students attend radical activist workshop in dc

Bard students and other conference attendees listen and learn at the 9th annual National Conference on Organized Resistance.

BY BECCA ROM-FRANK

At four am on March 6, one day before the 9th annual National Conference on Organized Resistance (NCOR), an unidentified cyclist tossed a homemade bomb into the army recruitment station in Times Square. As NCOR, groups of people could be heard enthusiastically discussing the news, and one table at the conference even offered free stickers with a sticker depicting a Zorro-like figure on a bicycle holding an explosive, with the words “I Heart the Bicycle Bomber.” The radical action of the “bicycle bomber” seemed generally lauded by the majority of NCOR’s participants, but anyone who attended would know that Anarchist Theory is more complex than a punk attitude.

On March 7, twenty-five Bard students drove down to Washington D.C. in order to attend NCOR, an annual activist conference held on the main campus of American University, which seeks to “bring together activists from a variety of issues, struggles, ideologies and backgrounds for a weekend of learning and reflecting on the state of progressive movements occurring locally, nationally and worldwide,” according to the event’s website (www.ncor2008.org). In addition to providing an open-minded atmosphere, NCOR offers a range of workshops, panel discussions, and informational tables aimed to promote organized action against “the injustices and inequalities that we confront in our daily lives and in the world.”

This year it was held March 7-9, with workshops running on Saturday and Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 7:00 in the evening.

The conference itself was organized by a coalition of social action-focused student clubs at the university, known as Community for Action and Social Justice. They receive partial funding from AU’s Student Activities Department.

About a hundred total workshops were offered over the course of the weekend, and a participant could choose to attend up to five workshops in one day. The workshops and lectures, held inside three different AU buildings, featured titles such as, “In the World But Not Of It: New Anti-Authoritarian Approaches to Retiree Struggles,” and ranged in subject matter from animal rights to environmental justice to gender identity. A series of lectures designated as the “Radical Theory Track” included talks by experienced organizers on the history and goals of a radical movement. A schedule listing the times and descriptions of the workshops was distributed, and some “spontaneous workshops” were announced throughout the weekend. Participants tended to be experienced organizers or non-profit group leaders, although there were several talks by college professors. All in all, according to sophomore Dan Raskin, the event was well organized, although the workshops were an unexpected blend of smoothly-run talks by very knowledgeable, interesting people, to “really dumb topics run by unqualified speakers.”

Raskin had been looking forward to attending one particular lecture for about a year titled “Radical Sustainability for Autonomous Communities.” The workshop was conducted by members of the Rhizome Collective, a non-profit community organizing project based out of Austin, Texas that develops techniques for creating de-centralized, sustainable urban infrastructure. “It’s what I’m interested in, and I wanted to hear about it for myself,” he said.

While Raskin was generally satisfied with his schedule, choosing workshops proved more difficult for some students. Sophomore Lisa Birnbaum chose hers based on her interests, and thus attended many workshops on Anarchist Theory. Looking back, however, she realized it would have been more helpful to attend workshops that played to her strengths as a demonstration organizer. During the Q&A sessions after every workshop, a number of the best questions were asked by the people who were actually organizers, or who were actually knowledgeable about the subject being discussed,” said Birnbaum.

The majority of the attendees appeared to be college-aged or older, but a number were older, more experienced organizers. In many workshops, Bard students found themselves in attendance with independent media journalists, labor organizers, members of sustainable communities, and alternative educators.

When not in a workshop, there was 24 time for browsing amongst many booths run by activist groups, most of which also had sponsored workshops. There, attendees could buy radical books, zines, and apparel, and pick up radical flyers, pamphlets and buttons. It also provided an excellent opportunity for people to talk and connect with one another. “It’s such an amazing opportunity to talk to people from all over about what is going on in the radical community,” said Birnbaum.

Raskin agreed, adding that he didn’t necessarily learn anything new about the movement but that the real experience was the opportunity to be around like-minded people. “I left with a lot of really useful information.”

Rachel Worthington, a second year transfer student, attended NCOR last year as a student at American University. The Casey are “a pretty small minority on campuses,” she said. “Their involvement in the campus community is pretty minimal, although they do have a group on campus.” In her first year at AU, Worthington noticed an excessive amount of bullying and tension between AU students and NCOR conference members. She reports seeing a number of “Frat Boy types” holding postings to kick “those smelly anarchists off our campus,” and, due to an impromptu pipe-bomb construction workshop, rumors circulated that the anarchists were a danger to the campus. Although the conference is now deliberately held during AU’s spring break, tensions have not necessarily ceased to exist. “It was really weird when I went last year,” said Worthington, whose family resides in Washington, D.C. “It seemed like most of the AU students who stayed over break hid on one side of campus, while the other side of campus turned into a radical vegan-sandwich eating sunbathing fest.”

In sum, the complete lack of lasting impression on all who attended. “NCOR ruined my life!” cried first-year Johanna Warren, when asked about her experience at the event. “It was really informative and interesting – but I can’t do anything to know that I’m aware that the world around me is going to hell,” she explained.

Worthington, however, found the whole experience empowering “I don’t feel afraid – or a sense of disempowerment from those workshops,” she said. “NCOR brings the people fighting for equality, solidarity, and freedom to its conferences. The conference shows what is being done and what I, or anyone, can do to help out – to spread the word.”

March 19 marks the fifth anniversary of the war in Iraq.

budget forum: a hostile environment? concerns about diversity prompt consideration of a new budget allocation process

BY RYAN GUSTAFSON

Responding to the outrage of affinity groups over the most recent Budget Forum’s allocation process, Dean of Students Erin Catman and other members of the administration have pursued legal council to determine if Budget Forum violates the rights of some Bard students. This action may bring about fundamental changes to club funding procedures. The decision to pursue legal council is indicative of the administration’s desire to reform the allocation process, which has traditionally been managed by Student Government’s Planning Committee and amended by the student body at Budget Forum.

Although the College’s discussions with Roberta S. Tarshis of the firm Tarshis and Hammerman are still in a preliminary phase, Cannan indicated the Forum might violate “hostile environment” standards and alcohol regulations. Though she has not yet investigated the matter formally, Cannan hopes that Tarshis will meet with a coalition of interested parties—members of the administration, the diversity commission, student government, and affinity groups—to assess the legality of current allocation procedures with the ultimate aim of reforming them. Student Government has already stated a preference that the budget allocation process should remain independent of the administration and has suggested reforms of its own.

There have been no concrete determinations about what a new allocation system would look like. Cannan stated that a major consideration of reform should be ensuring that certain clubs that “accede with the mission of the institution” more than others have a source of funding that is unaffected by Budget Forum. In addition to affinity group clubs, such groups might include academic, literary, and journalistic publications. It has not been determined
Students, faculty and community members filled nearly all 400 seats of Olin Hall for a discussion held by the Bard Political Union Thursday night, Mar 13. The topic was the resolution “America is too religious” which was supported by President of the Bard Political Union, Andrew Simon. The program would last three hours and 45 minutes, and is the longest time the Bard Political Union has ever operated.

President of the college, Leon Botstein, alongside sophomore Franklin Brancely and junior May Howden-Howell. Arguing against was college chaplain and theology Professor Bruce Chilton. They also discussed Pope Benedict and what they thought as they left, it wasn't the outcome. “The vote was really just a tool to demonstrate...” said Simon. The topic was the resolution “America is too religious” which was supported by President of the Bard Political Union, Andrew Simon. The program would last three hours and 45 minutes, and is the longest time the Bard Political Union has ever operated.

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A still from Graeme Reid's film, "Dark and Lovely," which is featured in the film's trailer.

Most Americans would be shocked to find a Constitution designed in the previous century that is still in use across the land. The Constitution, however, was not the work of any one person. Instead, it was the product of a collaborative process that brought together diverse voices and ideas from across the country. Through a series of debates and compromises, a document was produced that was intended to ensure the stability and longevity of the nation.

The Constitution was not without its flaws, however. As with any human creation, it was subject to the biases and concerns of its time. Some of the most significant limitations of the Constitution were its silent treatment of women and its exclusion of enslaved people from the political process. These omissions continue to shape the nation's political and social landscape to this day.

Today, as we look to the future, it is important to remember the lessons of history and the power of collaboration. The Constitution serves as a reminder that a diverse and inclusive society is possible when people work together towards a common goal.
The Men’s Rugby Club, shown here in a team huddle, plans to work smarter, not harder.

The Men’s Rugby Club

The Men’s Bard Rugby Football Club began their winter training with Brian Wolf, new head coach of the club. Wolf is stepping in for John Nandor, who after two years as head coach agreed with BRFC President, Joe Forsyth, to take time off. “Unfortunately John never actually moved beyond Bard rugby. He doesn’t have any coaching or playing experience besides at Bard and maybe a few men’s clubs here and there” said Forsyth. The decision for a new coach came as the fall season ended with a record of 0-5. For Bard Rugby, the plan is to work smarter, not harder this season. Nandor is confident that the team will make it a reality.

In addition to a coach who was more rugby-specific, one that could teach us more about the sport” said Forsyth. “Last season. But we were just a bunch of guys going out with our heads cut off, we didn’t know how to play the game. That’s the reason we made the decision we did.”

The team began a four-day clinic February 20, occurring simultaneously with the Demetrick basketball clinic. The clinic concentrated on fundamentals as well as playing and conditioning. “We have the team involved raising the rugby IQ,” said Wolf. “I don’t feel like I’m coaching or making people do anything for me—they’re in it for themselves. I want to offer guidance with the knowledge I’ve built on from my experience, the rest is up to the players.”

The barriers Chartwells corporate standards posed to purchasing local, a few years ago seemed insurmountable. Currently, Chartwells sources its food from five or six large food distributors, in order to simplify what would otherwise be an impressively complicated purchasing process. The questions the prospect of local posed were many. How could it maintain separate accounts with twelve different small farmers? How would these farmers be able to make deliveries in an already busy day? And how could the farmers ensure a regular delivery that would guarantee enough produce to produce 3,300 meals a day? The reality of a family farm harvest is that farmers naturally cannot guarantee a constant supply of produce on the scale that Chartwells needs.

The Men’s Rugby Club, shown here in a team huddle, plans to work smarter, not harder.

At a Cornell Cooperative Extension-sponsored Farm-to-School meeting in Red Hook in the spring of 2006, the incompatibility between the needs of a food service corporation and the capabilities of a small farm operation left a room full of Dutchess and Columbia County farmers and food-service professionals dejected. What was needed, it seemed, was a local food distributor who could facilitate this kind of Northeast Coop based out of Massachusetts that had provided such local food to so many high schools and colleges for over the last three years. The first of these was a creative deal worked out with a local farmer, Larry Sipler of Old Saw Mill Orchard in Germantown— you may remember Mr. Sipler who has come to landie our cider in the servery in full semester pasts. Chuck Abraham coordinates the purusing, pick up.

Local farmers pose in Kline during this year’s Farmer Appreciation Day.
About two weeks ago the Root Cellar suffered a collapsed ceiling in the zine room. Tiles, wires, light fixtures and metal beams protruded from the gaping hole that took up roughly one third of the ceiling. B&G fixed the ceiling two days after being notified. The Root Cellar is up and running again—open every day from 12 to 2.

The Tremblay basement has been a longtime problem for residents. Besides a new, strangely pristine laundry room, it remains wet and dirty and generally seems to be inhabited by monsters. Exposed pipes and wires line the walls and most of the floor is frequently taken up by a large puddle.

Half of the Old Gym basement is occupied by the Bike Co-op and Aramark offices. Further into the Bike Co-op, there are increasingly exposed pipes and wires in the ceiling, especially in the bathroom, though it is still functioning. The other half of the Old Gym basement has been condemned for several years. The closing of this area dates back to a mattress that was set on fire on the floor of the Old Gym, causing structural damage and leading to an inspection by the fire marshal, after which many sections were deemed unsafe.

Blithewood Barn was once briefly considered as a potential location for a new student space. It would allegedly cost more to renovate than to demolish it and build a new barn.
looking up at the sky
this week: contrails

WITH AARON AHLSTROM

Often it feels like the sky lives far away from us. It appears to be another world, an untouched realm so distant and removed that we imagine it inhabited only by gods and the deceased. Humans, though, have learned the ways of flight and now visit the sky on a daily basis. In fact, we have created our own type of cloud in the past: contrails, which are mashing together of ‘condensation trails’ that began one hundred and five years ago, created our own type of cloud in the past: contrails. This week: contrails across the sky, adding humanity’s tenuous strips. Like someone underlining air which then becomes saturated and warm breath on a cold night. The case of contrails is near saturation, the contrail may exist through a clear blue sky, dragging behind a quickly evaporating white tail. That planes don’t always manufacture contrails, but rather generate out-of-the-ordinary vegetables like brussel sprouts, sun gold tomatoes, purple beans, blueberries, and cherries and tomatoes. What’s been done: to investigate the hostile relationship with the sky.

SLC Updates:
The more you know.
What’s been done:
the study in the Faculty Dining Hall will now be open until April 15.
• A student-run taxi service is underway to provide a shuttle service between the Lapland House and the Stone Row condos.
• SLC pod casts are on WXBC and are available to students through a clear blue sky, dragging behind a quickly evaporating white tail.
• The exact changes wrought by contrails may also signify important developments in the weather. You might have noticed that planes don’t always manufacture contrails, but rather generate contrails. Sometimes they shoot cleanly through a clear blue sky, dragging behind a quickly evaporating white tail. That planes don’t always manufacture contrails, but rather generate contrails. Sometimes they shoot cleanly through a clear blue sky, dragging behind a quickly evaporating white tail.
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Do you know?
• Fresh produce has been banned from Stonerow due to noise complaints.
• There is no possibility of renting hybrid ZIP cars due to noise complaints.
• There is a possibility of renting hybrid ZIP cars due to noise complaints.
• The farm is petitioning to have the shuttle service extended to the middle of the week.
• If the Red Barn is a 24-hour space, it will require student monitors to keep it open. Would you be willing to take a monitor shift to work/office+SRG, similar to the shifts students work at the computer labs and late-night study hall.

The relevance of this article in the middle of the winter, they should have been in the Stevenson Gymnasium on February 1st when Chartwells fed 300 people a no-waste, mostly local food lunch as part of the Focus the Nation. The menu was chili and soup in bread bowls, cold cuts, beef salad, and apple cider. It was delicious.

Three years into this initiative, local Bardians are more than producing the ice cream. It is usually Sinoe’s Ice cream from the Green Onion Union Co. but this year Chartwells found Bora Bora (juice from Highland and Square Bites snacks from Pougetseep Ice Cream Co. is obviously more popular than dairy ice cream, rather than grown). Much of the Bread Square Bites snacks from Pougetseep Ice Cream Co. and the Technical Institute, and the SLC green food from Prospect Hill Farm in Pine Plains. Last spring Chartwells started filling the cases for Stony Brook farm from Hudson Valley Fresh, a Dutchess County dairy cooperative. Although the price of Hudson Valley Fresh milk is 99¢ more per gallon, Chartwells has felt it worthwhile to assume the added cost. Students on the SUNY Albany recently signed a deal with Hudson Valley Fresh for all dining halls by the end of the 2015–16 academic year, the only way to purchase cage-free eggs only. Currently the farm is from Indiana.

As a fanatic locavore, I was discouraged by the added cost. Following Bard’s precedent, Chartwells has felt it worthwhile to assume the added cost. Students on the SUNY Albany recently signed a deal with Hudson Valley Fresh for all dining halls by the end of the 2015–16 academic year, the only way to purchase cage-free eggs only. Currently the farm is from Indiana. (see box page four)

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Should students be allowed to serve/distribute alcohol during the hours that the Red Barn is a 24-hour space? 68.0% No - it’s not ideal but I’ll settle for this solution 51.9%

You - there is a very strong need 70.7%
Yes - not ideal but I’ll settle for this solution 51.9%
No - this isn’t a good solution 5.8%
Neutral - this doesn’t affect me 5.3%

3.8% There is no need 2.8%

The Red Barn has been suggested as an INTERIM student space, to be used for the next FIVE YEARS until a more permanent space is built. Because this space is TEMPORARY, it will only be outfitted with temporary/movable architecture.

Do you think there is a need to increase bookable, student-run spaces on Bard’s campus?

You - there is a very strong need 70.7%
Yes - there is a moderate need 21.2%
Neutral - this doesn’t affect me 5.3%
No - there is no need 2.8%

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I am not Jackson Pollock, the narrator announces in the opening story's first sentence from John Haskell’s A Book Column. A collection of short stories on notable people. The first sentence of another story, “The Judgment of Psycho”, reads, “Janet Leigh was never completely naked during the filming of Alfred Hitchcock’s Psycho, but she did have breasts.”

Famous, ludicrous, mythical, notorious, notable people: their personality, to whatever degree, is necessarily subsumed. What makes them unique is dramatically overshadowed by their uniqueness. I am not Jackson Pollock is a collection of meditations on the humanity of these people whose humanity resides in a blind spot. Janet Leigh is conflated with her character in Psycho, and her humanity is presented in light of the Trojan War. The Judgment of Paris, a painting by Lucas Cranach, and Girl Asleep at a Table, a painting by Jan Vermeer in Elephant Feelings: Haskell interpolates straightforward accounts of Topy, an attraction at Coney Island around the turn of the century (who was an elephant), the Hottentot Venus, a kidnapped African woman who was shown off as an oddity in the early nineteenth-century in London, and Ganesh, a Hindu deity with the head of an elephant and the body of a male human being. I’m not giving anything away when I say that Topy is executed for being who she is, a minute-long short film produced by Thomas Edison’s manufacturing company captured Topy’s death by electric current, and that it makes perfect, tragic, beautiful sense.

And it’s not that the devil is incapable of love. It’s just that what the devil calls “love,” we call “evil,” and we try to eradicate that evil. In The Exorcist they’re tied the god down and with their water and curses and crosses they’re trying to destroy a thing that just wants some kind of existence. But they don’t give the devil a choice. And the devil, naturally, is upset. It’s hard to think of the devil being scared but that’s why it spits out the thick green bile. To sicken the priests. To drive them away. And they are sickened. The old priest has a heart attack, the young priest starts hallucinating, and let’s say that Mercedes McCambridge is the devil.

If this sounds gimmicky, you’ve got the right idea. This is what gimmicks aspire to—what gimmicks want to be when they grow up. But John Haskell takes no shortcuts; he creates a wonderful reality for each icon. I am not Jackson Pollock resonates all the more deeply because we think we know the truth about Orson Welles, or about Laika, the first dog in space, but upon realizing we have no idea, we want these fictions to replace our preconceived notions.

Haskell cofounded the Huron Theater in Chicago where he performed his own writing, much of selections of I am not Jackson Pollock are available at http://johnhaskell.home.mindspring.com/sound.html.
Although the direct effect the ad had on the panic of rudeness but a kind of impatient caring. Fiona, leaning over the table to heap brand-aids and Neosporin for him after he spread over the darkened room. Fiona had written two lines. gross feet and Orangey-gold.” He brought his eyes down number one. She had always done that, in the spirit of making fun of herself. He was wearing a pair of her flip-flops. Johnson won that election in one of the greatest landslides in American history. The ad ends with Senator Clinton's message front-center in the media narrative.
Both President Botstein and Chaplin Chilton looked cool, calm, and confident as America’s second most atheist school in the United States according to Princeton College, the second most atheist school in America, is not too religious, it is too diverse.

BY MIKE LEVEL

zzekian sparring

BY MYLES CURTIS

A daring group of young men can be found on campus, in a Literary Theory survey or an Introduction to Hegel class, at a Hitchcock screening or a two-paragraph spread. Likely one also finds them on Friday or Saturday among our district beau monde, tongue and supple, and posing with the brightest lights of our generation’s grand intellectual constellations. This is a curiosity, however, for the author is an31

The speed in which Power acquiesced this primary has become, I doubt this to be a power struggle between ideological politics, the California! begs my leave. One man misses the ball (but only because of the angelic fold. My reverie is interrupted: a ball, full sail a mighty gust. Two men, to their boundless will, a will they cannot refuse for fear of a court! These essence-sappers betray to their boundless will, a will they can no more refuse than a full sail a mighty gust. Two men, to their boundless will, a will they cannot refuse for fear of a court! These essence-sappers betray.

In an ideal society, all the citizens would, by their own free will, hold the same religious, philosophical, and political beliefs.

BY ELIAS ISIQUE

Senator Barack Obama won Mississippi Tuesday night, after a sometimes substantial delegate lead over Senator Hillary Clinton. But, although every win in a primary contest as competitive as this one is valued, elections haven’t been the story since Clinton’s big wins in Texas and Ohio. Instead, the heated rhetoric emanating from advisors to the campaigns has inspired the most commentary. The hubbub began with Samantha Power, a Harvard professor, Pulitzer Prize winner, and now-former foreign policy advisor to Barack Obama, and her comments to a reporter from the UK paper The Scotsman. Although Obama swiftly and unilaterally agreed to beat back, at some point Power proclaimed Clinton to be “a monster” for her tactics in Ohio. Predictably, the comments were published; more predictably, the Clinton camp called for Power’s “resignation” though she held no official position.

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In an ideal society, all the citizens would, by their own free will, hold the same religious, philosophical, and political beliefs.
The student body is at risk of losing a considerable amount of power and authority. This was exemplified by the Planning Committee and the incompletely hysterical reaction of the Anti-Racist Discourse. Their members are in such a fervent position in body that it was almost hard to control. This would make it much harder for students to get funding for social events, for instance, when the Planning Committee ultimately remove one of the things that makes Bard a unique institution.

Every semester, seventy dollars comes out of your tuition and goes into a special fund that the Committee uses for allocation decisions. In turn, clubs can try to take money from one another at budget forum. If a club is still unhappy with the amount of money it has received, it can petition for further funding. The Athletic Department sends the most funds to sports teams and academic departments fund some academic clubs. Also, clubs share a budget forum.

This system is unlike that of most institutions because students can decide which activities to support, which activities are valuable to them, and which aren't. Clubs can argue over our communal values, rather than the strogs. Perhaps better clubs can get more dollars for better activities, if their members would vote for that cut. This time around, the Committee met even though the members were absent.

Worst of all, the Committee doesn't keep books, doesn't know how much money is actually in the fund, or how much they've spent of the $100,000 surplus that was reallocated last semester. The record situation is so bad that one recent graduate embezzled money from the fund, and other students covered it up because they were afraid of repercussions against the Student Association (one on the committee was involved). One wonders how any one on the Committee ever thought that the fund was properly managed, or that any IRS audit would ever have passed an IRS audit.

This spring’s budget process was tough. One club, however, was the Mexican Club, which was missing and Secretary Oliver Tadliz had to attend to the fund. He applied for more this semester than last, and most clubs asked for more this semester than they had been allotted last semester. 26 clubs got less that half their minimum budget, and 39 got less than their minimum. The conviction fund doesn't grow between the fall and the spring, so budget requests for some clubs need to be funded by reductions in funding for other clubs. But some clubs asked for larger increases than others. An analysis of the budget forum in print in the last Observer shows that “affin clubs” in general averaged a request for a 74% increase in their fall '08 budgets (affin clubs, by the way, account for about 75% of the Mexican government’s budget, or roughly about 75% of the Mexican budget’s minimum budget). Of course, this is not to say that they didn’t deserve the increase. Nor is it to say that they expected to get their minimum budget first. Most clubs know that the hands far outnumber the dollars, and that they’re lucky to get 50% of their minimum operating budget (My own club, Bard Excel, got 40%, and that’s about average). In fact, the total minimum budget requests exceeded the conviction fund by 26%, or $36,000. The ideals exceeded the fund by 66%. One club, however, was the Mexican Club, that they were entitled to a budget increase of over 70%. They thought that their club was more important than other clubs, and, when the Committee awarded them 15% of their minimum, they reacted with outrage. But instead of bringing their case to the student body at the forum, they began a boycott of the entire budget selection process. This club was the ARD. Their hubris is succinctly summed up by ARD member Marika Cater’s comment: “The Planning Committee cannot deny funds to the only resource on this campus for students of color.” The Hindu Student’s Organization might be surprised to learn that the other “affin clubs” on campus are color free (FYI, they got a budget increase of 227%).

The ARD also insinuated that the students on the planning committee and at the forum were prejudiced, or worse: “Affinity groups like A.R.D. must not have to defend their budgets in front of a Pla- niminist’s eyes!”

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nafta: who benefited?

by Caroline Friedman

In this harsh climate of the primary season, candidates Obama and Clinton have recently been straining for that last, feeble populist tone in their rhetoric. Perhaps this is due to the perception that low-income, which is a significant part of the campaign’s adherents, Edwards, the populist dujor, dropped out of the race. Both candidates have been criticizing the North American Free-Trade Agreement (NAFTA) for a variety of reasons. These include the elimination of labor restrictions, and a loss of American jobs. NAFTA’s failure to address trade imbalances fails to address its greatest victims: farmers in the Mexican economy. Citing American farmers, the Mexican government has made that has eradicated large problems, and there are steps that they could have taken to soften the harsh blow of free trade.

NAFTA is the largest trading bloc in terms of combined GDP, even surpassing the EU. Its main purpose was to phase out the majority of trade tariffs over a fifteen year period. It was passed by the Senate in 1993 and is administered by environmental standards by Bill Clinton. Though it has been claimed to serve as a pact between three countries, in many cases agreements are only bilateral. For instance, the pact between Mexico and the US is far broader and wider in agricultural liberalization than the US-Mexico pact. By 2000, the US had largely successfully in opening up trade between the countries: trade between the US and Mexico had increased by 93% since its signing.

Free trade has always been touted as a way to lower prices for (mostly American) consumers. Others would argue that the benefits extend beyond consumers. Some claim that NAFTA has actually benefited the Mexican economy, citing its increase in per capita income. However, judging anything without delving into particular sectors has rarely been helpful, and obviously occurs relative to other factors of pro-business interests. Surely, a few large farmers and transnational food corporations have benefited from NAFTA, but the Gini coefficient (a number that represents inequality within a country) increased. In the US, the Gini coefficient increased, while the Gini coefficient increased, while the Gini coefficient decreased in Mexico and Canada. It is hard to parse this out from other modes of outsourcing. It is this fact that limits the Gini coefficient. With Obama even offering tax incentives for companies that move American jobs to Mexico, the increased exports can be attributed to the needs of the country’s needs. The Mexican government thought that this would siently favor modernization over taking care of its poor. A fair assessment of NAFTA should criticize the Mexican government, even if that is less populous and less entertaining than bashing the US.

Mexico has more free trade agreements than any other country. One of the greatest mistakes the Mexican government has made is the neglect of the allowed tariffs. Mexico was allowed to keep tariffs on corn trade until 2008, which would’ve provided a much longer period of adjustment for farmers. However, Mexico chose to drop corn tariffs as soon as NAFTA was passed. Instead of phasing out tariffs over fifteen years, it was completed in 30 months. What was the hurry?

It is fair to say that the US and Mexico are the big winners in the squashing of Mexico’s agricultural sector. The US has forever sus unfair trade agreements, and many would consider their agricultural products to be a source of subsides. Producers are likely to be hit in their country. However, Mexico is certainly not the only example out of many of the Mexican government favor toward international trade. Though Mexico has been heavily courting Foreign Direct Investment, only 8.3% of this investment has gone toward agriculture. What is has in succeeded in is inviting corporations like Cargill, Mitchell, and Tyson’s to increase their operations in Mexico. Moreover, the Mexican government was not surprized by the injurious effects its policies, and blind trade-agreements have had. They knew that growing corn would not be completely untenable. However, they had with all their might that “inefficient” farmers would just find new crops. But the government completely miscalculated the importance of corn in Mexican society. Corn has been grown in Mexico for over 7000 years, and remains today as a symbol of its culture and national pride. Corn is grown primarily out of subsistence, corn accounts for 60% of the cultivated land in Mexico. The government has always thought that this agricultural sector could simply be shifted out of the hands of the cultural implications of corn, the lack of credit and technology that a rural farmer has access to might help its chances. All the world’s crops are at the end of the day, access to credit, and government support have actually fared well under the Mexican government, and not instead of creating the necessary foundations for small farmers.

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ard out of line

CONTINUED FROM PAGE TEN

students and at a Budget Forum of mostly drunk, mostly white students [emphasis added]. The reference to race is a cop-out— an insulting one at that. But it’s consistent as far as I can tell with both clubs and other communications. Club head Carolyn Lazard told me on the phone that she could not attend an ARD meeting because “the ARD only admits students of color,” and emphasized “Friday’s workshop is for people of color” were sent out to members of the community. In fact, I was barred from attending that event. Thantly veiled accusations of racism, closed meetings and selective admission are a troublesome pattern of behavior, and everyone at Bard should give it serious consideration.

The ARD has done to the administration arguing that budget forum is a “hostile environment,” and that something needs to be done to correct the process (at $2K plus, I wish someone was hostile to me). The administration is now considering, among other options, dedicating a portion of the fund to affinity groups. Thus, ARD argued would eliminate the need for affinity clubs to compete for money. In the conclusion to the argument is ignorable of the facts. The total percent of the convocation fund awarded to affinity groups this semester amounted to 17%, exactly the same as in fall ’08. ARD didn’t lose money to non-affinity clubs, they lost money to groups similar to themselves. In fact, the total convocation funds this semester have not significantly change from last semester. What happened was that the ARD didn’t get the massive increase in their budget they wanted. This would have happened if the fund was partitioned. Incidentally, ARD was the biggest winner at the forum by gaining $2,350. At the end of the day, they actually increased their budget by 5%. That’s more than a lot of clubs can say.

This debate is not about the value of affinity groups or even the, what is valuable, and no body argues that. This is a debate about who gets to decide how the student activity fee is spent: the students or the administration. Be assured, it should be the former. I hope that Erin Canaan and the other administration officials agree. Forcing an immovable partition would the student clubs and affinity groups themselves incapable of participating in rational public discourse, but because their rhetoric seems to toe the line. Racism has no place here. In the budget, at the convocation, at the ARD, at the community at large. Equality is a concept that is being seen as a double-standard— isolated from both the college and the world at large. Many students complain that Bard is a bubble, at odds with the realities of the outside world. The editors of Bard publications then, are working from inside both the college and the world at large. Why Bard take a stake in journalism and the college at large. For one thing, campus newspapers, even the long-standing Observer, have no permanent writers, and journalists. Even the students have not always been treated with respect by the administration. Now, there have been other ongoing investigations into Spitzer’s involvement with more serious corruption charges. This is what should be focused on. Instead, Eliot Spitzer will be remembered as the man that The New Individualist called “the man that The New Individualist called ‘the man that The New Individualist called’.”
Vol. 4 No. 2 October 9, 1961

slater [food services] slapped by student protest

BY RICHARD BROWN

for those willing to drive students to Ann’s

profits are negligible and Slater System

would be delighted to drop the coffee shop

altogether.

4:00 – The sign-up chart in Hegeman has been up for just over two hours. One person has signed his name. It is for Tuesday at four o’clock and Friday at nine thirty.

5:30 – Student Boycott committee posts twenty foot long sign in Dining Commons stating that they are “personally insulted” by Dzing Commons food. In shockoing red ink, measures are outlined to show Slater System that they “mean business.” The first one is “Attend all meals!!”

6:00 – The sign-up chart in Hegeman has been posted for five hours. So far one person has signed up. He has crossed his name off.

8:06 – The sign-up sheet for rides to Ann’s has been posted for six hours in Hegeman. One person signed up. He has crossed his name off.

9:02 – After lengthy discussion on the student concession to determine time, place, tenure, etc., the question is finally called and the motion is finally passed. 9:16—from Council minutes “After numerous decisions had been arrived at, Mr. Wissman appeared to announce that the five students mentioned found themselves unable to offer the community such a part-time service for various sundry reasons.”

9:25 – Council is informed that as it is meeting, there is a concession operating illegally in the lobby of Albee.

9:28 – There is evidently a facton present which is pressuring for support of the student concession in the lobby.

9:27 – Noble intentions notwithstanding, it is felt that the group should be condemned because it is using a lobby.

9:30 – Mr. Strauss called the illegal concession an “illegal concession.”

9:31 – In defending the illegal concession, Mr. Lensing made a motion that the Community Council state is sympathetic with anyone attempting to improve the existing or arising conditions; that the council is willing to aid any such groups in any way possible. As Mr. Lensing is talking, just above his head, in the lobby of Albee, a dungareed student in glasses is doing his part in attempting to improve existing conditions and support the boycott by selling salami sandwiches and cider. The salami sandwiches are forty cents apiece. The cider is ten cents a cup. The sandwiches cost him just under 18 cents apiece to make. He buys the cider from Mr. Hoyt.

5:30 – Leaders of boycott will continue their protest.

9:16 – Council was willing to aid any such groups with anyone attempting to improve the existing conditions. As Mr. Lensing is talking, just above his head, in the lobby of Albee, a dungareed student in glasses is doing his part in attempting to improve existing conditions and support the boycott by selling salami sandwiches and cider. The salami sandwiches are forty cents apiece. The cider is ten cents a cup. The sandwiches cost him just under 18 cents apiece to make. He buys the cider from Mr. Hoyt.

a response:

We, the students, are faced with an unpleasant and three-fold situation in dining commons. The nature of the situation is over crowding, inadequate meals, and perpetual chaos.

Of the first condition, over crowding, we have no control. Admissions is the concern of the administration, and if there have been admitted more students than Bard seems able to accommodate that is no fault of our own.

The solution of the food problem may not be immediate, but it would be the result of negotiations between the administration and the Slater system representative.

The chaos is caused by and can be eliminated by the students. Bard is neither a country club nor a finishing school, and if it were to develop into either it would be a prostitution of the college.

As vague as is the “Bard ideal,” that for which students seem to fight, one can easily associate scholarship with the Bard that most of us would enjoy. With the development of the mind, though, should come a certain amount of dignity and self-respect. An individual possessing dignity and self-respect will in turn have respect for others. One finds little dignity in dining commons. Aseide form slight physical exertion, the indignities that are occasionally noticed, lack of dignity is manifested at means by unsavory table manners and lack of consideration for others. My concept of gracious living at Bard, I will never expect hors d’oeuvres and I do not believe that a college representative.

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