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## Bard Free Press, Vol. 10, No. 3 (December 2008)

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BARD FREE PRESS

ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, NY

DECEMBER 2008

VOLUME 10 ISSUE 3



HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME



# Fanmail

Ouch! For more, see pg. 23

Editor:

The FREE PRESS is a legitimizing institution on campus, and I am concerned that the editors are not cogniscent of that. The FREE PRESS creates and enters campus dialogue, and by printing things, determines that those things are relevant and valid and worthy of public attention. The FREE PRESS's editors have the ability to enter certain uninteresting or irrelevant or stupid things and opinions into public eye & discourse, and I think in addition to focusing on making a beautiful paper, the FREE PRESS should garner worthwhile content (and I understand that is hard, but maybe redistribute some energies from glamorizing/trendifying to article-harvesting?).

Because really, in printing poorly written or uninteresting articles, or making a 2-page postery-insert of a mediocre band with, like, seven photos

and a 6-column interview, the FREE PRESS is legitimizing those things and aggrandizing them when really there are probably cooler and more important things to talk about. Like the ARD's art conference (and show?) at the beginning of December. Coco Fusco is coming to speak! She makes really great art! I think more people should know about things like that. I want to know about more things like that. But I guess I am just frustrated with the systems that decide who is relevant and important and worthwhile and who is not, and I am only slightly less arbitrary in what I think is cool and interesting. Still, though, I am not in a place to publicly declare what is important for people to think about, but the FREE PRESS is, so I think the editors need to be conscious about the FREE PRESS's power as a system of legitimation. I think that's valid.

-Emily Derian DeMartino

This letter was written the week before the alluded to ARD lecture with Coco Fusco, Dread Scott, and Paul Chan.

Emily, the tubes are and have always been open. We thank you for your criticism and hope you like our new layout. --Eds.



Emily has a point! HELP THE FREE PRESS SURVIVE/IMPROVE! WRITE, EDIT, LAYOUT, PHOTO, DRAW, CRY, LAUGH, LOVE!

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freepress.bard.edu

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The FREE PRESS is always looking for new staff members to help make the paper bigger and better.

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PHOTOS BY DANIEL TERNA

# 14:52 with Rep. Kirstin Gillibrand

03

**FREE PRESS:** First of all, congratulations on your reelection last month. You were up against Sandy Treadwell, an established and well-funded challenger, with the national Republican party hoping to oust you. Did your margin of victory surprise you?

It did surprise me. I think it was due to the work we had done over the past two years. I think what people reacted positively to was my commitment towards more transparency and open government, and the way we did that over the past two years was visiting local communities. I went to a local bookstore or grocery store or coffee shop and just meet with constituents for an hour or two. And they really appreciated it in my district because they got to talk to me about their concerns and their priorities and things they wanted me to be working on. It also allowed me to open case files for direct constituent services—if people needed help with veterans' benefits, or social security benefits, those kinds of issues. So they really appreciated me doing that, by going into communities directly, places where they really felt comfortable meeting me. And we did a lot of this on the internet: we posted all my earmarks, we posted all my schedules and financial disclosures. I'm the only one in Congress who does all three. So I think that kind of new approach to government service was valued by the district.

**In your first term in Congress, what leadership vacuums have you seen—both in the House and in the Senate—that you might try to fill?**

On the House side, we made progress on energy independence legislation and we made progress on a new direction in Iraq, but in both instances the Senate failed to pass key legislation. And that was very frustrating and troubling.

**Even with a Democratic majority?**

It just wasn't enough, because they need 60 votes. The two big areas where I believe the voters had given the last Congress a mandate, Congress was unable to succeed and unable to put forward what the American people wanted. And I think that was largely due to the fact that the Senate could not get 60 votes, and also due to the fact that the President vetoed key legislation. For example the President vetoed children's health insurance, a \$50 billion commitment to fund children's health insurance for the ten million kids who don't have access to affordable health care. The President vetoed that. The new President will not veto that. We will succeed on that legislation.

Same thing with a new direction in Iraq. I think the new president wants to see a new direction

in Iraq, wants to see troop redeployment in the next year, wants to focus only on terrorism and not policing. So I think there'll be a new approach and that it will pass, unlike in the last Congress.

**Even without the 60 Senate votes the Democrats had hoped for.**

Yep, I think it'll pass, because the veto was the thing we had trouble with.

And last, on energy, we still need to work with the Senate, because the House side really focused on paying-as-you-go. We really want to have fiscal discipline, so when we have spending we want to have cuts elsewhere to offset that new spending. We wanted to fund energy independence—we wanted a \$15 billion fund passed immediately for a research-and-development grant. It passed in the last hour as part of the tax part of the bailout. But the reason it couldn't be passed earlier was that the Senate wouldn't pay for it. They didn't want to take away the tax cuts for the oil companies that we were going to use to pay for it. We wanted to take those tax cuts away and refocus them on tax credits and tax incentives for energy independence. And so those kinds of votes I think are still going to be a challenge, because we still don't have 60 votes in the Senate.

**Related to energy independence, the auto bailout package was just voted down. I assume you were a supporter of that?**

Yes. **Do you think the American auto industry can actually come around to designing products that are energy-efficient?**

We have passed already a \$25 billion fund to invest in alternative energy and new conservation technology specifically for the auto industry. How we agreed to do that was use those funds specifically for the bailout, and make them discontinue product lines that weren't effective, to make them stop paying dividends and bonuses, to make them all restructure the plants to create the cars that were energy-efficient. The Senate couldn't pass that. So now what's happening is, unfortunately, they're going to use \$15 billion in TARP [Troubled Asset Relief Program, aka the Wall Street bailout] funds, to just give to the industry. The TARP legislation, which I did not support, had none of those oversight mechanisms, so they'll still pay bonuses, they'll pay dividends, they won't get rid of dysfunctional product lines. All the work that was put into the bill that I voted for is not present in the TARP. So some restructuring, I fear, may not happen, whereas it would have had to happen for them to access the money on the

bill that we passed.

**So it seems like they'll probably be coming back for more money at some point, but hopefully by then—**

—We'll have a new administration in place, so we can actually help them restructure. They basically need to do all the things they do in bankruptcy, but not call it a bankruptcy. It's the fear that people won't buy cars if they're in bankruptcy. But my view is, do the hard choices of a restructuring, and have the car czar be the same thing as your bank bankruptcy administrator. So make the tough choices, everybody takes a haircut across the board, and re-form a new industry that's actually going to be competitive and build cars that are energy-efficient and that

participate or not. That seems like a red herring. And I haven't heard the Obama Administration say they're going to be anti-Second Amendment.

**You've been supportive of the Second Amendment, which speaks of a "well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state." But it was written at a time when a national army or police force did not exist. Why is the Second Amendment not obsolete?**

Because I really think it goes to the right to bear arms. It's a fundamental right that we've always considered that we have through jurisprudence, through Constitutional debate, for centuries. And so people believe that we have a right to bear arms. So you can't

**do you have for Bard students graduating and trying to settle themselves when everyone is talking about how opportunities are all disappearing?**

I think there is some real job potential in the future for our region. There's very good potential for growth in the high-tech sector, specifically towards high-tech manufacturing and high-tech development. I talked to some students who just graduated from RPI, and a lot of them were actually creating new businesses in the energy sector for alternative energy. One RPI grad created his own business to figure out how to make new insulation for building

U.S. Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand, of Bard's very own 20th Congressional District, was just elected to her second term, and as Governor Paterson chooses an appointment to replace Hillary Clinton in the Senate, Gillibrand has found herself somewhat in the national spotlight. After weeks of requests, the FREE PRESS some-

how managed to convince Gillibrand's fixers to set up a 10-minute phone chat, which we actually managed to stretch into 14:52. Her henchman cut off the interview just before I could ask whether Governor Paterson was accepting bribes.

Excerpts from her conversation with the FREE PRESS's Travis Wentworth.

people will want to buy.

**I think there's a design gap too between American cars and foreign cars—they're just ugly, they're your grandparents' cars. It's all got to be taken into consideration.**

**Switching gears—some time ago I was listening to Saxby Chambliss's acceptance speech after he won the Georgia Senate runoff. He was saying that as soon as the President-elect starting tinkering with the Second Amendment or taking away people's choice of doctors, he'd be the first to stand up in opposition. And his supporters went nuts. But these are things Obama has specifically said he wouldn't do. Why is the GOP rehashing culture wars and inventing controversies?**

That's bizarre. Taking away their doctors, I think, is a reference to universal health care. No one's proposing universal health care—what they're proposing is making Medicare, or something like Medicare, more accessible for people to buy into, which would be very different because that would be just adding more competition to the system, adding a not-for-profit public system that people could choose if they want. So you're not taking away doctors if you just create Medicare for all that people can buy into, and still have the choice of whether they want to

just rewrite that fundamental belief that people feel that that's what the Second Amendment is talking about. For my district, for upstate New York, people enjoy hunting. It's not only a sport, it's also a part of how they provide for their families. For many families in the north country, the meat that's on their table is what was hunted over the weekend, whether it's deer, or duck, or other types of game. That's what we do in upstate New York. I come from a hunting family, my mom is a great hunter, she shoots the Thanksgiving turkey. My brother is a great hunter, my dad is a great hunter. We all like to fish. One of the bounties of upstate New York is having vibrant, beautiful natural resources, and you can be in the woods and you can hunt and fish and have that food for your family, and also to enjoy the outdoors and be stewards of the environment.

**Obviously you have to balance that with smart gun safety laws. We should have hunter safety—every hunter has to take a hunter safety course to get your license. It's a weekend course, it takes two full eight-hour days. So in New York State we've got very good regulations to make sure people are safe with weapons. You've got to know how to load and unload and use your guns properly.**


**The job market right now isn't exactly welcoming. What advice**

materials literally out of a plant. So it was not only green, it was energy-efficient, it was cost-efficient, and it was in fact more effective. So I think for young people graduating they should be looking towards entrepreneurial businesses focused on the energy market that are high-tech oriented, because that's the area of growth for our region. We have AMD coming into Saratoga County, and when that comes in there will be a lot of other businesses that will grow around it because they like to collaborate. So there will be opportunities for development and for manufacturing and for management, all in the high-tech sector, particularly in the energy market.

**And that's all happening right here nearby.**

Yep. It is, I mean we've got wind, we've got solar, we've got fuel cells, we've got hydropower, we've got cellulosic ethanol, we've got all these different opportunities for energy. If we can focus our graduates on those businesses, those are going to be the growth areas that the federal government is going to support through tax incentives and research/development grants. So that's the area of growth. So I'd focus people on the new energy market, for research, for development, for manufacturing, for management. All of the various aspects, there's going to be growth there.





MY SEARCH BEGAN WITH AN AMBIGUOUS QUESTION: WHAT IS THE STATE OF RACIAL AFFAIRS ON BARD'S CAMPUS?

## 'Tricky Business'

*Conversations about the  
Status of Race, Diversity, and  
Multiculturalism on  
Bard Campus*

BY ABBY FERLA

I had formulated a theory that Bard students address race in terms of how it applies in the so-called "real world," as I listened to students debate what Obama's skin color meant for America, but realized that I had never heard the same students discuss how the construct of race affected them on a daily basis- and that I was actually afraid to ask them. As far as I'm concerned, as a student at an institution where I can say "fuck" in class and in a newspaper article

without any reproach, a college where other students routinely get naked onstage, where free speech is said to be valued above all other rights, the very fact that there is an intellectual conversation that I am genuinely petrified of having speaks volumes about the nature of race relations on this campus.

Which is how I came to sit awkwardly in the Dean of Students office staring at paintings of owls and photographs of her sons, observing Erin Cannan's shrewd admin-

istrative skills as she and I danced around the subject of race. She has a talent for saying just enough that one has no questions left to ask but never quite gets to the heart of the matter. In the interview she mentioned some of the problems she addresses on a regular basis, saying such things as "there are students who don't necessarily feel safe here- and some of it's institutional, but some of it comes from things said in class or in the lunchroom with peers, unconscious remarks. These things can cause pain," but didn't dwell on specifics. Later I caught a glimpse of her personal opinions when we engaged in a short discussion on the resistance on campus to "political correctness." Mostly, however, she spoke of the current progress and future goals of the two year old Diversity commission. Erin was proud to be able to tell me that last May the college hired Cheryl Kaye Symister-Masterson as the new Director of Multicultural Recruitment and Retention in the Office of Admission. It has also completed the search for a new Dean of Multicultural Affairs, who will begin in January. As to where there continues to be a need for improvement, the titles of the board's three divisions sum up its sense of where progress must be made on campus: Pedagogy and Curriculum; Campus Climate; and Recruitment and Retention.

The next day I spoke with Carlos Apostle, who met me the next day in the Campus Center along with a friend of his, Eli Strauss. As members of RISE, a TLS project mentored by Bard professor Charles Walls that seeks to advance the population of students of color on campus, they highlighted an inner tension that they perceive between minority groups at Bard. Echoing one of Erin Cannan's earlier assertions that a lot of the conflict on campus is tied to economic status, Apostle immediately corrected me when I implied that privileged and white are synonymous. "There's a class structure," he says. "It's not students of color versus privileged kids. Many of the students of color come from privileged backgrounds." Apostle and Strauss told me of a rift between these students and those who come from poorer neighborhoods. They also frequently alluded to tension between different minority organizations, some of which they told me are very exclusive. As Apostle has observed, "there are two groups on campus. There is a group of radical students of color and people who say, 'We are privileged to be here. Let's make it better place.'"

Apostle and Strauss made a few points in our interview that I encountered on several occasions over the course of my research. First, they provided institutional reasons for the lack of diversity at Bard. Apostle told me that "black faculty professors cannot stay at Bard." Why?

As Strauss explains, "it's because there aren't other professors like them. You can recruit

students of color to come to an institution, but if you don't recruit faculty to act as mentors, they won't stay." As a result, they told me that students of color often don't feel as though their image is reflected in the institution or in the student body, using this to explain why "A lot of students of color here graduate feeling like they've been in prison."

"Black students feel kind of exposed," Apostle said.

Apostle and Strauss spoke at length about different conferences they have attended, explaining the importance of networking with other schools like Vassar, Williams, and St. Lawrence. When I asked them how Bard compares to other schools, they explained that the school lacks an ALANA (an acronym short for African, Latino, Asian and Native American, but often used in place of "multicultural") house, multicultural space, network of alumni of color, a dean of color, and a published history of its past diversity, all of which they told me most other accredited colleges can provide students. However, they added that the administration has been very receptive to criticism and ideas for progress. "The deans here will help out," Apostle acknowledged.

When I asked whether they thought the campus is integrated, they laughed. "In Kline, just look at who sits with who," said Strauss.

Following their adamant suggestion that I speak with Paul Marienthal, director of the TLS program, I found myself in his office as he voiced his concerns about the article and cautioned me not to oversimplify the matter. "Discussing this in print is tricky business. These are complicated conversations. If someone has an issue, they should find the person they have an issue with and talk to them," he said.

Providing context for understanding, he told me, "It's very hard to integrate an expensive liberal arts college in the Northeast. Look, this isn't news. This is two or three centuries of being second class citizens." When we spoke of the factions, race-related and otherwise, that students often break into on campus, he explained something everyone can relate to. "A lot of this is developmental. For the first time at twenty people are going, 'Wow, I'm one of these and not one of these. They all come from different backgrounds and are meeting lots of different people. That's confusing and sometimes it creates openness and sometimes it creates defensiveness and sometimes it creates anger. It creates the full range.'"

Adwoa Adusei, founder of the Anti-Racism Discourse echoed this sentiment a few days later in Down the Road. "It's insidious the way it happens," she said of how students of color feel uncomfortable on campus. "Most liberal arts colleges are majority white and minority students of color, and this isn't necessarily a reflection of the way it is in the real world. Things become very polarized.

You realize you're a minority, and this can be a big shock for students of color." She told me that when she first arrived at Bard, she sensed a certain degree of racial tension. She recounted, "It wasn't as diverse as I wanted it to be." This sense of isolation led to the creation of the ARD, which she says started in order to provide a way for students to come together and deal with matters of race, to talk about difference, and to share problems they experience.

When I asked Adusei if she believes the campus is integrated, she explained that Bard students often self-segregate, but that the community is integrated "in that there are pockets in which you can immerse yourself and where you can integrate yourself. It's like any other liberal arts college, but it could be better than any other liberal arts college if it gets its act together." As to the progress that she's seen at Bard in her five semesters, Adusei responded, "It's hard to say because as a member of ARD my relation to the way Bard is progressing is a little skewed. We try to go the administration, but they're very slow in responding. We're a small group and it's easy for the admin to brush us off."

Change happens, she later clarified, but it happens very slowly. Adusei and the members of the ARD believe that some institutional progress will come from recently created initiatives such as the a implementation of the Diversity Commission, increased recruitment of students of color, and a rethinking of the curriculum. "When you look at the curriculum--FYSEM, the Rethinking Difference requirement--there are classes that deal with race, but they don't really get to the heart of the matter. We tend to approach it in a very historicized way. We speak of it in an academic manner, but it's a lived experience, and sometimes people don't really

told me earlier, there are plans in place to convert a few rooms in the admissions office into a space for affinity groups, but Adusei cites the delays in doing so as an example of how the administration moves slowly in response to their suggestions. Adusei explained that a multicultural center would have a library, hold lectures, provide a space for the entire student body to go to learn about systems of oppression in lieu of a department of race relations, be a space for activism, and serve as an important tool for recruiting a more diverse student body. "I think [a multicultural center] is crucial to how Bard invests itself towards diversity. If we really believe that we can be committed to diversity we need a symbol for outsiders that we are actually committed to it. My friend always says that Bard wanted math and science students and they built the new math and science center," she says. Due to this apparent lack of investment in diversity, Adusei told me, "it's very hard for me to tell [prospective students of color] truthfully that 'If you come you will have a really open and wonderful time.' I could lie just to get them to get their foot in the door, or I could tell them that there are a lot of things that we still have to struggle to get."

I asked her what the role of white students should be in the discourse. She paused for a moment. "It's about recognizing instances of solidarity and where you pick and choose your battles. It's about being supportive. It's about having an open mind and open ear. We want to respect everyone's opinions, but where someone comes out and says that we are actually racist--which is actually impossible--and criticizes the way we talk about racism and teach people to learn the idea that everyone is a racist--what white students need to be is more supportive, more open

tion and a white friend dismisses anger or hurt as an overreaction or misunderstanding. She ended the interview saying, "There are a lot of ways that we could all be better about how we address race on campus."

If we are to assume that race is a lived phenomenon, then in order to conceptualize its role in our lives, we need to share our experiences with it. Because Bard students come here from different backgrounds and with different lived experiences, by no means do I suggest that any interview or set of interviews could accurately depict "the state of racial affairs" on campus, because ultimately there are as many statuses as there are students. "Students of color" do not comprise a singular entity with one view point just as there is no one group of "white students." However unanswerable my original question may be, what is clear is that we are not having campus-wide discussions about how race affects our school.

When reading this article, a peer responded to Adusei's comments saying, "There are a couple of points here that are presented as common sense but are anything but. First of all, I don't know how it's impossible for minority students to be racist themselves. Secondly, I don't quite get the thing about 'the way we talk about racism and teach people to learn the idea that everyone is a racist.'" That he does not even understand the basis of an argument that a fellow student assumes to be common sense signals that discourses on race here may be confined into small private spaces. They may each be having conversations about race, but they are not having the same conversation. I'm not entirely sure that the majority of white students are even aware of the debates and efforts surrounding diversity at Bard- and a portion of our student body currently engages in debates, conflicts, and efforts on a daily basis.

We need to all come to the table with a sophisticated understanding of race as a social construct and as a lived experience in order to determine where we have progressed and where we still need to do so. As Paul Marienthal said, "People have to have some courage and come to it and have civil conversations."

Join us in the discourse. The FREE PRESS invites responses of all types.



think of it that way."

Like Strauss and Apostle, Adusei attested to the acute need for a multicultural space on campus that would foster a sense of community, safety, and inclusion for students of color. As Erin Cannan

about how they think about us and our race, not to try to find faults and to question what the students of color feel about race." She continued to tell me that it can be hurtful when a minority student feels offended by a comment or situa-



# Kline & Library Renovations Are Top Priorities



## New dorms and student space put on hold

BY GRACE DWYER

An extensive renovation of Kline Commons and an addition to the library will be the first projects funded through Bard's latest capital campaign, a three-year fund drive aimed at raising \$500 million for the college by 2010. \$150 million of this money will go towards building and renovation projects, with the rest reserved for faculty salaries and scholarships.

Kline will be expanded – possibly, though not probably, as early as summer 2009 – up the hill to meet Griffith's Walk, the promenade extending from Ludlow. The tentative plans include larger student and faculty dining rooms and three additional floors, with meeting rooms, classrooms, a bookstore and café. Design work will be done by Cathy Simon of SMWM, the California and New York-based firm responsible for the Bertelsmann Campus Center and the Olin buildings.

The 27,000-square-foot library expansion will cost upwards of \$17 million and will mimic the yellow Venturi part of the library.

Also in the top tier of projects are permanent dorms, a renovation of the gym, and a classroom building where the Old Gym now stands. Student space and a black-box theatre to replace the Old Gym performance space are not featured—as Vice President of the Administration Jim Brudvig explained, “the campaign goals were formulated in advance of the master plan—there will be adjustments as we go.”

The master plan Brudvig refers to was developed last semester by SMWM. In consultation with students, faculty, and administrators, the design firm outlined an expansive plan for the foreseeable future of the physical campus. Construction priorities are determined when administrators make recommendations to the Board of

Trustees based on student need. “The institution relies on its consultants and architects to make sure designs fit in with both student need and Bard's master plan,” said Brudvig. “It's very important to get student input and we do it in that way.”

How well does the top tier of projects really reflect student need? An informal online survey with over 80 student respondents indicates that students think dorms are the most important priority (56% said they would like to see dorms built or renovated first.) Student space came in second at 21%, with Kline and the library falling shortly behind at twenty and sixteen percent, respectively. Most students who listed dorms as their top priority emphasized the need for permanent housing. This student's response was typical: “Bard's top priorities are looking pretty to prospective

donors. Can we please get rid of the trailers clogging this campus and make some nice dormitories?”

In a question that asked students to rank the buildings most important to their academic and emotional wellbeing, dorms also came in first, followed by academic space, dining space, student space, and finally gym/exercise space. Other options rated by single responders as “very important” included roads and parking, an ALANA/multicultural center, music/art practice rooms, environmental responsibility, and an alternative late-night study space.

Brudvig agrees that the conflict between student life amenities is a false problem, saying, “we recognize that dorms are really important at the same time.” A strategy

for replacing temporary dorms is included in the master plan, and once the money is raised, smaller dorms like those in the Village only take four months to build.

Of the 1,490 beds now on campus, fourteen percent are either in trailers or buildings like the treehouses that will be replaced by permanent dorms. The first step calls for removing Williams and building three new Village dorms (60 beds) on the dirt road that leads to the soccer fields. The second step will replace new additions Hudson and Catskill with new dorms on the quad outside the Campus Center. The third and final phase replaces the treehouses in Cruger Quad with new permanent dorms, upping the total number of beds to around 1,555. The first two phases will eliminate temporary dorms on campus, but it is unclear when work on dorms will begin. Dorms at Bard on average cost \$75,000 per bed.

Another highly-ranked student priority, student space, has also been set aside until more money can be raised. The renovation of a red storage barn was originally slated for this fall, but was postponed when local contractors estimated costs of over \$980,000. On-campus architect Robert Nielson then eliminated the planned second floor and submitted a revised version of the blueprints. These plans now carry a price tag of \$750,000, still more than can be drawn from the college's general operating budget. As student space is not one of the projects currently included in the capital campaign, Brudvig estimates that over \$400,000 must be independently raised before construction can begin. Again, once funds are available, the construction process is relatively short at around 90 days.

The capital campaign is one third of the way to its goal and, according to Brudvig, so far largely unaffected by the economic downturn.

What building would you like to see built or renovated (some people gave more than one answer.) [66 responders]

37/66 - dorms (56%)	1/66 - photo lab
14/66 - student space (21%)	1/66 - ALANA center
13/66 - Kline (20%)	1/66 - conservatory building
10/66 - the library (15%)	1/66 - the Gym
3/66 - alternative study space (5%)	1/66 - Olin
2/66 - parking (3%)	
1/66 - bathrooms in older dorms	

Which on-campus building is most important to your academic and emotional wellbeing? (Four is “very important,” one is “important.”) [87 responders]

Dorms 3.67
Academic Space 3.44
Dining facilities 3.21
Student activities space 3.06
Gym/exercise space 2.28

Other options rated by single responders as “very important” included roads and parking, an ALANA/multicultural center, music/art practice rooms, environmental responsibility, and an alternative late-night study space.

# The Future of Campus Solar-darity

As GM flounders, students in New-Detroit-on-Hudson are engineering the next big thing: the sun.

ILLUSTRATION BY BEN NEUFELD

cycle aims to cut coal and other fossil fuels out of the loop.

A few months ago, BCEP (the Bard Center for Environmental Policy) was approached by a resident of Red Hook who had invested in an electric bike and built his own single solar-powered charging station. He suggested that Bard build its own station, and so began a campus solar initiative. The project eventually found its way to Laurie Husted, director of BERD, who found the initiative attractive because it is "discreet, with a clear beginning and end." No run-away solar trains. She sent out a memo inviting all interested students to help.

Bard currently has five electric vehicles on campus: three golf carts used by Aramark, B&G, and the Athletic Dept., as well as two electric bikes, which students may have witnessed being ridden around campus by Ken Cooper. Although not a grand fleet, they are enough to satisfy the initiative's 'start small' goals, and so it will begin by offering solar energy to these five vehicles. The project will continue developing as interest and funding augments.

On the projects team, the resident expert on photovoltaic energy is freshman Jonah Most, who owes much of his experience to the place in which he grew up. A native of Berkeley, Calif., Most witnessed first-hand the nation's first and greatest city-wide solar initiative to date, in which the local govern-

ment loaned citizens the funds to install solar panels on their roofs. With a friend in high school, Most built a solar-powered skateboard.

The panels and adjacent charging station, Most explained, will be built in the Ludlow parking lot, a location with as little shade as possible. At its peak, it will be an 800-watt system, collecting and storing the sun's energy in batteries as the vehicles are being used during the daytime hours of direct sunlight. Power will then be transferred from the batteries to the vehicles at night. 800 watts is not a great deal of energy, but it will be sufficient in during the preliminary stages of the project during which only five vehicles need energizing.

Husted has high hopes for the project, not only because of its potential within the Bard community, but because of a chance for federal support as well. "I believe," she explains, that "with the investment in solar R&D that Obama promises, we'll see some improvements in the technology very soon and the cost will come down as the energy output comes up." Research and development is exactly what the solar energy needs. In the past decade, even though R&D for solar energy has been limited, scientists have been able to raise the efficiency of solar energy considerably. Currently, the best solar panels function at a 42 percent efficiency level, but many predict that this number will rise above 50 percent with the increased investment in the industry. At present, commercial solar panels can only absorb energy from visible light. Companies could eventually market panels

that absorb non-visible light as well. In fact, William Yuan, a 12-year-old boy in Beaverton, Ore. recently created a prototype 3D solar panel cube that enables the absorption of the entire spectrum of visible to ultra-violet light, 500 times more energy than commercially available panels, and 30 times more than the most advanced of photovoltaic systems.

This project could open up a plethora of possibilities on campus. The two electric bikes could be made available for students, a prospect which has already been discussed among certain administrators, such as cycling enthusiasts Ken Cooper and Jim Brudvig. More small vehicles could be purchased as old vehicles are up for replacement. The small station currently being designed may only be a precursor to a much bigger station, one that could even be shared with community members like the one with the electric bike who first approached Bard and sparked the idea. With the current instability of oil prices and geopolitics, the investment in electronic vehicles may soon become a more attractive option to American citizens if solar options become readily available. A large-scale solar power station would therefore not only promote greener lifestyles, improve town-gown appreciation and grant the college more much-admired media mayhem, but it may eventually even make or at least save the college money, an outlook that will attract the most fiscally conservative of administrators in this time of financial presentiment.

To participate in or find out more about the project, contact Laurie Husted at [husted@bard.edu](mailto:husted@bard.edu).

BY TIMOTHY PALMA

Hear ye, hear ye, beach bums! It looks as though you, our bronzed friends on campus, soon will no longer be the only beneficiaries of solar heat. Two thirds of this planet's solar energy is absorbed in the ground, and it's high time that you share your harnesses! Students and the Bard Environmental Resource Department, with the help of community members, are taking the first step forward, putting into action a solar panel project that will energize the community's electric vehicles. While the promise of electric vehicles has been dampened by revelations that electricity is not always as clean as it may seem, this new project for a self-contained power

## HOUSING

# Trailer Trash

Hudson and Catskill are developing Bard's chronic underdevelopment.

BY REBECCA WEBB

I look around the room my roommate and I have opted to call "cozy" instead of small. We have Andy Warhol prints from the college section of Allposters.com that make us feel so original, hung thoughtfully on the wall. Within the clutter and atmospheric lighting from my string of frosted light bulbs, courtesy of Target, I almost forget where I'm living. But then I walk out my door, through the hallways reminiscent of those in hospital waiting areas (I can't stop to use the bathroom on my way to class--it's being worked on today by strangers for unknown reasons), and make my way out of the florescent lighting onto the front steps and remember: I'm living in a trailer.

I am one of the freshmen living in Hudson. For those not familiar, it's the new dorm that looks vaguely like an air-conditioning unit in the field next to Robins. I, along with a good deal of Hudson's residents, moved from Williams, the more old-school trailer located behind the toasters. Even as Bard is vigorously developing its campus, it seems that improvements on the housing front, are, well, still developing.

The process of getting to this aluminum sided Mecca of our triple-room lives was a bumpy one. Williams, our smelly, decrepit, possibly black mold-filled (if surprisingly spacious) home of more than two months at Bard was originally meant to be a temporary residence, for obvious reasons. Countering the dorm's decrepitude was one reason that con-

tributed to Williams's survival: its former residents' claim of the great community atmosphere the dorm seemed to allow. This being the case, it is strange, then, that this year's incoming freshmen were meant to live there, together, in a 54-person community, only to be separated after what was supposed to be three weeks. We were confronted with the daunting task of what we called voting someone off the island. Reslife disapproved of such terminology.

But we were put off by the consequences of alienating what at the time were the only people we knew, so we put off the move, and the move date was rescheduled nearly every week. One boy in the dorm had his things fully packed and unpacked three times in the process. We were bombarded with baked goods and promised pizza parties to compensate for the discomfort triples had created. A specific example of such discomfort was the mold that grew under the bed of one Williams resident. Her window was broken and rain leaked into the room, leaving the carpet behind her bed wet, and because there was no room to maneuver the furniture, the carpet stayed wet and actually grew mold. The girls lived with this for weeks.

And when relief finally came, it was in the form of a rushed packing job three days before the scheduled move, which was now to take place on parents' weekend. An email in the middle of the week excitedly told us that we would be moving up to Hudson on Friday-



COURTESY OF AUTHOR

-if it passed an inspection that morning--and for some of us who were lucky enough, our parents would even be there to help! I didn't think to point out that maybe my parents had something better to do (like buy me dinner).

A few weeks later, as a sort of tribute to the experience, a female Hudson resident happily proclaimed that she would be dressing up as "trailer trash" for Halloween--barely a cos-

tume, save the scary cost of wasted tuition. This proclamation--and the brilliant follow-through, I might add--shows that despite the fact that there are men in the girls' bathroom, and dressers that have to be nailed into our walls as not to fall over and unsuspectingly crush us to death, the first year residents of these trailers have maintained their sense of humor. Even more, they've grown to really love their trashy Bard roots. The trailers do seem to foster a strange sense of community among its residents, but probably for all the wrong reasons.

Such bonding, to be attributed more to the residents than the residence, and relatively spacious rooms do not seem to be reason enough to keep plopping temporary dorms around campus, and in choice spots at that. They only leave trouble in their rectangular wakes. As I write this, pieces of Catskill dorm are arriving. Residents of Bartlett are meant to move in there. These students are now living two to a room in what were meant to be singles.

As we freshmen now know, the sad truth is that these brand new trailers, with their clean carpeting, washing machines that sometimes work, and a lovely cleaning woman who often leaves coffee in the kitchen, are destined to have the same fate as Williams--their less-magnanimously-named predecessor. So even if part of me likes the view from my appliance-shaped home, that doesn't discount everything else. I'm a freshman, I'm not stupid. No matter how many Andy Warhol posters I buy for \$5.99.

The emperor has no clothes, people--he does, however, have cupcakes, which is fine for now.



# National & Local Victories on Nov. 4: Obama, Gillibrand & McKeon

*And there was much rejoicing.*



BY LUKE BOLTON

Election day is long over, and the chalk calling students to get out to vote has nearly faded off the steps in front of Kline. Most students, even the most active, have recovered from stresses and pressures brought on by working for a campaign or engaging in heated political discussions day after day about experience, mavericks, and Tina Fey.

The enormity and historic nature of what was accomplished on the national level is staggering. The repercussions are not felt only in the United States. Reactions across the world have been powerful and immediate. Although few states went as far as Kenya and declared a national holiday, political attitudes toward the U.S. have indeed shifted dramatically. Politicians in Iraq negotiating the agreement on the status of U.S. forces, which details the terms of the American army's future there, came to the negotiating table with greater optimism and hope because they knew that America had elected a president who they believed would keep America's half of the bargain and remove troops on time.

Obama has been acknowledged across the world as a person who has a greater understanding of diversity and a man with whom cooperation will be much easier. This is a sharp contrast from our outgoing president, who is seen by many to have little political will to understand the diversity of the world. As a college student who became politically aware and active under the Bush

administration, it is nice finally hear words of praise and hope from abroad and at home about our next president.

But what about the other candidates on the ballot? Bard students turned out to vote in nearly record numbers with over 600 people voting locally and 100% of registered students in Tivoli voting! However, in the wave of euphoria brought on by Obama's victory, it might be easy to forget who else Bard students helped elect this year. On the congressional level, Kirsten Gillibrand won her bid for reelection, defeating Sandy Treadwell in a hotly contested campaign. When she won for the first time in 2006, Gillibrand was the first Democrat elected to represent this district since the Civil War, and there are still about 80,000 more registered Republicans here than Democrats. This race was not only significant because Gillibrand had been targeted as one of the GOP's primary targets in their bid to unseat Democratic congressmen, but also because of how each campaign was run.

Over \$11 million was raised by both sides over the election cycle, with \$5 million coming from Treadwell's personal funds. In addition to not funding her election from her own pocket, Gillibrand also focused her campaign on canvassing: paying volunteers to go door to door to talk about her campaign. In comparison with Treadwell's decision to spend much of his money on negative advertising, Gillibrand's more personal approach repre-

sents a type of politics that I would like to see more often. It was evident in her campaign that she cared about the opinions of every one of the people she represented, and her approach was validated with her decisive victory over Treadwell. On the national level, her victory was important because she will be a strong voice in support of Obama's national agenda.

In the race for State Senate, Republican Steve Saland won his bid for reelection against Democratic challenger Ken Dow, and in the race for State Assembly, Republican incumbent Marc Molinaro beat his Democratic rival Anne Rubin. Both of these races were uphill battles from the start for the Democratic candidates.

But the encouraging news comes from much closer to home. Democrat Robert McKeon pulled through with a strong victory over the Republican incumbent Robert Latimer for the town council. McKeon's victory means that the Town Council now has a Democratic majority for the first time since there basically was a Town Council in Red Hook. Not only that, but McKeon won by over 800 votes, which means that Bard was not voting against the wishes of the community, but rather reaffirming a Democratic trend in the area as a whole.

Of all the races below the presidency, this race will yield the most tangible benefits for Bard students. For years, students have been asking why we have not gotten a polling place

on campus and the answer has been basically that Republicans controlled three out of the five seats on the Town Council. Now that Democrats have three seats, they can make tangible progress to ensure that we will get a polling place on campus. McKeon was also a strong advocate of connecting Bard students with local politics, and we might see the establishment of a student representative to the Town Council, or arrangements for local internships. Finally, Bard students should begin to see a greater focus on environmental policy that we care so much about.

The elections were a momentous event in both local and national history and it is important to remember that the phone calls, canvassing and get-out-the-vote work of Bard students helped to make these victories possible. It is unfortunate, however, that certain races in other states turned the day bittersweet. California, along with several other states, passed propositions that outlawed gay marriage. This is a powerful example that simply electing Obama to the presidency is only the first step in what is a long struggle for the rights and freedoms of all Americans no matter their race, faith or sexual orientation. If we are to follow Obama's words and believe in our own ability to bring change to Washington, then his victory is only the first in a series of stepping stones, a strong foundation upon which we can stand to push for even greater achievements than were made on November 4th.

PHOTO BY DANIEL TERNA

BY CHRISTIAN MANZI

People in Africa have mixed feelings towards the U.S.: on the one hand, some see it as a land of opportunity, a land of tolerance, an example of a true democracy, and the home of the best economy in the world. On the other hand, it can be viewed as an arrogant country, a country always trying to get involved in others' business

chance to be a presidential candidate, because his father is not native to the country. But critics also point out that the U.S. has taken 200 years to arrive where it is now, so there is no need to push the black continent, which only has 50 years of independence.

A very controversial issue is the creation of the African Command, AFRICOM, which aims at

ing in rooms or public places. Young people wear baggy jeans and large jerseys, trying to look like American rappers. Their hope is to go to the U.S., where they believe they could pursue a career. Many believe they can even compete with 50 Cent if they are in the same environment and have the same means. Akon is taken as an example to support

velop, we need the private sector to be active like in the U.S.," argues Paul Kagame, the president of Rwanda, where before 1994, most businesses were owned by the government. Now some have been privatized but the government still owns others. The economic liberalization takes time, and some success has already been seen, but in many cases

# How Africans View the United States of America

*Fierce Obamanism is raising questions in Africa about the appropriateness of the U.S. as a role model.*

and a country that uses favoritism in its foreign policy. Politically speaking, the U.S. is believed to have a democratic system that works well. There are elections every four years, and those who lose, accept this fact without creating any sort of problems.

"African leaders should learn a lesson from the speech of Senator McCain after losing elections," a South African University student commented on Free Talk Radio. "He showed his political maturity."

Another remarkable aspect of Obama's election, according to some Africans, is that his father was not American. A French newspaper in Senegal wrote that if Obama had been running there, he would never have been given a

having American troops in Africa for the specific purpose of fighting members of Al Qaida on the continent. Many Africans see these armed forces as agents of neo-colonialism. "They are in Germany, in Saudi Arabia, and now they want to come to Africa. This is unacceptable. It is a new form of colonization," lamented former foreign affairs minister of Guinea, Francois Fall during the last meeting of the African Union (AU) in Cairo, Egypt. Despite heavy opposition, Liberia is likely to host the American troops, in large part due to its desire not to disrupt longstanding relations with the U.S.

From a cultural standpoint, Africans often see posters of Tupac, Eminem or Michael Jordan hang-

their argument.

Parents, however, criticize American music by saying that it destroys African culture and traditions. "Look at our youth, they are lost in marijuana, they don't respect elders, they are having a spirit of rebelling. This is what they copy from Americans on T.V.?" asked an angry headmaster at a graduation ceremony in Northern Kenya. However, a dramatic new testament to power American influence in Africa can be seen in the surge of infants who are being named Obama or Michelle.

When it comes to the economy, some Africans see the U.S. as having the best economy in the world and many countries want to follow its liberalism as an example. "For this country to de-

African economies are still tied to the dollar. However, hardliners see African development differently. "Louis Farrakhan was right when he said that the U.S. owes Africa. Our people were taken by force as slaves and work to develop Uncle Sam's country. So, they must pay as back," said a Nigerian Muslim leader in Kano, the northern part of the most populous (148 million) African country.

Farrakhan's views are certainly extreme, but the U.S. could help out by lending expertise. President-elect Obama would do well to match the good will towards him in Africa by strengthening the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Peace Corps.

## ADVERTISEMENT

### Crisis Seminar Draws Hundreds

By Rob Ross

Without spending \$700 billion to \$2 trillion suspending taxes, investing in national infrastructure, helping 2 million homeowners keep their houses and assisting struggling financial institutions, the US will likely lose more than \$7 trillion of wealth before the economy recovers. So argued Bard's Executive Vice President Dimitri Papadimitriou during last Thursday's Seminar on the Global Economic and Financial Crisis sponsored by the Students for People's Relief.

Speaking in front of a capacity crowd in the MPR, Professor Papadimitriou and Levy Research Scholar Gennaro Zezza, University of Cassino, Italy, spoke on the severity and extent of the current economic crisis, as well as possible solutions. This was only the latest in events hosted by the SPR; other events include a Seminar on Global Poverty, a special film screening on the eve of International Day of Peace- 21st September and a year-long fundraising campaign that has so far generated more than \$7,000 for international charity organizations. "We feel that the crisis will lead to increasing levels of poverty in areas already in desperate need of aid," Club Head Ashfaq Kabir, ju-

nior, said. "We can be in a better position to help those in need if we inform ourselves of the situation."

SPR has been working tirelessly for over a year to raise awareness on global poverty in Bard campus. "I want to remind us of our individual capacity to do at least something to help the world," Ashfaq said, "and take a single step that might someday have a global impact". He added that "SPR is not trying to solve poverty rather we are trying to unify everyone to stand shoulder to shoulder and do something in a small scale and lessen the impact of poverty in our community"

This was a rare opportunity to get first hand analysis from experts in macroeconomic policy and financial markets. Professor Papadimitriou began his comments with a thorough outline of the severity of the financial crisis, reporting that the US had already lost nearly \$4 trillion in wealth, 5 million homeowners were delinquent or in foreclosure, consumer confidence continues to fall with home prices and the stock market, and fourth quarter growth was expected to be between -3.5% and -4%. As of last Wednesday, the stock market was at its lowest point since 1982. "It's up to President Obama and the new Congress to decide just how bad this recession is going to be," Professor Papadimitriou said.

The situation in Europe might actually be worse, Pro-

fessor Zezza argued, since European states don't have the same level of spending discretion that the US has. Financial integration between the US and Europe has meant that as the US economy goes, so goes the EU. But while the US government can deficit spend its way out of trouble, European states deficits are restricted to 3% of GDP or less. While some states are not suffering as much as others, in general the EU is experiencing the same problems the US is.

The impact of the current crisis is exponentially worse in nations that are less developed than Europe and North America. Rising food prices are threatening millions with starvation and deprivation-related illnesses, and at a time when the World Food Program needs more money simply to meet the same level of aid it provided last year, contributing states are feeling budgetary crunches that limit their ability to help. The burden of the current crisis will fall hardest on the neediest.

The US and EU need to lead the way with aggressive fiscal measures, Professor Papadimitriou argued. Politicians should forget about tax rebates like the one granted earlier this year and spend more money on infrastructure development. Among our nations most urgent needs are \$628 billion for roads, \$268 billion for schools, \$115 billion for potable water, \$41.6 for hazardous waste disposal and

\$50 for electrical and energy infrastructure. In all, Professor Papadimitriou estimates that \$1.6 trillion should be spent on infrastructure in the next five years. This sort of spending has a higher multiplier effect in the economy; for every \$1 the government spends on infrastructure, \$1.30 is generated in the economy.

In addition, Professor Zezza argued, both the US and the EU need to work towards stemming debt financed consumer spending, as well as addressing the growing income gap, particularly in the US. In the short term, the US and EU need to act immediately to restore investor's confidence in other market participants. Regulations on federally protected financial institutions need to limit their participating in risky speculation, and overextended homeowners need aid.

The seminar also included a slide show projection that focused on interesting statistics including the fact that more than 3 billion people live on less than \$2.50 a day. In addition, clips from the national media showing the visceral impact of the crisis on the nation and politician's responses. The seminar was attended both by students, as well as faculty and administrators, and the response of the audience was extremely favorable. For more information about the Student's for People's Relief email: [sprbard@gmail.com](mailto:sprbard@gmail.com) **Students for People's Relief**



# Newsflash: Bard Is Growing

Work-study was capped at 15 hrs./week. Administration thought students could use more time for writing and thinking.

BY CONOR BEATH

This month's student government forum, held on Nov. 12, 2008, focused on issues about on-campus student employment. Both Denise Ackerman, Director of Financial Aid, and Micki Strawinski, Student Employment Manager, were on hand to discuss changes that have occurred over the past few years, and shed some light on the administrative reasoning behind these new policies.

The most contentious and talked-about change concerned the new limitations of student work schedules to fifteen hours per pay period. This reduction has left many students unable to meet their financial needs, and, subsequently, disgruntled. Furthermore, this policy was put in place by the administration without any dialogue between staff and student government, much less the student employees.

According to Ackerman and Strawinski, the limit on student hours was decided last year in a meeting between various deans and vice presidents including Michele Dominy and Mark Halsey. The unilateral imposition of this policy left many students confused by the opacity of the college's logic. Ackerman cited two reasons in clarification, one economic and the other academic.

Economically, the logic of the administration seems best articulated by Ackerman: "this college has been growing." Indeed, that might seem obvious to anyone who has cared to follow matriculation statistics or listened to the concerns expressed by upperclassmen. Apparently, the number of Bard students requiring work-study grows by 5% a year, far surpassing the estimated 2% increase in federal grants per academic year. As one sophomore, Leah Murphy, put it: "I don't know why the administration keeps letting in more students when they clearly don't have the resources or the housing to accommodate them."

Academically, according to Ackerman, the administration felt that it was important to limit the amount of hours so students

could focus on the intensity of their academic load. After quite a few objections from both the government and students in attendance, Ackerman insolently asked whether students came to Bard "to learn or to work?" Nevertheless, she did attempt an explanation by referencing other colleges that use limits, such as Vassar's 10 hours and Skidmore's prescribed nine hours for freshman. Yet, as a student at the forum remarked, Bard students chose to come to Bard, not Vassar or Skidmore. When pressed for specific academic reasons, Ackerman was unable to give any real answer. The logic of the administration's limitations seems at best anecdotal, with no polling or hard facts to support their decisions.

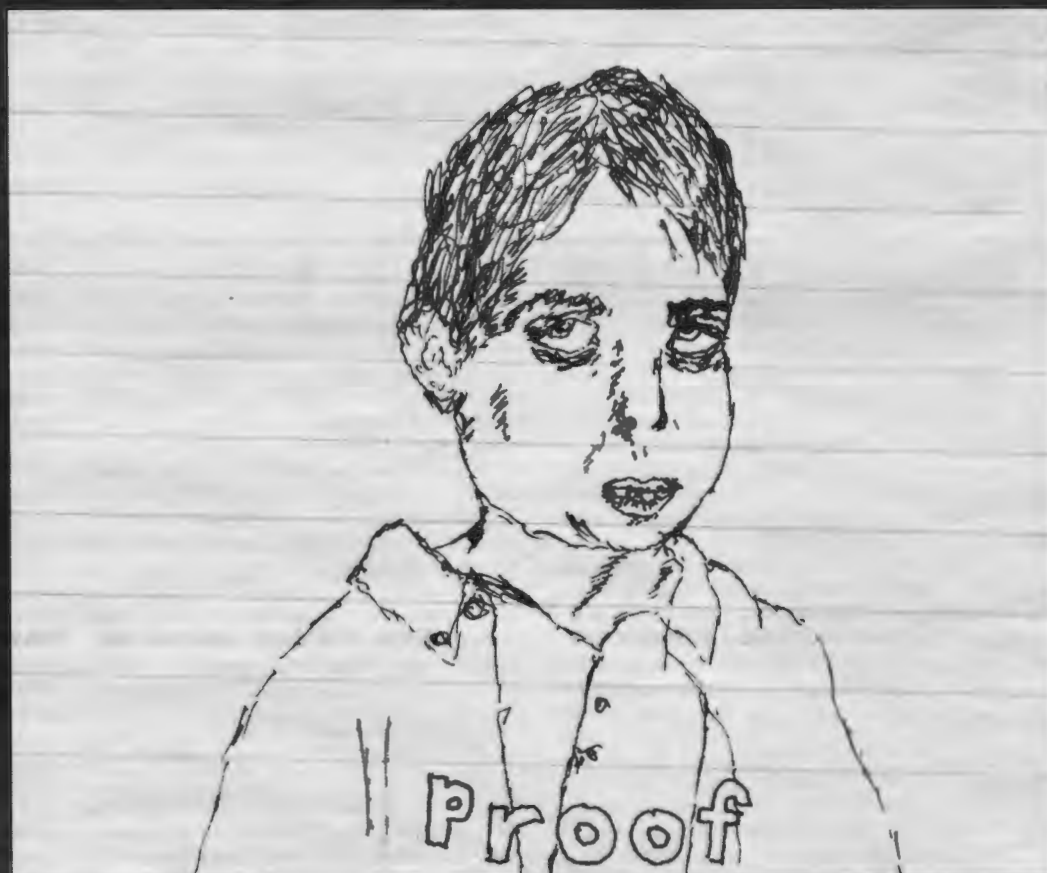
In any case, Ackerman was able to assure the forum "that's what the administration decided" and that "it's not going to change." Apparently, the goal of the administration, as articulated by Ackerman and Strawinski, is to promote academic growth and ensure that the process works. Nevertheless, issues relating to the limitations persisted throughout the forum with no clear resolution suggested even by Ackerman. As one student explained, the AV club is particularly harmed by the limitation because they are now unable to find

the additional workers they would need to mount student events if the current workers are capped at 15 hours, which they have typically exceeded in the past. The Director of the SRG was on hand to speak about the problems faced by the limitation of two jobs per student. This hurts those students who work jobs requiring only 3-4 hours per pay period because they can't take on new jobs to make up for the deficit. These problems were not resolved, perhaps because the administration refused to consult the student body prior to their decision. One student asked whether "we [the student body] could have addressed some of these issues," to which Ackerman responded, "they were addressed."

LATE-BREAKING: Erin Canaan, Jim Brudvig and Bot-man have acknowledged that certain clubs could not operate under the new limitations and have allowed employers to apply for exceptions. Frustrated with Strawinski's and Ackerman's flimsy reasoning, the student government commissioned a survey to test the administration's claim that student over-employment results in too little time for academics, and virtually all of the nearly 200 respondents indicated that increased employment actually corresponds

with a rise in GPA since it forces the students to structure their time efficiently. But the new exceptions won't filter through the bureaucracy until next semester. According

to Chris Given, speaker of the student senate, Botstein holds a more enlightened view of student employment than his administrative colleagues. "He was unsurprised by the survey results, and echoed what many of the individual survey respondents had offered in their comments, that work forces them to better balance their priorities and is an important part of their college education, not least of all because it allows some of us to afford it." Students and the student government seem to be in rebellion against the idea of Bard as a nanny-state. Employment restrictions demonstrate "the speciousness of the claims by the Admissions Office that Bard students are extended a 'presumption of adulthood.' Students should be trusted to balance their responsibilities unless they demonstrate that they are incapable of doing so," Given says.



## ENVIRONMENT

## MOVING MOUNTAINS

*Changing the way we get electricity may be even more difficult than mountaintop removal itself.*

BY PATRICIA MANOS

At the Mountaintop Removal Roadshow in Olin on November 14, anti-mining activist Dave Cooper displayed pictures of what appeared to be craterous sores on the Earth's surface. The images seemed both clinical and post-apocalyptic, revealing a landscape somehow even Miltonian: infernal pits, but with nary a damned soul in sight, and the sun shining. A hulking machine slowly makes its way across the screen, a dragline excavator, Cooper explains, perhaps 20 stories tall, with a scooping apparatus large enough to move hundreds of tons of rock and soil in one motion. "It's as big as a classroom," Cooper said. "I have a picture of a marching band standing inside one."

The process of mountaintop removal was born in the 1960s and 70s as many underground mines began closing and coal companies found they could efficiently extract coal by literally removing up to 800 vertical feet off the top of Appalachian mountain peaks. Cooper describes being stunned the first time he heard about mountaintop removal from West Virginian Larry Gibson, whose family's 50 acres of land on Kayford Mountain are encircled by strip-mining operations. "I figured he was kinda exaggerating, you know? People like to embellish stories" Cooper told the group. He decided to drive four hours from his Lexington, Kentucky home to Cabin Creek, West Virginia, to see the damage for himself. "There's no trees, it's just this huge rubble pile. These forests that they've got in West Virginia are some of the most biologically diverse hardwood forests, but when you get up on these huge coal mine sites they just take everything off of the mountain," he remembers. "It felt like driving on the moon."

Residents of Appalachia have grown accustomed to seeing the landscape vanishing before their very eyes, while much of the rest of America fails to see the relationship between mountaintop removal and the generation of electricity. "People in America don't know where our electricity comes from," says Cooper. "A lot of people think of electricity as being, you know, a clean energy because when you look at an electrical outlet, you don't see smoke coming out." Coal-mining currently fuels about 54% of the electricity generated in the United States, most of it emanating from the coal-producing regions of Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky and West Virginia. "In Kentucky, where I live, 95 percent of our electricity comes from coal," says Cooper. In West Virginia, the figure is closer to 99 percent. The coal industry dominates these regions' economies. According to the State of West Virginia, the coal industry accounts for over \$3.5 billion of the gross state product, and provides West Virginians with 40,000 jobs.

"You drive through West Virginia and you see these billboards all over the place: 'Coal keeps the lights on.' 'Coal supports our schools--do you support coal?' and politicians are all scared to death of the coal companies," Cooper says, attesting to the self-preservation of the Big Coal behemoth, and to the powerlessness of state legislatures. The past eight years have brought together the nationwide concern over U.S. dependence on foreign oil, with a president who has supported the coal industry as a means of embracing home-grown energy. Coal extraction has increased as global oil prices have spiked, while in the

haste to produce inexpensive fuel relatively quickly, environmental regulations have often been changed to accommodate the demands of industry.

"Once you're actually in the coalfields, you have a better sense of what's happening," explains Bard senior Sara Lynch-Thomason, a Tennessee native who works with the preservation group Mountain Justice. Sara Lynch-Thomason hopes to generate enough interest in the problem to attract a group of students to Mountain Justice's annual spring and summer camps in West Virginia, which encourages activists, many of them college students, to interact directly with coal-mining communities in Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia and West Virginia, and gain an understanding of the effects of mountaintop removal. "I think we're very used to seeing our land diseased and destroyed, but to actually see what's lost is much

issue of mountaintop removal with a degree of sensitivity, Lynch-Thomason says, in order to be persuasive. Only by seeing life in the coalfields can one gain the sensitivity necessary to reconcile sensitivity toward the workers with broader environmental concerns.

"Change comes really slow in Appalachia," says Cooper. He insists that mountaintop removal must be brought to national attention if the Appalachian Mountains are to be protected. "It's really hard to get people to change their minds. I think the change is going to have to come from the outside," he says, and argues that the progressive states must lead the rest of the country in endorsing such protective legislation as the Clean Water Protection Act, a proposed amendment to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act specifying that fill material cannot be composed of mine waste. It would curb the mining companies' ability

unless, as Lynch-Thomason says, mountain activists "get a lot of lobbying around Obama and get it now. I understand that he's got a lot of money from the coal industry, so it's interesting to see how he's going to swing," she muses.

Lynch-Thomason fears something she calls 'compassion fatigue.' "You see the horrible things going on in Africa and other places, and people are just like 'I can't care.' You cannot have compassion for the whole world. It's not in our nature to do so. But what I think is really important about this issue is that it's happening on a daily basis. We fund it by having stocks in Citibank and Bank of America and we turn the lights on every day." If the residents of mining communities in Appalachia are divided about a practice that irreversibly modifies their landscape, can poison their drinking water, utilizes enough explosive material daily to equal, by Cooper's estimates, "a thousand Oklahoma City bombings," and which is a stopgap measure at best, what can we Northeasterners possibly have to say about it? What can Bard College and the coalfields of Buffalo Creek, West Virginia, possibly have in common?



more impacting," Lynch-Thomason says.

Direct interaction with coal-mining communities forces some reconciliation of idealism and practicality, especially when dealing with the consequences of shutting down a viable source of employment. Those who are "actually from that region," according to Lynch-Thomason, might complain about the environmental degradation, "but they'll still say, 'It's where the jobs are. I don't care.'" A mountaintop removal operation takes a crew of about 20 workers about a year to complete. Though environmentalists argue that replacing coal with diverse forms of renewable energy will provide work for many more than are currently employed by the coal companies, many miners in Appalachian coal country are wary. Even if a renewable energy industry were to establish itself, it would take time. Preservation activists approach the extremely divisive

to dispose mining waste through valley-filling and the creation of toxic sludge lakes. Kirsten Gillibrand, who represents Bard's Congressional district, at this point has not endorsed the Clean Water Protection Act.

Though the amendment has sat in a House subcommittee since May of 2007, largely due to Bush Administration opposition, one of its 152 co-sponsors is Obama's chief-of-staff designate Rahm Emmanuel, and the new Congress might pass the bill onto the Senate. But Obama himself has expressed no support for the bill. Instead, he has embraced "clean coal" refinement, a process that improves the environmental impact of coal by-products, but only after the coal is extracted by the same mountaintop removal processes currently underway. In other words, it's unlikely President Obama will have Emmanuel prodding his former House colleagues into advancing the bill

As it turns out, the question can be answered in many ways, starting with the fact that many national financial institutions invest heavily in the coal industry and that coal is still the source of about 54% of the electricity in the U.S. More specifically, Buffalo Creek has attained a certain degree of notoriety for having been the site of a 1979 sludge impoundment breakage that flooded the surrounding area with hundreds of thousands of gallons of mining waste material and caused 125 deaths. It is also directly connected to the Danskammer Generating Station in Orange County, one of several power plants that provide Dutchess County with energy.

"If we want to be survivors on this planet, we have a responsibility to learn about this and work to stop it," presses Sara Lynch-Thomason. We can start by turning off the lights.

PHOTO BY TRAVIS WENTWORTH



# smog



Fancie: Alas, Alak, Alaska! and GDFX live at SMOG on Tues., Nov. 25. Poor turnout but really good vibes.



<-----The girls on tour played as two separate bands, and I forget which one is which, but they both sounded solid. Lots of instrument swapping, and the music fluctuated between basic casiotone dance pop and melodramatic interludes led by a trumpet and flute that blended nicely with cuckooing vocals. Their second set featured projected video pieces with live music accompaniment. Donning weird veils and performing a ritualistic dance was an added bonus for me.



<-----Then Bard alum Greg Fox came through with his static beats and samples, kept going by an attentive Emma Mead who kind replaced his empty PBR's.

-Daniel Terna

-myspace.com/whereisfancie-bred  
-myspace.com/alasalakaska  
-myspace.com/5limbs

SHOW SCHEDULE:  
student.bard.edu/clubs/smog



## A Great (Too) Many Friends

In the beginning, there were two. Then, eight.

BY EMILY DIAMOND

The Friends are a campus band with too many members, too much humility, and not nearly enough credit for the patience it takes to play with eight people. I met with the two founding members, Jonathan Rosen and Luke Hamel, to talk about the group. Zachary Seman, another member, sat nearby and said nothing. The boys have beef with the makers of Chumby (kind of like a small computer) and need a label. Read this and consider signing them.

**FREE PRESS:** When did you guys get together, you two?

Jonathan Rosen: Sexually, or politically? We got together at the beginning of freshman year of college. We were both really into Creedence Clearwater at the time, so the idea was just to rip them off. Luke Hamel: We sound nothing like them. Jonathan: So we wrote a song that ripped them off and after that we started sounding completely different.

Luke: We've known each other since sixth grade and we had a band in high school together.

**So why did you decide to add the other six members? It was going pretty well with just the two of you.**

Luke: Last year it was just a recording project. It was just us two, so we'd have all of our friends, like Zachary Seman,

come and play on the recording. We were planning on this year putting together a live band so when people were recording I'd be like, we're putting together a live band next year you guys should just play with us. And six other people agreed.

**Who are the most prominent members of the band?**

Luke: Zachary Seman and Kelsey [Shell] on the recordings.

**Tell us about the actual process of writing the songs.**

Jonathan: It all depends on different songs. Our chord progressions are generally really easy. So I will just start messing around with a melody over it. The lyrics will always come last. The songs are personal,--quasi-metaphorical.

Luke: I play guitar, I do a lot of the lead guitar parts, if not all of them. But in

the recordings, on "I Fell in Love With a Ghost" and "Joseph and Mary" I played all the instruments on it: bass, guitar, piano, drums.

**That is not possible to do all at once.** Luke: I actually just have a lot of arms. That's the only way to do it.

Jonathan: He has a lot of arms. Maybe seventeen. He has a lot of idle arms during the show.

**Do you have any influences, besides CCR?**

Jonathan: CCR, we are no longer citing them as an influence.

**Good, I don't think you sound like CCR.**

Luke: I just have to mention The Beach Boys. I write the harmonies and I fucking love The Beach Boys.

Jonathan: Other than R. Kelly, my main

influence is Paul Simon. I don't know if manifests itself in my songs but he is my favorite songwriter of all time.

**Let's get into aesthetics. Why do you dress the way you do?**

Jonathan: We are kind of the pioneers of our generation's fashion. Luke's kind got the "I just woke up in a pantry" look because he lives in a pantry. And Zachary Seman's got the acid wash jeans look.

**You do wear those a lot.**

Luke: Yeah you do!

Zachary Seman: You like them.

Jonathan: And I wear Gap Kids boxer shorts. And Zachary Seman wears Old Navy.

**Where do you see your music going in the future?**

Jonathan: Getting better.

Luke: The recordings need to sound better, that's me. They need



\* WXBC REVIEWS \* WXBC.BARD.EDU \* REQUESTS: 845.752.5300 \*

WOODS	AT REAR HOUSE	LO-FI PSYCH ROCK FUZZ	GEORGE
CRYSTAL STILTS	S/T	DREAMY 50'S LO-FI ROCK YEAH THATS WHAT IT IS ONLY THAT	GEORGE
MENEGUAR	THE IN HOUR	DRIVING ROCK/PUNK WHATEVER ITS COOL	GEORGE
DAN BURKE AND THOMAS DIMUZIO	UPCOMING EVENTS	NOISE	GEORGE
JAY REATARD	MATADOR SINGLES '08	PUNK	GEORGE
HER SPACE HOLIDAY	XOXO PANDA AND THE NEW KID REVIVAL	BANJO POP	SAM
STARKEYS	DIL MUN EP	LIGHT STRAIGHTFORWARD KIND OF BORING POP	ROX
LIGHTS ON	WAITING FOR THE HEART TO BEAT	INTERPOL	ROX
HUSH ARBORS	HUSH ARBORS	SOOTHING	ROX
GOI DEBAPP	WINTER WONDERLAND	IT'S THE HOLIDAYS, WHATEVER	ROX
VAMPIRE WEEKEND	THE KIDS DON'T STAND A CHANCE	ROOBY	GEORGE
THE (INTERNATIONAL) NOISE CONSPIRACY	THE CROSS OF MY CALLING	NOT NOISE	ROX
ANATHALLO	CANOPY GLOW	COMPARED TO NO KIDS/dirty projectors dancey	GEORGE
LIGHTS	S/T	HOTTIE KNOWS A DUDE WITH A COMP	BILLY
HEARTS REVOLUTION	SWITCHBLADE EP	CRYSTAL CROTCHES	BILLY
ARLISS PARKER	HANDSOME LIKE A LION	ELECTRONIC DRIP DROP	BILLY
TOTALLY MICHAEL	S/T	TOTALLY HOT	BILLY
VARIOUS	NOTHING ON BUT YOUR RADIO-- LIVE SESSION C.I.S.W. 90.9	PEDDLE JUNKIES WITH SOUL	CHAS
RELIGIOUS KNIVES	THE DOOR	STOOPID INDIE VOX WITH RAD STONER DOOM BEATS	CHAS
HILDE MARIE KJERSEM	A KILLER FOR THAT ACHE	SOFT SOUL SWOON FROM NORWAY, AUTOHARP/HEART	BILLY
LUOMO	CONVIVAL	ELECTRONIC FINNISH HOUSE OPERA	BILLY
THE BOXMASTERS	CHRISTMAS CHEER	BILLY BOB THORTON SINGS HOLIDAY HITS	ROX
EVERY WEEK MUSIC PROMOTERS SEND WXBC NEW MUSIC. MOST IS SHIT. HERE IS WHAT MADE IT TO THE SHELF. REVIEWS BY BILLY RENNEKAMP, ROXANNE BEHR, GEORGE GLIKERDAS, SAMANTHA RICHARDSON & CHAZ MCCARTY.			



PHOTOS BY DANIEL TERNA

sound like the people I love, and I'm not that good of a producer yet. And we need to find our own voice as far as production goes. We don't have much uniqueness yet.

**Do you guys have the goal of being signed by a label?**

Jonathan: A couple of weeks ago Luke and I went down to New York City with the one ambition of getting signed by the biggest label in the world. Really any of them. We got out of the train station, walked straight to the Sony building with our shitty looking demo.

Luke: We taped a recorded CD in paper with our pictures on it in black and white. Jonathan: I don't really remember what happened.

Luke: I remember exactly what happened. It's a long story. Actually, I'm not

a good story teller.

Zachary: I'm going to New York City guys. (Gets up and leaves.)

Luke: Are you back this weekend?

Zachary: I'll be back tonight at like 4AM.

Jonathan: Call me!

Luke: I don't think I want to tell the story.

**Okay. Is it hard being best friends, and living together, and being in the same band?**

Jonathan: The common misconception is that Luke and I can actually stand each other. I hate him.

Luke: It's only musical. We never spend any time together. It's his character.

Jonathan: When you put this in the interview you have to make it clear that this is a joke.

**No.**

Jonathan: Luke and I love each other. We

really do.

**Who do you think, of the two of you, is more important to the band?**

Jonathan: I'd say Luke.

Luke: Definitely Jacob. He really ties it all together.

**What with the economy being so bad right now, do you foresee a lot of layoffs in your band?**

Luke: We should fire Jonathan.

Jonathan: Desperate times call for desperate measures. We might have to downsize. I might not be in this band come tomorrow.

Luke: The good thing is that all our recordings were made for free so we aren't losing any money if people steal our music.

Jonathan: Ooh! We should mention that two of our songs were on a commercial

for Chumby. What is Chumby?

Luke: It's...I don't know.

Jonathan: Chumby is this mysterious product that we still have no idea what it is but this woman solicited us saying that she would like to put our music on the website for Chumby.

Luke: She promised us a couple hundred bucks.

Jonathan: And all we got were two free Chumbys.

Luke: Which I have never seen.

Jonathan: We don't know what the fuck a Chumby is.

Luke: This woman was a friend of Kelsey's, this is how it all got set up. So Kelsey got the Chumbys. And Kelsey has stolen the Chumbys.

Jonathan: The commercial is like, sort of impressive.

Luke: I have got to say, our music works well to sell things.

Jonathan: Particularly Chumbys.

**It makes me feel happy.**

Jonathan: Thank you. Are you going to put a fat picture of either our faces or genitals in the article?

**Yes.**

Visit The Friends on MySpace at [myspace.com/thefriendsrock](http://myspace.com/thefriendsrock) and on Facebook. Although they do not have any shows before winter break, be on the lookout for spring performances.



## THEATER

## Recent Performances

Reviewed: *Elektra*, *Enter the Night*, and *No Business*

Photo'd: *Now You See Me*, *Enter the Night*, and *Farmyard*

## Electra R3v13w

Gold stars for parts of Kate Motzenbacker's sr project in directing.

BY EMILY DEMARTINO

I think the set was really great (the alternating grain of the strips of astroturf was really classy) & I think I could've really liked the costumes, but they should have been more accurately fifties and also Clytemnestra looked kind of trashy (it was mostly the jewelry, but srsly she is the queen and she should've looked better). What the aggressive face-groping Malka Roth (Elektra) kept doing to the Chorus made her maniacal in the best way possible, and the sister Manon Manavit / Chrythemis was fantastic & hilarious in her delirious rant when she first believed Orestes was alive (she spun in a circle for at least a full minute, threw a bowl of lettuce in the air, got some stuck in her cleavage, sort of choked on a carrot, and definitely spat out a few pieces of carrot mid-rant), but the objectively strongest interactions of the play were between Nicko

Libowitz (Aegisthus) and Elektra. The sexualization of Aegisthus's control over Elektra made the three to five minutes he was onstage the best minutes of the play. The way he sauntered around, manhandled Elektra's face, and exuded sexual confidence (srslyyy), ONLY TO BE STABBED MOMENTS LATER (which Elektra knew was going to happen!!), was really great. I think it was especially appropriate because the rôle of women / their relation to men / to power in plays by Sophocles is always very interesting / I can never figure out if Sophocles is really an asshole or relatively progressive in his portrayal of women. (The only play by him I've read, actually, is *Antigone*, but I've more or less read it on 4 academic occasions). Anyway: gold stars for the set & for Nicko Libowitz & for the vegetables in the air section. I can't really say anything else because I just am not interested in issues of family honor, which Sophocles is fixated on, and at 10pm on a rainy Monday right before Thanksgiving break, even if you are trying really hard, I think there are going to be lapses in understanding the translation of a Greek play from around 400 BC.



*Now You See Me*, DIRECTED BY SARAH WRIGHT; PERFORMED AT THE OLD GYM.

## How Tender Is the Night

Bold directing and splendid acting give life to depressing subject matter.

BY ABBY FERLA

Despite a flawed script, *Enter the Night* by Maria Irene Fornès and directed by Shawna Powell evoked loud laughter and tender tears from its audience in a genuinely moving performance. As part of the Directing Senior Project Festival in Theater Two of the PAC over the weekend of November 20th, it was acted out on a small, minimalist set. The audience sat along the periphery of the room where walls would have been in the apartment, which created an intimate relationship between the actors and audience, but also made for a sterile and unconvincing setting since the audience was forced to imagine the color and decor of the walls on its own.

The play is set in a small city apartment owned by Tressa, a cross-dressing nurse

played by Mette-LouLou VonKohl. Visiting with her is Paula, who is played by Nora DeVeau-Rosen and suffers from economic hardship and heart failure. Quinn Olbrich plays the third and final character, Jack, an old friend of both Tressa's and Paula's, who is reunited with Paula for the first time in three years.

The single act opens with a conversation between Tress and Paula about a dying patient of Tressa's. For the remainder of the play, the plot circles around death. Paula suffers from a potentially fatal cardiac condition, and Jack, who reveals that his partner has recently died of AIDS, obsesses that he too is HIV-positive despite continually testing negative. Though the play grapples with issues of sexuality, seclusion, jealousy, resentment, and eventually gang rape, Powell's work does not dwell on

the onslaught of tragedies presented by the script, but instead celebrates the enduring humanity of the three friends.

In a scene that manages at once to be both hilarious and heart-breakingly poignant, Tressa dresses as a Japanese man and Jack puts on a wig and the dress of a poor Japanese peasant girl. The two then reenact scenes from *Broken Blossoms* with total sobriety. Even while the audience laughed, VonKohl and Olbrich reached a higher level of sincerity here as the Asian couple than in all of the other scenes as Tressa and Jack.

All three actors delivered notable portrayals. Though Olbrich occasionally allowed himself to be trapped by the awkward and far-fetched nature of the script, he was charming and witty overall. VonKohl demonstrated her perfect

control of her body and voice when giving life to Tressa, ironically achieving the greatest success at the play's climax, when her character loses control in argument. But it was DeVeau-Rosen who stole the show with her stunning depiction of Paula, which was rich with charisma, beautiful humming, and genuine warmth.

Powell and the players countered a script full of dense pronouncements and utterly depressing subject matter with timely use of music, bold directing, and splendid acting. They transformed what might have been an hour spent dwelling in the inevitability of aging, death, and degeneration of relationships into an hour that celebrated enduring love and vivacity in the face of death. Ultimately the result was candid, beautiful, heart-wrenching, and utterly enjoyable.

## FARMYARD

by Franz Xaver Kroetz

directed by Samuel Stonefield



Not a scene from *No Business!*, which is reviewed below. The above photo features a scene from *Farmyard*, directed by SAM STONEFIELD.

## No Complaints for "No Business!"

*Several incompetent shows combine for a single stunner.*

BY ROMY OVERBEKE

"If you want to tell people the truth," Oscar Wilde once said, "make them laugh. Otherwise they'll kill you." With the Bard Musical Theater Company's latest show, "No Business!," Tom Houseman did exactly that. While the show's posters and program lead the audience to believe that the play is a mockery of playwright Arthur Miller, the show, written by Houseman, is actually a brilliant satire of the absurdity behind the musical theater world. It is not just a play within a play, but a mockery of a musical situated within an actual musical that also makes a mockery of all other musicals in general.

The play tells the story of a (up and coming?) theater company getting ready to premiere the first ever production of "Crucible: The Musical!" The plot is fluid and funny, while actually addressing serious issues in the theater business. The lack of artistic integrity in the theater business was best expressed in the uplifting song and dance number, "It's All About Cash," performed after the producer forces the writer to change almost everything about the script to avoid paying any kind of fees to Arthur Miller.

When Jim (Dave Toropov), the hopeful, energetic, and dimwitted leading man, falls for the smoldering manipulative leading lady, Sally Sue (Emily Cuk), Houseman creates the archetypal "love-at-first-sight" scene from so many famous musicals.

Though Sally Sue resists at first, once she learns of Jim's riches, she agrees to a relationship, and they sing out their celebrations with the song "I Have A Funny Feeling We Were Meant To Be Together." But Houseman brilliantly adds his own sense of mockery and realism by having Jim admit that this "funny feeling" was coming from his penis, and ends the scene with the line, "Well I guess that now we're in love we should get to know each other."

The satire continues with a chorus that laments having to share the spotlight. A narrator (Tim Lewis) then makes one of his random appearances expressing his distress at having to explain the lives of the characters while his own life is completely ignored. An abused assistant director (Rachel Gordon) also sings a beautiful ballad about how she is going to kill everyone. The characters, on many occasions, bluntly express their lack of knowledge of theater, their dismissal of any artistic vision, and their primary interest in using the stage as a means to inflate their own ego.

The set was simple and effective, consisting of a painted brick wall, curtains, desk, and a painted background of a church for the Crucible: The Musical scene. The set was cleverly utilized during the performance of "Crucible" when Sally Sue visits Jim in prison, which is represented by a connected set of wooden planks. Hilarity ensues when Jim angrily moves the wooden planks to en-

sure the audience has a good view of him.

Performances were wonderful all around, especially those of freshman Shaun Mahan as the flamboyant, self-involved prison guard, and Ming Gan as the evil (rockstar!) Reverend Parris. For those of you who were not aware, Ming can jam. Oh God yes, Ming can jam. But the most refreshing performance of the night was by Dave Toropov. As a former follower of the PBS show "Zoom," with vivid memories of the young Toropov's role as Prince Charming divorcing Cinderella to wed her two evil step sisters, I must say, Dave is a natural. His character was by far the most lovable, and his big toothy grin never failed to get a laugh from the audience. Particularly after Sally Sue's line of "You were calling me from outside my house."

Michael Kauffman (Bernard) plays such a good "skeezy guy" that I'm actually a little afraid he'll be typecast. His performance was heartfelt and hilarious, and he kept the audience rooting for him the whole time, which is hard to do as a skeezy guy. Matt Lerner-Lam, who played Carl, has a voice that could sell you just about anything. It doesn't even matter what he's saying, you will listen. His voice wills it. Meredith Hudak, who played Martha, was hilarious and brilliant, with a performance that can only be described as having "umph." Lesley DeMartin, who played Samantha, was captivating and funny, with a gorgeous voice. And Emily Cuk as Sally Sue was just sexy. If you don't already have a crush on her, you probably should.

One scene I found particularly brilliant was during the song "The Show Must Go

On," in which many famous romances from "Romeo and Juliet" to "Phantom of the Opera" were quickly comically mimed. My personal favorite was when Romeo finds Juliet dead, stomps up in a huff, and feels her up one last time before drinking the poison himself and staring at his watch impatiently, waiting to die. This, again, was Shaun Mahan. Shaun, you are my hero.

But it is time to give credit where credit is due. (True-life) director Kaycee Filson was the evil genius mastermind behind the whole event, and with each comic movement and extraordinary performance you could hear Kaycee's whispers of "Play with it! No zombies!" Her unique directing style and challenging task to create a never-before-performed show allowed her and her cast to really thrust themselves into the fray, have fun, and let the audience stream along with it all. And we did. Thank you Kaycee Filson, the surely un-abused assistant director Caleb Parsons, the ever-talented musical director Lesley DeMartin, the brilliant choreographer Zia Morter, and Ronald Joseph. I ran out of adjectives just before I got to Ronald, but I want him to know he deserves the best adjective there is. And finally, Dan Whitener, the music was so catchy it will take me days before I get it out of my head. This show was truly a representation of the creative genius that Bard has the ability to produce, and I hope this isn't the last we see of this play. I left my seat with a big smile, a numb butt, a giant crush on Dave Toropov, and a little more faith in humanity. Bottom line: Tom Houseman, you can take on Mel Brooks any day of the week.



# past present

PUBLISHING

## Student Newspapers: Past and Present

*The average lifespan of a Bard publication is 7.85 years, which means the FREE PRESS is living on borrowed time.*

website, click on the "archive" section, find the link to the pre-2005 archives, and instantly be transported to the treasure trove that is the Bard Student Newspaper Archive. It was set up a mere nine years ago, and the lack of maintenance or publicity since is no excuse for being unaware of it.

Nevertheless, the FREE PRESS editors have asked me to describe its contents, in order to plug the holes in your postmodern souls. Bard has had many newspapers over the course of its 150-year history. A few, like the Light and Crazy Eights, have been entirely lost to the sands of time; we have nothing except their names, and perhaps the hazy, drug-addled recollections of a few alumni. The rest though have a great deal to tell us about our past—but not so much that I cannot describe them in a paragraph each.

BY DONNA MCCOLLOCH

People at Bard often complain about the lack of a sense of community or tradition. This is because they are pig-ignorant. Any fool could go onto inside.bard.edu, scroll through the dropdown menu to find the "Student Clubs" page, click on the link to the Bard Observer popup window, open the Observer

extensive collegiate sports coverage.

**Reason for formation:** Grief over dissolution of The Lyre Tree.

**Reason for dissolution:** Having a paper called The Bardian being written by and for actual Bardians was felt to be contrary to the College's values.

**Representative headlines:**

"Additional Stops Donated to the Organ;" "America's Dying Political Set-up."

**Most surprising discovery:** Tewksbury was considered an amazing improvement over previous Bard housing.

**Bard Week**

**Years Active:** 1948-1949, beginning a long tradition of cool things at Bard falling apart after a year.

**Distinctive Features:** Some criticism of administration.

**Reason for formation:** The Bardian was way too elitist.

**Reason for dissolution:** Editors departed to work on Senior Project.

**Representative headlines:** "Council To Discuss Raising Of Money For Rec. Hall;" "Alumni Pledge \$2,200 To College."

**Most surprising discovery:** WXBC is over sixty year old.

**AM**

**Years Active:** 1952-1954

**Distinctive Features:** Handwritten headlines and masthead.

**Reason for formation:** Not enough random doodles in other campus publications.

**Reason for dissolution:** Shortage of "reefer."

**Representative headlines:** "Resume of Bard Community Government Progress Report: Shahn Hits Community Do-Nothing Attitude;" "Editorial:

**Saint Stephen's Messenger**

**Years Active:** 1895-1930

**Distinctive Features:** Reprints of sermons, obituaries for Episcopal ministers, doggerel.

**Reason for formation:** The unfortunate trend of "cutting" chapel services.

**Reason for dissolution:** Secularization of the College, repeal of Prohibition, general decline of morals.

**Representative headlines:** "Quid Est?" "The Call to the Mental Life;" "One Reason Why Tennyson Is Remembered."

**Most surprising discovery:** Two former leaders of the college died within a single month.

**The Lyre Tree**

**Years Active:** 1924-1935

**Distinctive Features:** Tiny print, no pictures, extensive collegiate sports coverage.

**Reason for formation:** Tobacco ad revenue.

**Reason for dissolution:** Goofy name.

**Representative headlines:** "Intelligence Test Shows Fine Record: Members of Freshmen Appear to Be Creditable Lot;" "Hoover Leads In Campus Vote: Republican Candidate Wins Majority Over Man From New York Sidewalks; Thomas Draws Startling Vote."

**Most surprising discovery:** Bard's social life once revolved around fraternities and football.

**The Bardian**

**Years Active:** 1935-1961

**Distinctive Features:** Tiny print, no pictures,

SEPARATION IS DOOM. WE ARE FREE PEOPLE, AND WE DEMAND A FREE MUSIC, A FREE HIGH ENERGY SOURCE THAT WILL DRIVE US WILD INTO THE STREETS OF AMERICA YELLING AND SCREAMING AND TEARING DOWN EVERYTHING THAT WOULD KEEP PEOPLE BLAYE.  
JOHN BRICLAUS  
POLITICAL PRISONER

**RED TIDE**  
The Bard Community  
A newspaper serving  
Volume 1 Number 1 April Fool's Day 1976



Coffeeless Sugar?????

**Most surprising discovery:** Bard's newspapers have never been properly proofread. [Eds.: we try.]

#### Communitas

**Years Active:** 1954

**Distinctive Features:** Photography; sans-serif fonts.

**Reason for formation:** Coverage of Bard's financial crisis.

**Reason for dissolution:** Photography, sans-serif fonts proved too expensive.

**Representative headlines:** "Guests Payment for Dances Hinges on Budget Decision;"

"Charles Naef, '53 Suggests Ways of Making Army Pleasanter."

**Most surprising discovery:** Bard's graduates once went on to successful careers.

#### Bard Comment

**Years Active:** 1956-1957

**Distinctive Features:** Pithy quotes at the bottom of every page.

**Reason for formation:** The need to discuss both international and local political issues from an informed theoretical perspective; resume-padding.

**Reason for dissolution:** Drama between editors.

**Representative headlines:** "WXBC Fakes Plans;" "Wolff Leads Bible Study."

**Most surprising discovery:** We used to invite far-right third-party candidates to campus.

#### Bard Observer

**Years Active:** 1961-

**Distinctive Features:** Enormous budget; longevity.

**Reason for formation:** Bard needed a new "establishment paper" after The Bardian folded.

**Representative headlines:** "A Miasma of Exsuffication;" "how is bard greening the campus?"

**Most surprising discovery:** Total lack of coverage of Botstein's ascension to the presidency in 1975.

#### Gadfly Papers

**Years Active:** 1966-1967

**Distinctive Features:** Open mockery of the Observer; coverage of "Community Council" meetings

**Reason for formation:** Open mockery of the Observer; coverage of "Community Council" meetings

**Reason for dissolution:** Hating on everyone, every week, is hard work

**Representative headlines:** "[Untitled] Editorial;" "Bill Bernstein v. Robert's Rules of Order."

**Most surprising discovery:** Student government used to make recommendations about faculty hiring and curricular issues.

#### The Utopian

**Years Active:** 1970-1971

**Distinctive Features:** Conservatism.

**Reason for formation:** Providing a counterpoint to "Jacobinism."

**Reason for dissolution:** Admissions forgot to admit a token Republican to replace the graduating editors.

**Representative headlines:** "Thoughts on a Non-Revolution or How to do Your Own Thing the Same Way Everyone Else is Doing It;" "General Humanities 222- Irrelevance."

**Most surprising discovery:** Even Bard

# BARD TIMES

Vol. 20 No.5

The Official Newspaper of the Bard College Community

March 13, 1980



## AN INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT BOTSTEIN

by Tom Carroll

Bard Times (BT): One Bard student said recently in the Village Voice that you are trying to turn Bard into a "Harvard-on-the-Hudson". Are you trying to do this?

Leon: The answer to that is no. The phrase "Harvard-on-the-Hudson" can be understood either to mean that Bard is becoming more "classical" or more conventional, or becoming more prestigious, or that Bard is becoming a place of excellence. So if you take the quote at face value, I am interested in helping Bard grow in excellence, in seriousness, in a place where the arts and intellectual matters take place, and I am very committed to that. Am I trying to make Bard resemble Harvard? The answer to that is no, because I have great difficulties with the way Harvard has been over the last 50 years.

BT: You've said that there will be a recruitment problem at colleges in the next ten years. Do you think there will be a recruitment problem here at Bard, and if so, are you trying to change the image of the college to meet the years ahead?

Leon: No, I don't think that the college will have any trouble in recruitment if it continues to be distinctive, of an extremely high quality, providing a program that very few other institutions offer.

BT: So you are trying to forge your own way, rather than try to imitate Harvard?

Leon: Absolutely. The problem is that most institutions are pale imitations of places like Harvard. The problem of recruitment is severe, but the biggest mistake that anybody could make is to make

Continued on Page 4

conservatives like to swear and use drugs.

#### Red Tide

**Years Active:** 1971-1981

**Distinctive Features:** Masthead flanked by hammer-and-sickle & pot leaf

**Reason for formation:** Taking on the system

**Reason for dissolution:** Mass suicide following inauguration of Ronald Reagan.

**Representative headlines:** "Citizens of Annandale;" "Botstein Proposes New Summer Program."

**Most surprising discovery:** The 1971 Bard housing crisis was just as bad as this one.

#### Bard Times

**Years Active:** 1977-1981

**Distinctive Features:** Extensive, possibly fabricated, letters-to-the-editors section; coverage of Major League Baseball; ads for airlines.

**Reason for formation:** Ad revenue.

**Reason for dissolution:** Advertisers caught on.

**Representative headlines:** "A Book Review: Bard Catalogue;" "Pagan Ritual Becomes Carnal Nightmare!"

**Most surprising discovery:** Botstein once had hair and smoked a pipe.

#### Bard Reporter

**Years Active:** 1980-1981

**Distinctive Features:** Hard-hitting journalism; shitty photocopying

**Reason for formation:** Covering disciplinary actions at Bard, evils of Reagan administration.

**Reason for dissolution:** Reagan scared us straight.

**Representative headlines:** "Student Stabbed At Coffee House;" "Ludlow Sees Shift In Drug Culture."

**Most surprising discovery:** Bard students used to fight "townies" at Kline parties.

#### Hard Bard

**Years Active:** 1980-1982

**Distinctive Features:** Medieval woodcuts of lesbians.

**Reason for formation:** Medieval woodcuts of lesbians.

**Reason for dissolution:** According to final issue, the chick that did layout got murdered.

**Representative headlines:** "LEON FOR SHAH!" "Shortage of Ping Pong Balls."

**Most surprising discovery:** Bard student once went on strike to protest denial of tenure to a beloved faculty member.

#### Summer Times

**Years Active:** 1987-1988

**Distinctive Features:** Stories admittedly taken from Associated Press wire; summer publication schedule.

**Reason for formation:** Summer internship at USA Today didn't come through.

**Reason for dissolution:** School started.

**Representative headlines:** "Cool Air Should Ease Local Farm Worries;" "Equipment still Lacking as New Gym Nears Completion."

**Most surprising discovery:** Hour-long waits for Security to unlock doors are nothing new.

#### Bard Eagle

**Years Active:** 1989

**Distinctive Features:** Giant clip art of mosquitoes; inaccurate table of contents

**Reason for formation:** By their own admission, "resume building."

**Reason for dissolution:** Everyone got malaria.

**Representative headlines:** "Student Will Press Charges;" "Libraries Plan to Computerize."

**Most surprising discovery:** Abortion was the #1 issue on campus in 1989.

#### Bardvark

**Years Active:** 1989-1990

**Distinctive Features:** Advice to freshmen on life at Bard; making fun of administrator's verbal mannerisms.

**Reason for formation:** "To annoy, confuse, and enrage as many people as possible."

**Reason for dissolution:** Too "mean-spirited."

**Representative headlines:** "New York City: Bard's Other Campus;"

"Shocking New Evidence Dean Levine is Santa Claus."

**Most surprising discovery:** Bard once had a publication that didn't take itself seriously.

#### Bard FREE PRESS

**Years Active:** 2000-

**Distinctive Features:** None.

**Reason for formation:** Drama between two factions of the Observer staff.

**Representative headlines:** "Global, National & Local Change Afoot;" "Photographing Like a Frog."

**Most surprising discovery:** Entertainment Committee

(controller of about 1/5 of total club money) was elected as

recently as five years ago.

#### The Naked News

**Years Active:** 2006-2007

**Distinctive Features:** Nudity on page 1; constantly starting drama with random groups and then publicly apologizing for it; pseudonyms.

**Reason for formation:** Drama between two factions of the Observer staff.

**Reason for dissolution:** We finally got a budget and blew it all on E; destroyed the part of the brain that writes articles.

**Representative headlines:** "My Milkshake Brings All the Boys to the Bard;" "Jacked From The Observer."

**Most surprising discovery:** People had two issues' worth of things to say about Pippin.

#### The Newsnake

**Years Active:** 2007-current?

**Distinctive Features:** Hullabaloo over use of "Jewsnake" in title.

**Reason for Formation:** Critical over lack of coverage in Observer and FREE PRESS concerning something, but sources are hard to find.

**Question of Dissolution:** are you still around?

**Representative Headlines:** Nobody really remembers much. Sorry.

## The Bardian



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# *lifestyle*

## How to Green up Before Winter Break

BY NATALIE NAROTZKY

1. Got any stuff you don't want? Fill a blue bag and put it next to any recycling station or in any Barry monster. How to get blue bags? Ask your BERP or email [bardberps@gmail.com](mailto:bardberps@gmail.com).
2. Close your windows to keep out the skunks and masked bandits.
3. Turn your heat down to around 50° to freeze out the bandits, but don't turn it off because the pipes might freeze.
4. Turn off all lights.
5. Go on an adventure to find any leaky faucets. If you discover one, tell your PC—he/she will know what to do.
6. Drink all the beer in your fridge. Then unplug it.
7. Check out the Freestore for all of your holiday shopping needs.

## How to Look FIERCE in an Economic Downturn

BY ZACH KUSSIN

With a recession looming over America and the world, it's wise to follow the experts' advice and abstain from pricey and unnecessary purchases for the next several months.

Forget buying yourself a fancy winter wardrobe for the long, cold months of spring semester. Erase those Uggs boots you saw on the internet from your memory and find the strength to say no to that flashy Patagonia jacket you saw that one kid wear to class. Make it your mission to find new combinations in your current wardrobe. This way, you can find new and cre-

ative ways to wear your clothes while saving lots of money in the process. Here are some helpful tips:

1. Layer, layer, layer: layering is key for staying warm in the winter. Try combining shirts and sweatshirts that create a nice color palate. Use whites with off-whites or light blues, and grays with forest greens and blacks. Scarves or fashion keffiyehs can also contribute to the overall image. Interested in a hip, more formal look? Consider wearing long-sleeved dress shirts with vintage dress vests or a sport jacket on top. This classic look is timeless and can always change if you have dress shirts of different colors and varieties hanging in your closet already.

2. Tight is the new warm: straight-legged jeans and leggings can mix well with anything that you own! Go for a simple look with T-shirts or sweatshirts; mix it up with flannels for a Grunge Movement look and try dress shirts for a classic look. Tight legwear also tucks in easily to your choice of winter footwear. Need more boots for more looks? Browse Bard's Free Store selection to see what's available.

3. Take a risk and make alterations to boring clothes in your collection. Sew flashy buttons onto plain jackets; make patches that you sew onto sweatshirts; cut T-shirts into strips to make cotton scarves—the possibilities are endless!



THE APPETITE

# How to Cook

*Just do what feels good.*

BY TRAVIS WENTWORTH

In the age of the top chef, the iron chef, Mario Batali and the admonishing ghost of Julia Child culinary perfection, cooking seems to have become an art to be feared: if you don't get it exactly right, something is going to blow up—whether that something be an angry chef on your TV or just some over-seared garlic that makes the whole dish taste burnt.

The first thing you need to remember is that bad cooking is not dangerous. You might be disappointed with the results, but in most cases cooking is not like the kinds of high-school chemistry experiments that exploded in your face and made you smell like rotten eggs the rest of the day, thereby turning you into an outcast loser and forcing you to go to Bard.

On the contrary. Though there are plenty of things that can go wrong, the learning curve is not all that steep. Just pay attention. There's never a failed attempt that doesn't yield a substantial amount of lessons learned, including, if nothing else, that late-night trips to the Golden Wok after failed culinary excursions will make for a less-than-worthwhile morning-after.

The easiest lesson in cooking should come as no surprise: you must conceive every aspect of the process in sexualized terms. There's nothing more sexual than cooking. Even sex is less sexy than food. An ongoing discussion in my house last year over the relative merits of barbecue, sex and Brussels sprouts led to some heated debate.

The saga begins at the supermarket. In the produce area, follow your instincts. The specimens you select should be firm, taught, smooth, clean. Asparagus, for example, should be as stiff as can be. As it ages, it becomes flaccid, and flaccid asparagus just doesn't get the job done. As a bell pepper ages, its skin gets loose and wrinkly, so if loose and wrinkly doesn't sound attractive, you shouldn't buy it.

Onto the butcher. Well, we don't really have butchers at Hannaford, and the fishmongers are pretty clueless. But the butcher understands flesh like no one else. Not in any sort of cannibalistic way, but in a familiarity with form that can only come from years of study. A good butcher will

tell you exactly what piece of meat you need and how to cook it.

Then comes the cooking of the meal. Some things to remember: as mentioned earlier, burnt garlic ruins everything. I see this all the time and it really saddens me. It's such an avoidable mishap. People (somewhat rightly) think that adding garlic first will infuse the flavor with the oil, but if there's lots of other stuff going into the oil, to be cooked at medium or high heat for any length of time, the garlic will end up charred. Save it for the end if you're sauteing. If the garlic is suspended in a liquid other than hot oil, however, as in stews or baked dishes, it will soften nicely and add a subtle and complex flavor. Peppers, onions, and mushrooms, on the other hand, can taste great burnt. Think fajitas. Oh wait, there's no Mexican food around here, so few of you know what a "fajita" is. Doesn't matter, you can't make them at home for real anyway.

Slicing onions: the sharper your knife and the faster you go, the less they'll make you look like a sissy cry-baby. You could also wear goggles, but I can tell you, they do nothing for your reputation. I think it was Mario Batali who said slicing vegetables is like making love to a woman. So if you've never made love to a woman, you can't cut veggies. Martha Stewart must have come out of the brig a much improved veggie cleaver. The right rhythm should result in fast, smooth, safe and satisfying slicing. Buy at least one decent 8" chef's knife—it doesn't have to be super fancy, but pay at least \$30. Also get a sharpening steel—the size doesn't matter, it's how you use it. Find some demonstrations on YouTube.

The sexualization of food, of course, is neither new nor surprising. Words like "gourmand," "appetite" and "satisfaction" all have clear double meanings, and all of which, incidentally, the French excel in. They understand that food and sex are on the same plane of intimacy. Take, for example, a French classic: a lamb shank braised with red wine, with buttery mashed potatoes and mushrooms, capped off with a chocolate tart and a cheese plate. Enough said. It's all just a matter of pleasing yourself—a process much improved by careful attention to detail.

JUST A SEA SHEPHERD

# How to Watch TV

*Whale Wars makes a mockery of activists' important watchdog role.*

BY ALEJANDRA BLOHM-SALLEH

On November 7th, Animal Planet aired the season premiere of *Whale Wars*, which follows Captain Paul Watson's team of volunteers aboard the MV *Steve Irwin*, named for the martyred crocodile whisperer. Capt. Watson's Sea Shepherd Conservation Society has been engaged for years in a campaign that every winter finds them prowling for Japanese whale ships that catch around 1,000 whales a year. Sea Shepherd rose to prominence this past winter when their arsenal of stink bombs—built with rancid butter and launched onto the decks of whale ships—sparked an international controversy in which the Japanese government accused Capt. Watson of eco-terrorism.

The whalers claim their work is in the name of "research," although they also sell whale meat at a profit. And they do so in violation of a moratorium on all commercial whaling set by the International Whaling Commission in 1986. Absent effective enforcement, Sea Shepherd does important work. The press is popularizing it everywhere by showcasing its vibrancy and suspense. But the show's producers seem intent on undermining their efforts by portraying the group of devoted volunteers look like every activist stereotype: unorganized, uncoordinated, and completely irrational.

People have already begun commenting on how Sea Shepherd has been shown so negatively. In the first episode, as a group of them is being lowered into the waters by another volunteer, the boat immediately turns over as it hits the sea. After being told that they would most likely die if they were to fall into the water, the audience is obviously gripping their seats with anticipation and fear. Predictably, Animal Planet then cuts to commercial; we then see various people scrambling to save the stranded group, which has clamored its way on top of the inflatable boat, but has drifted far from the ship. Onboard the ship, the volunteers look incredibly insecure, scared, and messy. Their attempts to throw a lifesaver out to the boat failed numerous times before finally reaching it and reeling it back in. The entire scene was absolutely chaotic, but brought eventually under control, and at any rate, it was a negligible chapter in the group's broader

struggle against the whalers. A team that is trained, strong, and confident in their abilities was made out to be the exact opposite.

On the Animal Planet website, a viewer wrote that Capt. Watson "lacks common sense and leadership." "It is a wonder no one was killed," the viewer continued, "with the lack of structure, training, skills and safety shown on the first episode. This man has no right bringing humans out to sea." To say the least, the show left people with bad impressions, the very same conceptions of the volunteers that the Japanese government, which supports the whaling operations, has been promoting, that of a scrappy, hodge-podge group of eco-terrorists bent on irrational muckraking. That was exactly how the season premier characterized Sea Shepherd: an hour of somersault action that continued showing Capt. Watson and his crew as untrained individuals who deserve to be laughed at.

What is so disappointing about this representation of Sea Shepherd is that it is completely false and distracting. Sea Shepherd is a group of people who risk their lives in order to stop the atrocities committed by the Japanese whalers. They are honest and committed to saving whales. By going public through a commercialized television show they have decided to give people a reason to laugh at them. The show robs them of their validity and respectability by presenting them in this ridiculed way. "I am going to watch this because I want to see what a group of extremely untrained individuals do," another viewer commented. "Everything they do lacks common sense."

The Japanese government, for its part, is seeking to overturn the whaling moratorium, claiming that whale populations have sufficiently rebounded, and that fish supplies, which have suffered from rampant overfishing, can no longer support the disproportionately large whale population. But whatever merit these arguments might have, they are undermined by the character assassination of their opponents. As long as people continue to watch this show for the laughs, the jokes, and the mockery of it all, no earnest dialogue can take place, and people will lack an honest appreciation for what Sea Shepherd truly is.



# Opinion

LAW

## Drugs are bad, mm'kay

*A faculty drug bust may force the administration to clarify what aspects of drug use are necessarily perfidious.*

BY TRAVIS WENTWORTH

As many students by now have heard, Kris Feder, the chair of the Economics department, was arrested two weeks ago after state troopers discovered marijuana plants in her house in Gallatin. She faces charges of marijuana possession and illegally growing cannabis plants.

Most students are familiar with the administration's contentions that the use of drugs is, as Leon Botstein put it recently, "deleterious" to the conduct of academic life. Such views are not without merit, and enforcement in most cases has been justified—as in the case last year when nearly a dozen students were asked to leave Bard after the discovery of a DMT lab in Robbins led to the unveiling of a large distribution network on campus. Producing hard drugs like DMT puts students in immediate danger by the threat of fire and toxic fumes; the drugs themselves interfere with intellectual focus, and their immediate presence threatens the recovery of students who have struggled with drug problems in the past.

For reasons that largely seem to concern legality, the administration has sustained an unmitigated contempt for marijuana use. The law treats marijuana the same way as other drugs, and so the administration cannot formally condone or sanction marijuana use while condemning harder drugs. But as most Bard students know, and as many administrators perhaps know but cannot admit, the moderated personal use of weed can coincide with academic success. The situation with Kris Feder may force the administration to make a final ruling on the matter.

In conversations with the FREE PRESS, Botstein refrained from speculating on Feder's fate in light of the fact that she has not been found guilty in court, and that the presumption of innocence should prevail. Legally, her case is not open-and-shut, despite the clear evidence that troopers found marijuana in her home and that she conceded that the drug was for personal use. Feder's defense may center around whether troopers were justified in entering the home after responding to a call from a neighbor who reported having not seen Feder for several days, and that Feder's pet potbellied pig was

roaming the property untethered. Upon arrival, the troopers knocked on the door and called the house; when they got no response, they entered and searched. The neighbor then informed the police that Feder worked at Bard, and at that point the police were able to contact Feder at her office and asked her to return home, where she was then arrested. Whether the troopers had made sufficient effort to locate Feder before entering the house may be Feder's principle line of defense.

The fact that Feder's legal victory would relieve Botstein of the need to make a final ruling on Feder's marijuana use demonstrates how absurd the entire situation is. Regardless of Feder's legal fate, it's fairly clear that she uses marijuana personally. What's also clear is that Feder defies most pejoratives on the effects of smoking pot. She didn't become head of the Economics department by being a slouch. Her potentially perilous situation has generated an outcry of support from her students who testify that she is an excellent professor. Her success has run parallel to a practice that many would condemn as both legally and morally degenerative.

What's more, Feder's practice was entirely self-contained. When the troopers entered her home, according to local news reports, they discovered 16 marijuana plants that ranged from 18 inches to seven feet in height. According to the investigator, the plants were sufficient to produce two ounces of weed, with a street value of around \$200, a negligible value that sustains Feder's claims that the weed was purely for personal use. There is no reason to suspect she was sharing the weed with students or that her personal practice affected her professional life in any way. And unlike with other drugs, Feder's home-grown stash does not support any dangerous or exploitative underground drug market.

Still, according to Botstein, the administration has engaged its own legal counsel to investigate Bard's obligations in the event of a conviction. Even if the College went as far as officially condoning Feder's marijuana use—which appears unlikely—it might still have some obligation to condemn Feder's flaunting of the law, violating certain standards of behavior, even if those standards



PHOTO BY DANIEL TERNA



# Another Look at Academic Freedom

*Rigid accountability makes academic freedom at Bard so small it's almost invisible.*

BY DONNA MCCOLLOCH

The idea of "academic freedom" is crucial to the whole rationale for higher education. If academics were not free (by some definition, and to some extent) to research and teach what they pleased, entering academic life would have little appeal. In exchange for such freedom, aspiring academics put up with the rigors (some probably unnecessary) of Ph.D. programs and the uncertainty of the higher-ed job market—which sends many good, smart people off to work part-time adjunct jobs for what often works out to less than minimum wage. Then there's the tenure system to deal with, which virtually removes accountability from senior faculty.

Clearly academic freedom is an idea some people cherish quite dearly. It takes a central place in the Community Standards of Behavior, which states that "The Bard College community is committed to freedom of thought and speech, the attainment of the highest quality of academic and personal achievement, and ensuring that academic freedom and uncensored debate continue in an atmosphere uncorrupted by discrimination, harassment, or intimidation." The Faculty Handbook spends more than seven hundred words outlining Bard's definition of academic freedom, followed by the "Statement of Policy on Faculty Whose Fitness to Teach is Challenged by an Outside Authority," which states that Bard "concede[s] to no outside authority—government, public opinion, the press, or whatever—a voice in the determination of a particular teacher's fitness to teach."

So far so good. So noble. This is important stuff; there are people teaching here who, rightly or wrongly, are controversial public figures, and there is an active movement on the political right to discredit much of what we do here. Barack Obama's recent triumph notwithstanding, this movement isn't going away anytime soon. The external threat to our academic freedom is real. But given how much effort has been spent by both the supposed attackers

and supposed defenders of academic freedom, it's worth asking what's really at stake here. What is it we're supposed to be so enamored with? What extent and what substance does it have? The Faculty Handbook talks about it in terms of freedom for a professor "to teach within his special competence" and "freedom in the classroom in discussing his subject." OK, so they're free to work their own personal theories into intro classes. Fine by me. Really, isn't that part of the fun of First-Year Seminar—not to mention something the course catalog could play up more? But, at least in practice, it doesn't mean that professors have free rein in developing advanced classes. I know plenty who've told me of classes they've wanted to teach but been unable to get approved—sometimes for fair reasons, like the need to cover sections of core classes, but sometimes not.

So how does this apply to us Bard students? There's a big show made of treating us as junior academics. In the Moderation process, we are supposed to explain who we are as intellectuals—although, looking back on my Moderation papers from a year and a half ago, I for one feel like I'm reading something by a totally different person. The Senior Project, at least in most academic departments, is treated and structured like a mini-dissertation to prepare us for the rigors of graduate school. But how free are we in our academic pursuits here? Every decision we make about classes we want to take has to be approved twice—once by the instructor teaching the class, and again by our advisers. Most of us have no say in what classes are offered, and there is no formal process for us to express such wishes. The process of developing new programs is an utter mystery. There is almost no student involvement in deciding what fields new hires should be made in. Our Senior Project work is closely monitored, and many aspects of it subject to veto. In short, it looks like most of the supposed academics here—that is, both students and faculty—have no academic freedom at all.

I've already heard a few responses to these arguments. The first is that we can't have total anarchy in teaching, that there have to be some standards and norms for us to follow. Very true.

But my argument is not that standards should be eliminated, but that we have a degree of academic freedom that's so small it's almost invisible. The second goes something like this: "I've always had great experiences talking to Professor X about classes the department should offer next semester! What's the problem?" The problem is that most of us aren't that person. Even if these privileged few are our best and brightest—an idea that, frankly, I think is bullshit—every student here puts in some enormous sum of time and money, and should have some effective say in what they get in exchange. The third is that some institutions, such as the Division of Multidisciplinary Studies and the opportunities for tutorials and independent study, already allow students to pursue their own courses of study. Well, sort of. Multidisciplinary Studies has very little presence and very few resources. Tutorials and independent studies generally mean significantly more than the workload for a standard class, for half the credit. It's just not practical to make them a major part of your education here. And even then, everyone who wants to try such a program has to go it alone. In a lot of ways, it's easier to double-major. The fourth is that we can still do whatever we want here, as long as we don't worry too much about grades. That's selling freedom rather short. Are we "free" to smoke marijuana in front of a police station, as long as we don't mind getting arrested?

It is probably too early in this discussion to close in on specific solutions. But there are questions that need to be asked, and asked publicly. What are the educational benefits of the division and department systems, and of the different categories of programs? Could we have a curriculum that was more liberal and/or more preparatory for professional life without it, or with it in a reduced form? Is the structure of the Educational Policies Committee—as a group of students elected by the student body as a whole, with heavy responsibilities in the faculty evaluation process but no specific role in curriculum or planning—at all adequate? And lastly, what sort of "academic freedom" could we and should we enjoy?

were defined by ridiculous laws that prosecute victimless crimes. Feder's fate might well come down to the details of Feder's contract that Bard's lawyers are now reviewing.

"Drug possession and use is against the law and faculty members are held to a standard of conduct which is appropriate to their profession," Botstein says. Does Feder's status as a professor impose a higher standard of conduct? "A lot of what is the proper remedy falls under contract law," he says. The legal counsel that Bard has commissioned might turn out to be Bard's gateway to firing Feder on contractual grounds. If she is convicted, tricky legal gymnastics would lessen the need wrap her dismissal in terms of a moral judgment.

"If in fact there is confirmation of the alleged behavior, then the College has to respond in some way that is appropriate," says Botstein.

Such a statement all but eliminates the possibility that the matter might simply be treated as a private legal issue that is of no concern to Bard, which is exactly the attitude the administration should adopt. Anecdotal evidence has long suggested that professors have exhibited other very human and clandestine habits whose destructiveness is not lessened by their legality: alcoholism, sexism, prejudice, dishonesty, etc. Will the College define what is "right" simply in terms of laws that have no bearing on justice?

Students have found themselves conflicted. On the one hand, the illegality of marijuana use and underage drinking has led the administration to punish students—and in some cases, ask them to leave—and students fear a certain double standard if a faculty member's drug use is exonerated while students face tough penalties for the same infractions. At the same time, Feder is a highly respected professor, whose marijuana use has clearly not affected her teaching.

In drawing a distinction between students and faculty, Botstein laid the groundwork for a pardon, but one that would come at the expense of acknowledging different treatment of students and faculty. While faculty are bound by their contracts, "the relationship with students to the institution is one of membership that's granted by the College, in which one has to abide by certain rules," says Botstein, giving the College a wider reach than drug law and contract law to govern student behavior on campus. But such a double standard seems warranted: the reasons behind enforcing strict drug rules for on-campus students don't seem valid when applied to Feder's case: drugs didn't interfere with her academic life, and they didn't endanger anyone else.

Still, such a pardon may be unlikely. For both students and faculty, membership to the college community infers "a common standard of respect for the law and the distancing from drug use," Botstein says. "In both cases, the College will not be in a position by which it condones one and doesn't condone the other. The College does not condone it on anyone's part." To what extent not condoning means condemning remains to be seen.

## COP SHOP

Dispatches and Alerts from Your Friend Ken Cooper

**Safety & Security Director on fashion; the proper routes to a sugar fix; watch the motorbike.**

- An eminent Bard professor expressed his concern for students crossing Annandale Road, especially after 4:30pm as we lose light. Many students wear dark colored clothing, possibly to express societal or world concern, or to prove they are no slave to fashion. This would be fine if, along with the color choice, they wore bright blinking LED lights and reflective tape. As most students will not make this commitment to safety, I ask that everyone look before they cross from Ludlow Hill or Kline to the Campus Center, or anywhere along Annandale Road, especially in the evening.
- On Thanksgiving Day, Bard College Security Officers escorted a group of hunters off campus. We carefully explained to them that the inhabitants of the campus are not in season, and that they are in violation of state law.
- The second floor vending machine at the Campus Center was vandalized. A few candy bars were taken, but the damage to the machine was over \$1,000.00. Should the vandal need a sugar fix, please see me - I will gladly give you the three dollars.
- A student's motor bike was knocked over in the Main Lot - very slight damage.
- A student's car window was broken in Kline Lot Saturday. No suspects as yet. Good idea to keep valuables in the trunk and out of sight of youthful high school offenders... for example.
- A number of dissected bicycles were discovered in a dorm basement. Body parts everywhere - like a scene from Saw 2. We are checking to see if they match any bikes reported stolen. The Bike Co-op is the only group sanctioned to perform life saving operations on bikes.
- A fire extinguisher is missing from the Campus Center. We are investigating. They are expensive to replace and important for campus safety.



22

## The Perpetual Student: by Choice and Necessity

*Five years of college are five good years of college!*



BY LEAH FINNEGAN

I've been waiting to graduate from college from the first minute I started in college. When my parents dumped me at L&T in 2004, I was so green—my belly was full of corn and my hair was full of Herbal Essences; I had one of those requisite Bed Bath & Beyond lamps with all the different-colored sconces pointing every which way like a postmodern Medusa head [eds.: These lamps supposedly light stuff on fire; it will be Ken Cooper turning you to stone should he find you with one]. But even then, as the entire freshman class dropped acid and had sex while I read People magazine in bed while wearing footie pajamas, I knew things were over before they even began.

I drafted a four-year countdown calendar nearly immediately. "Only 1,419 days left," went my inner soliloquy on

Oct. 16, 2004. "Just gotta get through a couple more years. Just a couple more years til I'm free. I see it: Brooklyn. Brooklyn's on the horizon. In 1,419 days, I can move to Brooklyn. I can live in a house with my imaginary friends. We can share clothes, bake squash, drink tea out of jars and make music and art. Brooklyn. Brooklyn. Brooklyn. Just a couple more years."

I made it through two years at Bard before I threw in the towel for the sake of my personal manifest destiny. I thought a big move might expedite the 700-odd days left of college. But, alas, here I am, three years later, creaking along at 22, struggling to pass Biology for Liberal Arts Majors at the University of Texas while the hungover freshmen around me ace exam after exam, despite being hungover and having recently contracted herpes.

The thing is that at the University of Texas, they want you to stay more than four years. They want you to stay eight years or ten years. They love you, even if you believe in exploring renewable energy options. So they make it incredibly difficult to graduate. This in itself is not so bad for several reasons. One is that Texas does not cost \$6 million per year like Bard, and if you look in the right pockets and pretend to be Latino you can find lots of money to finance your education. The other thing is that staying in college is at once an awesome and prudent decision. I mean, let's be honest—there's nowhere else to really be right now. The job market is about as welcoming as an abusive father and the economy has been flapping in the wind like a rotten piece of celery. College is nothing less than a beautiful crib with a vague yet venerable purpose in which to

hide from the storm.

But I still feel like I've been in college a little too long, and I reserve fear that I'll never get out. It's just too easy not to pass classes, or put them off or take more classes because you decide in your ninth semester that you need to know German and xhtml and macroeconomics to have marketable skills.

But seriously, being a student is so legit right now. There's so much shit to "know" and so many ways to pay for the process of "knowing" it, especially if you converted all your money into silver bars like I did two years ago. Ah yes, I could take -332 more days of this. College is magical, and it is why I exist.

*Finnegan left the FREE PRESS to become editor-in-chief of the University of Texas's Daily Texan, which has a daily circulation of roughly 30,000. She also has a blog: [asidreflucks.com](http://asidreflucks.com)*



Dear Editors,

Real Change is the product on an intellectually honest re-assessment of long-standing ideas and institutions. It is not a process of negation; rather, it is a process of creation. Pseudo intellectuals look for reasons to be disagreeable, but it takes true mental courage to propose lasting solutions. As one of my favorite economists put it, "I propose to beg no question, to shrink from no conclusion, but to follow the truth wherever it may lead." More simply, I ask that you keep an open mind.

The great thing about the system we have for allocating funds at Bard is that it allows us to do things that no Sensible Person would do. And the reason that's great is that some of the time Sensible People aren't. So, when someone proposes that the school give thousands of dollars to fund a play without a script, plot, or characters, where people make crazy noises dressed in absurd costumes, we can say yes where more Sensible People would not. Our community is better off for it.

The downside is that some of our fiscal adventures have poor results, despite sounding like really good ideas. This is true in the case of Bard's newspapers. The Observer has been Bard's newspaper for decades, but the FREE PRESS was founded in March of 2000. When the Planning Committee started funding the FREE PRESS, it did so because it thought that having two newspapers would improve the

quality of journalism on campus. Specifically, they thought having two publications would a) make each compete with the other to see who can cover the news better; b) offer a wider range of opinion, encouraging diversity of opinion on campus; c) allow for more diversity in layout and visual presentation; and d) encourage more students to write.

Sadly, eight years later, this is not the case. In fact, two publications is one too many for this campus. Re-reading this past semester's issues of the Observer and FREE PRESS side-by-side, I would make the following generalizations:

Both newspapers devote a considerable amount of space to non-Bard considerations, though, this semester, the Observer is far guiltier of this than the FREE PRESS.

When they do deign to cover local matters, both papers cover the same topics, with nearly the same editorial viewpoint. Take, for example, the coverage of the Senate turmoil earlier this year, or the election coverage.

Both newspapers are extremely conservative - what article this year was likely to find disagreement among most of its readers? Heck, what article this semester didn't qualify as preaching to the choir? Instead of addressing controversy among students, the papers cover controversy with the administration, as though they still haven't gotten over that adolescent urge to pick on Mom and Dad.

Both newspapers cover only a fraction of the news at Bard. But ask them why they prefer to pontificate on national politics rather than immediate issues, and they will arrogantly claim that 'nothing goes on here.' Open your eyes.

Both newspapers suffer from poor editing, inconsistent layout, and generally poor writing, with few exceptions like Alex Eriksen and Daniel Terna only serving to highlight how bad everything else is.

Both newspapers' websites are out of date and I daresay infrequently visited, and, last I checked, the library's permanent records were incomplete.

Both newspapers avoid human-interest and feature stories like the plague.

Both newspapers come out according to the whenever-we-get-around-to-it school of timing.

Both newspapers largely ignore the local community, only recently reaching out to advertise for struggling local businesses, and then only because the Planning Committee encouraged them financially.

Both newspapers, particularly the Observer, are disrespectful of their writers, ignoring people's emails or refusing to meet about articles they don't want to publish.

Why is this the case? Why hasn't our radical endeavor produced the spectacular results we thought it would? I suggest the following reasons:

Having two newspapers splits the group of students interested in writing for the paper in two, leaving both papers understaffed and under submitted.

Having two newspapers splits the amount of money allocated to student publications two ways, leaving both papers with too few layout computers, cameras and other equipment.

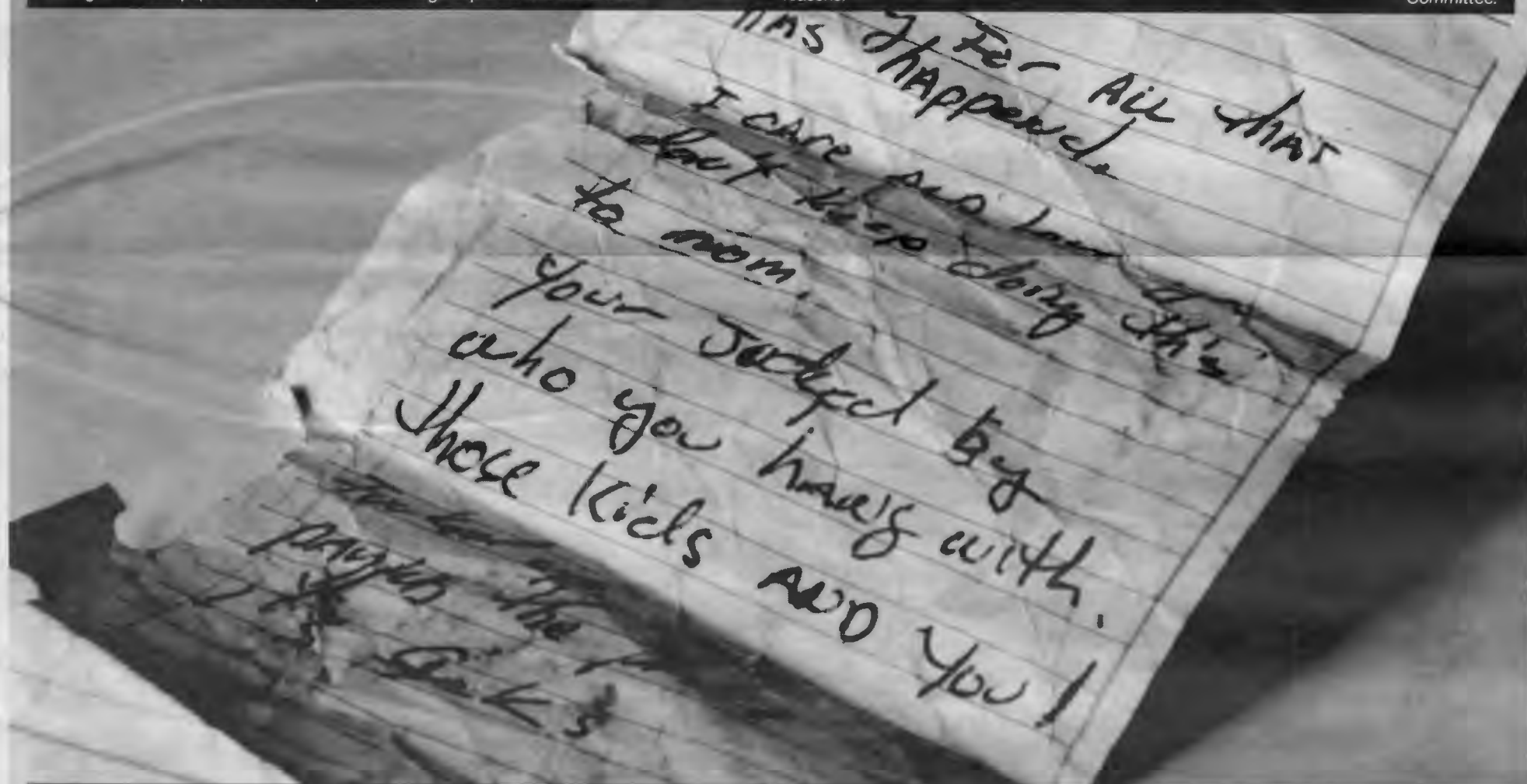
The lack of participation means that both papers are run by a small clique of editors that mainly see eye-to-eye. The FREE PRESS, for example, is really only run by four people of similar viewpoints. Unlike the Observer, the FREE PRESS does not advertise its editorial meetings.

Dispersing the public dialogue weakens it. The newspapers each operate as though they are the only papers on campus rather than engaging in any kind of dialogue. Try to find one paper's name in the other paper's pages. Some experiments, like the Surrealist Training Circus, work out great. And others not so well. We need a cold reassessment of our campus newspapers; next year, I will argue that Bard consolidate its newspapers into one with a bigger budget, more participation, regular, frequent publications and a more diverse editorial viewpoint.

Best,

Rob Ross

The writer is a member of the Planning Committee.



Mr. Ross,

We reject your premise that the FREE PRESS sucks. But we do admit that we are understaffed and are in need of more writers.

Though we try our best to encourage new members to join us during layout weekends that we make open to our entire email list, two seniors and two sophomores compose the editorial staff of the FREE PRESS. We understand that the size of our staff sometimes limits the improvements that can be made in layout, editing, content, and timeliness, but we in no way agree that we compose "a small clique of editors that mainly see eye to eye" or that we "pontificate on national politics rather than immediate issues." We've done almost zero pontificating this year. What you see in the FREE PRESS generally reflects the interests of our writers more than any censored "editorial viewpoint." We examine every article closely and never reject articles on the basis of their opinion. Rare rejections occur because a) the writing is not up to our standards,

b) the article has been sent anonymously, or c) the article covers a personal rift between students. We work at length to be fair and comprehensive in our editing by working closely with our writers to straighten out clarity and organization, and the results, we think, are typically very good. Beyond some rare (though admittedly egregious) errors, such as the misspellings of Olafur Eliasson's name on our last cover, we challenge you to produce more good examples of "poor editing."

You are correct to point out that the Observer and FREE PRESS can feel similar in content. This similarity is due largely to the fact that both papers suffer from a shortage of writers, due to a general lack of interest in journalism and nonfiction writing one campus. A regularly scheduled newspaper that covers every single event on campus (from what to expect at the next earthenware sale at the Campus center to the failures of the Boy's Rugby Squad) is an impossibility.

But this brings us to the crux of the matter. As best we can tell, your suggestion is that the FREE PRESS and the Ob-

server combine forces. You come to this conclusion by way of artlessly singing insults at just about every writer and editor at each newspaper, which makes us wonder why you think one shitty paper would be better than two.

Still, you raise an interesting point. Bard needs newspapers, and Bard needs diverse opinions and coverage. Perhaps the FREE PRESS's (and presumably the Observer's) contributor shortages would be solved by merging and producing a single paper more frequently. There are drawbacks to such an approach that are too numerous to name here, but we are willing to enter into discussions. In the meantime, Mr. Ross, please dispense with the polemics.

We stand by our writers and paper. But ultimately, it goes (almost) without saying that we trust the independent judgment of our readers regarding the quality of student publications. If our readers share Mr. Ross's dissatisfaction, we are accountable to none but their judgment.

--Eds.



Emily & Isabelle  
PRESENT  
**NATURE TALK W/  
DAVID ATTENBOROUGH\***

a column in which we learn interesting  
or nerdy things we know relatively nothing  
about and then try to teach them to you

**BLACK CAPPED  
CHICKADEE**

• black cap  
• black throat  
• black back  
• black wings  
• black tail  
• black legs  
• black beak  
• black feet  
• black everything

**GOLDFINCH**

• slightly bigger than a chickadee  
• bright yellow in spring  
• dark / olive in fall & winter  
• mostly monochrome

**TURKISH  
TITMOUSE**

• slightly bigger than a goldfinch  
• light, dirty brown  
• has the same shape as the blue jay  
• black cap  
• black throat  
• black back  
• black wings  
• black tail  
• black legs  
• black beak  
• black feet  
• black everything

**DOWNY WOODPECKER**

• black cap  
• black throat  
• black back  
• black wings  
• black tail  
• black legs  
• black beak  
• black feet  
• black everything

**PLEATED WOODPECKER**

• black cap  
• black throat  
• black back  
• black wings  
• black tail  
• black legs  
• black beak  
• black feet  
• black everything

**BLUE  
JAY**

• black cap  
• black throat  
• black back  
• black wings  
• black tail  
• black legs  
• black beak  
• black feet  
• black everything

**BIRD FOOD**

feeding birds to you

**PINECONE FEEDER**

• tie string to pinecone  
• spread pine on pinecone  
• roll in birdseed

**PREY**

• black cap  
• black throat  
• black back  
• black wings  
• black tail  
• black legs  
• black beak  
• black feet  
• black everything

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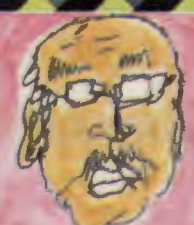
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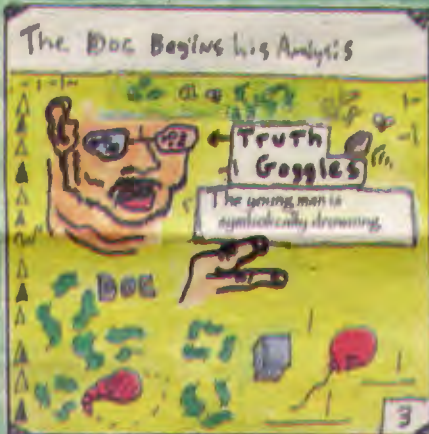
**THE  
DOC**



Part I of 00

Our Hero, The Doc, Struggles to  
Connect With his Patients

In order to deal with the problem  
at hand, The Doc, Analyzes  
a Series of Dreams



**vcopenstudio.org**

Open Studio's aim is to nurture an ecology of production and critique using the intimacy of the artists' studio and the scope of international collaboration. Exposed to the generative habits of a large community of peers, students are able to see their own work as part of a global narrative.

The three main arms of the website pass information between the studios, the project page, and the magazine, letting ideas cross-germinate. Anyone who accepts the invitation to 'curate a show' using works from the existing studios will feel the connections existing between the practices of students on opposite sides of the globe.



Svetik Semisvetik, 2011  
by EMILY NEWMAN

**SUBMIT TO THE BARD PAPERS!**

The first due date for Bard Papers submissions (poetry, prose, visual arts) is **Monday, February 9th**.

Please send in all poetry and prose submissions as a Word doc to papers@bard.edu. Be sure to include your name and the title of your work.

Please send in all visual arts submissions as a jpeg. or tiff. file on a CD. Be sure to include your name as well as the title, dimensions, and materials of your work.

Campus-mail submissions to:

Alice Gregory or Sydney Schrader

REVIEW OF ALL SUBMISSIONS IS BLIND.

Feel free to contact us with any questions, concerns, or to let us know whether you will need us to photograph your work at papers@bard.edu.