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# FP



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# bard free press

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*photo by levi shaw-faber*

*this issue features artwork by senior amanda lees (p. 13)*

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# LETTERS

January 24, 2014

Dear President Botstein,

On Wednesday, January 22nd, students and staff arrived at the entrance to Al-Quds University and found Israeli soldiers and military vehicles stationed at the gates of the school. Classes at Al-Quds Bard Honors College proceeded normally until teaching was interrupted by the firing of tear gas canisters onto campus around 10:00 AM. Despite the timely and professional attempts by AQU security personnel to evacuate the campus, a group of AQB staff, faculty, and students were still inside the college building when Israeli soldiers entered the campus.

As witnesses of the events that followed, we can attest to the additional use of stun grenades and rubber-coated bullets by the soldiers over the course of the 5-hour military operation that took place both around and within AQU. Several of our students experienced extreme shortness of breath as a result of the near-constant presence of tear gas, requiring medical attention from Red Crescent volunteers. At about 2:30 PM three Israeli soldiers entered the halls of the college, walking past several AQB students and staff, and detained a student. This was followed by the explosion of further stun grenades right outside the front entrance to the college.

This raid, as well as the countless others that have come before it, constitutes an intolerable erosion of the right of students and faculty to a secure educational environment. We condemn these acts by the Israeli military, which create a climate of violence, harassment, and fear on our campus. We trust that you will likewise denounce this raid, and will take all positive measures at your disposal to help ensure the safety and welfare of all AQU students, staff, and faculty. Please let us know what you plan to do, and how we can cooperate with the steps you plan to take.

Sincerely,

AQB Faculty and Staff

## Bard College Responds to Military Incur- sion at Al-Quds University

On Wednesday January 22, 2014, Israeli soldiers entered the campus of Al-Quds University in the West Bank village of Abu Dis. Soldiers stopped passing students and utilized tear gas and rubber bullets. Al-Quds University faculty, including those of the Al-Quds Bard Honors College for Arts and Sciences, were trapped in their offices, students were injured, and university buildings were damaged. We have reached out to all parties to voice our concern and indignation. This is unacceptable.

The University must be a place where teaching, learning, a free expression can take place without fear of military action. Incursions such as these interfere directly with the mission of the University to promote scholarship and encourage the free exchange ideas. As a partner in this mission, and an institution of higher education, we deplore these violent actions and demand that all efforts be made to prevent their recurrence. Military incursions into the University campus fly in the face of the basic mission of any institution of higher education. Al-Quds University students and faculty, including those in the Al-Quds Bard Honors College for Arts and Sciences, must be allowed to pursue their educational goals free from fear of violence.

Leon Botstein, President, Bard College

Jonathan Becker, Vice President and  
Dean for International Affairs and Civic  
Engagement

Hey guys,

I just wanted to drop you a line to say that I'm impressed with your paper and your on-line presentation. Keep up the good work.

Rob Ross '09

Beth Mackey: Congratulations,  
Bard Free Press. Stay smart  
and free.

AlphaJ7 on featured artist Jes-  
sica Chappe:

Luv this. I want a print of it!

For more on military incursion at Al-  
Quds University please see page 20.

~~ADAMIS~~

SIONS

REPORT

# BARD TRIES TO ESCAPE THE NUMBERS TO FOCUS ON THE WORDS

BY NAOMI LACHANCE

Henry Gonzalez wrote the four essays to run away from the numbers. He was skeptical of the traditional admissions process, and he wanted a new way to apply to college. The Bard Entrance Exam (BEE) came just in time: introduced last fall, it gave Gonzalez the chance to show his work while keeping peace of mind.

Gonzalez is one of 17 students who were admitted through the BEE. For one reason or another, these students harbor mistrust toward the usual application process. Many chose to submit essays so they would not have to show poor transcripts. Gonzalez's case is a little different, though. As a low-income minority high school student originally from the Bronx, he wanted to be admitted to a college on his own merit, not to boost a school's diversity.

The groundbreaking BEE gave Gonzalez the chance to prove that his skill was separate from his background. "I was worried... that maybe the standards would have been lowered for me... that my acceptance was an attempt to boost diversity statistics," he said of applying to colleges. Bard admissions does not employ affirmative action, but he was wary nevertheless.

Bard's announcement of its entrance examination was a little like Amazon's announcement that they would begin delivering packages by drone. Part metaphor, part publicity trick, part revelation of the organization's true ambitions, the programs received attention for their creativity. Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has revealed that he was entirely serious about his drone dreams. And in Bard's case, the program has already reached fruition. It asserts what has never been a secret: Bard admissions officers are wary of the college admissions process.

The BEE is simple enough. You write four essays, 2,500 words each, on given topics. The topics encourage students to deal with texts they might encounter at Bard: Confucius' Analects, the Federalist Papers, Aeschylus' Prometheus Bound, Feynman's Law of Gravitation. A few options require independent scientific research, and one asks for a piece of written music. Applicants don't have to submit any scores or transcripts. If Bard professors grade the essays as B+ or higher, the student is accepted, and they are asked to submit a transcript for formality's sake.

The college admissions game is often all about numbers, so let's take a moment to play. 6,980 students applied to Bard this year. Forty-one percent, or 2,862, were accepted. Fifty students applied through the BEE, and 41 followed the guidelines correctly; the other 9 were discarded. One student of those 41 was rejected for plagiarism. Seventeen of those 41 were accepted to Bard. Eleven of those 41 were asked to re-apply through the Common Application. Seven of those 11 took the invitation to re-apply, and 3 of those 7 were admitted. That means the BEE had a 50 percent acceptance rate, slightly higher than the overall 41 percent.

Mary Backlund, director of admissions, said she hopes that the BEE application don't increase in future years, or else she will have to find a faster grading system. Bard faculty members Peter Gadsby, Jim Brudvig, Jeff Katz, and David Shein were part of a group of 16 faculty members who

reviewed the essays. It was a time-consuming process that, Backlund said, was worth the work.

"The kids that scored 'A's, the faculty thought the essays are comparable with Bard first-year essays," Backlund said.

She spoke of a focus on essays that Gonzalez would find satisfying. "We don't have a lot of information on these students. Some I can't even tell you their gender," she said.

For many of the students who applied through the BEE, the option gave them the opportunity to prove their worth was separate from a favorite numbering: grades.

Vita Taurke, a high school student from New York City, said Bard had always been her top-choice school, but that she was concerned because she had low grades in math and science. She immediately knew that the Entrance Exam would give her the edge she needed. She was set. Bard was

Though the BEE was a welcome option for Gonzalez, Pagano and Taurke, it was not met with unanimous support. Stephen Lawrence, an English teacher from Princeton, New Jersey, wrote in a letter to the editor that was published in the *New York Times*. He was wary of the time constraints, and he was wary of the prerequisite skills: "this requirement focuses only on a few skills, particularly writing ability and research technique," he wrote. "It says nothing about a student's ability in mathematics, which tells us a lot about skills in related disciplines, like science and philosophy."

Helen Chen, a high schooler from San Francisco who applied through the BEE, also spoke of the time requirements. She spent two weeks on the essays, pulling several all-nighters over winter break to get the work done.

"Completing the BEE was challenging," she said, "due to a combination of the exam itself (the questions weren't exactly easy, and the length was daunting) and my own self-doubt — I think I actually rewrote a single sentence about seven times before deciding it was good enough."

Another critique of the BEE, voiced by *Atlantic* Senior Associate Editor Jordan Weissmann, was that it was easy for students to cheat — an idea that baffled Backlund, but an idea that she sought to address. In August, the Language & Thinking professors teaching BEE students will read their application essays to compare to L&T work. Any student who had indeed submitted essays that are not their own, Backlund said, will have the chance to leave before they have matriculated into the college. For all students, L&T serves as a buffer to gauge students' readiness for college.

Accepting talented students with poor grades is not a new idea for SAT-optional Bard. For the past 20 years, the Exception Admit program has given a spot to students whose GPAs are low but who demonstrate ability in other areas. They meet with deans to find a way to succeed academically. Max Kenner '01, the founder and executive director of the Bard Prison Initiative, was a part of the Exception Admit program. At least one student who applied through the BEE was admitted through the Exception Admit program as well.

Gonzalez hopes that the BEE will make education more accessible. "It's something that I'm really grateful for, and I hope that one day more [People of Color] can enter college without those worries weighing them down."

And for Taurke, who loves Bard but was worried about her grades, the BEE gave her the chance to show just her talent for writing and analysis.

Maybe the BEE does not change anything. The exam drew bright, talented students with an interest in engaging with the world at large. Bard as a whole draws bright, talented students with an interest in engaging in the world at large. But for students who for one reason or another have a problem with the admissions process, the BEE gives a sense of security. It's a public proclamation of the approach that has always been present at Bard College admissions.



illustration by isabelle marshall

the only school she applied to, and she never even had to fill out a common application.

For the BEE, she wrote about Shelley, Gogol, Kant and Darwin. "I found the topics really absorbing, and I definitely learned a lot," she said. But it was hard to find the time to work on four 10-page essays in addition to her heavy course load at Rudolf Steiner School.

The gamble paid off: she plans to major in dance as part of the Bard class of 2018.

Like Taurke, Sam Pagano of Darien, Conn., wanted to come to Bard but did not think his grades were high enough for admission. Like Gonzalez, he was wary of the admissions process. "I've always said [the BEE is] how colleges should do admissions," he said.

Pagano's four essays, on Kant, Weber, Watson and Shelley, did not suffice. He was one of the 11 students who scored lower than a 'B+'. But admissions did not want to give up on him yet, and he was offered the chance to re-apply.

"You could probably call that getting accepted through the Entrance Exam," he said, "but I'll leave that honor to the people who can say firmly they got a 'B+' or better on their essays. I am convinced, though, that completing the entrance exam was a pretty huge part of why I was accepted to the school."



# NANCY PELOSI

## A SPEAKER TO SPEAK AT COMMENCEMENT

Pelosi serves as the current House Minority Leader and was the Speaker of the House from 2007 to 2011. Throughout her career, Pelosi has worked to further legislation in relation to health care, college financial aid, clean energy, and civil rights. She will receive an honorary degree.

## OTHERS TO ALSO RECEIVE HONORARY DEGREES

JACQUELINE  
NOVOGARTZ

Novogartz is the founder of Acumen, a not-for-profit organization that aims to employ venture capital to invest in projects that address poverty across the globe. In 2009, she published her New York Times bestselling book *The Blue Sweater: Bridging the Gap Between Rich and Poor in an Interconnected World*.

HENRY  
ROSOVSKY

Rosovsky is the Geysler University Professor Emeritus at Harvard University. His research focuses on economic history, Japanese economic growth, and higher education. He has had numerous positions at Harvard, including Chairman of the Economics Department, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and Acting President. In 2000 he released a report called *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise*.

JACOB  
NEUSNER

Neusner is an influential Judaic scholar and is the Distinguished Service Professor of the History and Theology of Judaism and Senior Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Theology at Bard College Annandale-on-Hudson. His research focuses on rabbinic Judaism during the Mishnaic and Talmudic eras.

ANNIE  
BOGART

Bogart is a 1974 Bard College graduate, and founder of the SITI Company, a New York-based theater company. She has received many accolades, including two Obie awards, a NEA grant, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. Bogart is now a professor and head of the Directing Concentration at Columbia University.

DARREN  
WALKER

Walker is a lawyer and the president of the Ford Foundation, a foundation that funds a multitude of projects, including the Bard Prison Initiative in 2013. He has also pioneered initiatives such as JustFilms and ArtPlace. Before working at the Ford Foundation, he was vice president for foundation initiatives at the Rockefeller Foundation.

# NEA GRANT BRINGS BOOKS TO BARD AND BEYOND

BY ERIN O'LEARY

Bard has received a grant from the National Endowments of the Arts (NEA) known as the "Big Read," which supports communities in funding the purchase of books and corresponding events. The grant was started after the results of a survey in the late 2000s indicated that reading rates had declined, particularly in young people. This year, 250 copies of Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping* were distributed into the community for free.

Every year, the NEA chooses a certain number of books that communities can apply for funding to read as a community, and this year, *Housekeeping* was on the list. The grant was secured by Roger Berkowitz, director of the Hannah Arendt Center. Berkowitz was working on a book chapter on Robinson at the time, and also knew the connection that some Bard students would already have with the work.

Erin Cannan, associate director of the Center for Civic Engagement, is responsible for organizing and helping promote the program events. She explained, "The book is actually required reading for lit students, so it matched nicely with the kinds of books that Bard students are reading." The program is intended to function as a link between the local community and Bard.

The grant requires the community to put on 10 events, but they have in all ended up organizing 35 events, which will take place over a six-week period, involving three counties and five libraries. So far, events have been held on and off the Bard campus: at local libraries, Upstate Films, local bookstores, and schools. They are even holding "Little Reads" at libraries, which are geared at younger children in the community, and relate to trains, a prominent theme in *Housekeeping*. Additionally, literary critic James Wood spoke at Eastern Correctional Facility, a prison that works with the Bard Prison Initiative. The students there have also read the book, and will be participating in the programs.

Event attendance has been averaging between 20 to 60 people, and Cannan admits it has been a challenge to try to reach everybody and get people to come out to this many events. However, Cannan has heard from many people who haven't been able to come to the events, but have still read the book.

"That's actually what I've found to be the most interesting, is how many people, because they've heard that the Big Read is happening... they haven't been able to get to events but they've read the book. Not because it's required for a class, but because they knew that people in the community were reading it," Cannan said.

The other aspect that has been particularly challenging, Cannan explained, is the book *Housekeeping* itself. Not only is it not as well known as some of the other

books on the list, but those who have read it know that it isn't the "cheeriest" book, dealing with difficult themes such as death and abandonment. Additionally, those working on the project have had to get especially creative in devising events, as the book doesn't lend itself in the same way as some do to holding themed events (based on the time period, for instance).

All the same, "People have really found the book to be hard and lovely," Cannan said. "And if they didn't like the book to start with, by the time they had a conversation with people ... they grew to love it ... it was more compelling to them because of the conversation they had in the community." On the setting of a college campus, this happens regularly, but after leaving this environment, most readers aren't afforded that opportunity. The aim of the Big Read is not just to share what Bard does out in the community, but to bring together people from different parts of the community in this shared project.

For Cannan, the variety of people that have gotten involved in the program has been the most exciting aspect of it. The people talking "about the book and about Robinson's work are of all different ages, so you're not just hearing the perspective of how a young person is interpreting something."

The grant, in its attempt to improve reading rates, has succeeded in building a community supportive of art and its appreciators. It promotes the continuation of reading beyond the program and it raises awareness to the fact that it is "not just Bard as a sort of cultural destination," as Cannan puts it, but that in and around Annandale, "there are many artists and writers and people who are in the community who make this community attractive."



# CONVOCATION FUND: SUCCESS OR DEBT?

BY DANA FRANCISCO MIRANDA

In a recent email, undergraduate students were made aware of an increase in the convocation fund. For anyone who has become aware of the increases in tuition to Bard College or has read the pamphlets produced by Strike Debt (a club funded by Student Activities fees), the recent measures by our Board of Trustees regarding the convocation fund might give one pause. "I'm proud to announce that over Spring Break, at the most recent Board of Trustees Meeting our proposal for a \$20 increase of our student activities fee passed," said senior Rosette Cirillo, Speaker of the Student Body. The former Student Activities fee at Bard College was \$85 per semester, or \$170 in an academic year. It will now be starting next semester \$105 per semester, or \$210 in an academic year. What will this recent increase in the convocation fund mean for student life at Bard and what effects will this have on our pockets?

Examining the student body's perceptions of money at Bard College helps us understand the direct and indirect impacts an increase in convocation funding will have on the student body for the following years to come. "The ramifications of an additional \$40,000 a semester for the student body, are huge," said senior Carter Vanderbilt, the chair of Student Government's Fiscal Committee and speaker-elect of the student body, "It means greater access to funds for new initiatives, better events, diversified activities, and more opportunities for student leadership." The assumption that more money, i.e. more fees, means a better student life is supported by factual data. For the past two years, clubs have requested and spent more money than the Convocation Fund had. "But now that we have the money to fund the pent-up plans and ideas of clubs both old and new" said Vander-

bilt.

An increase in the Convocation Fund has the potential to drastically improve student life, so the Board of Trustees recently voted to approve the petition. The student body will benefit from clubs that now have the funds to support their initiatives. If there is a positive net increase in student life at Bard College, a \$40 increase in fees might be worth it. The future increase of the Student Activities fee should not be conflated with an increase in tuition in the coming years at Bard. Tuition and the Student Activities fee are two separate entities.

"Tuition is something very different from the student activities fee," said junior Jonian Rafti, treasurer of the Bard College Student Government, "It is the one portion of the bill that you see from Bard that you see directly allocated by us the students." The Convocation Fund, the pooled money collected from all Student Activity fees, is transparent. Whereas compared to tuition, students might not be aware of where the money is directly going. During Budget Forum all students can see how their money is allocated, distributed and ratified. In the end it is *our* say to ultimately decide what they want to do with these newfound reserves.

*"The ramifications of an additional \$40,000 a semester for the student body, are huge. It means greater access to funds for new initiatives, better events, diversified activities, and more opportunities for student leadership."*

# TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP: A WINNER

BY LEELA KHANNA

When Bard junior Karimah Shabazz talks, she constantly moves her body and hands, swaying from side to side, giggling to break the pauses in conversation. But bring up educational achievement gaps in the United States, the topic that led her to win the prestigious Truman Scholarship, and suddenly she's all business — calm, composed, and making direct eye contact as she argues for public policy reforms.

Shabazz is the first Bard student to become a Truman Scholar, an honor that is awarded to nearly 50 students nationwide annually. The federal scholarship is highly competitive and granted to college juniors, who have shown a demonstrated interest in public service, and provides them funding for graduate school. The application requires students to develop a strategy for their future educational and career goals, and argue a policy proposal they think should be implemented.

"My proposal is for compulsory pre-kindergarten education, because the gap [in educational achievement] between wealthy and low-income children starts at 18 months," said Shabazz. "Children from lower income families have heard about 30 million fewer words than children from more affluent families."

Shabazz's policy proposal supports President Barack Obama's plan to guarantee universal access to high-quality early education for all children.

"My plan is actually different from [President Obama's] because before making it universal, I want to make it universal for students from low-income families," said Shabazz. "For students whose families receive some form of federal assistance it would be mandatory for them to attend preschool from the time they are four till they are six years old."

When Shabazz was informed that she was a finalist and showed up for her final interview, she realized quickly that she may not be as well prepared to argue her proposal as the other competitors.

"I had not had a mock interview at all, and most people, before they have the real interview, meet with faculty advisors on campus and they have a mock interview," said Shabazz. Having spent this spring semester studying at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary, Shabazz arrived Stateside just in time to be interviewed.

In addition to being a Truman Scholar, Shabazz is also a Posse Scholar, a peer counselor, a peer mentor for the Bard Equal Opportunity Program, a co-head of the TLS project Building Up Hudson, and a member of several student-run clubs on campus. When asked who inspires her to be so driven and involved in her community, Shabazz becomes somber and talks about her dad.

"My dad is someone who I really looked up to when thinking about education and achieving things academically. Throughout my whole childhood I always

remember him studying or being in some class, and he was a real estate agent, and did a lot of accounting work," said Shabazz. "He would have gotten his Ph.D in April of 2011, but he passed away in March of 2011."

Shabazz chose to attend Bard as a Posse Scholar just before her father's unexpected death from stage-four kidney cancer, partly so she could spend time with him and his family who still lived in New York City. She chose to stick to her decision and upon arriving at Bard, realized that her own educational background didn't match up to those of her peers, leaving her feeling unconfident and insecure in academics.

"After coming from my own school in Georgia, I felt highly intimidated and unprepared by my classmates who may not have gone to private school but still went to top public schools," said Shabazz. "I felt my education created a barrier between me accomplishing and fulfilling academically as much as I wanted to."

She channeled her own experiences into her passions for education reform and ultimately chose to apply for the Truman Scholarship last fall while studying at the Bard Globalization and International Affairs Program in New York City.

When David Shein, dean of studies at Bard, called Shabazz to inform her that she had won the Truman, she first thanked God before telling her mother "who started screaming, and hugging [her], until her breath was almost gone."

Shabazz, who finds Bard's lack of diversity to be polarizing, is also aware that the Truman Scholarship is one of the few awards that is merit-based and doesn't have minority preference.

"It is definitely an honor to be the first person at Bard to win this, and not be the first black person to win this," said Shabazz. "I think that it speaks volumes for the student body and anyone else who is witnessing this history in the making. It says that, not that it doesn't matter what your race is, but that you can still accomplish this because of you not because of your race, or gender, or sexuality, or whatever privilege you have."

Shabazz will be spending her summer at the Public Policy and International Affairs Junior Summer Institute at the University of California, Berkeley, as well as researching graduate programs in social work.

"We all want to make some type of mark in the world, and when we limit ourselves, we take what could have been achieved in the universe and take that away from people who are waiting on us to become our best selves and come up with [the best] policies and changes."

## ROAD SAFETY

BY ALEXANDER KELADZE

"The issue of road safety in and around Bard has a depth for me of 14 years — that is when I accepted the responsibility for our college's safety," said Ken Cooper, director of safety and security.

In light of recent tragedies affecting the Bard Community and the greater Dutchess County, road safety is as important as ever.

The Safety and Security Department consists of a director, an assistant director, and fifteen officers. In addition, a professional dispatching staff coordinates all security communications. All safety and security officers are highly trained, registered New York State security personnel.

The crosswalks that connect the East and West sides of campus along Annandale Road create an active pedestrian area. The yellow crosswalk signs on Annandale Road are an example of Bard Security's dedication to protecting students, even when it comes to defying laws.

Article 24, section 1114 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Code states that no unauthorized signs may be placed on county roads. Upon installing the signs, Security was threatened with fines. Fortunately, the threat was never realized.

Local residents have also shown concern for student safety. An email sent to the Bard community on March 20 reflects the issue of reckless driving. The anonymous letter recounts a situation in which a car filled with five Bard students drove against traffic, nearly inciting a head-on collision.

As Cooper points out although road signs and reckless driving are points of concern, "The biggest issue is consciousness raising among our community so that we know we are doing all that we can to erase this problem for good."

# CENTER FOR MOV- ING IMAGE ARTS

BY ERIN O'LEARY

His so-called office is bare, but buried under piles of stacked cardboard boxes and large, hexagonal containers called Goldberg cans, which film is often shipped in. The containers are a tarnished silver, dented, and covered in stickers, which sometimes lend insight into their origin: Library of Congress, Museum of Modern Art. The office belonging to David Rodriguez, Manager and Archivist for the Center for Moving Image Arts at Bard College, is acting as temporary storage while construction is being completed on two climate-controlled vaults.

The cans of film are constantly in transit, shipped from venue to venue. "They've probably been sent hundreds of thousands of miles by this time," Rodriguez explained. Some of them will be sent away again, but some of them will remain here, in the basement of the Ottaway Film Center, becoming the foundations of Bard's very own film archive.

There are many other film archives around the world similar to the one that is beginning at Bard. These institutions form a system of exchange with one another, collectors, and studios. "Our print sources are varied, but they're all sort of born out of this idea that old film is worth saving," Rodriguez said.

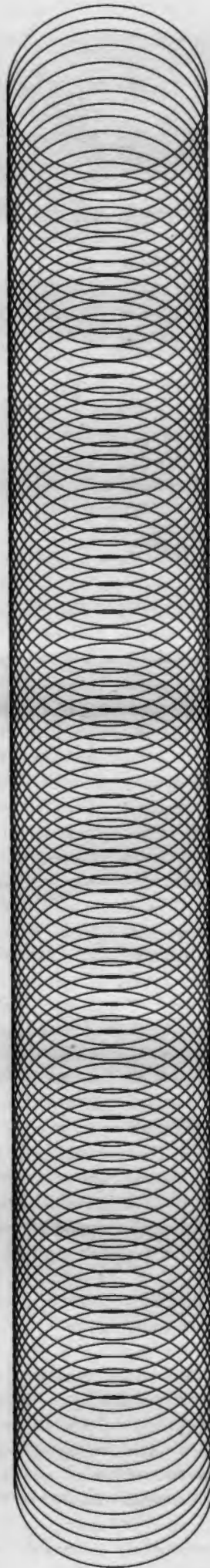
Earlier in the history of cinema, Rodriguez explained, film was viewed as a disposable commodity. After a print was screened, studios would either reclaim the silver content or just throw it in the ocean. Around the 1930s, as cinema began to claim the status of an art form, some film prints were preserved. Not long after, the first film archives came into being.

The primary goal of the CMIA is to educate, making a college campus the ideal location for the archive. The archive is designed to support CMIA programs, as well as provide opportunities for students to work hands-on with film materials. Rodriguez thinks that "what makes us unique here is that we have the opportunity and the capability to sort of merge this idea of being a collecting institution ... with the fact that we are at a college, and we can use our collection to teach."

The CMIA functions as much more than just an archive. It treats cinema holistically, working to bring together preservation with other aspects of film culture. Above all, as explained by Richard Suchenski, its founder and assistant professor of Film and Electronic Arts, the main focus of the CMIA is exhibition. The CMIA screens films several times a week, at 7:00 p.m., as a part of the film curriculum. It currently holds special screenings more regularly than most venues in New York City. These screenings are free and open to all Bard students as well as the greater community. Suchenski seeks to reach out to students in every area of study. There isn't any reason, he said, that you can't think about the connections between math and film.

"I'd like them all to engage with cinema and think through what cinema might mean in relation to their own discipline, their own interests, and their own work," Suchenski said. "The programs are designed to facilitate that so that they can look intensively at particular questions, at particular bodies of work, seeing them in relation to larger aesthetic and historical questions."

Recently, the CMIA showed "Under Capricorn," a rare Hitchcock film, which, according to Suchenski, is impossible to see in any decent form. The film was screened here, and now it's going to go back and disappear again and be



difficult to see. That's why it's important to Suchenski that students take advantage of these fleeting opportunities.

The CMIA is designed to "help think through ways students can engage with film outside the classroom," Suchenski explained. This includes internships, such as the one with Cinema Conservancy, an archival organization in New York City designed to preserve the heritage of American independent film. Jake Perlin '98 runs Cinema Conservancy and The Film Desk, and he is also a founding member of the CMIA Advisory Board. Through this partnership, Nicholas Carbone '14 became the first CMIA/Cinema Conservancy intern. He interned for eight weeks in the summer of 2013, working on administrative tasks, such as researching for films and making press and educational packets. As it stands, this internship will allow one student from Bard to learn and work in this environment each year.

In addition to internships, the CMIA holds workshops and offers work-study opportunities for students. These workshops allow students to screen a particular work, and then participate in a general discussion with, for instance, the filmmaker, about the work or cinema in the broader sense.

The final major goal of the program is publication. The template for the integrated program, Suchenski said, is the Hou Hsiao-hsien project, which includes a book and a retrospective that will be going to fourteen major cities globally, all coordinated out of CMIA. Bard will be launching the retrospective in the United States. The director, cinematographer, and screenwriter will all be coming for workshops with students, and most of the prints will become part of the permanent collection.

Suchenski explained that it was Hsiao-hsien's film "The Puppetmaster" that has been the most difficult to deal with, in that there are only a handful of prints in existence and a very mediocre video copy. That's it. It isn't possible to make more prints, and it's not going to be released digitally. In a time when, as Suchenski explains, it can be "a question of not seeing it at all," students will have the opportunity to not only see the film print, but to speak with the director.

At the CMIA, exposure is crucial. "It's like if I buy a famous painting and have it restored and preserve it in a tiny room inside of my house, that only I can look at it, you're not really preserving that painting," Rodriguez said. "You're not doing anybody any favors, you're not enriching the world through that."

Suchenski decried the "teleological, utopian idea that everything is accessible now, and that you can take a painting from the 15th century, and take a Lumière film from 1895, and you can take a video work from 2014 and they're all on the same plane. And what you lose of that is the sense of history. What's happened in between? What was involved in making a painting of this kind in the 15th century, making this particular Lumière film in 1895? What's the apparatus, what's the mechanism, what are the questions that are being asked? If you begin to see this historically you have a much deeper and richer sense not just of cinema, but I think of history itself."

What is perhaps most unique about the CMIA, to Suchenski, is, "Not only that it's happening, but that it's happening at Bard College... At a time when many places are switching over, or film programs are in crisis... this is exciting, this is not happening everywhere, and [students] can get involved in a number of ways."

# PERSEPHONE

BY EVAN NICOLE BROWN



photos courtesy of persephone the movie

I learned a long time ago, in middle school Latin, that Persephone was a goddess: the daughter of Zeus (the supreme god) and Demeter (the goddess of the harvest). I learned that she was carried off by Hades (the god of death) and crowned queen of the underworld, much to Demeter's dismay. I saw illustrations in my book of Greek mythology depicting Demeter's refusal to let the Earth produce its fruits until Persephone returned to her. And I knew that since Persephone had eaten pomegranate seeds of the underworld, she was committed to spending part of every single year there. My teacher likened Persephone to spring; her return to Earth every year allowed for the return of the grain. I hadn't thought of Persephone since eighth grade.

But the Persephone myth has not remained an artifact of Grecian antiquity. Thanks to Laurent Rejto's new coming-of-age film "Persephone," her story has taken on a contemporary life. Rejto, head of the Hudson Valley Film Commission, has "always been enamored with the beauty of the Hudson Valley and [its] properties." Couple that Hudson Valley appreciation with the fact that producer Amanda Warman is a Bard alumna, and the result is a short film — it runs for just under 30 minutes — filmed on Bard's campus. Blithewood Mansion served as Demeter and Persephone's home, the Mount Olympus mansion and gardens. Just beyond, the Hudson doubled as the river Styx, which divides Earth from the Underworld.

The movie opens with romantic music and endless flora and fauna, a nod to Demeter's connection with nature. And, perhaps,

also a nod to Blithewood's sheer beauty. Blithewood's magic, however, immediately contrasts with the tension between mother and daughter, fueled by Persephone's teenage angst. In Rejto's film, unlike in the myth, Hades is not Persephone's suitor; instead, he replaces Zeus as her father. The film interprets Demeter and Hades as estranged spouses trying to co-parent their rebellious daughter. "The problems we see Hades and Demeter struggling with are modern-day realities...and Persephone is like any teen: she wants freedom and to express herself outside of the bounds of her parents," Warman said. Director of Photography Bryan Cloninger noted that Mount Olympus, or Blithewood, "was filmed in a classic frame style. The goal was affinity. [Summer images] were filmed with a frame composition using limited space — no depth of field cues, no diagonal lines or longitudinal planes and a distinct foreground, mid-ground, and background frontal lanes." These filming choices all rely on the actors and story to carry the film, and they certainly did. Academy Award winner Melissa Leo brought a subtle, yet resigned pain to Demeter; she is a mother unaware of what to do with a free-spirited teenage daughter. Lindsay Andretta's Persephone was refreshing: she straddled the divide between youth and adulthood with ease. And Gilles Malkine, who played Hades, was a devilishly perfect dad — the type you think you'd want — but later realize is not really a parent and you're still too young to properly parent yourself.

Rejto reinterprets the rape of Persephone as a parental child abduction. During Persephone's birthday party, Hades kidnaps her

from her mother's custody, takes her across the River Styx, and leads her down into the Underworld. Cloninger described the filming of the Underworld as using "ambiguous frames [to make it] hard for the viewer to understand the set geography. Odd angles, a lot of diagonal lines, very shallow depth of field, shadows and contrast. In the Underworld, size and spatial relationships of objects are not easily understood...mirrors and reflections are disorienting. [The Underworld] is hellish, but not ugly." Filmed at the Rokeby Estate, the Underworld was like a SMOG of yesteryear, filled with alcohol, drugs, sex, and rock music. The pomegranate martini Persephone reluctantly downs becomes her shackle to this world, in which she has no place. She soon spirals into a darker lifestyle. Rejto moves us quickly through time and space by showing how Persephone's two worlds conflict and collide. There is an emphasis on weather and thus, on the passage of time. We see shots of Blithewood filmed over the summer during L&T, nearly superimposed on subsequent shots of Blithewood in ten-degree weather. Once Persephone is finally able to return to Earth and springtime is restored, she steals Hades' car and drives away from home, leaving both parents equally helpless.

Warman felt "it was amazing to bring my connections and resources from Bard to the production...I'm still friends with most of the security guards, and loved having them check out our set. The film professors and administrators were so gracious, providing us with production office space, makeup and hair rooms, and dressing rooms."

After graduating from Bard, Warman spent

a lot of time in Woodstock, getting to know Hudson Valley history and landmarks. "The history of the Hudson, local folklore, farms, estates, and plethora of other locations really lends itself to a mythical film landscape." Warman, as a producer, but also as a former theatre and sociology major, knows the importance of location. "Creating and attending dance and theatre performances in so many diverse spaces on campus is so amazing. It's very safe and cost-effective too...I may have taken that for granted when I was a student creating new work."

"Persephone" employs the Hudson Valley landscape and its mansions to create an environment in which the old meets the new. Blithewood will continue to age, but its surroundings — Bard students — will always be its Persephone, challenging it to keep up with the ever-changing times. There is a certain mystique about a place so real, yet so magical; Blithewood transports you while keeping your feet firmly on the ground. The mythical narrative lends itself to the Hudson Valley by dealing with themes of restoration, growth, and mystery. We see countless beautiful things about the area every day, and yet there are things about this stretch of river that we will never know. Bard students, like Persephone, are caught between the familiar world of Mount Olympus and the haunting mystery of the Underworld.

# A PHILOSOPHER NAMED

## LISA TESSMAN

BY DANA FRANCISCO MIRANDA

Often, those who write on moral thought employ the methods of psychology. The public asks the psychologist questions they might have once asked the philosopher. Lisa Tessman, an associate professor of philosophy at Binghamton University, has become a notable voice on the subject of this shift. G.E.M. Anscombe, who once asserted that “we should stop doing moral philosophy until we have an adequate philosophy of psychology,” made Tessman reconsider the methodological framework of her discipline. Since then, she has moved away from virtue theory in favor of moral psychology. Tessman joined Bard on April 8 for an in-class discussion in Jay Elliott’s course *Virtues & Vices* and a lecture titled “Thinking the Unthinkable: On The Risks of Constructing Morality.” The two events concerned Tessman’s research on moral failure and her subsequent movement away from the framework of virtue theory in favor of moral psychology.

In her book *Burdened Virtues: Virtue Ethics for Liberatory Struggles*, Tessman coined the term ‘burdened virtues’ to speak to the oppressive conditions such as war, or institutionalized racism and sexism that prevent people from developing virtue. Virtues are ‘burdened’ when they are not conducive to one’s own flourishing; such virtues can never lead one to a ‘good life.’ The freedom fighter, for instance, may need to employ aggression to to act against oppression, a psychologically corrosive form of virtue. But what does it matter if virtues are ‘psychologically’ damaging?

For Tessman, an unjust world makes it psychologically untenable to be virtuous. The contemporary moral subject could be likened to Atlas: ordained to hold up the world, but bound to fail at that same duty. The impossible must be done. Consider, then, Tessman’s view on whether the demands of academic publishing — summed by the popular refrain ‘publish or perish’ — require of the philosopher an impossible task they are nonetheless forced to meet. “Before tenure I definitely did feel the demands of publishing,” said Tessman. “After tenure, however, it was the expectations of my colleagues, and I didn’t want to lose

my reputation as an active researcher.”

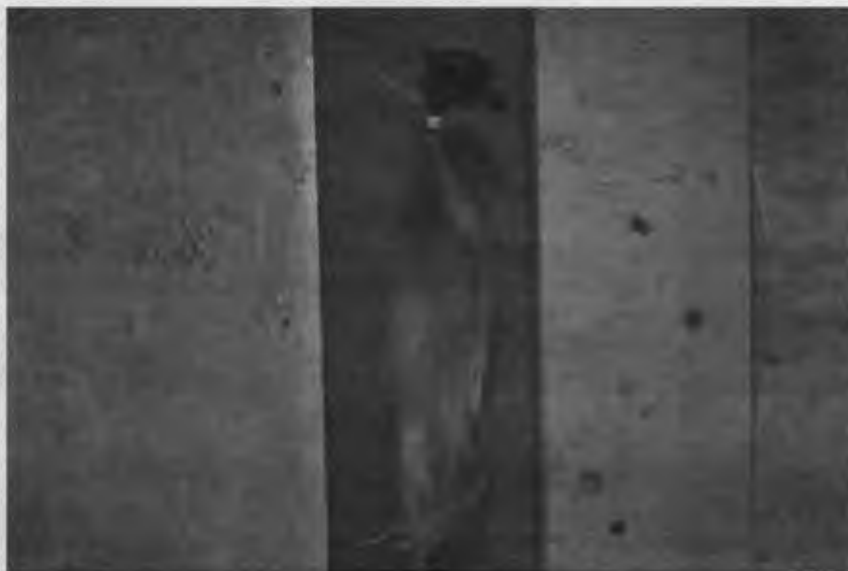
In her talk, Tessman presented on the construction of ethics, a critical process of reasoning that scrutinizes a moral judgment by every other judgment until they form a coherent framework. Tessman offered the example of a Neurathian bootstrap: a repairman on a ship must stand on one plank to repair or scrutinize the other parts of a ship. Likewise, one must hold one value firm to then scrutinize other values. No one value serves as a dock; the majority of our values must be subject to the same scrutiny. But for Tessman, certain moral judgments can only be done intuitively. She calls these ‘sacred values.’ “The sacred are a class of intuitions that should not be exempt from criticism,” says Tessman, “But I really think that there are some values that are destroyed when there is one thought too many.”

*Burdened Virtues* was met at first with a silent readership. “The first book, when it is released — you don’t hear anything for months. My big shock came about six months later at a conference when people were talking about and reading my work,” sad Tessman. But whom are philosophers exactly publishing to and for? Her new book, *Moral Failure: On the Impossible Demands of Morality*, will be published in December 2014, and will seek a broader audience than her previous work. “‘Moral Failure’ asks what happen when the sense that ‘I must’ collides with the realization that ‘I can’t,’” says Tessman. By bringing together moral philosophy and research done in moral psychology, Tessman adroitly examines the possibility that some moral requirements might be impossible, and moral failure unavoidable.

# FEATURED ARTIST

# AMANDA LEES

BY OLIVIA CRUMM



Free Press: Where are you from?

Amanda Lees: I'm actually kind of quasi-local. I'm from Millerton, New York, which is about forty-five minutes from here, so it's pretty close, but I was born in Boston and raised on Martha's Vineyard for about 12 years.

FP: What was your inspiration for this project?

AL: I guess just my own life. I've been collecting objects significant to memories or moments of my life for a long time, and I started my career at Bard as a written arts major, so I was writing about my own life. They tell you to write about what you know, and I'm kind of writing about what I know here, which is my own life. Aside from that would probably be just my general fascination with objects that are markedly used, or have played a role in someone's life, be-

cause to me they're like pieces of information in an otherwise clandescent full story. FP: Is there one object that has a very particular story that comes to mind when you think of your installation?

AL: Some of them are as simple as my liking the way they looked, but there are some really weighted objects in there. I guess if I had to think of one it would be a silk map. It was my grandfather's map. He was in World War II. He was a navigator in a plane, and his plane was shot down over the Pacific. Only a few of them survived, and they lived in the jungle for months until some Australians found them. He gave that to me years after I learned this about him.

FP: How did the final product of this project differ from your original intentions?

AL: I guess when I began this year my idea

was much more literal. I wanted to build a much more literal representation of a house, because to me, this piece is a lot about house and home, the objects that you put in your house to make it a home. It was going to be less about me and more like a fictionalized story told through objects. I'm happy to say that it hasn't gone far from what I originally thought. The core idea has remained mostly the same. It has all of the elements that I always wanted, just kind of re-oriented.

FP: How have you evolved as an artist during your four years at Bard?

AL: My work grew very rapidly. I moderated at the beginning of junior year, so I moved very quickly. I began doing a lot of figure painting, drawing and printmaking. I was making stuff that was fun to make, but it wasn't very special. It wasn't individual, and it wasn't exciting, so it wasn't

really until this year that I started to do more stuff that more entirely me. This project has been really important to me as a learning lesson and has helped a lot with my confidence in my own work.

FP: Any plans for next year?

AL: I'm moving to Hudson and working for Jeffrey Gibson, who is a teacher here and my advisor.

If you could communicate with one dead artist, who would it be?

One dead artist... To be honest, I don't know shit about art. Is Rauschenberg dead? if Rauschenberg is dead then that, but I love John Singer Sargent. He's one of my favorite painters. He's the master of the portrait, and I would love to talk to him.

# M I C H A E L C U N N I N G H A M



Illustration by nicole carroll

## BY ABBY ZIEVE

Michael Cunningham writes contemporary fiction. Actually, Michael Cunningham writes very good contemporary fiction. The kind of contemporary fiction that wins awards. The kind that wins the Pulitzer Prize.

A few weeks ago, Cunningham came to Bard to talk to young literary minds about his 1998 novel "The Hours," and to read from his new book, "The Snow Queen." I managed to manipulate my way into the Olin classroom where Bradford Morrow's contemporary literature class was talking with Cunningham. The following is a compilation of some beautiful quotes, good stories, and a few fun facts.

### On The Greatest Parenthetical of All Time:

We were discussing the experience of emulating Virginia Woolf in "The Hours" when my least favorite word in the English language was spoken by one of my favorite English speaking authors: parenthetical. (The word induces nausea. I have no real explanation for this phenomenon, so I'll say nothing further.) Cunningham uses parentheses generously when writing as Woolf in the novel. On how he came to write a voice that resembled and did not imitate one of the greatest literary figures of all time, he says the key was to read everything she had ever written. To read and read and then to stop until he was "full of her way of making a sentence." The following, an excerpt from Nabokov's *Lolita*, is what Cunningham claims is the greatest parenthetical ever written:

"My very photogenic mother died in a freak accident (picnic, lightning) when I was three..."

### On the Best Punctuation Mark-

Cunningham claims the three-fourths stop of a semi colon is a perfect way of marrying two sister sentences. The longer pause implies an oblique connection, which he says has to do with the power of writing associatively.

### On Trying to Inhabit a Character-

"The process is primarily physical rather than intellectual. Start from the surface, rather than starting from the soul and embellishing."

### On the Ideal Reader-

Throughout the conversation, Cunningham remained adamant that it is best to think of specific people when writing. The following is a related story he shared about a waitress named Helen and a coming of age moment Cunningham experienced as a young writer. Helen was the hostess at a bar he worked at one summer around college. She was a single working mom and a voracious reader without a literature degree who gave herself one hour to read everyday. These hours were, to his observation, mostly filled with mystery novels. So — there is a pause at this point in the story in which he admits to the streak of pretension he carried around at this time in his life — he recommended she read "Crime and Punishment." A week or so later, Cunningham asked Helen what she'd thought of the book. She

had liked it, and they shared a few minutes discussing the story. Helen is what Cunningham fondly refers to as a "clean reader." Someone who is relieved of the idea that they are "supposed" to think Dostoyevsky is better; someone who enjoys crime novels and is able to read a stigmatized classic without the stigma. This is when, Cunningham says, he stopped writing into the sky and started writing for Helen.

### On Influence-

Someone asks if the worry that there's nothing new under the sun gives him anxiety. "Oh, everything gives me anxiety," Cunningham says, laughing. But the more appropriate and productive concern, he says, is does it matter and is it true? And when question of imitation versus influence comes up, "Let's just be influenced, cause you know what, you're not going to turn into John Coltrane. You'll have a few weeks of sounding like John Coltrane then you'll come out with that person inside of you, not in front of you."

Something Cool You Might Want to Know About Michael Cunningham That Doesn't Really Have to Do With His Novels-

He's a silversmith. He works with metals and sells his creations under an assumed name. (I know, I'm still kicking myself for not asking. How cool would it be to eat with Michael Cunningham's spoon?)

If you write, you likely know James Wood's name from the cover of *How Fiction Works*, his evergreen and indispensable guidebook to the craft. Perhaps most famous for coining the term "hysterical realism" to describe the kind of literature written by novelists like Zadie Smith, David Foster Wallace, and Thomas Pynchon in the 1990s, Wood's carefully qualified judgments have earned him a reputation as among the most lucid critics working today. He came to Bard on April 17 for the Big Read, to deliver a talk on the unstable religiosity in Marilynne Robinson's novel "Housekeeping." He agreed to speak with me for a few minutes before the talk.

**Free Press** You've often defended the critic's role as an arbiter of literary value. Do you judge a work of literature on what it aims to do, or on whether it succeeds at those aims? How do you determine the value of a noble failure or an ignoble success?

**James Wood** I like that. Oh god, tough. Well, one way of answering that is: if you are regularly reviewing new works, you are mindful precisely of the danger of not attending to the ignoble successes. The thing that I have in mind is a wonderful thing that Randall Jarrell wrote, in the 1950s, I think, when he said, about his own writing — actually, more often than not it seems right about his contemporaries — but he said, "Who among us would've actually praised *Moby Dick* when it came out?" The intellectuals would have said 'thumbs down, messy, sloppy, doesn't cohere,' you know. And so I think that a certain amount of salutary second-guessing needs to go on the whole time. I think, if I were to briefly answer your question, I probably do attend more to ends rather than aims — to the final achievement, rather than the aim. But that's probably only because most writing of the average kind doesn't actually fall into the category of the ignoble success, of work that aimed extraordinarily for something, but didn't quite reach it. Usually, the daily fare is of works that adequately achieve their aims — the adequacy being precisely the problem.

**FP** Your reviews often pose a critique of 'supermimetic' literature, which embodies rather than suggests its object. What are the stakes of mimesis, and what are the dangers of an exhaustive fiction?

**JW** I think the stakes couldn't be higher. The stakes are everything, and mimesis in one form or another is what we're about in writing, in fiction. Specifically, I have found myself sometimes at odds with a certain kind of literature — there's perhaps more of it in America than in Britain, though that's not always the case — that seems to... Well, if you take it back to Whitman's line about how "America is the greatest poem:" America is very fascinating, and has an extraordinary amount of life in it, and I think the danger sometimes with American writing has been — as you rightly put, this 'supermimesis' — instead of mimetically grasping America, putting form 'round it, the work bloats itself up in some attempt almost at equivalence. And I don't just mean you get long novels. I mean that you get long nov-

els that somehow aren't interesting in their realism, where I, at least, want a little more pressure, a little more form on the business of representation itself.

**FP** You wrote once that "an endless web is all [such writers] need for meaning," as if a cancerously expanding network of interrelated stories is, in some way, not what realism is meant to do. What is it about a carefully limited narrative scope — such as that in Robinson's *Housekeeping* — that produces meaning in a text, that makes realism meaningful?

**JW** Wow, God, you do ask good questions. In all these things, if you're too dogmatic, you sound like you're just ruling out large books, you know, ruling out interesting web-like forms. And one wouldn't want to live in a world where — I wouldn't want to live in a world where — all books were *Housekeeping*, for goodness' sake. I wouldn't want to live in a world where everything was always super-controlled and pressurized.

**FP** Virginia Woolf once said of a contemporary novelist, "He is trying to hypnotize us into the belief that because he has made a house, there must be a person living there." By the same token, you say of DeLillo's "Underworld" that "it is a Dickensian novel without any people in it." Do you think that there is a crisis of materialism in contemporary fiction? Is the problem that the human has

somehow withdrawn?

**JW** There are several ways of answering this question. There's a sort of humane, generally forgiving answer; and Woolf was writing about this in one way or another. She wrote in "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" that creating characters is hard. Getting the human is the hardest thing in fiction. It's why, by the way, that most writers aren't particularly good at dialogue. They're good at other things — how to describe a tree — but dialogue is hard. Getting the human is hard. And in that forgiving spirit, we should say, about the DeLillo example, that what interested me about that kind of fiction when I was writing about it is that there seemed to be almost an acknowledgment of the difficulty. And then, as a kind of response to the difficulty, you've got a kind of exaggerated version of the human — not so much in DeLillo, but you get that a bit in Pynchon, and so on — but that's one answer. A second answer might be that with certain writers, there probably is a kind of crisis of the self going on, which we've seen developing during the last 30 or 40 years through post-modernism, and that is to say, it's not surprising that the generation (your generation, really) of writers were really the first writers to come up with cultural theory. Some found it very useful, this is not to dismiss it at all, but they were the first generation to come up with cultural theory, and who really

did imbibe the idea that the self is almost fatally mediated by discourses and ideologies, that it doesn't own itself; so that those who write about the self now find it quite difficult to restore a lost innocence, that it's hard to write innocently about the self when the self seems to be saturated in self-consciousness. One thinks of Foster Wallace here. I mean, even Wallace's strongest admirers will tend to agree that Wallace's work is about people trying to escape some prison of self-consciousness, where they actually are working out the terms and conditions of self-consciousness. And I think that probably that has left its mark on fiction, and is making it harder in some ways for fiction to claim the human, and to resemble some of the fiction of the past that we love. But I don't want to get into a sort of lament. There are good reasons why contemporary fiction shouldn't look like the past, and your example from Woolf is a pretty good one of how we keep needing — seemingly, about every 30 years — to revitalize and renew the terms of the debate.

**FP** Do you see that happening? Is there any effort, any movement on the horizon toward a new kind of humanism?

**JW** I'm afraid, by and large, I don't. Because I think humanism at the moment is in something of a battle with a kind of enlarged and rather proud scientism. And scientism does seem to be telling the self to quiet down, and acknowledge that it's not master of its own house. Now, you could say — and I think that it's a reasonable point; Freud said this a hundred years ago and it didn't kill the self, it actually renewed the self and our understanding of its unconscious workings — I have to say that if you look at, say, at Daniel Kahneman's book about the weirdly simple division of the brain, between Brain 1 and Brain 2, do you know what I mean?

**FP** The reptilian brain?

**JW** No, it's essentially a less interesting, far less interesting version of Freud, where you have an instinctive brain and a rational brain, and the latter comes after the instinctive brain. It's not unlike the reptilian thing, but Kahneman, being a psychologist, has many experiments to show how, again and again, we kid ourselves into thinking that we're masters of our own mental destiny. Just to go back to the scientism thing: neurology is seemingly telling us that we're very much lost agents, that we're owned by our neurological firings, and I would say some kind of hydra-headed monster — called pragmatism, evolutionary biology, neurology, and utilitarianism — is busy calculating cost-benefits for how we should be in the world. It's really striking, actually, if you put a contemporary popular columnist like David Brooks, in the *New York Times* — dreaded David Brooks, in the *New York Times* — alongside utilitarianism in the 1860s, how similarly reductive the thinking is.

# JAMES WOOD

BY DUNCAN BARILE



illustration by katie mcdonough



# SPRING FLING

SOUTH CAMPUS QUAD

MAY 1<sup>ST</sup>-4<sup>TH</sup>

## THURSDAY

SENIOR BAND SHOW: **PALBERTA \* PALM \* PEOPLE TALKING**

A KITCHEN PROCEDURE: ANINA IVRY-BLOCK SENIOR PROJECT SHOW \* PC VILLAGE BBQ \* CONTRA DANCE \* DRIVE-IN MOVIE: SAMUEL DENITZ SENIOR PROJECT \* IHEARTRADIO AWARDS \* JAZZ VOCAL CONCERT \* COMEDY CLUB/IMPROV NIGHT

## FRIDAY

CELESTIAL SHORE \* GIRAFFAGE \* **SPEEDY ORTIZ \* BRANCHEZ \* DEERHOOF**

BARD BIG READ: MARILYNNE ROBINSON'S HOUSEKEEPING \* SHABBAT DINNER \* DRIVE-IN MOVIE: SAMUEL DENITZ

SENIOR PROJECT \* SAB: CASINO NIGHT \* BARD SLAM POETRY EVENT \* BFC MOVIE

## SATURDAY

SILENT ADDY \* CHI CHI CHING \* **DJ SPINN \* DJ RASHAD \* LIL B**

BRENDAN EPRILE \* STUART LEACH \* ELBOWTOE \* CHOOM GANG \* SHARKLING \* RANTIPOLE \* OUR FRIEND JOHNNY

\* FURNITURE GIRLS \* SUPER RARE CANCER \* GODS WISDOM \* CRAZED \* PARIDOLIA \* MAXY AND THE BEEFCAKES \*

ESTERHAZY \* MORUS ALBA \* APO!!O \* O-FACE \* JAWBREAKER REUNION \* SWEET BABY JESUS \* WAVE ENVY \* LUCKY

SPOON \* BIG SI \* P.T.P \* OXBLOOD \* HSO: HOLI \* LASER TAG \* CSA WATERBALLOON FIGHT \* TRICENTENNIAL: GEORGE

DUPONT SENIOR PROJECT \* ISO: \* SOCCER TOURNAMENT AND BBQ \* SAMBA SCHOOL \* SUBSTANCE-FREE SATUR-

DAY SOIREE \* BFC MOVIE TBA \* MIND'S EYE THEATER COSTUME PARTY \* DRIVE-IN MOVIE: SAMUEL DENITZ SENIOR


PROJECT \* POI JOY \* BFC MOVIE

## SUNDAY

STUDENT BANDS \* KLINE PICNIC \* VENDORS \* TFC FASHION SHOW



illustration by katie mcdonough

**Lil B From The Pack** 

**@LILBTHEBASEDGOD**

Mogul, First Rapper Ever To Write And Publish A Book at 19, Film Score,  
Composer, Producer, Director/Photo/Branding/Marketing/Historical Online  
Figure #BASED

United States · [youtube.com/lilbpack1](https://www.youtube.com/lilbpack1)

## NOTES FROM THE SPRING FLING COMMITTEE

The Spring Fling Committee aims to set a new precedent for the festival and has made significant changes based on feedback from the student body. Spring Fling has a reputation for creating an atmosphere of sexual predation and drug abuse. Through careful musical curation, diverse events, and copious safety precautions, the committee hopes to create a new paradigm.

"In part, the feedback is in many ways the justification for the removal of olin parking lot as a venue and the diversity in the music line-up. On the other hand, the feedback also helped us emphasize how dangerous and alienating some people find spring fling. Not only did some people find the emphasis on electronic music obnoxious, but they associated it with an atmosphere of sexual predation and drug abuse. This is why we are doing so much work with safety and security and why we are trying to offer a more diverse selection of alternative events so that those people who don't care about music can still have a fun time during the saturnalia of the weekend without having to feel uncomfortable, or peer pressured, or preyed upon."- SFC Co-Chair Preston Ossman

"Bard students have an eye on music, and that I've learned to appreciate" - Assistant Director of Student Activities and SFC Co-Chair Brian Mateo

The Spring Fling Committee has written a safe space policy to make Spring Fling a more positive experience. "we encourage all participants to be proactive in creating an atmosphere where the safety of others is valued. In this spirit, oppressive behavior, abuse, sexual assault, and discrimination will not be tolerated," the policy says. To view the full policy, please visit [bardfreepress.com/springfling](https://bardfreepress.com/springfling)

# THE FIVE- STEP SENIOR MELTDOWN

BY AKSHITA BHANJDEO

It's talked about since the day you enter Bard College, viewed by the college as the capstone of the student's education in the liberal arts and sciences, and subtly weaved into all four years of your studies, regardless of your major (or choice). The Senior Project is defined by the college as an 'original, individual and focused project growing out of the students cumulative academic experiences.'

These words broadly mean that as you cherish

your wonderful memories of growing up and turning into a fully formed constructive adult, who is ready to enter the world of jobs, debt and soap, you will be tested with Annandale on Hudson's very own epidemic. No, it's not Lyme disease, and you need more than just a pair of tweezers to get this bug out. Welcome, Bardians, to the 5-step senior project meltdown.



**STEP 1:**

*Scientific Name:* Denial

*Slang:* The Peter Pan Stage

*Symptoms:* Euphoria, devil-may-care attitude, hopefulness, nonchalance

*Things to notice:* The sudden weekday benders that include checking out smog bands on a Monday.

*Where to find:* Sleeping out in the sun, attending meetings for clubs they are not part of, and inebriated marches to first-year dorms in the middle of the night to reminisce about a time when they thought sproj was another word for SMOG.

*Triggers:* The faculty advisor, your mom, the library

*You might find them listening to:* The Beatles' "Yellow Submarine"

**STEP 2:**

*Scientific Name:* Adrenaline

*Slang:* The Psychostimulant Stage

*Symptoms:* Excess energy, drivenness, short attention span, alertness, improved memory, meticulousness

*Things to notice:* The incessant finger/pen/lighter tapping in the library, the discarded pens with the end bitten off, the sudden addiction to the gymnasium, and the break from not smoking cigarettes

*Where to find:* Gymnasium, library, the Faculty Dining Room, professors' offices

*Triggers:* Midterms, your advisor, your mom.

*You might find them listening to:* EDM

**STEP 3:**

*Scientific Name:* Acceptance

*Slang:* The Caveman Stage

*Symptoms:* The sudden abundance of facial hair, dirty laundry being your style for the week, the inability to lift one's feet and walk

*Things to notice:* The deep set eye bags that are now your choice of sunglasses, the grunts and mumbles that only your dear friends can comprehend to assist you in your day-to-day task that consists of black coffee and rolled cigarettes with no filters, because you can't even...  
*Where to find:* Kline, musty corners, and contemplating life in the Parliament of Reality at midnight.

*You might find them listening to:* Portishead's "Only you"

**STEP 4:**

*Scientific Name:* Deprivation

*Slang:* The Whiny Stage

*Symptoms:* Replying to comments on any online page of Bard since your four years has given you the enlightenment to solve disputes and also dictate terms on what's funny (it doesn't matter that you wrote more words on that one post on Overheard than on that page you opened up in the morning to edit), also, pointing out anything that is in your way to achieve your goal; starting with the Kline cappuccino machine to the...air.

*Things to notice:* The outstretched pointed hand since you physically are too exhausted to reach out and pick up something.

*Where to find:* Any study space on campus that has a "Quiet Please" sign, since you have now developed an appetite for shushing people (this includes a rehearsed monologue on how they will never make it alive... ever..)

*You might find them listening to:* No Doubt's "It's My Life"

**STEP 5:**

*Scientific Name:* Redemption

*Slang:* The Victory Stage

*Symptoms:* You can finally see their face and what they look like in clothes whose original color you can put a name to, the frolicking, skipping and overall disbelief of having just spent 9 months on one paper (remember when you sat up all night whining about that Fysem paper?)

*Things to notice:* The smell of detergent, toothpaste, grad school applications, and battle scars

*Where to find:* On the roof of the library, Blithewood, waterfall, Cruger Island, in their beds.. finally.

*You might find them listening to:* OutKast - Hey Ya!

# AN ORDINARY DAY AT THE UNIVERSITY IN PALESTINE

When it comes to freedom of expression, academic and cultural freedom or the right to education where Palestine-Israel is concerned (and now internationally, considering the possible boycott of Israel and its institutions until its abuse ceases), we often forget that these are some of the normal conditions under which teaching and academic life has existed for decades in Palestine.

Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2014. As usual, like all my students and colleagues, I get into my car way before classes are due to start. When you travel by car or any other means of transport, to the university or elsewhere, you kid yourself when you try to make plans.

The occupation is also occupation of this energy. Its power lies precisely in the fact that it is effective even without actually doing anything. Anyone who lives here knows what their worries need to be. And consuming this energy is one of the daily aspects of power. Like when you pass under the Israeli watchtowers and you don't know whether there is a soldier in there or not. It worries you. You are careful about how you drive the car; careful not to do anything that might appear out of the ordinary. You behave as if the soldier were watching you.

*You behave as if the soldier is watching you.*

So you start off very early. There is no other way to "cope" with the delays that arise daily as a result of the wall between the West Bank and Israel, the checkpoints and other obstacles that the system of occupation, colonialism and apartheid has put in place against the Palestinians. Leaving early provides the illusion of being "sure" to "arrive on time" at the university.

An illusion. In fact sometimes you never get to the university at all. Maybe because the Israeli army really is there, rather than just the dread of an empty military tower. So it blocks the streets or the entrances for the students and university staff. Or the checkpoint system surrounding Palestinian towns creates traffic hold ups that last for hours, and it's goodbye lessons and university.

Arriving at the campus of Al Quds University, in the small Bantustan-town of Abu Dis (where I have been teaching for a few years and where I run the Human Rights and International Law Programme), I find five military jeeps belonging to the Israeli occupation army stationary in front of the university. According to sources at the Al Quds University, a few weeks earlier the army demolished a house opposite our campus. It was considered a "danger to the security of Israel" because it was too close to the wall that separates the university from Jerusalem. On the morning of January 22, the owners were trying to rebuild the small road leading to the house, when the army intervened.

The reconstruction of a demolished house, or in this case the road that leads to it, is, in a colonial context, a terrible affront. Eliminating and rebuilding an indigenous presence is at the heart of the clash between those who, on one hand, build settlements and demolish indigenous houses as routine of their settler colonial project since 1948, and those who, on the other hand, build and rebuild as a form of resistance-existence. Shortly after the owner started working with a bulldozer to reopen the road, the army intervened, seized the bulldozer and stationed for a long time — as often aggravatingly happens — near the main entrances of our campus. Usually soldiers block the entrances and start to ask students for their IDs, trying to provoke their legitimately irritated reactions and the clashes that usually follow.

BY NICOLA PERUGINI

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AND HEAD OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW PROGRAM, AL QUDS BARD COLLEGE, JERUSALEM.



At a quarter past nine I leave my car in a "protected" car park — because normally, when the army attacks our campus, the cars parked at the entrances suffer severe damage. I enter the campus and start receiving my students, "as if nothing has happened". Shortly after half past ten I meet a graduate and go out into the courtyard to discuss his thesis project on why international law is applied only to certain crimes and criminals and not to others. Shortly after advising him to include a section in the thesis on Ariel Sharon, Sabra and Shatila and the fact that Sharon did not undergo an international trial for war crimes before he died, our eyes start to smart. The army has just started the five hours of tear gas, rubber bullets and stun grenades that distinguish our day at the university.

The army attacks on our campus are frequent. The military are usually positioned defiantly at the entrances. They point their guns at the students, ask for their identity cards. It is the classic strategy of tension carried out by an army armed to the teeth. They know the students will rebel against these insults, and they know this will lead to clashes. Who would put up with life like this at university?

But this time ordinary university life was made more than usually tough. Many students and staff were injured and reported symptoms of suffocation (the gas used was particularly strong and caused severe irritation on various parts of the face). In one of the buildings on campus the thick tear gas on the ground floor prevented some of the students and university staff from leaving. They remain trapped. They eventually had to break the windows on the upper floors and use ladders to get out. The army's bullets destroyed many of the university's windows. The university implemented an evacuation plan and brought out some of the students and staff. But after hours of shooting and stone-throwing the army came into the campus and besieged a number of buildings, including the one where I was at, Al Quds Bard.

Trapped inside with the colleagues and students still there, we started thinking about what to do if the soldiers entered. One colleague said: "Perhaps the men had better hide in the kitchen, they could be arrested." Right after, the army came into our corridor. Men in balaclavas captured a student right in front of our eyes, just inches away from me. They dragged him out with them.

The clashes continued and there were arrests. We got out of the building at half past three in the afternoon. The university administrative and security staff began to assess the extensive damage. Palestinian national television arrived at the scene and there were a few interviews. Head of university security said, "This is our destiny: a state of siege."

After five hours of being surrounded I left with my colleagues and students by the only road the army has left open, with a refrain in my mind: BDS — Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions.

# STUDENT PERSPECTIVES: BARD COLLEGE CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT CONFERENCE IN ISTANBUL



BY SOPHIE LAZAAR

American social philosopher and pragmatist George Herbert Mead once suggested that through human activity meaning is made and that through communicative action the mind and the self begin to emerge. I found Mead's theory of constructive social engagement to be particularly true throughout the course of my six days in Istanbul for the Bard Center for Civic Engagement Conference, in which I presented the work done by the Root Cellar Collective for the greater Bard community.

Above all, I found my dialogues with students and faculty from Bard's sister institutions to be the most impactful part of my experience. Speaking to students from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Russia, Belarus, Austria, Singapore, the Netherlands, Denmark, Palestine, and Turkey — well, it does something to you, especially if you're like me, having lived my entire life never once fearful of suffering egregious abuse under some of the world's most corrupt and repressive governmental systems.

I'll point to one example. While taking a walk with a Turkish student, I asked her about her involvement in the student protests in Taksim Square. She vividly recounted to me what it felt like for her to have tear gas sprayed in her face until she couldn't breathe anymore but how she kept yelling at the police to spray her again, spray her again. I asked her if she was afraid; she wasn't, but her parents were afraid she would be killed — easily. It struck me there that for whatever political engagement I had participated in as per my civic duty, I never once rationally feared the police would kill me.

At Bard, apathy can be our largest barrier to productive social change. We have an obligation to engage in dialogue with and to support the work of students in parts of the world where meaningful engagement in social justice is restricted by repressive government.

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# KYRGYZSTAN BUDGET CUTS: IT HIT ME A COUPLE WEEKS AGO, THE OUTRAGE

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BY ALBINA MUZAFAROVA

Last year, the students of the department of American Studies were informed that their program was being closed and that in order to graduate, they would be required to take all their remaining required courses in one academic year, or during the summer. Some were sophomores, some freshmen. The reason for this was, as the administration put it, a lack of students. The university would not keep a program open if the number of students in a classroom fell below six to eight students. Yet prior to their decision to close American Studies, the students were not informed about the problem. There were no visible attempts to promote the program, either. Unwitting international students were advertising on behalf of the American University of Central Asia, when they might have focused their energies on promoting American Studies.

What remained of the department was subsumed under European Studies, which reduced the number of courses offered in American Studies. It was an easy solution to the problem of declining enrollment, but it also deprived students of their freedom to choose courses of their liking and get a good education in their field of interest.

The word has been around university for some time now — changes that no one welcomed, but that each individually seemed to take little away from the university. It hit me a couple of weeks ago, the outrage. I felt betrayed; I felt alone. I write this with faith that I am not. I am a student of the American University of Central Asia. I am part of a community of scholars from around the world. I am part of a great nexus of academia, of freedom, justice and knowledge in a tortured country.

During registration, students also discovered that several professors disappeared from the schedule for next semester. Given that they teach in the humanities — philosophy, religion, literature, art, politics, and history — and have high evaluations from students and peers, it is hard to contemplate that they may not be returning in the fall. This is especially true of those students

who were planning to ask them to be their thesis advisors. This, in fact, has been taken out of the students' hands completely. Thesis supervisors are now to be assigned by the department.

Surprisingly enough, sometimes it is not possible to enjoy your studies even when it is something you do best. A rigorous curriculum is not the problem. All one needs is a little willpower, less time on social networks, and a sense that all is well and good. But you know that there is something wrong once fewer and fewer course offerings begin to mark the passing of each successive year of study.

We were misled. Despite the contract, despite the fact that the university has promised us to "provide education according to the program to which the students have been admitted," despite a deeper sense of justice, my program was shut down, the professors that taught me most teach no more.

It would not be the end of the world for me, personally, if only American Studies students were affected by the changes. But when the university at large seems unable to offer a minimum number of courses in art, history, and literature, and other programs offer only two electives for non-majors, the quality of education suffers. Students are unable to pursue their dreams. As the students, who are trying to find out what exactly is going on and why their professors will no longer teach, are being sent bouncing from the office of the dean of faculty to that of the head of general education to the president and then back again, professors' names disappear from the schedule.

A strange reality emerges. As students try to get the courses back on the schedule, the administration argues that there are no students to fill the professors' classes. We are told that many of our professors will no longer be offering classes, while it is clear that they would like to. Not one of them is fired, but the contracts of many are not being renewed. They leave, we are told "of their own accord." It would be strange

to see them stay when they are not being offered a position.

The violation of democratic principles at the American University of Central Asia is outrageous. A dictatorial administration continues to experiment with new ways of doing things, as students and professors lose what little academic freedom and dignity they have, or go in search of answers.

My university has taught me much. I have learned to question authority, to state my position, and resist power instead of obeying it. My university gave me academic freedom. The realization that it may be only "academic," in the most putrid sense of the word — that it is theoretical — snatched the ground from under my feet. Suddenly, I felt I was being deprived of something I care for most — a source of knowledge. I am unhappy with the upcoming changes. Indignation erases everything and leaves me with only one thing to do — to oppose these changes.

I love AUCA. It is my home. I care about the learning environment here. It hurts me to see, with my own eyes, the difference between what it was when I started and what it has become. It used to be a marketplace of ideas, a bastion of academic freedom, and a place where we all felt safe and appreciated. This isn't the case anymore.



# BARD EXPANDS TO CHINA

BY JP LAWRENCE

When Robert Martin studied cello in the late 1950s, there was exactly one Asian student in his conservatory. The vast majority were like him: Jewish-American kids whose heritage came from Eastern Europe. Then as the years went on, Martin, now head of the Bard conservatory, noticed more and more students from Japan, South Korea and China sitting in the orchestra.

Today, East Asian countries, and China especially, are home to the largest classical music scene in the world. While many American orchestras are struggling, in China, classical concerts sell out quick, and there are 40 million students trying their hands at piano and violin.

It is in this environment that Bard is working on a partnership with Soochow University in Suzhou, China. The two colleges hope to create three programs: a student exchange, a four-year academy similar to Bard's partnership with Al-Quds Honors College, and a five-year, double-degree program similar to that of the Bard Conservatory of Music.

The idea is a modern shuyuan. That's the term Li-hua Ying, Bard associate professor of Chinese, likes to use. Shuyuan means university or college, but not quite. Literally, the term refers to a courtyard where philosophers would lecture their disciples, a place of critical inquiry, where books are studied and debates fly freely. Li-hua, while visiting Soochow last March, was delighted that the term was already in place.

It was a concept, Li-hua said, that seemed very Bard.

The dual degree students would receive one diploma from Bard and one from Soochow. In the beginning of April, the Soochow School of Music selected the first two dual-degree candidates out of eight applicants. Both selected are pianists, with one interested in economics, and the other in psychology. If all goes well, they will be the first Bard graduates from Soochow.

Martin embarked on a recruiting trip with Soochow last winter. The trip included stops in Seoul, Taipei, Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing. The hope was that recruiting jointly offers Bard a foothold within China, while

offering Soochow the endorsement of an established American conservatory.

In each city, the two schools held auditions and gave concerts. Martin brought his cello; Hekun Wu, the director of the Soochow School of Music, brought his too. The tour included a flutist from the Czech Republic, a violinist from Singapore, a guitarist from Germany, and a Korean-American pianist.

It was a truly international affair, fitting for a project that began with a plane ride across the world. It got its start when Soochow University began building a concert hall in 2013. They hired the acoustician who designed the Bard College Performing Arts Center. Yasuhisa Toyota, a Japanese native who also worked on concert halls in Tokyo, Kansas City and Disney Hall, told Soochow University to check out his work at Bard. And it was after a flight to Bard in 2012 that faculty from Soochow got the idea of a partnership.

The hard part now will be creating a program of study that will satisfy both Soochow and Bard. Academic programs at Soochow are used to students taking 90 percent of their classes within the major, as opposed to splitting between music and economics. Additionally, matters such as Bard distribution requirements, moderation and senior project are still up in the air.

"Both sides are saying we want to be flexible, but we have our needs, they have their needs," Martin said, adding that he won't know if the whole arrangement will be confirmed until the end of next year.

"It's like planting seeds," Martin said. "The numbers are so small, but if one of these kids or two of them get excited and do something with this, it may be something that resonates."



# I AM AFRAID OF MODI'S INDIA

BY RAJASRI NARASIMHAN

If you travel along the sands that touch the Bay of Bengal, past all of the curving roads that branch off of the highway that lines Marina Beach, eventually you reach Sri Parthasarthy Kovil. The temple is difficult to miss. During the day, massive crowds, mostly visitors, amble around the gates after worship. Lone photographers admire the eighth century Pallava architecture, avoiding the rickshaws and lorries that in their rush pay no mind to the bystanders in their way. Vendors try to pawn off coloured powder, bananas, flower garlands and other wares. A cool sea breeze wafts overhead and the scent of jasmine flowers fills the air. Paradoxically, everything is chaotic and serene.

This was the Triplicane, Madras, India of my childhood. It now exists as nothing more than a faded memory. The only remaining glimpse of this past, located across the temple, is Vedavalli House — my mother's childhood home and the only house left in Triplicane that hasn't been converted into a cramped apartment complex or wasn't, due to rising costs, abandoned as a den for opossums and rats.

I didn't grow up in India. Most of my life was spent more than 9000 miles away on the shore of another ocean. That I developed such a strong connection to such a distant place is something I feel only third culture kids can truly understand. The duration between my summers spent in India were inconsistent — first it was once every two years, then after a break of eight years, then once a year after that. With each return, I watched as Triplicane transformed from a traditional town into an urban nightmare.

Now when taking a walk, it is more common to see piles of trash and plastic than cows. The once pristine Marina Beach has turned into a sump for sewage disposal. Fishermen, dependent on these waters for their livelihood, sit around with nothing to do. Gone are the days of the modest Hindustan Ambassador, as much larger diesel vehicles attempt to navigate overly-congested, narrow roads. And the rate of expansion of McDonald's, KFC, and shopping malls for the elite is only matched by the ever-expanding slums located across the street. "Madras is industrializing," I hear people say proudly. They have long ago grown numb to the drainage fumes, the open defecation and the increase in the homeless. "We are expanding. We are entering the future." But at what cost?

Triplicane, a neighborhood of about 150,000 people, is a miniature model representing a much larger issue. Cities all over India are industrializing. And as they do, income gaps are widening, the environment is suffering, villages are being destroyed, and more and more slum settlements are popping up. Yes, India is entering the future. And it is sacrificing itself in the process.

Since April 7, around 150 million Indians have headed to the polls to vote in the general election and millions more are expected to until May 12. For a while now, Narendra Modi, the current chief minister of Gujarat, has been projected as the winner of the election. To anyone

even slightly familiar with Indian politics, this isn't surprising. His main opponent, Rahul Gandhi, is of the Congress party, which has, in so many ways and for so long failed the people. As a member of the Nehru-Gandhi family, Gandhi has also become a symbol for the dynastic politics and corruption within the Congress. His blunders, such as referring to poverty as a 'state of mind,' show how far removed he is from the plights of the Indian people.

Modi's past is sketchy. He is an ardent Hindu nationalist in a country that tries to present itself as 'secular.' He was most likely involved in the 2002 Gujarat Riots. Even if he didn't directly incite the riots, he refuses to apologize for how he handled the situation. But unlike the stagnant current government, Modi offers the people solutions and boasts a track record for economic growth that is seemingly promising. And for many Indians, desperation for some sort of change and the prospects of a 'Gujarat Model' are enough to ignore the implications that Modi's religious bigotry will have on a national scale.

Though Modi's Hindu nationalism shouldn't be dismissed, I fear Modi's India for reasons beyond that. For all of the people that the 'Gujarat Model' works for, there are millions of others who are falling through the cracks. The same state that takes pride in its high income levels also has high levels of hunger. Its urban slums have some of the worst conditions in India, with fewer facilities than most rural areas of the country. Its rivers are contaminated with biohazards. Poor farmers are forced to give up their land to industry giants. Workers at the Alang ship breaking yard rip apart oil tankers with their bare hands to make a profit for the state. In the Gujarat model, the poor suffer while the rich thrive.

I see the entirety of India heading in this direction and with Modi at the reigns it will eventually be too far gone to fix. I don't want India to be a country where quality of life is an afterthought and profit is valued before people. Development is important, but not when human lives are treated as expendable. I think of small triumphs that have occurred in favor of the people, for example when India blocked a bauxite mine that would have displaced the Dongria Kondh tribe. There will be no such 'victories in Modi's India.

As Indians continue to go to the polls for the general election, they will be voting between many lesser evils. Just the other day, Modi urged the youth to vote for 'the future of the country.' Yes, indeed, India is entering the future. And what kind of future will it be when so many people are left behind?

# THE FUTURE OF INDIA

BY ARMAAN ALKAZI

I often conflate my identity with India's — open, inclusive and moving (hopefully) toward equality. An idea premised on a lush romanticism and a kind of wild hope. It's a naive illusion but there can be something beautiful in naivety.

My vision is, admittedly, cloudy. Home often throws ideas into a magnetic space, where emotions trump logic. The ongoing elections in India have warped that space, it isn't that I've finally seen the two major parties for what they are: the Congress, a power-obsessed monarchy, and the BJP, a Hindu supremacist party willing to do anything for power. It's just that in the circus leading up to the election few people seem to care what India means. There is of course, the reflexive I don't want Modi — The Prime Ministerial Candidate for the BJP, and most probable winner — because his leadership will harm Muslims and Non-Hindus or the Congress is corrupt and we want a meritocratic, less dynastic, party in power. Both those charges are meek, in that they're echoes of what both the parties say about each other, uninterested in what India, home, should stand for. The only ray of hope has come from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), led by an anti-corruption activist and supposedly based on some form of direct, or rather, marginally more direct democracy. Local councils will have the power to review things like government contracts and lobby for better infrastructure. Besides being ineffective in delivering on any of their promises of direct democracy, AAP also has no vision or ideal for what they want India to look like, besides a clambering and clumsy call to end all corruption.

Of course nations, politics and (especially) the media are hardly what we hope them to be; there is always a yawning gap between what should be and what is. But I've always filled that space, and I suspect so many of us have, with a simple, almost unquestioning optimism. A teleological belief in the betterness of the future. The difference now is that the optimism I always felt comes up against a complete failure of political imagination and the desire to vote-in a fascist simply because he promises to remake India into a powerful, decisive, independent world power. The calming of that optimism does, however, let me think a little more sanely about Indian politics, where there is an increasing move towards identity politics, the supremacy of economic thought and almost complete disregard for massive inequality.

Thinking about home, when you're in a different country, especially where it's your main marker of identity, has to be distorted by longing. But distance can also give you perspective, the ability to stand outside the madhouse, to see how mad your house really is. Watching and understanding that madness, for me, has been undoubtedly depressing. It's made me realize the dark fractured space India is headed into, the inability of so many Indians to imagine a better, fairer world and the shallowness of political thought and commentary. But, in a roundabout way, it's also liberating. Delhi with its odd cosmopolitanism, harshness and schizophrenia (in architecture, in people) will always be home. I don't have to hold onto an idea of India, not only because it's an idea that's resolutely dead, but because it's an idea that masks a very nasty reality. I, like everyone else, attach my identity to people, places and ideas, often by choice, sometimes by birth. This election cycle has made me realize that a country, or a political community, is always by choice.

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<sup>1</sup> Modi was accused of aiding (through negligence and rhetoric) the death of 3000 Muslims during a spate of riots in the state where he was Chief Minister. His supporters like to point out that he has never been

<sup>2</sup> Whatever the hell that means.

<sup>3</sup> Translates as 'The Common Man's party'

<sup>4</sup> Corruption for AAP is mostly a technical problem, wherein if one simply legislates enough overseers and ombudsmen, it will be solved, rather than it being based in social conditions.

<sup>5</sup> Primarily based on the Caste system.

<sup>6</sup> For the statistically minded, the ratio between the poorest and richest ten percent has doubled in the past ten years.

# SPORTS

## SOFTBALL CLUB

### OFF THE BENCH

BY NORA CADY

"I didn't think I was going to be a starter right away, but I definitely thought I was going to have a chance coming into this program to help change it." I'm sitting with first-year Ben Diamond in his dorm room. Every inch of the wall behind him is covered in some sort of motivational paraphernalia. Most notably, his "Practice Player of the Week" Bard Basketball T-shirt hangs right above his bed. Looking at the wall feels like getting some sort of unspoken pep talk. Diamond was the star of his high school basketball team in New York City. Bard took notice, and in his junior and senior years of high school, he was recruited by the athletics program. It was a perfect fit for Diamond: he had a chance to play his game and receive a top tier education at the same time. August came and Diamond geared up for his first year as a collegiate athlete. He had formal practices six days a week, and in addition worked out four times a week. Other than class, most of his waking hours were spent perfecting his game. He worked hard but somehow the majority of Diamond's season was spent sitting on the sidelines watching his teammates start. Basically, Diamond sat on the bench a lot this year.

The general perception of the athletic program is that we have underpopulated teams whose rosters can barely be filled; having bench players is almost unthought of. But the opposite is true. Players like Diamond are an indication that the athletic program at Bard is changing rapidly. This year, 20 percent of the first year class are recruited sports players. And in turn the athletic program is becoming more competitive. Adam Turner, the Men's Basketball coach points out that "every legitimate program in the country has players who don't play."

This new, more "legitimate" program is one where not every player will receive their desired amount of playing time. I ask Diamond if he is disappointed about this past season. He concedes that, at times, sitting on the bench is frustrating: "It was tough but I never really felt like a bench player because I knew that eventually I would get playing time." While talking with Diamond, one word kept coming up over and over again in conversation: "investment." He sees his situation as an opportunity to work harder, to push himself further. Diamond understands he is no longer the star of his high school

basketball team. Instead, he's a first year student, fighting for a starting spot in an evolving program. And that program is making an investment in Diamond as well.

On the men's lacrosse team, first-year Avery Mencher is in a similar situation. However, he chose Bard first, and then found a place on the college's lacrosse team. Mencher views his time on the bench similarly to how Diamond sees his. This is the lacrosse team's first year, but it has every intention of developing players like Mencher, even if they cannot use them in every minute of every game this year. Like Diamond, Mencher is pretty content with his current situation. Both players value the success of the their team over their personal glory. Mencher is pretty straightforward about his time as a bench player. Saying that "I'd rather us win then me play more".

The recruitment and cultivation of players like Mencher and Diamond is evidence of Bard's commitment to its athletics program and to its athletes. One might think that bench players would feel angry or resentful in some way but instead it seems Bard has selected a group of athletes and possibly engendered a culture where sitting on the bench is an investment rather than a punishment. Student athletes don't sit on the bench because they are bad players, but rather because they may not be what the team needs in that moment, or at that game, during that season. But this does not mean that someday they won't be. Coaches at Bard aren't always recruiting on false promises. Instead, they are cultivating a long-term and successful future for their various sports — a future that includes players like Diamond and Mencher.

BY NORA CADY

I have this nightmare where I break a window at Blithewood. When I joined the Bard Softball Club, I realized it was this dream could now become a reality. It was 11:30 on a Sunday morning when members of the softball club sleepily made their way to Blithewood for our first semi-official game. Unfortunately, we were a few players short of two teams, so participants instead played catch and got a chance to hit. The practice was relaxed and informal. This mood provided the perfect environment for players to get to know one another. Members of the young club come from a variety of backgrounds. Some are seasoned players with years of experience on school and travel teams, while others are just now picking the sport up. Softball Club's members are an indication of the possible advantage this program has over others of a similar vein at different schools where even club sports are much more competitive. The organization is in its first year, student run, and ready and willing to teach newcomers to the sport. The club makes picking up softball easy. Club founder and sophomore Alana Bortoluzzi hopes that the club will appeal to "people who grew up throwing a ball but never played on a real team... [because] this gives them a platform to play in a low pressure environment." Alana's hopes have now become a reality. Bortoluzzi founded the club to provide an outlet for students who love to play softball, but she also hopes that this club might become an intramural sport. Though this idea appeals to some members, it is more of a future goal. For now, we just have to focus on not breaking any windows.

# OPINION

## TRANSFER CURRICULUM

BY F. ROGER BRADY

For a transfer student, the Bard College curriculum does not adapt. It ignores and denies difference. At Bard there is no transfer curriculum; there is only a standard curriculum, or mold, which we transfer students do not fit snugly into.

Every Bard student goes through three phases throughout their years here. Firstly, there is the first-year curriculum, consisting of L & T, CitSci, and Fysem; secondly, there is moderation; and lastly, there is the creation of a senior project.

I, along with many of my peers, will not experience the first two of these things as intended. Transfer students are not obligated, or even offered the option, to take L&T, CitSci, or Fysem.

And as a transfer student you are expected to moderate almost immediately. As my first semester at Bard unfolded, moderation remained in the back of my mind, so now, as a second semester Junior, I have one semester to moderate. If I am rejected I will not graduate unless I spend another semester, and another \$22,865, in and on college, but my purpose here is not to ruminate on my prospects for graduation.

In the Bard classroom there is an expectation of previous understanding. I, as a Bardian, am expected to have a basic understand of Nietzsche's genealogy of morals, the formulations of our own Hannah Arendt, and Plato's Republic along with a plethora of other foundational texts. I, as a transfer, do not meet the expectations that many professors' have of a "Bardian."

Am I less of a Bardian because I did not take First-Year Seminar? Am I less worthy, because in high school Bard was not on my radar? In Bard's mission statement it says, "The liberal arts tradition at Bard is evident in the First-Year Seminar and in general courses that ground students in the essentials of inquiry and analysis and present a serious encounter with the world of ideas."

And to this I ask, have I been exposed to this "world of ideas?" Perhaps not. Is it assumed that I transferred from another small liberal arts college, which implemented the same educational praxis? I would love to understand Nietzsche, Arendt, and Plato, but Bard has not provided me the opportunities to do so, which they otherwise consider a graduation requirement.

I know very little about L&T, besides stories from first-years and retrospective complaints from those looking back. I know very little about CitSci, besides anecdotes of the frigid Hudson Valley air and two-week winter breaks. And of Fysem I have a reading list, which I found

online, but nothing else.

I feel as though these experiences are opportunities, which many take for granted. When my Environmental and Urban Studies professor references Rousseau in passing, slipping in the dreaded, "you read X for Fysem" or when my writing professor reads a beautiful passage from *Absalom, Absalom!* as a prototype for skillful prose, I sigh with regret.

Some would argue that, if I am so concerned as a transfer, I should familiarize myself with the Fysem syllabus on my own time. If this is the case and I am solely responsible for familiarizing myself with these foundational texts without the academic guidance granted to first-years, then why did I come to Bard? Why not sit at home, or my previous college, and read the books on the syllabus for each class and gain the same education as any Bardian? Education, especially at Bard, is collaborative. The education, which we are here to acquire, is founded primarily on those who surround us. I came to Bard to learn with Bardians and to become one through the process.

I believe that every Bardian should be held to the same standard. Many of my fellow transfers disagree with me; they rejoice in the fact that there is not yet another requirement standing in between them and a timely graduation, and this is a valid point. I certainly agree that graduating, as a transfer, should be comfortably attainable.

I also believe that graduating, as a transfer, should come with the education with which a Bard degree is associated. There must be some middle ground, in which us transfers can attain something that closely resembles the Bard education that is expected of a four-year graduate. With this said, let it be known that as a Bardian I should be at a minimum allowed those experiences and opportunities, if not obligated to complete them. Lora Seery, Peter Gadsby, Leon Botstein: you can do better by us.

Bard designs its curriculum with the preconception that there are certain things that every college graduate should be taught and learn, yet somehow this founding principle is not applied to us transfer students. So let me end here by asking, why not me? Why not us?

# TEACH FOR AMERICA: PRO

BY KIM SARGEANT

This summer, new Teach for America (TFA) corps members, like myself, will partake in an intensive 7-week training program to prepare them for full time teaching positions, but what they may not be prepared for is the animosity and backlash that faces them.

It is obvious that this country still needs a lot of reform when it comes to equal opportunity, especially in light of President Barack Obama's recent "My Brother's Keeper" initiative, which was created with the purpose of assisting young minority men. Even with the strong need for a broader range of opportunities in America, there is a great deal of opposition regarding how the equality issues are being addressed, particularly in education.

We are in the midst of a society that has progressed tremendously since the Civil Rights Movement, but we have become complacent with our advancements in the education realm. It is important to try newer initiatives like TFA, because the older systems are keeping us academically and socially stagnant.

Like plenty components of America's education system, TFA is far from perfect. But it is worth the try to get it right, especially when one hears the inspirational story of former TFA student Troy Simon.

Troy Simon is the sophomore who introduced Michelle Obama at a higher education summit in January. He also has been a student of TFA teachers in New Orleans, LA since the fifth grade. "Teach for America teachers are gentle with students and make sure that they graduate from high school and college," said Troy. He is still in contact with all of his TFA teachers and how the support is still there for him.

Troy went on to give TFA some credit for preparing him for the opportunity to sit same room with the presidential family. He said that lot of people know his name and his story. "TFA teachers make sure that you get connected," he said. If Troy's story is representative of many other student experiences with TFA, then TFA teachers appear to have the passion to be ideal mentors for young students, but that is just from the inside looking out.

How does TFA, an organization with the vision statement that "one day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education,"

end up being the subject of the ongoing #ResistTFA trending topic on twitter and the growing anti-TFA movement?

From the outside looking in, critics see that TFA teachers may not have the most extensive academic background in education. They have, however, been picked out of thousands of applicants and have been identified as educated leaders with the potential and desire to take on the challenge of equality in education.

Before I even applied, Ali Rallis, recruitment manager in New York told me, "When considering applying to Teach for America, please keep in mind that the real question is whether or not you are ready to make a full commitment to the kids."

I wanted to commit to students, but I also expressed some concerns about the pros and cons that I had been hearing about TFA. Ali embraced these questions. She told me that it was a good thing that I was not coming in to a program that I perceived to be perfect. She said that with a critical eye, and the talent to be a great leader and teacher, I would be the perfect asset to help improve TFA and get them closer to their goal of bettering educational opportunities.

I was sold.

Next fall, I will be teaching math in Memphis, Tenn., making use of my Bachelor's degree in mathematics while exploring my love for teaching as a career. As a math major, I have learned that sometimes the best way to a solution is through trial and error.

TFA has grown and developed for over twenty years, and the program may still be in its trial and error phase, because reform is gradual. However, if we keep students like Troy in mind, the potential for TFA's impact in communities across the nation is undeniable.

I challenge TFA and its critics to find ways to cooperate to make TFA a better force in solving the problem of education inequality, because TFA can no longer be a scapegoat. We live in a time where we need more doers and less finger-pointers to really see the advancements in education that we have all been waiting for.

At this point there is a lot of readily available and thoroughly detailed information on why Teach for America (TFA) has been doing more harm than good for a long time now. Both the academic research and the anecdotal evidence, such as several blogs run by former TFA teachers who are now criticizing the program, is damning.

Therefore, excuse this short article for painting with a somewhat broad brush.

TFA is awful in every way.

I know, it's surprising.

You would think that throwing recent college grads with only a few weeks of training under unrealistic conditions into some of the most under-resourced and technically demanding classroom environments in the nation would be a slam dunk of an idea.

And you would suspect that working for a two-year commitment with no guarantee of job placement gives TFA members the same bargaining power as unionized and tenured teachers to stand up to the administrators and politicians who are constantly chomping at the bit to implement increasingly unreasonable regiments of standardization and testing.

At the very least, you must agree that even if you don't believe any of these things, it is perfectly acceptable to promote and support them anyway because it will look great on your resume and could even land you an awesome internship at Goldman Sachs.

TFA has a simple model. It recruits students from America's top colleges to teach for two or three years in high-poverty areas. Recruits receive a five-week 'teacher boot camp' and are then thrown into the classroom.

After their commitment is up, the vast majority of these recruits will quit teaching and move on with an impressive new line on their resume. The near total abandonment of the profession by recruits is not a bug in the system, but an explicit part of the TFA model.

As those who have gone through the application process can attest, the single most important focus is the question "What do you plan to do after TFA?" It is the reason why people already holding degrees in education or teacher certifications are almost never accepted. It is the reason why TFA coordinates an internship program with Goldman Sachs for recruits between their first and second teaching years.

The purpose is not to create good teachers. The purpose is not to fix the education system. The purpose is simply to churn out TFA Alums into positions of power so they can in turn reward TFA with additional

contracts or funding.

For years, TFA has been able to keep this racket going based on two central myths. First, that there is a desperate teacher shortage in high-poverty schools that they are filling with high quality applicants. This myth is so pernicious that dozens of schools — particularly high-profile charter schools such as KIPP or Achievement First — staff their schools with massive numbers of TFA students.

Secondly, TFA has often argued that its goal is not to create permanent classroom educators, but to create more lawyers, bankers, doctors, and political leaders — power brokers basically — who are more knowledgeable about America's education crisis in high needs schools.

Let's turn to the first myth. There are certainly large swaths of the country — though fewer than there used to be as more and more people go into the teaching profession — where teachers are desperately in need. However, these are simply not the areas TFA is set on expanding into. For example, Chicago does not have a teacher shortage. It has thousands of bright and capable teachers with many more on the way from local graduate schools. Yet, when Chicago laid off well over 1,000 teachers last year they hired nearly half as many TFA recruits to refill spots.

Memphis, similarly, laid off 800 teachers while simultaneously dramatically expanding its commitment to TFA. If TFA was remotely sincere in their intentions, they would at the very least send their recruits to where they might do some marginal good, rather than to replace veteran educators with cheap non-unionized temporary stand ins.

As education researcher Philip Kovacs noted after reviewing a dozen different studies of TFA's impact on students, "There is simply no 'large and growing body of evidence' suggesting TFA corps members make as much of an impact on student achievement as veteran teachers." Are we more comfortable with bad teachers than bad surgeons simply because teachers only operate on the next generation?

The second myth is already a joke at the outset. The idea that TFA at least produces future leaders in law, business, finance and politics who will care more deeply about the state of our education system is insulting and untrue.

First, because it is clear TFA actively does harm to students, creating this 'awareness' comes at the direct expense of making the existing problem worse. Second, if this is TFA's goal, then it also needs to do a

greater job of explaining and contextualizing the brutal poverty that corps members address every day. It would address as part of its practice and advocacy the multiple systemic problems raised by poverty every day, and train their recruits to speak out on these issues. Instead the only anti-poverty TFA puts forward is that districts should recruit more TFA members.

But of equal importance, it does not work. A 2010 study of TFA grads is unequivocal on the matter. To quote the New York Times, "In areas like voting, charitable giving and civic engagement, graduates of the program lag behind those who were accepted but declined and those who dropped out before completing their two years, according to Doug McAdam, a sociologist at Stanford University."

Going through TFA actually makes you less likely to remain socially engaged in the future. The study finds several reasons for this, such as the extreme level of burnout and exhaustion caused by being thrown into the role of teaching with little training or support. Most important, however, is the disillusionment created by TFA's approach to the issue of educational inequality. The few well known TFA alums who are vocal about education and still support the program are proponents of privatization and dismantling of public education through charter schools, vouchers, union-busting and standardization.

So when you join Teach for America, understand that you are not supporting your students or yourself as an educator. With that in mind, we have to ask the question what TFA actually supports.

In 2012, teachers went on strike in Chicago to guarantee better pay and adequate resources for their schools. The strike proved quite embarrassing for Mayor Rahm Emanuel. It would certainly be easier for Emanuel to deal with a cadre of two-year volunteers as opposed to experienced and vocal members of the Chicago Teachers Union. They are cheaper, more likely to work harder without more pay, and less likely to speak out against city leadership. It is not surprising then that mayors and governors nationwide — both Republican and Democrat — are clamoring to fill classrooms with non-union TFA corps members.

It is equally unsurprising that many charter schools — privately run public schools that are generally non-union and often run by large businesses — support TFA. These teachers, again, are cheaper and more compliant with administrators. This means higher salaries for administrators and greater profits for charter board members.

That is TFA's true mission. While I know for a fact that there are plenty of folks who believe strongly that they are doing great work in the classroom, the real goal for TFA is to strip teachers of their power and agency while empowering administrators, politicians, and very wealthy people, all while making a quick buck.

Meanwhile the reasons for inequity in education — the effects of high poverty, under resourced schools, low pay for teachers — go unaddressed.

So if you are a Bard student hoping to go into teaching, what can you do instead? There are a number of paths for students hoping to become educators. Many graduate schools of education are affordable, high quality, and offer substantial scholarships for future teachers. While the viability of grad school in other disciplines is beginning to fall into serious question, education grad programs remain a bright spot. Additionally, there are other programs that accomplish TFA's stated mission much better than TFA itself.

Programs such as Teach Boston and the NYC Teaching Fellowship program — while not perfect — offer teacher training, mentorship, and in class experience all while you earn your advanced degree. The main difference between these programs and TFA are that they actually want you to make teaching your true profession and they lack TFA's \$300,000,000 hedge fund sponsored endowment. If you want to go into teaching, don't join TFA. If you just want to feel like you're doing some good in the world, don't join TFA.

Teach for America is a thinly veiled front for the privatization movement. It does not care about students. It does not care about you. At best, it is awful at its stated mission. More realistically, it only cares about helping to tear down public education in order to establish something more profitable in its place. The sickly sweet public relations copy it gushes in the media and at recruiting sessions about its deep concern for the children only serves to make it more grotesque.

## WHAT'S UP WITH ALL THE DEAD WHITE GUYS?

BY AUTUMN RIVERS

A few weeks ago, I led a class discussion about Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* in my Fysem class. After dragging the topic out for as long as my fellow discussion leaders and I could, we still had another 20 extra minutes for discussion.

I reckoned it was an acceptable time to bring up a question that meant a lot to me. As someone who is neither white, nor male, I often wonder why the vast majority of texts that we read were written by such authors. I realized the omission of female and colored writers early in the semester, and I couldn't understand why this was. In a sense, my question boiled down to: "what's up with all the dead, white guys?"

With this in mind, I asked the class how they felt about the scarcity of women in the Fysem curriculum.

My professor scrunched his face uncomfortably. The men in the room fell silent and wide-eyed. One girl quickly replied, "no comment." Soon thereafter another girl followed suit exclaiming, "me neither."

I found this response troubling. After a few more moments of silence and tension, another girl's hand rose. Her response to the question was essentially that we are being equipped with the general foundation of collegiate discourse. She said that Fysem was preparing us for things that would appear later in our studies, and that this curriculum would help us better communicate with other scholars at other colleges and universities who will also read some of the same works.

After this, I asked the women, all of whom were white, how they felt about the lack of exposure to female thinkers of color in the curriculum. Another person replied with that while, yes, we should seek diversity in our discourse, there is already an array of varied and foundational texts, and that they were chosen because they have maintained a sense of importance despite the passage of time and state of current affairs.

I felt alienated. But then again, I cannot say I expected anything from the conversation.

I have never given much notice to the race or gender of the people I have read. And I'm sure many of my fellow classmates hadn't either.

As students, we have never been encouraged to think about why, despite the fact that women of color far outnumber white men in the world, we have read books by so few women of color writers.

I think this is a bizarre omission if we think about the purpose of Fysem. In its course description, Fysem is advertised as an exploration of the human

experience. How can we possibly explore the human experience when we knowingly omit such a large portion of the human population?

As a community of well intentioned people, if you do not agree with my stance, I challenge you to at least reconsider your pre-conceived notion of what belongs as a part of a so-called "Western Canon."



# CURRENT STATE OF THE FREE PRESS

Hello, dear reader:

Now's as good a time as ever to catch you up on how the *Free Press* is doing. We've welcomed some new members onto our staff. We've won awards. And we're continuing a dialogue about what we, the *Free Press*, can do to serve you, our reader, better.

The *Free Press* has been recognized by the New York Press Association for first place in the design category and second place in the feature story category. "The look is remarkably fresh," the judges said. "Each and every page is interesting and for that reason, they stand out on their own."

The *Free Press's* budget for the 2014-15 has been approved. The budget from the convocation fund will allow the FP to continue publishing monthly.

In a recent meeting, the Charter Review Committee said that the *Free Press* has not been acting in accordance with its charter. While the Student Government does not have a say in editorial decisions, they felt that content does not serve the Bard community to its most positive potential.

Articles, committee members said, violate the *Free Press* charter's following line: that the *Free Press* "is pivotal in clearing up rumors, misconceptions, and misunderstandings (even if it does occasionally start, promote, and add fire to these things)." Unnamed articles, committee members said, are "othering" to members of the Bard community. This is grounds for reevaluating *Free Press* charter club status.

If the *Free Press* does not write a new charter, Vanderbilt said, its charter status will be put on probationary status for the upcoming fall semester.

It is not the place of the Student Government to interfere with the editorial decisions of the *Free Press*, unless those decisions violate any of the conditions set forth in the college rules or the charter club rules. The members of the committee said they understood that government does not have a role in editorial decisions, but would appear from their threats that they do not.

Student Government's actions threaten Bard's only independent news source. The *Free Press's* purpose is to serve you: the Bard community. Not solely the student government. There seems here to be a misunderstanding of the difference between propaganda and journalism. We must not accept funding at the expense of editorial freedom.

Here is an excerpt from Fiscal Committee chair and Speaker-elect Carter Vanderbilt to Editor in Chief Naomi LaChance and Managing Editor Leela Khanna: "As per our conversation, we wanted to reach out regarding the *Free Press* creating a new Charter-- one that would contain internal structural safeguards against the type of actions we discussed, as well as language to ensure journalistic integrity and sensitivity."

The *Free Press* maintains its journalistic integrity and sensitivity, and will continue to do so independently of the student government's requests. The *Free Press* takes this chance to remind its readers of the primary goal: to offer news, criticism, and analysis by the Bard community, for the Bard community. We are a space to express bold new ideas in a public venue. We prioritize you, our reader, above the structural safeguards of the institution.

While the *Free Press* will take this opportunity to reconsider its charter, a formal objection has been written to the proper authorities regarding the threats by members of the Student Government.

The *Free Press* takes its responsibility to its readership seriously. Feedback is welcome in the form of letters to the editor and opinion pieces.

In other news, don't forget that all members of the Bard community are invited to join our newspaper. Please email [bardfreepress@gmail.com](mailto:bardfreepress@gmail.com).

That's all for now. Thanks for reading.

Love,  
FP editors



# RE: BARD TWEETS

@benjaminbucketz

Team Lift @ 5 haaaaan

@snacks666

Hey everybody freaking out about senior project, you know we are all going to die one day, right?

@crlyk4

Do you guys think Nancy Pelosi is going to visit smog?

@mopptimusprime

so the question of the day is definitely "why the fuck is an assistant professor of japanese on my written arts moderation board?"

@wordsmithed

four hours of sleep is the new black

@therajasri

I just saw Walter Russell Mead jogging in a long-sleeved shirt and dress pants. Well, good for him!

@clairebnschtn

lkjaslkjalsdhfasldjklfajsdkfl;adjs just don't talk in the library! don't bring tours through here! this is a sacred space for sproj!

@jpcorner

I think the librarian might've just made fun of me for using the microfilm reader when I asked her for help.

@lizarddeath

I'm summering at my parents house this year.

