

2-2014

## Bard Free Press, Vol. 15, No. 5 (February 2014)

Bard College

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

---

### Recommended Citation

Bard College, "Bard Free Press, Vol. 15, No. 5 (February 2014)" (2014). *Bard Free Press - All Issues (2000-2018)*. 111.

<https://digitalcommons.bard.edu/bardfreepress/111>

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).



# BARD FREE PRESS

will "he ever go to senior seminar?" anderson  
j.p. "larry" lawrence  
rebecca "stopped reading" swanberg  
naomi "cereal dater" lachance  
emily "is graduating and getting married" wissemann  
madeline "frank ocean fan" porsella  
leela "welcome back" khanna  
lucas "sam williams" oppenorth  
rajasri "we're still looking" narasimhan  
anne "anne rowley" rowley  
avery "blum" mencher  
max "310-808-7792" wortman  
sam "new york city" williams  
troy "heavy lifting" simon  
nelle anderson, nora deligter, madi garvin, ian mcmahon,  
kassandra thatcher, katy schneider  
olivia crumm, naomi lachance, niall murphy, abby zieve

*editor emeritus*  
*editor emeritus*  
*editor emeritus*  
*executive editor*  
*creative director*  
*layout editor*  
*news editor*  
*culture editor*  
*bardiverse editor*  
*opinion editor*  
*sports editor*  
*web editor*  
*photo editor*  
*distribution mgmt*

*copy editors*  
*layout staff*



4 news  
10 culture  
16 rembering  
20 bardiverse  
26 sports  
28 opinion

cover: evelyn buse  
back cover: jessica chappe

photo by maia akiva

## 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.

# RE: BULLETS, BAND-AIDS & APARTHEID

BY CONNOR GADEK,  
LEE GENSLER, AND  
STEVEN TRAN-  
CREQUE—MEMBERS  
OF STUDENTS FOR  
JUSTICE IN THE  
MIDDLE EAST

In light of Nelson Mandela's recent death, this year's Israeli Apartheid Week has a special significance. Unfortunately, in the December issue of the Free Press, the essay "Why Should We Replace Band-Aids With Bullets?" by Ben Powers characterized the situation in Palestine as intricate and paralyzed by reactionaries, South Africa's struggle against apartheid as a discourse about empowerment, and Nelson Mandela as a proponent of dialogue.

None of this could be further from the truth. An honest discussion of the nature of oppression and political resistance demands better.

While apartheid was a term originally used to describe the situation in South Africa, under international law it applies to any form of institutionalized racial segregation and oppression. To his credit, Powers does not reject the comparison, writing that Palestinians "suffer under a state that looks eerily similar to the one ruled by the Afrikaner National Party."

He's not the first to notice the similarity. Hendrik Verwoerd, former South African prime minister and architect of apartheid, stated in 1961 that "the Jews took Israel from the Arabs after the Arabs had lived there for a thousand years. Israel, like South Africa, is an apartheid state."

Fifty years later, apartheid continues in Israel/Palestine. Palestinians born inside of Israel's borders are routinely referred to as a "demographic threat" by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Military checkpoints deny Palestinians freedom of movement. Those living in Gaza cannot leave to study at academic institutions—or, indeed, for nearly any other reason—due to Israeli control of their borders. Palestinians are forced into refugee camps inside their own country after their homes have been demolished by the Israeli military. West Bank Palestinians cannot see their families and friends inside Israel without receiving secu-

rity clearance from Israel, which is routinely denied. Muslims in the West Bank cannot pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem (the third holiest site in Islam).

And while apartheid South Africa needed its black population for exploitation as cheap labor, Palestinians have instead become victims of ethnic cleansing. This system of oppression, like that in South Africa, must be stopped. But we will never achieve justice in Palestine by reproducing false narratives of South Africa's transition.

Powers claims that apartheid "came to an end because a democratic government was negotiated by various parties through a discourse about empowerment, economic sanctions by other nations, and a critical understanding of what democracy was and what it might look like." And just like that, in one sentence, he erases half a century of armed resistance.

When we hear vague claims that it is committed people who foster dialogues about empowerment—whatever empowerment is—we should listen first for what is silenced.

What of those who took up arms and died resisting apartheid? Why does no one remember Steve Biko, who was murdered in the back of a Land Rover in 1977? Or Chris Hani, who ran the armed wing of the ANC and was assassinated in 1993? Or Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, who fought in the streets, survived torture and solitary confinement, and still speaks plainly of her hatred for "the enemy?" And what of the countless other revolutionaries who organized and lived underground or languished in prison for years? Are they not committed, too? Nelson Mandela—the same Nelson Mandela who authored the M-Plan strategy for guerrilla warfare in 1953—died first when the man who spent 27 years in prison for his organization of an armed resistance movement was domesticated into a great teddy

bear of history.

We are assured: dialogue is always good. The better question to ask would be, what is dialogue good for? After the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993, Israel doubled the total settler population over the next three years. And so on to this day—you can always insist that the situation is complicated and intricate, because you can always be assured: you will never be wrong. But dialogue, the constant repetition of "both sides," the perpetual insistence that things are complicated—the same lines are repeated as settlements continually expand and the occupation becomes more permanent every year.

There is no peaceful dialogue that will magically do away with oppression. Endless dialogue is precisely what allows Israel to continue building settlements and warehousing Palestinians in the world's largest open-air prison. Debates between two state and one state solutions miss the point entirely: Israel can continue with this permanent crisis indefinitely—and fully intends to—as long as we provide the legitimacy of more dialogue. And the thoughtless refrain of "both sides" is always a demand that oppressor and oppressed, no matter how unequal, be treated as interchangeable—as if history and power did not exist.

The vague demand for more dialogue and empowerment serves one purpose: the radical delegitimization of resistance.

Powers ends his article with the pathos of "an old South African proverb." We would like to offer one of our own. After the Soweto uprising in 1976, while Nelson Mandela was imprisoned by the apartheid government, he called out to fellow members of the ANC: "Unite! Mobilize! Fight on! Between the anvil of united mass action and the hammer of armed struggle we shall crush apartheid!"

# CITIZEN SCIENCE CITIZEN SCIENCE

## WHY SO MANY SCIENTISTS WANT TO TEACH SCIENCE LITERACY

BY NAOMI LACHANCE

Mark Chee talks about science like it's going to save the world. His eyes light up and his fingers trace diagrams on the table. It's important to him that I understand what he's talking about. I'm not his student; I'm just a reporter today, but as he explains the phenotype characteristics of micro RNA in *Drosophila melanogaster*—known colloquially as fruit flies—it seems like he actually wants me to understand.

It's a Wednesday evening in late January, the last day of the Citizen Science program, and he'll leave the next morning for North Carolina; he's a lab preparator at Duke University. He studies the spindle pole body duplication cycle in budding yeast. It would not be entirely inaccurate to say he studies gene mutation so beer will taste better. Chee wouldn't want me to say that, though: he's especially critical of how the media tends to dumb down science.

He's come to teach at Citizen Science because he wants to encourage science literacy. And he's not the only passionate,

accomplished scientist to be hired for the program. In fact, working at Citizen Science has become one of the most prestigious positions in the field.

"I'm doing my part to correct this trend towards a phobia of science that I've noticed in America," Chee said, "[it] is in stark contrast to the situation in a lot of developed countries. For example, in Japan, it's not uncommon to walk into a bookstore and pick up books that are meant for the layman that explain science but they don't dumb down the science at all."

Citizen Science, which completed its fourth year this January, attracted national attention for its innovative approach to teaching the sciences in a liberal arts setting. It's the brainchild of President Leon Botstein, and it's designed to teach science literacy through the theme of infectious diseases. Which is to say: the idea is that if you learn how to study infectious disease with a critical eye, you'll know how to study all science with a critical eye.

The course is divided into three mod-

ules: laboratory research, computing, and problem-based learning. It covers three themes: scientific method, antibiotic resistance, and bioethics. There are about 18 students to a class. Every student participates. Not everyone participates happily, but they participate nonetheless.

"We're only living in a more and more scientific and technological world," said Amy Savage, director of the Citizen Science program. "When you're done here, if you are truly the liberal arts student that we envision, you should be able to engage in all sorts of situations appropriately critically."

The 26 scientists chosen to teach Citizen Science come from backgrounds in communications, neuroscience, and mathematics, to name a few. Some are Bard alumni, and some come from abroad. Some have never taught before; one, John Martinko, co-authored one of the most commonly used microbiology textbooks. Savage estimated that for this year, there were between 60 and 75 qualified applicants, and that she expects the numbers to keep on growing.

The professors, at least on paper, find a pedagogical match in the Citizen Science program. "It's important that the professors realize that it's about going on a journey with the class," Savage said. She said she expects professors to be at the forefront of their respective fields, and that they be willing to say "I don't know" to students; scientific research means pushing boundaries.

Marshall Hayes, a research associate at Cornell University, said that he liked the idea of teaching science in a small setting with the chance to give students lots of personal attention. He did the math: you're in class five hours a day every day for two and a half weeks during Citizen Science.

"So" he said, "I teach on Monday, Wednesday and Friday through the semester and it's a 50-hour class. One day of Citizen Science is equivalent to 2 weeks of course work at Cornell."

But following the rule that for every hour of class, students should do three hours of homework, the parallel may not

"When you're done here, if you are truly the liberal arts student that we envision, you should be able to engage in all sorts of situations appropriately critically."

hold—there are not possibly enough hours for students to spend 15 hours a night on homework.

The program was a busy whirlwind for Hayes; he liked the idea of passing on scientific knowledge to the next generation of scholars. He liked the chance to learn from his colleagues.

Natalia Frias-Staheli, a postdoctoral associate at Rockefeller University, liked that the program had a specific goal.

"The goal of the program," she said, "is not that you all guys get vaccinated. The goal of the program is that whenever you take decisions, you take them based on critical thinking, base decisions on scientific data and not because of popular rumors or it's fashion to do something."

The professors are often hired for their experience in the field rather than for their experience teaching. Take Kurt Marsden, for example, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania who was looking for teaching experience.

"This allowed me to do it within a discrete time period," he said, "and to run my own class, and to get experience of what it really is like to teach my own class of students in three weeks and then I go back to my regular life. So it was a really great way to do an in-

tensive teacher training."

Marsden's background is in neuroscience. He studies zebrafish in order to understand how the human brain works. He looks for which genes are responsible for startle response, which has allowed him to make important realizations about mental illnesses. He brought fish into class that had GFP—green fluorescent protein—on some neurons.

"You put them in a petri dish," he said, "and there's like 50 of them in there and they're just these little wiggly things but you go un-

I can think of four people off the top of my head that are dying to do this... maybe the best teacher is someone that hasn't had a chance [to teach] yet.

der the right light that will activate this green fluorescent protein it's like these little green squiggles swimming around."

The green light didn't actually work in the round of fish he brought into class, but the students were able to watch the zebrafish develop nevertheless. This kind of flexibility makes the program effective. The teachers have general guidelines that they are taught during a three-day training program in July, but because of their diverse backgrounds, it makes sense that they would be given free-

dom to follow their own personal expertise.

Many professors who come to the program have heard about it through word-of-mouth, including Savage and Frias-Staheli. Marsden has been recommending the program to colleagues. "I've told people at Penn in my lab and at the labs around," he said, "and I can think of four people off the top of my head that are dying to do this... maybe the best teacher is someone that hasn't had a chance [to teach] yet."

The professors have gone back to their respective laboratories and classrooms, and the students are now in the midst in their spring semesters. Some may never take a science class again outside of requirements. But for just under three weeks, Bard first-years were exposed to an unbelievably enthusiastic, engaged group of scientists.

To Hayes, a small school like Bard is the place to start this program. "I think that it's important to recognize," he said, "that there are some substantial challenges to pulling off the program that Bard wants to do, and I think that Bard is a perfect place to implement Citizen Science."

If it doesn't work at Bard, it won't work anywhere, he says.

photo by jodi wissner



## BARD BARD BARD BARD BARN BARN BARN BARN

(A BARN COMES TO BARD)

BY MADI GARVIN

In spring 2013, the Bard Farm held a Farm Fest to help fund a barn. Now, as plans for the new barn are being finalized, the structure addition is predicted to help the farm increase both its crop yields and its student engagement.

Bard Farm Director Paul Marienthal estimated that the barn will cost between \$25,000 and \$30,000. In addition to Farm Fest, the farm has organized other fundraising events, written grants, applied for convocation funds, and received donations on account of the pursuit.

The proposed barn will have four rooms: one for cold storage, one for tool storage, an office for record keeping, and another of yet-undetermined use. A fifth space in the center will have a roof and walls on the left and right, the other two will be left open-air.

The ability to store food in the barn could double the crop yield, for there will be less spoilage while creating a greater output—the farm has the capacity to grow more, but has refrained since the storage was scarce.

“Probably double what was used this year will come from

the farm,” said Marienthal. “I think upwards of 20,000 lbs. of food will come from the farm.” This means more fresh, local food for Bard’s eateries.

“We want to increase the amount we can produce, increase productivity, and hopefully increase profitability so we can continue investing in other things like expansion,” said junior Carter Vanderbilt. “So the barn is not only an investment in increased productivity, but also a great space now to have for storage and musical events and Farm Fest and things like that.”

The Bard Farm also hopes that the new barn will better engage students and the community. The barn’s unenclosed center could be useful, said Farm Coordinator John-Paul Sliva. “Summer camps that come to the farm will have a place to get out of the sun and have a place to be right next to the farm to think about it and go through a les-

son plan or whatever it may be. And the same goes for any Bard class or any other group that comes to the farm,” he added.

He also said that it could be reserved as a student space, but expressed concern over “people having rowdy parties there, just because [the farm is] growing food that is going to be consumed by people, so [they] don’t want people peeing on the doors.”

From the barn’s erection, student engagement will be encouraged. Plans are underway for a barn raising during the 2014 Language and Thinking program. Sliva added that it will be “a really cool experience for someone just arriving at college, and [that participants will be able to say], ‘I just help put up an actual building.’”

*“We want to increase the amount we can produce, increase productivity, and hopefully increase profitability so we can continue investing in other things like expansion.”*

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN PRISONS

BY NAOMI LACHANCE & MADI GARVIN

In Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, Feste talks to an imprisoned Malvolio, deliberately misleading him until Malvolio is convinced of his own insanity. This is more trickery than education, but it can be read as an early indication of intellectual pursuit whilst behind bars. In the United States, education has a controversial history. Here's a little list of some of the other times inmates were educated:

1789

America's first penitentiary, the Walnut Street Jail in Philadelphia, is founded. It sets the precedent for prisoner rehabilitation, includes an educational program and a labor program. Clergyman William Rogers leads lessons for the inmates. Pennsylvania's Quaker background was cause for less harsh punitive measures than that of the other 12 colonies.

1833

350 (90%) of the nation's prisons have higher education programs.

1995

Inmates in New York no longer have access to state financial aid, giving precedent to privately funded programs.

2001

There are fewer than 12 prison college programs in the U.S.

1826

New York's Auburn Prison hires its first chaplain, Jared Curtis. He taught the Bible to 160 students.

1965

The Higher Education Act includes the Pell Grant, which funds people in prison to take college courses. The act was signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson.

1999

Bard Prison Initiative is founded. It now has 275 students in five state prisons and 250 inmates have graduated.

2008

Second Chance Act, signed into law by President George Bush, funds re-entry programs for those who used to be incarcerated; the act put nearly \$90 million toward education programming, including prison education programs.

## 2014: CUOMO ANNOUNCES INCARCERATED NEW EDUCATION PLAN

BY EVAN NICOLE BROWN

On Feb. 18, Governor Andrew Cuomo made a decision inspired by the Bard Prison Initiative. With high rates of recidivism a disheartening reality, Cuomo announced new financing for college classes in 10 state prisons. The bill will grant prisoners the opportunity to receive an associate's or bachelor's degree in either two or three years. While housing a prisoner costs the state of New York around \$60,000 annually, this new funding will help to offset that cost by providing educa-

tion that intends to motivate prisoners to avoid future incarceration after their release. At \$5,000 an inmate per year, this new initiative hopes to follow in BPI's footsteps. A mere 4 percent of the prisoners enrolled in the program and an even lower 2.5 percent of the prisoners who earned a Bard degree returned to prison. Released prisoners with college degrees have better and more job opportunities and thus more stability, creating an environment other than prison in which they can

thrive. Naturally, with fewer inmates, taxpayers spend less money. Bard alumnus Max Kenner '99 conceived of and created the Bard Prison Initiative as a student volunteer organization when he was an undergraduate in Annandale. Since 2001, when it became a credit-bearing and degree-granting organization, the Bard Prison Initiative has enrolled over 500 students and granted over 250 college degrees.

## KEITH HARING SCHOLARSHIP

BY GERGO FEKETE

Thanks to a \$400,000 five-year grant by the Keith Haring Foundation, Bard College's Center for Curatorial Studies (CCS) and the Human Rights Project (HRP) have announced the Keith Haring Fellowship in Art and Activism. Each year, the cross-disciplinary joint program will donate \$80,000 to a scholar, activist or artist to teach and to conduct research in Bard's CCS and HRP programs.

The Keith Haring fellow will have the chance to explore the significance of art as an accelerator of social-political change, deliver a lecture at Bard College and publish their findings internationally while protecting and sustaining Keith Haring's legacy.

In keeping with Bard's focus on providing students with an interdisciplinary academic experience, the fellowship program offers another avenue to effectively utilize the connections between various departments. According to Tom Eccles, executive director of CCS Bard, the award was primarily established to expand new collaborative projects between the CCS and the HRP as well as cement the existing relationship. "Besides, this is a great way to maximize our teaching capacity by having a teacher in two departments," he added.

The fellowship is also a tribute to recognize the legacy of Keith Haring, who passed away in 1990. He was a renowned artist and social activist whose works centered on notions such as birth, death, sexuality or war. Eccles, who is also a member of the Keith Haring Foundation Board, noted that "Keith is mostly seen as a popular artist, but he was also quite profound in politics - not out of choice, but out of necessity." The themes of AIDS/HIV and gay identity permeated Haring's life and work, which is why he decided to help AIDS victims earn visibility and voice their opinions in an era when the disease was far from being accepted.

The Keith Haring Foundation makes grants to nonprofit groups that engage in charitable and educational activities. In accordance with Haring's wishes, the Foundation concentrates its giving in two areas: the support of organizations that provide educational opportunities to underprivileged children and the support of organizations that engage in education, prevention and care with respect to AIDS and the HIV infection.

The selection of the annual Keith Haring fellow will be carried out by Eccles, Paul O'Neill, the director of the CCS Bard graduate program, and Thomas Keenan, the director of the Bard College Human Rights Project. The applicants should have a passion for education, activism, and art. "We are looking for a great teacher committed to education, a prominent practitioner, and someone who is an active participant out in the world," Eccles said. "And a sense of humor is good, too."

Bard has already begun accepting applications and the first Keith Haring Fellow in Art and Activism will be announced this spring.

## BARBARA LUKA'S TENURE TROUBLES

BY ABBY ZIEVE

Assistant Professor of Psychology Barbara Luka filed a complaint with the New York State Division of Human Rights alleging that her recent tenure denial was the result of "illegal reasoning." When Luka was denied tenure in 2010, President Botstein extended her contract three years, after which she was officially denied tenure in August 2013. Luka claims she did not receive tenure because of her sexual orientation, gender, age, and as "retaliation for raising her concerns" about the alleged discrimination. The complaint specifically targets President Leon Botstein, Vice President and Dean of the College Michèle Dominy, and Associate Professor of Psychology Frank Scalzo, who at the time of the first incident was the chair of the Psychology Department. The respondents denied comment on the grounds that it involves a pending complaint by a college employee. "We have reviewed her allegations of discrimination and harassment, and they are without any merit," Dominy wrote in an email.

## SALARY RESOLUTION

BY J.P. LAWRENCE

Students successfully passed a resolution calling to cap the salaries of top wage earners during Budget Forum Feb. 12.

The resolution called on the Student Government Association to demand the administration redistribute compensation from Bard employees making more than \$100,000 to Bard's housekeepers, security and other non-salaried workers on campus.

"It started out as a silly idea, a way to have fun and raise awareness, and then we looked at the numbers, and this became serious," junior Connor Gadek of the Bard Anti-Capitalist Club said. "We didn't actually think it would get passed."

Gadek and senior Lee Gensler, member of the Bard Anti-Capitalist Club, have worked in the past on issues regarding higher wages for housekeepers at Bard. In the past, they have been told that there is not enough money to pay more for housekeepers. As part of their resolution, they stated that they could raise an additional \$2 million by

capping payment of just the top ten wage earners at the college.

What comes next for the resolution is unclear. The student government must take the resolution, which just barely passed with a 66% vote, forward to administrators.

When reached for comment, Taun Toay, Associate Vice President, said he considers Bard's pay scale is more than fair.

"Many Bard employees, at all levels of skill and education, work above and beyond what their peers do at other institutions and often for less pay," Toay said in an email. "Blanket statements like these don't take into account the level of education of the people they target nor the pay scales at other institutions. Students would likely be losing many of their favorite professors with this misguided take on distributive justice. Students may want to look at Marist to see what a disproportionate pay scale actually looks like."

### HIGHEST PAID FACULTY AT BARD

	Total Compensation	Total Minus \$100,000
Leon Botstein	\$635,453	\$535,453
Dimitri Papadimitriou	\$483,991	\$383,991
James Brudvig	\$235,463	\$135,463
Debra Pemstein	\$225,379	\$125,379
Michele Dominy	\$211,166	\$111,166
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,791,452</b>	<b>\$1,291,452</b>

## KOREANS AND BARD- IANS MEET

BY AUTUMN RIVERS

Fourteen Bardians and 14 Korea University (KU) students convened in New York City for Bard's Global Leadership Conference Feb. 4. The conference brought together students from Bard's Annandale campus and Korea University in order to talk about numerous issues relevant to students including new media, slacktivism, climate change, global leadership, global terrorism, and multiculturalism in South Korea.

The day began with team building exercises about leadership and the concept of global leadership.

After a few bagels and some coffee, students from each school gave presentations.

KU students gave several interesting presentations, but one that stood out was "Comparative Study on Multiculturalism in Korea and Europe" by KU presenters Min Woo Kim and Adela Woojung Kim. South Korea is ethnically 97 percent Korean, and complications have arisen in attempting to assimilate new citizens and their families.

They discussed how the government is trying their best to account for the new population of workers, wives, refugees and other types of immigrants.

"I liked the active participation from Bard college stu-

dents," Min Woo Kim, who became involved through university international affairs announcements, said. "I saw how Americans viewed Korea and the great interest Bard College has for sustainable environmental development.

Another presentation was given by juniors Gabriela Philo and Jack Lee. Entitled "Slacktivism and Social Media in the New Age," they defined it as the disembodied, computerized version of activism.

Philo's presentation illuminated modes of well-intentioned, yet highly ineffective slacktivist inaction, such as signing online petitions, RSVPing to rallies on Facebook but not attending, liking Human Rights Watch posts on Facebook, and following Amnesty International on Twitter.

The conference emerged from meetings funded by the Henry Luce Foundation that Eban Goodstein, director of Bard's MBA in Sustainability, attended in Korea.

The combined interest of Bard College, Korea University and the Henry Luce Foundation led them to create a dialogue about Environmental Studies between the two schools.

The Campus to Congress-Corporation Fellows workshop, commonly known as C2C, is an opportunity for current students and young professionals to network and further their skills in sustainable business and politics. The C2C Fellows workshop took place February 14-16, one of three occurring this year, at Bard College. Fifty-five undergraduate and graduate students, as well as a handful of young professionals, trudged through the winter weather to attend the workshop. It was appropriate that a workshop dedicated to leadership in sustainability, in response to global warming, had to face an extreme weather event. In the span of 24 hours, 20 inches of snow had fallen on Annandale-on-Hudson.

The workshop was filled with a mix of environmental awareness and entrepreneurial spirit. Each participant seemed eager to learn about a variety of topics, ranging from the "carbon blanket" surrounding the Earth, to skills like lobbying for funds for political or business ventures. One of the most interesting aspects of the C2C Workshop was an interview panel with young professionals. Fellows were able to speak with Sean Eldridge, congressional candidate for New York's 19th District, Miles Crettien, co-founder at VertiCulture a leader in urban aquaponics, and Julian Lesser, founder of Compost Valley.

Furthermore, the eclectic mix of people and interests in the room allowed for a greater dialogue about furthering fellows' individual projects against the fear of failure. "As a business owner with clients, you have an idea which you are selling to the world. It's hard to take a step back and go in a different direction, even when it's a better move.

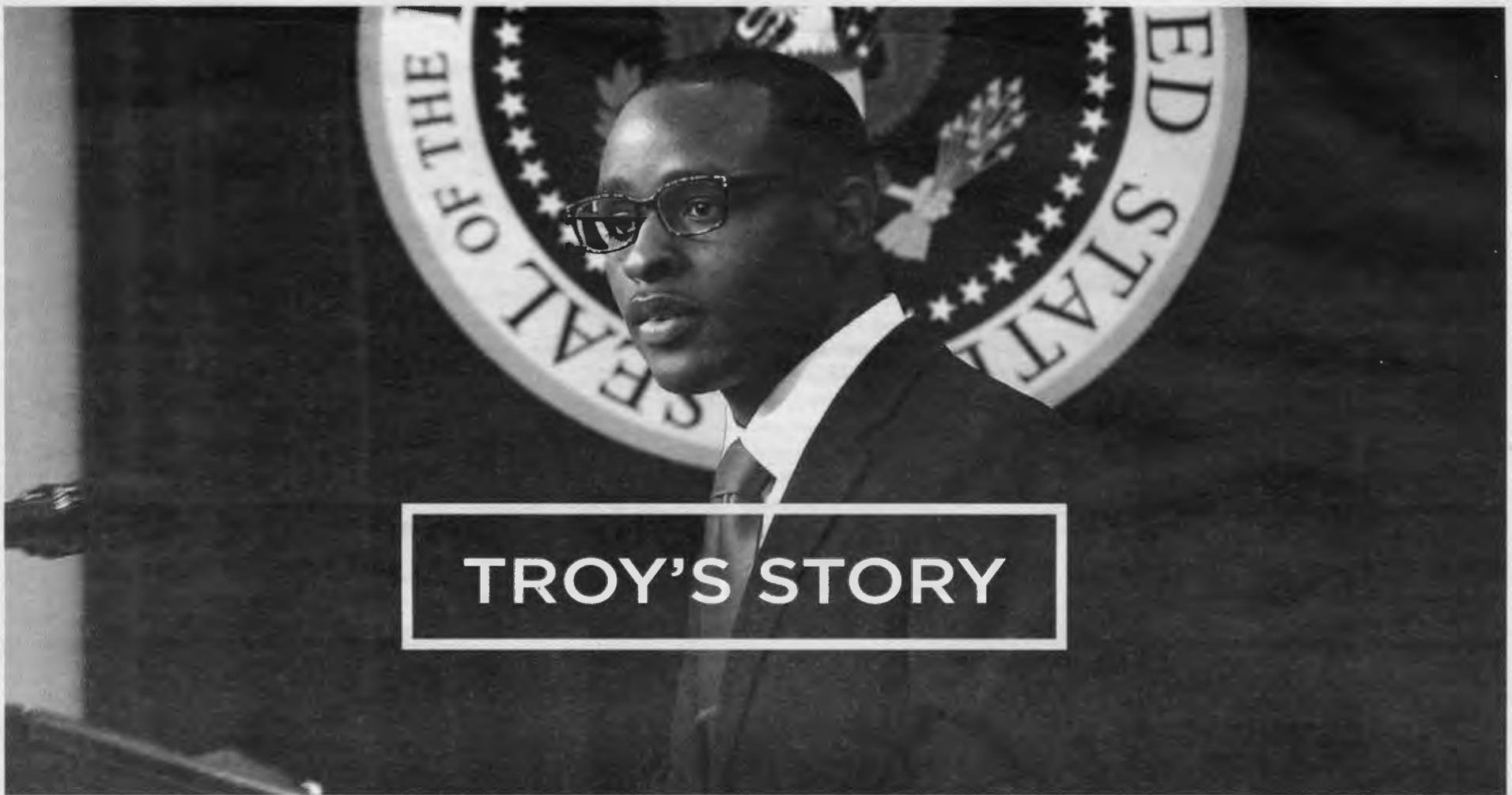
Hearing about embracing failure was encouraging. "By not worrying about failure, it allows my business to evolve and change," said Brittany Chiles, manager and business owner of 8 to 8 Barbershop.

As such, C2C is not only about connecting students and young professionals now: much like the issue of climate change, the program is also future-oriented. Jess Scott, workshop director of C2C Fellows, envisions that by 2018, 25 of its fellows will be involved in national-level politics and 25 more in high-level positions in sustainable businesses. In the short term, C2C is actually preparing an initiative on sustainable leadership. "Beyond Cynicism will be a national day of action next spring focused on political inaction and climate change. Modeled off of past national actions that C2C has launched, it will identify 100 young people across the country who will commit to running for national-level office in 2016 or 2018," said Scott.

The Campus to Congress-Corporation Sustainability Leadership Workshop brought together 50 young leaders from across the nation and provided them with the opportunity to lead without the fear of failure. The message of the workshop was that if we fail to act, failure is the only possibility. Eban Goodstein, the director of C2C Fellows and of Bard's Graduate Programs in Sustainability, even had a mantra for this. In the words of Bruce Springsteen, from the song Dancing in the Dark, "You can't start a fire worrying about your little world falling apart." The C2C workshop was about how passion and practice can coincide in a world ready to fall apart. "I just want to help you guys light a fire of your own," said Goodstein.

## CAMPUS TO CONGRESS

BY DANA FRANCISCO MIRANDA



## TROY'S STORY

photo via ap news

BY TROY SIMON

The short story, the story I tell people, is this: I am Troy Simon from New Orleans, La. I was illiterate until I was 14. And then I enrolled in an academic support program called the Urban League College Track. I met with some connected people who supported me and helped me tap into my intellectual potential. And I got selected for the POSSE program, came up to Bard, and met the Obamas at the White House.

But of course, the story's more complicated than that. I'd like to start at the end, before approaching the beginning.

On New Year's Eve, I received a text from David Silver, CEO of College Track, telling me to leave Jan. 16 open. I was at the Café Du Monde on Decatur Street in the New Orleans French Quarter, sitting with my little brother and my friend, eating beignets.

I texted back "okay" and "Happy New Years." Silver told me that I would be speaking at an event but didn't tell me who was going to be there. Ten days later, he told me I would be speaking about my life. And that I would be speaking about my life in front of First Lady Michelle and President Barack Obama.

On Jan. 12, I got off the plane and checked into a hotel across the street from the White House. I was lost. I was nervous, thinking about how fancy the hotel was, with its marble columns, marble floors and long hallways. When I found my room, unpacked my clothes, and sat down, I was dumbstruck.

The next morning, I went to breakfast. I was wearing a brown suit and a red tie. There were

bright lights and the press stood right behind us with their cameras. Each place at the table had a name card. And there, across from Alicia Keys, was mine: "Reserved—Troy Simon."

I wasn't sitting for long before someone called me away. I left the table. Michelle Obama approached me then, and said, "Troy, it is an honor to meet you. You are so amazing. You are going to be like the Northern Star that will show the world that there is hope for every kid. I cannot wait to hear what you have to say."

She asked me how I was feeling.

I said I was nervous.

"Why?"

"Because you're the First Lady!"

Michelle laughed.

### LOOKING BACK

Looking back, my path didn't seem like one bound for the White House. I grew up in the Ninth Ward with my father and mother, when they were still together.

My cousins and I wandered the streets in packs, stealing chickens out of people's yards, cutting off their spurs or sharpening them to make them fight. I would take birds down from the tree and take their eggs, drop them and watch them crack. I was a total nutcase then.

My mom didn't really help me with my schoolwork. I didn't pay attention in class. I didn't know how to start, what was I supposed to do. I didn't know that I was supposed to ask for help. I thought that my teachers would come to me. But year af-

ter year, my teachers would graduate me, I would wonder why, and I would think to myself, "What is school all about? Why do I have to do this? What is the purpose of this? No one in my neighborhood values education, so why should I?"

The strange part? I told one of my teachers this and she got mad at me.

Literacy class was in the early morning. The kids would read together before going to their classes for the day. And I would fight them because they teased me about my illiteracy. In second grade, the school held me back.

I was lonely in school. Most of the time, other kids bullied me and made me feel bad. They talked down to me because of my grades and because I couldn't spell certain words.

I wouldn't fight them in the classroom, but I would wait until we'd get on the playground and play "man on the run." It's a game like tag. So when we'd play, I'd try to clip them. Sometimes, they'd catch on, and I'd just hit them in the face.

I remember I would shoot spitballs at this girl I liked, and she used to wonder about me and why I acted the way I did. I told her that there's no place for me in the world. I couldn't read, and she knew that, and I thought, what am I going to do?

One day, when I was nine, my cousin came and said, "You want to go in the French Quarter?"

"What is that?" I said.

"You know where those big buildings are?" He pointed. "You can make money there. You can make a lot of money there."

"How?"

"You can tap dance," he said, and he started tap-

ping.

I looked at his feet and I said, "But I don't know how."

"I'll show you — just move your feet and they'll throw money at you."

So I did. And they paid me.

\$91 on a Friday, \$87 on a Saturday, maybe \$51 on a Sunday. More during Mardi Gras. Sometimes we'd get jacked; the rougher kids would take our money.

As I danced, I'd look at the tourists and think: "Wow, they have so much money, but how did they get so much? Where did they work? My mom works, but she don't make this much. Why aren't they telling me to stop and go home?" I guess for them it was OK, because they knew I was poor.

We didn't have much. We all lived in our shotgun house together—me, my mom, my three siblings, my grandmother, four of my grandmother's daughters, my grandmother's boyfriend, my auntie, her husband, and six of her children.

My mom worked at Sonic. Sometimes she'd bring leftovers home for us. Sometimes she wouldn't come home at all. I'd go months without seeing her. When she was home, she'd tell us to go to sleep. It was a trick though, so she could go and have her fun. But I'd fool her, pretend that I was sleeping with one eye open.

When I was 13 or so, my cousin said, "We're getting too old for this tap dancing, so let's do something else. Let's sell weed." We'd smoke weed, but I wasn't as big of a smoker as they were. I was always thinking about my future, even then. That was when I'd go home and cry, sit on the bathroom floor and wonder why my life was the way it is. I wanted what I saw on TV. I used to watch a lot of Disney Channel, Nickelodeon, and I wanted a family that would tell me, "go study." When I was a kid, I always liked it when my mom would tell me to take a bath—because I was dirty—but I liked that, that support, someone to care for me. Someone willing to teach me and be patient with me.

I was in eighth grade then. I remember sitting back, looking at my auntie, and my mom, thinking about how she had abandoned me. I couldn't understand the way in which I grew up and why I had to suffer as an African American. So I decided to take control and change my life.

## THE DAY OF

The day before the White House event on expanding college opportunity on Jan. 16, I found out from David Silver that I would be introducing Michelle Obama. You can understand why I didn't sleep much at all the night before. I was so focused on the speech that I was going to give. I rehearsed over and over again. It was 3 a.m. when I finally decided to go to bed. Four hours later, I woke up and left for the White House.

My speech was at 11 a.m. I was talking to POSSE Founder Debra Bial when Barack and Michelle Obama came into the room. The president shook my hand.

"How are you, Troy?" he said.

"I am doing great! How are you? It is a pleasure to meet you President Obama."

"That is wonderful. How is school?"

"School is wonderful."

"What school do you attend?"

"I'm at Bard College."

"Are you about to graduate?"

*"Other people have told my stories, and they are always focused on education, but that's not the whole story."*

"No, not yet. I am a Sophomore."

"What are you majoring in?"

"American Literature."

I asked if I could take a picture of him. He said no. It would be taken care of.

When it was time for my speech, I heard my name called, and everyone touched my shoulders and said, "You got it." I walked out and saw the lights and the cameras and the people. I got to the podium and said:

"Hello, my name is Troy Simon, from New Orleans, Louisiana."

And then I talked about how I couldn't read until I was 14, how Hurricane Katrina brought me to Houston, how I received help from my fifth grade teacher, how I studied every day, how education brought me so far and how so many people helped me.

People clapped.

When it was all over, there was more applause as I introduced First Lady Michelle Obama. It felt like a dream—everything was blurry, everyone's face was big, and Michelle came onto the stage

and hugged me. I sat down and felt: *It feels good to be me.*

I felt like a different person when I got home. My father hugged me and everyone said, "look at the president." People from the houses across my street said, "I saw you on TV." I felt that my expectations of myself rose. I thought, this could be a turning point for how people perceive me as a young man in my neighborhood.

## MY STORY

Now, this is the crazy part that no one really knows about my story. The part that makes my story complicated. Education was a large part of it, and so was my fifth grade teacher, but the real turning point was located somewhere else.

It was when I was sitting back looking at my auntie, thinking about how my mother abandoned me. That was when I realized that I wanted to change my life. My grandmother has always said if you want to change, you should go to church. So I did. And that New Year's Eve of

2007, I went to church and gave my life to Christ Jesus.

Church helped me go to school and endure negativity. Church helped me love others and understand the world around me. Not education. Education helped me learn how to write and tell my story, to see the world in another perspective, but

it was Jesus who built my character and allowed me to surmount hurdles when the going gets tough. It was the church that got me where I am today. Two separate fronts: a relationship with God and an interest in education.

Other people have told my stories, and they are always focused on education, but that's not the whole story. Education is a portion of it, but a large part is my faith, and that's the part people don't like to hear about. So they tell my story in a different way than I would.

When I tell my story, I tell people what they want to hear, and I never feel guilty. Why should I? Yes, education changed me, and my faith did too—but no one never asks about that part of my story.

I would try to add God to my story, and they'd tell me no, and I would wonder why. I have to shut down who I really am to communicate with others. But at the end of the day, I know what helped me and what's still helping me today: Jesus Christ my Lord and savior. Amen.

# MEET CORINNA BORDEN

*saving the world  
one local, organic,  
fair-farmed kline  
carrot at a time*

BY ERIN O'LEARY

Corinna Borden has a unique job. She is, in fact, the only person with her job—out of the more than 200 North American schools that Chartwells serves. And out of those 200 schools, Borden works at Bard.

Borden started working at Bard in August 2013. She is officially known as the college's food sustainability advocate. Borden is at Bard because "the community made a joyful noise to ask for it," as she put it.

Borden has been involved in everything food-related for many years now. In 2005, she started working at a high-end deli that operated with a farm-to-table model. This exposure in working with local products first put her on the path to where she is today. She then ran their baking school, farmers' market, and started writing about food for her local paper in Michigan.

Borden came into the food industry with a perspective of distrust that the industrial food system was keeping us healthy. "I don't want that kind of energy in my body," she explained.

In 2011, Borden published a book called "I Dreamt of Sausage" about her path to recovering from Hodgkin's disease—a type of cancer that originates from the white blood cells—describing her personal experiences and investigation into alternative forms of medicine. Today, in addition to the work she does for Bard, she also continues to write about food, grow food, and she dedicates most of her time to this cause.

First-year Amelia Goldstein is a researcher for the Real Food Challenge and an intern for the Bard Office of Sustainability. She works closely with Borden. Goldstein says that because Borden works for Chartwells, people might see her just as "corporate trying to appease us."

"But that's just so the opposite of who she is," Goldstein explains. "She genuinely cares about food justice."

Chas Cerulli, senior food service director for Chartwells, says that he hired Borden to act as a liaison between Chartwells, Bard, and the farms. Further, he says that she is a liaison to the student body, "to have someone accessible to speak to for this mission that we have."

The mission: Bard Eats. An umbrella term for all of the sustainability efforts surrounding food on campus, Bard Eats is a collaboration among dining services, the Bard Farm, the Office of Sustainability, the Environmental and Urban Studies department, the office of the vice president, and student groups such as the Bard Food Initiative.

The students who make up the Bard Food Initiative work on the Real Food Challenge, whose goal is to switch to an institutional buying of 20 percent "real food" by 2020. It is a nationwide organization, and by using this, Bard has a starting point regarding the standards a product must meet in order to be considered "real food." It is judged in four categories: local/regional, ecologically sustainable, humane, and fair.

Every invoice for food that comes into Kline is analyzed on the basis of these four criteria. The baseline report for real food on campus in March 2013 was 9 percent. In August, it was 16 percent, and in September, 17 percent. Borden expects the school to vastly exceed the goal—the question is what the next step will be when they do.

Bard Eats is trying to bring the other food service locations on

campus, Manor Café and Down the Road Café, into the real food reforms that they have been working on at Kline.

There have been successes: recently, all of the serving dishes at Kline were switched over to smaller sizes, in an effort to both supply fresher food, and produce less waste, because the food would be made in smaller batches, as needed.

But there are constant challenges to the efforts of Bard Eats. There are restrictions to what the school can buy based on issues such as insurance, delivery, and distribution—aside from the efforts to then buy food that is produced sustainably, fairly and locally. Providing this type of food is particularly difficult when you're talking about feeding an entire college campus.

"The other part of it...is just having people value what we have," Borden said. Over 6,400 plastic cups disappeared from Kline last semester, and 2,200 paper cups had to be bought. These extra costs detract from what could be spent on more "real" food because unfortunately, according to Borden, it often comes down to cost.

By engaging these different groups and interests, Bard Eats unifies a variety of perspectives toward a common goal. "By being able to have all those people together in one room talking about it, we can say, 'let's do something about it,' as opposed to having these little silos of information...We're all eating, so we all have a voice, and this stuff's important," Borden said.

This engagement is also vital for Goldstein. "Yeah, Chartwells has a lot of flaws," she said, "but they're trying to change and a lot of people just see Bard dining for the bad parts and they just like to complain about it, and I think having Corinna, and having the Bard Food Initiative... these are really signs that Chartwells is willing to listen to us."

So, Borden wants Bard to know—if you have a concern, a suggestion, a blog, a petition, a senior project, or a rant concerning anything food-related (note: you are), she will be sitting at her desk in the back of new Kline, eager to hear and discuss them. Recently, a student approached her with a petition to stop selling Sabra hummus in The Green Onion, on the grounds that the company supported the Israeli Defense Force. The decision to remove the brand was done the same day.

Not every food-related issue will be as simple a matter, but Borden believes that these "small victories" can accumulate and go a long way. There will always be more work to be done, more improvements to be made, but, at least as Cerulli sees it, what Borden does at Bard serves as a pilot program for other schools. "She can pave a lot of the way," he says, and what is only just beginning here at Bard is seen as a model so that other schools might do the same.



# FEATURED ARTIST JESSICA CHAPPE

Free Press: Where are you from?  
Jessica Chappe: Santa Monica, California

FP: What are you studying?  
JC: Photography

FP: What kind of art do you make?  
JC: Photographs

FP: What's your biggest inspiration as an artist?

JC: The works of artists that grab your attention and illustrate a deeper meaning - from Sally Mann to Steve McCurry.

FP: What are some themes in your work?

JC: I am interested in psychological representation, human interaction with in landscape, color (even in black and white)

FP: What is the art that you're most proud of?

JC: My color work last semester with the Mamiya 7 II. I titled my work *The Liminality of Consciousness*. I wanted to explore that hazy phase between human consciousness and unconsciousness, awake and asleep, fantasy and reality. I did this by creating scenes that could express this state of mind.

FP: What do you do when you're not at Bard?

JC: I babysit in Hudson, go to concerts in the city, hike, canoe, photograph, cook, and EXPLORE!

FP: What's your favorite outfit?

JC: Don't really have one but the outfit that makes me happiest is a flowy burgundy skirt that goes down to my ankles from Madewell, black crop-top, burgundy doc martins, light-pink cashmere socks, and spiral earrings (if you can't tell my favorite color is burgundy).

FP: What else do you want us to know about you?

JC: I have a fraternal twin sister who also goes to Bard named Chloe (or Chlo-facekilla)





photos by sam williams

BY LUCAS OPGENORTH

Right off the bat, before we start talking about a “Bard music scene,” I want to raise a question regarding what the scare-quoted phrase actually means. When uttered in bad faith, the phrase “music scene” can be as hollow, confusing, or generalizing a phrase as they come. Journalists have found it useful in the never-ending quest to label and classify all musical endeavors or to fetishize certain locations and eras. It also comes in handy when one is trying to narrate the present, thinking of a future memoir, offering an account of “what exactly is happening here and now.” Of course, this is what journalists are most often want to do but it is probably also a way of thinking that most of us engage in more often than we’d like to admit.

But to borrow a cliché, the phrase has different meanings for different people. Oliver Bruce, a junior and drummer in two Bard bands—the punk-pop Wave Envy and queercore PWR BTTM—has clearly thought about it before.

“When I talk about a scene, I mean a bunch of people playing music in different bands and supporting one another,” he said. “It’s like an ecosystem and everyone has their niche. That’s not to say that there’s no two bands that are similar, because there probably are, but everyone’s respectful of each other’s styles for the most part.”

This plurality of bands and styles, as well their web of connections with one another, has, in the opinion of Bruce and many other musicians and event hosts with whom I spoke, birthed a new and healthy “Bard music scene.” Over the last year or so, bands such as Palberta, Jawbreaker Reunion, Furniture Girls, and PWR BTTM have become active and energetic presences at SMOG, the Root Cellar, and Manor.

But more than just their quantity, the connections formed between these bands, their audiences, and Bard’s student-run venues have become the foundation of this new “scene” of which we speak. Bruce’s Wave Envy bandmate Zachary Taube and junior Preston Ossman, who plays guitar in the emo-ish Bard band O-Face and serves on both Entertainment and Spring Fling Committees, have initiated somewhat of a reinvention of SMOG, Bard’s biggest student-run music space.

With the goal of establishing a strong infrastructure with leadership and accountability, SMOG has in the last few years hired and trained audio techs to run sound and SMOG Monitors to regulate shows and keep security involvement to a minimum as well. They’ve also held monthly cover nights, where bands pay tribute to the music of Weezer, Bowie, or the Velvet Underground. The goal, for Taube and Ossman, has been to strengthen the community

around SMOG as well as its relationship with Bard’s administration.

“I think a lot of the DIY or punk mentality is like, ‘fuck the system,’ but you need to work with the system or at least accept that you’re within a system in which you can exist,” Taube said.

But talking about a turnaround at SMOG, and a newly invigorated “Bard music scene” requires a brief detour in the form of a not-nearly-as-subjective-as-it-could-be history of the Booty Banger:

Booty Bangers were EDM/dance-party oriented shows that developed a reputation as basically being monthly bacchanalian shitshows and spawned a slew of similar events hosted by other groups of Bard DJs. As the BB’s reputation grew, the events became wilder, eventually reaching the point at which cases of damage to SMOG’s sound system, several alcohol-related hospitalizations, and other such incidents resulted in the BB’s being banished from campus. Though other students continued to organize similar events, none seem to have reached the level of infamy as the Booty Banger (because let’s be real—with that name and the way the hosts were able to generate a reputation as the place to get wasted and/or laid, these former Bard students possessed a bizarre strain of PR/advertising genius [at least when your target audience is college kids]).

This occurred around the same time that SMOG was in frequent jeopardy of being shut down by Bard’s administration due to what they perceived—not entirely incorrectly—as dangerous and destructive behavior occurring at the space. It would be absolutely reductive to suggest that Booty Bangers, or EDM shows in general, were responsible for the hot water SMOG has been in, as plenty of rock shows have the potential to slip into chaos and in their time, the BBs were wildly popular and enjoyed by many.

“The problem is not, like, drinking a beer. The problem is people drinking half a fifth in their dorm room and thinking that stumbling to SMOG is going to be fun,” Ossman said. “We’re not tryna advertise that you should do that.”

But when the BB and like events became less of a constant presence at SMOG, there was the opportunity for the beginning of a new chapter for the venue.

What’s interesting is how large a shadow the Booty Banger casts for participants in Bard’s current “scene.” The common narrative seems to be that once these events reduced in popularity, bands started popping up and people started talking to each other, working together to host shows.

“I think that the magnitude of fuckery that went down at those shows was kind of a factor in making people sit back and go

'do I really want to get caressed in a large open space? And do I really want to get sprayed by a fire-extinguisher?'" said Lily Mastrodimos of the predatory and hazardous reputation the BB instilled in some students, Music Director of WXBC and singer/guitarist in Jawbreaker Reunion.

The culture that tends to surround certain strains of EDM has also been an issue of concern for the Spring Fling Committee, who have in their requests for feedback, heard concerns about the rape culture that can loom around the heavy "party" focus of Spring Flings past. This year's Spring Fling will deviate from previous years in that it will feature a wider variety of smaller acts intended to appeal to as much of the student body as possible, rather than two famous headliners.

"You go to any festival and its not just one act at night, it's throughout the day," sophomore and Entertainment Committee member Sam Williams said.

Organizers are also hoping to collaborate with BRAVE to provide information about consent and have built a lineup that offers a gender diversity that Spring Fling has often lacked.

"In the past, Spring Fling [lineups] were almost entirely male-dominated. I think that itself is insulting to the student body and brings with it an air of misogyny that we're trying to erase," Ossman said.

Junior Sophie Lazaar, a member of the Root Cellar Collective, the second of Bard's active student-run music venues, views the issue as one of students' safety and comfort, rather than music preference.

"EDM, if that's your thing, that's your thing—stick with it. But if it's not your thing, you should have your own space as well," she said. "It can coexist peacefully with the other space too; there's no need to have one over the other."

But electronic music as a whole has by no means disappeared from campus. Williams

and fellow sophomore Alec Petty run a club called Secret Internet that books club shows with DJs, producers, and rappers. Their soft-spoken, New Jersey born buddy Josh Abramovici also produces electronic music of a more experimental variety and has been working to book shows from like-minded artists, both at Bard and from out of town.

"I think there's more of a community, at least from my perspective, of electronic musicians who are interested in a similar direction of exploration of show development," Abramovici said. "I feel like the shows now are much more dynamic. There's more original music and it's more progressive in terms of having different style acts."

To help further connect Bard's musician and event hosts, members of SMOG, WXBC, Entertainment Committee, and the Root Cellar are joining forces to form BUMP (Bard United Music Project/Bard Underground Music Prevails). The group's focus is to boldly bring Bard's unified "scene" into the great beyond by offering information on how to book your own show, connecting Bard musicians, organizing funds to bring in outside acts, founding a record label for Bard bands and creating an all-encompassing calendar where anyone can see where the rad music is on any given weekend night. Keywords in describing BUMP seem to be "dialogue," "accessibility," and "community."

Creating more possibilities for communication between musicians, show hosts, and audiences (and all people who assume combinations of these identities) also comes with a goal of working to create safer student-spaces at Bard. Junior Quinn Moreland, a member of BUMP, hopes to have some sort of 'Safe Space Manifesto' to serve as a guideline for conduct at places like SMOG, Manor, and the Root Cellar.

"When there's a more respectful atmo-

sphere, things will improve. Not to say that there isn't one now, but I think there are still issues with groping or being touched in a way that you don't want to be touched—not just for girls but for guys too," she said.

While playing a recent show at SUNY Purchase, Jawbreaker Reunion guitarist and singer Bella Mazzetti noticed that each of their music venues had signs emphasizing that each is designed as a safe space.

"I'd like to see those at all of our spaces at Bard," she said. "But it's harder to do than you think, like with SMOG having kind of a predatory image, it can be hard to dispel. But I hope we can do it."

There are also satellites, so to speak, of Bard's "scene." A few driveways past the highway's intersection with Tivoli's Broadway is the Rat Shack: a one story house—with an expansive backyard—inhabited by four Bard students who attended high school together in Brooklyn (the current enrollment status of one of them wasn't entirely clear when I interviewed them but I didn't ask for clarification. Suffice to say these dudes are part of the Bard community). Over the last three years, they've periodically hosted shows in their living room for students interested enough to make the trek off-campus to hear some music.

When I ask about a Bard "scene," the residents of the Rat Shack seem slightly confused. Senior Hugo Stanley speaks of a house in Tivoli known as the Creep Colony that used to host shows in an abnormally large basement several years back. Thinking of his first year at Bard he remembers a jazz-freakout project, that was "more freakout than jazz," fronted by a former student named Alex Hood. He recalls when Providence-based noise group Lightning Bolt played the patio of SMOG, in what we both agree was the most violent show we've seen at Bard, which occurred at the supposed height of the BB era. His memory runs counter to the common narrative

that I've heard in other interviews.

By staying off campus and hosting shows in their living room, the Rat Sack can go past Bard's quiet hours and kids can stay around long after the music has ended. There's no security but themselves and the self-regulating audience and they haven't once heard from local police.

"It feels more community-based than even community-run spaces at Bard," senior Mac Kelly, another Rat Shack resident, said.

But as for a "Bard scene," the dudes seem skeptical. Because of how small it is, they view Bard's music community in terms of individuals, something that's constantly changing based on who is matriculating or graduating.

"I wouldn't think of it as 'how the music scene has changed' but as 'how these certain shows don't happen as much because so-and-so who used to book them graduated,'" Stanley said.

What has undeniably stayed the same is the DIY spirit that runs through Bard's "scene." It's been dedicated kids working with a garage, a basement, a living room, and a small pool of club funds to do something interesting and fun. Perhaps "scene," in this instance, refers to the strength of this spirit, drive, and creativity and the people, artists, and organizers who keep it alive. This relies on active participation and the variety of forms that this article demonstrates as well as those it excludes (big shout out to Noah Firtel and his Sound Crew disciples!).

"I think that, like a lot of other aspects of Bard culture, it can be perceived as super cliquy and can be actually really cliquy. We should all be working towards getting rid of that air of exclusivity," said Andrea Szegedy-Maszak, Jawbreaker Reunion's drummer.

For those about to rock, we salute you.



## REMEMBERING

On January 31st, Bard first-years Sarah [unclear] after being struck by a drunk hit-and-run, the Free Press assembled these submissions.

I've been unable to string Lina's amazing life into a cohesive story or collect my feelings enough just to write something until now. I was hot tubbing the summer after high school when I learned of Lina's gap year plans, something I too was planning on doing. She told me about skydiving, being an "au pair" in Europe or working and traveling in Australia. We made plans, one year from that day in August to get lunch at Bard College, and to share our travels over the year. We had that lunch at Kline during L&T and Lina

did it all. She traveled the world and even came back with a tattoo inside her lip: "Sweet As," An Australian saying which she told me means "hella awesome but it can be used as a noun." Lina wouldn't want us to cry or be sad about her passing. Rather, she would want us to live life to its fullest, taking risks we never have, like she did. So I will keep my memory of Lina close to my heart as I encourage all of you to do, and live life sweet as, for her.

— ZACH WARD

— ZACH WARD



### IN MEMORY OF LINA,

We only knew one another for six months, but those six months were the best they could be. Lina had the most contagious smile, and I'll always remember her laugh. She was the first girl I can recall dancing with at SMOG, laughing at ourselves as we headbanged to electronic music—we were figuring out that this was Bard. Our friendship strengthened

as we struggled through FYSEM together. Sometimes we'd make ourselves laugh if we caught each other's eye while we tried to spit out something philosophical about the readings. We came close to some awkward laugh attacks. It seems like yesterday we were hanging out at JFK with Abby Zieve, waiting to get on our plane home together,

back to Seattle, losing our Shake Shack virginites and stoking each other out to be getting back home. I miss her a lot; she was becoming a close friend, and as an intended studio art major, she would have brought a lot to the Bard community. I'm so thankful for the time we got to share.

— AUSTIN LEHN

# LINA & SARAH

TO MY COUSIN, MY PARTNER IN  
CRIME AND MY BEST FRIEND,

Christina McCausland and Evalina Brown passed away  
in a car accident in Tivoli. In dedication to their lives,  
from friends and family of Sarah and Lina.



photo via thomas smith for chronogram

solid and formidable alter ego; you were so full of wise words, sound advice and a witty joke at all times. You were one of the most selfless people I knew, your genuine and forthright character touched the lives of so many, you left your mark, one that will, without a doubt, never be forgotten.

The hallmark of your outstanding character was that you marched to the beat of your own drum and commanded the respect of those around you and I always admired you for that. You were brimming with life and charm; your zeal radiated through you like a light in the center of a sponge.

Looking back on my childhood, the best times were always with you. You and I, we got each other, we knew when to stop arguing, or to start, when to let the other be or to simply give the other a hug when we knew they needed it most. I could always count on you to brighten my day whether it be through a sarcastic text or Facebook post, or a cheesy joke while stealing green apples from the neighbor's yard. So vibrant and passionate about life, music and of course Iceland, you brought out the best in me even if I didn't realize it at times. You are, and will always be one of my favorite people on this earth, you are my best friend, my kindred spirit, and my second self, and I will cherish every minute of our time together forever.

I never expected you to be taken from us so soon. There are no words I could use to describe how much I love you and miss you.

Growing up with you was full of adventure. Whether it was climbing trees, running over furry caterpillars on our Razor scooters, more than a few fights that usually involved biting each other, jam sessions to ABBA in the basement, picnicking at the park for hours on end, eating ice cream and popcorn until we couldn't anymore and countless other questionable shenanigans, you kept me on my toes and were always there when I needed you most.

I used to brag to people about our relationship because it was so special. At times I could tell people were annoyed because I would rant about our friendship for what seemed to them like too long, but to me it was never enough because I could never accurately convey to them how exceptional our relationship really was. We didn't always see eye to eye, but we shared such a fierce and deep love for our family and that was something that could never be broken. Because we weren't just friends. We were blood. The ties that bound us were deep, because we acted more like siblings than cousins, and more like best friends than siblings.

Though we were polar opposites in many different aspects, at the same time we were so very similar, and from that came an unprecedented kind of companionship. You were one of the people that I loved most, whose opinion I valued most, but also who loved everyone unconditionally. My first best friend, my pen pal, my

— ANNIE  
MCCLAUSLAND

I'm a year older than her, so I always tried to be her big sister. In the end, she taught me much more than I ever taught her. Sarah was so unique; she had a way of looking at the world like nobody else did. She was creative, inquisitive, compassionate, sassy, and true to herself. To me, she is a best friend, sister,

fashion advisor, therapist, co-crafter, co-baker, and teacher, and now, a guardian angel. I love you forever my buddy, I'll catch you on the flip side. *Dú ert alltaf hjá mér.*

LOVE ALWAYS, MAXINE

"Dear Sarah"  
Dedicated to Sarah  
Christina McCausland,  
11.13.94 - 1.31.14  
Written by Leah Silberman  
and Sarah McCausland

# YOUNG LOVE, WEIRD SEX, STRANGE FEELINGS

*This month, the Free Press asked Bard students to submit their experiences with love, sex, relationships and everything related to those three things. Lots of people submitted their stories, proving the broad emotional and sexual scope of the Bard community. Take a gander.*

Bard to me has been a whirlwind of emotional bullshit, hokey hook ups, fantastic friends, and sex in a lot of weird places on campus. Without Bard my sexual revolution wouldn't have started nor the passion to stand up for myself and to not let gendered conventions weigh me down. I don't have a stable partner but I do have the most amazing best friend anyone could ever ask for. To find someone who you can be yourself around and to trust completely negates the superficiality of a relationship. Love isn't roses and chocolates but laughter and spliffs.

-Anonymous

The other day, I was chronicling my love life aloud. My friend was listening; he was one of those friends who you tell things to and then they kiss you and you kiss them back but you never really date. There are a lot of guys like that in the list: flings and fleeting crushes and almost-but-not-quite loves, and I'm okay with that. The friend, who grew up in Red Hook and goes to college in the area, said that I need to find a manly man. He said I would never find a manly man at Bard. I'm not even sure if I know what a manly man is, and I'm not sure if I want to know.

-Sophomore Cisgender Female

I met a boy on the roof of Sands House one October. A week after, there was a Halloween party in Kline. On a hunt for a friend's lost shoes, I ran into him in between the front doors. I said to him, "You're really talented," and then I kissed him. For about ten minutes. In the rankest of all dining hall vestibules. Then there were about two months of awkwardness. Some of my bravest, most desperate interpersonal moments happened during those two months. He gave in eventually. We've been together for almost ten years.

-Anonymous

When it came to love/sex/lust, my first two years at Bard were nothing short of dysfunctional. The first semester of my junior year was a nice celibate break from all that. Then my friend Bill introduced me to a really nice girl, and we've been together ever since.

-Kurt Schmidlein '13

This weekend, I made out with a 37-year old whose name I can't remember. He was nice I think.

-Will Anderson

I exclusively fuck people in the Free Press office.

-Anonymous

"I met him in India. Paul is a big animal lover. He was staying in my area, and there was a music festival. And we bumped into each other trying to catch the same snake. And it so happened that I am also an animal lover! A year and a half later I came to the U.S, and we got married in 2011. The reaction I get when I mention I'm married is, "Omigod you're serious? You're married? You're young, what?" So now I'm like, 'yeah, I'm married, like yeah, whatever."

-Anonymous

I have a reputation here. People either tell me that, or that they've "heard things." I've been with a lot of people. It's often because I don't know how to say no. I don't enjoy sex. I'm not so good at translating thoughts into words, actions come more easily. I'd like to fall in love with every beautiful person I see here. I mess that up, so I seek to find a connection another way. I want to apologize to everybody who has been involved with me in some way. I was only trying to find the one like everybody else.

-Junior Robbie Brannigan

Within the first 3 days of L&T, I had broken up with my boyfriend from back home. I just wasn't interested in him anymore. I hooked up with no one, & spent a lot of time in my room. A few months later, I met my current sweetheart, & after a long, convoluted, confused period, we decided to try an "official" relationship. It worked so well that we decided living together would be a good idea. Despite a few disagreements, we still think it's a good idea, & plan to continue it. So, love at Bard? Grade: A-

-Sophomore Cisgender Female

There's a lot of self-obsessed gay men at Bard. I wish we all would stop focusing on the construction of identity, and more about caring and being tender for each other. I've been really attracted to a lot of boys, but oftentimes they are so stuck up they don't even know what's going on outside of their own ego.

-Gay Male

One time a girl slept over and left at 8 am and walked home in a blizzard so i could sleep more comfortably. That was chill.

-Anonymous

I had sex to the newest 2 Chainz album.

-Anonymous

bad sex  
 sour water  
 bless you  
 I don't know why  
 we are being so  
 light he said  
 at least a  
 warning  
 I am going  
 sour water  
 soaked sheets  
 this wont happen  
 cant happen  
 to go  
 again  
 again  
 Oh  
 she is lovely  
 beautiful and  
 he said  
 again  
 and  
 I said  
 practice some self-control  
 -Esme Savage



photo by abby zieve

I was a virgin for most of my time at Bard. I have a hard time connecting with people and I often feel like there is some set of sexual social cues people pick up during puberty I must never have learned. The following is the closest I came to getting laid in my first twenty-one years of life. I was quite drunk and at a party. And a girl actually was interested in me! She came and danced with me. We drunkenly made out, repressed desire peaked and I fingered her in a pretty public place. I still feel a spasm of mortification thinking about that. Anyway, we went to my room and started fooling around until I said "Excuse me" and threw up in my wastebasket. Surprisingly, that wasn't a turn on and she left. When I woke up I had vomit on my face, period blood on my hands, and shame on my mind. And that was my dominant sexual experience until rather recently.  
 Romance at Bard!

-Anonymous Male

I met my boyfriend the first week of school my freshman year. We had a comfortable, uncomplicated relationship until he graduated. Bard makes it easy to meet someone and get into a rhythm with them—people run in circles, and when you're in a relationship, your circle can easily become you and your partner. I felt lost when he left, and spent a semester reevaluating my identity alone. I think that it's easy to define yourself, or be defined as "single" or "in a relationship" here. Either way, you're kind of committed to it. It's not easy to go from taken to open or vice versa. People knew me as taken, and it's left me grappling (and desperate) for a way to explain who I am now, if he is gone.

-Cisgender Female

Part 1: Confession: I love three men.

Guy #1: He doesn't give a shit about me. Yet in those rare moments, he confides his loneliness in me. He said 'I never want to be mean to you.'

Guy #2: I met him once. He called me 'lady' and it made me feel special. I told him that Tinder was where the deep, complex relationships were formed. That isn't where we met. I found out he calls every girl 'lady.'

Guy #3 My Bard boyfriend has seen all of my faces. Our relationship is difficult. In most ways, he is my hero.

Part 2: I categorize all men into 'big brother' or 'little brother'. In the end, I'm not interested in romantic or sexual partners. I've always just wanted a brother. I've slept with more guys than I can remember just to talk to them and "make them my brother."

Part 3: What do you think it is about me that attracts so many sad souls who just want to cry in my lap and in the very same breath, scares them all away

-Anonymous

The first time I tried adderall (freshman year) I stayed up all night writing what was, in hindsight, a sincere, perhaps a little bit self-important, definitely overly-lengthy break up letter in hopes to minimize the shame of having already been broken up with. The sociology paper did not fare as well. The first time I tried cocaine (last semester) I did so under the misguided assumption that you do cocaine and then you have sex: A follows B. A didn't follow B. My ears felt crackly and I forgot the name of the girl I wanted to talk to. Love is a drug but so is anxiety. Drugs are drugs too. Life is chemistry and I think it would be nice if we all walked around wearing sandwich boards that said, "just looking for someone with whom I could descend into a warm little netflix coma," as a reminder.

-Shades Guy

# BARDIVERSE OVERVIEW

BY JP LAWRENCE

Bard in Russia once consisted of two rooms in the basement of the philology faculty there. Today, almost 500 students graduate from Smolny College of Liberal Arts and Sciences with a B.A. in liberal arts from Bard College and Saint Petersburg State University.

These students are part of a Bard network of more than 35 affiliated programs, institutes, and centers, spanning 12 cities, five states, seven countries, and four continents.

The fact that Bard is in authoritarian regimes such as Russia and Kyrgyzstan is no accident. Bard's international programs began as new democracies were sprouting in Eastern Europe, Susan Gillespie, Founding Director and Vice President for Special Global Initiatives, said.

Liberal education has a natural affinity with democracy, she said, and by bringing liberal arts overseas Bard ensures people who want to have a democratic society can have a liberal education.

"The unifying ethos is the idea of a college that is, in some sense, in the public interest," President Leon Botstein said. "That's kind of a framing idea — that the institution does things that need doing, that have utility in solving issues that relate to social justice, opportunity, to the values that define a college and university."

These values are similar to that of multimillionaire George Soros's Open Society Foundation, which Bard currently manages the undergraduate portfolio for. Many of Bard's

partnerships come as a result of Bard's association with OSF, Botstein said.

Currently, Gillespie and Jonathan Becker, Vice President and Dean for International Affairs and Civic Engagement, are trying to connect the international schools through student and faculty exchanges, conferences and cross-campus classes.

"We hope that students take pride in the simple fact that Bard as an institution is involved in promoting educational reform and innovation," Becker said, "so that young people like them can be exposed to more student-centered and, we think, more effective, educational approaches."

## **BARD DEFINED: THE FOUR PILLARS OF A BARD EDUCATION:**

Partner schools develop their own courses, recruit their own students, develop curriculums according to their own needs, but with Bard guidance and adoption of what Becker calls the four pillars of a Bard education: Language and Thinking (L&T), First-year Seminar, Moderation and Senior Project. (A fifth pillar, Citizen Science, has not been taken up at the other networks yet, although Bard has encouraged its adoption).

### **Kyrgyzstan**

#### Background

The partnership with American University of Central Asia (AUCA) began when Open Society introduced the two colleges.

#### What's up?

Offers scholarships to some of Central Asia's poorest youth. Visiting student program. Eight-week summer internship program.

#### What's next?

A new building and new interdisciplinary programs on human rights and environmental science. Developing a science course partly inspired by Citizen Science.

### **Russia**

#### Background

A group of faculty at St. Petersburg State University wanted to teach from multiple disciplines and brings arts into university study. After meeting with Bard faculty members, they developed a seminar series, which led to Smolny College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

#### What's up?

Botstein said he measures progress on the idea of liberal arts being adopted and approved by the Russian government as an alternative program of study. Has a human rights center.

#### What's next?

Two new masters degree programs: one in art criticism and curatorial studies, and one in music, with a humanities-integrated science program currently under discussion.



### **Burma:**

For a while, there was a possibility of a Bard program in Burma. Talks stalled when Burmese government and opposition forces could not come to agreement, but Bard has not given up.

### **China:**

The Bard Conservatory has been working on a dual-degree partnership with Soochow University in Suzhou, China. Representatives from both schools have been flying back and forth.

**Berlin****Background**

Bard College Berlin was a gift. For years, Bard accredited coursework for students studying abroad there, so when the foundation that owned the European College of Liberal Arts (ECLA), Berlin wanted someone to take over, they gave control of the school to Bard.

**What's up?**

A six-week summer program, a couple one-year programs, a chance for Bard students to spend their first or second semester in Berlin. ECLA offered a Bard four-year humanities degree in 2009, formally merged with Bard in 2011, and changed its name to Bard College Berlin this year.

**What's next?**

A new social sciences program and perhaps a new location in Berlin.

**Palestine****Background**

Al-Quds President Sari Nusseibeh wanted an American partner institution. Bard was probably not his first choice, Gillespie said, but Bard's experience with Smolny played an important factor in his decision.

**What's up?**

500 students from Al-Quds University participated in an Arabic L&T this summer. The masters program in teaching at Al-Quds recently graduated almost 130 teachers for Palestine's school system.

**What's next?**

More opportunities for Bard students to study abroad.

**Boston:**

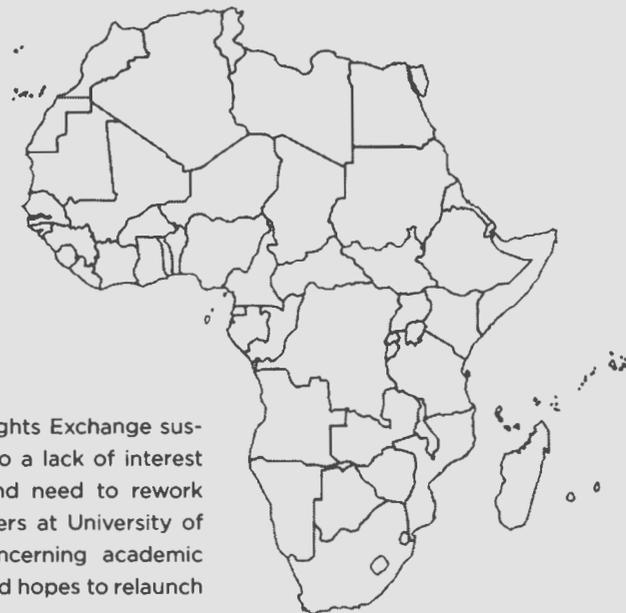
Longy School of Music is focused on graduate programs and the El Sistema program, which gives music lessons to Venezuelan youth and is being adapted in the US. Teaches music to 200 adult students at \$100 an hour for private instruction and \$40 an hour for group classes. Offers masters degrees in music and teaching. Undergraduates at Longy jointly enroll at Emerson College.

**Cleveland:**

A new early college. Students attend college level seminars in the humanities full-time. Enrollment starts with ninth-grade students and a small group of eleventh-graders, with students of other grades coming later. Funding came from the George Gund Foundation. The school does not yet have a permanent home.

**South Africa:**

International Human Rights Exchange suspended last year due to a lack of interest from Bard students and need to rework relationship with partners at University of the Witwatersrand concerning academic and financial issues. Bard hopes to relaunch IHRE again soon.



# UKRAINIAN TRAGEDY OR MAIDAN IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

BY MILA MALYSHAVA

"It is not a riot. It is not unrest. It is a battle. It is a revolution of dignity, awakening of national consciousness" (Maidan activists).

I am not a Ukrainian, but my dear friends holding the barricades in Kyiv are. Besides the personal attachment of worrying about their fate, I am also closely following the uprisings across Ukraine as a supporter of the opposition movement in neighboring Belarus, which faces the same issues: an oppressive government, armed violation of human rights, and a blatant disregard for the democratic values that distinguish a free society. This revolution affords hope for both countries.

It is deeply appalling to watch the international media's failure to understand the essence of the Maidan struggle. I seek to explain the general situation and most of the common misconceptions that, unfortunately, dominate the world's media these days.

## WHEN

The demonstrations began on Nov. 21, 2013 in Kyiv where people gathered around Maidan—the independent square in the center of the capital—after the government suspended the signing of a trade agreement with the European Union in favor of closer economic collaboration with Russia. People have been continuously protesting in the streets since. EuroMaidan has grown bigger over these three months, collecting up to a million protesters. It is only now, when Maidan is covered in blood of unarmed civilians, that the crisis made it to headlines.

## WHY

Yes, initially, the protesters came out in opposition to trade agreements, but that was really just the last straw. The Ukrainians have grown tired of the governmental abuse of power, abuses which serve exclusively personal interests doing no good to the country. The nation has gathered to show they have had enough. The Ukrainian Revolution has gone far beyond dissatisfaction with any economic deals.

Maidan is not about picking East or West. What they want is to overthrow a corrupt and brutal regime represented by the oppressive Ukrainian government. The president and his underlings are not motivated by ideology, geography or ethnicity (Russian versus Ukrainian). Their decisions are driven by personal interests and greed, and remain free of politics. It follows, and not surprisingly so, that a Russian offer of massive bailout through purchasing government bonds and amoral energy deals would supersede any other economic deal. During the round of negotiations with the opposition forces, however, the authorities denied allegations of government corruption and an abuse of power.

## WHO

There have been multiple allegations about who exactly represents the Maidan activists. Many of the allegations became unbearably ugly after the violent armed clashes. The activists have been labeled as skinheads and neo-Nazis attacking a legitimately elected president and his government.

Yes, there are representatives of radical nationalist groups among the protesters, but they are a small minority who share with the Maidan crowd abhorrence toward the corrupted government. This is not enough to justify any level of coordinated violence against protesters and Maidan volunteers. In reality, the protesters represent various groups: young and old, Kyivans and people from the periphery, people from cities and suburbs, various religious groups, Ukrainian- and Russian-speakers, state employees and businessmen... people like you and me.

## ATTACKS

The protests were peaceful for about two months until they were deemed illegal, in violation of constitution. This sequence of events is crucial. Berkut (riot police) violence is not a response to riots; rather, the riots are a response to police violence, abduction of people by police, tortures, violation of laws and constitution, and violation of basic human rights. The president and government are in offense; protesters are in defense, and a very weak defense at that. Maidan activists have cobblestones, fireworks, and Molotov cocktails. The riot police have water cannons, AK-47s, grenades, armored trucks, tanks, and rooftop snipers. They have also kidnapped wounded people from hospitals, who they later torture and throw in jail.



## DEMANDS

Maidan protesters are simply desperate people who intend to show their disagreement through peaceful demonstration in an attempt to live in a dignified country. During the negotiations with government representatives, the opposition have repeatedly asked the president to resign or hold emergency elections, and return to the National Constitution of 2004. They have also begged the European and the United States officials to adopt sanctions against the Ukrainian leaders, though the Western world has been superfluously passive in their response.

It is the biggest and most violent protest since the collapse of the USSR. Don't be silent—spread the awareness. Long live Ukraine.

photos by valerie pochko

EuroMaidan (Eurosquare) is ongoing demonstrations and riots in Ukraine, which started on Nov. 21, 2013 with protests demanding to sign the EU Association Agreement. We use the spelling Kyiv; Kiev is a disputed label due to its status as a Russian transliteration.

# KYIV EUROMAIDAN: LETTER FROM THE CITY ON FIRE

BY VALERIE POCHKO

I first saw footage from EuroMaidan in November in Berlin, where at the time I lived and worked. I remember clinging to the TV screen, feverishly looking through web pages and constantly regretting that I was not there. A few days later I joined the first local gathering next to Brandenburg Gate. On New Year's Eve, I found myself home, in Kyiv, in the midst of the Revolution.

In three months, EuroMaidan transformed from a friendly Sunday meeting with tea and dancing into an apocalyptic place with scorched houses, gas masks and an endless sea of camouflage that dazzled the unprepared eye. Forced night crackdown of the defenseless students and adoption of several ridiculously restricting laws became two major waves that escalated the conflict.

The most impressive feature of EuroMaidan is a tremendous level of self organization. It is a tiny country with its own commandants, doctors, chefs, journalists and army. Some people volunteer within their professional skills; others try themselves in unusual tasks. Ages and hierarchies are blurred; everyone tries to make at least a small contribution to the common cause—old women pour gasoline into bottles, students collect cobblestones for weapons, white-collar workers carry numerous packages with anesthetics and ointments for burns.

There is no minimal useful input—one can bring a pair of gloves or chop wood, live in a cold tent or die in battle. This is an artificial model of life with terribly real consequences.

Many people have found a purpose here. Young boys who once hid from the state army are now skillful with weapons and take self-defense courses. Girls that could barely make scrambled eggs now cook huge 500-serving pots of porridge. People deliberately give up their "senseless" jobs and volunteer for sincere gratitude, a genuine smile and a cup of hot tea with a sandwich.

But that is the peaceful side of EuroMaidan. In the moments of aggression everything changes dramatically. The thunder of grenades stuns even those who are sitting on the couch in front of their

TV screens. The news reporter announces that a nine-story building right on the central square is on fire for the second day in a row. Those transporting tires in trunks get more years of prison

preventative measures. One doesn't need to be on the front line—the bullet can reach him during the day or night, in a dark alley or in front of a crowd. No one is protected. As the days go by, it feels like



than burglars or murderers. For the first time in my life, the metro lines are completely blocked—urban hitchhiking becomes a new trend. A phone on my table warms up from calls with polite questions and sincere compassion. "Do you have any idea what's going on in your country?" yells the voice from the cell phone. Apparently it seems like I don't.

The worst thing is not knowing whom you can trust. Each side of the conflict has its own radicals—soldiers who save civilians and protesters who severely beat unarmed policemen. There are corrupted sportsmen who disguise as protesters to provoke scandals and pro-government journalists who turn a blind eye to the obvious. European politicians condemn the aggression in Ukraine and promise on their Twitter pages that they will take

we have less and less to lose.

Few people currently care about the initial purpose of the perpetual campaign—signing the European Union Association Agreement. Aside from the fire-burnt convictions and municipal buildings, tents and homes, we do not have much to return to. Today, Ukrainians, with their faces covered in soot, create history that will be hard to misquote in school textbooks. There are too many eyewitnesses.

Ukrainians have always been known as "none of my business" type people. This motto has been replaced by a new creed: I am Ukrainian and I cannot keep calm. We are not going to sit by and wait until we are all imprisoned. EuroMaidan is our common challenge and a school of life for every single person.

# A JOURNAL ENTRY FROM A BLACK GIRL IN BUDAPEST

BY KARIMAH SHABAZZ

When I learned that I had passed my moderation board, I grew excited with the idea that finally, I would be able to escape Bard's campus by studying abroad. Yes! I hated Bard with a passion. Well, maybe it was a love-hate relationship. I loved my classes and how I grew academically in my writing and speech. I loved my TLS project, which I co-founded, Building Up Hudson, and the sleep I lost from working on it. I loved the relationships I built with friends, professors, and staff as well as the clubs I dedicated my time to. Bard also enabled me to build social capital by connecting me with influential people and opportunities.

However, Bard was not always this place of happiness for me. I absolutely hated the lack of students of color and professors of color on campus. I hated the lack of cultural sensitivity, the prevalence of unacknowledged privilege, and the immense amount of microaggressions heard daily. I hated during freshman year when some of my classmates in First-Year Seminar made me feel uncomfortable and inferior after voicing my beliefs as we read Genesis. I hated the coldness of the campus—how people refuse to make eye contact, smile, or even acknowledge you when you walk by (even though they've had like five classes with you)! I was ready to leave.

After learning that I would be spending my second semester of junior year in Budapest, Hungary—after completing the Bard Globalization and International Affairs Program (BGIA) program in the fall—I naturally grew anxious about this new adventure. I didn't know of anyone in my family who had studied abroad. I can't even think of a family member who had traveled to Europe or any other continent or country, other than Mexico or the Caribbean Islands, for vacation. I was the first one.

Besides doing the general Google search of Budapest and admiring the images that appeared, I remember searching vigorously for the Black experience in Budapest. I wanted to know what I would experience as a Black person, specifically as an African-American. Would I have to worry about hate crimes or racism and discrimination? After hours upon hours, I found one video of an African-American woman who taught in the countryside of Hungary. That wasn't very helpful. "What would my three months in Budapest be like as a Black woman?" was a prevailing thought in my mind as I prepared myself for this experience.

Stepping out of my three-bedroom apart-

ment, I walk down three flights of stairs and out of the complex. Heading towards the grocery store, I turn left onto Nagymező utca. Walking down the street, I notice a woman staring at me. Her eyes gaze over my hair, down to my boots, back to meet my eyes. As I stare back at her, she quickly looks away. "That's awkward," I think to myself. Continuing down the street, I shrug off the uncomfortable moment and notice a One Euro Shop (like a dollar store). Oh, I should definitely go there, I think to myself. Walking past me, a couple gaze over my body and then stare intensely, directly into my eyes. For the full three seconds that we walk past one another, our "staring contest" does not end until the couple are well past me—not forgetting to look back at me as they continue in the opposite direction.

Whenever I leave my apartment, I can expect at least 90 percent of the people I pass on the street, in the school or in the store to stare and glance me over. Usually, the curious stares turn into glares that produce an uneasiness and nervousness within. I don't know why people glare at me. For some, I am the first Black person they have ever seen. Others are curious and find me exotic, while some hate me. It makes me sad. Sometimes, it makes me want to cry. Sometimes, I do. I don't know why they glare at me like this. What did I do?

This is, of course, not the only story to life in Budapest as a Black girl. Of course there are students of color who come to Budapest and find beauty in the city. They use this adventure as a learning experience: learning the language, the currency, and the new culture. They value the education that is gained at the Central European University, which offers Master's level courses. They take advantage of visiting other nearby European countries. They gain experience in living on their own, cooking for themselves, and transforming into an independent adult.

Yes! I have experienced all of these things; however, the intention of this writing is to present a perspective that I was not able to find on my journey. A voice that was not present in the Black experience abroad—because there is one. Anyone can tell you stories upon stories of their triumphs and their moments of happiness; however, will they tell you about their trials and tribulations, the times they wanted to give up and their moments of sadness?

# NEITHER EAST, NOR WEST: INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN “CENTRAL EUROPE”

BY DALMA SZENTPÁLY

Growing up as a Hungarian, I learned quickly that the concept of “Central Europe” is nonexistent. I was born in 1989, when Hungary lost its ties to the Soviet Union, and lived my whole life with a dual mindset. Budapest, even today, culturally belongs to Eastern Europe, while it wishes to be accepted and assimilated into Western culture.

Ever since the Central European University opened its doors and offered a liberal arts education, Budapest became more and more fashionable to international students. As a result, the city tries to accommodate its nightlife to the wishes of the West.

What does the city have for Western students? Ruin pubs. Deserted buildings, somewhat renovated but filled with mismatched, retro (reaching back to the Communist era) furniture and the best of street art. We offer the remnants of our bitter past and commercialize it to fit the stereotype of the post-Soviet country, which was ascribed to us.

As speaking a foreign language is a requirement to receive a degree in Hungary, some college students are desperate for an opportunity to speak with the international community in the city. From the moment that we could utter a sentence in English, my friends and I began to vigilantly roam the ruin pubs at night, listening to every non-Hungarian syllable so that we could find a group of foreign students and party with them “Western style.”

Even though a lot of people in Budapest are open to international students and Western ideas of tolerance, there is a deep-seated reluctance to accept the diversity of the world outside of Hungary. Language isolates people. Hungarian is only spoken by little more than 10 million people around the world and is a language without similarities to any other language on the planet. While its uniqueness is fascinating, it also makes people too comfortable in their solo-lingual bubble.

Before the change of regime, as part of the Soviet bloc, Russian language was compulsory to study for Hungarian students. My parents and my siblings told me that, despite having to study it, as an act of rebellion most people refused to speak Russian. Studying Western languages was another rebellion in itself. The easiest way to survive on the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain was to stop looking at the other side. Inside of this small world, everything unorthodox was feared and distrusted.

In some ways this mentality has never left. The international community of Budapest constantly encounters this confusion. Though the westernized post-Soviet space of the ruin pubs provides comfort; the everyday interaction with the locals ends in strange stares and rude mutterings in Hungarian.

However much we wish for the Western future, we still belong to our Eastern past.

## STICKS AT MIDNIGHT

# PLAYING LATE

BY AVERY MENCHER

If you strolled through the Stevenson Athletic Center at 8 p.m. on a Tuesday, you would see students and community members alike, sweating and testing themselves throughout the gym. If you came to the building at midnight on a Tuesday, you would barely expect the doors to be open, let alone anyone to be inside. But you would be mistaken. For the past few weeks, the men's lacrosse team is often found on the basketball court from 11 p.m. to approximately 12:30 a.m., two or three nights per week. If you're lucky, you might even catch them in the gym seven hours later, practicing from 7 a.m.-9 a.m.

Such are the inconveniences of an athletic program in progress; when a team needs all the practice it can get, sometimes athletes have to lose a bit of sleep. As a lacrosse player myself, the risks of these late practices are especially evident.

"Get into one-on-ones!" the coach barks, and we jump into our drill. It's offensive player vs. defensive player, *mano-a-mano* on the gymnasium floor. Unfortunately, it is almost midnight, and after a long day of classes and homework, I am not at my best. As first-year Henry Blossfelds, a 6-foot-1-inch, 190-pound midfielder, begins his dodge, I am standing behind the goal with the other defenders, my brain near paralyzed with exhaustion. I turn toward him just as I see his arms whip across his body, firing the ball upwards of 75 miles per hour. As my right thigh explodes with pain, I despise these late practices even more. I wonder in the back of my head what color the bruise will be.

Though coaches obviously do not have to wake up and go to class at 10

in the morning, they are not fans of this arrangement either. Men's Lacrosse Coach Tucker Kear is young, like most of the coaches at Bard, so he recognizes that there is a definite strain exerted on his players when they have to come ready to play with intensity at 11:00 p.m. and arrive in class ready to learn the next morning. But he explains that the men's lacrosse team cannot afford to take days off, as this is the first year that Bard has fielded a men's lacrosse team since 2010. That season did not go well: the team went 0-11, and the program was shut down at the end of the year.

Though this year is looking better than the 2010 effort, the first year of building a program is always difficult, especially in terms of numbers. Union College's lacrosse team, a strong Liberty League program, has 40 players. Bard has 18. Of those 18, 15 are freshmen. So the team takes whatever time it can get.

Kear, with the help of his assistant coach, Alex Stone, a former star player at Union, has brought in nearly 60 recruits this year. Another 13 are already committed to playing here if they attend. According to Kear, recruiting is the hardest aspect. This difficulty is exacerbated by the fact that a potential applicant can drive up to Liberty League competitor Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and see not one, but three pristine synthetic turf fields. Without an artificial turf field, the only place at Bard to practice in the winter is in the gym.

Regardless of these complications and obstacles, both Kear and Athletic Director Kris Hall are dedicated to keeping this team on track. Hall is doing her best to change this discrepan-

cy, with talks underway to determine a fundraising strategy in order to replace the grass on the Lorenzo Ferrari Soccer Field with artificial turf.

Kear and Hall both acknowledge the extra difficulty of working under an administration that has openly admitted a lack of support for athletics. In an address to freshmen during Language & Thinking, as well as during Parents' Weekend, President Botstein said that he places very little personal emphasis on college athletics. Luckily, Kear, Hall, and others in the athletic department are not totally alone, as both praise Vice President for Administration Jim Brudvig and his advocacy and dedication as Bard Athletics expands.

The burly Coach Kear has his own way of explaining the problem at hand.

"You ever hear of the children's story 'The Mitten?'" Coach Kear asks me. We sit in his office, resplendent with lacrosse paraphernalia, from sticks in every corner to a list of potential recruits on the large white board. "Can't say I have, Coach," I say, wondering where he might be going with this.

"Well, in this story, a boy drops his mitten in the woods and loses it. First, a mole finds it, and he crawls in. He realizes that it's warm and cozy, so he stays there. A few more animals happen upon the mitten, and they burrow in as well. It's a little snug, but it can still fit them. Eventually, more and more animals hear about how nice this mitten is, and they all come, squeezing themselves in. Finally, the mitten bursts. Our mitten is getting crowded."

# VOLLEYBALL SANDWICH SURPRISE

BY JOHANNA COSTIGAN

I am sandwiched by surprise. Having expected only a few scattered and unenthusiastic fans, I find myself instead seated between a middle-aged Red Hook couple, expertly reading the scoreboard and commenting on the players' maneuvers, and a group of Bard students, loudly singling out their friend's name in cheers, sipping cheap-smelling beer out of Gatorade bottles.

Half the kids seem like they spend all their time in the gym; others seem like aliens dropped into the stands from Mars, itching to go outside to Instagram or smoke something. The stench of body odor, native to the gym, is inescapable—although it's unclear whether it's coming from the court or the bleachers.

We all watch the game with a startling focus. The sight of scruffy and unmistakably Bardian men stripped of their skinny jeans and jammed into spandex was exciting enough to quiet our artistic minds and narrow our attention exclusively to the action of the court.

The Raptors' opponent on that Wednesday night was the SUNY New Paltz Hawks, with a record of 15-1. The Hawks possessed all the qualities that typically intimidate opposing teams; seemingly five years older and stronger than most of the Raptors, equipped with striking height. But they lacked true camaraderie, a sense of togetherness and

interest in pursuing the same goal.

Every time a Hawk succeeded—in serving, returning, or blocking, he would grant himself a nod of self-appreciation. When a Bard player succeeded, he was rewarded by claps and acknowledgement from his teammates, an instinctive appreciation that's paired exclusively with friendship.

Dressed in a nice blouse and khakis, Head Coach Stefanie Carrington is an active coach. The subtle heel of her shoes click against the gym floor as she approaches the cusp of the court as Carrington gives each of her players individual advice. New at Bard this year, fresh from five years coaching women's volleyball at Dominican College, she relies upon the guidance and experience of her two captains, seniors Henry Kasiske and William H. Williams.

Carrington gushes about her captains in an expected but genuine way. "Billy and Henry are some of the best leaders I've ever worked with in my career. They're motivational, positive, the kind of guys that lead by example."

She made it clear that she extends the same value to all of her players. "They know if they screw up I'm not gonna put someone else in; there's no pressure from the bench."

One of those players, first-year Alex Adams, No. 9, is stretching, preparing for the next set. Adams started playing volleyball in seventh grade.

"I'm from Fire Island. Emphasis on Fire Island, not Long Island," Adams distinguishes preemptively.

He joined the middle school team mostly out of peer pressure. The volleyball team was full of "the chillers," as he put it, rather than the "asshole, jock-y people."

While his high school team was highly ranked and relatively intense, he still likened it to the

Bard team in the sense that he considers both to be the underdog. The main distinction, he explained, is the fact that the Bard team only has eight players.

"Every single one of us knows that we can't get hurt, we can't get sick," Adams said. "If one of us did, we'd have a hole in the court."

When not on the court, Adams can usually be found sitting on one of three chairs in the Hudson common room, shirtless, playing Super Mario Smash Bros with two kids from his dorm. Otherwise, he's practicing serving in his room with his friend ZuZu, embracing the pure fun of the game, sans competition.

Another player, sushi-loving, 6-foot-7-inch, first-year Shane McDonald, No. 13, is just getting into the novel *Lolita*, reaches the ball effortlessly—at least partially by virtue of his height. When Carrington pulls him aside during a break to give him some seemingly game-changing pointers, he listens attentively and appears to incorporate her advice into his playing.

McDonald plays with focus and ease, with both fixated interest and a slight edginess to be reunited with his freedom once the game ends. Wrapped in a blanket and chewing on a Pop-Tart, four hours after he has finished playing the game, McDonald talks about what makes playing for Bard especially rewarding.

"It's really fun when a team that's nationally ranked is forced to put in their starters because they underestimated us," he said.

Senior Kasiske throws the ball in the air and serves aggressively, successfully. The score is 11-13. The Raptors are revived and determined, putting up a fair fight against the highly-ranked New Paltz team. As the emotional leaders, as well as the most experienced players on the court, the captains' job is to make sure people are having fun, to keep

the momentum up, while also staying competitive and focused.

Momentum can be everything. During the first set in a match against Hilbert College, Carrington said there was a moment when the volleyball team realized they could win, and a light switch came on. By set five they were rolling on all cylinders and working off of the momentum of success and respect, playing less like underdogs and more like winners.

As the only upperclassmen on the team, the captains are the ones who most clearly remember the way the team used to be run. While the 18-player team they were on their first year was larger, stronger, and, for the most part, more experienced, they still consider this year's team more impressive overall, primarily due to Carrington's expertise.

"She approaches each player with what she thinks is the best way to coach him individually, whether she's sarcastic, tough, passive aggressive, whatever, she's always effective. She has gotten to know us as people, which has helped us grow as players," Williams said.

The coaches, captains, and players have fostered a sincerely trustful dynamic despite of, or perhaps because of, their small size.

The Raptors were eventually swept, but moral victories can at times be sweet enough. Kasiske summarized the spirit of the team. "We come in with the sense that we have nothing to lose. Everybody is expecting nothing from us, so why not scare the big guys?"

# DOES BLACK HISTORY MONTH MATTER?

BY DANA FRANCISCO MIRANDA

FP: To start off I would just like to ask each of you what are your thoughts regarding Black History Month?

OO: I don't feel that I can have an opinion because I'm Nigerian and South African. It's only an American thing. I believe Black History Month should focus on all forms of blackness, not only on African-Americans, but British Blacks, Caribbean Blacks, blacks in South America, etc.

DB: I feel that Black History Month is not the best thing. By separating it from American history we are allowing ourselves to be separated. But black history is needed because white America tries to erase black history from American history. My teacher was telling me his daughter was learning that slaves helped their slave masters voluntarily. That's erasing history. In 2010, Gov. Jan Brewer of Arizona signed a bill that banned ethnic studies in high schools. Black History Month is less a celebration, and more a case of historical self-defense.

JC: I believe you cannot go a single day without thinking about race. Every day should be a celebration of people. Every day one should study American history, which means black history too. If you assign a certain time to something, you allow people to archive it and forget about it.

CD: Reminiscing about African-American history is not going to bring equality. It's more about institutions. It's about working to change school systems in low-income communities where most of the black people live. Those things need to change, not the days or the amount of time that black history is celebrated.

OO: The onus should fall on educators to integrate black history into American history. Black history didn't happen in a vacuum. The two should be taught together, because they happened together, concurrently. It's almost unfair to section it off. It's almost a form of segregation.

JC: By not teaching Black History as part of American history it becomes easy to forget. To give people the excuse to deny Black history is almost un-

American.

FP: So in a month speaking of oppression and empowerment how does privilege come into play when it comes to education?

DB: White America has exalted those black people that have separated themselves from the rest of the black population. What it means to be a privileged black person means to be separate because of education.

OO: But is it? Is it separation on whose terms? It doesn't come from us. It comes from society. White people say what black is. If you speak really good English or know big words, then all of a sudden you're whiter. Why are things of cultural capital only associated with white people? There are so many things that bind us, education should not separate us. I think it is part of the self-hate that makes blacks feel being educated makes them traitors. Bettering yourself, what black power is all about, now means becoming white. It's disempowering. Getting an education shouldn't mean I should become less black.

FP: So do blacks that don't have an education feel like educated blacks are separate?

CD: Blacks without an education don't have educated blacks coming back and being heroes to the community. Educated blacks are viewed as white because in the eyes of low-income blacks, whites don't give a fuck. If you are going to be educated and not claim your people, they are going to be upset. But with education you come to the full understanding of who you are in America, whether black or a white. You can then go out and extend it to the outside community, to those who need it. That's why you are here in college. Bard allows you to talk about these issues.

FP: So are you having these conversations outside of this room, outside of Black History Month?

JC: Personally, yes. A lot of times people are scared and uncomfortable to dis-

cuss these sorts of subjects. They sort of check the boxes but don't want to discuss it—this campus in particular.

FP: But isn't that a privilege—not having to talk about uncomfortable subjects?

JC: It most certainly is. It's unspoken privilege that's always quietly there. Choosing not to talk about it, or gaining something by not talking about it.

OO: I do believe that we have these discussions. It's just the same people coming to panel discussions on race. But why are people so scared to enter that space? If I go to Red Hook and I walk into a store with a big jacket I will face microaggressions. White people don't face the daily implications of race. They don't acknowledge how such a system benefits them. It's important to understand these things so that people can learn how to be an ally.

FP: So what I hear is that you want more done by Bard College. Is that correct?

DB: I believe that Bard should mandate a conversation about race. I think people don't want to hurt peoples' feelings. But I am afraid to wear a hoodie in a neighborhood and get killed. We as Americans have to realize that we are part of the same nation. What we choose to talk about and what not to talk about it affects the nation. The fact that we are not having this conversation, what does this say about us as a people? What does it say about us as Bardians?

OO: Bard is so anti establishment if things were mandated, people would just come begrudgingly. The conversation would be tainted. A lot of white people feel like this isn't their conversation to have. But blackness is not just a black issue. Race is not just a black issue. We are a community. We are here for educational purposes. If you really want to be here, to be educated and to educate, then you should want to talk and challenge your own assumptions.

In this dialogue, four Bard students, senior Durante Bar-ringer, senior Olawunmi Ola-Busari, junior Casper Davis Jr., and senior Joe C., gathered together to discuss what Black History Month means to those in college. The conversation dealt primarily with issues of empowerment, privilege, i.e. special advantages enjoyed by an individual or class, and cultural capital, or assets that promote social mobility.

## WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT HUMMUS

BY ROBERT ISAF OF THE ORGANIZATION OF BARD COLLEGE STUDENTS AND ASSOCIATES FOR BOYCOTT, DIVESTMENT, AND SANCTIONS

As of this writing, there are perhaps two dozen containers of Sabra Hummus—the market leader among hummus brands in the U.S.—sitting in the refrigerator of the Green Onion. There is a fair chance that, by the time this article goes to press, those will all be gone; sold out and replaced with an organic brand chosen by our dining services. There is no expectation that Sabra Hummus will ever return to campus. And this is something for us to celebrate.

The fact is, choosing or not choosing Sabra is more than a matter of taste. Since 2005, the international movement for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions of Israel (BDS) has been very slowly working to change the way people around the world interact with and think about Israeli policies. Led by a sweeping coalition of civil society groups within Palestine, and modeled on the BDS movement that played so large a role in dismantling the apartheid system within South Africa, the movement encourages boycotting consumer products and divesting from companies that directly contribute to or benefit from the ongoing occupation of Palestine.

Sabra Dipping Company, LLC, is owned 50 percent by PepsiCo and 50 percent by the Strauss Group, an Israeli food manufacturing company that, like many businesses in Israel's heavily militaristic society, has made a point of supporting the Israeli army, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF). In particular, the Strauss Group has drawn ire for publicly advertising online (in language that was later redacted)

their over 30-year long "adoption" of the IDF's elite Golani Brigade. The brigade is notorious both inside and outside of Israel for charges of repeated human rights violations.

Bard students may remember the videos of the most recent IDF incursions onto the Bard Al-Quds campus that surfaced just a few weeks ago. These videos showed the tear gas fired on the campus. Faculty members reported the use of stun grenades and rubber-coated bullets. This came on the heels of another incursion in December, widely reported in the Free Press. With our connection to Palestine, through Bard-Al Quds, we are given glimpses of everyday life under occupation, seeing the impacts of Israeli policy that many Americans never see.

As Bard students, then, we seem to have a special responsibility to stand up for justice in Palestine. Around the world, the movement for BDS has been gaining extraordinary momentum, even in the last few months, and it's time for Bard, little by little, to lend our voice to the choir.

Contrary to allegations, the BDS campaign is not anti-Semitic; it pointedly endorses no one solution for the troubles plaguing Palestine and Israel, and is careful to avoid even threatening any individual's personal freedoms. Nor, in fact, is this primarily about economic or a monetary impact, as many incorrectly assume.

Rather, BDS endorses the responsible use of boycotts (academic, cultural, and consumer), divestments, and sanctions as a means to achieve three end-goals:

1. An end to the occupation and coloni-

zation of all lands occupied in June 1967, including a dismantling of the so-called Security Wall;

2. Recognition of the fundamental right of all citizens of Israel to full equality;

3. An unequivocal recognition of the Right of Return for all Palestinian refugees, as stipulated by UN Resolution 194.

BDS, in its methods and its goals, is increasingly being seen by many Americans as the only moral stance to take regarding an apartheid system that the U.S. supports with billions of taxpayer dollars annually. Tellingly, some of the most outspoken voices in support of BDS in America are Jewish; Judith Butler, who served as the Hannah Arendt Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School, is one of these voices.

If Bard College hopes to remain morally sincere and relevant, and continue the proud tradition of ethical ferment and fortitude we hold so central to our identity, it is imperative that we move towards a complete embrace of the call to boycott, divestment, and sanctions against the apartheid system in Israel today. Sabra Hummus is only the beginning.

And that's why it matters, here on campus or back home, what hummus we buy—not for economic reasons, but for moral ones. Only if we strive to move consciously and ethically in even our smallest motions can we hope for the world to be more balanced when it moves. Only through instilling our everyday actions with belief and hope in a just future can we bring that future about.

## BARD: DIVEST FROM FOSSIL FUELS

BY OLIVIA HUFFMAN

Throughout college campuses around the United States, fossil fuel divestment is a controversial topic among students and administrations alike. So far, nine schools have rid their endowments of stocks, bonds or investment funds linked to fossil fuel companies and over 300 student-led divestment campaigns have sprung up around the country because of the belief that fossil fuel investments are unethical or morally ambiguous.

The Socially Responsible Investment Committee of the Bard Student Government is posing the following questions: Is divestment right for Bard? What other methods does Bard have to counter climate disruption?

On one hand, the fossil fuel business is considered the most profitable industry in human history. Compared to other competitive liberal arts schools, Bard has a relatively small endowment, which offers the school less security during financially hard times. Divesting from fossil fuels could result in a drop in stock revenue and lead to a downturn in Bard's endowment returns.

However, it is also possible that Bard could increase endowment returns without the aid of fossil fuel investments. There is mounting evidence that shows socially responsible investing pays in the long run because unsustainable activities or practices will make companies less profitable over time. For example, companies that are heavy polluters have a heightened chance of facing legal action over their emissions and will use more inputs in production.

President Botstein has signed a pledge for Bard to be carbon neutral by 2035. The college could very easily be seen as hypocritical for working towards this sustainable goal while still profiting from investments in companies directly linked to large carbon emissions and other environmental problems. As recent as October 2013, Bard was invested in Schlumberger, the world's largest oilfield services company.

According to President and Vice President of the Levy Economics Institute, Dimitri B. Papadimitriou and Taun Toay, divestment is not the only means by which Bard could shift the status quo from fossil fuels to renewable energies. Both suggest that Bard's wonderful history of shareholder advocacy exemplifies how shareholder engagement is more educational and informative—to students and companies alike—than simply wiping our hands clean of the problem

with divestment policies.

In 2009, Bard became the first college or university to file a shareholder resolution that focused on environmental and worker's health issues, according to the Responsible Endowments Coalition. Bard's shareholder resolution prompted the McDonald's Corporation to agree to formally survey and promote the best practices in pesticide use reduction within its American potato supply chain.

Toay and Papadimitriou argue that by having shares in companies like Schlumberger, Bard can have more control over their corporate policy-making through similar shareholder resolutions.

The importance of having such a dialogue with financial experts about Bard's role is clear. Fossil fuel usage and aggregation are directly linked by scientific experts to climate disruption. The need for action on the part of the college is growing ever more clear as climate change accelerates. We are witnessing the increasing impacts of a warming planet more and more consistently; in these last few years alone our country experienced record breaking heat, precipitation, droughts, and hurricanes, which impacted hundreds of thousands of people and cost our country hundreds of billions of dollars. Experts agree that global warming caused by humans burning fossil fuels will continue to accelerate and intensify these tragic climate disasters.

The scientific consensus is clear and overwhelming; we cannot safely burn even half of global fossil fuel reserves without dangerously warming the planet and intensifying climate conditions for several thousand of years.

Whether you agree that Bard should divest or believe that shareholder resolutions present the best opportunity to enact positive change, the main assumption of the panel happening in March is that climate change is happening and that Bard should do everything in its power to slow it down. Our school projects an image of itself as not only "a place to think," but a place to enact change throughout the world. Even though our current economic system does not take the well being of future generations into account—the previous, current and future students of Bard College still deserve the opportunity to live in a world unharmed by climate chaos.

# BUY COAL: WHY DIVESTMENT IS POOR LEVERAGE FOR CHANGE

BY TAUN TOAY

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT, BARD COLLEGE AND RESEARCH ANALYST, LEVY ECONOMIC INSTITUTE TECHNICAL ADVISOR TO THE FINANCE GROUP IN THE SUSTAINABILITY TRACKING, ASSESSMENT & RATING SYSTEM™ (STARS) FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

I am encouraged by environmental criterion that many people are adding to their philanthropy and the student interest in divestment. However, while I share intended aims of the anti-fossil fuel movement, I disagree on the means to the end. In the world of finance, we are not discussing a country like South Africa that can succumb to international pressure. Rather, we are talking about pulling money out of businesses that are used to having public black-eyes. Private money will fill this void instantly if there were a downward pressure on a stock price. This outcome is largely irrelevant beyond the symbolism of the gesture, as these companies are not issuing new stock and operations are disconnected from stock prices.

Furthermore, while a widespread divestment effort may force a dialogue (a point on which I am very skeptical), that dialogue is terminated with the sale of the security. There are formal ways to engage a company (protected and outlined by U.S. Security and Exchange Commission law) for investors: proxy voting; attending annual meetings; and filing shareholder resolutions, which

is a very powerful catalyst for change. For a small investor like Bard, such policies are far more effective than removing ourselves from the conversation to make a one-off PR statement.

It is also worth noting that donations to Bard do not go to lining the pockets of the oil and coal industry, but rather, to funding scholarships, professors, and keeping the heat on in currently frigid Annandale. We do, however, have a green investment option in our Social Choice Fund, which is an alternative endowment for socially-minded alumni/ae. All companies in this fund are "negatively" screened for environmental, labor and legal practices, which removes all but the most upstanding energy companies.

Unlike the huge university-banks that comprise our peer institutions, we can punch outside of weight class as an undercapitalized institution by employing shareholder activism. We have had successes with shareholder activism in the past, some quite large, and divestment removes this potential means of change. If you want to be an agent of change, divestment is poor strategy.

RE: BARD TWEETS

Zoe Groomes-Klotz  
@locawaka

24 hour theater festival: 50 freshmen singing wrecking ball, 10 seniors sulking over pbrs in the back row

Cypress Marris  
@CypressCymbals

i'm "doing that thing" where i read a bunch of tangentially related theory to procrastinate actually starting a paper.

J.P. Corner @jpcorner

New level of failure. Trying to do laundry. Put clothes, money, and detergent in machine. Pressed start. Then realized it was the dryer.

EDEN @edenhambric

Why didn't i apply to Bard College

SMOG Bard College @smogshmog

RT if you want Weird AI to play SMOG

Diogenes @emorevival

All the coolest people u know e-cig in library

Lily Mastrodimos @Lily\_MastrO

He just wanted to party

Quinn Moreland @quinnmoreland

i don't care #beyoncebudget

Nigel Uno @cheese\_grits

Ever since I got fired from my waiting job I been cheffin in the crib becoming a better man and shit so fuck em.

Moira Donegan @MegaMoira

Supposed to go back to Bard to give advice to graduating seniors but all I can think of is "You can store tote bags inside other tote bags!"

BUY COAL  
WHY DIVESTMENT  
POOR LEVERAGE  
CHANGE

