

# BARD

## OBSERVER

BARD COLLEGE / SINCE 1934 / Thursday OCTOBER the 12, 2006

### LUDLOW REVOKES ON CAMPUS TRASH SERVICES FOR EMPLOYEES

*Staff Forced to Use More Expensive Off-Campus Alternatives* by Michael Brown

**E**FFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, BARD EMPLOYEES ARE NO LONGER ABLE TO DISPOSE OF THEIR RESIDENTIAL GARBAGE ON CAMPUS, FORCING THEM TO SEEK OUT MORE EXPENSIVE ALTERNATIVES WITH PRIVATE DISPOSAL COMPANIES OFF-CAMPUS. Citing new environmental restrictions and issues of cost-effectiveness, Ludlow informed the staff of the change to the service that has been available for decades in the past. Amidst B&G and Security contract renegotiations, the Union has filed a grievance on the matter.

In a September 13 letter addressed to community members, Vice President of Administration Jim Brudvig attributed the move to hazardous materials such as aerosol cans that make it into Bard's system, "While it is legal to dispose of some of these items in residential trash, it is not legal for Bard to handle these items as solid waste." The letter also said that the hazardous materials aspect of the program "adds significantly to our disposal costs."

The legal issues brought up by Brudvig stem from the fact that Bard's status with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has changed in recent years from non regulated to highly regulated. In 2000 Bard volunteered for a compliance audit to avoid fines that other schools such as Vassar had incurred for their environmental violations, a process that was completed and fully disclosed in March of this year. Laurie Husted, Bard's Environmental Resources Auditor and the head of BERD, said that the voluntary efforts have saved the college over \$300,000 in government fines since the year 2000.

The move to remove trash service privileges is being met with resistance from the Union because of the long standing nature of the program and the significant added expense that will be put on the shoulders of the college's most underpaid employees. Brudvig explained, "This thing about garbage is not in the [B&G] contract." Steve Pinchbeck, an official steward of the Union and the B&G employee in charge of waste disposal, characterized the service as a benefit. He said that benefits are decided by two things, "Written contract and precedent." He added, "It is

impossible to enumerate every benefit in the contract. I have the right to drink from a school drinking fountain even though it is not indicated in the contract." Contractual issues will be further discussed when meetings to renegotiate the expired B&G contract start again on Oct. 17.

Not every employee on campus utilized trash disposal services, but for those that took advantage of the resource, it was a great convenience being so close to the workplace. Employees that utilized the service paid a \$120 annual fee in order to be included on a list officiated by Laurie Husted. The demographics of the list included, as Husted said, "A lot of B&G employees—about 90%, some Security, some retired employees as well." She also addressed financial concerns, "It's going to be more expensive for employees. It reflects more of the cost."

Employees such as Pinchbeck have a few options remaining—they can hire a private hauler at an approximate cost of \$25/month, or drive their household garbage to the Columbia County Transfer Station, usually only possible on weekends for most employees. Pinchbeck voiced his concern over the having every employee forced to drive individually to Columbia County, "It's

**NOT EVERY EMPLOYEE ON CAMPUS UTILIZED TRASH DISPOSAL SERVICES, BUT FOR THOSE THAT TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE RESOURCE, IT WAS A GREAT CONVENIENCE BEING SO CLOSE TO THE WORKPLACE.**

inherently anti-environmental to drive 20 miles every week to drop off household trash." Brudvig pointed out alternatives such as a Red Hook dropping station on Saturdays for employees who live in the immediate vicinity. Brudvig commented on the prospect of employees no longer having an on campus option, "My guess is that 90% of those people are happy to do otherwise."

A primary concern of the administration in the policy move is in regards to the prevalence of illegal and irresponsible dumping on campus, whether it be by authorized staff or not. Brudvig explained how little he felt the college was able to enforce proper disposal techniques when services were still being legally offered, "Did they separate their garbage out properly according to Bard standards—I just don't know." Pinchbeck responded to such concerns regarding the disposal practices of employees that had been legally dumping their household garbage, "It is my opinion that they are the least abusive population on campus." He explained how he, as the man in charge of disposal, had approached employees in the past, "Every time we've have someone new, I've made it clear that I'm a resource."

Bard owned residences including faculty housing will continue to receive trash services. Husted said that a letter had gone out to all professors and others living in such residences

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### LICE EPIDEMIC SWEEPS CAMPUS

by Kaye Cain

SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2006— AS THE REST OF THE NATION REHASHED 2001'S TERRORIST ATTACKS, THE FREEDOM-LOVING CITIZENS OF ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON QUIETLY FELL VICTIM TO ANOTHER STRIKE. On and beyond that day, nearly one hundred of our own were robbed of dignity and personal liberties by a small but powerful insurgent force. An undisclosed number of the sly insurgents, thought to have "hitched a ride from the [nursery school] summer camp with a hard-working student," (Barbara Jean Briskey, Associate Director of Health Services), are still at large.

As word of mouth spread news of the attack, many were appalled. A few didn't give a shit, even when directly affected. But most everyone was somewhat shaken. Says Briskey, "This is my 13th year at Bard. I have never, ever seen an outbreak of this magnitude." So whom are they targeting? Some think those with longish hair are at greater risk, or people who don't shower as much as others. But, as it shakes out, no one is safe. As Briskey told me, "they do not discriminate." These lice hate America.

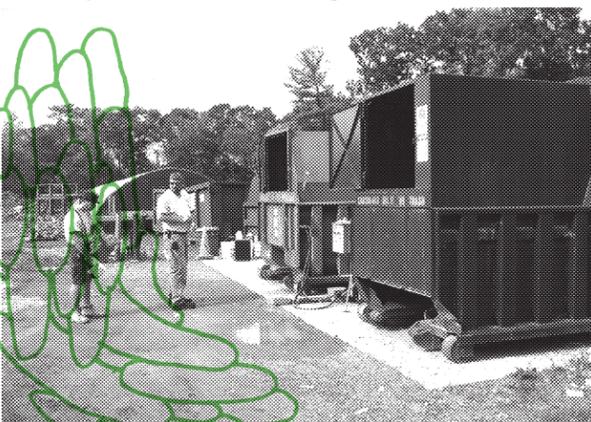
Damn straight, we've got lice. We would. Even though Ashley Wildman of ResLife claims "lice are more present in colleges than you'd think," the thought of lice overrunning an affluent liberal arts campus is strange to say the least. But we go to Bard College, and live for all things edgy and eccentric. No doubt the lice terrorize our campus through paranoia-induced mayonnaise head-rinses and obsessive bagging of winter coats. But, they also help grant us that certain je ne sais quoi that makes us Bardians. Lice are kind of freak-folk.

Anyway, the lice still make people itch. So they've got to go. Although administrative response to the lice attack seemed slow (according to ResLife, they did not want to spread "mass hysteria" by putting out information too soon), things are looking up for eradication of the rebel pests. "We were at peak last Thursday, and I believe by next week the numbers will be radically down," Briskey speculates. For this, she credits the "resourcefulness and resilience" of the students, Lisa Perlman of Health Services and the PCs, and Ashley at ResLife for her education program. "And," she reminds us, "don't forget the housekeeping staff who have been vacuuming your couches with extra vigilance." So, say thanks to all those folks, then your ass in gear. The lice are still among us. If they hit you next, don't panic. Just follow those sheets up in your dorms that tell you how to be clean, and hit up Health Services for a check if you're worried. Or, you can always shave your head.

#### I WANT YOU INSIDE ME.

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What \$3,000 looks like

## SMOKING KIOSKS...

by Jason Mastbaum

**SMOKERS TAKE NOTE: YOU MAY NOT HAVE TO SMOKE OUTSIDE IN THE BLISTERING COLD OF UPSTATE NEW YORK THIS WINTER.**

The New York State legislature has banned smoking from the inside of college dormitories—not on fire-hazard grounds, which would perhaps make some sense (among other reasons one might cite, college students like to get drunk, college students like to smoke cigarettes, and drunkenness and fire are not a good mix), but on health grounds. This is in addition to efforts by on-campus actors to get smoking banned from the inside of any building on campus. As a result many smoking scholars will be, quite literally, left out in the cold this winter.

There are schools that provide smoking areas on campus. However, due to the New York law, no smoking can occur inside, so they regulate where students can smoke outside as well. Since it has been decided that Bard doesn't want to go this route, the issue has not been resolved on our campus. Jim Brudvig, Vice-President for Administration, has appropriated \$9,000 for three enclosed smoking kiosks—but so far nothing much has come of it. The problem is part financial, part practical.

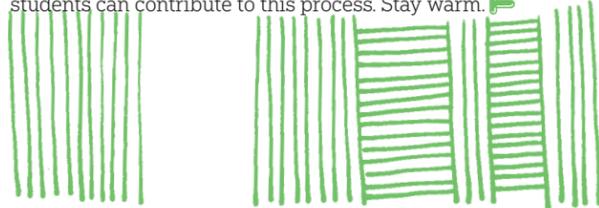
Senior Patrick Murtagh, in his capacity as a youth spokesman for the American Legacy Organization (an umbrella organization which includes the Truth Campaign), had been working to get

the campus to go smoke-free prior to the New York law banning smoking in dorms was in place. (He chose to mention fire hazards as a reason for banning inside smoking, citing the ban on candles, and while this is a reasonable argument one has to wonder if it isn't just a convenient additional reason to get smoking banned from the insides of buildings.) As a result, he has been looking into prefabricated kiosks in an attempt to get the campus to go smoke-free. Unfortunately, though, they have so far been either been horrible or beyond the project's budget.

Stan Stroh, Campus Activities Coordinator, has been assigned to work with Patrick. So far they have come up with numerous proposals about how to go about the project. One idea currently being floated is to have the structures specially designed to fit in with the part of campus in which each is placed. It has also been suggested that the unsightly prefabricated smoking shelters be purchased and installed as soon as possible, with hopes of modifying them to look nicer at some later date. Regardless of what is ultimately decided on, the intent is for Patrick and Stan to get a student committee created to oversee this project.

However, there is the issue of exactly how these smokers' ghettos are going to be constructed. One is to get students volunteer their time and labor for the construction effort. When asked if it would be possible to give non-monetary incentives to students to participate in the building, Patrick stated that it was not in his power to promise anything but that it would be considered. The other way would be to get B&G to do it, but this might be problematic due to their ongoing need to focus their resources on finishing New Robbins. Either way, they would need to be up before the deep freeze sets in sometime around mid-November; Patrick thinks that, realistically speaking, there is roughly a 50% chance that this will happen.

Any inquiries regarding the project should be directed towards either Stan Stroh or Patrick Murtagh (pm575@bard.edu) while David Shein will be able to answer any questions regarding policy specifics. Additionally, in the near future an e-mail will be sent out over the announce@bard.edu service to announce how students can contribute to this process. Stay warm.



## CAMPUS TRASH, from page 1

informing of them of the legal constraints the school is under. She also added that for Bard owned residences trash collectors are able to see firsthand what is thrown out, and therefore are able to monitor any signs of hazardous materials. She stressed the importance of understanding that the move is a necessary part of the changing nature of the college, "We've grown as a college. As we grow, so do the need for policies."

Pinchbeck encouraged students to make efforts understand what it means to get by in the Hudson Valley. He expressed his concerns about how the move to stop trash services on campus would affect the livelihood of some of his co-workers, "An extra \$200 a year might not seem like much, but for someone who's not earning a living wage, for someone who's on the edge, that's a lot."



The Editors of *Rough Draft*, the literary magazine of the Bard Prison Initiative, invites all Bard students to participate in a photography contest. The winner's photos will be featured on the front and back covers of Volume 1, No. 2 of *Rough Draft* in January and will be awarded five free copies. The first issue can be found in the Bard College Archives in the Library; ask a librarian to help you find a copy. You can submit prints of any size, but the final product will be reproduced as a pair of 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 vertical photos. Please coordinate for the front and back covers. Campus Mail your submissions to Sarah Martino no no later than November 22nd.

# \* Interview with William H. Gass \*

by Len Gutkin

ON OCTOBER 2, BARD STUDENTS HAD THE GREAT GOOD FORTUNE TO HEAR FICTION WRITER, ESSAYIST, AND CRITIC WILLIAM H. GASS SPEAK ABOUT HIS WRITING AND DELIVER A WONDERFUL READING. GASS CAME AS A GUEST OF PROFESSOR BRADFORD MORROW, WHO IS TEACHING GASS'S SHORT STORY COLLECTION IN THE HEART OF THE HEART OF THE COUNTRY IN HIS SEMINAR ON CONTEMPORARY FICTION. (LATER THIS SEMESTER, WRITERS LYDIA DAVIS AND VALERIE MARTIN WILL ALSO BE VISITING BARD AS PART OF MORROW'S CLASS). GASS HAS WRITTEN THREE NOVELS, OMENSETTER'S LUCK, WILLIE MASTERS' LONESOME WIFE, AND THE TUNNEL, IN ADDITION TO THE AFOREMENTIONED SHORT STORY COLLECTION, AND A COLLECTION OF FOUR NOVELLAS ENTITLED CARTESIAN SONATA. BESIDES HIS FICTION, HE HAS WRITTEN SEVERAL VOLUMES OF CRITICISM, AN AESTHETIC TREATISE CALLED ON BEING BLUE, AND A BOOK ABOUT RAINER MARIA RILKE (CONTAINING GASS'S OWN GORGEOUS TRANSLATION OF THE DUINO ELEGIES). GASS WAS KIND ENOUGH TO SIT FOR AN INTERVIEW ON THE MORNING OF HIS READING AT BARD.

**Len Gutkin:** *The Tunnel*, your biggest novel and one you spent almost thirty years writing, was simultaneously lauded for its stylistic brilliance and criticized, by some, for its controversial content. [*The Tunnel* is the first person account of one William Kohler, a bitter academic with a disturbing psychological investment in the Nazis]. Louis Menand in the New York Review of Books objected to what he saw as an alarming resemblance between you and your character. In my opinion, the reviews failed fundamentally to fairly assess the novel, which for this reader at least was, among other things, a tremendously brave and honest exploration of the etiology of hatred. It was also—and amazingly some otherwise very smart critics failed to notice—incredibly funny. How do you respond to charges that your novel was, well, actually hateful? (I.e., not that the Kohler himself is a very nasty man, but that you, William Gass, are as well—indeed, Menand especially had a hard time differentiating Gass the author from his fictional creations.) The New Criterion, for instance, chastised the Guggenheim foundation for providing financial assistance to a project that, their reviewer implied, was morally reprehensible.

**William Gass:** I never saw the New Criterion review, but there were a bunch of reviews, one in the New York Review of Books [Menand]—well, they called my office at Wash U, and asked if I was fat [*The Tunnel's* protagonist is fat]. And I didn't answer the phone but I would have said, "Well, I am, but I wasn't when

I started the book!" Birkerts' review probably expresses the problem for people, because what he did was divide it up into pros and cons, and one side had "this is reprehensible awful stuff" mainly because it dared to make fun, or light, of the Holocaust, and situations that weren't to be laughed at in any sense, and lacked reverence for events, and that it gave voice to the villain, not just the victim, both of which things I was really in one sense trying to do. I asked for it in the book; I mean the book does tease the reader with identification, and it has traps laid for the reader all the time. Some of these are philosophical traps that I borrowed from my experience in teaching, where in a philosophy class you may set up a very reasonable sounding argument and march the student through the premises and stages of the argument and then they find themselves ending up with a horrible conclusion from their accepted standpoint. But again, a familiar kind of complaint, the complaints that Jack Hawkes used to get, and others, is that you can't write beautifully about something so awful. One of the points I was trying to make in the book was that the Holocaust in some way had become a sacred subject, and was not to be touched by unclean hands. [The other reason people may have responded negatively to *The Tunnel* is that] it was too long, dull, boring, hard.

**LG:** Though Kohler is as full of hate as any Klansmen, and though he is in some ways rather hard to empathize with, I remain dissatisfied with the general reviewers' verdict that he is a Jew-hating Nazi sympathizer through and through—on the contrary,

it seems to me that his knowledge of anti-Semitic barbarisms has wounded him very deeply, has perhaps even contributed to a pathological obsession in which his only way of dealing with the Holocaust, which he experiences as a personal trauma, is to somehow ally himself with its perpetrators. My question is this: What kind of anti-Semite is Kohler? Is there any sense in which he is simply psychically wounded to the point of insanity by a violent history he cannot accept?

**WG:** That's a good point I think. He's such a hater of mankind that blame falls evenly or more or less evenly, not so much on Jews but on human nature. And that of course removes him from being an anti-Semite; he's just anti-everybody in a way, including himself. The problem is more Swiftian. With my work it is generally, because I am sort of that way myself.

**LG:** Your second novel, *Willie Masters' Lonesome Wife*, remains your most formally challenging—text all over the page, footnotes that threaten to overwhelm the primary narrative, even photographs (and a coffee-stain!) throughout. Although your later work contains "experiments" of this type, their scope is definitely scaled back. Why, after Willie, did you not continue in that direction? Did you feel that it was not, after all, successful?

**WG:** Certainly it wasn't as successful as I wanted it to be. As Gertrude Stein said, "Ideas aren't literature." And too many things in Willie were just ideas, so that the reader could say "Oh, I get

# Dick Griffiths

## Longtime Employee, Dies at 73

by Elvia Pyburn-Wilk

Former Buildings and Grounds Director Dick Griffiths died on Wednesday, September 27, after a long and courageous battle with acute leukemia. Griffiths was an active figure on the Bard campus since 1961, the year he was hired by former college president Reamer Kline. Jim Brudvig, Vice President of Administration, explained his Griffiths role, "Griffiths was the person responsible for all the building on the entire campus, even the stuff you don't see, like the water in the sewer pipes." Griffiths' most notable project on campus was the construction of the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, of which he was involved with for more than three years. He had begun work on another large project, the new science building, at the time of his death.

In the eulogy read at Griffiths' funeral on Friday, September 29, President Leon Botstein said that Griffiths knew Bard campus "Inside and out, in his head, without a shred of paper." During Griffiths' first years at Bard when the college was suffering financially, Griffiths' frugality and ingenuity helped Bard acquire some of its first important buildings, most notably Olin. As Brudvig put it, "he always worked hard to get the best value for the college."

Aside from being a "hard worker and a fabulous colleague," according to Botstein, Griffiths was popular with students and formed lasting relationships with many of them. Steely Dan, made up of former Bard students, refers to "Mr. G" in one of their songs. Though politically he did not agree with the general partisan slant of the college, Griffiths was always tolerant and respectful of those who disagreed with his opinions. And above all, "he was fiercely loyal" to Bard faculty and students, says Botstein of Griffiths. In his eulogy, Botstein also referred to Griffiths as a "true optimist, a real dreamer." Griffiths' imagination and boundless energy, combined with his determination and dedication to the college, made him an invaluable asset to Bard campus. To commemorate Griffiths' service, the main campus

walk was dedicated as the Richard D. Griffiths Campus Walk on May 20, 2006.

Off campus, Griffiths was an active citizen in the Town of Red Hook and in Dutchess County. He worked first for the Zoning Board, then for the Sheriff's Office, and finally as Town Justice. Botstein called him a "fair and humane judge," and Brudvig described him as "incredibly proud of his position." Botstein stressed in his eulogy "Dick did more than anyone else to bridge the gap between town and gown."

Dick Griffiths' energy and hard work for the last forty-six years have helped shape Bard College and its surrounding communities immensely. Leon Botstein said of Griffiths, "he made us feel safe." While Dick Griffiths' contributions will last far into the future, his presence will be sorely missed.

Griffiths is survived by his wife of 47 years, Nancy, and his two children, David "Skipper," and Brenda. More than four hundred people attended his funeral, which was held at the Sosnoff Theater in the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts on Friday, Sept. 29. Memorial donations may be made to the Richard D. and Nancy M. Griffiths Scholarship at Bard College, which Dick and Nancy endowed for talented and deserving undergraduates who show a deep appreciation for the Bard campus and an interest in environmental matters.

Notes of condolence may be sent to Nancy Griffiths, 4696 Route 9-G, Red Hook, New York 12571.

the idea." But I wanted the graphics to work more like commas, in that you saw them and you did what you are supposed to do with commas, saw them and organized the material. But that was impossible because it was introducing new elements into texts that the reader wasn't used to. *The Tunnel* would have been much more--my Tunnel doesn't resemble the one that got printed. My Tunnel would have been looseleaf, would not have had my name on it in any of the usual ways; it would have been Kohler's book, a ton more graphics, a whole lot of different things, and originally my idea was to set the whole thing in antique German type, so that the page set that way looked like a field of barbed wire. I mean it was marvelous visually, I thought, with all those funny double S's, you know, all that stuff. I asked for in effect an actual paper sack, in which one page or so of the text appears--all kinds of things of that sort were designed in the original manuscript. Same way with Willie--much more complicated, it just became impossible to execute. I wanted a pop-up penis in *The Tunnel*, and they said "Well you can't do that because these books will be destroyed in the shops." And there was supposed to be a detachable armband around it, like a German armband, and again people would have played with it in the stores. You couldn't remove the publisher and the author's name from the obvious text in any commercial sense. There are tons of reasons why--it couldn't be in a box with looseleaves et cetera. At some point having acquired a fortune I might produce the book in the original way. I don't know if I would or not, even if I had the funds to do it. Because Willie was overjunked, and maybe *The Tunnel* would have been too--but, the book is a compromise in a sense, economically and practically. I think they [Knopf] did the best possible job under the circumstances, they did really try as hard as they could.

LG: I've just read *Omensetter's Luck*, and though it was your first novel, I didn't read it until after I'd already read *The Tunnel*, *In the Heart of the Heart of the Country*, and *Willie Master's Lonesome Wife*. I absolutely loved it, but I never would have predicted, based on your later work with which I was familiar first, how traditional *Omensetter* is in some ways: that is, it seems to me to fit very nicely in a certain Faulknerian America Gothic tradition--the American religiosity, the simple people and the rugged land, the fear of God and Satan.... There are also definite affinities between *Omensetter* and your first published story, "The Pedersen Kid." Was there a conscious effort on your part to move away from that in some sense traditional territory?

WG: Well I was moving into deeper American territory, because *The Tunnel* is basically Sinclair Lewis rewritten. "It can't happen here". Oh yeah. Nobody every pointed out the similarity of themes, and possibly because in every other way they're so different. The book [*The Tunnel*] is about the underlying fascist tendencies in American culture. And that's why it's having a little rebirth; people who say "Hey wait a minute, it's coming true." But when I was growing up there was a lot of this right-wing stuff. It was also religious, it was Father Coughlin leading these Catholic groups, and the Ku Klux Klan which was strong in Indiana.

LG: Your formal academic training is in philosophy, which you taught for many years at Purdue University and then Washington University. How would you describe the intersection between fiction and philosophy, generally? More specifically, how does your own fiction reflect your background in philosophy?

WG: Well, philosophy is itself, from my point of view, mostly fiction. Almost none of it is true, either in whole or in part, but what's interesting about a lot of things that aren't true in the world, for instance a Hegelian approach, turn out to be true in works of art, and that's because they're mythical, they're fictional. Hegel's view for instance works well to describe the way certain novels are constructed. The whole doctrine of internal relations, which is crucial to Hegel, is I think total nonsense when applied to physical reality, which is basically chance, but Hegel is wonderful to adapt as a theory of what a work of art ought to be like. In Hegel, for instance, everything we see is a predicate, and there's one subject, the Absolute. Wonderful, for a book, and nonsense for the world! Furthermore, these philosophical theories are, very often, absolutely gorgeous conceptual works of art. There is, as they all talk about, the architectonic, the architecture of Kant. It's quite beautiful, but so is Plotinus, I mean as poetry it's magnificent. And it might be what a lot of prose-writing poets these days are trying to do, create conceptual poetry: they ought to study philosophy then. Doing philosophy well is so hard that if you have four or five people doing it brilliantly you call it the Age of Enlightenment. So philosophy for me is, uh, unintentional, maybe--in fact--and this is a very Nietzschean position in a way--most all ideological ideas, theories, in the world, are false, and that's demonstrable, and Nietzsche pointed it out--I mean, if you look at the cultural systems, or the philosophical systems, of human beings, both geographically and over time, you will find contradictions between various views that are enormous. Contradictions between cultures. And that's the cultural relativist

Continued on page 3

## West Point Exchange

PART II OF II

by Rachel Meade

### The International Relations class taught by Cristol and Silverstone consists of 12 West point cadets and 13 Bard students.

Although the curriculums of the two professors are separate, the classes have four joint sessions a semester. For International Relations in particular, Cristol and Silverstone see the melding of minds from their respective schools as vital. "For anyone who studies International Relations, it's important to meet the people who are actually involved in what you're talking about," said Cristol. As for West Point cadets, Silverstone sees the class as a chance for them to see their ideas in another light: "It allows them to see how non-West Point students approach the same ideas."

More generally, both West Point and Bard hope to gain a greater understanding of themselves and each other through communications. According to Silverstone, cadets can likely profit by hearing viewpoints from civilians and international students about issues surrounding the military. "It's really important for cadets to see how civilians look at issues," said Silverstone.

For students, just the chance to break away from discipline and routine to interact with students having a more traditional college experience, can be exhilarating. West Point freshman Christopher McCole described the overarching discipline of the school, regulating everything from sleep patterns to the way books are aligned on a shelf to mealtimes. "It's really unparalleled discipline," said McCole. "We can learn a little from Bard about freedom and how people perform when they're not being watched." At the same time, McCole thinks Bard could benefit from West Point's disciplinary example. "I think that any disciplines added to a daily routine can have a positive effect," said McCole.

The benefits for Bard students include a chance to interact with students with a wholly different point of view, and dispel some of our largely uninformed judgments about the military. "West Point is a much more complex institution than most people, especially Bard students, realize," said Associate Bard Dean Jonathan Becker. Due to our extreme political homogeneity, it is easy for us to unequivocally reject views different from our own. Therefore, according to Cristol, it's especially vital for Bard students to be exposed to conservative views of intelligence.

The same holds true with respect to our views of the military. "Anyone who believes we need to continue a healthy two-party system should look with fear on the emergence of a democratic party unable to understand the military," said Mullen.

For students who attended Scott Silverstone's recent lecture on preventative war, this process of understanding the complexity of West Point, and the military in general, has already begun. First-year student Milo Daemgen was pleasantly surprised by the lecture. While formerly he'd had an impression of West Point as a fairly homogenous group of military men, the eloquence of the speaker broadened his picture of the school. "It's much more of a college," said Daemgen. "It's much more real." First-year Mae Colburn agreed: "I wasn't expecting that much truth. I would be glad to be in one of his classes."

For any Bard student interested in interacting with the varied ideas of West Point Military Academy, the opportunities should likely be increasing in the coming years. A video-seminar class should be available by fall of next year, lectures will be happening intermittently, and other events are in planning stages. "We hope great things are coming," said Mullen. "Stay tuned." ➔

## TEACH ENGLISH!

- Volunteers needed to teach English classes to the Red Hook community.
- Classes are free to the public and are taught one on one.
- No prior experience or foreign language skills necessary. Anyone is welcome!
- We meet at the Old Gym and carpool: Mondays at 7:00 pm & Thursdays at 6:00 pm
- Or meet us there!  
St. Paul's Lutheran Parrish House--Corner of S. Broadway and Fisk.  
Mondays at 7:30 pm & Thursdays at 6:30 pm
- For more information contact  
Julia Wentzel { [jw114@bard.edu](mailto:jw114@bard.edu) } x4885

**\* Gass Interview \*** *From page 2*

premise of Nietzsche's argument. I'm lifting it out of Nietzsche and cleaning it up a little. And the next premise of Nietzsche is that we know from logic that when two propositions contradict one another, both may be false, but only one of them can be true. So if we have a world full of contradictory views, most of them must be false, only a few can be true, we just don't know which ones. If any! They could all be false. So we know whole cultures, great cultures, have been built on a bunch of nonsense, superstitions, mythologies, complete misconceptions. And people have flourished there. Nature doesn't give a damn. Nature allows us to be fools. It doesn't seem to care at all. And so you have all these sort of theoretical houses, cultural houses that human beings create to live in--human beings have always hated nature anyway, basically--they try to make their civilization, their little world, around themselves, as I've always thought of architecture--the problem of surrounding man with man, and that's what we do--even when we have a wilderness it's to go boating in the summertime or something like that, in a relatively unmolested part of the world, if you can find any. And it can be gibberish! I mean most religions as far as I'm concerned are just absolute nuts! So it's like on a street, people have different houses, some are gothic, some are Georgian, and we all want to sit in our houses. The problem is we want them all to be true! George Santayana can say, "Oh, I'm an atheist, but I'll live among the nuns. I like Catholicism better." So philosophy is simply another way of talking about beautiful concepts. Even some of the philosophers I admire most, Plato for example, or Wittgenstein, *the Tractatus*, [may be false vis-a-vis reality], but again, marvelous about what is true about a novel. In the *Tractatus* he [Wittgenstein] says that the structure of a true proposition mirrors the structure of the fact. Marvelously said! Not so, I think, at all, making in fact the usual error of attributing to the world the structure of the describing medium--mathematics, logic, that structure, which is much easier to study anyway. But boy, that's all a novel is. The structure of the propositions is the structure of the fact it contains. And there isn't any other thing! And for me it was just so exciting. The world is everything that is the case is the opening of the *Tractatus*, and it's wonderful in German [Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen]. There isn't any other structure to attribute to the world. So I'm skeptical sufficiently about philosophical theories--they're just more marvelous art.

**LG:** I'd like to talk a little about Gertrude Stein, about whom you've written beautifully. It seems to me that in a certain sense you are part of Stein's legacy. One part of that legacy, I think, consists chiefly of poets, especially the language poets and the post-war American avant-garde. Your work does not fall into that camp, but nevertheless I think it's Steinian: the sing-song rhythms, the frequent nursery rhymes, the obsession with language as material over and beyond its referent. I was hoping you'd say a little bit about your relationship to Stein's work, and whether you see your own as part of the tradition Stein helped found.

**WG:** I think that's a big part of it. And playfulness, she was very playful. Extremely inventive, and smarter than most writers. One of the things that deceived me about her, because I had confronted her reputation before I confronted her work, was that she was sort of dumb. But she was very, very smart. So the influence that she had on me was largely conceptual, theoretical. I mean some of her work when I was starting out was just a revelation in terms of simple things that I should have known. The importance of a page. When is a book a volume? So she'd write a sentence and then with the next sentence, she'd call it Volume 2, and as soon as she does that you think, hey, wait a minute. She wants to know why when you're printing a poem on the page you don't break a stanza in the middle, when prose just gets cut off any old place on the page, nobody cares. Mallarme cared. She was seeing all kinds of issues early on, and handling

them brilliantly. And then she would write sentences that were so disturbing and interesting. Only Stern, for example, my favorite Stern sentence is "A cow broke in tomorrow morning to my uncle Toby's fortifications." Great rip in reality that sentence is. One of my favorite Stein ones though--there are dozens--"It looked like a garden, but he had hurt himself by accident." All you have to do is start thinking about how that works, and you're learning about sentences. And prose writing especially but poetry too, it's built on sentences, and it's built out of it. With Mary [Mary Gass, architect and William Gass's wife] I'm working on *The Architecture of the Sentence* a book we're hoping to get done. And she's extremely funny. When I taught her, the students adored her. There is a childishness inherent in her work, and she will always be in some sense minor in terms of her own production, but she will be major in influence, and she will have, like great minor poets, Andrew Marvell or somebody, turned out some masterpieces. I have my heroines, and she's one--I'm on a first name basis with Gertrude.

**LG:** You've said before that much of your work is borne of rage and frustration, or even just "getting even." And yet, in much of your work (especially I think in the stories in *The Heart*) there is profound compassion and kindness. How do you balance the rage and resentment which you've said before is your very reason for writing with the compassion that I find everywhere in your work?

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**I find out over time what I should have known all along about what I was doing. I never know what I'm doing.**

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**WG:** Well it's the fuel. Looking at the world, George Bush every day--it's outrage, that human beings do the things they do to one another, and miss opportunities, and I think it's--what moves me of course about the mess is how it might be otherwise, not utopian, but where people have a chance to realize their capacities, and do what Moore said, to develop a consciousness, because that's what we are, is a consciousness--dependent of course absolutely upon the body. And the enrichment of this consciousness, and the development, so we appreciate, understand, respond to the world and its problems and so forth--that's the point of existence, 'cause there isn't any other, and we have to make our own appreciation of the world, and that doesn't mean there isn't one out there that we can understand, but that's a scientific approach I think. But the point is--it's sad, when human beings are denied these possibilities, and denied them not by bad luck of horrible natural catastrophes which occur. And it is luck. But by human agency itself. And my characters are almost always people who've failed either through themselves or through circumstances to realize these potentialities. And my ethical view is very--I mean I make a distinction between morality and the good the way Kant did. Aristotle was quite right. The aim of life is for well-being, but that's self-realization, entelechy. Self-realization is not a moral aim, it's a human aim, a value. Kant was generally right about what the moral problem is. But it's infuriating to see what we do with it. And not just simply that we waste time. Because wasting time in a certain sense is very positive--it's how it's done. But this mean-spirited, it's just--one thing I like about Erasmus, even though he's a Jesus freak--Jesus is all right, he's trivial but you know, he doesn't preach crusades, he just says saccharine stupidities like "love everybody"--respect would be nice--to treat others as ends in themselves--and if we take that and say "Never treat people as mere means but as ends in themselves," and we can't always do that--but we treat people as mere means constantly, and it's awful. And your own life you have to constantly say, "Have I done the

best with what I was given." A lot of what you start out with is just a matter of chance--genetic dispositions, where you're born, into what environment, how well you surmount your problems, and all the rest of that, what you've done, and simple things like--I have a responsibility to bring to the world at least as much as I've consumed or taken away. And we don't do that. And that's the rage. I'm not mad at any particular person. I have no personal hatreds at all. But the human race just pisses me off! Tear one's hair!

**LG:** Care to talk about what you're working on now, what fans can look forward to?

**WG:** I'm working on a number of projects as usual, because I write books in order to avoid writing other books. And right now I'm avoiding the novel, *Middle Sea*, and working on books like *The Architecture of the Sentence*, and lectures of philosophy that I'm going to be delivering. I just finished a collection of lectures on the classics, Plato and Aristotle. I'm writing regularly for Harper's on various past idols. But *Middle Sea*--it was supposed to be a novella, because at my age, with my slow tardy way of writing, I didn't want to start another novel. But it turned into one. Now I kept saying *The Tunnel* was half done for twenty years. And *Middle Sea* is half done. But it is not one of these blockbuster things. It's deliberately supposed to be a simpler thing, in the hopes that I can get it done, but it is becoming more

and more complex, and that's how I work. I find out over time what I should have known all along about what I was doing. I never know what I'm doing. And it's basically about a man whose father hauled him and his mother--he was in his mother's womb at the time--him and his sister and his mother out of Austria in thirty-seven or so, just before the Germans came in. And they're not Jewish, but his father sensed the moral decay and didn't want to be a part of it. And the only way, since they were poor, they could escape was to pretend to be Jewish, and get to London in time to endure the Blitz. And they end up in the States--not his father, his father disappears. And so this young man becomes obsessed with keeping his hands clean, as his father does, washing his hands. And he in effect presents a false persona to the world so that the interaction with the world will be with this false person, and not with him. *Middle Sea* having to do with--he's a music teacher, but he isn't really educated in music--under false pretenses, false documentation, gets a job in a small college to teach Schoenberg, and he teaches Schoenberg not because he really likes Schoenberg, he really likes Liszt, but he never presents to the world who he really is. And *Middle Sea*: the way to survive, is to be average. Doesn't work, though. ➔



**::: From the Observer Editors :::**

We would like to apologize for a comic appearing in previous issue entitled *wwjd*? It was vulgar, offensive, and ultimately pointless. The piece was a mistake and an embarrassment, and could have constituted a violation of the Community Standards of Behavior. It in no way represented the views of our contributing writers. We are sorry to anyone who was hurt by our negligence. Religious intolerance is too often passed off as acceptable in the Bard community. We do not want the Observer to be a forum that condones such manner of discourse, let alone one that publishes it. We encourage you to respond to our articles with your letters and comments. Our hope is that in the future, we can reach the Bard community in a constructive way, to improve the dialogue on campus, and give a voice to those who in previous times have hesitated to make themselves heard. **The Editors**

**the Observer**

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# Obama in Africa: A Son and a Comrade

by Neesha Fakir

**In late August the much loved, ebullient and well-spoken Senator Barack Obama (D- Ill) trekked across six African countries on a 15-day tour to address issues pervading the African continent.**



This was Obama's first tour to his father's native country of Kenya since his election to the Senate in Nov. 2004. The Senator reiterated that he was in Kenya as a US Senator, that his loyalties to the people of Illinois superceded that of Kenyans, and that he was representing the US Government. However, for many of us Africans, including thousands of adoring Kenyan fans, Obama came home as a son of our community, a brother and comrade. The tour was not only a sentimental one for the eloquent Senator; it also afforded him the chance to address many unfortunately neglected issues, especially those of Darfur and HIV Aids.

Whilst in South Africa, Obama visited many townships and landmarks where the struggle against Apartheid unfolded. The Senator acknowledged that the altruism, might and valor of all South Africa's anti-Apartheid heroes are what most inspired his career in politics. Obama's remarks were accompanied by a heated denunciation of the South African government's denial of the HIV crisis. Obama has always been outspoken about the issues that haunt most of post-colonial Africa, including Darfur, corruption in countries such as Kenya and continuing exclusion from world markets. By raising awareness of these issues Obama has taken the first steps towards correcting the corruption, denial and irresponsibility of many African governments.

Having been denied visitation into the Sudan itself, the most crucial leg of Obama's tour occurred when he traveled to Sudanese refugee camps in the Chad. The trip was a potent one for Obama. It granted him the new perspective of being a firsthand witness to the proliferating humanitarian calamity and genocide in Darfur. With the mandate requiring the presence of African Union Troops in the area almost expired, the crisis on the ground in Darfur is worsening. Obama asserted that not only were the African Union troops insufficient to guarantee a stable Darfur; he also urged the United States Government to support a robust, active and multi national UN force as a protectorate for Darfur. Despite the usefulness of Obama's comments the situation in Darfur remains amorphous, volatile and abstruse. What the Senator should do to help ease the crisis in the Darfur region is to urge all parties, including the Sudanese Liberation Army, the Justice and Equality Movement and the government of Omar el Bashir, to come to the Peace Table, especially by the May 5th deadline for the Darfur Peace Agreement.

By lashing out at African governments, Barack Obama has made it abundantly clear that the misery and crisis pervading Africa cannot be ignored and that the United States has many reasons to consider these needs and grievances.

Having received the chance to get to know this remarkably dynamic human being, on his tour of South Africa and in my yuppie Washington DC intern days, I can conclude that this is truly an assiduously polished political figurehead whom many of us, in Africa, would like to see in the White House someday.

AMANDALA OBAMA! ➡

# THE INTERNATIONAL TUBERCULOSIS RELIEF PROJECT

\* BY JIE ZHANG & ANH PHAN \*

Those who live with fast and easy access to effective health care have a tendency to overlook tuberculosis related public health issues. Most people in more developed regions consider TB a solved problem or a cured disease. However, a set of astounding statistics compiled by the World Health Organization, or WHO, speak the opposite: about two billion people in the world, that is, one third of the global population or one in every three people, are TB carriers. Two million people die of TB each year and is the leading cause of death amongst those infected with HIV. The WHO estimates that TB accounts for up to a third of AIDS deaths worldwide. These numbers are an undeniable reminder that to a massive portion of the world's population TB is a problem of epic proportions.

Mycobacterium Tuberculosis, the causative agent of the disease, is rapidly evolving into Multi-Drug-Resistant (MDR-TB) and Extensively Drug-Resistant strains (XDR-TB). The XDR-TB strain has become almost untreatable. In a recent XDR-TB outbreak in South Africa, "52 of the 53... (affected)... died after an average of 25 days". The potency of the disease is mirrored by the swollen costs required for its treatment. The second-line antibiotics needed to treat MDR- and XDR-TB cost tens of thousands of dollars. As a result, being infected is often a death sentence to someone who can barely sustain a living. Furthermore, the WHO ignores the problem and refuses to treat patients due to their stringent "cost-effectiveness" and "sustainability" protocol. They claim that due to the high cost of treating a complicated TB case, there is simply not enough funding to save everyone.

However, Doctor Paul Farmer thinks otherwise. The Doctor has devoted his entire career to treating patients at the most impoverished regions, Haiti, for example. He has smuggled drugs from Boston hospital and employed all means possible to get donated drugs for his patients. "Never underestimate the ability of a small group of committed individuals to change the world." This is a statement from Farmer's book Mountains

beyond Mountains that struck me deeply. It also seems to be the philosophy of Partner in Health (PIH), the public health organization founded by Paul Farmer. The group has built hospitals and schools, constructed clean water systems and roads in Haiti. For PIH, TB is not a simple medical complication but a human rights issue.

.....  
WITH THE STRONG DESIRE TO ACT, WE START THIS PROJECT FOR ANYONE WHO CARES TO LEARN ABOUT TB ISSUES AND WHAT ACTIONS CAN BE TAKEN.  
.....

So, what can we do about it? To rid the world of TB is not only the responsibility of Paul Farmer or WHO, but of everyone, including Bard students. With the strong desire to act, we start this project for anyone who cares to learn about TB issues and what actions can be taken. From there, we can give a hand to international projects in treating TB. We plan to go to conferences and workshops as well as host fund-raising activities. Our plans for the future include eventually going to Southeast Asia where half of the world TB cases occur and educating local people about TB, or helping build clinics. However, plans will not become formalized until we receive more input from our study group. So people who really want to make something happen should join this project and together we can manifest the desire to act into reality.

The International Tuberculosis Relief Project is collaborating with Partner In Health (PIH), the non-governmental organization led by Paul Farmer. Our project is sponsored by TLS and supported by ISROP. The first meeting will occur on October 15th and subsequent meetings will be announced by fliers and through e-mail. ➡

## A Letter from the TLS Office

We are writing in response to students who have come to the TLS office to voice their dissatisfaction with a recent flyer for the Nicaragua Project. First, let us say that the complaints are justified; the flyer was insensitive in many ways. We acknowledge that, and apologize to anyone who was directly offended by the flyers. Here are the most glaring of the problems:

1. Dividing the world into "First" and "Third" is highly problematic and inflammatory. It presupposes a hierarchy of worth that simply has no validity. It is damaging and arrogant to speak about the world this way.
2. No one in TLS is encouraged to take a "3 week winter break odyssey" anywhere, to do anything. There are serious problems in the world that require everyone's best thinking and energy. Everyone in the world, together, has to figure out what to do about them. We are not out to save the world. We're in it, participating.
3. The point of TLS projects is to create genuine relationship and do real work. The critique about international trips verging on voyeurism is a valid caution. A few students might be going on some kind of a "vacation", but TLS does not promote that in any way. Our hope is that every student who makes an effort - whether it is in Burma or Hudson - is searching their own soul for their own hang-ups and judgments and assumptions. We're not sending troops to the rescue. We're attempting to be paralyzed. We're attempting to participate. "Help" is not

exactly it. The point is the development of compassion, genuine compassion, for the self and for others, so that the load can be shared without condescension and patronizing bluster.

4. The TLS program has not, to date, supported any project whose mission has been to "work against anti-American sentiment." Whether or not attitudes toward "America" change, has never been our mission. Our mission is to participate authentically, practically and effectively.

TLS is a leadership development program. Mistakes get made, because that's the way it is in the learning process. We do not check every flyer that leaves this office. (We would have to hire another person just to do that!). This recent flyer had some mistakes in it, and we have spoken about it to its authors. Learning has taken place. A copy of this article has been sent to all TLS students, and we will speak about it at a TLS gathering.

We appreciate those students who came to the office and voiced their concern. That kind of clear, sharp feedback is essential. We do not, however, invite the writing of profanity on the office door in the night; that is not an adequate form of communication at Bard. In general, if you don't like something happening in TLS, please come speak to us about it. We are all learning, all the time. Our door is more than open. We strongly invite every kind of conversation. Please, if you have something to say, come in and say it.

by: Paul Marienthal, TLS Director, Susanna Armbruster, TLS Assistant Director

## ¿Qué cocinaré hoy?

Radio program with music, news reports, politics, local and Latin American culture, feminist discussions, recipes, humor and more.  
Hosted by Mariel Fiori and Maria Elena Alvarado.  
--La Voz-- Wednesday Mornings 8-12pm --WXBC 540AM--

# John Sweeney

Get Rid of Him Now

*By Noah Weston,* You would think that in dire times such as these, when our presence in Iraq has grown increasingly malignant, both to Iraqis and to our troops, that a politician who so vocally backed the war would take the tamest, most contrite posture possible on the war, minimizing the electoral backlash he would certainly face come November. However, Bard's own representative in the House, Republican John Sweeney, has not only bucked that wisdom but turned it on its head and shot it in the face. Recently, Sweeney has not only avoided the subject of the war in his ads, but he has put out some downright bizarre messages, ones that make you think that he is either psychotic or calculatingly brilliant, depending on Americans' thoughts on the war.

Last week, Sweeney aired an ad in which a woman named Kathy Brown, presumably a constituent, said that she met the Congressman the day she buried her son who had died in Iraq due to insufficient vehicle armoring. According to her, he pledged to get troops the assistance they need, and "kept that promise." She goes on to say that although she opposes the war, she trusts John Sweeney, and thus supports him as a candidate. Sweeney seems to want voters to think the following: "John Sweeney is the man to keep our sons and daughters alive while they are in harm's way." End of story.

That begs the question, however, of who put these young men and women in peril in the first place. The responsibility seems diffuse. First, we have the men and women themselves who joined a volunteer military, but who would think that the United States would ever engage in a poorly thought out war based on a falsehood? Nobody who remembers the Gulf of Tonkin, I guess. Could it be the "terrorists?" Well, since al-Qaeda did not exist in Iraq until we invaded, we cannot assign them that much credit without forfeiting our national dignity (oh wait). How about the insurgency? Given that it's their country, it would be even more foolish than blaming al-Qaeda and other post-invasion groups.

Perhaps, there is another blameworthy party aside from the people fighting this war on either side, maybe someone who makes decisions to, you know, authorize an invasion? Why, golly, I think that might be Congress, of which John Sweeney was coincidentally a member when he supported the invasion of Iraq! And under what pretenses did Mr. Sweeney give President Bush the authority to ruin a country and endanger young men like Kathy Brown's son? Let's go to the tape!

"With each day that passes, Saddam Hussein and his regime in Iraq take another step towards building a weapon of mass murder, reach out with another hand to embrace and support terrorism, and turn another back on the peaceful diplomacy of the international community (emphasis added)."

That's right. In October of 2002, Sweeney propagated all those half-cocked theories and cherry-picked intelligence that the Bush administration used to take us to war. Those weapons of mass

destruction turned out to be papers and floppy disks, and those ties to terrorism were defunct or non-existent, as in the case of alleged operational connections between the Hussein regime and al-Qaeda.

John Sweeney's ad, along with others, seeks to take attention from the fact that at best, he was irresponsibly lazy in interrogating assumptions underlying the case for this war, and at worst, he was part of a campaign of lies. He wants to tug at Americans' heart strings, invoking the names of fallen soldiers and labeling himself as the sole choice for those who care about "our heroes." If he keeps pounding this message into voters' heads, perhaps the worry of dishonoring the troops will eclipse any questions about the reasons for sending these men and women into the fray. Contrary to what some may say, those reasons are not just matters of "history," ones that should be overshadowed by the reality of the conflict today (which is no more reason for optimism). The rationale for a war always matters, particularly when that war still claims hundreds of lives a month.



How can we conscientiously fight when our motivations were baseless? To do so has led our soldiers on the bloodiest fool's errand imaginable, and at the cost of what little peace Iraq ever enjoyed.

It is clear that John Sweeney supported the invasion of Iraq from the get-go, and supports the occupation today as a component of the "War on Terrorism." Mothers like Kathy Brown suffer the loss of family and loved ones as a result of these poor decisions and unfortunately feel satisfied with the promises Sweeney makes today. If only they, and the majority of Americans, had questioned the men and women behind this war before the bloodshed and before the flag-draped coffins began coming back home by the dozens, we wouldn't be in this mess. Anyone registered to vote here at Bard has the ability to excise the man who zealously abetted this war, so I ask you to do so, and make sure that John Sweeney never has a voice in our legislature again. 🗳️

member of the Student Life Committee and that Committee's freshman alternate showed up, as well as three other students.

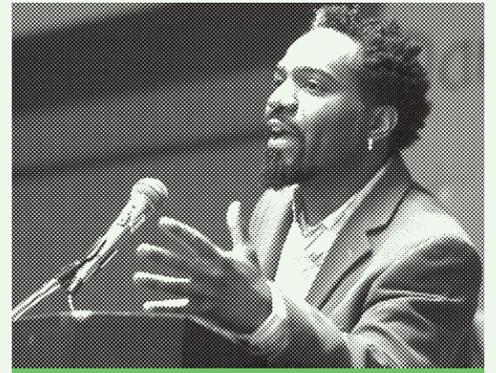
One of those students was Brandon Rosenbluth, who runs the SMOG club and TLS project, and if nothing else the "forum" provided a productive discussion between him and John Gall, who was glad of the low turnout, describing himself as "shy." Word around campus was that Gall had "felt the heat" from recent articles in the Observer and Free Press. He seemed to be shaking in his workboots at the revelation that eleven fucking people care about the timely construction of the SMOG expansion and the proper use of fifty thousand dollars of student money. (That was a lie. He was actually quite comfortable - not that I begrudge him that. And luckily it looks as though the construction will be relatively timely and the money will be used more or less properly.)

Gall and Marienthal spent most of the forty minutes or so that they were present discussing the weird intricacies of Red Hook zoning and making hand motions to describe construction concepts that I can't quite recall. After they left, we held a meeting of the Central Committee, because we had

## Ewuare X. Osayande

Poet Drops Words, Bombs at Reading

by Frank Brancely



Ewuare X. Osayande

Chances are you weren't the most comfortable person in the room, especially if your skin was white and you attended the poetry reading on Sept. 30 at Weis.

Some undoubtedly confused the event with that of a white-guilt trip. Sure, you are likely to feel guilty after recognizing your own privilege, but the only intent was to raise serious awareness and insight into a society that prefers to forget on a regular basis its active participation in racism. Ewuare X. Osayande, black activist, poet and author, read some of his work to a crowded, racially mixed audience of Bard students. For many, the experience of meeting Osayande is understandably emotional and unsettling. Unhesitant and confident in his convictions on the still vibrant, if more covert, role of racism in the day-to-day existence of American life, Osayande speaks with an empowered voice, reading work that is evocative and passionate. Included in much of his poetry are specific, recent examples of racism (for example, New Orleans before and after) to illustrate just how inept the world, and the United States in particular, is in its non-confrontation. What's at issue is an illusion that we seem to live under, that all people are equal in this country, that all are able to partake in the American dream. Osayande arrived to our campus and worked to shatter, at least for some, that well-known American fantasy called equality.

Osayande has published books of poetry and essays, his first book of poems *An African Awakening* (1991) issued the *Quarterly Black Review* to consider him "one of Black America's newest insurgent intellectuals coming to the table with enough mental firepower to be a David Walker for our time." On his website it is purported that Osayande has "spoken at over 500 different educational, religious, and community centers from Harvard University to Howard University, from Riverside Church in New York to Al Aqsa Mosque in Philadelphia, from Alameda County Juvenile Hall in California to Graterford prison in Pennsylvania."

Osayande can be seen as a revolutionary, a man whose passion for justice is exemplified beautifully throughout his poetry - which, for the privileged few who attend college here, should have some impact. "Know that once the word is written on the page, it dies, all the books you've read, the words are dead, only that which remains alive, this is how culture thrives." While unable to attend the daylong workshop the following day, I'm sure those who did were able to widen narrow perceptions, seeing colors and realizing realities they were previously ignorant of. Bard's Anti-Racist Dialogue Group, which meets every Sunday night at 7 - deserve our thanks for a very necessary awakening. Now let's do something about it. 🗳️

important information to impart to the six interested students who had made the trek to Kline, and to each other. (A turnout of eleven does not suffice for a quorum for a forum of the Student Association.) Laura Bomyea of the Educational Policies Committee talked about the cancellation of Thursday's Forum on Academic Concerns and the possibility of rescheduling; Karen Soskin of the Planning Committee talked about getting enough sleep since Budget Forum and about beginning the process of mid-semester check-ins for club heads; Anna Pycior of the Student Judiciary Board mentioned that this year's SJB are a bunch of "great kids" and Michelle Moses-Eisenstein of the Student Life Committee requested input on smoking kiosks and pet policy.

There was some discussion of student social space, mostly about how 750 kids signed some petition last year and wouldn't it be nice if we had a place to call our own, like the Old Gym used to be - wait, what's that - isn't that where they put on all of those beautiful and introspective interpretive numbers? Yes, Virginia, it is. But I promise that if you come to the next student forum we'll teach you a whole new way to dance. 🗳️

## OCT. 4 STUDENT FORUM WRAP-UP

B&G Director, Paul Marienthal Discuss Smog

by Oliver Traldi

Attendance at last week's almost-Student Forum peaked at eleven - eleven people, not eleven o'clock (it was done by nine). This appeared to be the entirety of the amassed interested parties at a meeting whose docket included items concerning the Reserve Fund and student social space. It featured informative updates about SMOG - from John Gall and Paul Marienthal, in the flesh - and about the status of class presidents and officers based on a meeting between student government and the administrators behind the new system, which only one class officer was present to hear. Besides this class officer and five members of the Central Committee, a

# The Sex Column

Dear Muses of the Form,

When is the right time to be tested for STIs? I have heard that I should be tested with every new partner, and I have also heard that annual testing is sufficient. What's a good rule for STI testing?  
- Anonymous at Home -

Dear Anononymous,

The best general recommendation about STI testing is that testing ought to be done whenever any exposure to an STI is suspected. Ideally, before a new sexual relationship is started both involved partners ought to be tested for STIs. Also, if one partner in the relationship has been involved in a sexual encounter with another partner outside of the relationship, both original parties ought to be tested. If you ever experience what you believe to be symptoms of an STI (change in discharge, painful urination/intercourse, a rash or blister in the genital region etc.) you ought to go to health services or Planned Parenthood for a consult.

Some important things to know about STI testing at Bard health services:

- All STI testing at health services is covered by Bard health insurance.
- Bard health services does not include herpes testing in its general STI screen. This is because the test for herpes (without sores) is a blood test, which is very expensive to process. If you have herpes symptoms such as sores, testing will be done for you at health services, and will entail swabbing a sore to obtain a sample for diagnosis. Also, if you have reason to believe that you have been exposed to herpes specifically, but you do not have sores (or if a viable sample cannot be obtained from your sores), health services will do the blood test for you.
- Bard health services does not do HIV testing, but it does financially cover HIV testing done at planned parenthood.
- Also, 2 times this semester a representative from an HIV testing center will come to campus to do 20-minute oral swab testing for HIV. I will update you on the dates that this representative is coming in a future article.
- It is important to know that STI testing for men at health services no longer requires a urethral swab. It simply requires that the man being tested urinate into a cup. Knowing this may help some men to be less hesitant about getting tested

So, in summary, the answer to your question is:

- 1) If you have never been tested for STIs, but you are sexually active, get tested.
- 2) If you have been tested for STIs before, but you or your partner has had a new partner, get tested.
- 3) If you believe you have symptoms of an STI, or if things just seem strange or different in your genital region, schedule an appointment at health services to discuss the changes and possibly to get tested.
- 4) Finally, if you just want to know your status (even if you have had no specific encounter that causes you to question your STI status) get tested! It is a far better thing to be over tested than under tested.

Knowing your status generally improves sexual encounters by removing the stress/worry associated with fear of transmission. Ask your partner(s) if they have been tested for STIs and expect that they get tested before you allow yourself to be exposed to them sexually (whether they are male, female, extremely experienced, relatively inexperienced, etc.) By being insistent about STI testing you are contributing to making Bard a more sexually responsible community, and that is a wonderful thing. Thank you for submitting this important question!

Send them Sexual questions to [g1139@bard.edu](mailto:g1139@bard.edu) or [fc138@bard.edu](mailto:fc138@bard.edu).  
Medical advice should be obtained from liscened physicians as well as college papers.

## Letters From Readers

Good job on the first issue. I really like what you guys did with the nameplate and the front page. I know a lot of people liked last year's cover, but I wasn't one of them. The change makes the paper look more professional. You might want to be careful, however, about making text columns thinner than about 5 picas; it looks a little cramped at the bottom of the first page.

While I think that this issue was a good beginning, there are a few things that concerned me. First on the list was your use of space. I didn't make the fact that you didn't publish my article an issue, since I figured you had a lot of new freshmen writers that you wanted to give preference to. But I'm a little confused at the amount of space you devoted to advertising the Observer itself, and at the fact that one of your contributors got three different pieces published, while others like myself couldn't get anything published. It just seems a little unfair that you turn away people who want to contribute, and at the same time, give special attention to others, while wasting space on large notices. It smacks a bit of favoritism.

Secondly, making fun of Botstein is a classic pastime at Bard. But, I have to ask what substantive contribution Michael's article and Ace's cartoon made to the forum. Maybe its over my head, but I just don't see these pieces serving any purpose other than juvenile mockery. And I'm not sure I want my paper to be lowered to the station of campus waste bin for juvenile rebellion.

Finally, I think that, for next issue, you should elevate the level of dialogue. Yes, yes, we're unique, independent students; that doesn't mean we have to be, well, assholes. That also doesn't mean that we have to shy away from engaging serious issues. This issue may not have preached to the choir, but it certainly preached to the folks in the front pew. The Observer should be a paper in which students can have a good mix of entertainment and serious political dialogue, not a paper that leaves students feeling dirty and a few IQ points dumber.

I know you guys work hard for no pay, and the Bard community appreciates the work you do more than you know it. It is a sign of loyalty that we take time to tell you what we like and what we don't like, rather than just abandoning you all together. So take these criticisms in the spirit they are offered.

Good luck on next issue,  
Rob Ross

BARD

## BARD STUDENT BLOWS BARD BUCKS FOR REST OF SEMESTER REGRETS "GETTING REALLY HIGH" BY CARL KRANZ

While most Bard students were watching the latest episode of Project Runway, Reed Sharpton, a junior at Bard College, spent the last of his remaining Bard Bucks at the Down The Road Café in the campus center last Wednesday, effectively ending his ability to obtain food on campus without using cash.

"I honestly could have sworn that I had more Bard bucks, but the next thing I know, I'm told that I only had 35 cents left," said Sharpton, who appeared very shaken regarding the incident. "I really didn't know how to react to the news immediately, so I just said 'cool.' In retrospect, I think I would have said something like, 'Man, that sucks.'"

Added Sharpton: "I thought I'd have enough Bard Bucks to last me the rest of the semester."

Sharpton began the year with \$150 Bard Bucks and 19 meals from Kline Commons each week, switching his meal plan the next day to \$200 Bard Bucks and 14 meals, knowing that he'd "crave lots of midnight snacks this year, if you know what I mean." Also at the beginning of the year, Sharpton had purchased what he claimed to be "enough weed to last me the rest of the year," which he believes may be responsible for his Bard Buck demise.

What Sharpton had forgotten was that his constant smoking also led to an increased appetite, which led to many binges at the Down The Road café. "Almost every night, I'd go down to Down The Road and get something, just cause I had a craving for food. Even if they were out of almost everything, I'd get whatever they had left."

However, Sharpton believes it was his large purchases on Wednesday that caused him to run out of Bard Bucks: "I hadn't eaten dinner that day because Kline was real disappointing - fried fish bar - so I was really hungry by the time I had smoked. Then, when the stuff hit me, I was ready to eat. A lot."

By the time Sharpton had arrived at Down The Road, he had already planned out exactly what he was going to order - a bacon cheeseburger. But by the time he arrived, he noticed that no one was around. "I figured that, since there was no line, I wasn't concerned about other people waiting behind me. So I ordered as much as I could." As much as he could translated into a whopping five bacon cheeseburgers, three large orders of curly fries, a chicken tender sandwich, and two quesadillas. Sharpton also adamantly stated that "the guy that was working that night also gave me ten pickles. And I only asked for eight."

What Sharpton didn't realize, however, was that he was near the end of his Bard Bucks. "I had gone back inside to get a Sobe, and after I paid for it, the woman who works there says 'Well, I guess we won't see you here often anymore. You have 35 cents left.'"

"All summer, I had stayed relatively sober. I just couldn't wait to get back on campus, blow all my cash on some marijuana, and sleep for thirteen hours a day. You know, like, get away from the real world. And the past few weeks for me have been all about getting really high, which has been great but I can't keep up that lifestyle anymore, simply because I'm not able to get any food from Down The Road anymore."

Sharpton promised that, for the rest of the semester, he was going to smoke less and eat healthier. However, once next semester rolls around, "my Bard Bucks will reset and I'm going to smoke them away, but hopefully at a slower pace." 🍓

### Write for the Observer.

Next Meeting Thursday Oct. 13 @ 730  
Tewsbury Basement  
or email us at [observer@bard.edu](mailto:observer@bard.edu)

“When they are no longer sated by the taste of blood They will discard their weapons and the sun will fall”

# SMOGFEST REVIEW



## THE DIRTY PROJECTORS TELL BARD'S NOISE CURFEW TO "SUCK IT"

*by Jake Virant* At around 1:45am, Sunday morning, the Dirty Projectors began their set as the penultimate band of the two-day Smogfest. After the two-day celebration, the hype built up around the Dirty Projectors was fading. A good portion of the crowd, after hours of music most Bard students had never heard before, began to shuffle back to their dorms, burned out from a night of drinking and standing outside of Smog.

When the Dirty Projectors finally went on, they were not only fifteen minutes shy of mandatory campus noise curfew, but they lacked the crowd a popular, indie-label band usually receives at Bard. As a result, it was much easier to listen to the music and get a good look at the band.

The performance began with front man, Dave Longstreth, singing a solo piece to the accompaniment of his electric guitar. This stripped down performance laid out the songwriter's talents. Longstreth's long pauses between his playing kept the song tense while the constant dynamic shifts of rhythm kept the song moving. His voice, slipping in and out of tune with the guitar, kept the song grounded in a free rhythm. The slight embellishes of his voice along with an emphasis on heavy finger-picking forced the Dirty Projectors to be spontaneous to changes in dynamics or the dragging of the beat. Instead of calling attention to the song's lack of foundation, Longstreth's voice played off his guitar playing slightly behind the beat and dramatized the effect of hitting notes in unity with his voice.

Even though the first song sounded free, the rest of the Dirty Projectors' set was well rehearsed. Longstreth recently reformed the Dirty Projectors keeping only bassist, Nat Baldwin, aboard for the band's latest tour. Performing only new, unreleased material, the band had no trouble following the songs' difficult rhythm changes or swinging into fast, syncopating guitar figures. Baldwin and drummer, Brian McOmber, were exceptionally free as a foundational center. Baldwin's playing had the ability to accent the funk backbeat McOmber laid out while also supporting the melodies of the guitars and Longstreth's voice. On top of the solid rhythm section was Charlie Looker on 12-string electric guitar. Looker played most of the melodic fills and acted as sort of a lead guitarist while Longstreth played rhythm guitar and sang. That's not to say Looker played guitar solos. Looker's guitar lines, similar to Baldwin's bass playing, accented the notes that Longstreth's voice implied but couldn't hit (or purposely avoided to hit).

Due to the odd rhythm of the vocal melodies, the band constantly shifted the beat to match Longstreth's singing. The vocal lines never paused to wait for conclusion of the beat. Instead, the band changed the meter to accompany the voice more fluidly. As the set drew on, it seemed as if the band was just a backdrop for Longstreth's soulful voice.

# ALL THE KING'S MEN

By Kirianna Buteau

**Sean Penn seems to generate a sort of love-him-or-hate-him reaction amongst viewers. I may be one of the only people I know who reacts to him with almost complete apathy — but nevertheless on a poster for All the King's Men I saw his name next to Jude Law, Kate Winslet, James Gandolfini, and Anthony Hopkins, caved to All-Star Cast Syndrome, and went to see a movie that RollingStone.com reviewed as "thuddingly underwhelming."**

While Sean Penn gets first billing, the story mostly follows Louisiana reporter Jack Burden (Law), who begins to work alongside idealistic gubernatorial candidate and proud hick, Willie Stark (Penn), as he runs for office, wins a stunning victory amongst the lower classes but not with the aristocracy, and gradually becomes corrupted by his power. Not being familiar with the original novel (to my shame) or the first film adaptation, I cannot say whether or not this adaptation was good in representing the original feel of what Robert Penn Warren wrote, but certain things were disappointing and— I'm only guessing— probably rather "off." First of all, I like a James Horner score once in a while, but it was rather needlessly epic and majestic for such a psychological piece with voiceover narration that suggested a mood bordering on noir. Secondly, most of the actors were extremely well cast overall. My only complaint being that Penn is only believable as angry, corrupt Stark, not innocent, idealist Stark; but it might have been a good idea nevertheless to not have used so many British actors, whose invisible or occasionally slipping accents drove me a little nuts at times. And, unfortunately, as with so many movies these days, there were times when the amount of slow motion could have been seriously toned down.

However, while problems like these appear to be ruinous in the opinions of those at Rolling Stone and of apparently many other critics, I'm pretty convinced at this point that although Hollywood has mostly moved past filming movies as if they were plays, a lot of critics haven't stopped reviewing them as if they were plays. When I saw this movie I found the editing

very clever — it opens with a flash-forward scene and then a spiraling zoom in to the Louisiana state seal on the floor of the courthouse, and after two hours ends with a zoom away from the same thing (though, keeping spoilers hidden, I can only say it looks a little different), than a flashback. That's only one example. The cinematography is nothing meriting an Oscar, but there are a number of shots that I found totally stunning. I only seem to find writers caring about any of this stuff in formal, critical analysis, and maybe this is the case because the levels of meaning and themes that can be woven into how a film is shot are not things that some audience members would consciously grasp; but when a critic says, "This is a horrendously made film," and completely ignores how cinematic storytelling works, forgive me, but that's just sort of stupid. So, I could be sticking my neck out a little far here, but I honestly recommend All the King's Men to people who do care about cinematic storytelling and not only dramatic storytelling. It's got its problems, but I enjoyed myself anyway.

And besides, the story itself is classic. I'm going to buy the book when I can. ➡



# THE BALLET: MATTACHINE

By Omer Shah

The Ballet does a pretty tight job of representing the queer contemporary moment.

The Ballet are a foursome from New York City. The group shys away from the term "indie pop" and instead suggest, "sissy pop." The group touts itself as, "four queers, three chords, and one hundred melodies." They've been together just over a year and just released their self-released "Mattachine!" this summer.

I believe in preserving the accuracy of the word "gay." When I say that the Ballet's debut album "Mattachine!" is really gay I first of all do not mean it as a negative; the album is in fact awesome. So when I say "gay" I mean that the album relates and/or refers to experiences of homosexuals on a number of occasions. The album's title references one of the first homophile organizations in New York, dating back to the late fifties. Don't worry, you won't need your PhD in queer history or your Wikipedia for the rest of the record.

Mattachine! opens with "Personal," which is perhaps the only good song ever written about the Internet. "Personal" recounts the sometimes awkward experience of an internet hookup which then becomes something more. "I guess I didn't understand when you said are you top or bottom/ I said your wish is my command / which ever side you want I got it." It's as heartfelt as the Internet gets. Keeping with the gay Internet, Mattachine! also hosts an appearance of sorts by everyone's favorite gay pornographer, Sean Cody, on "Tell Me How." Other more classic guests on the record include members of Voxtrout, The Bakervilles, and The Aisler's Set, which perhaps provide a better sense of their contemporaries and their sound. The group's indie pop sensibilities have them receiving constant comparisons to the gay and mildly gay greats of indie pop, The Magnetic Fields, The Hidden Cameras, and Belle & Sebastian.

I realize that I'm perhaps harping on the queer sensibilities which draw me to this record, however Mattachine! deals with a host of universal themes. One of the album's most memorable tracks, "I Hate the War" provides an accurate representation of feelings of exhaustion and confusion regarding the war, "It's over I'm done writing songs about love, there's a war going on." The success of this song, within the broader context of protest songs, is the song's directness. It doesn't disorient with shallow metaphors.

The album's most addictive track for me right now is "Clay," which is quickly climbing my iTunes "Top 25 Most Played." The chorus bounces, "In autumn when all the college boys go back to school in fancy New England towns."

In total, Mattachine! is totally charming. I recommend you order a handsome handmade copy of the album their website. If you're a fan of gay porno, Judith Butler, or just really great pops songs, Mattachine is for you. The Ballet plays the Bowery Ballroom on November 7th opening for Voxtrout. ➡

The band only stopped twice during the performance: once to ask for water (Rafael said something about real men only drinking vodka) and once again to compliment another band, Aa / BIG A little a for their energetic performance earlier in the evening. After about an hour of music and an encore, the band had run through all the songs they knew and left the stage for the last band of Smogfest, the Ex-Models (who Bard security shut down after fifteen minutes due to noise complaints). I had never listened to the Dirty Projectors in much depth before Smogfest, but they are a different band live than they are on their albums due to changes in their line-up and the freedom they allow themselves on stage. Rating: redundant. ➡

# WAKE UP!

## REACTIONS TO

## Road to Guantanamo SCREENING

by Frank Brancely Slam. A man in a military uniform pushes your face onto the hard

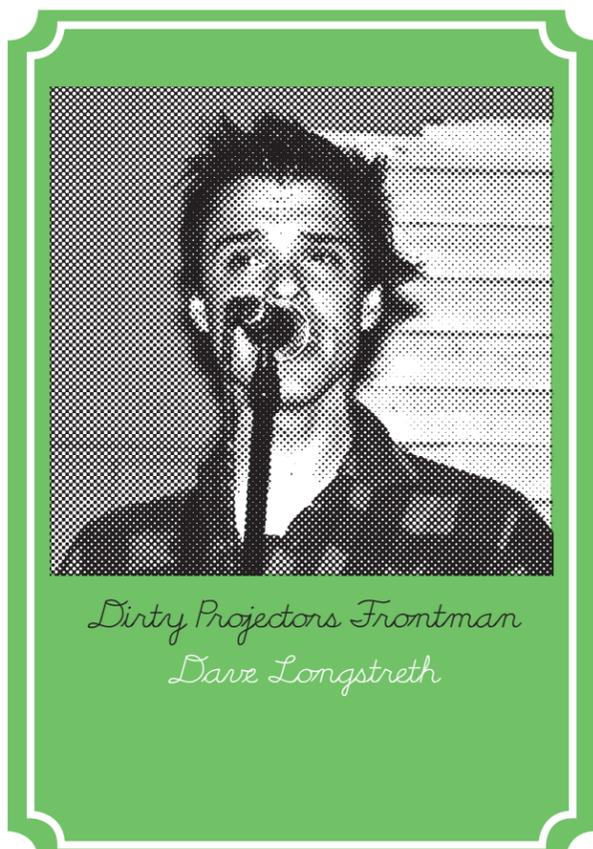
concrete. Pounding, you can't see anything but a very bright, white light, an angry voice demanding answers to a question you've answered several times over. As blood trickles down your face you realize there is no way out and little reason to hope. Who do you expect to come to your rescue? Americans? Welcome to Guantanamo. The Road to Guantanamo, screened Wednesday night in Olin as part of the thorough examination by the Human Rights Project to explore the "GITMO" debacle, is a terrifying docu-drama that our close friends at West Point might want to take a close look at. In post-911, the government and military have taken certain liberties, resorted to certain methods, many of which are unconventional (as in, not in accordance with Geneva Convention), in order to further suppress threats of "terrorism." In case for some reason you haven't been heard or seen or engaged in any conversation that involved the news, one of the more controversial and chilling headlines in the post-911 fiasco has been the detainment camp established in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in order to interrogate and imprison suspected Al-Qaeda operatives, otherwise referred to as "terrorists." Let's say it again... "terrorists."

Michael Winterbottom, a British director whose 9 Songs claimed critical appeal, follows the story of three real-life British nationals - Asif Iqbal, Ruhel Ahmed, and Shafiq Rasifkown, called the Tipton Three, who were held for roughly two years. The three plan to take some time off and devote recreation to exploring Afghanistan after traveling to Pakistan for a wedding. In the process they are captured by the U.S. military and are mistakenly identified as "terrorists." The reenactment of their capture, torture and interrogation are all intensely horrifying for anyone who realizes the role America has in international affairs.

The Road to Guantanamo should leave you furious. If it doesn't, you weren't watching (sort of like voting). Not early enough to find a decent seat, I sat on the floor where I was quickly plagued with a headache and chest-tightness. All the same, I'm pretty sure the symptoms were a direct result of my status as a U.S. citizen and not the floor. The acting is indisputably convincing and what is most effective is the very potent feeling of humiliation the film easily stings. It is all scary, but by far the scariest thing is that far too many people in this country may be unaffected by it.

Nonetheless, imagine if every American who decided not to vote or engage in political activity was given a tour of this prison. Watching a detainee who raises his head, one would immediately observe the quick consequence - a threat of physical force if not a clobbering blow. Reminiscent of Soviet interrogators whose duty it is to force some kind of a confession out of their prisoners by any means, or even vaguely nostalgic of Bush's encounter with CIA Director George Tenet who was allegedly told to find evidence linking Saddam to Al-Qaeda; the prisoners are refused absolutely any right whatsoever of authority, not as inmates, not as human beings, nor as innocents, which is the very least Americans like to think they offer.

It seems we have entered a realm in which tyranny has effectively disguised itself in a mask labeled "freedom" and "democracy" by the men in the White House. The Red Cross, after being authorized to examine the approximately 460 men in the camp, reported that many had fallen into despair, that twenty suicides were attempted - three had succeeded in hanging themselves with their bed sheets. Protesting their inhumane treatment and inadequate legal access, many in the camp reportedly waged hunger strikes. The US military called it "a move to draw attention." After watching Road to Guantanamo, I'd urge you to make a move yourself and at the very least, see this film. ➡



Dirty Projectors Frontman  
Dave Longstreth

# { THE SCIENCE OF SLEEP }

UPSTATE REVIEW

BY RACHEL MEADE



The eccentric creative force behind *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*'s is fully unleashed in *The Science of Sleep*, the first project both directed and written by Michel Gondry. The film, reputedly a semi-autobiographical depiction of the artist's own cluttered mind, takes its audience on a whimsical fantasy adventure through waking and sleeping with the aid of cardboard cities, cellophane rivers, and a reality as surreal as a dream.

Both reality and dream sequences belong to the fanciful and childlike Stephane, who, after the death of his father, returns to his French childhood home, his mother, and a creative job designing calendars. His disappointment at finding out that he has been duped into coming home for a mind-numbingly dull job pasting print on top of calendars is suspended as he begins to fall in love, slowly and wholeheartedly, with his neighbor Stephanie, whose artistic senses and creativity attract him.

Stephan's waking life, especially his relationship with

Stephanie, is enormously complicated by his skewed sense of reality. Stephan's fantastical dream world so interrupts his reality that he often forgets, as does the audience, privy to only his perspective, whether he is awake or dreaming. In one heart-wrenching scene, a wild dream in which he proclaims his love for Stephanie by singing a song in a fuzzy suit, turns into a psychotic Stephan terrifying the real life Stephanie with a nonsensical marriage proposal outside her apartment. When he realizes, in horror, that he is no longer wearing his furry suit and he has just attacked the real-life Stephanie, he is helpless to do anything more than mutter a confused apology.

Interestingly, Stephan's odd behavior is present even when he is fully aware of reality. In fact, at times, his impulsive behaviors and childlike emotional reactions to frustrating situations suggest the mind of a mentally-ill person, eternally trapped in his own immaturity and fantasy. Seen from this light, the movie takes on a whole new meaning, one that is a heart-breaking portrayal of the incoherent reality of a man who is unaware of the disabilities which are perfectly clear to everyone around him.

His mother's proffered creative job becomes a ploy to get her son, incapable of living alone after his father's death, to come back home to her. The leniency with which his coworkers and boss treat him, despite his inability to complete menial tasks or show up consistently can be seen as a recognition of, and respect for, his unstable condition. And Stephanie's inexplicable interest in Stephane after he breaks into her apartment, leaves an unintelligible note under her door, and breaks into tears several times in her presence, becomes the loving concern of a caretaker, rather than the interest of a girlfriend.

Whether you see a greater meaning in the portrait of a mentally-ill young man lost in his own delusions, or merely immerse yourself in wading through the complex sea of reality and dream and enjoying Gondry's fanciful concoctions, *The Science of Sleep* is an unquestionably worthwhile film. Rife with subtle humor, dream-like creations so wondrous your eyes can hardly get their fill, and superb acting, most stunningly, the role of Stephan, played to frenetic perfection by Gael Garcia Bernal, Gondry's second major work is nothing short of genius.

## Wu Tang Forever

A Look at Solo Projects *by Charlie Lanning*

Endearingly and never-failingly monotone, U-God opens *Made In Brooklyn*'s floor killer "Iron God Chamber" with as much simplistic rhyme candy as reverence for the Wu-nostalgic beat, making fireworks so everyone knows it's not just a single, but the new Wu single. The swarm wants fans to know the dynasty has returned. Masta Killa's Brooklyn seems as though it has this proclamation as its main purpose. When you look at Method Man and Inspectah Deck's new solo albums, that Wu notion is less a quirk than a sign of life. Method and Inspectah are just presently not as moving in their rhymes, and especially the beats, as the newly enlivened and much improved Masta Killa, and so they feel more detached from the Wu as a force. The power trio of releases is nevertheless a force to be recognized, even if it is in large part carried by *Made In Brooklyn*.

Masta Killa has just as mixed a bag of producers as any of

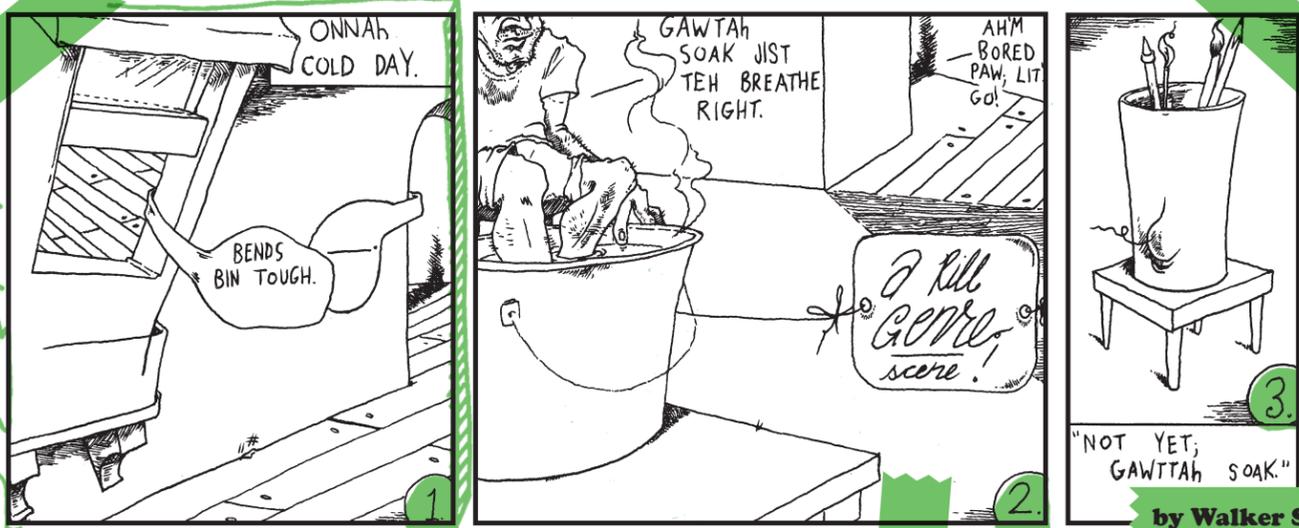
the recent Wu-Tang solo projects, but his sound is unified, and much more identifiably Wu, despite yet another production absence on the part of RZA. Yeah, Inspectah Deck's *Resident Patient* is the samurai throwback, but Brooklyn is what modern Wu should sound like, a nostalgic soul but fresh and ahead of everything else. On the other hand, presentation of Method Man's *4:21...The Day After* is on the part of an individual, customized as the brand new Tical; it's Method Man's own fantasy of the full clubby production and stoned out synth paranoia he loves to indulge. Yet Method is still thematically coherent, insisting, like other returning champs, that this is all about New York comin' back and the best still being the best. Beyond that, the beats are in sum coherent and mostly fresh, save the overuse of spaceship sounds and a few overzealous or overambitious missteps a la the slightly bloated but nevertheless brilliant *Fishscale* of late May. The ass-crunk blippity synths on "Fall Out" make one accept that Method is off doing his own thing and only drops "Wu-Tang" meaninglessly for pump-they-ass-up choruses, cause with his flow and rhythm, he could probably make a Pharrell track hip.

Yet, that just makes the new fresh and staggering Masta Killa all the more appealing for casuals and heads alike - he carries the heaviest Wu legitimacy and has simultaneously gone the farthest in developing a strong persona. This puts *Made In Brooklyn* in a comfortable place between the notable commercial success of *4:21* and the over-the-head and under-the-radar status of Inspectah Deck's new effort. Not forgetting Ghostface's outstanding success with *Fishscale*, this new volley of releases maintains popular Wu recognition as it's been since about 1999, about half in and out of the collective hip and tuned ears.

So considering *Fishscale*'s explosive re-illumination of Ghostface and subsequently Wu - check "9 Milli Bros." and excuse the chorus - there is considerable commercial disparity among the clan members' latest. In all the hype for Masta Killa and Method Man's August releases, it's hard to easily hear Inspectah Deck's new bombs dropping, quiet and unfortunately far less potent. Where *4:21* is too long, the Inspectah's *Resident Patient* is over-developed but short-breathed. Method Man has "Ya'meen (feat. Fat Joe & Styles P)" which blatantly imitates 50 Cent's "If I Can't"



# COMIX



by Walker Schiff



by Matt O'Koren



by Tyler Dorson

# MOVIE SCREENINGS

Wed 10.11	Thur 10.12	Fri 10.13	Sat 10.14	Sun 10.15	Mon 10.12	Tue 10.13
<b>Avery 7pm</b> LAS HURDES (1932) --LUIS BUNUEL TRIUMPH DES WILLENS (1936) --LENI RIEFENSTAHL LISTEN TO BRITAIN (1940) --LENI RIEFENSTAHL	<b>Preston 6pm</b> DEVI (1960) --SATYAJIT RAY <b>Avery 7pm</b> THELMA & LOUISE (1991) --RIDLEY SCOTT THE LIVING END (1993) --GREGG ARAKI	<b>WEIS</b> BENNY'S VIDEO (1992) --MICHAEL HANEKE THE PIANO TEACHER (2001) --ROD PRIDY	<b>NO SCREENINGS LISTED</b>	<b>WEIS</b> PING PONG (2002) --PAUL SCHRADER DODGEBALL (2004) --MIKE FIGGIS SHAOLIN SOCCER (2001) --ALEXANDER PAYNE <b>Avery 7pm</b> THE COMPUTER GENERATION (1972) --STAN VANDERBEEK GLOBAL GROOVE (1973) --NAM JUNE PAIK	<b>WEIS 7pm</b> GRINE FELDER (1937) --JACOB BEN-AMI	<b>Avery 7pm</b> THE RULES OF THE GAME (1939) --JEAN RENOIR <b>OLIN 102</b> LOS SANTOS INOCENTES (w/o SUBTITLES) (1984) --MARIO CAMUS
Wed 10.18	Thur 10.19	Fri 10.20	Sat 10.21	Sun 10.22	Mon 10.23	Tue 10.24
<b>Avery 7pm</b> MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON (1943) AT LAND (1944) A STUDY IN CHOREOGRAPHY FOR THE CAMERA (1945) RITUAL IN TRANSFIGURED TIME (1946) --MAYA DEREN	<b>Preston 6pm</b> CHARULATA (1964) --SATYAJIT RAY <b>Avery 7pm</b> MURDER, MY SWEET (1944) --EDWARD DYMYTRYK HIROSHIMA, MON AMOUR (1959) --ALAN RESNAIS	<b>WEIS</b> TRANSFORMERS (1986) --JAY BACAL TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES (1990) --STEVEN BARRON MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE (1987) --GARY GODDARD	<b>NO SCREENINGS LISTED</b>	<b>WEIS</b> TETSUO (1989) TETSUO II (1992) --SHINYA TSUKAMOTO <b>Avery 7pm</b> VIDEODROME (1989) --DAVID CRONENBERG	<b>WEIS 7pm</b> YIDL MITN FIDL (1936) --JOSEPH GREEN	<b>Avery 7pm</b> SCARFACE (1983) --BRIAN DE PALMA THE LEOPARD MAN (1943) --JACQUES TOURNEUR <b>OLIN 102</b> EL ESPIRITU DE LA COLMENA (w/o SUBTITLES) (1973) --VICTOR ERICE