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Potential Link Between Global Warming and Hurricane Katrina

by lauren kitz

terrorists to blame for not bombing hummer factories

As New Orleans faces the aftermath of the greatest natural disaster since the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, some scientists and experts are arguing that global warming was a key contributor to Hurricane Katrina's devastating intensity. Although it matters little now to the 400,000 refugees whose lives have been totally displaced by the storm, an examination of the factors leading up to Katrina may prove valuable in preventing an increased severity in future natural disasters.

Sir David King, Britain's chief scientific advisor, has drawn the connection between rising sea temperatures caused by global warming and the intensity of tropical storms. In the past 20 years, global warming has increased surface sea temperatures in many ocean regions by close to one degree – a crucial amount considering that the development and intensity of hurricanes is very sensitive to the temperature of the water they build up over. The surface temperature that Katrina encountered was a relatively scalding 31 degrees, at least 2 degrees higher than was necessary to create hurricane conditions.

MIT professor Kerry Emanuel simi-

larly claims that the warming of ocean surfaces has doubled the destructive potential of tropical storms over the past 30 years. However, Emanuel recognizes that there is not sufficient data to prove that Hurricane Katrina was a direct result of global warming and not just part of a natural weather cycle. The majority of climatologists agree that climate change and hurricane intensity are related; many forecast that by later this century, global warming will have increased hurricane speeds by 5 percent. However, these experts acknowledge that there are inadequate records with which to definitively prove how much of Katrina's force was human-induced and how much was part of a natural climatic pattern.

Meanwhile, international leaders and media sources are pointing to

the hurricane as a consequence of President Bush's refusal to sign the Kyoto Protocol, which aims to limit

global warming by reducing airborne emissions. Bush rejected the Kyoto Protocol because of the perceived negative impacts it would have on the U.S. economy. And now it seems that even while facing the effect of Katrina on the United States economy and infrastructure, sensitivity to environmental factors is still lacking in the Bush admin-

istration's decision making. Katrina devastated many key refineries and oil pipelines along the Gulf Coast and displaced 58 rigs and platforms, 30 of which have been lost altogether. This has caused gasoline prices to skyrocket to well over \$3 per gallon, and has cre-

ated the first gas lines since the 1970s. In response, earlier this week the White House decided to release 2 million barrels of emergency reserves in an attempt to bring down prices and prevent inflation. This was coupled with a relaxation of EPA standards, which through September 15th will allow gas with higher evaporation rates and diesel fuel with higher sulfur content to be sold. Furthermore, the International Energy Agency has agreed to put 60 million new barrels on the market, although these barrels may take two weeks to reach the U.S. by tanker. These decisions caused gasoline futures to drop 23 cents on Friday, but its future impact on the environment is yet to be observed. To allow the climate to stabilize enough to cease the warming of ocean surfaces, it would reportedly require a 70% cut worldwide in the use of oil and coal. While that is clearly impossible considering our political climate at the moment, one can only hope that it will not require an even greater disaster than Hurricane Katrina to prove the dangerous link between the general good of the United States and the fragile condition of the environment.



<http://www.britishcouncil.org/>

When You Risk Upon a SPARC

by brenden beck

A tiny division of Bard admissions sifts through the rough

There are two kinds of errors an admissions office can make. The first is admitting students who fail or drop out. The second is failing to admit students who would have flourished. Stuart Levine worried Bard was making the second.

So, in the mid-80's, as the Dean of the College, Levine began the Bard Admissions SPARC program. "We believed colleges should respond to the existence of high potential. That is what education is all about, taking risks," he said.

Standing for Superior Performance Admissions Risk Candidate, the program extends "exception-admittance" to around twenty traditionally under-quali-

fied applicants who demonstrate high potential. SPARC students apply through the normal method and are not notified until later that they were chosen for this program. The program continues today, with twenty-two applicants receiving special acceptance letters in 2005.

Though most had poor or inconsistent grades in high school, there is no typical SPARC-student, says Mary Backlund, current Director of Admissions. "We do not use a slate of criteria. What is clear is that a person has literary, artistic, musical, entrepreneurial, or other innovative talent and their performance or high school setting has not allowed them to show their potential."

Once the SPARC student accepts and deposits his or her first tuition, which they do at a higher rate than non-SPARC students, the demands are not strenuous. Frequent meetings with the SPARC Advisor, David Shein, are required in the first semesters. The SPARC students receive more supervision, but barring any poor academic performance, they will moderate and graduate no different than a non-SPARC.

Before the introduction of the SPARC program, Bard College ran like most every other American college. "This program is not typical of other colleges," says Backlund. "They might use academic probation or waitlists, but that sends the wrong message."

As SPARCs have yet to consistently display high academic performance, the Admissions Office considers them risks. Such risk-taking does generate opposition. The founder, Stuart Levine, describes SPARC's opponents: "Not all people have the same view about risk. These people must understand the subtleties of what students bring to the table."

Though no official statistics are kept, SPARC advisor David Shein claims "SPARCs do as well as other students." SPARC student and Bard Senior Abe Jellinek describes the SPARC performance slightly differently. "Of the SPARCs I know, half or so have failed or been kicked out; lived up to their promise, I guess.

The other half are double majors and the heads of clubs, they have flourished."

Jellinek dismisses the suggestion of a SPARC stigma. "I never felt the non-SPARCs looked at me differently. Quite the opposite of a stigma. It was a great way to meet other people. The SPARCs bonded over our common SPARC-ness."

The program is threatened by Bard's ever-growing application pool. "A program like this is harder to do as applications increase," says Levine. "With stronger candidates, more people ask, 'why take a risk?' But we must take a risk. It's part of American society to extend opportunity to all."

Op-Ed: A Word From A Friendly Neighborhood Freshman

by katy kelleher

Intimacy and pastoralia denied for newest teeming mass of late-teen liberals, yearning to learn

"Where did all the kids come from?" I heard an upperclassman say, obviously referring to the swarm of freshmen standing in the campus center. As one of the 520 new freshmen, I found this comment both annoying and totally relatable. The freshman class at Bard is the largest it has ever been; even Botstein recognizes the problems that arise due to the huge number of "kids" now on campus. We are impressive in our numbers and annoying in our presence, but somehow there has to be room for all of us.

When applying to Bard, I was enticed by promises of intimate classes of 12 or 13 students, but the harsh reality is that most of my classes contain 20 or more people. For instance, a fellow freshman at Bard is taking a chemistry course with 41 other kids; instead of a personalized and intimate

course with interesting discussions and frequent student-teacher interaction, he will be attending daily lectures. And class size isn't the only thing that has been affected by the exceptionally large incoming class: housing has seriously screwed some people over. Did you notice that we actually have trailers on campus? Real trailers – ugly, industrial, temporary (or so they say) buildings erected to hold the surplus of freshmen and unfortunate upperclassmen who didn't get their promised apartment-style dorms. Not only are freshmen "taking over the campus" but the unprecedented number of freshmen is also negatively affecting things at Bard, making it harder for everyone.

People all over campus (including me) are complaining about the huge freshman class and the changes that are occurring at Bard,

but what can we possibly do about it? Sure, it's a huge pain to be 1 out of 520 new freshman faces wandering the campus, anonymous and a clear annoyance to many of the established Bardians, but I'm also really excited to be here. I just hope that there will be room for all the new Bard kids and that the administration will be able to find a way to accommodate the large freshman class without making any more sacrifices in class size, housing or job availability. Bard should stay the intimate and engaging place that all of us applied to and hoped for.



Read on for: Reviews of the new *Silver Jews* and *Coctopus* records, analysis of the new bankruptcy law, reviews of *Last Days* and *40 Year Old Virgin*, comics, a crossword, jumbles, and more

The Zim Carnage Continues

Written from a South African non-governmental civil society perspective

by neesha fakir

During my visit to Zimbabwe in late 2002, at the height of Robert Mugabe's election rigging and vehement strangulation of the free press and civil society, I came to the conclusion that it is quite an oxymoron to label Africa "democratic." The process of Zimbabwe's liberation in the 1960's was one of endurance and revolutionary banditry against white supremacy, the kind that perpetuated the ideas of democratic socialism and communitarianism. At the time of the revolution against Ian Smith's government, Mugabe was surprisingly conciliatory, having eradicated all references to Marxist revolution from ZANU PF's manifesto. The camouflaged rhetoric of Mugabe's ZANU PF movement shifted from being a liberation movement, rejecting racism as a primitive dogma, to Mugabe being placed on Interpol as running one of Africa's most kleptocratic regimes. Since the beginning of the Zimbabwean land crisis that emerged in 2000, and the subsequent election rigging including this year's March elections, the majority of Zimbabweans have inevitably become victims of Mugabe's insidious accumulation of class and economic power. To elaborate on the land issue dominating the predicament in Zimbabwe, there is a stark contrast to the land settlement commissions in the 1980's, when land was effectively distributed to the poor. Today, the confiscation of land that began in 2000 is coupled with confiscation from farmers to the elite within Zimbabwe.

At the same time, civil society and political opposition within Zimbabwe is becoming increasingly frustrated at the lack of activity, condemnation and lobbying on the part of the South African government under Thabo Mbeki's African National Congress. South Africa, essentially viewed as a sub-imperialist on the African continent, since the crisis emerged, has pursued a policy of "quiet diplomacy" with regards to Mugabe. Renewed class-interests of the elites in the post-apartheid, hybrid system governing South Africa largely dominate South Africa's foreign policy regarding Zimbabwe.

The main reason for the racial divide that exists in Zimbabwe has been the perception amongst South Africans that the land 'reform' policy of the Mugabe regime, which is an integral component of the contemporary Zimbabwean crisis, is fundamentally defined by issues of race. Mbeki and the African National Congress see Mugabe's land policy as a genuine attempt at addressing the legacy of colonialism. The unfortunate polarization of race regarding the crisis in Zimbabwe has impoverished the debate on the history of the crisis as well as causing less focus and attention from the South African public on issues of human rights and political freedom in Zimbabwe.

With the UN condemnation of the current forced removal of 700,000 Zimbabweans from urban slums otherwise known as "Operation Restore Order",

it is incongruent that the South African government sees Mugabe's ambitious accumulation and theft as a manifestation of anti-colonial resistance that has absolutely nothing to do with ordinary Zimbabweans facing detrimental human rights abuses as a result from state oppression. There are currently 3 million Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa facing detrimental conditions, mostly from the South African public at large. Less than 50 Zimbabweans in South Africa have managed to acquire permanent citizenship or rights to property, water, employment, and the rest are subject to ardent xenophobia, racism and intolerance, again from the South African public.

The cumulative effect of South Africa's policy approaches between the 2000 parliamentary elections, the presidential elections in March 2002 and again in 2005 effectively institutionalised Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis. Mugabe was basically 'free' to intensify the degree of state repression against all political opposition, endorse the corrupt and autocratic programme of 'land reform' and gain astronomical elite booty all with the knowledge that the Mbeki government would continue to provide political economic sustenance to his despotic

regime.

The dual tragedy of Zimbabwe in the 21st century should be conspicuous to global civil society and the international community.

On the one hand, the systematic subjection and oppression of the Zimbabwean people by a shrewd megalomaniac and his incumbents who have put the lives of the vast majority of Zimbabweans down the metaphorical 'river' of power and greed. On the other, the equally gradual but systematic loss of any meaningful popular and sovereign control over, and 'ownership' of, domestic wealth and economic resources to South African capitalists (including water and electricity parastatals who have indebted the Zimbabwean public to the tune of \$200 billion) who have commodified the oppression of the Zimbabwean people for their own class and accumulation of wealth. It is only fitting that, if the formal International Community gives no heed to the carnage and consistent oppression prevailing in this Southern African country, a revolution like that which occurred in South Africa (with the help of the US Anti Apartheid movement), dislodge Mugabe and ZANU PF.

Germany Goes to the Polls

freedom spreads to the four corners of the globe

by philipp penka

After the August 23 ruling of the German Constitutional Court on the legitimacy of the dissolution of the parliament (Bundestag), nothing stands in the way of Germany's general elections on September 18 of this year. Chancellor Schroeder had called for a vote of confidence after marked loss of popularity in past years, especially in the Bundestag earlier this year. The anticipated loss of the vote on July 1—approximately a fourth of the representatives supported him—created the necessary preconditions for an early general election, from which Schroeder had expected advantages, although he is now likely to lose to Angela Merkel, his opponent of the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU).

controversial reforms. Large losses in membership of the party, especially of older members, seem to indicate that the SPD has lost touch with its original social-democratic roots. They have furthermore been criticized for large concessions to capital and corporate powers. President Schroeder is only now appealing to employers' solidarity; real criticism of free-market capital-



Photo: gragreport.com

ism (main points of concern are instances of radical outsourcing or dismantling of corporations by ruthless, often foreign businessmen--notoriously termed "the grasshopper effect") is surfacing only in the course of the campaign, too late for many potential voters. Schroeder's opponent, Angela Merkel, is widely known as a confidante of former chancellor Helmut Kohl from the onset of her career. Having only consolidated her team of financial and political experts in the past two weeks, she is frequently accused of offering no real alternatives apart from the contention that the

current coalition of Red-Green (the SPD and the Green Party) have run out of options. Hers is a conservative politics with emphasis on family, education, economic growth in conjunction with globalization, and a return to patriotic values. Many analysts currently consider her likely to win the election. Others prognosticate another scenario, believing that the results will necessitate a so-called large coalition, i.e. a coalition of the two parties that hold majority in parliament, an alternative highly debated as to its effectiveness. There are still two televised debates to be held between the candidates, on September 4th as well as on the 12th, only six days before the election

Regardless, the outcome will hold great significance for Washington and US-German relations. Whereas Schroeder has been firm in his disapproval of Bush's foreign policy and his refusal to cooperate in the war on Iraq, it is known that the CDU's stance has been one largely affirmative thereof. Party leader Merkel has paid frequent visits to leaders in Washington, as well as UN officials in New York, and has insisted that Germany, were it ruled by the CDU, would have joined the US in its fight against terror. Such statements have, however, been softened in the recent weeks of the campaign, while Schroeder is reemphasizing his peaceful intentions.

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The Bard Free Press

freepress@bard.edu
http://freepress.bard.edu
Campus Mail: The Free Press
845-758-7079

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christian blunda	katy kelleher
tim donovan	jesse malmed
matthew evans	kelly mears
neesha fakir	philipp penka
tom houseman	ben schultz-figueroa
morgan kanter	claryn spies

109th Congress Passes New Bankruptcy Law Changes

by morgon kanter

On April 14, 2005, the House of Representatives passed bill S.256, entitled "[The]Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act". This sent the bill to a committee to work out the differences between the House and Senate versions before sending said bill to Bush for his signature, which he gave on April 20th. The Republicans voted yea straight on the party line, with the Democrats voting with 73

years and 125 nays. The bill created sweeping changes in title 11 of the United States Code, better known as the "Bankruptcy Law". The bill's sponsors claimed that the old system of bankruptcy had become a system "where deadbeats can get out of paying their debt scott-free while honest Americans who play by the rules have to foot the bill." However, more than 90 percent of debtors file for bankruptcy due to "unemployment or underemployment, an illness or accident, or divorce." The

bulk of the remainder suffered from other legitimate difficulties, including activation for military service, being a victim of crime or natural disasters, or a death in the family", according to members of the House Judiciary Committee. Roughly half of all bankruptcies filed in 2001 were caused in part by illness or medical debts. So while a few deadbeats exist, the vast majority of bankruptcy filings were legitimate.

Interestingly, the "Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection" in the new bankruptcy law occurs in Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 bankruptcies (filed by individuals), while Chapter 11 (filed by corporations) is apparently not in need of reform and is left mostly untouched. While the exhaustive list of the changes would take up 195 pages, here are some of the more controversial changes of the new law:

- A Chapter 7 bankruptcy is now much more difficult with the addition of a "means test". This test requires the debtor to calculate their net income after subtracting priority debt payments, secured debt payments, expense allowances, and other allowances specified
- house in a State with an unlimited or extremely generous homestead exception, and then declaring bankruptcy."
- The law makes debt owed on luxury goods purchased via credit within 90 days undischargable.
- The law makes it easier for creditors who received payments

lenders charging usurious interest rates to servicemembers, and to allow servicemembers to exempt property based on the law of the State of their premilitary residence" speaks for itself.

- S.ADMT.28 and S.ADMT.29: to provide better protection to debtors whose financial problems were caused by medical debt.

- S.ADMT.37: "to exempt debtors from means testing if their financial problems were caused by identity theft" speaks for itself, especially as the bill's stated purpose was consumer protection.

- S.ADMT.38: to prevent credit card companies and other such businesses from being predatory. As this was part of the stated purpose of the bill, the fact that this amendment failed is very telling.

- S.AMDT.42: to limit the amount of assets that could be protected by a trust through bankruptcy.

- S.ADMT.49: to protect the pensions employees and retirees when the providing corporation files for bankruptcy.

In addition, no amendments were even allowed to be presented in the house; they were all quashed in the Judiciary Committee.

So while the bankruptcy bill has done some things that can be considered good by closing loopholes and things that many would consider bad, a look at the proposed and rejected amendments can be even more telling. In addition to these, the fact that no amendments were allowed in the house makes the bill very suspect. Welcome to a new era of bankruptcy in America.

Primary sources:
<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d109:s.00256>: (bill text, info, etc)
http://rawstory.com/exclusives/dissenting_views_bankruptcy_405.htm (for the House Judiciary Committee's dissenting views)



in the new law. In addition, alimony and child support debts have become "priority debts". This has the side effect of both making it easier for so-called "deadbeat dads" to file for bankruptcy and rewarding those with large amounts of unsecured debt.

- The law allows creditors to collect (via repossession, for the most part) much more easily in various circumstances.
- The law makes bankruptcy filings subject to an audit similar to tax returns.
- The law mandates financial counsel for the debtor before any debt can be discharged.
- The law limits state homestead exceptions to \$125,000, essentially closing the "mansion loophole", which "allows opportunistic debtors to avoid paying their creditors by buying a

of less than \$5,000 from the debtor before he or she filed for bankruptcy to avoid repaying for the benefit of all creditors.

- The law improves the ability of those who file for bankruptcy to reclaim assets placed in asset protection trusts within ten years of the filing. This is part of what is known as the "millionaire loophole", which allows those with a great deal of money to place assets in shielded trusts and retain them post-bankruptcy.

As you can tell from the list, the bill was quite controversial, despite doing some necessary things. However, the true controversy is over some proposed amendments, all voted against by a straight Republican party-line vote:

- S.ADMT.16: "to protect service members and veterans from means testing in bankruptcy, to disallow certain claims by

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 (a puppet rock opera)
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 @Back Stage Productions
 in uptown Kingston
 visit thewhizbang.org for details

Construction at Bard

To see how the campus will look in two years, pick up a newly-revised hand-painted map pamphlet from Security, in the Old Gym.

Villages J & K

These dorms are an addition to the Village, which was named fondly after our beloved alphabet to illustrate our bitterness with our alums for not donating money for dorms. You may notice that the dorms now have numbers instead of letters; my only explanation for this is that the long-term plan is to build more than 26 Village Dorms, in which case we would run out of letters.

These dorms are almost done being built, I think. They are almost exactly like the old Village Suite Dorms, except they contain 1 single and 2 doubles. And on a side-note, trees that were cut down in this endeavor were milled into planks by the summer horticulture crew.

Curatorial Center

You guessed it, it's getting bigger. As a journalist (kinda), I feel a responsibility to provide better information; but as a student, I think it's bullshit that nobody bothers to tell us when they are doing these things. This one should be done in '06 and will accommodate a new collection and a larger library.

Where is the Space Needle/Rabbit Ears/Stargate/Spinny thing? I don't know how to tell you this, maybe you should sit down; you see, it's gone to a better place. Actually it's behind Manor/Robbins and yes, you can still get stoned and climb on it, just be careful.



Robbins

The Robbins construction was originally supposed to be completed by Spring '06 I believe. I think at this point we are looking at a mid '07 job, not too shabby though. This addition to Robbins is reported to house over a hundred new students as well as having a cardio/workout room and musical practice spaces. From what I have heard it is intended to accommodate the new conservatory students whom I know nothing about.

Williams: Dorm hits .406, not so good for a living space

trailer culture becomes the zeitgeist at overcrowded institution

by peter neely

It is no secret that there is a housing crunch on campus. The res-life couch has been full all week, and with many awkward housing situations, the office is trying to make the best of a bad situation.

With more students in this year's freshman class than ever before, the administration decided in mid-June that they needed more beds, and quickly. They contacted Williams Scotsman, the leading national provider of mobile and modular buildings to construction, education, commercial, health-care, and government markets. After a quick negotiation and one-year rental agreement, they acquired the modular that is now Williams.

The 15-part modular building was delivered in mid-July. With Williams Scotsman contractors constructing and Bard staff wiring the dorm, it was finished in about one month. Williams dorm, named after the company from which it was rented, has been a residence hall previously, at Olin College of Engineering in Massachusetts.

The building now sits down the path



behind the new Toasters. The residents of this mostly freshman dorm moved out of their south campus singles and into the building last Wednesday. Inside, Williams is about what one would expect: nauseating fluorescent lights, paper thin walls, and partially working everything. But despite its expedient construction and questionable appearance, the rooms and bathrooms are quite large and clean. With the final addition of a porch, sidewalks, and furniture, the dorm is habitable and occupied. Williams, exhibiting a modu-

lar-chic, tan-colored vinyl siding, and questionable cinder block foundation, is another great trailer-style addition to the Bard campus. Robbins, with its planned unveiling in the fall of 2006, will negate the need for a 40 bed trailer, as the new 160 bed dormitory will more than cover the needs of newer, larger, future incoming classes.

Tragically, with no plans of keeping the building, it seems like the barracks will be the only trailer-esque beauties around for years to come. One can only hope that with a year on campus the building will leave a hint of trailer trash in the potpourri that is Bard College.

Construction at Bard

The new science building

I know almost nothing about this, except that you (person reading this) need to stop driving your car to class; in addition to the obvious monetary and socially responsible reasons for this, you can add the largest parking nightmare north of the city.

I'm guessing the building will be done in a couple years, at which point all the departments will shuffle around. I've heard talk of the Psych department moving into the old science buildings, but really, who knows?



Old Gym Update

On another note, the scaffolding surrounding the Old Gym and the accompanying sign that says something about beautification does not mean that there are any actual repairs being made to the Old Gym. Presumably it was seen as a quick solution to prospective students and parents asking, 'What is *that*?' If you would like to see a return of student autonomous space, you should write a brief letter expressing your views to President Botstein, or you can drop them in campus mail c/o Adam Baz, head of the Planning Committee, who is collecting student requests for a multifunctional space to replace the one we once enjoyed.



Jumbles!

by Jesse Malmed

¿E, BRO, WHADDAYA CALL THIS?



STUQE
MUSTR
TORAA
CAMIIB



HOW THE EVASIVE DRESS-MAKER HANDLED HIS SON'S ZINE



SKRUBE
DTEIDE
SUSTIE
OSTRUB

HE THE

music reviews.
music reviews.
music reviews.



you're a sex bomb, baby.

as "You don't know me / I'd like to build us a home in the trees." Regardless of Chad VanGalen's star-studded crowd of influences, *Infiniheart* proves one of this year's most deliberate and distinctive releases.

- Karen Soskin

pop crystals that prove twice as compelling as songs of the debut album like "By Your Side" and "Terrible Angels". On this sophomore effort, the crisp echo of Sierra's harp acts as an anchor for Bianca's beautiful, lo-fi ballads ("Tekno Love Song"), whereas "South 2nd" sweetly plods and rips through the tale of a gang fight in Brooklyn, complete with a lead-in reminiscent of Bjork's "Possibly Maybe". Surprisingly, Sierra's opera-trained pipes appear less frequently on this album, and when they do, they sound more like they belong to Electrelane's Verity Susman than to Maria Callas ("Noah's Ark"). The other noticeable difference is the shift away from guitar, which only appears on two tracks, and on which *La Maison* is beautifully revived to accompany erotic narratives ("Honey or Tar"). "Noah's Ark" demonstrates that CocoRosie is not only a multi-dimensional band, but far bolder, more mature, and unique than when they first started.

- Karen Soskin

familiar with The New Pornographers' last album *The Electric Version*, imagine, if you will, an album similar, but performed in a way that could end world hunger. The world hungers for really good tunage.

-Kelly Mears

and beautifully poetic. And The Silver Jews fan asks his Father: "So why is this album different from all other albums?" And The Father says, "The Sweetness will seep in, flooding every shore, with a strong cry of 'peace out man' and the goth kids with flowers in their long hair will play their keyboards to acoustic guitar." Fan says "Hey Dad, Jesus had long hair," and Dad says, "that's right son: jesus walked everywhere."

-Michael Knight



Chad VanGalen
Infiniheart
Sub Pop

RECOMMENDED TRACKS:
5,6,7,11,12

Infiniheart, Chad VanGalen's debut on Sub Pop, provides listeners with a captivating selection of a decade's worth of songwriting and recording that has long streamed from a basement in the depths of Alberta. Armed with a Tascam 4-track and an Akai hard disc recorder, VanGalen croons softly throughout sixteen tracks, revealing the wide range of emotions stirring in the soul of a Canadian workingman. A skilled animator and illustrator by trade, VanGalen channels Jason Molina, Neil Young, and even Thom Yorke to gently deliver narratives over rich melodies that are literally hand-crafted - homemade saxophones and violins whittled by the artist playfully detail the space between rich guitar chords and crisp drums. VanGalen isn't afraid to push above wavering indie folk on a few songs, however, infusing his timid vocals with grit and determination to hatch three-minute nuggets of savory pop-rock in the spirit of A.C. Newman or the Shins. These anthems prove to be uniquely gratifying and bittersweet; "Echo Train" is a no-frills rocker, with pounding guitars underscoring the indulgent repetition of the melodic refrain, "Stop dragging us down, 'cause eventually this future's going to swallow you". Once VanGalen hits his stride on *Infiniheart*, specifically in the five-track stretch from "Somewhere I Know There Is Nothing" to "I Miss You Like I Miss You," the listener feels as though they have been taken into a dear friend's confidence; on the track "Blood Machine" VanGalen's uneasy imagination sketches a colorless world in which "people have their hearts plugged into a giant machine that could circulate air." At his strongest, VanGalen's pleas recall Bonnie 'Prince' Billy, especially on "1000 Pound Eyelids" and in echoing such lovelorn offers thebardfreepress.vol7.issue1



CocoRosie
Noah's Ark
Touch and Go

RECOMMENDED TRACKS:
1, 3, 4, 5, 7

Ain't many folks in this topsyturvy world who can compel me to bust out my best imitation of a keel-billed toucan, but when Sierra and Bianca Casady come to town, it's the modern equivalent of the circus rolling through. Although CocoRosie doesn't mesmerize crowds under a Big Top, their shows are similarly filled with the promise eccentric guests, exotic costumes from distant lands, masks befitting melodramatic clowns, and, of course, mysterious melodies concocted on harps and haunted pianos. CocoRosie's sophomore album, *Noah's Ark*, is a freshly-built rocket ship of Bohemian hip-hop welded together with dark gypsy lullabies and poised to blast off into the world of make-believe where aborted babies and Bambi are spoken of in the same breath. Upon the release of their critically-acclaimed debut album *La Maison de Mon Reve*, music critics attempted to pigeonhole CocoRosie as more girls making "bucolic blues" with "backwater vocals" (Pitchfork). As countless bands have found out, this guzzling slot offers all the perks of a black hole - or perhaps, as CocoRosie would put it, a "K-Hole". But be assured, the Casady sisters don't seem the type to give a damn about critics. For one reason or another however, it is obvious that they have shifted priorities for their latest release, a record on which they energetically develop their infamous toy-based hip-hop compositions even further ("K-Hole", "Bear Hides and Buffalo"). Although *Noah's Ark* is a far darker and more alienating release, it still offers simmering



The New Pornographers'
Twin Cinema
Matador

In one particular episode of *Aqua Teen Hunger Force*, a character by the name of "Meat-Wad" (he is, in fact, a meatball) begins listening to a new rap song, "Fo' da Shorteez" by Sir Loin. In this hip-hop masterwork, Sir Loin begs that all foodstuffs (in whatever state, good or bad) be brought to him "fo' da shorteez"; the "shorteez" being, in this case, starving African children. For our purposes, however, I will redefine "da shorteez" more generally as the peoples looking for sustenance and contentment in a world mainly devoid of such. *Twin Cinema* was definitely handcrafted "fo' da shorteez". From the first notes of "Twin Cinema" until the last resounding chorus and fade-out of "Stacked Crooked", The New Pornographers completely deliver "fo' da shorteez". Tracks like "Jackie, Dressed in Cobras" and tight, nearly perfect drumming make this an album "da shorteez" should be thankful for. For those



Silver Jews
Tanglewood Numbers
Drag City

Fifteen years of beautiful tradition (or non-tradition), and the Silver Jews find themselves set up on an altar high above the rest. As a dedicated follower of the Jews, I am not afraid to proclaim that their fifth (technically sixth full length album, if you include the out of print *The Arizona Record*) really fucking cooks. And why shouldn't it? The group has not made one bad album in their existence, and this time everyone showed up to rock it to Russia: born again Jews. Bob Nastanovich and Stephen Malkmus, Duane Denison, Bobby Bare, Jr., and fucking Will Oldham! Looking back on their long and illustrious career, their sound has come a long way. From the lowest of fi early cassette recordings to the polished *Tanglewood Numbers*, the Jews have ranged far and wide on an expansive soundscape to arrive where they are today. Their most prodigious venture yet, Berman and co. return to the upbeat feel of *American Water*, though the album is definitely loaded with sadness. I was also happy to hear the return to some of the experimental weird sounds, as *Bright Flight* (their last album) seemed to suggest turning to more straightforward country tunes. Not that this album isn't country to the max (oh, it is) but it bypasses the TNN crap and travels into uncharted territories like that of the weird, meandering "the Farmer's Hotel" (seven minutes long no less!) and the punchy gonzo jazz ballad "Sometimes a Pony Gets Depressed". This album is goofy good time fun and yet at the same time is gut wrenchingly personal



Mount Eerie
No Flashlight
P.W. Elverum and Sun, 2005

Since his last full length LP as The Microphones, Phil Elverum has stepped away from K Records, started a new band, married a beautiful Canadian illustrator, and begun to turn Anacortes, Washington into an island commune of independent art and creativity. The very different tone of this album reflects a change in Elverum's life and philosophy. *No Flashlight* tells the story of one man (P.W. Elverum) observing the night. In doing so, Elverum attempts to reconcile the legitimacy of humans in "nature", the failings of communication, the hidden world, and various other heady subjects. The overriding theme is an ontological search using the metaphor, and sometimes the example of the night. The songwriting is much more similar to his performances (download "Live at Bard College in the Dark" off of DC++ if it still exists) and recent super limited EPs than any previous Microphones albums. The album lacks the very poppy songs of recent Microphones albums, but retains the spookiness of the most recent effort, also named Mount Eerie. Hints of Timbaland-style drums and Thanksgiving-style lyrics provide welcome influences in a relatively sparsely furnished album. A comprehensive explanation of the album can be found on the tarp-sized liner notes of the LP, which comes with a CD for an easy media frenzy. Mount Eerie will be performing at Bard with Tristan Dahn, Thanksgiving, and Jason Anderson on October 5th, venue TBA.

-T. Joseph Donovan

Charming Bastards Slam Campus Center, New York City

by abe jellinek

In the weeks before school began, Bard band legends Charming Bastards played their final trio of shows. With Christian Blunda on guitar and Paul Salvesson on drums, both class of '06, Henry Gwazda on bass, and Tim Abbondello on vocals, both class of '05, this hard-charging lineup is quintessential post-summer rock. The first show occurred at Down the Road Café during a L&T Open Mic/Poetry Slam, and the final New York City tour hit Delancey's in Manhattan, and Tommy's Tavern in Brooklyn.

The Down The Road show featured probably the largest crowd ever to attend a Charming Bastards show, and certainly the most confused. When PC Noah Weston announced "The Charming Bastards" in the midst of twenty-one single-mic spoken word acts, the hundred-plus rapt freshman expected more of the same: poetry, prose, or simple tunes, rendered

with heartfelt gravitas. As amps, mics, heads, and pedals flooded in, filling the tiny area at the front of the café, nervous murmurs began to course through the perplexed crowd. Who are these people? What's going on? Why is that other guy who isn't in the band drinking a Corona in the Campus Center? Scandal. Once the Bastards plugged in and turned on, all conversation ceased, as hundred-decibel feedback shrieks and the rough vibrations of bass strings being tuned shook the rivets from countless cheap campus center seats. Once the music began, with a rollicking cascade of string progressions, thumping drum beats, and some choice caterwauling, there was only rocking out left to do. Vigorous, but not fawning, applause, surely tempered by the perplexing situation, accompanied the Bastards as they exited Café right.

The Delancey show was less exciting, and far more expensive. A \$7 cover, \$6

drinks, and a \$5 additional charge to go on the roof deck, typical tariffs for Manhattan, but an adjustment for the thinly-pocketed Bard student, dampened the mood somewhat. If the cripplingly dark, thoroughly unimaginative "colored lights in a basement" décor and strange couches, seemingly arranged to prevent socializing, did not nail the coffin shut, the downbeat, quiet bands preceding the Bastards certainly did. A brief rejuvenation, a true spark, was found in Tim Abbondello's ceiling-pipe acrobatics: flailing around, hanging almost completely upside-down, and still singing his head off. The energy in the room rose perceptibly. Sadly, the somewhat neurotic in-house sound guy claimed these very gymnastics broke a mic stand, and that means the band did not get paid for their appearance that night.

The final show, at Tommy's Tavern on a main drag in Brooklyn, was much more

of a Bard-friendly scene. Split into two rooms, with a pool table, solid colored lighting options, and two-dollar Pabst Blue Ribbon cans, Tommy's is a good place. All attendees were in the mood for revelry, and the various performances that night did not disappoint. A well-executed DJ set by former Bard student Shawn O'Sullivan set the mood, a punk-ish set by The Rats was the very opposite of terrible, and ex-Bardians Dan Brunner and Brian Schneider played driving, phenomenal surf rock with local pals in Shark Attack. A brief interlude, with Jewish jokes told by Abe Jellinek, preceded the Charming Bastards' last-ever, and night-concluding, performance. Words cannot describe it. Seinfeld ended his show "at the top", and, as the Bastards dissolved into that Brooklyn night, champions of the free universe, they did not quit while they were ahead, so much as leave while the world was still behind.

SHOTS FROM RECENT BAR SHOWS



MOGGS

RELAY



I
K
E



BUCK BUCK BLOO

BATTLE ROYAL





film // film // film
 film \ \ film \ \ film
 film // film // film

Review: The 40 Year Old Virgin

by tom houseman

When examining the quality of a film, a lot of emphasis is placed on plot and plot development. In the case of Judd Apatow's new movie *The 40 Year Old Virgin*, judgement based on plot would be a mistake. The film has barely more of a plot than Jim Jarmusch's *Coffee and Cigarettes*, but thankfully it does offer comedy. Of all the stupid comedies released recently, such as *The Wedding Crashers* and *The Dukes of Hazard*, *Virgin* is both the stupidest and the funniest. The first half of this film is basically a plot-less series of absurd and hilarious vignettes about one man's quest to get laid. When a plot does eventually develop, the film loses some of its steam, but that does not stop *The 40 Year Old Virgin* from being the funniest movie of the year so far. Andy Stitzer (Steve Carell) is forty years old, and he has never had sex. When he reveals

this fact to three of his coworkers, they vow to get him laid by any means necessary. They take Andy to a club, have his chest hair waxed, and even hire a prostitute, not realizing that they have hired a transvestite. However, it is not until he has an actual relationship with a single mother (Catherine Keener) that he understands that he has really missed out on relationships that lead to sex, not sex itself.

After producing several films, *Virgin* is Judd Apatow's directorial debut, and he proves that he is a skilled writer/director. Similarly, this is Steve Carell's first starring role after being the saving grace of Bruce Almighty and giving a stand-out performance in *Anchorman*, and he is brilliantly funny as *Virgin*'s leading man. Supporting actors are crucial in films like *Virgin*, and Paul Rudd, Romany

Malco, and Seth Rogan turn a very funny movie into a hilarious movie. Each of them has moments to shine, and they are each hysterical in very unique ways. Catherine Keener is unspectacular as the love interest. Although she is given little material, she uses her role to juxtapose the insanity that is going on around her. Do not go to *Virgin* expecting a great film, as you will be sorely disappointed. However, if you are looking for some cheap laughs, *The 40 Year Old Virgin* is the movie for you, as few other films can produce more.



The Brothers Grimm

We will refrain from puns on the word grim

by liv carrow

Terry Gilliam's latest release, which actually began more than five years ago and was finally released in a more or less unfinished form, *The Brothers Grimm*, is reminiscent of post-Pink Floyd Syd Barrett albums: beautiful, strange, and totally incoherent. Though Gilliam has doubtlessly retained more of his mental capacity than Barrett, this movie is somewhere between a bad dream and a masterpiece spawned from the mind of a befuddled and distracted genius. Read: this is no earth-shatteringly political *Brazil*. This is no witty, mile-a-minute Monty Python film, or zany hilarious *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. It's worth watching, even on the big screen, but go on discount night, and don't expect the film to follow through with

any of the connections it endeavors to make. *The Brothers Grimm* is a fictional projection of the Grimm brothers

Grimms, the film is so historically accurate that even the contemporary belief that the Plague was airborne is casually mentioned, and a replica

They remove their own imagined witches and demons from their customers' souls, collect a handsome sum of money from the vil-

the town's young girls. Aggressive, cocksure Wilhelm (Matt Damon) and dreamy-eyed, scholarly Jakob (foxily played by a bespectacled Heath Ledger) begin a collective soul-search as they redesign their regimen and begin to actually hunt spooks in the enchanted forest, with the help of a young, beautiful village outcast whose family is intimately tied to the curse of the forest. After a grueling and terrifying adventure in the woods, the Grimms solve the mystery of the curse, and a number of well-known tales are visually referenced along the way, but never expanded upon: Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, Cinderella, Snow White, Hansel and Gretel, and The Gingerbread Man to name a few. Needless to say there is a happy ending, and they all live happily ever after, but when the nearly three hour tour through Fairytale Theater is over, one is left with the feeling that they just read a long string of "Deep Thoughts by Jack Handey".



as well-known witch and ghost hunters in Napoleonic Germany. While only loosely based on the actual lives and tales of the

of a medieval village was created outside of Prague for the filming. The Grimms roam the countryside being paid to "exorcise" spooks from wide-eyed peasant properties. They are, however, fakers, and stage these elaborate exorcisms based on their own expert knowledge of folklore.

lage governments, and move on to the next town. Their plan is foiled, however, by a kooky and sadistic agent of the French imperialists, who captures them and forces them to work for the French to free a village from the spell of an enchanted forest, which has been kidnapping

Visually, this film is incredible. One can understand why it was released incomplete to make back some of the obviously extravagant sums of money.

Adult Film Review # IV

Choke on the Chicken

The trademark of NyMPH pictures is, "Sex You Asked For." I hoped the trademark might also serve as a disclaimer like, 'don't blame us for the raunchy ass-to-ass stuff,' but after watching the film through, the only disclaimer it deserved is one for lack-luster sex and virtually no plot. Also, I was disturbed (and shocked) by a lack of reciprocity between sexual partners. A small box of text at the beginning of the film promises 30 minutes of original sex, and another hour of footage, but it was all new to me. CHOKES ON THE CHICKEN is divided into a little six-part variety pack; only the first part involves choking a 'chicken head.' More notable than the oral devastation was the girl's weave, and the embarrassingly small amount of semen the male lead was able to deposit in his partners eye socket. In a desperate attempt to salvage this 'facial' he uses his penis as a spreading utensil. Lack of music makes this video awkward to watch with friends, and I was glad when it was over.

The bar was raised in the second film. An thebardfreepress.vol7.issue1

aggressive pornographic film in a traditional wrestling setting, it was a violent match-up between 'Sweet Connie Lingus' and the vested tag-team-duo comprised of 'Dirty Dick' and the 'Back Door Kid.' I was happy to finally see a girl who fought back, until I realized that like the WWF, the HCF (Hard Core Fucking) is totally choreographed and it wasn't long before Sweet Connie was being double penetrated to the crowd chanting, "Anal! Anal! Anal!" She rebounds briefly to hit them with a carnivorous 'cock four-lock' and a titillating 'silicon death slap.' The commentators in the background announce that before Connie turned pro, she worked for the census. She was a "poll-taker." In only fourteen minutes and twenty-two second both men 'tap-out' on Connie's face, and to my confusion, Connie is pronounced victorious.

I know I had promised gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgender porn reviews, but they don't have any of those at Redhook FAMILY Video. I was skeptical of this lesbian scene, figuring it was only a matter of time before

they introduced a 'chaperone' wearing a cockring, but the only ring I saw was pierced through a labia. In this brief lesbian short, the camera (and the viewer) enters a scene, mid-conversation, to hear an older woman consoling her supple friend by saying, "Life is worth living when you have somebody to be with." If the high-paced sex-only movie had destroyed your attention span, after a painful minute of conversation you might find yourself saying, "The video isn't worth watching because nobody's fucking." That is until the comforting gets serious and serious questions get asked. "Can you cum and eat my pussy at the same time?"

The LEGEND, Ron Jeremy, appears in the final video, and it occurred to me I had never seen Ron in a video. Based on what I had heard, I was disappointed by the size of this penis, honestly, and besides, it was too late for redemption. In the pre-sex interview, the girl introduced herself as being from Newport Beach, but she looked like she was from Poughkeepsie to me. Her pearl earrings

seemed to say, "Don't be fooled by this beer can in me, I'm really a nice girl." Even in her grimace, you could tell this girl really thought it was an honor to be sleeping with a legend. And she was right, I didn't believe it until the end, but watching Ron nonchalantly cum was inspirational, like he'd done it a million times. Contrasted to Ron, the female role was the most self-conscious porn star I have ever seen. Self-conscious porn star, NOT self-conscious porn. CHOKES ON THE CHICKEN is the kind of artless dick flick that gives artful dick flicks a bad name. CHOKES ON THE CHICKEN is not the kind of film you want to start your day out with. Try it between meals.

-Zak Kitnick

**PARENTAL
 ADVISORY
 EXPLICIT CONTENT**

Gus Van Sant's *Last Days*: Cobain-alike biopic succeeds

by matthew garklavs

Kurt Cobain's tragic death took place over ten years ago and since then it has generated a wide range of discussion. Like many great rock stars of the 20th century who died at a young age, he was immortalized through the vacuum of the media and perceived as a martyr for his art. Fortunately, Gus Van Sant's *Last Days*, a film that was publicized as a movie about the final days before Cobain committed suicide, is void of such pretentious hyperbole. In fact, Van Sant seems to do just the opposite by exposing the fragility of his idiosyncratic behavior. However, by making this distinction alone we ignore the philosophical profundities that are more fundamental to the film. Instead of recapitulating facts or even theories about Cobain's life in a melodramatic fashion, Van Sant wanted to do something that was "more elemental and existential" about "one man wandering through

the three elements: earth, fire and water." Beneath this sense of minimalism, we see the coexistence of austerity with sublimity.

In *Last Days*, Cobain is depicted as an ascetic figure named "Blake." Throughout the film we see him roam around aimlessly like a primate in the wilderness. He estranges himself within the confines of his decrepit mansion and the desolate woods that surround it, going out of his way to avoid other people. Although the film lacks an emotional core, it effectively draws the audience in on a psychological wavelength. Like Blake, we begin to feel estranged from the outside world. The rare and muffled affirmations of reality that take place when Blake interacts with someone seem to heighten the sense of isolation that pervades the film.

The unique filming techniques that we find in *Last Days* are consistent with previous movies that Van Sant

has made in the past like *Gerry* and *Elephant*. In each of these films he experimented with the ambience of sound and perspective. Van Sant stated in a recent interview that his objective was to "get away from some kinds of movie conventions such as using multiple angles to describe scenes." The aversion from linearity that we find in Van Sant's style of filming certainly demands our patience. At the same time, it allows us to be more observant of reoccurring motifs and patterns.

In *Last Days*, Van Sant offers something that was lacking in *Gerry* and *Elephant*. It seems more fitting to adopt this experimental style of filming when the main character is an artist. The sense of genius that we associate with artistic creation is a mystery to most of us. Nevertheless, by offering us a lens that is both observant and courteous, Van Sant manages to portray it as something that makes us human. Never since

Tarkovsky's masterpiece *Andrei Rublev* has the craft of cinema delivered such an endearing portrait of the suffering artist. Although *Last Days* may lack the spiritual substance

that gave a director like Tarkovsky an essential level to his film on the Russian iconographer, Van Sant shows us how the virtuosity of art can redeem a man of his iniquities.



Ideas Are Bulletproof

by claryn spies *A look inside Bard's Zine Library, within the student-operated Root Cellar*

In truth, much of the best writing from our age group is hidden between the creases of mass-xeroxed eight-and-a-half-by-eleven inch sheets of paper, stuffed in a box beneath someone's bed. For about twenty-five years, kids of all races, religions, genders, and economic backgrounds have been pouring their hearts into creating publications for the sole purpose of being heard. With precisely this in mind, Bard's Zine Library is dedicated to the retrieval and preservation of zines from every genre you can imagine. Founded nearly ten years ago, our college sports what is reportedly the largest zine library in the Northeast. It is a mainstay of alternative publications with do-it-yourself ethics.

Greenzine #14. Change is Constant. Composed by the extremely talented Cristy Road, already well-known in the underground scene for her non-traditional illustrations, this zine is both visually and cognitively stimulating. Fully accompanied by illustrations, this issue follows Cristy in her physical and psychological journey from her beloved South Florida to Philly. Cristy shares the analytical side of her forays and produces a zine that encompasses issues of racial, sexual, and cultural identity. While I would have appreciated more careful proofreading, this is pretty solid work.

I Defy #4. This is an excellent example of why cataloging old zines is such a worthwhile endeavor; published in 1996, it features an interview with one of the catalysts of screamo, Still Life. Interviews with Franklin and Enkindel, along with the standard-fare self-examining prose and personal and political ranting fill out the rest of the issue. This is introspective and smart, if perhaps slightly masturbatory, just like zines should be.

Profane Existence #45. In accordance with their claim of "making punk a threat again", this issue of long-standing publication Profane Existence includes interviews with Phobia, Garmonbozia, and intelligent ex-Aus-Rotten Pittsburgh punks Behind Enemy Lines. A short primer entitled "Punk vs. Sexism"

attempts to chip away at the enigma that is patriarchy, particularly in the context of the punk scene, offering suggestions for building something better in a community which is all-too-often tentative to identify problems within itself. This issue also includes the regular album and zine reviews as well as MRR-styled columns.

The Zine Library also has the latest issues of larger indy publications such as Maximum Rock 'n' Roll, Clamor, Slingshot, and Adbusters as well as a prolific and growing collection of fanzines and other assorted personal, political, feminist, poetry and miscellaneous zines. Come down to the Root Cellar in the basement of Potter behind Stone Row between 2PM and midnight, and sip good, cheap coffee while you read. Zines aren't lent out, but it is a wonderful resource available to the entire community. Use it well and treat it with respect!



Send articles, reviews, opinions and other papery things to the electronic mail address freepress@bard.edu



Visit www.woodstockfilmfestival.com and look for festival programs on campus.

ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE'S SPECTACULAR SPECULATIVE FALL LINE-UP

Sunburned Hand of the Man
SEPT.16 Death Chants
Graybird A

XBRRX
Books on Tape SEPT.25
This Show is the Rainbow

Mount Eerie (Pri of the Microphones)
OCT.5 Thanksgiving
Tristan Jason Anderson

The Perceptionists OCT.7
The Mae Shi

Old Time Relijun
OCT.21 Calvin Johnson
The Creeping Nobodies
Wolf Parade Mussels

The Gift Machine OCT.25
Nate Ashley

DEC.2 Akron Family

DATES TBA:
Trio Convulsant (ex-MrBungle)
USAISAMONSTER
Lost Film Fest
the Wind Up Bird
One AM Radio
The Game

The Human Impact of Katrina

the Free Press presents an interview with a Bard student from New Orleans

Can you share any first hand accounts from friends or family who were in New Orleans when the hurricane hit?

I could tell you my friend Jeff's story about getting out of town. He stayed later than most people did, most people left last Monday (August 29th). Jeff was still around town, staying at one end of the city, and the flooding wasn't as bad, but that day it really broke open, and he couldn't get anywhere. So Jeff found any roads that were open and made it to a hotel with my friend Sophia and stayed there for a night, and in the middle of the night the flooding got a lot worse and the winds hit at 145 mph. The police surrounded the hotel and wouldn't let anybody leave, and it [the hotel] was full of older people and people who had evacuated and they were running out of food. Jeff knew that he had parked his car on the interstate where it was higher up and they could go there, and it was right by Sophia's house, and they could get out that way. But the police wouldn't let them leave . . . because they were afraid people didn't understand the severity of the storm and they [the police] thought it was going to pass – they could just stay inside for the next five hours and it would pass. But in fact they were making it worse, because the storm wasn't passing.

So finally Jeff threw the police out of the way and they ran into the street, and eventually the streets ran out and they had to start swimming to the interstate where they found his car. They found Sophia's house, which was in the last dry area left in town, around City Park. They stayed there that night – this was Wednesday night. In the middle of the night the 17th street canal broke open – that and the Florida canal were two of the last levees protecting the city – and that meant that the whole of Lake Pontchartrain pushed as hard as it could through the city.

So there was this banging on the door at three in the morning and Jeff opened it and water slammed in up to his waist. And there was a neighbor saying "Get the hell out of town, the 17th street canal broke". So they climbed up back to the interstate, which is 20 feet above ground so it was still safe, and they got out of town . . . But other details, like swimming to the interstate near Sophia's house – it's right by the biggest cemetery in town and all the graves are above ground in New Orleans because it's six feet below sea level, so if you put

graves below ground the water goes through it and it contaminates the drinking water, so they're all above ground, literally. And all the graves, the concrete blocks, had been blown off by all the wind and water and were floating around town. So Jeff was climbing over coffins to get to his car. And then they drove to Texas. . . and now he's coming here.

How's he getting here?

His car doesn't really work anymore. So he's going to try to sell it and buy a bus ticket. None of my friends know how they're going to get here.

So how many people do you have coming?

Five. Only three of them are coming for an extended stay, the others just for a few nights. They need somewhere not filled with other evacuees that's quiet and calm and [where] they can think about what to do with their lives.

Have you talked to anyone about their feelings with how federal and local governments prepared for and are dealing with the event now?

Yeah. A lot of people are upset about it. But one thing is that even if our government gave twice as much money as it's giving now, everyone would still have to help as much as they possibly could. They're still upset about it but it's not a political problem. But what my friends have said is that you have to know this would happen in New Orleans. It's below sea level, it's surrounded on all sides by bodies of water, in the Gulf of Mexico essentially. It's just that hurricanes happen every year, it's nothing special; and there's never been anything like this, but you get kind of jaded. The last two, when they said they were going to tear our city apart, I didn't even leave town, cause I just thought "Oh they say that every year." Category 1 and 2 storms happen every year. This one started as a Category 4, and they only built the levees to hold up to 4. So no, we weren't prepared, but really, the earth wasn't prepared for that. It's dangerous that they built the city, and everybody knew that, and they should have done something about it 50 years ago . . . and there's a sanitation problem now. The drinking water's contaminated with all the dead bodies, there are over 20,000 people in the Superdome now

and they have sufficiently run out of food and have no way to get any there. And now there are rumors of tuberculosis in the Superdome.

Do you have any friends or family who know anyone in the Superdome right now?

Yeah. And my friend Marie, last time I heard from her a couple days ago she was still downtown on her roof shouting for help and running out of water.

Have you thought about what you're going to do now? I heard you were planning on going down there to do relief work.

I'm actually waiting to be deployed. What happens is that you get a phone call and then you have 24 hours to get ready and then they send you down there. But it might not necessarily be to New Orleans. It could be to the Astrodome where they have 15,000 people, it could be anywhere. Soon they may be even opening a shelter in Dutchess County. I'm trying to work on a way to have Bard College authorize the gym as a shelter. . . I just want to help get across the idea to people that the 1.5 million people who are now homeless, jobless, and helpless are not in a position to rebuild their city. We have to help them. And there's never ever been a disaster like this in the United States. And in other situations before the disaster happened, it would be horrible and unthinkable and we would all be shocked, and we would know we should help but not everybody would, and eventually it would kind of shift out of the newspaper, the dirt from the last pages would clear away and we would forget about it. But if everybody actually doesn't help this time it won't shift away because the city will be destroyed, we will lose a major American city. . . People can even think differently about what help means. I feel like people think they're being begged at from every direction. I think ideally help means being empathetic and trying to understand, in a human sense, what it means to have lost that much and imagine yourself in the Superdome. Then you really don't have a choice but to try and help.

If you want to help with the relief effort in New Orleans, look for Red Cross fliers on campus, or send an email to our address, freepress@bard.edu



An example of an above-ground cemetery in New Orleans.



In some places, the waters reached 20 feet or more above their typical levels



All pictures from www.nola.com

hurricane katrina benefit concert

saturday the 10th at 8pm

featuring:

- yikes
- duck dück blood
- dave end
- the hello george quartet
- the washcloth bunnies

accepting \$3 to \$00 donations


red cross personnel will be present to address what bard students can do to help the relief effort

NEW ORLEANS BENEFIT RAFFLE

You could win one of the following fabulous prizes:

- 1) A date with George Hamel (left)
- 2) A "Dirty South" mix CD
- 3) A bachelorette party/romantic getaway
- 4) A love/hate song addressed to the person of your choice
- 5) A portrait of you or your significant other
- 6) A visit from two adorable kittens for one full hour of cuddling
- 7) One cake per week for a month
- 8) A winning Senior Project idea
- 9) A makeover/manicure/haircut for your big night
- 10) dinner out at a Red Hook restaurant of your choosing



Loop 



#10 9/3/06 by Michael Dudeczak



true romance by christian blunda

