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The End of Albee?
 AIDS: A Special Report
 Adventures in Room Draw



Carefully Choosing Their Words

The students ask for open lines of communication, Security hesitates

by **Deirdre Faughey**

IF SECURITY is interested in regaining the trust of the student body, they have a lot of explaining to do. Students are beginning to call Bard campus a police state, with a racist Director of Security; they warn each other about the spy-like tactics of some officers. Most agree that Bard is not the comfortable, easy-going place it once was.

However, Vice President Jim Brudvig claims that these sentiments are exaggerated. According to The Central Committee, improved communication between Security and the student body might help to eliminate the confusion.

Racism within Security has been a widespread issue of concern lately. In August 1998, a security officer, Max Dube, filed a complaint with the New York State Division of Human Rights against Bard College: he claimed that he was given a poor performance evaluation by Bob Brock, Director of Security, because of his race.

Brudvig, speaking for Bard College, replied, "We don't believe the poor performance evaluation was racially motivated." Unresolved, the complaint sat dormant until this past March 17 when Dube went to White Plains to speak with a hearing officer.

Two weeks later Brudvig and Brock testified with the same officer.

Separately, Dube had three meetings with Brudvig and a Union Representative. These meetings resulted in a private agreement and now the hearing

officer from the Division of Human Rights is drafting a conciliation.

Dube's complaint dealt solely with the performance evaluations of 1998. However, in another complication, Dube resigned from his post as Charge-of-Shift upon returning from his January 2000 vacation.

Charge-of-Shift, according to Brudvig, is a management position that changes day-to-day. Prior to his vacation, Dube held the position for the 11p.m. to 7a.m. shift five days a week. When he returned the position had been partially given to security officer George Walzack, leaving Dube as Charge-of-Shift only twice a week. This, Dube felt, established a pattern that upheld his charge of racial discrimination in 1998.

Security has no particular reason for dividing the shift among two officers; they view it as a random managerial assignment that never really belongs to one officer. The Union is now demanding an explanation for the frequent changes.

Insulted and disheartened, Dube resigned from the Charge-of-Shift position completely. Since then, Brudvig stated, Dube has been a "normal officer."

The most disturbing charge in this case came from former security guard Mark Scheer. He testified on Dube's behalf at the March 17 White Plains hearing that he heard Brock call Dube a "nigger," saying that he wanted get rid of him. According to Scheer, Dube is most qualified for the night shift because he's been

at Bard longer than anyone else. Brock, says Scheer, tries to turn the officers against one another.

Brock denies all allegations of racism and points to the fact that when he took over as Director of Security Dube was the only minority officer. Today, he says, there are "four minorities and females." He is proud of the fact that the 12 to 14 dispatchers

who, he says, spies on Service Master workers, students, and other Security guards. He is an "out and out liar," says Scheer, "who will turn people in for anything." In his most shocking accusation, Scheer said that he has seen Walzack carrying a gun on campus.

When questioned about the gun, Walzack replied, "Why would

Brock is not as popular as former director Kim Squillace, now at Vassar College.

Brudvig recognizes that Brock has been the subject of criticism. Security guards have complained about some of his decisions, and, on occasion, shared inside information with the students, something they have been advised not to do. While the officers are encouraged to converse with the students and engage in friendly conversation, they are not supposed to share personal or occupational information with them. This, Brudvig states, is how rumors get started.

When it comes to hiring a new guard, Brudvig and Brock have to find a particular and rare kind of person: someone who has experience as a security guard, and familiarity with a college campus setting. A security guard at Bard has to be "non-judgmental," Walzack says. "There are a lot of freedoms here, and it's great that everybody can do what they do." It might take a while for a new guard to adjust to the leniency that Bard students are permitted. Brudvig states that some of the complaints against Walzack are a result of his demeanor, "which he needs to soften."

In lieu of recent complaints, Brudvig has set aside May 18 for "respect training," which Service Master and Security employees will have to participate in. This training session will focus on issues of racial discrimination and sexual harassment on campus.

Chris Pappas, a member of EMS and the Central Committee, . . . continued on page 5

Insulted and disheartened, Dube resigned at the beginning of the semester from the Charge-of-Shift position completely. Since then, Brudvig stated, Dube has been a "normal officer."

are of various ethnicities, and that he has made an effort to recruit from a variety of student groups, particularly those in the HEOP program. He also mentioned that he is "one of the few people around that believes in Affirmative Action."

Scheer, who worked at Bard from August 7, 1999 to late January 2000, was officially let go due to his "poor job performance." He is currently formulating a lawsuit against Bard for unjustly firing him based on the accusations of George Walzack, who reportedly caught Scheer sleeping while on duty. Scheer says that he was not sleeping, but merely resting in the Security office during his 5am break, answering a few calls while he was there.

Scheer advises the students to be wary of George Walzack

"I need to carry a gun here?" While he does tote a gun and a bullet-proof vest for his private security day job, Walzack swears that he has never carried the gun or worn the vest on campus. He is fully aware that it is a federal offense to bring a firearm onto a college campus and says that he has no interest in putting his job on the line. Walzack has only been at Bard for the past eight months and admits that, although the new guy always takes some flack, talk of a gun is ludicrous.

Walzack does wear a vest that is strikingly similar in style to the bullet-proof kind, but is merely for warmth; bulky coats are too cumbersome, he says.

Inside Security

Low morale is a new and increasing problem at Security.

NEWS COMMENTARY by Stephanie Rabins

The Changing of the Guards

There is a lot of buzz going around campus. Talk of Bard's structure—or lack thereof—changing, talk of a widening gap between students and administration, talk about a new feel on campus. Security, which maintains a unique and precarious position between administration and the students body, is getting its share of scrutiny. Claims of abuse of authority, poor communication with students, and most frighteningly, of institutional racism within the department are being voiced and investigated.

The question remains—how do students on campus feel about their day-to-day interactions with Security, and the role played by the department in life at Bard?

Students, mostly campus residents, were asked a few informal questions about those interactions. And for the most part, answers were positive.

Freshmen and sophomores were most enthusiastic about their experiences with Security here. The guards are friendly and helpful, they said, and aren't out to get anyone in trouble. Their presence is seen as one protective of the security of the student body, rather than as a disciplinary force. Tucker Dalton, a first-year who attended a private boarding school before coming to Bard, says that this is true here more than it has been with any other security he has encountered. Mike Morini, also a first-year, says that "security guards are usually extremely friendly. They're always willing to strike up a conversation", he says. Students noted good relationships with individual guards, and voiced appreciation of their presence.

As older students were approached, the answers became a bit more skeptical. There is a sense that changes have taken place in the past few years. Students who interact regularly with guards, to gain access to particular rooms on campus or just on a friendly, social basis notice that although particular relations remain positive, there is something of a new feel. Certain new guards haven't settled in quite yet, or morale is not as high as it could be. Junior Rebekkah Willingham sometimes feels that security is here more to protect Bard's reputation than its students.

Senior Monte Large relates changes in security to a wider spectrum of trends here. "I definitely think that security is one of the main aspects [contributing to the changes]", he says. The "lack of ability to have parties on campus" is adding to the much-talked-about "break-up between classes."

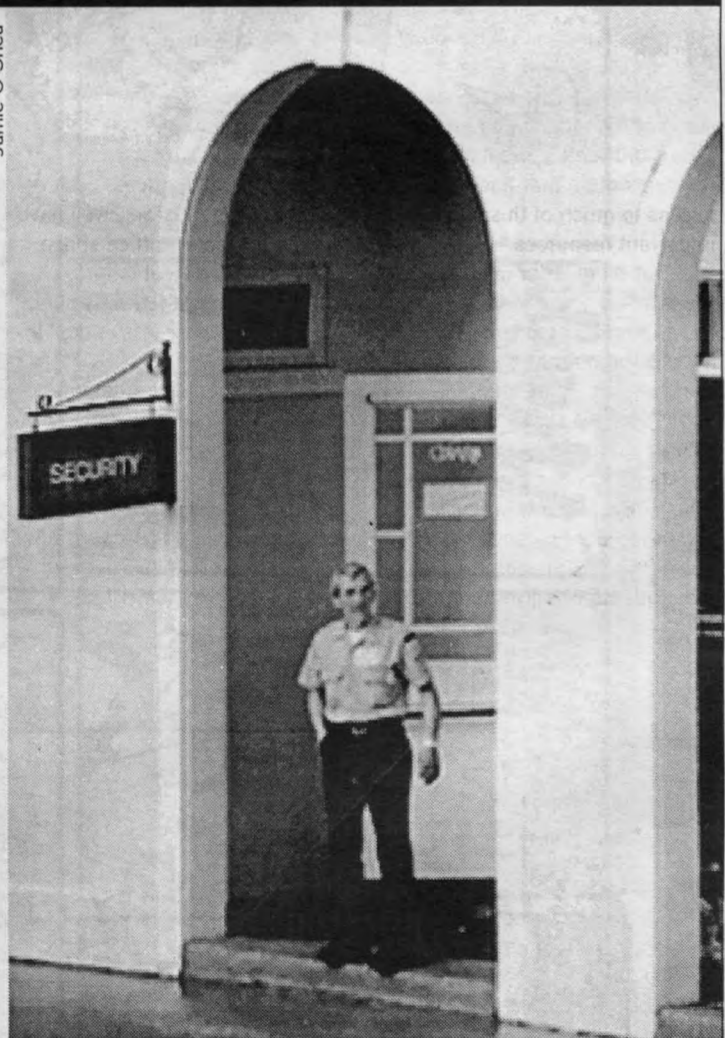
Students recognize that Security, for better or for worse, has something of an authoritative role to fill. Adam Davison feels that the guards have a "by the book regimen", but when it comes to actual student life, there is a lot of freedom. As long as kids are safe, most activities are tolerated. "You can't do that at Vassar," he reminded us, "you can't do that anywhere."

The changes are clearly not a function of one department or sector of campus. Housing decisions, building plans, and faculty hiring procedures are currently all under scrutiny. There is something of an urgent feel to the discussions lately.

Upperclassmen are worried that if questions aren't asked now, they never will be; the trends

. . . continued on page 5

Jamie O'Shea



A Familiar Face: Gilbert Baker is a long-time security guard at Bard and well respected campus personality.

The Contested Fate of Albee

Off-line? On-line? Albee vacillates between two uncertain futures

by **John Garrett**

WITH ALL OF THE CHANGES, both structural and cosmetic, that Bard College is undergoing, there is one on the way that many students find particularly disturbing. Bard's upper administration—a small group of administrators made up of President Botstein, selected vice presidents, and deans below him who make almost all of Bard's important decisions—are planning to have Albee taken offline as a dorm. Instead, the building would reopen as faculty offices for the spring semester of next year.

Centered amongst some of Bard's most important structures—notably the Library, Kline Commons, Ludlow, and Olin—Albee houses over thirty students in some of Bard's most popular single dorm rooms. Every year, the process known as Room Draw sees Albee go with the first of those single rooms available for students other than Peer Counselors.

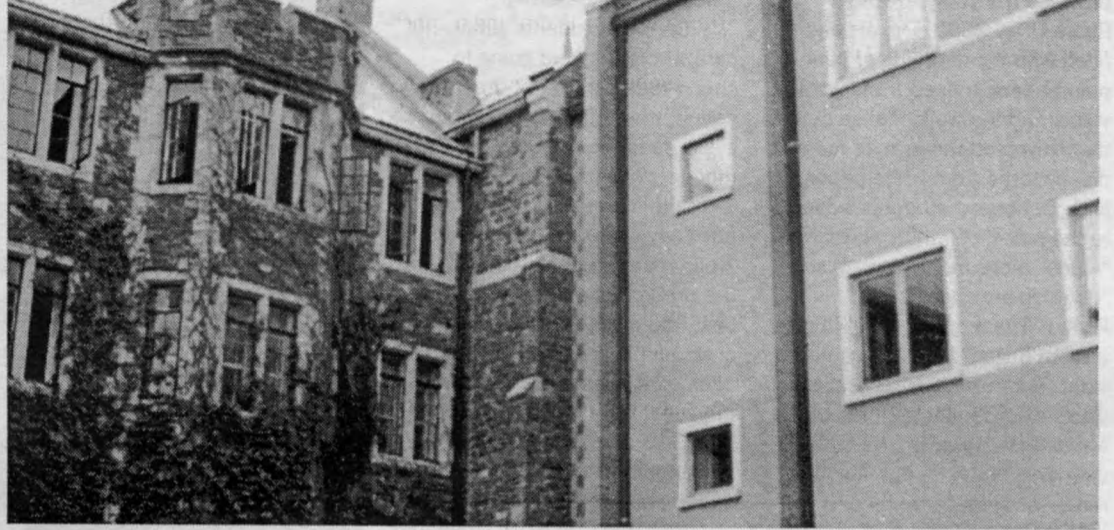
There are several perks associated with living in Albee that make it so appealing. The prime location of the dorm, which gives students easy access to food, the library, faculty offices, and the bulk of classrooms, is

not being considered," stated Brianna Norton, a member of the Central Committee.

This is precisely what has provided the impetus for Bard's student government to write up a petition demanding that Albee remain a dormitory. More than just providing rooms that are convenient for busy students, Albee remains one of two student-run social spaces on campus. This is critical to students at a time when extra on-campus space is so difficult to come by.

Bard has always been known for the liberty it's students have had on campus. Unlike most colleges, there has traditionally been a lot of freedom for students to gather and socialize on the college's grounds. However, students fear that the recent trend for social life to move into the bars of Tivoli will skyrocket with the loss of Albee's social space.

Another point which has to be considered is the fact that there is already a problem with space for students to both work and live on campus, and losing the space that Albee provides will only compound this problem. If Albee were going to be converted into academic space—class-



Brian Ackley

which the petition for Albee was submitted, Allison Bennett backed student sentiments. She said, "Albee is the only building built on campus that was built as a home, and not a dorm, for students."

The fact that "Edward Albee literally donated everything down to the sheets on the beds is a strong indication that he intended Albee for student housing," stated Bennett. But in relation to the influence Bennett actually has on the Albee situation, she continued, explaining her view that Albee is not a black and white issue, "Residence Life is not privy to the dialogue in the decision making process about residence halls."

What seemed to bother Bennett even more about the lack of input Residence Life has is the fact that they are more directly linked to the everyday lives of students than those upper administrators who make most of the decisions. "The need for an acknowledgement of the feelings of students and those administrators who work closely with them is really important," Bennett said.

At the April 28 meeting, Max Kenner claimed that an administrator had suggested Albee would be up for discussion, rather than definitely being taken offline. But when Allison Bennett was asked about this, she reaffirmed how little her powers are. "I haven't been informed about any decisions being made for Albee," she said.

However, Bennett was quick to express that she, along with Erin Cannan, was pushing for student interests. "Erin and I have been emphasizing the need for social space to those above us."

The fact that "Edward Albee literally donated everything down to the sheets on the beds is a strong indication that he intended Albee for student housing."

one example.

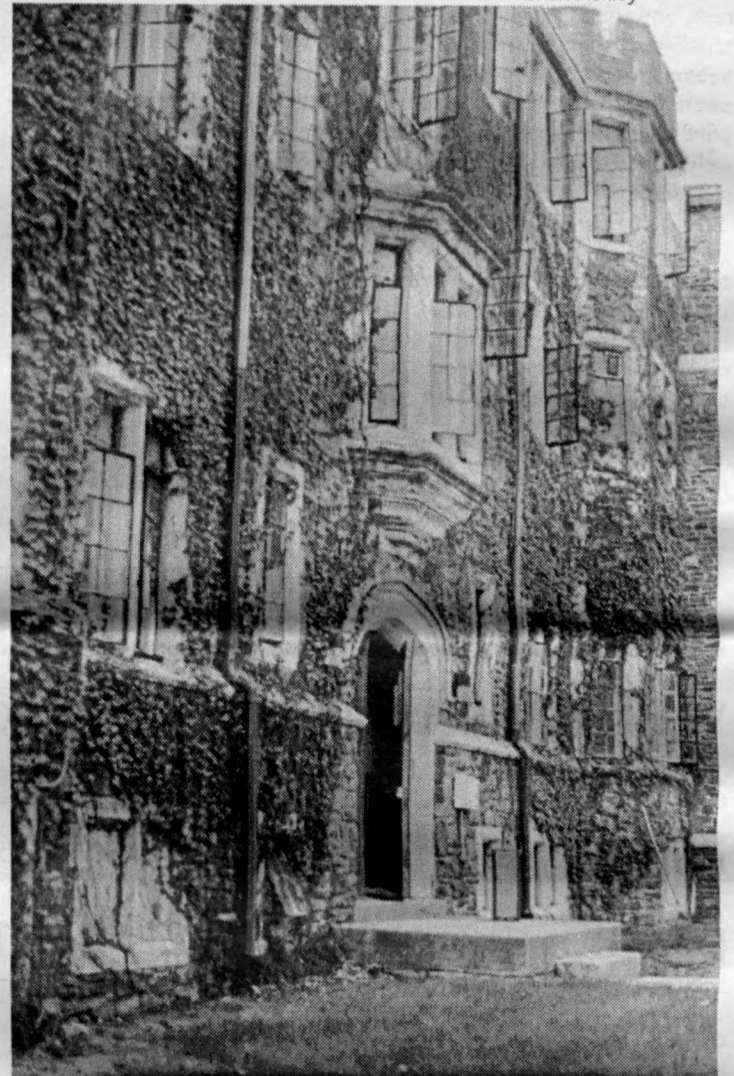
Max Kenner, a resident of Albee and Chair of the Planning Committee, says, "Having Albee as a dorm really helps to keep some of the focus on main campus. It provides students with a housing option that has easy access to much of this campus' important resources."

But there is far more behind the issue of Albee being taken offline that has students rallying to save the dorm. "We have been watching the administration make changes to this campus without considering the overall affects the changes may have to student life. Important student-run space is being sacrificed and the effects this has on the lives of the students who live here are

rooms, labs, or studios—the loss of the building as housing might not be nearly as bad as losing it to faculty offices.

"It is absolutely unnecessary for us to lose Albee as a dorm and critical social space to fill the need for faculty offices." But as Norton put it, "We may well have a need for faculty office space, but if it's not critical to be attached to Hegeman why should we lose a dorm that is critical to campus life?"

Fortunately for students, there is some support from the administration. However, the strength of the support may not be enough to win the battle for Albee. In a meeting on April 28 between several administrators and the Central Committee in



Where Science and Housing Class: Many students are citing Edward Albee's original intentions for Albee in defense of keeping the dorm as student housing

At this point, it is still to be seen whether or not students will win their fight for Albee. But with both the student government, and some help from Residence Life and Erin Cannan, Albee won't go offline without a fight. And, if Albee is a battle already lost to the agenda of the upper administration, ground can surely be gained in the new dorms being

built. Stated Bennett, "One component of every new living space built at Bard will be some small study spaces and large living spaces." She then added, "Why build a home without a living room? You just wouldn't do that."

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A Rite of Passage?

Room Draw 2000 results in student complaints and passivity

by **Melissa Stultz**

THE BOUNCING of a basketball provided the sound track for Room Draw 2000. The air was filled with the shuffling of floor plan papers, a deep transmitted voice, and the walkie-talkie static that traversed the gym as rooms disappeared from white paper lists. Gabbering students added to the noise; common words were "Albee—move into a new toaster," "doubles are gone," and, "I don't know." The process of fighting for a room began once it became clear that even the first year students who wanted doubles were out of luck. However, the crowd did not seem to be fighting, but, rather, sharing floor plans, complaining and bragging about numbers, and stomaching stress and tension. Most of the students seemed relaxed, but I would have sworn that the complexity and pure luck involved in this process were bound to give someone an ulcer.

The pretense built up around the room draw process left a salty tinge hanging in the air after conversations about the process. Freshman were tense and already cynical from the tales of upper classmen, those with numbers over one hundred and fifty already sure they would not be provided with housing and franti-

ber with surprising calm and, at times, blatant passivity.

Do Bard students simply not care where they are going to spend the next year of their education, where they are going to sleep, read, write, socialize, and meditate? Or have they simply lost faith in the idea that they have any choice in the matter? While many students believe that the random number system is the best and most democratic way to assign housing, some still complain, and question what reason the school has for denying them quiet housing, main campus housing, or any housing at all.

Saul Jacobowitz, a Junior II at Bard, summed up the synonymous disillusionment and agreement with the process that causes many Bard students to have mixed feelings about room draw. "I'm ecstatic about the fact that I've gotten a number over one hundred every single year and everybody else who doesn't want a room gets like two and three. . . and when you need a room they give you like four hundred. It's just stressful." He continued, "I guess they could do it by mail, but there isn't a much better way to do it. It's not that bad. It's relatively fair. It just seems that I



Mike Morini

Staring into the Abyss that is Room Draw: What student doesn't know the anxiety that accompanies the long wait before the opportunity to choose a dorm room comes? Seeing Room Draw is almost as dramatic watching Bard intramural floor-hockey.

summed up his complaints about the housing crisis, which had less to do with housing and more to do with a departmental concern. "I find it pretty ridiculous that they are building new dorms and keeping the studio dorm a dorm instead of turning it into senior studio space, cause senior art majors desperately need studio space. And, instead of reducing the population, they're adding more kids to the campus so that

numbers is pretty fair, but they should have more rooms. They should have planned, you know." Jacob Cottingham added, "I think it's stupid that you're not guaranteed housing though either. Somebody was saying that sixty people aren't going to be able to live here next year."

Another complaint dealt with the manner in which the room draw process was handled by the administration who conducted it. Some students commented that while they thought the process was, for the most part, fair, they were disappointed at the bad luck that some of their friends received.

First year II, Nicci Reinsour, had a particularly angry story to tell involving an administrator's intrusion into the process. "I was waiting to get a single and this lady came up to me and she said that my best bet was to take a double in a trailer, because otherwise I was just going to be put on the waiting list and if I took the double in the trailer I would be put on the room change list which happens before the waiting list goes through. And so she said that would be better. But it turned out that I could have gotten a single through room draw and I wouldn't have had to either be on the waiting list or on the room change. I could have just gotten the room that I wanted because room draw wasn't finished yet; and she made me think that there were no singles left by saying that my best bet was to get a double in a trailer." Reinsour continued, "I was confused, she confused me, she was trying to persuade me to take a double in a

trailer and I thought that was good but it ended up worse for me. I guess I thought [room draw] was okay, but I happened to get screwed over, and it probably happened to a lot of other people too."

A fairly humorous aspect of the room draw process is that there seems to be a system that students try to figure out within the numbers. First year students often discussed whether having a number in the hundreds was better than having a number under fifty, because they would then get the rooms that the upperclassmen who are living off campus move out of. One such conversation amongst a group of first year students left no real solution resolved. "You should try to get room draw number 150 instead of 40. . . But still the mere fact that you got 40 is just chance anyway. . . Yeah, but if you got 40. . . I wish I had a 40."

Overall, students' complaints about room draw were met with no solution or plan for change. Most acknowledged that, while many people have unfortunate experiences, there is no way to conduct room draw in a manner that leaves every student content. The Saturday after room draw, two first-year students held a meeting to discuss actions that could be taken to change the process. One person showed up.

Thus, the complaints regarding this Bard living tradition manifested into passivity rather than action; and no student anti-room draw manifestos circulated the gym that day. Bard students seem content enough just taking the best room they can get and get-

Freshman were tense and already cynical from the tales of upper classmen, those with numbers over one hundred and fifty already sure they would not be provided with housing and frantically discussing possibilities of living off campus.

cally discussing possibilities of living off campus. The upperclassmen were either disillusioned by past experiences or passively partaking in the room-choosing process, accepting the reality of its downfalls and hopefully considering room changes or off campus housing arrangements. However, despite the talk and commotion preceding room draw, students crammed into Stevenson Gymnasium on May 1 and 2 analyzed floor plans, cursed at crossed out room numbers, and waited for student volunteers to call their random num-

always get a really crappy number every year." Junior II, Evan Morris, chimed in, "It's just one of those things you know—college life."

In relation to room draw, the most popular complaint among this year's students was the lack of housing on campus. Many students expressed disappointment over the fact that, in the middle of a housing crisis, the Bard administration plans to change Albee from dorm rooms into offices for the science department, an issue that student government has made most students aware of.

Jack Lewis, a Sophomore II,

they can get more tuition money, and the kids who have been here who should be getting studios are not and they should be changing the studio temp dorm into studios and not keeping it a dorm."

Lino Fontanella, a First year II, added, "I think it sucks that so many of my friends are on the waiting list in this housing crisis, because they don't know where they're going to be." He continued, "They should just have more rooms so not so many people are on the waiting list. That was the only problem. I mean I think the whole idea of randomly assigned

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Inter-Actions

Educational Policies Committee asks only to be informed

by **John Garrett**

WHEN SOME STRATEGIES fail, there is always strength in numbers. On April 28, the Central Committee met with a slew of administrators to present various student petitions and to voice concerns within the student body pertaining to several facets of student life.

Stuart Levine, Dean of Bard College, called the meeting in response to a previous, more informal one which occurred between Levine and the Central Committee on April 17. The first meeting was called in order for the student government to outline grievances, particularly with matters of the Educational Policies Committee (EPC) and their role in administrative decisions, as well as the apparent lack of administrative initiative in informing students of campus-wide decisions through the student government.

The EPC, which is intended to serve Bard as an influential student voice in tenure decisions and academic policy changes at various levels within the college, has seen their active role diminish over the last few years. Not only does it seem EPC recommendations have repeatedly gone unheard, but the EPC is concerned that the administration is knowingly bypassing the committee, whether it be for reasons of convenience, or to serve a specific agenda.

Guidelines in the Student Handbook are supposed to set standards for the administration on how the EPC should be uti-

lized; minutes from administrative meetings should be automatically forwarded to the EPC, as well as invitational meetings. When initially confronted in the first meeting, Levine promised Anu Kumar, chair of the EPC, that things would change.

However, Levine did not follow up on his promise. There were meetings held in which the EPC had no invitation, and received no minutes. In fact, after the EPC learned the promise had been broken, the committee confronted Levine and he personally wrote a letter of apology to Kumar and the EPC while reassuring them he would act on his word.

Despite the apology, which Max Kenner, a Central Committee member, commented was "appreciated and well received," the EPC and Central Committee felt that Levine renegeing on his word was just another example of the poor relations between student government and administration at Bard. Thus the second meeting, in which Erin Cannan, Mary Backlund, Jim Brudvig, Jonathan Becker, Allison Bennett, John Kelly, Nicole Woods, and Allan Josey were all present - in addition to Stuart Levine and the Central Committee - was set to serve as an opportunity for student government and the administration to begin to re-establish a working relationship.

"The first meeting we [the Central Committee] had with Dean Levine was to address some issues that needed to be

dealt with immediately, particularly in how the administration seemed to be bypassing the EPC," commented Max Kenner. "When the second meeting was planned, it was to expose more general concerns we had about the college, and the direction the college is headed in. We submitted the petitions as specific ideas to present that we were student

the administration (362 signatures); 4) immediate return of the Tewksbury lounges (332 signatures); 5) maintaining Albee as a dorm (322 signatures); 6) a review of Bob Brock's tenure as Head of Security (302 signatures).

In less than one week of advertising these petitions, support (from one quarter to one

were evasive with this topic.

It was also brought to the table that Bard should have an administrator appointed as a bridge between students and faculty, providing information as well as an outlet for student initiative. Jonathan Becker was mentioned for this position, and Kenner said Becker seemed "willing and more than able" to do the job.

All said and done, Kenner stated that he thought "the meeting was a moderate success. We were able to convey that there is an active student body at Bard that only needs to be informed. The petitions showed specific ways in which the students are capable of generating ideas and rallying support." However, he did express disappointment in the evasiveness of the administrators pertaining to some topics. Said Kenner, "We are moving in the right direction. For the most part they [the administration] are willing to listen if we come to them with legitimate and well supported concerns."

With that in mind, student government hopes that students are beginning to understand they have a voice in campus decisions. Whether it be through the Central Committee, the EPC, or the Student Judiciary Board, students should look first to fellow students, rather than administrators, to get things done on campus.

The EPC and Central Committee felt that Levine renegeing on his word was just another example of the poor relations between student government and administration at Bard.

generated and student supported."

Kenner explained that the direction student government was watching Bard move in was one of obvious growth and expansion. "This growth is not the problem, but the fact that administration has been leaving the students who live and learn here out of the process, be it for convenience or what have you, is definitely against everything Bard has stood for."

The petitions presented were first exposed to the student body at the Central Committee forum held on April 12. There were six petitions: 1) immediate return of a permanent twenty-four hour academic space (402 student signatures); 2) consistent extended coffee shop hours (394 signatures); 3) greater powers for - and better utilization of - the EPC by

third of the student population signed each petition) was overwhelming. This could not go unnoticed by Bard's administrators, and so far all of the petitions, with exception of the review of Bob Brock's security position, have been responded to. The petition for Albee is the only other petition which has not been "granted," although what was once an official decision to take Albee offline has been modified, and the Albee situation is now up for discussion.

In addition, student government took issue at the meeting with claims of sexual harassment within the school, and more specifically, raised questions about allegations surrounding the tenure denial of Psychology professor, Tracie Stewart. This issue proved harder to resolve; as expected, the administrators

Security continued . . .

recognizes that there has been "poor communication between Security and the student body in terms of changes." The students might feel more comfortable if Brudvig offered more information on campus issues.

Most students are in complete agreement with Pappas. But when asked to elaborate on certain issues, Brudvig was hesitant. Both he and Brock refused to let *Observer* reporters tape record their interview sessions. Brudvig expressed a nervousness about the recording process, stating that if a recorder was used he would have to "choose his words more carefully."

Dube could not speak with a reporter unless Brudvig or Brock consented. When asked, Brudvig claimed that there was no reason to interview Dube because he would not provide any new information. Brudvig finally gave his approval. But when the *Observer* went to the Security office to meet Dube at the start of his shift, the dispatcher first said to wait for his arrival, and then that there was a mistake and Dube was not working that night. The next morning a different dispatcher informed the *Observer* that Dube had in fact been at work the night before. This was one hinderance to the

communication process.

Similarly, the *Observer* asked Brudvig for permission to speak with Walzack. Upon meeting him, Walzack was fully prepared for a reporter's arrival. Brudvig had called him, Walzack said, and told him what he could and could not talk about. Walzack had even gone home in between shifts to get his bullet proof vest to show the reporter the difference between it and the one he was wearing.

If Security cares about making the students feel comfortable, they are going to have to do a better job at making it seem like they have nothing to hide. It might come down to the little things. For example, when one guard called the *Observer* office and asked the staff to move cars out from the Tewkesbury driveway, he would not give his name. "If you want to file a complaint," he said, "you can talk to my Charge-of-Shift, George Walzack," and hung up.

"The students are fantastic," said Walzack, in the conclusion of his interview. "I've never had a problem with a student."

If Dube was available for an interview, one wonders what he would have said.

Security Commentary continued . . .

aren't detrimental to the running of a college, only contrary to the way students here want Bard to function.

For the most part, students and security guards maintain friendly, supportive, relationships. Many upperclassmen have come to know a few really well, as in the ever-changing sea of faces here, they are one of the most constant presences around campus over four years. The concerns

currently being voiced about the department, triggered by recent changes and additions to the system, are there because the student body recognizes the importance of a mutually trustful relationship between themselves and the people there to help insure their safety. It is a relationship that has largely been the case up until recently, and one that, for everyone's benefit, must be maintained.



One last horrah: BRAVE ended Sexual Assault Awareness Month last Wednesday evening with the annual "Take Back Bard" speak-out and march. Students assembled outside of Kline just after dinner and listened to one another speak about sexual assault. They then proceeded over to Ludlow where the march ended. (photo: Jamie O'Shea)

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A SPECIAL REPORT:



The Changing Face of AIDS

Twenty years after the start of the epidemic, AIDS is spreading to new communities. A virtual media blackout is promulgating the myth that AIDS is over. Here's what some people in Bard's area are doing to help.

by Michael Haggerty

LIVING WITH AIDS can be an isolating experience, particularly when surrounded by a wall of silence that ignores the disease. Liz Schmidt, Mid-Hudson Casework Supervisor for AIDS Related Community Services (ARCS), an organization that provides assistance to people with AIDS, recalls one 'client' who came to ARCS believing she was the only HIV positive person in Dutchess County.

Similarly, other people with AIDS fear they will be discriminated against or abandoned to their disease if they disclose their HIV status to family members, co-workers, or neighbors. "The stigma is high and there will be people who call me who are afraid to give their name," says Schmidt.

There is a danger to the discourse now prevalent in the media and society that says the crisis has been averted, AIDS no longer means inevitable death, we can all go back to having regular sex again. That old adage—"Silence equals Death"—is just as relevant today as it was twenty years ago, when people started dying of AIDS.

"AIDS is not over. We have people dying every month and people are not living well," says Schmidt. "The infection rate of HIV is the same as it's been for the past ten years."

Like other community service providers (CSPs) such as ACT UP and Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York City, ARCS formed during the early 1980s to combat the ignorance and discriminatory practices surrounding AIDS. Back then, no one really even knew what AIDS was, except that it was quickly killing a lot of people, specifically young

gay males.

Since then, many of the myths originally surrounding AIDS have been dispelled and the demographic of people most threatened by the disease has shifted away from the homosexual population and more towards poor communities of color. AIDS is now the leading cause of death among Black people aged

schools, drug treatment centers, corporation board rooms, and, more times than most, right out into the streets; ARCS also organizes public education forums and in-service training programs.

ARCS also serves hundreds of people living with AIDS in the Hudson Valley. The services ARCS offers range from assisting clients in applying for Medicare

Schmidt says it is in proportion with infection rates of major urban centers. That number also only reflects confirmed AIDS cases, not the number of people who are HIV positive.

Until recently, state law prohibited the CDC from releasing statistics about how many people are infected with HIV. The assumption was that by not mak-

The second largest risk group is men who have sex with men, but this group is half the size of I.V. drug users (IDUs).

Jeff Kraus, Executive Director of ARCS, says that AIDS is a huge risk to IDUs because they are one of the hardest groups to reach and educate. "The whole effort to engage people who are injecting drugs is difficult."

Harm reduction programs that would help slow the spread of AIDS, such as clean needle exchanges, are also difficult to implement because they prove too controversial for certain communities. Kraus says a "not in my backyard" mentality about heroin and other drugs prevails which hinders education programs.

Another big challenge for ARCS comes in their role as housing advocates. Tracey Winchester, a case-worker at the Poughkeepsie ARCS office, says that finding affordable housing for her clients is one of the most difficult parts of her job.

"In small towns, it's difficult to deal with a land lord and advocate for a client when everybody knows each other's business," she says. Confidentiality is major factor for many of her clients, who fear eviction if their HIV status is discovered by their landlords.

ARCS helps provide housing through a grant called Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA). HOPWA is funded through the Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) of New York State. Individuals or families pay the program 30 percent of their annual income and HOPWA covers the rest.

HOPWA has been extremely effective, but is continually plagued by scarce resources and funding cuts. In Dutchess County, there are currently 16 housing allocations though HOPWA. The waiting list, however, is over 40 families long. And oftentimes, people already living in a neighborhood aren't too receptive of a person with AIDS moving in next door. "There's a great community resistance to placement like that," says Kraus.

Kraus adds that another ... continued on page 8

The demographic of people most threatened by the disease has shifted away from the homosexual population and more towards poor communities of color. AIDS is now the leading cause of death among Black people aged 25 to 44.

25 to 44.

AIDS organizations have had to reorient themselves in order to better accommodate the changing face of AIDS patients. For ARCS, this has been a particularly challenging task because in the places that they serve—the seven counties, including Dutchess, that make up the Hudson Valley—AIDS isn't exactly a popular topic.

Over the years, ARCS has focused their energy in two distinct realms: community education and client support. Education takes ARCS staff into

to obtaining sufficient food, from advocating for clients in court to providing child care.

All of ARCS's work falls under the rubric of "harm reduction", which basically means creating a safe and supportive environment in which a person with AIDS can achieve the best possible quality of life.

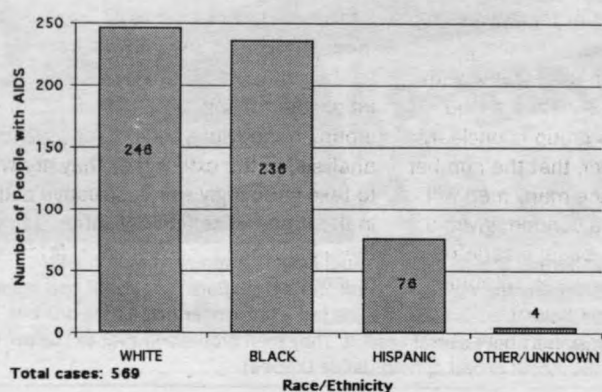
ARCS's clientele in Dutchess county is diverse. According to the latest statistics from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), there are 569 people who have AIDS in Dutchess County. That number may seem small, but

ing that information public, people would perceive a level of confidentiality around HIV testing.

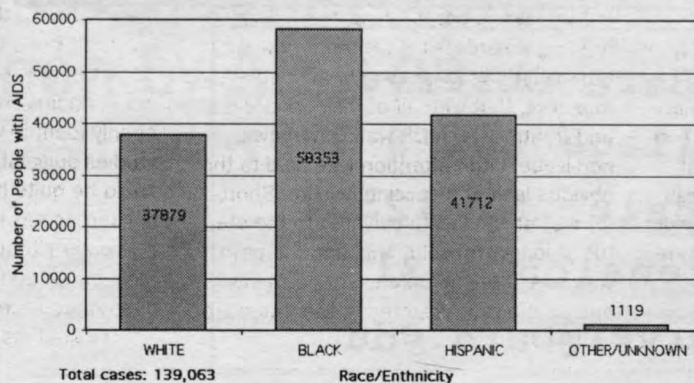
But effective June 1, the CDC will be allowed to release this information. Schmidt says that the rate of HIV infection might be a high as three times that of AIDS cases. "Over the next year, we're going to see what the numbers are really like."

In Dutchess County, new infections are concentrated primarily among people of color. Most of these infections are caused by intravenous drug use.

The Ethnicity of AIDS, Dutchess Co.



The Ethnicity of AIDS, New York State



Breaking Silences

An interview with Gay Men's Health Crisis Volunteer Coordinator Frank Carson

by **Emily Benedetto**

Frank Carson is an AIDS activist who has been at the forefront of the AIDS crisis since the beginning of the epidemic in 1983. He is a volunteer coordinator at Gay Men's Health Crisis, an AIDS education and advocacy organization in New York City. He has worked at GMHC since 1992 and, before that, worked at ARCS, an AIDS organization serving the Hudson Valley.

In April, he spoke to the students in *AIDS: Views from Several Angles*, a team-taught course, which addresses the AIDS pandemic and is supervised by Professors Dianna Brown and Lindsey Watton.

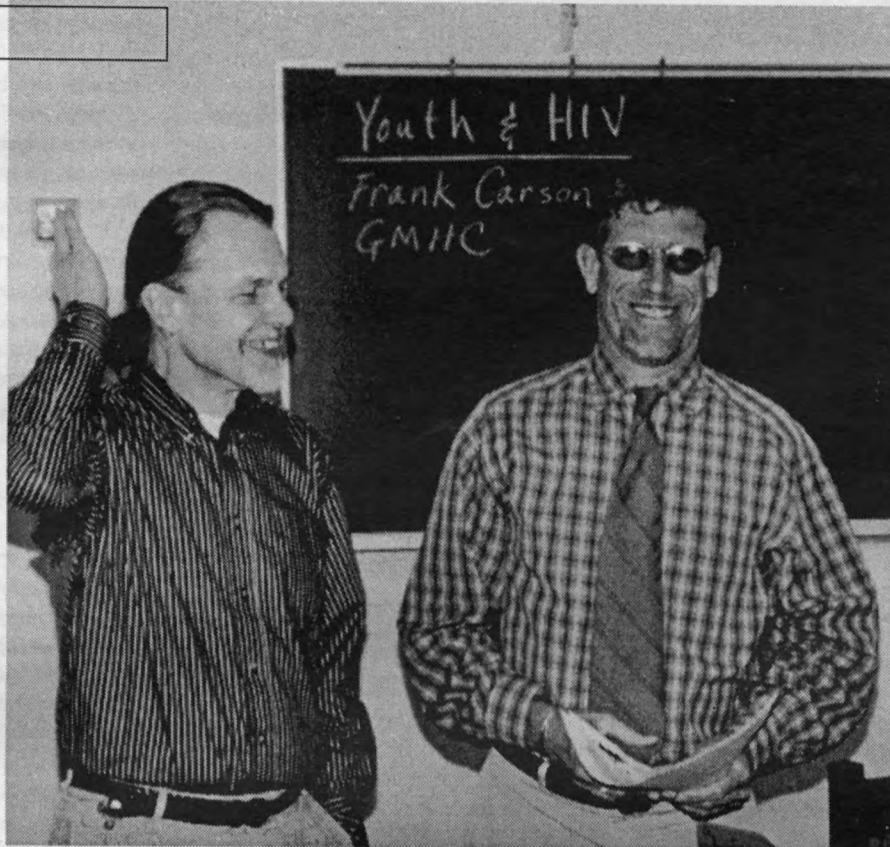
Observer: What role do you play in the GMHC and what work have you done in the past with them?

Carson: I've been a staff member at GMHC for over ten years. I've had a variety of positions within the agency, but my current position includes being coordinator of the speakers bureau, of the community outreach program, which we call "tabling", and the part of my job that I love the most: training volunteers.

Volunteers who are going to be on the hotlines, volunteers who are going to be on the speakers bureau, volunteers who are going to be tabling—all kinds of volunteer jobs. I'm not alone, but I'm one of the primary trainers.

Observer: Have you been involved with AIDS activism for longer than you've worked for the GMHC?

Carson: I started doing volunteer work in HIV and AIDS education when we didn't even know it was HIV in 1983/84, working for ARCS—AIDS Related Community Services—that's the AIDS service organization that covers this region. I volunteered with them from 1983 to 1992. (I continued volunteering after I started working for GMHC.) It was in 1989 that I needed a job change, and realized that my heart and



Working Towards Prevention: (left) Mary Beth Davis-Steyer and Liz Schmidt at the ARCS office in Kingston; (above) Frank Carson jokes with Prof. Lindsey Watton after Carson's talk with the class.

energy was going into my volunteer work, so I was fortunate enough to get a job at GMHC.

Observer: How do you think that AIDS activism has changed in the last twenty years?

Carson: The epidemic has changed a lot and activism seems to grow out of communities that are empowered.

The middle-class white gay male community was very committed and dedicated, and that's what started GMHC—realizing that government organizations weren't seeming to give a damn about people living with what we subsequently have come to call HIV. Because people were dying and not getting care, that community really rose up and became very vocal, and worked in a

number of different directions—not only founding organizations like GMHC and ACT UP, but influencing major legislation at the state and federal levels.

The epidemic has changed so much that the activism of the original community (and I said white gay men but I certainly want to include lesbians because they were involved from the beginning) is less evident today.

You just can't continue functioning at that angry level for a lifetime, and nobody dreamed it would be for a lifetime at that point.

Simultaneous with that rise and fall is the prevalence of the epidemic in other communities that, for the most part, aren't organized and aren't empowered. Activism is apparently not something that people in those communities—and I can't speak for

them—turn to or think of.

GMHC has been much more focused on working within the system and has effected some incredible change, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. That's legislation that was passed by the United States Congress that would not have happened without the organized within the system of AIDS service organizations, of which I'm proud to say GMHC was the leader.

Observer: What are some present goals of GMHC? Is there anything you're working on right now?

Carson: GMHC's mission from the beginning has been three-fold: education, to try to prevent transmission of HIV; direct service, to try to improve the quality of life for people living with HIV; and advocacy, at the city state and federal levels for fair and just policies around HIV and AIDS. One definition of activism might be the kind of work that GMHC's policy arm continues to be involved in—that's the arm of the agency that has been the spear head for effecting legislation.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is a prime example at the federal level, the confidentiality laws and other laws in New York State, that protect the quality of life of people living with HIV, at the state level. The issues that they're focusing on are really difficult issues. We don't, in this state or this country, have adequate health care—period.

There are too many people who have no health insurance or inadequate health insurance, and that's an outrageous injustice that impacts on people living with HIV especially. Helping the government find ways to meet that problem is a major thrust of GMHC's "activism".

A second major area is HIV and immigration. The number of people that are in this country who may be undocumented or in some way subject to expulsion who have HIV in their lives is a major problem, and at present our laws are not supportive or much less sympathetic to those people at

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• COMMENTARY by Sameer Reddy •

Towards an Understanding of the Unsafe in Sex

Growing up gay in the 1990s made it impossible to avoid the media frenzy surrounding unsafe sex practices. Countless television news segments flashed statistics on the levels of HIV infection and the correspondent percentages of individuals who engaged in unsafe sex. Distinct sexual and racial communities were analyzed, marking low-income black women and seemingly all gay men as high-risk groups. Condom ads proliferated, sports superstars became AIDS spokesmen and new evidence pointed towards potential cures. And, as is the case with many subjects of contemporary culture, a saturation point was reached; we suffered from a media overload, a surplus of information that left us helplessly frightened.

We repressed our collective anxiety and the panic surrounding HIV and AIDS began to subside; as a result, safety standards began to relax as well. Not that condom sales plunged dramatically or that people felt completely safe. This process had more to do with a return to a state of anxiety-tinged ignorance, a reaction to the impossibly difficult task of balancing urgent sexual desire with a will to live.

Media coverage waned and the few

news items that remained touted "highly effective experimental therapies." It seemed our culture was intent on sending its fear into a deep-freeze. Paralyzed by the seemingly hopeless challenge of confronting a disease that challenged our most basic nature, some segments of the American population began to respond in unconventional and sometimes shocking ways.

Of course, white heterosexual men and women remained relatively unscathed by the terror of being infected with HIV, especially the upper-middle and elite classes in American society, the ones who make the big decisions that affect us all. The entertainment community excepted, individual and corporate concern and funding towards AIDS research dramatically declined. An insidious public perception took root, that with all of the new drugs and treatments, AIDS was somehow a non-issue. Little attention was paid to the obvious lack of a vaccine or cure. Short-term strategies were elevated to the status of long-term solutions, and the payoff was that some semblance of normality and control was restored to the American

public.

But at what price? Few people seemed to be asking that question. What about the continent of Africa, whose populations risked decimation within the next three decades? What about those American citizens who were already infected? What about sex education, youth perceptions, awareness of the risk we take every time we engage in an act of lust? It was easier for many people to retreat into a mindset that obscured the clear and present dangers of sexual activity, and afforded them false sense of peace of mind.

A group of men within the gay community, however, made a decision to adopt a revolutionary position towards sexual intercourse. They proposed to reclaim their sexual liberty and affirm their identity as gay men by consciously choosing to engage in unsafe sex. They are known as 'barebackers', and they are men who, cognizant of the health risks, embrace the opportunity to engage in intercourse without condoms. The number of men who openly identify with this group is unclear; studies suggest, however, that the number could be quite high, since many men will consent to sex without a condom given a particular situation (i.e. being inebriated or high, swept up in the moment, without immediate access to protection).

I would make a distinction between

these two groups for political, as opposed to semantic, reasons. The men who consent on a situational basis are usually conflicted about their actions; under 'normal' circumstances they would use a condom. The men who openly embrace 'barebacking' do so in a spirit of aggressive and unabashed assertion of free will. They see themselves as refusing to surrender their sexual freedom to an "ambiguous" health risk.

Of course, even this grouping is problematized by the personal motivations of various individuals within the group. Some men have "survivor's guilt"; having suffered a loss of friends or lovers to AIDS, they see no reason why they should survive uninfected. Others could care less about infection, choosing to ignore the risk in favor of an unrestricted pursuit of physical pleasure. Still others romanticize a positive HIV status, consciously seeking infection. This last group is perhaps the most interesting and controversial; known as 'bug chasers', they will seek an infected partner to 'initiate' them. These subgroups are obvious targets for psychoanalysis, to the extent that they are willing to take seemingly self-destructive actions in the name of self-actualization. I find them interesting, however, for different reasons.

For me they symbolize a radical

... continued on page 8

AIDS on College Campuses

The Center for Disease Control has concluded that half of all the new HIV infections in the US occur among people under 25 years old. Considering the vast umbrella of college-aged people newly living with HIV suggested by this statistic, and the relative silence about HIV and AIDS here on college campuses—at Bard and beyond—the threat AIDS poses is now particularly relevant.

According to Marsha Davis, Director of Bard Health Services, there are an estimated two college students positive for HIV among every thousand. She believes this ratio is accurate at Bard.

Davis warned that the incestuous nature of the Bard community should provide inspiration for students to protect themselves not only from AIDS, but all STDs. She also has noticed a new trend that AIDS is off of students minds.

Reflecting back on the fist half of her twelve years at Bard, Davis said there once was a very active AIDS committee that involved both students and faculty. The committee generated information, outreach, fundraising, and programming. It still exists in name, but most students would have problems describing its recent outreach activities.

There continues to be an AIDS course offered each year which drums up interest, but on the whole this is not an issue that students are requesting information on. Davis said that many students entering Bard already are fairly solid in their knowledge about HIV and AIDS. Since diseases such as HPV (genital warts) and chlamydia were generating more confusion

among students, the health center shifted its focus to making these conditions more familiar.

But she acknowledged that the switch of focus may have been too extreme because an unwarranted sense of security has been fostered in the process.

There are many reasons why protection at a college like Bard is so crucial, one being the size of the student body. The small number of students on campus has many implications for sex on campus—an increased risk of AIDS and other STDs travelling through the population, among other things.

Davis says that the scariest aspect of HIV and STDs at Bard is that students use protection, but not consistently between partners. She further thinks that AIDS is gaining a reputation as a chronic disease instead of its previous instant association with death. This is a perspective she said should be informed by the excruciating experience of having to take a prescribed drug cocktail for HIV every day.

In terms of how Bard students differed from students at other colleges in respect to knowledge about HIV and AIDS, Davis says Bard students are better informed.

She recounted an incident at another school in which a student with Hepatitis C—which can be sexually transmitted—faced major ignorance and prejudice from other students. Other students refused to share housing with them. She did not believe that the same situation could repeat itself here at Bard because of information and tolerance.

Still Bard students are more at risk in other respects. What

Davis terms the "immortality sensibility" is especially at work here: Bard students supposedly have the information, but are still taking the risks.

This identifies the problem of how to alter risky behaviors towards AIDS if just giving people information will not necessarily create change. The solution most frequently offered has been organizing the student body itself. The AIDS committee once set up a table right off of the Red Hook high school grounds to distribute condoms and provide information on AIDS. Not all members of the Red Hook community were congratulatory about that.

Davis's opinion is that activism is becoming more centered on global issues as opposed to localized lifestyle issues.

Still, the blocking of the merger between North Dutchess hospital with a Catholic hospital in Kingston shows that AIDS related activism can move Bard students. The merger would have prevented doctors and nurses at the hospital from talking about birth control.

The hope presented by Davis, and Fred Carson of Gay Men's Health Crisis, is that students will offer information and support to one another because HIV is already an issue here on campus.

Davis also mentioned that although she would encourage at risk students to get tested for AIDS, testing is not preventative. She worries because sometimes testing becomes knowledge too late.

—Megan Cambell

Unsafe Sex continued . . .

stance towards gay identity, an irrepressible emphasis on the physical danger inherent in all sexual (and human) activity. An interview with a barebacker, published on a bareback website www.barebackjack.com compares unsafe sex with sky-diving or playing the stock market. Although the ultimate prices may differ, the element of calculated risk remains the same. An experience is deemed desirable, its riskiness weighed, and ultimately it is judged as worthwhile or not.

The interviewee also isolates various motivations for the desire to be 'converted'. He lists resignation to eventual infection, a desire to be on an equal plane with HIV+ lovers and a determination to enjoy the 'candy store' of sexual opportunities as contributing factors. To the extent that these men are willing to risk their lives, they also seem to enjoy a measure of liberation in their lives. They are willing to challenge Death; come what may, they refuse to surrender any degree of pleasure or freedom in their lives.

Of course this issue is debatable. Most people would not feel comfortable taking the risk of unprotected sex with a stranger, or possibly even a long-term lover. For whatever reason, sex isn't as important to me as the chance to continue to live a healthy, disease-free life. I can, however,

respect the courage and determination it takes to make such a brazen gesture in the face of a terrifying plague. While I might not fully understand the motivations behind such a choice, I do believe that this level of passion is essential to a healthy sexual, emotional and mental life, no matter what one's sexual orientation or persuasion.

Sex is already scary enough without further alienating and demonizing groups that defy social convention. All people can make a choice to participate in an honest dialogue about our fears and desires, or to silence the parts of ourselves and others that scare us. The first option is a step towards an open sexual climate, where each individual makes a conscious choice to take responsibility for their actions. The second option is simply another dead-end, a path that leads us deeper into a frightening maze.

There might never be a cure for AIDS or an HIV vaccine, but that doesn't necessitate a total loss of sexual spontaneity and pleasure. Perhaps there is a place to be discovered where, despite our decision to use or not use a condom, we can maximize our human potential for love and our animal desire for lust, a place where we are safe enough to discard our fears, if only for a moment.

Face of AIDS continued . . .

important service that has developed in the past few years out of the changing dynamic of AIDS is an increased need for job training. Since new medicines are enabling people to live up to fifteen years with HIV before developing symptoms of AIDS, clients are now planning in the long term.

"How do I go back to work when I thought I was dying before? The medical situation has changed the services that need to be provided," says Kraus.

Medicine is also effecting how people conceive of AIDS and is partly responsible for the calm that has now superseded the crisis. The popular image of the "drug cocktail" promoted in the media supports the false notion that "treatment" is synonymous with "cure" and neglects the fact that the experience of taking so many drugs is just another excruciating ele-

ment added to the pain of AIDS.

And the numbers continue to rise. The CDC estimates that over 1.5 million people in the United States either have AIDS or are HIV positive. Of these cases, 112,000 are in New York City alone. Since 1981, over 400,000 people have died of AIDS. Worldwide, the CDC says there are over 30 million cases of HIV.

"Prevention should be the next big push," says Kraus, who sees our present situation as an opportunity for AIDS education to ameliorate the future. Education has certainly proved itself effective in deterring the spread of AIDS, but it is also an important part of creating a community in which AIDS is openly discussed—one where people living with AIDS don't feel so alone.

Interview continued . . .

all.

Observer: Do you think there's still a stigma attached to AIDS, as a homosexual disease?

Carson: [laughs] Yes, big time. People won't go to an HIV testing clinic, because it says HIV clinic above the doors. They don't want they're friends to see them walking in, because they'll assume, one, that they have AIDS and, two, that they're gay. This is a very homophobic culture we live in, and that's not changed much in twenty years.

I would say that we're seeing much more in terms of characters in mainstream TV series and

films—we're seeing more gay and lesbian characters. But I think that that's highlighting people's fear. But from Matthew Shephard to all the other people who have been murdered, or gay-bashed, or threatened, I think we're seeing possibly as much or more homophobia today than we were twenty years ago.

Observer: Are Americans becoming over-confident about AIDS?

Carson: Certainly, if you follow the media.

We have a major problem and the perception is for many that the epidemic is over. Some people are doing well on these combination therapies, for a year or two, but some people who did the Lazarus thing—coming back from the dead practically—now are finding that the drugs are no longer working. The media's not covering that, and I really hold them responsible for a big part of

From Matthew Shephard to all the other people who have been murdered, or gay-bashed, or threatened, I think we're seeing possibly as much or more homophobia today than we were twenty years ago.

the perception that the epidemic's over.

We don't know what the long term effect of those drugs will be. We don't know about all the people who don't have access to those drugs. All the people whose bodies can't tolerate the drugs. All the people who can't keep up with the regiment of taking thirty-four pills a day. And this one on an empty stomach, and this one with food, and this one with fatty

foods. . .

The whole idea that it's called a cocktail treatment is so offensive to people living with HIV, because it is no party taking those drugs. But I think an overwhelming majority of people in this country, to follow your question, don't hear that side of it.

Observer: What advice would you give to advocates of GMHC?

Carson: HIV is a virus that is an equal opportunity virus. Any of us can contract it. First, it's some-

thing that all of us should be paying attention to; second, it's causing an epidemic that is particularly infecting young people. People thir-

teen to twenty one constitute a quarter of the new HIV infections these days in this country. We can't ignore it.

Fifteen or twenty years ago, when I was working at SUNY New Paltz, it was a hot topic. And I'm afraid that, here we are, going on twenty years later, it's not such a hot topic for a lot of people. It's something that we still need to be paying just as much attention to as we were twenty years ago.



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IMF in Depth: Jails in DC

Students play hookey to be in solidarity with students in jail

by **Jacob Gordon**

THE DEMONSTRATIONS in Washington DC last month that confronted the annual convergence of the International Monetary Fund have been viewed in many ways.

Demonstrators claim the actions to be victorious for the most part, although they did not succeed in the declared goal of disabling the meetings as protesters in Seattle did when the meetings of the World Trade Organization mostly flopped in October. Part of the reason that delegates were able to meet may be attributed to the preparedness of the DC police force who had been training several months prior to the meetings with the aid of surveillance information gathered in Seattle.

While demonstrators claimed victory in their camp, police did as well after a weekend of mass arrests and some colorful media coverage. DC police

chief Charles Ramsey was seen on the news forcefully removing a gas mask from a young woman's head while what was presumably an undercover officer beat back protesters with a baton. While both sides claim to have won the day, in either case there were some shocking images painted as police and protesters clashed.

Over the course of three days, between April 15 and 18, several thousand demonstrators were arrested. The first arrests occurred on April 15 before IMF protests really got started at a legal rally downtown to protest the prison industrial complex.

Six-hundred people with no intention of getting arrested were barricaded in by riot police and taken away with little or no warning or opportunity to disperse.

Among those arrested was Bard student Lena Brodersen, her mother, father and 15 years old sister. They had come across

the lively group of people by chance and decided to mill through the energetic crowd, as had others, including some elderly people, tourists and several prominent press members.

A formal request by protesters and passers by asking the police if they could leave was denied; soon after, the arresting began.

After three hours in the rain, the Brodersens were arrested and put on busses. Men were separated from women and Lena's sister was taken away to be held in juvenile detention. Those arrested spent 13 hours with their hands cuffed behind their backs on the busses before being moved to holding cells where their hands were cuffed to their legs.

It was ten hours before they were given water or a chance to use a bathroom. After 18 hours they were released after paying \$50 fines and being charged for assembling without a permit.

Many people saw these pre-

emptive arrests as scare tactics on behalf of the police that were intended to cut down on the number of protesters later that weekend. But demonstrations seemed to go on unfettered the next day; however, there were few arrests, and the day before seemed only to anger people mostly uninvolved in the later actions.

Actions started before sunrise and, while police were there, they seemed to be observing the demonstrators as opposed to suppressing them. But police preparation paid off as they had blocked off a large radius around the IMF building and protesters did their best to maintain that perimeter and stop traffic around it.

Scattered arrests and deployment of pepper spray and tear gas took place the next day, as three police helicopters were circling the "no protest zone" at any given time. But it was not until the afternoon of the 17 that a significant amount of arrests were made again. A large number of protesters had confronted a police line and there was talk of rushing it. The crowd then sat down as people tried to maintain calm and discourage any behavior that might provoke the heavily enforced police line. After several hours in the rain, police agreed to let protesters cross the barricade in groups and be peacefully arrested.

Among those taken into custody were seven Bard students, all members of Bard's Direct Action Affinity group and risking arrest. As before, men were separated from women and those arrested were cuffed and put on busses. This time they were taken to the DC police academy facility.

People were put into large gymnasiums as there was far from sufficient capacity to hold the number of people detained. Protesters were seated on the floor, still wet and cold from an afternoon that had yielded several cases of hypothermia. People were then officially booked: finger printed and asked their names.

Most of the activists arrested had planned in advance to use a tactic called "jail solidarity": when arrested they withheld their identities to complicate the booking process. Few activists carried ID and by the end of the day, officers were used to registering prisoners as Jane or John Doe.

Without any form of identification, people were given numbers and had them written on their inner arms. After booking they were given blankets and a chance to get warm.

Arrestees were then taken to the DC central cellblock, a facility joined to the courthouse, where they fell under the jurisdiction of the Federal Marshals. There the women were strip-searched and told that they would be unable to see any legal council until they were in the courtroom. In court they found that the lawyers that had been ready to represent them had been denied access and public defenders had been assigned.

The Direct Action Network had a qualified group of lawyers

lined up from the National Lawyers Guild, already prepared for the situation and the tactics of solidarity and anonymity that the demonstrators were using. The judge presiding over the seemingly endless line of arrested protesters said that it was no longer admissible to have specified legal council for such a group.

The proceedings then took a shocking turn when the judge announced that a large number of the protester's papers had been lost, meaning that they could go free without having to give their names and without a legal record of their arrest. All but two of the Bard students were released on "no papers"—Emma Kreyche and Rayna Matthews remained.

Some saw this turn of events as very fortunate but others were more suspicious, thinking that the court had not actually lost the papers but were unable to deal with the number of people arrested and felt that they could better prosecute if there were fewer of them.

Half way through the all-day proceedings, a scuffle broke out in front of the courthouse where demonstrators, lawyers and reporters, and news cameras had gathered for a press conference. Several demonstrators were pepper sprayed by Federal Marshals. The rulings began again about an hour later under much stricter conditions.

The approximately 130 people who remained (those who had not had "lost papers" or cited out and paid a fine, receiving a court date) were transported to the DC jail. Women were kept separate from other inmates but the men were put in with the general population.

Tension was high as the judge had been warning people all through the proceedings of the squalor of the DC jail and how any one of them might get "sold for a pack of cigarettes."

Male protesters reported that prison guards made attempts to turn the general population of the jail against them, referring to them as "a bunch of faggots."

The prison was also put on lock down when demonstrators arrived, meaning that inmates were strictly limited in their activities inside the prison. Guards told inmates that it was a result of the John and Jane Does not giving their names.

Tension was undoubtedly inflamed by the fact that the overwhelming majority of people incarcerated in Washington DC are black while virtually all the arrested demonstrators were white.

Demonstrators then asked to see their lawyers, and when denied that, chanted. They were further denied. Not at any point had they been granted access to the legal council of their choice.

Meanwhile, outside the jail, demonstrators gathered in support of their arrested compatriots and conferred with National Lawyers Guild lawyers who were being denied access to prisoners.

... continued on page 10

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Scrutinizing the Zimbabwean Land Crisis

Violence reigns while the country's economic stability sways

Recently, the international press has focused its lenses on the unfolding events in Zimbabwe with a lot of sensationalisation and revelation. Four people have been reported dead in the land crisis that intensified with the invasion of "white owned farms" by the war veterans of the 1980 Independence war from British colonial rule.

The land hungry war veterans, amid clashes with the white farmers in alliance with their farm workers, have occupied approximately 1000 farms. The international media, like always, has been obsessed with the deaths, whilst sidelining the issue at hand. It was against such a "tense political environment" in Zimbabwe that Jonathan Becker, the Dean of Studies, organized a discussion in the College Room, where three Zimbabwean Students—Ngonidzaishe Munemo, Faith Maromo, and this writer—put the land question into perspective.

To the speakers, the land crisis is not a new phenomenon that started with the invasion of farms by the war veterans. The issue dates back to the colonization of Zimbabwe in 1890, where the British settlers illegally and forcibly occupied the fertile lands, ensuring that the black majority occupied the marginal lands (17%) whilst the white minority occupied the prime land (83%). This was supported by legal statutes, which ensured the poverty of the blacks and the development of white agriculture.

The Zimbabwean Independence was a result of the Lancaster House settlement. The settlement resulted in safeguards, which ensured continued land inequalities. But why, 20 years after inde-

pendence, does the Zimbabwean government hold the British responsible for compensating the white farmers who lose their farms?

The British made an undertaking to fund the "willing-seller-willing-buyer" provision of the Constitution, hence the recently passed law in Zimbabwean parliament holding Britain morally responsible for compensating white commercial farmers who lose their farms.

Whilst condemning violence, the speakers showed that the land crisis was a serious problem and the political and economic stability of the country rested on its fair and transparent resolution. Only redistributive justice can arrest the situation.

Zimbabwe's economy is agro-based with tobacco (dominated by white farmers) being the largest export earner, and maize (dominated by the black communal farmers) being the highest on domestic demand. Currently the unemployment rate is at 50-60% and inflation is above 50%, hence agriculture is viewed as the sector that can utilize the underutilized black population.

Though a specific date has not been set, parliamentary elections are expected in May 2000, in which ZANU (PF)—the party that has been in power for 20 years—faces the greatest challenge to its position from Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)—the labor backed party.

"After all the media sensationalisation, it was a relief to hear an analytical insider's view of the Land crisis in Zimbabwe" commented Jim Skhosana, a PIE student from South Africa.

— Harton Maliki

Protestors in Puerto Rico

Hundreds removed from Naval testing ground, none arrested

by **Michael Chameides**

ON THURSDAY, MAY 4, at 5:30 a.m., Federal Marshals, FBI agents, and thousands of U.S. troops were mobilized in the removal of nonviolent protestors from a military base in Vieques, Puerto Rico. The U.S. government and the people of Vieques have been in conflict for years over the use of two-thirds of the island for a Navy training base. After a civilian was killed by a bomb that missed its target, locals moved onto the base in attempts to end the military occupation and destruction of Vieques.

The protestors represent a broad range of interests composed of grassroots community leaders, members of the community at-large, religious leaders, elected officials from Puerto Rico and the U.S.—including two members of the U.S. Congress, members of the Puerto Rican Legislature, leaders of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, students, union members, and known artists.

The U.S. moved its Navy base onto Vieques just after WWII. The military claims that they bought the land at or above market value, yet the people—who now live in the middle third of the island—claim that they were forced off their land and were never paid.

Opponents of the base charge the military with a broad range of environmental and human rights violations. The military

uses bombs and bullets coated with depleted uranium, a radioactive carcinogen, in their training. The uranium, along with other military weapons, has wreaked havoc onto the island, destroying coral reefs and fishing grounds. Fishing serves as part of the economic base of the region, and the Vieques' economy has suffered severely. Many people also fear that the uranium will cause cancer.

The military uses the island to practice attack scenarios. On a regular basis, the Navy practices bombing, attacking, and seizing the island. The U.S. government claims that the Vieques range is vital to national security and is the only place its Atlantic fleet can conduct simultaneous air, sea, and amphibious training using live munitions.

The people of Vieques and the U.S.

government have been working on a solution for years. Last January, President Clinton pledged, pending congressional approval, to use only non-explosive bombs and give Vieques \$40 million in aid. There has also been mention of removing the base in five years.

Despite these talks, the conflict has continued, as the Navy still holds the site and the people of Vieques work to end the occupation. Last April, David Sanes Rodriguez was killed by a Navy bomb. Thousands took the streets, protesting the killing as well as the Navy occupation. In an act of direct action, people moved onto the base. Their message is clear: "Not one more bomb!" Hundreds of people have set up civil disobedience encampments on the training grounds, stopping the military exercises.

On Thursday, the federal authorities moved in and removed non-military person-

nel. Hundreds of people were removed, but none were arrested.

The next day, the world exploded in protest. Protests were recorded as far as Korea. New York City, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and San Francisco had some of the largest demonstrations.

Five Bard students attended a rally on Friday in New York City. Many students are enraged about the U.S. action.

Shonali Choudhury, a Bard student and resident of Puerto Rico, tells the *Observer*: "Since 1898 the people of Puerto Rico have been the slave of the United States. We have been granted citizenship and have been ripped of our rights. The U.S. navy has used and abused our land and our people only to show off that the U.S. is the world's superpower. Our people have suffered and died, our natural habitats have been destroyed, and our land has been taken away from us. The U.S. is the only country to have colonies in the new millennium. The abuse must stop today. Todo el mundo con Vieques. Fuera la marina."

Many Bard students have pledged to make this an issue at Bard and the local community. The Latin American Students Organization (LASO), Human Rights Project (HRP), and Student Labor Coalition are planning actions and activities for the next few weeks. LASO and HRP are planning a panel discussion for this week.

"The U.S. navy has used and abused our land and our people only to show off that the U.S. is the world's superpower. Our people have suffered and died, our natural habitats have been destroyed, and our land has been taken away from us."

IMF continued . . .

The warden had told lawyers that conference booths were full but after a call from a prominent DC attorney to the warden it was proven to be false, that the booths were empty.

A tarp was put up and food was distributed, bubbles blown, flags waved, songs sung and drums beaten. On Passover, an improvised Seder was held both outside and inside the jail as those arrested were allowed to congregate in the gym to have the ceremony.

Demonstrators had no idea how long people were to be kept in jail, but assumed the worst as in Seattle where they were kept for six days. It turned out to be only five.

On Thursday, as arrestees were being transported to court, US Marshals protecting the vans clashed with people making a soft blockade in the street. Several people were pepper sprayed, a young woman was taken away by EMT's with neck trauma after being thrown down and another man required stitches after being tripped by a Marshal.

Despite friction between demonstrators and police, the atmosphere remained subdued. Local residents gave their support and an off duty police officer engaged in a long discussion with a small crowd of protesters around his squad car about issues of the week.

An inmate released after a year and three months recounted the strange but venerable behavior of protesters inside the jail. He recalled their group huddles when decisions needed to be made and their refusal to let anyone of them be separated from the group.

Most local people acted sympathetic to the cause of the demonstrations and seemed familiar with the harsh violence and intimidation methods of police, although many did act shocked at the liberal use of pepper spray and were startled by police's heavy duty riot gear and

brandished batons.

It was late Friday that the word came that there would be releases. It was not until approximately 2:30 a.m. that people began to be released in small groups with mere five-dollar fines and the charge of incommoding, equivalent to a J-walking charge.

Three and four at a time, people were released in surprisingly high spirits. They were fed and greeted by close to a hundred happy but weary supporters. Those released recounted stories of jail and expressed sympathy for those other inmates who were not to leave after such a relatively short time. Many said that they felt privileged in prison as they had lawyers trying to represent them and energetic and committed supporters outside who they could hear through the walls as they chanted and drummed.

They also made strong ties with their fellow protesters who they referred to still by their chosen nicknames, unable to use real names in jail. A sense of unity was gained. People felt as though they personified the collective Jane and John Doe by the end of the week.

For some the experience was one that they have no intention of repeating, but for others it was fuel for the fire. Seeing the way that the justice system functioned during and after the planned demonstrations was shocking to many both inside and outside the protests.

And while both police and activists claimed victory for the results, it is clear that a new relationship is building between law enforcement and political and social mobilizers where each struggles in their own way to stay abreast of the other and come out of things with as much accomplished as possible and the fewest consequences.

Bard Hires Environmental Auditor for New Environmental Resources Department

THEY SAY THAT BIG THINGS come in small packages; the saying rings true with Laurie Dicutiis, the Bard College horticulturist since 1989, and the College's new Environmental Coordinator. Toying with the idea for at least three years, members of the Recycling and Environmental Education Committee (REEC) finally approached College administration last semester with a solid proposal for a full-time position responsible for all environmental aspects of campus functions. In one semester, Bard alum Amy Foster, with the help of a member of the Bard senior class, generated an extensive proposal for the establishment of a full-time Environmental Coordinator for the college and brought it to Jim Brudvig, Vice President for Administration. Brudvig was supportive of the idea and Mini and Foster quickly met with the REEC to generate a succinct job description for immediate distribution. The goal was to hire a Coordinator to begin in June, just after Commencement. The Committee agreed on a job description, which was sent to Brudvig for approval near the end of the semester.

At about the same time, Laurie Dicutiis considered applying for the position herself. Having issues about the direction of Bard's horticultural approaches (or lack thereof), Dicutiis was considering leaving Bard. Seeing this position as the answer to her frustrations, she met with Brudvig about being considered for the job and was quickly met with approval. Brudvig felt that she was an ideal candidate for the position because she, due to her experience with the College, was familiar with its inner-workings and with the staff and faculty of the campus. She would need no training or adjustment period and is aware of the problems already in need of attention. Brudvig and Dicutiis then met with Executive Vice President Dimitri Papdimitriou, who agreed to hire

Dicutiis for a one year trial period.

While the exact titles of her position and of the new department are still up in the air, Dicutiis will begin in her new role in June, just after Commencement. She sees the position as one facilitating communication between students, staff, and faculty regarding specific environmental issues on campus, and as a means of generating concise action toward resolving those issues. For example, if students notice that recycling bins are missing from their dorms, they will be able to call the office of the Environmental Coordinator and be assured that the bins will be replaced. Or if a Service Master employee notices that students are mixing up their trash, then Dicutiis might work with that employee to discuss a way to educate students better about proper recycling practices. Even if a student, staff, or faculty member thinks a new (or old) building could utilize better energy or water saving methods, he or she could meet with Dicutiis to discuss the possibility of instituting those methods.

Dicutiis' job will not just target recycling, but will also include revamping the composting system (including practices, storage, and maintenance problems), fine-tuning recycling education among faculty and staff (including Chartwells, Service Master, Barnes and Noble, and all faculty), and overseeing the establishment of green purchasing (such as purchasing paper with higher recycled content, recycled carpeting, re-tread tires, recycled office furniture, or untreated, non old growth wood products), energy conservation measures (including computer, light, and water use), and the employment of green building processes for new campus construction. Her main priorities include requesting for proposals for campus recycling and solid waste hauling to local waste contractors, improving the function

. . . continued on next page

Inside the Capitol Corral

Congressman Maurice Hinchey Advocates Democrats, Denounces Republicans

by **Abhik Siddiqui**

LAST TUESDAY the Bard community got a taste of real life politics with the public appearance made by Maurice Hinchey, the representative for the 26th Congressional District of New York. The program was organized by the associate professor of political studies at Bard, Joseph Luders.

The speaker started his talk by saying that contrary to those who believed that the 'Democratic Party looked dead', the Democratic Party was very much alive, and in the last few years had in fact seen a surge in the popularity of the Democratic Party. He was forthright in his condemnation of the Republicans. He remarked that when the Republicans took control of the Congress in the '94 elections they deliberately advanced what he referred to as the rightwing public agenda. In the '90's this country witnessed the "conservative revolution" that resulted in a shift towards the right.

Playing on the meaning of the word conservatism, Hinchey remarked that since "conservatism" was a term of art, this term could not be applied to the Republicans because they 'did not conserve anything'. He blamed the Republicans for the right-wing shift in the political spectrum, which came to the fore during the Clinton years. He said that the impeachment issue was a "payback for Nixon." According to him, despite their best efforts to bring down Clinton, he had a "successful time in office," with the economy slowly becoming

more robust and strong. He remarked that their principle objective was to "destroy the Clinton administration, impeach him and remove him from office." He observed that, despite all their best efforts, the Republicans became victims of their own vicious propaganda and could not affect the functioning of the Clinton administration.

The Clinton years saw the gradual growth of the economy with an unprecedented level of job creation. He compared and contrasted the difference in the approach of the Democrats and the Republicans to the issue of Budget deficit. While Nixon's strategy rested on the reduction of the budget deficit by importing federal funds, Reagan's administration, on the other hand, was intent on creating more budget deficits "as far as the eye could see."

The Clinton administration inherited a huge budget deficit in its first term in office; but it gradually restored the budget balance, and the federal reserve interest rates increased six times. Congressman Hinchey was very harsh in his criticism of Republicans for the massive infusion of money into defense. He remarked that the defense spending skyrocketed during the Republican era.

He commented, "The Republicans believe that the federal government has no role other than defense." Defending Clinton's approach to foreign policy, he said it was more pragmatic and in tune with the current inter-

national situation. He said that the Democrats only spend what was asked by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was needed for the protection of American vital interests in the "Middle East" and

al warming and ozone layer depletion. He said that there was an attempt to disregard these environmental issues and push them onto the back burner. After the talk, Congressman Hinchey received questions from

ful" of certain groups, and this fear psychology is evident in the way the State responds to even supposedly minor crimes. He recommended that mandatory minimum sentences should be discontinued and that the "sentence has to be applied to that particular case."

In response to the question of police brutality in Washington and New York he said that the police sometimes overreacted and was trigger-happy. He remarked, "The tendency of the authority is to overreact."

To a question regarding the huge amounts of "aid" going to the relatively small country of Columbia, Hinchey said the aid was exclusively military and was meant to solve the drug problem. He said this approach is essentially flawed because the drug problem cannot be resolved by simply giving military aid and local people will end up dying. He remarked, "The foolishness of the American government is that we can't solve the drug problem by dealing only with the supply side. As long as somebody wants something, someone is going to supply it."

Commenting on the question of sanctions on Iraq, he said he was personally in favor of lifting the sanctions, but he could not change the general view regarding this matter.

The Congressman left the gathering by making all the people feel that he could rise above the rough and tumble of politics and understand things in all their complexity.



Mike Morini
Making His Point: Reiff says humanitarian aid

"Southeast Asia." He summed up the political views of the Republicans by saying that they had a minimalist conception of the state and wanted to keep it out of every possible sphere of life. They wanted to turn education into a "local issue" and also wanted to wash their hands of the healthcare system. Their minimalist understanding led them to believe that "everyone should be able to take care of himself or herself" and that the government had no role except to oil the wheels of the market economy.

He insisted that the government must not only have a role in the "cleaning the Hudson river" but also in dealing with larger issues of global concern like glob-

the audience. To a question regarding the overwhelming population of predominantly Black and Hispanic people rotting in prison on seemingly nominal offenses, Hinchey responded by saying that, "Locking up prisoners deprives them of their freedom" and that there were too many prisoners for low level drug charges sitting in prison for many years.

He said that the "society creates such conditions" and that the prison system was a form of disciplinary control on the society. How else do we explain the fact that although Blacks constitute about 15 percent of the population they make up 98 percent of prison population. He said, "The general public is made to be fear-

Environmental continued . . .

of the compost system, and hiring in-house waste collectors.

In addition, Dicutiis will oversee the continuation of recycling and composting workshops that take place during L&T. Next year's first-year students will receive free Bard travel mugs again (this year's mug was designed by a current first-year student Raisa Kogan).

Overall, she wants to see Bard get up to speed with what other colleges are doing with their campus environmental programs, serve as an example to other schools and to visitors, and she wants this program to help enlighten students and staff about the need for sustainable environmental solutions on the institutional and individual level.

Dicutiis holds an admirable and crucial approach to the management of the new program: she refuses to be dictatorial in her position. Instead, she will work hand-in-hand with the various campus staff and faculty departments, as well as with students, to implement realistic and viable solutions to campus environmental problems on campus, be they the need for more or better recy-

cling bins in Stone Row, the purchase of re-tread tires for all College vehicles, or the use of recycled carpeting in a new dormitory.

Dicutiis is hiring student employees for summer and semester help in developing the Environmental Resources Department programs. Tasks will include website development, research into other similar programs, and general program assistance. Dicutiis considers student input and involvement an essential component to the program, and encourages students to apply for jobs with her. (Call her at x7565 if you are interested.)

Dicutiis is optimistic and enthusiastic about getting down to work on some of Bard's big environmental issues. She hopes to receive continued support and cooperation for her new role at Bard, and looks forward to what appears to be the origins of a long-awaited sustainability movement at the institutional level at Bard College.

-Kate Mini

¹The hauler manages the entire solid waste of the institution, and owns the dumpsters maintained around campus. The collector transports the waste from the curb/dumpster to the transfer station. Currently, the Bard hauler is also the collector, which may be more expensive than having collectors that are Bard employees

²Re-tread tires are tires that have been re-manufactured and repaired for re-use.

• STAFF PIC # 4 •



Which Way to the Ponies?: "This totally reminds me of the State Fair back home in Detroit, Michigan," said *Observer* Editor in Chief, Michael Haggerty, when he discovered BETTY's bouncy-park Saturday afternoon extravaganza. (*Time Passes*). Later that day, when he saw the blue and red "car boats" driving through Tivoli, he commented, "That doesn't remind me of anything."

Do you like to listen to music? Do you like to eat free food? Do you like to stay up all night? Then the *Observer* is for you! Give us a call at X7131 or drop an email to observer@bard.edu to find out how you too can enjoy these luxuries that we can no longer live without.

arts/entertainment

The UBS Files

Meet the graduating senior artists in the current show at Bard's new space

by **David Janik**

THE ONSLAUGHT of Bard College Senior openings, concerts, readings, and screenings that comes each spring has reached frenzy pace. The immensity of the graduating art students' creative output could be seen the night of Saturday, May 6 in the second show at Bard's new studio and gallery space, the UBS building in Red Hook. The eight artists showing displayed the great variety of ideas, materials, and personalities that are all possible and actually present within Bard's Studio Art program.

However, this breadth of work seemed in no way random, crowded or overwhelming. The way the show was allowed hung one artists work to flow into the next seamlessly, sometimes even overlapping: a painting or drawing on the wall counter-pointing a sculpture in front of it on the ground.

Meanwhile, space was open between the work, making UBS' huge room feel full and charged, but open and airy at once. There was a remarkable balance between the show's overall sense of unity and the expression of each individuals character and culmination of their work at Bard.

The work was not labeled locally as one walked about the room but instead there were maps just inside the door. This way an observer could move from one project to the next but never feel isolated within it or separated from the show as a whole. Coming in the front door and looking to the right I was immediately drawn to the large wood sculpture constructed by

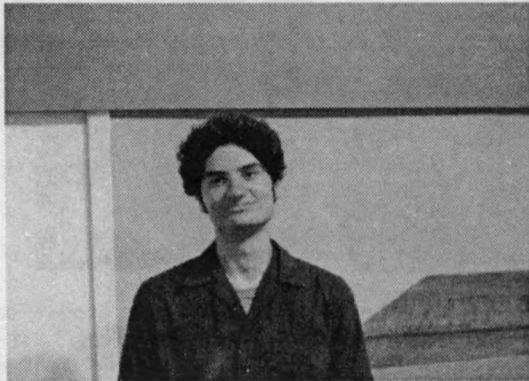
Ishmael Randall's work uses carpentry to create structures that play off of organic, architectural, and mechanical shapes. Their rough, unfinished, scratched upon surfaces references "rustic carpentry" which Ishmael feels a nostalgic affinity towards. The simple practical forms approximate those built by people in "tiny little towns that create out of a need to create." Ishmael's background in Ollantaytambo, Peru and in America inspired this interest in rustic building. The sculptures were juxtaposed by Ishmael's drawings that gave examples of ideas for similar forms in two dimensions. The parallel seen in the drawings gave a sense that Ishmael's wood sculptures were drawings made with timber



rather than ink. Ishmael hopes to focus on some of these ideas further even though "it is kind of hard after college." Looking through one of the sculptures it was hard to miss Monte Large's long paintings on the opposite wall.

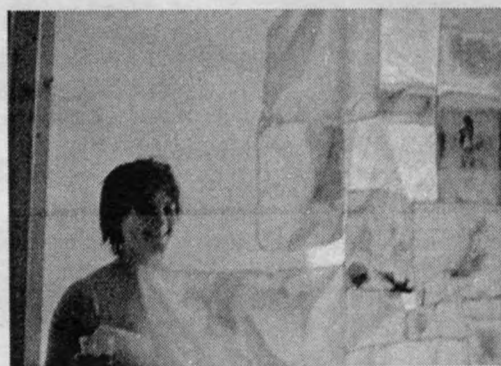
Monte Large comes from suburban Houston, Texas and feels that his art is based on ideas and spaces he found in that region's architecture. Monte hopes to

continue working in art as an architect. His diptych pieces show this intersection of fine art and architecture. One side of each is a painted representation of a space that matches up with a side constructed of various building materials. The two parts combine in calculated perspective to make one clean, open, spacious whole, giving an illusion of an actual depth beyond the flatness of the wall piece. Building these



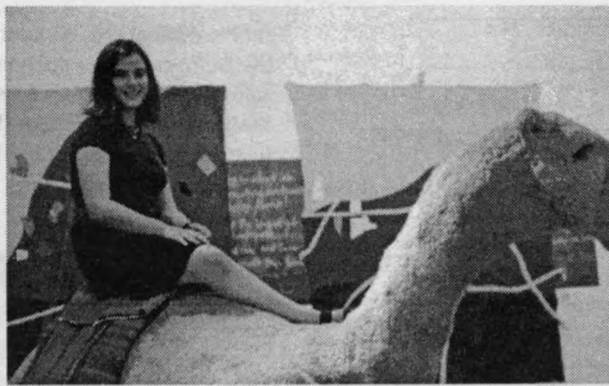
combinations of painting and building is a logical transition in Monte's plan to pursue architecture further "so some of my designs might someday be built." Just next to one of Monte's illusions of space is a real door leading in to a dimly lit corridor that runs along the edge of the UBS building. As I walked into this space scale quickly shrunk from wide and open to intimate and precise.

Fletcher Boote's work lined the walls of this hall glowing, almost floating on small shelves and pedestals. Fletcher's work combined metal and wood boxes, embroidering, various found objects, thread, color, and glimmering cloths to create delicate compositions. The secrets symbolically unfurled by the boxes' locks and latches left open loads their contents with voyeurism. The contents of the boxes can be seen as microcosms of personal



secret and thought. This trail of artifacts lead to a large patchworked piece that stands out in front of the wall, back-lit. The sections of the patchwork are made of translucent cloth adorned with images, colors, and shapes. This piece is good centerpiece for the others. The differences of scale between this piece and the others brings out issues of separation, privacy, and possession. Fletcher, who grew up in Washington, D.C., wants to continue working on her art as much as possible after graduation. After leaving the dim side and re-entering the bright white main room of UBS it was hard to miss people climbing onto the life-size camel sitting in the back right corner of the room.

Sheila Refael was there beside the camel taking Polaroids of people on the camel for a small fee. Sheila's camel is the center of her piece consisting of map-like tapestries, and half-covered, half-erased chalkboards. Sheila's work comes from her personal experiences growing up in Israel and Westchester County, NY. The school



All photos by David Janik

branches and neurons at once that almost reached the top of the new building substantial space. This summer Brett is going to drive to California. Lining the wall in front of Brett's pieces and wrapping around to the front half of the building a series of blue panels.

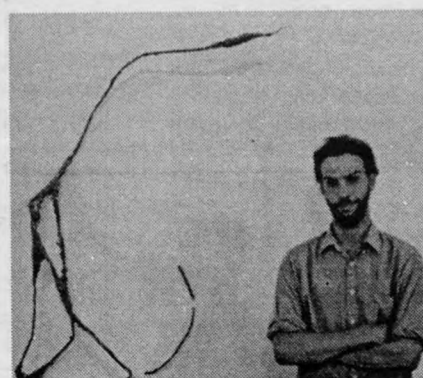
lesson texts on the chalkboard, simple boldly colored felt lines of the maps and the extreme stuffed animal camel all came across impressions from childhood. The work dealt with geography, education and memory with a refreshing simplicity of composition and symbol. The execution of these ideas was impressive with the installation of the chalkboards and diversity of materials. Any viewer had to stop and marvel for a moment at the fact that Sheila actually built a life-size camel. Sheila's next plan is to travel for a while. Sheila's bright and continuous stood across from a wall of small primarily white paintings.

Elizabeth Strickland from Port Washington, NY says that these paintings are based in memory and how we "think things over again and again." The paintings seem to mimics this idea leaving any figure or idea washed out and reapplied. The cool soft pieces of various sizes are spread across the wall, floating across the white background. The memories depicted range from rabbits hopping by to self portraits. That thoughts come in



different sizes, vague and haunting came through in the way the paintings stand together. Elizabeth claims to have no plans for the future. Also in the back half of UBS,

Brett Beyer's wiry organic sculptures towered toward the ceiling. Brett comes from New Jersey and claims "totally hippie" influence as responsible for his art: the trees, yoga, and breathing. Trees were the most obvious of these influences in the sculptures' branch-like extensions and bark-like surfaces. Brett's works sit in the sterile art space as if uprooted. They mirror the most natural things, trees, human organs, but take these forms and place them in inhabitable formation and context. The most impressive in his show was a giant construction shaped like root



Angela Farrell comes from Boston and her father works with wood. Being around his activities influenced the direction her work has gone. The piece Angela has up in the UBS show is made of panels of wood, blue on the front and orange on the back that repeat periodically across the room. The repetitive contrasting colors create an illusion of the panels moving as the viewer moves across the room. At certain points along the wall the repetition deviates where the panels turn down toward the ground or the wall disappears from beneath them giving repetition



its necessary variation and nuance. Angela plans to move to New York City and live with famed Bard alum, "Topher." As Angela's piece turned back around to the front of the show so did I, where a number of stained mattresses stood lined up near the front wall.

Jessica Segall the front left corner of the large room as well as a small side room with videos and a loft visible only to those who climbed a rickety wood ladder. Jess says her work is a result of her experiences, personal aesthetic and things from people's backyards. The most emotionally engaging of Jess' work are the series of beds stained and torn with lacy lingerie sewn on. The interaction of desolation, luxury, poverty, and absence makes the beds haunting and even scary. The surrounding



broken furniture and the dimly lit, curtained space at the top of the loft puts the viewer into an atmosphere in which the beds seem even more personal and affecting. Jess plans to not do any art for a while after graduation.

Coming back to the door after rounding the space through eight artists' work I still had the sense that group show worked as one coherent show. The show is still up for another week and will be followed by a third Senior show at UBS. UBS is located off of Route 9 in Red Hook, near White Horse Liquors.

Reading Distinctions

Curatorial thesis show offers a view into culture/subculture

by **Brian Ackley**

The meaning of subculture is always in dispute and style is the area which the opposing definitions clash with the most force.

-Dick Hebdige, *Subculture and the Meaning of Style*

IT IS THROUGH STYLE (the manner in which a person lives and presents him/herself) that homology becomes apparent. The corresponding relationship among members of a group is established by the common signs and behaviors that distinguish that group. The work shown in Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy's CCS thesis exhibition "Distinctions" invites readings of group identities, questioning their formations and the potential of difference.

Distinctions of style among a queue of teenagers are shown photorealistically from a bird's-eye view in Jennifer Allor and Guillermo Calzadilla's drawing "Untitled" (2000), which begins on the floor at the threshold of the gallery and extends to the other between entrance. The kids are standing or walking, alone or in groups conversing, reading the free weekly, talking on cell phones, riding a bike and so on. The various specifics of 'kid culture' are lovingly depicted: Adidas hats, bandanas, piercings, cell phones, hairstyles, gestures, sunglasses, skate boards, etc. The piece celebrates the mundane act of kids hanging out.

Although the procession has been elevated to an object of art, this status is undermined by the drawing's lack of finish. The drawing is not hung but is laid on the floor and is shown in an extreme perspectival view from above that suggests a viewer who hovers a few feet above them. This orientation implies a hierarchy by representing a cultural 'underground.' It is also under our feet, relegated to the space of detritus, of accumulated debris. Since the drawing is unfixed, the charcoal is smudged and tracked all over the drawing by the public who walk all over it. Viewed as such, the drawing is perfectly situated in the gallery, and necessarily so. If placed off center closer to the wall it would only invite (or dare) us to walk over it, but since it bridges the main axis of passage in the gallery, the viewer is forced to participate in this relationship.

The viewer is in a position to

obscure the drawing itself. This situation can be read as a reference to the ways in which counter-culture is constituted and manipulated by the agency of its other, the dominant culture. The eventual dissolving of the work also points to the temporal nature of style. When the medium's softness and materiality are subjected to the crowd's ferocity, the sensitive renderings of realistic portraits are smudged and erased. The viewer leaves a readable cultural imprint of her own: the distinct tread of Converse, the backward 'swoosh' of Nike, the textured sole of a dress flat all interact with the images they disrupt.

The signifiers of style (the symbols of distinction) that appear within the active clusters



Walking the line, walking in the line: Jennifer Allor and Guillermo Calzadilla's drawing "Untitled" (2000). Art Club 2000's "Untitled (Puzzle Party)" (1992-1993) (below)

everything and cellular phones that connote the groups excessive purchasing power. These symbols are on display to be read as the 'distinctions' among the group as well as between the group and our culture as a

the drawing become walking advertisements assembling a style that is a collection of labels. There is a space for choice with in this pastiche at the superficial level of the image, but their style is never 'original'. Even though this reading of the drawing

is dressed in cut-off jeans; dark, wire-frame sunglasses; and denim vests with red bandanas tied on their heads. They are aloof from one another busy looking cool and independent in the middle of Times Square.

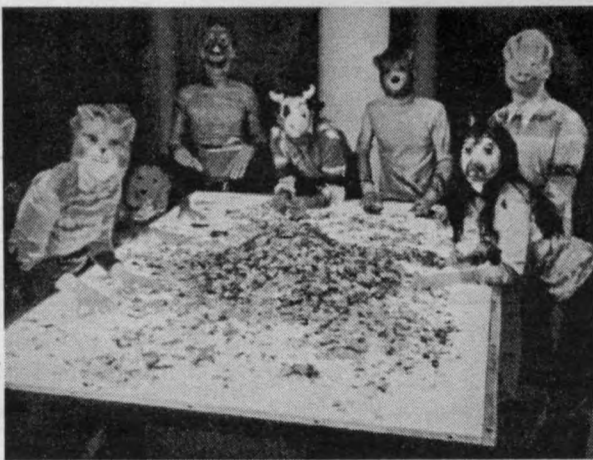
In another, the group is

assembled in front of a 7-Eleven. Their fashion appropriates the Day-Glo aesthetic of the convenience store. They address the camera aggressively, gesturing a group "fuck you" while clutching Slurpies.

A third image, a puzzle party, is even more bizarre. The group is assembled around a lightbox

The signifiers of style that appear within the active clusters of kids range from everyday objects rewritten to symbolize 'deviance,' and opposition to the ultra-labeled commodities and high price accessories.

of kids range from everyday objects rewritten to symbolize 'deviance,' and opposition-establishing, as Dick Hebdige says, a style of



Refusal—to the ultra-labeled commodities and high price accessories: from the graffiti paint can and skateboards that express rebellion to the brand-name

whole.

But the symbolization of this 'refusal' itself is caught up in the culture it protests. The group consumes the commodified 'deviance' of the equipment of youth culture. This style is carefully planned and marketed by the corporations that produce these items. The group is constituted through the acceptance of various commodities, thereby engaging in the culture of capitalism from which they are trying to differentiate.

Style still is a clash of "opposing definitions," but these definitions are generated in the service of the commodity, for profit. This is evidenced by the extent to which the individuals in

implies a destruction of self-definition within culture, the individuals depicted in the drawing still prove that this system is, in fact, functional: they all have a relative 'uniqueness' and apparently they all are enjoying themselves.

The understanding of this work as such was influenced by the photographs of the co-operative Art Club 2000 (AC2K). "Distinctions" displays a selection of their year-long project "Commingle" (1992-1993). Intended as a critique of the representation of 'the collective' in advertising, the photographs depict the AC2K in different scenes dressed up identically, in different styles. The five untitled photographs invite us to immediately characterize the collective based on the shared image.

One picture shows, "Untitled (Times Square/Gap Grunge)" comes off as more of an "Axl Rose" look. Each AC2K member

with a huge pile of puzzle pieces on it. The collective is wearing 70s polyester shirts with a brightly colored design and animal masks on their heads. A cat, dog, frog, cow, bear, and pig stare blankly at the camera.

While the AC2K references the aesthetic of various subcultures (grunges, ravers, etc.), they are never specific in defining the group. Unlike the group in Allor and Calzadilla's drawing, who are unaware of their being viewed, the AC2K pictures always engage with their spectator. The work is a parody of forced representations whose goal is to 'reach' and influence a very specific audience. Through this, the project moves to become a closed study of differentiation where we become sensitive to the nature of the individual within the group.

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Photographer Challenges own Narrative

Filmmaker Dariusz Jablonski presents Holocaust through found images, interviews

by **Stephanie Rabins**

THE OCCASIONAL "documentary" film that confronts the difficulty of its own language and the complexity of story-telling itself is usually not seen by great numbers of people. We have grown used to a distinct and often homogenous format that few movies attempt to defy. *Photographer* (dir. Dariusz Jablonski), which played in the Campus Center Theater on Monday, May 1 as part of the continuing "filmseries 2000" presented by the Human Rights Project, is one such film.

In 1987, a collection of color slides was discovered in Vienna. The slides are some of the earliest made, when the technology was only just being developed. They were photographed by the German accountant in charge of overseeing the Lodz ghetto in Poland during World War II, at the request of a Nazi official, and had been left untouched ever since.

The Lodz ghetto, which initially held over 300,000 thousand Jews concentrated into a restricted section of the city, was an especially productive one. Nazi uniforms and hats, among other things, were manufactured with extreme efficiency and quality, earning praise for administrators. The film never goes into detail about the photographic project itself, but most likely, ghetto officials wished to record its workings as evidence of its methods for "success".

The film, which is based on the slide collection, works with four components. 'In one, excerpts of recent interviews with several people who lived in or governed the ghetto give accounts from memory of personal experiences. The men look at the slides, sitting in their homes. Dramatically lit and heavy with silences, the shots draw attention to lined faces of men who speak in Polish, in a tone that sounds still puzzled, about their lives sixty

years ago.

Interspersed throughout the interviews, letters between Nazi officials are filmed and read aloud, subtitled in English. Most often, the men discuss logistics. They exchange particulars on the measures taken in order to conceal the ghetto's grim conditions—from inadequate food rations to the gradual, tell-tale disappearance of those Jews unable to work efficiently enough.

Most strikingly, the film uses shots of the slides themselves.

The idea that images could desensitize was far from people's minds, and pictures could be a form of shocking revelation of a tragedy which many, at the time, were unaware

The old AGFA images, made with an archaic chemical process and then left for six decades, are extremely grainy and in soft focus. The colors match an aesthetic that we already grant to mid-twentieth century Europe—the cool, hard greens and rusty oranges seem poignant regardless even of their content. Faces are reduced to their simplest shapes.

Dark hollow eyes stare into the camera, while long black hair and kerchiefs distinguish the women from the skinny, gaunt-cheeked men. Most of the pictures were taken in the street or in well-populated rooms, and are panned slowly by the film camera. Enlarged so extremely, and already so reduced in detail, the pictures become distant and

painterly.

Finally, we see several shots of present-day Lodz. The camera moves through the town, matching the speed of the slide pans. The streets look still and quiet; at times it is unclear if we are seeing the town as it looked in 1940 or as it is today.

Alternating between these layers of presentation, a story is loosely formed. Most of the retrospective narrative comes from a doctor in the ghetto at the time the pictures were taken. He

from any recollection of death or tragedy, but from the telling of the story itself.

Among the snippets of memory and documentation runs a parallel narrative. The officer overseeing the photographer, unhappy with the distorted orange color of the slides, writes a series of letters to AGFA. In a disapproving, authoritarian tone, he voices concern with the quality of the product. He is certain of the capability of both the camera and the photographer, and fears

were not so used to pictures of horror or violence. The idea that images could desensitize was far from people's minds, and pictures could be a form of shocking revelation of a tragedy which many, at the time, were unaware.

The film ends with two takes on finality. First, we are shown a slide that is labeled as showers for Jews. It is a shot from above of a gas chamber packed with blurred, naked bodies. It is especially powerful and silent in its vernacular, plastic frame; if many

recalls his life there, most dramatically when recounting decisions he and colleagues made regarding the lives of the children in the ghetto. He slowly explains that some people were necessarily sacrificed in hopes that anyone might be saved in the long run. He also remembers, however, that his situation—unmarried and without children or elderly relatives—allowed him to make such decisions. Nothing in the film is easily recalled.

The narrative comes in different form from the German officers. Slides show them relaxing off-hours, dining with well-dressed women. The pictures are striking in their difference—taken of peers instead of prisoners—and acquire a critical feel in the context of the film. Thus, the most jarring aspect of the story comes not

that his project, overseen by an important superior, is not being properly executed. His language is formal and removed, and one with which we all, as consumers, can identify. Placed deliberately among the other scenes, these few letters most explicitly point to the complexity, the layers, the difficulty and multiplicity of writing a narrative.

Photographer does not let a viewer walk away with any sort of conclusion. It is a smart film, one that uses a starting point—the discovery of the slides—not as a narrowing-down but as an opening-up of perspective. Documentation and the Holocaust already maintain a complex relationship, as so little has been salvaged. Photographs, in particular, occupy a particular place; in the early 1940s, we

such photos exist, they are certainly not readily shown.

And then finally, after several letters, AGFA writes back apologetically. They have developed new technology, new film, and will promptly send some to Lodz. They are sorry for any inconvenience.

Photographer asks a few of the questions about responsibility that we have come to expect. It then goes further, however, and asks more: about media, memory, and narrative. It asks, in the words of one Jewish doctor looking at the slides, a question that we have been asking since the first photograph was used as proof or evidence of something else. "The truth... is it in my memory, or in the pictures?"

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Synthetic Pops

Mouse on Mars Create Synth-pop for Enthusiastic Students

by **Melissa Stultz**

"IS THIS WHAT it's always like here," Mouse on Mars member Andi Toma asked me in a thick German accent as we traversed the Minor Demon lawn party and headed towards the music building in search of a music stand for Toma's electronics. This question spawned a discussion about the differences between the school systems in Germany and America, a topic that both Toma, and later other mouse Jan St. Werner, seemed very interested in exploring.

The fact that the German trio, which features Toma, St. Werner, and the newest member, a percussionist who goes by the name of Dodo, were playing at a college was evident by the top forty hits circumventing the dancing legs of tanktopped nineteen and twentysomethings, the long line of pushy students with plastic cups struggling to get a full glass of keg foam, and the sterile cleanliness of the administration's campus center where the performance was held. Toma made special note of this college show, addressing the crowd, saying, "Thank you for interrupting your studies to come out tonight." The rowdy crowd, already prepared for a party from the ruckus outside, had no idea that they were in for a night of dancing to synth pop.

And that is what the night became once Mouse on Mars took the stage and changed the atmosphere set by Bard's own Yobananaboy, a palindromal elec-

tronic act created by seniors Nick Emmet and Raja Azar who created experimental soundscapes that featured dense layers of manipulated samples and showed their roots in the electronic and experimental scenes through the use of rhythmic passages.

Surprising to some long-time Mouse on Mars fans, their set, composed of various keyboards, synthesizers, laptop computers, guitars and a mixture of electronic and traditional drums, was fairly catchy and straightforward, with a much more dance oriented tone than is found on their records. However, the crowd was excited about the "dance music," and displayed their interest as the last of the Mouse on Mars CDs disappeared off of the merchandise table. The trio seemed pleased with the crowd's enthusiasm, remarking that, "there are some good dancers out there."

[Mouse on Mars] are not necessarily dancy synth-pop as one may have thought from their live performance, but rather a trio of humorous, charismatic German musicians who create original, innovative, and thought provoking electronics.

Personally, I felt more like I was at a dance club than a German electronic show; but, as a die-hard fan, I could not help but appreciate every sound that came from

sonality, enthusiasm, and jokes made in both English and what seemed like a somewhat "inside joke-esque" German to the two English speaking students. They

enjoyed miso soup, vegetarian burritos, and even the vegan German-chocolate cake which gave the Cologne natives a good laugh. The trio played a great show and gained a good deal of new fans despite a few technical difficulties with the multi-purpose



Of mice and martians: German musicians caused the first major outbreak of dancing ever reported in the campus center courtesy of their pop inflected electronic grooves.

Mike Morini

the band's equipment.

Café Luna 61 was generous enough to reopen their kitchen and feed the mice, two of their friends, and two Bard students who jumped at the chance to insure that the band got a healthy, vegetarian meal on their tour. The group was full of per-

enjoyed miso soup, vegetarian burritos, and even the vegan German-chocolate cake which gave the Cologne natives a good laugh.

The trio played a great show and gained a good deal of new fans despite a few technical difficulties with the multi-purpose

show. One student commented that he liked the show, but not the CD he bought afterwards. Mouse on Mars' new record, *Niun Niggung*, was at first denounced by the famous music magazine the Wire as being a step backwards in their musical progression, a statement that was quickly taken back by the editor after the staff decided, upon another listen, that the record was outstandingly creative and innovative, which it definitely is. Thus, the magazine's next issue featured the trio on the cover.

Mouse on Mars, direct from Cologne's A-Musik scene and founders of the Sonig label, which pioneers electronic music in Germany and features other electronic artists such as Fx Randomiz, Vert, and St. Werner's side project Lithops, are not necessarily dancy synth-pop as one may have thought from their live performance, but rather a trio of humorous, charismatic German musicians who create original, innovative, and thought provoking

Bali-on-the-Hudson: visual and audible pleasure for all

Last Thursday, a concert of Balinese music was held in Olin Auditorium for a large and enthusiastic crowd. It featured performances by Giri Mekar, a Hudson Valley-based gamelan; Chandra Kanchana, the Bard student gamelan; the Bard Gender Consort, a smaller group of six gamelans; and I Nyoman Sumanthi from Bali. The next day, a benefit dinner was held in the chapel, featuring Balinese food, dance, and a wayang kulit, or shadow puppet play, by Sumanthi.

The small island of Bali, Indonesia, is a unique part of the world in many respects, religious, social, and artistic. Its music, made world-famous by such enthusiasts as 20th Century musician Colin McPhee, is equally unique, and as beautiful as the island itself. Since last year, Bard has been privileged to have a Balinese gamelan, or orchestra, on indefinite loan from Gary Kvistad; and this year, we have had the guidance of Ni Ketut Suryatini, a prominent musician from Bali.

The concert opened with a procession featuring all the performers, many playing deafeningly loud hand cymbals. Then Chandra Kanchana played two

pieces, the second featuring a sung section where the players humbly offered their music to the audience. After this, Giri Mekar played two pieces. The second of these featured this reporter and a



Talk to the hand: Indonesia performance and dinner benefits an orphanage in Bogor

handful of other Bard students playing the traditional Balinese game of Mesiap-siapan, which hopefully was not too ridiculous looking.

The second half of the show featured a piece by Suryatini, which canny audience members remembered from a performance last semester, played with sweet perfection by the Gender Consort. There were also three dances, one featuring two young local girls. The last number fea-

tured Sumanthi wearing a succession of masks, playing several characters as they gathered together to fight an evil king in a neighboring village.

The strangely poor acoustics of the Olin Auditorium conspired with Sumanthi's strong accent to make some of the dialogue disappear, but the performance was very funny, never more so than when, after a long speech in an Indonesian language, he turned to the audience and asked, "You get what I'm saying?"

The dinner was also a success, gathering a huge crowd and presumably, a huge amount of donation money to aid the children at the Bina Harapan orphanage in Bogor, Indonesia. There was more music, dancing, and delicious food, albeit in small portions after a humongous line, both due to the unexpectedly great success of the event. Sumanthi's performance was a

tour de force typical of a dalang, or puppet master, who must command the skills of a musician, actor, puppeteer, and sage, as well as be able to speak the dead language of Kawi, which all the noble characters speak. The wayang kulit, traditionally a dusk-till-dawn show, lasted only two hours or so, and its plot was extremely compressed, making it hard to follow at times.

But the sheer entertainment value of the puppets, so magically alive, exciting, and funny, more than made up for occasional bewilderment. Who would not be engrossed by the action, which included a spectacular fire, intense battle scenes, and Delem, a big fat character, displaying his dancing skills, even if they were not sure what, exactly, lead to these events?

All in all, a very successful weekend of Bali-on-the-Hudson, which those present will not soon forget.

-John deBoer



Jamie O'Shea

Zorn rereleases some filecard projects

John Zorn
Godard/Spillane
Tzadik 1999

Avant-garde jazz musician John Zorn's music veers from one genre to another with enough speed to disorient any listener. From the Yiddish free jazz of Masada to the progressive grindcore of Painkiller, his music may be better classified as a sort of film score for the imagination, rather than any genre a pigeonholing critic might wish to indulge in. Appropriately, many of his compositions are soundtracks to films which don't really exist, allowing a more complex framework than even the most detailed "concept album."

Two projects which took this concept to an extreme, *Godard* and *Spillane*, have recently been reissued in remaster form on Zorn's Tzadik label. Inspired by theater director Richard Foreman, who meticulously blocked every scene, page by page, Zorn developed the "file card" process, which involved creating dozens of individual pieces of music to correspond to the emotional impact of any given theme in a work. The now easily available compositions are accessible and enjoyable, despite their unorthodox origins and disjointed construction.

Godard begins with Zorn himself spitting out irate French, and propels from there through recognizable elements of all Godard's works (though the Marxist aspect of his late '60s period is absent). The disjointed nature of the composition actually preserves a greater sense of unity than one would think possible, given the scope of Godard's genre exploitation, but still fails to convey a coherent mood. The leaps from cabaret jazz to science fiction ambience to Chinese instrumentation begins to seem haphazard rather than cal-

culated, though a listener intensely familiar with the dramatized works might be able to make sense of it.

Zorn's *Spillane* succeeds in being much more expressive, understandable given its narrower focus. The tone is quickly set by a blood-curdling female scream,



JOHN ZORN
GODARD
SPILLANE

a good indication of its more visceral quality, in contrast to the sometimes irreproachably cryptic *Godard*. As Zorn himself remarks in the liner notes, "Spillane's world was a natural choice for me because of the extreme nature of his vision."

Should the listener's mind ever wander from the fragments of jazz and the samplings of thunder and rain, *Spillane* is punctuated by bursts of violent noise and actor John Lurie's hardboiled rendition of such Mike Hammer lines as "If you kill ten men, one of them's bound to come back." Former Richard Hell & the Voidoids guitarist Robert Quine also makes a cameo as Hammer's conscience. *Spillane* fades into a melancholy rain-drenched denouement, giving the listener an unmistakable sense that he has witnessed some sort of profoundly affecting story, despite the absence of any discernable narrative.

The CD reissue is rounded out by another, much briefer application of the file-card method, *Blues Noel*, which evokes a speak-easy atmosphere and con-

tinues the cinematic thread with a brief allusion to *Blade Runner*.

Catharsis: inspired hardcore

Catharsis
Passion
CrimethInc., 2000

Lou Reed once wrote that he wanted to create "the Western equivalent to the cosmic dance of Shiva. Playing as Babylon goes up in flames." This is the best explanation I can give of Catharsis' artistic method. Propelled by a more complex philosophical and musical basis than many of their hardcore peers, Catharsis' second album integrates politically-motivated fury with primitivist and sacred music influences to create a varied and distinctive soundtrack for industrial collapse.

"May the lovers betray and be betrayed/May the poets all choke on their own sweet lies," goes one couplet of "Into the Eyeless Sockets of the Night." No, this is not "positive hardcore." Unlike labelmates Trial and other politically-conscious hardcore bands which build on the late-'80s roots of Born Against and 4 Walls Falling, Catharsis draws inspiration from the apocalyptic din of death metal and the brutal speed of crust, along with such esoterica as Jim Jarmusch's surreal meta-Western *Dead Man*, steel drums, and impressively orchestrated interweavings of instrumentation and vocals.

Unlike such antecedents as Crass or Conflict, who are sometimes so unrelentingly downbeat as to be something of a chore to listen to in spite of their evident musical talents and inspiration, Catharsis's intense music sometimes approaches beauty. In the liner notes

explaining one song, Catharsis notes with wry self-parody that "Duende, the wild magical soul of Spanish Flamenco, is present only as an absence in our dreadfully serious songs. This is our attempt to find soul of our own."

This "wild magical soul" is most evident in the closing songs. "Deserts Without Mirages" grafts noise-guitar reminiscent of Neil Young's score to Jarmusch's *Dead Man* onto minimalist reggae, accompanied by an almost Leonard Cohen-ish narration, conjuring images of a flaming automobile slowly careening towards oblivion. The result is easily the most nihilistic appropriation of the typically sun-splashed reggae rhythms I've ever heard, vaguely reminiscent of the Clash's "Straight to Hell." While this amalgamation of diverse sources would have been an impressive ending to the album in itself, it leads into the intense climax "Sabbat," which applies a children's

Catharsis draws inspiration from the apocalyptic din of death metal and the brutal speed of crust, along with such esoterica as Jim Jarmusch's surreal meta-Western *Dead Man*, steel drums, and impressively orchestrated interweavings of instrumentation and vocals.

choir's Latin hymn and an insistent percussion to an otherwise blindingly fast and heavy barrage of guitars and vocals.

While Catharsis can come off as pretentious at times in their impressionistic lyrics, they are easily one of the most diverse and inspired hardcore groups I've encountered.

Arab on Radar Deafens While Tristeza Soothes

Melissa asked me if I could write a review of the Arab on Radar/Tristeza show from this past Tuesday night in the Old Gym basement and I didn't answer her at first. It's not that I was hesitant to help her out; it was just that my ears were still ringing so loudly from having survived the entire show. But please don't let me mislead you; it was all Arab on Radar's fault.

But lets start from the start. And the show was started with Apse . . . so lets start with them. Apse, as in part of a church, not "the Aps," as was listed on the flyers, consisted of two kids from Connecticut, and Ezer Lichtenstein, a first year student at Bard. I think it was their first time playing a show, and you could kind of tell, but that didn't make it less enjoyable. Their unpolished, Slint-esque instrumental rock seemed to be appreciated by the gathering crowd. Perhaps the audience was caught up in Apse's abrupt dynamic shifts, or maybe everyone was entranced by the flickering oscilloscope that they brought on stage for the crowd to gaze upon.

Next up were local favorites Chocki, who played an energetic (as usual) set, while distraught

with setbacks such as broken guitars and senior project due dates. Chocki persevered as Brad Alter borrowed a friend's ultra-feminine, purple Danelectro, and Chris Pappas postponed his senior project. My personal Chocki highlight was when Ben Brunnemer was screaming, jumped on my back, and hurt me.

The audience was then ready for some non-Bard action as Tristeza hit the stage. Tristeza, whose challengingly cryptic name some say is Spanish for "sadness," more convincingly comes from bass player Tristan's nickname for his Subaru Impreza,

Much of the crowd was battling with whether to be embarrassed or intimidated, as they were imposed upon by Arab on Radar's ridiculous behavior.

assuming the bass player is in fact named Tristan and if he does in fact drive an Impreza. The San Diego five piece have

mainly been gaining popularity from their Makoto Records full-length *Spine and Sensory*, which is really good, and also from this weird tour-EP series from Insound.com which, I was told, has this stupid song that consists of a not-so-interesting 10 second loop repeating for 40 minutes. But that shouldn't take away from the fact that the show was good.

Tristeza played a very consistent set, mostly of songs off of the LP. Their blend of swirling guitar melodies, droney synth, and syncopated but solid drumming definitely translated well into the live performance. Tristeza is a

leader in the current trend of beautifully hypnotic instrumental rock bands who are basically hardcore kids that eventually

learned to play their instruments well. I've seen them categorized in genres such as post-rock or slow-core, but I personally don't think they're jazzy or slow enough. They tend to sound more like a cross between the loopy, tonal guitar playing of Papa M, and the buzzing, lush guitar and synth of Southpacific.

Tristeza's set was enjoyably direct, and did seem a little short, but I'm not sure because I didn't have on a watch. People did call out for more, but I think that it probably had more to do with Tristeza having been good than their set having been too short. Unfortunately, Tristeza

turned down the chance to play an encore and succeeded to Providence's Arab on Radar.

Arab on Radar, two geetars,

one drummer, and a screaming guy, came on and set up their two sideways three-piece stacks, complete with their ridiculous subwoofers, and played a long, painful set which was louder than any of the bands that played at the hardcore show the prior weekend in the same room.

Wearing matching uniforms, they spat, snotted, and seized all over the red room, grabbing their penises and sticking their fingers up their asses. Much of the crowd was battling with whether to be embarrassed or intimidated, as they were imposed upon by Arab on Radar's ridiculous behavior. The show was as loud as it was entertaining, and basically sounded exactly like the disjointed rock of US Maple, except, well, twice as loud.

Arab on Radar is a good band, don't get me wrong, but as a friend of mine told me when I asked if he wanted to come to the show, "No, I'd rather not see them live." Anyway, you can buy Arab on Radar stuff from Skin Graft Records and you should be looking out for a new Tristeza record on Tigerstyle.

-Frank Musarra

Pulitzer Prize winner visits Bard

"She hurries from the house wearing a coat too heavy for the weather." This is how Michael Cunningham's book, *The Hours*, begins to describe what it might have been like for Virginia Woolf to commit suicide. Cunningham came to Bard for a reading and discussion of his novel, *The Hours*, which is a riff on Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. While talking a little bit about what it is like to win the Pulitzer Prize, he also had a lot to say about writing in general.

"Winning an award for a book is like winning the Miss America contest, or the county fair cucumber award. I never thought that I would win the Pulitzer Prize for some eccentric little book. It came as a complete surprise. I was fully prepared for *The Hours* to fail." He highlighted the importance of creating the style of art you want to create because in his case, not following the rules got him the Pulitzer. "You might as well produce the art you want to produce because you never know what the world will think of it."

He then went on to read from his award winning novel, *The Hours*. Among other things, he read from a section of the book that attempts to depict what it may have been like for Virginia Woolf to commit suicide. The audience was very engaged throughout this reading and asked the author questions after he was done. Someone asked why so many of the characters in the book seem to be fail-

ures. He replied with, "it is because what they want to accomplish is so enormous. As a writer I can relate to that; there is always something bigger in mind." Cunningham said that he has always wanted to write a novel that is smarter than he is. "If you know where a novel is going to go, all it is going to do is get there."

Many of the questions pertained to the act of writing a novel and what it entails. "When writing I don't like to deal with reality. I dream, sleep and then write—without any contact with the outside world before I write. I only work on one book at a time, and try to get it as perfect as possible the first time around. Sometimes I discard as much as fifty pages of perfectly good writing if I realize

of the ways it could have gone."

Michael Cunningham started writing his first novel at the age of five. Mrs. Dalloway, by Virginia Woolf, was the first book he ever read that showed him how great books could be. *The Hours* is a riff to this book. "It is similar to what a jazz musician would do with a great piece of music when trying to create another work of art out of what was already done." He read and re-read all of Woolf's work, and then set it all aside and started writing the novel.

Cunningham, who is also the author of *Golden States*, *Flesh and Blood* and *Home at the End of the World*, wanted to do in *The Hours* what Virginia Woolf had tried to do with her own work. "Woolf always insisted on trying to find the epic

"You might as well produce the art you want to produce because you never know what the world will think of it."

it isn't going in the direction I want it to go. Even when I look at a book that is published and "done" it is hard to look at it as complete, simply because I know all

in the ordinary. If anyone looks deeply enough at any hour with enough art, you can see the whole human story."

-Ben Dangl

• ART REVIEW •

Lucien Freud at Aquavella

"They're not flattering. They're very realistic."

This is what a woman told me as I was looking at the catalogue of the new Freud exhibit. She was sitting two seats away from me on the downtown F train and was leaning over her neighbor to look at the reproductions of the paintings, about half of them nudes. Most of the other half is portraits. What caught this woman's eye were specifically the nudes and when I turned the page to one of them, she would lean even more intently over her neighbor to scrutinize the paintings. At the gallery, the nudes were also what visitors stood in front of the longest.

I disagree with both definers that woman used to describe Freud's paintings. They draw the spectator into searching for nudity, perusing the canvas for skin, whether the representation be a

nude or not. The bodies Freud paints are often considered grotesque and obscene, as this woman put it 'not flattering'. But it would seem to me that the audience has been conditioned to view those bodies as obscene because they are not smoothed off, they are not glossy.

The 'flattery' that an audience would contrast Freud's paintings with is most probably that of magazines, billboards, which is seen so frequently that it has become the mainstream reference of what one should resemble. So, the audience views Freud paintings as realistic because they are not attractive in the basest sense of the word. This is where I again begin to disagree: to me the paintings are far from realistic. They are nearly cartoons, with a subtle, almost imperceptible exaggeration in the body language, in the facial expressions. Barely insistent, on the verge of exaggeration, the audience will have to peruse carefully to notice.

Freud works a lot with texture, mostly in the faces of his figures from where the facial expressions seem to be born,

more so in certain cases than the faces' actual twists, smiles or frowns.

Everything seems to be rounded off, fingertips, noses, limbs. His paintings seem to proceed into a space of hyper-realism. In one painting, the foreground shows a seated man reading in a large room.

Behind him one can distinguish a person, also seated, breast-feeding a child. Whether this person is male or female is left to the audience to decide. Freud blurs boundaries between what is and what should be; the audience is thrown off kilter because they expect of the paintings, and end up seeing realism rather than discreet magnification.

-Leila Morsy

'Lucien Freud - Recent paintings 1997-2000' at the Aquavella Gallery on 79th street between Madison and Park Avenue.

Wim Wenders' poetic, *Alice in the Cities*

What a beautiful film *Alice in the Cities* is. It is as beautiful thematically as it is visually. Shot in low-contrast black and white, or even gray and white, it is a portrait of a chance comradery between a mature child and a confused adult. After being turned away from a journalistic job because he refuses to do what he is supposed to do, Phillip—a 31 year old writer—is accidentally left to care for a little girl named Alice.

We find his character continuously taking Polaroids of his surroundings and scribbling away in his notebook as he drifts around Europe and America. These instant photographs seem to affirm his existence, they serve as visual alibis for his thoughts. As he looks at one of his Polaroids he comments on the discrepancy between mechanical reproduction and human subjectivity, he murmurs about how the photograph is never quite like the reality that he sees.

Reproductive imagery in general holds an extended presence throughout the movie. Wim Wenders inserts found footage sequences, without disturbing the narrative flow, with the television screens that are always turned on in the numerous airport terminals and sparse motel rooms. We are forced to contrast Phillip's personal pictures of reality with those of the mass media. In this paralleling of human individuality with the contemporary society's standardization of life, the film questions modernity's victory over romanticism.

There is a scene where our meditative hero gives in, or sells out, and attempts to hand the little girl over to the police. He is tired, broke and incapable of continuously searching for answers; but Alice gets away, comes back to him and they keep on searching. In terms of the plot, they are looking for a non-existent grandmother, but in truth it is an unfruitful search for rules and meanings.

Music by Can adds sublime melancholy to the never-ending terrain of water towers, factories and NYC skyscrapers. The entire story is set in a homogenous, modernist landscape of plastic railways, identical motels and airports. This retro-high-tech sensibility gives a nostalgic aura to the film, as if it were simultaneously pitying and envying the hopes which literally and metaphorically built our contemporary world.

-Ketuta Alexi-Meshkivilli

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Rugger's Victorious, Depite Score

Bard's muscle-bound men in black (and a few of their friends) played what was their last meaningful rugby match of the season on Saturday, against Columbia University. Through a heat wave that saw four spectators spontaneously vomit after eating at Kline, the ruggers played two forty minute halves of intense rugby.

Columbia attacked fast in the first minutes of the match, but Bard played hard defense, stopping Columbia several times just outside of the try zone. However, before the half would end, Columbia would go up five to zero, on a try converted off of a broken play by Bard.

Bard threatened a try with the first half coming to an end, Mike Starace was tackled about a meter from the try zone, after carrying three Columbia defenders, before Columbia was able to seize possession and end Bard's surge.

Battling fatigue brought on by the heat and humidity, as well as the thick smog bellowing out of the grill vent over Kline, the two teams took the field in the second half, hoping to somehow gain control of the match. Columbia struck first, opening their advantage to eleven points with their second try and the conversion of the bonus kick. But Bard would not give up.

Coming together offensively for the first time this season, Bard drove the ball inside the

Columbia twenty-two meter mark, when veteran phenom Kimani Davis set up Ray for a dramatic try that sent a surge of energy through both Bard's ruggers and the supportive crowd. Senior Ami Copeland, who played especially well offensively for Bard, converted the bonus kick to make the score eleven to seven, in favor of Columbia.

With twenty minutes left in the game, Columbia, a team comprised of far more juniors and seniors than the young Bard squad, began to draw on their experience as a team to pull away from Bard. Unable to build substantial drives against Bard's gritty defense, Columbia scrambled to score a few tries off of mistakes by Bard. The breakaway scores were quick and game-altering, and were what Columbia needed to win the match by a score of 18-7.

Bard got strong efforts out of scrum half Andrew Corrigan and prop Jeremy Thomas in their last match at Bard as ruggers. Corrigan guided an offense that saw its first score of the season, and played well up and down the field.

Bard's younger players also put forth a strong effort, as there were few mistakes made by those men who will make up the core of this club in years to come. Danny Castillo led the freshmen with some fearless ball-carrying, as well as a try he nearly converted late in the match.

-John Garrett

Mike Morini Presents: Sports Rap-Up

Reggie Miller scored a play off-career high 41 points for the Indiana Pacers to beat the Milwaukee Bucks 96-95, wow that is close . . . The Arizona Diamondbacks' Randy Johnson has a 0.91 ERA . . .

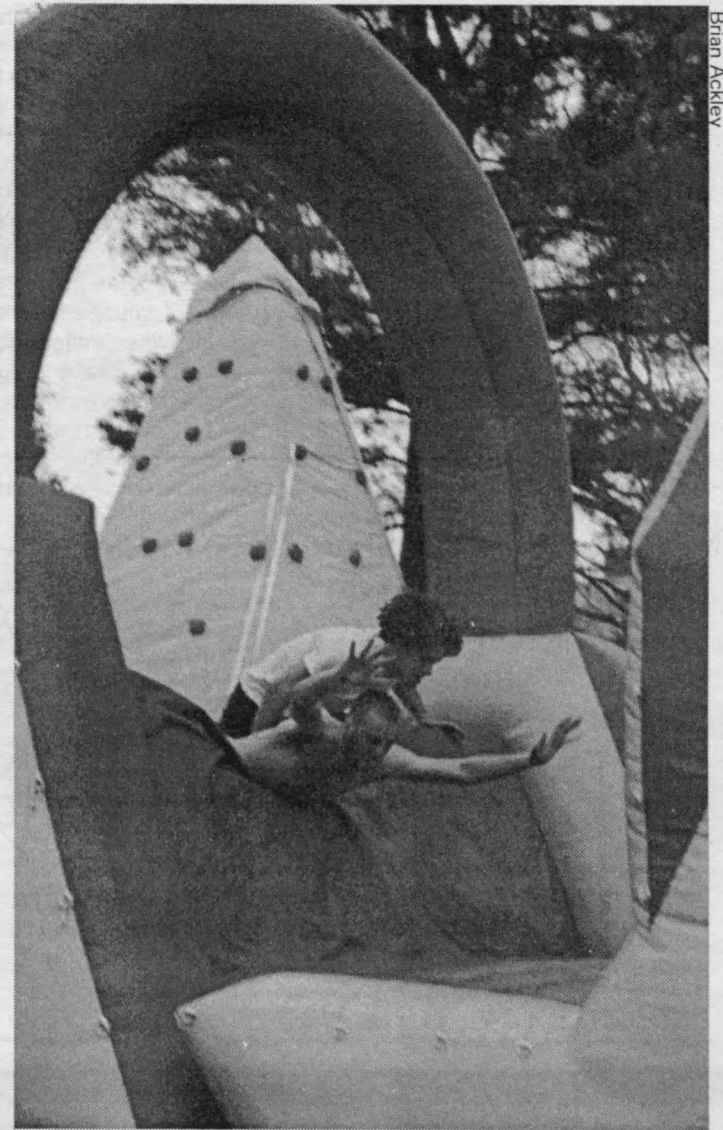
The Boston Red Sox's Pedro Martinez has a 1.27 ERA . . . Alex Rodriguez leads the American League in walks with 26 . . . Barry Bonds is leading the National League in home runs with 11, he also leads the NL in vertical leap size with 63 inches.

. . . he can fly . . . he is rumored to have flown from Giants stadium to his house . . . he is also rumored to be chummy with Colin Greenwood . . . he is also rumored to be a big fan of women's golf.

San Francisco 49ers star Jerry Rice, the NFL's career receiving leader and touchdown scorer, has agreed to return and play for the 49ers this fall . . . Rice has agreed on a reworked contract reported around 2.5 million . . . the best player in football still only gets paid less than 28% of the lousiest basketball players contract

. . . nark . . . Fusaichi Pegasus won the Kentucky Derby on Saturday, he or she is the first horse predicted to win the race who actually won since 1979, I think.

-Mike Morini



Brian Ackley

Bubblicious: Observer cover model G.J. Echernkamp braves the challenge afforded by the moonbounce-esque obstacle course that spent Saturday afternoon in the sun on Ludlow Field. Other attractions included entertainment and amusements fit for hampsters, but blown up real big for people. Thank you, BETTY.

A List, in the Theme of "(Some) Student Shows"

Monday, May 8

- "Fefu and her Friends", a play by Maria Irene Fornes, performed in part as completion of a few senior projects. Seating is limited, call 758-8622 for reservations. Manor Lounge, 7:00pm

- Department of Theater presents "l'Orfeo", an opera by Claudio Monteverdi. Scene Shop Theater, 8:00.

Tuesday, May 9

- The Da Capo Chamber Players perform student compositions. Blum Hall, 7:30.

- Last night of "Fefu and her Friends", Manor, 7:00.

- "l'Orfeo", Scene Shop Theater, 8:00.

Wednesday, May 10

- Big, important Forum. Get elected for next semester. Kline, 7:30

- "l'Orfeo", Theater, 8:00.

- The Woodstock Chamber Orchestra premieres work by Richard Teitelbaum, also performing pieces by Rossini and Manuel de Falla. Olin Hall, 8:00.

Thursday, May 11

- John Coyne's senior concert. 7:30, Bard Hall.

- Howie Wyman reads poems for the last time (probably). Come request impressions of his mother. Chapel, 8:00.

- Ariane Policastro's senior dance performance, 9:00, Stevenson pool!

Friday, May 12

- Caleb Cliff's senior concert. Blum Hall, 8:00.

Saturday, May 13

- Julius Masri's senior concert, Blum Hall, 11:00 am.

- Rival photo openings!
Elena Guzman, Tatiana Brockman, and Sophie Martensson, Woods Gallery, 3-6.

vs.
Joe Elwin, in the Campus Center Hallway. 3-5.
Piñata, a multimedia piece by Nick Jones. MPR, 8:00.

Sunday, May 14

- Art opening at UBS, 4:00.
- Piñata, 4:00 and 10:00 pm.

Monday, May 15

- The SRC Lithic Trio, from Simon's Rock, performs Dvorak's "Dumky" Trio and Mendelssohn's Trio in D Minor. Blum Hall, 7:30.

- Gala Concert, featuring Gamelan, Jazz, and Vocal ensembles, plus more. You must know someone in this . . . Olin Hall, 8:00.

Tuesday, May 16

- Keith Fredrickson's senior concert, Blum Hall, 7:00.

- Molly Zenobia's moderation concert, Bard Hall, 8:30.

Wednesday, May 17

- Ali Meah's senior concert (piano), Blum Hall, 7:30.

Thursday, May 18

- Raj Azar's senior concert, Blum Hall, 7:30.

Friday, May 19

- Senior Film Show first night, in the Olde Gym! Come relive the past, only better. PM.

Saturday, May 20

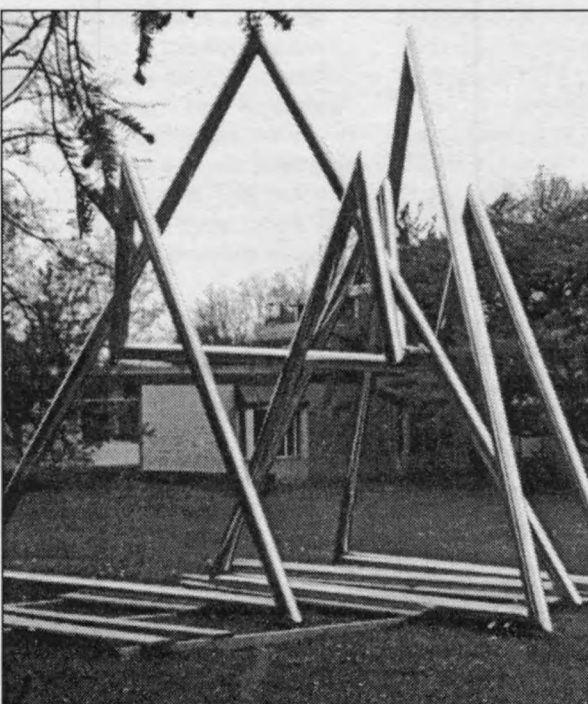
- May Dance Theater, with faculty and senior project choreography. Dance studio, 8:30.

- Bailes Españoles—Flamenco and Spanish dances choreographed by Aileen Passloff. Dance studio, 7:00.

Sunday, May 21

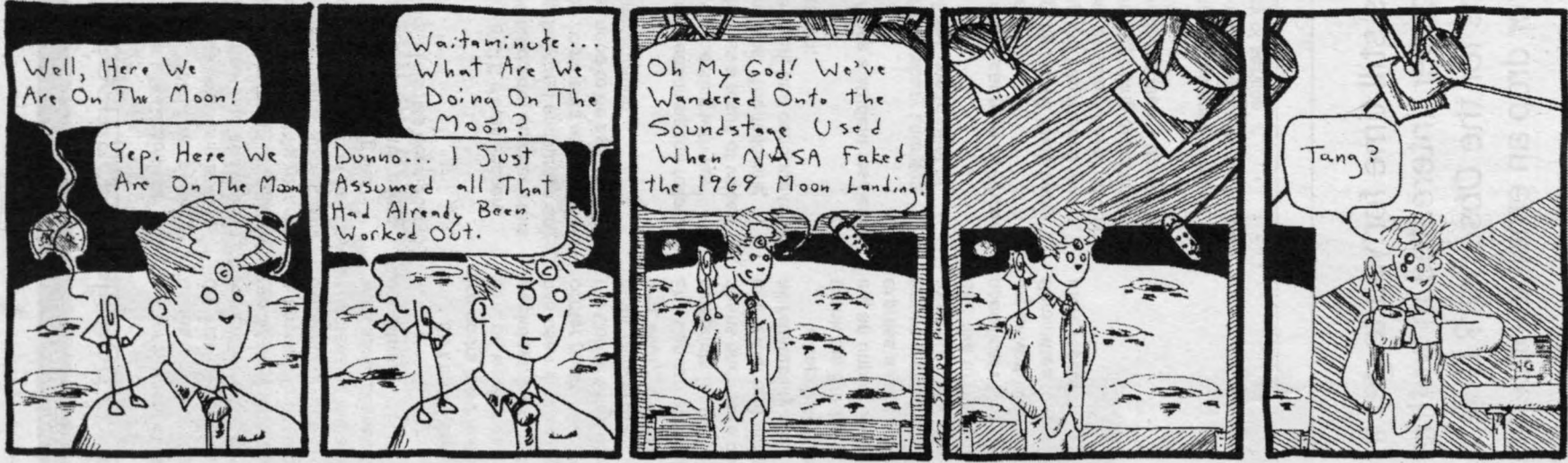
- May Dance Theater, 1:00.

- Amanda Holt's moderation concert (cello), Blum Hall, 2:00.



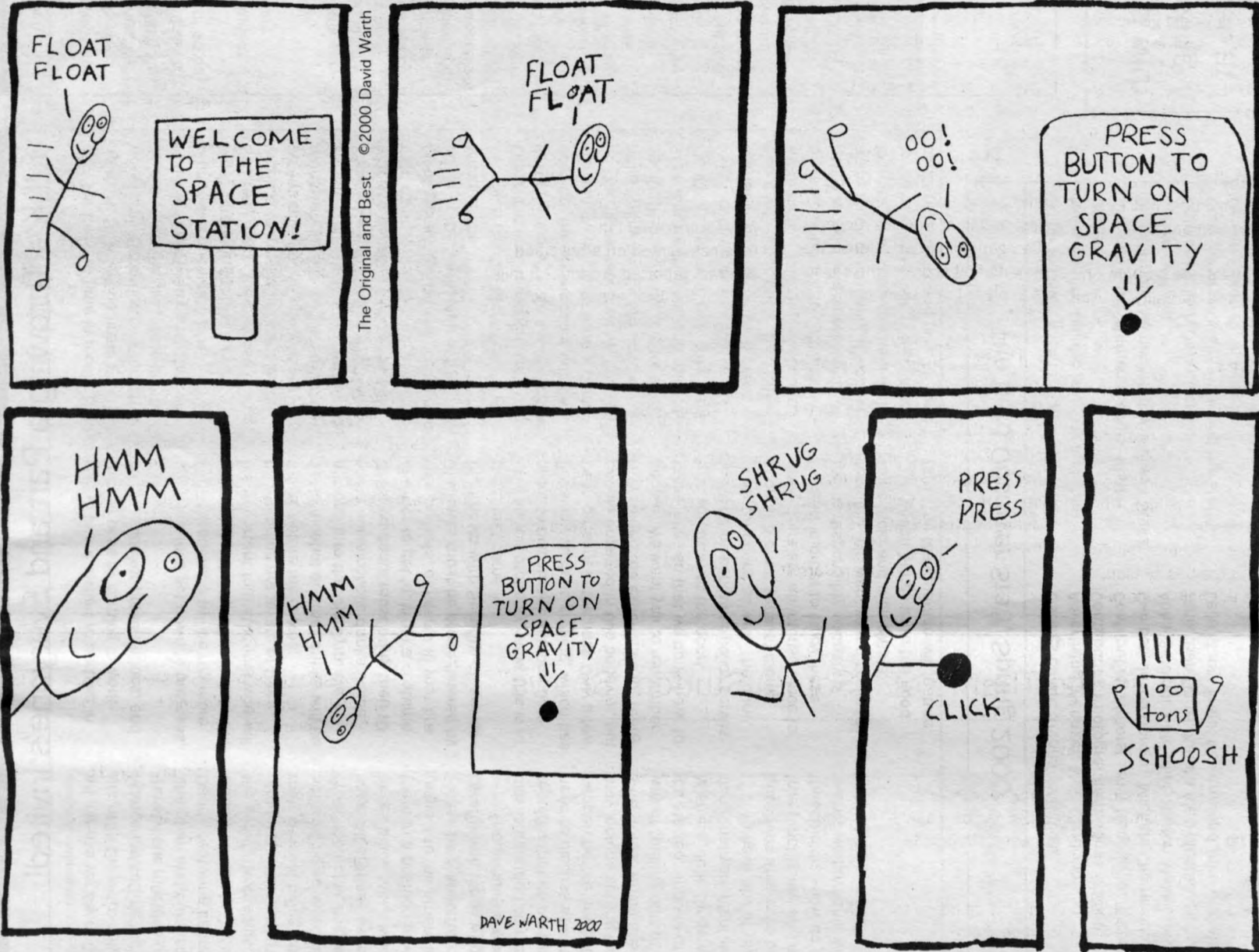
Sculptural Displacement: What has happened to America? Somebody moved the it from Tewks field to make room for new dorms. And they set up back up wrong!

The Dancing Paperclip of Tormented Souls by Morgan Pielli



©Morgan Pielli

Mr. Schoosyface in SPACE! by David Warth



The Original and Best. ©2000 David Warth

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My obelisk is non-parous.

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• STUDENT LIFE COMMITTEE •

What's been accomplished thus far . . .

The Student Life Committee headed by Mary Molina has primarily focused on increasing campus wide student involvement and awareness of important issues facing the student body this year. Thus far this year, we have attempted to voice student concerns to the administration at Bard by reaching out and conveying the urgency of student concerns to key administrators. This has been accomplished by:

1. Setting up a SLC e-mail account (studentlife@bard.edu) we check this account regularly and encourage suggestions and comments regarding any matters that need to be brought up with the administration.

2. Polling and petitioning the following issues and/or meeting with key administrators as a result of voiced student concerns. The following issues have been, and continue to be, actively pursued:

- Keeping Albee a student residence hall
- Return of Tewksbury Lounges
- Review of the department of Security
- Maintaining a year round 24 hour study space
- Extending the Coffee Shop hours
- Increasing the importance and effectiveness of student evaluations and opinions regarding departmental decisions involving faculty tenure and rehiring
- Increasing shuttle service hours, expansion of shuttle routes and overall efficiency of service

- Improvement of facilities in existing dorms including social spaces, laundry machines, vending machines, etc.
- Increasing the number of quality residence halls on campus
- Researching the possibility of an on campus bar/pub
- Increasing the amount of student work space, especially in the art department

So far this semester, shuttle service hours have been extended until 3 a.m. on weekends and 1 a.m. on weekdays, a 24 hour academic space has been established, the computer center hours have been extended and the Coffee Shop has agreed to consistently remain open until at least 12 a.m. every day. The SLC has met with Erin Cannan and has reviewed the blueprints for the proposed new dorms and made suggestions for general layout and enhancement of overall habitability and "non-hotelness."

In conclusion, we would like to thank the Bard Student body for taking an unprecedented effort to express a genuine concern about the issues mentioned and we hope to see more such involvement. We would also like to thank the administration, specifically Erin Cannan, for continuing to work with the Student Life Committee to make Bard College more receptive to student needs.

SILK's Throwing a Part and Everyone's Invited!

• SILK •

For the first time in recent Bard memory, SILK will be hosting a weeklong celebration of alternative sexual lifestyles and practices, the Week of Kink Awareness. The celebration will culminate in a Masquerade in the Old Gym, Saturday night. The purpose of this Week is to reach our larger Bard community, and to educate our community about Alternative Sexuality for personal practice and for general knowledge and respect. This new-found or revisited knowledge will then come in use in order to harmoniously enjoy the experiences provided for in the downstairs of the Masquerade.

SILK (Sexual Identities, Lifestyles, and Knowledge) is a pan-sexual group where a variety of practices are appreciated, although we will admittedly never have a demo on the missionary style. At this stage of life many people are unsure about their sexuality, and for some, S/M, leather fetishes, and motorcycle gangs are more than they want to get involved in. But SILK is not only about these things. It's also about educating each other while we're here, after our parents and before our in-laws, to cultivate an active respect and appreciation of many kinds of sexuality. It's about learning what skills can help make for safe, consensual, non-isolated, open-minded sex and play. All Bard

students are invited to partake in this process by coming to workshops, speaker presentations, and so forth.

Now let's get down to business. The Masquerade will be run more strictly than Bard parties usually are. It's important that students who will be attending are aware of three things before they come:

- 1) **No alcohol or other drinks will be allowed into the Old Gym.** We will serve non-alcoholic drinks inside.
- 2) **All students must bring their ID in order to get in.** Wear a costume with pockets, or keep it in your bra.
- 3) **Guests must be pre-registered by their hosts with Security**—otherwise they can't come in.

As you probably know, this is in order to discourage inappropriate behavior, such as groping, which has been present in the past. Only a few people engaged in this behavior, but they ruined the experience for many people. We want you to remember these rules so that we don't have to turn you away at the door!

The no-container policy serves other functions as well. The dungeon and other sensual rooms downstairs are an intense place to be, and in order to enjoy these rooms responsibly, sobriety is required. We want your discoveries to be lucid and memorable.

Which brings us to the good part. The Masquerade will feature

an intense variety of Bard performers, with the extremely talented Mangerine setting the tone between the stylistic mixtures of David Shamban and our disc jockeys. Your Daddy, featuring Laurel Barclay previously of Variety City, is heading up the event. Downstairs there will be other ways to enjoy the full range of their sensual being with tables of hot wax, liquid latex, body painting, erotic food play, flogging and massage. All of these sensual experiences place those who engage in them in a position of vulnerability in respect to the others in the room. Please be respectful, caring, and careful with those who are playing.

The primary ingredient for any play is informed consent. This requires that all parties involved need to discuss what they want to happen before any actual play. This may include setting limits, roles, and safe words, which are an essential way of "pulling out" of a scene once it's started. Inquire of our Dungeon Mistress, Julie Bindeman, for anything that you might require.

To have any of your most prying questions answered by a tried and true practitioner and expert in any of these fields, show up at some of the events we have this week. See you at the Masquerade!

The Bard Observer Staff, Spring 2000

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There's still time for you to get involved with the paper. Interested in writing or taking photos for the *Observer*? Give us a call at X7131 or drop an email to observer@bard.edu.