Bardians Craft Event to Support Kosovars

*Group raises $1,000 for refugee center in Vienna*

**BY PETER MAUSELL**

PLAY FOR RELIEF, the sporting event held on May 2 organized to raise funds for Kosovar refugees, was poorly attended but successful nonetheless. All-in-all, the event raised approximately $1,000. The Play For Relief Committee will now use this money to help Kosovar ethnic Albanian refugees in Vienna, Austria.

The event took place at the Stevenson Gym, where, for four hours, Bard and Red Hook High School students played softball and basketball, and then ate pizza donated by Broadway Pizza and Village Pizza. Participants were sponsored with a minimum of $15, and Virgin Sacrifice

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**THE BARD OBSERVER**

May 18, 1999 • Issue 7, Volume 9 • Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, 12594

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**PAC Site: North Campus**

**CRACKS BEGIN TO SHOW FOR THE OLD BARD BACCHANALIAN MENAGE**

by Mary Molina

Derek Jeter, the star of baseball's hot New York Yankees, was not the only celebrity to command attention recently. The Bacchanalian Menage, the annual Bard sporting event, which took place on Friday night, May 1, has also become an event of significant attention. Molina told the Observer that the event was not as successful as expected, and was held at the Rec Center of the campus.

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**Bacchanalian Menage is Back**

**With foam machine, volcano and virgin sacrifice, banned party returns**

**BY KERRY CHANCE**

IN THE DENOUEMENT of the highly anticipated Menage, after the talk of legacy and the hype of return, the student body sighed, and mourned that more went than came. On May 1, an estimated 1,000 partygoers packed into the Old Gym flashing with laser lights, decorated with art installations, and pulsating with techno. Featuring two cages, a papier-mache volcano, a fetish room, and a sex tent, the party, intended to capture the old Bard bacchanalian emphasizing, as primary organizer Mary Molina said, "sexual expression and loosening inhibitions." Midway through, the party was interrupted for the ritualized "Virgin Sacrifice," that was advertised as a pyrotechnics show, but, in actuality combined magic and erotic dance. The event dulled the effects of the actual party. From the start, when Molina secured $2,500 from Big Brother/Big Sister, rumors stirred about the money and the eventual culmination. With the organizers reminding students to clean up, even Molina agreed that the party did not live up to expectations, for students had, as promised, intensely sexual experiences while others enjoyed the dancing and atmosphere. Molina described student's experiences by saying, "they ranged from having sex and having fun, to being laid back and having fun, and taking a drug and having fun." Even the organizers had different conceptions of what the Menage should be for students. White said, "Mary [said], 'I want them to fuck' and I said, 'I want it to be sensual.'" Despite these conflicting perceptions of the party, MacLane echoed Molina's statement and simply said, "Regardless, people had fun." On a similar note, attendee Amy Cara Borenan said, "I had a good time. I'm glad someone decided to get it together and organize one this year...But more than anything else, it was just about the concept of having the Menage." One experience shared by some young women at the party was unwanted groping. Although B.R.A.V.E. refused to give an official statement, citing internal conflict and victim vulnerability, Greg Johnson, who was on duty for B.R.A.V.E. during the event, said, "The Menage acted as a magnifying glass to that the

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Alternative Spring Break: Building in Appalachia

Dr. Angela Ross

The trip was part of a project by students in the Trustee Leader Scholarship program. The goal was to provide Bard students with an alternative spring break where they could offer their services to those less fortunate while learning about a different community and culture. The nine students that attended the trip this year worked together in groups to raise funds and to plan the trip.

The group wishes to return to Fries next year over spring break. They also hope to get to Mississippi or Louisiana at the end of winter break next year to do similar work. If you have any questions or want information on how you can attend future trips, please call Rick Eichler (extension 4377, email ge488@bard.edu) or myself (extension 4663, email ar735@bard.edu).
Event Raises Funds for Kosovars

but most raised more. Ian Schaff, a participant from Red Hook High, single-hand-
edly raised $300.

Pay For Relief was the brainchild of Bard student Rachel Mahoney. In addition to
Mahoney, the event, Chaplain Rev. Bruce Chilton, Kerry Chance, Peter Malcolm and Duffi Connolly organized the event. “I was watching ‘20/20’ one night,” said Mahoney, “and it was really hard to watch all the images of war-torn Kosovar. I was really upset. I felt so helpless and I knew that I wanted to do some-
ting. I mean I had to do something.”

Chilton, who facilitated the event, encourages Bard students to take political ac-
tion on behalf of others. He said, “Bard College has a tradition of progressive
rhetoric where it concerns our own rights and privileges,” said Chilton, “but our rec-
ord of action on behalf of social justice has been spotty at best. The way that
people have reacted to the crisis in Kosovo gives me hope.”

If you were not able to support this event and are interested in donating, the
Bard Chaplaincy is still collecting donations. Please write checks to the Bard
Chaplaincy Fund, and send them through Campus Mail to Bruce Chilton. All
the money will be sent to the Kosovo Refugie Center in Vienna, Austria.

The Vienna Kosovo Refugee Center shelters a small community of mostly
children and teenagers, many of whom have been separated from their families.
Beverly Davis, mother of Bard student Aimi Copeland, works at the Center.
Kerry Chance, a member of the Pay for Relief committee, contacted Davis two
weeks ago regarding the relief project. Since then, Davis has sent emails detail-
ing the shelter’s needs. According to Davis, the Refugee Center now needs a low
cost computer system. The refugees have sufficient food and necessities, but
they have nothing to do with their time, and no way of keeping up with events
at home. They speak only Albanian and English, and although they are learn-
ing German, they could certainly benefit from contact with the outside world
on the Internet.

The Pay For Relief committee plans to buy a computer for the Center. It will
combine funds with those donated by Lara Chance, a student at the Maryland
Institute of Creative Arts, who raised $650 selling flowers. Once the Center has
a computer, it will be possible to contact the refugees via the Internet. Davis plans
to set up a penpal program for the refugees. Anyone interested in having a Kosovar
penpal should email Kerry Chance at kcb88@hollister.com. Chance can give you
the mailing address for the Refugee Center, and Davis’ contact information.

Due to the recent developments in Kosovo, it appears that the refugees may be
able to go back home within a year. The computer that Bard sends will still be
put to good use. “When and if the refugees go home,” wrote Davis in an email to
Chance, “then we will donate the computers to the Vienna Orphanage Homes
(here are several) who need this sort of thing.”

Until then, the refugees can use as much as the Bard community can donate.
The Refugee Center especially welcomes donations of American clothing.
The Kosovar youths covet American gear, which, according to Davis, the Center “does
out on special occasions.” If you can make a donation of clothes to Kosovar, please
contact Bruce Chilton.

There are now an estimated 750,000 ethnic-Albanian refugees in the border
countries of Kosovo. Sheltering these people is causing major problems for the bor-
der states. Macedonia, for example, faces a potential political or economic break-
down, due to the number of displaced Kosovars seeking refuge there. In short
these, refugees need food and medical aid. In the long term, perhaps they will
be able to return home, but resuming and rebuilding will both take a considerable
amount of money.

Chilton wants the Pay for Relief Committee to become the first phase of an
ongoing project at Bard. With a long-term international aid program, he said, “we
might take our place within a network of social justice, so that what we do might
Correspond better to the progressive ideologies that we tend to embrace.” Next fall,
the existing Pay for Relief committee will continue to organize fundraisers to
respond to the emergency in Yugoslavia. After that, the committee will become
a permanent organization at Bard that will respond to crises all over the world.
Mahoney said, “I’m really excited for next year when I hope we do a lot more.”

Menage Returns to Bard

people causing problems at the party are also causing problems out-
side the party. The event set up problem situations for women.”

The number of the partygoers and the amount of consensual sex-
ual activity taking place presented a challenge for B.R.A.V.E. mem-
bers, security, and even students whose friends were engaged in ques-
tioned behavior, said Natasha Brooks-Spurduti. “It was really hard
to assess where the line [was] being drawn, and when [my friend]
was in control or not... It was a dangerous situation.” To this,
organizers respond that the problems arose from non-Bard stu-
dents attending the party. Several of organizers developed ideas on how
to prevent sexual harassment during the next Menage, possibly by
limiting the party to Bard students. Because, as Molina emphasized,
“Pretty much everyone at Bard knows that ‘naked girls’ does not
mean touch.” Conflicting definitions of sexuality and different
expressions of that sexuality created a cultural clash between schools
such as Sarah Lawrence, Vassar, and Smith, who were officially invit-
ed to the Menage, and schools such as West Point and U Mass who
were not invited. Johnson noted, however, that “It’s a lie to think that
there are not people at Bard sexually assaulting women. If it didn’t
happen here we wouldn’t have B.R.A.V.E.” For the future,
Student Activities Director Allen Jossey offered this advice, “If I’m
going to a party with a provocative, sexual theme, what I need to do
is keep alert. If not, that’s what Security and B.R.A.V.E. are there for.
People need to take responsibility for themselves.

Few other problems occurred at the event. Administrators and
security agreed that even for a typical Bard weekend there were few
injuries. Jossey, who confirmed that one student was taken to the
hospital, said, “People are taken to the hospital numerous times per
week, so compared to any given weekend it was pretty good.”

The organizers stressed that many safety precautions were taken to pre-
vent any drug or alcohol related injuries, such as distributing mirror
and providing a shuttle service. The Menage’s abrupt suspension
four years ago came when a drunk student totaled his car and suf-
ferecd injuries resulting in a month long coma.

In the end, $2,100 was brought in, $1,500 of which organizers are
donating to Beyond the Horizon, a summer program for under-
privileged children that received no funding at the budget forum.
The remaining profits will pay for unanticipated expenses, and will
be given to Big Brother/Big Sister. A representative of the national
organization said of the Menage, “I’m sure that nothing Big
Brother/Big Sister would have anything to do with and the national
organization is certainly not going to comment on it.” He did spec-
fify that, “there aren’t really any restrictions placed on local fund rais-
ing as long as the events are in good taste.” Dean of Students
Jonathan Becker said of the organization sponsoring the Menage,
“My personal feeling is that the purpose of the party is incompre-
sensible with the goals of Big Brother/Big Sister.”

The original $2,500 Menage organizers received from the Bard
emergency fund was mostly spent on the lighting system which cost
over $1,000, the professionally made ads costing over $700, several
hundred more for the installations, and likewise for weather balloons
and food. Brooks-Spurduti said, “I was outraged by how much
money they got.”

Though the newly restored tradition of the Menage remains on
shaky ground, organizers and students hope it is one that will con-
tinue. Chelsea Goerdier said, “It was good they had the Menage again.
It was nice to see the self-same community come together like that.”
NYC Gardens Saved
Activists take charge as City encroaches on the green

When Mayor Giulani announced he was planning to sell 112 of New York City's community gardens to private land developers, the response by the public was one of outcry and resistance. Ten years ago, the city allowed citizen groups to transform the vacant lots into green oases. The gardens that provided local food to the homeless and green space in a cement city were in jeopardy, so that Giulani could increase his tax rolls and revenue.

Due to the massive outcry of public disapproval, it appears today as if the gardens have been saved. Sixty-three of the gardens will be sold to the Trust for Public Lands at the price of $3 million. The remaining 51 will be purchased by the New York Restoration Project, run by actress Bette Midler, for $1.2 million. Although these prices are below the market price for which Giuliani was determined to sell them, citizen and various coalition members have demanded that he compromise his original agenda. After numerous demonstrations, lawsuits, small protests, letters writing campaigns, and acts of civil disobedience, the issue has become such a hot topic and so well-covered in the mainstream press, that Giuliani and his supporters cannot rid the city of its gardens as easily as they had originally hoped. As the New York Times reported Wednesday, May 12, "One week ago a protest at City Hall that led to the arrests of 50 people, some bearing banners, another week found a man, dressed like a sunflower, screaming, "The gardens must be saved!' from his porch in a ginestetree in City Hall Park." On May 5, another 62 citizens were arrested, including five Bard-related activists, in another act of civil disobedience, sitting in the street, as a swarm of garden supporters cheered, "Justice, Justice, Save Gardens! The some bearing signs that threatened to use Giuliani as fertilizer if he did not spare the gardens. Three activists stuck cigarettes themselves to a city office using Kentucky blue tape Monday, May 10, demanding that the gardens be saved. Police had to use electric saws to cut the locks before they could be arrested (Berty 1999). These demonstrations, and many others, have been combined with lawsuits filed by the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance, More Garda, the Puerto Rico Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the Trust for Public Land.

The success of these efforts teaches three important lessons. The first is that urban gardens are private spaces, allowing city dwellers access to fresh produce, and are forming a space that is conducive to community organizing, beneficial to the environment, and a source of neighborhood health and pride. As the group More Garda defenders, we indeed do need more gardens to make our cities greener and the lives of citizens more enriching. The second lesson is that if we remain silent, those seeking profits will auction off that which we love and need as a human community. If there had been more grassroots activism of garden-dwelling, the gardens would be no more, plain and simple. This brings us to our third lesson, by far the most empowering.

Public demonstrations and lawsuits have given birth to the community gardens of New York City. These citizens have proven that activism is both a necessary and effective tool in the fight for justice. As the group More Garda observes, the gardens have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. Their flowers have yet another season to bloom. 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Delighting in the Refulgent Spring

Bill Mullen (top left) directs an event he organized for his class on rhetoric and public speaking, April 29. Fifty West Point cadets traveled to Bard to give and hear Battlefield eulogies and to conduct a debate with Bard students regarding public speaking. Graham Stroh (above right) and Shanti Manukeller organized a hill party for seniors on registration day, last Wednesday. Beer and steaks were plentiful as the seniors gloated in the fact that they were finally freed from Bard’s punishing bureaucratic machine. On the left, Director of Admissions, Mary Backlund, captured before undertaking a gravity-defying keg stand. Bottom left, Senior Brian Duran shows off a robot he built as part of his senior project.
TRANSLATIONS are such impossible things. Human languages, being the fickle and illogical creatures they are, preclude any attempt to duplicate a text from one language completely and wholly into another. It's not that the act of translation is an impossible thing, as anyone with a little knowledge of a foreign language and a dictionary can produce at least a meagre approximation of most original texts. However, any hope of retaining any more than a shadow of the phrasing, rhythm and character of the original is almost impossible, and must be undertaken by any aspiring translator. This is also not to say that there do not exist translations of exceptional quality that are faithful to the original text and worth reading. Speaking as a reader of English, I would much rather read a translation than the original if the translator has done justice to the work in question.

It can be said that what is most impossible about translations is our need for them. Realize that many of the greatest works of literature would go unread without them, we have understood and come to terms with this demand for English language editions in our literary world, and consequently there now exist a myriad of English translations of literature from just about every known human tongue.

But if we leave the literary world aside for the moment and examine the world of music, specifically that of opera, we find a plethora of workable English translations of even some of the best loved European operas. If we are to assume that the economics of opera function similarly to those of literature, this lack begs the question "Where is the demand?" I suppose that the first reaction to this question would be "Why should there be a demand?" After all, didn't the composer blend the words, creating and molding in such a way that, if he knew his craft well, all three of these qualities would support and complement one another to a unique and irreproachable way? Yes, it is true. Everyone who even attempts to write an opera must have as keen an ear for the rhythm and melody of the language as he has for writing as they do for music. But since the composer sets not only the sound but also the meaning of each word, what good will it do to perform an opera in the original language if nobody in the audience can even understand the words being sung? If anything, more of the opera is lost in this fashion than if it were given in translation. If the composer deemed the sound of the voice to be more important than the words being sung, why, then, should he limit himself to real words or real language? Composers like Philip Glass and Meredith Monk, deciding that words were secondary elements in their individual operatic visions, did not limit themselves merely to words but added also phonetics and sound syllables, as well as non-linguistic sounds of their own creation. Only the visual words and phrases, if any, are used in these operas. When they are, their contextual signification in the opera is therefore nullified.

Since the interest in words as necessary a part of the opera as the music, the question of English-language versions of opera surfaces once again. The next objection against such translations comes from purists who argue that the original language of a libretto, aside from determining the music to which it is set, actually determines and shapes the structure of the opera itself. Roger Samsom, American composer and essayist, exactly observed that some of the traditional opera directors that exist now developed in order to fit the language of the text with greater felicity. As examples he mentions the secco recitatives, which so comfortably fits the Italian language, or the German Singspiel, which, with its spoken passages, better suits his operas, to the priests of Sarastro, to the three ladies, to the priests of Sarastro, to a Singspiel opera, by Marka Vural, all fit the spirit of the music, not the words, beautifully. There were some aspects of the direction I didn't understand, like the portrayal of the three singing spirits who advise Tamino and Papageno on their journey. Just why these chaste, angelic spirits, who in many productions are played by young boys, were portrayed as three feathered, clurking, nymphomaniacal girls is beyond me. However, I have long since learned not to question the finer points of the Bard theater department.

It may be that one of the reasons why English-language opera seems so lacking to many audiences is the lack of a healthy, defin­
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The Bard Observer Arts & Entertainment Tuesday, May 18, 1999

A Rant on Opera and "the Magic Flute"

By John Custer

When perhaps more English operas, especially those written by Americans, are taken with greater seriousness by our professional opera companies, the English language opera may actually begin to sound like a natural operatic language.
The Greatest Food Review, Without Question, of All Time

A comprehensive account of restaurants in the vicinity of Planet Bard

BY STEPHANIE SCHEFF

FAR-AWAY, CRAPPIEST DINER

As the sun sets on my Bard career, my project having splintered into non-existence, my dream room consumed by order of Mindy Leeds and the shoebox dark cloud of a whole new life hovering over my head, I reflect on all the great places, and not so great places, that I have reviewed or been reviewed for the Bard Spectator.

Here you will find a sampling of my life's work:

MOST DEPRESSING RESTAURANT:
The Taco Maker. Formerly an Arby's, this fast-food venue represents the farthest reaches of the Puerto Rican-based, monolithic corporate juggernaut Taquería Guadalajara. As it attempts to portray itself as an okay place to eat, it relies on faded paper party products, a dried-up salsa bar, and not so great places, that I have reviewed or been reviewed for the Bard Spectator.

I did the only thing I can think of—give away free food. I miss the breakfast area. Maybe was filled with mystery smoke that perhaps the Taco Technicians, who seemed to be Foster's Coach House: Getting your picture taken while talking on the phone in a home drawn curtain is an experience too great and rare to pass up.

BEST APPETIZERS:

Foster's Coach House: Getting your picture taken while talking on the phone in a home drawn curtain is an experience too great and rare to pass up.

BEST BREAKFAST PLACE:

Another Roadside Attraction: Besides being the only place I know of to name a dish in honor of Bard, this restaurant offers a far-away feeling from its desert view. It offers the Tavon special, which starts the Tavon town, a dense forest of ingredients that make it into a prime example of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

BEST REVIEWER:

Foster's Coach House: Getting your picture taken while talking on the phone in a home drawn curtain is an experience too great and rare to pass up.

BEST APPETIZERS:

China Rose: I love scallop pancakes.

BEST, WORST, STUDIEST, EXPENSIVE, FAR-AWAY, CRAPPIEST DINER

The Eveready Diner: It may have that shiny chrome outside but that just masks the sad truth of the inside.

BEST OR POSSIBLY WORST PLACE I'VE NEVER BEEN

Blondie's Cafe, Bear and Bats, and Crabby Dave's: ALL-AROUND GREATEST PLACE (AND BEST SERVER)

Del's Diner: Whether you sit outside and enjoy the elements or sit inside and get that intercom when your order is ready? Inside, the food is hot and delicious.

The thing is, I fear that these messages may be lost in that carnival of people who want to be offended. I fear that these messages may be lost in that carnival of people who want to be offended.

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FILMREVIEW
PRETTY IN PINK

In or care of the excellent Pretty in Pink, the Golden Age of
Teenage Wanks, Jonathan Bernstein notes that a repeated
sexual trauma in the triumph of the underdog. Molly Ringwald gets her
brush in Sixteen Candles and shows us the obvious riches in
Pretty in Pink. Three popular sultans set their maker in
(last of), Weird Science. Ruby Girl.

No longer, my friends. The roots of this movement are
way back in the Breakfast Club, but I believe it was Cluster
which actually set the standard that popular kids in the late
movies would actually be... portrayed as people. At
the expense, of course, of the outcasts. Sure, this is almost
impossible to prefer to be than to be sneered and despised,
but by suggesting that the popular kids are to be sympathetic
with, the last salute of the reject—the stubborn pride
and moral superiority—is washed away.

I was thinking about this in light of the recent Columbine
High School massacre— or not so much that, but in the way it
was handled by the media, that is, as usual. Badly. The
Trentodocatta, I read in magazines, was contemptuous of
the popular kids, who in turn held such enmity in less regard than
they did for, say, diet. Coming from a high school the size of a
small autonomous state, and being completely unaware of what
happened within my little group of friends, let alone outside it,
I never really care of the dynamics of popularity, or even who
the popular kids were, but I do know that I was never like them.
I never wanted to be like them in that. This fade into
nothingness emerges instead; I wanted to continually be in
their faces: ’Hey, I’m not like you! I think your ideals and every­
things you do is so much shit! Want And Sometimes! When
the news media take about enmity and hopeless students, I get
the creepy feeling that they would include me.

And what is en-swrens for such enmities? Let’s see. We
could have the class bitch all prettied-up in Two Things I Hate
About You. We could go see the class freak all prettied up in
She’s All That. We could watch Ruff (we did, last week) Kick
the crap out of a “kind of spiky, but nice” guy who planned to
semble evil, brain-eating creatures (network TV executives)
at the prom, and see her announce that she’s given up on any
change at a regular high-school moment for herself. Very nice.
Take a little pride in that declaration, there are some of us
who never had that option in the first place. (I’d also like to
address the idea that the prince always returns in time for that
ones special dance, I really, there is no prince.)

What is popularity? In the older days (the 80s), Bernstein
writes, ’’War movies had Hibs. Spy movies had Connies. . .
. . .’. This teen movies had friends. Hip, cool, powerful friends. I.e.,
perfectly accessorized ensembles of tools who decided with the
arch of an eyebrow or the cast of a scarlet by who would be
allowed to continue breathing the precious air of the inner cir­
cle and who would be plunged into social oblivion.” How
the enemies are, variously, grown-ups, jealous exes, and many an
anomalous substitute that fails to be believable en-swrens for the
simple reason that they are not the enemy here. Films changed.
Taylor handle. Here I still a high school studied, I would be
blessed. As it is, I don’t watch teen movies anymore. It’s
en-swrens enough watching the people who try to make
them.—Anna Malanowski

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Avoid The Lines
Stead Today, Before It’s
All Gone!

The Five Most
Common Sights On
Campus

1. Pathetic egocentric music ma­
jors playing guitars on the Kline
Wall (surrounded by even more
pathetic female groupies.)
2. Mark Lambert, training for the
1992 Olympic Wall-climbing.
3. Annoying Kline sleepwalkers
who are always standing exactly
where you would like to be
walking as they clack from
the anes, to the salad bar, to the
soup thermos, until finally
coming to rest permanently on the
posto plate
4. Self-elected campus D.J.’s
perched on their window sill as they
select their personal favorites
for the enjoyment of everyone.
5. Obscure vendors selling
products made by way that
worlds are politically correct Bard
students.
An American Band: A Tribute to the Parachutes

The all-star group of legendary heroes who rocked like no other—they touched not only stardom, but also our hearts

By Scott "Plu' 'n' Flup" Stewart

An American Band: A Tribute to the Parachutes show was one of the lucky ones who saw the live debut, singer/guitarists Shawn Vandor and Ezra Feinburg, assured and assured, with what they couldn't care to. They don't bother taking themselves too seriously. The Parachutes listen and make music with their guts, and it is with our own that we must listen in order to recognize the ingenuity and heart behind it. Their work is rock stripped to its essence, sheer simplistic melody and abandon with a healthy spoonful of sloppiness for good measure. It's meant to make your head bob, your feet shake, your fists rise and your bellies rumble. I was one of the lucky ones who saw the live debut, singer/guitarists Shawn Vandor and Ezra Feinburg, assured and assured, with a healthy spoonful of sloppiness for good measure. It's meant to make your head bob, your feet shake, your fists rise and your bellies rumble.

They don't bother taking themselves too seriously. The Parachutes are the idiot savants of modern rock, and their brilliance lies in their not knowing it.

Once this semester comes to a close and brings the graduation of Bard any time they like. Ezra, and Gaddy, (leaving Matt as something of a free agent) the future of the Parachutes may seem a bit questionable, and rightfully so. Live music on Bard may never be the same. But perhaps I'm being too shortsighted. Did we not just see this past weekend Boba Fett (or, rather, Challenge of the Future) return to Bard, twice in about a year and a half, to show they still gotta little steam left inside to rock with the best of them? And with members of Variety City (or, rather, Daddy) no doubt rocking the night away in some night-time urban locale this summer, thoughts of the imminent decline in live Bard music are probably best put to rest. So let's look forward to what perhaps might be for the Parachutes. Their music is simultaneously primitive, brilliant, gothy, and potgranted. They have an open invitation to play Bard any time they like.

OF ALL THE COUNTLESS COLLEGE BANDS making music on campuses across the country, few are so audacious, so frequently stunning, as Bard's own Parachutes. So it was destined that these four fortunate souls would cross paths musically and spiritually in the Hudson Valley and make some of the most potent and pure rock of our day. Make no mistake— there is nothing innovative or groundbreaking about the Parachutes' music—but therein lies its brilliance. The Parachutes listen and make music with their guts, and they're the idiot savants of modern rock, and their brilliance lies in their not knowing it.

But Ezra's naggingly driving and catchy "My Car," a Parachutes experience can be likened to that of a pleasant car drive. Ezra in the propulsive pop tunesmiths of the group, the figurative gas pedal, if you will; providing a strong impetus with tunes such as the aforementioned gem and the transcendent "Artist Boyfriend," whose development from the excitement building stop-start verses to the cascading chorus is a rollercoaster ride in itself. Meanwhile, Shawn's own off-kilter melodies shine through on his trademark "Hey, Girl," and the riot-inducing, slide guitar frenzy of "Uncle Nudie's Cabin," while elsewhere he realizes a priceless level of introspective rocking with the remarkable "Rarely Ever Do I Think I'm Wrong." If Ezra's songs add the occasional surge of fuel that urge things on down the road, Shawn's songs are all about allowing yourself to coast, look out the window and enjoy the trip.

I would be committing a grave injustice if I failed to recognize another fine craftsmen of music in the group. Though he contributed only one composition to the Parachutes catalog, Gaddy's "Bugged" had enough pent-up energy, spit, and visceral power to make it an instant favorite. It indicates so much potential for the smooth-looking bassist, letting people know he's not just the group's pretty face. Apparently that's enough for Gaddy, even though the song is merely performed and spoken-of even less. What he's left behind is a myth of a song and a would-be songwriting legacy.

An American Band: A Tribute to the Parachutes

The all-star group of legendary heroes who rocked like no other—they touched not only stardom, but also our hearts
Wham, Bam, Thank You Ma'am

Miss Lonelyhearts
Well, I guess this is it. I don't know what you will do without me all summer, though. I have faith that possibly a few relationships will survive without my assistance. I'm a little disappointed in this final piece. I mean, somehow it just doesn't seem to have that Lonelyhearts ummph all we know and love. It seems to me that in the wake of the message there might have been more than a few confused and misunderstood people out there, but I guess I underestimated your ability to recover from a night of debauchery. I suppose you could use the impending doom of finals as an excuse, but quite frankly I would be surprised if this is really impeding your ability to get laid. I mean, think about it, this is the primary, and most enjoyable form of procrastination (besides writing this column). I find that beginning new relationships just before the year ends is the perfect way to avoid doing your work and significantly healthier than sitting in your dorm room and sniffing glue. If you think about it, any kind of sexual relationship can provide hours of not only sex, but fun-filled discussions about the direction of your relationship, and whether you really feel ready for commitment. So give me a break, step away from your computers, go out and find someone as stressed as you are and relieve some of that tension, baby. Otherwise you might actually have to turn that paper in on time.

Dear Miss Lonelyhearts,
I just started seeing this girl & I don't know her very well yet. We've just started fooling around & I'm new to this sort of thing (I'm a virgin). How do I tell her she's ready to go all the way?

Sincerely,
Groping in the Dark

Dear Groping,
There comes a time in every boy's life when a little voice deep down inside begins to rear its ugly head and says: "It is time to become a man." Well, groping, now is your time. You heard it when you saw your first gun, arming your first fastball, now it is time to hit your first hometown. You see, this is a decision only you can make, and until you are ready, it doesn't matter what she is. You are about to embark on a decision that will change your life, you are opening yourself up to a plethora of new and exciting opportuni­ties (i.e. "You can put that in there!"). However, if you have reached down inside yourself and realized that "gully gee, you really are a great person," and "boy are you comfortable with yourself," then go right ahead. In fact, if the only way you feel you can improve your Robert Redford good looks or Griffith smile is with a good lay then what the hell, go for it. If you really want to know if she is ready, why don't you try talking to her? Talking is a very underrated form of communica­tion, and I should know, I spend all day at this damn computer. You can approach the subject delicately, or be blunt and get right to the point, the choice is yours. Personally I do not believe in all the nonsense about the physical sign of readiness. I mean, just because I had a mole on my right shoulder didn't seem to stop a good enough reason to have sex, but somehow the time just seemed right. (Editor's Note: Ha ha!)

I would like to quickly dispel some of the common misconceptions that men have about when a woman is ready to have sex:
1. She comes over, lays down on your bed, condom clenched between her teeth and wiggles.
2. She can breath through her eyelids.
3. No matter what you say to her, she just says: "please, please, please me!"
4. She constantly mentions that de-bunking you and your roommate's beds will "really open up the room."
5. She reminds you that getting a water bed will "really tie the room together."

While many of these situations seem to imply that this girl is ready to sleep with you, you will find that more often than not, she is mostly interested in home-decorating. This is not the girl you want to sleep with, or else you will find yourself owning lace window cur­tains to match your bed ruffle. This is very bad, mature have shown that living around too much lace causes cancer. Be wary of the obvious, because more often than not the knowledgeable one is much more subtle.

Dear Miss Lonelyhearts,
I am a freshman at Bard, and I must say when I came here I never expected to encounter such a blatant endorsement of sex and promiscuity. The recent "menage" party during which I actually wit­nessed people frolicking in the hall appalled me. I find all this talk of sex and promiscuity upbraiding, and I can't even escape it when I attempt to read a fine piece of literature such as the Bard Observer.

Every time I open up contains your desire (and columns accom­panied by a positively offensive picture. How can you write such things? I am disap­pointed by the com­munity for actually supporting your columns by writing you letters. When I open up the school newspaper, I expect to find articles which pertain to the enhancement of our community and the achievement of its members. Instead I encounter debate about whether to spit or swal­low, and instructions on how to locate my "g-spot." I expect you will make fun of my prudishness, but I thought it was time that some of us spoke out.

—The Silent Majority

Dear Silent,
You have made a fatal mistake by addressing this letter to me instead of the editor. You see, now I get to respond and make fun of you. Ha, ha, ha, ha. Unfortunately, I am going to overlook all the ways in which I can belie your letter and I think I might actually take it seri­ously. I refuse to sub­mit to your personal attack with one against you.

You see, I am not telling everyone to go out and have tons of sex all over the place without protection against a wall on the second floor of Ludlow while being watched by Australian sheep herders who are trying to get copies of their transcripts. No way. All I do is hon­estly answer people's questions and provide a little comic relief for those of you who are stuck in last semester's exchange (or sniffing glue). And I also see no reason for you to blame the community for writing me letters. These are your fellow students, and they are just asking me what they want to read about. I mean you don't actually have to read this, and if the picture offends you that much I'm surprised you read it at all. Although apparently you couldn't turn the page fast enough and somehow know the topics of several letters I replied to. That picture is just a ploy to get you to read the damn thing, and apparently it is pretty darn successful.

I respect your values, whatever they may be, but see, you don't get to write this column and so I don't know what she says to you except that maybe you should go out there and join the wild rumpus. Sometimes being positively offended can be fun.
Letters

To the Bard Observer,

I am writing in response to the previous Observer issue’s Dot-man, “On the Ground, Beneath her Feet” in which feminists were portrayed as “unattractive hippey-chippy with hairy legs.” In my opinion, as a male feminist, this was yet another fetishized attempt at humor on the part of the Dot man crew. It sought to not be funny, particularly following the blatantly sexist offensive@bard.edu signs that mocked Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Those signs clearly demonstrated the lack of ease with which the sexual violence that is prevalent in the Bard community and the need for events like Speak Out, Clothesline Project, and Take Back Bard to increase the awareness of such issues. Chris Peppe, who created the original Sexual Assault Awareness Month signs, wrote a letter to the author(s) of the droogspager signs, that the Observer also printed in the last issue, ironically on the flip side of “On the Ground, Beneath her Feet.” Chris wrote to the mystery author(s), “Maybe you thought, ‘Hey, nobody but feminists, man-hating leftist chicks care about this stuff, and they take it so seriously,’ so you felt you could take a few jokes at women’s equality. Maybe you thought that no one is stupid or is an abusively relationship at Bard, and everyone could use a good laugh about it.” Though obviously the flies and the comic took different forms they occurred in a similar message: the women’s movement and the antirape movement is a laughing matter. “On the Ground, Beneath her Feet” suggests that Bard students accept the notion that sexual violence and assault does not occur in the halls and hallways of Bard. Whether this is spathy, ignorance, or an image of Bard that the Observer perpetuates, students should read with discretion and help shake this illusion. Do students really need another relationship to end in murder or another rape in Twill Baya for this illusion and that kind of humor to be destroyed? To mock the effort of people who work for equality and to falsely stereotype them, inevitably shifts the balance and insults every victim of inequality and sexual violence. Since so much more effort needs to be put into increasing the awareness of sexual abuse, it is disharmonizing to see how much is put into mocking those efforts. Humor can be a powerful weapon. Those who wield it should consider at whose expense it comes and how it could be used to help instead of hurt. Those who are reading this might think, I am being overly sensitive, but we all do and say hundreds of things every day that support a sexually violent culture. Most of those things people do not even realize support such a culture. Every time someone fails to let others like this slide by unmonitored, we become one step closer to a world and a community without sexual violence.

Sincerely,

Greg Johnson.

(EDITORS NOTE: The Observer reminds readers of the notion that support for a cause like this does not have to be so strident or so overt, indicating that the prolaborant views are not necessarily consistent with those of the comic and that the Opinion section, as a matter of established form, has and will continue to appear at the end of the publications, on the flip-side of the Back Page.)

Observer Editorial Policy

The Bard Observer is Bard’s only student-run newspaper. It features 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 submissions, for the stories, cartoons, photographs, statistics, or works, 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 artwork on a labeled disk with file named in a Macintosh-compatible format (as PC files). Include a double-spaced heading (printed) 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 his or her identity to the Editor.

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

Send submissions via Campus Mail to PO. Box 664.

The Editors can be contacted at observer-editor@bard.edu; 787-7342 and PO. Box 664, Bard Colleges, Annandale-on-hudson, NY 12504.

Taking a Stand On Sweatshops

Code passes, protecting the rights of workers making products for Bard

By Michael Chameides

DOES BARD COLLEGE Support Sweatshop Labor? Your Bard t-shirt, most likely, was manufactured in a factory with abhorrent conditions, including exposing workers to toxic chemicals, forced labor, employment of young children, mandatory strenuous hours, and a low wage. For example, many companies lock women into factories forcing them to work over 14 hours a day. Factories with these conditions are commonly referred to as sweatshops, and the goods we find at the bookstore and store may be manufactured in such places.

This semester, Bard students joined a national student movement against sweatshops. Over the last year, thousands of students at schools ranging from Duke to the University of Wisconsin have banded together in attempts to stop sweatshop labor. The movement has focused on the fact that most clothing, such as T-shirts and sweatshirts that bear the names of colleges and universities, is made in sweatshops.

Barnes and Noble is responsible for making the T-shirts sold at Bard. They contract the labor out to Champion and a number of other companies. It is difficult to know whether the T-shirts are made in sweatshops. Large corporations do not disclose where their factories are located, and in what labor conditions, unless there is a contractual agreement that forces them to do so. In line with other schools around the country, Bard’s Student Labor Coalition took on the cause and sought to add a code of conduct labor standards into the contracts of Bard’s major vendors.

After meeting with the administration for months, a code has been finalized. In March, a group of students drew up a code and began meeting with Jim Brudwig, vice-president of finances. Brudwig suggested a shorter line of the version of the code along the lines of a one-page value statement. But, students wanted to ensure that the code would have “teeth” and would be strong enough to force corporations to end the use of sweatshops. In the end, Jim Brudwig and Leon Botstein were supportive. Last week, both of them signed an effective code and agreed to enforce it. The code covers Barnes & Noble and Compass, the parent company of Charterstone/ Fil and Service Master. The code draws out a set of clear labor standards including a living wage, health and safety standards, and antidiscrimination clauses. Bard will only enter into contract with companies that adhere to these standards. In order to ensure compliance with the code, Bard may request that contractors disclose certain information about the location of factories, the subcontractors they employ, and specific labor conditions. Furthermore, Bard has the right to send independent monitors into factories. All the information collected will be considered public and is available to Bard students and the community.

Passing the code of conduct has been a major victory. With the code, students and the administration can monitor Bard’s major contractors and guarantee that Bard does not support sweatshop labor. Next year, the Student-Labor Coalition will put the code to use to investigate the clothing in the bookstore, the fruit in Kline, and Compass’s dealings with Newpark food company, in order to ensure that these products are sweatshop free.

The code is posted on the website, http://student.bard.edu/~sg584.

Students who are interested in getting involved are encouraged to contact Shanelle Gopalakrishnan of the Student labor coalition at x4452 or by e-mail at sg584@bard.edu.
GETTIN’ FUNKY AT MENAGE

Bot-man, Volume 3, Issue 7, 1999

Written & created by: Chris Van Dyke, John Holowach; Copyright 1999 Holowach/Van Dyke; Drawn by: Chris Van Dyke