will be the first to design a field that focuses on new media and democracy.

Baruma, a contributor to the New York Review of Books, and also a freelance writer, seemed an ideal match for the developing department. "Baruma's well-suited for the position because of his extensive writing on both politics and media, but also because of his outside interests and incredible capacity for critical thinking," said Danielle Riou, a research associate at the Human Rights Project.

Ian Baruma was born in the Netherlands, educated in Japan and Holland, and is the author, most recently, of *Bad Elements: Among the Rebels, Dissidents, and Democrats of Greater China*.

The Project aims to "fill the gap between traditional human rights rhetoric and teaching practices," said Riou. It began in the fall of 1999 as a response to major world events such as the end of the Cold War and the subsequent political and economic globalization.

While its degree of recognition may change as it shifts from special program to department, Riou

believes the Human Rights department will simply be a formal extension of what it already is.

The program currently includes opportunities in research and active involvement, the sponsorship of on-campus films and lectures, and supports student-led initiatives in the area of human rights.

According to its web site, "the Project encourages the Bard community to move the concept of human rights toward new forms of scholarship and discourse; forms that will further unfold the complexity and richness of contemporary human rights theory and practice."

Though the theme of human rights underlies many of Bard's courses either implicitly or explicitly, the new department will give closer and more exclusive attention to the human rights paradigm through a multidisciplinary approach. Both "human rights" and "new media and democracy" are intentionally openly defined terms. As the field is constantly changing, so are the ways in which it can be understood.

Professor Tom Keenan, however, the professorship with the Project as "designed to encourage innovative study of the ways in which new information and communication technologies have affected, raise questions about, and are at play in struggles for and around democracy and human rights."

The Human Rights Project is working to become an official department for next year.



Bard Not as Well Endowed as We Thought

Endowment contributions exposed

by **vincent valdmanis**

Despite a recent contribution of considerable size to Bard's endowment, the college cannot afford increased spending, President Leon Botstein said in a phone interview.

The donation of \$120 million by Bard's trustees announced last December led many to believe the college is in a position to spend an unexpected injection of cash on anything it wants.

In fact, the donation is for an endowment that will generate interest equivalent to what the trustees

Instead of continuing this hand-to-mouth approach, the trustees decided to give a one-time capital donation that will earn the equivalent in interest of their previous annual donations. This means greater year-to-year stability for the college and less dependency on a few individuals to keep it afloat, but it also means the trustees cannot be expected to be as generous in the future as they have been in the past.

As a result, Bard will announce a capital campaign in

ened me into thinking that wealthy people would be scared off," said Botstein. He decided to ask the Board of Trustees to show their dedication to Bard's future security. "[The \$120 million] was a resounding commitment," he said.

Botstein's goal is for the endowment to be \$400 million five years from now. \$300 million will be earmarked for undergraduate programs, "yielding about \$15 million [annually], which is what we're spending today," he said. The remaining money will fund Bard's graduate programs.

By way of comparison, Vassar College's endowment "was close to \$700 million before the market hit us," a spokeswoman for its Development Office said. It now stands at around \$590 million. Botstein cautioned against getting carried away with endowments. "I'm against over endowing, I don't think it's healthy for a college to be wealthy," he said. "The best college is not the richest. We have no ambition to be a wealthy institution. It makes you conservative, risk-averse."

With the interest earned the college will in effect have the same amount to spend as it did before the donation. In other words: not enough.

would normally give on an annual basis. With the interest earned the college will in effect have the same amount to spend as it did before the donation. In other words: not enough.

"The college now runs a \$14 million deficit a year," said Botstein. "That \$14 million has to be raised privately" every year. Eighty-five percent of the gap is typically met with annual gifts from the trustees, who, as Botstein noted, bear no obligation to donate.

June with the goal of raising at least another \$150 million to help the endowment cover the remaining gap. Tuition will also rise 5% to \$26,900 next fall, outpacing inflation but remaining comparable with like-sized schools with far greater endowments.

The trustees' donation last winter was a vote of confidence that Botstein hopes will convince others to give.

"The situation after September 11, with the recession, fright-

OSAKA

Japanese Restaurant

VOTED
"Best Sushi in the Hudson Valley"
Chronogram & Hudson Valley Magazine

★★★★
Poughkeepsie Journal
Rating **EXCELLENT**
by *Zagat's*

Vegetarian dishes available
2 Great Locations!

18 Garden Street Rhinebeck (845) 876-7338 (845) 876-7278	74 Broadway Tivoli (845) 757-5055 (845) 757-5056
---	---

Palestinian Activist Brings it Straight from the Trenches

...continued from page 1

What have you been doing during your time in the occupied territories?

The general idea is to have an international presence in Palestine. This is because the Israeli military forces do not at all honor Palestinian life but honor international life since a loss would anger the US government. American citizens have more freedom of movement than the Palestinians do.

I talk to a lot of people about what's happening to them and record what I can and give that on the radio. I write as often as I can get Internet access, not very often but... here I'm in Jenin, all the telephone lines have been cut and there's no Internet. There's not electricity in the camp of course; in most parts of town there's not. That's another thing that the Israeli military does is to target the infrastructure of the town; not just kill and demean people but they go after the basics of regular life. The regular life under the occupation mind you, not regular life as what most people in the world are familiar with.

Now that you have seen the situation for yourself what do you think is the biggest distortion, even amongst people who are somewhat informed about the crises, about the situation in Palestine?

Well, the current biggest distortion is that the Israeli military is pulling out, that they are quieting in certain towns. I was in Nablus, I couldn't sleep for a night because the bombing was so loud and this is the same time that it's being reported that Nablus was quieting. I think it was on the front page of *The New York Times* yesterday that the Israeli military was pulling out.

It's a lie. I got beat up by the troops inside Nablus and that was when they weren't supposed to be there. You know, that kind of stuff. That's really bizarre.

But the people seem to really take more seriously how much the death toll is. Hundreds of hundreds of Palestinians have been killed, but what people forget is that daily life underneath the occupation is a slow death, a humiliation. It's a deep humiliation to be unable to just cross the street without getting permission from the Israeli military. The Israeli military calls the Palestinians "dogs," they don't respect even the slightest bit of their humanity. I've seen it over and over again. I think that's some of the stuff that just regularly goes on that people forget about.

Palestinians can't really travel through the West Bank and this is what's supposed to be their territory, a tiny bit of the land that is actually their's. People get stopped at checkpoints; they have to show their ID and get questioned by the soldiers and sort of prove their worthiness to go from one Palestinian village to the next. That's the life in the occupation that I think many people don't know about.

Can you please describe the interactions that you've had with the media – both the Jewish and Palestinian media and western media such as CNN etc.?

Sure, the Palestinian media has just taped, [Arabic cable channel] *Al Jazeera* or some other local media such as *Bethlehem TV* just taped; they haven't asked me any questions, they just tape specifically what I'm doing and then they put it on the news. There's never been any spin or anything about it. It's just "here's something that happened today" and they showed the footage of it. If we're doing a demo, for example. The Israeli media has never asked me one question. It's hard to describe [my interaction with] the US corporate media and the BBC. I got interviewed by this guy who didn't leave East Jerusalem, which is just regular occupation. It's not under siege, it's not the same as West Bank or Gaza at all. It just seems like they're not really trying to see what's happening.

You had previously talked about the Israeli Defense Force (IDF). Could you please describe what your interaction has been with the IDF?

The IDF, which is a joke of a name for one because Israel Defense Forces, what are they defending against? Palestinians are so demoralized; they don't have anything as far as weapons. You should see the guns and the night vision and the tanks and the APC's and all the stuff that the Israelis' have.

[phone cut off]

Hello?

Hi, I'm on the roof right now, usually we can't go on the roof because of the snipers. Ok so, I've been generally harassed, they've tried to intimidate me; they point

ach.

What about with the families you've been staying and acting as a human shield for; what has been your interaction with them?

It's been some of the most remarkable interaction I've ever had in my life, people that somehow under occupation and under invasion are so generous and kind and loving. I've been called peo-

Hundreds of hundreds of Palestinians have been killed, but what people forget is that daily life underneath the occupation is a slow death, a humiliation. It's a deep humiliation to be unable to just cross the street without getting permission from the Israeli military. The Israeli military calls the Palestinians "dogs," they don't respect even the slightest bit of their humanity.

ple's daughter and their sister. I get hugged and kissed on the cheeks every day. I'm never without anything that I need, I get more than I could possibly want as far as sharing the little bit of food that people have. Tea anytime, just so much love and kindness. I've been given little gifts and little girls always want to play with me. There is so much humanity here, people are so nice to me and... I wish there was a way to describe it, it sort of sounds stupid in a way but it's just... it makes me teary how great the people are here and what they

idea is that they're building settlements, Israeli settlements all the way around Bethlehem to completely isolate east Jerusalem and Bethlehem from the rest of the West Bank. Bethlehem is totally surrounded and it can't even be slightly connected to the rest of the West Bank.

Then they started coming in, some stayed on the outside and others came into the town and

bye." People in the camp were just waiting, waiting to get the news of which one of their friends and their family was dead next. There are dead bodies in there, people were really injured and couldn't get out. Ambulances aren't allowed to get in there; we tried over and over to get ambulances inside, near Merger Square to get some of the people out. Even the people that were lying out on the square not even in the church that were dead, just to get them away. In one house there was a dead mother and a kid inside the house and the rest of the family was still there and they couldn't get out. They couldn't get the dead people out and they couldn't themselves get out, they would just sit there with dead bodies in this little house.

How do the Palestinians feel about neighboring Arab States? Do they feel supported or abandoned?

One Palestinian said to me, "You're better than any Arab government because you don't sit around and talk about peace, you actually came here." Another yesterday was saying, "Why doesn't anyone care about us, why are we so alone?" In general, I certainly haven't talked to every single Palestinian, so I can't say how everyone feels at all – they feel very abandoned and disappointed and pretty alone. They know that the punishment at the hands of the US for any country who stands up to the US or does her own thing is – you know sanctions, look at Cuba. How long has this blockade been going on, since the fifties? I think that a lot of Palestinians seem to be aware of the fact that going against the consensus of the US and its cronies is slow or immediate death like sanctions or bombing. Palestinians feel like they're pretty alone and that's why they thank you so much when internationals show up here

Do you see any positive outcome or a Palestinian state in the near future?

The Israelis are now talking about having a security buffer zone. They want to bring the green line in 8 miles further so all the way around the west bank Palestinians will lose another 8 miles. Considering that there are resolutions saying that there should be right to return, there should be pre '67 borders. People are saying now here in Jenin "no one is going to believe in this peace propaganda, after this massacre there is just no way." I don't think that there's gonna be any sort of Palestinian state because it's never gone that way. Even in Oslo Arafat signed away most of the rights of the Palestinians, and the Israelis still didn't honor that. I think that the situation in general is pretty hopeless. Except that the Palestinians have so much hope and goodness and the ability to deal with all of this. That's the good part.

There is so much humanity here, people are so nice to me and...

I wish there was a way to describe it, it sort of sounds stupid in a way but it's just...

it makes me teary how great the people are here and what they have to put up with.

[Crying] Their homes are rubble and they have nothing left and they're still nice to each other and they're still nice to me.

the turrets of their tanks at me and kind of shake them up and down. One of them climbed out of the top and yelled at me, told me to go home. I've of course been shot at more times than I can count but I don't know if they're trying to kill me because I think that if they were I would be dead, considering how many Palestinians they kill.

A woman was shot straight into the stomach and we thought that it was a ricochet bullet but it turned out it wasn't. The doctor at the hospital that was operating on her said it was straight into her stomach and it's a dum-dum bullet, it has a hollow tip and those are illegal under international law. It split into two parts within her stom-

have to put up with. [Crying] Their homes are rubble and they have nothing left and they're still nice to each other and they're still nice to me.

I understand that you were outside the Church of Nativity when the Israeli forces invaded. Could you describe the scene around Merger Square?

When the tanks rolled in to Bethlehem, they did it in stages. First they went into Beit Jala, which is the town just above, and took over that town with tanks and had house arrests and curfews and cut the electricity. Then they moved downhill, because that's their entrance point that the tanks were using to get into Bethlehem. The

started rolling through the town and knocking things over and every one's gone inside of course. You can't be out on the streets. They just devastate their path, just crush everything that they come across. The Church of Nativity and the Merger Square is one place where Palestinians tried to resist the invasion a bit. Of course they're completely out numbered, out armed, out everything; there's no chance.

The tanks surrounded Merger Square, they burned the mosque, they went in to the houses that surround Merger square, took out the families, stuck them in rooms under guard, went on top of all the houses and used them as sniper posts. The Church of Nativity is on Merger Square. They took this public space and filled it with tanks and soldiers, killing the Palestinians that were there, so some ran into this church. The church was filled with priests and nuns who were already there and a lot of everyday Palestinians happened to be caught outside or in one of the houses.

People have been held up in there for a couple of weeks now. I talked to some people via walkie-talkie that were inside there. They were getting along well with the nuns, and the priests were taking good care of them as much as they could. They had a well inside so they were able to get a little bit of water. There was a little bit of food in this one store that was inside the church. How it was described was: somebody held in an L with their thumb and the index finger, and said: "For every five men every day there is a square of bread like this." So they shared their food inside, some people would call their friends inside the camp with walkie-talkies and they would be crying and saying "we're waiting to die" and "we're gonna be killed, good-

Judith Butler on Extra-legal Spaces and Guantanamo Bay

...continued from page 1

working under conditions of censorship. It's very hard to say that you're opposed to U.S. militarism because that might be construed as an act of sympathy or affiliation with Al' Qaeda, or with the attacks that happened on September 11.

So it seems to me, that what would be best is if the media would open up, and allow for a certain kind of critical public discussion about what's happening, such that we might distinguish between opposing this war and also opposing Al' Qaeda, and the attacks on the US, and what it means to say both things at once.

Maybe we could also have a larger public discussion on the feeling of anti-Americanism in both Central Asia and the Mid-East, thinking about Indonesia and the Philippines as well. What are the sources of anti-Americanism? What does it mean when people say they're anti-America? Is 'America' short-hand for something else? Is this the result of American actions? Where does anti-Americanism come from and what purpose does it serve? It would be extremely useful, I think, as a country, and also as part of a global community, to take stock of what that enormous anger is.

And, you know, early on in September and October, people didn't want to hear about why the people who orchestrated and executed the attacks on September 11th - they didn't want to hear explanations of why they did it. Because if you can give a reason for why they did it, that makes them rational, that makes them animated by a reason. And if you have an investment in making them out to be just pure evil, or constitu-



distinguish between those two. We can condemn those violent actions, but also be compelled by our international place and obligations to figure out the reasons for them. **You've alluded to this question, but how do you define the human in human rights?**

It's interesting, I think, you see, that we have not yet become human. Or, I might say, in a different way, that the category of the human is in the process of becoming. There are many ways to define the human, and there are many ways in which human beings themselves define their humanness - what constitutes it, what source it derives, what kinds of value it has. So I think it's really important for human rights not to assume an advance that we have a conception of the human already in place, and that it is fixed and final, and good for all times and places.

I think what constitutes the human is a site of contestation. That there are clashing cultural

in terms for some cultures.

And some people at Amnesty were worried that it would be an act of cultural insensitivity to oppose that notion. But if it's true that some cultures don't want to think of homosexuality as part of the human, and want to think of it as bestial, or un-human, they nevertheless have to live in a world in which others do want to make that claim.

And I think that there are very often provocative encounters that take place in human rights negotiations where different notions of the human have to yield. They have to yield to new notions of the human. And they have to yield to new notions that are promoted in the name of a more expansive, or more universal notion of what the human is.

I think currently, we're seeing the US government make an argument that the Guantanamo Bay detainees, Arab-Americans, and Arab immigrants or residents, who have been detained illegally since September 11, that they are not entitled to certain kind of civil liberties, or that they don't fall under the rubric of international human rights. And I think implicitly we're being told that these humans are

not humans in the ordinary sense. Or that they are 'suspected' to not be human in the ordinary sense.

And what that means is that there's an ordinary sense of the human that is sometimes defined by a racial or racist episteme, which has a certain view of what qualifies as a human, who are subjects entitled to certain rights. And so when another so-called human comes along who doesn't fit that, there are authorities, such as the US government, that do not consider these people subjects entitled to human rights - these rights, which we nevertheless deemed universal! So they just commit this extraordinary contradictory act, by which they claim the

universality of human rights in one breath, and then they insist on the exceptions to this universality in another.

And we have to ask, under what conditions do certain members of certain populations get targeted as exceptions to that universal? And

as long as that continues to happen, we have not yet achieved the human.

Often times in discussions about human rights feminism is, at best, considered implicit, or, at worst, excluded. How do you see feminism's role in human rights discourse?

Charlotte Bunch [founding Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership] has run a center for a very long time working on feminist human rights and it's interesting to think about that phrase, "feminist human rights," along with the phrase "lesbian and gay human rights" or "Arab-American human rights," which is hopefully the sight of a new politicization.

But her view has always been that human rights discourse has to accept that the human comes in various kinds, and when we're talking about feminist human rights, we're asking the question, "What specific meaning does the term human rights have for women?" It's not the same as "women's rights" and it's not quite the same as "human rights" per se, which is supposed to just take in everybody. But it's an admission that human rights is not always conceptualized in relation to women's situation, and that human rights takes on a very specific meaning in the context of women's situation.

In the Beijing conference on women, which happened around four or five years ago, which was a central international event on women's human rights in the last decade, you saw certain very fundamental notions become central for women's human rights activism.

One of them is autonomy and sexual autonomy. A term like sexual autonomy can mean both to protect women's sexual freedom, allowing them to engage in consensual adult sexual relations that are the consequence of their own free will and without punishment, but also can mean access to reproductive technology, deciding whether a woman's body will bear a child or not, deciding to have access to technology that would enable one to bear a child.

It was also a term used to talk about the rights that women have to be protected from sexual violence, from rape in particular,

whether it is in public or in the household. The question of household rape or rape within marriage is, of course, a very complicated term to argue cross-culturally and internationally at this time, but I think that the notion of sexual autonomy provided at least a rubric in which that debate could take place. And that debate is not resolved, there is not international consensus on it.

I think there are also fundamental issues of poverty - the differential ways in which women suffer from impoverishment, especially in countries where to be unmarried or to have been divorced, or to have lost a husband, makes it very difficult to have access to resources or to property or to independent money of any kind. Very often marriage law traps women financially in ways that can be very devastating.

Also [difficult can be] the differential wages that women suffer, especially under international corporations who tend to enlist women in very low wages in second and third world countries.

Education and literacy are also major issues that women's human rights faces. I know that there have been campaigns in South Asia to establish literacy programs for women. That is really key. I've seen that happening in Spain, working women are not literate. I know that it's happening in India. It's a major issue.

Much of your work deals with your conception of performativity, and recently you've mentioned that the attacks on September 11 and the "War on Terror" have decentered the "I" in both. How does performativity translate to the "I" as nation or "I" as an American citizen? Or even as Al Qaeda detainee?

Let's remember that the theory of performativity was originally a theory of gender, about how gender is performed, how gender is enunciated and articulated and how it's done in relationship to certain kinds of norms. Performativity, in the work which I elaborated most fully, probably has to do with becoming a man or becoming a woman, or becoming something else, where the norms of man or woman are hegemonic and one has to negotiate them, either through replicating them and resignifying them or by crossing them or confusing them, or vacating them, or posing them many different relations.

I think that, in that context, I was particularly concerned that we get away from the essential notions of masculinity and femininity and the emphasis on performance was to show certain ideas of natural femininity are indeed performed. Even when they are performed well, they're performed, and that it is still a question of performance trying to become commensurate with an ideal, not in an animation of an essential femininity.

I think we can transpose this into broader questions of identity when people say that there's a certain kind of essential "Americanness," what it is to be an American,

And I worry that very unified and conformist, monolithic notions of what it is to be American at this moment not only suppress dissent and conflict, on the one hand, but they also tend to produce certain kinds of images of what Americans look like and what they ought to be like.

ently violent, or extra-human or not human, then they are not motivated by reason, they are motivated by something that's other than reason. So, in that case, no reasons can be given.

But I think that it's not only wrong to cast people in that way, even when they do heinously violent acts, but it is an opportunity to think critically about the origins of violence in our time - where it's coming from, why it's directed where it is, what it's themes are.

So, in the piece that you referred to, I worry that people who try to think about explanations are very often accused of providing a rationale or justification for that action. But I think it's important to

interpretations about what the human ought to be, and that every time you assert human rights, you are also adding to the meaning of what the human is.

For a long time, I remember, it was very hard for Amnesty International to accept gay and lesbian rights as human rights. They finally did come around and now have a whole program devoted to it. But in the early days, when they were resistant, I attended some meetings with the leadership in New York, and it was clear that they were afraid that in certain cultures homosexuality was not part of what was admissibly or valuably human. So to have gay and lesbian human rights was a kind of contradiction

"But one cannot take collective responsibility alone. It is something taken with others."

...continued from page 4

what it is to be patriotic, what it is to belong, what the norms are to which you must conform if you are to appear in public, right now, as a patriotic American.

I think that many people in the media have sought to conform to those norms to suppress dissent, to expunge criticism of US policy from the mainstream media, to selectively report on the deaths of Afghanistan, to selectively report on the Mid-East – although some of it is breaking up right now. Many of these self-censoring practices are about trying to produce the US reporter as a kind of foot soldier in the Bush army, and there were several reporters who did define themselves as such, especially after the very tragic murder of Daniel Pearl, the Wall Street Journal reporter. But I think it's not right to see journalists, for instance, as part of the military and we need an independent notion of what critique is, and what dissent is. And the place of critique and dissent in democracy and in radical democratic culture is always going to be agonistic, it's always going to be conflictual.

And I worry that very unified and conformist, monolithic notions of what it is to be American at this moment not only suppress dissent and conflict, on the one hand, but they also tend to produce certain kinds of images of what Americans look like and what they ought to be like. With the racial profiling practice and the request to be "on alert." And what are we supposed to be "on alert" for? We're supposed to be looking at people who might look vaguely Arab-American and watch their movements. It's kind of patrolling the phantasmatic Arab, on the streets and in the cities of the US. It strikes me as a way of defining who is American, the ones who are on alert, watching, and the ones who are not, the ones who are watched, monitored. So we see a certain normative control on what will and will not be identified as American that doesn't have anything to do with any sort of natural description of what Americans actually are. That's a normative prescription and restriction on what "American" is.

Now, in my opinion, the social categories are subject resignification, and there needs to be a

strong public assistance on what the diversity of being an American has been and continues to be. Since I think there is a certain kind of backlash against Americans of Arab descent and various groups in the US who are non-white, or from the Mid-East or Central Asia, who are suffering from being not only suspected but being ostracized in certain ways.

What does it mean to take responsibility for human rights as a nation or individual, which has no determining boundary, referent, center?

Well, wouldn't it first and foremost mean trying to figure out the community that we actually are in our diversity and in our decenteredness? And to establish modes of participation, which extend radically to all populations within the nation state. And then to take account of our history, even though we are an unwieldy collectivity, right? We're not a single, or monolithic collectivity. And ask, what does it mean to know our diversity and our history, and to try to develop participatory, democratic, political structures, with which we not only can assert ourselves as

a radically diverse country with a radically complicated history, but also to attempt to forge a future from that position.

The very fact that we live with others whose values are not the same as our own, or who set a limit to what we can know, or who are opaque to us, or who are strange, or are partially understood, that just means we live with a kind of humility, that means we are decentered. And that is to say, who I am is not the center of this world. I live in a world in which I am constantly decentered with the differences of others. And if I live in a democratic polity, I agree to be decentered, in some sense, to undergo a certain kind of humility. Because I know that I am living in a world where I know my values are not necessarily assumed by neighbor or those who are most proximate to me.

It also means I have to find cultural translation, modes of encounter, modes of democratic participation, which actually work to foster understanding, without mandating unity. And it also means that when I take responsibility it is not a grandiose act, it's not a narcissistic act, in which I am responsible for the entirety of the world. No, I place myself in a vividly decentered way in a world with others, who are their own centers, and which I must understand to live socially, to live democratically, to live in a polity, is always to in some sense be displaced by the subject. It is partially what it is to live in a

culturally diverse, democratic culture.

But if one finds that the modes of communication and deliberation that allow for that to exist in its complexities, then I think we have the chance to take a kind of collective responsibility. But one cannot take collective responsibility alone. It is something taken with others.

What is preoccupying you now, where do you see your upcoming work going?

Well, it's complicated, right? Because everybody had a project going until September 11, and now I've written four pieces about the war and about the detainment effort. You know, I think I started actually doing a project on accountability, trying to think about what it is to give an account of myself or to give an account of others. And then September 11 happened, and I wrote that essay on explanation and exoneration, trying to explain that these might be two different ways of giving an account of something. A moral one and a historical one. I seem now to be examining two different uses of ethical discourse, wondering about how, say the invocation of evil works to stymie critical thinking, and also how one might render compatible radical critical thinking with moral accountability. So I guess that's the perimeter of what I'm doing, but I keep responding to world events and I'm not sure I'm elaborating the book I'm supposed to be writing.

DC Protest Coverage, continued

...continued from page 5

point where they were a danger to the community, to the public, and to themselves," Chief of Police Ramsey told the Washington Post in regard to the Critical Mass ride. All of the bicyclists were released from jail by Saturday evening; the bikes, however, have not all been returned.

Saturday was the largest and most historic day of protest activity during the weekend. By 11 am the nation's capital was saturated with four separate rallies, all of which grew in numbers as the united march approached. The morning rallies, including one outside of the IMF and World Bank buildings, sponsored by the Mobilization for Global Justice, eventually met up with the A20 Mobilization to Stop the War at Home and Abroad at the base of the Washington Monument. At the Washington Hilton the Committee in Solidarity with the People of Palestine held a rally, and at the White House Ellipse the International ANSWER coalition sponsored a rally against war and racism.

Around 1:30 pm all of these single-focused rallies joined the same march route towards the National Mall where a 'unity rally to stop the war' was held until 5 pm. The march, estimated at 100,000 participants, was lively and peaceful. In what has been called the largest pro-Palestinian demonstration in U.S. history the other issues were sometimes overshadowed by chants of "FREE, FREE PALESTINE!" Muslims and people of Middle-Eastern descent came out in droves from all over the eastern seaboard, the Midwest and South East, mobilizing in response to the recent surge of violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Another 35,000 protested in San Francisco on Saturday. Other solidarity demonstrations took



place in numerous U.S. cities. Internationally, April 20 solidarity demonstrations happened in Buenos Aires, Argentina; Basque Country; Montréal, Canada; Chile; the Dominican Republic; San Salvador, El Salvador; Tabasco, Oaxaca, and Mexico City, Mexico; Santo Domingo; Santiago, Managua, Nicaragua; Madrid, Spain; and South Africa, among other countries. The Cuban Ministry of Foreign Relations issued a statement supporting the D.C. actions.

Weekend leave was cancelled for 3,800 members of the Washington police force, and officers from nearby cities and counties in Maryland and Virginia were called in. Although the police presence was not as visible as in past mass demonstrations there was a subtler, covert presence from plainclothes officers infiltrating the movement by helicopters and other advanced technology. The cost for policing was over 10 million dollars. During the four days only 80 people in total were arrested, compared to 1,200 during similar anti-globalization protests two years ago.

By 8:30 am Sunday morning there were people back in the streets, this time to "meet and greet" the IMF and World Bank delegates at their headquarters.

Those protestors, estimated at 1,000, proceeded to join the Colombia Mobilization Festival at the Washington Monument which included speakers, music and non-violence training. The main message was to end U.S. military aid to Colombia. After Saturday's demonstrations, which were dominated by pro-Palestinian protests of U.S. aid to Israel, Sunday's marchers focused on global economic issues. On protest signs and in chants, they called for the cancellation of Third World debt and a change in U.S. foreign policy. Monday was a day of more militant direct action for both the Palestinian and Colombian causes.

Organizers saw the four days of action as an incredible success. Former Bard professor Stephen Collatrella, who attended Saturday's events, observed the historical significance of the of the demonstrations, "This is one of the largest, most diverse protests on the Left in years... We have found new allies and a dialogue has begun." Those in attendance in D.C. hope that the events will bring the world one step closer to peace.

News Analysis

Bush's Steel Tariff: Repercussions

Some time ago President Bush imposed a 30% tariff on steel, but the debate on the results and validity of his action goes on to this day and is likely to continue. The tariff is expected to raise the price of steel as much as 10%. The nations which will be affected the most significantly are Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, Germany, and Brazil.

"We are a free-trading nation and in order to remain a free-trading nation, we must enforce law," Bush said, raising the question of whether he understands the difference between free trade and protectionism, and whether he thinks the public is aware of the difference.

"I decided that imports were severely affecting our industry, an import industry, in a negative impact, and, therefore, provide temporary relief so that the industry could restructure itself."

Meanwhile an economist at the Brookings Institution calls Bush's plan "a damaging economic plan that could delay the U.S. economy's recovery by increasing the cost of steel-made products like automobiles, cutting the demand for them and setting a dangerous precedent that could cause tens of thousands of layoffs in steel-using firms." Far from always being the flawless free market champion it sometimes wishes to

appear, it seems that the U.S. does indeed support the free market policies in theory or when it has to do with other nations, but has no consistent record of following the same policies itself.

American economists are not the only ones who are skeptical of the new tariff. The 15 members of the European Union fear that their markets will be flooded with cheap steel as a result of Bush's imposition of the new tariff. The Union's trade commissioner said that the tariff "will not only not provide a solution, but aggravate matters." They claim that American steel industry's failure to restructure is not a result of unfair competition but is an outcome of its own problems. Under W.T.O. rules the Union has an option of retaliation against the United States 90 days after the tariff takes effect.

Thus, the last word on the tariff debate has not yet been said. In the U.S., the fact that the president of the country advocates higher tariffs and presents it to the public as something that would benefit the economy, while the economists say otherwise, means that Bush takes for granted that the public would believe such an argument. Which it does.

-Daria Solovieva

A Revolution (of a different kind) is Afoot

Redefining the terms and implications of globalization discourse and activism

by **rob ponce**

Recently, the premature emergence of the International Criminal Court and a failed coup in Venezuela that made the White House blush, prove that a global revolution is brewing. It is not anti-globalization but counter-globalization, a movement that seeks to manipulate institutions within the globalized arena that made momentous progress in recent weeks. Those who gathered in Washington D.C. this past weekend to protest undefined causes can no longer refuse to answer an indispensable question: can globalization potentially be a good thing?

I have taken my contempt for globalization to the streets of Quebec City, Rome, and New York, only to walk away frustrated because the meetings I protested for the most part went on without interruption. Many in my generation recognize that the mainstream media and the general public often deem protests inconsequential. Yet, they concede that there is little we can do in a globalized epoch when the interests of the few corporate elite undermine the collective global welfare.

Justly so, the anti-globalization movement takes on oppressive global institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. In a recently-published Foreign Affairs article, "Coping with Anti-globalization," Jagdish Bhagwati complained, "If reducing poverty by using economic analysis to accelerate growth and thereby pull

people up into gainful employment and dignified sustenance is not moral, and compelling imperative, what is?" In theory, global institutions exist to ameliorate some of the world's social and economic fabrics. In practice, however, they offer loans to poor countries, attaching unreasonable stipulations and staggering interest rates, which exacerbate widespread problems such as poverty and environmental negligence.

The empowered elite mentioned earlier represent not only corporate interests, but in the cases of the IMF and the World Bank, the interests of the world's wealthiest nations, i.e. the western world. America, the most powerful nation since the Roman Empire, makes its mark from the Pacific Ocean to the Caspian Sea and beyond.

American troops are stationed on almost every continent of the planet, as are the golden arches of McDonalds, a true symbol of America's bland yet grandiloquent culture.

"Hegemonic" is an adjective commonly used to describe America's monopoly of the world's resources. "Hegemony," however, is just an academic word for imperialism, and many are keen to this. In his book *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*, Christopher Hitchens says we cannot "shamefully vindicate the ancient philosopher Anacharsis, who maintained that laws were like cobwebs: strong enough to



detain only the weak, and too weak to hold the strong." Likewise, the International Criminal Court is the answer of 66 countries to that very problem.

Until now, protesters of globalization could do little more than march down the streets of Seattle or Quebec shouting chants such as "the world is not for sale" or "this is what democracy looks like," referring to 15 foot chain linked fences that prevented the public from eye witnessing meetings that supposedly make the world more open to democracy. Events in recent weeks, however, offer a ray of hope, not for the eradication of globalization but rather for its democratization.

Since many consider globalization inevitable, a new movement called "counter-globalization" affords protesters the opportunity to propose changes to the current system. Its supporters accept globalization but seek a different,

more democratic form of it. The International Criminal Court allows a member country to try individuals from other nations for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and acts of aggression. It is the first legitimate victory for a newly formed movement that aims to establish global institutions empowering the disenfranchised. Also recently, a right-wing militia briefly ousted President Hugo Chavez from power in Venezuela during an unsuccessful coup. Chavez's history of opposing U.S. policies in Latin America and his warm relationship with Fidel Castro continues to raise suspicion within the U.S. government. However, what was truly suspect was that the Bush administration, specifically Condoleezza Rice, appeared eager to recognize a new, right wing government in Venezuela, and when the coup failed, the press caught the administration with their pants down.

The crisis in Venezuela recalls a longtime tradition in American foreign policy: to support capitalism (not to be confused with democracy) over governments that lean towards a socialist ideology. Washington's ostensible approval of the short-lived coup made front-page news in the New York Times just hours after the legitimate President was arrested. That alone is progress. It took almost 30 years for the world to realize Nixon's national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, was "in bed" with one of Latin America's most notorious dictators, Chile's Augusto Pinochet. Today international crises are becoming chapters in an open book, rather than in a clandestine one as they were in the 1970s.

Whether shattered windows of a Seattle Starbucks or accessibility to the Internet enable the counter-globalization movement to make headway is impossible to determine. What is evident is that international discontent with American hegemony now penetrates U.S. borders. For example, both The New York Times and The Washington Post reported that it is now less likely that elder statesman Henry Kissinger, once a prolific traveler, can leave the country without foreign judges calling for his arrest while abroad. That one of America's most celebrated diplomats is confined to a kind of global "house arrest" should bestow hope to a progressive movement. Although in its earliest stages, a revolution has begun.

New Policy Awareness Campaign to Start; Students Worried

...continued from page 1

key, whose primary concerns are the endangerment and aggravation of non-smokers from secondhand smoke. She suggested that the Paranoids, Kline's smoking section, be eliminated entirely. Briskey also claimed that the idea that proper ventilation protects against secondhand smoke is a myth perpetrated by tobacco companies to encourage continued indoor smoking.

Administration fears an extreme negative response from students if the Paranoids are abolished. "A large portion of the population uses that room, because there are no other facilities on campus where you can smoke and study," said Elizabeth Anderson, a Student Government member who attended the forum to petition smokers' rights.

Junior Tubby Carroll concurred, "Fuck no! Where the hell would me and my manic-depressive, substance-abusing chums go to avoid a hook-up from the previous night's little gym party? Where, I ask, where! Certainly not to any non-smoking room!"

Briskey's agenda, on the other hand, is very different. "I would like to see indoor spaces smoke-free and have a culture of clean air," she proposed. Briskey also speculated that Bard students could hypothetically pursue future litigation against Bard administration for allowing cigarette smoke to waft openly about campus, thus supposedly enticing some students to smoke and preventing current smokers from quitting. Briskey does not blame the students for their inability to cease smoking, but rather administration for perpetuating a "culture of smoking" and especially the tobacco industries. Briskey also argued that student smokers are too consumed by their addiction to make the active decision to quit.

igation against Bard administration for allowing cigarette smoke to waft openly about campus, thus supposedly enticing some students to smoke and preventing current smokers from quitting. Briskey does not blame the students for their inability to cease smoking, but rather administration for perpetuating a "culture of smoking" and especially the tobacco industries. Briskey also argued that student smokers are too consumed by their addiction to make the active decision to quit.

There are no plans to enact any changes this semester, though Kelly predicted that next year's freshmen will acquire a very different awareness

ating a "culture of smoking" and especially the tobacco industries. Briskey also argued that student smokers are too consumed by their addiction to make the active decision to quit.

"That's ridiculous," refuted Mira Gibson, who recently successfully quit in spite of Bard's alleged "culture of smoking." "If you don't want to smoke, then you don't smoke. That's basically the bottom-line. I quit cold turkey and I can still get shit-faced at a party and not want to smoke."

In addition to potential health risks from second-hand smoke, administration fears that smoking

in hallways and lounges leads to an increase in property damage. In Robbins, doorframes have been severely burnt, as well as the hardwood floors, which are now in need of renovation. In Tewksbury alone, twenty thousand dollars will be spent to install new carpeting. The current flooring, just reinstalled last

There are no plans to enact any changes this semester, though Kelly predicted that next year's freshmen will acquire a very different awareness

year in preparation for incoming freshmen, is now severely damaged from cigarette burns.

Tewksbury resident Dale Beran fails to see a direct correlation between destruction of property and permissible smoking. "People are going to be destructive and stupid regardless of whether or not they have a cigarette in their mouth," he countered. Although it is agreed that there should be some sort of solution based on a compromise from both sides, opinions on what that outcome should be are varied. Some students suggested that a new building be created where smokers

can study and congregate. Others, such as Briskey, demanded a total non-smoking enforcement, particularly in indoor spaces such as Kline. Both the construction of awnings over buildings to shield smokers from the elements during cigarette breaks and a renovation of the Paranoids' ventilation system were also proposed and considered.

There are no plans to enact any changes this semester, though Kelly predicted that next year's freshmen will acquire a very different awareness about smoking rights. Kelly is currently planning an extensive anti-smoking campaign, which will consist of informative posters, an increase in "no smoking" signs, and the distribution of educational literature around campus, "so people know what is smoke-free and that they are breaking the law," Kelly explained. Security will also be expected to direct smokers away from doorways and other non-smoking areas, and Peer Counselors will be encouraged to report dorm residents who are violating this policy. However, monitoring will be difficult due to a general lack of resources.

When will the controversy surrounding the issue of public smoking be resolved? "Never," answered Kelly, "though I expect that our conversations will make the policy more clear. Ultimately, administration [decides the policy] but students have the biggest say." Kelly emphasized that the regulations themselves will not be altered, just awareness and respect. Yet Kelly later admitted, "depending on where the advocacy goes, the policy could be changed."

The reevaluation of Bard's approach to smoking might signify more changes in administration's response to substances on campus. Kelly explained, "All registered parties that could potentially have alcohol are being reviewed by Allen Josey and Erin Cannan." According to Kelly, Cannan is currently not approving the registration of any parties. Possible changes in Bard's drinking policy include student party monitors, additional security guards, the introduction of some sort of carding system, and more responsible party hosting.

Many students are dissatisfied with what they see as Bard's increasing resemblance to other colleges. "Bard allows their students the ability to choose, and that's great, it allows people to do what they want," said first-year Thomas Quigley. "Bard is an environment for the individual; it's all about personal preference. You just live among each other and do whatever you want...when they start to cramp down on what individuals want to do then they're hurting that idea."

When will the controversy surrounding the issue of public smoking be resolved? "Never," answered Kelly, "though I expect that our conversations will make the policy more clear. Ultimately, administration

When will the controversy surrounding the issue of public smoking be resolved? "Never," answered Kelly, "though I expect that our conversations will make the policy more clear. Ultimately, administration

The Rhetoric and Discourse Surrounding the (coup) in Venezuela

—by rafi rom

"Rewind your tape and check the precise time and sequence of events," Ari Fleischer, Press Secretary for the White House, urged reporters while fielding questions about the US role in last week's botched coup in Venezuela. It was one of several times Fleischer used this technical jargon in his statement on April 16th—delivered two days after Chavez's speedy return and flight in the midst of growing evidence of ties between the US and coup leaders.

"Reviewing" the tapes was meant to reaffirm the US policy toward Venezuela framed on April 12, the day Chavez was ousted. It was in this State Department brief, written by Philip Reeker (Fleischer used the same position for the White House statement), in which the United States asserted that what resulted in Venezuela was a "transitional government" spawned directly from a mass popular movement at odds with Chavez's oppressive regime. He writes, "The results of these provocations are: Chavez resigned the presidency." Even on April 16, Fleischer still maintained, "President Chavez resigned under pressure."

Interim President and oil executive Pedro Carmona perhaps first created this interpretation of events, when he said in his swearing-in ceremony, "I announce to the nation that Hugo Chavez has handed over his resignation as President of the republic. And therefore, in light of this fact, it has been decided that the armed forces maintain in custody the outgoing President Mr. Chavez, and it has been decided that a transitional government will be formed."

Of course, we now know Chavez never resigned at all, and that between the protests and the so-called "transitional government" there was indeed a military backed coup orchestrated by a powerful Venezuelan elite. By completely leaving out major parts of what actually happened, and then refusing to define certain words, the government is making any real sort of dialogue—the sort it is pushing for in Venezuela—nearly impossible.

Yet Fleischer is right. Go back—rewind the tapes—and the media's recording of the sequence of events eerily echoes the packaged message of the US government. Tracking US government comments on Venezuela with the media's coverage shows how often the press adopts government rhetoric. And even the most recent reports are still tainted by how the U.S. government framed the "change of power" in the crucial first few hours.

the state department.

On Friday, April 12, Deputy Spokesman of the State Department Philip T. Reeker issued a press release ambiguously titled

"Venezuela: Change of Government." The statement declared a blanket commitment to preserve "the essential elements of democracy." It labeled the actions of the peaceful protesters and the transitional government as democratic, and universally dismissed all actions of democratically elected Chavez as "undemocratic."

When over a year ago Uzbekistan's authoritarian government was facing instability as a result of terrorist attacks, Reeker said, "The United States strongly condemns these acts of violence and recognizes the right of these States to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity." Yet no such right was recognized for Venezuela. Reeker got around the blanket condemnation by simply refusing to consider the coup as an "act of violence." Its purposes are merely "transitional."

Venezuela's history from April 11 was dubbed a "situation of democracy" by the State Department. There are already many other words and phrases—like military-backed revolt, overthrow, or coup—that more precisely define what happened during those hours, that more precisely define what happened during those hours, like military-backed revolt, our coup. However, what is critical about the State Department's statement is that there is absolutely no mention of any actions by the military or civilians to overthrow Chavez.

The only military actions mentioned are their laudable inactions during Thursday's strike. By reading this statement, one would assume that a genuine "people's revolution" occurred, as Reeker's rhetoric pins the credit on ousting Chavez solely on Thursday's march. Reeker writes, "Yesterday's events [referring to the protests and oppression by Chavez] resulted in a transitional government until new elections can be held." (Although it was apparent early on that Carmona was going to delay elections until at least December, if not a full year.) What essentially happened was that the United States decided what was an "event" and what was not. The coup was not a legitimate event, and therefore it was possible to not discuss it. It is almost as if the US erased the coup from actually happening.

But by April 15, the US was under sharp international criticism for their April 12 position. But the US stuck to its guns. In his daily press briefing on April 15, Reeker further explains the government's position.

At this point the US is continuing to "monitor the situation." He mentions this at least three times. It is waiting for the Organization of American States (OAS) to present its opinion derived from its fact-finding mission. He mentions this, by his own count—"15" times.

Perhaps the most disturbing revelation of the US policy towards Venezuela reared itself when a reporter

asked, "Can you tell us in detail about the contacts between the United States and the coup plotters in the period leading up to the coup attempt?"

Reeker replied, "I don't think I have ever defined anything as a coup or coup plotters, Jonathan, and I don't know to whom you would be referring in terms of contacts." This is the first and last time Reeker utters the word coup, and he very nonchalantly refuses to define "coup" in the State Department's initial statement. This refusal essentially protects the US for allowing any effective interrogating by the reporters. Never again does the state department entertain the word coup; and besides vaguely admitting to some contact between US officials and "transitional" leaders, Reeker pleads ignorance about any interactions between these two parties.

Again, when evidence arose yesterday linking US government grants to opposition leaders, Reeker once again said he was "unaware" of any grants. This veil of ignorance dramatically complicates questioning from any number of sources, like the media or even the public-at-large.

the white house.

The theme of Fleischer's comments on Venezuela in his April 12 statement to the press was that "the events remain fluid." What he means by fluid is not exactly known, although some members of the media had no problem picking up the description in early reports.

In part the fluidity of the situation is that "events are underway still" (and as long as there are events, Fleischer assures us the US will continue to monitor them). But the fluidity perhaps more accurately characterizes Venezuela's political situation. Unlike other stable democracies, the status of Venezuela's government is "fluid," and therefore more susceptible to change. The transitional government is only part of Venezuela's fluid "transition" to democracy, although Fleischer never explains how a coup toppling a democratic regime is in fact a transition to democracy. Essentially this fluid state is an "in-between" state, a step between political systems but not a system in itself.

Washington continued to "monitor" the fluid nature of Venezuela for the next couple of days, and released its next formal statement jointly with the State Department on April 14. By this point it was clear to the entire world that there was a coup and the coup failed. Chavez returned to power. Yet neither of these events are ever explicitly mentioned.

The April 14 statement also wholly excludes major "events." the OAS decision to go on a fact-finding

mission was an "event," but Chavez returning to power was not. Chavez's future commitment to "peace, human rights, and democratic freedoms" was deemed event-worthy, but the undemocratic coup preceding this whole crisis was not.

By April 16 Fleischer had to address whether or not the US government had supported the coup effort because of ceaseless criticisms from the international community. The same day Senator Dodd (D-CT) criticized the US, for it chose "to stand silent while the illegal ouster of a government is occurring is deeply troubling...I think it's incumbent upon the greatest democracy in the world to defend democratically-elected governments. And that's something I'm deeply disappointed in that we did not do in this case." However, Fleischer still never acknowledged the fact that a coup actually took place, and continued to drown questions in his technicalities, the "sequence of events" recognized by the US government.

the media.

When Ray Suarez reported on Venezuela's crisis on the April 12 edition of *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, he referred to the coup-installed regime as a "transitional government," which "announced it's dissolving the Venezuelan Congress and Supreme Court, has promised elections by the end of the year..." The only time the word coup was mentioned was in a historical reference to Chavez's own failed coup in 1992. This perfectly illustrates how successful the Bush Administration was in shaping the terms of reporting about Venezuela.

Later that day another *NPR* host John Ydstie began his broadcast with, "There's a new government taking shape in Venezuela today." He went in more detail than the State Department did in outlining this government, and even blatantly credited the military with implanting the new regime. However, he countered any possible undemocratic elements of this new transitional government by assuring the listeners that Carmona "doesn't look like he's going to be a simple puppet of the military" and that, "He's noted as a moderate, as a conciliator...as a man with strong democratic credentials."

Virtually all other major media outlets did not refer to the change of power as a coup. Julie Chen on *CBS' The Early Show* called it a "political upheaval" resulting from an anti-government protests and "pressure from military leaders."

Kathleen Hays, an anchor of *CNN's Money & Markets* show, called it a positive "shakeup" in an interview with "Mack" McLarty. In case there was any doubt that what happened was not a coup, McLarty, vice-chairman of Henry Kissinger's strategic consulting firm Kissinger McLarty Associates, dis-

missed claims by Chavez's relatives that what happened was a coup. "I sharply disagree with that," he said. "The military, I think, in this case really stepped down or stepped back at the urging of civil society. They did it with, I think appropriateness. It is important, I think, [that] the military be subordinate to civilian and political rule." To McLarty, what happened was "the opposite" of a coup.

McLarty "thinks" wrong, as all accounts now show how active of a role the military took in ousting Chavez. The military only to "stepped down" when Chavez's supporters protested in outrage. For all the monitoring the US claimed to be doing, none of the official statements released during that tumultuous week come close to matching the detail of Organization of American States Secretary General Cesar Gavira's report on the fact-finding mission (endorsed by the US). The statement differs sharply from the position of the US, although both Reeker and Fleischer spoke highly of the commission. For one, it distinguished Thursday's protestors from Friday's usurpers. It also firmly planted the "undemocratic" methods where they belong: on the military.

Gavira found no reason to praise the military as Kissinger's partner did. "It is essential that the government, opposition, social actors, human rights organizations and the media commit to rejecting any participation in political debate on the part of the military."

Legitimate participation in political debate is certainly not the number one priority for the Bush administration, which went to great lengths to hide the facts to the point of actually denying certain "events" actually happened. Although it is too soon to tell what exactly the US hopes to achieve by distorting the debate as it did, "the situation of democracy" in Venezuela shows how far the Bush Administration is willing to go to push its interests. But one must wonder if there is not something more sinister at play here.

Perhaps Reeker himself put it best when he said, "it is a matter of looking at the facts as we have them and trying to state what we would like to see happen in accordance with those facts." By choosing what to define and what not to define, what to recognize and not to recognize, the government is able to mold what it "wants to see happen" to what it deems factual, instead of shaping its policies according to what actually occurred.

You Don't Always Have to Drink to Get a Citation

by **ariel bardi**

The last night of my Spring Break was spent in an apartment complex on the outskirts of Baltimore, at a party for an acquaintance's 21st birthday. It was well after midnight, the keg was already tapped, and the attendees, most of whom had already left, were gathering jackets and car keys and heading towards the door. Someone smoking on the balcony saw a flash of car lights as the police pulled up. As the cops ascended the three flights of stairs leading to the apartment, we were ushered into a back bedroom by the party host, who hoped that by vacating the main room the "party vibe" would somehow dissipate, despite the telltale red plastic cups and beer bottles strewn about.

This was not the case, and within a few minutes three cops had busted into the bedroom with flashlights, yelling various threats

and demanding ID. I wasn't too concerned, because I had only had a quarter of a cup of warm keg beer two hours prior, and would have easily passed a Breathalyzer test. But apparently how much alcohol someone who is underage consumes, if any, bears no significance. If alcohol is present, you are liable to get charged with its possession. I learned this while being detained for several hours in the living room with ten other party attendees.

During that time the illegitimacy of the cops' actions slowly mounted. When they initially entered the apartment, they knocked down the host, who had stood his ground and asked to see a search warrant. They then arrested him for assaulting a police officer. One officer refused to identify himself or give his badge number. They refused to let anyone

use the phone or the bathroom. And, although you generally can't search an apartment without a warrant, you can if you have probable cause. To compensate for not having any, the police fabricated that a strong odor of marijuana was coming from the apartment, and that when they opened the door they saw random drug paraphernalia littered everywhere.

There was a small supply of pot and a collection of bong, but they were hidden in a bedroom closet, clearly not in use, and were uncovered through an illegal search. According to police, we can theoretically all be charged with marijuana possession, too, just for being in the apartment.

The police went through our ID's one by one, and I watched people who were completely trashed get the same citation as my sober friends and me. After talking to each one of us individually, we were asked to immediately leave

the premises. This entailed getting into our cars and driving, which was a pretty irresponsible request for a police officer to make, considering we were all supposedly inebriated.

On the ride home, my friend Jenn remarked, "I make it a personal goal of mine to get trashed every possible chance I get. The one time I decide not to, I get a fucking alcohol citation."

The next day I went to a baby shower where wine was offered. Could I have faced the same charges? Where is the line drawn? I have brazenly broken the law dozens of times. The one time when I honestly feel that I hadn't done anything wrong, I am punished. So, now I am dealing with a possible fine of 500 dollars and a pending court date, all for attending a private party where alcohol was served, ironically enough, by a 21-year-old. The unnecessary and unpleasant ordeal makes me grateful to attend a school where one's vices are not considered punishable by law. Here, alcohol use is not only permitted, it is funded. And, unfortunately, this is not the case in the real world.

Congratulations, New PC's

Choosing the 2002-2003 Bard College Peer Counselor staff has been a semester-long process. This year's selection process has been particularly challenging. The number of applicants has been steadily rising from year to year, and this year's pool of candidates was especially strong.

We began recruiting applicants in early February with our annual Open House in Bard Hall. The Office of Residence Life staff, including the majority of our current Peer Counselors, turned out to welcome potential applicants and to answer any questions that they had about the Peer Counselor position and the selection process. Over one hundred application packets were distributed that evening.

Nearly sixty students worked their way through the entire rigorous process, which consists not only of the initial application packet requiring several detailed essays and the submission of three or four references, but also involves attending a night of group inter-

views as well as an individual interview.

During the group interviews, which take place over two evenings, the Peer Counselor candidates work in small groups to complete two challenging exercises while being observed and evaluated by current Peer Counselors and the Residence Directors. During the individual interviews, which are conducted by a current Peer Counselor and a member of the Bard College faculty or staff, the candidates are asked a series of difficult questions meant to engage them in a conversation about their experiences and views, as well as to assess their ability to perform well in the position. All application materials and subsequent evaluations are returned to the Office of Residence Life where each file is carefully reviewed by all of the members of our professional staff before the actual selection meetings begin.

Current Peer Counselors wishing to be considered for rehire must

submit a detailed application and meet with Residence Life professional staff. Evaluations of their job performance from both students and supervisors are also given consideration.

The Peer Counselor selection process is lengthy and challenging. We truly appreciate the effort and enthusiasm that our candidates have shown. We send our sincere thanks to you all and our congratulations to next year's staff, which will consist of eighteen returning Peer Counselors and twelve newcomers. To those PCs who are graduating, going abroad, or otherwise moving on: Thank you for a wonderful year!

Again, congratulations to the 2002-2003 staff. This is a well-deserved accomplishment and we look forward to working with you!

*Threya Ahmed,
Residence Director
Office of Residence Life*

What War Are We In?

by **tubby carroll**

Ok, let me bitch to y'all about something that's been pissing me off lately. I have seen various signs up all around campus by the Student Action Collective, or whatever superfluous activist club on campus, stressing an apparent war that is in bad need of some protesting. Now there are SO many things wrong with this situation...where should I start...

Well to begin with, if you're going to get self-righteous and insist that someone HAS to protest something, you might as well, give, oh I don't know, maybe a sentence or two about what supposed war, they are protesting. I mean come on man, this is pretty ambiguous here. I wasn't even aware the United

States was officially at war, but well, if the activist groups insist...

Now here's what else. Apparently if you're not in the mood to protest a war today, they are many other things you can pick from. It's also an Anti Capitalist protest, anti IMF, Anti Genetic Engineering...you know what I have to say about that, PICK A FUCKIN' CAUSE AND STICK TO IT! I know that you might think, "Hey, maybe if we have MORE causes they might listen to us even MORE. . . .it all works out!" Oyl

I remember this same exact thing happening earlier this year. After the September 11 attacks there was a march in D.C. for peace, which I, the most cynical apathetic

art student on campus was all ready to go to, until I heard that the activist groups (which were all pissing themselves with excitement now that our generation had its own Vietnam) had turned it into a Multi-protest. Then I realized...wait a minute. If reporters ask us what we're protesting and each of us give about ten different things, we won't look active...we'll just look REALLY REALLY DUMB. I mean if they want, maybe I'll show up chanting "Free Bobby! Free Huey!" Then people would REALLY listen.

What the shit! Well, I must go now. I see some people plugging in a CD player, I'm going to go protest the mistreating of the wall socket. But thank you for letting me bitch for a moment.

Two Great Shows!

Proper Queens
Friday, April 26th
8:00 pm
Charm City Sockpuppets
with bard's own
Teenage Piss Party

SUNY New Paltz
info:
motte57@newpaltz.edu

Sunday, April 28th
4:00 pm
CHANGES Real
Majority Project

featuring:
Alphabet Soup of
Thugs
Sever All Ties
DJ Keith
DJ Jolly Joel
MC Whitebread

Rhinebeck Hotel
info:
joeltyner@earthlink.net

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: Matt Dineen, All Tonak, Lora Jaramillo, Rob Ponce, Tubby Carroll, Brian Yanity, Paul Murray, Chelsea Beck, Tyler Stevens, Frank Torino

Editors in Chief
Chris Downing
Rafi Rom
News Editor
Emily Schmall
Vincent Valdmanis
Opinions Editors
Daria Solovieva
Ariel Bardi
Arts Editors
Jonah Weiner,
Huffa Frobes-Cross,
Tosh Chlang,
Daniel Lichtblau
Associate Editor
Kerry Chance

Copy Editor
Johanna Bodnyk
Designer
Jonah Weiner
Ad Manager
Johanna Bodnyk
Photo Manager
Jon Feinstein
Special Thanks
Ariel Bardi

Dissecting the Political Complications of Tree-sitting

Overcoming the class division in environmental perspectives and activism

by **brian yanity**

Imagine that you are \$12,000 in debt and face the constant looming threat of unemployment.

You don't know if you will be able to make rent this month, let alone the electric bill. You already owe the landlord three months of back rent, and you are worried that your kids won't get anything for Christmas. At the age of thirty-five, you could move in again with your parents, but since your mother is sick with no health insurance (the Medicaid dried up a few months ago), you don't want to impose. So it is off to work in hills again, hoping somehow that things will work out.

But this time, some over-privileged kid from the suburbs of New Jersey calling himself "Dancing Rabbit" jumps in front of you to inform you that you are murdering the tree gods. In that whining upper middle class-tone, he starts preaching to you about how all the rich kid hippies sitting up in the trees are protecting the earth from destruction. They are trying to send you a message of love, he tells you, but somehow it feels very patronizing. Though he doesn't explicitly say it, he implies that YOU ARE THE ENEMY. Of course, your most natural human urge is to break his nose.

The fictional scenario that I described above is a rough sketch of what goes on every day on the front lines of this country's environ-

mental movement. I am not trying to bash the environmental movement, I only want give a fair critique of many environmental activists because I CARE about the last old-growth forests. I am concerned that the actions of many anti-logging activists do more harm than good. When I observe what goes in tree sit-ins, tree-spikings, and roadblocks in logging areas, I want to be on the side of the environmentalists, yet the anti-classist (I guess you could say Marxist) in me is rooting for the loggers. Tell me that I am making an overgeneralization, but I can say with certainty that nine out of ten anti-logging activists are white kids from relatively privileged upper-middle class backgrounds. Most of people who consider Julia "Butterfly" Hill a hero grew up thousands of miles away from timber country. Most logging families, on the other hand, are constantly struggling to make ends meet.

The yearly cost of Bard, a place with a good number of privileged environmental activists, is somewhere around \$35,000. Most logging families are lucky to earn that much in a year.

Huge numbers of young people in this country have taken up the environmental cause, as they should. But what is noticeable about the environmental movement in this country compared to that of other countries is that it is almost

completely devoid of working-class roots. Often times, upper-middle class environmentalists treat working class loggers the same way that white Christian missionaries and settlers treated Native Americans. Their behavior is hardly "progressive" in the classical sense of the word. When you compare the impact of the U.S. environmental movement has had on national politics to the success of European environmental movements, it is quite astounding. Most mainstream politicians in Western Europe are much more environmentally aware than most "liberal" Democrats. European environmentalists are much more successful at selling their cause to normal, i.e. working-class, people.

As a lifelong resident of Portland, Oregon, I have seen plenty of both sides of the coin. Portland is a city known for its progressive and environmental conscience, and also its large numbers of yuppie transplants from the East Coast and California. The rural Pacific Northwest, on the other hand, is a completely different story. You will see lots of clear cuts up and down the Cascade Range and the Coast Ranges, in addition to high unemployment, dilapidated schools, and houses in need of a paint job. These are not the poorest regions in the United States, but still are in desperate need of help. Is the current insecurity of logging jobs due to past decades of forest mismanagement? Perhaps. But all that

matters right now is accepting the reality of the current situation.

My old friend Sean has spent most of his life in Clatskanie, Oregon; a logging town located forty miles up the Columbia River from the Pacific Ocean. It rains a lot, and there really isn't much going on. The middle and high school are in need of repairs, the tax base in dwindling, many dependable saw mill jobs don't exist anymore, and the population is decreasing. The last thing that people around here want is more preaching from limousine liberals; they have heard all of the environmentalist clichés before. There is no mystery when you look at voting patterns in the rural Northwest. Areas that are dependent on the timber industry have had a revival of grass-roots right-wing politics in recent years. The only encounters these people ever have with "the Left" are with over-privileged, misguided forest activists. The right-wing, on the other hand, is very successful at relating to working-class people. A little less than a century ago, some of these very same logging towns were hotbeds for radical left-wing labor groups such as the Industrial Workers of the World. Progressives have no one to blame but themselves.

All of this leads to the question, what should be done? First of all, if you want to go a timber region with the intent of saving old-growth forests, you should FIRST

ask the local people what they think should be done. Nobody wants to be unemployed, but at the same time, no one in even the most conservative rural town wants the forests to disappear forever. Many of the loggers' families have lived in the same place for several generations, and feel a deep sense of connection to the land. They are now stuck in a difficult economic situation. Ask them about what they feel about the future, and you may be surprised. They have hopes, dreams, and fears just like anyone else. If you start relating to people on their own terms, there is a chance they would be willing to talk to you about conservation of resources and bring up suggestions that you may not have even considered. At the very least, you would open up human-to-human dialogue, which is needed now as much as ever. Forest activists should be trying their hardest to make loggers their allies, and not to alienate them. The real enemy is resource-extracting corporations, who exploit both their workers and the environment. If both the loggers and environmentalists were united on one side against the likes of Weyerhaeuser, Georgia-Pacific, and International Paper, only then would real changes start to happen.

Confusion over Police Confrontation in Memphis

Looking Racism and Police conduct in the face

by **emily schmall**

Two friends and I visited Memphis for the first time over spring break. We were so moved by an experience we had with a man named Henry that we decided to submit this letter to the local newspaper, The Commercial Appeal. It appeared that an injustice was committed, one that we found to be alarming, disconcerting, and sadly, not surprising.

Dear Commercial Appeal,

I wanted to submit this letter because of an altercation I had with two Memphis police officers and a citizen of Memphis. As a tourist in downtown Memphis on April 2, my friends and I were confronted by a homeless man who introduced himself as Henry.

He was polite and also friendly. He asked for money so that he could buy himself lunch. We agreed to walk with him to buy him lunch. He expressed anxiety over the police presence in Memphis, saying such things as "it's hard to be black in Memphis" and "the police here are tough."

Within feet of the place where we intended to buy him food, he was aggressively pulled aside by two white plain clothed officers.

Without explanation, we were encouraged to move on, not watch, and not talk to Henry anymore. We obeyed but, struck by an inability to walk away from what felt unjust, we returned to ask one of the officers for an explanation. He told us Henry would be going to jail, and threatened to take us with him. Henry had his hands put up against the wall, his legs spread, and an officer was padding him down and emptying his pockets.

The other officer, who had encouraged us to leave, was standing by, casually swinging Henry's umbrella. Intimidated yet persistent, we remained, and the officer encouraged us to move on once again, this time saying that Henry had been sanctioned out of the downtown area of Memphis by a judge, and thus by being found there, had violated the judge's mandate. He repeated that Henry would be taken to jail. Not convinced by the officer's claim, we waited to see for ourselves what would happen.

Approximately five minutes later, we returned to see Henry visibly shaken but still walking the downtown streets. It was obvious the officers had lied, for reasons still unknown to us. We then bought

Henry the meal we had promised to him. He thanked us profusely, and wished us a nice day.

Confused and curious about the events that had taken place, we made our way to the police station. We intended to file a complaint. We met a Lieutenant Webb who informed us of a city project to make the downtown safer for tourists. Part of this plan included stopping people at random if they looked suspicious. He told us of situations where tourists had been taken to crack houses and had been brutally beaten, and predicted that that was where Henry was planning to take us.

It seemed to us that Henry was harmless, and the only time we felt intimidated or felt fear was due to our confrontations with the Memphis police department. Two days after the event with Henry we attended a candlelit vigil celebrating the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. There were many interesting contradictions between the two events: holding the unifying cry, "I am a man" of the 1960s striking sanitary workers in contrast to Henry's humanity brushed aside; celebrating the empowerment of the famous bus boycotts and witnessing at the same time the authorities disempower a citizen; and commemorating the pro-

gression of the civil rights struggle while acknowledging that there is still a long way to go.

In Henry and in Memphis, we saw a sadness that cannot be easily explained. It seems as though the downtown area is geared towards the tourists instead of the people who live there. Similarly, the law enforcement works to protect the city's visitors instead of its citizens. It appeared to us that Memphis had a large black population. Despite this, Henry complained of the difficulties he faced everyday living in Memphis. Henry said to us, shortly before we went our separate ways, "Sometimes I wish I were white." He said this in spite of the successes and struggles of Dr. King, Jessie Epps, and countless other activists, an indication that while progress has been made, more needs to be done so that the laws protecting civil rights are not ignored.

In the days we were there, the city celebrated advances made in the civil rights movement, most pointedly by a march and the candlelit vigil that followed. While we stood hand in hand singing "We Shall Overcome," it was hard to not remember and be saddened by the look of hopelessness and hurt on Henry's wearied face.

bard free press

write.draw.
review.report.

freepress@bard.edu

Bard Newspapers' Last CHANCE

Confronting Christianity, Censorship, Colonialism, friends and enemies alike

by **kerry chance**

If you don't see this on the front page of the Free Press, you'll know why...

I write this to address not only the poorly argued 'Catholic stigmatization article' (or should I say articles?) in last issue of the Free Press, but also to expose some of the behind-the-scenes decisions made by some of the Free Press staff as ill-considered, biased, and against its own stated principle of being responsible and open to the students on this campus. While it may at first seem like a simple issue of one-sidedness, I hope to show that the Free Press' decisions and the opinions of some of its writers have wider implications that place it dangerously close to siding with censorship, neoconservatism, and an unfortunate lack of sensitivity to power relations.

I will begin with the front-page article...

In "Catholics are people too," a headline written by one staff member to warn readers of the article's silly unselfconsciousness, begins with a grammatically confusing, but nonetheless clearly opinionated statement, "Christianity at Bard College is often stigmatized by right wing, radical politics, such as a fervent opposition to abortion, and a strict sentiment about celibacy until marriage." Ignoring for the moment that these so-called 'stigmas' are the official doctrine of the Pope, several staff members complained (as I imagine other students might have) that the article was not only poorly written, but did not consider the implications of naming all Christians as 'victims' of some horrible yet undefined forms of discrimination. Moreover, it does so without any indication that anything at all is happening to Christians on campus, nothing newsworthy anyway. Even if the article had identified some kind of discrimination against Christians or had been newsworthy, it still glibly dismisses the possibility of being opposed to various forms and practices of Catholicism or Christianity without garnering the title of 'bigot.' This might (had it been more cogently argued) been an opinion with which I could respectfully disagree, however, against the protests of some of the staff members, the Editor-in-Chief decided to make the article front page news.

This may seem an obvious point, as no articles in the Free Press or Observer are ever unbiased or completely objective - I agree, they never are and shouldn't pretend to be. But I think there are also certain responsibilities the newspapers take on by saying an article is news - one is that news is, to a large extent, represented as the position of the newspaper and its staff. On this point, as the Associate Editor of the Free Press, I want to completely separate myself from the Free Press' decision, and say that other staff members would like to do the same.

That is not to say the article should not have been printed - all opinions from all students should be printed, regardless of whether or not the staff agrees with them. The front page article should have rather been placed with the quite similar and perhaps even sillier (did I mention unselfconscious?) article in the Opinions Section, "Taking on bigotry and religion at Bard: We are All Just A Bunch of Freaks." Or, with the better written, more interesting and topical opinions article, "Some Musings on Priests and Pedophilia," [sic.] which also makes yet another similar kind of "Hey, give Christians more respect!" argument.

Now to consider censorship in the Free Press...

It is good that we are all taking-on questions about religion, and that those articles stimulate debate. I would say it is equally fine and debate inspiring for Emily McNair, another Bard student, to say "stupid missionaries" in an interview that the Free Press did with her about Nepal. One Editor-in-Chief didn't think so. He cut, without the consent of the staff, "stupid missionaries" from the introduction of the interview, which would have read, "In this interview, Emily talks to the Free Press about the present violence, stupid missionaries, pseudo-Buddhists, and the evils of ecotourism." Mentioning "stupid missionaries" - the opinion of the interviewed student, not the news writer - is somehow vastly different from offhandedly talking about "pseudo-Buddhists" or "evil ecotourism" (both clearly religiously/politically charged little statements). Why was an anti-missionary student opinion censored from the front page of the newspaper, I asked the Editor-in-Chief? "Because it is offensive," he said. I think what is dangerous about that comment speaks for itself - especially when you consider that an entire pro-Christianity opinions article was left on the front page the issue after (not to mention the inclusion, and solicitation of several other "Catholics are people too" type opinions articles).

A system of discrimination against Christians?...

Related to the point I am making about censorship, and perhaps widening and directing this address to the Christian Student's Fellowship, as well as to those who have contributed articles to the Free Press about Christianity, I would like very briefly to consider the problems with claiming 'victim-status' for Christianity, and with forgetting the position of Christianity in a history of power relations in this country.

Though it's not impossible that some students on campus make derogatory and unfair comments about Christianity, that claim is undermined when the writers of these articles imply the existence of a larger system of discrimination against Christians - whether it



The debate over Christianity at Bard is alive and well...

is supposed to exist inside or outside of Bard's campus.

Outside of the campus, it should be made clear that this is not a feasible argument, if only by considering the power of Christian lobby groups and organizations in making government policy, or the fact that a Christian god is invoked daily by government officials (Bush: "We thank God..." - State of the Union Address), the mainstream media ("We pray for our city tonight..." - CNN Breaking News), and even in the banal parts of everyday American culture (US coins, the Pledge of Allegiance, etc.) In other words, the Christian majority of this country, as varied as it may be, is felt, not as an oppressed group, but rather as the empowered mainstream - from the US (and Europe's) civilizing and missionizing projects of the colonial era, to Cold War anti-Communism, and to the post-September 11th outbreaks of hatred and violence toward Muslims living in this country. I realize I address this history in broad strokes, but I unfortunately do not have the space in this article to provide more extended cases or examples, though there are many.

As for discrimination on campus, it might be argued that Christians feel misunderstood and as part of a minority, which is possible. But that must also be read in terms of a larger historical context that I have just briefly sketched. The articles I mentioned neither did that nor provided any convincing evidence at all that Christians are treated unfairly on campus. And it is simply not enough to start with the presupposition that Christians are 'victims' of some widespread discrimination. There still lies an unanswered burden of proof with the writer who wants to make a case that the relations of power in the larger context of this country have somehow been reversed at Bard. Again, this might be possible, but cannot be presupposed, not only because it is a wholly ineffectual argument, but also it shows a dangerously neoconservative - and not to mention grossly insensitive - approach toward relations of power. An approach, in fact, that the writers themselves ironi-

cally imply is a 'stigma' imposed on Christianity.

Though it is an imperfect analogy, a writer who makes claims that men are discriminated against at Bard, because they are a minority and there is a strong feminist constituency here, (and some might even suggest that men are just 'no good', etc.), would have to provide irrefutable evidence of such a claim, and show a careful consideration of the reality of sexism in America. Even then, I would probably disagree with the writer, but at least he would be making an attempt at an argument, and would rightly discredit the foolish assumption that all discriminations are the same. This is yet another fault of the articles in question. One writer even goes as far to make a false equivalence between anti-Semitism and derogatory comments against Christians, writing "Do that for one religion and it's called anti-Semitism." This equivalence is outrageous, and it shows how these writers would decontextualize a history of domination (be it racism, sexism, homophobia, anti-Semitism, etc.) of particular groups. The writers would attempt, further, to dismiss the way in which that history becomes crucial to the force of the insult itself. Discriminations are not the same. To say that the writers strip certain kinds of discrimination of their historical and cultural weight, and wrongly assumes that we live in a color-blind or gender-blind society. And as far as I know, Christians haven't been thrown to the lions since 300 AD (a generous estimate), but Muslim people in this country have been murdered for racial and religious 'reasons' in the past few months. That is the difference.

Now speaking of an unself-conscious approach to histories of domination, I would like to make a brief point about the Christian Student's Fellowship raising money for one of the largest and oldest missions in the world, 'World Vision.' I invoke Emily McNair's comments about "stupid missionaries" in Nepal, of which World Vision is one, "Missionaries, as agents of colonialism, and how of neo-colonialism have been one of the single most overwhelmingly neg-

ative and destructive forces the world has ever seen." How does the CSF account for, I think, justified arguments that missionaries not only have deeply ingrained roots in colonialism, and continue to enact a similar kind of domination today? World Vision is not only located in Nepal but in every country of the world and their website unabashedly states that the purposes of the mission is to "get inside" communities, and convert people in times of crisis. Due

to limitations in space, I again cannot go into a

long history of the mission's relationship to colonialism, or the present relationship between missionaries and domination. (Perhaps Edward Said, Renato Rosaldo, or Jean and John Comaroff would be a useful place to start). And be sure to check out World Vision's website (http://www.worldvision.org/worldvision/comms.nsf/stable/history/OpenDocument&ExpandSection=3#_Section3), which offers a history of the mission with accompanying pictures of old white men suggestively touching small children from various needy countries of the world. It's a strange and sordid history. And why didn't CSF choose to donate to the countless other organizations providing the same food and access to water as World Vision? And if the organization must be Christian, why not one that does not ask people to make the choice between hell and salvation when they are starving or without water, such as Habitat for Humanity?

A Final word on the newspapers on campus...

Finally, to return to the question of the newspapers, I would like to say that I do not write this article specifically to attack the Free Press. I worked for the Observer for over a year, and watched as a feminist article was censored because that Editor-in-Chief flatly said he "disagreed with it," and as an article was cut because it might make the administration crack down on the drug-dealers so dear to the Editor's heart. I should have written something then, but it would have never been printed. It's equally possible that the Free Press would have never printed this article had the Observer not been around. The only reason I have leverage to print something that has the potential to be censored (because as we can see, we cannot always trust those in charge) is because there are two newspapers, and I hope it stays that way. It is part of the same principle under which organizations like Media Watch, and less directly Indy Media function.

Despite the Free Press' recent *continued on page 15...*

Continuing the Debate

...continued from page 9

bias toward Christianity (maybe in response to September 11?), what I can say for the Free Press, and less so for the Observer – with the exception of maybe Tamara Plummer's graduating statement – is that it continues to print articles by students that attempt to talk to other students about issues that concern our community, be it letters on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or our responses to September 11, or our positions on religion. Remember that atrocious "How Dare You Criticize America and Its Riches" article about the "War on terror" in the Free Press? It was an absolutely terrifying opinion from a Bard student, but printed nonetheless. And yet it made us talk to each other in Kline, in the newspapers, in class, about how terrifying or maybe even how justified it is to be thinking of Saabs and 'our country love it or leave it,' even as the US continues to illegally hold prisoners in Guantanamo, and displace and murder people in Afghanistan.

And just as an aside on the Observer, has anyone noticed that in the last two years the Observer has not had a single female News, Opinions, or A&E editor, let alone Editor-in-Chief, despite rapid turnovers and the fact that the campus is more than sixty percent female? The oft referred to and accurately described as 'The Dude's Newspaper,' the Observer should be mindful of the way that it curbs participation and shuts out potential writers on campus, and that call for

mindfulness goes without a doubt for the Free Press as well.

So write, God-Damn It...

So the purpose of this article has the debate about religion in mind, but also calls for an increased scrutiny of the papers on campus (because, let's face it, they're not as good as they could be and they fuck up a lot), and in doing so, increased participation as well. Though I did not have any specific intention other than to express my own opinion regarding the aforementioned 'Christian' articles, I realize that many of you reading this must disagree, perhaps strongly, and some may even agree with what I have said, whether about Christians, or missionaries, whatever.

So respond, or I have the last word. And I don't want the last word. I'd rather have a forum, one that comes out weekly, and doesn't start with announce@bard.edu or end with a drunken allotment of club funds. But for that to happen, we need to write. I've been guilty of this myself – not wanting to put myself out there, trying to remain separate from what I was doing with this and other organizations, and for any number of other boring, self-concerned reasons. The fact is that we should not only be reading article after article on the Bard Space Program, everyone has free space in both newspapers to write or advertise. So please send responses, articles, announcements, opinions to the Free Press at freepress@bard.edu, or to the Observer at observer@bard.edu

From the Cloth: A Priest's View of the Church's Spiritual and Earthly Challenges

by paul murray

A century ago, theologian Alfred Loisy wrote (I paraphrase), "Jesus came proclaiming the kingdom of God and the church came forth." The irony was unintentional. The current crisis in Roman Catholicism has served to remind many of just what it is they find so distasteful about church. Church for them means "organized religion." Roman Catholicism, I have found, is, more often than not, the unstated referent of this ambiguous term. Catholicism is commonly perceived as the quintessentially patriarchal religion, ruled by a celibate, clerical elite supported by an extensive body of doctrine, exhaustive codes of conduct, and powerful sanctions. These criticisms have merit. Unfortunately, the Church has become, in many respects, about control. Its bishops and priests accouter themselves with emblems of power that are a far cry from the humility and poverty of Jesus of Nazareth.

What has angered many, both within and outside the church, has been the defensive, legalistic handling of cases of sexual abuse by the clergy. Here one sees "church" in abundance, a bureaucratic structure that stands alongside other, similarly self-serving corporate entities, such as Enron and Kaiser Permanente. Where is the kingdom of God in all of this?

The kingdom lies at the core of the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. It is a term that does not signify a place or political program, but rather a way of life that puts the needs of people first. Justice, peace, goodness, beauty, mercy, compassion and love are the purposes of the reign of God, which is realized wherever they are practiced -- inside or outside an organized religion. The kingdom belongs to the poor and dispossessed, Jesus insists. Adopting this perspective and, more importantly,

acting on it, for example, by working to overturn unjust laws or expose corruption in industry, is a challenging, transforming experience in any time or place. The promise of the gospel is that God will be there to meet those who enter this process. They will inevitably face opposition from vested interests, including religious officials.

As a Catholic, I am anxious to see the bishops find just and responsible solutions to the immediate crisis. Long overdue apologies to victims of sexual abuse by clergy are being made now. Redress for grievances and policy decisions to prevent future abuse are additional, necessary steps.

Some church officials have been looking for a place to lay blame: the media, psychologists, the 1960's, gay priests. So far, I have not seen much evidence of soul searching among themselves.

But how much of this is just the church, that is, the hierarchy, acting, once again, to protect their interests? The real test is whether the church's leadership is prepared to look at itself and to ask tough questions about what got us into this crisis. Some church officials have been looking for a place to lay blame: the media, psychologists, the 1960's, gay priests. So far, I have not seen much evidence of soul searching among themselves.

I suggest that where they -- we, the clergy -- need to look is to the culture of the clergy. The ethos of this culture -- not listening to alternative voices, to lay people, to psychologists, sociologists and

other experts; secretiveness; privilege; and an aversion to openly acknowledging and discussing sexual feelings -- is clearly a significant part of the problem.

There is irony, both tragic and pathetic, in the fact that the failures that have generated the current crisis stem from sexual abuse. The irony is that the mandatory celibacy required of Catholic priests is supposed to be the "jewel" of the church, to use the traditional metaphor. Why does this discipline -- not a doctrine -- come to carry such symbolic weight, when the church had married priests throughout its first millennium? I suggest that it has much to do with control.

Human sexuality, in the view of St. Augustine, is a notoriously uncontrollable aspect of fallen human nature. Grace is required to bring this rebellious part of the self where it belongs, under the control of reason. Drawing on this understanding, the church eventually developed a pastoral practice that emphasized -- some would say centered on -- control of sexuality, for example, through the confession of sins and penitential practices.

The celibacy of priests, who have ostensibly transcended this aspect of life, therefore assumes enormous importance as a demonstration of veracity of the church's claims. No doubt there are many priests who have happily and successfully lived celibate lives. That is not the issue. The issue is what are the consequences of making this state of life mandatory? The "jewel" that has been understood to set priests apart from the laity has exacted a terrible toll on the lives of priests and laity alike. It has turned out to be paste. And so it will always be when church makes itself its own purpose.

When structure and organization get in the way of putting people first, they need to be swept aside. As Catholics demand reform of the church, perhaps something more than "organized religion" will indeed come forth. Something closer to what Jesus of Nazareth had in mind.

Paul Murray is a visiting assistant Professor of Religion and Bard's Catholic Chaplain

S.O.S.: Salvaged Office Supplies

the salvaged office supplies room has FREE stuff...

folders	white and colored
computer monitors	paper
art goods	and a smattering
text books	of electrical

brought to you by BERD, located in the basement of Brook House open 7:00am to 3:30pm, Mon.-Fri.

collective consciousness



by chelsea beck

The Question of Surveillance in Communist Romania

by elizabetha zelinka

I would like to "attack" the subject of surveillance in Romania during the Ceausescu Communist epoch, 1965-1989. Ceausescu was the Romanian sultanistic-totalitarian dictator from 1965 to 1989. Surveillance, in the worst meaning of this term, can be a means of repression and terror. Secondly, the unique nature of this Ceausescu-type of terror-surveillance led to the uniqueness of the Communist regime overthrow in Romania, the uniqueness of the Romanian revolution in 1989. Let me elaborate on this issue.

Among all the Warsaw Pact countries in Eastern Europe (USSR, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany), Romania was the only country in which in 1989, when all Communist regimes fell like dominoes in the former Eastern Block, the overthrow of the Communist Regime had to happen by extreme violent means: street revolution, bloodshed, street fights, shooting into the masses by the Romanian Secret Service and Army, thousands of dead people. In all other 6 Warsaw Pact countries the transition from Communism to democracy followed a much less violent track (USSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland or East Germany) or it followed the celebrated 'pacted transition' with peaceful round-table-discussions as in the case of Hungary. (I should say, by far the luckiest country of all these.)

SO, my question is what does a terror surveillance like Ceausescu's have in common with the fact that only in Romania did the regime overthrow take up such a bloody aspect. The response is that the uniqueness of this surveillance system triggered the uniqueness of the revolution. Let's see in what way and how.

First, allow me to focus on the nature of the Ceausescu surveillance of the people and describe it in some detail.

The most important feature that one has to bear in mind about Ceausescu's surveillance is that it was the most powerful and its terror input was the most shattering in all the Warsaw Pact countries. The Romanian dictator was a sultanistic type of leader, consequently he viewed his people and his political arena as personal belongings and acted as such. That

is why, the dictator's surveillance of his people relied first and foremost on terror, thus out rooting any potential revolutionary impulses that might have existed even in embryo form among the people. It was THE regime in all the whole Eastern Block that relied mostly on terror.

Secondly, it was the regime in all Warsaw Pact states that penetrated most deeply all the strata of every-day life. The forces of surveillance, Secret Service ("Securitate") were an omnipotent and omnipresent, generally feared, ghost-like force in each and every ordinary person's life.

Just a few examples: you

In none of the rest of the Easter Block states were all career paths and institutions politicized to the extent they were in Romania. Everything was in the hand of one person, THE PERSON, THE SULTAN, Nicolae Ceausescu.

could never enjoy a peaceful night in a hotel or motel, you knew that somewhere in the room there must be at least one secret camera; you never knew which of your best friends or closest colleagues at work was a Secret Service spy, an "informer" for the Securitate. Usually the people who made the boldest comments and jokes about the hated regime (and thus those you trusted the most) might turn out to be the informers. You trusted them, since they were the ones who showed off with the spiciest political jokes, so you might drop some 'nasty' comments yourself, the next day you were turned in--by the very people you trusted most. There were specially trained informers, whose job was to travel by train here or there, and listen to peoples' discussions in the compartment, while they were bored and waiting to get to their destinations. The usual way to "recognize"

a politically incorrect person, was to observe his outer appearance: jeans (since no such clothes were available in the Eastern Block), a more western-style hairdo or make-up, all these were signals for the informer that that particular person might have connections, relatives or friends abroad. Consequently, he was a political danger for the Romanian Communist regime, a "western traitor." The informer would track him down, (be it on the train or in the street), listen to his conversations with other people, find out his address, bug his phone, harass him, and so on. If he really proved to be a dissident, he would be "invited" to the Securitate headquarters from time to time...

The Securitate had endless secret files about almost every citizen of Romania, due to the assiduous work of its faithful informers about the potential 'dangerous' citizens. Many informers were ordered during the revolution in December '89, to eliminate such 'dangerous' citizens, just because you had relatives or friends abroad, with whom you risked a (bugged) phone conversation twice or three times a year. Without giving names, I had such cases of 'elimination orders' in my circle of friends...

Absolutely all offices were bugged, all conversations of factory or institution leaders were monitored. Again, without giving names, I know of a specific number of such cases of bugged office desks, in my circle of acquaintances...

As one can see, the entire surveillance system was based on striking terror into the people. The system was operating with a

continuous, omnipresent, looming, ghostly terror.

Romania was the only country where due to the sultan's anti-abortionist and pro-natalist policy (in order to prove how high the standard of living was, and how life was thriving), humiliating and obligatory monthly gynecological tests for women were introduced. This happened more in factories. Romania was the only Warsaw Pact country in which there was absolutely no social or political pluralism, not even in an embryo form, unlike Hungary, Poland or Czechoslovakia.

Romania was the only Warsaw Pact country in which absolutely no samizdat ever circulated, unlike Hungary, Czechoslovakia or Poland.

In none of the rest of the Easter Block states were all career paths and institutions politicized to the extent they were in Romania. Everything was in the hand of one person, THE PERSON, THE SULTAN, Nicolae Ceausescu.

You might wonder why he had so much power while the other celebrated actors of this hated scenario (Jaruzelski, Honecker, Kadar) didn't? Well, the

answer is simple. All of these leaders had strong connections to Moscow, and were under Gorbachev's close surveillance. (This sacred word: "surveillancell!") And Gorbachev was pushing for his perestroika and glasnost, in the USSR and in his satellite countries, too. Consequently, these leaders had to adapt their policies to the boss's, i.e. Gorbachev's commands: guys, follow my perestroika and glasnost and chip down on your dictatorial-totalitarian tendencies. That is what happened in the case of Germany, and Poland. One direct phone call from Gorbachev to Honecker and one to Jaruzelski, in the summer of 1989, and the path of the transitions in these 2 countries was stamped. From above. From the leaders. Not in the streets, like in Romania.

Because, Romania had no connections, no strong ties to the Soviet Union, no responsibilities

to Moscow. Romania WAS a Communist country, but not a DIRECT satellite to the USSR, the other above-mentioned countries were. Ceausescu had successfully promoted a centrifugal policy of distancing himself from Moscow, and of setting up a Communist totalitarian-sultanistic system of his own, without any obligations or responsibilities towards Moscow. In this way he could do whatever he wanted in his country, he could exercise his abusive powers to whatever extent he wished. There was no phone call from Gorbachev urging Ceausescu to slow down his sultanistic-totalitarian abuses. The people were ON THEIR OWN, in the streets. Surveillance was much stronger and more terror-marked in Romania than in other European Communist states. And that is the first reason why the revolution had to take such a violent turn. Only by means of violence could such a strong and deep-rooted surveillance system as Ceausescu's be overthrown. Ceausescu was on his own, he was not stopped by Gorbachev's glasnost policy, he could drive his violent repressive measures as far as he could.

Far be it from me to state that there was no terror surveillance in these other countries, but as the above-mentioned examples prove, the Romanian surveillance had the most terror and fear input, and it penetrated the everyday life of ordinary citizens to the most.

This excess of deliberate fear and terror led to the 'last straw' effect in December 1989. People just couldn't take it any more. The second explanation why the Romanian revolution was so bloody and violent, as compared to the rest of the East European transitions, is a psychological explanation. The more repressive a system, the more violent the hit-back of the repressed will be. The more repressive a surveillance system, the least likely it is that the repressed will rebel soon. But once they do, the intensity and violence of their revolt is directly proportional to the intensity of the repressive force they had to endure.

These are the 2 reasons why the Romanian Revolution was much more violent than in the rest of East Europe and it came last in the domino line of Communist countries.

PARADOX CAFE

veggie wraps • brownies
smoothies • sandwiches
juices • salads

55 Broadway, Tivoli • 757-5575

food / music / life

grap a copy of BardPolitik!

[Bard's own undergraduate journal on Global Affairs]

email Rafi (ar638@bard.edu) and a copy will be delivered to you in campus mail

or, stop by Jonathan Becker's office, Seymour 106

murder BY NUMBERS

...In the spectrum of implicitly homoerotic suspense films involving teens, it's somewhere between "The Craft" and "Toy Soldiers".



by Tyler Stevens

Barbet Schroeder continues along the lines of his unstoppable *Single White Female* with *Murder by Numbers*, a thriller that is at once spine-tinglingly homoerotic and fabulously predictable in its reinforcement of hegemonic norms. This time, instead of focusing on the repressed homosexual/incestuous psychosis of Pacific Northwest yuppie loft-dwelling types, Schroeder plunges us into the twisted domain of Northern California white boys, and the trouble they get into when faced with a combination of above-average intelligence and a lack of athletic ability.

The result is yet another in the litany of Leopold and Loeb style semi-erotic suspense films in which two possibly gay (but definitely not swishy) privileged young men plan what they think will be "the ultimate crime." Needless to say, some quick-witted member of "normal" society shows up and puts a stop to things. In this case, Sandra Bullock tries her best to be both a no-nonsense forensic specialist and a vulnerably sexy victim/hero (she became a detective after nearly being beaten to death by her abusive ex, a former high school dreamboat). So, the boys get too cocky, Sandra figures it all out, and the movie climaxes as they betray each other and die/go to jail as Sandra solves all of her sex problems with the conveniently non-

threatening Ben Chaplin.

Murder By Numbers fails where most other Leopold and Loeb pictures stumble. What's intriguing about the original case is that the murder was not complicated at all, and the perpetrators were immediately caught by virtue of sheer sloppiness (one of them left his



glasses on the corpse). It is difficult to imagine the squabbling, obnoxious boys of *Murder by Numbers* planning anything more elaborate than a shopping spree. Leopold and Loeb were more or less regarded as a well-adjusted couple and were extremely popular in school. At any rate, the movie is meant to be little more than an extremely unfaithful modernization. Still, it falls short of being disturbing or interesting because it reduces its teen killers to a brain and a spoiled brat. It is not at all surprising that Schroeder's whiny, maladjusted boys commit a murder, whereas Leopold and Loeb shocked an entire nation. And Sandra Bullock is no Jimmy Stewart.

Murder by Numbers implies, among other things: that professional women are sexual predators; that professional women become professional to get back at men; that homosexuals hate women; that to be intelligent in high school is to be either a maniac or an asshole; that high school janitors are usually sex maniacs or drug dealers or both; that British men are somehow less threatening than American men; and that idle hands are indeed, as

was always expected, the devil's workshop (lack of good hard work results in a downward spiral from drug use, to homosexuality, to murder).

I don't think it was a terrible film. There is an excellent scene in which Sandra Bullock is attacked and mauled by a baboon. But it has its issues. In the spectrum of implicitly homoerotic suspense films involving teens, it's somewhere between *The Craft* and *Toy Soldiers*.



FRAILTY jonah weiner



It took nothing more than a Sam Raimi blurb, prominent in the trailers for *Frailty*, to make me look forward to the opening of supposedly "the scariest movie since *The Shining*." Well, a little bit more. For instance, the premise: a blue-collar Floridian single dad (played by director Bill Paxton) has a vision from God ("the angel told me that there are demons among us!") and, acting according to its dictates he finds an axe, a lead pipe, and gardening gloves, and begins to kidnap and chop up people who God reveals to him as minions of Satan. It appears that we have the makings here, at the very worst, of a truly bizarre Hollywood movie. For most of *Frailty*, this is actually pretty accurate, perhaps in spite of itself. Hardly frightening, the movie stretches along for upwards of an hour and a half, and we watch with a decreasing level of suspense as Paxton and his two boys (the angel told him they would help in the demon slaying) chop up this person, then the next, and so on. There is a remarkable segment --because truly ridiculous and completely incongruous--in which we see the same angel Paxton is supposed to be seeing: the bottom of a car morphs into a cathedral roof, and a CGI white guy with curly red hair and a beard flies at us with wide open eyes and a flaming sword. The film is structured

as a flashback, narrated by Matthew McConaughey in the office of an FBI detective investigating Paxton's serial murders. McConaughey arrives at the office in a stolen ambulance, announces himself as the brother of the murderer, and begins to tell the story. This narrative device acts as, if nothing else, a lure to draw us forward in anticipation of a secret or twist end, no matter how insipid we very well know such a payoff might turn out. The lure, moreover, provides a tautness to the slow pacing of the storyline--we are willing to forgive awful acting, suspenseless murders, and incredibly strange CGI imagery, and even to write these aspects into the context of 'kitsch' or something even less categorizable--and be entertained, for no better reason than the fact that, in all important respects, we can tell that *Frailty's* success is riding on its last scene (think *Usual Suspects*). Unfortunately the twist is lame and predictable. Moreover, it tries to evade being predictable by cutting off in the middle of things, making no sense, not attempt to make sense, and is, in effect, a maelstrom of poor editing, poor writing, and poor planning. Incomprehensibility is offered up in the stead of ambiguity or a more deliberate and crafted sense of 'unsolvedness'.



Senior Project in Art: "In the Dirt" at Fisher

by **huffa frobes-cross**

"In the Dirt," Carla Aspenberg's show in the Fisher Arts Building helped inaugurate this year's season of senior projects in the art department along with the first opening at UBS which, sadly, I was unable to see.

However, Aspenberg's work is a promising beginning for the next few weeks of senior shows. The project is divided between several series of small 35mm photographs and a number of works mounted on the wall which tread the line between painting and sculpture in a way similar to pieces by Anselm Kiefer or Rauschenberg. The larger works swell in and out with bulbous globs of nylon and egg protruding from rolling fields of dirt stuck on to plaster. They all have an intriguing formal relationship to some kind of half thought out image of the body. None of the pieces seem violent although they all seem to speak of an extreme distortion. The nylon almost busts and often times torn or stretched beyond its limits and submerged within the dirt.

It is like these pieces hint at being depictions of a birth scene

with these egg bundles emerging from the earth, but they never let you feel comfortable that that really is what's going on. The materials themselves also seem central to their effectiveness. Almost all of the materials used carry with them strong cultural connotations. Much of this circling around ideas of maternity and the identity of women. It is the ambiguousness of the use of these materials which allows them to not simply restate the easy clichés related to these materials. The eggs, the nylon, and the dirt do not easily fall into roles of mother and child or foetus, instead they form a mess of confusion in which you can't quite figure out how they are supposed to add up.

The photographs seem to frame the larger works in a more performative context by showing the artist acting out a fictional narrative of their creation. In one series of pictures Aspenberg is putting on underwear that she fills with eggs which she then pours out onto the floor. These same eggs one would presume find their way



into the other pieces on the wall. Another photo series further complicates her role in relationship to her work, by depicting her relating to one of the completed pieces. In it she is doing something like an awkward dance which mimes

the shapes of one of the larger works. It hints at an emotional intimacy between the artist persona Aspenberg is portraying and the wall sculptures. Not simply that the works are a kind of expression but more that they are almost like

other living things which she has a relationship with. The most effective photographs seem to make one wonder who did these things and why. They further add to the effective confusion that Aspenberg's show provokes.



This past Thursday photographer Nikki Lee gave a small talk to a group of students at Woods Photo Studio. She showed slides of her work and fielded questions as she went along. It was more of an informal visit than a talk, which was certainly refreshing after a series of interesting but very non-interactive photo lectures this past semester.

It also was, I think, a manifestation of a desire that one feels in particular with Lee's work, where you just want to see what she's like. It's a feeling that is rarely provoked in my experience with portraits, and the fact that it is felt with Lee's work is, I think, connected to some of her more substantial strengths.

Lee's photographs depict her as a participant in a vast array of different subcultures. They are not setup or acted but are documents of her own forays into these groups. For instance, for her Punk Project she collected a wardrobe

which suited a punk rocker who would likely be seen hanging out on St. Marks St. in New York, dressed up, and then befriended a group of punks who hung out on St. Marks. Lee then has someone come with her and photograph her during her time hanging out with them. She did similar projects with many different groups, from yuppies to tourists, and from drag queens to residents of a trailer park in Ohio.

The result acts both as a virtuoso display of Lee's ability to meld into these groups and as the creation of a seemingly endless mystery with regard to the nature of the photographs. As was demonstrated during the talk by many of the questions asked, these photographs produce an inexhaustible curiosity from the viewer. Is she still friends with these people? Does she like them? How did she know what to wear? How did she meet them? The answers are not particularly important, and Lee rarely gave very much information



when these questions were put to her at the talk. But the fact that you can't help asking them gets to one of the central strengths of her work. The way in which it constantly reminds us of how ambiguous our relationship to our cultural identity is, and it's ability to fluctuate between something we feel is somehow intimately connected to ourselves and something which is just a set of rules we fulfill to feel comfortable wherever we are.

During her talk, Lee consistently played down the idea that

one person asked about the emotional fatigue of having to change identities that the only time she was depressed was when she had to be her "normal" self. She said more than once that she didn't feel like she was acting any more during her projects than she did outside of them. This is something which certainly appears in her photographs in which she never seems to be trying to put on a persona, but instead always seems to be trying to fit in-- with the people she's around and within the photographs. Sometimes this is so effective you can hardly even tell that it's her or that she's just not one of the people who normally spends time in whatever circle she is in. Other times she seems awkward and out of



these pictures documented a radical stepping outside of her self.

Saying when

place, but this awkwardness is not so much like the awkwardness of a bad actor as it is like the awkwardness of a teenager trying to look cool to her friends.

As a result, there is a much more emotional and engrossing drama played out in these photographs, a drama of shifting identities on a stage where we all feel the stakes are high, when we go out with our friends or arrive at some new place ill prepared for how we might fit in. One of the most interesting things she pointed out when coming here was how little this was performance art for her. Some of the groups she didn't feel close to and some she felt very close to, but it seemed like they were all just groups of people she happened to meet, not the cast of a project which she had placed herself into as the lead actor.

...there is a much more emotional and engrossing drama played out in these photographs, a drama of shifting identities on a stage where we all feel the stakes are high...

*Music BRIEFS



And You Will Know Us By The Trail of Dead Source Tags & Codes Interscope

Utilizing sound surges of melodic guitar noise-hooks juxtaposed to a simmy feel and the eventual rock-out explosion, *And You Will Know Us By The Trail of Dead* creates music which melds the hardcore prerogative of fast and hard with whiny emo melodicism and lyrics. For many, this is an invigoratingly potent mixture—there are slammed drum snare blasts and walls of back and forth guitar fuzz, moments of energetic releases with memorable singings such as on "How Near How Far." Some of these tunes even have the occasional string accompaniment, a nice touch to help those tiny "so hurt I'm rocking" tears flow. The lyrics themselves concern that melancholy state of lost love and general sadness mixed with rev-

eries and regret; "Relative Ways" relates that an "electric guitar hanging to my knees / a couple of verses I can barely breathe" is the only way to escape the "panic and struggle."

The studio production is quite good; the rawness of the band is preserved whilst not being over-produced. The songs also have a nice order—slightly reminiscent of each other yet always a bit different in feel; there are layers of despair infused in each song.

And You Will Know Us By The Trail of Dead is, quite simply, the logical invention of an indie scene confused between hurtful sadness and a reactionary will to rock-out, the result of people having listened to Godspeed You Black Emperor, the result of crinkle-hearted kids with too much sappy poetry to sing. What this album personally does for me is very little; I find it well-executed but lacking—the band puts together pieces of other bands to make something which sounds...like it's always been there, like it's not creative but more a formulaic regurgitation with streamlined effectiveness. Of course you should find this all out on your own; critics are certainly not the best judges of music—you are.

-Tosh Chiang



VIA, Songs From the Old Gym 2—Bard Class of 2002

Buy this damn CD and help out your current senior class! It's chock full of Bard-born music with everything from reworked/remixed 80's pop-power ballad songs (Brownian Motion) to funk (Mother Ming), rock, acoustic pop (Skull-crusher) and insanity (The Flowers of Disgust). There's a hot rocking Broken Bottles track and a shiner of a song by post-rock favorites Formosa. Red Room dance/punk diehards Alphabet Soup of Thugs lay the fuzz down and Popsicle Riot blasts the beats out with jumpy-fun and effervescent glee. The campus's sole death metal band, CAIN, has an epic adventure into the world of metal while The Jordan Caress Band lays down their sooth-

ing brand of singer/songwriter ease. Also, the Dirty Hearts go dub-reggae-Clash-like and Miso proves that they should play more shows. Of course Hilary Konrad has a great song and so does Monica and Charlie's Fried Chicken Special—actually 4 songs, of the classical variety. Not all of these bands actually play the old gym, but the CD still comes out as a strong summation of Bard bands. There's also a more experimental-ish track by The Secret Life of Statues and two fun songs from the Aziatics and Jackson Barry Stole My Trumpet. So you know, get in touch, campus mail style to Toni Fortini and request your \$5 copy.

-TC

Jackson Barry Stole My Trumpet Demos from Amsterdam (self-released)

Lo-fi slacker pop-rock pranksters Jackson Barry Stole My Trumpet are notorious for sneaking their energetic shouty sets into shows in which they're unbilled. There's Jordan on guitar-string smashings and Jack with the upbeat basslines—both of them sing with that Pavementesque "I could almost care less about the backing melody" feel and it works out quite well on songs like Mystic CT (also on the Bard CD). Pulling

duty on drums is of course the legendary Raphi— watching him perform with his fantastic smiled drum face is a true shot of joy.

The trio's music itself is a raucous of whirl-crunched shenanigans that churgle onward with bass pumped, drum charged momentum—"Bombs are Falling" is a good example of this. "Stand Up Man" also has a memorable chorus and a rockin' intro. Strung throughout the CD are cryptic odd noises and dialogues which start songs off and even come in during many of the songs. There are lots of interesting attempts to exploit the technology of lo-fi recording in all of its panned fuzzy delightedness. But most of all, *Songs from Amsterdam* manages to preserve that energy and rock and roll fun which make JBSMT a solid band. 'Course it's hard to tell when they're playing next, but if you happen to be in the Red Room, lookout for the three bohemian lookin' kids (one with an amazingly tasteful fro) giving each other that "you wanna play" stare as the other bands are packing up.

-TC



Khabarta is without question the hottest shit around but, unless you were at the Red Room April 12th or the Fischerspooner night at "Electroclash," you've probably never heard of him. From New York City, Khabarta combines metal, disco, electro, and more ambiguous influences in a one-man act. His music is composed using Fruity Loops on a PC, I've been told, and his performance consists of little more than a discman, a mic, a pencil-thin moustache, and a gold tooth. Stripped down as it may seem, the *Khabarta* live show is, in a word, mesmerizing. In-between-song comments about Hennessy cognac, the 'magic principle', and

the questions people often ask him ("so Khabarta, what's up man—how is it you do what you do?") combine with a near-constant grin (he appears as entertained as the people he's playing to) and expert manipulation of the mic stand. *Khabarta's* older material, distributed on a self-titled cd put on sale after his Red Room set, is a lot weirder than his newer, more straightforward composite of late 70s metal and synth pop. His Red Room set drew almost exclusively from his newer material. In "Straight Ripper," an anthem about 'ripping people off', wailed and slightly off-key vocals ("Straiiiiight Rrrrippaahhh!!!") were delivered

over heavy electric guitar samples and a dance beat. In "Melt my Brain" recurrent bursts of atonal electronic noise represented the effect 'the opposite sex' can have on Khabarta's brain, while "Do you want me to go?" elicited a chorus of no's from the packed crowd. Besides an incredible live show, why is Khabarta so important? The answer to this has to do, for one thing, with the current synth craze—Khabarta has no trouble making catchy beats and basslines that fall directly in step with those of his many Electroclash contemporaries—and it has to do with the brilliant way he distinguishes himself from that trend, working to create what might be called the electro hair metal scene. Khabarta played the Red Room with 5 other acts, all from New York, who included the synth pop duo *Crème Blush*, their set marked by excellent keyboard playing, sweet vocals, and an inspired cover of *Georgio Moroder's* *Midnight Express* chase theme; the instrumental and meditative rock band *Apse* (with both Bard and non-Bard members); fast-tempo hardcore kids the *Fugue*; and *Fetal Orchestra*. Last but not least was the electro-rap act *Fashion Emergency*. Icing out the stage with a G4 laptop, tight white jeans, and



This ---'s for you: Ken Habarta as seen in a signed 8x10 glossy, in which he reclines on the club car of a Paris-bound TGV. Image courtesy www.khabarta.com

a Mercedes hood ornament worn as a necklace, Fashion E sounds like *Michael Jackson* rapping for the *Locust* over Commodore 64 samples and Cash Money beats,

Check out www.khabarta.com for details on Khabarta, the man, and his upcoming events & dates.



Bard's HOTTEST BOYS

COMPILED BY FRANK TORINO. When first approached to do this piece, I was a bit hesitant. I thought to myself, Me? Objectify men? Yummy. It was a painstaking task--walking around, eyeing face after face. For every guy I encountered, there remained the question, Does he make the cut? After nearly a month of scrutiny, I finally compiled a list, and I stress, this in no way encompasses every delicious male at Bard. These are just the beauties that stick out in my mind. I can't give a clear answer as to what defines these men as "hot", whether they're just aesthetically pleasing, sensual, or simply charming. Many of these men will be surprised to find themselves on the list, as it was completed solely by myself. In no particular order, I, Frank Torino, present to you the Ten Hottest Men at Bard:



coreySULLIVAN

Gentle. Soothing. Mysterious. Doesn't speak a lot but when he does, he means it. Bunsen Burner blue eyes. If he isn't baring his soul as a Bard thespian, he's alone, in the community garden, reading Pablo Neruda. Corey has the serene nature of an ascetic, the quiet manner of one who listens well. Although he's single-handedly saved potential theatrical failures, Corey will never admit it.



raimondoCHIARI

Mamma Mia! Rai is a passionate man, a lover of Italian freestyle rap, as well as political debate. It's hard to ignore his rhetoric, or his intense, almond eyes. Rai is proud of his European roots, as one can tell from the infamous, neon pink, 'Invicta' backpack he wears. The blood of Dolce and Gabbana, Gucci, and Armani runs through his veins. He is a miraculous harmony of brawn and brains. Chiseled lips, sculpted with the grace of a Renaissance artist. A tall, formidable physique, complimented by his runway model's strut. Che bello!

khalil JIBADE-HUFFMAN

Khalil radiates a natural self-confidence without knowing just how gorgeous he is. Never seen without a camera, or his trademark poetry journal, Khalil is a 'go-getter' in the truest sense of the word. If something interesting is happening--a reading, an exhibit, a wet t-shirt contest at "Joe's" in New Paltz--chances are Khalil is behind it. Though he is a prolific writer, and photographer, one wishes he would switch to something else, say, body painting?



oskarMIARKA

Back in Poland, Oskar was editing fashion videos and occasionally lunching with supermodel Gisele Bundchen. Now he has the honor of teaching inept Bard film students how to use computer software. That Oskar is handsome (and macho) is undeniable. But most people don't know of Oskar's softer side. During a recent screening of Godard's "Vivre sa Vie", Oskar openly wept, to the amazement of his peers. As for his saucy side, one only has to venture to the fourth floor of the library to view one of Oskar's indiscreet makeout sessions.

prof. gregory MOYNAHAN

An honest man of integrity. Who better to guide the youth of Bard than someone as upstanding and beautiful as Gregory? He enjoys the outdoors--a mild hike every morning. With the recent purchase of a telescope, he's begun to learn the constellations. His favorite? Orion. Fitting, for such a hunky woodsman. His favorite planet? Venus, of course. After a hard day's work, Gregory likes to relax with a glass of Remy-Martin, Sade's Lover's Rock emanating from the stereo. With his curly, hyacinth locks of hair, and a remarkable knowledge of Central European history, Gregory has a million students screaming Hot for Teacher!



mauricioMORA

"Mora" means blackberry in Spanish, and the name couldn't be more appropriate for a sweet heartbreaker like Mauricio. A frequent rock climber, as one can tell from the taut muscles that form the beautiful topography of Mauricio's back. He has the voice of a daydreamer, the smile of a little boy caught red-handed. And who can forget Mauricio's proud dreadlocks? This modern day Samson needs no Delilah.

richardSAUDEK

At first glance, Richard is just another Bard hottie, but this devilish Freshman has an outrageous past: Richard was a clown in the circus for six years. "One time", Richard reflects, "the fire-breather tried to play a trick on me. You see, we were always playing pranks on each other. That's how it is in the circus. Anyhow, he put chili powder on my popcorn (I was doing an act where I'm a clown eating popcorn), and after the first bite, my mouth was burning up! Luckily, I managed to get through the act, and later, I got my revenge!" Richard's shy demeanor and playful lips are reminiscent of the sober James Dean. Make no mistake, this boy is no bozo.



markusKIRSCHNER

Known for his deadpan wit and razor-sharp rebukes, Markus Kirschner is the sassiest beauty at Bard. Always the center of attention. Flawless good looks. A cherubic face straight out of mythology. Wispy, sandy-blonde, eternally wind-swept hair. He's an avid swimmer and loves steak frites. The only thing more compelling than his infectious laugh is his sultry pout.



nickWEIST

Who is that boy on the bike? Nick likes to ride when the weather is hot, and it's never been hotter. Often seen dressed in ultra-hip athletic wear, Nick isn't too shy to show off his scrumptious buns. He is an expert baker. Any night you can find him in the Village Dorms squeezing a supple mound of dough. Give him a pinch and you'll find his skin is just as soft.



danielLICHTBLAU

The gentleman. When asked about his fantasies, Dan replies, "I want to make a woman the best meal she's ever had. I want to lose myself in her. I want to bathe her in jasmine and rose petals. I want her to dream the softest dreams, in my arms." Need to know what wine is right for the occasion? Ask Dan. The right suit? Ask Dan. But this cultured cutie isn't all high-brow luxury. In fact, Dan is also the lead guitarist for the notorious, psychedelic-alt-country group, Kuna. Is he romantically involved? "Maybe", Dan replies coyly, never one to kiss and tell.