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# bard free press

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## COVER ART (FRONT AND BACK)

aaron rogachevsky

These prints began with the rusting of steel plate with water and nitric acid. Plaster was then poured over this rust, prompting the growth of rust into the plaster, which was then removed from the original plate. All of the color aside from the red rust is a chemical (iron III sulfate) that is formed when the iron oxide interacts with the calcium sulfate (plaster) and decays over the course of half an hour. All photos were therefore taken over the time span of 30 minutes and represent different stages in the decay of the iron III sulfate.

## ADMINISTRATION: PURIFY SMOG OR ELSE STUDENTS RALLY FOR SPACE

by joey sims

The future of SMOG, a student-run space which has operated as Bard's primary music venue for the past ten years, is in jeopardy after Ken Cooper, Director of Security, recommended the space's closure. In an open letter e-mailed to the entire student body, it was announced that the administration was strongly considering closing SMOG due to "numerous recent violations of school policy including alcohol and drug use resulting in medical emergencies, destruction of property, theft, graffiti, and vandalism."

The announcement set off a firestorm of student protest and debate. Cooper himself received numerous impassioned responses from students (see page 8). Many argued the importance of SMOG as a student space; others argued that its closure would not combat larger issues with excessive drinking and drug use on campus. Cooper and other administrators encouraged student input on the issue. Student Government will be holding a student forum on the topic immediately following spring break, which Cooper and other administrators are expected to attend.

The threat of SMOG's closure comes in response to a perceived culture of drinking and drug use at the venue. "There have always been problems with the drinking and drug scene there," said Julie Silverstein, Director of Student Activities. The administration argues that this culture has worsened over the past academic year. "There have been a couple different events in the past year where ambulances have had to come and take people to the hospital for consuming too much alcohol," said Silverstein.

Maxwell Paparella '13, one of the SMOG club heads, detailed some of those incidents. "Already this semester we've had someone get taken away from SMOG in an ambulance because of alcohol poisoning, and someone else set off the fire extinguisher in the middle of a show," said Paparella. "These are the incidents that are catching the eye of the administration."

Several efforts have already been undertaken to address administration concerns. Beginning in the 2009-10 academic year, a security officer was stationed outside the venue to intercept students entering with alcohol, and a 'no backpacks' policy was instituted, also to prevent alcohol from entering the space. Last semester saw the introduction of SMOGCOPS, student workers who supervise the space and confront policy violations. (The name, Paparella was quick to note, was "a joke that grew out of our distaste for being figures of authority at a space we love just the way it is.")

That program's start has been "rocky," according to Silverstein. "We've gone through a lot of different people." Though she added that SMOGCOPS has improved in effectiveness this semester, Silverstein feels it is an "unreal-

istic expectation that two students per show can really put an end to everything that happens down there." Though the SMOG club heads had hoped the program could substitute for increased security presence, security guard Cliff Powell is expected to be present inside every SMOG show from now on.

In order to save SMOG, those involved stress, a larger change in student behavior is required. "It's a cultural shift," said Jeremy Carter-Gordon, Secretary of the Student Association. "Students as a whole really need to step up and take responsibility for both their own actions and the actions of their peers."

"I would urge students to be more respectful of the space, themselves, and each other," agreed Paparella. "The administration is looking for an excuse to shut SMOG down — please don't be the dude who fucks it up for everyone." Paparella also stressed that "a 'fuck the administration' response will not be helpful. Although the administration is seriously misguided in the way they are addressing this issue, they seem to be at a loss for other ideas. A brash, negative response would further convince them that SMOG is a problem that needs to be stopped."

Cooper and other administrators encourage student ideas, as well as a broader student debate on SMOG's future. Cooper praised the student responses to his letter. "The e-mails were heartfelt, excellent well-articulated sentiments," said Cooper. "I was humbled. We are definitely a unique school, that we have that type of communication." He insisted that the debate on SMOG's future "has only just begun." In a response to one e-mail, Cooper wrote, "The huge response to the letter has had what I believe may be a life saving effect for our little brick building."

The final decision on SMOG's future will fall to Jim Brudvig, Vice President for Administration. For his part, Brudvig insisted, "I don't have any great desire to close it. I don't know where else [students] would go." Brudvig agreed, however, that a change is needed. "It can't go on as it is," he said. "The behavior has to change or modify for [security] to feel at all responsible for what is going on."

The form that this "cultural shift" should take is a matter of debate. "One thing we can do is get different kinds of programming in there," argued Carter-Gordon. "A lot of students at this school do not like SMOG. And they get to some extent left by the wayside." He noted that if SMOG's appearance were improved, it could be used interchangeably for different kinds of bands, and for other activities, such as an outdoor café.

Some students were left baffled, however, by the focus placed on SMOG's appearance from the onset of the debate. "The graffiti at SMOG is an integral part of its identity,"

argued Eli Sidman '12 in an e-mail to Cooper. "It's harmless and gives the space life." Paparella agreed, and noted that Cooper's specific criticism of the graffiti was not part of the letter draft which they had approved. "I am not sure why this is still an issue being cited by the administration as a negative aspect of SMOG," said Paparella. "SMOG is a student space, and students are responsible for its physical appearance. Paint cool shit."

The administration has also faced criticism for being out of touch with student life on campus — particularly the lack of student space. "A frustrating aspect of this is the failure of any of these so-called 'officials' to understand the importance of SMOG not as a party space, but as a space for student acts and other smaller artists," argued Enrico Purita '11 in an e-mail to Cooper. "The administration fails to propose any alternative to this space." In a response, however, Cooper agreed that "students deserve and need a decent social space." Silverstein also agreed, saying "That's why ultimately no one wants to see SMOG fail. What we want to see is a change of culture down there."

Silverstein also acknowledged the argument, put forward by many students, that closing SMOG will not prevent drinking and drug use, but simply move it elsewhere. However, she argued that irresponsible drinking, and a lack of student discretion, has forced the administration's hand. "We have to say that if you are not 21 years old, you're not allowed to drink," said Silverstein. "But at the same time we can have that conversation where we understand that college students make choices, and that if you are going to make the choice to drink, we want you to do it in a responsible way."

Carter-Gordon expanded on this idea of discretion. "If you have a beer, keep it to yourself — that's fine," said Carter-Gordon. "Don't show up with a thirty rack, don't show up with a handle of vodka. You can't drink that. It's just a bad idea."

Whether or not students agree that SMOG is 'a problem,' it is clear that if a change does not occur, the space will be in great danger. Such a change is not so much about SMOG, some argue, as it is about over-consumption of alcohol across campus. "An attempt to close SMOG would be addressing a symptom of the problem, not the problem itself," said Paparella. Yet while some administrators acknowledge this, liability issues may push them to single out SMOG — unless a shift takes place. "It is a very real threat," said Silverstein. "But our sincere hope is that it creates a discussion on campus that will change the culture down there. If this cultural shift does not happen, SMOG is in real danger of getting shut down."

photo by will anderson

# SHOOTING AT POUGHKEEPSIE TRAIN STATION COMMUNITY RATTLED BY VIOLENCE

by lucas oopenorth

On February 18, a Poughkeepsie police officer was killed in the line of duty during a shootout in front of the town's train station. Several police officers had chased an armed 27 year old named Lee Welch after he shot his wife, Jessica Welch, and himself. While the shot to Ms. Welch proved to be fatal, the gunman ran, clutching his chest, to the train station. He was carrying his three-year-old daughter when the police arrived, but officers were able to remove the young child from the man's arms soon before the struggle occurred.

While no bullets were fired by the police, the gunman released several shots, one of which hit an officer in the head. The shooter was then taken down by another police officer who dislocated his shoulder in the process. During the struggle, Welch was also hit in the head and subsequently killed by one of his own bullets. Fortunately, the child and civilian bystanders were unharmed.

The officer who suffered fatal injuries was an eighteen year veteran of the force named John Falcone. He died that night, in the company of his parents, at Poughkeepsie's Vassar Brothers Medical Center. During his time as an officer, Falcone had testified as a witness in multiple im-

portant murder cases and was honored with several merit awards from the Police Benevolent Association. Following the recent incident, he was awarded a posthumous promotion to Detective for his heroic and brave service that protected the child and subdued the dangerous gunman. Two days after the shooting, more than 1000 people attended a candlelight vigil in Poughkeepsie that was held for the fallen officer.

According to the Poughkeepsie Journal, the incident was the result of an abusive relationship between the shooter and his wife. Lee Welch had been arrested several times previously on accounts of domestic violence, assault, and criminal contempt. He had just recently been released from jail for violating a court order to stay away from his wife following a violent incident between the two. The two agreed to meet in Poughkeepsie to exchange a car; the wife was living with family in Mount Vernon and the gunman was travelling from Catskill. Welch apparently shot his unarmed wife while she was still in the car.

The town of Poughkeepsie, which claims Dutchess County's largest population at around 30,000, has had a history of gun violence in recent years. According to the Pough-

keepsie Journal, last year the town saw 16 shootings. Also, in 2009 and 2008, 23 people were shot each year. Police have blamed illegal drug activity and gang violence for the high number of shootings in these years. Even since the incident that claimed Falcone's life, another man was shot by an unknown masked man. The victim then drove himself to a hospital and is expected to recover.

Because the shootout in front of Poughkeepsie's train station occurred on a Friday, it interrupted the travel plans of several Bard students who were headed to catch the Metro North into New York City. Ken Cooper, Director of Security, reported in a security notification email that Bard Security "assisted the Bard Transportation Department in arranging transport for six Bard students who had arrived at the station after the incident had ended." Additionally, several other students showed up to the Bard shuttle stop only to be informed that Poughkeepsie's station had been temporarily closed. Many of these students took taxis to the Amtrak station in nearby Rhinecliff.

## AWARDS AND HONORARY DEGREES AT COMMENCEMENT ANNOUNCED FRONTMAN OF BEASTIE BOYS, DISNEY SONGWRITERS AMONG RECIPIENTS

by joey sims

The recipients of the awards and honorary degrees to be presented at Commencement 2011 have been announced. The most famous name amongst the recipients is Adam Yauch '86, also known as MCA, the founding member of hip hop trio The Beastie Boys.

Other alums being awarded include Richard C. Friedman '61, a prominent psychoanalyst, and Pia Carusone '03, chief of staff to Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. Honorary degrees will be presented to Robert and Richard Sherman '49, a songwriting duo who wrote the musical scores for many popular movies.

Yauch attended Bard for two years before dropping out to pursue his music career. He had founded The Beastie Boys before even arriving at Bard – he mentioned the band in his application and enclosed a tape of their work for admissions staff. "Because Bard attracts a lot of artists, there have been a lot of successful alums who did not graduate," noted Jane Brien, Director of Alumni/ae Affairs. "But he is still in touch with many friends from Bard." Yauch will be presented with Charles Flint Kellogg Award in Arts and Letters, which "is given in recognition of a significant contribution to the American artistic or literary heritage," according to the Bard catalogue.

The John Dewey Award for Distinguished Public

Service, which recognizes "extraordinary contributions by Bard alumni/ae and others to the public sector or in the public interest," will be presented to Pia Carusone '03. Carusone is chief of staff to Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, and became the public face of the Congresswoman's office following the shooting in Tucson. "[Pia has shown] leadership under immense pressure," said Brien. "She stepped up during this tragedy and made everyone proud."

The John and Samuel Bard Award in Medicine and Science will be presented to Richard C. Friedman MD '61, a prolific psychoanalyst. The award "honors a scientist whose achievements demonstrate a breadth of concern and depth of commitment" like that of John and Samuel Bard. Friedman has conducted influential research on affective disorders and sexuality. He teaches at Cornell and lectures at Columbia.

Several honorary degrees will also be presented. David Botstein, a prominent biologist at Princeton and brother to our President Leon Botstein, will be honored as a Doctor of Science. The Doctor of Laws will be presented to Christopher Edley, Jr., Dean and professor at Berkeley Law. Doctors of Humane Letters will be given to Sari Nusseibeh, a professor of philosophy and President of Al-Quds University in

Jerusalem, and Nina Totenberg, a legal affairs correspondent for NPR who has reported on the Supreme Court since the 1970s. Two-time Tony award winning lighting designer Jennifer Tipton will receive the Doctor of Fine Arts.

Robert and Richard Sherman '49 will receive both Doctors of Fine Arts and honorary degrees. The famous songwriting duo wrote more motion picture musical scores than any other in the history of film. These films included *Mary Poppins*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *The Jungle Book*, *The Aristocats* and *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*. They also wrote the musical scores for the original *Winnie the Pooh* shorts, and the song "It's a Small World (after all)." Brien noted that the brothers wrote and copyrighted a composition entitled 'The Bard Song' during their time at the college. According to Brien, all students in their year knew the song by heart.

The Bardian Award, which honors a longtime employee who is retiring, will go to Jean M. French, the Edith C. Blum Professor of Art History. French has been at the college since 1971.

The 2011 commencement speaker has yet to be announced.

## ATHLETICS CRISIS? ONLY SORTA RAPTORS FACE ENDANGERMENT

by kurt schmidlein

Recently, a rumor has spread amongst students that Bard was in danger of losing its status as a Division 3 school with the National Collegiate Athletic Association. The rumor was greatly exaggerated - but the reasons behind it, and other concerns in the world of Bard athletics, have raised questions about whether the athletic department is getting all the resources and support it needs from the administration.

According to Kris Hall, who has been Bard's Athletic Director since 1995, Bard is not in danger of losing its status as a NCAA D3 school. To qualify as D3, a college has to field twelve varsity teams, six for men and six for women. Each sport has to field at least the minimum number of athletes required by the rules of that game, and depending on the sport, each team must also participate in a minimum number of inter-collegiate matches. Should a team fail to meet these requirements, they can become a club sport instead.

It is likely that this rumor stemmed from the disbanding of the Bard's Men Lacrosse team, which folded after several players decided not to play. Before the lacrosse team disbanded, Bard was fielding thirteen varsity teams, seven men and six women. Therefore, the school had one Men's team that effectively acted as a cushion for the other Men's teams. If one team could not field enough players or did not play enough games due to poor weather (thus losing its status as a varsity sport), then the school's status as a D3 school would not be threatened. When the lacrosse team lost its varsity status, the number of teams fell to twelve. While this does not compromise Bard's ability to participate in NCAA D3 competitions, it changes how the Athletic De-

partment's attitude towards weather cancellations and D3 requirements.

But should anything be done to address the dissolution of the lacrosse team? Hall believes that if the position of lacrosse coach were a full time job, the rate of players returning would increase dramatically. In her experience, a team with a coach who is present and part of the community is much more likely to become a steady team. "The men's lacrosse position was proposed in June 2009 to be implemented that summer of 2009," according to Hall. "The timing corresponded with the elevation of the program from club to varsity." That request is still pending.

The broader question of whether the administration is fully assisting the athletic department with resources and support is harder to answer. Those who regularly use the Stevenson Gym will have noticed the awkwardly located blue recycling bins that are collecting water from leaks in the gym's ceiling. In addition to such repairs, the gym is in need of some obvious expansions. The cardio center, for example, is squished into a squash court. These courts are only 1000 square feet; according to Kris, fitness industry standards say such spaces should be at least 6000 square feet.

A \$15,000,000 renovation and expansion of the gym is among the goals of the college's 150th Anniversary Capital Campaign, meaning an expansion is somewhere in our future. Until then, however, the building will continue visibly suffering under the strain of accommodating not only the student body, but the local community as well - seniors, kid swimming groups and local high schools all use our facilities regularly.

## WHY STEAL WHAT YOU CAN TAKE FOR FREE? OUTDOORS CLUB EXPERIENCES THEFT

by elizabeth hayt

During the week of February 14th, the locked door of the Outdoors Club's storage space was brutally smashed open with a sledgehammer, and hundreds of dollars worth of climbing equipment was stolen from an organization that exists to provide Bard students with free access to outdoor gear. The crime, and especially its violent nature, was a shock for a club that will happily lend these supplies out for free to any student.

"It doesn't make any sense," said Ken Cooper, Director of Security. Cooper has been involved in investigating the burglary from the start. "Right now we have nobody," continued Cooper, "but it was somebody who was a Bard student, and most likely a member of the club, because whoever did this knew that the equipment was stored there."

The storage space for the Outdoors Club is located in an out-of-the-way spot in the basement of Tewksbury, so the smashed lock was not noticed for some time. As a result, the exact timing of the robbery is unknown, making it difficult to determine who may have been in the area.

"It was unbelievable," said Cooper, referring to the extent of the damage to the door. "It was a very poor decision on the student's part." The total cost of the stolen merchandise totaled around \$600, and while the club has been able

to use funding to replace the equipment, they are still dealing with the aftermath of the crime.

"The items stolen included a brand new climbing rope, a climbing harness, three water filters, and a backpack," said Elsa Raker, one of the heads of Outdoors Club. "We believe that some things were stolen on the day of the break-in, but that other people went in afterward as well."

The Outdoors Club is an active organization on Bard's campus, and endeavors to help students make the most of their four years spent living in the beautiful Hudson Valley. "The goal of the Outdoors Club is to ensure that Bard students can experience the wilderness around Bard. Locally we have world class rock climbing crags, mountains to hike, waterfalls to climb, rivers to canoe and swim in, and beautiful places to camp," explained Raker. "In addition to lending out brand new gear to students, the club currently leads biweekly rock climbing trips, and helps to build the bank of knowledge essential for safe experiences outdoors." With so many students coming from environments drastically different from Bard's, the Outdoors Club provides an opportunity to experience nature in a way that many students do not have access to at home, or could not otherwise afford to pursue, Raker continued.

The club's Facebook page, listed under "Bard Outdoors

Club 2010," shows an enthusiasm and dedication from its members, and offers an abundance of well-researched information about local climbing sites. The one downfall to this openness, however, is that it may have been taken advantage of. A full list of the club's equipment for rent was listed on the site, which may have made it an easier target for theft.

While Bard Security and the club members had been hoping for a quick return of the stolen merchandise, it has been several weeks since the theft and nothing has been resolved.

"Nearly a month later we are still dealing with the repercussions of the incident. It has involved both student and administrative time which would have been better spent doing something productive instead of fixing a problem," said Raker. Right after the incident was discovered, Raker took the time to move each and every piece of remaining equipment out of the compromised space and into her car so that nothing else could be taken. The lock on the club space has since been repaired.

"B&G has spent the money to fix the lock, but we don't have inexhaustible funds to repair destruction like that," cautioned Cooper. "I want the person who did this to give the stuff back, and never do it again."



photo credit: left: alyssa goldstein  
right: kabren levinson

## POSTER VANDALISM AT BARD CHICKEN SCRATCH GETS PERSONAL

by abhishek dev

Bard Anti-Racist Discourse's experienced poster vandalism last month during the Black History Month presentation. Two photos were defaced, three were torn down, and a statement was removed at the Campus Center during the weekend of February 12. Following the incident, b(ARD) and Erin Cannan, Dean of Student Affairs, sent two campus-wide emails expressing their discontent about the incident.

"The Bard community refuses to acknowledge our shared history of slavery and racial injustice in this country," read a comment b(ARD) provided to the FREE PRESS. "When confronted with this imagery, the community's first reaction was anger rather than compassion. We are disheartened, yet this event demonstrates the necessity of ARD at Bard."

The investigation into the issue has not turned up any culprits. Cannan noted that that since the incident was reported a day after it occurred, finding the culprit will be difficult unless someone comes forward. "The culprit can be caught only if a friend or a witness comes forward to help," said Cannan.

While this is b(ARD)'s first experience with poster vandalism, other clubs are very familiar with the problem. Members of Bard Students for A Just Peace in Israel-Palestine say their posters have been vandalized several times in the past. Last semester, posters reading "Got human rights? Palestinians don't" were disfigured when someone wrote "BLAME HAMAS" across them. Similarly, posters put up by the Bard Palestinian Youth Initiative (BPYI) were also vandalized last semester. Someone defaced a BPYI poster of a Palestinian girl and wrote "she's cute until she gets rockets" across the top.

The head of BPYI, Muahed Sursar '12, noted the culprit's complete ignorance of the club's mission. "If this human being knew that BPYI has support from Jewish brothers and sisters at Bard and that BPYI has been striving for equal opportunities for children in Palestine as with that of Israel, he or she would not have written that comment," Sursar said.

Alyssa Goldstein, co-head of Bard Students for A Just

Peace in Israel-Palestine, considers this spate of poster vandalism obnoxious. "These acts are incredibly racist and fucked up, and is an example of how racism against Palestinians (and Arabs and Muslims more generally) is normalized in the American society," said Goldstein.

Though these incidents were reported, there are many which go unreported as the clubs assume that nothing can be done. Last semester, large posters donated by various groups that had done workshops at Bard were stolen from the walls of Root Cellar. The members of the root cellar decided not to report the incident because they didn't think the culprit could be caught. "The fact that someone would deface student space -- more importantly, a strictly student-run and maintained space -- still remains quite unfortunate and saddening," commented Maddy Strassler, a member of the Root Cellar Collective.

Ben Wszalek '13, who planned and hosted the Disney Dance Party in Manor three weeks ago, felt personally targeted in another recent incident of vandalism. More than a dozen of his posters were torn down in the five day period before his party, and he felt as though it was a systematic attack.

"This wasn't just a case of someone drunkenly ripping down a poster because they thought it would be fun," said Wszalek. "Someone actually went around Campus Center, Library, Kline and all 3 floors of Olin and tore down every single one of my posters each day for four days in a row." Wszalek also noted his surprise that no-one noticed or said anything.

While the event was organized by Wszalek without association with any club or with any political agenda of any kind, he could not help but take it as a personal attack. "It's very distressing to feel you are being persecuted, and you don't know who is doing it or why," he commented. Though the incident was reported to Ken Cooper and Julie Silverstein (Directors of Security and Student Activities respectively), the two could only offer their sympathies.

Putting up the posters all week long, Wszalek realized the difficulty in advertising on campus and remarked that

limiting the advertising to the few bulletin boards by the college forces people to compete for what little space there is and encourages vandalism.

Silverstein does not believe that the lack of bulletin board space is to blame for poster vandalism. "Bulletin board space is actually an area where we have made positive strides within the past couple of years," argued Silverstein. "With the involvement of SPARC, the poster-ing has in general become more efficient because the posters are not just stuck anywhere and old posters are continually removed, thus ensuring that people pay more attention to the posters that are around, as they remain relevant at all times."

"Even though the Bard administration has been keeping a close eye on these kinds of incidents through the Security and Residence Life staffs, the openness of campus to general public has made it difficult to reduce such vandalism," noted Cannan. It has been speculated that non-students from the surrounding area could be responsible for some of the issues.

The Student Activities Office has also taken several steps to decrease such incidents. Campus Center info desk workers have been encouraged to keep a closer eye on the bulletin boards in the building, and report any inappropriate tampering to Security. SPARC interns are also working to ensure all posters are relevant, and that those stuck to doors or walls are moved to appropriate bulletin boards, not thrown away.

Silverstein feels these incidents are connected to an increase in vandalism campus-wide, particularly in residence halls. The administration is hoping to facilitate discussion around this issue, as well as a larger sense of community, to combat this trend and encourage students to respect the campus, according to Silverstein.

Cannan similarly believes that vandalism is an issue that can be most effectively minimized when students create an environment where it is unacceptable. "Top down approaches rarely have a lasting impact, and they can cause more harm and animosity than good," she said.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS MOSTLY ABOUT KLINE

by joey sims

## **Why are the big cups gone in Kline?**

The removal of the large Dixie cups from Kline Commons is chiefly a sustainability effort, according to Chartwells. "We go through upwards of 18 - 20,000 cups a week," said Chas Cerulli, Director of Dining Services. "Think about what that looks like in a landfill. It is absolutely excessive and really not necessary."

The change is also part of an effort to change student behavior, particularly in the area of theft from Kline. Cerulli notes that 1200 new plastic cups were put out on the same day the big cups were removed. Of those 1200, seven hundred have been stolen in less than a month.

Cerulli acknowledged the student "uproar" following the removal of the big cups, but insists he is sticking to his guns. He encouraged students to bring reusable cups, or make use of the smaller cups that are still available. "People need to realize the scope of the amount of paper that's being wasted here," argued Cerulli.

## **Why can't I swipe my own card in Kline?**

Since February, Kline has instituted a new card-swiping system. Students hand their Bard IDs to Kline workers to be swiped for them, rather than swiping themselves. "It's about control," said Cerulli. The measure was in response to concern that students were using a friend's Bard ID to get into Kline - thus, in the eyes of Chartwells, eating a meal which they did not pay for.

Cerulli said the new measure has been a success. "Ten or fifteen" cards were confiscated in the first week from students using cards that were not their own. "Some of them weren't even the right sex," laughed Cerulli. Chartwells also hopes to encourage engagement between students and Kline employees.

## **What happened to the butter?**

All trace of butter disappeared from Kline for a few weeks, leaving butter-craving students with only the option of Smart Balance, a vegan butter substitute. The butter has

now returned after many student complaints on the Kline suggestion board.

"The butter is back," laughed Cerulli. He explained that butter is "an expensive commodity," and there had been a lot of waste when other spreads were mixed in with the butter. So he tried offering only Smart Balance, a cheaper option. He noted that Smart Balance is also healthier, at least "from the standpoint of trans fats."

But on this one, Cerulli has accepted defeat. "The long and short of it is, people just want their butter," said Cerulli. "Certain people just don't like the taste of the butter substitute."

## **Why do I have to ask for a cup/bag of chips in Down the Road?**

Students now have to ask for a cup or bag of chips at the register in DTR, instead of picking them up themselves. This change was made to prevent theft, which Chartwells says has been an increasing problem in DTR.

"People are stealing," explained Cerulli. "We were being ripped off." DTR employees reported that students were either stealing food or eating it while they waited for their orders, and then hiding the remains. This has long been a problem at DTR, according to Cerulli. "There has always been a weird sense of entitlement [there]," he said. He pointed out that DTR is a retail space, unlike Kline. "No matter how you look at it, it's theft."

## **Why is winter break a week longer now?**

Winter intercession, which in recent years has run five weeks long, will last six weeks starting the 2011-2012 academic year. The spring 2012 semester will begin on January 30th. The change is to accommodate the Citizen Science program. With the change, the program will begin two days later (on the seventh, rather than the fifth) and start on a Monday, rather than mid-week as it did this year. While good news for incoming freshmen, this change will be a harsh blow to those students who hate their families.

## **Why were the doors always closed in the library?**

Until very recently, the large magnetized doors on every floor of the Stevenson Library were closed - creating much embarrassment for those who couldn't work out how to open them (just push the handle down first guys, it's not that hard). Jeff Katz, Dean of Information Services and Director of Libraries, said he fielded more questions on this subject than he had on any other in his time at the college.

The cause was a power outage. "One of the power outages...burnt-out the power supply," explained Katz, leaving the magnets on all the doors useless. "They were out for three weeks." The magnets are now fixed, and the doors once again stand open.

## **What the hell is Reserves Direct?**

Ten classes this semester are being used as test subjects to try out Reserves Direct, an alternative to Reserve Web. The college is planning a full transition to Reserves Direct in the fall semester. The reasons for the move are several, according to Katz. It is partly prompted by problems with Reserve Web, which is struggling around the weight of ten years worth of classes. Reserves Direct can hold far more documents with ease.

Also, Reserves Direct is simply superior in many areas, according to Katz. "It looks better...it is easier to use...all of the courses you are enrolled in show up on your home page...people can load their own documents...it is easier to link with Moodle..." The list goes on. In addition, Reserves Direct lets professors know how many students have downloaded any file - so they know how much of the class has done the reading each week (or at least, opened the reading).

While Bard's Reserve Web page will remain available, current plans have all classes moving to Reserves Direct next academic year.



# ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE BARD TAKES A STAB AT SAVING THE PLANET

by adrienne vitullo

The Blackout Buster was an event promoted by Laurie Husted and the Environmental Collective in which the power on specific parts of campus is shut down in order to practice for a "brown out," or a drop in voltage along the electrical power grid. This is a particularly difficult event because Bard is given only twenty four hours notice, meaning it is a challenge to notify students and faculty of the impending power loss. Though challenging, the successful completion of this event means that Bard will receive \$10,000, which is often devoted to improving Bard's facilities. There will be another Blackout Buster in April. Hopefully, the brief lack of power will help students and faculty be more conscious about their electricity usage and perhaps make changes in personal habits.

Recently, Bard has also been awarded a series of grants

that were used to improve energy efficiency on campus. In the dorm Keene solar panels were installed in order to supplement the second floor geothermal heating system that was already in use. Currently, the dorm is using electrical and geothermal energy to heat the building. Tremblay, another north campus dorm, is also becoming more sustainable as solar panels have also been installed. These upgrades were completed so quickly that Bard also received a monitoring system that provides information every ten seconds about the new system's efficiency. Another grant went toward the improvement of the gym. Changes include: new induction lighting, improved the HVAC and powering-off of the machines when they are not in use. Overall, this will reduce the total electric use at the gym by over 10%, meaning that more than \$9,000 will be saved this year. The greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced

by 146 tons annually. In receiving these grants, Bard is obliged to educate students, faculty, and community members about the importance of energy efficiency.

During the last 3 year Bard has been in the top 3 in the country for Food Waste composting, and in 2009 the college took the number 1 spot. The WasteWise project, which includes the Recyclemania program, which began on February 6 and ran for eight weeks, is being run by two undergraduate students who were selected to serve as EPA interns. All of this is exciting news for Bard, which is devoting a substantial amount of energy to making the campus greener.

Other environmental events coming up include:

- Farm Earth Day on March 22nd
- Blackout Buster - April



## DEAR KEN COOPER, WE <3 SMOG

Hi Ken,

I'm sure you're being flooded with emails now in regards to this SMOG letter. I'm just going to keep it short because I'm not sure if people have pressed this point yet.

To me, the biggest problem right now is that our school is growing faster than we can keep up with it. With more and more students coming into Bard than before, our spaces and facilities are about/have reached max capacity, especially in regards to student spaces like SMOG. As a music major, SMOG has been one of my only outlets for presenting my work in a context that is for the students. I'm sure you've been talked to a lot about the lack of student spaces on campus, but this point needs

to be stressed until something is done about it. Kids pour into SMOG some weekends because there is literally nothing else to do on campus. To me, THIS is the main cause of this "widespread" stupidity and recklessness.

I remember a few years back getting all sorts of spam from the student activities office about THE RED BARN finally opening, but when the new semester began it was nowhere in sight. I was actually looking forward to having a new space on campus, but it seemed to have completely vanished.

With our very limited, very small, barely-functional student spaces/venues, too many kids pail into small, small rooms, and if we could somehow create more possibilities for kids to have fun/perform/do things on campus over the weekends, then perhaps this problem could be

averted. I've been to too many shows at various student venues on campus where the biggest issue hasn't been drunkenness but overcrowding, which is FAR more dangerous to me.

SMOG has been a very important part of my life for the past few years and, as a frequent attendee of its events, have very rarely seen anything too out of the ordinary, destructive or dangerous... other than massive amounts of overcrowding.

I hope you found this email somewhat helpful in your assessment of SMOG's legitimacy as a student space, this is an issue I feel very strongly about.

Michael Foster

Dear Ken,

As we all know, time is the most valuable currency of all so I will make this brief: Bard needs SMOG. The collegiate experience is based on the individual asserting their role as responsible and productive members of the human race; student spaces such as SMOG allow for such growth to take place. I remember a year and a half ago being a disconsolate and lonely freshman - 'twas late October I do believe. I was on one of my manifold introspective walks, wondering if Bard was the right place for me, if it had anything to offer me. As I walked out of

the village, I heard the most wonderful washed-out guitar fuzz of my life. I gravitated over the SMOG and was warmly welcomed by upperclassmen who, despite never meeting me, encouraged me to come inside. Hands were shaken, hugs given and received, dances had and laughter resounded - all in the space of 15 minutes. If it was not for this glorious show at SMOG, I may not have stayed here at Bard. SMOG showed that there was a common place for students to gather, outside the intimidating gaze of Pai Mei-esque professors and faculty.

I have come to love Bard more than most non-human consolidated entities. Bard offers the student a liberating

sense of freedom, more so than NYU or Vassar or any of its colleagues in the academic world. This freedom comes with a price of course. "With great power comes great responsibility." Indeed, perhaps SMOG can be indulgent at times, sometimes even downright decadent. But closing SMOG will not help the issue of drug and alcohol abuse any more than cutting of an arm will assuage carpal tunnel.

Thank you, and I look forward to attending the eventual meeting on the issue.

In solidarity,  
Michael E. Anzuoni.

Dear Ken,

I wanted to just respond to the letter sent out, in case it has any importance to the debate about SMOG's closing. Firstly, I would like to note that the problem students have with drug/alcohol is not the SMOG space itself, but a problem that those students who behave erratically and irresponsibly at SMOG encounter at other campus events and parties, and further those events that occur off-campus. I understand the fact that SMOG has probably encountered more problems of this nature than other venues or events, and so it seems like the best idea to close SMOG because of the higher rate of drinking/drug abuse. But I think it is very important that we acknowledge that closing SMOG does not close the problem on the student rate of alcohol and drug abuse.

I think that the SMOG closing is only a superficial solution to the problem, and threatening students with the shut down will not make any students have a greater capacity to control their drinking and drug use because a place where it occurs no longer exists. In fact, I think

that closing SMOG will just cause this problem to move to other places of interest, and will possibly cause more accidents because of the students anger at the school.

Still, it is not the school's fault what students feel is the right or wrong thing to do at SMOG, because you and others have sent emails addressing the problem and its possible consequences. Regardless, I firmly believe that this action only superficially accounts for the problems evident at this school with drug/alcohol use. I think in order to actually attempt to curb this problem, we would need to find another way to do it so we are actually contributing to changing the philosophy at Bard in regard to use and abuse of substances.

In my own experience I can reflect on problems that I have had with alcohol in the past, and I know that the only way I was able to get through them was not by NOT attending functions with the school, but by addressing the problem from an individual perspective and getting help from a therapist. This experience helps me to relate the idea that I did not have problems with alcohol consumption because I was not aware of the implications

it had on others or on the school, but that this desire for alcohol caused me to behave in a way that I now realize was irresponsible and hurtful to my community. At the time, the problem that I had took precedence over any responsible action I could to help myself, and further the community that I was also hurting. I think that we need to understand that this is a very real issues in young people's lives, and they will continue to deal with it alone even if SMOG is closed.

I share this personal story that is very hard for me to tell because I hope it sheds some light on my argument. If you feel like it would be helpful to share this information with others debating the issue of SMOG closing I can support that, but I hope that everyone is respectful of my personal history and only uses this as a help to the SMOG debate.

A response to my letter would be quite appreciated if you find it useful.

Thank you,  
A senior graduating May 2011

Hi Ken,

I am usually right behind you in your decisions. However, I must speak out about this particular one. As a graduating senior, I think it would be a detriment to the campus community to close SMOG. This is a symptom of what I see as the Bard administration at large not understanding the true root cause of issues such as 'drug and alcohol abuse.' The large incidence of medical emergencies at SMOG this year has coincided with an assault on the ability for students to have alcohol on their person when entering SMOG. Due to this, students get far drunker in the privacy of their dorm rooms. These policies, and the lack of safe drinking space on-campus, has resulted in greater binge drinking and the more unsafe atmosphere of off-campus parties. I understand that the administration wishes to absolve itself of any responsibility regarding student welfare, and the gradual moving of campus social life to off-campus residences will mean that the administration can sleep well knowing that despite the fact that more students are getting far drunker off-campus, the administration can look the other way.

Another frustrating aspect of this is the failure of any of these so-called 'officials' to understand the importance of SMOG not as a party space, but as a space for student

acts and other smaller artists. The administration fails to propose any ALTERNATIVE to this space. This is the same situation as the closing of the Old Gym. The administration is quick to absolve itself of liability, yet you guys fail to see the big picture. The lack of social events on campus (a definite consequence of the closure of SMOG) would result in MORE DRINKING, MORE DRUGS, and MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOU.

I also understand that Bard is attempting to shed its reputation as a 'hippie' school. The closure of a free-form arts venue seems to be a symbol of this undeserved shift. In general, the biggest problem with Bard administration is that they are out of touch with college life. Drinking is an inevitability of college life, and the administration has to be working to provide safe spaces for social drinking, rather than ignore the fact that college students drink. The administration attempts to hide drinking culture in the dark corner of the Annandale woods until it can be hidden no more.

This is the great paradox of the dysfunctionality of the Bard administration. Due to widespread incompetence when it comes to providing quality student life, the solution then becomes to critique student solutions to the student life crisis.

I don't wish to perpetuate a divide between administration and students, but I think that we can't forget that

the biggest issue here is the need for student space. If Bard administrators feel as if SMOG doesn't fit with their vision of Bard, I'm not really sure why the administration doesn't take initiative in creating a viable student space with a security presence and controlled alcohol use. If the administration does not see this as an issue of student space, and if they don't take adequate measures to correct the issue, they are objectively in the wrong and we can't accept the closure of SMOG as a solution.

I also want to share a personal experience that I know will resonate with many graduating seniors. As a freshman, I remember drinking a 40 on the way to SMOG shows from South Campus Quad. Since we were able to bring small servings of alcohol to SMOG, I didn't feel as if I needed to get a certain level of drunk before going. I would nurse my 40 until I finished it. Since the no backpacks rule and the banning of open containers at SMOG, this can't happen. Yes, I was underage. Yes, drinking is detrimental to your health. However, underage drinking is a fact of college, and understanding that a simple decision like no backpacks at SMOG can completely change the way people disperse their alcohol consumption throughout the night is something that Bard administrators are not understanding.

Enrico Purita.

# HOW WE ENDED UP WITH A GARAGE, AND WHY IT'S SORTA IMPORTANT TO KEEP IT

by Will Anderson

## The Old Days

If you think Bard is isolating and uneventful, you have nothing to complain about compared to the St. Stephen's boys of the early 1890s (the college would not be named Bard until 1934). Adjacent towns were little more than a collection of rural farms, the school lacked any student center, and the only contact students had with the opposite sex was when Vassar girls were bused in for the annual Freshman Dance. The campus was cold and there was nothing to do, but all the students wanted was a gym. They pleaded with administrators, rallied to raise money, and even tried to convert Preston Hall into a gymnasium. All of this was to no avail, and by the late 1890s students gave up the fight.

It would be more than thirty years until their dream became a reality. In March of 1920, the President and Trustees of St. Stephen's met to discuss the college's bleak financial situation. The President argued for the closure of the school but the Trustees directly opposed and passed a three-resolution response. The first resolution authorized the building of the long desired gymnasium.

On Sunday morning, January 9, 1921 the gym officially opened. In addition to athletics, the space featured a four hundred-person auditorium, a bowling alley, and classroom space. A month later the Freshman Dance, previously limited to Ludlow Hall, was held in the new gym. Bard's paper at the time, *The Messenger*, praised the space, and deemed the dance a success.

The gym continued as "the" venue for school dances and social events throughout the 1940s and 50s. In the 1960s, students used the space for political organization and a number of protests. It was also used to host lectures by visiting intellectuals and performances by artists. But by the end of the decade, students turned to alternative hangouts, and the gym's use was marginalized. Bruce Chilton '71, remembered the gym as primarily used for athletics, while adjacent bars like Adolph's Annandale House and the newly built Kline Commons were the more popular social venues.

## The Old Gym

Beginning in the early 1980s, students again became vocal about a lack of social space on campus. With the Old Gym being used exclusively for athletics, students saw the basement of Stone Row as an ideal spot for their "Student Co-Op", but plans never materialized.

In the fall of 1987, Bard College began plans to build what is now Stevenson Gym. At the same time the college remodeled the former gym, now known as the Old Gym, to be a student center. Security and dispatch offices were moved from the second floor to the front of the building in order to keep student parties and events in check. By 1989, the Old Gym was used almost exclusively for student activities, and the vast majority of social events on campus were held there.

The student space thrived throughout the 1990s. Students took advantage of and developed a number of different spaces within the Old Gym. Two students opened up a student-run convenience store, DeKline, which would stay open late and sell healthy food. The post office was also moved to the basement of the Old Gym. The downstairs was home to the Red Room (SMOG's predecessor for rock shows), the Root Cellar, and the Student Action

Center, where all of the environmental and social justice groups would do their organizing. Students held late-night parties on the second floor, creating a central space for all students to come together on weekends. For more than 10 years, the Old Gym existed for the sole purpose of student activities. In the words of Josh Klein-Kuhn, a former Bard student, "It felt free, it felt autonomous, and it really felt like ours." This lasted until a series of events occurred in 2003 that shut down the Old Gym and affected the college for years to come. It began with a mattress.

## The Final Drag Race

In the spring of 2003, someone torched a mattress in the Old Gym. This followed from what administrators described as years of abuse and trashing of the space. Bard promptly closed the Old Gym to repair the fire damage. But just two months after reopening, another huge and catastrophic party shut it down, this time indefinitely. In order to understand this event, and the impact it had on the campus, one must understand the Bardian Drag Race.

An annual event put on by Bard's Queer-Straight-Alliance, the Drag Race was a 'till dawn party full of cross-dressing, live music, and general debauchery. Originally intended as a coming-out party for gay students, the Drag Race became one of Bard's most well known fall traditions. The dress code was described in one *Observer* article as "large wigs, four-inch platform shoes, daisy dukes, and bare breasts." This presumably applied to both genders. West Point cadets were known to drive to Bard's campus just to catch glimpses of the barely-dressed college girls. The event drew so much attention from local residents and nearby college students that in 2000 security created checkpoints at every campus entrance to prevent outsiders from entering. These checkpoints were so strict that Leon Bostein was once temporarily unable to enter campus because he did not have a proper Bard ID.

The 2003 Drag Race ended around midnight - it had started only 45 minutes earlier. By the end of the night, 29 EMS calls were placed, and 16 people were hospitalized in serious condition. The Northern Dutchess emergency room was so overwhelmed that it had to start sending patients to neighboring hospitals. Every single ambulance in Red Hook was on Bard's campus. The state police, the sheriff, and the Fire Marshall all independently showed up. The party severely strained the college's relationship with surrounding communities and was the final straw for administrators who saw students' use of the Old Gym as no longer acceptable. This led to its final and absolute closure in the spring of 2004.

## SMOG

By the time the Old Gym closed, many of its previous uses had already been allocated to other buildings. The Bertelsmann Campus Center now housed the Post Office and a campus cafe. A natural foods market was established in Kline Commons. Many of the clubs and organizations previously kept in the Old Gym found new spaces. But the main social aspects - the student parties and shows - had a more difficult transition. Many students began to throw parties off campus. Some students used an old garage near Woods Studio as an occasional place to have shows.

This ad hoc space was known as The Student Mechanic

Operated Garage, or the SMOG. But students were not satisfied. Many felt that what the Old Gym offered - a central place for students to socialize, a strong sense of community, and a space seemingly untouched by administrators - could not be found in places like Kline, the MPR, or SMOG. But it soon became clear that the administration had no plans to reopen the Old Gym, or to create an alternative space. While many schools can rely on alumni to donate money for such buildings, the vast majority of Bard's fundraising comes from friends of the college, who would rather see their money go towards academic buildings. For example, never in the college's history has money been donated for a new dorm. This meant that a dedicated student space would most likely not be built in the foreseeable future. So students got together to make do with what they had: SMOG.

Students met with administrators and architects to discuss the expansion of SMOG. They planned a building around the size of the MPR that would have a number of practice rooms, bathrooms, and a large main space. But the students were unable to get the administration to fund the project through its Capital Campaign. The next year the Student Government discovered a source of money left over from the annual Convocation Fund, saved up over several years. This was money that belonged to students, and they decided to put the \$50,000 towards renovating SMOG. After a 10-month delay, the newly renovated SMOG finally opened in January 2006. It featured a covered concrete patio, a new heating system, and a couple coats of paint.

## Today

Unfortunately, moving students from the Old Gym to an isolated garage didn't seem to deter any of their previous behavior. In Spring 2011, Ken Cooper, Bard's Head of Security, issued a letter to several students and faculty outlining why he believed SMOG should be closed. The letter cites numerous violations of school policy on SMOG premises including alcohol and drug use, a number of medical emergencies resulting from this behavior, destruction of property, theft, graffiti, and vandalism. In addition, Cooper cited SMOG's location as an easy spot for outsiders to enter and disrupt campus life.

Students will make the next step in this story. It's clear that unless students make an effort to respect SMOG and comply with school policy, the space will be taken away. This space, which students put their own money towards renovating, is Bard's last and only space for purely social events. It has history, it has purpose, and all it needs is some appreciation. From the very beginning, Bard students fought to have buildings on campus that they could call their own - the St. Stephen's boys who demanded a gym, the students in the late 80s who took the same gym and used it as a social co-op, and the students who then helped establish SMOG once the gym was no longer available. With these efforts came a sense of school pride, fostering of community, and true changes that altered Bard's history. And each example showed that while students came here to learn, the social element of the college experience cannot and will not be ignored.

# SO SENSITIVE IT'S LIKE WEARING NOTHING AT ALL WAIT, THIS IS LIKE A SERIOUS EDITORIAL ABOUT RACISM AND STUFF

by abby ferla

In response to the defacement of the Anti-Racist Dialogue's Black History Month posters and the subsequent string of emails, some students were quick to conclude—and loudly—“They’re overreacting. That happens to every group’s posters.” People—some whom I consider intelligent and compassionate individuals—were for some reason eager to completely dismiss the incident as one of many instances of poster destruction—the implication being that the ARD didn’t have a right to be concerned or offended, that it was whining too loudly or getting too much attention, that everyone was being “too sensitive.”

And, ok, so it does seem as though this instance of vandalism is just one in a disconcerting string of incidents. That is completely besides the point. First of all, it is not anyone’s place to evaluate the validity of someone else’s feelings. Secondly, to some students of color, the incident felt like an act of intolerance. Instead of taking even a second to question why they felt this way, other students were quick to dismiss the concerns as “irrational.” However, the fact of the matter is that interpreting the vandalism of images of the Civil Rights movement as racist is only irrational if one has the privilege of never encountering discrimination. Calling someone “over-sensitive” not only stops the con-

versation at this point but is incredibly closed-minded and pretty pretentious. If minority students feel unsafe at Bard, there must be either systemic or personal reasons as to why they feel that way. In the place of blind skepticism, we need to immediately ask why students are inclined to interpret any act as a racist one—especially if we don’t understand the interpretation, because this gap in understanding is indicative of a much larger gap in experience.

Instead of the appropriate critical approach, I’ve heard vehement defense of the trope that “there is no racism/sexism at Bard,” which begs the question: why is anyone so adverse to considering that it’s even possible? I feel like some people hear every concern voiced about racial issues as a direct indictment of outright racism that personally blames every white individual for slavery. Listen, no one is saying that you enslaved Africans in the nineteenth century, but I am insisting that you are part of a system that is still grappling with the fact that it once did. As a member of this society, you necessarily play a role, however minimal, in either supporting or challenging the structures of this society. So if you choose to live your life as though we live in a post-race, post-gender society, you are implicitly supporting racism and sexism.

The problem here is more complicated than that: White students, white male students in particular, have grown up in a world in which they have felt unjustly held responsible for wrongdoings in which they had no part. I don’t think that is easy or pleasant. It makes sense to be a little defensive. Not to mention that when the average education about race does not go any further than discussing Rodney King, not everyone understands that racism can occur in more subtle manners—that it can be as simple as unconsciously avoiding eye contact with members of another race. So, on the one hand, we need to understand that conversations that cast blame are divisive and foster an environment where individuals are inclined to interpret concerns as accusations. On the other hand, we need to recognize that not all concerns are accusations. We need to be especially sensitive to other people’s experience, and to the possibility that it is very different from but equally as valid as our own.

If someone feels as though he or she has encountered racism, then we have a problem, period. However, if we are not willing to ask why the person is inclined to feel this way, our problem is much larger than we might initially recognize.

You’re in Tivoli, Red Hook, Germantown, Rhinebeck or wherever. You need to know what is going on in your community whether it’s emergency notifications or farmers markets.

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## BPYI ANNOUNCES SISTER PROJECT

by the bard palestinian youth initiative

The Bard Palestinian Youth Initiative is a TLS project that works with a small village in the West Bank called Mas'ha. For the past few years, a group of Bard students have organized a trip to Mas'ha over the summer, during which we stay with members of the village and run a summer camp for kids and English classes for adult, as well as participating in a number of other community service activities. In one of our biggest accomplishments so far, last summer BPYI students helped build and established the first children's library in the West Bank. The program's aims are to establish ties between Bard students and Palestinians and facilitate understanding and learning between the two cultures.

This summer, the BPYI is planning to unveil a new program, tentatively titled the Palestine-NY Exchange. In addition to going to Palestine, we are working to bring a group of teenagers from the village Mas'ha here to Bard. If you're interested in being part of BPYI but aren't sure if you can travel to Palestine, this is definitely a great way to get involved! The teenagers from Mas'ha will stay at Bard for two weeks with several BPYI group members who will act as "counselors". The summer camp will involve workshops that focus on language and expressive arts, as well as a weekend trip to New York City. The main goal is connection and cultural exchange, and so we'll also be planning shared events with the Red Hook schools and library

that will allow the Palestinian students to talk and get to know their American peers. Hopefully, the summer camp will help foster a long-term relationship between Bard and Mas'ha that will continue after the Palestinians return to their home. Because this is a new program, we welcome and encourage any help in making it successful.

It is never too late to get involved with BPYI. All new members are welcome. Contact [bpyi@bard.edu](mailto:bpyi@bard.edu) if you are interested. And look out for the campus-wide campaign to encourage students to donate a few dollars for the Palestine-NY Exchange, starting after Spring Break.

## MEN CAN STOP RAPE IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW

by jessie channell

Before this talk, I overheard a lot of conversation about the posters all over campus with 'Men Can Stop Rape' in big, bold lettering. I was a little weary going into it, wondering what a talk about stopping rape would entail. But I came out very impressed by Joe Samalin, the speaker, and the way he presented the organization, which is actually called Men Can Stop Rape.

The group was originally formed as DC Men Against Rape in 1997 by a group of men in Washington D.C. who met weekly to discuss problems openly. They then became the Men's Rape Prevention Project and eventually Men Can Stop Rape. Their focus is on three programs: youth development, training and technical assistance, and strength media works. From working with children, to developing chapters in colleges and universities, to leading trainings in communities, to getting men engaged through newspaper

and radio, they really do a lot. They approach the topic positively because they don't want men to respond defensively. They focus on masculinity and what it means to be a man and believe in primary prevention, aiming to stop the violence before it happens by talking through these issues and sharing stories.

Joe brought the crowd through a couple exercises. He began by asking us, "Who is the real man?" He showed us two images, 50 Cent vs. the Pope, then the Situation vs. Hugh Hefner, and finally Jackie Chan vs. Tiger Woods. Each time we were asked who modern day society sees as the real man and why. Qualities ranged from violent to muscular and we began to question the source of these traits. After creating a rather lengthy list, Joe asked us, "Who is the strong man?" The crowd shared stories of friends, neighbors, and fathers that had changed their lives

and another list was created. He discussed how men are so often torn between being a "real man" and a strong man, trying to figure out where they belong in the "dominant story" of rape prevention.

As the talk came to a close, Joe explained why rape is a man's issue, but also more than that: "It's a people issue, a human issue, a societal issue, an economic issue, an everything issue. Men rape, men are raped, men know survivors, men are confined by rape too, men can stop rape." We talked about Bard specifically and he challenged us to see the connection between the gut and the brain and act when we see things around campus. He challenged us to step away from social conformity and be the people that others follow so that we can make Bard even better and even safer than it already is.

## POP CULTURE IS LOL LIFE LESSONS WITH CHARLIE SHEEN

by abby miles-ruttenberg

"I am on a drug. It's called Charlie Sheen. It's not available. If you try it once, you will die. Your face will melt off and your children will weep over your exploded body."

His thoughts on Drugs: "I probably took more than anybody could survive. ... I was bangin' seven-gram rocks and finishing them because that's how I roll, because I have one speed, one gear. ... I'm different. I have a different constitution, I have a different brain, I have a different heart. I got tiger blood, man. Dying's for fools, dying's for amateurs."

-One gear? One speed? You would be a terrible vehicle. If Charlie Sheen were an unlocked bike left outside of Cruger Village nobody would ride him. Is that tiger blood on the seat? NOPE....ew.

His thoughts on his life: "It's perfect. It's awesome. Every day is just filled with just wins. All we do is put wins in the record books. We win so radically in our underwear before our first cup of coffee, it's scary. People say it's lonely at the top, but I sure like the view."

-I'm curious what constitutes a win here. For me, finding a cigarette in what I thought was an empty pack is a huge win. But I think we might be from two different worlds, Charlie. You tap a bottle of urine every time you walk passed it in

your hallway and consider it to contribute to you "winning", but I don't feel the same when I accidentally pee on my hand squatting outside of Smog on a Friday night.

His thoughts on Porn Stars: "They're the best at what they do and I'm the best at what I do. And together it's like, it's on. Sorry, Middle America. Yeah, I said it."

-What is he good at, you may ask? Well, that's a loaded question. He's phenomenal at freebasing cocaine, wearing hats that make me feel uncomfortable, locking doors (especially when there's a hooker on the other side), abandoning his children, and ...I'm out. But he's right, Middle America - your porn stars are the pits! No stage presence and they have bacne!

His thoughts on the true Charlie Sheen: "I'm tired of pretending I'm not a total bitchin' rock star from Mars, and people can't figure me out; they can't process me. I don't expect them to. You can't process me with a normal brain."

-I am beginning to understand that, in order to decipher the brilliance that spews from the gaping cavity that is Charlie Sheen's mouth, one probably has to be a Republican. Sheen's wisdom embodies Ann Coulter's logic - but with less Adam's apple and more 90's catchphrases.



# RAMBLING INSIDE THE MIND OF KEN COOPER

interview by j.p. lawrence

When I finally spot Ken Cooper for his interview, he is wearing some sort of heavy-duty yellow parka, reflective sunglasses and a grey windswept haircut that makes him look like a wolverine. For the past week, I had been trying to interview Ken Cooper, the security director at Bard College for more than 11 years, but in between ski certifica-

tion, a trip to Idaho and his job, he is an elusive figure. All that I know of Ken Cooper comes from the security emails he sends out to students, and the website created by a student that paints him as some sort of memetic figure. So I ask him, behind the mythos, the various controversies and emails, who is Ken Cooper?

## Ken Cooper on his philosophy:

I'm a philosophic person. Security starts with your ideology. Respect – number one. I run this campus based on mutual respect. I respect that students are here for four years. This is their home: we don't violate people's houses - on the other hand, we have certain parameters we have to live under as human beings, very fair protocols that need to be respected. When there's disrespect, we need to figure out why.

## Ken Cooper on his average day:

The first thing I do every day is answer everyone's emails. And I get emails from students all the time. Sometimes they're mad at me. Sometimes they're justified. Sometimes it's just a difference of opinion. If there's a problem, students don't have to go through a maze to get to me. They can go to my office or email me.

## Ken Cooper on what he does outside of Bard:

I'm a senior instructor and the founder of a law enforcement-training academy. I'm also a use of force and firearms expert, ballistics and those sorts of things - I also do a lot of courtroom testimony. One day, a bunch of fancy attorneys came up to me and asked me if I could be their expert, and I said, "On what?" I had no idea I had a reputation. And I started getting involved in 1995, I think, dealing with court stuff. I'm not a lawyer, but I have a great amount of knowledge. One of the last trials I did was the head of the Bonnano crime family. It was a capital case - I think he got convicted.

## Ken Cooper on how he defines what he does:

I am a custodian for a very important institution, Bard College. I'm the head caretaker. I have assistants. They would be my security officers. And we make sure that you, your children, and their children have a Bard to go to.

Being security director, I have to work out, be physically strong, work out my brain, be mentally strong, and I have to have great respect for the people that I'm prepared to protect. And it's a 24-hour-a-week gig. And you have to have extreme energy.

Every day I'm presented with unique circumstances I think could hurt the campus or hurt the students. And I'll put a block there, redirect it or stop it.



**Ken Cooper on first coming to Bard:**

When I first got here to Bard College, there was a drag race. And I didn't know what it was – I thought it was a car race. But it was a counter-cultural thing: people were basically naked. You had these West Point cadets and guys my age trying to see our student body naked, and I said, 'that's not going to happen.' So I decided to do what I'd normally do, which is shut down the entire campus. I hired some people that I knew, and I put them at every entrance and exit to Bard College. You couldn't get in without a Bard ID. And one of the first people we stopped - a guard saw a car and said, 'we need an ID.' The guy said, 'I don't need an ID; I'm president of the college.' 'I never saw you,' the guy says, and he takes his ID and lets him through. And he calls me up on the radio and says, 'hey, I just stopped Leon Bostein.' And from my inflated chest, I just deflated immediately.

**Ken Cooper on "Citizen Security Guard"**

One of the goals when I came to Bard, was to take every Bard student and train them as a security guard, to get a certification. So you graduate with your degree from Bard College, a very progressive school, and also you get a certificate from the Division of Criminal Justice Services...It was just too much.

**Ken Cooper on his myths**

I love to meet international students. I'd meet with them for lunch, and they'd always say, 'hi Chuck.' And I'd say, no, my name's Ken. And I didn't know what they were talking about. I guess it was because I look like some action hero.

I've been doing it for 11 years. So there's generations of students who were exposed to my inner brain.

**Ken Cooper on Bard**

Bard College is filled with some of the most brilliant people. I have to keep up with them. You're surrounded by these excellent human beings, and I like that.

Bard is unique, because some of the people like Leon make it unique, and because the students make it unique, you've got to be unique yourself. They've let me be unique.

photo by j.p. lawrence

**MEME-ING KEN COOPER  
STUDENT-RUN SITE PART  
PARODY, PART TRIBUTE**

by j.p. lawrence

It all started as a joke among friends. "You know how inside jokes start – we were just kinda talking, and Ken Cooper came up, with all his emails and the persona that he puts out," said the founder of Ken Cooper Has a Gun, a meme-site devoted to Bard's security director. "I just kinda made these pictures, and I showed it to my friends, and they were like, 'this is really funny, you should make it into a Tumblr.'"

The website, [kencooperhasagun.tumblr.com](http://kencooperhasagun.tumblr.com), presents stock pictures of Bard's security director, Ken Cooper, and Bard's president, Leon Botstein, with big Impact-font lettering parodying some aspect of their image. Many of these images derive from one inspiration: the security emails, often leavened with his own parlance, that Ken Cooper sends to warn students of possible dangers.

"Ken Cooper just sends out really funny emails," said the founder, who asked to remain anonymous. Such quotes as "the icing on the cake is ice" and "when I see a bus, I go into school bus mode" became easy subjects for parody, he said. "He's got the whole Chuck Norris thing going on, but then, he's also kind of goofy too. I don't know if he kinda, like, plays into it. I mean, he must know, to some extent, what the students think about him. And I think he definitely must fuel the fire. You can tell in his emails that he's not being 100% serious. He is talking about serious subjects in a light-hearted manner. If he was to be really a jerk about anything people wouldn't take him seriously...it definitely gets people to read [the emails]. I look forward to them."

Cooper said he had seen the website, and while it initially "scared the crap out of [him]," he thought the website was "interesting" and "cute." "It's kinda neat that the emails are being read," he said. "Whether they're being used positively by the students or not, the fact is that they're being read, and that's why I write them."

As for the light-hearted tone of the emails, Cooper said they are not meant to be funny but are rather a natural outpouring of his personality. "My opinion is this: I'm a security director, and I could be a really tough guy. In fact, I am – in other worlds. But here, it's more natural for me. And I can't tell somebody what to do. I think that's wrong....I want to gently direct people.

"Sometimes the way I say things is kind of funny, because I don't read what I write until it comes back to me on my computer. Sometimes I actually laugh. But I'm not a comedian. I'm a security director. I have a point I want to get across that could help people."

The founder of Ken Cooper Has a Gun said that while doing research for the website, they found a site with Ken Cooper's resume and certifications. "It talks about all the things he's certified to do, and there's some really goofy things in there, like interrogation methods and terrorism awareness, weapons of mass destruction, you know, stuff you wouldn't expect your security director to be certified in," he said. "I guess you could say, on paper, that he's overqualified. He could be a freaking SWAT team member or something. And that definitely adds to the persona of Ken Cooper.

"Honestly, the more things he's certified in, like TASER and weapon control or whatever, that's great," the founder continued. "I trust him. If something bad were to ever happen, I know that there's no one more capable than him in taking care of a situation."

As for the website, the founder said it has become bigger than he expected, with web analytics reporting people from other countries joining in. "I assume it's just foreign students linking it to their Facebooks," the founder said, "But yeah, I'm glad people are enjoying it."

The founder also said making funny images for the website has become harder as material runs out, and that the popularity of the website will more than likely fade. "I'm definitely not going to delete it or take it down or anything, but there's only so much you can do. I'll definitely keep putting things up when people submit them. I'm not sure how many I'm going to keep making. I guess it will stay alive, but it will definitely wane in its popularity.

"It's making fun of Ken Cooper and Botstein, but it's not any harsher than you would make fun of your friends jokingly," the founder said. "It's just for everyone's amusement. And I think everyone knows that Ken Cooper and Botstein are very qualified, and we all appreciate what they do immensely. I don't know if they're laughing, but we're laughing with them, not at them."

For his part, Cooper, when showed images from the website, laughed. "Bard is comprised of some of the most imaginative beings on the planet," Cooper said. "And I would never interfere with imagination, no matter what it is. And I have a good sense of humor."

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## OSCARS 2011: BEST AND WORST

by elena watson

**BEST-** Melissa Leo's acceptance speech: Not only did she seem genuinely surprised and thrilled by her Best Supporting Actress award, but she was so flustered by all the bright lights and people that she managed to drop the first F-bomb in Oscar history. All while being awkwardly hit on by Kirk Douglas. Commendably done!

**BEST/WORST-** Kirk Douglas: The 94-year old actor/director/legend did have some pretty hilarious moments—making fun of Hugh Jackman (and Australians in general), wrestling his walking stick away from some guy in a tuxedo, and drawing out his presentation of the Best Supporting Actress award for as long as humanly possible. But his incessant ogling of everything in high heels, both onstage and off, kind of started to border on creepy. I think this one just depends on your sense of humor.

**WORST-** Anne Hathaway and James Franco's "co"hosting: Really, this was just kind of sad. Little Annie H. threw herself into the role of host with almost embarrassing zeal—singing, dancing, and changing costumes seven, yes, SEVEN times. Jimmy Franco, on the other hand, only bothered to come out on stage about half the time, and seemed rather bemused to find a theatre full of people staring at him, and an overenthusiastic co-host waiting for him to say something. One or the other of these actors would probably have made a good (or at least interesting) host, but together, they just didn't make sense.

**BEST-** James Franco: It's very rare in Hollywood to see someone who so blatantly doesn't give a fuck about what they're doing. Smirking at the camera, delivering his lines dryly and apathetically, and Tweeting nearly constantly throughout the entire show, you got the impression that James Franco was just laughing at everyone around him. And it was kind of excellent. Right after the ceremony was over, Jimmy blew off his own after party and flew back to Yale, where he's probably doing a sociology project on how everyone in Hollywood is batshit crazy.

**WORST-** Gwyneth Paltrow singing country songs: Speaking of batshit crazy, this woman is really starting to scare me. After naming her firstborn child Apple, starting a health blog called "GOOP" and just generally over sharing about nearly every aspect of her extremely perfect life, I think it can be agreed that Ms. Paltrow should be kept in a soundproof glass box and released only to make movies (which she still does very well.)

**WORST-** Celine Dion: Why has no one killed this woman yet?

**BEST-** All the pretty dresses: Ok, I told myself I wouldn't geek out too much over the clothes... but ooohsöpretty! Ok. Done now.

**WORST-** *The King's Speech* winning pretty much every major award (of course the only movie I haven't seen has the most success). The Oscars always means disappointment and frustration at whatever didn't win, but really, giving Tom Hooper Best Director over Darren Aronofsky, or David Fincher, or even Chris Nolan (except oh wait, I forgot he wasn't nominated for *Inception*)—that is just foolishness. Which, Hollywood, is why we love you.





photos courtesy of sarah dianne loucks

## MUD: A REVIEW

by hannah khalifeh

Over the first weekend of March, a group of Bard students put on a performance of *Mud*, a play written by Cuban-American playwright María Irene Fornés. Directed by Sarah Loucks '13 and starring Layla Wolfgang '13, Harry Beer '14, and Matthew Needleman '13, the play was almost overly simple, but captivating nonetheless.

The play explores themes of discovering self-worth and the animalistic nature of man. Two siblings, Lloyd and Mae (Beer and Wolfgang respectively), live together in a small house on the outskirts of society. Lloyd is illiterate and ignorant of the world, while Mae yearns to educate herself and is struggling with Lloyd's stubborn refusals to step out into the world. When Lloyd becomes sick, he refuses to go to a clinic, and so Mae brings over their neighbor Henry (Needleman) to help them find a treatment for Lloyd. Because Henry can read and express intellectual ideas, Mae idolizes him. Conversely, her scorn for Lloyd increases rapidly. When Henry moves in, Lloyd becomes increasingly scared, defenseless, and childlike as his resentment builds

up.

While the dialogue was often flat and seemed at times unrealistic, the characters were interesting and the performers did a great job portraying them. Mae's desire to be educated and prove herself is painfully evident, especially when she laughs at Lloyd for his inability to change his ways. She desperately wants to separate herself from the life she has always known and distinguish herself, but is held back by her sense of duty to her brother. Wolfgang did an amazing job conveying Mae's passive rage and her frustration. Lloyd, on the other hand, is human in the purest animalistic form. His determination to rely only on himself and live simply invokes Rousseau's ideas about the natural state of man. Henry, the outsider, is almost as simple as Lloyd and nowhere near as ambitious as Mae. But Mae latches on to him and convinces herself that he can be her savior from her despair and sense of worthlessness.

The set was incredible. The foundation of a tiny, cramped house was its main component. The house was built by

freshmen as part of a Citizen Science civic engagement project with Bard Works, and was already ready-made for the cast and crew to use. Every scene was played out inside this tiny house, which emphasized the tensions between the Mae and Lloyd when Henry came to live with them because Lloyd literally had nowhere to go.

In one scene that particularly struck me, Mae practiced reading aloud from a book about starfish. As she read, she wrapped herself around and through the foundations of the house, almost as though she was reaching out to civilization but couldn't yet escape what it was that tied her back. The set was an important element in revealing the conflicts between the characters. And with the seats surrounding the house, it felt as though the audience was looking in to a real snapshot of a very different life.



## THE FUTURE IS ODD

### ZOMBIE BABES AND PIGGYBACK RIDES ON JIMMY FALLON WILL BE PART OF IT

#### by grayling bauer

Last November, my friend told me about a 16 year old rapper who goes by the name Earl Sweatshirt. I brushed it off; thought it was just another kid trying to rap.

If you've seen the phrase "Free Earl" graffitied somewhere around campus, you've already been introduced to him. He's the youngest member of Odd Future Wolf Gang Kill Them All (or Odd Future for short, or OFWGKTA, or Wolf Gang, or Golf Wang), an emerging hip hop, visual art, and skateboarding collective from Los Angeles.

"Earl puts the 'ass' in 'assassin'"

Puts the pieces of decomposin' bodies in plastic

Puts 'em in a pan and mixes it up with scat

Then gobbles it like fat black bitches and catfish

-From "Earl" By Earl Sweatshirt

Why "Free Earl"? Apparently Earl's mom found his lyrics so disturbing that she's sent him somewhere until he turns 18. No one really knows where she sent him; the group isn't really explaining that. But Earl's horrific lyrics about rape, murder, and cannibalism were enough for him to get the boot. What's crazy is that he might not even know how

famous he is right now.

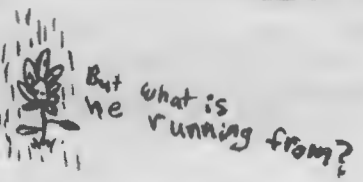
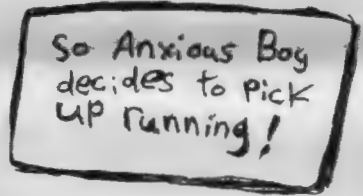
With positive reception from blogs and sites like Pitchfork, Odd Future earned a sort of cult following by the end of 2010. I was reintroduced when Tyler, the Creator, 19 year old leader of the crew, released the video for his single, "Yonkers" in February. I watched Tyler eat a cockroach and throw it up while rapping about how he's sick of Jesus calling him and complaining. The don't-give-a-fuck mentality soaked in his lyrics made me think of the 1995 movie *Kids* if it were turned into a rap project. The truth though is that Tyler and the rest of Odd Future are more far disturbed than your average street kids. At the end of the video, Tyler hangs himself.

Eleven days after its debut, "Yonkers" earned a million views on YouTube. Odd Future was finally catching air in the main stream. A week earlier, Tyler and another member, Hodgy Beats, performed "Sandwiches" on Late Night with Jimmy Fallon accompanied by The Roots. Wearing ski masks adorned with inverted crosses, Tyler and Hodgy wrought havoc on national television next to a girl dressed as a zombie. At the end of the performance, Mos Def ran up to the camera screaming, "Swag! Swag!" while Tyler

hopped onto Jimmy Fallon's back. Even Kanye West linked the video for "Yonkers" on his Twitter and called it "The video of 2011." Since then, Odd Future has been featured on a ten minute long segment for MTV Rap Fix, as well as in a skit from comedy site Funny or Die titled "Odd Future Gets Signed." It wasn't that funny.

While Odd Future's shock value might be adding to their success, for the most part it's their musical talent and devotion that makes them at all worthwhile. True, some of their songs are better than others, but production by members like Tyler, the Creator, who makes most of the group's beats, videos, and graphic design, and Left Brain allow the crew to have true, innovative, musical substance. Rapper Domo Genesis adds a more mellow side to the group; his album *Rolling Papers* is mostly about smoking weed and less about disposing bodies. Through proficient and aggressive use of the internet, OFWGKTA has opened itself up to fans from all over the interweb. Whether or not this is all just a short lived fad, we have yet to see. Who knows what a mind like Tyler's or Earl's could do to the odd future of rap.





After another UP beat adventure with Anxious Boy and Phill the Philosophical Flower get ready for the next issue: Anxious Boy's Dreaming

And so all problems are solved. He is in fact a happy and content boy.

written and illustrated by Jordan Segal

# THE CONVERSATION

by bard peer health

Peer Health is starting a column in the Free Press. Every month we are going to be publishing your questions and answering them as best we can using our own knowledge and the various resources we have on campus and beyond. Mailboxes are going to start appearing around campus. The Library, Campus Center, Kline and Olin are each going to be allocated a "Peer Health Mail Box" for you to drop in your questions, concerns, stories, funny anecdotes, anonymous thoughts or experiences. We want to improve the openness of Bard's campus and its student body in talking about sex, sexual health, body issues and mental and physical health – whatever you want or need to talk about.

Peer Health is also going to start a "Sexy Library." On Friday afternoons from 3pm-5pm the fish bowl is going to be full of books on sexual health, sex tips and other important "sexy" sources of information and exploration. The fish bowl will be a safe space for visitors to browse through texts and bring up questions or concerns quietly to themselves, one-on-one or in groups – whatever feels most comfortable. There will always be a Peer Health representative at the library to answer further questions you might have or direct you to the answers if they cannot personally answer them. If talking about something out loud feels uncomfortable, the "Sexy Library" will have a mailbox in it, much like the ones that are going to be placed in the public spaces around campus. Just drop a

question or thought into the mailbox and Peer Health will be sure to answer it.

Finally, in conjunction with all of this, bathroom stalls across campus are going to be transformed into a Peer health semi-weekly project. Your "Stall Seat Journal" is going to be found on the back of most bathroom stall doors for you to enjoy interesting articles, health and sex tips, Q and As and peoples' stories while you go about your business and have time to briefly ponder some of the most important questions your fellow peers and people around the world are asking.

We'll keep you posted if you keep us posted so...  
Watch this space!

## A SAMPLE OF WHAT PEER HEALTH CAN DO FOR YOU

Dear Peer Health Educator,

I'm worried my girlfriend doesn't have a clitoris. Not really, but really. I know all women have clitorises (clitori?), and I know she does. Even though I've spent considerable time with what I suspect is her clitoris, I'm having a hard time bringing her to orgasm.

It's not my favorite feeling, this underachievement. I'd like to not only find her clitoris, but to romance it. She's patient, but I'm not sure for how long.

Any advice?

Clitorally Challenged

Dear CC,

As silly or obvious as it may sound, have the two of you had a good, quality conversation about what sensations, movements and stimuli have been able to move her to orgasm in the past – including the sensations she uses to masturbate? Bingo—that's what you'll want to incorporate into your racy repertoire. You'd be surprised how many couples don't realize that the quickest route to more pleasure for both of you is to talk about what makes you feel good already. If she's not so sure (as some women aren't) you could encourage her to masturbate alone or with you, so that she has a little more experience exploring her own route to orgasm.

It's crucial to note that oral sex is not a one-way street. Although it's amazing in theory to let her lie down and relax while you bring her to fireworks, invite her to play an active part in her own pleasure by guiding your movements and position and moving along in rhythm with you. You might even ask if she'd like to masturbate in front of you so you can get a better idea of what she likes. You can make your next oral sex session into a game: "How does this feel? Warmer?"

Simply put, don't be too proud to just ask—both of your sex lives will improve if you do.

Bard Peer Health

## GIVE ME YOUR SEX AND DO IT THOUGHTFULLY

by ella jacobson and jeremy carter-gordon

Give Me Your Sex is something I hear every day.

Sometimes it's unspoken or implicit -- a magazine spread, a billboard I pass driving south down Route 81 on the way home for Christmas break, asking me to redefine my concept of beauty, sexuality, and sex. Sometimes it's yelled at me as I walk down the baked sidewalk back from the gym, sweat stains under my arms and hair matted to my neck. Other times it has been violent and ugly and threatening. Sometimes it's about power-- and who has it. Other times it's simply the casual comment, "I would never be a slut like that girl."

As men, we are also confined by many of same messages, and its close relation, "Take her sex." I don't know if I learned it from "bar-tested, never-fail" pickup lines in magazines or from women who were told not to be too forward, but I know that I am supposed to make the first move. While I might "get some," it depends on a girl "putting out" or "giving it up". If I "take her virginity," she "loses her v-card." Somehow sex has become a commodity, in the possession of women, for the consumption of men. We pay for it by conforming to a dominant idea of masculinity that leaves many of us uncomfortable.

We live in a world where imperatives about sexuality, sex, gender and pleasure are created around dominant stereotypes, and that these ideas fit few of us and leave fewer of us happy. Frequently they are not the beliefs, images, or ideals we would choose for ourselves, and frequently, they shape our exposure and ideas about what sex, sexuality, and pleasure ought to be.

To that end, the Dear Peer Health/Give Me Your Sex column is designed for you to ask your questions, to facilitate a discussion about sex and gender and sexuality, to actively redefine the places we allow sexuality into our lives, and to destroy the shame, guilt, or stigma attached to sexuality. As Peer Health, we believe opening a public venue for discussion is vital and hope that this column will give all of us at Bard Campus a place to examine, question, redefine, and discuss our sexuality, beliefs, and experiences.

These are the tenets of Give me Your Sex.

Give me Your Sex is an acknowledgement that sex, sexuality, and the erotic permeate almost every aspect of our lives -- they are not limited to the bedroom, to pairs of two, to heterosexuals or homosexuals, binary genders, monogamous relationships, or behind closed doors.

Give me Your Sex is an acknowledgement that there is no single definition of sex. There is no single act that is "sex" for everyone, and what is sexual for one person could be silly, strange, sexy, scary, titillating, boring, or hot for another. Sex does not have to have a "beginning" or an "end."

Give me Your Sex is the acknowledgement that companies and institutions around us have a vested interest in shaping and creating our definitions of sex, beauty, intimacy, gender, grace, consent, pleasure, and sexual joy and fulfillment; that influences around us spend billions of dollars each year to convince us our definitions are incorrect; and that we must conform, consume, and consent to marketed expectations and norms.

Give me Your Sex is the belief that the portrayal of sex as

a commodity or status symbol is harmful and disconnects sex from human experience, intimacy, and relationships, and robs it of its power.

Give me Your Sex is the acknowledgment that if we don't question, talk, discuss, and engage with issues of sex and sexuality, we will be left - by default - with the images and ideals we were handed and that frequently these are images and definitions we did not create or consent to.

Give me Your Sex is the acknowledgement that we live in a place where talking about these issues can be difficult, embarrassing, or uncomfortable, but that this is all the more reason to do so.

Lastly, Give me Your Sex believes that through dialogue and discussion, openness and honesty, awareness, respect and bravery, we can recreate our own definitions of sex, beauty, and sexuality.

I don't want to live according to someone else's definition of sex, intimacy, or expression; life is too long for that. I do not want to subject my beliefs about sex, intimacy, and expression to the assumptions that come with my perceived gender, sexual orientation, occupation, or size. Give me Your Sex is an affirmation that I do not have to. I can create my own definitions.

How did you learn about sex? What is sex for you? What are your definitions of sexuality, beauty, and intimacy? How does sex operate in your life?

Join the conversation.

## THOUGHTS ON SEX ... FROM A BARD STUDENT

by jordan segal

Sex is a very strange concept. When thinking about gender roles in society or, rather, how society defines a gender, people almost always think of Feminism. However, to be "Masculine" is also not easy. As a sensitive and skinny 19 year old, I don't fit the classical definition of what it means to be a man, which can cause me to be insecure at times. In an age when society is changing faster than ever, I think it is important to draw attention not only to the gender and sexuality struggles of women but also that of men. In essence, the expression of both gender and sexuality are, to different degrees, personal struggles for every individual in a different way regardless of gender and sexual orientation.



# OPINION

send your opinions to [bardfreepress@gmail.com](mailto:bardfreepress@gmail.com)

## OUTSIDE.BARD.EDU

### WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON IN NEW HAMPSHIRE?

by Kurt Schmidlein

Before 2006, Republicans controlled the legislature of my home state, New Hampshire, for 86 years. Then, power switched in the wake of the Iraq War and Katrina. In 2008, New Hampshire Democrats expanded their majorities in both chambers thanks to the Obama-driven Democratic wave. Two years later, however, the Republicans rode the red wave to a three-quarter majority (otherwise known as veto-proof) in both the State House and Senate. They aren't the reasonable Mitch Daniels or Colin Powell type Republicans though – these guys are wacky, and arguably among the most radical in the country.

The State Senator representing my district is an excellent example of this new brand of conservative. He believes that the government of New Hampshire should do nothing but maintain highways and fund state law enforcement. Unfortunately, his view is becoming a reality, as many state programs are being cut in the name of austerity. Ironically, these cuts will be extremely costly down the line. For example, New Hampshire is withdrawing from RGGI (the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative), a coalition of ten Northeast and mid-Atlantic states pledging to reduce carbon emissions by 10% by 2018. Pulling out of this group will actually cost New Hampshire money, as we will no longer receive funds for weatherization and clean energy research while still having to pay the surrounding states for our electricity.

Steps are also being taken to drastically reduce funding to public schools. Since the state is legally required to supply the resources for the education of every New Hampshire child, the GOP is simply removing sex education, physical education, foreign languages, and art and music from the definition of 'adequate education.' Local school districts have two choices: raise property taxes to fund those programs (bloating town budgets and burdening property owners), or let them disappear.

These steep cuts have been made in the name of auster-

ity; considering the \$500 - \$700 million budget shortfall, the GOP argues that government needs to find ways of living within its means. But the same Republican majorities seek to cut business taxes by \$300 million as well, widening the budget gap to almost \$1 billion. Due to New Hampshire's tax structure – we have no state income tax or sales tax (an Arizona Ice Tea actually costs \$.99 - what's up, New Yorkers) – the state already has a small budget with little room for extensive cuts. Therefore, those that are made, like those I mentioned, are painful and have tangible effects.

As if the fiscal practices weren't bad enough, the state GOP is imposing a radical social agenda as well. In addition to all sorts of crazy bills being considered (a resolution has been submitted demanding that the U.S. leave the U.N.) there is also a bill in committee to create – wait for it – a New Hampshire militia. This state-run volunteer force would act independently of the federal government and the National Guard, and will serve to protect New Hampshire from 'invasion.' With Massholes to the south, Maine and its lobsters to the east, Vermont hippies with their maple syrup (back off, ours is better!) to the west, and French socialists to the north, armed conflict is obviously imminent. I suspect the \$500,000 budget for this force will be spent on muskets and 18th century hats, but that's just a guess.

While on the subject of second amendment fantasy-land, it seems appropriate to mention the Republican leadership's first legislative order of business after they were sworn in: allowing firearms to be carried by lawmakers in the state house. On that note, there is also a proposal to exempt all New Hampshire-made firearms from federal gun laws, effectively permitting the possession of guns in schools and courthouses. Should this bill pass, any New Hampshire law enforcement officer trying to uphold those federal laws would be charged with a felony.

As expected, the Republican majorities have begun the process of overturning marriage equality. New Hampshire

is one of five states in the country in which it is legal to have a same-sex marriage, however that law will likely be officially repealed in January of 2012. The delay is probably designed to put more distance between the GOP and the infamous rant of a former Republican lawmaker, Nancy "Wiggle It" Elliot, who described anal sex at a public committee hearing: "We're talking about taking the penis of one man and putting it in the rectum of another man... and wiggling it around in excrement."

As they institute this new societal order, Republicans are seeking to work the demographics of the state to their advantage. A bill currently in committee is proposing that all students attending a New Hampshire college who did not live in New Hampshire before enrolling at said school will not be allowed to vote as a resident of New Hampshire. Should this bill pass, it would have positive implications for the GOP, as the majority of young voters in New Hampshire vote liberal. Speaker Bill O'Brien said on the subject of liberal trends in our generation: "Voting liberal, that's what kids do. No life experience, they just vote their feelings."

Though it is very embarrassing, I must admit that Bill O'Brien is my representative. In fact, a close friend of mine (whose campaign I managed) ran against Mr. O'Brien for the seat he now holds. Because of his connections and the cunning use of his large wallet he is now the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Fortunately, most Republicans are not as radical as Mr. O'Brien, but regardless, the effects of the Republican wave are being felt in places other than New Hampshire. Unions are under assault across the country, and Planned Parenthood and public broadcasting will both likely lose their funding. So, if you care about upholding marriage equality, reducing carbon emissions, and giving teachers adequate pay, you should think about voting in 2012. This is what happens when you don't.

## YOU'RE SO ALTERNATIVE ARE BARD KIDS AS OPEN MINDED AS THEY THINK THEY ARE?

by a bardian

Before you start reading this article, I'd like you to do me a favor: pull out your Bard ID and study yourself. Are you smiling? Is your hair brushed? Are you one of those people who didn't quite make it into the frame before they clicked the button? Or, even better, did you decide last minute to make a funny face, not knowing this was the picture you'd be showing Donna every morning for the next four years? Now I'd like you to imagine what would happen if, by chance, you got to take a new photo. You'd sit straighter, maybe not make the face that friends make fun of to this day, right?

But what else would be different? Did you, perhaps, acquire some new glasses in the time gone by? (Understandably!

The larger frames increase your peripheral vision.) Get a new haircut? (Shaved on the sides, long on top. It's aerodynamic.) I'm pretty sure you probably stopped showering, too. But I'm certain you've noticed all of these things already; no matter how unkempt you seem, we all know how long you looked in the mirror this morning. So here's a question maybe you haven't asked: why? What do all of the new aspects of my appearance say about me? And why have all of the posers at Bard started stealing my style?!

In case you haven't noticed yet, Bard has a typology. In entering Bard campus, whether as a student or a visitor, you enter a world where everything is radical. Except radicalism, of course. The 'cool kids' here don't play sports. They don't support religion. (Well, I guess anything non-Christian

is ok.) Their sexuality is fluid, and they certainly don't listen to K104.7, the local pop radio station. In general, students at Bard won't bully you for being a nerd; they won't laugh at you for putting tortillas on a table and calling it art; and they certainly won't have a problem when you use heteronormative as a slur against a straight person. At Bard, the tables have been turned against the Finn Hudsons and Quinn Fabrays of the world. Oh wait, you don't watch "Glee" either, do you?

So what does the typical, hip Bard student do? My careful research (done by, well, living here) suggests there is a lot of discussion on the downfalls of the world. This encompasses, of course, horrible human rights violations, high infant death rates in third world countries, and religious persecution across the globe. Unfortunately, it also includes dismiss-

# ADVICE FROM AN ALUM

## "I REGRET NOT SPEAKING UP"

by noah odabashian

I went to Bard (read: I graduated from Bard). I usually tell people that I enjoyed doing my time there, that it was a good place to struggle. Hell, I liked Bard so much I decided to get my four year degree in a mere five years.

I should clarify that when I say 'struggle,' I don't mean academically (regardless of what you might think about my super-senior year, you judgmental ass). Certain aspects of existing at Bard were difficult and as a result I had some shitty experiences - made only shittier by how I chose to handle them. I regret not addressing those situations in a way that empowered and protected me. So much regret in fact, I am willing to momentarily embrace the shame of being that guy, unable to fully disconnect with his college experience, so that I can share with you what I should have done and do away with this nagging regret for good.

A security guard, while closing up shop one evening, told the Multicultural Director that he wanted to "smash the face of the chubby Mexican kid." He meant me (don't let my last name fool you- also, I'm Chilean). The next day, the Director, who ideally upheld the safety of all students as a priority (but especially the multi-cultural ones), told me about it. Now, while I was flattered that the security guard (who, incidentally, is also supposed to have student safety as a priority) called me chubby rather than flat out fat, I felt a little threatened. Though, perhaps this guy thought students were safer if I were to have my face smashed.

I was then told by the Director to keep it a secret, that if I said something to the administration the position of Multicultural Direction might find itself prematurely vacant. At this time, I'd like to remind you that it was a security guard who threatened me - a guy with access to my dorm room and personal information (as well as a student Facebook security keeps of your ID photo and home address, phone number, car registration, etc you get the idea). It wasn't just some hipster with a grudge, it was someone with a significant amount of power over me.

Regardless, I did what the Multicultural Director asked me to do, after all in this economy its hard to find a job, any recent graduate can tell you that - even if you have a degree from Harvard. I regret this decision, what I should have done was:

**SING LIKE A FUCKIN' CANARY.** I should have told everyone who would listen. I should have written letters, told my parents, told a lawyer, told the person assigned to matters concerning students of color (oh wait...), told ANYONE who thought that the safety of students both physically and mentally was a priority and an important aspect of student life.

Don't let Bard Security intimidate you, that's not their job. If I had spoken up, I would have felt safer and Bard would have been safer (that's assuming the ever-wise Director of security would have fired this guy - a big assumption). If he

acted on his insanity and was able to hurt a student as a direct result of my having not opting to be a stool pigeon, I'm sorry. Really. I always thought Student government needed a Security Oversight Committee; every other aspect of Bard life has an organized group of students whose goal is to address it. At the very least there should be a safe way to report issues with security that doesn't go through the Directory of Security's hands, because from experience, I know he doesn't take that sort of thing very seriously.

Instead, I spent the rest of my time at Bard keenly aware of any time that particular security guard was around me, always trying to avoid being alone with the guy. I regret that decision. I never should have sacrificed my already thin sense of security at Bard so that another could keep a job that they couldn't completely do. I slept with a pool cue next to my bed for a week because you never know when some one's gonna do what they want- especially if they are dumb enough to say something like that publicly.

I should have spoken up the time security stole something out of my car (they called me to say my car had been burgled) and there was an eyewitness to corroborate it. I should have spoken up the time the Director of Security was openly racist about my Armenian heritage (I dare not inform him that I am really, actually, Latino). There are, unfortunately, a bunch of other times I should have spoken up - these are just the ones I regret.

Bard security doesn't have a great track record regarding how they deal with students of color, but you'd be hard pressed to get people to openly talk about it. They have too much power (which, trust me, they masturbate over). I will say, however, there are exceptional guards who I'd trust in a second. They know who they are and if you're cool you probably do too (hint: the good guards are pigmented and/or accented).

I did handle a shit situation well once though.

I took a computer programming class because I thought it'd be fun. It was difficult, but I liked it; I have a nerdy streak. Not a Mountain Dew-gulping, techno-listening type of streak, more of a engaged and interested problem solving type of geekiness. The class challenged me, but I did all the work and even managed to have some fun. Then I got a F, as in Fuck You for trying- or maybe existing?

Though they'd never admit it (academics watch each other's backs more closely than southern policemen: they have a real good ol' boys thing going on), sometimes teachers just don't like particular students. It gets personal for them. I don't know how I rubbed him the wrong way (or maybe it was because I never rubbed him at all), but this guy just didn't like me and there was no way I could convince him that I was an honest student deserving of an honest evaluation of my classwork. I needed professional backup.

An email exchange confirmed the need for a witness at the meeting I had set up to discuss my grade. In the emails he was rude and nasty, and when someone is being a dick-head toward you, the best thing to do is be nice (because it pisses them off more). I brought along one of my biggest allies at Bard, the Multicultural Affairs Director at the time-way back when the office was still in the Campus Center.

Bringing an ally to the meeting was the best thing I could have done. With her there, he had to mediate his bullshit, although he did say some things to me that have never been said to me before or since. I didn't know a teacher could treat a student of theirs the way he did and still consider himself a teacher. I felt as though only the fact that I had brought the then-Director of Multicultural Affairs with me forced the teacher into treating me fairly. I got the F changed to a shitty, but passing grade. I could tell that the teacher *really* didn't want to do it, which also made me happy.

Its a strange mix of power and vulnerability that students have. I am confident that had I not brought a member of the administration to the meeting, I would still have that F. He couldn't justify that F in front of her, especially when I had the same information he did - proof of my work in the class. If I went in alone not only would I still have the F, but when I would have contested the grade to a panel, his word would have weighed more than mine (remember, hoes? Dem good ol' boys are tight knit). The word of an administrator, however, that's easily, like, 3 or 4 students combined. It *means* something. Something that a student's word does not.

I regret not speaking up. I made decisions based on how fast I could put a situation behind me, even at a personal cost. I know for a fact that my experiences are not unique. But I also know that they are not usually spoken about in public. They are more likely to be shared with peers in hushed tones, and the story rarely reaches anyone who could do something about it. Fuck it, these are the *freest* years of your life, and someone has put up a lot of money for you to be here: you deserve to be safe and happy. Don't let some over-educated dick or failed police officer get your shit down. This is your time to make inebriated, silly mistakes in a safe environment.

I know most people will probably think, who is this fuck with no life trying to tell us something. That's what I would have thought. But I regret being pushed around by bullies at Bard (it says something that the bullies at Bard are much older than the student population) - especially when I could have done something about it. Congratulations if you read to the end of this, I wouldn't have.

ing the entire population of the South as idiots who voted for Bush, twice; alienating a peer because they are an athletic, upper-class, white citizen (whose clothing didn't come from Goodwill); and a phrase I've heard too often in my time here, "I hate Catholics." My conclusion can only be, then, that these students don't plan to exist in the real world. Fighting against restricting ideals held by a normative society is an important and noble plight, but hating others simply for believing some of those ideals will get you nowhere. It does no good to belittle someone's character or to tell them that you hate their belief system. In fact, it will usually just turn them against you, and -believe me-- outside of Bard, the hip liberal student's views are the ones that are outnumbered.

Even within Bard's boundaries, we've gone against our own

ideals. We are not the open-minded, liberal student body we attest to be. The extreme trendiness of Bard students has created our own little normative society. Here you are free to be homosexual; you are encouraged to think, work, and create abstractly or theoretically; you are even welcome to walk around naked in the first snowfall of the year without being jeered at. But jocks, conservatives, and Christians are all looked down upon. And please, boys, don't ever hold the door for a girl.

I'm not asking you to give up the fight against a staunchly normative society: the fight is important, and change is good. But take another look back at your ID and think again about what is different about you. Have the changes you've made been to fit you further into Bard's normative society? Whether

or not the transformation was conscious, can you say that in ten years, when you have a job and maybe a family, you'll still want to be a hip liberal with big glasses and a creeper-stache? What if your partner is a devout Christian? Or your children want to go to prom like "normal" high school students? Whether in three months or three years, all Bard students will be joining the real world, and, if we aren't prepared to accept and work with people whose beliefs we don't agree with, we are setting ourselves up for a hard fall upon leaving Bard. Sorry kids, you're just too alternative.

# MISSED CONNEX IF YOU THINK THIS IS HARD TO READ, YOU SHOULD TRY ULYSSES

Me: guy sitting on the shuttle quietly and respectfully waiting to get back to campus. You: girl in shiny gold tights and ridiculous wedge heels yelling at the shuttle driver on Friday night. Your cacophonous voice sent shivers down my spine. Find me next time you're drunk and disorderly; I'll be the guy who's equally drunk but far more orderly.

I'm just wondering who is tearing down all the posters everywhere so if you know who it is or if it's you then you should really just stop or leave or just tell people that it was ken copper okay bye.

I was running on the treadmill when you entered my life. As I ran, I couldn't help but notice your shoes matched mine, and your gait was elegant, effortless, as if you were running on springs. As I ran faster and faster, I smiled at you and although you were lost in your iPod, I could see our legs match stride for stride. When you left to go stretch and meet your boyfriend, my pace quickened, and my heart raced, but I know in my guts, darling, that you were meant for me - can your boyfriend run a five-minute mile?

You: Tumblr.

Me: Bardian.

Is there some corporate sponsorship deal going on here? Seriously it's crazy it seems like ten new bard themed tumblrs pop up every day and none of them are of particular interest to anyone but the self indulgent kids who made them. Sorry.

Me: hungry. You: a delicious chicken tender from Kline, on the tip of my fork, slowly sliding off into space, hurtling through the air on your way down toward the center of the Earth, before bouncing off my sleeve and rolling to a stop in the middle of the table. Do I dare break the bonds this society has placed upon me? I so dearly long to have you inside of me, and yet you and I - star-crossed lovers - we were torn apart by some cruel twist of gravity. Come to me, I will grab you and hold you - you will be mine when no one's looking.

Wanted: an explanation for why we all decided to go along with the whole "chicken tender" thing - it's a nugget, a clump of processed chicken parts - tender has nothing to do with it.

Seeking: A reason for being.

I'm sorry I haven't called you. It's not that I don't like you; it's just that I dropped a lot of acid and my ChiaPet ate the Post-it that you wrote your number on.

I'm sorry I missed your calls, my ChiaPet ate all of my acid and I had to take him to the ChiaVet, which was also a combination pizza hut/taco bell, so I spent the week. If you still want to try and communicate with me I'd recommend direct messages on twitter.

Sorry, my Chiapet was whining so loudly about his lactose intolerance that I couldn't hear any of your tweets. I don't think he likes you. I don't think I can do this anymore. I think you are asking too much of me. Do you know how hard it is to be a single parent in this economy?

