

11-2012

## Bard Free Press, Vol. 14, No. 3 (November 2012)

Bard College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/bardfreepress>

---

### Recommended Citation

Bard College, "Bard Free Press, Vol. 14, No. 3 (November 2012)" (2012). *Bard Free Press - All Issues (2000-2018)*. 101.

<https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/bardfreepress/101>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Bard Free Press, 2000-2018 at Bard Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bard Free Press - All Issues (2000-2018) by an authorized administrator of Bard Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@bard.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@bard.edu).

FP



PHOTOGRAPH BY [unreadable]

# bard free press

## EDITORS IN CHIEF

will "cam2cam" anderson  
jp "sorry nolan" lawrence  
kurt "byline superstar"  
schmidlein

## ONLINE EDITOR

rebecca "plz dnt fape me"  
swanberg

## NEWS EDITOR

anna "mastdebater"  
daniszewski

## CULTURE EDITOR

lucas "whitney  
houston" oopenorth

## OPINION EDITOR

arthur "tutee putee"  
holland-michel

## BARDIVERSE EDITOR

leela "mrs carlos" khanna

## SPORTS EDITOR

tom "the white whale"  
mcqueeny

## COPY STAFF

emily berkowitz - editor  
nora deligter  
naomi lachance

## LAYOUT

will anderson  
kurt schmidlein

## PHOTOGRAPHY

will anderson  
otto berkes jr.  
anna daniszewski  
j.p. lawrence  
joann eee  
anna low-beer

## WRITERS

roger berkowitz  
nora deligter  
david dewey  
ben ellman  
jeremy gardner

defne gencler  
hallie greenberg  
naomi lachance  
charles mcfarlane  
tom mcqueeny  
alenka muslimova  
francine prose  
anna maria sice-  
nica  
lenny simon  
matilda tucker  
gleb vinokurov

## THANKS TO

raed al-abbasee  
ammar al-rubaia  
max gavrich  
anna hadfield  
hannah khalifeh  
alice weston

---

NEWS.	04
BARDIVERSE.	12
SANDY SPREAD.	14
CULTURE.	18
OPINION	24
SPORTS	27

---

## [ TERMS ]

THE FREE PRESS RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT ALL SUBMISSIONS FOR SPELLING, GRAMMAR, AND COHERENCE. WE PROTECT OUR STUDENT JOURNALISTS' FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS AND ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITIES THAT ACCOMPANY THAT FREEDOM. CONTENT DECISIONS ARE MADE BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD, AND THE FREE PRESS WILL NOT PRINT ANYTHING LIBELOUS OR DISCRIMINATORY IN NATURE. ANONYMOUS SUBMISSIONS CAN ONLY BE PRINTED IF THE WRITERS CONSULT WITH THE EDITORIAL BOARD FIRST.

ALL ARTICLES IN THE FEATURES AND OPINION SECTIONS REFLECT THE OPINIONS OF THE AUTHORS, NOT THOSE OF THE FREE PRESS EDITORIAL BOARD OR STAFF. RESPONSES TO OPINIONS ARE WELCOME AND CAN BE SENT TO [BARDFREEPRESS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BARDFREEPRESS@GMAIL.COM), AS CAN LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

ALL LETTERS SUBMITTED TO THE FREE PRESS WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION UNLESS THE WRITER REQUESTS OTHERWISE. THEY WILL BE EDITED FOR SPACE, CONTENT AND GRAMMAR.

## [ CORRECTIONS ]

1. In Will Anderson's article "50 Ways to Make a Farm," the time frame for the fundraising efforts should have read "three weeks and one day," not "one week and three days." Apparently Will is dyslexic. Oh well.

2. In Will Anderson's article "50 Ways to Make a Farm," he incorrectly associated Taun Toay with the Levy Institute. Toay was, in the context of the article, working through the Vice President's office. Will is fired.

cover by alice weston

back by max gavrich

this photo by paloma dooley

## LEVY INSTITUTE LAUNCHES NEW MASTER OF SCIENCE

BY MATILDA TUCKER

The Levy Economics Institute of Bard College has announced that it will begin offering a new Master of Science in Economic Theory and Policy in the fall of 2013.

According to a press release from the Levy Institute, the program is designed to primarily focus on the study of macroeconomic theory, while also highlighting monetary policy, labor markets, and distribution of wealth.

Members of the Levy Institute have been eager to see an opportunity at Bard for students to take master-level classes in economics for quite some time.

"The program has been in process for a while," says Liudmila Malyshava, Assistant to the Director of the Levy Institute. This year, "all the ideas came together," as Malyshava said, and the final steps toward realizing

the project were able to be carried out.

The curriculum of the degree will consist of 16 required core courses in economics and a practical yearlong research workshop and master's thesis. Since the program is attached to the Levy Institute, it will offer a far greater amount of resources and open up new research opportunities for students of economics, including students from outside Bard College.

These close ties between the Levy Institute and the M.S. program make for a degree plan based on empirical learning based on a practical year-long research workshop and a mandatory practicum for all graduate students. This will ultimately help to facilitate a far greater understanding of both the micro and macroeco-

nomics, which becomes applicable in a variety of career paths, as Malyshava explained.

Taking after many other academic programs at Bard, such as Environmental Studies and Engineering, the M.S. degree's curriculum is also adaptable to the 3+2 Program Option, which makes it possible for students to earn both a B.A. degree and a M.S. degree in five years.

Although the Levy Institute Master of Science program is geared mainly toward students that are in their junior year who have already successfully moderated, Malyshava also encourages freshman and sophomore students to start considering the program as a viable opportunity.

## NEW COURSES TAUGHT BY STUDENTS

BY TOM MCQUEENY

The Student Life Committee is looking to set up a system of student taught courses at Bard College ideally by next semester.

Though the SLC has not found an administrator to oversee the project, it doesn't see administrators as necessary to the trial run of this system.

Rosette Cirillo, SLC chair, said "I don't necessarily think it's an urgent need for our test run model, which would be pretty informal for our first semester".

A board of students would provide oversight over student submitted curriculum and syllabi.

Josh Kopin, a Bard graduate who works at the Learn-

ing Commons, might also be a resource for the students who teach these courses.

The student teachers themselves might form a support network to help each other.

While the informality is up to the discretion of the teacher, free reign and student teacher autonomy is largely the spirit of the system.

"Courses wouldn't be mandated to stick to their syllabus of course- we just want to see an indication that the students planning on teaching indeed have some plans" said Cirillo.

These courses would be without credit and grades.

If lessons plans were approved by this student board in time, they would go into the SLC's own "student course book".

The system could allow clubs a chance to teach classes and impart certain skills.

Cirillo hopes that this system of student taught courses can become "a more formal structure for students to share specific areas of knowledge with one another (seniors and their senior projects for example), as well as a structure that students can find each other within if they're hoping to explore a topic together".

## LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS

Incumbent U.S. Representative Chris Gibson, a Republican, beat his Democratic challenger Julian Schreibman for New York's 20th congressional district. He captured 55% of the vote in Dutchess County.

Terry Gipson won a close three-way race for the New York State Senate. He beat Republican incumbent Steve Saland, who cast the deciding vote for Marriage Equality in New York, and Neil Dicarlo, a Tea Party challenger. Gipson will represent most of

Dutchess county and part of Putnam County.

Kevin Cahill, a Democrat, was running uncontested for his seat as Assemblyman for Red Hook and Rhinebeck. Cahill has represented NY District 101 since 1999.

President Barack Obama won Dutchess County with 53% of the vote, and Kirsten Gillibrand was re-elected as New York's junior Senator with 65% of the vote in Dutchess County.

# نحن. قرحنا. ةيروس ةدعاسم ىلا ةجاحب

BY REJWAN WANBERG

It's late—but it must be dawn where the hacker is. I'm about to talk to a Syrian rebel, that's what's going through my head, a Syrian rebel who just hacked one of Bard's websites.

Everyone in the room makes sure they're out of the camera's view, except the translator, Bard senior Raed Al-Abbasee, and I. They stand on the sidelines, tapping a whiteboard full of questions. Don't forget to ask this. Make sure he answers this.

I'm calling Mohammed Al-Askari, but he refuses to video chat. Mohammed Al-Askari calls me. On the screen, there is a graphic: a green and black flag, three red stars, superimposed on an anonymous man's face.

The hacker refused to video chat, and he refused to admit his location, to show a picture. It makes sense—if you've already hacked multiple websites and have every intention to continue, identifying yourself is counterproductive. But hiding behind the mask of a Free Syrian Army flag, he held nothing back.

"I started my mission with Bard, but it was a random choice," Al-Askari, the self-identified hacker, said. "And I will continue from here."

Al-Askari hacked onto the Inside Bard website Nov. 6, minutes after the election results were announced. He is anti-Assad regime, and works alone. The normal page was replaced with the Free Syrian Army flag and Arabic writing reading "Free Syrian Army" and Al-Askari's name. At the bottom of the page, there was a picture of a young man. Al-Askari later identified him as a friend who was killed by the Syrian regime.

A student noticed the hack and posted on Facebook. Other students caught on instantly—but Bard Information Technology Services (BITS) was a little late to the game.

"We took [Inside Bard] offline as soon as we could, which can be done remotely, but not before kids were able to see it and begin talking about it and taking screenshots," Jeff Katz, Dean of Information Services, said.

In the time it took for BITS to take Inside Bard offline, the page had already gone viral within the Bard student community. Screenshots were posted on Facebook walls. But nobody told BITS.

"When people see something, they should say something right away—the security dispatch desk is open 24 hours a day," Katz said. "In this case, I think a professor saw it and called security."

BITS kept Inside Bard offline until the following

evening, but reported to the student body that it would take some time to restore all of the site's functions. Al-Askari was attempting to promote an activist message by hacking Bard's website, a means that was first used in 1996, and deemed "hactivism."

But many students didn't have a strong grasp on the intent behind the infiltration, as most Bard students can't read Arabic. Many thought the hack was a joke by another student. Yet Al-Askari said that he used the main page of the website to send his message, which he thought was "obvious" and didn't need further explanation.

It's not the first website that Al-Askari has hacked. His Youtube channel shows footage of multiple websites being hacked and videos in memory of Syrians who were killed in battle. There is a clip of the hacking of the Syrian Electronic Army (SEA)'s website, a pro-regime hactivist organization. He's also allegedly hacked the League of Arab States, 14 Iranian websites and more. But this was one of his first university website hacks. It just so happened that it was one of the first he found and one of the easier sites to hack.

"It was very easy for me to hack their website because of the weak security," Al-Askari said.

According to Katz, BITS updates the network security every day. Though all of Bard's website components are on separate machines, security is a struggle for every network. Al-Askari only hacked onto one of the networks, the one that provided access to inside.bard.edu, but couldn't gain access to bard.edu since it is on a separate server.

"All the passwords were changed and various other upgrades were made in the process. So it won't happen again there—it may happen somewhere else," Katz said. "I think all of us have to struggle with the same thing, which is keeping some kind of balance between the access and availability that users want and the desire to lock the whole thing down so nothing will be out of place or vulnerable."

Al-Askari claimed that he was able to gain access to classified information like grades and student email accounts, and that he created a backup for the information. BITS has not yet investigated deeply enough to verify the legitimacy of this statement.

"We don't have evidence of other exploitation, but we are still looking. It's complicated—it takes time to find these things and there are aspects that

are not as obvious and some things that are very obvious," Katz said. "It will take us a while to look around. Our first obligation was to get things up and running so people could use their stuff."

Katz says that they don't have evidence of other sources of compromises, and that he can't confirm nor deny the claims that Al-Askari has made, but that often hackers leave clues behind. Al-Askari mentioned that if he chose to, he could spam students with emails that also promoted his message, but that it was unlikely he would.

What was most important to Al-Askari, more important than spamming inboxes and compromising students' security, was to bring light to his cause—building support for the rebel Syrians.

"The regime is still getting all the help and support they need," Al-Askari said. "I just wish the United States government would take a step further in their political endeavors in this issue."

At the root of Al-Askari's hactivism was a call-to-action message that was lost. In the 10 minutes that Al-Askari's hacked page was live, students had enough time for initial reactions and impressions. But his intention was buried under the shock of the hack itself.

Al-Askari is less interested in answering inquiries about how he hacked Bard's website. He wants to tell us about the things he's seen, how bad it is in Syria right now.

Mohammed Al-Askari is trying to send you a file. Accept or Deny?

Accept.

We've been talking for 40 minutes now. One of the editors watching on the sidelines reaches over and writes on the front of an old Free Press—"It's a huge file. Also, it's probably gruesome footage."

I scratch, "Yeah," underneath, but we let the file continue to load.

"The videos I sent are from people [being tortured] inside Syria, and all of them were killed," Al-Askari said. "It is recent—two or three weeks old."

The video opens. I hide my face in my hands.

"All that and the world is just watching and doing nothing to help."

Maybe Al-Askari's message wasn't initially perfectly clear. But he doesn't plan to stop at Bard.

"This is just the beginning," he said. "You will see more."

# FREE PRESS CONTACTS SYRIAN HACKER

BY FP STAFF

TRANSLATION BY RAED AL-ABBASEE



photo by will anderson

The Free Press staff, with senior Raed Al-Abbasee translating, Skypes with the Mohammed Al-Askari on Nov. 8, 2012.

*When inside.bard.edu was hacked, an email was included in the hacker's message. The Free Press contacted that email and exchanged several messages before Al-Askari eventually suggested having a Skype call. The call lasted 45-minutes, and in this time Al-Askari explained his motivation for hacking Bard's site. This is an abridged version of that exchange, as translated by senior Raed Al-Abbasee.*

**Free Press:** Why did you choose to infiltrate Bard's website?

**Mohammed Al-Askari:** I have a goal and I am working on it. Bard's website isn't the first that I've hacked. I hacked the website of a school in New Mexico and another one in Missouri. I got everything from Bard's server and made a back-up of it. The information includes students information and email addresses.

**FP:** What are you going to do with all the information you got from Bard?

**MA:** I might just upload a virus to the students' email accounts, like tell them use a link to see something like their grades. Once they click on it, I could get access to their e-mail accounts and from that to any information they have on it, like bank account information etc. But I don't think I will do that now.

**FP:** Are you aware of Bard's connection to the Middle East? We have a campus in the West Bank.

**MA:** I had no idea about any of that.

**FP:** Where did you learn how to infiltrate websites?

**MA:** In the beginning of the uprising, I was on the regime's side. At that time, I remember that we hacked Harvard's website. The Syrian Electronic Army (SEA) used to give us a list of all the names of people they would like us to track. They provided us with whatever we needed. Most of the work we did with the SEA was tracking individuals who were wanted by the government through their Facebook

accounts or through their email addresses. I worked with the SEA for about five or six months.

**FP:** Where are you operating from?

**MA:** I can't tell you ... I am not in Syria now and nobody knows where I am, but my family is still [in Syria]. I am trying to get them out of there, but nothing has worked yet and I am really worried. I

**FP:** Who shot the video?

**MA:** The video is from inside Syria. All of the people in the video have been killed. It was shot two to three weeks ago. We have people working with government's militias and army and they have been providing us with videos or any information we need. But you have to pay them for receiving such videos or information.

**FP:** Are you going to continue hacking other colleges' websites?

**MA:** Yes, right now, I am working on King Faisal University's website in Saudi Arabia and I will continue.

**FP:** Is there a specific message you are trying to send to American universities?

**MA:** After almost two years since the beginning of the uprising, and after all that has happened in Syria, the killing and destruction, [Syrians] are very upset. We were hoping that the US government would do the same to help us since they help Libya before to oust Al-Qaddafi regime and they helped Egypt as well.

**FP:** What do you see for the future of Syria?

**MA:** Life under Bashar Al-Assad government has been very hard. They make all the college students serve in the army. We did not have democracy. If you go to Al-Mazza, a neighborhood, there are a lot of places there where the government keeps the prisoners. Anything you say against the government puts you in danger.



A still from a video sent to the Free Press depicting torture in Syria.

have arrest warrants from the Syrian Army and the Syrian Intelligence. All that, and the world is just watching and doing nothing to help.

**FP:** What groups are you associated with now?

**MA:** I work by myself without anybody helping me. [In response to a video depicting torture sent by Al-Askari]

# STUDENT VOTES CHALLENGED

FL 50-14158

BY NAOMI LACHANCE

ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY  
JP LAWRENCE AND REBECCA SWANBERG

MAKE A CROSS OR CHECK MARK IN THE SQUARE AT THE LEFT OF THE NAMES OF THE PERSONS OR QUESTIONS FOR WHICH YOU WISH TO VOTE. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the name in the blank space under the proper office title and make a cross or check mark in the square at the left of the name. Do not write in any name that is printed on the ballot.

HAGA UNA CRUZ O UNA MARCA EN LA CASILLA A LA IZQUIERDA DE LOS NOMBRES DE LAS PERSONAS O LAS PREGUNTAS PARA LAS QUE DESEA VOTAR. Para votar por una persona cuyo nombre no se imprime en la boleta, escriba el nombre en el espacio en blanco con el título de oficina adecuado y hacer una cruz o una marca en la casilla a la izquierda del nombre. No escriba en el nombre que aparece impreso en la boleta electoral.

Last year, when sophomore Abby Margolis registered to vote in Dutchess County, she never imagined her right to vote would be questioned.

Margolis received an email from the Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) a week before Election Day stating that her voter status was inactive. "The CCE couldn't even clearly explain it," she said. "The Board of Elections thought I was no longer living at Bard."

When Margolis went to St. John's Episcopal Church in Barrytown to vote, she was given two options: vote by affidavit ballot or appeal to a judge in Poughkeepsie. "I thought, there's no way I'm voting by paper ballot," she said.

An affidavit ballot is one in which a challenged voter states in writing that he or she has a right to vote in the district. They are usually counted several days after the

Kern was one of four plaintiffs in the recent case *Pitcher v. Dutchess County Board of Elections*, which was heard in Federal Court on the Monday before Election Day. The judge ruled that the students were able to vote in the general election.

Kern viewed the case as a part of the larger issue of voter suppression. "Based on the outcome," he said, "I will either become completely disheartened and disillusioned with the system or I will say you can actually, if students and lawyers unite, make a bit of a difference."

#### CONFLICT ONE: REGISTERING TO VOTE

The students involved in the lawsuit were four of 100 Dutchess County college students, according to a press release from the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU),

Republican Sue Crane, Town Supervisor for the Town of Red Hook, was unaware of instances of voter suppression in the county. "If they're registered voters at their current address," she said, "and they have proof they live at the address, then I don't see anything wrong with it."

#### CONFLICT TWO: NAMES MISSING FROM THE LIST

Ten to 15 voters, including Margolis, encountered difficulties on Election Day because their names were not on the list of registered voters.

"The BOE went through what I have been told is a hasty process to remove from the active list of voters people who no longer resided in district," said Jonathan Becker, Vice President and Dean for International

*This is not a new problem in Dutchess County. Students have encountered difficulties voting for years; in 1999, 2004 and 2009, students participated in lawsuits involving the right to vote.*

election takes place.

On November 6, Bard provided Margolis with transportation to the court in Poughkeepsie. After waiting for about an hour, she presented her case. The judge, who Margolis described as "very supportive," signed a form so she could vote, and she submitted her ballot in the general election on Nov. 6.

Hans Kern, a junior, also received an email from the CCE that his registration was not received. The explanation he was offered was that he did not include his dorm name and room number on his registration form.

This new constraint in voter registration was put in place by Dutchess County Board of Elections (BOE) Republican Commissioner Erik Haight. It raised questions regarding what information is needed in order to vote, and whether students are being targeted.

"Voters are made 'inactive' for a variety of reasons," Haight said. "I would not be able to comment without a particular circumstance since a voter is made inactive on a case by case basis."

that encountered difficulties registering to vote.

"We found that something was fishy there," said sophomore Jonian Rafti, intern at the CCE.

Haight is credited with the policy that asked for dorm names and room numbers. "Haight is challenging hundreds of voters," Fran Knapp, BOE Democratic Commissioner, said. "He basically makes up his own rules as he goes along."

Marist senior Daniel Torres, who was involved in bringing the lawsuit to court, found that non-student citizens in similar living situations did not have to include room numbers. "94 percent of seniors in senior housing developments didn't have to have extra info," Torres said.

Because of this, Torres concluded that students were being targeted. "There are two very close congressional races in the area," he said. "It's very conceivable that college campuses could be what sways the vote."

"College students are targeted because they tend to be more liberal," Knapp said.

Affairs and Civic Engagement.

Two Bard professors, Omar Encarnación and Dimitri Papadimitriou, also found their names had been removed from the list. Papadimitriou voted via provisional ballot, while Encarnación argued his case in Poughkeepsie and was granted the right to vote on a machine.

Neither voting via affidavit ballot nor appearing in court was an appealing option for voters experiencing this issue. Because affidavit ballots can be rejected due even the smallest mistake, Becker said the acceptance rate for affidavit ballots is less than 80 percent.

"If one thing is wrong, they discount the whole thing," Rafti said.

Margolis said Encarnación hypothesized that the purging of voters might have been related to foreign-sounding names, while Becker said that residents of Bard campus were targeted—Encarnación and Papadimitriou both live on campus.

"Or maybe it's random," Margolis said.



Several Dutchess County voters, including Bard students, encountered difficulties registering to vote. Above, Dylan Casidy votes in Barrytown, NY.

## HISTORY – VOTERS IN DISTRICT 5

This is not a new problem in Dutchess County. Students have encountered difficulties voting for years; in 1999, 2004 and 2009, students incorporated legal action.

In 1999, Bard and Vassar students threatened a lawsuit against the BOE. A committee appointed by the county legislature resolved to “encourage the franchise among students” to vote where they live and study.

“Students had tremendous challenges being able to vote here,” said Becker of past years. He said the last serious problems were in 2009, and that challenges in subsequent years have been “periodic.”

In 2009, some students had difficulty at the polls due to intimidation and a “poorly written legal decision,” according to the CCE’s blog on voting, [election.bard.edu](http://election.bard.edu). In this instance, students affected were required to vote through affidavit ballot.

“It’s unfair—it’s been happening every four years for a long time,” Rafti said. “It doesn’t just happen here. It’s happened all around the country.”

But Knapp questions why student voting rights continue to be challenged. “It’s well-settled case law that students can vote in New York state,” she said, “so this should not be an issue.”

Torres said that students are thought of as liberal voters, and so they are targeted in instances of a close race.

“If all 2000 Bard students registered to vote in Dutchess County,” said Erin Cannan, Dean of Student Affairs and Associate Director of Center for Civic Engagement, “you could swing an election, especially the local elections.”

Becker urges students to be responsible about registering. “The assumption should be that people live where they say they live,”

*Becker estimates that over 400 students voted at the polls in Barrytown, and countless more voted at other polling stations or by absentee ballot.*

he said. “If you move, you should re-register.”

### THE BIG DAY

On Election Day, Becker estimates that over 400 students voted at the polls in Barrytown, a number he called “good,” considering that other students voted at other polling stations or by absentee ballot.

“We had three administrators at polling sites as poll watchers but we also had issues in Tivoli where we didn’t have poll watchers. There was [a challenge] by 9:30 in the morning,” Rafti said.

Before the election, Knapp warned of Republicans that might come to the polls and try to sway the vote. “On Election Day,” she said, “be mindful that Republicans could challenge students in line to vote. You’re going to find more poll watchers, you’re going to find them being more aggressive.”

According to the “Poll Watcher’s Guide” published by the BOE, poll watchers are designated by organizations that have candidates on the ballot or political commitments. “To ensure fair and honest elections,” it reads, “New York State law provides for appointing poll watchers to observe voting at

the polls.”

Becker, who spent much of Election Day at the polls in Barrytown, was involved in an altercation—BOE Machine Coordinator Lori Patricola asked him to leave so that he wouldn’t interfere with the voting process.

“We were assisting. We were doing the job that the BOE should have done,” Becker said. “The BOE needs a better process. It’s a no-brainer.” He said the poll workers had no list of inactive voters in order to aid those turned away on Election Day for unforeseen reasons, despite the fact that it was available through public record.

At the polls in Barrytown, 772 people voted on machine and 60 filled out an affidavit ballot, according to Becker.

### THE RESULTS ARE IN

Margolis’ and Kern’s stories end happily for them; both were able to vote, and both helped start a dialogue regarding who should vote and where.

“The reason I think it’s important to vote is because it’s the extent of our political power in this democracy,” Kern said, “and you might as well exercise that.”

The history of suppression of student voter rights in Dutchess County, though, shows that not everyone is on point with Kern. His was only one of several lawsuits regarding college students’ ability to vote.

But for Cannan, the importance of student voting is obvious. “That’s not a requirement, to say that you have to live in a place for four years before you can vote there legitimately,” she said. “You’re here for four years; it’s your primary residence for this time. It’s a way to be more integrated into the community. To have a voice. That’s what voting is about.”

## THE VERDICT

### PITCHER V. DUTCHESS COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

S.D.N.Y., Case No. 12 CV 8017  
(direct)

Date filed: October 31, 2012

Date heard in court: Monday,  
November 5

Plaintiffs: Dylan Pitcher, Alexis  
Roe, Hans Daniel Rosso Kern and  
Michael Johnson

Defendants: Dutchess County  
Board of Elections, Erik J. Haight  
and Frances A. Knapp

Organizations involved: NYCLU,  
Lowenstein Sandler PC

Case number: 7:2012cv08017

Filed: October 31, 2012

Court: New York Southern District  
Court

Office: White Plains

County: Dutchess

Judge: Kenneth M. Karas

Nature of Suit: Civil Rights - Voting  
Cause: 42:1983 (Civil action for  
deprivation of rights)

Jurisdiction: Federal Question

Jury Demanded By: None

**Preliminary Injunction:** students from the Culinary Institute of America, Bard College, and Marist College against the Dutchess County Board of Elections for their being rejected for failure to include dormitory name and/or number.

**Requests of the case:** to deem unconstitutional the practice of denying college students the right to vote because of a lack of a dorm name or room number, to immediately act to ensure that students would be able to vote in the Nov. 6 general election.

**Verdict:** Judge Karas ordered the Board of Elections to register students immediately who had previously been denied and to send supplemental election books to polling sites by 6 am Election Day so those affected could cast ballots.





photo by rebecca swanberg

## SHIPPING CONTAINER SLATED TO HOUSE BARD'S NEW MEDIA LAB

BY ANNA MARIA SIČENICA

In a world of overpopulation and natural disasters such as the recent Hurricane Sandy, the idea of what constitutes a building in the 21st century has dramatically shifted. Limited space, tight budgets, and an emphasis on environmental consciousness now shape the standards buildings must meet.

With these criteria in mind, Bard College's Jeff Katz, Dean of Information Services and Director of Libraries, and Leslie Melvin, Manager of Academic Technology Services, have found a radical way to create an affordable space through the use of shipping containers. Seeing the need for a general digital media lab for a long time, they have successfully obtained a budget and the interest of architect Adam Kalkin to help create a new Bard space.

Kalkin, a graduate of nearby Vassar College, has already created a number of buildings using shipping containers—including his own house. In an interview with CNN, Kalkin cited his previous project, called the Quik House. He used five shipping containers and created a house with an area of 2,000 square feet costing around \$150,000 to \$175,000. Working within similar budget constraints, Katz

imagines a similarly sized building at Bard, "about [a] 1,300 square foot" and using "three or four shipping containers" although this may change depending on Kalkin's vision.

The idea will be to combine student input with Kalkin's vision and create a pre-designed shipping container (interior and exterior) that can easily be transported to Bard and placed in the center of campus. The recently torn down Annandale House has opened up space that will not only provide a central location for the building, but also allow for its use of utilities already in place.

In why the place of Annandale House is a good spot for the new media lab, Katz says he "doesn't want to have to use any of this [grant] money to run electric, fiber optic cable, and plumbing to another place on campus." Additionally, this repurposing of old utilities helps to fulfill one of the many aims of this building—to conserve natural resources and focus on being energy efficient.

On the student government page on Facebook, Cara Black claims that the space Annandale House previously took would be better utilized for a student

space. And she argues for the media lab to be placed on North Campus. However, this idea has just been proposed as opposed to Katz's long time wish to create a media space. The funding of this shipping container "media lab" building been given by the Alden Trust—who also funded the RKC. According to the application guidelines for colleges and universities on the George I. Alden Trust website, their money should be used for the "support for classrooms, libraries and laboratories as well as for the acquisition of scientific and technological equipment and infrastructure." Therefore, these donations were based on the premise that their money will be used for a media lab, not a student space per se.

Both in planning for and using the building upon completion, this space won't be program-specific. Katz hopes students from every discipline get involved and that the building is not the hallmark of any particular program.

Students interested in the anthropology of space and place—how people gather, and how they want to gather—or students interested in film, cyber graphics, and experimental human ties will all find a

flexible multimedia lab of real value. With a "vanilla" interior and adaptable walls, the space can be transformed into a space for multiple purposes based on the needs of the students, allowing for it to be continually repurposed.

Katz gives freedom to future needs by allowing for adaptability.

"It's very likely that in five or 10 years the use of it is completely different because we don't need this anymore," said Katz. "People can do everything they want to do. The process itself could also prove invaluable to generating practical opportunity on campus"

While Bard students are increasingly engaged in the world, this project could foster engagement within the Bard community itself. The politics, anthropology, and science of constructing a college building will allow students who are looking for real experience to take on a material and concrete project, as opposed to a simply theoretical one. There will soon be an announcement for a series of workshops in the spring for students who wish to get involved.

# BARD CONTRIBUTES TO POST-SANDY NYC RECOVERY

BY LEELA KHANNA

photo via yasho singh



In the wake of Hurricane Sandy's devastating impact in parts of the Northeast, several Bard Emergency Medical Technicians have begun to take initiative to contribute to the massive relief efforts needed to help the thousands affected by the storm.

"I went down right after the storm hit," Rixey Browning, a senior at Bard said. "I was involved with Occupy Wall Street in the past, and I noticed that they were organizing a relief effort."

Since then, Browning has made numerous trips down to parts of New York City to help with the volunteer work. As a trained Emergency Medical Technician and a member of the National Street Medic Community, Browning specifically focused on helping survivors with their medication and other health issues they may be struggling with.

Browning realized within her first visit that federal relief efforts were not effectively providing aid to the impacted communities. Instead, it was Occupy Wall Street's volunteers that were providing the majority of groundwork support.

"We saw that Occupy is actually organizing a great community relief effort and they seem to be the main organization, not the Red Cross, in giving better aid," said Browning. "We've had FEMA and

the National Guard come up to us and ask us what they should do or what the people need."

Seeing the conditions many people were facing, Browning decided to tap into the resources at Bard to organize a larger Bard community relief effort. With her friend, sophomore Allie Shyer, Browning organized the group Bard2NYC, a relief effort between Bard and the communities of New York most affected by the storm.

"Bard has a lot of connections to New York City in terms of programs and drawing a lot of students from the New York City area but we didn't have anything in terms of Sandy relief," Browning said. "Our student body has a lot to offer and we can wrangle everyone's resources together and add to the efforts."

Bard2NYC aims to establish partnerships with other Bard communities in the City such as Bard Early High School to provide relief aid to communities. Among the communities that have asked for Bard's help is a Synagogue in Long Island owned by a Bard student's family that suffered damaged by the storm. Bard2NYC is currently working to get enough funding from the TLS Project and Center for Civic Engagement to help fund transportation of Bard students down to communities that have been particularly

been hit hard such as the Rockaways, Red Hook in Brooklyn, and Breezy Point in the Queens.

"We have all these great ideas floating around but we don't have the funding," Browning said. "Right now what I've been doing is collecting donations from donation boxes around campus and driving them down myself."

Browning hopes that more Bard students will become part of the relief effort and that, through additional funding, Bard could take down donations and students each weekend to help with on-ground relief efforts.

Another student involved in Sandy relief efforts is senior Will Sanna, who organized a day-trip to the City in early November with a group of Bard EMT's.

"There was a big cry for helping out New York after the hurricane hit," Sanna said. "We kind of wanted to chip in in some way."

Sanna and seven other students went down to the Lower East Side of Manhattan and volunteered at the Bowery Street Mission, a soup kitchen that was helping distribute food to families impacted by the hurricane. The group of Bard students helped unload and organize the food supplies at the center.

# BARD TUNES IN WITH NEW ANTENNA

BY LUCAS OPGENORTH

Bard put up a radio antenna Oct. 26 to begin broadcasting at 88.1 FM, under the call letters WLHV (LVH standing for Lower Hudson Valley). The antenna was hung on an existing telecommunication tower in Taghkanic, a small town in Columbia County, about 20 miles northeast of Annandale. Currently the antenna is re-transmitting programming from WHDD Robin Hood Radio, a National Public Radio station based out of Sharon, Connecticut.

As the Free Press reported in our April 2012 issue, Bard received a non-commercial construction permit from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). This license was secured by Danielle Riou, Research Associate for the Human Rights Project. Since acquiring the licence, she has been working on a volunteer-basis to bring the station to fruition.

Last year, Bard's push for an FM station fell short when organizers were unable to secure the funding necessary to bring the project to life. Seeing that the Bard had a permit, but no station, Robin Hood Radio contacted the organizers for a potential collaboration. Since March, the two parties have been discussing how to make the project work. According to Riou, the collaboration has made an FM radio project economically feasible for the college, seeing as it is not responsible for funding the operation and maintenance of a radio station.

"While it became apparent back in February that

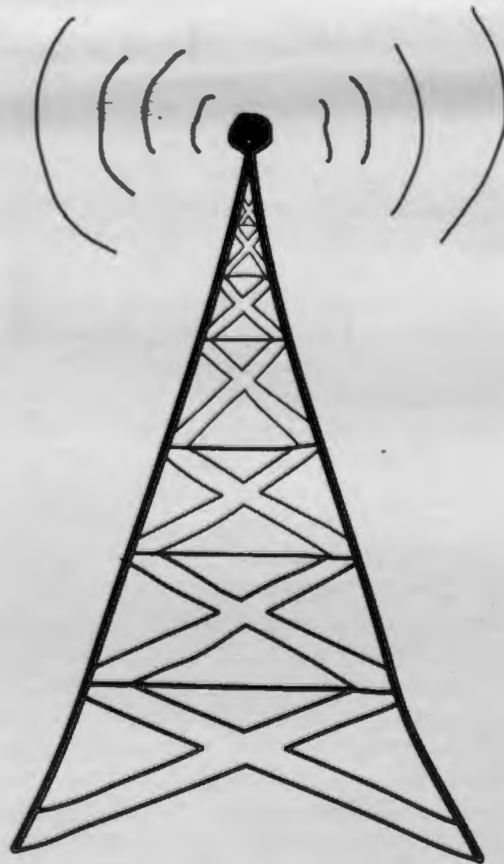


illustration by austen hinkley

the funding goal for the initial iteration for a 24/7 Bard Radio station fell short, this new arrangement with regional NPR affiliate WHDD gives Bard the opportunity to provide programs for broadcast over WHDD/

WLHV," Riou said.

Robin Hood Radio proclaims itself to be the "smallest NPR station in the nation" and produces most of its programming locally.

Though at the moment there is no Bard-produced material being broadcast on WLHV, Riou said that there are tentative plans for the college to supply programming at some point in the future.

Senior Shannon Thomas, Co-Programming Director of WXBC, Bard's student-run online radio station, is excited about the project. The WXBC staff was told about the new station about two weeks ago and is planning to drive to see the antenna soon. Thomas hopes that WLHV might present opportunities for internships and the expansion of WXBC's interaction with the greater community that surrounds Bard.

She also said that the station is potentially interested in tapping Bard for high-profile lectures and concerts that take place on campus, particularly at the Fisher Center.

"One of the primary goals of bringing a new FM station to Bard was to create a platform for Bard programming to be developed and broadcast to a regional listening audience and to promote local programming in general," Riou said.

Additionally, the project brings another NPR station to the area, in addition to Albany-based WAMC, which has a transmitter in Kingston.

The Constitution of the Student Association of Bard College states that Student Senate elections are to be held through campus-wide elections, decided by the sheer number of votes, with no runoff unless there is an exact tie. It goes on to detail the election of the Speaker of the Student Senate and how students can run for Student Senate.

The problem is that the Student Senate does not currently exist.

Dangling clauses such as this are spurring efforts to make the constitution clearer and better matched to the student body's needs.

"The people who wrote [the constitution] were obviously from a different time, so it doesn't make sense with the current size of the student body and our changing needs as an organization," said Cara Black, President of the Student Association Government.

Alex D'Alisera, sophomore and Chair of the Peer Review Board (PRB), is spearheading an endeavor to rewrite the constitution.

"We're going to form a working group to rewrite constitution basically from scratch," D'Alisera said.

Eighteen students met for the first Constitution Review Meeting Nov. 7. They identified problems with the current constitution, set goals and made rules for how the group should function.

D'Alisera made a list on the blackboard entitled, "Things to Fix," which included addressing elec-

"It's your individual responsibility to read the student constitution, but unless it's made relevant by the student association, then students aren't going to take the time to learn about it," said senior Dan Gettinger, a member of the working group.

"You can't have a government without a constitution. It's the same as that you can't have a revolution without a plan," said currently unenrolled student and group member Sagiv Galai.

The current constitution is based on a draft, according to the note on the Dean of Student Affairs page, from February 1992. However, the former editor of the now-defunct Bard Observer, Michael Poirier, said, "I enrolled in September of 1991, and by the time I got there the constitution and politics of the Central Committee and the Student Forum seemed very well established. I definitely don't remember a whole constitution being drafted in 1992."

Regardless of the current constitution's origins, the student government has followed many incarnations of the constitution over the years. In her senior year, Kit Ellenbogen '52 was part of a small group that drafted a new constitution. She and her fellow drafters received credit for the course, spending spring semester studying community governments at similar colleges, including Sarah Lawrence and Bennington.

"I remember thinking, what am I going to do when I get out of here, telling people that I took a

# REWRITING BARD

## STUDENT CONSTITUTION UNDER SCRUTINY

BY NAOMI LACHANCE

tion procedure, clarity of language, and relevance to student life.

After thorough debating, the group decided on several procedures: items are passed by a 2/3 majority, D'Alisera will serve as facilitator at meetings and, effective Nov. 28, students must attend the previous meeting in order to become a voting member.

In an effort for transparency, students can learn about the group's progress by visiting <http://student.bard.edu/constitution/>. "If we're having conversations about constitutions, we should probably make it 'googleable,'" said junior Isabel Filkins, who will be in charge of maintaining the website.

Redundancies and discrepancies have long been an issue with the constitution.

"Unfortunately," said Julie Silverstein, Director of Student Activities and Bertelsmann Campus Center, "the current document has many flaws and contradictions within it, so it will be a large project to read through carefully and fix."

D'Alisera said he is interested in making sure the student body is involved in the rewriting. "There will be no absolutist, authoritarian change," he said, adding that the focus would be on clarity.

The issue of student awareness of the constitution was brought to light last spring when a previously overlooked section of the constitution left the outcome of the presidential election in question.

course where we wrote a constitution?" she said in an interview with Helene Tieger, college archivist.

"It turned out that I learned more writing that constitution, about democracy and law and what makes for a good constitution, than from any course practically that I took," Ellenbogen said. The course inspired Ellenbogen to attend law school; she practiced law for two decades.

Past versions of the constitution included rules about voting procedures, roles of committees, and even, in the 1942 constitution, protocol for opposite sexes visiting in dorms. The version in 1971 was five pages long and defined roles, including those of the Student Senate.

The updated constitution will most likely contain remnants of its predecessors. The current government, for example, is based on the Soviet central committee. "That's kind of fun. We can keep that," said D'Alisera with a laugh.

For their next meeting, the members of the group will read the current constitution and each create a rough draft to present for discussion. After thoroughly investigate and debate aspects of the document, they intend to have a draft to present to the student body by March 6 next year, after the approximately 14 meetings. The group is open to all students and plans to meet at 7:15 on Wednesdays in Olin 204.

"It's a fucking constitutional convention," said Galai. "It's going to be interesting."



photo by will anderson

## CAN BARD NOLA SAVE THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL?

BY JP LAWRENCE

It was a storm that brought the Bard high schools to New Orleans. Stephen Tremaine, a native of the city, was an undergraduate at Bard College when Hurricane Katrina, with all its rage and winds, struck the city in 2005.

And Tremaine had an idea.

Today, that idea has become two Bard early college high schools in New Orleans – one downtown, and one in the Second Ward.

The goal is to take a Bard liberal arts education, with both its resources and its expectations, and give it to students who typically wouldn't have access to them, said Tremaine, who is now Executive Director of Bard Early College in New Orleans.

In New Orleans, Ph.D. faculty lead tuition-free classes based on Bard's First-Year Seminar and Language and Thinking seminar. There are rounds and rounds of free writing, informal group work, and a heavy workload of Nietzsche, Plato, and Susan Sontag.

The program, which is funded by the Patrick F. Taylor Foundation and

other philanthropic groups, draws from Bard's experience with Bard College, Simon's Rock and the New York and Newark Early High Schools.

Classes focus on the Bard style of thinking, and not on standardized tests and mechanical repetition, Tremaine said. Admission is not based on test scores, but on interviews. Students read texts at the same level with the same expectations as Bard College first-years.

"We want students to understand writing as a powerful force in the world around them, before we talk to them about why a semi-colon matters," Tremaine said.

Metrics that measure school performance have traditionally not been kind to Louisiana's public schools. In 2011, 44 percent of Louisiana's public schools received a failing grade, and within the state, New Orleans schools ranked 60 out of 69 districts.

A massive overhaul of the city's educational system in the wake of Hurricane Katrina has led to better rankings, but for many students in New Orleans, the Bard program is a welcome change from the "apathy" of public schools.

"In my high school, education isn't really taken seriously by some teachers – not all, but even some students," said Wesley Alexander, a graduate of the Bard New Orleans schools. "It's like this whole apathy that affects everyone"

Alexander began Bard-taught AP English classes in 11th grade. He officially enrolled in the program in his 12th grade because he liked the challenge of taking college classes.

Tareain King, also a graduate of the program, said the Bard program was the only reason she went to school during her senior year. Students take the Bard courses, which are offered junior and senior year, concurrently with normal high school classes. The differences, King said, were stark.

"The public high school was so bad that basically my workload was Bard... I really didn't have

concern for the well being of our public education system" and "a real belief that we're not doing the right thing by the younger adolescents in the nation."

The solution to America's sickly education system, Botstein has long advocated, would be more schools like the New York and Newark Early High Schools, Bard-affiliated schools where students effectively complete two years of college while in high school.

The New Orleans schools, while a different model, are a continuation of Botstein's idea that in terms of experiencing Foucault, more and earlier is better.

The fact that so many New Orleans students are interested in the program, Tremaine said, refutes the narrative that low-income students in low-performing schools want to avoid the hard work of learning.

In fact, it was all those hours of reading densely that converted King to the Bard way. She jumped at the change to come to Bard for college, but before she left,

*Botstein's idea is that more and earlier is better, and that the solution for America's high schools is more Foucault.*

anything to do in the other classes," King said. "So it's easy to see what's Bard, and what's not Bard."

Alexander and King, now both first-years at Bard College, both credit the Bard curriculum for preparing them for college.

"From ninth to eleventh, if I would have had regular English –" King paused, and then let out a long sigh, "I would be so overwhelmed. I would not be prepared for this, at all."

President of the College Leon Botstein has long been a vocal critic of the American system over the years. His 1997 book, "Jefferson's Children: Education and the Promise of American Culture," argued for overhauling the system so students graduate high school at 16.

High schools using the current test-based and standardized system "produce graduates who do not write well enough, have limited reasoning skills, are unable to use the tools of mathematics and whose command of science is far inferior to that of their counterparts in other nations," he wrote in a 2009 New York Times piece.

The reasons Bard is in the high school business, Botstein told the Free Press, is out of "civic

she and other members of the program became schoolyard evangelists for the program – what it is, what it does.

"What about the students who aren't taking the course?" King said. "Now that I'm in college and I'm seeing what college is about first hand, that's scary, how are they going to do in college? I can speak for the people in my high school, because I know what it's like. They are not prepared at all, so it's kind of devastating, because you want the best for people."

Tremaine's idea is now part of the network of Bard schools.

"These are your classmates," Tremaine said. "You are part of the same intellectual community as our students in New Orleans, as the Bard students in the early colleges in New York City, as the Simon's Rockers, as the students enrolled in the new Bard Al-Quds honors college, as the students enrolled in the Bard Prison initiative."

"And that's something," Tremaine said, "that really means something to Bard."

# AMERICANS ARE WRONG

BY GLEB VINOKUROV

Have you ever thought about what you would do if you had a chance to meet the American President? What would you ask him? I have just thought about this, and now I can see it pretty clear – I don't really want to see him. I don't really want to ask him. Because he'll never tell me the actual reality that exists, anyway.

This lack of truthfulness is similar with every other other president in the world. So I would prefer to talk not to the U.S. President, but to the U.S. nation.

Let me tell you about that strange feeling we had in Russia when conflict between our country and Georgia began in 2008, and it was all blamed on Russia by U.S. and some European countries' mass media.

It was weird, that even though our army may have only meant to help the people of Tskhinvali in South Ossetia, whose homes had been set to ruins, we were called "aggressors."

It's really strange to feel so much hate from all over the world. To have no chance to say "No! We are NOT aggressors!" To have nobody really believe you. On the Internet, you can tell everybody

the truth, but does anybody listen to you? No, because there's a lie on TV, in newspapers, everywhere. It's such a "Cassandra feeling" – to know the truth which no person would ever trust.

Sometimes, I'm not even sure that in Russia we actually know all the truth. Have you ever thought that maybe everything you are told by media and your government is a total lie, whatever country you live in? I personally try not to give this too much thought, otherwise it's easy to go insane.

Like all this mess with "Pussy Riot." The whole world is discussing their case. Almost everybody in Russia has an opinion about this. Recently it seems like nothing else is happening in the country but the Pussy Riot case. Yes, it is surely an important question of personal and social freedom, but sometimes it feels like behind these smoky clouds of vocal judgment and injustice, some secret and even worse affairs of our government are secretly done.

But we are too much into mass media to notice.

# THE DIFFERENCE IN REACTIONS

BY ALENKA MUSLIMOVA

It was the most resounding judicial decision in the recent history of Russia. On August 17, Pussy Riot was sentenced to imprisonment for two years for their protest in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow. But their sentencing is not the end of the story. It is just the start.

All around the world, people respect and support the girls of Pussy Riot.

The Russian authorities do not, and they have their methods of solving the Pussy Riot problem.

For our country, especially for young people 18 to 30 years old, Pussy Riot's message of doubting the government and the role of church today is resonating.

They are fighters, dreamers and they are young. They did not think about what could happen to them, but what could happen if they kept silent.

They do not want to be popular like pop stars, but the Russian authorities helped them to become famous.

Of course, the Russian authorities are not really afraid of Pussy Riot and their "cruel and illegal" actions, they are afraid of the Russian people's reaction. That is why fear is used as the way to regulate frame of mind and make the people keep silent.

Right now, we are sitting in front of our TVs and computer screens, but we are ready to make posters, write letters, unite people in social networks and find everybody who is

ready to stand up and have a voice about the real situation.

Pussy Riot's main weapon is modern art - their song, pictures and speeches, their desire for making us become brave and creative, independent and strong.

That is why the majority of pop stars from all countries that are not Russia support the girls: they see how art can influence people, change their mind and make everybody think, speak and appreciate the role of art in modern world, even in political life.

Without a doubt, Pussy Riot's actions have influenced our society, but it is extremely difficult to say they have changed minds. For example, despite open demonstrations and outrage over Pussy Riot, people here seem to be still afraid of something. Nothing has been done.

At Smolny, our faculty encourages the possibility of choosing your own way, of saying everything you think and everything you are concerned about. We might not look like Pussy Riot, but in some ways, we have the same way of thinking.

We have a lot to say and a lot to change, but we think there is no real possibility of change in Russia, and there are many facts which can not afford to continue. We must deal with our history and our relations with and to the government, Church and modern art.

# C2C OPENS UP DIALOGUE

BY LEELA KHANNA

From 2008 to 2010, Dr. Eban Goodstein, Director of Bard Center for Environmental Policy and Dean of the Bard MBA in Sustainability, organized a series of talks throughout a network of 2500 colleges and universities about viable global warming solutions.

Through these national conversations emerged the C2C Sustainability Leadership Workshop, a program for students active in environmental sustainability who want the skills to become involved in politics and entrepreneurship in order to make an impact.

C2C stands for Campus to Congress, to Capitol, to City Hall, and also for Campus to Corporation. Bard will be hosting its second C2C Sustainability Workshop this fall from Nov. 30 to Dec. 2 on campus.

"Young people should be the voice of change," Jess Scott, C2C Workshops

Facilitator said. "What we're advocating is basic leadership skills for people who are excited about sustainability and who want to pursue careers in green business or green politics."

As C2C Fellows, participants of the workshops engage in a series of trainings that aim to prepare young people with the skills necessary to run for positions in political office or begin green business start-ups.

Over the past year, Bard CEP has hosted a series of C2C Workshops at college campuses around the country, promoting the idea of students becoming the catalysts of environmental change.

"The students are getting a chance to build these connections regionally and talk to other excited students while at the same time being connected to the nationwide network of C2C Fellows," Scott said.

The workshop will provide students with

an introduction to basic leadership skills, such as fundraising, entrepreneurship, resource management, public speaking. It will also introduce participants to successful, young green entrepreneurs and leaders. The workshop at Bard will host 26-year-old Nate Kimball, who works for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as a developer of sustainability plans for New York area airports.

"We are hoping that by 2018, 25 to 50 of our workshop attendees are running for Congress, City Hall, City Board, or Mayor on a green ticket, or are leading their own green businesses," Scott said.

Much of the workshop also focuses on entrepreneurship in green energy, and supporting the growing movement of a larger demand for businesses that promote sustainability along with profitability.

"Solving many of the world's most

pressing problems environmental and social problems can only be achieved if the solutions are profitable, and therefore able to rapidly achieve global scale," said Dr. Goodstein, in his recent article "Three Ways to Fix the Climate in 2012 and Beyond."

By approaching both politics and business through a sustainability lens, the C2C Workshop hopes to create a large network of student leaders that will begin to create global environmental consciousness and change.

"One defining feature that brings our generation together is what we're going to do about global warming," Scott said. "Irreversibly the world is warming, and what our generation does in the next 30 years defines what global warming will look like."

# SANDY

*photos by J.p. Lawrence*

Hurricane Sandy made landfall Oct. 29, but Bard College avoided the devastation the "Frankenstorm" inflicted upon other regions on the East Coast.

The storm resulted in "no damage, no flooding and no injuries on campus," Ken Cooper, Director of Security, said.

"We were prepared for a major disaster. We avoided it, but I believe we could have handled it," Cooper said. "You always err on the side of caution."

Reports of a massive storm led to a Friday afternoon meeting with Bard administrators and local officials, Cooper said. Administrators then worked with local towns to prepare the college for possible disasters.

On Monday, Kline Commons remained open for dinner. President Leon Botstein, trapped in Europe, sent emails of support while Michelle Dominy, Dean of the College, slept on Botstein's couch after the long day. Emails popped into students' inboxes informing them of decisions such as the closing shuttles on Monday afternoon, the calling of a "shelter-in," the canceling of classes on Monday and the resumption of classes on Tuesday.

"When you get all these reports, nobody panicked," Cooper said. "Everybody said, 'we've got a storm - we know what we can do.'"

Students, meanwhile, spent their Monday in their dorms rooms due to the "shelter-in," which closed all public

buildings on campus and encouraged all students to remain indoors. The relative quiet of the storm at Bard led to low-key nights for students.

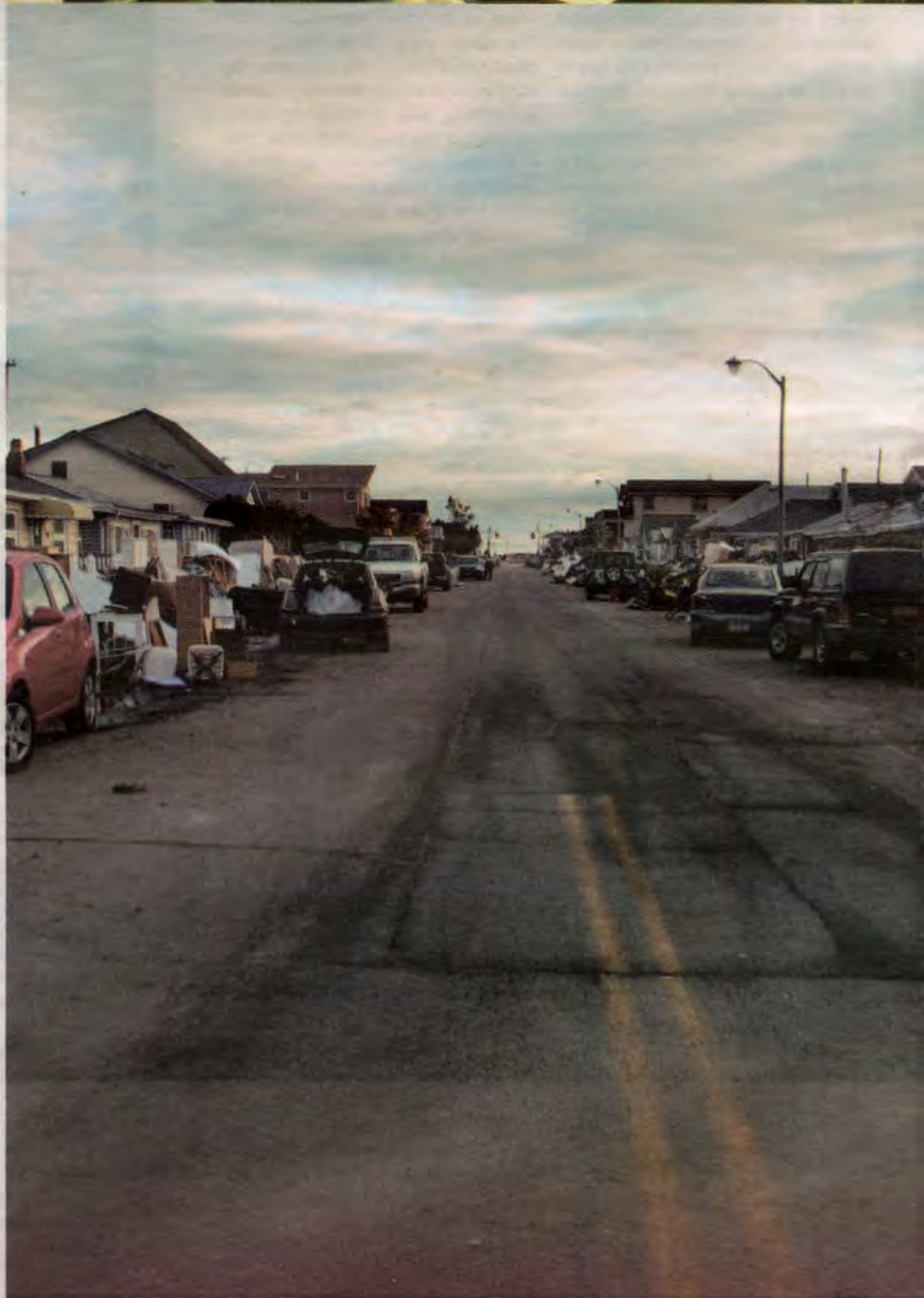
Sandy made its effects known elsewhere along the East Coast. As of press time, the U.S. Energy Department reports that more than 160,000 customers in 10 states were still without power. The storm claimed at least 113 lives in the United States, bringing the total number of deaths to at least 193. The damage, shown on Youtube and Facebook and Instagram, hit home for students with ties to the affected areas.

Early Tuesday morning, for instance, Alyssa Freeman, a sophomore, said she found out her high school was completely flooded. "In general, hearing stories from friends and seeing pictures about it was definitely really frightening," Freeman said, "because going home, I know it won't be the same."

Another sophomore, Sally Chakwin, said her family's home in Norwalk, Conn., was littered with strewn boats and downed power lines and sewage.

Cooper, who was watching the weather reports as the storm curled its way around Bard, remarked how lucky the college was to avoid any damage.

"All this stuff was happening around us," Cooper said. "I personally think we scared off Mother Nature, and she left us alone."







## J.p. Lawrence, '14

### *Sonnet to Hurricane Sandy*

Breezy Point in Queens, N.Y. A quaint Long Island beach town. Firefighters, policemen and lawyers spend their summers here. Small beach houses, all huddled next to each other.

I was at Breezy Point one week after Hurricane Sandy hit. I saw homes, collapsed on the beach. Telephone poles bent over. Yards flooded. Flags that flew limply in the ocean breeze. A group of U.S. Marines unspooled hoses and pumped water from the houses out into the sea.

The night that Hurricane Sandy hit, a six-alarm fire destroyed much of Breezy Point. When the fire trucks came, they couldn't get to the fire, due to the water.

I walked the streets, filled with couches, waterlogged and ruined. People's lives on

the pavement, waiting to be picked up. But the garbage trucks had not come. They were overwhelmed.

In nearby Rockaway, first responders set up a distribution point. Families would drive up, like they would to a drive-through burger joint, and pick up cases of food and water.

I ran into the captain of the soldiers giving away food. Residents asked his soldiers to see if their homes were okay or to check up on shut-ins or to drive to the nearest pharmacy to fill prescriptions. He wasn't necessarily told to do these missions, but they were just "stuff you would do for regular neighbors," he said.

I took a photo of a woman picking up water. "Ah! It's like I'm a refugee," she said.

The old Army officer was mad. The

Marines were hungry for publicity, he said, when they stormed Breezy Point. They didn't follow the rules. The Army captain, too, meant well, he said, but he needed to follow the rules, too.

Everyone in Breezy Point told me to talk to Brian Doyle. Doyle was a 19-year-old community college student and bartender. The night Hurricane Sandy hit, Doyle and four others took two boats and headed into the storm.

There was a report of a woman trapped, Doyle said. The water came in so fast. Their fire truck wouldn't work. Six feet of water. Crazy winds and waves. They picked up a man and his dog. A family. More families. They looked for flashlights in windows.

Doyle's father, in particular, wanted me to hear Brian's story.

The fire grew and grew. Smoke everywhere. One house in imminent danger. They kicked the door in. Then the wind changed and smoke filled the safe zone where they had been moving all those rescued. Embers flying. The fire trucks, miraculously, started in the midst of the storm. Everyone who could loaded onto trucks. They escaped back to the firehouse.

Hurricane Sandy was messy. Rubbish and tree branches and sand everywhere. "This doesn't look like America," I thought. "America's usually so clean."

At Breezy Point, the storm made a mess of some stories and left new ones in its place. Houses ruined. Lives changed. But people craft new mythologies.



## Francine Prose, Distinguished Writer in Residence

Ten, maybe fifteen years ago, flipping through the TV channels, I paused to watch a CSpan broadcast of a US Senate hearing. Usually, I find those programs at once boring and depressing, precisely not what I'm looking for when, at the end of the day, I want distraction and entertainment. But this time I was fascinated to watch a climatologist, pointing to a map of the world's oceans marked up with what resembled a swarm of angry snails, tell the government committee that, thanks to global warming and climate change, tropical storms would continue to grow more frequent, more intense—and more destructive.

This, as I've said, was more than a decade ago. Now, in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, that scientist must be experiencing a very grim and melancholy

version of I-told-you-so. Meanwhile, what I would like to know is: Why do I remember that testimony and the government, it seems, does not? Why have our lawmakers not been encouraged to watch, and to take seriously, the marvelous documentary film, "The Island President," in which the heroic leader of the Maldives Islands contemplates the ocean that has eroded and partly covered what used to be his country's beaches and says, "This is what has happened to us. You are next."

Yesterday, the plane on which I was traveling from the West Coast circled low over the coastline before landing at JFK. You've all seen photographs of the destruction: houses reduced to matchsticks, cars picked up and tossed like a child's discarded toys. When I flew out of JFK, two days

before, I met an elderly couple who'd spent almost a week waiting for a flight to leave New York. In the interim, they'd stayed at a hotel in Queens, where their fellow guests were families whose homes, in Breezy Point, had been obliterated.

We all know that suffering is inevitable, that nature can be violent, and so forth. The misery of others afflicts us with something like grief. But when we feel that some of that suffering might have been avoided, that it could have been avoided, that it was not inevitable, that it was at least partly allowed to happen because of human carelessness and greed, then we may feel—as we may feel now—sorrow mixed with frustration and even rage.

One reason I like teaching at Bard, one reason it cheers me up, is that I feel I am

surrounded by people who are young, energetic, intelligent and generous enough to help those who are suffering now, and perhaps to try and prevent climate change from getting any worse. I would like to think that my children and grandchildren will live in a world in which nature will no longer have to fight back quite so ferociously against what we humans are doing to it, a world in which the beauty and power of the sea and the water and the wind will not have become our enemies, monsters out of some science-fiction apocalypse, vengeful forces to be universally dreaded and feared. I remember that the scientist on CSpan said that it was not too late, that there was still time to halt the destruction. And I believe, I insist on believing, that there still is.

## Roger Berkowitz, Academic Director, Hannah Arendt Center

I plead guilty to being a New York cynic when it comes to weather disasters. When hurricanes hit, I generally tune out. I know disasters are disruptive and dangerous. I have empathy for those whose lives are ruined or worse. Weather is just not my thing. It has had pitifully little impact on me. A blackout here, an ice storm there. A few earthquakes when I was living in Berkeley, Ca. But never has my life been meaningfully disrupted by a storm. I know I am lucky. I like it that way.

So as the mania about hurricane Sandy was whirling and as Ken Cooper was sending ominous emails, I was most concerned because I was scheduled to speak Monday night at Book Culture, an independent bookstore in Manhattan.

As the frenzy of news and warnings intensified, it quickly became clear that Sandy was not to be denied. On Sunday we canceled the

reading. I went looking for flashlights, batteries, and a portable radio, and found myself searching far and wide, as supplies had already been snatched up. Buying water and dried goods took nearly an hour, with the lines stretching to the back of the store. This is how New Yorkers prepare for a storm. We go shopping.

On the night tropical storm Sandy hit, the Upper West Side was quiet. It barely rained. The wind blew a bit, but not much else happened. Two neighbors came over; I cooked steak and risotto. We opened a well-aged bottle of wine from before most of my Bard students were born and toasted the storm. Then we sat around and intermittently checked Facebook to see what was happening. The devastation was becoming apparent. My parents and my sister each lost electricity. But they were ok.

On Tuesday, as hundreds of thousands of my fellow New Yorkers sat in the dark without

heat, as many others surveyed their waterlogged houses, I drove on dry and empty roads back up to Bard, where I taught my seminar on Hannah Arendt.

"The earth," Arendt writes, "is the quintessence of the human condition." For as long as we humans have existed and amidst untold and often unimaginable changes and transformations, we have lived on this earth. There is no particular reason for this. We may, one day, leave the earth and live on the moon, on mars, or on some new planet that we create or make habitable. But for now, by fate or fortune, this is where we live. We are creatures of the earth.

Tropical storm sandy reminds us of the climactic chanciness of earthly living. It is not a reminder many of us want to hear. Talk has already turned to prevention. Inevitably, technology will be deployed, the oceans will be blocked, the beaches will be secured. We will

engage in a deeply human striving to overcome—or at least mitigate—the basic fact of our earthly condition.

I have nothing against our human rebellion against our all-too-human frailty. It is indeed part of what makes us humans special—our will and ability to remake our world. What I do worry about is our delusion that we might succeed.

No matter how much we spend or how high we build, we cannot and will not make ourselves secure. The greatest danger of our efforts to do so is that we will forever be surprised and disappointed when nature strikes in ways that we simply did not predict or expect. We will insist we can build near the water and remain in our houses in the face of rising waters. And we will then blame government when our confidence is misplaced. That too, however, is human.



## Nora Deligter, '14

A month ago, at a concert that my mother attended alone, a large man fell on her from four rows above. While she didn't break any bones, her small and fragile body was crushed under his weight. Bed ridden and unable to move, she feels paralyzed. In two weeks time, she will be able to take her long walks again and her lungs will no longer feel heavy and pained. It will be as if the accident didn't happen. She lays blame on the monster full moon for her current state.

Now, in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, the city where my mother lives has too become crippled. She says that it is the return of the full moon that has caused the city's stillness. The windows in her bedroom

were shattered, cracked in the middle of night and gone by morning. But it's the first time that there is no need to close them, she says. Because the city is silent. There are no sirens or subways and the tunnels and bridges have been closed. It is hard to think of my mother, brittle and fatigued, lying voiceless in a room meant only for reading or sleeping. But it comforts me to know that now she is less alone. That the city has stopped moving alongside of her.

Over the course of the past week, I too have been feeling something somewhat similar to paralysis. A certain helplessness in regards to the fate of my city. In August 2003, I was forced to watch news of the city's blackout on Italian news channels,

delivered by men with dark gelled hair on fuzzy TV sets that sat in air-conditioned hotel rooms. I was eleven and sad to be missing it.

Last Monday, I spent the day indoors, uselessly charging my laptop in anticipation for something devastating. The weekend before, I had gone to the grocery store to buy two cans of tuna fish and four boxes of soup. I felt prepared. But the storm never ended up fully reaching the Hudson Valley.

After a hurricane, or after any sort of disaster, a sense of community develops. But I felt and still feel like an outsider, left unscathed and separated. I want to explore the streets that have been hit by the hurricane, to wander through the aftermath of

what New York City has endured. But I can't. I am both physically and emotionally removed.

I didn't hear from my mother until late Wednesday evening, two days after the storm had hit Manhattan. The apartment had lost electricity and cell service. But her only concern was that she couldn't take a hot bath. I told her to go to stay somewhere uptown, but she refused, claiming that she had been through much worse. The electricity will be restored by the end of this week, but for now, my mother is content. She says that she is enjoying the pause of rare and empty darkness in a city that usually never sleeps.



# CULTURE

photos by jp lawrence

## WHY THAT GAL SITTING NEXT TO YOU IS OLD(ER)

BY JP LAWRENCE



It's the beginning of a long day.

Joy Sebesta wakes up at 6 a.m. to rouse her son and get him ready for school. At 7:30, she wakes up her two daughters to get them ready for the 8:30 school bus. Somewhere in that hour she makes breakfast and showers.

Then, once her children are off, she heads off to a Math Circle event, prepares Girl Scout activities, and eventually arrives back home in Marlboro, N.Y. There, she helps her children with their homework, does her homework, and falls asleep near midnight.

At some point in the day, the 44-year-old mother of three finds time to work on her senior project at Bard College.

Her life in one word? Insane, she says.

Sebesta is one of a handful of students studying at Bard through the Returning to College Program. The program's aim is to help students who are 25 years or older get their bachelor's degree.

These RTC students, many of whom have not done math or an analytical paper

in decades, come to Bard to get a second chance, to close a chapter of their careers, or to retool their lives.

RTC students sit in the same classes as any other undergraduate student. Bard College requires them to be full-time students with at least one-year of college experience. Most are from the Hudson Valley region, and all live off-campus.

Greg Armbruster, Director of Transfer Admission, meets these students every semester in his office in Hopson Cottage. Usually, Armbruster says, these students know exactly what they want.

"They're at a time in their life that they can devote for education, so now is the time to finally complete the bachelor's degree they've been gnawing for, that they've wanted for a while," he says. "It's sort of like going back in time."

He recalls students such as Aleta Murray, who attended Bard in the 70's, left, became a nurse, and came to Bard to complete her senior project.

Students such as Jeffrey DeAmaro, a New York City chauffeur who wanted to study philosophy.

Students such as Amy Freeman, a marketing director at an Atlanta museum who felt she was in a rut and needed a change.

Students such as Joy Sebesta.

### BACK TO SCHOOL

Sebesta was once a mother with a degree in electrical engineering technology and a job, second-shift, at IBM. The pay was \$600 a week, but after childcare, gas to and from work, she made by with \$40 left over. Most days, the only time she had with her children was the hour before school – not always the most pleasant time, she says.

The other she had with her children was one meal every Friday night, when her husband would bring the children to her work, and everyone would go to a McDonalds or a Wendy's – somewhere they could afford.

And then, 10 years ago, her husband died.

"After that happened, I said that if I could survive that and come through it well, I could do anything," Sebesta says, "and I said I would get my degree in mathematics."

Sebesta enrolled at Dutchess Community College. Two years later, she was at Bard, hoping to become a math teacher, with part of her tuition paid by the RTC program, and the rest paid by student loans.

When she got to Bard, however, Sebesta found that if she wanted her happy ending, she'd have to earn it.

The first semester was hard, with a lot of culture shock, she says. Because of the generation gap, she didn't know if she could have anything in common with her classmates. In addition, she had been used to being at the top of her classes at Dutchess, but classes at Bard were so much harder than at community college. "The level of the classes I was taking increased," she says, "and I just wasn't ready for it."

## NOT A "USER-FRIENDLY" SYSTEM

Many RTC students, Armbruster says, are surprised by the difficulty of going back to college. Armbruster estimates that out of the 15 to 20 students who have entered the program since 2007, only four or five have graduated.

Many students, he says, find it's easy to "get in over their head, academically."

Bard, unlike other colleges that admit returning students, does not offer night classes, weekend classes, or other ways to cater to the needs of returning students.

In addition, due to Bard rules on financial aid, students must take at least three classes to receive financial aid. Because Bard classes are usually during the 9-to-5-work day, that means RTC students have a hard time finding work.

Three classes, plus family and mortgage payments, are too much for many students. Armbruster says that many RTC students have had to make difficult decisions between continuing their education and paying rent.

"We've done the best we can to help adult students, because often times they've had to quit their jobs or they have been laid off, so they're not making a lot of money, if any," Armbruster says.

Amy Freeman, for example, quit her job in Atlanta and showed up at Bard with \$220 in her checking account. She says that despite a high-paying job, she felt she wanted to rise up. She kept seeing that look of surprise when she told people she didn't have a degree. Despite how many books she read, she felt she needed the discipline of college.

"Going from living in a fine 2 bedroom / 2 bath loft in Atlanta and eating out every night to cleaning toilets for your landlady's rental property in exchange for your rent and netting about \$4000 a year is harsh," she writes in a program survey.

"I allowed myself to be an indentured servant so I had a place to live while I went to school," she says, adding, "It was worth it."

The old system, dubbed the Continuing Studies Program, gave returning students the option of taking fewer classes over a

longer period of time, Armbruster says. Students could work and then take night classes out of a special course list just for returning students.

The program changed in 2007 after a partnership with the Bernard Osher Foundation, which gives out grant money to institutions who cater to returning students. The program was reformed and renamed, but in the end, not enough students joined the program, and the Osher grant was not renewed.

What remains is a program that only supports a few students each year, that often places students in a bind financially, and where few who begin graduate.

"This program, for those who have the time, and live close by, and really want to jump in and finish their degree as quickly as possible, this could be the perfect program for them," Armbruster says. "But it's perfect program for a very small slice of eligible candidates. It's not for everyone."

Constraints such as this are why Armbruster makes sure to sit down with each candidate to find their goals and to find it it's really the right program for them.

"I want them to clearly know what they're getting into," Armbruster says. "Regrettably, I'd have to say it's not a real user-friendly system."

## THE GENERATION EXCHANGE

Mariel Fiori earned her Bard degree under the Continuing Studies Program at the age of 27. She was a brand new immigrant from Argentina, but the biggest language barrier, she says, was in relating to her younger peers.

"Because I studied academics, formal English, in my classes, I didn't have any trouble understanding my professors, but for the first few months of classes, I couldn't understand my colleagues," Fiori says. "It was impossible to understand teenagers."

Understanding teenagers, and vice versa, is what the program is all about, says Erin Cannan, Dean of Student Affairs and Associate Director of Center for Civic Engagement. "Any kind of diversity brings



*What remains is a program that only supports a few students each year, that often places students in a bind financially, and where few who begin graduate.*

something," she says. "You can't learn in a vacuum. Having non-traditional students in undergraduate classes – they always push us to think very differently, because they're in a different place in life."

For Fiori, classes on modernism and theater really helped her gain the confidence she needed. After graduating, she was able to go to New York University to get her M.B.A., and today, she runs La Voz, a magazine for Latinos in the Hudson Valley region.

Like Fiori, Sebesta had a hard time relating to her younger classmates. She also has to leave Bard early, to pick up her children from the bus stop. She recalls once coming home late to her children waiting, crying. As other students complained about Kline food, she had to find dinner every night. She felt isolated.

"Bard is an enclave, so to feel a part of the community, it's hard when your life isn't centered," Cannan, who knows Sebesta, says. "When you have to run out because the bus is leaving, you can't stay to engage in campus activities – it's hard."

Her discontent built up and boiled over the first day of her second semester. Sebesta was walking to her car, and she was frustrated. "I was like 'god, I haven't seen anybody I know, I hate this place I'm never coming back,'" she recalls.

Then, she says, a fellow student, Layla Wolfgang, came running up to her. "She

was like, 'Joy, Joy, Joy! And she came up and she gave me the biggest hug. I was like, 'oh, I can do this,' Sebesta says. "I was so happy!"

## THE ROAD HOME

Today, Sebesta and Wolfgang have the same senior project advisor, and they hope to finish their senior projects by the end of this year. Wolfgang, who has met Sebesta's three children – Michael, age 13; Jordan, age 10; and Alisa, age 8 – when they come to class with her mother, calls Sebesta the "coolest math major I know."

Sebesta comes home to her three children and has family time before bedtime. She helps them with their homework, even when she has homework of her own. She has a work-study job and is co-head of the Math Circle. While still quiet in class, math is the universal language, and she has more friends in the classroom.

"We see each other every week," Wolfgang, a senior, says. "We talk about her kids. It's hard to find a time to hang out. She's so busy – she has a real life."

And when Sebesta graduates, there will be Armbruster, who looks forward to the graduations of every RTC student that he admits.

Until then, there will be a lot of long, long days juggling family and school for Joy Sebesta.



illustration by austen hinkley



# MAKE YOUR MAJOR

BY DEFNE GENCLER

Psychology, philosophy, sociology... These were just a few of the programs into which junior Hallie Greenberg could envision herself moderating. But after spending a couple semesters dabbling in the various departments, she came to realize that they were simply not for her.

During her sophomore year, with the help of her advisors, Greenberg created a petition to moderate into the Multidisciplinary Studies program. Essentially, she created her own major, which she titled 'Education Studies.'

"Education is a liberal art," she said. This was the idea that Greenberg became committed to creating through the lenses of the philosophy, psychology, history, and sociology programs at Bard.

Jeremy Gardner, also a junior, found himself in a slightly different predicament. Having intended to study film when he was accepted to Bard, he discovered right before the start of his freshman year that film wasn't going to be a feasible option for him. With his growing interest in the field of politics, he wanted to be sure that his time at Bard was going to be well spent.

"I wanted to pick courses each semester that I was interested in from different fields and one of the ways I realized I could do that was if I created my own major," Gardner said.

Taking from different disciplines such as psychology, political studies, economics and history, Gardner has titled his major "Strategy," which focuses on the nature of decision making in a variety of situations, whether they are social, economic or political. He hopes to receive approval to pursue the program in the upcoming few weeks.

Though disciplines often overlap in the Bard

curriculum, Dean of Studies David Shein noted that the Multidisciplinary Studies program is actually much harder than it might seem at first glance. The key ingredient for success, according to Shein, is serious self-motivation.

"Students are really required to consider for themselves what they want to study, what they want to think about and how they want to think about it," he said.

Gardner added, "Nobody else is telling you what to do; you're figuring it out for yourself. Some kids can't even figure out how to get themselves to class."

According to Giulio Santini, a rising senior who is currently taking a year off, students planning on creating their own majors must coordinate with the professors with whom they intend to work before they submit a proposal to the Executive Committee and are given the green light to pursue their major. Santini is crafting a major that is based around video game design, incorporating computer science, writing and film.

"As much support as [Bard gives,] there's no clear cut path," he said.

Shein also noted that the moderation process for the program is slightly more complex than those of other majors for Bard.

It wasn't until a year after drafting her petition and working with former philosophy professor Ariana Stokas that Greenberg was finally able to moderate with the approval of the Faculty Executive Committee.

At times, Greenberg wondered whether or not she made the right choice, especially as her friends' majors became increasingly focused.

However, as Shein pointed out, the Multidisciplinary Studies program calls upon several ways of thinking about a specific topic, which requires a certain level of flexibility on the student's part.

This flexibility enabled Greenberg to break through those moments of hesitation. What she appreciated the most, she said, was that the Multidisciplinary Studies program gave her an ideal platform to learn about the many different sides of her major and herself.

The program also allows for students to draft their own curriculum and identify exactly which courses will be taken.

Currently, Greenberg is participating in a four-credit independent study of her choice, working with special educators and psychologists at the Center for Spectrum Services in Kingston, a school for children with autism.

For Gardner, one of the most engaging aspects about the Multidisciplinary Studies program is the freedom that comes with designing a specific curriculum.

At odds with the amount of preparation we are given to thrive in the world after college, Gardner wants to select courses that he hopes will prepare him the most.

"I think it's important to have some kind of direction for when we're leaving," he said, "so I'm kind of creating that direction for myself."

Santini also expressed his appreciation for the fact that Bard offers multidisciplinary majors as an option, saying that it is something that more students should consider more often.

As David Shein asserted, it is not so much what the major is or what the program is called, but rather, what the student is excited about, passionate about, and worried about.

"We're not a fast food restaurant," Shein said. "We're a fine dining experience and in a fine dining restaurant you can order off the menu."

# LET'S GO A-LARPING

## EPIC BATTLE/TEA PARTY TAKES PLACE IN OLIN

BY CHARLES MCFARLANE



Empty Nerf bullets litter the ground. There is a body lying in the hallway. The entrance to room 201 is barricaded with chairs and there are sounds of a struggle within.

This is Olin on a Friday night. This is Teavning, an event hosted by the Bard Live Action Role Players (LARPS).

Bard LARPS is the college's live action role playing club. LARPing is "slightly complicated pretend," said Shana Hausman, a senior. "It's basically a creative exercise... You become someone else."

There are many different kinds of LARPing ranging from themes such as Dungeons and Dragons to tango dancing. One thing is always certain: "no [two] LARPs will ever be the same," said Galen Dorpalen, the club head.

Prior to this event, the group met to prepare for the evening. At the meeting, Dorpalen handed out character sheets. This is where the LARP character comes to life. In order to get into proper character, LARPer must understand their characters. On the sheets, the prospective LARPer makes up his or her character by answering such questions as: How does your character earn their living? How do they feel about sofas? What is their one major flaw? Is your character depressed?

There is usually a theme or set time period, but this is not always the case. In a recent LARP there was both a stripper and a hyper cube.

The theme of Teavning is "steampunky" tea party. The

event kicked off at 7:30 p.m., and the LARPer, now in full character, gathered in a classroom on the second floor of Olin. A butler announces each guest as they arrive while other guests drink tea and enjoy other refreshments. The guests include an heir to a French wine empire, the great white wale, Zeus, a college student and two journalists. The majority of the LARP is spent in this cocktail party atmosphere; it is basically a party with everyone in character.

"[It is] acting on a much greater scale," Atticus Cullinan, a senior, said.

The conversations border on both the fantastical and the ludicrous. They range in topic from a Skittle explosion that set off a civil war in New York City to the mental state of a serial killer wale. The evening of stimulating conversation takes a turn when the hosts announce they are actually from another planet. They intend to engage in a deadly fight with the best skilled character. At this point, padded swords and Nerf pistols are handed out.

What ensued was an intense room-to-room battle on the top two floors of Olin. Nerf bullets flew and swords clashed. Three hits from a Nerf gun or one hit from a sword rendered the LARPer "dead." The deceased would then go back to the room with refreshments and wait to recreate their character, or 'respawn' after a couple of minutes. The battle ended at around 9 p.m., when the weary LARPer decided to call it quits.

No one died in real life.



photo by sam youkilis

## WORKING AT BARD IS A THING YOU CAN DO IT'S JUST A MATTER OF SCHEDULING

BY DAVID DEWEY

Bard College, as a rural school, is perhaps not as likely as a large university to support a large community of student workers. However, many students do find time to work. Most of these jobs are on campus. From interviews with the student body and with Kim McGrath Gomez, a member of the Red Hook Chamber of Commerce, it seems that student employment depends on scheduling.

"It's a problem of continuity and consistency," says Gomez. "There just isn't a lot going on [in Red Hook businesses] during the hours students are available." Gomez says that Tivoli is probably an easier place to find work, because there are only one or two businesses in Red Hook open at night.

Luke Johnson, a sophomore who works at Taste Budd's, in Red Hook, said that he is one of the lucky few. "There's a fair amount of students I know who have jobs, but a lot of them complain that it's only, like, a shift a week. They don't feel like it's worth it to keep these jobs, but those are mainly on-campus jobs. I work off-campus."

Alex Franco, a Bard senior who works at the campus

center, says that even a few hours a week are better than nothing. "In this scarce job market, any experience you can have is great." He adds that, with on-campus employment, scheduling is a lot easier because he can do homework at his desk. "We can bring our work. Just so long as we're still being a resource to the campus."

Many on-campus jobs involve academic work. Abhishek Dev, a biology tutor, explains that this can serve as refresher course. "With the material that I've learned a few years back, I tend to forget the details. When you tutor you get to revisit the topic." Teaching, he says, runs both ways. "When you tell somebody a different way of understanding the same thing, you get to look at that thing in a different way."

Ola Ola-Busari, a junior who works as an economics tutor, says that employment has been pretty easy even with her current 20-credit workload. Also, she feels that her work as a tutor helps to reinforce old concepts. "With the Econ study room, it's a chance to practice and be in constant revision." Ola also works for Student Activities, and she

said that the hours are minimal and flexible.

In addition, a recent database makes searching for jobs at Bard somewhat easier.

StudentCenter is an online resource that lists campus employment opportunities. It hosts resources such as a resume-builder, articles about employment, and an optional database to which students can submit their resumes for employers. For more information, students can visit the Bard College Student Central page ([www.StudentCentral.com](http://www.StudentCentral.com)) or the Career Development Office in the campus center.

When asked whether the disparity between available on-campus and off-campus jobs may have to do with hostility between the citizens of Red Hook and Bard, Gomez said that such a thing may have been possible in the past, but times have changed. "I think that things are really changing for the better, significantly." The Center for Civic Engagement is really changing Bard students' attitudes toward Red Hook, she said. "Students are popping up everywhere in the community these days."

# SCI-FI WITH SAM

INTERVIEW BY JAVAN RICHARDS

illustration by giulio santini

*Samuel R. Delaney has been writing for more than 40 years, publishing science fiction, literary criticism and essays on an array of topics, including sexuality and society. His work has earned him a Hugo Award and four Nebula Awards, both high honors in sci-fi, as well as a Stonewall Book Award for excellence in LGBT fiction. His latest book is "Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders" and was published this year. The writer came to Bard on Nov. 5, giving a public reading in Weis Cinema. Delaney spoke with the Free Press about success, innovation and the art of writing:*



**Free Press:** What do you consider good science fiction?

**Samuel Delaney:** I think like any other good writing, writing that gives you a lot when you read it. The strengths of science fiction tend to be color, pace, interesting distortions of the present that we can interpret as possible future developments. If those are interesting enough, usually it's going to be a fairly satisfying science fiction story.

**FP:** What interests you the most about your writing?

**SD:** The human traits are what interest me the most, and that's a matter of believability—if I can believe that this actually happens and these traits are presented with the richness that is somehow congruent to my own life experience, even though they're set in different worlds and different places. And if they can be shown as a response to the new world the writer is projecting, then I'm a happy reader.

**FP:** What is your take on the art of writing?

**SD:** Any field, and any artistic field, has a strange tension between tradition and originality. On the one hand, you have to respect certain kinds of tradition or else people don't recognize it or it doesn't make sense to people. And at the same time, within those traditions, they want something new and interesting that responds to the world. When you put in things that are new and interesting, there's always going to be readers who say "what's that?" or "that's terrible" or "I don't understand that" and some people will get it. And sometimes you're just wrong. Sometimes, you

think you're doing something new and you're just presenting confusion and you have no real way of being sure. The very fact that some people like it is no proof. You just live and it's a big gamble. You just hope that what you're doing is good and you work as hard as you possibly can to make it better and you hope that you're actually succeeding.

I have little tics and default rules that I like to follow. When I write about something, I try to write about things that I've seen other people do. I also like to make sure that the things that I choose that I've seen other people do I've also done myself, so I have at least two views of what they feel like or what they look like. Between the two, that's what allows you a sort of stereotypical view of the elements that gives them some dimensionality in the story. You have seen them from both positions. Very often, what something feels like is very different from what it looks like. But you want to be able to tap both qualities. I've been trying to do that in my work since I was 22.

Other thing is economy. I think that's a very important thing to do things in the quickest and most vivid way and vivid writing is something I'm really interested in: how to make it clear and visual.

**FP:** Do you ever feel constrained by the genre of science fiction?

**SD:** I haven't written science fiction in 30 years, so no. I say that my most recent book has some elements of science fiction in it, "Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders," but there's a lot in it that's not terribly science fictional and there are certain currents in it that are. It starts in 2007 and continues on for sixty-seventy years to the future

so it becomes science fiction in spite of itself.

**FP:** As an African-American writer, was there any particular adversity that you had to overcome?

**SD:** No, I think I was very lucky. Any African American artist is going to have to deal with some prejudice. I've been publishing for 50 years now. You know, there was the white editor who didn't want to take up a novel of mine for serialization because the main character was black and things of that sort. The book is still in print and he's dead. Not only that, but the guy who took over his magazine used to tell that whenever he wanted to be reminded of human stupidity, he would go into the files and read the rejection letter that this editor wrote because he thought that the book wasn't a really good book, which is warming.

Today you go into a Barnes and Noble and most books are gone three weeks later. The life of most books on the shelves is well under three months and with many of them, it's under three weeks. They have two copies of the book and they sell those two copies and that's it, they move on to something else. I'm very lucky that almost a dozen of my two dozen books are still in print and people are still buying them 20, 30, and in some cases, 40 years after I wrote them. I hope it's because I've worked as hard as I did on them when I was writing them, but I don't know. There are people who work incredibly hard on their work and it doesn't pay off at all. The last book I wrote, "Through the Valley of the Nest of Spiders," this great big book, took me seven years. You'd hope that it would have at least that much shelf life. But there just isn't any way to know for sure.

# BACK ON THE HUDSON

## FRIDAY MORNINGS ON THE RIVER

BY LUCAS OPGENORTH

In between the South Campus parking lot, which leads to Bard's waterfall, and the Avery/Blum building, there is an often overlooked road which winds down to the Tivoli South Bay.

Bard's Field Station, a base for ecological research and home to Bard's collection of canoes, can be found at the end of the road. I found myself here, on the shores of a glassy portion of the Hudson, one chilly Friday morning. Along with three other Bardians, I launched out into the bays in a canoe, paddling from the shores of the Unification Church's property to the road that leads to Cruger Island.

The only clouds that I could see hovered just above the northern horizon. Otherwise, the sky was clear, and the sun was strong. As the tide dropped, we paddled to shore lest we be stranded in the muddy bay.

This semester, these canoes, part of the college's collection, have been available for access on Friday mornings. Karen Gardner, the Internship and Activities Coordinator for both the Environmental and Urban Studies (EUS) program and the Center for Civic Engagement (CCE), oversees the program. She graduated from Bard in the Class of 2012 and over the summer Susan Rogers, Visiting Associate Professor of Writing and Co-director of EUS, presented her with the possibility of running the canoe project. To Gardner, the canoes presented the opportunity to foster a greater connection between Bard students and the environment around Annandale.

Gardner explored the woods, water and trails around Bard as a member of the cross country team and wants to provide others with the opportunity to get out into the nature of the Hudson Valley.

"If someone doesn't have the confidence and the initiative and the drive to go on those adventures, which I would totally understand... you can really easily get through an entire four years at Bard and not know the bays very well," Gardner said.

She also noted that because of the college's many different programs abroad and around the country, Bard students can sometimes lose their "sense of place" in the Hudson Valley.

Though the cold weather has ended

the program for the semester, Gardner said that one morning, as many as 11 or 12 people showed up to head out onto the bays. Next semester, she hopes to expand the hours of availability, publicize the canoes more and bring more students out onto the water.

Bard's canoes were acquired last academic year when Rogers, student Gleb Mikhalev and a group of people affiliated with the EUS programs, started an initiative to cleanup the Tivoli Bays.

Although Hudsonia, a non-profit environmental research institute which uses Bard's Field Station, has a collection of canoes, they are not available for use by Bard students. In addition, due to insurance concerns, use of the college's canoes must be supervised by a certified canoe instructor, of which there are now several among Bard's students and faculty.

Rogers and her group scoured the Hudson Valley's Craigslist for cheap or free boats and built a modest collection.

Otto Berkes Jr., a senior, was part of the first cleanup outing. He explained that the cleanup crew filled their canoes with gas containers, 40 year-old soda cans and old blue barrels that many of the area's docks use for flotation.

Berkes he enjoys paddling out to the area's islands, such as Skullpot, a small rock island the South Bay which is often populated by turtles and can be easily reached by boat.

"We don't think of this area as really oriented around the river because people don't interact with the water very much," Berkes said. "But when you do, it really puts everything in perspective."

Out on the water, the dull rumble of the New York State Thruway can be heard echoing from the western side of the river and Amtrak trains charge toward Albany and New York City. But in many ways, the Hudson, its shoreline and the Catskills seem much the same as when Thomas Cole famously depicted them in painting, 150 years ago. My paddling partner and I float up to a rock outcropping, less than ten feet away from a glowing white snow goose. It calmly looks around, unstartled by our presence. Our boat quietly drifts by as the goose slips into the bay and floats off.



# OPINION

## DEAR FAMILY AND FRIENDS, TEACHERS AND CLASSMATES,

LOVE, HALLIE GREENBERG

In 2008, I had Obama Fever. I wore my Obama t-shirt with pride and strolled the hallways of Mamaroneck High School with my "Yes We Can" pin on my backpack. The week before the inauguration, I wrote a letter to my parents citing Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence in an attempt to travel to D.C. to watch the inauguration or stay home from school and watch the proceedings on TV.

A lot has happened since January 20, 2009. We have endured a massive economic recession and witnessed major revolutions throughout the Middle East. This past week, we were reminded once again of the intensifying effects of climate change as Hurricane Sandy took the lives of more than 110 Americans. America is still hurting.

The "time for a change" hype of 2008 has died, and for many Barack Obama has been a disappointment. As a country, we have become increasingly disillusioned with the promise of democratic government.

For Americans my age, the statistics are scary. About 14% of current college grads cannot find full-time work and only 55.3% of people ages 16 to 29 have jobs.

And all the while, I am in the middle of a mid-college crisis, for lack of a better term. I am questioning my ideas and intentions. My remaining time at the nurturing and loving academic community that is Bard College is quickly

evaporating. I am realizing that there are many sides of me that I have not yet explored in my twenty years of life. I recently sought guidance from one of my mentors, Paul Marienthal, and he gave me great advice:

"If you really know that life will be an up and down ride, and you can live with it, then you are so far ahead of the game. If you know this, then you don't necessarily have to resist the down moments. Just notice them, maybe even celebrate them in an odd way. Something like appreciating low tide at the beach. No waves, no actions, but a lot of sandbar to explore. What is there in the state you're in is worth exploring. Don't overlook how important the lull moments are."

I don't think Paul would say we should "celebrate" poverty, racism, class divide and a dying ecosystem—but I do think he would emphasize that our nation, as a participatory democracy, present us with unique opportunities during times of challenge to think and rethink our future.

I have not lost hope in America and I have not lost hope in democracy. In less than two years, I will inherit a world filled with serious social, political, economic, and environmental problems. For me, this is a call to action.

I want to graduate college with health insurance under Obamacare. And I want to be able to get an abortion if I need one. I want my gay friends to be able to get married too. I want kids living in urban

areas to suffer less from the effects of pollution and crime. I want more psychologists and social workers to be paid by the government to serve in poor urban and rural areas. I want higher salaries for teachers and real effort to achieve education reform.

I want women who are paid less than men for the same work to have the right to sue their employers for discrimination.

I want to see "grand bargains" on urgent but deeply dividing issues like tax reform and immigration. I want investment in renewable energy. I want an end to the war in Afghanistan.

I have come to understand that a life devoted to inquiry is a life worth living and that education is a core tenet of self-improvement and action. As part of the "one percent," I feel no small amount of guilt, but also feelings of responsibility to help repair the world.

My generation may be confronting unprecedented challenges, but we have an equally unprecedented opportunity to make the world a better place.

I worry that the State of the Union in 2012 is not all that different from the times of John Dewey, who described how a successful state must begin with a public that recognizes and shares the consequences of everyone's actions. Only miles away from my bubble of privilege, people are struggling to put food on the table. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. We are

losing our middle class, the backbone of American society. This upsets me. But maybe this gives reason for hope. Maybe just maybe the consequences of excess will yield a new impulse for reform, a second surge of progressivism in American life.

American politics have become increasingly polarized. Getting things done through compromise and conversation seems ever more difficult. But if we define "progressive" in a Deweyan sense, "favoring or advocating for progress, change, improvement or reform" we might just come together to share responsibility for addressing the challenges of the twenty-first century.

As a young (and sometimes angry) liberal, I often have to remind myself that freedom and diversity of opinion is one of the things that makes America a great nation. As I stand on the cusp of adulthood, I am still working to appreciate how opinions different from my own can challenge my thinking for the better.

I'd love to talk with anyone who agrees or opposes what I have said above. Debate, diversity and dialogue are critical to the establishment of true democracy—something I think we can all agree on!

Today, the day after the election, I am so relieved that the United States of America chose to re-elect President Barack Obama. I am anxious to see what the next four years will bring.

# THE COMFORT OF MISINFORMATION

BY DAVID DEWEY

In this last election, political commentators on the left explained away Republican policies by calling them ignorant. This term is, at best, not saying very much; at worst it is dismissive. When Timothy McCarthy came to Bard, he told us that misinformed conservative punditry was the fault of poverty and anger. I would argue that it is the fault of modern intellectual and cultural trends.

First, I think it is prudent to remember how segregated America is geographically. Republicans tend to live in the middle, Democrats on the coasts. On top of this geographic divide, there is a vocational gap. Some careers, such as education, attract more liberals than others. In a recent Harvard study, it was found that for every conservative social science professor, there were another ten that were liberal (social science departments were the most extreme case in the study).

One can explain this education gap through practical or ideological means. The Democratic Party supports education spending. Professors, obviously, are obliged to support the party that pays their salaries. There are also historical precedents. In the 60's and 70's, a massive liberal protest movement emerged from American colleges. It has become cliché that Christian children, after their freshman years of college, return home as atheists. In a church attended by a friend of mine, there is a special service every year for kids leaving for college.

Journalism is another field that seems to show a bit of a liberal majority, although the gap is probably smaller than Republicans think.

We therefore have two information-generating fields that have assumed partisan positions. This has huge repercussions.

In the Republican primary this year, Rick Santorum said that he represented "decent men and women who go out and work hard every day... who work with their hands... that aren't taught by some liberal college professor." Considering a modern world in which it is increasingly difficult to earn money "with your hands," this is not an easy position to uphold. The fact that a prevalent political figure gained support by attacking universities, means that higher education is alienating a substantial group of citizens.

It is imperative that we understand why Conservatives feel out of the intellectual loop. I have a tentative explanation. I believe that, besides historical or financial trends, much blame can be laid on the current state of academia and historical self-perception. Western academics, looking to the hypocritically self-righteous violence of our past, largely scapegoated Christianity for historical

Europe's crimes. They made the common mistake of blaming a dogma for its laity. This is as logically valid as blaming the Holocaust on Hitler's mustache, and yet it is suffused throughout our culture.

Christian rhetoric is so dominant in historical sources that it fades into the background: since everyone was a Christian, most crimes of the past, by default, take on Christian coloration. "In this sign shall you conquer," and so on. The Crusades were rhetorically Christian, but could much more easily be blamed on ignorance and a desire for war spoils—especially considering that crusaders did not hesitate to pillage Christian cities.

Colonialism is often blamed by our generation on missionaries, despite the fact that many of these missionaries were the only group in our society advocating an end to colonial persecutions. In debates over evolution and climate change, Christianity is shown at odds with science. In reality, science only survived in our culture, for about a millennium, within the convents and the clergy.

Christianity gives us the first tract on racial tolerance in the Western canon—the parable of the Good Samaritan—and, at least at inception, was starkly pacifistic and anti-wealth. Thus, modern liberalism, even at the most secular, is a direct descendant of Christianity; and yet the exact opposite is largely felt in our country.

Even the idea that Christianity is superstitious is historically funny: Christianity was appealing in the ancient world largely because it was a philosophically-imbued faith, derived from Plato and scholarly Judaism, and held very few traces of the superstitions of paganism: "In the beginning was the logos and the logos [read "logic"] was..."

I suspect that conservatism and reactionary opinions are only appealing to Christians because they have been condescended to and shut out of modern intellectual circles. To be a modern Conservative is to be part of an era which—in educated circles—blames you for the torture chambers of the inquisition. That is a terrible role to inhabit. If you cannot operate in the world of facts, because that world is hostile, then you must operate in the world of punditry. This is exactly what happened to the Republican Party.

America is an extremely religious nation. To understand the politics of our rival party, we must understand perceived threats to the Christian religion. Until bipartisanship is possible—and this will only happen after we end our pseudo-intellectualism and illiterate secularism—the Republican comfort with misinformation will build, subverting American democracy.

photos by anna daniszewski



BY JEREMY GARDNER

## THE TOLL OF TRUANCY

Let us begin with a few (disturbing) numbers. The yearly cost of attending Bard College is \$57,580. Tuition is \$44,176, room & board is \$12,782, and additional fees are \$622. That's \$7,000 more than the median household income in the United States. Depending on the source, we're around the 10th most expensive college in America.

But hey, it is what it is, and we already go here, right? So let me present to you a different number: the price per class.

If the average Bardian takes four courses each semester, with each class meeting twice a week, for the 27 approximate weeks of school we attend (not including breaks, exams, completion/advising days, and given eight or so cancelled classes,) students will have 216 classes per year.

Take the cost of tuition alone at \$44,176 and divide that by the average number of classes, and the price per class comes out to \$205. If you divide the entire cost of attendance, it comes out to \$266. If you only have six classes a week, and thus 162 a year, the prices are \$273 and \$355 per class, respectively. If you wish to calculate your total, you can follow the aforementioned formula knowing that there are 14 weeks of school in the first semester, and 15 in the second (subtract cancelled classes, reading/advising days, and midterms as applies.)

Now let's put those two hundred and five dollars into perspective: An iPhone, Xbox 360, and Kindle Fire each cost \$200. With \$205, you could immunize 854 children in Africa from measles. For \$180, you could feed a child in Western India for an entire year. According to the United Nations, the average GDP per capita in Somalia, the DRC, and Burundi is \$201 and under.

While this article really isn't meant to pontificate or guilt-trip, when someone I know skips class to get high and watch

Netflix, a professor cancels class "due to high winds," or I am made to watch Troy because my teacher is too lazy to discuss the Aeneid, I can't help but feel annoyed.


Since my sophomore year of high school, I have skipped two classes. This is not because I wake up every morning thrilled by the thought of profound intellectual stimulation or engaging class discussions. It is because I know that there is a certain price being placed on the value of my education, and at Bard, that cost makes skipping inexcusable. It's the same reason I try to do every homework assignment, even the most esoteric readings, from which I know I will gain little.

There will always be good reasons to skip class (forgot to do the reading, need to write a paper, lusting girlfriend, etc.) but the reality is that in light of the monetary loss, it requires a great excuse (winning the lottery, lusting supermodel, etc.) to legitimize missing an hour and twenty minutes of potential monotony.

But by far the most galling argument for missing class is that of the student who posits their truancy on their financial aid and the small amount they are paying. If you come from a family where \$205 is a lot of money, then why on earth are you wasting that costly time period hanging out or smoking pots? It's not like that money is magically spawned by the Financial Aid Genie; it's coming from someone's pocket.

In the end, there are few excuses that justify missing class. We all wake up tired, hung over, or just sick of school sometimes. The thought of Kant at 9 a.m. only revitalizes the Bardiest of Bardians. But skip four classes and all of a sudden you have wasted more money than most people make in a year in nearly forty countries around the world.

I personally find that inexcusable.



**MISSED CONNECTION?**

**M4M?**

**W4M?**

**ETC.**

**SEND TO**

**BARDFREEPRESS@**

**GMAIL.COM**

## AN EXPERIMENT IN INVISIBILITY

BY ARTHUR HOLLAND-MICHEL

### PART I

When the giant portraits of Chartwells workers went up in Kline last semester, it was the most moving piece of public art that I had ever seen at Bard, but now they have to come down. The point of the project was to humanize the workers. With the portraits up all around us, the cooks, servers, card-swipers and administrators were suddenly made visible. But when was the last time that you really noticed one of these portraits? In the days after they first went up, I looked at every single one. Now that we are so used to their presence, so accustomed to their power, it is as though they don't exist.

By keeping the posters up for so long, they have become an experiment in invisibility. Show a person the same image every day for half a year, and that image ceases to be an image and becomes part of the environment. If the same person makes your eggs every day, they cease to be a person. This art project was an intervention into this process, and now it has become subject to that process itself. The same kind, diligent people keep us nourished every day, but if we don't constantly remind ourselves of their presence and their hard work, they, like their portraits, become invisible.

I absolutely believe that Kline should serve as a space to give thanks to the employees of Chartwells, but the work doesn't end with the portraits. This art project started a conversation, and by leaving the photos hanging for so many months, we are letting the conversation stall. We must constantly reinvent our gratitude. We must constantly remind those who work around us that we can see them, and that we appreciate their work. But with these portraits, we're doing just the opposite of that.

### PART II

Even though they share almost nothing in common, Amii Legendre has become the new Ken Cooper. This is not because she spends her evenings

collaborating with the three letter agencies. It is because every time we open our computers, she has sent us a new email. On Nov. 9 alone, we received three separate emails from her. And while Ken's protracted missives and serialised chronicles about injured animals had a certain entertainment value and (usually) contained quite important information, Amii's emails are often just notifications for events that are already posted on the Daily Mail and advertised on every cork-board on the campus.

I offer this opinion because I feel that Amii does important work for the school, and I don't want that work to go unnoticed. I think that what has happened with her emails is a cautionary tale. If you receive enough emails from a single person, no matter how important they are, they will, like the portraits in Kline, become meaningless. Many students have told me that Amii's emails go straight into their trash; odd, considering that so many of us directly and indirectly benefit from her work. It is another experiment in invisibility. Something in our nature means that we stop paying attention, even if we know we shouldn't, when a thing becomes part of the everyday. If Amii sent us one email every month, more people would read it.

At the risk of making another important idea meaningless through repetition, I think it bears stating that with great power comes great responsibility. Having access to [undergrad@bard.edu](mailto:undergrad@bard.edu) is a great power, and that power is being abused. Though I am offering up Amii as an example, she's only one small part of a troubling trend of institutional spamming at Bard. Every time my eyes see the word [undergrad] in an email title, I stop paying attention. This is problematic, because sometimes emails with [undergrad] in the title contain very important information. [undergrad] emails should be a rarity, not a commonplace. That way, they will carry the weight that they used to have.

# SPORTS

## JOINING LIBERTY LEAGUE CHANGES THE RECRUITING GAME

BY KURT SCHMIDLEIN

When Bard left the Skyline Conference in 2011 and joined the Liberty League, an elite and highly competitive NCAA Division III athletic conference, the Raptors started competing against some of the best teams in the country. To keep pace long-term in such a competitive league, Director of Athletics Kris Hall said that coaches have to up their own games when it comes to recruiting new classes of student-athletes.

"We were recruiting when we were in the Skyline," Hall said. "But we knew that we had to attract higher caliber student-athletes to run with some of these nationally-ranked programs [in the Liberty League]."

According to Hall, coaches are constantly in recruiting mode in order to make sure they have enough players to field a team and to ensure that their team can keep up in the highly competitive Liberty League. She said

that upgrades have been made to the Athletic Department's ability to contact prospective students, such as a new admissions software.

But since joining the Liberty League, Bard has added several varsity sports as well, and hired coaches to coach those teams. Tucker Kear is the new Men's Lacrosse coach, but he can't coach until he has a team. And to build a team he needs to recruit enough incoming first-years, as well as any current students, to field a team by next fall when the varsity lacrosse team is scheduled to make its debut. Luckily, Kear is not new to recruiting. Before being offered his current position at Bard, Kear was an assistant lacrosse coach at Union College, another member of the Liberty League. Now, Kear's job is to build a lacrosse team from the ground up.

With that goal in mind, Kear is aiming to recruit at least 20 student-athletes

for next year. A typical recruiting class usually has between 10 and 15 incoming first-years, he said.

Recruiting prospective student-athletes is a multistep process. Coaches visit showcases and tournaments, and try to reach out to prospective student athletes they're interested in recruiting. "If there's a kid with ability that's at a Liberty League level, you call him and decide what sort of school he's looking at," Kear said.

Kear and the other Bard coaches have help with this process. Bill Kelly, Director of Recruiting (his title was changed after Bard joined the Liberty League) and Head Women's Soccer coach, is the liaison between the Admissions and Athletic Departments.

"My primary focus is helping our coaches evaluate their recruits from an academic standpoint," Kelly said. He also works with coaches on recruitment strategies, especially networking and identifying which showcases and tournaments to attend.

But Bard coaches can't go after every talented athlete they see. Kear and Kelly were both quick to say that they don't pursue prospective student-athletes who don't have the "academic chops" to get in to Bard. In fact, coaches limit their searches to high school students with GPAs of 3.4 or higher and a strong array of extracurriculars, according to Kelly.

"My advocacy work focuses on recruits who are students first, athletes second," Kelly said. "I make sure our coaches understand that it would be a complete waste of time and energy to recruit an athlete with a substandard academic record."

If and when a prospective-student athlete visits Bard, Kear prefers to show them around campus himself, as he wants to develop a positive personal relationship with prospective students.

"You don't want it to sound like a spiel," he said. "If you're telling each kid the same thing over and over again it's going to sound the same and they're going to know it."

Kear spends much of his time with prospective students highlighting the academic qualities of the school,

namely the liberal arts curriculum, and the local community, especially Tivoli and Red Hook.

"Bard is a wonderful, wonderful place, and it's easy to sell," Kear continued. "The cherry is playing in the Liberty League."

For first year Daniel Gagne, a goalie for the Men's Soccer team and member of the Men's Volleyball team, athletics was exactly that.

"The main things I was looking for in schools were good student-to-faculty ratio and rigorous academics," Gagne said. "I really liked the feel of the [Bard] campus better than the other colleges, and the fact that I might be able to play sports... pretty much sealed the deal."

As a Division III school, Bard cannot offer athletic scholarships to prospective student-athletes. Bard offers need-based financial aid, Kelly said, and academic scholarships are also offered on an as-needed basis.

Despite that, both Hall and Tucker Kear said that being in the Liberty League means Bard is in competition with many stellar academic schools, since qualified student-athletes are looking at other colleges with athletic programs in competitive leagues.

"The kids who [visit] here... they're going to Bates, Vassar, Union, Saint Lawrence, they're going to Hobart, they're going all over the place," Kear said.

President of the College Leon Botstein said that prospective students ultimately choose Bard because of academics, and participation in athletics falls within the context of the student's academic career.

"We're eager to provide a good experience to the student-athletes that are here, but we have no institutional investment in having winning teams," Botstein said.

Hall said that, though she hopes and believes all varsity teams will be competitive within the Liberty League, the Athletic Department will not bend the rules when it comes to admissions and recruiting.

"Institutions play all sorts of games to win championships," Hall said. "We will never play those games."



photo by anna low-beer

# RE: BARD TWEETS

**Megan Smille** @meganisabitch  
Does knowing that I'm not intellectual make me intellectual? Also, does anyone know a good place to get a hair cut in Red Hook? #splitends

**Robbie Brannigan** @robbiebrannigan  
I just need an income high enough to sustain the ingestion of prosciutto three meals a day.

**Zoë Ames** @zoevija  
Current subject at Student Life Committee forum: airborne peanut allergies. Is that or is that not a thing. Discuss

**Beardkins** @beardkins  
Creepily eating gummy bears on a stone row bench. I hate when I get to things too early.

**Madeline Porsella** @inePor  
Today I decided to take a 20 minute nap before class. I woke up three hours later and my class was over. What kind of disease is that?

**Kyle Smith** @kyleforserious  
I'm always afraid to go to the bathroom after my photo critique in fear that people think I'm crying.

**Max Segal** @max\_segal  
@leahlize\_it haha yeah but fuck the electoral college did u know it's not even a real college like bard

**Zoe Groomes-Klotz** @locawaka  
just found out they have parties in red hook. lol!

