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Bard Free Press, Zine (November 13, 2019)

Bard College

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Bard College in the Aughts

By Nick Fiorellini

Twenty years ago, a room in the basement of Albee was the home to the *Free Press*' office and stored the single point-and-shoot camera and MacBook the paper had to shoot, write, edit, and produce local news. While students were working on producing a paper in the office, other students would stop by and use the camera to take pictures of themselves and their friends. When the MacBook wasn't in use by the paper's staff, the desktop was up and running, largely snapping photos of students in the now-passé Photo Booth effects.

As the last generation to go through college without ubiquitous smartphones, these photos helped capture a world undergoing a drastic and sudden technological and digital transition. While digital cameras that worked with a home computer via serial cables became available on the consumer-level market beginning in 1994, the technology for point-and-shoot cameras at night was not as developed as

it is today, and photos taken at night were grainy and oversaturated with light from a flash.

During this time, few people had personal computers and the introduction of the digital camera was still fresh in the public memory, so despite the sub-par quality of these photos, the presence of the camera and the images it produced was special.

For years, these beloved snapshots of Bard held a sentimental place in decade-old Facebook albums, SD cards, and printed back issues of the *Free Press*. That was until this summer on July 3, when a former photographer for the *Free Press* and their friend, both of whom wish to remain anonymous, created the account "@bard_in_the_00s" on Instagram and published nine of these photos.

"The night we started the account I think I said, 'Interest in this niche content will have a ceiling of about 50 people,'" the friend said in an interview with the *Free Press*.

"The medium lends itself to a kind of spiral. Photography brings about sentiment, so the audience will remember a crazy party, for example, tag their friends, and the account grows and grows," retorted the photographer.

And as the photographer predicted, pictures of parties with Bard students dressed in 2000's garb, holding a Tropicana bottle from the Green Onion in one hand and a bottle of beer in the other, with someone looking caught off guard in the background, have resonated with Bard students and alumni. At the time of publication, the account has no bio, follows no other users, goes by the name "Bard College in the Aughts," and boasts just over 850 followers.



Photo posted on @bard_in_the_00s on August 5, 2019.

"@bard_in_the_00s" joins many other accounts that are popular on the mobile photo- and video-sharing social network, including "@bardcollegememes" and "@bardheart," which share humorous and flirtatious content, respectively.

As social media platforms rise and fall, the sites Bard students use to communicate and to create community have changed over the years.

Around 2010, Bard students and alumni came together online to post different types of content, sometimes under anonymous monikers, accounts, and groups. In December 2009, the original "Overheard at Bard" group was created for students as "a procrastination station on the web; a compendium of interesting dialogue or muttering you happen to hear on or around campus," according to the group's description.

During the heyday of Tumblr, these Facebook groups were replicated on the blogging

website between 2011 and 2012, creating what many Bard students would refer to as the "Bard Tumblr network." Unlike Facebook, which requires users to use and post with their real life names, Tumblr allowed for Bard students to remain anonymous when they posted. This anonymity allowed for the creation of more vulnerable and risqué groups like "likesomebardian" in October 2012 and "sexsomebardian" in March 2013, where Bard students could submit posts about their crushes or inquire about potential hook ups.

While Facebook and Tumblr were the primary modes of online communication a decade ago, current students and alumni are more likely to utilize Instagram than any other social media site, which is why the photographer and their friend decided to create the "@bard_in_the_00s" on Instagram.

That, and they weren't clever enough to make a meme account, the friend quipped.

Going through hundreds of

photos and creating the account have evoked all kinds of emotions between the friends. Pictures with Bard landmarks in them are great and nostalgic. Photos of people smiling make them smile. Students trying to look cool have a "we-were-young-once feeling" to them. Sometimes, alum with their own submissions are now parents. Other times, they find out a fellow peer had unfortunately passed.

Some of the creator's favorite pictures on the account aren't even photos. They're advertisements to The Black Swan, now Traghaven Whiskey Pub & Co, and a flyer advertising the Gamelan Club's weekly Monday meetings in Olin Hall.



Photo posted on @bard_in_the_00s on August 14, 2019.

"The Gamelan flier is great," said the photographer. "Walking by Olin and hearing the Gamelan group go to absolute town on those beautiful instruments is a nice Bard memory."

Bard College

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The *Free Press* is always accepting submissions. Any of these editors would be able to help you with one.

If you would like to join us for meetings, we meet Mondays at 7. Location through email.

Instagram: @bardfreepress
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Horoscopes

By Masha Kurbatova



Aries (March 21 - April 19): Leaves turn yellow and fall to the ground, but don't let these bare trees get you down. Your zest for life is your biggest asset, and what attracts others to you. Despite upcoming challenges, keep your flame burning.



Taurus (April 20 - May 20): Changing seasons bring bouts of seasonal depression, but resist the urge to sleep and eat away your feelings. Take your coziness to-go with a nice sweater, and hit the streets. You never know what you will find out there.



Gemini (May 21 - June 20): Geese fly south in the colder months, but never alone, travelling only as a flock. Birds of a feather stick together, they say, but this November, try hanging out with a different crowd than normal. They will teach you something new.



Cancer (June 21 - July 22): Always the diplomatic one, you may avoid expressing your true feelings for fear of causing conflict. This month is for you to embrace your stronger opinions. Take a cue from the pumpkin patch scarecrow. He is unapologetically himself, even if it means scaring flocks away.



Leo (July 23 - August 22): Your bold personality burns bright even in the dark, like a blazing autumn bonfire. This brings to you those seeking warmth in the cold November nights. Be careful though, for not all those who come to bask in your glow have good intentions.



Virgo (August 23 - September 22): The temperature outside is decreasing, and so is your will to leave your cozy room. Remember, however, that real life lies just beyond the confines of your bed. Get out there and brave the cold weather -- that's where all the fun is.



Libra (September 23 - October 22): Unfortunately, with everyone spending more time in their rooms, this month will be hard for a social butterfly like you. It's time to go back into your cocoon for a bit, to marinate in your own feelings, and focus on yourself.



Scorpio (October 23 - November 21): Happy birthday, past or upcoming. This is your season, and unlike most, you revel in the doom and gloom of late autumn. Channel this potent energy, and use it to engage actively with your passions. Whatever work you make this month will be extra special.



Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21): Pumpkin spice is sweet, but it burns the tongue. You too are sweet and charming, but you can be inflammatory when delivering your truths. This month, watch what you say; you never know how sensitive your listeners are.



Capricorn (December 22 - January 19): The clownery of Halloween is over, but the clownery of humanity continues on. It may seem like everyone around you is stupid and unnecessarily flamboyant, but bear with them for a bit -- someone special is coming soon.



Aquarius (January 20 - February 18): Every autumn leaf is unique, whether in its color, shape, the way it crinkles, or its particular smell. This month, embrace your brand of different, but remember that everyone around you is trying to do the same.



Pisces (February 19 - March 20): It's the season of corn mazes, and the inside of your mind often feels like one. Don't spend too much time wandering the intricate corridors of your thoughts. Stay grounded and present in the real world.

Getting Accessibility on the Map

By Alyssa May White

Following the events surrounding the alleged assault on the Simon's Rock campus, President Botstein sent a message to the community addressing student concerns about campus safety. In this message, President Botstein wrote, "A map of 80 emergency phones has been posted on the Security website. The emergency phone map is being incorporated into the accessibility map through the implementation of Concept 3-D for accessibility this spring." The current link on the Security website, which can also be found through the email from President Botstein, brings you to a standard map of campus that indicates locations of phones that can be used to call for help in case of emergency. In the wake of Simon's Rock, these phone boxes have been painted blue, reflectors have been added to them, and some have been had blue lights added to them. But what is the accessibility map? The *Free Press* reached out to Finn Tate, co-head of the

people with mobility issues.

In a follow-up interview with Web Services Manager Juliet Myers, who is spearheading the map, and Director of Housing Nancy Smith, who is also the Campus Accessibility Project Manager, this concern was addressed. Myers explained that the project considered a number of providers before settling on Concept 3D, the company that makes maps for Disney Parks, because the company has accessibility at the core of their operations. One of the examples of this is the way the product constantly updates. Bard requested the ability to filter for the severity of inclines. No one had asked that of the company before, but the company is working with Bard to figure out how to add that feature to the map, and though it will not likely be included in the first incarnation of the map, there is hope that future versions will be able to integrate that feature. One of the benefits of the company allowing changes to the map is that it can always be a work in

A Sign of the Times

By Joe Nadler

Upon first glance, nothing seemed out of the ordinary in the basement of Robbins Annex. Dingy carpeting. Decorative name tags. Doors painted over more times than one can count. That is—until you turn the corner—where there was a bright green emergency exit sign, laying on the floor. Earlier last month, this exit sign was knocked down during an exceptionally rowdy evening in a dormitory that otherwise seems calm during the day.



Robbins Annex exit sign. Photo by Matthew Zweigbaum.

While temporarily losing an emergency exit sign was not originally the most substantial loss, the news from the North Campus Area Coordinator of the Robbins community being ordered to pay a collective fine of \$700, was. In an

henceforth referred to as Robby, responded to questions about the signs being knocked down as well as the sign on the condition he remained anonymous.

"\$700," Robby questioned? "Everyone was drop kicking [those] signs. Mostly me, my friend, and this person we know from the city."

Free Press asked Robby what he thought about residents being upset about the possibility of paying a \$700 fine for someone knocking down the sign, and he responded by first noting that there were multiple people doing it and that "Every single person that is upset has the right to be upset. These signs clearly are used for evacuation purposes only and should not be used for recreational purposes."

Another source allegedly involved with the situation said "I think its bullshit that they're charging \$700 to the whole community...The all or nothing attitude...I mean like if someone comes out and admits to it, they'd probably just put it all on them... I

A Cult by Any Other Name?

By Alyssa May White



A poster found around Bard campus on October 30, 2019.

A college campus is a place where one should always be prepared to encounter the unusual. This is doubly true, to be sure, the week of Halloween. In a way it was both surprising and not surprising at all, then, to encounter truly bizarre posters around campus on Wednesday October 30th, 2019, the day before Halloween. The poster had a picture of an old woman touching the tips of her fingers together, and it was captioned "CHRISTIAN MOTHERS FOR SAFE GAY SEX". These posters seemed like they should be a joke, and indeed at first I treated

semester. This email also included the club's mission statement, which is, "The Christian Mothers joyously undertake the role of sanctifying young souls on the Bard College Campus. We care for each other and the community around us through prayer, blessings, hymns, and coloring. Christian mothers work to unite our own hearts to the spiritual world and draw our community closer to the Lord". Christian MOB also emphasizes that they welcome anyone regardless of religion or maternal status.

This wasn't quite the message I was getting when I was there. At the time of the meeting they claimed to be pro safe gay sex and anal beads, amongst other things, and anti-Kanye West, a claim that was then undermined by Curtin playing Kanye West. It was clear at the time, however, that they accepted anyone regardless of religion or maternal status, a fact that was emphasized as two members came dressed as

co-head of the Student Disabilities Union (SDU), to find out.

According to Tate, the accessibility map is coming out in response to a list of demands leveled at the college by the SDU last school year. According to Tate, the campus is widely inaccessible due to old buildings and steep inclines, among other things, and current maps of the school don't mark which paths are accessible. They explained that the map itself also has accessibility issues because it is uploaded as a PDF and cannot be read by screen reader applications. Tate explained that the map was one of the first measures both pitched and accepted, and was a widely uncontroversial move. The map was in the works over the summer, and would allow students to do pre-planned routes. Different overlays of the map would also allow students to access information such buildings with elevators. Tate pointed out, however, that the map cannot currently display the severity of an incline, which is a factor that often impacts

progress.

President Botstein's message to the community seems to imply that the map will be available this spring. The people working on the project weren't certain about this. Tate wasn't aware of an official timeline, but directed me to Myers and Smith. Myers and Smith explained that because the school is still in contract with the company, there is no official timeline. They hope to get the map out as quickly as possible, and couldn't think of a reason why it wouldn't be out in the spring, but the timeline is not yet certain.



The current map of emergency phones that can be found through Bard's security website.

email to the residents, Derick Ebert wrote:

"It should go without saying, there is nothing hilarious about the destruction of campus property; save your pranks for friends. The community will be billed \$700; this penalty will incur next month unless those responsible take ownership of their actions. I encourage students to speak with their peer counselors or contact me directly if you have any helpful information."

Originally, community members believed each individual resident would have to foot a \$700 bill. *Free Press* reached out to Ebert for comment, and he responded after a few days, clarifying that, "...the fine was going to be shared by the entire community, so \$700/x number of residents. I agree, it does seem strange that people remember it happening, but have not come forward."

A student who is self-admittedly one of the individuals who hit a sign, who requested his name be changed and will be

know like 10 people on video were doing that shit."



Robbins Annex hallway. Photo by Matthew Zweigbaum.

them that way, sending a snapchat of the first one I saw to my dad. The first poster I encountered was the one pictured with this article. It looks, quite frankly, like a shitpost. My dad came back with an Admiral Ackbar meme labeled with "CHRISTIAN MOTHERS FOR SAFE GAY SEX". By the time Dad responded, however, I had seen yet another poster with the other *Free Press* editors, and though none of us truly believed this was real, I had promised to swing by the Chapel just to make sure. My father, worried that this might genuinely be some sort of trap set by homophobes appealing to the surreal nature of college, made me promise to have a friend on standby while I investigated, just in case. I'm glad I decided to humor him, because while I was never in any real danger, the regular contact with my friend at fifteen-minute intervals might have been the only thing that kept me sane through the most unreal experience of my college career.

I arrived at the Chapel at

Satanists, complete with fake blood, a wholly inaccurate depiction of an actual Satanist. Dodson offered their identities, which was the first time I got truly cultic vibes from the group. That was undermined when Dodson and Curtin realized they didn't have masks, and a brief amicable argument about whose job it had been to get the masks ensued. This, combined with the fact that they agreed to all address each other as Mother for the first time at this meeting, made it clear that this was the first meeting of this group in their capacity as an unsanctioned club. The mission statement they gave at the time was also distinctly different than the one Curtin later emailed me.

The group then partook in "Be With Us Mary Along the Way" led by Curtin as the opening prayer, and for a moment I thought perhaps this was a normal Bible study group with a very weird name. They then moved into personal reflections on Jesus, something that while foreign to me, seemed relatively normal. Dodson

EDITORIAL

Support E. P. C.

We would like to congratulate the Educational Policies Committee on the work they are doing this year. They have conscientiously and thoughtfully attempted to look into many of the problems connected with academic life at Bard and make suggestions for their correction.

However, we are disturbed by the apathetic attitude shown by the student body towards this important Committee. Attendance at bi-monthly open meetings is virtually non-existent, and members of the community have brought only one or two matters to the Committee for discussion.

E.P.C. is a vital liaison between students and faculty on academic matters, and should be taken advantage of to the fullest. We hope that the enthusiasm which greeted the Committee's re-institution last semester will return and will increase.

Today in Editorial History

By Cassidy Polga

As part of our year-long 20th anniversary celebration, the *Free Press* is pulling from our deep and storied archives every issue to bring our readers a taste of Bard through the decades. These three mini-editorials are from the Bard Observer's November 13th, 1961 issue, and contain a few gems which still resonate today. The Editorial Board takes issue with the "apathetic attitude" shown by students toward the importance of the Educational Policies Committee, a complaint recognizable to

Support Council

We wholeheartedly support the resolution passed by Council concerning its role as the governing body of the Bard Community. If the Council is to function efficiently as the nucleus of the community it must have the support of all members of the community and be recognized as the body to which community problems must be brought for discussion and action.

Support Tewksbury

Last semester Henry Edinburg suggested in a letter to the Observer that the New Dormitory be named Tewksbury Hall, and thus become the first building on campus to be named for a man connected with Bard as a progressive institution. We feel that this is still a fine idea and call upon Council and the Administration to take the steps necessary to put it into effect.

anyone today who has received the avalanche of emails about uncontested student government elections. Notice too the origin story of a campus legend- Tewksbury's name was still being debated, and the Editors supported the change as a shout-out to the man who renamed us "Bard" and who implemented our progressive liberal arts policies. The best reminder of the times might be the typos sprinkled throughout- thank SpellCheck for catching all your "stpes" and "governings!"

approximately 9:27PM, three minutes before the meeting was set to start, and sent my first safety text to my friend. There was one other person there, a first-year named Annie Dodson. I assumed that she was just there to pray, and wondered how to explain to her that I, a secular journalist, was there to investigate the potential meeting of an organization called Christian Mothers at Bard (or Christian MOB) for short. Then she asked me if I was there for exactly that event, and I asked her if it was real. Dodson told me it was if I wanted it to be, a cryptic and somewhat unsettling answer. For a while I made small-talk with her and helped her set up chairs, eventually disclosing my identity as a journalist. Maggie Curtin, sophomore and cohead of this club, showed up soon after. In total, there were around ten people who showed up to participate in this event.

I should note that, presently, Christian MOB is not a Bard-sanctioned club. According to a follow-up email with Curtin, the club hopes to be registered next

then started asking questions like "Would you have sex with God?" and "Could Jesus be gay?" Curtin supplemented that second question with, "He did say ah, men all the time." A conversation about King Solomon threatening to cut a baby in half to determine who its' true mother was lead to a discussion about at what age an individual gains personhood, and thus the right not to be killed. There were varying opinions in the group, though Christian MOB maintains an officially pro-choice stance.

After this Bible discussion, they held Communion with two giant bottles of The Blood of Christ (or John Mulaney, His potential Second Coming) and dollar store Ritz crackers, accompanied by another genuine prayer. This was followed by coloring on coloring pages, and at the end they recited another genuine-seeming prayer while holding hands.

As I walked home, I was left with the philosophical question of when a joke cult becomes a real one.