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Calendar
Jefferson Huang has been one of the most open and energetic members of the Bard College administration since his arrival on campus three and a half years ago. Beginning as the director of Career Development, and later promoted to Associate Dean of First-Year Students, Huang has been extremely active and accessible in his relationship with the student body.

Unfortunately though, Bard College is going to have to let him go.

In an interview Monday morning, Huang announced that he will be leaving his position at Bard after graduation. He said that it was "a bittersweet decision" to take another job after years there. "I really held a job and a half," Huang commented.

In the spring of 1993, Huang was promoted to Associate Dean of First-Year Students, a newly created position designed to help first-year students with their adjustment to college life. Huang also continued organizing and registering student activities, presenting regular substance-free events to the entire campus community.

Looking back on his accomplishments at Bard, Huang said that he was especially proud of his work in the Career Development Office.

"I worked hard at giving the Career Development Office some direction that I thought was missing," said Huang. "When I arrived, the position had been vacant for a semester and things like the resume book were ten years old. Putting that office back in order was a big accomplishment."

"One of the things I'll remember the most about Bard is the students who came back later to thank me for helping them," continued Huang. "It's the individual students that I've helped, not anything that I've done for the college that I'll really take away with me."

None of which is to say that Huang hasn't contributed greatly to the college. "It's funny. You resurface the pool table and you have people thanking you for the next six months. But then you do something else you'd think would be much more significant and you don't hear much about it," Huang added.

Looking forward

Huang has done considerable work in planning the design and construction of the imminent campus center. "Hopefully my mark will be in the work I've done in the campus center planning, going to all the other college campus centers and learning from their mistakes," he said. "I really think that will improve the social dynamic of the college, and that's important."

Huang also suggested that the College should look more into collaborative programs with other institutions in America and abroad. "I've seen that as one demand that comes up again and again," Huang explained.

 Asked what he thought were the best things about Bard, Huang replied: "The thing I brag about Bard when I talk to people from other schools is that Bard is a very open place...There is certainly tension here, but Bard doesn't have that very basic struggle."

continued on page 2
Mose Allison
jazz and blues musician
performs at Olin Auditorium
Friday, April 14 8 pm

Security Update

The practice room in the Student Center (Old Gym) was looted over spring break. Over $1,100 worth of equipment was taken including an irreplacable guitar handmade by a Bard student. The theft also included another guitar, an effects board, cables and the like. No signs of forced entry were found; the thief or thieves probably had a key.

A few motor vehicle accidents have occurred on Bard parking lots. All accidents should be reported to security. Director of Safety and Security Kim Squillace comments that "it is very discouraging to be member of the Bard community, and find that your vehicle has been hit, and not reported by the driver who was responsible for the damage."

A security officer was bitten while patrolling the campus by a dog. Dog owners are required to lead their dogs while on campus. Bard College fire alarm policy is often not being adhered to, "People are not leaving the dorms in some cases," said Squillace. Security officers routinely silence the alarms before inspecting the building in question to protect their hearing. The alarms are silenced, not reset. Should a fire alarm go off in a building, the building is to be evacuated completely. Reentry is allowed only after the security officer has emerged from the building and given the all-clear signal, not upon the silenced of the alarm.

As a final note, skateboarding is not allowed on campus. This is a safety measure!"
The ruckus was a return to the grandstanding fun that about 25 people were a return to the grandstanding fun that about 25 of the over 1,000 Bard students may have come to expect. The ruckus was over a constitutional amendment concerning voting procedure. The matter was tabled for an emergency forum scheduled for Wednesday, April 26. A committee was created including Michael Poitier, Bryan Shelton, Secretary Imteaz Mannan, Student Life Committee member Joshua Bell and Student Judiciary Board Chair Andrew Fowler. They are charged with coming up with a cohesive amendment for passage before the next elections.

The Student Life Committee is scheduling a garage sale/book/soror stuff sale for May 13, the same date as the Menage Party. Funding for the new student center is running $2 million short. Student Life Committee Chair Gilberto Fonseca estimates the total cost at around $4 million. He reports that the administration is nevertheless optimistic and is seeking one donor for one sizeable gift.

The vegan food co-op remains an unfinished possibility, but probably not for Feitler, the originally environment friendly option on room draw paper-ride 32. The concerning the Faculty Handbook amendment is seeking one donor for one beneficial suggestion of more permanent tenure. A committee, which was not smiled upon. The amendment is quoted below:

"Each faculty search committee must have a minimum of two students who prefer-ably have declared majors in the field in which the prospective candidate is to teach, and always in a ratio of no less than one student for every three faculty members, appointed in consultation with the Committee on Vacancies. Any student may directly petition that committee with complaints about the selection of students."

The Planning Committee received a "slew of requests" for Emergency and Laundry fund money. Laundry fund re-quests will be first evaluated by the Planning Committee which will make its "recommendations." The requests will then be put to campus-wide vote. Students will vote for the Planning Committee's recommendation or the request is denied. Dana Silverman said "I register disgust" in reference to the process. Treasurer Gabor Bogner estimates the remaining Emergency funds at $10,000.

Saturday, May 6, Red Hook is sponsoring Apple Blossom Day. They invite all Bard arts.

Representatives to the Board of Trustees Dana Silverman and Laurie Curry reported that Vice President and President of the Student Association, the positions up for election are the Educational Policy Committee, student forum Tuesday, May 16, and the Educational Policy Committee, four Student Judiciary Board positions and two Student Judiciary Board alternate positions.

The Election Committee will be chaired by Sean O'Neill, the current Chairperson of the Educational Policies Committee. He will solicit volunteers for the Election Committee. The committee positions are open to all interested members of the Student Association, and the interested students should contact Sean no later than April 23 to ensure adequate planning and arrangements.

A statement of purpose should be submitted to the Board of Trustees and two representative seats to the Student Association.

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Beware writers bearing gifts
Lewis Hyde lectures on chance and accident in creative work

Lewis Hyde, professor of Art and Politics at Kenyon College, gave a public lecture April 6, sponsored by the Institute for Writing and Thinking. His talk was entitled "A Gift of Hermes: On Change and Accident in Creative Work," and centered around Hyde's own writings and his discoveries through the creative process. A poet, writer, editor, and translator, he has a wide history in the world of arts and letters from which to draw ideas and examples.

Hyde is currently studying trickster figures in literature and mythology, which coincides with his earlier work with hermaion—the gift of Hermes, or the accidental find. "In the trickster figure is about the boundaries of the group, and how one can get out of it." Hyde asserted that the lucky find allows for alternatives to such strong bonds as social situation... "An accident always has a context of the ongoing design, and the lucky find is a way out of that design."

The crux of Hyde's talk was the larger questions asked by the hermaion: what does an accident reveal? What is on the other side of order? If tricksters are messengers, what message do they bring? He provided three possible answers, some more compelling to him than others. "The classical answer is 'it is the will of the gods'—that there are no accidents, you just think there are. What is being revealed is a higher design," Hyde stated, offering Freud as a modern version of this classical thought. "In psychoanalytic theory there are also no accidents, just outbursts of the unconscious, one's real feelings." For Hyde, though, this solution is incomplete. "If Hermes has an accident and reveals the will of the gods, and he is a god himself, what does this say? To me, it suggests that heaven itself is unsure, and open to contingency."

As a second interpretation, Hyde said, "perhaps these trickster characters bring primordial chaos to heaven. The answer of 'hidden purpose' is something we made up to cover up the chaos surrounding us. I think that's a plausible answer, but the Greeks complicate it by distinguishing between smart luck and dumb luck. So, this cannot be relied upon."

Hyde's personal answer is that the lucky find reveals the mind of the finder. Only the person open to finding the unexpected will recognize something as a lucky find. "The mind is prepared for what it's not prepared for—this paradox comes up a lot in writing. You have an idea of what you want to go with a story, but have to be open to alternatives. We need this type of intelligence to live in a world of contingency. Hermes has the wit to live in a world of happenstance, the world invoked by mythology."

In support of his idea, Hyde quoted Picasso, who said, "I don't seek, I find," and Louis Pasteur, who asserted that "chance favors only the prepared mind."

While the content of the lecture was rather esoteric, the delivery and examples were clear and simple. Perhaps other writers can take a lesson away from the stories and thoughts of Lewis Hyde.
Democracy Triumphant?

A conference on truth, justice and the Eastern European way

Five years after much of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union won the right to democratic self-determination, the ultimate destiny of the region is still uncertain. “Democracy Triumphant? Issues and Perspectives on the Post-Cold War Era,” a conference held at Bard Saturday, April 8, brought scholars and renowned international figures together to exchange views on the future of these new democracies.

Conference Director and Bard professor Amy Ansell, in her welcoming speech, characterized the event as a “follow-up to a conference held five years earlier.” Called “Recovery of Memory,” the 1990 meeting had been held in the hopeful aura immediately following the opening of the Eastern Bloc.

Now, in the wake of disillusionment with the sacrifices necessitated by economic reform, some poities in the region have elected former communist functionaries to national office. In the West, observers have worried that the new democracies may revert to authoritarian rule.

Ansell emphasized the important role of international exchanges in furthering understanding among different cultures. Along these lines, she lauded Bard’s own Program in International Education (PIE). In its fourth year, the PIE program brings students from Central and Eastern Europe to study at Bard while Bard students can spend time learning at one of several sites in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and other countries.

Understanding through Dialogue

The next speaker may have been familiar to Bard students. Former history professor and associate dean Karen Greenberg returned to the college to open the first discussion, “Education and Media in Transition.” Greenberg, the founder of PIE, is now executive vice president for programs at the Open Society Institute.

Speaking with a pointed, direct style, Greenberg brought up what to her is the fundamental question for Americans to ask themselves at the end of the Cold War. “Should we interfere or intervene in Eastern Europe?” People who do not ask this question, she said, are stuck in the past, captive to the Cold War’s crusading mentality and unable to see that the United States shares many of the economic and social problems for which we possess the solutions in the East.

Proposing her own solution, Greenberg noted that “influence is a lot better than interference or intervention.” She would focus on exchange, emphasizing that both West and East could benefit from what one has to teach the other. Programs based on “mutuality of interest,” such as the PIE program, hold the greatest hope for progress, she said.

Greenberg ended her talk on a pessimistic note, stating that the people of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are disappointed with their lives today. “Things don’t feel good,” she sighed.

Elzbieta Matynia echoed this sentiment. Another former Bard professor, Matynia is director of the East Central Europe Program at the New School for Social Research. “Things are not looking well,” especially in Russia, she said, noting a growing divisiveness that threatens the consolidation of democracy there.

Matynia felt that Eastern Europeans needed to make a mental adjustment to adapt to the new realities of freedom, but, she said, the United States would not do all the teaching. Americans could help by adopting a “non-patronizing approach.” She stated that a dialogue among intellectuals and scholars from West and East is the key to progress and understanding.

“I have never taught at Bard,” joked Miklos Haraszti. He modestly did not mention his true credentials, which include editing Hungary’s major clandestine magazine in the 1980s, and a stint in the first democratically elected Hungarian parliament from 1990 to 1994. His political experience showed in his charming speaking style, which had the crowd laughing several times.

Now a professor at Northwestern University, Haraszti broke with the previous speakers to express hope for democracy in Eastern Europe. In the election of former Communist Party members to the new government in Hungary, he sees not a disaster for the future but the normal growing pains of a working democracy. Nations that resisted the domination of Soviet-style communism for years, he said, aren’t about to fold so easily. “Democracy is becoming an inherited culture,” he optimistically proclaimed.

However, Haraszti foresaw potential dangers to Eastern Europe in government control of the media. All of the new democracies in the region, he said, could not avoid the temptation of keeping partial control of broadcast media. For the maintenance of true freedom of the press, television and radio must be established on an autonomous basis, similar to the British BBC network. The establishment of truly private companies, though, might remain an American phenomenon.

Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict

The most interesting and timely part of the conference came next, with a total of five participants discussing the forces threatening Central Europe and tearing apart the former Yugoslavia.

Bard professor Shelley McConnell introduced the subject by drawing on her expertise in the emerging field of democratization. The complicated issues raised by the new governments in Eastern Europe “caught the literature by surprise.” Old ideas have made way for theories that take the role of ethnicity and identity into account. In previous democratic transitions characterized by conflicts of interest, problems could be negotiated. Identities, she noted, could not be debated.

Moderator Norman Manea spoke briefly on nationalism and multiculturalism. His background as a Bard professor of literature appeared in cryptic references to the “civilization of soil versus the civilization of the satellite.” He said that...
Fact & Fiction

What's What

The columnist’s interview with his interviewer

by Sean O’Neill

Ever suspect that people our age are besieged with criticism? Perhaps I’m paranoid.

But what if Columbia House sent me a free CD each time I heard that my generation is dull and lazy?

I’d own a huge music collection, wouldn’t I?

And most of the songs I’d have would be about angst and hopelessness, right?

Unlike the Baby Boomers, we’re told, people our age haven’t earned anything.

It’s said that everything has turned.

But wasn’t, however, until she failed to pull her first all-nighter that she ventured into the all-night reading room. She sat across from him, but, instead of memorizing her chemistry texts, she fell asleep.

When she woke at dawn, he was still there. His only movements were to occasionally turning a page. She wanted to say something amusing to him, but decided not to. His concentration seemed too intense to disturb.

She left the eerie scene for her bed in Tewksbury dorm, where she dreamed of him. How much he could do to now someone who would give equally intense attention to her!

Curious in a way she had almost forgotten she could be, she returned in the afternoon to the library after taking her chemistry test.

She walked conspiraciously to the magazine rack first, and then headed towards the room.

He was still there. Except for the fact that he was holding a different book, she would have been unable to tell if he had ever left his seat. She sat at a desk, slightly behind him and to his right. She coughed, loudly. He remained motionless. After a few minutes, she left.

Soon, her friends, formerly accustomed to finding her by a third floor window, noticed that she had changed her favorite study spot to the always-open reading room.

Her friends saw other changes in her personality, too. She seemed more agitated. When talking to them, she was increasingly prone to distraction. She denied, though, that she was experimenting with any new drug.

Then, one Tuesday, she got a feeling in her blood that compelled her to do something. Something daring. Something wicked.

She went to the room. The pale, almost tubercular-looking figure turned a page of a book.

She walked over to him, crouched on her knees, and said, breathily, “You’re in my seat.”

The reader continued to read.

“Jim, you’re sitting in my favorite seat,” she said.

No response.

Dizzy and fearful, she did the unexpected. No one knows why she did it. Perhaps to provoke him? Or to unconsciously let her inner fears free?

She screamed. ShriI, long and in his face.

The man looked up from his volume of Goethe, grimacing. His disdain for humanity was renewed with double vigor. How was it possible, he wondered, that this ugly, screaming beast could be one of the most expensively educated humans in the history of the world? Jeff Katz, a librarian, rushed in. “Who screamed?”


“Who is he?”

Johann, an undergraduate here since 1953? Johann returned to reading.

“Looks like he’s in his twenties,” she said, incredulous.

“Well, the story is that Johann enrolled as a Bard student just like everyone else, but, when the time arrived for him to graduate, he didn’t leave. He got so frightened out about going out to a world beyond academics that he chose a life of studying instead.”

“And he has never aged?”

“No. And he’s read every book in our collection, though it isn’t much. Six-hundred books a year, we estimate. He’s probably the most knowledgeable man on the planet. Nevertheless, I know that he doesn’t speak. You must have been the one who screamed.”

“I’m sorry,” she said, in an unspurrow voice. “I don’t know what came over me. I guess I thought he was dead.”

“Hmmph,” Katz muttered.

Johann turned another page.

“Why don’t you kick him out?”

“By rights,” said Katz, “Johann should be kicking us out. Have you no respect? He is the one who owns the place, in a manner of speaking. He’s ousted everyone and outread everyone. He has become Bard.”

She glanced at Johann the undead and felt slightly ill.

Bard Spring

Mental Statism and the Machine Experience

by Sean O’Neill

Her visits to the library were intermittent, since she kept erratic study hours. Yet he was always there, in the “reading room” that was open all hours.

She first had noticed him a few weeks into 1997, when his gaunt figure passed like an apparition along the book-shelves beside her.

A toxic environment. “No, no. I mean, why are young people drinking, drugging and sexing themselves to death?”

I don’t know, sir.

“What is the cause of the decline of the middle class?”

One reason is that more and more jobs require specialized education in the U.S. and that there is less demand for less skilled workers. Also, the standards of consumption that define middle class status have become increasingly outrageous.

“Do you think about the family?”

I like families, sir. I think they’re a good idea.

“And the climbing divorce rates?”

I would say economic changes have caused the divorces, and do not think that divorce causes economic decline.

“You’re very analytical, aren’t you?”

he said, in a tone of disapproval.

He then “tossed out a theory” for me. The nuclear family — that is, a man, a woman, and their children — is a social ideal that shrinks the middle class as well as creates hordes of nihilistic, amoral twenty-somethings.

This man believed that extended families, which in turn build mutually-supporting neighborhoods, are superior to the consumer-oriented, individualistic ethos of nuclear families. Large families allow many chances for emotional release and personal expression, whereas small families encourage “emotional exiting.”

A noteworthy idea.

The despair created by unnaturally small families, consequently, leads to substance abuse, which leads to unprotected sex, which contributes to the spread of HIV infection that, ultimately, will eradicate American twenty to twenty-five year olds.

Infection will kill off, in Darwinian style, those youth who do not realize what is best for them. The biological imperative of our species is to recreate extended families, and only this will restore our nation’s economic well-being.

That was a rather analytical argument, I responded. Then I repeated a sentence of Leon Botstein’s, about how this logic was “nostalgia for a past that never was.”

I said “emotional exiting” happened in extended families in the past, too: that Prohibition was made law in the prosperous 1930’s because of rampant alcoholism despite extended families; that the perpetual changing of jobs and locations disrupts plans for extended families, dialectics. Surprise! I didn’t get the job.
Sports

Tennis starts with a slam

The Blazers win three out of four

Well, Spring is here and with it we see the arrival of Men's Varsity Tennis, intramural softball, and a new Observer Sports writer. Tennis, being the only varsity sport played during the spring at Bard, has made an excellent start by winning three out of four of their first matches.

The Blazers triumphed at their season opener, Monday April 3rd, against the College of Saint Rose with a score of five to four, winning four out of six of their singles matches and one out of three doubles matches. Accordingly, on Thursday, April 6th, the Blazers dominated Mount Saint Mary's College, defeating all of their opponents with lightning speed.

Unfortunately, the Blazers could not pull out a win at their April 6th away meet at Yeshiva University, where they lost three to six. Bard's number one seed Sheshadri Hameed, however, did manage to win his match against Yeshiva with the score of 6-4, 7-5. Coach Joel Tomson did not seem to be disheartened or worried by the loss to Yeshiva, and further said that he believed this year's team to be the "strongest team Bard has ever had."

Last Monday, the Blazers played a very strong match against Mount Saint Vincent College at home at the Bard tennis courts. Although official scores could not be obtained at press-time, we have reliable reports that Bard dominated Saint Vincent without any problem. According to Eugene Kublanovskiy, "they were bad, very bad."

The Blazers have another away meet today, against the ever-wonderful New Jersey Institute of Technology, so if you see a player wish them good luck and Godspeed on getting out of New Jersey (a problem the fencing team seems to have). Also clear your calendars and come to the April 20th home meet to cheer your Blazers on. Until next week "go, fight, win, Blazers."

Play ball!

Intramural softball season begins

It's that time of year again: time to grab your gloves, and your bats, and your bottles of Lowenbrau and head on out to the NEW Bard Intramural Softball Diamond for some serious softball action. That's right time to see otherwise apathetic and non-athletic Bard students go out and kick some severe apathetic-ass. This year the intramural department can boast 17 teams competing in the Recreational League, and four teams competing in the Athletic League. Moreover for those of you who had not heard, the teams will be competing on a brand new softball field.

The new field is essentially a complete field, providing players with a backstop, bases, a fence, a pitcher's mound, and imported softball dirt (from New Jersey). All students need to bring is themselves, a good attitude, and a few packets of Big League Chew. Unfortunately, the usually pleasant and predictable Hudson Valley weather impeded the start of the season by dumping snow all over the field delaying opening day until Tuesday the 11th of April. Teams that were supposed to play on Monday should be contacted by the someone from the gym, soon, about rescheduling. Accordingly, Tuesdays games were held without any awful interruptions from God or nature. The season was kicked off by competitors in the South division, with the game between Graceland and KEG: the all-demain outfit. Were assuming that the KEG's over the game means they fell to Graceland and KEG by a score of 28-2.

The second game of the season was played by Bountiful Crop who defeated one of last years champions, St. Tula, 14-2. Rumor has it the film team is losing a few in the betting, just so they can have a come-back season and make an enduring sports movie out of the whole ordeal (keep your eyes open for not-quite-"Major League III"). This afternoon at four, the Western division begins its season with a game between Super Diva and the Zebraheads. This game will be followed by an Elks/E.O.C. double-header versus first the Naked Ice Brothers and then the Klugers.

For all of those that are extremely athletic, the Athletic League will be beginning its season on Thursday with a game between The American Dream and The Tony Dana Banana. Followed by the Gym Rats playing the Dirty Dogs, these games will be played at forty-thirty on the same field that everyone else uses, behind the gym (on a space once known as the soccer field). In other non-softball sporting news, the Bard Blathlon is coming up, so anyone interested in competitions involving great deals of stamina and exertion get your Nikes ready and check the gym or the Observer for further updates. Also the athletic department will also be offering swim lessons, so stop by and sign up to learn how to swim.

Well, that's about all for this week. If there is particular sports coverage you want to see please drop me a note at Box #185 addressed to Bell and I'll get around to covering it. Also we will be beginning a support group for those still traumatized by the 1986 loss of the Red Sox in the World Series because of BILL BUCKNER, those inquiries should be sent to Box #32. Thanks a lot and see you next week.
For questions waved a cigarette.

Karklins said that she held "a moderate and optimistic view" of Eastern Europe's ability to cooperate and perhaps create a set of new Swiss.

During an amusing question-and-answer period, Professor Chace took exception to Karklins' examples, claiming that Canada's ethnic diversity is driving it apart and that Belgium has had many crises that have nearly sundered it. As for Karklins' third example, Chace cheerfully said, "I wish Switzerland didn't exist," calling it the exception to every political science rule.

Economics in Central Europe

After a break for lunch, the conference resumed with a discussion on the economic transitions taking place in the former East Bloc. Leading off the talk was a "Callout" of the left-wing Dimitri Papadimitriou, who spoke of the careful balancing act required for successful economic recovery. Finding the right speed to push free-market reform is essential, Papadimitriou said, as well as not allowing the need for economic growth to outstrip the evolution of guiding institutions. He returned to a theme espoused by some of the earlier speakers in saying that the United States, where "many of our people do not live within" our political and economic systems, does not have all the answers for Eastern Europe.

Stanislaw Wielicz, a economics professor at both Columbia University and the University of Warsaw, pleaded the crowd with his clever, dry wit. Asking the question on the lips of many speakers, "Is there a retreat from reform?" he cited a sharp drop since 1989 in the value of wages for the people of Eastern Europe.

Ironically, reforms initiated by the first wave of elected democrats are paying off only now, after the fickle electorate has replaced the reformers with former Communists. Wellicz had few worries for the future of the region, though, predicting that the desire to join the West in political union would keep once-authoritarian leaders in line.

The next speaker, Peter Bothe of New York University, disappointed with his loud, boring manner and jargon-sprinkled verbiage. He proposed political solutions to the economic problems the East is experiencing. Concentrating on Russia, he saw organized crime filling the role of contract enforcement, a function the state had proved unable to perform. As long as Western models are not thoughtlessly imposed on situations peculiar to Russia, though, he felt there was a way to proceed adaptively successfully to the new realities of post-Cold War economics.

Katharina Pistor from Harvard Law School also directed her comments to Russia's economic predicament. Her presentation was a refreshing change from Boettke, and she later garnered many questions from the audience.

Pistor attributed Russia's problems with organized crime to the inception of a free market before a civil society could catch up. She thought that Russia's autocratic history would make legal reform difficult, but emphasized that tradition need not doom the state to permanent obsolescence.

Overall, the economic discus- sions were narrow and of limited interest to the politically oriented audience who regarded the talk as even declined to field one question from the audience, citing lack of knowledge.

Gellner, Nationalism's Guru

The conference changed its format to accommodate two keynote speakers. First came Ernest Gellner, director of the Centre for the Study of Nationalism in Prague, Czech Republic. Gellner is an internationally known expert on nationalism, having written more than twenty books and other publica- tions on the subject. According to administration sources, he flew in on the same day of the conference, and paid a total of $6,000 to secure his presence.

Considering his price tag, Gellner's talk "Civil Society and Its Enemies" was less than satisfying. The scholar began by saying that he meant to state the case for liberal democracy against totalitarianism. Instead, he meandered into a description of agrarian societies and their dubious relation to the civil society of today.

Gellner described Marxism as a total failure, saying in his clipped British accent that the only remaining Marxists were probably in this country. Yet he also said that "totalitarianism in a modern society must be Marxist," or have the characteristics of Marxism. Right-wing dictatorships are therefore easy to topple, he claimed.

Civilians today, Gellner said, stand on three legs. Without self-policing, the multi-state system, and continued economic growth, life as we know it would be very different. The scholar cautioned that none of these three will endure forever. Though we may trump a moral value of liberal society, he said, we our our success only to economic success.

The Million-Dollar Keynote Address

Last, but far from least, came the philosopher George Soros, President of a $1 billion investment fund, Soros has spread his great wealth across the world, especially in the countries of Eastern Europe. He has opened universities and foundations all over the region, starting well before Gorbachev and political openness made such endeavors fashionable and profitable.

Bard president Leon Botstein presented Soros to a packed audience in the Olin Auditorium. He gave Soros a glowing introduction, comparing him to Lafayette in his selfless devotion to democracy and civil society. None, Botstein has said, "has changed the lives of so many people" in Eastern Europe as Soros.

If any other proof of his importance was required, the presence of Security Director Kim Squillace and Assistant Director Jim Lawler, for the first time and on a Saturday night, spoke volumes. They stood at either side of the auditorium, watching the audience carefully as Soros lectured.

Soros, surprisingly, looked as good as his pictures all over the campus. He spoke in a confident, relaxed manner, punctuating his words with understated hand gestures and warm looks at the audience.

In the debate on the role of the West in Eastern Europe, the philosopher emphatically came down on the side of Western influence. "The idea of the open society," he said, mobilized people to struggle against "the universal closed society of the Soviet Union."

Now, people continue to model themselves after Western ideals.

Soros discussed with regret the plight of Russia today, due to the failures of the West is falling into a "black hole." While a capitalist system is emerging there, he said, "I don't think it is going to take hold." Organized crime and a weak government have transformed Russia into a "lawless, amoral society," and the masses remain "apathetic, alienated, [and] estranged" from the state.

By contrast, Soros described the Ukraine as now "in a very hopeful stage."

Soros next presented his plan for a new United Nations. Calling the current organization outdated, he proposed drawing up a new charter with perhaps "a few fewer members," such as Libya. However, he was unable to answer later questions about the feasibility of creating such a new body given the antipathy in the United States towards international rule. Certainly such a new organization would be a boon to international investors like Soros himself.

The question-and-answer period showed that Soros had attracted a diverse crowd to Bard that night. The first person to rise to President Botstein's invitation for questions waved a cigarette around and asked Soros whether he thought bars against smoking in public places were compatible with the concept of an open society. While Botstein commented that rephrasing this question so that all could hear it would be difficult, the questioner was laughed at and left in embarrassment.

The next questioner asked if American federal government could be trusted, given that Bush, Clinton and many other federal officials were once members of a "trilateral commission." Soros responded that he was not into conspiracy theories. Funny, with foundations in twenty-four countries and with billions of dollars at his personal command, I kind of expected him to say that.
Beware of the Plants

How to protect yourself from indigenous wildlife

by Barbara-Jean O’Keefe

Poison Ivy is common on the Bard property. Controlling it would be virtually impossible, and very damaging ecologically. So, if you are (or might be) allergic, learn to recognize and avoid poison ivy. It is a woody vine that rambles on the ground or climbs trees, rocks and buildings. The stem (up to 2 inches in diameter) gives rise to surfaces, often having a hairy appearance. These rootlets do not have enlarged disks at the tips and are not branched. The leaves have three leaflets, each about 1-3 inches long and usually with one or two large teeth on each side. The surface of the leaves is glossy or oily looking and they turn red early in the fall. Many poison ivy vines bear hanging clusters of small, waxy, whitish or grey (inedible) berries. Poison Ivy usually grows in the sun or partial sun, along roads and trails, and thrives on the type of clay soils with a long history of disturbance that are so prevalent on the Bard campus.

Persons who are allergic to poison ivy develop a red, itchy rash, with or without small blisters, several days after contact with the plant or with the toxic oil on clothing, pet fur, or other objects. By the time the rash appears, the oil is long gone from the skin and the rash does not spread to other persons or to other locations on the same person. However, the rash may appear at different times on different parts of the body after a single exposure.) If the rash doesn’t bother you, leave it alone! If it itches, it is best treated with over-the-counter, or prescription topical cortisone ointments. Don’t scratch it — the symptoms will disappear in a few days to a week. There is no reason not to bathe or swim when you have poison ivy, unless you scratched the blisters and they have become badly infected.

You can avoid exposure by staying out of vegetation (other than lawns), especially along roads and trails. Relatively few people get poison ivy, considering its abundance. After the leaves fall, there is much less risk. During the winter, cottontail rabbits browse on the twigs, and several kinds of birds (notably woodpeckers) eat the berries. Evidently animals, like many people, are not affected by the toxin. The plant is also an important soil binder on the Hudson River bluffs. Poison ivy is a part of country living in the Northeast.

Poison Ivy Remedies

Last autumn’s tree planting festival became more memorable for many students than the actual event. At least six students acquired a nasty case of contact dermatitis from poison ivy or poison oak roots while digging the soil to plant their trees. Itchy, weepy, scabbing skin and restless nights ensued, sometimes lasting up to two weeks. Two students had severe allergic reactions, causing puffy, red faces and swollen shut eyelids. These required systemic steroids to alleviate severe symptoms.

As we approach Earth Day and warmer weather, a few precautions could help prevent an outbreak of the poison ivy rash.

1. Know your plants (see preceding article).
2. Wear gloves if planting or doing yardwork.
3. Wash your hands and body well with Dawn dish detergent or old fashioned brown soap after possible contact. Use a nail brush to scrub poison ivy resin from under fingernails.
4. Wash all clothes worn at the time of contact (i.e. after a walk through the woods).
5. Beware of all possible contacts — a frisbee or softball retrieved from the woods, a pet’s fur, shoelaces, or the hands of a friend who did not wash well after outdoor exposure.

If, despite precautions, you develop a poison ivy rash, there are some basic measures you can take to make yourself a bit more comfortable.

1. Use cold compresses or soaks on the affected area for twenty minutes, four to six times a day. This is the mainstay of therapy.
2. Apply a drying lotion (e.g. calamine) after each soak or compress.
3. Avoid topical lotions containing antihistamine or benzocaine derivatives (e.g. Caladryl). These ingredients add nothing, and may act as allergens.
4. If the rash is not weeping, apply 1% hydrocortisone cream 4-6 times per day.
5. Use an oral antihistamine (e.g. Benadryl) for moderate to severe cases. This helps decrease itching and may help you sleep at night.
6. If the eyes, face, mucous membranes, genitalia, or large areas over the body are involved, see your health care provider.

Understand too, that one can develop a sensitivity to poison ivy at any time. Many people (myself included) survive multiple childhood exposures with no allergy, only to be surprised with an extensive case of contact dermatitis in early adulthood. So take precautions as you enjoy the beautiful outdoors of Annandale!
retina soybean and/or friends

* SPECIAL ISSUE *
- Rack and Roon's Funnyman,
  Rob Busher

by mortonvena

KAFKA CORN GIBLET SNORKS
NIBLET CORPS

PINESOL
EASEL

GUMMY SHOE
CANOE

"RED DOESN'T FREEZE."
- SCOTTY PLAIDTRUCK -
Earth Coalition

For those of you out there who have been hearing rumors that Bard finally has an environmental club, we are here to tell you that those rumors are true. We are Earth Coalition, and we meet every Tuesday night at 7:30 on the third floor of Aspinwall.

Earth Coalition started when a group of us began meeting informally to work on recycling and composting at Bard because we all thought something needed to be done and no one seemed to be doing anything. After meeting informally for several months we realized that we were a group and wanted to open up to the Bard community. About eight of us traveled to Philadelphia for the Free the Planet Conference after which we decided to incorporate the Free the Planet Campaign into our already existing goals of recycling and food waste disposal. From Kline (composting). We've already made a lot of progress on these goals. We've completed a campus-wide waste audit with the help of Marie West, a woman contracted by the college to deal specifically with our needs, such as recycling.

When we return from Spring Break the new recycling program will have taken effect. This means Bard will be recycling materials. There will be new bins which will be more available, convenient, and clearly marked.

Our next step will be a campus-wide education program to ensure that students are aware that Bard is recycling. Everyone's cooperation is essential to make this program work.

You may have noticed us tabling at Kline with a petition for an environmental bill of rights. This petition is part of the national Free the Planet campaign which is trying to draw upon the voices of students and others who are concerned. The goal is to send a message to Congress that we want environmental issues taken seriously. You will see this petition again at Earth Day which will be held here at Bard on April 22. Earth Day is a big project and we need lots of ideas and help.

We run our meetings with rotation co-chairs and everyone takes part in the leadership. We've accomplished a lot so far but there's much more to do, so come with your ideas and enthusiasm.

Thanks very much,
Susana Strauss
Anna Lacinia
Earth Coalition

We, the jury, in the case of the people versus O.J. Simpson, find the defendant, O.J. ... NOT GUILTY of the murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman." In all seriousness, regardless of whether or not O.J. perpetrated those two awful murders, the spectacle of the O.J. tv-trial present important implications for the American people, for the future of democracy, even. [My own belief is that it is downright unethical to hold someone guilty for the progress of science: should we blatantly ignore Dr. Orenthal's dazzling new contributions to surgery?]

The media, in its overwhelming coverage of the 'trial of the century', has discovered, or even created, a host of new problems for the American legal system. What's next? Would you believe the end of jury trials in America? Never, you say? Judging from the perspective of the present, with the courtroom already reconstructed by modern communication systems, can we envision a future where the very aura of justice has become contingent on the presence of technology, to the point that the law itself becomes a game, a movie, a simulacrum masking the absence of justice? A future where the courtroom of an exploited U.S. legal system is restructured to correspond with our ideas of the law is derived from sit-com television? a future world containing exciting new possibilities, entertaining new forms of popular justice? Of course, such actions would be justified on the pretense of the necessity to reveal THE WHOLE TRUTH.

Did I hear you right? O.J. will be acquitted? Well...sorry, Nicole, sorry, Ronald G., we know you deserved better, but O.J. will get off easy. Acquitted, because of American psychology which has become timel, intimidating, frightened of assigning blame for any human crime. Acquitted, because the people of this age of information, and especially their children, are more susceptible than ever to have doubt implanted in their minds. Acquitted, because the American media-industry has permeated society so thoroughly that there can be no tadating the juries, no possible questioning which could adequately prevent their being exposed to prejudicial viewpoints.

The trial of O.J. Simpson is more than a trial conducted on television, it is a trial about television, about visual media. Witness: Johnny Cochran's opening remark, pulled from the mouth of Jack Nicholson: "They can't handle the truth!" He speaks to the jury, saying, "When you reach a verdict...if you can reach a verdict..." and already, we're starting to hear stories of jurors who lied to become a part of this so-called world-event. Jurors who are placing bets on the outcome of the trial, signing licensing deals with Nike, Coca, and Hertz Rent-A-Car. Politicians may campaign for the creation of an information highway, but this ignores the facts that our information society has already evolved to such a state that we can barely grasp the decline in our ability to arrive at certainty, the disintegration of our ability to assign guilt, blame, and suddenly, no one can prove a thing. But scientific thinking will continue to advance, to develop new methodological standards, new techniques for gathering evidence. And, as the complexity of the techniques through which we accumulate evidence develops, the language employed by the prosecution will need to grow proportionately until, finally, it will become too cumbersome to be adequately handled by a jury, even a jury of one's peers. At such a point we would then have to move away from jury trials, as there is a growing segment of the population which does not see the big picture and, as a result of their blindness, they will always offer a site for doubt to take root.

The fact is, we can no longer pretend that we can merely present to facts and expect that the jury will be able to make a judgment free from any morally coercive or otherwise seductive rhetorical force. The fact is, we cannot expect the individual to be any more scientific in this age of information. The fact is, the O.J. trial could have profound implications for the representative character of American democracy.

But in the end, we will be met with disappointment, for a hung jury leaves us with no specter of reconciliation. Disappointing, for, in this end, this whole trial is a spectacle—and nothing else besides.

Andrew Noselli

Operation Stray Cats

To the Bard Community,

There are stray cats on campus, and a few of us are trying to trap them, get them tested for feline leukemia, then (if they test negative for feline) get them fixed and given the basics shots (not, however, the feline shot because it is unlikely we could trap a cat again in time for the follow-up shot).

Professor Burt Brody has loaned us a Halsey trap, and Sara Cooper, Secretary to the Dean of Students, is seeing to the trapping with the help of Simon Marcus. Dr. James MacDonald of the Red Hook Veterinary Hospital (RD3, Box 15, Red Hook 12571, (914) 758-2659) is giving us a very good rate for veterinary services.

After "full spa treatment," the cats will be released where they were trapped on campus—not a great solution, but better than their reproducing and/or getting sick and/or passing on diseases.

What can you do to help?

Let us know if you want to adopt a cat or kitten: be aware, however, that the cats are fearful and require patience.

- Let Sara (ext. 7454) know where you see cats regularly on campus, and what they look like.
- Contribute any amount of money you can to defray the veterinary costs, the only cost involved in our project: at present, I will pay vet bills, but I can't do it all myself and anything you donate will help. I will keep records, which anyone can see in the Faculty Secretary's Office (Hegeman B8, ext. 7231), showing payments to the vet, contributions received (by donor, when known) and (I hope, I hope) funds available to keep up the project, including bringing cats back periodically for shots, although that would depend on our ability to trap them again; if there is any money unused after a certain period, it will be donated to the Dutchess County SPCA (unless someone requests a refund). We will issue periodic feline and/or feline up-dates. We are guessing that there are perhaps ten cats (but have no real idea of the number), and could figure roughly $90 for a female and $65 for a male (baring unusual circumstances); we have only just started.—Kitty One, a young brown-gray-tabby female with a cauliflower ear, was trapped and taken to the vet on March 15, and brought back on the 18th; total vet bill, $87.

I would be happy to hear from anyone with suggestions to improve our plan. I know Vassar has a program to adopt out its campus stray—perhaps someone would find out the details of that (I can supply a phone number), including refused staff necessary. Thank you all in advance.

Carol Brener
Faculty Secretary
**TRANSPORTATION**

*Jitney Schedule:* the Jitney runs Monday through Friday and makes stops at the following places and times:
- Robbins: 8:30a, 8:50a, 9:10a, 9:30a, 9:50a, 10:10a, 12:00p, 12:20p, 12:40p, 1:00p, 1:20p, 1:40p, 2:00p, 2:20p, 2:40p, 5:00p, 5:20p, 8:40p.

**Tuesday:** Van to the Library in Red Hook, 6:30p - 10p.

**Wednesday:** Shop n Save Run, 6p - 9p.

**Friday:** Vans to Rhinecliff Station at 4:20p (4:50 train), 6:00p (6:31 train) and 7:20p (7:51 train). Vans to Poughkeepsie Station at 5:20p (6:12min), 7:55p (6:20 train) and 10p (10:45 train).

**Saturday:** Van to AA Red Hook, van leaves at 6:10p from Security Shuttle to Tivoli. Red Hook, Rhinecliff and Rhinebeck, 10a - 2p. Trip to the Hudson Valley Mall, leaves at 5:30p.

**Sunday:** Meet at 9:15a to go to various churches in Red Hook, Rhinecliff and Rhinebeck (St. Johns, St. Chris and St. Paul). Pick up at Rhinecliff Station for trains arriving at 6:07p and 8:55p and 10:06p. Pick up at Poughkeepsie Station for trains at 6:46p, 8:46p and 10:52p.

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### Meet all vans behind Kline

#### Wednesday

**April 12**
- **Table Française.** Kline President's Room, 5:30p - 6:30p.
- **German Table.** Join us for some conversation. All are welcome to attend! Kline Commons Committee Rooms, 6p - 7p.
- **Spanish Conquest and Colonization at the Center of the Old World: The Spanish Nation in Rome, 1555-1625.** Lecture by Professor Thomas Dandelet, Olin Auditorium, 7p. Reception in the atrium at 6:45p.
- **CAY/NORMIE Meeting.** Topic: What are the Marijuana Laws? Come with your own harrowing tales and information to share. Olin Moon Room, 8p.

#### Thursday

**April 13**
- **Vintage Clothing, Records, Pottery and other nifty things.** Sold today outside Kline.
- **Russian Discussion or Ryski Sto.** All are welcome to come from 5p till ???, Kline Commons Committee Rooms.
- **Sister Cities Project Meeting.** Kline Committee Rooms, 5p.
- **S/M ACES** meets every Thursday at 6pm in Kline Committee Room.
- **Benvenuti alla Tavola Italiana.** Kline President's Room, 5-6p. Join us for Italian conversation from 6-7p. All welcome! Olin 202, 7p - 9p.

#### Friday

**April 14**
- **Reading by Poet John Ash.** The poet, essayist, and art and literary critic John Ash will read from his poems today at 5p, Olin Auditorium.
- **Bard Christian Fellowship Meeting.** Bard Chapel, 7p. All are welcome.
- **Jewish Students' Organization Meeting.** Kline Commons Committee Rooms, 5-6p. Join us for a discussion about our community and how to get involved. Olin Moon Room, 7:30p.

#### Saturday

**April 15**
- **Coming Out Ball.** Sponsored by Bigala as part of the Queer Week. Watch for signs specifying place and time.
- **Comming Out to Parents and Friends.** An informal discussion sponsored by Bigala as part of the Queer Week. Albe Social, 7p.
- **Bard FilmFest I.** Sponsored by Bigala. Film and time TBA, Preston.
- **Queer FilmFest II.** Sponsored by Bigala. Film and time TBA, Preston.

#### Sunday

**April 16**
- **Green Coalition Meeting.** Come to discuss campus recycling, composting and other environmental issues. Aspinwall, 7:30p.
- **Bard FilmFest I.** Sponsored by Bigala. Film and time TBA, Preston.

#### Monday

**April 17**
- **Green Coalition Meeting.** Come to discuss campus recycling, composting and other environmental issues. Aspinwall, 7:30p.
- **Queer FilmFest II.** Sponsored by Bigala. Film and time TBA, Preston.

#### Tuesday

**April 18**
- **Free Fitness Seminars**
  - **April 10 - 14:** Diet and Exercise: How to lose the extra ten pounds in a healthy manner.
  - **April 17 - 21:** Alternative Ways to Achieve Fitness Without Entering a Weight Room.

**Instructor:** Gina Delmont, Bard Athletic Trainer/Fitness Director.

**Stevenson Gymnasium**
7:00pm - 8:00p.