

OBSERVER

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The
FREEK

REPUBLIC

SICK OF IT ALL REVOLUTIONARY TAKEOVER ISSUER NUMBER 1

MAY 4 ★ 1994

"I can't believe they're really eating that stuff!"
-Barry, the Kline chef

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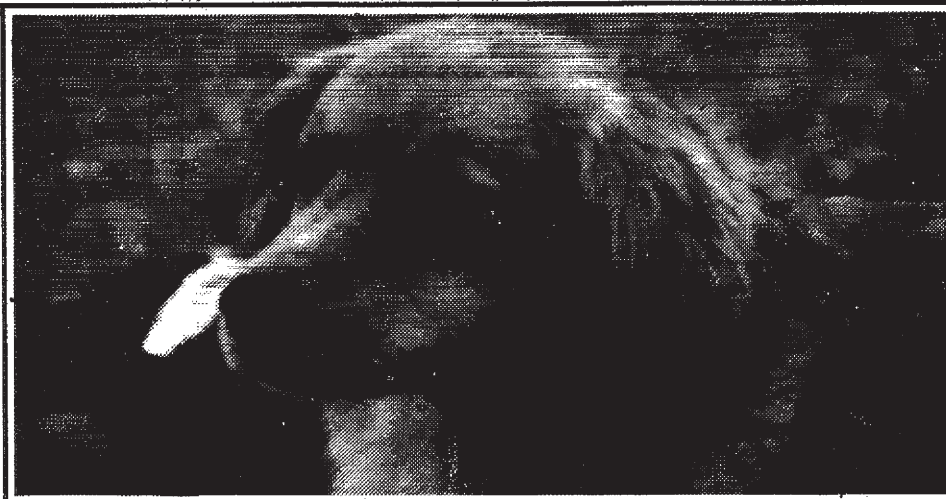
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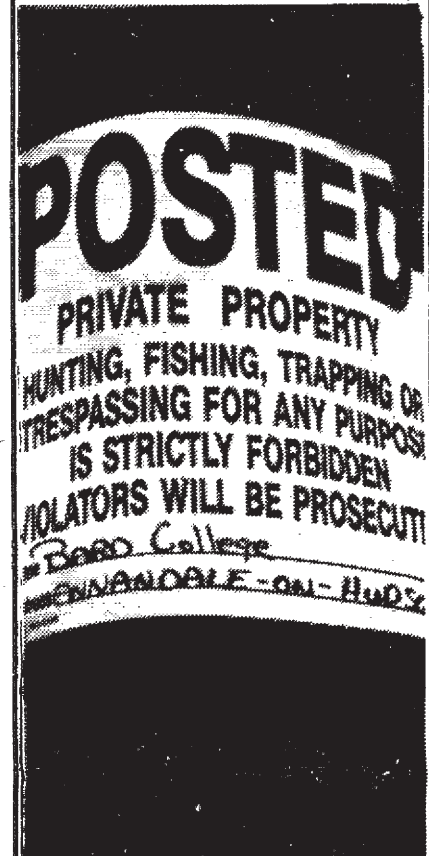
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Rest in Peace, Oh Noble Kline Dogs. Your Deaths will not go unavenged.



TAKEOVER ISSUE!

THE FREEK REPUBLIC HAS OCCUPIED THE OFFICES OF THE BARD OBSERVER!

Takeover Issue! The Freeks have taken over Tewksbury basement as a protest against the slaying of the Kline Dogs. Everyone knows that the beloved Tripod met his maker over the last few weeks, but he was an old dog, and we'd been expecting it for a while. But what of the original Kline Dogs? Those two peppy tan hounds that scampered around, bringing joy to our bright and sunny days, giving us all a good laugh now and then by running through the main dining room at Kline, celebrating the coming

of spring with a good hump on the lawn? Haven't you all wondered where the Kline dogs, Gertrude and Elliot, disappeared to just a few semesters ago? Everyone talked about vague rumors that their real owners had moved, and taken them away, but we found out the truth—the kline dogs were taken away and put to sleep under the directive of members of our very own administration. Doubtless this will be played off as an unfounded rumor, but don't buy it - 90% of the things the

administration would prefer to avoid dealing with are played off as rumors—just ask Deans Morgan and Watson. All they have to do is wait, and all the students who know anything about it graduate, and that's the end of it. Don't let it happen this time—tell Ludlow exactly what you think about the callous disregard for animal life that resulted in the death of the beloved Kline dogs. Write or call Ludlow and demand your piece of the truth today!

Student Power! (Are they ignoring your opinion, too?)

In the last couple of years, Bard has undergone many changes, changes that are not entirely popular with the student body. The administration constantly says they are making policy based on the wants and needs of the student; a worthy goal, but is it true? A look at the facts will show that the real decisions are made based on the agenda of the administration and the financial backers of the college, not on the opinion of the students.

1) Last year on a number of occasions, surveys were sent out questioning students as to their preference on the issue of locking the dormitory doors. The results on all occasions stated that no, students did not want the doors locked. But upon returning to campus in the fall, we found a surprise - the administration waited for us all to leave, then made up their own mind and put their own terribly-organized policy into effect without student input.

2) Security has been encroaching ever further into the daily lives of the students; over the past year, more and more regulations and policies have been put into effect concerning the role of security on campus, none of which were offered to the student

body for approval. A few examples include the parking regulations we have been forced to deal with, regulations which have made parking on campus almost impossible during weekdays as well as causing no end of paperwork, fines, and general inconvenience in the lives of the students trying to live here. Meanwhile, our security guards are instructed to move closer and closer, to the point that we now have security roaming Kline during dinner hours, watching for the presence of drugs and alcohol.

3) Odds are you won't find a single student who is thrilled by the fact that they are required to subscribe to the meal plan if they want to live on campus. And even if they were thrilled, I don't remember anyone asking the students about that before the Wood contract was signed or renewed. Students constantly try to escape from the overpriced, lousy food, but are constantly told that they really are getting a good deal. We've all done the math, folks, and we all know we can eat cheaper on our own, so why hasn't anything changed? Why are all the meetings about the food service held behind closed doors, and why are they undertaken by representatives of

the collegiate bureaucracy, who don't live here or eat the food, and representatives of the Wood company's district managerial staff, who don't work here and don't have to see anything more of our campus than the numbers on paper?

4) Our campus is continually torn apart and rebuilt to suit the whims of whoever wants to throw a little money around - not that all the changes are bad, but when were the students consulted in any way that had a visible effect? Were the students asked if they would prefer to have the new computer and art buildings worked on during the semester, requiring them to sleep next to construction sites? Were students asked if they wanted to see Manor field torn apart to build an amphitheater, a potentially public place within spitting distance of a student residence hall?

5) Why is Buildings and Grounds always made available to leap at the whims of the administration, Levy, or the Black Center, but always told to put student needs at lowest priority? Why are cosmetic repairs, seen primarily by board members and touring potential students, always made before repairs which effect the daily lives

of students? How could a ticket booth for the summer music festival get built at the beginning of the semester in the back of the old DeKline-cum-health food store (and be completed in only a couple of days), when the radiator systems in many dorms were so far gone over intercession that students returned to their rooms to find their property waterlogged? How did the people in charge of B&G get away with blaming these problems on student negligence, claiming that any damage was the result of students improperly treating the heaters in their rooms?

6) Students are supposed to be involved in major faculty hiring decisions, such as the giving of tenure and the hiring of the new art department chair, but all faculty and student review opinions can be vetoed by Leon. Also, students who have 'participated' in search committees to hire new faculty members have stated repeatedly that they are not even invited to be present at major interviews or decision-making meetings. Basically, the decision is made by Leon and Stuart, and the supposedly involved students are sent notes from Stuart thanking them for their collective interest.

As time goes by, it seems that more and more of what takes place on this campus is being scheduled around the preferences of the administration, the dictates of the school's insurance company, and wealthy eccentrics who want to use our campus as a playground. We need to start asking more questions and start demanding more answers. If we want Bard to become anything more than another spoiled upper middle class private school after another ten years have passed, if we want to come back in twenty years and find anything left to admire, we have to turn things around. Student opinions have to be brought to the front, and the petty office politics of groups like the Wood company and individuals like Dick Griffiths, fascist small town politician extraordinaire, have got to be put out of the picture. Remember, time is not on our side - all anyone in a position of power on this campus has to do is wait, and in four years the complaining students will graduate anyway. Student opinion must cease to be a whiny chorus of disjointed moaning, and become an organized force that cannot be ignored.

Thoughts on Film

A Consideration of Four Weddings and a Funeral

The following is excerpted from a recent correspondence:

To top of all these ruminations I'll tell you what movie I saw with my mom to give you some picture of the sorts of dichotomies I feel surround me. The movie was called "Four Weddings and a Funeral" with Hugh Grant (the Oxford bloke from Maurice, etc.) and Andie McDowell (who's almost always too much to stomach - I can't help thinking she's some sort of fantasy inflatable doll with just a smidgin' of brains thrown in). You may even have been the one who recommended seeing it, but I had a write-up in the New York Times, whose movie critic hailed it as the funniest comedy he'd seen in decades ???... The four weddings, as you may already know, are very upper-class (no one except about the top one percent of the population could afford to pay for the floral arrangements alone, much less the food and festivities). The intellectual content of the film centers around the life-long puzzles, whether there is such a thing as "true love," and can one fall in love in an instant with the person who one is destined to live with for the rest of their life? Because of the way the group of friends who all wind up getting married behave, I can't help but think the producers and screenwriters are about the most cynical bunch of neurotics who exist. Either they must be one or another type of persons. Possibility #1 is that they really don't believe any of the hogwash in the movie and know there isn't any such ready as lifelong romantic love and predestined soulmates and as they are just playing to a perceived audience of sentimental, lobotomized heterosexuals and romantic idealists who couldn't handle the despair of having their illusions shattered so the producers scripted a crowd-pleasing, unrealistic movie to make money and perpetuate a myth that I must say has not, and, I think,

harmful consequences to human behavior (in relationships of all sorts) in our society. This possibility, if it were true, would mean the powers that be are not only cynical in reality, but two-faced and Machiavellian to boot. Possibility #2 also assumes the producers and screenwriters aren't stupid and that they know there are hordes of desperate people in our society having insurmountable difficulties working in relationships with fellow human beings. They must realize about half of all marriage commitments are abandoned for some reason or other and many souls can't ever settle down. Obviously they (the writers and producers) don't want to deal with questioning the causes or contributing factors to these realities, because so much of the movie is superficially constructed. What they opt for, if not for monetary reasons then for psychological reasons, is to perpetuate a standard which most people find unobtainable in any relationship they've ever had; and, I dare say, the producers themselves would have to admit what the movie depicts has never happened to them. What the psychological reasons might be for continuing to promote the myth of romantic love are significant. If people's reality virtually contradicts the notion entirely, then most of us must be engaging in defensive, neurotic coping strategies if we cling to the myth in the face of discomforting realities.

On one level, the cultured community of wedding guests and even the camaraderie of friends is an ideal I have pursued all my life. How many places (none where I've lived) could you expect to see so many well-dressed women and men who knew what quality to expect in clothes and furnishings and arrangements. There are of course two sides to this cultural elite facade; one is the snobbery and superficiality. Whatever guesses one makes about why the movie chooses to condone the ideal of romantic love, there's no question that it has bought into a deeply cynical view of the

upper class spiritual lives, as portrayed in movies like "White Mischief" and Evelyn Waugh's "Handful of Dust." When you stop to think who these loveless characters are, is it really any wonder why relationships are so difficult for them? The homosexual couple are typically effete aesthetes who drink and cavort, but whose relationship isn't even recognized as serious by the rest of their friends. At one point Hugh Grant tells one of his friends, "We didn't realize that for all intents and purposes, two of our circle of friends were married." The older rich guy who'd been buggered in school probably and couldn't relate to women, only his Labradors; and the other stereotype of the frigid upper-class woman a la Julia Ryder in "Brideshead, Virginia Woolf, and via Sackville-West who appears cool, aloof and unattainable; who appear unable to express passion and might even have lesbian tendencies. Then there is the Romeo and Juliet characters who the sentimental, lobotomized audience is supposed to root for. Andie McDowell is some editor at Vogue, and I think her character really was summed up by the frigid upper crust snob who called her an American slut. This characterization seems to be borne when she relates to Hugh Grant brief synopses of the thirty-two men she's slept with: the last being her sixty-some year old fiance. Charming and sophisticated as Hugh Grant appears, what we learn about his personality is pretty off-putting to me, at least. The slipshod, indiscreet way he has treated various of his girlfriends and his willingness to use a woman to satisfy unconscious desires he's not even willing to grapple with consciously by marrying someone he doesn't love is, to say the least, a poor and ineffective coping strategy for someone who wants any sort of emotional stability and self-respect in life. What I think is so ultimately cynical about these stereotypes in movies, what I call the "Pretty Woman" syndrome, is that they teach us that the choices we make in

life have no bearing upon our future happiness; equally, they abrogate intellectual responsibility or what, in another day and age, would have been called moral responsibility, that is the responsibility to grapple with what is repressed and sublimated in our individual unconscious and to come to terms with our needs and desires so that the reality we help create in social conduct is conducive to our individual happiness and the community's benefit.

This raises the second aspect of the facade of upper class cultural elitism I mentioned. As I admitted, this is somewhat of an ideal I developed in early childhood and still in some ways cling to. This is why the movie struck such a resonant chord with me. That is because I don't know whether the movie's cynicism, of the kind I've just described, is real or not. I mean, we know many cases of just this sort of moral irresponsibility on the part of the upper class, but is there something inherently depraved about all members of a cultural elite, or do they always tend to spiritual acuity over time. Obviously this is tied up with issues of power and political control. Or is this cynicism, in fact, a form of middle class consciousness which has been projected on certain members of the traditional aristocracy? It might be that the kinds of behavior, for example licentiousness, debauchery, embezzling, political scandal, etc., which brought about the general disillusionment with the respectability of the upper class wasn't true at all, or only to a small degree, about the real upper class. Maybe these kinds of behavior only came about after the middle-class started getting power and moving up the traditional social ladder to occupy places in society proper. What is very telling in this regard is that these very types of behavior which critics of the upper class indict class-based societies with, are most prevalent among middle class lifestyles in our own country. It is the character-

ization of our compulsive consumer oriented, climb the corporate ladder ethos. Our classless society is the one with political compromise and scandal (not to mention televangelist debauchery), corporate embezzlement and insider trading, and racist violence and hatred. This is why I think these two aspects of social pessimism (one is the valueless moral society we live in and the other is the abandonment of personal responsibility for our own emotions and relationships) are united in this movie which was clearly made for an American audience, despite its British upper class setting.

What worries me most is that our society incorporates the kind of pessimism that doesn't expect any more responsible behavior from people than what this movie, and so many others, depict. Then all classes will be made up only of people who can't cope with their fundamental desires for association and companionship and love, and social fulfillment, job satisfaction, etc. I'm tired of seeing movies about every generation of Americans who can't cope individually or collectively with the responsibility of living and maintaining close ties with other human beings. Basically they promote the very kinds of avoidance behavior that lead to neurotic emotional instability. Movies like The Big Chill, Slackers, Reality Bites, Thirtysomething (TV), Sisters (TV) Melrose Place, Beverly Hills 90210, Pretty Woman, Indecent Proposal, Sent of a Woman (I just can't list them all, but every movie that's been made about love and relationships in the last two decades, since I've been alive really) - oh, I forgot Singles (that awful movie with Matt Dillon and Bridget Fonda - pretty similar to Reality Bites), not to mention Point of No Return (the remake of La Femme Nikita, also with Bridget Fonda), which has some really awful messages in it about re-socializing misfits, conditioning women and the supremacy of power over moral standards as a guide for social conduct. On... and on... and on I could go, about every reflection of violence and greed and discrimination that has something to say about individual and community responsibility. But I digress... which I have now for the last four pages. I have to stop, but now that I've gotten all this off my chest, I feel much better.

Queer Positive Menage a Moi

by Evelyn Glynn Goiter

What is sex? Am I sexy? Am I too sexy? Are you too sexy? Too sexy for me or yourself? Ok then, what is sex? Are you bi? Are you gay? Are you queer, straight, bi, gay, loud, noisy? Are you listening? Are you coming to the party? Will all the girls be there? What about the guys? Will there be bloodshed? Can I get NAKED? Well, can you? Is there room for a "friend"? My room or yours? This is fun, but you should have left the dog at home. Is that real leather? If a tree falls in the woods, will you put a condom on it before you get it on? Can we talk? Cum on now, be serious. Don't you "want" to? If you fuck and suck and eat it, will you tell me all about it so I can write poems about it later? Do you have a receipt for that? Paper or plastic? If it moves again, I swear I'll scream. Can I really be your go-go dancer? Isn't this erotic? Is it a black thing, a white thing, a gay thing, a bi thing, or an overprivileged middle class youth thing? Do you want fries with that? Hot "apple" pie? Is this my beautiful house? Is this my beautiful wife? Where does that highway lead to? Same as it ever was, same as it ever was...

Why real people are cooler than Bard Students, reason number 62: A note on the Kline Grapevine Board dated 4/22 read:

This is a serious request. Many people feel sick after many of the meals - usually at dinner. Would you please consider having some sort of antacid or something to soothe the stomach, i.e. Alka Seltzer. Thank You.

The response read:

We do what we can to assure that food is handled safely and is in 'safe' condition when served. Stand in the servery for one night and observe your fellow students. Some sneeze in the food; last night we caught one girl drinking out of the soup ladle; others eat pieces out of the salad bar and put the food back in. Just watch. Go into the bathroom. Over half don't wash up before they leave. We do the best we can. Maybe you can help us monitor the situation. -Doug

Clearly, the real person involved (i.e. Doug, beloved head chef) is much cooler than the Bard student (who shall remain nameless).

Taking Responsibility for your Plate

by Marilyn Schlechtsanger

Mine is an unpopular opinion, but that's only because I'm so much stronger than the average woman. A few years ago I was at a very large dinner party stuffing my face with potato byproducts, even more than I normally would have. I started talking with some guy while I was in line for thirds, and I invited him back to the table with me. I thought why not. We ate for a while, and one thing led to another, and soon we were sharing condiments. Then, I could tell, he was about to reach for one of my french fries. I experienced a lot of misgivings, because the fry he was reaching for was one I had promised to someone else. But he was portly and persuading. At another point in the meal I told him point blank to leave that fry alone. He agreed it was off limits,

but kept on reaching. At one point I realized he wasn't going to give up, and I thought, either I can give him the french fry, or I can cause a scene. I chose to let him have it.

I feel sorry for people who don't understand that it's okay to give a little, and having someone take some of your food is no big deal. It's much better to twist the situation around and explain why you were in total control at all times than it is to have regrets, because boys do those suck. In an interview at a McDonald's a few years back, a U.S. Senator said, 'if having your french fries taken is inevitable, why not sit back and enjoy it?' Take responsibility for your plate. Don't put yourself in a position to go hungry. Grow up, and let a little go now and then. You know you wanted to.

The Return of Mr. Armadillo X!

I hope all you suckers missed me, cuz I'm back, after a much needed and long awaited vacation, yes, back to the hollowed halls of Bard College, the best little whorehouse on the Hudson (which ain't sayin much, I can tell ya from my arduous search). Actually, I been back on campus for a while, but I went to BEACH NIGHT in Kline, and the sight of Pete in a grass skirt gave me diarrhea so bad I only just got out of the toilet last night. Boy was I pissed. These guys want to know where the Kline dogs went, they need look no further than the entrance line of Kline. Don't complain - in some countries it's a delicacy.

So what have all you little shitforbrains been up to, whilst I was away? Nothing much has changed, I gotta tell you that. Stuart Levine is still the same doddering old fool he always was. Shelley is still all smiles and hugs, and Gladys could still move a mountain with that angry glare of hers. Jeff Huang's career has become a total joke - only at Bard

would they pay somebody to schedule barroom events and make them non-alcoholic. Hey Jeff, when's the midget toss? Moderation, senior projects, all that bullshit academic stuff is still the same as it always was - it's not a matter of how good you are, it's not a matter of how smart you are, it's just a matter of how hard you suck, that's what the armadillo always says. Hey, I found out the other day they made Bernie Greenwald the head of the art department, until they could find somebody better. Man, they musta been really hard up. That guy couldn't art his way out of his own asshole. And watching him try is no pretty sight either. The art department should pay us for art classes, instead of the other thing around. I haven't seen any art students produce shit in the three years I been here, which proves that professional ego gratification and a big-ass bookstore bill is the only thing you get out of those studio courses. Fair warning to all you prospective students - go to a real fucking school,

and save yourself the burned asshole and mass insecurity complex that will come of being a Bard art student. How many art majors were institutionalized this semester? I only counted one, but I wasn't paying close attention.

There was that whole Anne Reid heroin scandal thing, which I must say tied in nicely with voice-of-our-generation Kurt Cobain's little publicity stunt. I guess that Marc kid musta been a real Nirvana fan, too, huh? So did they catch her and string her up by her ass, or did she get away? That's the problem with this place - all rumor, no follow through. You guys got your heads so far up your own asses all you see is the dim glimmer that makes it back through the shit. I gotta tell you, I'm disappointed. The last semester has been so boring, even the usual whining isn't half as entertaining as it used to be. Haven't heard much from ol' Hellin Kay (of the famed Wannabee indian tribe), and ol' Power Dick New Warrior Hairy Boy certainly hasn't been saying much. Yep, real disappoint-

ing. The biggest sign of rebellion I've seen since I came back was that "town meeting" back a few weeks ago. That whole thing made me laugh so hard, I nearly shit a hole in my pants. As if life in general here were anything more than a bunch of inarticulate, self-oriented social misfit wanna-bes walking around

in search of a clue, we had to have a big meeting where we could all whack off about it to boot? Like I need a third dick, we do. Speaking of which, I'm gonna have to cut this a little short. If I don't get yankin' soon, my hard on's are gonna crack a hole in the ol' armor. Enjoy your tuition increase...

Career Day

May 10
Old Gym

Featuring representatives from:

*Santa Fe

*Broadway Pizza

*Grand Union

*Hudson Valley Mail Security

(sponsored by the Career development office)

From your security director

There has been much confusion this semester regarding Security's policy on parking regulations. I am writing this letter in hopes of clearing up this confusion.

The parking lot behind the student center is restricted to access by students who are on-campus non-resident non-smoking and financially cleared. The "main" parking lot is now designated for vehicles purchased for administrators with students tuition money. The Kline parking lot is now designated for students with special parking needs (e.g. handicapped or drunk). All other students are to park in the Feitler parking lot.

I am also writing to enlist the students assistance in the enforcement of these parking regulations. As I am sure students are aware, we are understaffed and our guards are overworked. In the year since I started working here, I have started enforcing over 75 completely ridiculous rules. It takes the guards a lot of time to enforce these meaningless rules and for that reason we are asking the students to police each other.

Please find below a copy of a Parking ticket. I am encouraging all students to cut this out and photocopy it for their usage. Simply place one copy on the offenders windshield and mail the other copy to me by campus mail. Here is a list of some of the more commonly violated parking regulations.

1. No parking is allowed anywhere on campus the following days: Parent's Day, Open House, Graduation.
2. Every other parking space must be left vacant in order to allow the tow trucks room to operate.
3. Taking any short cut to avoid the pot holes on Manor Road is strictly forbidden. Note: B+G is exempt from this rule, because the college pays for repairs of their vehicles.
4. If you accidentally hit another car on campus you must report it to security immediately. Note: see above.

Sincerely,

Kim Squillace

BARD COLLEGE SAFETY & SECURITY

VIOLATION

DATE: _____ TIME: _____ OFF #: _____

PLATE #: _____ STATE: _____ STICKER #: _____

MAKE: _____ COLOR: _____

LOCATION: _____

VIOLATION

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BANNED FROM CAMPUS | <input type="checkbox"/> OBSTRUCTING TRAFFIC |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BLOCKING DRIVEWAY | <input type="checkbox"/> OVERTIME |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FIRE LANE | <input type="checkbox"/> PARKED/DRIVING ON GRASS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HANDICAP | <input type="checkbox"/> UNREGISTERED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NO PARKING | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER |

PAY FINES AT STUDENT ACCOUNTS

If you have been raped-



We will bring him to JUSTICE !
Just call....

1-800-BBHAJJFE.

That is
1-800-

Bard Bleeding Hearts Acting as Judge, Jury
&
Fuckin' Executioners.

What to do about drama majors

To whom it may concern-

I am writing with a suggestion for the new student center. Could we add on a special, soundproof dining area, for the drama majors? I and many of my friends are repeatedly subjected to bouts of indigestion resulting from the uneasiness and discomfort of having to dine among shrieking, blabbering, howling theater people. The fact that a group of supposedly adult students would have so little regard for the comfort and pleasure of others that they would act as they do at meals astounds me; at least outside, the sound can echo off into the catskills, but in Kline it goes straight into your skull. I've tried moving around the room, but somehow the volume they attain is such that no matter where you go, you find yourself seemingly at the focal point of their chatter. Can't something be done? signed, High Decibel Indigestion

Dear Decibel -

We at the Freek have been asking around about your question, and it seems enough people have been complaining that action is about to be taken. The new student center will, in fact, contain a special soundproof room as you suggest, and meal cards will be coded to determine which room you may enter. We asked B&G what else would be done. until that gets built - one source at the physical plant said the situation would soon be under control. A large order was just placed with the U.S. government's chemical warfare division to purchase leftover quantities of a chemical which, B&G feels, should be "just right" for the theater people. This chemical will be dispersed into the food and drinks in Kline. For the average student, it will remain inert and pass safely through the digestive system with the other wastes. However, anyone who begins making noise above a certain decibel level will trigger the chemical to act. The chemical will react with the neurotransmitters in the brain which control speech, causing the offending Drama Major to forget how to make noise. The effects, according to this source, will wear off "just about the time they get back to the theater, where they belong." Until shipments of this chemical arrive, security is considering asking Ted the security guard to go around during meals and ask the theater majors to please quiet down or leave; for their own safety.

