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Israel Assassinates Hamas Spiritual Leader

missile hits Yassin

by kate crockford

Israeli helicopters fired a missile at wheelchair-bound, paraplegic Hamas leader Sheik Yassin as he was leaving a dawn mosque service on Monday morning. The 67-year-old, his two bodyguards, and six other Palestinians were killed in the attack while at least 17 civilians were reported injured.

The assassination, one of what Israel terms "targeted killings," came as Israeli army incursions spread through the West Bank and Gaza Strip, leaving many dead, including civilians.

The helicopter gunship attack was the second in recent history on Yassin.

In September *Sheik Yassin* 2003 Israeli forces dropped a 550-pound bomb onto an apartment building in which he was having a meeting. Yassin

escaped from that attack with light shrapnel wounds, and 14 others in the building were wounded.

Yassin is the most prominent militant to have been killed by

fighters responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Israeli civilians killed in suicide bombings since the beginning of the uprising.

The assassination comes

withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, the continued construction of the separation barrier (otherwise known as the apartheid wall or security fence), and the defense and enlargement of many Jewish settlements inside the Palestinian territory demarcated in 1967.

Columnists and political strategists posit that the Yassin killing is Sharon's way of showing that, upon withdrawal, the Israelis are leaving by their own design and not because they feel defeated. It sends a clear message to the Palestinians regarding who is in the position of power.

But, according to the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, "Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, who is in Washington for previously planned talks with top U.S. officials, told CNN on Monday that the decision to assassinate Yassin had actually been made months

ago, adding that it had nothing to do with Sharon's disengagement plan."

The US government declined to condemn the killing, saying instead that it was "troubled" by the developments in the region. UN secretary general Kofi Annan did condemn it, declaring it illegal under international law and unhelpful with regard to the "peace process." UK foreign secretary called the killing "unjustified," arguing that it would not help peace develop in the region.

Palestinian protests erupted in many parts of the region, with 20,000 rallying in Nablus, West Bank, while in Gaza City, Hamas activists declared that Sharon had "opened the gates of hell and nothing will stop us from cutting off his head."

A 22-year-old journalist from al-Najah university in Nablus was one of the Palestinian civilians killed on Monday; he was shot as he covered the protests for his university's radio station.

The Israeli army completely sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip, enforcing curfews in many cities and villages. Yasir Arafat has declared a three-day mourning period throughout Palestinian territories.



UCLA Cadaver Program Suspended for Misconduct

body parts sold out of contract

by zak kitnick

The University of California at Los Angeles suspended its Willed Body Program days after the director of the program, Henry Reid, and another unidentified employee were put on leave for allegedly selling body parts for profit. UCLA police arrested the two employees for "illegal activities involving the commercialization of human remains."

Reid allegedly sold the parts to Ernest Nelson, but their final destination is still under investigation. "There is no indica-

tion that the body parts had been used for any purpose other than medical research," said Dr. Gerald S. Levey, vice chancellor of UCLA Medical Sciences, but added that he was not sure. It is possible that the remains were acquired by anybody, even cannibals. The Johnson & Johnson Company admitted to buying tissue samples for testing from Nelson, but issued a statement denying that the purchase of human remains without knowledge regarding its origins is a questionable business practice.

Reid reported to authorities that Nelson entered the area twice with a saw, taking the desired parts, including knees and torsos.

The Willed Body Program is intended to make donated bodies available for medical research and education; family members of willed bodies received contracts from university officials guaranteeing that their "loved ones' remains [would] never be sold" and that they would be treated with "dignity and respect."

Following any scandal of

this magnitude is a slew of lawsuits, but one of the most noticeable has been filed by Nelson's attorney's, seeking \$241,000 in damages from UCLA for shutting down his "business."

This is the second time in ten years that UCLA's cadaver program has been under investigation. In 1994, it was accused of mixing medical waste, animal remains, and trash, disposing it all in a garbage dump.



Henry Reid

Newbriefs by the bite

compiled by tosh chiang

Al-Qaida's No. 2 Claims to Have Nukes

SYDNEY, Australia (AP) - Osama bin Laden's terror network claims to have bought ready-made nuclear weapons on the black market in central Asia, the biographer of al-Qaida's No. 2 leader was quoted as telling an Australian television station. In an interview scheduled to be televised on Monday, Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir said Ayman al-Zawahri claimed that "smart briefcase bombs" were available on the black market. It was not clear when the interview between Mir and al-Zawahri took place. http://cnn.netscape.cnn.com/news/story.jsp?loc=NW_1-T&oldflok=FF-APO-1106&idq=ff/

[story/0001%2F20040321%2F1830828661.htm&sc=1106&photoId=20040319XDG103](http://www.ajc.com/news/content/news/0304/21/climateside.html)

Carbon dioxide in air at record high

MAUNA LOA OBSERVATORY, Hawaii -- Carbon dioxide, the gas largely blamed for global warming, has reached record levels in the atmosphere after growing at an accelerated pace in the past year, say scientists monitoring the sky from this station atop a Hawaiian volcano. <http://www.ajc.com/news/content/news/0304/21/climateside.html>

Nepal claims hundreds of rebels killed

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) - Government forces killed at least 500 Maoist rebels, and at least 18

news thats fit to print

police officers and soldiers died in some of the fiercest fighting since a ceasefire collapsed last year, officials reported on Sunday. <http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/World/2004/03/21/390699-ap.html>

Gibson to make Jewish Western?

New York - Mel Gibson, whose hit film The Passion Of The Christ was attacked as anti-Semitic by some critics, says he is now intrigued by the revolt of the Maccabees - the story behind the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah.

"The story that's always fired my imagination is the Book of Maccabees," the actor and director told ABC Radio Network host Sean Hannity on Tuesday. "The Maccabees family stood up, and they

made war. They stuck by their guns and they came out winning," he said. "It's like a Western." http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?click_id=22&art_id=qw1079706960965B214&set_id=1

Microsoft 'in talks to buy AOL' from Time Warner

Time Warner, struggling to stem the decline of its America Online division, is reported to have held talks about selling the business to Microsoft.

Executives of the two companies are said to have met for discussions about a possible deal in the past few months. Time Warner lawyers have also been asked to overcome any potential roadblocks in the transaction from Washington, the New York Post

reported. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/story/0,3604,1173902,00.html>

Ex-Aide Says Bush Doing 'Terrible Job'

WASHINGTON - Richard A. Clarke, the former White House counterterrorism coordinator, accuses the Bush administration of failing to recognize the al-Qaida threat before the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks, and then using the event to manipulate America into war with Iraq (news - web sites) with dangerous consequences. http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/ap/20040320/ap_on_go_pr_wh/terrorism_adviser_14

continued on next page...

Watson is Double Win for Bard

by **liv carrow**

For the second year in a row, two Bard students were among four recipients of the prestigious Watson Fellowship, a \$22,000 grant give to graduates of fifty American liberal arts colleges. Last year, former Free Press writer Vincent Valmandis received it to study surveillance in various countries, and Emily McNair received it to study the art of beekeeping around the world. Both graduates are still at large, as Watson Fellows cannot

reenter the US for a full year. This year's Bard winners include Yishai Garbasz, a continuing studies photography student, and Nguyen Nguyen, a music and integrated arts double major. They received the fellowship from a pool of over 200 finalists and hundreds more applicants after a long and arduous application and interview process. Garbasz's project involves continuing a photography project dealing with Israel/Palestine, but as

he is currently in Israel shooting he was not available for an interview. What follows is an interview with Nguyen, who is a peer counselor, jazz pianist, composer, visual artist, filmmaker, and all around great guy.

Liv: So first of all, what is your project?

Nguyen: The focus is on the younger generation of Vietnamese artists and musicians, in Vietnam and the diaspora. Its a collaborative and

1 year grant goes to two Bardians

performative project, so basically I'm gonna go to go to Vietnam for four months and play music with other young musicians and artists, visit studios, make work with other artists, that sort of thing. I'll be doing the same thing in Vietnamese communities in Germany, France, Russia and Australia.

L: What kind of work have you done or are you doing that you will be able to continue with this project?

N: I'm a double major in integrated

arts and music, so my integrated arts project is focusing on the Vietnamese-American experience. I got the Bar Junior Fellowship to volunteer in the Vietnamese community in Dorchester, Massachusetts this summer and that's what really got me interested in Vietnamese youth culture and collaborating with other Vietnamese artists.

L: Do you think people you've worked

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The Free Press Tests Dorm Water

by **free press staff**

Ever think the water in your dorm is tapped straight from the Hudson? With so many people using water filters and bottled water in their rooms, the free press decided that it was time to test Bard College's water supply to find out just how bad it really is.

A \$20 dollar "Watersafe" screening test from Silver Lake Research was purchased from Red Hook Natural Foods and brought to Stone Row's South Hoffman

dorm. Water was then collected from the kitchen and bathroom sinks in equal parts in the same container. The test itself consisted of several dipsticks which would change color to indicate presence and level of a contaminant. Color swatches were provided to "match" a dipstick's color relative to the range of EPA guidelines. In cases where nothing registered, we used the term negative. Keep in mind that these results are in no

way certifiable, but only approximations.

Pesticides: The test for Atrazine and Simazine was negative. Regions in which these chemicals are used tend to have higher cancer rates.

Nitrates/nitrites: Another negative. Nitrates/nitrites come from fertilizer and animal wastes. They are linked to development problems in children.

Chlorine: The measurement between 0.0 and 0.1 detected though this reading may be false due to the lack of accuracy in the swatches. Chlorine by-products cause increased cancer risk as well as give water a bad taste and smell.

Iron: Negative. Iron causes a metallic taste as well as reddish staining.

"Hardness": No result. This test failed due to a mistake. However,

judging from the deposits on many South Hoffman sinks and showers, there is probably some hardness.

Ph: 6.0-6.5. Unfortunately, our dipstick registered something between 6.0 and 6.5. The EPA's guidelines enforce a standard between 6.5 and 8.5. Acidic or alkali water can cause metal (often lead) pipes to "leach" into the water.

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Hookah Party Cancelled

by **liv carrow**

The third hookah party in the Old Gym, set for Saturday the 20th, was cancelled on Friday the 19th by the Office of Student Activities following concerns raised by Security.

According to co-sponsor Ramy Hameid, Allen Josey called off the party for a number of reasons. Namely, there was a security concern of not having enough guards to police two keg parties (the other being the Rugby party in Robbins) an administrative concern about New York smoking

laws, the confusion of hookahs with bongos, and the promotion of smoking in an officially sponsored campus event. The party will be rescheduled after Spring Break once some legalities have been worked out.

"I understand their point about smoking, but people practically always smoke inside at parties. At the hookah party people are forced to sit with other people they dont know, as opposed to going to the Old Gym and getting drunk to get to know them, it's a chill different environment for a

administration cancels smoking themed event

party, with music and dancing," said Hameid.

Craig Judelman, who organizes parties with Hameid, took more issue with the New York law which makes smoking illegal in indoor public spaces than with the administration's decision to can the party.

"At parties on campus there's a weird vibe, and it seems like people just wanna chill out and listen to music. We're just going for a nice vibe. It sucks that more specific things that make our party different are getting us in

trouble," he said.

The Hookah Party began earlier this year as an alternative to the usual Old Gym scene, with DJ dance music and a keg, and instead arranged large blocks for sitting around several hookah stations. Live music was a feature at both previous parties, and the atmosphere was relaxed and personal. Both parties were well attended.

Judelman and Hameid hope to have the next party at the end of April, outside if the weather permits, which will eliminate any

conflict with smoking laws.



Tennessee County Votes to Ban Gays, Rescinds

by **bonnie ruberg**

from the people that brought you the scopes monkey trial

In an attempt to show solidarity for Tennessee's state-wide ban

on gay marriages, Rhea County decided on Tuesday, March 16th to re-illegalize sodomy. The commissioners of the rural, Bible-belt county voted unanimously in favor of the motion, which would petition state representatives to pass legislation giving Rhea county the right to bring gays up on the legal charges of "crimes against nature."

The ruling, however, attracted national attention and outrage, and on Thursday, March 18th the same Rhea county commissioners voted 8-0 to rescind the motion. Declining to comment, the commissioners made

a quick decision and left behind an excited crowd of mixed reactions. Many local residents were disappointed in the verdict, some even shouting "coward!" as the commissioners passed them by.

This incident, of course, comes at a poignant time for the issue of gay rights and acceptance in America's societies and legal systems. It was only last year that homosexual intercourse was officially protected by law when, in the case of Lawrence vs. Garner, the supreme court ruled 6-3 to declare sodomy laws both unconstitutional and unenforceable for consenting adults. Perhaps it is the clear unconstitutionality of the gay ban which has made Rhea, as one local man admitted, "a laugh-

ing-stock" before the rest of the country. However, the support this ban initially received testifies for the way many Americans still view gays and gay relationships, despite whatever advances the homosexual and lesbian community may be making concerning marriage laws in select American counties.

Once the news of the problematic court decision broke out, journalist, protesters and supporters all flocked to Rhea County. County Attorney Gary Fritz claimed in defense of the initial decision, "Same-sex marriage is what it was all about. There has just been so much misunderstanding about this." However, the words of other participants present more striking

prejudices against the on-going struggle for gay rights. One such opinion was spoken by commissioner J. C. Fugate, who initiated the motion on Tuesday, when he expressed concern as to how to "keep them [gays] out of here."

Rhea County does not necessarily represent the average cross-section of American beliefs. For its conservative and controversial past, popular culture has branded the town of Dayton as an oddity, even a tourist attraction. Only two years ago, a federal judge banned the teaching of bible studies in public school classrooms. A local ordinance still prohibits the sale of alcohol in a store less than one mile from a church. However, the Rhea County Courthouse's

real claim to fame is the 1925 "Scopes Monkey Trial" during which high school teacher John T. Scopes was charged and fined for teaching evolution in the classroom. Despite the fact that this verdict was also soon rescinded, such a history gives an impression of the orthodox ideals of Dayton.

Though locals of Rhea County seem to disapprove of the stigmatic legacy they bear, the conservative values of their elected officials lives on. As justification for the proposed ban on gays, Attorney J. C. Frugate added that the intent of the motion had merely been, "to stop people from coming here and getting married and living in Rhea County."

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M20 Protests All Around The World

Millions have rallied all around the globe, both on March 19, the actual anniversary of the invasion, as well as March 20—the anniversary of worldwide protests against the war.

A demonstration took place in Baghdad, Iraq in tandem with protests around the world against the violence of the occupation. The protest was also a powerful show

of unity between Sunni and Shia muslims. The marches started with the Shias in Khadamiya, and the Sunnis across the river in Adamiya. The two groups met just as the Shias came over the bridge, and emotions were high as they merged into one. They then together walked to a public square where speakers denounced the occupation and called for unity between all Iraqis.

Japan Says Killing of

Hamas Leader Was 'Reckless Act'

March 23 (Bloomberg) -- Israel's assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, the former leader of the Palestinian Hamas group and a foe of a political settlement, was a "reckless act," Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said.

The killing was "a reckless act that was devoid of any consideration of the consequences," Fukuda said

at a regular press conference in Tokyo. "It was unjustifiable."

Japan's criticism of Israel echoes similar denunciations from the U.S., European Union and Russia, which said the death of Yassin, the most senior Palestinian killed since the start of the second Palestinian uprising in 2000, will worsen security.

<http://quote.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000101&sid=aNDf3WBufp8E&refer=japan>

Minister dies watching Jesus movie

A BRAZILIAN pastor died of a sudden heart-attack while watching Mel Gibson's controversial film "The Passion of The Christ," church officials said Monday.

Pastor Jose Geraldo Soares, 43, was watching the film, which has been criticized for its violent depiction of Jesus Christ's final hours, when he suffered a "violent heart attack" in a movie

continued on next page...

Microsoft Critical Update Is Censorship

by **tosh chiang**

update removes symbols

A new "critical update" for Microsoft Office 2003 eliminates the Star of David and swastika symbols from the Bookshelf Symbol 7 font, replacing each with a black box. A critical update is normally intended to improve the performance or security of a program. Yet in this case, the update was clearly not a critical one, but a form of downloadable censorship.

Why, after so long, remove these symbols? It's an issue of questionable motive when Microsoft decides to remove two politically charged and historically important symbols from the de facto word processing standard of the masses. The symbols' paired removal is also something to think about: is Microsoft saying that the swastika and the Star of David are equally problematic? A kind of systematic "forgetting" seems reminiscent of the standard Orwellian nightmare. But then again, it is just two symbols from a font—Microsoft helping you go where you want to go today, right?

But then again, Corbis, Bill Gates's media database company, owns the Bettman archive,



which includes the visual record of the Nazi Holocaust. Not to jump the gun, but in this age it seems like this sort of symbol erasing should be paid great attention to when it comes from a media giant such as Microsoft. The ability to type the swastika is probably something that most people will not miss. The ability to even see a swastika is nothing that we're going to have a riot for. But as long as these symbols have meaning, they shouldn't be eliminated. It's scary that Microsoft can give

you an update when really they're just mediating your ability to access a symbol.

The Bettman archive currently lives under ground, in a sub-zero compound in Pennsylvania. The archive is heavily guarded about a mile beneath the surface and access is very limited. What if the hardcopies of the holocaust were to be critically updated too—replaced with empty space? It's a far-fetched scenario but it is just a bit frightening.

Nguyen Wins Watson

continued from page 2...

with so far on this type of project share any of your experiences or insights, and what do you expect to find?

N: I'm gonna try to embark on this project without any pre-judgements and with a very open mind, expecting to be surprised. I guess a very big motivation is a way for me to find a community and find like minded people, so in that way i do expect to find other young artists who look to Vietnamese tradition and feel that there is something there for them and there is a way to make it their own and make it contemporary. I don't expect to find artists who are working in the same mediums that I'm working in that deal with the same specific types of ideas.

L: What was your initial reaction when you heard you won the fellowship?

N: I was having a gray day and right before I checked my mail I was telling myself I shouldn't kid myself and I should look for other fellowships and start planning for next year more proactively. So when I checked my mail and found the big Watson package I was sort of stunned, and when I found out i won

i walked home to call my parents and sister, it was one of the most pure senses of joy I've felt in a while.

L: What will you come back with?

N: The Watson really dissuades the fellows from producing any tangible work, because their focus

is on the process of the project, but I think what will naturally come out of this is a lot of songs, a lot of work on paper and a lot of multimedia collaborative work with other artists. Installation, performance art.

L: What are you bringing?

N: A keyboard, which will be heavy,



a laptop, dv camera, a winter coat.

L: Any other thoughts you want me to put in this interview?

N: Now that I got the fellowship, now I have to go through with it, and now ... I am extremely nervous, but also extremely excited.

theater in Belo Horizonte, capital of the southeastern state of Minas Gerais, said Pastor Amauri Costa de Oliveira.

<http://ad.doubleclick.net/click:h=v2%7C30d7%7C0%7C0%7C%2a%7Cw:6240683:3-0:0:8888208:933-120%7C600:3463719%7C3481615%7C1:;%3fhttp://www.reuters.com/knownow>

Muppets Bringing Peace to the Middle East

TEL AVIV, Israel (Hollywood Reporter) - Where countless poli-

ticians and diplomats have failed, Elmo, Cookie Monster and their "Sesame Street" buddies are on a mission to promote peace and tolerance in the Middle East. A programing experiment using the Muppet characters was launched six months ago and was widely welcomed by parents, educators and the media. But the Muppets are not without their critics in Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan.

<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jht>

[ml?type=televisionNews&storyID=4628500§ion=news](http://www.cnn.com/2004/TECH/ptech/01/11/sony.minidisc.ap/)

Sony unveils 45 hour mini disc

TOKYO, Japan (AP) -- Sony Corp. has introduced a revamped mini-disc Walkman that doubles the recording capacity of current discs and a new 1-gigabyte mini disc that records up to 45 hours of music, up from the current 80 minutes.

<http://www.cnn.com/2004/TECH/ptech/01/11/sony.minidisc.ap/>

Dear President Botstein,

Over the last three weeks there have been a string of hateful events that have occurred around campus; each of which have been an individual's or group's outward manifestation of bigotry. These incidents have taken place in dorms as well as in public spaces and have not been limited to any one area of campus. This campaign of hate has left many minority students scared, angry and ready to act.

During the first week of March there were three prejudiced incidents, these were reported to the Office of Residence Life. The first involved the posting of a racist limerick in the hallway of a dorm. The other two involved residents hearing bigoted comments being made about them by other residents of their dorm outside their doors. In one case the overhearing of these homophobic, racist and anti-Semitic comments was followed by the posting of a homophobic cartoon and another overheard instance of calling an individual by a racial slur. The latter two episodes were in the same dorm. Even if all three had occurred in different parts of campus and seemed isolated events, this would have been no excuse to look into these problems in a superficial manner. Especially when these events were later shown to be only the first of many more such racist actions on the part of Bard students. A dorm meeting is a wonderful method of addressing problems such as a rash of early morning fire alarms, however, as soon as race, sexual orientation, religion, or any other identifier is mentioned or used in a hateful way the entire community in which it is happening needs to be examined and reeducated.

The next week a resident in yet another dorm found racist and homophobic slurs scrawled on his/her door. Later, on the other side of campus, a concerned member of the community found that when she tried to ask an unruly, intoxicated group of students to be respectful of the dorm they were disturbing, they called her a "f***ing ni**er." The most recent of these hateful acts occurred this weekend in the campus center. Someone wrote, "I hate all minorities" on one of the corkboards and then proceeded to list in the most derogatory language which minorities they meant specifically.

In a community that purports to be as liberal and forward thinking as Bard, there should be no room for hate in word or deed. Sometimes in the assumption of universal 'right thought' people will say things that are more than just not politically correct but are, quite plainly, hurtful and wrong. There seems to be a feeling that when such comments are made the listeners who are also of course enlightened individ-

[index.html](#)

World Champion 'Snake Man' Killed by Cobra

BANGKOK (Reuters) - Thailand's Boonreung Buachan, holder of the Guinness Book of World Records title for spending the most time penned up with snakes, was killed by a cobra that bit him during his daily show, a hospital doctor said on Monday.

<http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=oddlyEnoughNews&storyID=4620483>



uals, will know that the speaker obviously doesn't mean what is being said and is just being ironic. Such remarks can make the unintentional audience feel everything from upset to unsafe and to scared. Unfortunately, you never know the indirect ramifications of such remarks.

After the first such incident we would have thought it clear that there was a need for diversity education, if not for the entire community, at least for the dorm in question. The fact that this situation has grown so large in such a short period of time is not only worrisome but also frightening.

We ask that the College issue a formal denunciation of such hateful actions and clarify the definition of discrimination in the eyes of the College, as well as consequences of such behavior. This is to be sent out via mass campus mailing, mass emails and a papering campaign.

Furthermore, we ask that the College begin and institutionalize a mandatory diversity awareness series for all students. It is not enough to have one ninety-minute workshop during the first week of L+T and expect that any students who may have entered the school with prejudices will be rid of them.

Also, we ask for the creation of a two strikes policy. The first time someone is caught exhibiting, acting on or in any way disrupting the life of the community with bigoted speech, behavior or actions that they have their on campus housing privileges revoked, the second time they are expelled from the school. It is only through the strict enforcement of such policies that we can assure that the seriousness of such offenses can be made clear to the community at large.

Finally, we ask that the college create a discrimination and harassment board. While we believe that the SJB is a positive institution and quite effective in the cases it handles, when harassment and discrimination are the problems we believe that it is important to have a deeper understanding of the roots of such behaviors and the intricacies in dealings with such problems. Thus, a board that is devoted to dealing exclusively with this type of offence is needed on the campus.

The one positive side effect of these atrocious actions has been the unification of much of the minority student community. We will fight for our right to live and work and learn here, free from prejudice and hate; we do not want to be seen as separate from the rest of the community, but as an integral and inextricable part of the whole. Our diversity is an asset to Bard's community, and is something to be celebrated. Unfortunately this is not currently the case. Sir, with your help, we know that this can be possible.

Thank you for your time and aid in making discrimination at Bard a thing of the past.

Kena Hazelwood
Saran Adkinson
Casi Kolbjornsen
Phinn Markson
Elizabeth McWilliams-Hernandez
Shaun Cheesboro

*the free pres recieved this letter prior to President Botstein's email to the bard community.

End the Occupation?

by **christie seaver**

The position of the US in Iraq is much more complicated than it was a year ago. Before the US began bombing Iraq, in the spring of last year, the message of us peaceniks was clear: Don't invade Iraq! We fought hard to argue that George W. Bush and his administration were risking the lives of Iraqi civilians, as well as the lives of American troops, based on shoddy evidence and their ability to incite fear in the American public. One year later, our argument is still the same, but our demands must undergo some changes.

A week after the US invaded Iraq, Bard students and community members were ridiculed for still holding vigils in Red Hook. "The war's over," people yelled as they drove past; yet my fellow students refer to last spring as "during the war." Barely a week after President Bush announced his intention to attack Iraq, the

media hoopla was over, and so was the war, in many people's minds.

Last Saturday I marched to Red Hook carrying a sign that read "The War Isn't Over." I believe that we are still at war. American soldiers are still dying in Iraq; there is still violence and unrest. If this is not war, doesn't it at least merit as much recognition?

The situation in Iraq is serious and deserves our attention, but personally my position has changed. The phrase "bring the troops home" is no longer relevant. We are embedded in Iraq. It would be wrong to leave behind the mess that we've made. Also, as much as I may disagree with the administration that sent them there, our troops are doing good work in Iraq. While I am dedicating my time to exposing the injustice of this war, American troops are dedicating their time to an equally

admirable cause— spending 14-15 hours each day working to improve the lives of the Iraqi people. Many of them don't want to leave — they care about the work that they are doing there.

We need to focus on bringing in the UN. The only reason that people are calling for an end to the occupation is because the United States refuses to let anyone else help out. The presence of Halliburton is suspicious, to say the least. Finally, the US charged into Iraq declaring that we would bring them "peace and democracy." The Iraqi people need to be free to decide for themselves what democracy means for them; they do not need Western-style democracy shoved down their throats. Unfortunately, we are in Iraq for the long haul. This doesn't mean, however, that we can't still be critical of our leaders, and the decisions that they make.

Bard Tap Water

continued from page 2...

tastes like water to us...



Lead: Negative. A surprise—of all things, we figured lead might be in the water, especially since Stone Row is one of the older dorms on campus. Lead, if ingested, can cause neurological damage, kidney problems, and develop-

mental harm in children.

So that's the deal with our water supply. This unofficial test leads us to believe that it is safe, clean and lead free. Of course, there is still the issue of taste. And as far as that goes,

well, bottled and Brita'd water might still win out. For more info on the water supply, go to <http://www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/default.asp>

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fairplay?



The Sleepy Jackson
Lovers
Astralwerks/EMI

Perhaps one of those mellow, feel good studying albums, or heart lamenting road trip inspirations, Lovers is a crafted pop album which makes no mistakes whatsoever. Well, maybe a few, but for the most part this is one solid album. Prepare to meet a band that will probably become unavoidable, ubiquitous, yet irritably likeable. The songs range from "the boss" influenced rock crooning and acoustic jaunts to trip-pop simmers of the melodic, flaming and soothing kind. The lyrics are infectious and the recording is crisp and warm. In fact I'm trying to write this band off as marketed crap but, well, I've got a soft spot for honest good pop. The music is bland enough to be a nice background. The instrumentation mixes it up with the standard tools of rock but works in synthesizers, strings and heavy-processed vocal harmonies. Lots of kudos go out to frontman Luke Steele for composing these potential pop jewels. Perhaps they are radio ready, but not everything on the radio is always completely bad. On first listening I pegged this band as rehashed pop. Sadly, Lovers did get a bit better and better.

The first tune, "Good Dancers," is reminiscent of the a-side first track of the Soft Bulletin by the Flaming Lips. It kicks off with an uplifting string melody and then drops in with flighty light vocals. "Vampire Race Course" follows it up with an effort towards rock and roll but never delivers the full load. "Rain Falls for Wind" fits those rainy blue nights if you need something to sing to, and well, I'm sure that many of will. "Acid in My Heart" is like a rolling country background to feeling down and out but effervescent. I'm not sure just what that means but I think this song does it. The Sleepy Jackson manage to fulfill the new sound of where Paul Simon and "Graceland" left off.

And yeah, I know I just mentioned Graceland. Maybe I'm wrong; this is sort've scary to write. This band ain't no rock and roll but it can definitely fulfill those times when you've had too much rock, hip hop and electronica and maybe need something to just

chill. [tosh]
JOANNA NEWSOM
WENDY WALES



Joanna Newsom
The Milk-eyed Mender
2004 Drag City

This is the first label release from singer-composer Newsom, who released two homemade tapes in 2002 and 2003. She distributed them to her friends in the Bay Area and was soon approached by Will Oldham, Devendra Banhart and Cat Power to tour with them. Newsom released a homemade demo, "Walnut Whales" in 2001, and now the public can buy her full length album "The Milk-Eyed Mender in Drag City records.

The album contains eleven tracks, mostly arrangements of Joanna's voice and harp, which she has played since age 8, while a few others have piano or keyboard accompaniment. Her often complexly layered songs sound deceptively simple, and repetitive rhythmic changes and dissonant harmonies balanced by heroddy childlike, nasally sweet voice.

Newsom's songs are not pretentious or inaccessible despite being very mythical and strange. She sings about "thimbles full of milky moon" and "a little wicker beetle shell" but something about the bizarre fairytale lyrics makes sense. They aren't obvious songs, they don't whine about love, they aren't telling the listeners anything in particular, but pretty ditties with an evident tie to bluegrass and folk music lyrical traditions. The album has a good balance between upbeat and slower, more melancholy songs, a welcome diversion from the singer-songwriter pattern of a mass of sad songs punctuated by a few cheery ones.

Newsom's songs are fanciful and quiet, but not in a way that is easily ignored. Rather they are quiet in a way which affirms that not everyone is mired in some collective depression; some people can escape into a lovely world of shells and grass and the sea and staring off into the stars, strung together with solid yet dreamy harp harmonies, and make a fantastic album out of it.

[liv]



The Liars
They Were Wrong, So We Drowned
Mute

Acceptance is not always the incentive of an artist. The novelist James Agee eloquently professed about this sense of misanthropy: "Official acceptance is the one unmistakable symptom that salvation is beaten again, and is the one surest sign of fatal misunderstanding, and is the kiss of Judas." Ethicality as such is impractical, especially for the career of an indie rock band. In light of the drastic altercations that the Liars have made on their recent LP, They Were Wrong So We Drowned, we have an ideal example of how the failure to attain a prospect of acceptance was not involuntary, but intentional.

They Were Wrong is essentially a 'concept' album about witch-hunts. Despite their originality, the songs are deprived of the intimidating dance/punk formula that had previously gained the Liars approval from their audiences. On They Were Wrong the band has chosen to focus on the more abrasive side of their music by extracting the thick bass lines and caffeinated guitar jolts which were ever-present on the last LP, They Threw Us All In a Trench and Stuck a Monument on Top. Notwithstanding its almost intolerable experimentalism, the music certainly achieves a consistent narrative. The album aptly catalogues the paranoia and subversion that pervaded the witch-hunts of the early 19th century. This is highly notable in Angus Andrews vocals. His dynamic voice range allows him to dramatically shift between tones of neuroticism and perversion.

This album has its moments. The morbid context of the music possesses a hypnotic nature that is mildly intriguing. Despite whatever gratification one might gain from listening to They Were Wrong, this was certainly not the band's intention. In light of their previous work, the Liars have proven that they are capable of creating music that is captivating and accessible. Although They Were Wrong is unmistakably a retreat from such merits, the Liars are still very capable of resurrecting them. If anything,

this album is an assertion of their self-consciousness and artistic freedom. [matt]



Wantage USA's 21st
Release Hits Omnibus
Wantage USA

Wantage is by far my favorite small-scale record label: they have immaculate taste and in turn are highly selective regarding what they choose to release. And they are from Missoula, Montana. MISSOULA MONTANTA! Something magical happens when hard rock meets a backwoods mountainous environment.

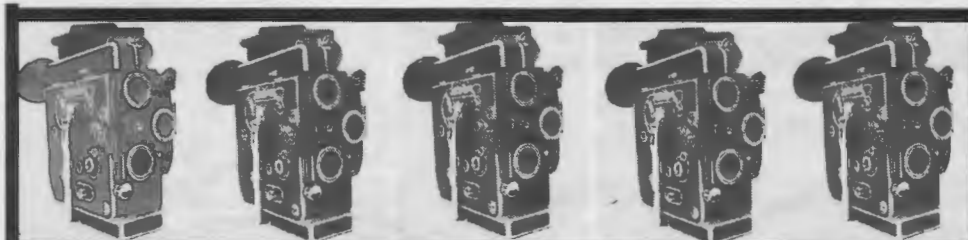
This two-disc compilation highlights their local music along with underground scenes predominately from the Pacific Northwest, Oakland, and Latvia. LATVIA! Along with Wantage graduate all-stars like the Fucking Champs, Drunk Horse and the Last of the Juanitas, this comp sheds light on less famous artists that deserve more exposure. Some groups that stand out are a Portland two piece called Point Line Plane, a Juanitas pure rock and roll side project called Party Time, a Washington state science fiction tribute Metal band called Bloodhag, an unadulterated Latvian punk band called Inokentij's Marpls, Norway's "Nor-wavers" Noxagt, and a totally bitchin' live recording of the Fucking Champs' Thin Lizzy cover, "Extra Man." There is a lot of other really good heavy instrumental bands in the same vein as the Champs from around the country like Stinky Lizaveta and Le Force. If you want a good education in relatively unknown, unpretentious, "all the about rock" bands from around the world, buy this comp. While you're at it, buy everything released on this label. It will make you want to move to the country and listen to metal with the mountain lions. [brel]



Dub Narcotic Sound System
Degenerate Introduction
K

Everyone seems to have an opinion about Calvin Johnson. It is impossible to deny his legendary contribution to the American underground rock scene through his seminal former band, Beat Happening, and his indie rock unstoppable force, K records. However, one can also disregard him as a pompous figurehead who is riding on the coattails of his success without continuing to make good music. Dub Narcotic's new album proves the nonbelievers wrong. Calvin and the rest of the crew have finally made the album of which they were always capable. In recent years Dub Narcotic has exchanged its scattered dub sound for a more stripped down garage feel. Degenerate Introduction creates a perfectly danceable synthesis of these two musical genres. Rather than simply rehashing bland concepts, this album takes the best elements of their sound and creates a refreshing and focused product. I have always been a bit irritated by Dub Narcotic's dissonant use of the Melodica, which is actually tastefully used in a cohesive manner on this release, particularly on "Code of the West." Degenerate Introduction was recorded by Adam Forkner (of ((VVRSSNN))) and Yume Bitsu) who screams lyrics on "I Don't Love," one of albums best songs. Another highlight is "Fuck Me Up," sung by Heather Dunn, which combines the subject of heartbreak with a catchy and raw dance hook. There are a few bland moments in the dub-centric songs that don't really go anywhere. That said, this album will no doubt rock the fuck out of dance parties in 2004. For a good time, buy this album. [brel]

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Dawn of the Dead

When the original Dawn of the Dead was released in 1978, it was a big deal. Far from being the first campy movie, it still was a kind of cinematic landmark for that style in the 70s and 80s. We were entering a time when it was really hip to be both scary and funny in a horror movie. It was this style of filmmaking that eventually evolved into cultural phenomena like Troma, a company famous for releasing zany gore-fests such as Toxic Avenger and Tromeo and Juliette. Ironically enough, it is the co-writer of Tromeo and Juliette, James Gunn, who comes full circle to take on his roots in the remake of Dawn of the Dead. And not much has changed since 1978.

At first I was puzzled as to why a studio would choose to remake Dawn of the Dead. To start with, it's a sequel. A remake of a sequel is extremely uncommon, especially when the first has such a popular title that it on a marquee alone will bring in the crowds, if for nothing else but nostalgia. Also, there were a number of terrible Night of Living Dead sequels that are just sitting on the shelves collecting dust, and dying for someone to do improved updates of them. So why pick the best of the sequels to make again? The answer is simple: The same premise that made the original sequel successful is the one that is going to make the second one immensely popular. The story of a handful of survivors who gather in a shopping mall to hide out from the mass hordes of zombies which their loved ones and neighbors have turned into never quite seems to miss. There are always zombie jokes to be made, hidden entrances and exits from which the undead can appear, and plenty of creative artillery that can be made from the items in the stores.

It may not be the best movie in the world, but Dawn of the Dead has a certain charm, and certainly a lot of fun in it. There are definitely some scary, tense moments, as well as intentional humor. The Troma touch that Gunn brings to the script lets everything else be funny in a laughing-at-it sort of way, and the premise alone promises that by the end you will see plenty of carnage, a plethora of eccentric characters, some ridiculous CGI, and even a zombie baby. [mike]



Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

I was beginning to think that Charlie Kaufman was kind of a one-hit-wonder. After the brilliance of Being John Malkovich, a film in which Kaufman's writing not only displayed his creativity, but also his ability to cover all angles of viewing the oddball plot points that go on in his head, he seemed to have trouble keeping up with himself. The extremely unhilarious Human Nature bombed both critically and at the box office, and despite the success of Adaptation, nothing in his meek, unexploratory musing of self-reflexive cinema came anywhere close to questions of sexuality and identity in Malkovich. Even the wildly original Confessions of a Dangerous Mind owes most of its writing to the autobiography of Chuck Barris, from which it was based. With a penchant for working with music video directors (Malkovich and Adaptation where both directed by Spike Jonze, who helmed several Fatboy Slim videos as well as many other classics), Kaufman puts his new script in the hands of Michel Gondry, director of Human Nature as well as many White Stripes videos. Gondry, who acquits himself admirably with Eternal Sunshine, could have pretty much been sitting in autopilot. Kaufman's new script is a refreshing reminder of what he is capable of.

The story goes something like this: Joel Barish (played by Jim Carey) is shocked to find out that his ex-girlfriend, Clementine (played by Kate Winslet), has had the memory of him completely erased, thanks to in technology made by brain specialist Dr. Mierzwiak (Tom Wilkinson). In a frenzied state of depression, Joel hires Mierzwiak and his crew of stoners to erase his memory of Clementine so that he can ease his pain. At this point, the film jumps into the internal workings of Joel's head as we track backwards through the memories

of his relationship with Clementine, and Gondry has some fun with digital effects erasing objects from the images. As if this weren't complex enough, Kaufman poses the question: what happens with Joel panics and wants the process to stop but can't wake up? Where can he hide Clementine? And this is where Kaufman really starts to have his fun. Going beyond the routine curiosities about memory that many of the recent Philip K. Dick films have asked, Kaufman's script covers certain universal questions about memories of relationships: Do you feel differently when you remember something than when you are experiencing it? Where do you hide things in your brain? When you talk to someone in your head, are they the same way they are in real life? He even lets a bit of the Malkovich themes in when he asks: Can you really impersonate someone else? Is there any substitute for the real thing?

Through the humorous dialog and clever variations on the digital imaging style, Eternal Sunshine manages to keep our attention constantly. Kaufman undercuts his sappy scenes with bitter jokes and harsh doses of reality, even in the surrealist world in which he writes. Somewhere in the end of the second act it gets bogged down with a little too much of a subplot and has a little bit of trouble picking up the momentum of the emotional arch of the characters. However, Carey and Winslet hold their own and the film skips off into its own mental landscape, only to leave with several ideas and a deeper emotional template than we could have ever hoped for. [mike]

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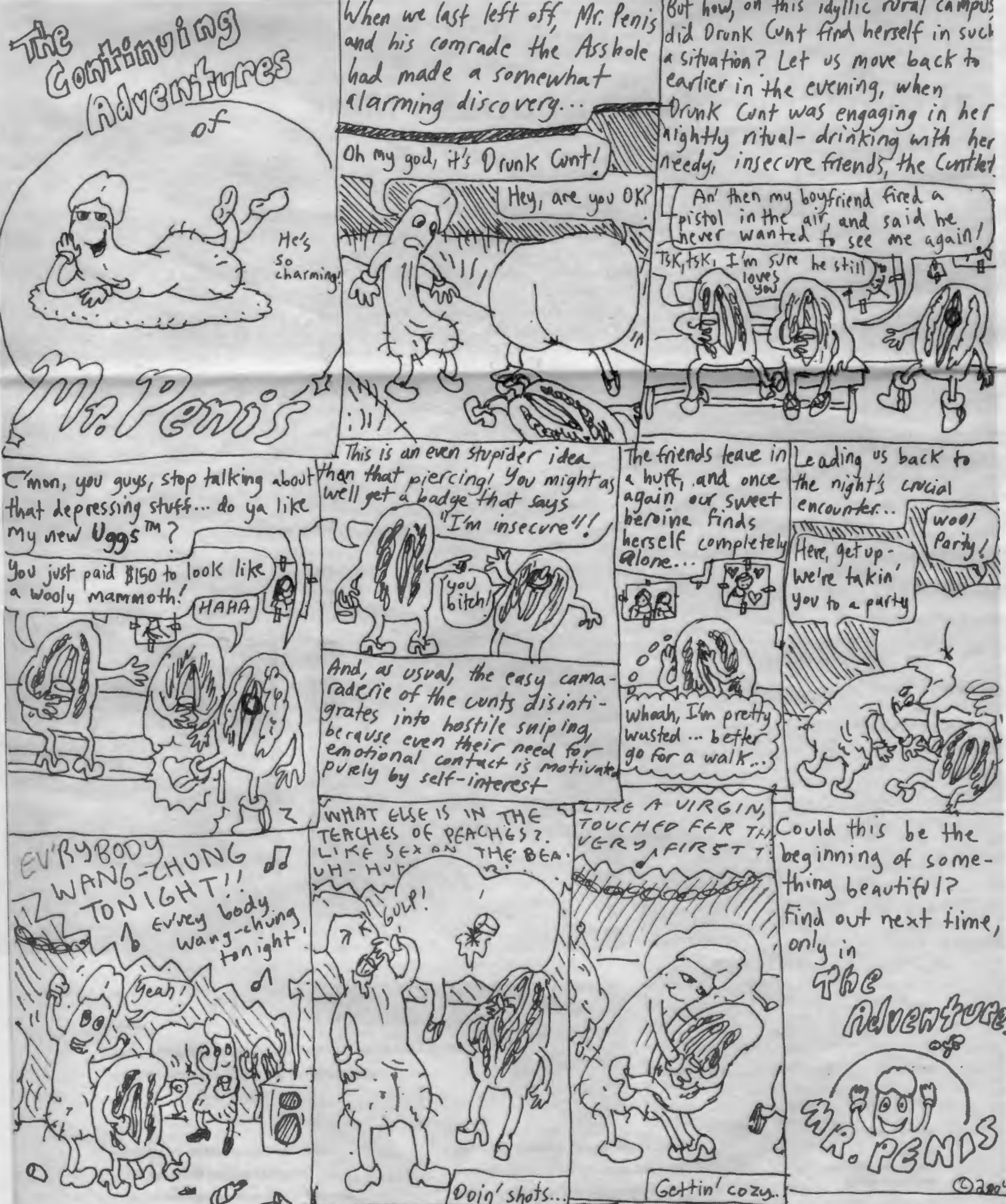
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Loog



The Continuing Adventures of Mr. Penis



NOTE: If you are offended by my genitalia-based take on relations of the genders, then to quote T.S. Eliot, "Shove it up yer ass!" [real quote] [cricket]