

# OBSERVER

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"News is whatever sells newspapers; *The Bard Observer* is free."



THE BARD

# OBSERVER



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THE CHAMP: Molinaro

THE CHALLENGER: Voell

## Molinaro vs. Voell: Where's the Beef?

*Tivoli election not expected to fork lightning*

By MICHAEL HAGGERTY

TIVOLI MAYOR MARC MOLINARO is confronting the first electoral challenge ever to face him. In 1995, he ran for mayor unopposed and won, becoming the youngest mayor in the United States, at 19. This time around will not be as simple. Tim Voell, the well-known bartender at Stoney Creek, announced his candidacy last month in an election scheduled for March 16. "I think the idea of having an opponent is wonderful," Molinaro said. "I'm looking forward to gaining the support in order to win in March."

With only 1,300 residents and an estimated 500 registered voters, Tivoli is a microcosm of American democracy. But don't expect this affair to be characterized by intrigue and haranguing. Both candidates loath being called "Mr." Even the scheduled "debate" on March 9 is really just an opportunity for residents

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## Former Black Panther Leaders Address the Power of Protest

*Bobby Seale and David Hilliard reflect on a transformative age*

By MICHAEL HAGGERTY

AMADOU DIALLO, an unarmed young African immigrant, was shot 19 times by four New York City police officers two weeks ago. Thousands of community activists led by the Reverend Al Sharpton, have denounced both the police department and New York Mayor Giuliani. They claim Giuliani has failed to sufficiently address the criticism that the reduction of crime in New York has been accompanied by an increase in policy brutality, directed particularly at African-Americans. Incidents such as the shooting-death of Amadou Diallo and the torture of Abner Louima in a Brooklyn police station a year and a half ago have left many people wondering how far America has really come since the turbulent 1960s.

Bobby Seale, ex-Chairman of the Black Panther Party (BPP), sees an immense change; he and ex-Chief of Staff of BPP David Hilliard spoke with Seale Wednesday night in Kline Commons to a beyond-capacity crowd. Seale asserted that police brutality was twenty times worse in the 1960s when the Black Panthers were at their height. "They did it, got away with it, and laughed at it," he said. According to Seale, the attention given to Diallo's case in the press and the ensuing investigation into the four officers involved would have never happened thirty years ago.

At the outset of the talk, Seale noted that there are highs and lows of political activism and that the country is experiencing a low point.



LAYING IT OUT: Seale spoke to an audience in Kline with Huey Newton in the background. (See interview, p.5)

The 1990s lack the high profile issues that galvanized thousands into action during the 1960s. When issues do arise though, as with the shooting of Diallo and the subsequent protests in Brooklyn and Manhattan, the potential for large-scale activism is demonstrated.

Seale and Hilliard also cited the lack of any

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## Bard Trustee Skip Gates Presents CD-ROM

*A new encyclopedia of African history, Encarta Africana, offers a multimedia account with the help of the Microsoft*

By NICOLE COOK

OLIN AUDITORIUM was packed to capacity when renowned African-American scholar and new Bard Trustee Henry Louis Gates, Jr. discussed and gave a tour of the *Encarta Africana* CD-ROM, a two-million word electronic encyclopedia of Africa and its people, on February 3. Though the event was advertised as a "conversation" between Gates and Leon Botstein, Gates took the stage after Botstein's introduction and kept it, promoting the product of over 20 years of work. Leon, cross-legged and astute, spent most of the evening craning his neck to view the projected CD-ROM display behind him, and conducted the question/answer session after Gates's talk.

Microsoft's *Encarta Africana*, coedited by Gates and



A CONVERSATION? President Botstein introduced Gates's presentation.

fellow Harvard scholar Kwame Anthony Appiah, includes more than 3000 articles, 2000 photos, and numerous interactive videos and maps on its two CDs. Building on W. E. B. DuBois's 1909 vision for a comprehensive encyclopedia of Africa and the African Diaspora, a distinguished team of more than 30 advisory board members from universities worldwide come together to catalogue the historical and cultural achievements of Africans and people of African descent. The content ranges from African tribes to giraffes to boxing legend Joe Louis. Demonstrating the benefits of the computerized format, Gates showed a video clip of Bill "Bojangles" Robinson displaying his one-of-a-kind tap dancing. Another novel feature of the CD-

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# Campus-Wide Cigarette Referendum Passes

By AMANDA KNIPEKAMP

YES, AFTER A LENGTHY ABSENCE, cigarettes are once again available on campus. For a mere \$3.45, one can purchase a pack of cigarettes from our own Barnes and Noble Bookstore.

For many years, cigarettes at the bookstore were a staple of campus life and a huge source of profit for the bookstore itself. However, a year and a half ago, Associate Vice President Jim Brudvig wrote a letter to bookstore manager Steve Vandenburg asking that the sale of cigarettes be permanently discontinued. Approached by students upset by the loss of an appreciated convenience, Brudvig explained that while he understood smoking was an individual choice, he felt that the college, as an educational institution, had no business promoting the use of deadly substances. Last semester, the Student Life Committee continued to complain that such a decision should not be handed down by administrators, but that the community should decide if on-campus cigarette sales were acceptable. Administrators Jim Brudvig, Stuart Levine, and Mary Backlund agreed that a campus-wide vote would be a fair way to resolve the issue. They agreed to abide by the community's decision as long as the referendum met certain criteria. All students, faculty, and staff were eligible to vote, and a voter turnout of at least 50



SMOKES ARE BACK: Bookstore employees raid the new stock.

percent was required. A simple majority would decide.

Student Life Committee members tabled in Kline and the post office during the last weeks of the previous semester, and complained that the only difficulty was collecting the 870 ballots that were required to meet the 50 percent voter turnout needed. However, when enough people finally cast their ballots, the result was a landslide victory for the tobacco industry, with some two thirds of the population voting to allow cigarette sales at the bookstore.

Rumors have accused Dean Levine of writing to the president of Barnes and Noble and asking the corporation itself to refuse to sell cigarettes at Bard. Levine firmly denies any such action. "In retrospect," mused Levine when questioned by the *Observer*, "it would have been a good idea."

Brudvig, good-natured even in defeat, continues to express his disappointment and his concern for the health of Bardian smokers.

Jonathan Becker, Dean of Students, laments the SLC's lack of political savvy. He feels more detailed rules and protocols should have been established for the referendum, allowing for a more accurate and intriguing political game.

Steve Vandenburg, bookstore manager, had no comment.

The Student Life Committee remarks only that they are thrilled at any opportunity to combat administrative paternalism and would love to receive more suggestions. Committee members can be reached through campus mail or at slc@bard.edu.

## NEWSBRIEFNEWSBRIEFNEWSBRIEFNEWSBRIEFNEWS

**BARNES, A NEW MAN FOR THE MILLENNIUM**  
The pocket watch Fred Barnes carries was the free gift of a cologne set he does not use. He writes short stories in his free time. He has curly, silver-gray hair, a full beard, and a dog named Zuri, which means "beautiful" in Swahili. Barnes is also the new residence director (RD) of north campus.

"I'm having a lot of fun," said Barnes. "I did the nine to five, shirt and tie thing and I made a lot of money, but it's not what I want to do. I like to be out and about, talking to people."

Before arriving at Bard, Barnes led a varied and interesting life. He worked for ten years in youth services and then owned an art gallery/coffee shop in Newburgh called The Tree of Art. Following this, he spent several years writing grants for environmental research. He then held the position of director of Dutchess County Youth Build, a nationwide program that works with the rehabilitation of high school dropouts, ages 16-24. Finally, he took on the job of night dispatcher at Bard. After the resignation of Neal Fegan as north campus RD, Barnes was asked to apply for the position.

"It's difficult to express [how I feel], because it's a job, but it's also a way of life," said Barnes. "Theoretically you're always working. If something good or bad happens people look to you—whether you're on-call or not."—Jessica Jacobs

### LEAH LAVALLE MOVES ON

The holy triumvirate of the Residence Life Office has shifted once again. Leah LaValle has resigned her position as director of residence life to become Hofstra University's complex coordinator. "She got a great job offer she couldn't pass up," said Allison Bennett, the newly appointed director of residence life. "She has less responsibility for the same salary and gets to take a master's degree program in exactly the subject she wants, education."

As a result of her move, Bennett was promoted from residence director (RD) to LaValle's former position. "I'm really rakin' it in now," she joked. "And I have to be here. . . I mean, I get to be here all year round."

The Dean of Student's Office (DOSO), has hired Susan Coppa as the new RD. According to Bennett, she was chosen because she was the most qualified applicant and has experience working in college housing.

This follows the resignation of Neal Fegan from his position as RD. In his place, DOSO hired Fred Barnes, a former night dispatcher for Bard. "Fred's great. Students really seem to have taken to him and he seems to be enjoying himself," said Bennett.

As for her new position, Bennett said she has a new appreciation for LaValle. "Leah did a lot. The kind of work this job does is stuff people don't know about unless something goes wrong. It's also difficult because this job gets very personally charged," said Bennett.

As the person now responsible for room assignments, Bennett said students will often take her decisions as a sign of her personal bias for or against them. "How students perceive you is sometimes different than how you perceive yourself," said Bennett. "I hope to have a personal connection with students because those are the relationships that make a job like this worthwhile."—JJ

### GADSBY TAKES ON REGISTRAR POSITION (HINT: HE MAY DISLIKE THE LETTER E)

At last fall's conclusion, Mr. Gadsby, a hoary

Bard administrator, took a job signing us up, giving us all our class lists (plus a's, b's, c's, d's, {?}, f's).

It's natural, according to Gadsby. If all functions optimally, you won't know it; no drama at all. Coming soon: digital forms and listings of many an upcoming class.

Gadsby, famous for his scrupulous organization and British lilt, will go on dishing out a glorious class to frosh in fall and spring.—NS

### ADDITION TO WOODS BEGINS NEXT MONTH

After years of stonewalling, funding for an addition to Woods Studio, Bard's photography facility, has appeared. While some funding was previously reserved for the project, the administration recently chose to reallocate significant bond-funding to start construction, diverting these funds from a planned remodeling of Seymour. Designs for the new facility were completed last summer, and while the bids submitted by construction companies were higher than expected, Jim Brudvig, associate vice president for administration and finance, asserted "the need was dire" enough to hasten the project's commencement.

The new \$600,000 building will adjoin the current Woods Studio and will contain a gallery, a large classroom, a student lounge, facilities for digital imaging, and a studio space measuring 22 feet by 36 feet and two stories high. The current building will

see its offices renovated and a handicap-access darkroom installed. It is unclear whether the darkrooms will be renovated or whether dilapidated enlargers and other battered equipment will be replaced.

Construction is scheduled to begin within a month, and the addition is expected to open by the fall semester. The college will continue to search for donors for the project even after it begins.

Students will reach the new facility via the same muddy, unpaved road.—DPM

### PRANK CALLS CAUSE DISTRESS

For the last three weeks, an anonymous obscene male caller has preyed upon the Bard community. According to Alison Bennett, Director of Residence Life, the calls are of a random nature. The numbers called were in sequence and were received by both men and women. When men have answered the phone, the caller has claimed to have dialed the wrong number before hanging up. When women have received the call, he has told them he is high and asks the listener to guess who is calling. The caller then pretends to be whoever the woman guesses, eventually leading the conversation to crude sexual matters.

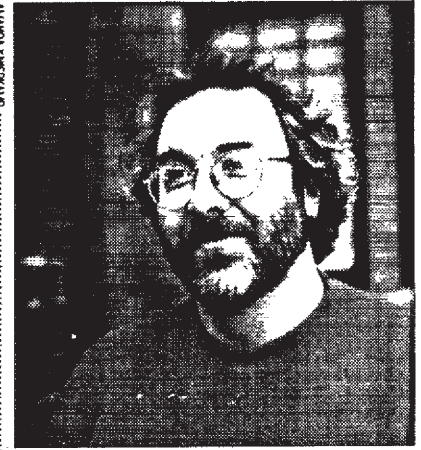
Since both Vassar and Marist students have received these calls, the perpetrator is not thought to be a Bard student.—JJ



RAKING IT IN: new Director of Res-life Bennett.



BRITISH INVASION: Gadsby is back in Ludlow.



STILL ON CALL: Barnes is new residence director.

## Panthers Speak to Large Audience

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

political framework through which students can organize themselves. The speakers appeared reluctant to directly answer questions concerning what strategies can be devised for organization. Instead, Hilliard said that the main purpose of their talk was to clear up some myths and misunderstandings about the history of the BPP.

Although the Black Panthers contributed immensely to changing the oppressive political structure in America, their legacy is tainted. According to Hilliard and Seale, J. Edgar Hoover's COINTELPRO program had undermined many radical organizations in the 1960s by publicizing damaging misinformation about the organizations and creating internal conflict within the groups themselves. The Panther's association with violence is one example of this damage to their reputation. The Black Panthers legally wore unconcealed weapons as a symbolic gesture of self-defense. They claim this act was misrepresented by the press, who labelled the Panthers as a militant hate group.

While advocating self-defense in response to American violence, the Black Panthers also initiated many programs to assist the immediate needs of the Black community. The Free Breakfast for Children program was established, feeding thousands of school-children across the nation every morning. The Panthers also provided free testing for sickle-cell anemia. By providing direct solutions to the problems of the black urban population, the Panthers hoped to create a political electorate that could transform the system to make it serve the people's interests.

For Seale, history is an essential component of activism. During the talk, he explained how his largely self-taught knowledge of the history of the African peoples helped him understand the racist political processes taking place around him in the present. In addition, he emphasized the need for young people to be aware of past movements, in order to more effectively manage their own.

David Hilliard is currently running for Oakland City Council, with Seale acting as his campaign manager. Seale and Hilliard made the point Wednesday night that Hilliard's candidacy does not represent a shift away from the grassroots toward a more traditional political arena. The BPP have always sought political empowerment through the electorate. "We can't be outside of the system when we're being oppressed by it. You're interconnected with it," Seale said. In 1968, Huey Newton and Seale were both on the ballot for California's state assembly and Elderidge Cleaver, Minister of Information for the Black Panthers, ran for President on the Peace and Freedom ticket and won two million votes.

If he is elected, Hilliard will work with Oakland's progressive mayor Jerry Brown to further fulfill the goals set by the 10 Point Program in the 1960s. One of his main goals is to shift money from the prison industry to schools, housing, and services for seniors. "We were trying to evolve some real community political empowerment on a lot of different levels," Seale said. "That is what [Hilliard and Brown] will continue to do."

## Gates Presents CD-ROM

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ROM format is the mapping of every documented slave revolt that took place during the history of the slave trade on a digitized cross-continental map.

The format of *Encarta Africana* appeared user-friendly. It is thoroughly cross-referenced with hyperlinks to other areas of the encyclopedia as well as internet websites. Gates commented that black people need to get on the information highway, or else suffer "intellectual neo-slavery." Noting that there are 14 million black Baptists in the United States, Gates mentioned the value of encouraging black Sunday schools to teach its pupils about African history, comparable to the way Hebrew schools teach Jewish history alongside religion. He suggested that *Encarta Africana* would serve as an ideal resource for this purpose. Microsoft is planning to donate 8,000 copies of the digital encyclopedia to schools and libraries. However, the CD-ROM is not yet Mac-accessible, preventing 40 percent of school computers from running the software (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 2/11/99).

The audience appeared receptive to the easy authority with which Gates spoke; there was a general response of laughter and head nodding as Gates revealed his product with the zeal and fondness of a new parent. However, the question-and-answer period revealed skepticism about the potential for *Encarta Africana* to achieve the scope to which it aspires. One student offered the criticism that Gates's creation was providing a "meta-narrative" of the history of black peoples, to which Gates responded that he saw no problem with such a concept. Another student suggested that the encyclopedia glossed over the issue of racism, while a third pointed out that the history was of an iconic type, neglecting the folk history of black peoples.

Generally, Gates responded with dogged advocacy for what the encyclopedia does include, rather than apologizing for what he acknowledged as inevitable limitations. "[Some] people say I'm not afrocentric enough...the great thing about capitalism is, I can say make your own goddamn CD-ROM!"

*Encarta Africana* will soon be installed in the library and sold at the bookstore. The retail price is \$69.95, and includes a \$20 rebate. The encyclopedia will also be published in print form later in the year. Further information about the encyclopedia, including sample "pages," can be found at [www.Africana.com](http://www.Africana.com).

## Tivoli Mayoral Race

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

to meet the candidates. Both candidates are concerned with the same issues—quality of life, youth oriented programs, community togetherness, but their approaches are slightly divergent.

Tivoli's population is relatively eclectic. There are the permanent residents, the Bard students, and the weekend New Yorkers, all of whose interests differ. As in Molinaro's platform in the 1997 election, in which he again ran unopposed, he is focusing on "bringing the community together." This includes finding ways in which all residents can have an active role in the community.

Currently, Molinaro is working on setting up a college forum, in which students can voice their ideas and grievances to the Mayor, Planning Committee, and other facets of the Tivoli government. The mayor also maintains an open door policy so that anyone can enter his office and talk with him at any time.

Tim Voell, if elected, hopes to continue in the same manner. He would like to see an increase in community-oriented events such as the Tivoli Art Fair and Community Day. This summer, he wants to have a Saturday night outdoor movie series in the park behind the water-tower, and monthly pot-luck dinners. Events like these are not only low-cost, but they are also "a better forum for people getting together and talking and also really valuable for the person making decisions for the village," says Tim.

Another issue which both candidates have addressed is the increased youth population in Tivoli and their needs. Molinaro has formed a Tivoli Youth Committee and praises the success of events such as the annual Halloween party which drew over 250 kids last year. Tim would like to establish either a day care center or afternoon programs that would benefit both youths and their parents alike. With the youth population rising,

As for complaints that the police in Tivoli specifically target Bard students, Molinaro says that there is no such agenda.

there may also be potential to open a school in Tivoli, which, Tim says, would build a real sense of pride in the village.

The future development of the Hudson river-front is also a concern. Currently, Conrail, not the village, owns the property on the other side of the tracks. Since Conrail is required by the federal government to close all railroad crossings, access to the river may be closed off. Molinaro wants to acquire and develop a small piece of the river-front in order to prevent a loss of access to the water by Tivoli village.

Although Tim also wants to protect access to the river, he thinks that the park-like development that Molinaro is suggesting may be a waste of resources, considering the existence of nature parks like

Clermont Park and Tivoli Bays.

The issue most important to Bard students is, obviously, the police. Life in Tivoli this semester has been accompanied by the strongly felt police presence, as the cops crack down on under-age drinking, public drinking, and "disorderly conduct."

"To be honest," Marc said, "the police are a blunt tool, but they don't address a problem, they simply mask a solution." He admits that he has failed to find a sufficient solution that works for everyone. Tim Voell says that, if elected, he will consider reinstating the position of Town Constable, which has been out of use for some time. Rather than use the police, he would like to employ a constable to "walk the beat," who would be familiar to everyone and serve as "a reminder [to keep quiet, not drive drunk] without any of the negative aspects that come with the police presence."

As for complaints that the police in Tivoli specifically target Bard students, Molinaro says that there is no such agenda. He meets with the deputy-sheriff every Friday and has accompanied the police on their patrols many times. Although he does not yet consider police harassment a major problem, he is open to hearing any complaints that need to be voiced.

"In terms of Bard students being targeted, I think that is more the result of the fact that after eleven o'clock when the police are here, seventy-five percent of the people who are out are Bard students," Tim said. Though the police problem is very complicated, both candidates are willing to work with students to find a solution.

# Relocation of Arts Center to New Site Now Likely

By DAVID PORTER MILLER

BARD COLLEGE has announced plans to seriously consider an alternative site for the Frank Gehry-designed Bard Performing Arts Center (PAC). The move represents an attempt to hasten the completion of the project by avoiding the inevitable legal hassles associated with the original proposed site near the Sawkill River, against which neighboring Montgomery Place had mounted a fierce campaign.

Following December's public hearings in review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement commissioned by Bard, the Red Hook Planning Board issued a lengthy memorandum requesting that the college provide detailed analyses of several alternative sites and of the Cumulative Impact Analysis taking into account all future projects planned for the Avery/Blum area.

According to Jim Brudvig, associate vice president for administration and finance, Bard would have needed to work extensively to build an "airtight case" for approval in order to "immunize the planning board" against a threatened lawsuit from Historic Hudson Valley, the owner of Montgomery Place. This alone would have set the project back months, but Brudvig worried that further legal maneuvers on the part of Historic Hudson Valley could delay construction indefinitely.

The college was only willing to explore alternative sites which would require minimal redesign. A site to the north of Ward Manor, on a grassy area presently used as overflow parking for the Bard Music Festival each August, was found to be acceptable. Gehry visited the site and voiced his approval. Only the foundation will need to be significantly altered, he said, as the site is flat rather than sloped, calling for excavation. The loading dock must also be placed on the opposite side, and minor adjustments may be made to some facilities on the first floor.

The building itself will look exactly the same.

Although the Planning Board encouraged a move to the Manor site, the college's decision would be contingent upon the Board's ability to promise and facilitate rapid approval to begin construction, said Brudvig. "It is more important to have the building somewhere than not at all," he said, "[but] I'm not fully committing to moving it until I know the community is behind [the new site]."

The Planning Board expressed concern about the

reaction of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to the site's proximity to the Tivoli Bays Reserve, which it administers, as well as about the possible visibility of the building from the Hudson River, which will be just under a mile away.

Moving the Performing Arts Center to North Campus would dramatically restructure the functional arrangement of Bard's campus, placing teaching facilities and performance space in a part of campus that is currently residential. The entirety of the drama/dance department would soon need to follow, and a replacement for the Avery facility would be built to open either concurrently with, or a few years after, the Gehry building.

The relocation of the proposed building, along with

If construction were indeed to begin in August, the facility would be ready to open by the beginning of the 2001/2002 academic year.

the replacement of the Avery building, could add as much as \$10 million to the building's original \$26 million price tag. Only \$13 million dollars have officially been raised thus far, leaving the college with significant fundraising work to do.

President Leon Botstein spoke to the *Observer* on a cellular telephone as he hurried to a Manhattan meeting with possible donors.

"It's not easy to start from scratch," Botstein said, referring to the complete relocation of all drama/dance facilities, "but we may get a better result." He added that the Avery facilities are currently in need of renovation anyway, and that moving the drama/dance department would enable Avery to be converted into additional space for the music department.

Botstein still believes that Bard could eventually win a battle over the original site—which at the December public hearing he declared to be the only site at which the building would ever see completion—but that the fight would be lengthy and extensive.

"[Montgomery Place has] declared war on any facility near the Sawkill," he said. "We're not in the busi-

ness of fighting wars."

The money and time saved by not engaging in the legal battles would cushion the effect of the \$10 million discrepancy between the estimated costs of the two sites, he added.

Botstein said that an anonymous group of donors had agreed to pay for the remaining cost of the project (although he said that he would prefer to continue trying to fund the entire project with smaller contributions). This philanthropic offer, however, may not be forever extant, making the new, relatively obstacle-free site more attractive.

He admitted that the new site is "a little more distant, a little more inconvenient. It's not an ideal solution, but it may be the only viable solution." While others might suggest that the new plan isolates drama/dance from the rest of the campus, he extols "residual benefit" of this turn of events as a chance to integrate the campus as a whole, with all sections being utilized for learning and performance as well as for residence. More shuttle transportation would necessarily be added, and the additional lighting installed for the expanded parking facilities would address the safety concerns of the Manor area.

But both Brudvig and Botstein are quick to point out that this relocation is far from certain.

"There will be no deal unless we can break ground in August," Botstein said, which would require the complete cooperation of the Planning Board, as well as the approval of Bard's Board of Trustees for the extra cost of the new plan.

If construction were indeed to begin in August, the facility would be ready to open by the beginning of the 2001/2002 academic year. If significant obstacles were to arise in the new plans, the college would continue to fight for the original site on the edge of the Sawkill Ravine.

Brudvig notes that representatives of Historic Hudson Valley have approached him to offer their help in getting the new site, at the furthest point of the campus from the Sawkill River, rapidly approved.

Botstein, however, continues to resent the "war of egos and wills" that opponents of the original site waged against the project.

"They have done the college great harm, and my enmity has not been lessened. They have come close to destroying a very important project for the campus and the community," he said. "Let's hope that they [will now] leave us alone."

## Campus Robberies

By CIPRIAN IANCU

On the evenings of January 30/31 and February 16/17, two robberies were committed on Bard campus, by what the authorities believe to be a group of four assailants. In both cases, the assailants achieved entrance to the dorms (South Hall first, and then Robbins) by entrances that were propped open, and entered the two students' unlocked rooms after being directed by other residents. The assailants carried baseball bats and threatened the two students with physical harm before robbing them, though no one was injured. The administration has expressed particular concern about the ease with which the assailants reached their victims. Currently, Bard Security is working with the State Police in solving the case.

Though the details released do not confirm whether the attacks were random or targeted, it is rumored that the assailants asked where on campus they could purchase drugs before proceeding to the victim's rooms. Whatever the case may be, Dean of Students Jonathan Becker is imploring campus residents to follow strict security measures, such as locking their rooms, refraining from propping dorm entrances, and allowing no strangers into their dorms. Anyone who sees the suspects on campus is asked to call security immediately, or if they have information that could help the investigation, to call the State Police at 876-4049, and ask for Inspector Saunders.

WE START AT 3:00AM -  
THAT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!



HAND ROLLED BREADS  
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COFFEE THAT KEEPS ON COMING!

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TIVOLI, NY  
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red hook new york

**"The Best  
Barbecue  
in the  
Northeast"**  
-The County Magazine

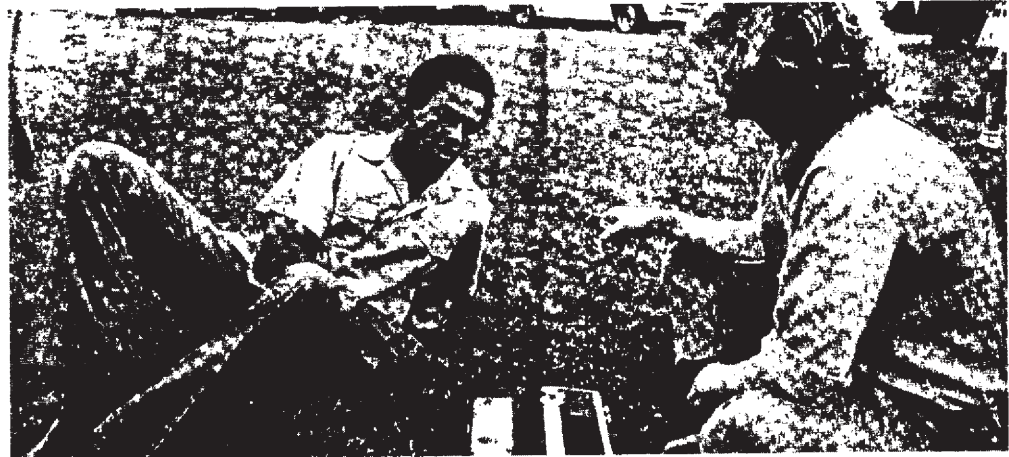
- hickory smoked chicken and ribs
- maryland crab cakes
- Max's blue suede lager
- certified black angus steaks
- grilled veggie specialties
- frozen margaritas

★ ★ ★ ★  
-The Poughkeepsie Journal

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## Spring '99 Budget Allotments

Club Name	Fall '98	Request	Allotted
Argentinean Tango Club	0	500	350
Art Club	250	1371	216
Asian American Stud. Org. (AASO)	2200	3770	2000
Audio Co-op	350	2145	800
Bard Animal Rights Collective	160	192	100
Bard Black Stud. Org. (BBSO)	2000	3800	3000
Bard EMS	1600	2014.5	1062.72
Bard Journal of Soc. Sciences (BJSS)	3300	4300	3300
Bard Party Brigade	200	936.5	200
Beyond the Horizon	0	1500	0
Big Brother/Big Sister	800	1294.1	800
Building Community	200	1245	300
Central Committee	2300	2600	2600
Ceramics Club	0	600	0
Chess Club	100	335	100
CineMatrix (film journal)	500	2119.09	1000
Comic of Free Speech	0	160	0
Computer Gaming Club	0	millions	50
Creative Music Alliance (CMAB)	300	2155	800
Crew	540	1300	600
Culture of Japan	0	534	400
Dance Club	700	1775	900
das Men-ah!	0	1000+	0
Debating Society	300	735	250
deklare	120	3682.95	1200
Dime Store	350	300	300
DVD Film Festival	0	600	100
Earth Coalition	550	825	500
Electronic Arts Club	300	2490	300
Entertainment Committee	8000	14690	10000
Everywhere Descending (lit. mag.)	350	530	400
Film Committee	8000	13460	9000
Folk Underground Collective	0	288.10	1 kazoo
Golf Club	150	620	150
History of Photography Club	0	1200	0
International Students Organization	2000	2500	2000
Jazz Heritage Club	800	6900	800
Jewish Students' Organization (JSO)	700	3053	1200
LASO (Latin American Stud. Org.)	2000	3000	1500
LE CLUB 1855 (wine club)	0	50	0
Loop Entertainment	0	2000	0
Martial Arts Club	1400	3353	1400
Medieval East	0	300	0
Medieval Studies Society	300	340	50
Model United Nations	1200	2036.54	1500
Monstera Deliciosa	50	300	50
The Bard Observer	5500	5909.97	4500
Opera Production Club	0	2125	425
Outing Club	800	4586.3	900
Photography Club	500	3000	500
Psychology Club	0	180	0
Queer Alliance (formerly BiGaLA)	2200	3750	2200
Radio Station	900	1000	350
Rocky Horror Picture Show	0	1000	0
Root Cellar	350	715	300
Rugby Football Club	850	1155	900
Russian-Eurasian Club	200	2180	600
S.I.L.K.	900	2355	500
SEED	0	760	250
Simpsons Marathon	0	139	50
Sister Cities Club	200	450	250
SMOG (student garage)	0	790	500
Snow Club	200	1110	400
Society of Physics Students	50	100	50
Stitch N' Bitch	300	400	150
Student Action Collective	325	1190	200
Student Labor Coalition	250	1445	800
Students of Color for Racial Justice	300	768	400
Swingset United People's Front	0	0	0
System of Sound	400	619.96	550
Tap Dance Club	0	250	0
The College Must Swing Club	350	650	350
Universal Human Rights Society	1700	1440	900
Womyn's Alliance	800	2645	1700
TOTAL:	62030.75	138613.01	67003.72
EMERGENCY FUND	3393.06		4396.28



## From the *Observer* Archives Speaking with Huey P. Newton

*Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from an interview with Huey P. Newton conducted by John Bancroft and David Fenton of the Liberation News Service on August 21, 1970 in New Haven, Connecticut. It was subsequently published in the September 1970 of the Bard Observer (an issue which, incidentally, also included an article concerning the college's \$90,000 deficit). Huey Newton was one of the original founders of the Black Panther Party in 1966. He spent three years in jail on charges of murder, but, as a result of the force of the "Free Huey" movement, the charges were dropped and he was released. Huey died in 1989.*

we feel that history has bestowed this task upon us. In many ways, it's a natural thing that Black Americans are the vanguard of the revolution. Because our history was destroyed. We were kidnapped from the Mother Country, brought here, and our national attitude was destroyed by slavery.

The people are looking for salvation not from the past really but always to the future. So we're progressive by necessity--a very pragmatic people. You're less likely to have ethnocentrism when your history has been destroyed. So we end up being a very dynamic people. We end up being a people that's been dispersed all over the world, so therefore we're international by our very heritage. Because we're not hung up on this national chauvinism, not really historically, because after the break, by slavery again, it's only natural that we'll be internationalist and it will be easier for us to give up those chauvinistic ideas of nationalism.

Charles Garry (Huey's lawyer): Huey, why don't you tell them something about the difference between revolutionary suicide and reactionary suicide.

Huey: . . . at this point in history . . . the people in general and the blacks in particular have little alternative. We can choose between revolutionary suicide and reactionary suicide. What I mean by reactionary suicide is suicide that's caused by a reactionary set of conditions. When a corrupt regime strips a man of all dignity and crushes his spirit he kills himself. This is reactionary suicide. If he does nothing he gets killed by that reactionary set of conditions. It's a spiritual kind of death. This is suicide in as much as he's doing nothing to stop it. And I'm contending that he has an obligation to preserve himself, so it's suicide if he doesn't.

On the other hand I think that we all have to realize that the enemy that we're fighting is very strong, very powerful, and our individual chances of surviving are very slim. so when we take action, when we take our destiny in our own hands and try to change those reactionary conditions by going in a head-on conflict with those forces, then this is edging on suicide. I call it revolutionary suicide because there's a small chance that we'll actually succeed, I mean individually succeed. We know that the people will eventually win. But as far as each of us we have no guarantee that we will succeed. And matter of fact I believe that our chances are so slight that we can call this revolutionary suicide. Because it's a freedom of choice, and that we're taking action to live, really, and to change those conditions that are about to kill us.

I think that this is sort of symbolic, actually. It shows that we're being destroyed, but it also shows a redemption. Because in the new world, people will only live to love each other anyway, you see. We won't be concerned about those material things and so forth. I'm contending that what sustains the revolutionist is the love that he has for the people and this motivates him to destroy those things that have stripped everything else away. so it's a destruction and a redemption.

Liberation News Service: Do you think there's a revolutionary potential for youth culture, or do you think that it is a kind of sidetrack?

Huey: Well, I think that the drug culture and the drop-out movement is in a transitional stage. I think that the youth will drop out and then they'll start dropping in again after they see they can't find any peace by separating. I think that the youth movement at this time is another manifestation of the separatist idea that many black nationalists preached just a few years ago. The youth drug culture is another manifestation of this—you know, like "we'll get out of the whole thing."

But we're starting to find out that we can't separate, because imperialism won't allow us to separate. Imperialism won't allow developing countries some 10 or 15,000 miles away to live in peace, and they're already separated even on a geographical level. If imperialism won't let those countries be free 15,000 miles away it surely won't let a group of people right here in North America separate.

We won't find any salvation until we are rid of the small ruling clique within this country. Then there won't be any need to separate at all anyway—matter of fact the whole concept of nationalism will be settled.

Right now the Black Panther Party supports all nationalist wars of independence, because we feel that these countries haven't exploited anyone, and they are nationalistic on a self-defense basis. They have a right to independence. But we view them as no more than liberated territory or a base to operate from in order to destroy imperialism.

After imperialism is destroyed, then there won't be any need for nationalism, so we won't support it. At this point we take a stand that we think that blacks within this country have a moral right to separate. The revolutionary nationalist idea is a moral thing. After so many years of abuse we have a right to do this. On the other hand I feel, the Party feels, that history has bestowed an obligation upon us. And that obligation is to transform the whole society, as a matter of fact, the whole world.

Because if this society is moved, then the whole world will be transformed. While we have a moral right I don't think the political strategy is correct. Because if we don't serve as the vanguard in this transformation, then someone else will. So the Party accepts this role as the vanguard—not with any arrogance, but



**STRIPPED:** Debaters at the Budget Forum were required to remove an article of clothing for every 30 seconds of speaking time. Needless to say, concision won the day.

# "http://students.bard.edu/-your name"

By JOE STANCO

FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, attempts have been made to setup a server devoted exclusively to providing web space for students. Students had previously proposed that a server, funded by the Vice-President's Fund, be networked on the O/S 2 Warp operating system. This system was chosen to avoid providing superuser<sup>1</sup> access to the administration. Under the operating system endorsed by the administration, the college would have had ultimate control over the network. Students had demanded exclusive administrative privileges on a student-designated server, but former Information Resources Director Bonnie Gilman refused to grant students this degree of control. Other points of contention, related to content issues and student authority in general, stymied the approval process for a student-run server.

However, with Dave Maswick as the current director of information technologies, we will now see the student server become a reality. The server, a new Sun SPARC, has been purchased with funds allocated as an allotment owed to the students who made the previous request. Fortunately, the purchase will not affect the amount of the current semester's fund. Ben Running, webmaster for the Inside server, is coordinating the installation of the machine. Students can speak with Maswick if they want to participate in networking the server.

As a student-controlled community resource, the server will provide many services. The ability to publish on the web may gradually but dramatically change the character of the Bard community. Such an open and versatile medium as web publishing may provoke students to re-evaluate the way that information is distributed on Bard campus. Indeed, the right to web publishing is extremely important in expanding the ability of students to share their work and ideas with not only each other, but with anyone else in the world. Maswick admits that one of his highest priorities was to "open the web publishing channel for the entire community." He cited the online version of *The Bard Observer* as an example of the progress already made towards getting students' work published on the web. Inside Bard has also featured a web project by student Laura Gail Tyler, which documented her experiences with Judy Pfaff in Brazil. The Bard Book System, a database of books created by Shankar Gopalakrishnan and Suneth Jayawardhane, has also been linked on the Inside server. Though recent applications for student web publishing have been large-scale projects, students from all levels of experience are encouraged to become active web publishers.

As an open medium, web publishing lends itself to controversies regarding content. Students will be able to distribute any files or information they choose, without being subject to evaluation or censorship by the college.

At the end of last semester, you might have noticed a disclaimer appearing before the *Observer* site, preparing the viewer for content which "[does] not necessarily reflect the views or policies of Bard College or its officers and faculty." Indicating that the college was ready to allow students to take responsibility for their work, the disclaimer was a harbinger of greater expressive freedom for the Bard community. It is a gesture which places students on their own ground. The administration's reluctance to provide this kind of disclaimer is perplexing. Many colleges like Bard have long ago recognized the value of supporting the work of their students. For example, Maswick took a survey of 40 "Tier 1" liberal arts schools and found that Bard was one of two that do not have a student web server. Thankfully, the college has finally approved a technology which will put Bard in the same league as its competitors.

Besides a disclaimer, a number of "appropriate use" guidelines accompany the installation of the new server. These guidelines were modeled after those used at other colleges, and were adapted specifically for the Bard community. To avoid redundancy and political friction, Maswick tried to keep the guidelines, and their corresponding punitive measures, consistent with those that already exist. As he explained, "If you trash somebody's room, there is already a process to address

those issues. I didn't need to create a new one if you trash someone's email account." Maswick is confident that there should be few major problems. Disagreements will be resolved on an individual basis. But if a controversy were to erupt, the dispute would be settled by the Student Judiciary Board and the administration.

The web publishing guidelines can be viewed from the Inside Bard homepage (<http://inside.bard.edu/hcrg/guidelines.html>). Basically, you cannot use the site for illegal or commercial purposes. Additionally, there are a few requirements which apply to the construction of every student's site. Students must refrain from using Bard logos or any images that might make the page appear to be an official document. The page author must also identify himself or herself and provide his or her e-mail address, so as to assure that the author is responsible for the content of his or her page.

Maswick plans to make getting started simple. Students will be able to create a web directory for themselves by typing in a special command when they telnet to Bard. The command will create a personal web address, which will look like this:

<http://students.bard.edu/~yourname>.

At that point, students will be able to use an FTP (File Transfer Protocol) program such as WSFTP or Fetch to transfer HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language) files to their web directory. Maswick is in the process of hiring an instructor to get students running their own sites as quickly as possible.

It will be interesting to see how the Bard community takes to web publishing. There are certainly many practical advantages to publishing on the web. It is a great way to make important information, such as a résumé or a portfolio, easily accessible. It will also be an effective way for clubs and organizations to provide information to students. There are many creative possibilities to be explored with web publishing as well.

The success of a student server depends on how diversely it is used. The student community will determine how meaningfully this resource is integrated into life at Bard. With a diversity of participants in the experiment, the value of such a resource in the community may become very significant. However, it is impossible to predict the way students will choose to use the server. One might expect that the student server could complement the kind of community "presence" generated with the resurrection of the radio station. It is likely that *The Bard Observer* will be at the center of these changes, adapting dynamically in response to new demands.

<sup>1</sup>Geek speak:

If you have email at Bard, you have a UNIX user shell account. This means that you have a directory on the Bard server named after your email address. When you telnet to Bard, you are accessing this disk space. Only you have privileges to read, write, and execute files from this directory. Unless you change permissions on your files, only the superuser can read, alter, move or delete these files.

Who is this almighty superuser, you may ask?

In the UNIX networking environment, there is always a root directory from which all other directories are spawned. Only the "root," usually the system administrator, has access privileges to that directory and control over all directories branching from it. Root giveth user accounts and root taketh away.

Maswick took a survey of 40 "Tier 1" liberal arts schools and found that Bard was one of two that do not have a student web server . . .

## A&EBRIEFA&EBRIEFA&EBRIEFA&EBRIEFA&EBRIEFA&E

### PHOTO SPEAKERS

Mark Haworth-Booth, curator of photographs at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, will be speaking on Monday, March 8, at 8 p.m. in campus center theater. The lecture is the second in a series of talks entitled "Presentation and Representation" sponsored by the Photography department. The next lecture will be on Monday, April 26. It will feature Donald Hoffman, the author of *Visual Intelligence*.

### NEW MUSIC TO PREMIERE AT BARD

Kyle Gann, assistant professor of music at Bard, and internationally acclaimed pianist Lois Svard, will perform several new works, including two

world premieres on Wednesday, February 24 at 8 p.m. in Olin Hall. Gann is also the new-music critic for the *Village Voice*. Svard is on the faculty of Bucknell University and has commissioned works from Gann in the past.

### "TEN YEARS OF PROTEST" IN FISHER

Commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Tompkins Square riots in New York City, "Ten Years of Protest" opened in Fisher Sunday night. The show features flyers, posters, and photographs from one of the most vital protest movements to have taken place in the last twenty years. It addresses issues of squatter's rights, gentrification, and affordable housing on the Lower East

Side. The show will be on exhibit until March 15. (FYI: A great source for more information on these events is *The New Urban Frontier* by Neil Smith.)

### NOBEL LAUREATE SPEAKS

When working on his dissertation in 1968, Russell Hulse stumbled upon the first-known binary pulsar star. Since then, the binary pulsar has been the subject of extensive research and has been used for some of the most stringent and important tests of Einstein's general theory of relativity. Hulse subsequently received the Nobel Prize in 1993. His lecture, "An Astronomical Adventure: The Discovery of the Binary Pulsar," will be held on Saturday, March 6, at 3 p.m. in Olin Hall. Says Hulse, "Among the many things we hope for in our lives are an opportunity for adventure and per-

sonal discoveries that lead to a deeper knowledge of the fascinating world around us."

### THE MUSIC AT BARD JUST WON'T STOP

Horacio Gutierrez, world-renowned pianist, will perform on this Friday in Olin Hall at 8 p.m. The *Chicago Tribune* reports, "For the average-to-good pianist, listening to Gutierrez may be cause for despair; there is just no way to get from 'good' to where he is." Born in Havana, Gutierrez performed with the Havana Symphony at the age of eleven. He won an Emmy Award for his fourth appearance with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Friday's performance will include works by Alban Berg, George Perle, Robert Schumann and Ludwig van Beethoven. Don't miss it.—Briefs By Michael Haggerty

## FOODREVIEWFOODREVIEWFOOD

IN SEARCH FOR A NEW AND EXCITING place to dine this semester, I recalled hearing through the grapevine that a new Thai restaurant opened up in Kingston. It was with this little information that I began my search. Realizing after four years of experience that Kingston can be a confusing and confounding metropolis, I decided I needed to be better prepared.

My first thought was to look in the phone book. Not knowing the name of the restaurant did cause a problem. I went to the library and began perusing the listings. "Oooh, Buffet 2000, that place sounds exciting," but no, I must stay focused. Thai food, Thai food, Thai food . . .

"Oh, here it is! 'The Saigon Cafe.'" I said aloud to the librarian, excited and proud I had found it so quickly.

"Uh, Saigon is in Vietnam," said the librarian, shedding light on my ignorance.

"Oh, what's the capital of Thailand?" I asked trying to recover from my embarrassing exuberance.

"Bangkok." And so that is the story of how I became acquainted with the restaurant known as (luckily for me) the Bangkok Thai Restaurant.

Well prepared, I set off with two companions, both whose experience in Thai cuisine goes well beyond my own, which had been limited to pad Thai, iced coffees and chicken in a pineapple boat.

The dinner began a bit strangely, as we were escorted out of the front dining room where everyone else sat and brought into a back room, where our only company was the space heater.

"I think we're being dogged," said one of my companions. Naively, I didn't believe it, suggesting that perhaps they knew I was a restaurant critic, reading my previous work in the *Observer*, and that all this mystery was just the VIP treatment. As usual, I was living under a disillusion.

It wasn't such a bad experience, but the wait was forever. This of course, should be stipulated by saying that the restaurant was short-staffed and we were granted a conciliation prize of a free round of iced coffees, which I really appreciated. Plus, we were sequestered in a weird section; and if I put myself in the waitress's shoes, I could see myself forgetting these oddly seated customers as well.

The menus were perhaps the oddest part of the whole experience. They seemed to be those mass-produced picture books that, I later discovered, are published by Thailand's bureau of tourism. The options were limited, especially considering my budget—not many vegetarian options either.

The whole menu situation did kind of replicate the feeling, as someone told me, "of being on a flight to Thailand," which was even more significant considering the time spent waiting for our meal. I had succumbed to the pineapple chicken boat, with which I was pleased and satisfied, particularly with the number of cashews it included. The vegetarian among us ordered the pad thai—nothing too extraordinary about it, I've had better. My other companion ordered Chicken on the Green, which put my pineapple boat to shame. The dish contained chicken and some vegetables in a green sauce, nothing more, nothing less, a perfect symphony of simplicity.

In conclusion, the Bangkok Thai Restaurant left me broke and disappointed. The ambience is simple yet dull, the service was friendly yet slow, and the food, though not too shabby, is not worth the trip—unless you're not paying.

—Stephanie Schneider

## Latin American Music Resonates on the Hudson

*Bard celebrates neglected repertoire with Brazilian composer Lacerda*

By JOHN COVNE

FAR FROM THE WORLD of thick German Romanticism, Viennese Classicism, and all the other European classical traditions that have formed the hub of our western musical canon, the Latin American music scene has flourished independent of their neighbors to the north. Occasionally a composer of comparable virtuosity and approachability, like Villa-Lobos or Ernesto Nazareth, will breach the ivory tower of the classical tradition and earn a place in the repertoire. In general, however, the music of Latin America has remained a poorly explored genre of classical music literature.

It was therefore pleasing to see a concert celebrating the music of Latin America, by the Bard Music Department. The concert, which illuminated a handful of South and Central American composers of varying degrees of notoriety, was held on Wednesday, February 4, in Blum Hall. It placed the well-known composers Villa-Lobos and Ginastera side by side with Alba Potes and Osvaldo Lacerda, composers who, in spite of talent almost tantamount to the former two, have not yet found a firm place in the western repertoire.

Thanks to a grant from the Brazilian Ministry of Culture, the septuagenarian Lacerda, one of the last and most respected of the Brazilian nationalist composers, was in attendance Wednesday night to hear three of his own compositions. In addition, he delivered a few short talks during the course of the concert. In one of these, he gave a brief history of Brazilian music beginning with the country's colonization. In another, he spoke of his late teacher and colleague, Camargo Guarnieri. Lacerda's discourse was loquacious, humorous, and extremely well informed, evincing a strong knowledge of the musical culture in which he has lived and to which he has made an impressive contribution.

A few days prior to the concert, I had the opportunity to talk briefly with Mr. Lacerda and his wife. His wife, a pianist who played the Villa-Lobos concerto in Paris shortly after its composition, has also performed extensively in Brazil. I asked Mr. Lacerda if he was still composing avidly, to which he responded that he had just finished a concerto for Marimba and chamber ensemble, and is now at work on another piece. He emphasized the need for composers to always keep busy and not fall out of practice. He said that even when there is a lack of inspiration, he prefers doing counterpoint exercises rather than nothing at all. His favorite instrument is the human voice. Yet in spite of this, he does not compose operas, citing a lack of decent librettos in the Portuguese language.

The performances of the evening all kept with the spirit of the music. Bari Mort and Joan Tower's performance of "Paseo" for two pianos, by William Bolcom (the only American on the program), was a supple rendition of a rather supple piece. The style of the piece seemed to owe more than a little to the tangos of Ernesto Nazareth. Ms. Mort was then joined by flutist Sato Moughalian for the remainder of the first half. In the second to last piece, a "Choro" by Agustin Barrios, the floor was surrendered to guitarist Greg Dinger. While all the performances themselves were enjoyable and spirited, the short talks Ms. Moughalian gave prior to her solo pieces, attempted to give the audience something to think about when she was playing, were a little mawkish and beside the point. The talks were over quickly however, and her playing was exceptional enough to make up for her attempts to say something about the music that the music itself made clear.

After this lengthy first half, there was an intermission during which a whole array of Latin American treats were served, prepared by the gracious Daisy Tyler. With the help of some flan and punch, a group of devoted audience members returned to the tropical temperatures of Blum Hall for the second and more fun half of the concert. The second part consisted of mostly student performers, half of which were guitarists of comparable talent, playing selections from the vast Latin American guitar repertoire. Among the non-guitar performances was another piece by Osvaldo Lacerda called "Pomento." This sweet song-like piece, for flute and piano, was beautifully performed by Barbara Smith and Jun-Dai Bates, respectively. Violinist Erin Watson, accompanied by Bari Mort, played a light folksy piece called "Danza Colombiana" by Antonio Maria Valencia. Eric Meyers gave an intense and athletic performance of Alberto Ginastera's "Suite de Danzas Criollas." The concert concluded, as many concerts at Bard conclude, with a jazz piece; this one by the Brazilian Antonio Carlos Jobim.

After the concert, there was a trivia contest of three questions about Latin American music. The questions were posted in Blum the week before for all to see and discuss, and there was the promise that prizes would be given out. Most of what this writer knows about Latin American music he learned hunched over the Groves Encyclopedia in the library in a vainglorious attempt to bring home the gold, so to speak. But alas, I departed before this event took place, feeling a need to work off some of the flan I took in at intermission, and to allow my mind to process the lengthy two-and-a-half hour concert. After spending such a length of time immersed in the rhythms and peculiar energy of the south, returning to Beethoven and his neighbors on the other continent felt like a culture shock.



# Cinderella: Dark Tale Meets English Liveliness

*Victorian Studies and Liza Shippley bring pantomime to life with help of bawdy cast, including Registrar Peter Gadsby*

BY LUKE COHEN

DO YOU LIKE CHOCOLATE? Did your parents neglect you as a child? Do you miss the prepubescent joy that goes hand and gland with a good fairy tale? Are your free-loving-politically-correct-racially-diverse-homeless-Marxist-Stalinist-heroin-addicted friends beginning to seem a bit boring? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, last weekend's show of pure pantomimic brilliance, by Liza Shippley and her cross dressing troupe of loud-mouthed anarchists, would have been the perfect cure for your ennui.

Fearing the typical narcissistic melodrama of high school plays, and knowing nothing at all about pantomime, I was reluctant to accept the task of reviewing this play. Much to my surprise, I found the art of pantomime to be the rowdiest of the theatre arts, the goal of which is to parody the cheesy-lovey-doviness of which I was so scared. Originating in the Victorian Era, pantomime has continued to flower to this day. Though loosely based on children's fairy tales, pantomime is generally not predictable, due to its characteristic free interpretation of the script and gender role mishaps. It is this free structure, replete with last minute add-ins, that exempted pantomime from censorship instituted by the Victorian Parliament. Peter Gadsby, who sneaks into the play as a karate-chopping "Major-Domo," defines the madness of pantomime as, "A fairy tale done in a stupid way, with stupid jokes, that little kids find funny, and their parents find vulgar... The whole thing is cheesy: people in cheesy costumes telling cheesy jokes."

So how did all this silliness and history weasel its way into Bard College? Well, for Liza Shippley, it seemed sensible. As a Victorian Studies major, Liza had been



nurturing the idea of such a play for years, saying that pantomime would be the "ultimate" thing she could do for her department. With help from friends Arie Singer, Scott Gendel, Jed Berry, Gordana Bojovska, Amy Russell, and play choreographer Noel Brandiese, Liza successfully turned her classmates into a bunch of foul-mouthed, sniveling, Englishmen who warble their way into your heart.

The wonderfully clashing personalities who argue across the stage drive this version of Cinderella. The evil step sisters, Tulip (Emily Liechty), and Snowdrop (Amy Russell), while stammering and snarling fiercely, construct a sinister plot against their good sister Cinderella. James McShane plays a very pensive Cinderella; there is no place in this world for poor Cindy. It is his (I mean her) gaze, somewhere between bedroom eyes and a boy kissing the Torah for the first time, that makes her intriguing. One of the finest characters was the Fairy Godmother, played by Bernie Geoghegan. This celestial being floats in and out of the scene like a fart swirling around an elevator. Looking past Bernie's gassy aura one finds a true comic as he reaches the oratorical heights of a Jesse Jackson, battles through a Jeff Foxworthy, and finally ends his speech in a very dignified Nate Dog. Behind this powerful and pink tutued fairy, you can find a whole gaggle of like-minded sprites. Armed with furtive glances and smug grins, the throng of cut-throat fairies resembles a band of high school party crashers who end up pissing in the water cooler. In this fairy wonderland gone mad, the only true stability is Diana Obler's character Buttons. Armed with her virtue and natural allure, she battles through the many levels of absurdity and finds herself on top as the true gem of the play. It is her charisma that makes her stand out from the rest of these loons as they madly wheel about.

It would be an understatement to say that this play lacks a dull moment; put to the music of MC Hammer, Snoop Doggy Dogg, and the B-52's, it appeals to all of the senses. Without a drama department regular, we still find an impressive group of actors who do justice to Alan Brown's original. One leaves the play feeling as if a septic tank, filled with humor, English good times, and yes, David Bowie, has been emptied on their feet.

## FILMREVIEWFILMREVIEWFILM

THE ARRIVAL OF *THE BRANDON TEENA STORY* at Upstate Films was conveniently timed. I had just finished reading *Gender Outlaw*, a book by Kate Bornstein, that deals with various aspects of the gender and transgender experience. The book made me reexamine my assumptions about the world and its system of gender polarity. After having read the book, I felt as though I could freely shape the system, rather than be manipulated and shaped by it. These were some of the lofty, empowered, and sadly naive thoughts that were on my mind when I arrived at the theater.

The documentary traces the events leading up to the brutal and premeditated executions of Brandon Teena and two of his friends. Interviews with family, friends, and lovers, occasional diary entries, and recorded conversations form the content of the movie. The imagery accentuates the contrast between Brandon's transgender experience and that of the white, heterosexual, middle-class communities that surrounded him. It consists mostly of repetitive landscapes set to ironic country songs. By the third scene of rolling grass, hinky-dinky grocery stores, and plaintive country moaning about wanting a real man, I was bored and annoyed; I found myself wishing that they had stuck to their otherwise stark format of interviews and recorded text. The interviews were particularly well-done, painting portraits of the speakers through their own words rather than trying to manipulate them to reveal their ignorance, anger, etc.

The documentary successfully avoids degenerating into a moralistic or sensational account of the complex and tragic series of events. I left the theater disturbed by the violence I had just witnessed on-screen, but I was also disappointed by the efforts of the filmmakers. I felt that they misrepresented themselves to a certain degree by purporting to tell the Brandon Teena story, without really spending much time on what the experience of transgenderism itself meant to Brandon. Rather, they concentrated on presenting the restrictive atmosphere of ignorance and intolerance that oppressed and finally destroyed (and continues to destroy) people's lives. While these images and interviews are disturbing, they certainly aren't news to anyone who reads the newspaper. I would have been more interested if the professional and conscientious approach that distinguished this film were applied to an exploration of the transgender experience itself.

*The Brandon Teena Story* is most powerful as a cautionary tale (for TVs, TSs, gays, lesbians, and anyone else who is the object of prejudice) and an eye-opener for the mostly privileged and educated straight people who will view it. In the end, however, I don't feel this film will prevent any crimes or open people's minds. This film is simply a documentary of the latent violence that explodes in our faces and steals our breath, the violence that never seems to go away.—Sameer Reddy

## MISS LONELYHEARTS

## Lonelyhearts Gets the Valentine's Blues

POST-VALENTINE'S DAY DEPRESSION. Miss Lonelyhearts has the answers to all your cupid-inspired problems. Did you know that in the three days following Valentine's Day more Prozac prescriptions are written than any other time of the year? Miss Lonelyhearts guarantees no side effects. (Write: Box 609).

Dear Miss Lonelyhearts,

After attending a few dances alone this Autumn, I have been considering inviting an attractive and charming man to accompany me to the next one. However, I know nothing of the etiquette of attending a dance with someone. Am I allowed to dance with other people? Should we meet there, or walk there together? Who pays to get in? And, most importantly how can one gracefully ask another person to go with them? Please help.

Yours,

Confused in Cruger

Dear Confused,

Does this attractive and charming man have a cousin? Or better yet, a twin brother? Attractive and charming, huh? My advice to you is to immediately send his phone number to Box 609. Then tap your shoes together three times and say: "There are no men at Bard. There are no men at Bard." Spin around fifty times and when you regain your equilibrium you will remember nothing of this attractive and charming person. Ready? Set? Go . . .

Okay, but seriously, I gotta spend some more time in Cruger Village. I was a little confused by your letter mainly because I didn't know people at Bard actually went to dances together. I mean, unless they have been dating for the last forty-five years. But don't let this discourage you. There is never anything wrong with breaking new ground.

First off, there is no graceful way to ask someone to a dance. Flowers help. You may want to try and ask over the phone, as this is potentially less painful if you are rejected. But that won't happen. Keep the faith baby. It might help if you integrate the dance into a larger evening's excursion, like dinner, a movie, a walk, or a cup of coffee. You can also lessen the strain by starting off the night doing something with a group, and then branching off. (Just don't invite any of your attractive friends who have been unattached for over three months. They have no loyalties.) It is a lot less threatening to invite him along to do something with you and your friends then calling him up and flat out asking him to go to a dance with you. But if you have the balls, more power to you. When he says "yes," remember to stifle your cries of joy and keep your cool.

A few words on etiquette. Yes, you can dance with other people, but remember, so can he. If you think this will weird you out then you are probably too attached to him already. Try to walk there together, and if you are following my aforementioned advice, this should not be a problem. You each pay for yourself, unless he offers to pay for you. If he does, politely thank him and try to make a conscious effort to buy him a cup of coffee later. You can offer to pay, but I think it's just easier going dutch. He will probably feel the same way, but if he is living proof that chivalry is still alive, send his phone number and vital statistics to Box 609, tap your heels together three times and . . .



Dear Miss Lonelyhearts,

It's not that I have a problem giving head. It's just that I don't enjoy hot sperm swimming down my throat. In fact, the mere thought of swallowing triggers my gag reflex. I've been with my current boyfriend for over a year now, and I care about him a great deal. No matter how many times I tell him that I refuse to swallow, he asks every time. His latest maneuver is to tell me that if I loved him, I would swallow. This makes me feel guilty, yet angry at the same time. He keeps pushing, and won't listen to reason. I think it may be one of the major factors hurting our relationship. Should I just suck up (and deal) or spit in his eye?

Signed,

Reluctantly Swallowing

Dear Swallowing,

Where does your boyfriend get off? While it is true that if you love your boyfriend, you should love all of him, he should never guilt trip you with this fact. Quite frankly, his response to your refusal triggers my gag reflex. A good response to him might be to say: "If you loved me, you wouldn't want me to do something that makes me want to puke." But since I don't think you should sink to his level, let's think of another solution.

The age-old debate about whether to spit or swallow has plagued couples for thousands of years. There is even evidence of fellatio in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. However, as history shows us, a definite solution has never been reached. Cults in Italy in the 1200's believed that semen contained a purifying substance which lengthened one's life, and swallowing became almost as popular as drinking holy water. Yet around the same time period in Australia, there is evidence that people thought semen was harmful if ingested, and caused death in excessive amounts. At one point, when the spitters were in the majority, there was talk of designing beds with tasteful cups attached to the headboards.

Now that you are a little more familiar with cum history, it is important for you to realize YOU ARE NOT ALONE. This will become your mantra. Repeat it to yourself often. Whenever you feel that swallowing guilt coming on: YOU ARE NOT ALONE. There are others out there like you, and although I personally am not one of them, I suppose I can understand some of your revulsion. In fact, you are lucky. I knew a girl once who refused to give head at all because she felt like she would suffocate. Also, my sister's friend was plagued by asthma attacks every time her boyfriend was about to orgasm. Needless to say, he started carrying around inhalers more than she did. So look on the bright side, (and you might want to point this out to your jerkface, oops—I mean lovely boyfriend) at least you don't mind going down on him.

So, I've compiled a list to aid you in your attempts, if you do decide to suck up (and deal):

- 1) Do not think of cum as "hot sperm." This visual image will leave you feeling like you are swallowing tadpoles. Find something you enjoy drinking, like a milkshake, and just think about that whenever you are swallowing.
- 2) If you have a problem with the taste, tell him to lay off all processed food and citrus fruits. Also, a little bird told me that vegetarians always taste better, but this has yet to be scientifically proven.

- 3) If you are overwhelmed by the amount, make sure your chin is raised away from your chest as though you were resting it on an apple. (Feel free to experiment with said apple). This will open up your throat and it will be much easier to swallow. This is similar to the method used while chugging beer, so feel free to practice.

So whatever you decide to do, just remember that you shouldn't have to do anything that makes you uncomfortable and/or nauseous. And if he still won't let up, remind him that there are plenty of guys out there who don't mind at all if you don't swallow.

The age-old debate about whether to spit or swallow has plagued couples for thousands of years.

## PERSPECTIVES IN MUSIC

## The Rise of Auteurism in 70s Soul Music

By Scott Stanton

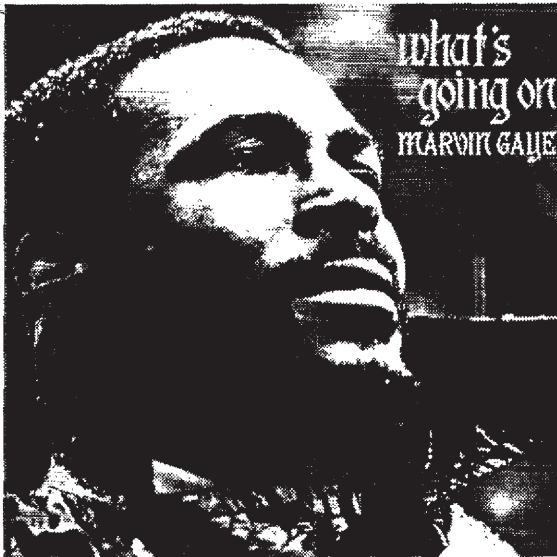
*In this piece, I regard the rise of auteurism in soul as an emergence of personal styles and visions in the 70s that coalesced into an artistic trend that overcame many of the genre's established rules and conventions in favor of individual self-expression.*

POPULAR MUSIC BEGAN with the development of a largely singles-based market. The emphasis was on the 45—an easily digestible chunk of music that delivered a condensed musical experience in often less than three minutes. For fans willing to spend more on the product, labels would often arrange substandard material around the one or two songs of note which were receiving airplay on the radio as higher priced albums—performers very rarely had complete control over their work or the manner in which it was arranged. Rock musicians in the mid-60s, taking their cues from performers like the Beatles, Beach Boys, and Bob Dylan, sought to assert their artistic identities and subvert the predominant role of albums as vehicles for singles. They accomplished this by producing two sides of vinyl with good material and a unified concept. Albums gracefully evolved into cohesive statements that reflected the artistic development of the performers. By the late-60s the rock market recognized the artistic merits of both singles and albums.

Despite the progress made by rock performers in the 60s in gaining artistic freedom, recording artists in other genres took a bit longer to follow the trend. Soul and R&B music in the 60s, though featuring such visionaries as James Brown, Otis Redding, and Issac Hayes, couldn't boast a widespread artistic upheaval within the genre. The two soul powerhouses of the 60s were the Memphis-based Stax/Volt label and the Detroit-based Motown label, both of which were run under the tight supervision of their respective founders, Jim Stewart and Berry Gordy. Both labels were managed an assembly line fashion, with professional songwriters delivering song after song based on a formula that worked, producers whose arrangements and skill would flesh out the music, and singers with enough talent and charisma to bring the singles to life. Though similar in approach, the two labels had very distinctive sounds, and it was no secret that Gordy's more poppy Motown had greater crossover market success. Gordy's "Motown Hit Machine" held a vice-like grip over the pop and R&B charts alike. It was a system that worked and was very rarely subverted; even the most successful writers and producers had to submit their work to weekly quality control meetings expecting that many of their creations would be compromised.

Marvin Gaye had been with Motown throughout its successful 60s era, performing such classics as "Can I Get a Witness?," "How Sweet It Is (To Be Loved By You)," and "I Heard It Through the Grapevine." By the end of the decade, Gaye had grown frustrated with the irrelevance of his recorded material in the face of the social and political changes that were sweeping the nation. Spending most of 1970 in seclusion, Gaye returned to Motown with a self-produced album in which he wrote and arranged all the material. Undoubtedly the most ambitious work to be presented to Motown, Gordy initially refused to release *What's Going On* because of the album's intense political tone and obvious artistic aspiration. After much resistance Gordy reluctantly released the album in 1971, and the most remarkable stride in soul auteurism was made. The major critical and commercial success of *What's Going On* (which yielded three top-ten hits) established Marvin Gaye at the forefront of soul music development and opened the door for similar artists to assert control of their own work. The success and deft execution of Gaye's conceptual masterpiece was repeated in 1973 on a more personal level with *Let's Get It On*, a breathtaking statement of sexual desire inspired chiefly by his fascination with a teenage girl. The album delivered his second #1 single in the title track.

The widespread impact of Marvin Gaye's artistic endeavors was enough to persuade Gordy to loosen the reigns on another major Motown player of the 60s, Stevie Wonder. Since his introduction into the recording world at age 13, Stevie Wonder was regarded as a major talent in soul, but when Motown agreed to give him full artistic control of his work, the public was able to fully appreciate his greatness. Wonder released *Talking Book* in 1972, a very impressive collection that showcased the breadth of his songwriting and imaginative abilities. The album delivered two No. 1 singles ("Superstition" and "You Are the Sunshine of My Life"), but *Talking Book's* success didn't prevent Wonder from upping the ante with its follow-up, *Innervisions*. Less per-



sonal and more political in approach, the album was again produced by Stevie and featured a collection of strikingly mature compositions (among them "Higher Ground" and "Living For the City"), making apparent the maturity of Wonder's muse and assuring his landmark status in music. An amazing album that addresses major socio-political concerns while building on previous innovations in the genre, *Innervisions* is a powerful and insightful work and one of the best albums soul has to offer.

Elsewhere in America, Curtis Mayfield was also rising as a soul auteur. The leader of the Impressions during the 60s, Mayfield had been one of the first soul performers to write most of his own material. His work assisting other local singers helped to craft the Chicago soul sound. He split from the Impressions at the end of the decade, releasing his first solo album, *Curtis*, in 1970. With this powerful album, Mayfield helped introduce gritty social commentary to soul along with another major contributor, Sly and the Family Stone. Also noticeable were the pronounced funk elements of the work, which would come into prominence on his third solo offering, *Superfly*. The soundtrack to the 1972 blaxploitation film of the same name, the album saw Mayfield describing ghetto life with a fervor and realism that was unusual in the recorded music world. Concerned with the horrors and excesses of lower-class urban culture, Mayfield constructed a work that is held together thematically as much as it is musically. Unfortunately Curtis Mayfield could never quite equal the impact and standards set by *Curtis* and *Superfly*, but he went on to have several hits over the ensuing decades.

The last major contributor to the rising level of auteurism in soul is Al Green. Considering that previous artists were almost completely independent in crafting the albums mentioned above, including Al Green may be a bit unfair in light of the collaborative relationship he had with his producer, Willie Mitchell, who was responsible for the lush horn and string arrangements that helped make Green's work transcendent. Nevertheless, the sound's central element was unquestionably Green's vocal style, rooted in gospel, punctuated by alternately slight and forceful wails and hollers, and capable of some of the most entrancing vocal inflections in deep soul. Along with Mitchell's immaculate production, Green made some of the most compelling soul music ever. Released in 1972, *Im Still in Love with You* is Green's first masterpiece, the album in which he truly comes into his own. By this time the Green/Mitchell sound had gelled into an unmistakably sexy and romantic force. The confidence and maturity of the work is evident in its intricate songcraft and subtle ambition. Green's version of Kris Kristofferson's "For the Good Times" is his first big approach to country music, and it is joined with Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman" as the two songs on the album that evince Green's amazing knack for interpreting others' material. Despite the album's achievements, Green managed to top *Im Still in Love with You* with its 1973 follow-up, *Call Me*. The album featured three top-ten hits in "Here I Am (Come and Take Me)," "You Ought to Be with Me," and its title track; but no track on the seemingly seamless work is wasted. Green's country-soul hybrid peaks with moving interpretations of Hank Williams' "I'm So Lonesome I Could Cry" and Willie Nelson's "Funny How Time Slips Away," and the album's magnificent closer, "Jesus Is Waiting," foreshadows the return to gospel music Green would make at the end of the decade.

Between the years of 1970 and 1973, established members of the soul community managed to gain control of their work and consequently indulge their artistic inclinations. What resulted was one of the most fruitful periods in soul, with no less than eight superb albums produced. Though the "classic" sound of 60s and 70s soul is regrettably absent from most of today's R&B music, the impact of the work of the aforementioned artists continues to resonate, and is most immediately recognizable in the widespread critical and commercial success of Lauren Hill.

...when Motown agreed to give Stevie Wonder full artistic control of his work, the public was able to fully appreciate his greatness.

# Perspectives on Alice's 8-Fitted Agony

By Devin Irby

LAST SEMESTER'S ALICE: an agony in eight fits was no mere adaptation of Alice's *Adventures in Wonderland*. This "improvisationally created" meta-play did not limit itself to sarcastic commentary on the human condition. Each chilling, clever, and cruelly amusing spasm mimicked the human aspect under dissection: uneasy submission, confident manipulation, overwhelming bewilderment, cold analysis, and frenetic struggle. Lewis Carroll's continual fascination with wonder, the evoking of intrigue via the obscured and unknown, inspired the performance. The entropic motion from the comfortable and understood to the lack of "order" and "sense" we constantly experience was intricately spun into each facet of this production. Further, this mesmerizingly articulate "agony" rhythmically alternated from a fluid, squid-inked viewpoint to a stark, precise captivation.

Alice, conceived by Julie O'Brien and supported by writers Seth Gillam, David Homan, and Zach Vreeland, was an energizing and enhancing end to the academic threshing of last term. The presentation orbited around time crunching and focus shifting, both processes which are particularly elevated during finals' week. Each "fit," or episode, opened and impacted the audience's various channels of perception.

Senior Devon Ludlow, entirely clad in white, appeared, grabbed a few suitcases, and hurried by the audience, who were still chatting and claiming seats. The White Rabbit beckoned the audience into the center of the stage space. A landing surrounded us, rising into a staircase with three exits on one side and a steeply inclined platform over the door through which we entered. In the top corner of the room two green lights accompanied the sound machine of Loren Steele, whose score punctuated the performance. Loren manipulated the vibrations of Klineaware scraping together, of a plastic-wrap fire crackling, and a myriad of assorted sound effects ranging from eerie to hectic. Five Alices waited for us to settle, as dead-brown leaves fell from above on the still line of mannequined actors. The first agony, *Bone White and Dark as Mud* begins...

The White Rabbit sweeps away the leaves with a broom, paying attention to amusing the blue-clad heap of people more than janitorial efficiency. Devon distributes a stack of political party hats, weaving out of our view temporarily. The quintet of Alices surround the smallest of their own and recite her life's future, her children, and her addictions. Leading the dissection is a dry auctioneer, played by Evan Briggs, who emphasizes Alice's many short-comings and coughs when the subject of sex arises, for the sake of self-censorship. The ensemble gathers under her large skirt as she collapses into a pool of tears. Anne Gridley's monologue progresses from the quiet, if not sweetly pleading, submissiveness of "Eat me, drink me, please, sir" to a hostile accusation of entrapment and a sarcastic recanting of her previous proclamation.

G.J. Echternkamp twitchingly portrays Bill the Lizard being interrogated by two cards. Meanwhile, Caitlin McDonough-Thayer is shrouded in a thin, light-blue material and lifted to the platform above the door, causing one of several audience revolutions. After shyly addressing us, ("You're probably wondering about the cocoon thing, huh?"), Caitlin decries the horrors of interior living, decorated or otherwise. Someday she'll be a valid "homeowner," she asserts while struggling with her wrapping. Futilely thrashing against the wall, the White Rabbit briefly appears from behind and leaves through a trap door.

The entrapping experience transforms her into another Alice, played by an exorbitant Kara Dawn Hendrick. Alice goes to in the next fit, *Advice from a Caterpillar*, in which Alice offers some advice on the web of pretending and believing that comprises social celebration. "You'll get used to it, say it a few times and you'll see the disconnection," she says, ending with the advice "Try the door!"

The next episode, *Leave it to Cleaver*, presents a bleak depiction of humanhood through its mock-stability. Alice sprawls in her room, surrounded by a scattered assembly of unnerving nuclear relatives: A mother and little sister jiggling a pot in

hand, a little brother cheerfully swinging a baseball bat from side to side, and the frantic father downing coffee from his mug. Unresponsive to one another, their behavior portrays a stereotyped and disturbing familial situation-comedy.

The dialogue ensues: "Turn that frown upside down!" sister says as dad warns against burnt oatmeal. Brother shares his excitement for Algebra Day as sister complains, "I hate math, it's so hard." Targeting our various pseudo-comforts and role-playing, the "characters" often try to reassure each other. Alice flees, knowing they were never assured to begin with, only promised a Low-fat, High-octane, semi-secured existence. "You must've got knocked up!" they conclude from her absence.

She falls and from between her legs pops Mandy Caughey. The play segues into *Navigating Madness*. Mandy escapes through a taxi driven by Devon's Hare, who calmly ignores her directions. She is dropped off, descends into anonymity, and is left alone to fearfully dance/fall along. She encounters Cheshire Cat, a 6-person Sarkany Dragon with a flaming orange coat. Although intimidated, Alice has advanced in her isolated rebellion and imitates the beast in a dualistic choreography of stomping and posing.

A Mad Tea Party finds Alice on the job search. The hastily assembled enjambment of cups, saucers, accountant bureaus and chairs are the set up into which Alice, Corday Rice strides, looking for employment. A chauvinistic threesome first ask her to fetch cream from the fridge for their coffee, requiring her to bend over in front of their leers. She struggles to maintain a calm debonair as they alternately patronize and ignore her. They request spontaneous performance and degrade quickly into a camp-fire raucous with innuendoes of sexual harassment. The fit ends in an exchange of brutal jokes about women.

Our very slick White Rabbit, promoted by Evan's enthusiastic announcer "Bob" introduces the final fit, *In the Red Realm* Alice finds her Groove. He presents his circus, assuming not only the role of corporate puppeteer, but also that of the ringmaster of this chaotic bazaar of tricksters. Caitlin's Queen of Hearts answers Alice as they wander amongst each of the contortionists and jugglers, the lighting suspiciously including the center of the room with its host of observers. She drops a few contemporary digs ("Is it... avant garde?") and suspects that the scene may be "played out." Alice reminds herself to stay "as far away as possible" and asks why these grotesque thespians toil. The butterfly Queen raises her polished arms and shrieks "They are performing... for themselves!" The ensemble sneezes and flimsily collapses, leaving none

other than our sly neural-technician, the White Rabbit, who removes his hat and slowly ascends the stairs softly lamenting "What a long sleep you've had, Alice."

Each of the two performances I attended rose into a standing ovation, compelled and connected by the direct sub/ultra conscious tap we had each received. A thorough illustration of identity degradation and a personal yet detached glimpse of our terrifyingly standardized daily doings. Unsuccumbing to the abyss, Alice activated a mobile, responsive element to the distinctively human process of wondering, wandering and generating sense. Having toyed with the human mind with the same prowess that it played with metaphor, juxtaposition and attentive tension, the production's numerous focus shifts and sense of timelessness through a fluctuating evolution of consciousness was made directly relevant and provided ephemeral escape from what we often refer to as our lives.

A thorough illustration of identity degradation and a personal yet detached glimpse of our terrifyingly standardized daily doings.

# Observer Redesigns, Wants New Writers

## To the Community:

Embarking on the semester, the *Observer* editors have initiated a fresh design and writing program. Visually, we seek a more fluid, readable presentation, while our writing and editing process ardently strives for a suitable balance of breadth and depth, delivered in diverse, yet concise styles. We are currently accepting applications from talented writers and designers. A introductory meeting will be held this Thursday at 7 p.m. in the *Observer* Office located in the Tewksbury basement (Rm. 84).

We also invite all members of the community to submit relevant work and information; direct all such to P.O. Box 609. Please note the following restrictions pertaining to submissions.

Formatting: All *Observer* stories MUST BE submitted in the following way. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in a severe spanking.

1. Submit all stories in a Macintosh compatible format (save PC files as .txt files) on a disk labeled your name and the name of the file (no other files on the

disk, *por favor*). Text must be spell-checked and double spaced. Include one print-out (hard copy) with disk.

2. All stories must begin with the following tag-line

Name: Joe Stanco

Section: News

Story: Computer center improvements

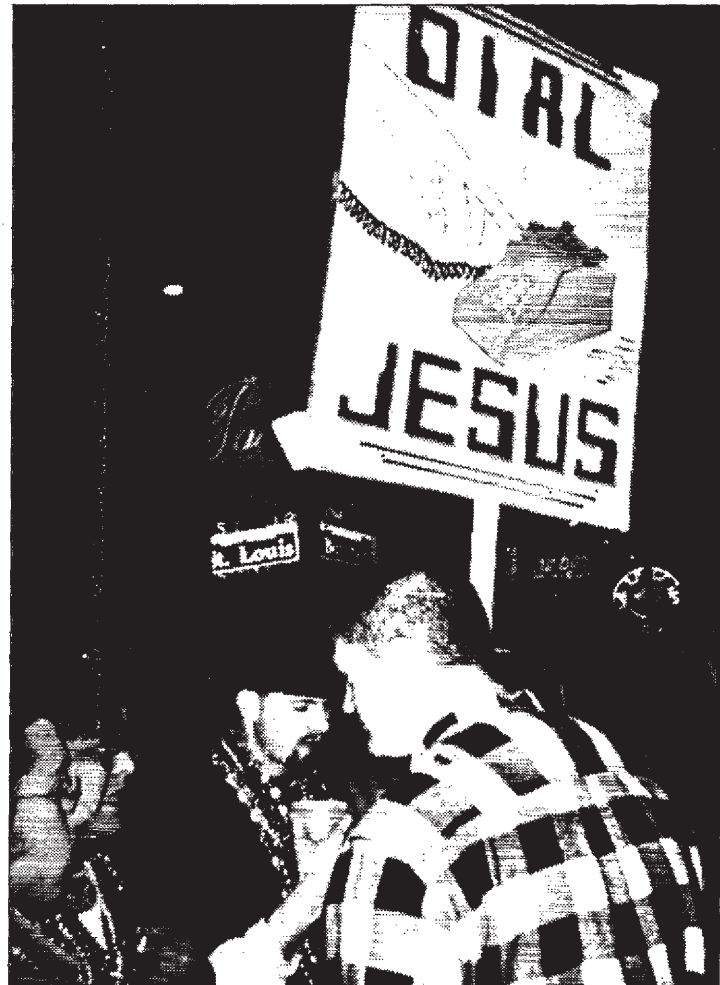
Suggested Headline: Henderson Wires Campus

Suggested Subheadline: Backed by private supporters, computer center initiates email revolution

Due Date: 3/14/99

## PHOTOS OF THE MONTH

# New Orleans, Land of Dreams



## Letters

To the Community,

Over the past four weeks our campus has had the privilege of hosting Dr. Henry Louis Gates Jr., Bobby Seale, David Hilliard and Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker. None of these events would have occurred without the determination, diligence, and focus of students, faculty, staff and community members. I want to draw special attention to the students. These events were made possible by students that decided to move from talk to action and dedicated hours ironing out details and securing support to bring these men to our campus. Without their efforts, those that participated in these events would not have had the opportunity to explore issues of African American history, social movements for Black justice or the evolution of African American music with these great minds. The sheer numbers of people that these events drew, from within Bard and from outside, indicate a thirst for continuing these types of events and broadening our intellectual discourse to areas of political action, grass roots organization, "re/righting history," and tolerating opposing viewpoints.

Over the past few days, several people have asked me how I think students felt about these events. I have no idea—only time will tell the true impact of these events. However, I do know that some students were disappointed that they could not directly hear or see at the events. I know that other students were frustrated, disgusted, and downright disappointed with what was said or left unsaid. Yet, I also know that some students were encouraged and motivated by what they heard or saw. I know that some students challenged what was said and used their frustration to seek more information. All in all, I hope the students, faculty, staff and local community that experienced one or more of these events received something of value, because there are more to come.

Signed,  
Nicole Woods  
Assistant Dean of Students  
Director of Multicultural Affairs.

### Bard Observer Editorial Policy

*The Bard Observer* is Bard's only student-run newspaper. A forum for the exchange of ideas and information, the paper is distributed free-of-charge on campus. Eight issues are planned for the academic year; distribution generally takes place Mondays on a monthly basis. Everyone is welcome to submit.

The deadline for all submissions, be they stories, cartoons, photographs, statistics, or advertising, is 5 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to publication. Late submissions (with the exception of late breaking news and sports articles) will not be accepted.

Submit all writings on a labeled disk with files saved in a Macintosh-compatible format (no PC files). Include a double-spaced hardcopy (printout) labeled with author's name, suggested headline and subheadline when relevant, and a short description of the work.

Letters to the Editor are welcome. We strongly discourage anonymous submissions. If anonymity is absolutely necessary, the writer must reveal her or his identity to the Editor.

*The Bard Observer* reserves the right to edit letters for spelling, grammar, length, and coherency.

Send submissions via Campus Mail to P.O. Box 850.

The Editors can be contacted at [observer@bard.edu](mailto:observer@bard.edu); 758-7131; and P.O. Box 609, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504.

### BLATHERINGS OF AN IDIOT

## Birthday Blubberings

By HOWARD MEGDAL

PEOPLE DON'T CARE about your birthday. I mean, a holiday like Thanksgiving is celebrated by just about everyone. Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza (I'm sure I'm missing some late December holidays and I'm sure they're chock full of importance—but just not to me) are celebrated by large groups of people. Even smaller holidays have groups to cherish them, like Halloween (children), Valentine's Day (insecure lovers) and July 4th (militia members).

But when it comes to real narcissism you'd be hard pressed to beat a birthday celebration; even your friends could care less! So I'm not really expecting anything from my birthday party. My friends will probably send me a "wacky" or "blatantly not funny" Hallmark card. In light of Bard's new fire policy, my girlfriend can't even make me a candlelit dinner! About the best she can do is dim the lights, snuggle close and burn incense suggestively. And I gave up on my parents to make my birthday special since my request for Transformers at age five was replaced with, and I kid you not, GOBOTS! I wanted Optimus Prime but instead I got a yellow Volkswagen Beetle with legs. I'll be in therapy for years over this.

At least my best friend could care less anyway. See, he's been complaining about his rash. And I know, while he's trying to make a big deal today about my becoming a man, or at least, a nineteen year old boy, he would, in all honesty, sell me into slavery for a really good ointment.

But I wouldn't want to have a national holiday. After all, that seems to work against reserving someone's memory. I mean let's face it, when one used to think of Martin Luther King Jr., one would think of bravery, progressive thinking and political activism. Now mention Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to any twelve year old and ask him to interpret it, and he'll say, in a reverent voice, "I went skiing."

What do I really want? I want to be mentioned in the "born on this day" section at the end of the horoscope in the newspaper. You know, the grouping which disproves Astrology once and for all. It's always the most random grouping. "Born on this day: Richard Nixon, Prince, and Secretariat," or "Florence Nightingale, Leopold and Loeb, and Roy Orbison." But that may not happen. So I'm doing it here. This is how I want it to appear.

Born on this day, February 17: Woody Allen, Casanova, Winston Churchill, and Howard Megdal. A newspaper column with this entry would make me happy. Of course, since it's my birthday, you can be reasonably sure I won't get it.

## The Bard Observer Editorial Staff 1998-99

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# Questions Raised by Gates's Presentation

By YATES MCKEE

"THEY CANNOT REPRESENT THEMSELVES, they must be represented." In many ways, these famous lines from Marx's Eighteenth Brumaire epitomize what we commonly refer to today as the "politics of representation." The vanguardist implications of these words now force us to examine the forms of inequality and domination which can emerge within supposedly emancipatory projects and to ask "who speaks thus?" and "for whom?"

Henry Louis Gates, Jr. himself deployed this quote from Marx in the introduction to his now canonical collection *Race, Writing and Difference* as a metonym for the violence and "indignity of speaking for others." With this in mind, how should the recent discussion between Henry Gates and Leon Botstein of the *Encarta Africana* be interpreted? Some exceptionally important and difficult issues are raised by this project, such as the contradictory position of the public intellectual in an increasingly privatized era of transnational capitalism and the complex relation between knowledge, power and identity. Obviously these issues will have no ultimate resolution but they do demand serious reflection and dialogue. My remarks are intended to contribute to such a discussion. They are not intended to attack, insult or silence. However, I realize that for some this distinction may not prove a viable one.

I encountered Gates's presentation with a fundamental ambivalence. No one will doubt the truth of the assertion that the hegemonic forms of historical knowledge in our society are deeply eurocentric. From school textbooks to public museums and libraries to university syllabi, the experiences, memories and histories of those who are other than the normative position of the white bourgeois male have been silenced and marginalized from official canons of historical and cultural value. Despite the accomplishments of the critical multiculturalist project and the "inclusionary" tokenism of liberals and conservatives, this fundamental exclusion remains. There is a serious void. This much is indubitable. However, the forms of defining, negotiating and "filling in" such a space are highly contested. It is into this immensely complex discussion that Gates seeks to intervene with all of his moral and intellectual power. Some have appropriated the "postmodern" tools which he helped to forge and problematize in the 80s to suggest that maybe it is the very epistemological foundations of western representation itself (transcendental subjectivity, and its correlate "scientific objectivity," "human nature," and "world history"), that, by their very nature, produce and necessitate forms of exclusion and subordination. The encyclopedia embodies this Enlightenment project par excellence, satisfying the desire of "Man" to bring all of reality under its voyeuristic and totalizing gaze. It is no coincidence that this mastery of the world through its reduction to a manageable grid of clear and distinct elements is the logic of both the commodity form and Western imperialism. How should those who are critical of contemporary social relations and the representational systems which legitimize and organize them come to terms with a supremely ideological form such as the encyclopedia? Many have suggested a rethinking of representation itself in terms of multivocality, antagonism, incompleteness and self-criticality; in the words of Lyotard "a war on totality." Gates, who ten years ago we might have associated with such an anti-encyclopedic position, has responded instead with a counter-encyclopedia of "Black Experience."

This raises the question of whether the form of the encyclopedia necessarily retains its sinister humanist implications even as it is deployed in divergent socio-historical contexts by differently situated actors. Is it inherently "ideological"? Indeed, might it also be harnessed for critical and emancipatory projects and enable new forms of agency and identity to emerge? The latter suggestion is tempting, but as Gramsci admonished us, optimism of the will must always be tempered by pessimism of the intellect.

On one level, the value and importance of Gates's intervention in official culture is beyond doubt. His attempt to ennoble and restore dignity to suppressed voices and experiences and to bring these into visibility in schools, homes, libraries and public discourse generally must be lauded. Nevertheless, the problem remains that the vehicle for this goal participates in the style of knowledge of the very culture which marginalized black voices in the first place. In this regard, the project is less a rupture with western representation systems, which are predicated on exclusion,

and more an attempt at inclusion within them. Is "inclusion" necessarily a flawed goal? I do not think so, although the mechanisms by which this is pursued must remain subject to constant critical scrutiny and must never be allowed to hypostasize or arrive at "closure." A question to keep in mind is whether *Encarta Africana*, despite its obvious benefits, will ultimately entail some of the same power relations as the hegemonic culture to which it has such an ambiguous relation of simultaneous opposition and complicity.

When the problem of "metanarrativity" was presented to him, Gates did enter into an obligatory exchange with Botstein about the inevitable vicissitudes of "editing," "inclusion" and "exclusion." Although these processes are obviously of very high import, he contained them in a discourse of dubious critical rigor about the "obvious impossibility of including everything," neglecting to move beyond this into a more complex discussion of the controversial assumptions at the center of the Encyclopedia. This was an interesting rhetorical strategy in which by distancing himself from the obvious futility of "absolute knowledge" or "perfect correspondence," he depicts the will to totalize as absurd and utterly other than his own seemingly innocuous project, thereby repressing his own totalizing impulse. Although he claimed that "multiple ideological perspectives were included," he conceded that "Farrakhan didn't get a very good entry." One wonders how other complex and unsettling figures in contemporary black politics were managed; for example: Angela Davis, Mumia Abu-Jabal or even Tupac Shakur. What becomes of those who deviate from Gates' normative criteria for "positive black images"? In a startling disavowal of his enormous advantage in terms of both economic and symbolic capital, Gates joked, "If you don't like it, well then make your own goddamn encyclopedia!"

When asked how he would negotiate the inevitable criticisms which would emerge of a project of such ambition and scope, Gates responded, unperturbed: "Well, maybe meta-narratives aren't all that bad." On one level such a gesture can be interpreted as something of

Who is he to speak for "Africa,"  
"Our History," "Our Tradition"?  
Who is the "We"?!  
What are these categories meant to refer to and what

forms of heterogeneity, contestation and inequality do they suppress and contain in the name of an essential unity? Is it possible that he has created an African-americocentric narrative which masquerades under a universalistic guise? And how is the specter of DuBois mobilized as a form of intellectual pedigree and legitimation? Very crudely said: Whatever happened to the "politics of representation" he and so many others worked for so long to scrutinize and interrogate in Western discursive practices? What is the ideological mechanism which enables his own position as a middle-class African-American literature professor to dissolve into a kind of primal identification with all people of "African" descent regardless of historical, cultural, religious, and socio-economic difference? (In an instructive instance, Gates remarked jokingly in reference to a quasi-ethnographic image of some North African travelers, "that's me on the camel.") Are the page-long reductions of entire nations and exoticizing, objectifying images of African "natives" exempt from critique? Does he imagine himself to have transcended the complex dialectic of truth and power? Of course he does not, although it seemed quite evident to me in his presentation that he wants to be interpreted as having accomplished just that. Indeed, Gates himself described the Encyclopedia as "really very humanistic." Symptomatic of this

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humanism was his simultaneous disavowal and "embrace" of difference. On the one hand, the trajectory of "black experience" is mapped out for a universal black subject to identify with. (Hence his frequent use of the pronoun "we," and the possessive "our".) On the other, Gates was emphatic about the fact that there are "35 million black people in the U.S. and 35 million ways to be black." My initial reaction to this was to silently denounce it as so much "retrograde bourgeois individualism." Yet before resorting to such belligerent language, perhaps it is wise to consider the historical refusal of "individuality" to people of color in the binary schemes structuring western identity: "We" are a group of infinitely unique and autonomous beings united by precisely the universality of this condition. "They" are an inchoate mass of unselfconscious bodies, enslaved to tradition and "herd mentality." Gates, in his justifiably passionate interrogation of these racist terms, ultimately overemphasizes the possibility for anyone to be "unique," at the expense of an acknowledgment of the concrete, historical axes of difference and inequality which constitute multiple forms of black subjectivity. Rather than questioning both racist assumptions and the bourgeois mythology of the autonomous subject, he simply refuses the latter and embraces the former. He includes African-Americans in the discourse of the West. Again, an illustration of Gates' ambiguous, contradictory relation to what Audre Lorde called "the masters tools." Even with this complexity in mind, I still remain troubled by Gates' remark, especially when considered in the context of his enthusiasm for capitalism and the entrepreneurial spirit.

Perhaps Gayatri Spivak's term "strategic essentialism" is appropriate to invoke here. Gates is obviously well aware of the problematic status of the African essence he conjures up in the narrative of the Encyclopedia. However, the strategic political function that such an imagined unity can serve in the public sphere is evidently assumed to outweigh the costs of a more uncertain and self-critical project. As I have already suggested, it should be recognized that for many communities of reception the Encyclopedia may prove empowering and valuable. The question remains on whose terms such empowerment will occur. Might the gesture of empowerment for some simultaneously constitute a form of disempowerment for others? In any event, I can't imagine that all of those for whom the Encyclopedia claims to speak will receive his words passively or uncritically. Although I am at odds with many of his philosophical assumptions, I refer to the afrocentric theorist Molefi Kete Asante to illustrate the kind of contention that such a project can possibly provoke and which Gates himself would like to disavow. Indeed, in his presentation Gates assured the audience that he and Dr. Asante were "great friends." Yet according to Asante (quoted in the *New York Times*): "What we have here is a commercial product for the white buyers...It is a project that is flawed, because the people who created it, even though they have strong credentials in white academies, do not understand the African world." The meaning of "Africa" is a much less stable affair than Gates was willing to acknowledge.

The pitfalls of essentialism loomed large at several points in Gates' presentation, such as when he offered a defense of none other than former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and author of "My American Journey," Colin Powell! In whose interest is it to invoke the "proof" for neoconservative assertions about the American dream? (I.e. that everyone does have equal access to upward mobility, even black people, if only they would "get motivated" and break their "cycle of dependency"). Should an agent of the apparatus which helps to maintain American global hegemony and a hero of the dev-

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astating assault on Iraq be lauded as "advancing the race?" Is not the apology for Powell as a "positive image" of a "successful" black man suspicious at best? What are the political consequences of such "strategic" alliances for attempts at constructing a more just society? Has "the left," plural and contested as it may be, lost a fellow in Mr. Gates?

The answer, at least as indicated by his recent performance at Bard, seems to be increasingly in the affirmative. Lending strongly to this impression was, among other things, his reticence about the contradictory demands of public cultural work and the profit motive of private capital. How do the requirements of "marketability" constrain and discipline the images and kinds of questions a "product" can present and explore? This was a question left insufficiently examined. Although it would be

excessively romantic to assume that these spaces could ever be separated absolutely, Gates's conspicuous advocacy of capitalism warrants interrogation. Even those of us who reject old Marxist explanations of power still understand contemporary capitalist relations as one determinant among others in structuring and reproducing domination. Gates' enthusiasm for the "information superhighway" frighteningly resembled the rhetoric of many contemporary neoliberal gurus who

equate free-trade, consumer choice and technological innovation with the telos of human freedom. Although new communication technologies do have radical potential for forging transnational and even postnational forms of solidarity, identity and political mobilization, they by no means guarantee the kind of intersubjective resolution the pundits of the "global village" imagine. Serious questions of accessibility and material resources persist, even in the U.S. As is so frequently overlooked, "globalization" is a highly uneven and in many cases painful process particularly for the peoples of the African Diaspora, coupled as it is with persistent forms of racism. To participate uncritically in its vocabulary, as did Gates, amounts in my opinion to a concession to capitalist messianism. Capital is inescapable, and the mass circulation which Gates desired for the Encyclopedia was only possible through collaboration with a corporation like Microsoft. However this does not warrant a cheerful celebration of the market. It requires sober reflection on the ethic of the interpenetration of what Said calls "speaking the truth to power" and private greed.

Where do we draw the line between intellectual and entrepreneur? It was difficult to discern last week. Ultimately, one might question whether Gates will be more valuable to the struggle against racism and inequality as a center-liberal whose voice will circulate at large in the bourgeois public sphere than as a radical on the academic margins. But maybe these spaces of reception are too narrowly conceived. Indeed is there "a" struggle against racism or "a" project of cultural empowerment? Do these not occur on multiple fronts and in many dimensions? Is there such a thing as "the" American public sphere, or might not heterogeneous publics engage differently with Gates's project?

Obviously it would be ineffective and alienating for Gates to deliver diatribes about "subject-positionality" or "metanarratives" in public. This is not what is demanded of him when he is described as "uncritical." Although it requires a certain degree of linguistic agility and economy (which I admittedly lack) to translate these ideas into manageable objects of discussion, it is not impossible. I feel as if Gates could have accomplished this, but neglected to do so in the interests of preserving the illusion of resolution and harmony. He evidently believes there to be a virtue in such closure. Whether or not this is the case remains to be decided by those in whose name Gates claims to speak.

In closing I should say that for obvious reasons I was hesitant about writing this article. Especially as I am so concerned with the problem of "positionality," it is probably necessary to locate myself as a middle-class white college student. I make this digression because I can already anticipate a very important and challenging critique which could be launched against my remarks, predicated precisely on my own otherness. "Who is he to question what Our Tradition or Our Identity consist of?" "Why, just as those who have been historically silenced begin to speak for themselves, does the very project of speaking itself fall under suspicion by those in privileged positions?" "What power relation does that entail?" These kinds of questions are provocative and difficult to negotiate. They put me in an uncomfortable position. But perhaps sometimes it is good to be made uncomfortable and uncertain about one's own speech.



# BOT-MAN: ABSURD DREAMS OF 1998

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Editor's Note: Bot-Man recently traveled to England, where he and Levine-Boy lingered in contemplation of Marx's carrel in the British Museum. After enjoying fish and chips, they took a bus tour to Stone Henge. As they entered the psychic sphere of the ancient monument, Bot-man drifted off, entering a realm of mystery in which past and present meld. As images of his adventures paraded by, secrets of Bot-man's inner world unfolded, revealing a hidden pattern . . .

