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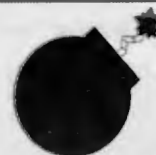
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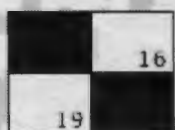
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## Bard Students Attend Fifth Annual World Social Forum

*expect more reports from the WSF in the next issue of the Free Press*

by kiernan rok

On January 26, 2005 the World Social Forum (WSF) commenced in the city of Porto Alegre in southern Brazil. The Forum brings together activists, non-governmental organizations, and social movements from around the world to create a civil society dialogue that served as an alternative to the current domination of world affairs by corporate and state powers. The WSF was born in 2001 when a group of Brazilian activists and intellectuals first organized the event to parallel the World Economic Forum (WEF), a summit of international business and political elites that takes place annually at a ski resort in Davos, Switzerland. The World Economic Forum is seen by many as a highly exclusive meeting of world business leaders to promote

and enhance an international agenda of neo-liberal economic development policies. The World Social Forum was created in opposition to those policies, based instead on a commitment to economic and social justice, human rights and direct democracy.

Since the late 1990s, major street protests have occurred regularly around the world at meetings of the WEF and other institutions of global finance such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Anti-globalization protests have drawn attention to the undemocratic decision making process and destructive economic policies that these organizations stand for. Unfortunately, in countries around the world, and in the United States in particular,

anti-globalization demonstrations have been met with an increasing level of police violence and state repression in recent years,



compromising their ability to shut down trade summits or affect change. The World Social Forum shifts the balance of power in the dialogue on globalization, creating new social spaces for civil society actors opposed to neo-liberalism to come together and build a future according to their own vision, rather than constantly

rallying against trade summits and institutions of global finance. The WSF, in a sense, transforms the anti-globalization movement into the counter-globalization movement and is the articulation of growing global resistance to neo-liberal globalization.

In late January, a delegation of Bard students traveled to Porto Alegre, Brazil to participate in the 2005 World Social Forum, thanks to the generous support of various Bard departments and student clubs such as the Student Action Collective and the Migrant Labor Project. The group's mission was manifold. First and foremost the delegation represented North American colleges students in an international meeting of civil society. At the event, the students established personal contacts and formed alliances with similar groups working in South America.

While in Porto Alegre they lived in tents at the International Youth Camp, a specific zone within the WSF organized and controlled exclusively by youth delegates attending the WSF. Additionally, the group documented the speakers, workshops and events of the WSF using video, photography, essays, and news articles, and plans to disseminate these materials in the Bard community as well as the general public.

In the wake of the recent Presidential Election in the U.S. and the Bush Administration's increasingly aggressive foreign policy, it is more important than ever that American student activists participate in the ongoing international dialogue on globalization, not of free markets and capital, but of solidarity and social justice. Besides, average January temperature in Porto Alegre: 88° Fahrenheit.

## Nepalese King Disbands Government

*chaos in Nepal as government devolves into chaos*

by brenden beck

King Gyanendra of Nepal disbanded his country's democratic government Tuesday. Nepal has not had a parliament since 2002, and this is the second time in two years that King Gyanendra has dismissed the prime minister. This is the most dramatic disbandment yet however, as Gyanendra has cut off communication lines and declared that there would be no democratic elections for three years.

Amanda Gurung, a sophomore currently studying at Bard, has been unable to speak directly to her parents. "They only open communications one hour a day, and if you don't know which hour is open, you can't get through at all," Gurung said. "I feel helpless here [at Bard]. The worst was not knowing if my parents were safe. There is a lot of confusion in Nepal and here." Gurung has since heard word that her parents are safe. The country is still operating. Stores are open

and the electricity works, but political leaders are being jailed with increasing frequency.

King Gyanendra declared a state of emergency, putting senior politicians under house arrest and the army in the streets. News from Nepal has been sparse since the King had the phone lines cut. Though the situation in Nepal is stable, Maoist rebels have called for a nation-wide strike in protest. The rebels have been fighting the Monarchical government in Nepal since 1996, and over 11,000 lives have been lost on both sides of the struggle. Citing an inability to restore peace and quell the rebellion, King Gyanendra condemned the democratic government for its past ineffectiveness and

corruption. It was on these grounds that King Gyanendra revoked the freedoms of expression, assembly and privacy and began preventively imprisoning political leaders.



The Maoist guerilla rebellion supports a "people's assembly," and experts say there can be no peace until the poverty, inequality and ethnic and caste discrimination which are the Maoist's primary grievances are resolved.

India, Nepal's foremost trading partner, expressed grave concern over the royal coup, but announced it would not be changing aid or trading agreements. Nepal, the 12<sup>th</sup> poorest nation in the world, relies heavily on military and financial aid from India, the

United Kingdom, the United States and others. Washington is thought to have supplied 20,000 M-16 rifles, night-vision and communications equipment, and counter-insurgency training to the Nepalese army headed by the King.

On January 21<sup>st</sup>, King Gyanendra ordered the closure of the contact office of the Dalai Lama and of the Tibetan refugee welfare centre in Kathmandu (Nepal's capital). The center mainly looked after the interests of the 30,000 Tibetan refugees in Nepal. The exiled Tibetan spiritual leader was exiled from Tibet after strife with the Chinese ruling government there. China has long welcomed closing the center.

Almost 90% of Nepal's people are Hindu, and it is the world's only Hindu kingdom. Many people view the monarch as a reincarnation of the god Vishnu. The monarch replaced King Birendra in 2001 after he and eight other members of the royal family were shot and killed by Crown Prince Dipendra, who then turned the gun on himself.

## Bush Faces Stiff Opposition on Social Security Reforms

by sam scoppettone

There is a ruckus all over the country since Bush's State of the Union speech Wednesday night, in which he thrust Social Security, the government program many have deemed the most successful in the country's history, into the forefront of his agenda for his second term.

Bush has been campaigning recently all over the country (including a stop in North Dakota, in which some Democrats claim they were blacklisted from attending the publicly financed event, according to their website) to promote his new agenda, which features privatizing Social Security by letting workers put up to 4% of their earned wages into investment accounts. The accounts, depend-

ing on the stock market, would supposedly earn more for each retiree than if the money was left in the Social Security fund. Another 8% of the wages would go into the fund, resulting in smaller guaranteed benefits from the government.

Opposition has come from people all over the political spectrum, including many Republicans. According to Terry McAuliffe, the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Bush has refrained from informing voters about the \$2 trillion cost of transitioning to the private accounts, which would have to be borrowed. He also says that the switch would amount to about a 50% cut in guaranteed benefits.

The Republican website GOP.com emphasizes that Social Security will go bust if nothing is done in the near future. There is currently a

3 to 1 ratio of workers putting money into the system to retirees taking it out, and in the future that ratio will shrink. The Democrats (democrats.org) say, however, that there is no indication that Bush's plan will prolong the viability of Social Security.

The issue is a pressing one, as Bush claims that the Social Security program will be bankrupt by 2042, but opponents regard his plan as too risky, because it largely depends on economic conditions. John Kerry stated that Social Security "can be fixed tomorrow if Washington ends the borrow-and-spend policies that are



*The Free Press cannot claim ownership of this awesome photoshop job.*

it on the backs of our children."

Bush's economic policies have raised doubt as to the stability of the economy, with a weakening dollar and record deficits. Opponents have not proposed any major plans in opposition to the President's, indicating the belief that the system can remain stable with the right economic policies.

McAuliffe added that when Bush took office there was a surplus in the social security fund, which Bush "raided" to pay for other programs. The \$5 trillion budget surplus also disappeared. This year, he plans to cut domestic spending, while increasing the Pentagon budget to \$419.3 billion. The figure does not include the costs of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

up a record debt and dumping



by zak kitnick

METH HITS THE BIG CITIES:

Not long ago, Meth was generally isolated to rural parts of the West Coast. Nowadays, if Meth were an employer, it would be an equal opportunity employer, with a diverse population of users. Meth use had been popular in rural areas, where it could be produced from cold medicine and other ingredients without anybody noticing the chemical stench that results from the cooking process; but now Meth is moving to cities, where drugs belong.

So many people are using Meth (and apparently stopping using meth) that the Chicago branch of Crystal Meth Anonymous meets five nights a week,

up from once a week only two years ago. Meth is the 'drug of choice' for chie former coke-heads who travel to Miami searching for the best, purest, and most pricey Meth they can find. But purity in a drug made up of tons of chemicals is a relative term. Meth use is tricky business for users, who experience a sense of control and power that disintegrates into paranoia and aggression. Some desperate dieters do Meth because it increases physical activity and decreases appetite.

METH WARS:

Republican and Democratic senators want to make it more difficult for Meth cooks to get the cold medicine they need.

Law enforcement supports the measure and drug industry groups are against it.



to 366 in a 30 day period, but only three packages at a time. This law is already in place in Oklahoma, where Meth lab seizures are down 80 percent. In very rural areas where pharmacies are not easily accessible (and most Meth is made), there are exceptions to the law. But Meth is being produced in large quantities in Mexico, and brought across the boarder, so there is some doubt as to whether the regulation of cold medicine will have an impact.

METH FACTS:

- \*Meth is an addictive stimulant.
- \*Street names include, "crystal," "speed," and "glass."
- \*Meth can be snorted, smoked, or taken orally.

## Bush administration payola alleged

by brenden beck

It was revealed, last week, that Mike McManus, a U.S. syndicated columnist, was paid indirectly with government money to help the Bush regime promote its pro-marriage proposals. This comes

on the heels of two other revelations about journalists receiving government money to favor Bush plans in their columns. Syndicated columnists Armstrong Williams and Maggie Gallagher were paid to promote educational and marriage proposals respectively. In a rare press

conference Wednesday, Bush admonished the payments saying, "But all our Cabinet secretaries must realize that we will not be paying, you know, commentators to advance our agenda." He added, "Our agenda ought to be able to stand on its own two feet." Though McManus

and Gallagher received sums of around \$20,000, Williams was paid 10 times that, \$240,000, to promote the No Child Left Behind Act. The Free Press would like to make it known that we need a new digital camera, and we really like Bush's plan to privatize Social Security.



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Across

1. Lover of Libraries
10. Feathery accessory
11. Subtract
12. Middle pt.
13. Sound of realization
15. Aquatic bird
16. Lover of the Brits
20. Letters preceding "Cool James"
21. Faulkner's fictional doctor
24. With "is," existing condition
26. Strays, as from a purpose
27. Is not able to, informally
29. Often, held in higher esteem than quantity
31. Lover of expertly recorded music
35. To seize
37. Period of time
38. Device plugged into an amp, informally
40. Lover of Bordeaux and fromage

Down

1. Radio station that broadcasts cricket scores
2. Very small amount
3. Assembly site in Orwell's Animal Farm
4. Kelly Clarkson was America's first
5. Tony Blair, briefly
6. John Cusack movie "\_\_\_ Fidelity"
7. Eskimo people, with "the"
8. Soothe
9. Acronym for english language educators
14. Robs at gunpoint
17. Talks incessantly
18. Toilet paper quality, with numbers
19. Go \_\_\_ (crazy)
22. Noah Wyle show
23. Argon, briefly
24. Initial bet
25. Pig dwelling
27. To secure
28. Suffer bad health
29. Quality Operating Procedure, abbrev.
30. Sound of surprise
31. Gold, briefly
32. Addict
33. With "tran," backlit advertisement
34. Nation west of Afghanistan
36. Letters preceding I-O, on Old MacDonald's farm
38. State with Jefferson City as capital, briefly
39. TCP/ \_\_\_ address

send responses and articles to [freepress@bard.edu](mailto:freepress@bard.edu). If you feel like we could be better, make us better; we'll publish what you send us.

## The Bard Free Press

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All articles in the Opinions and xtra sections 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](mailto:freepress@bard.edu)

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tim early for the next issue abbondello  
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## Student Space

by owen conlow

In case you took the semester off, the Old Gym is closed; it was deemed unfit to hold large—or even medium—amounts of people. So where can you party? At the start of last semester, the administration called a meeting with student representatives to explain the situation and set the record straight on the direction the school would take—both in filling the needs created by the defunct OG and addressing other space related issues. All of the possibilities for Old Gym replacement were laid out...I've forgotten most of them, but that's okay because they aren't going to happen anyway. The two most prominent were the idea of building an entirely new Old Gym, or turning one of the new B&G storage facilities into a student space. As of yet, neither of these plans has commenced, nor will they anytime soon (read 'ever'). So what *do* we get? Well, not much. The Red Room/Audio Co-op space has been temporarily (read 'permanently, unless the fire-marshall sees it') been replaced by the SMOG, which I can't thank the Surrealist Training Circus enough for

sharing. Acoustically speaking, the space is sub-optimal, but aesthetically and spatially it's gold, so two out of three isn't bad, right? Audio Co-op members are enthusiastic about the up-coming semester, and hope to see the SMOG rise to accommodate the ritual Friday/Saturday night Red Room shows that we held so dear. The Root Cellar has been relocated to the basement of H. Potter, which it shares with SAC, and is available for club meetings. Which brings us to the actual gym, formally the be all, end all of laptop dance party venues; the party space that existed in the Old Gym has not been replaced, and probably never will be. This is the sad reality that we must embrace.

Erin Cannan, Dean of Students, has told me that the Old Gym probably will not be renovated, but that there isn't much of a problem as far as student space; the Root Cellar and SAC being taken care of, the TV room (next door to Root Cellar) expected to be finished in the very near future, and performance/practice space issues hopefully to be solved by the completion of the addition to Robbins, which is expected to be finished for

the Fall '06 semester. Erin pointed out that a major problem is a lack of funding for a space that would be used for partying. The college doesn't see it as a priority investment, because in truth, we are here

**if you haven't already, have your club sit down and talk about what kind of space you would like to have for your events, then write up a brief description and send it to Adam Baz (al244@bard.edu)**

for the academics and not to punch holes in the walls of old buildings. Essentially the Old Gym was abused and the concept of a 'New Old Gym' doesn't sit well with the administration because it implies that the new space would be as mistreated as the old space.

While the MPR has picked up some OG slack, it is not as multifaceted as we need it to be to call it a replacement. Allen Josey talked to me briefly about the role of the MPR in the demise/restructuring of the beloved Bard nightlife. Aside

from not being as versatile of a space, a major drawback to the MPR is the fact that alcohol is not permitted anywhere in the Campus Center. I asked him about the possibility of relaxing that policy in the interest of easing the loss of space, but he raised the point that: although many students are in search of a place to hang out and drink, there are also a good number of students who like to hang out and not drink; the Campus Center has always filled that role and will continue to do so. So no, no beer in the MPR. Allen pointed out that the main problem isn't so much where students can drink, as where performances can be held. Right now the MPR is in high demand for bands, dances, and clubs, as well as the meetings that it has always been home to, but can't accommodate all of these functions. The MPR, and the whole Campus Center, has been in high demand lately and is not increasing its supply. Other party/performance space options are Kline and Manor, both of which have their share of flaws, along with off-campus parties, which have obvious drawbacks as well. Allen lamented the fact that students are experiencing problems finding performance space, and although he has a

few ideas about the benefits of a new space, he doesn't have much more power than we do in granting one. To learn more about places to do things, go to <http://space.bard.edu>, or drop by the office of student activities in the campus center.

At this point, the outlook for an all-purpose party/performance space is not good, but also not out of the question. So what can you do to help? Well, if you haven't already, have your club sit down and talk about what kind of space you would like to have for your events, then write up a brief description and send it to Adam Baz (al244@bard.edu), who has graciously taken on the task of coordinating the student government's role in this matter. In the next couple weeks, he will be compiling the letters he receives and taking them to the administration and Board of Trustees to express the concerns and needs of the students. It is important that he receives as much input as possible. So let's put our heads together and see if we can prove that we are not mattress-burning, wall-punching morons, forget the nostalgia for the old gym, and come up with a practical, plausible request for a space that we can use for student activities.

## Georgian Prime Minister Found Dead

by lauren kitz

Georgian Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania was found dead this past Thursday in the home of friend and fellow politician Raul Usupov, reportedly of accidental carbon dioxide poisoning. Zhvania had gone to Usupov's home in Tbilisi, Georgia's capital, around midnight on Wednesday to attend a dinner party. Some four hours later, after Zhvania continually did not respond to their phone calls, bodyguards who had been waiting outside broke in and discovered the two men dead; Zhvania was slumped over in an armchair and Usupov was found in the kitchen. The two men had apparently been engaged in a game of backgammon, the board of which lay on a table next to Zhvania's body. It appeared to officials at the scene that the portable gas heater in Usupov's home was the cause of a carbon dioxide leak, which lead to the two deaths. This suspicion was later verified by tests, which showed that Zhvania's blood contained fatally high levels of a substance called carboxihemoglobin. Georgian Justice Ministry official

Levan Samkharauli told the press that this was sufficient evidence that Zhvania had in fact been asphyxiated by carbon monoxide gas. Foul play is reportedly not suspected, as leaks from portable gas heaters in the country are, unfortunately, not uncommon - at least 45 Georgians have died of similar carbon monoxide leaks over the past three years. And although the heater had been installed two days prior to the accident, and appeared to be working fine, the improper ventilation of the room was what appeared to officials to have caused the poisonings. Eager to dispel rumors, Interior Minister Nano Merabishvili referred to the death as an unexpected, tragic accident that should not be suspected to be anything more.

However, the mysterious circumstances of the deaths have already begun to raise questions about the numerous enemies of this administration that may have been involved. Zhvania became prime minister in 2004 after playing a large role in the 2003 "Rose Revolution" that brought current progressive president Mikhail Saakashvili to power. Zhvania was known as one of the first politicians



who encouraged citizens to protest in the

streets over disputed elections - such protests contributed to the end of long-time Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze's administration. This gained Zhvania lots of political controversy, and as Deputy Prime Minister Georgy Baramidze put it, "There are lots of enemies of Georgia that might have wished him dead." One member of the Georgian parliament openly insinuated that Russian forces might be in play in the deaths. Earlier in the week a police station had been bombed in the city of Gori that killed 3 and wounded more than 20, which seemed to some to be associated with Zhvania's death.

President Saakashvili has announced that he will fulfill the executive duties of the Prime Minister until a new one can be appointed. However, this incident has been a devastating blow to the already unstable Georgian government, who valued Zhvania as a moderate and diplomatic developer of better relations between Georgia and Russia. Zhvania is survived by his wife and three children, and by Saakashvili, who has lost "my closest friend, my most loyal adviser, my biggest ally."

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## Bush, Iraq and Vietnam: startling parallels

*a history of insurgencies*

by jeff akins, bard alum

Bush's speech sounded so much like history repeating itself that many Americans cringed. "We will not set an artificial timetable for leaving Iraq, because that would embolden the terrorists and make them believe they can wait us out," said Bush in his State of the Union. "We are in Iraq to achieve a result: A country that is democratic, representative of all its people, at peace with its neighbors and able to defend itself."

President Johnson offered this same oratory about the escalating war in Vietnam. His

rhetoric was typical on Jan. 12, 1966: "We fight for the principle of self determination -- that the people of South Vietnam should be able to choose their own course, choose it in free elections without violence, without terror, and without fear."

Americans who forget Truman's warning, "those who do not read and understand history are doomed to repeat it," can expect a hard lesson. We must vigorously apply our First Amendment right by questioning obvious rhetoric, for the sake of our soldiers (sworn to silent obedience), our children (future soldiers?) and the world com-

munity (victims of Bush's objectives). Bush must understand that no militaristic application of money and/or American lives can make geopolitical outcomes turn out his way ... to think otherwise makes the words democratic and self-determination ring hollow, to Iraqis and Americans.



## U.S. Encouraged by Vietnam Vote: Officials Cite 83% Turnout Despite Vietcong Terror

by Peter Grose, Special to the New York Times (9/4/1967: p. 2)

WASHINGTON, Sept. 3-- United States officials were surprised and heartened today at the size of turnout in South Vietnam's presidential election despite a Vietcong terrorist campaign to disrupt the voting. According to reports from Saigon, 83 per cent of the 5.85 million registered voters cast their ballots yesterday. Many of them risked reprisals threatened by the Vietcong. The size of the popular vote and the inability of the Vietcong to destroy the election machinery were the two salient facts in a preliminary assessment of the nation election based on the incomplete returns reaching here. Pending more detailed reports, neither the State Department nor the White House would comment on the balloting or the victory of the military candidates, Lieut. Gen. Nguyen Van Thieu, who was running for president, and Premier Nguyen Cao Ky, the candidate for vice president.

A successful election has long been seen as the keystone in President Johnson's policy of encouraging the growth of constitutional processes in South Vietnam. The election was the culmination of a constitutional development that began in January, 1966, to which

President Johnson gave his personal commitment when he met Premier Ky and General Thieu, the chief of state, in Honolulu in February. The purpose of the voting was to give legitimacy to the Saigon Gov-

ernment, which has been founded only on coups and power plays since November, 1963, when President Ngo-Dinh Diem was overthrown by a military junta. Few members of that junta are still

around, most having been ousted or exiled in subsequent shifts of power. Significance Not Diminished The fact that the backing of the electorate has gone to the gener-



ernment, which has been founded only on coups and power plays since November, 1963, when President Ngo-Dinh Diem was overthrown by a military junta. Few members of that junta are still

who have been ruling South Vietnam for the last two years does not, in the Administration's view, diminish the significance of the constitutional step that has been taken. The hope here is that the new gov-

ernment will be able to maneuver with a confidence and legitimacy long lacking in South Vietnamese politics. That hope could have been dashed either by a small turnout, indicating widespread scorn or a lack of interest in constitutional development, or by the Vietcong's disruption of the balloting. American officials had hoped for an 80 per cent turnout. That was the figure in the election in September for the Constituent Assembly. Seventy-eight per cent of the registered voters went to the polls in elections for local officials last spring. Before the results of the presidential election started to come in, the American officials warned that the turnout might be less than 80 per cent because the polling place would be open for two or three hours less than in the election a year ago. The turnout of 83 per cent was a welcome surprise. The turnout in the 1964 United States Presidential election was 62 percent. Captured documents and interrogations indicated in the last week a serious concern among Vietcong leaders that a major effort would be required to render the election meaningless. This effort has not succeeded, judging from the reports from Saigon.

## Sam Smith, by edict of Erin Cannan, writes on Republicans, Bard, and more

*the writer of the falsified Bard Republicans "announce" e-mail issues a response*

by sam smith

As the days passed by leading up to the election, I became inexplicably addicted to online news sites. It was the easiest way to keep up to date with the most recent rubbish atop the American political landscape that I had been looking to avoid while studying abroad in Glasgow, Scotland last fall. It was a sad truth that I had become so infatuated with which states were turning which colors on the red-blue spectrum, that I could spend hours in front of the New York Times' interactive swing state map to posit hypothetical election results if Michigan were to go Blue or if my grandparents' New Mexico's four electoral votes could affect the outcome. Despite that, I knew that each day's news would not bring anything new or particularly interesting, but rather a series of recycled, fluffed-up speeches from recycled, fluffed-up candidates and the latest predictions from hardly-qualified political pundits, statisticians and theorists, and despite the fact that I was blissfully thousands of miles and two-dollars-to-the-Pound away from every single battleground state, I read on.

In an equally addicted fashion, I would punctuate my visits to progressive and mainstream American media outlets with constant upkeep of my email inbox to make sure that I hadn't received a surge of urgent messages in the past 14 minutes. This leads me to a day in late October, when I had a few hours to kill after school before starting dinner. Of course I headed

straight for the laptop, and there, buried amongst the daily dose of Announce emails, nine messages from fellow Bard students whom I don't know, all effectively, though more elegantly saying: "Go fuck yourself you fucking fuck." But who could blame them? Half of them thought I was a proud, boastful racist and homophobe, whilst the others presumed and probably continue to consider me a hypocritically intolerant liberal. I soon had my good name cleared with the former when it was revealed that I had been the author of an online prank: an Announce e-mail that I had sent, bogusly representing our newly formed Bard Republicans Club. The latter group of disgruntled correspondents, however, seeing right through my lies, pleaded with me to reconsider the misdirection and hypocrisy of my anti-Republican sentiments. This, of course, stems from the liberal paradox that makes us question the idea of tolerance for those whom we perceive as intolerant. The idea being that because we are pinko hippy liberals who therefore embrace all living creatures, be they rich, poor, old, young, men, women, black, white, Asian, Hispanic, queer, straight, human, animal, Muslim, Jew, atheist, polytheist, anarchist, capitalist, we should then also hold the same hospitality and patience for those who stifle our efforts and otherwise lack our open-mindedness. I was asked by DOSO to clear up what it was I meant to accomplish and why I felt that making a mockery of the Announce system, as well as a student club, was in the greater interest of the community. So here goes:

In the email I made two statements that really stirred everyone up. Both were presented as reasons why one should join the Club. The first argued for the end of suffrage to African-Americans, namely those in Florida, where the disenfranchisement of said group in 2000 in Bush's brother's state allowed the US Supreme Court to decide the next president of the United States. Although, to Bush's credit, he did receive 100% of the Black vote in the Supreme Court election - Way to go, Clarence! The second suggested that the "sanctity of marriage," as Bush and co. thoughtlessly and repeatedly spit out, is being threatened by "activist judges" (what the fuck does that even mean?) and homosexuals who are arrogant enough to think that just because two of them might love one another, their relationship might be comparable to a healthy, baby-making heterosexual relationship and somehow thus deserving of the same equal rights, protections and benefits. So this apparently pissed off some people, and caused a brief ruckus. I am not trying to say that all Republicans are racists and homophobes, nor do I think that conservatism is inherently evil. But from where I stand, I see that the Republican Party, as stated in their 2004 National Convention Part Platform, hates the idea that gays should be considered anything more than second-class citizens, and damned if they are going to stop us from constitutionally declaring so. And while there are many other things that I strongly disagree with about the Grand Old Party, namely:

- Not to mention accepting and thriving off of the financial sponsorship of large corporations, many of which are responsible for major human rights violations, and thus effectively representing these interests rather than those of the American and world's people.
- There is also the train wreck that is their fiscal responsibility which has destroyed any chance of a functional education system in this, the most powerful nation in the world. Combine that with a deficit with which all of our grandchildren will be screwed. That is, if they survive the current rape of the earth's breathable air, natural resources and biodiversity, all so that Bush can receive a political blowjob (which is worse than a real one) from oil, gas, and coal companies.

We could sit here and debate political ideologies until the cows come home (to be slaughtered by the billions, I might add), and that kind of environment is in some way healthy, forcing ourselves to exercise our minds and remember what we stand for and why. But, and this is where the bigotry against which I'm fighting comes back to bite me in the ass, I honestly didn't come to this school to hear neo-cons promote their dangerously irresponsible ideologies. I have the rest of the United States of America for that opportunity. This is my little safe

- Illegal, unjust, failed wars, for one.



# music reviews. music reviews. music reviews.



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## Reeks and the Wrecks Knife Hits Tumult Records

Reeks and the Wrecks are outer space if outer space was located in a backwoods shack. This music is my fantasy dance party soundtrack: sleazy lounge waltz gutter mud laced with a battered trombone; total brilliance propelled by dream state guitars and elegantly sloppy drums. This album is a testament to home recordings that encapsulate the environment in which they are produced: nature sounds, static, roosters, etc. It is also a post humus testament to a band that is no more. One of the members, Orion (ex- Spooky Dance Band), was killed by a drunk driver a couple of years ago. But before this tragedy occurred, the Reeks were an underground legend that blessed Northwest basements for years with their homemade gear and enigmatic and debauchorous performances. This is Art Rock that you can party to. After years of delays, *Knife Hits* has finally been released. It is very difficult to find their 12" release from the late 90's, so

this is pretty much it, man. One of the best albums that will be released this year, guaranteed. If you like marijuana, you should purchase this CD. -brel froebe

MATT SWEENEY BONNIE "PRINCE" BILLY



## Bonnie "Prince" Billy and Matt Sweeney Superwolf Drag City

Will Oldham possesses many of the characteristics that immortalized his predecessors, like Bob Dylan and the late Johnny Cash. This is apparent when listening to his music, due to its roots in folk and classic rock. However, what makes Oldham truly a successor of these artists is his deliberate effort to conceal his image behind a veil of obscurity. This shadowy persona (Bonnie "Prince" Billy) is echoed in his existential lyrics about death and devotion. Throughout his solo career, he has constantly challenged himself as a musician. However, overriding Oldham's eccentricities is a refreshing sound that remains unhindered by his experimental tendencies as an artist. In fact, when we consider the consistently

soulful narrative of his songwriting, it almost seems like he's challenging himself to look for new ways to channel his creativity, in order to achieve the same end result. In his recent collaboration with Matt Sweeney, entitled *Superwolf*, we can certainly recognize the natural allure of Oldham's songwriting that is apparent in his previous work, yet there are a few subtle distinguishing features. For example, unlike the Faulknerian meditations on existence that were predominant in his masterpiece, *I See a Darkness*, on *Superwolf* we tend to find Oldham speaking in a less somber tone, reflective of merriment and serenity.

What makes *Superwolf* such a remarkable work is not so much what we see in Oldham's lyrics (which possess a self-evident profundity), however, but in the music, arranged by Sweeney. Prior to this collaboration, Matt Sweeney led a career as a free-lance musician, acting as a temporary guitarist for a number of alternative rock bands. His experience with these bands is apparent in the amplified sound that contributed to the album. Nevertheless, for all the power and overdrive that Sweeney has the potential of producing, he manages to resist allowing it to reach its full intensity. Instead, he meticulously uses it on sporadic moments on the album so that it remains in harmony with the subtleties of Oldham's singing.

*Superwolf* certainly served as more of a challenge for Sweeney. Although this album is very characteristic of Oldham, in that his lyrics and coarse charming singing are

consistent with his previous records, it is Sweeney's contribution that is more impressive. He utilizes skills as a rock musician to sculpt a sweeping musical landscape equal to the sheer grace and depth of Oldham's lyrics. -matthew garklavs



## The Ducky Boys Three Chords and the Truth Thorp Records

After reforming with only two original members, the Ducky Boys set out to record their first album in over six years. When I first heard that they were coming out with a new album last November, I was definitely excited for some more raw and gritty rock and roll from this Boston street-punk band. After listening to a couple tracks though, it became apparent to me that this album lacked the anger and energy that the band managed to capture in the studio on previous releases.

Older albums like *Dark Days*, *No Getting Out* and *Live From the Banks of River Charles* pound out fast hard songs about betrayal, grow-

ing up alone, and other brutally honest themes about their lives in the slums of Boston. *Three Chords and the Truth* disappoints the listener with cheesy clichés about lost love and tired sounding ballads about having been around the block. The album includes a watered down re-release of "One for the Underdogs" as well as an unbearable acoustic track warning all the young punks to grab life before it's too late. Both the music and the repeated themes on *Three Chords and the Truth* are strikingly similar to Social Distortion's long awaited, and in my opinion equally disappointing, recent album *Sex Love and Rock and Roll*. Both albums seem to be memoirs of older punks looking back at their younger days of naiveté and recklessness with longing for what could have been. Somehow though, it seems a little more appropriate for Social Distortion who are all well into their 40's while none of the Ducky boys have hit 30. To its credit, *Three Chords and the Truth* is catchy and full of upbeat sing-along choruses that will have the most cynical punk rock purest mouthing the words by the end of each track. There are a few tracks like "Richmond Skyline" that offer a taste of what the band used to be, and hopefully, what the next album might sound like. Mark (Vocalist) has promised that it won't be another six years before the next album, and hopefully all this tra-la-la bullshit will be out of their systems and they will be ready to pump out some no nonsense rock and roll once again. -eliot pride

## Sam Smith statement continues... ("War is Peace, Love is Hate, Bush is President.")

haven, where I feel comfortable walking down the path hand in hand with my boyfriend knowing that all the passers-by will greet us with smiles rather than glares, stares, and "FAGGOTS!" After all, Bard is a dark blue dot within a red splotch on a blue state in a red country in a blue planet. I recognize that where we are allows me the position to denounce the bigotry that has consumed this party, and it was not my intention to attack the personal beliefs of others. Everyone's entitled to his or her own opinion. But, just as my 'values' of equal rights are spat upon throughout this country, I do not welcome a party that tolerates hate within its upper ranks to Bard. Being abroad this past semester has only reinforced in my mind that fact that Bard is a wonderful, magical place.

But of course not all fantasies can last forever. Last year brought the Democrats to Annandale, and while that party, to me, represents the betrayal to progressives, it seemed harmless to have on campus. Hell, I knew that I would be voting for a Democrat in the 2004 Presidential Election shortly after Jan 20, 2001. And I suppose it was through my feelings of fear and defenselessness that I, five thousand miles away in Glasgow, sent out this email to Bard, trying to protect my precious little community from what I perceive as a threat to the well-being of these four overlapping academic years that we share, before each of us is forced to return to the real world (save for those of us who never move out of Tivoli), where the Democrats represent the Left, homophobia isn't condemned, veganism isn't blasé, and intellectual and artistic self-dis-

covery is repressed rather than promoted. Being so far away, but still wanting to participate in the Bard Community, I thought that sending out this email would be a plausible way to make a humorous political impact from across the Atlantic.

It isn't my intention to make anyone feel personally threatened at this school. I just happen to feel personally threatened by this party. There is nothing that I am ashamed of as a homosexual. And all left-center-right politics aside, I think that any person belonging to a party that blatantly promotes homophobia—because it is socially acceptable—and more discretely practices racism—because it is less socially acceptable—should be ashamed of him/herself, and I see no need for that "diverse political point of view" on my campus.

But you better believe this goes far beyond the marriage equality rights which have become the in-thing this past year for political opponents and proponents alike. Republicans (and many Democrats) dutifully strip our dignity by limiting our basic fundamental rights simply because gay rights represents the same looming apocalypse that African American rights represented to them the 1960s. Until recently, I wasn't allowed to have sex in many jurisdictions in this great nation. I'm not allowed to give blood—not at Bard, not anywhere—because my dirty promiscuous lifestyle will undoubtedly infect a hemophiliac with HIV. I can't fight in the army and defend my Halliburton-fueled country because I'd be too busy ogling all that sexy, crew-cut military booty rather than shooting the [unnamed, 14 year-

old] enemy. And for fuck's sake, keep my pervy, prying hands away from the children, because if I were allowed to teach in schools or adopt one of the zillions of parentless kids, I would put the Catholic Church to shame with pedophilia scandals.

- In case you would like to know more about how the Republican Party feels towards queers, then here are a few quotes from some GOP all-stars:

- Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA), who holds the No. 3 spot in Republican leadership, and after whom syndicated sex columnist Dan Savage named "that frothy combination of lubricant and faecal matter that is sometimes the result of anal sex", equated the Supreme Court's 'legalization' of consensual gay sex with incest and bigamy.
- Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK), who recently chaired the Presidential Advisory Commission on HIV/AIDS, said that the so-called "gay agenda is the greatest threat to freedom that we face today."
- Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC), announced in a televised debate during his 2004 campaign that us faggots have no right to be teachers.
- Maybe if you're not queer, you can't quite grasp the severity of those proclamations. So try the next one on for size: I'll give you a hundred goodie points if you can tell me who Sherri Drew is.

Still nothing? She gave the invocation speech to officially kick off the 2004 Republican National Convention; the very first speech of the four-day love-in at Madison Square Garden. It seems to me that she should offer a fairly representative stance of the party if she's giving the first speech at their quadrennial jubilee. And here she goes: "Those who support gay and lesbian families are no different from those who supported Adolph Hitler in the years preceding World War II." WOW!

So obviously I'm a bit steamed. And obviously my anger should not rest solely upon the shoulders of Bard's lil' Red-Stater club. The truth of the matter is that I don't have any idea what the Bard Republicans do. If you sit around and discuss ways to change the party for the better rather than the party's current state of radical, neo-conservative hate-and-fear-mongering, then good for you. But bigotry is as bigotry does, and waving the Red Elephant flag around my campus will to me represent all of the ugliness of their parent corporation.

The email system is wonderful privilege which we have at Bard, and I hereby promise to defend the sanctity of the Bard Announce Email system from the terrorists and evildoers. I recognize that I abused and took advantage of our open forum for communication at our lovely college, and for that, I apologize. God bless the children, and God bless Erica.





# Sideways re-Review

by leonora colen

For those of you who enjoyed Alexander Payne's *Election* or Paul Giamatti's performance in *American Splendor* or even old episodes of "Wings" with Thomas Haden Church, prepare yourself for a disappointment or stop by the liquor store on the way to Blockbuster. *Sideways* is the story of Miles and Jack, buddies since college, going up to Napa to celebrate Jack's impending marriage. Both have reached a level of dissatisfaction in life that can only be remedied by heavy drinking and adultery. They meet up with two disproportionately gorgeous women, Maya (Virginia Madsen) and Stephanie (Sandra Oh) and come to terms with their lives and relationships with ex- and future wives.

*Sideways* can offer neither convincing acting, between the stale introvert/extrovert stereotypical characters of Miles and Jack, nor an interesting or well written screenplay. The jokes are uncomfortably unfunny and the dialogue is as uninteresting as the plot itself. Admittedly we, as college students, are not the demographic for

a movie about middle-aged stagnation and wine tasting, but I don't think that's any excuse to have to sit through the wine-as-people monologue for what seems

the juicy reaction shots of Madsen with shining eyes, we are expected to sit back and enjoy what should be a sentimental moment between two people and some rich character development. Unfortunately, Payne failed to realize that he doesn't have to hit the audience over the head with this blunt metaphor in order for them to absorb it.

The story of the mental and emotional decomposition of two middle-aged, middle-class white men, although overdone, could have had potential in the hands of a skilled writer or director. Sadly not even the gorgeous setting of Napa could save this sinking ship. I wish I had two more hands, so I could give this false promise of a film four thumbs down.


*Sideways* has been nominated for five Academy Awards, including Best Motion Picture of the Year. It has already won Golden Globes for Best Motion Picture and Best Screenplay, with additional nominations for best Director, Actor, Supporting Actor, and Supporting Actress, and Original Score. According to [imdb.com](http://imdb.com), the film has won over 60 sepa

## SIDEWAYS

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF  
ELECTION AND ABOUT SCHMIDT

PAUL GIAMATTI THOMAS HADEN CHURCH VIRGINIA MADSEN SANDRA OH

VIEW THE TRAILER



NOW PLAYING EVERYWHERE

like hours. Obviously when Miles begins his diatribe about why he's so drawn to Pinot Grigio and the camera zooms in and the music cues up and we get all of

# The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou

by cecca wrobel if this reads poorly, it's because it wasn't copyedited, and has little to do with the story

In the latest from Wes Anderson, we encounter many of the memorably similar story elements from his other films, not counting the once-rich dead-beat of a middle aged protagonist turned awkward father figure: absent mother cancer victims (Ned's, Max's in *Rushmore*, Henry's wife in *Tenenbaums*); grey haired men courting younger ladies; formal teams with uniforms staging sloppy robberies (*Bottle Rocket*); fascinations with the boats and the ocean; dynamite; even serial appearances of a no-name boyish character with shadowy, deep-set eyes (the intern here, the little blonde kid in *Rushmore*). He's cast many of the same actors, even

used several of the same lines and familiar scenes. (*Zissou*: after Ned describes his mother's passing, Steve mentions that he's recently lost a close friend - Ned says "I know"; *Tenenbaums*: after hearing that Henry's previous wife is deceased, Chaz replies that he too is a widower - Henry says, "I know"; *Rushmore*: after Miss Cross mentions her deceased husband, Max mentions his deceased mother - "We both have dead people in our families.")

We've expected this one to be a bit different, at least in humor, with the exchange in co-writers (Noah Baumbach for Owen Wilson). And so it is, but Anderson's directing also feels different here: in the first quarter or so of the movie, something seems awkward, as these familiar lines aren't being read in quite the same way. But if you think about it, the subtle differences in line delivery actually sound more natural than a lot of that smoothly timed cadence of the previous films. Similar amount of



deadpan, less rhythm to the lines. Though the boat's setting with cut-away walls and spot-lit night shots that constitute much of *The Life Aquatic* make for a less natural environment, and the oceanographer's crew provides a cast of characters less likely to be familiar to the average viewer, and the heavy accents on Wilson, Cate Blanchett and Willem Dafoe are somewhat surprising, it turns out that none of this is really enough to alienate the audience from the film. The colors, too, that Anderson picked for this movie - the bright red and yellow of boat details, green of Anjelica Houston's jewelry, the navy blue, even the shiny dolphin-

style light blue - are surprisingly more conceivable, tangible than the combinations of deep/rich oranges, fuchsias, crimsons, golds, bottle-greens, carnation pinks that stood out in his older sets and costumes. That might need more explanation, but I'm not sure that I can offer it. Basically, I liked the spirit of this movie, and I recommend it. Everyone's other favorite details: Bowie covers in Portuguese, Zissou Adidas (not available for retail sale, though Adidas is open-minded to it and a petition exists online; also online are whole diatribes against the consumerist nerds who're interested).

# Porn Review IV

*DISTURBED* directed by and starring Britney Foster reviewed by zak kitnick

They say, "porn is the theory, rape is the practice." It's difficult to apply that saying to *DISTURBED* with its all-female cast. It is also difficult to understand how porn icon Britney Foster created such a disturbing film. It is difficult not to cry. It's difficult, but not completely impossible, to get off on it.

Foster welcomes us into her "Foster Home" slapping a three-foot stud-ded acrylic cock against her thigh. (The Foster Home is art-deco-inspired with an elegant infinity pool.) Without any male stars, this film is loaded with a diverse selection of toys. There are black and white butt-plugs, and large clear ones that allow the viewer to see deep into the anus.

The film is a raw tour-de-force of sexual violence. The hard-core girl on girl is intensified by the colorful set, brightly-colored ripped fishnet stockings, and a hard-hitting soundtrack that repeats the lines, "FEAR! CONTROL!"

I would like to commend Britney Foster for her groundbreaking directing and acting in *DISTURBED*. It's cool to see women making an impact in the male-dominated porn industry. An all-girl porn has the potential to be really sweet. By eliminating any potential for facial cumshots, the movie could be seriously innovative. I would have liked to see some cuddling.



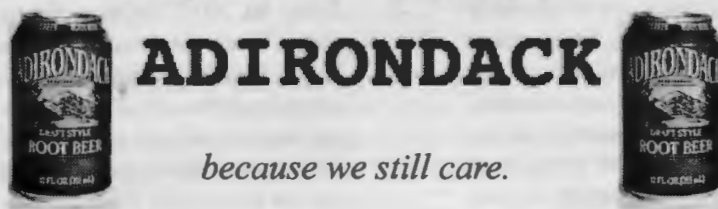
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# The Free Press Recent Films Overview

with Mike Lerman

**The Aviator** – Coming off the uneven and often hilariously bad Gangs of New York, Martin Scorsese proves he's still got it (or at least a lot of "it") with a beautiful portrait of the life of Howard Hughes. Entertaining (for a whole three hours!) and interesting to the very last detail. If not "high cinema", this is, at least, a good "movie".

**Life Aquatic** – If most filmmakers take four steps forward per film, Wes Anderson took sixteen with his newest film. Juggling larger scale locations, digital special effects, more characters than any of his previous films and much more dialogue, thanks to the addition of the brilliant screenwriter, Noah Baumbach, to the roster of talented people working on each production, Anderson often can't keep all the balls in the air - but who cares? Who says he has to have one of the top films of the year every time he makes one? This one is good. He hasn't gotten a grasp on everything yet, but it certainly is sixteen steps in the right direction. The next one will be better than anyone could possibly imagine.

**Meet the Fockers** – Even the hilarious ad-libbing from veterans Dustin Hoffman and Barbara Streisand could not dig this poor excuse for a sequel's script out of the gutter.

**In Good Company** – A humble request to all my readers, please go see this movie. The often appreciated genius of the Weitz Brothers who made About a Boy and American Pie (well, at least half of them, this was just made by Paul Weitz) have struck gold again with this cleverly scripted little late-coming-of-age piece starring Topher Grace, Dennis Quaid and Scarlett Johansson.

**Ocean's 12** – What do you do when your high budget, heist remake is a huge success and the studio pushes you into going forth with the terrible idea of making sequel? Take the money, don't pay for a tripod, get all your famous friends to improvise the dialogue and divvy up the earnings amongst yourselves. Even when it is a fun exercise for the audience to be let in on (which is, admittedly, often), nothing about it could be called "good".

**Phantom of the Opera** – With such lurid success on Broadway, support from the incredible vocal styling of talented performers Emmy Rossin and Patrick Wilson, and award-worthy art direction from John Fenner, this film should have made itself. Of course, under the supervision of Joel Schumacher, who has the rare talent of making every film he touches turn to dust (8MM, Batman & Robin), the camera work became haphazard and uncentered, and the tone-deaf Gerard Butler got cast as the lead - such potential wasted.

**Blade: Trinity** – Awful. This franchise has been beaten to death. Often people complain saying, "Why did they have to ruin a good movie with a sequel?" In the case of Blade, why did they have to ruin a good sequel with a terrible sequel? They were lucky it worked a second time. Why go for a third? And when did Kris Kristofferson forget how to act?

**Closer** – Praised by critics around the world, this undeserving film has received a lot of attention. Aside from a great performance of Clyde Owen and the mature direction from Mike Nichols (The Graduate), this messy excuse for realism is unsure of its character motivations and even more unsure of how to entertain an audience.

**Spanglish** – Paced like a Hindi movie - the ending is drawn out - and brilliantly acted, the latest venture from writer/director James L. Brooks (As Good As It Gets, Broadcast News) sometimes hits too close to the mark; Tea Leone is so accurate as the wealthy, egocentric mother that she's almost unwatchable.

**Beyond the Sea** – After seeing eight other films in three days, most of which were a mishmash of some brilliant parts and some terrible decisions, I was surprised by the fact that this was the most consistently good. What you see is what you get: Kevin Spacey, bio-pic, Bobby Darin. Yet there is something very magical about that, and very much worth watching.

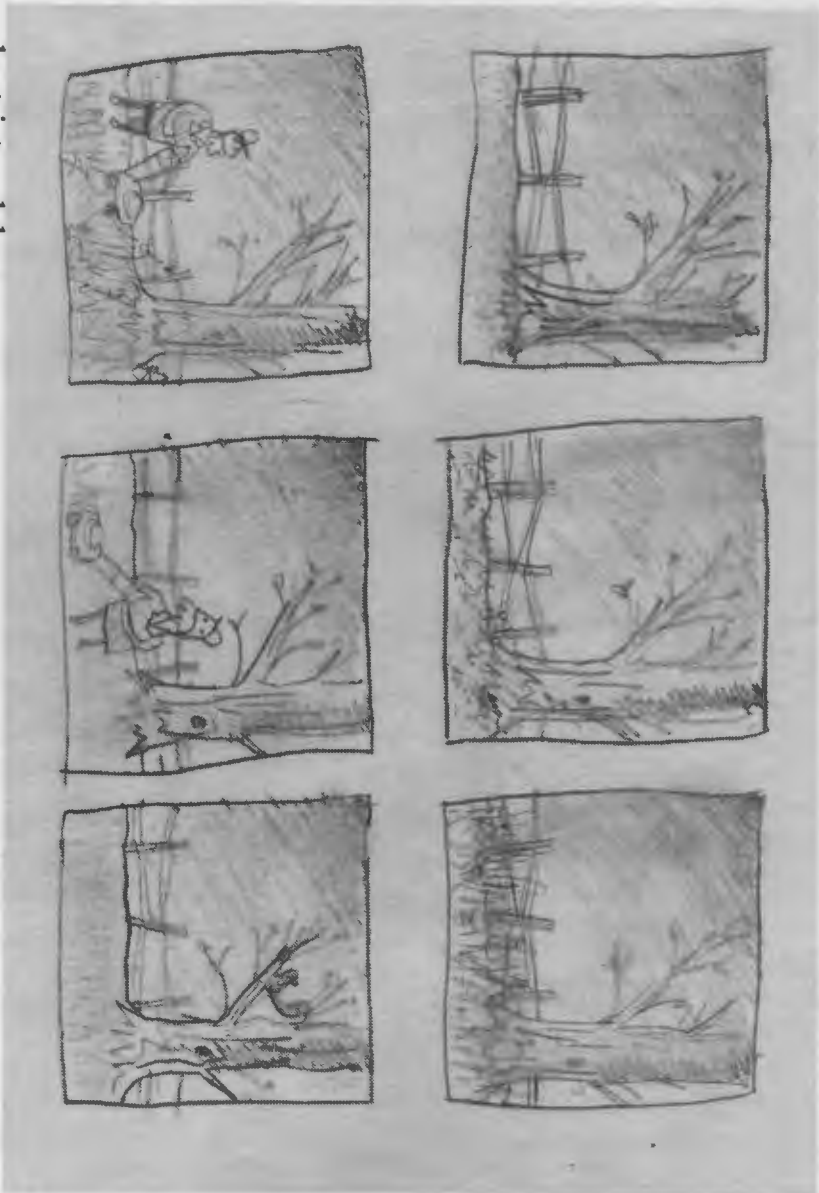
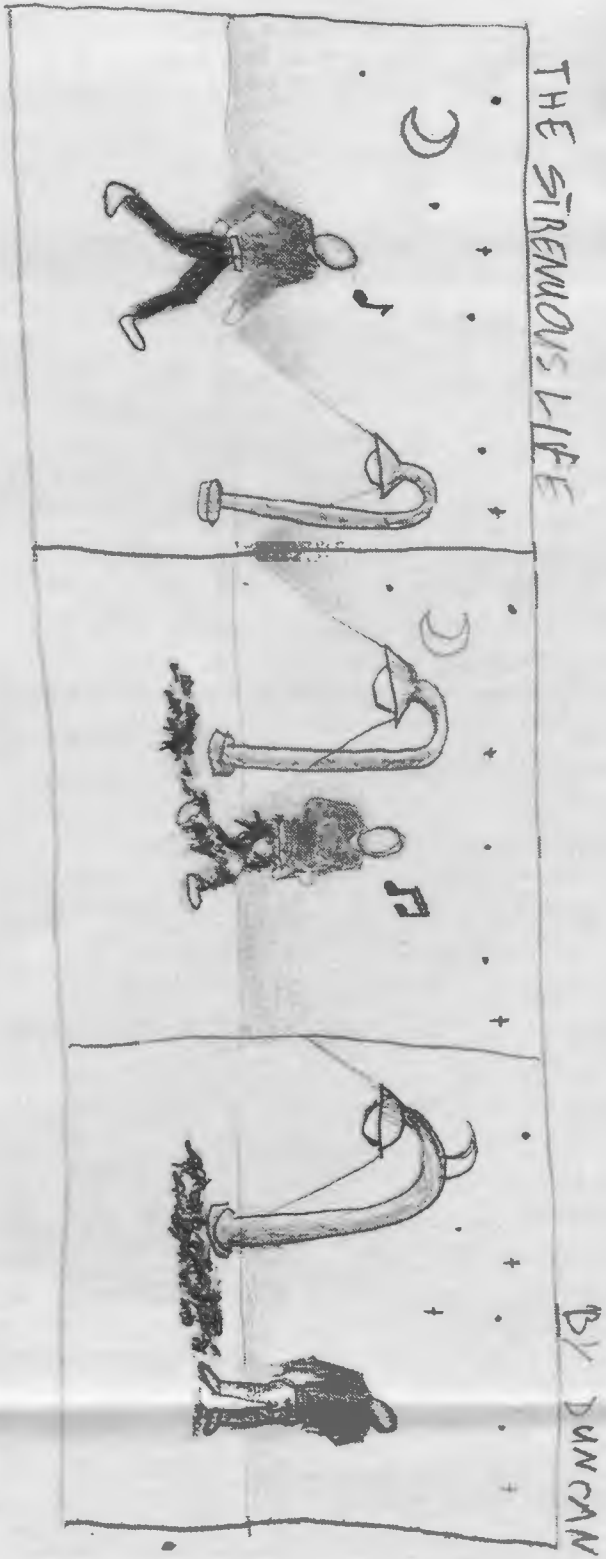
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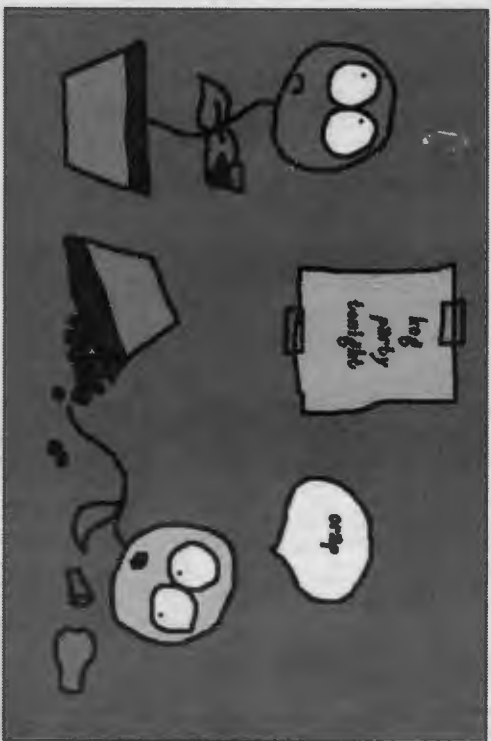
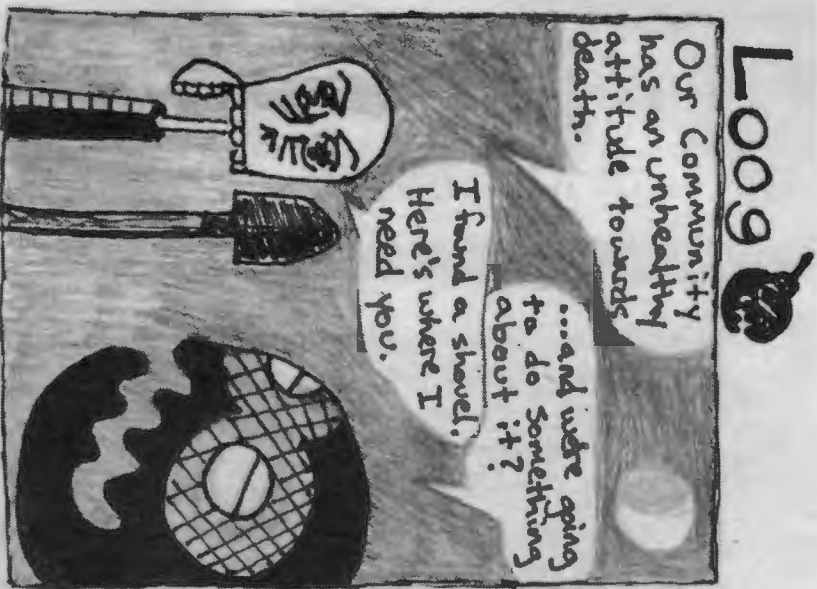


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by tristan dahn



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