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# Bard Student's Home in Palestine Demolished by Israeli Forces; Student Fundraising Effort Hits Procedural Obstacles

BY ETHAN PORTER

First of two parts

As the night sky lay over the Dheisheh refugee camp in Palestine on November 30<sup>th</sup> of last year, the Ibdaa Cultural Center was ready to operate for another day. Founded in 1994 with the stated mission of "provid[ing] an environment for the camp's children and young people to develop their abilities, creativity and leadership skills through social, cultural and educational activities not otherwise available," the Center hosted a kindergarten, a library, a girls' basketball team and even a dance troupe. At approximately three in the morning, Israeli soldiers woke up its inhabitants, as well as the inhabitants of the house next door, and told them to leave immediately. The soldiers informed the inhabitants that they had no time to pack their belongings. The houses were going to be demolished. Within three hours, the houses were destroyed and the people inside them were rendered homeless.

The next day, Bard first-year student Zeyd Hammash received a panicked phone call from a friend in California. His house, which doubled as the Cultural Center, was one of the two destroyed; the other was his uncle's. And suddenly, the nearly 6,000 miles that separate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from Annandale-on-Hudson, New York was not that far a distance at all. Bard College was immediately faced with two dilemmas: the material tragedy of the Hammash family loss, and finding the way to best assist them.

By December 3<sup>rd</sup>, junior Kate Crockford, senior Gus Feldman and Zeyd Hammash himself released a fund-raising letter to the community. Word circulated through the student body that student clubs had been asked to give funds directly from the budgets they had been allocated from the Student Convocation Fund. As usual, the end of the semester meant that some clubs had money in their accounts with which there was little productive to be done. "We didn't want clubs to spend money on beer and sushi," explained Feldman in an interview. "And we know they do that [in the waning weeks of the semester]." The tactic of asking clubs to donate money directly from their accounts to the cause lacked precedent, but in the minds of the organizers made sense because it was an "emergency situation."

Within a week, ten clubs had pledged between \$1000 and \$1500 (the figure varies depending on whom you ask). Other clubs also pledged, but were not accounted for by the Student Government Treasurer, Bill McColloch (full disclosure: *The Observer* pledged). Feldman recalls other club heads walking up to him during that week, explaining that they would pledge if only they had any money left in their accounts. "We need to come together," one student told Feldman.

The administration, however, was not supportive of the tactic chosen. An e-mail to the Planning Committee, written by Director of Student Activities Bethany Nohlgren and obtained by *The Observer*, expresses admiration for the community's efforts, but also explains that key members of the administration—Jim Brudvig, Erin Cannan, Allen Josey and Ms. Nohlgren—did not wish student funds to be used for this cause. "...It doesn't fall within the parameters of proper allocation of student activities fees," read the letter.

When a college employee lost her house and two of her family members last year in a tragic fire, the community response was markedly different. Individual clubs did not donate

money from their accounts. Instead, individual community members donated money to try to help her out. The administration argues that the same path should be followed by those who wish to help Zeyd.

"While you would be hard pressed to find anyone who would disagree that the situation Zaid [sic] is dealing with is a tragedy, providing support in this way is simply not appropriate," Assistant Dean of Students Allen Josey told *The Observer* via e-mail. "The purpose for activity money at Bard is to support and enhance the academic life of the institution—not to support the personal needs of any one student."

According to President Botstein, allowing money to be donated directly from clubs to an individual would set "a very dangerous precedent...It is not within the jurisdiction of an institution." Yet he also believes in the virtue of the cause. "I am willing to help the individuals concerned with this gentleman and his house," said President Botstein. "I am willing to contribute." But donating money directly from clubs does not fall under the "rubric of student activities."

"There is a proper way to do it," argued Botstein. He pointed to a situation several years ago that could serve as a model. A fund had been set up with the purpose of helping students struggling with psychological problems. When the fund ran out, the College did not seek donations from organizations and clubs on campus; rather, individuals were sought out, and they responded generously. In this case, the individuals attempting to assist Zeyd could have solicited donations from individuals, or they could "have contacted NGOs that contribute money in a way that is transparent and secure."

Gus, in his capacity as student representative to the Board of Governors, asked members of that Board to donate; he received \$25. Feldman also serves as student representative to the Board of Trustees. He claims that, even though he submitted the letter to the President's Office prior to a meeting of the Trustees, they never reviewed the letter and thus never donated.

Professor Keenan, Director of the Human Rights Project, has raised several hundred dollars from students, faculty and alumni concerned about the Hammash family. In contrast to Feldman and others, Keenan contends that individuals—not the College as an institution—should be the primary actors in donating. "Bard College is not in the business of private charity (except as a recipient!), nor should it be," Professor Keenan wrote in an e-mail to *The Observer*.

"We were in no way trying to undermine the way club money is distributed," said Feldman. He believes that the democratically-elected student government should serve the needs of those whom it serves. "If the administration prevented checks from being cut, it de-legitimizes student government. This is our money," he said.

At some point, the administration did indeed prevent the checks from being cut. Eventually, this might change. Treasurer McColloch and Kate Crockford are currently planning to meet with the college's lawyers to review the Student Constitution and find a way to release the funds. A date for the meeting has not yet been set.

Representatives of the college strenuously denied at every turn that the administration's reservations about releasing the money are in any way related to the tremendously controver-

sial nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But the political nature of the predicament Hammash's family finds itself in cannot be discounted from an inventory of what has happened. The Israeli government justified its demolition of the houses by claiming it was a sort of retributive action against two of Zeyd's cousins, who are now in Israeli custody for allegedly participating in terrorist activity. In reference to one of the cousins, Zeyd said that "the truth is, he never worked for anyone. We were in high school together. My family, we never think of that. We are always taking care of school, that's it. We never fight and never did anything to the Israeli army."

Student opposition to the donation plan currently being pursued is rather muted, but does exist. Some of those who lean to the right have quietly questioned the wisdom of believing in the innocence of Zeyd's family. One position held that the family could not be entirely innocent, since this was allegedly not the first time the house had been demolished. But according to Zeyd, his house had never been demolished before. "My father has been building it since 1990," he said.

An article in the right-wing *Jerusalem Post* seemingly about the Cultural Center at issue was cited by one student in particular as reason for opposing the money from being distributed. The article contains an interview with a member of the Center, in which the member argues in favor of "the right of return," a concept quite problematic to all of those on the right, most of those in the center and even some on the left.

However, nowhere in the article is it suggested that the Center functions as a breeding ground for terrorism against Israeli citizens. Furthermore, the article was dated December 17, 2004, almost three weeks after the Center was demolished according to Zeyd and others, and the writer claims the interview took place on December 14th.

Ms. Nohlgren reports that other students have privately opposed the fundraising, but are reluctant to come forward for fear of being branded as right-wing or conservative. At this past Budget Forum, a resolution in support of efforts to raise money for Zeyd was passed almost unanimously by those in attendance. Perhaps a few hands were raised when the "nay" vote was called, but they were assuredly raised with timidity and therefore generally ignored by most everyone else.

Sophomore Noah Weston, who co-sponsored the resolution with First-year Jesse Myerson, admits to being somewhat disturbed by the lack of visible dissent. "I expected more [dissent] from the more pro-Israel among us," said Weston. To Weston, the question of whether or not the Hammash family was or is involved with terrorism is besides the point. "Terrorist or no terrorist, threat or no threat, I am against the demolition of homes," said Weston. Feldman agrees. "Even if, worst-case scenario, they were involved with terrorism, the fact remains that Israeli destruction of homes is a grave human rights abuse, a violation of the Geneva Conventions [to which Israel is a signatory]," he said.

As the internal political structure of Bard College continues to wrestle with the issue, the Hammash family remains in need. Zeyd plans to send some of the money he makes through work-study back to his family. "No one is helping them, not even the government," he said. "My family is living a really bad life now. Imagine if that was your house."

## Prison Initiative Holds First Commencement Ceremony

BY ANDREW DOLLARD

On Saturday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, the Bard Prison Initiative held its first commencement ceremony at the maximum-security Eastern New York Correctional Facility in Napanoch, Ulster County. Twelve students, all inmates at Eastern, received Associate in Arts degrees from the college.

Myra Armstead, a Bard professor who teaches at the prison, described the event as "miraculous." "Rarely do we [professors] get to see so visibly and clearly the rewards of our efforts," she said. "It was fantastic to observe the intellectual transformation of the prisoners," she continued. "All of them traveled a great distance" in completing the program.

The Bard Prison Initiative was started in 1999 by then-Bard student Max Kenner, who graduated in 2001 and still serves as the Initiative's director. In addition to the program at Eastern, BPI runs another degree program at the medium-security Woodbourne Correctional Facility, as well as a Creative Writing workshop at the Beacon Women's Correctional Facility and literacy and GED programs at three facilities. Each week, a small number of Bard students travel to prisons in the region to volunteer with the program.

The overall goal of the Initiative, said Mr. Kenner, is "to bring college back into the prisons." College-in-prison programs were once commonplace in the United States, but in 1995 the federal government cut off Pell grants to prisoners, the major source of funding for the programs. As a result, over a period of just a few months, college education for the incarcerated virtually disappeared. Yet numerous studies have demonstrated that prison education programs like BPI have a major impact on reducing recidivism rates, thus reducing crime and saving

taxpayers millions of dollars.

The response to BPI from both prison administrators and prisoners has been overwhelmingly positive. Several prisons in New York state expressed an interest in the program, and in its first year the program had nearly 200 applicants, although there was room for only about 70. The students in the program are held to the same high standards of Bard College itself, and only the most capable applicants are accepted.

Those who did make it into the program, said professor Armstead, were appreciative of their opportunity and "didn't take anything for granted." She described the BPI students, considering their circumstances, as less optimistic than their counterparts in Annandale, but they displayed the same eagerness to learn. Their appetite for knowledge was so voracious, she said, that it became difficult to make adequate material available to them, since the prison library is small and the prisoners are not allowed access to the Internet; she ended up photocopying books and articles to satisfy their demands.

Next year, the Initiative's degree program will be expanding into its third prison, this time the Bayview Women's Correctional Facility in Manhattan. In addition, Bard alumni have founded or become involved with similar prison education programs across the country. Any current Bard students who wish to volunteer in the program are welcome to participate.

above left: President Botstein congratulates one of the Program's graduates

below left: The graduates pose with their diplomas



## Radical Criminal Defense Lawyer Now a Criminal Herself

BY CORI O'KEEFE

On February 10, 2005, civil rights lawyer Lynne Stewart was convicted on five counts of providing aid to terrorism and of lying to the U.S. government. Stewart, indicted in April 2002, was accused of abusing lawyer-client privilege by carrying messages from Omar Abdel Rahman, an incarcerated client with strict limits put on his allowed communication, to his followers on the outside. These messages related Rahman's opposition to a ceasefire between his followers and the Egyptian government. According to Stewart, if the press release had not been made, her client would have lost his position on the world stage and thus lost bargaining power. Rahman, a fundamentalist Islamic cleric, is serving a life sentence after being convicted in 1996 for seditious conspiracy related to alleged plots to attack several New York landmarks. Stewart, 65, faces up to thirty years in prison and will be disbarred.

The Stewart trial went on for more than seven months, ending in twelve days of deliberations that spanned four weeks. While Judge Koeltl emphasized to the jury that Osama Bin Laden and the September 11 attacks were unrelated to the case being deliberated, he permitted the prosecutors to present images of Bin Laden and recall the destruction of the attacks on the World Trade Center. After the verdict had been delivered, Stewart commented that while she still believed "in the strength of the people," she was concerned that the members of the jury allowed themselves "to be written upon" by prosecutors playing on their post 9-11 fears. Stewart remains free on bail and plans to appeal the verdict on the basis that the jurors misrepresented the terror conspiracy laws. The appeal will be filed by March 4, yet Stewart admits that the chances of such an appeal being granted are slim. In the meantime, Stewart is in the process of transferring her clients to her son Geoffrey S. Stewart who shares her criminal defense practice. While the prospect of jail time weighs heavily upon Stewart, what disturbs the self-proclaimed radical civil rights lawyer the most is the loss of her right to practice law.

Stewart had continued to work on the case of Juanita Young throughout her own trial. Ms. Young is a Bronx woman who became a critic of the New York Police Department after her son was shot and killed five years ago by police. She was also representing a student protestor from Hostos Community College who is fighting charges that he resisted arrest. The majority of Stewart's clients pay little, if at all, for her services. One former client of Stewart's referred to her as "not just your lawyer," but explained that he thought of her as a therapist at times and mother at others. Stewart's supporters claim that no matter whom she defends, she commits herself to doing whatever she can to protect and promote their best interests. Many seem to think that Ms. Stewart crossed the line when assisting her imprisoned client, Rahman. Attorney Andrew Dember claims that Stewart had effectively broken her client out of prison by reestablishing his contacts with active terrorism. Michael E. Tigar, Stewart's lawyer, counters that she was pursuing a vigorous defense of the sheik according to a strategy that she saw fit. Stewart defends her actions, claiming that if she had not transmitted the messages from the sheik, her defendant would have lost his position in the public eye which would be detrimental to any sort of bargaining in the future.

Supporters of Stewart claim that it is the government's intention to seek out and silence attorneys who take politically unfavorable cases. While Stewart's actions in relation to her client Omar Abdel Rahman are controversial, it seems that the Stewart conviction has led to an even greater controversy. "This verdict is a chilling attack on criminal defense lawyers," said criminal defense lawyer Jed Stone. He went on to say "the government is telling us not to get involved" in cases of those alleged to be terrorists. Stewart commented that she hopes her conviction will be "a wake up call to all of the citizens of this country...I see myself as being a symbol of what the people rail against when they say our civil liberties are eroded," she said.

Stewart's conviction has been hailed as a major victory for Justice Department prosecutors who consider the Stewart trial to be one of the most important cases since the September 11 attacks. Stephen Minarik, chairman of New York's Republican Party, has come under scrutiny for commenting that the Democratic Party can now be identified as the "party of Barbara Boxer, Lynne Stewart, and Howard Dean." This comment caused outrage on both sides of the political divide, resulting in Dean's request that Minarik either apologize for his comment or resign. The Democratic Party seems to feel that it is a form of political character assassination to be associated with Lynne Stewart. Minarik later commented "it is not the Republican Party's problem that these far-left activists have made their home in the Democratic Party." While Stewart's devotion and enthusiasm had been her trademark as a civil rights lawyer, it seems that the politically unfavorable cases that she was more than willing to take have earned her an unfavorable reputation among many politicians.

The implications of Stewart's conviction extend far beyond her disbarment and potential imprisonment. What many individuals find most frightening about the verdict is that it seems to be an attempt to silence those individuals working to support those without a voice. The National Lawyers Guild named February 17th National Day of Outrage in response to Lynne Stewart's verdict. Guild President Michael Avery issued the following statement on February 10: "The U.S. department of Justice was resolute from day one in making a symbol out of Lynne Stewart in support of its campaign to deny people charged with crimes of effective legal representation. The government is bent on intimidating attorneys from providing zealous representation to unpopular clients. The National Lawyers Guild strongly urges its own members and other defense lawyers to continue to proudly represent clients who are openly critical of government policies. We will not be intimidated and this prosecution has only strengthened our resolve to oppose the repressive attacks this government has made on the civil liberties of everyone in this country. We will also continue to stand by Lynne Stewart."

**"This verdict is a chilling attack on criminal defense lawyers."**

## Bard Employee Witness to Terror at Kingston Mall

BY LEN GUTKIN AND ETHAN PORTER

On the afternoon of Sunday, February 13, a 25-year-old Glasco, New York man opened fire in Kingston's Hudson Valley mall, expending up to 60 rounds from his automatic weapon. Remarkably, no one was killed, although Steve Silk, 56, of Kingston, suffered injuries to his hand, and Private Thomas Haire, 20, a military policeman, was shot in the leg and may have to undergo amputation, according to the *Daily Freeman*.



The suspected shooter, Robert C. Bonelli, Jr., apparently walked through the mall's Best Buy store, firing his weapon. When he ran out of ammunition, he dropped the gun to the floor and continued walking. He was tackled by employees and customers. Now in police custody, he faces up to twenty-five years in prison on assault charges.

In an interview with the *Observer*, Steve Dean, a stage

operations manager at the Fisher Center, who was at the mall with a friend at the time of the shooting, said that although he didn't hear the gunshots, he saw "the people fleeing the mall—200 to 250 people running past me...scared out of their minds." Mr. Dean assisted Private Haire, commenting that "I was holding his hand as we waited for the medic to come. He was in a lot of pain—he kind of joked, 'I better get a purple heart for this.'" Mr. Dean was among those who tackled Bonelli. "I put my knee on his head," he said.

There is no known motivation for the shooting, but Ulster District Attorney Donald Williams told the *Daily Freeman* that Bonelli exhibited a peculiar fascination with the Columbine tragedy.

## Possible New Strain of AIDS Found in New York Man

BY CHRISTINE NIELSEN

On February 11, New York City health officials announced the discovery of a possibly hyper-destructive new strain of HIV. A middle-aged man, known to be a heavy methamphetamine user who reportedly had hundreds of sexual partners last fall, seems to be carrying a unique strain of the HIV virus—one which is resistant to three out of the four types of treatments, and which also appears to be progressing at a frighteningly fast rate. This is almost unheard of. Many mutations of the virus may be drug-resistant, but they are known for being slow to progress and cause minimal damage. Also, most patients do not become drug-resistant until years into their struggle with AIDS, whereas this man was diagnosed with HIV only last December, and is believed to have contracted the virus in October. Said Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, City Health Commissioner, "We have not seen a case like this before. It holds the potential for a very serious public health problem."

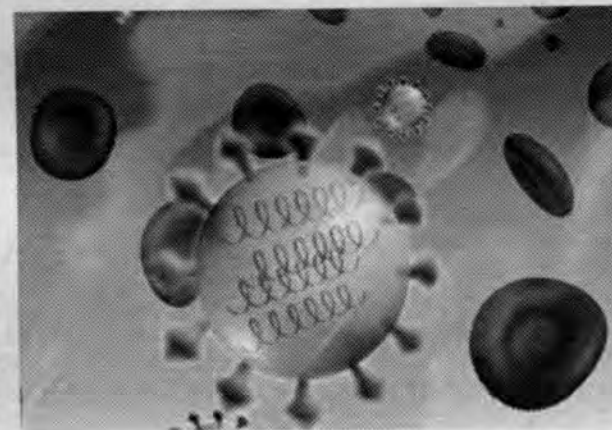
Some health experts are skeptical, however, as to whether or not this incident may be the outset of a new "super-bug," or an isolated case. Some believe this man's specific immune system may be the cause of his unusual case. Another possibility is that two different mutations infected the man simultaneously, and one virus is not responsible for both unusual features. However, both theories may be losing credibility with the discovery of two new cases—one in New York and the other in San Diego—of men who seem to be infected with genetically similar strains of HIV.

As a result of the potential new threat, New York City's health department is attempting to restructure its AIDS program to more vigorously address the problems in AIDS pre-

vention and treatment. Commissioner Frieden would like to see more information made available to the health department. "Confidentiality is a core and supremely important concept here," Frieden emphasized, but he also believes that current state law inhibits the city's ability to accurately assess the AIDS situation and, from there, determine the best ways to address it. Somewhere around 50,000 New Yorkers are currently on anti-retroviral medication, and Frieden claims "we really don't have much of a sense of what treatment they are on, whether the treatment is appropriate, how they are doing, whether the viral loads are suppressed, how many of them have drug resistance to one or more classes of anti-retrovirals, whether that number and proportion have increased in recent years." The Director of the New York State Health Department's AIDS Institute, Dr. Guthrie S. Birkhead, is willing to discuss changing the state law, but says data collection might be significantly hindered by the fact that no uniform format exists for reporting test results.

Some AIDS advocates say that the success of drug cocktails in prolonging the life of many HIV infected patients has had the unfortunate side-effect of decreasing the fear of infection in high-risk persons. Also, the rise in methamphetamine use in some gay subcultures may or may not be giving rise to higher numbers of HIV cases; certainly its use increases the risk of having unprotected sex. As Martin Delaney, founding director of an AIDS advocacy group in San Francisco called Project Inform, says, "It's an out-of-control experience...anyone who goes down that pathway is no longer sensible." Many other AIDS advocates and researchers cite a serious problem arising from the direction of government pro-

grams under the current administration. They argue that the abstinence-only initiatives supported by Bush will not reach out to high-risk groups.



The HIV virus spreads itself by hiding its own DNA inside other cells, commonly the "T-helper cells" which play an active role in defending the immune system from attack. When the cells reproduce their own proteins, they inadvertently also propagate the invading HIV virus.

# Program at Bard Highlights Depleted Uranium Issue

BY ZARNI HTIUN AND GOZDE SEVIM

On February 16th, Bard's Office of Student Life Programming, the Saugerties Committee for Peace and Social Justice, Safe Legacy, and New Paltz Women in Black presented the program *Art Revealing Truth: Weapons of Self Destruction* in the Bertelsmann Campus Center. The program, featuring a talk by Desert Storm medic and photographer Sgt. Dennis Kyne, the photo exhibition *Victims of a Different Nuclear War: US and Iraqi Children* with photos by Takashi Morizumi, Dennis Kyne, Lorna Tychostup and Life photographer Derek Hudson's photo essay "Tiny Victims of the Gulf War," provided shocking information on the usage of Depleted Uranium by the United States military.

Depleted Uranium (DU/U238), a cheap, abundant and radioactive byproduct of uranium enrichment, was first used in 1991 in the war against Iraq. Sgt. Dennis Kyne, who served with the 24th Infantry Division in Operation Desert Storm, spoke in

**A DU shell ignites on impact and vaporizes into a radioactive dust that when inhaled can result in cancers, deformities, paralysis, degenerative diseases, leukemia, irreparable damage to major organs and death.**

detail about the ill treatment imposed on him and his companions by the U.S. military during his service. Operation Desert Storm basically involved three days of ground war followed by forty five days of aerial bombing and the deployment of naval bombs, tank rounds, Apache helicopter rounds and artillery rounds. These rounds were tipped with DU, embraced by the military because its density allows it to pierce armor. Supposedly the round will explode in the targeted tank and the radiation will be contained by the vehicle. According to Kyne, however, since the round is already burning as it heads to the target, radioactive DU particles are released into the atmosphere. The majority of the targets that were hit, however, were not armored. Thousands of DU shells and bombs have been used in Yugoslavia, Kosovo, Serbia, Vieques Island, Torishima Island, Afghanistan, and in Iraq. In addition, the U.S. has sold DU to at least 23 countries at great profits.

A DU shell ignites on impact and vaporizes into a radioactive dust that when inhaled can result in cancers, deformities, paralysis, degenerative diseases, leukemia, irreparable damage to major organs, and death. In 1961, Stanford Studies discovered that DU particles, when released, grow even smaller than those of bacteria. Scientists say even a tiny particle can have disastrous effects. In addition, DU's deadliness comes not only from its radioactivity but also from the durability of particles formed in the 3000-6000 degrees Celsius heat produced on the firing of a DU weapon. These particles, which tend to concentrate in the lymph nodes, are insoluble in bodily fluid, highly toxic and non-biodegradable. In 1961, Briton HE Huxley and American Geoffrey Zubay, two nuclear experts, expressed to the scientific community that DU targeted human DNA as well as the "Master Code," which controls the expression of DNA.



Birth defects caused by DU

Only 467 U.S. soldiers were officially wounded during the 1990-1991 Gulf War but of the more than 592,560 dis-

charged personnel who served there, at least 179,310, one third, are receiving disability compensation. Among the 168,528 veterans of the current conflict in Iraq who have left active duty, 16% have already sought treatment from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Soldiers returning from Iraq suffer the same symptoms of joint pain, weakness, headaches, rashes, burning urine and semen, weight loss, respiratory problems, depression and gene mutations that first became known as Gulf War Syndrome and then affected veterans of Bosnia and Kosovo. Kyne, who himself suffers from illness due to DU exposure, was tested twice for ionizing radiation but never given specific results from the VA as to what was wrong with him. Instead, the military provided him with a 20% disability and paperwork accrediting him with undiagnosed illness.

The documentary, *Invisible Wars*, showing footage of melted tanks and coaled bodies, provides evidence of the undeclared nuclear arms that have exposed Depleted Uranium (DU), which has a half life of 4.5 billion years, to the environment. The photo exhibition *Victims of a Different Nuclear War* provides further footage, concentrating especially on the effects DU has had on Iraqi children. Children, particularly infants, do not have a strong enough immune system to survive exposure to DU. Dr. Jenan Ali, an Iraqi doctor at Basra Hospital's College of Medicine, states that there has been a 100% rise in child leukemia in the region after the first Gulf War as well as a 242% increase in all types of malignancies. DU deconstructs the formation of a fetus in an exponential way. This means that polluted cells of parents exposed to DU reproduce in abnormal ways and result in offspring born with brain tumors, various cancers and physical deformations. Soldiers exposed to DU can contaminate their partners with radioactive semen. In addition, the U.S. military is the biggest organ donor to the Red Cross. Thus, they are donating radioactive organs to people this very minute. Currently, Afghani and Iraqi children continue to play amid radioactive debris as the U.S. Army will not even label contaminated sites or wreckage because doing so would constitute an admission to the usage of DU.

The purpose of the lecture, the exhibition, and the movie screening is to educate the public and demand that the United States government stop using these weapons. There have been already a few publications in the media that have addressed this issue but the public is generally unaware of the existence and usage of Depleted Uranium. If DU continues to be employed, what we have ahead of us is a generation with a high risk of still births, birth defects, cancers, deformations and various other diseases. Kyne himself stated that "If we continue down this road, we are moving towards self-extinction as a species."

Geoscientist Leuren Moret claims that the Middle East is permanently radioactive but that the worst is yet to come, since air carrying DU particles takes about a year to mix with the rest of the earth's atmosphere. It is possible that DU particles have engulfed the world in a radioactive poison gas that promises illnesses and death for millions. Kyne states that there are miniature radioactive mushrooms like those that clouded Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II sitting all over Baghdad.

A prominent U.S. international human rights lawyer, Karen Parker, states: "In my view, use of DU weaponry violates the grave breach provisions of the Geneva Conventions...And so its use constitutes a war crime, or crime against humanity" ("Washington's Secret Nuclear War" Shaheen Chughtai). Parker and others brought the issue of Depleted Uranium before the United Nations in 1995. In 1996, the United Nations Human Rights Commission determined that DU munitions,



Munitions made with depleted uranium

being weapons of mass destruction, should be banned. President George Bush continues to insist that warnings about the effects of DU are merely propaganda. He states that "In recent years, the Iraqi regime made false claims that the depleted uranium rounds fired by coalition forces have caused cancers and birth defects in Iraq..." In addition, Bush's claim that the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) has given DU pollution a clean bill of health is deceitful since UNEP experts have not yet been allowed into Iraq.

Depleted Uranium (DU) is being employed within the United States itself as well. The U.S. has manufactured and tested depleted uranium in 39 states. It was in Hunters Point, California, in the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard, that the Navy first tested depleted uranium munitions in 1977. There, the USS Bigelow, using the Phalanx Weapons System, fired 3,000 rounds of depleted uranium penetrators per minute. Now Hunters Point has one of the highest rates of breast cancer in the world as well as a high level of SIDS. Now, a major housing establishment is planning to build right on top of the radioactively polluted area. In June 2001, the USS Fife, a U.S. Navy destroyer stationed at the U.S. Naval base at Everett, performed gunnery exercises off the coast of Washington State using CIWS (Close in Weapons System), which consists of Depleted Uranium rounds.

Dennis Kyne and others are somewhat despondent about what can be done to clean up DU contamination. He says that around 1.1 billion tons of depleted uranium are lying around in America alone requiring cleanup. He stresses that a method using the growth of such crops as corn could extract DU from the soil, which could then be cooked off. However, this would be laborious and time-consuming work that would need great human participation. Having been on the road for about a year and a half campaigning for the recognition of the military's abuse of DU, Kyne stresses education of the public as being the crucial factor. He stated that "We have an undeniable right to a decent quality of life. They are taking away this right by man-made intervention. This is radiation."

## SAY WHAT?

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# Gay Marriage Ruling Complicates Rather than Clarifies

*Mayor Bloomberg appeals judge's decision*

BY SARAH MARTINO

On February 4th Manhattan Supreme Court Judge Doris Ling-Cohan decided that under the New York State Constitution gay and lesbian couples are guaranteed the right to marry, granting a mixed blessing to gay marriage advocates. Ling-Cohan declared that denying gay and lesbian partners the right to marry is unconstitutional, but she stipulated that her ruling would not take effect for thirty days, giving the chance for appeals. Sure enough, just 24 hours after the initial ruling, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced that the city planned to appeal the decision in the Court of Appeals, the state's highest court.

The case began last March when gay rights group Lambda Legal filed a suit against the City Clerk, Victor Robles, on the behalf of five gay couples whom Robles denied marriage licenses. Judge Ling-Cohan's decision in favor of the plaintiffs is a landmark ruling in New York State, as it is the first in the state to defend the rights of same-sex couples to marry. The state does not currently define marriage as being between a man and a woman, but the state's Domestic Relations Law has always been previously interpreted as such. However, Judge Ling-Cohan's decision found that prohibiting gay marriage violated the state constitution in two ways: that the right to choose your spouse falls under a citizen's right to privacy which is protected by the constitution's due process rights, and that it denies gay and lesbian partners equal protection under the law. She also made many comparisons between gay marriage and interracial marriage, which remained illegal in some states up until the sixties. She wrote, "The challenges to laws banning whites and non-whites from marriage demonstrates that the fundamental right to marry the person of one's choice may not be denied based on

longstanding and deeply held traditional beliefs about appropriate marital partners."

Judge Ling-Cohan's ruling, were it to stand, would only make gay marriage legal in New York City. The rest of the state, with the exception of New Paltz Mayor Jason West, who last year distributed marriage licenses to gay couples without the jurisdiction of the law, has not been in favor of gay marriage. Recently Judges in Albany and Rockland County ruled against it and Governor George Pataki has repeatedly stated that marriage should be exclusively between a man and a woman, and any decision to change that should be made by the legislature, not the courts. Neither of New York's Senators, Chuck Schumer or Hilary Clinton, support gay marriage. Even Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, who is running for Governor against Pataki in 2006, supports the rights of gays and lesbian couples to marry, but has fought against it for the state out of an obligation to "to enforce the law as written and traditionally interpreted."

Mayor Bloomberg finds himself in a tricky position. Much like Spitzer, he has stated that he personally supports the rights of gay couples to get married, but he has chosen to appeal because of what happened in San Francisco last year when gay and lesbian couples married only to have their licenses nullified by the state. Bloomberg explained, "What you do not want to have is a repetition of California, when many people for a month

were misled into thinking they could get the union they so much wanted... Their great joy was snatched away." He is also wary of the decision because of the recent rulings around the state opposing gay marriage. Bloomberg had previously been viewed as a friend to the city's gay community, but when he announced the appeal at a Human Rights Campaign gala-fundraiser he was

openly booed. The appeal might cause Bloomberg some trouble when he runs for re-election in 2006; two of his opponents, Freddy Ferrer and Gifford Miller, have criticized the Mayor's decision.

As for the rest of the country, the issue is subject to heated debate. San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, who was responsible for the marriage licenses given to gay couples there, has vowed to keep fighting for gay marriage rights, and criticized Bloomberg for appealing the Manhattan decision. President Bush reiterated his belief in a Federal Amendment banning gay marriage during his State of the Union Address at the beginning of the month. The Virginia House of Representatives recently passed an amendment to Virginia's constitution defining marriage as between a man and woman. Three gay couples who were married in Massachusetts and Canada and resided in Florida had planned to challenge the Defense of Marriage Act, which stipulates that the state of Florida does not have to recognize the marriages, but have dropped their lawsuits out of fear of the conservative U.S. Supreme Court setting a precedent by rejecting their case.

Back in Manhattan, the initial decision has generated celebration and praise from gay rights advocates. Vice President of the Human Rights Campaign's Marriage Project, Seth Kilbourn, said, "The court simply recognized that every New Yorker deserves the same promise of equality under the law... Ensuring that every loving and committed couple in New York has equal access to marriage is about ensuring New Yorkers' basic freedom." One of the plaintiff couples, Mary Jo Kennedy and Jo-Ann Shain, has been together for twenty-three years. "I'd never thought I would see this day," Kennedy said. The two have a sixteen year-old daughter, Aliya, who plays an important role in their desire to be married. Shain explains, "This is not just about filing joint taxes and getting each other's social security, this is about our daughter learning that families are built on love." Despite the protest from many anti-gay marriage groups, and the uncertain future of the ruling, Judge Ling-Cohan's decision brings hope to gay rights advocates. As she wrote, "It is clear that moral disapproval of same-sex couples or of individual homosexuals is not a legitimate state purpose or a rational reason for depriving plaintiffs of their right to choose their spouse."



Plaintiffs Mary Jo Kennedy and Jo-Ann Shain with their daughter Aliya

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# "Deep Throat" on Deathbed *Leonard Garment May Have Been the Source*

BY KONSTANTIN MEDVEDOVSKY

Last week, in an Op-Ed to the L.A. Times, John Dean, former White House counsel under Richard Nixon, revealed to the world that Watergate source Deep Throat is of failing health. According to Dean:

*"Bob Woodward, a reporter on the team that covered the Watergate story, has advised his executive editor at the Washington Post that Throat is ill. And Ben Bradlee, former executive editor of the Post and one of the few people to whom Woodward confided his source's identity, has publicly acknowledged that he has written Throat's obituary."*

Naturally, as with any new tidbit of information about Deep Throat, this revelation has led to renewed fervor and speculation about the mystery man's identity. In the spirit of such speculation, my theory about the truth of Deep Throat follows.

Few meaningful facts are known about Throat. In the book *All the President's Men*, Woodward and Bernstein spoke in broad generalities about his identity and character. He drank scotch, smoked cigarettes, and could be at times boastful, solemn, and remorseful, characteristics common to many politicians of the era. Other than that, all that the book tells us about his identity is that he was close to the President's circle of power. The book reveals little else in the form of hard facts.

With those bits of information, as well as certain dates when Deep Throat was known to be in Washington communicating with Woodward, several insiders and academics have attempted to uncover his identity. John Dean himself wrote a book in which he concluded that Throat was Pat Buchanan, Dwight Chapin, Ray Price, or Jerry Warren. A study by professors and students at the University of Illinois concluded that Deep Throat was Fred Fielding. Other studies meanwhile have pointed to David Gergen and Pat Buchanan. A book by Adrian Havill, *Deep Truth*, concluded that Deep Throat was none other than former President George H.W. Bush (who was chairman of the RNC at the time). This is just a sampling of the theories; others point to everyone from Richard Nixon himself to anyone who visited or planned on visiting Washington D.C. between 1968 and 1974. In short, like any good political mystery, there are the popular theories (Buchanan and Fielding), there are the nutty theories (Henry Kissinger and Ron Ziegler), and then there are the legitimate sounding, but nonetheless fringe theories.

It is to one of the fringe theories that I now turn. Leonard Garment, who served as Counsel to the President during the Watergate scandal, recently authored a book, *In Search of Deep Throat*, in which he concludes that Throat was John Sears, another Nixon lawyer and advisor. The book, while filled with fascinating anecdotes of what it was like to be a White House insider at the time, is relatively unconvincing in its conclusion. It is filled with a great deal of what can perhaps best be described as "hand waving"; the arguments he presents against most of the prime candidates are based largely on Garment's personal opinions of those people's psyches. Few hard facts are offered in defense of the final conclusion that Sears was Throat. Instead, the conclusion is based on stunningly weak circumstantial evidence, which is at times more than slightly contradictory.

Garment does, however, bring something new to the table. While his final conclusion is unconvincing, he does tell of how, in the early 90s, he met with Woodward and got two admissions out of him about Throat's identity. First, the real Deep Throat has indeed been prominently fingered in the past, and he

has publicly denied it. Second, the reason that Deep Throat has not come forward is that, while during Watergate he was relatively hidden from the public view, he has since become a much more public figure and the revelation that he was Throat would clash with his new public persona.

While the disclosure about Throat's denial is not particularly helpful, the fact that Throat is much more prominent today is. Realistically, of the main candidates, this narrows the list to Pat Buchanan (a former Nixon speechwriter), former president Bush, John Sears (who became Ronald Reagan's campaign manager), and Chuck Colson (currently listed as one of the 25 most powerful evangelicals in the country by Time magazine).

Combining Garment's information with John Dean's disclosure about Throat's health, Buchanan, Bush and Colson can be relatively safely removed from consideration due to recent public appearances in which each appeared to be quite fit. That leaves us with Sears. However, a Sears candidacy is quite difficult to support, largely because of the details revealed in Garment's book advancing that very candidacy.

In his search for the identity of Deep Throat, Garment set out to identify all the other anonymous sources that are used more than once by Woodward and Bernstein in *All the President's Men*. During that process, he realized that one of Bernstein's anonymous sources "sounded" to him an awful lot like John Sears. Garment, being the one who had hired Sears in the first place, knew him quite well, and could plausibly reach such a conclusion. After more analysis, Garment then came to the conclusion that Bernstein's source and Deep Throat were one and the same, and that Woodward and Bernstein had neglected to mention that in order to throw people off track and create confusion about Throat's identity.

Convinced that Sears was his man, Garment explains how he confronted Sears with his conclusion, and while Sears denied being Deep Throat, he admitted to being the other anonymous source. This admission only bolstered Garment's certainty, because it proved to him that he indeed had the ability to identify these sources by how they sounded in the book.

However, while Garment appeared to be satisfied, the idea that one man was both Throat and a different source fails to pass greater scrutiny. While there are several problems with the idea, probably the most significant is the different modes of communication that Throat and the other anonymous source are depicted of using or said to have used. When Woodward wanted to talk to Deep Throat, he would surreptitiously move a flower pot to his balcony, and then after changing cabs several times, meet him in an underground garage in the middle of the night. When Bernstein wanted to talk to his source, however, he would simply pick up a phone and call him. Other than in extreme cases, Woodward would never have dreamed of calling up Deep Throat, due to Throat's insistence that his phones were bugged.

If the one man / two sources idea is to be believed, then Throat's apparent lack of concern when dealing with Bernstein must be reconciled with his paranoia with Woodward. Clearly this does not add up: one man could not have been both sources. And since Sears has admitted to being Bernstein's source, that would rule him out as Woodward's. Sears was not Deep Throat.

Thus, combining the facts that Garment has given us with those that Dean has given us, we are left with no candidates who fit both categories. Someone is lying. But why would they

lie? Dean certainly has nothing to gain from it. He is still active in the political world, and he would be giving up his credibility for no apparent benefit if he has made up the claim over Throat's health. While the opportunity exists, Dean has no clear motive. Which brings us to Leonard Garment. Why would he lie? All that lying about his conversations with Woodward and Woodward's revelations would accomplish would be to throw the public off the trail. Only one motive passes muster for why Garment would want to do so: because Deep Throat was none other than Leonard Garment himself.

The idea of a Leonard Garment candidacy is not new. His name has been bandied about for some time, for a variety of reasons. He was a liberal in an administration of conservatives. He was a Jew in an administration which was known to be anti-Semitic. He was always more of a lawyer than a politician, more dedicated to the truth than to furthering an agenda. However, it was not until reading *In Search of Deep Throat* that I began to seriously consider the possibility.

In the book, while describing the candidates for Deep Throat, Garment makes references to the belief among some that he was Deep Throat, and he issues several of what I can only describe as "Non-denial denials." He never says directly that he was not Deep Throat, but instead gives reasons why he was unlikely to be Deep Throat, so as to give the impression of a denial. However, when the statements are examined in greater depth, they become downright suspicious for their lack of directness. Furthermore, Garment returns to the issue of his candidacy at conspicuous points in the book, where it seems superfluous. In many ways it appears as if Garment is trying almost too hard to convince us that he's not the guy we're looking for.

Furthermore, the book's final conclusion about Deep Throat being Sears is not only extremely suspect, but it is obviously extremely suspect. I find it unlikely that difference in communication methods never occurred to Garment, but he readily accepts it as the truth in spite of such an obvious flaw. Why? Of the several possibilities, one is that the entire book is a ruse designed for Garment to have one more laugh at those who have been hunting him for 30 years. That his conclusion is clearly implausible is just one more way of caricaturing the would-be experts.

Of course, this is just one possible interpretation. It is possible that Garment really did just forget about the differences in the methods of communication between Deep Throat and Bernstein's source. In that case, however, we are still left with the fact that Garment's statements from Woodward about Deep Throat are incompatible with Dean's. One of the two men is misleading us. And while Dean has no apparent motive for doing so, Garment, if he really is Deep Throat, does.

However, if Garment really was Deep Throat, then he would need to be ill now. As Eric Alterman says on MSNBC, "my old pal Leonard Garment ... I have heard he is unfortunately ailing, of late." Make of it what you will. Myself? Given the suspiciousness of Garment's book, along with his previously established candidacy for Deep Throat, and combined with a lack of other plausible candidates of failing health, I feel like I have found my man.

## Suck Face *The Facebook phenomenon infests the Bard campus faster than genital herpes*

BY KATE HARDY

Bard students tend, in general, to represent social extremes. Some are painfully shy, some are strangely dominating and all are highly unlikely to make conversation-enticing eye contact with a stranger. Very often, Bard students open up to one another, and momentarily connect, only through random confrontations involving inebriation. Only in these moments are random exchanges such as "I love you, you're in my class!" "Omigod, you used my soap!" or "Totally, I love Bon Jovi too!" likely to be spewed. Someday, the sociological reasons behind the interesting situation that is the Bard social scene will be deduced, and logically precipitate a solution, but for now, The Facebook seems to be solving some of these issues.

Not only are hundreds of Bard students uniting under the addicting embarrassments that are internet communities, but they are able to discover facts about their fellow Bardians without even having to ask. Facebook is the ultimate combination of semi-social interaction and the universal but closeted phenomenon of stalker-esque behavior. The process begins with the initial discovery that Bardians, because of some bureaucratic mandate, are now allowed to join all of our friends at the SUNYs on The Facebook. One "registers" with his/her Bard email, and spends a terribly embarrassing amount of time creating a profile, an incredibly skewed portrayal of oneself, intentionally drafted to make one seem like a witty, interesting individual. So you sign in, you look at your pretty new profile: neat, now what?

On a somewhat practical level, you can establish quasi friendships with fellow students that you have never actually spoken to, and for many this can act as a positive ego-booster, and thus serve to nice-ify the Bard community. How fabulous. One can join discussion "groups" according to their interests, or disinterests. Some of these group topics include the old gym, TV shows, showering, James Bagwell, particular dorms, and particular people who express their affection in public. You can also discover who shares your class schedule, and I suppose either talk

about class, or beg for homework help. You can nicely compliment or brutally slander your "friends" using the provided "wall." You can also "poke" other people, whatever the hell that means.

On a less practical level, Facebook is incredibly conducive to suspiciously voyeuristic behavior. You can stealthily discover whether that girl in your Psych class is actually a lesbian, if your PC enjoys watching Kevin Costner movies, or if that guy you hooked up with last semester is "interested" in Ricotta cheese. The damper on these discoveries is the "confirmation" aspect of Facebook. You cannot, for example, claim to be "in an open relationship" with Leon Botstein, without Botstein himself confirming that the relationship is legitimate. In addition, if one desires to pour over the profile of any non-Bardian, you must first become their "friend."

While searching for fellow members who attended my high school, another remarkable feature of Facebook, I came across he who shall be called "that kid with the bright red jafro who played the saxophone and was kind of an asshole." Admittedly wanting to examine his profile for incriminating evidence suggesting that he had become a full-fledged asshole, I attempted to add him as my "friend." Alas, I can only suppose, after two weeks of waiting, that he intuited my intentions and that my request was hence "rejected." I have decided that I no longer need to examine his profile to determine his asshole status. I am the better person here, and (except for that random girl from Kentucky) I would never reject anyone! I am not bitter about this incident in any way.

Rejection aside, however, this is not the only problem

surrounding the use of Facebook. On the most basic level, at many seemingly arbitrary intervals, and due to server farts in cyberspace beyond my comprehension, the site itself can prove to be recalcitrant. The pictures often refuse to load, or Internet Explorer regurgitates the dreaded "This page cannot be displayed," message. What is more, unless you are willing to pay thousands of dollars for a college education, you can kiss off your chances of ever becoming a member of the infamous Facebook. Thus, it appears that, by default, Facebook proves itself a very expensive habit. And what a habit it is. This is perhaps the most

detrimental aspect of Facebooking. It is wildly addictive, and Bard students, who are both notoriously prone to addictive substances as well as poor time management, seem to be simply thriving off of such a pointless form of procrastination. However, the non-member Bardians seem to be containing their

urges effectively. Sophomore Sari Bilick says, "I refuse to join that or [other similar organizations] because I know that it will be addictive and dominate all of my time." I, however, am not nearly as levelheaded, and sometime in the future will probably have to join a support group in order to wean myself off of internet blogging. Even better, perhaps I will simply start a Facebook group and we can all work through this together.



## UN Report Denies Genocide in Darfur

BY REBECCA GIUSTI

A UN report released on January 25 concerning the situation in Sudan's Darfur province stated that the massive human rights violations that have occurred there in the past year may not qualify as genocide. Since last year, over 70,000 people have died from government-led attacks, and 1.8 million more have been forced to leave their homes. The five-member UN commission conducted extensive interviews with members of the Sudanese government, as well as with humanitarian workers in the region. In addition, they traveled to Darfur to investigate the situation.

The 176 page report stated that the government and the rebel army, known as the Janjaweed, were responsible for violations of humanitarian law, which may be considered war crimes under international law. For over a year, government forces and militia have conducted "indiscriminate attacks," which, according to the report, are comprised of massive civilian killings, torture, destruction of villages, pillaging, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and forced displacement. The UN statement also concluded that these and other atrocities have primarily been directed against the non-Muslim "Black Africans" in western Sudan on a "widespread and systematic basis" and they "may amount to crimes against humanity."



The commission strongly denounced the actions of the Sudanese government, but also made sure to distinguish the situation in Darfur from genocide. The report stated that two elements of genocide may be present in Darfur. First, the act of "killing and deliberately inflicting conditions of life likely to bring about physical destruction" and second, "the existence of a protected group being targeted by the authors of criminal conduct." However, the commission believed a key element to be missing from the violence in Sudan. It said, "the policy of attacking, killing, and forcibly displacing members of some tribes does not evidence a specific intent to annihilate, in whole or part, a group distinguished on racial, ethnic, national, or religious origins." Instead, the report claims that the individuals who planned the attacks in Darfur had the intent of driving the victims from their homes primarily for purposes of counter-insurgency warfare, and extermination of the victims was not considered a primary goal.

The commission urged that action be taken as soon as possible to end the human rights violations. It stated that the findings of the report "should not be taken in any way as detracting from the gravity of the crisis perpetrated in that region" and that the situation indeed "may be no less serious and heinous

than genocide." Kofi Annan agreed with this statement and urged the Security Council to act. "Such grave crimes cannot be committed with impunity. That would be a terrible betrayal of the victims, and of potential future victims in Darfur and elsewhere," Annan remarked. The UN is inclined to try war criminals, named secretly in the Darfur report, at the International Criminal Court at The Hague in the Netherlands.

The United States was dissatisfied with the commission's findings, and insisted that the Sudanese government has been conducting genocide against the people in Darfur. The US called for the UN and the African Union to set up a tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania to try the war criminals, due to the fact that the US is opposed to referring individuals to the International Criminal Court. The US also called for the deployment of UN peacekeepers to Sudan as well as targeted sanctions against the Sudanese government.

The government of Sudan responded to the report, claiming it was unfair and incorrect. Darfur rebels, the target of the government's expulsion efforts, claimed the report did not go far enough by denying the occurrence of genocide. Resistance within the UN to declare genocide in Darfur may be a result of the fact that Russia and China both have significant economic interests there. Beijing companies have heavily invested in Sudan's newly discovered rich oil fields, while Moscow has a sizeable arms supply contract with the Sudanese government in Khartoum. Both Russia and China have veto power within the UN Security Council, the group that would vote whether to take action in Darfur.

## White House Correspondent Got Credentials without Credibility

BY FRAN LANIADO

Who is Jeff Gannon?

That was the question the country had been asking ever since January 26, when the conservative-leaning reporter asked the President this question: "Senate Democratic leaders have painted a very bleak picture of the U.S. economy. [Senate Minority Leader] Harry Reid was talking about soup lines, and [Senator] Hillary Clinton was talking about the economy being on the verge of collapse. Yet in the same breath they say that Social Security is rock solid and that there is no crisis there. How are you going to work--You've said you are going to reach out to these people--how are you going to work with these people who seem to have divorced themselves from reality?"

Such a biased question invited scrutiny, particularly from liberal bloggers, who did some investigation. As it turns out, "Gannon" is really James D. Guckert, Washington Bureau Chief for Talon News. This is a conservative online news outlet associated with another website, GOPUSA. Under the name of Jeff Gannon, Guckert attended White House press briefings over the past two years, usually posing pointedly conservative questions.

Subsequent research on Guckert turned up several online domain addresses suggestive of gay pornography, such as HotMilitaryStud.com. Guckert told the Wilmington *New Journal* newspaper that these addresses had been registered under his name for a client. Guckert says that at the time he was setting up a web hosting business.

White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan claims to have been unaware of Guckert's association with any sexually suggestive domain addresses, saying that while Guckert did not have a press pass, he was cleared on a day-by-day basis to attend press briefings. McClellan told the Associated Press that "He, like anyone else, showed that he was representing a news organization that published regularly and so he was cleared two years ago to receive daily passes like many others are. In this day and age, when you have a changing media, it's not an easy issue to decide, to try to pick and choose who is a journalist. It gets into the issue of advocacy journalism. Where do you draw the line? There are a number of people who cross that line in the briefing room."

However, some are skeptical as to how much McClellan really knew. James Pinkerton, a media critic for Fox News who worked for President Reagan and the first President Bush, told the online magazine Salon.com that in his experience the White House was "...strict about who got in. It's inconceivable to me that the White House, especially after 9/11, gives people credentials without doing a background check."

Allegations have been made by various sources, including Rep. Louise Slaughter (D-NY), who sent a letter asking the President to investigate the matter. Accusations claim that members of the Bush administration paid "members of the media to advocate in favor of the Administration's policies." Rep. Slaughter also charges in her letter that "Mr. Gannon's presence

in your press corps was merely a tool of propaganda for your Administration."

On Tuesday February 8, still using his pseudonym, the reporter announced his resignation via his personal website. He said that he found it "no longer possible to be a reporter for Talon News. In consideration of the welfare of me and my family I have decided to return to private life."

Some speculate that in addition to this scandal, Guckert may have resigned due to the sites that were discovered registered to his name. Talon News frequently opposes gay rights, marriage, and adoption. This also suggests that there may be some conflict between Guckert's own lifestyle and the beliefs of his colleagues.

Still, most people believe that Guckert's sexual activities and orientation are not in question at all. According to the MediaCitizen blog: "This is not a story about sexual orientation, but about the viability of our Fourth Estate in the face of increasing efforts to disguise propaganda as straight news. By acting as a White House shill--lobbing softball questions to Press Secretary McClellan and President Bush and lifting, wholesale, sections of administration and GOP press releases and presenting them as 'news' Gannon rightly came under harsh scrutiny."

This scrutiny will doubtless continue in the coming weeks, raising questions about the White House press policy, Talon News, and the changing role of the new media itself.

## North Korea Claims to be a Nuclear Power

BY CHARLES FRAUMAN

On Thursday, February 10th, North Korea publicly declared for the first time that it has nuclear weapons. The statement, released by North Korea's KCNA news agency, also announced the communist nation's withdrawal from the six-party talks for an indefinite period. The talks had been set up to persuade Pyongyang to give up its nuclear ambitions, in exchange for assured security and economic benefits.

Previously, Pyongyang declared that it had the ability and the right to pursue its nuclear program. In April 2003, they admitted to U.S. officials in private that they had at least one nuclear missile in their arsenal. But this is the first time they've been so explicit about their status as a nuclear power.

North Korea asserts that its nuclear weapons program is for self-defense, to protect the country from "hostile" U.S. policy. "The true intention of the second-term Bush administration," the statement says, "is not only to further its policy to isolate and stifle the DPRK [North Korea] pursued by the first-term office but to escalate it." There is also serious offense taken at having been labeled an "outpost of tyranny" by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice at her confirmation hearing.

United States officials believe Pyongyang is engaged in two nuclear programs. One of the programs is well known, and involves manufacturing plutonium. The other, which the North has denied pursuing, involves the enrichment of uranium from a compound called uranium hexafluoride, also known as UF<sub>6</sub>, which can be enriched into weapons-grade material.

The compound was discovered in Libya in 2001, and is alleged to have originated in North Korea. This would suggest that the North is selling the product, but it is not clear whether Pyongyang knew where the material would end up. The sale could very well have traversed Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan's infamous network.

The six-party talks, held by Russia, China, Japan, South Korea and the United States, have not taken place since June. There had previously been three rounds of talks--with no significant progress made--and a fourth one scheduled for this past September, which Pyongyang refused to attend. Pyongyang wants to deal directly with Washington, but the United States insists that the issue remain a multilateral diplomatic endeavor.

The United States has been using its influence to convince the nations involved to apply diplomatic pressure on the North. Some are more reluctant than others regarding exactly how much pressure needs to be asserted, but all of those concerned want to get Pyongyang back to the bargaining table.

As Pyongyang's only ally, the Chinese have the most influence. China provides the North with a substantial amount of food and fuel, but the situation is nonetheless volatile, though certainly not as tenuous as Pyongyang's relationship with the South. Seoul has its doubts about whether or not the North even has weapons of mass destruction, while the Japanese are urging the North to rejoin disarmament talks; otherwise they threaten to halt all shipping in and out of their ports. Russia regrets the North's decision, and

hopes that the talks will resume again soon.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan expressed the need for diplomatic pressure from the international community: "I think we should all work hard to get them back to the six-party talks because that is the only format for the moment that will help us come out of this peacefully," Mr. Annan said. "And all the countries in the region, from China to Japan to South Korea and the Russians, are all pushing in this direction, including Washington."

World leaders are, as of yet, still debating about how to handle the situation. One alternative is that the North could be pressured back into the talks by diminishing the amount of aid allotted to them in the future. Another alternative would be to have the U.N. Security Council seek international sanctions against the North. However, the Japanese are against the idea. China advocates a cocktail of prudence and diplomatic pressure. There has also been talk about offering concessions to the North in an effort to lure them back in to the talks, but the United States vehemently rejects the proposal, insisting instead that the six-party talks be resumed.

Recent reports suggest that the statement may just be a bluff. This would not be the first time "we've heard this kind of rhetoric from North Korea," the Presidential spokesman, Scott McClellan, said on Tuesday at a press briefing.



North Korean propaganda poster

# Leigh Explores The Abortion Question Circa 1950

BY EMMA DeCORSEY

Mike Leigh's films are simply about human life, specifically in London, but pay no attention to time, period, or culture. We watch Leigh's characters live out their daily lives and routines the same way we watch our housemates walk in and out the door. Behind the natural routine lies a very theatrical process: the script is largely devised through a series of improvisational exercises with his actors that can go on for months at a time before shooting. The actors are given all the time they need to develop their characters so that they fully embody them by the time they face the camera. To the audience, the characters are totally exposed. It's the closest thing to what Chekhov achieved in his plays that I've seen in our time.

This might be all you need to know about *Vera Drake*, Leigh's latest film. I've now seen it twice and it was even more impressive the second time, because I could catch more of the subtle detail - and what strikes me most about it is its profound sense of what it means to go about one's daily life.

The title character, Vera, played by the longtime London stage fixture Imelda Staunton (you probably saw her as the Nurse in *Shakespeare in Love*), happens to know a lot of people around the area where she lives through both her family and her job as a cleaning lady to the elite in North London in 1950. As she makes her daily rounds cleaning houses and attending to her sick mother and various neighbors, we meet the other characters that fill the movie with their own routines. There's Vera's bedridden mother, who can't do any of her own housework. Vera's neighbors George and Ivy are both depressed and unemployed, counting on Vera for their afternoon tea. Reg, who lives upstairs from them, concerns Vera; he might be a bit lonely living by himself. Vera's first employer, Mrs. Wells, spends the day in her perfect house with her daughter Susan. They say hello to Vera as if she were one of the many fancy sculptures standing in the sitting room. Another employer, Mrs. Fowler, treats Vera the same way. Lily is a childhood friend of Vera's who sells sugar and other various black market items. Finally, we meet Vera's family at the end of the day. Her husband Stan runs a modest auto mechanic's shop with his brother Frank. Their two grown children, Sid and Ethel, work at a tailor's and a light bulb factory respectively. The vast expanse of characters makes a rich and diverse portrait of people from the lowest class to the highest. The class struggle has always been a prevalent topic in British literature and cinema. As we will see it is both necessary and enlightening to observe how all these different levels of society respond to both everyday and rare situations.



As is typical in Leigh's films, *Vera Drake* depends on a single event that will transform, if not directly, the lives of every one of the characters. Here it's the fact that in between going from house to house cleaning and making tea, Vera visits some women she actually doesn't know and performs illegal abortions. One of her abortions goes wrong and soon Vera is arrested. It is fascinating to watch every character's reaction to Vera's arrest. It comes as a shock to everybody, since, as her husband tells the police, "she's got a heart of gold. She ain't done a thing wrong in her life." While Vera's family and friends face losing her as a result of the arrest, on the other side of the social spectrum Susan Wells has a secret abortion of her own after she is raped by her boyfriend. "Sue, you clot, you've got yourself into trouble, haven't you?" her friend asks her as she gives her the name of a professional, albeit secret, abortionist in a fancy clinic.

The film becomes a quiet but beautiful tragedy as we follow its varying representations of routine life. The fantastic acting ensemble discovers humanity and honesty as they create the world of the film. Followers of Leigh's films will recognize many of his regular actors, playing shockingly different roles than they played in *All or Nothing*, *Topsy-Turvy*, and others. In particular Sally Hawkins as Susan, Daniel

Mays as Sid, Alex Kelly as Ethel, Wendy Nottingham as Ivy, Allan Corduner as the psychiatrist, and in perhaps the most dramatic change from her role in *All or Nothing*, Helen Coker as the policewoman. The film's central revelation is Imelda Staunton, who unravels miles on end of emotional dimension as little by little we learn what is really behind the kind lady who makes tea for everyone. In facial close-ups that resemble those of Renée Falconetti in Carl Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, we are transfixed by Vera's commitment to her ideals that are as purely simple as, well, making tea. "I help girls out," she says. Help is indeed what she lives to do, to give in any way.

If *Vera Drake* is not Mike Leigh's best film, it is certainly yet another piece of masterly precision and subtle detail to add to his body of work, all of which is highly recommended. Additionally, *Vera Drake* is certainly the best film of 2004 for me.

PS - Hilary Swank will probably win Best Actress and I will be so pissed off when she does. Her work in *Million Dollar Baby* is nothing compared to Staunton's.

## WXBC IS BACK! SPRING 2005 SCHEDULE

*The only club providing new content every day of the week*

### MONDAY

- 11am-12pm - **Democracy Now**
- 12-2pm - **Trinity Ink** - DJ Medium Rare, DJ Kahsay and DJ Yeehaw Science
- 2-4pm - **Beats Scissors** - Marc Gabor-Fourcade
- 4-6pm - **Savage Cabbage** - Madame Trash Heap, DJ Bea Arthur
- 6-8pm - **Radio Archaeology** - Raissa St. Pierre
- 8-10pm - **The Ordinary** - Matt Wing, Sam Kraft
- 10-12pm - **Professional Hot Girl Radio** - Adrienne Mathiowetz, Karen the Coquette
- 12-2am - **Rambling with Abe** - Abe Jellinek

### TUESDAY

- 11am-12pm - **Democracy Now**
- 12-2pm - **DJ Slow's Music Meltdown** - Andrew Lench
- 2-4pm - **Naked Noise** - Ben Stevens
- 4-6pm - **Tunsis the Driving Cat** - Johanna Hauser
- 6-8pm - **Binge and Purge** - Ben Feingold, Jared van Zweeden, Michael Benhabib
- 8-10pm - **Kuma Kuma Hotcake Feedback Radio Hour** - Jean-Luc Unger, Jonathan Sargent
- 10-12am - **Jazz and Politics** - Blake Malin, Akie Bermiss
- 12-2am - **Corporal Jigsaw Quandary** - Pedro Icaza

### WEDNESDAY

- 11am-12pm - **Democracy Now**
- 12-2pm - **Soul Shakedown** - Joanna Fivelsdal
- 2-4pm - **Sipping on Some Syrup** - DJ Souffle
- 4-6pm - **Psychotic Toddy's Syndicate** - Todd Squitieri

- 6-8pm - **Collective Cracked Egg Shell** - Henry Casey
- 8-8:30pm - **This One Time** - Nick van der Kolk, Adrienne Mathiowetz
- 8:30-10pm - **Songs for Hana** - Nick van der Kolk
- 10-12am - **Too Cold to Be a Hipster** - DJ Frenchie, DJ Dot
- 12-2am - **The Friskey Inquisition** - Dr. Feelgood

### THURSDAY

- 11am-12pm - **Democracy Now**
- 4-6pm - **The 11th Inning** - Howard Megdal, Adam Turner
- 6-8pm - **Watch Your Grill, Dun!** - Noah Weston
- 8-10pm - **You Like My Show** - DJ ZT, Caleb Bark
- 10-12am - **Gone Gefilta: Thugged Out Since Cub Scout** - Bobby Waltzer
- 12-2am - **Poop Chute for Dummies** - Sir Cracks-a-Lot, DJ dubble cizzle

### FRIDAY

- 11am-12pm - **Democracy Now**
- 12-2om - **A Short Term Effect** - John Brady
- 2-4pm - **This is Our Music** - Camilla Aikin
- 4-6pm - **The Weather Show** - DJ Tiennamen, DJ White Mike
- 6-8pm - **Music That'll Make You Pee** - Dan McKenna
- 8-10pm - **For Serious** - Lauren Stutzbach and Brenna Chase
- 10-12am - **Math Major/Klans Member** - Trevor Johnson, Jordan Volz

- 12-2am - **The Car Crash** - Greg Fox

### SATURDAY

- 11am-12pm - **Democracy Now**
- 12-2pm - **Fiona and Jesus Holy Sunshine Happiness Hour** - Fiona Quirk-Goldblatt
- 2-4pm - **Jesus on the Radio** - Peter Jaros, Sarah Keezing
- 4-6pm - **The Madames** - Sarah Smith and Dan Campbell
- 6-8pm - **Q104.4 THE BEAGLE** - Karen Soskin, Stephen Kristian
- 8-10pm - **Perpetual Muse** - Joseph Bartholomew Murray
- 10-12am - **Wine Tasting With Dylan Armajani** - Dylan Armajani
- 12-2am - **CREAM OF MEAT REVISITED**

### SUNDAY

- 11am-12pm - **Democracy Now**
- 12-2pm - **The Scherzo** - John Meny
- 2-4pm - **The Swollen Vernacular** - Winston McCarthy, DJ Doosie Babies
- 4-6pm - **Super-Weather-Double-Hour(s)** - Jamie Denvir, Jonathan Hasak
- 6-8pm - **Don't You Fucking Judge Me** - Brel Froebe, Ray Mack
- 8-10pm - **Sports!** - Adam Turner, Colin Orcutt
- 10-12am - **Like Bringing a Mic to a Gunfight** - Owen Conlow, Kevin Williams
- 12am-2am - **Attack, Clark, and Bark** - Joel Clark, Caleb Bark



## Grammy Disappointment

### Kanye West to Find Comfort in His Vast Stuffed Animal Collection

BY NOAH WESTON

When the dust settled, and the Grammy Awards (you know, like the Billboard ones, but sophisticated) ended, one man should have stood on top: Kanye West. As a producer, rapper, and a man who makes money off trauma and Jesus, West planted his flag firmly in 2004. One would have expected him to win most of the ten Grammy Awards for which he received a nomination, yet he only took home three.

Some contend that Kanye deserved more than just a nod for best rap record, best rap album, and best r&b record. The best new artist honor usually goes to short-lived, upbeat (white) crooners, such as Maroon 5, so I anticipated nothing there. I was actually more confident in his chances to win the award for album of the year for his debut, *College Dropout*. Instead, the ghost of Ray Charles blindsided (GET IT?) West and snatched the shit.

If *Genius Loves Company* really deserved that award as anything more than a tawdry gesture, then I'll suck angel dust out of Consequence's asshole. Thankfully, my dignity will remain intact, but the Grammy Awards' credibility hasn't. Both in terms of impact and quality, Ray's last hurrah didn't merit many accolades. They just killed two blues singers with one liver disease and turned the award into a wack tribute.

The Grammy Awards are almost devoid



*"A lot of people were wondering what I was going to do if I didn't win any [awards]," West laughed. "I guess we'll never know." - Kanye's Acceptance Speech For Best Rap Album*

of anything other than trite ceremony. By all rights, though, they should have given Ray Charles more of a big-up than a performance by Bonnie Raitt and Billy Preston. To some, this would entail stripping the highest honor of the evening of its intended significance, when a more appropriate, more dignified "one love, Ray" from Jamie Foxx would have sufficed.

In the end, I honestly just wanted Kanye West to have more padding for his ego. That would have made it even more probable that next year he'll complain about not getting his lifetime achievement award yet. For Kanye's sake, let's hope that Garth Brooks doesn't suffer an aneurysm while recording his favorite xylophone standards.

*This article was originally published on Trickology.com*



*Charles is seen here in the twilight of his life, attempting a friendly embrace. He missed.*

## A Great Night For SMOG

### Meredith, Kiss Kiss, The Algiers, and Skeletonbreath!

BY SAMUEL LANG BUDIN

SMOG, Feb. 11 - I must admit to a personal interest beyond the desire to see good live music when attending the rock show the Friday before last at SMOG: I have been familiar with the work of all three members of headliner Skeletonbreath since middle school. Just because we share the same hometown, however, does not mean that my ability to judge the quality of their music is impaired. As anyone who was at the show will tell you, they're crazy. Good crazy. They play a sort of surf-disco-progressive-klezmer-Elfmansque bass, drums, and violin mixture that has people dancing even though the groove is in 11/4 time. This is what is known in France as an accomplishment.

Kiss Kiss, who were also on the bill, share violinist Bob Pycior with Skeletonbreath. Rumor has it that Kiss Kiss has recently signed a record deal, a rumor their website appears to confirm, although they don't mention to what label they may have been signed. Their indie pop drops beats at the end of méasures like the Enola Gay drops atomic bombs on Japan, albeit with a less pronounced effect. Nevertheless, in terms of showmanship, theirs was the best performance of the evening, reaching its climax as lead singer/guitarist/synthesizerist Josh Benash, crouched in front of the drum riser, dragged his guitar's strings across its edge. I expect big things from them. (On a very personal note, Josh Benash is an inspiration to me because, although he is not even as tall as I am, he's out there fronting a

band, and he rocks really hard.)

The low point of the evening was the set of The Algiers, who played straight-ahead punk with a self-acknowledged nod to The Clash as though they didn't mean it. Their performance seemed nervous and slightly off-balance. At one point, a guitar left on top of an amp fed back on the ninth for the duration of a song. We must refrain, though, from holding it against them: word in the SMOG is that this was their first show, a position most likely familiar to many in the crowd.

Meredith opened the show with a handful of fingerpicked, acoustic songs that demonstrated both her proficiency on the instrument and as a songwriter, as well as an understated wit.

Bard junior Griffin Epstein booked the show, and booked it well. Kell Condon used an overhead projector to send children clinging to girders across the wall above the band members' heads. I take the evening as proof that SMOG, though dusty, is a place in which Bard students, when given good music, can happily dance and sneeze the night away.



## Not Seeing Mirah

BY OMER SHAH

Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY (February 11, 2005)

I really like Mirah a lot. I also like seeing shows at colleges/universities because they are generally free, and also because I like seeing other liberal places of scholarship. So we (Ashley, Gregory & I) rocked the Metro North to Bronxville, which was a quick hop skip and a jump out of Grand Central. However, whenever I am in New York I get anxiety about leaving New York. I can't put my finger on it, it's probably because I take public transportation really seriously and I get scared that I'll miss the train or whatever. Anyways, the show was at some coffee house on campus. The room was totally blue, a blue room if you will. This had the post-Old Gym Omer rather nostalgic for the red room.

A buttload of Sarah Lawrence bands opened up for Mirah & her sister's band The Weeds. First was a group called Bang Bang Indians, whom I liked a whole lot. Bang Bang Indians are a three piece outfit consisting of keyboards & ukulele. They were funny and really cute. And might I add that I take the word "cute" really seriously. They won my heart with a cover of Mariah Carey's "Fantasy." As some of you may or may not know, next to Prince, Mariah is my favorite crazy celebrity. Bang Bang Indians also deemed it necessary to explain the radical feminist implications of their songs, which was refreshing. The group performed a song about getting your period while riding a horse. They also covered an early Zeitlyn sister's song, "I am the light of this world, just as long as I am in this world" or something to that effect. Bang Bang Indians invited the Zeitlyns to join them but they hung back in the crowd. Some of you may recall Mirah singing this song when she played at Smog last semester. Anyways at some point, the Bang Bang Indians stopped playing songs. It may have been the rum, but my heart was thoroughly warmed.



*An Old Photo of Sarah Lawrence College, The Scene Of The Crime*

Next up was some guy with a guitar. The SLC kids seemed to like him a lot, but I found him a bit anti-climactic after the Bang Bang Indians. Greg and I left while he was covering "Toxic," the Britney Spears song. Do to circumstances beyond my control we cut out on Mirah. But if I were to guess, Mirah

probably was really goddamn good. I bet she played "Cold Cold Water" and "Person Person" and everyone whispered lyrics to themselves.

# The 24:28 Minute Theater Festival

## Theater comes out of the woodwork

BY JEREMY LOW

2:24 PM Saturday afternoon.

The playwrights, now mostly gone from the Fisher center, only to return here later at eight o'clock tonight after staying up for the better part of last night, had only from 8PM to 7AM to write, revise, and get their plays to the directors and techs who have since taken over the festival. Tom Mattos, one of those beleaguered writers, says of last night's activities, "I was working frantically to get it done so I could get sleep. Well, I guess the atmosphere around 7AM was...we were drinking coffee and stapling shit. We just wanted to get out of here and leave our misbegotten plays for the directors to sort out." After playing a show in SMOG with Tavit, Greg, Andres, and Mike, who collectively make up the band Press Gang, Tom with his other festival cohorts could be found at Manor's WXBC Hipster Party last night, returning to the Fisher Center at about two in the morning to start writing their plays. So for any of you who go around lamenting the abjectly terrible writing, consider that this is what the whole thing is all about: waking up drunk in the basement of Manor at 1:45AM and realizing that you've got to write a ten minute play in just a couple hours.

4:39 PM Saturday afternoon

The actors are upstairs by the studio frantically rehearsing their lines while the directors and producers of the show hound the tech staff for music, lights and a host of other theatrical amenities soon to become headaches as the show approaches. Most of the people involved, whether pressed into service by the show's creators or here by their own convictions, are readying for the actual performance scheduled to take place just three and a half hours from the time of this writing. I interview Andrés Zambrano as to the effect that such a grueling time schedule had on the thespians here in the Studio.

Saturday evening, just before tech rehearsal

The Bard Observer: What time did you get here?

Andrés Zambrano: 7AM, to meet the playwrights, and get their plays.

Observer: Will everyone who wrote a play get to see it performed or was there a selection process?

Zambrano: Yeah, everyone who wrote a play will have it performed.

Observer: How's everything holding up around here?

Zambrano: Chilling, it's amazing, it's fucking great. But one of my actors dropped. Because she didn't think the play was "up to her level" and we're still trying to put the shit on. It's incredible.

Observer: Why the hell would you even consider doing something like this?

Zambrano: Why...why...because I just think it's amazing just having people here learning lines and using non-rehearsal places for that. Somebody told me that theater is God and to create God in 12 hours is pretty cool. It's challenging, it's fun.

Observer: Think you'll pull this off?

Zambrano: I think they're good. Hopefully the audience will be a little understanding about what the process is like. We're not

trying to create masterpieces here. Theater is like a lab and I'm mixing all these elements that don't really belong together and the audience will see this and see that they're not supposed to go together and hopefully they'll understand that and all the work that these people have put in.

Observer: Where'd you get all these crazies to do this?

Zambrano: It was just an open call to the community; a lot of people were interested, and for people who'd never written a play it's an opportunity. For people to do something in a short period of time that will be tangible in a couple of hours. It's a really great opportunity. And I think that a lot of people see that this is really amazing, and then they just want to do it.

*"Clothed in peanut butter and dripping with anxiety, a few actors stand outside the studio going over and over their lines while inside the studio, Mephistopheles, bathed in a swath of red light, gives the universal sign for Eat me out. The circus, more so than last night's STC show, is getting more and more grotesque as the horror approaches."*

Observer: Where'd the idea for this come from?

Zambrano: From Brel and the TGBC (Theater Guild of Bard College) who came up with the idea. He came to the theater guild with the idea, which is just a group of directors and it's a great thing 'cause a lot of people are coming in and seeing a lot of work, and I can bet you think that tonight things are going to be insane and this place is going to be packed. And everyone here is different and to see all these different approach in less than an hour...you just don't get that.

5:09 PM Saturday evening, three hours before show time.

The food has just arrived and I'm taking a break to reassure my mother that, no, I'm not getting married, so here's what's going to be going on in the next one and a half hours:

[conspicuous ellipsis on account of food]

6:43 PM Saturday evening, one and a half hours before doors open.

Back. Queue to queues are starting now and I'm about to make my way upstairs to the studio where all the actors and actresses are frantically getting ready for the coming performances.

7:02 PM, 43 minutes before doors open.

Clothed in peanut butter and dripping with anxiety, a few actors stand outside the studio going over and over their lines while inside the studio, Mephistopheles, bathed in a swath of red light, gives the universal sign for *Eat me out*. The circus, more so than last night's STC show, is getting more and more grotesque as the horror approaches. Mattos's play is being rehearsed right now (hence, the Faust reference) line for line, to be followed by all the other plays created in this short amount of time.

10:16 PM, 19 minutes after the end.

Despite the numerous setbacks, not simply the time-frame, but technical as well as emotional, the show went off, albeit twenty-eight minutes late. The conspicuous lack of seating produced some interesting moments as the studio qua theater filled to capacity, with most of the audience, even those arriving thirty minutes early, found themselves sitting in the makeshift peanut gallery haphazardly constructed of mats in front of the stage. Claire Jordan, after the show, will say, "We should have had three performances just to accommodate all the people who came to see the show. The TGBC has created a new form of constructive chaos."

First to be performed was Tom Mattos's play, a satire replete with references to the Faust legend, *Paradise Lost*, and his own derelict visions of God, the Devil and the Divine Angels setting off the next hour and a half of student directed, produced and acted plays. While I can't go into detail on every piece performed here tonight, the audience got their fill of debauched madness, culinary miscreants, and other chimeras of misbegotten perditions. Simply titled, with the given theme, *The Only Gods We Deserve*, Rightor Doyle did a fantastic job, as did all of the other directors, casting their pieces, with Doyle even switching the sex of both God and the Devil to great effect.

Patrick Tesh's play, aptly untitled, and directed by Alex Eaton, was among the more seditious horrors ever to be performed here; showcasing a cruel and intolerant God, less reminiscent of the Lord of the Old Testament than a petulant crack-baby cum Chucky fiending for its next dose of ignominy. As such, it was a favorite of the crowd, though the tech crew could have used a bit less of the food throwing, squashing and spitting, as there were still three plays to be performed and the mess was a sight in and of itself.

Among the more performative derisions of the show's concept, "The Only Gods We Deserve," *Build I in the Winds My Dwelling, on the Floods My Place of Nesting*, anonymously written by the "Ferris Wheel Collective" and directed by Kell Kondon (who put on a damn good show himself - if you were so lucky to have seen it), was a Sisyphean endeavor in theater. He said of the preparation for the show: "we got that cargo net perfect before the show. Exactly one foot by one foot squares, and tied just right. Then the show starts and the whole thing becomes a tangled mess. That came closer to my conception of God than anything else tonight."

The show finished with Andrew Gilchrist's play under Julie Rossman's direction. Entitled *Shmoil*, the piece capped off an evening of some of the best theater I've seen here at Bard (and I worked here all summer with shows that had, oh, about 100,000 times the budget and preparation time). All in all, and not to gush, if you see anyone who worked here today you should congratulate them on bringing some damn good theater to Bard and hopefully setting a precedent for more productions like this to happen again.

## Sage Francis: Still Wise Through Paranoia

BY HENRY CASEY

If you ever thought that "rappers had it figured out," as Sage Francis puts it, just like him, you were damn wrong. Then again, I don't think Sage Francis thinks anyone's getting it right these days. The yellow ribbon sweating patriots, rappers with their eyes on the dollar and the Glock instead of the rhyme book and the microphone, the Clear Channel corporation and their blind following stooges, and last but not least, Sage's got a rib cage's worth of bones to pick with the man upstairs himself, God. And now he's released *A Healthy Distrust* on Epitaph records so we can hear his warnings again.

The song about God, "Sun vs Moon," is one of the most powerful songs on the album, and thankfully is the first song in a while to go in the directly opposite path of Kanye West's "Jesus Walks." Francis raps God as someone who will not be there for us, a derelict geezer on a never ending bender. "God's not a woman he's a big white guy in the sky / and the desert's a reflection of his eyes / he doesn't cry for us / but when he does it's because he's drunk / and he's always fucked up."

While the production on the tracks is good, (especially the turn Dangermouse takes on "Gunz Yo") one might wonder why Joe Beats, Sage's long time cohort in Non-Prophets, produced only one track on the album.

Of all the producers, Reanimator's tracks show good promise, especially since Reanimator and Sage met online. Francis was recruiting producers on the Non Prophets message board. Reanimator did 4 of the tracks on the album ("The

Buzz Kill," "Sun vs Moon," "Lie Detector Test," and "Slow Down Ghandi") which range from his typical wowing fury on "Slow Down Ghandi," to the smooth, thoughtful "Lie Detector Test."

"Gunz Yo" is one of the funnier pieces on the album. Check out some of the lyrics, "It [a gun] might remind you of a mic the way I hold it. Straight to the grill like a homophobic rapper unaware of the graphic nature of phallic symbols. Tragically ironic, sucking off each other's gats and pistols." I can't remember such concise imagery that combined Freud's favorite metaphor and the gun warfare that has eaten away at the fiber of hip hop today.

Longtime followers of Sage Francis probably wondered if his music would have a massive shift when he made the jump to Epitaph Records, an Indie Punk label. Well, the difference of this album and say, *Personal Journals*, is not one of quality or effort, it's that the words now have some space to breathe and to be heard. His previous albums showed a more clustered rhyme scheme where it would take 5 listens to be able to write a few lines down. Now it's much easier to figure out the witty punch lines and thematic concerns.

I've had this album since October thanks to the ever-leaking sewer system called the internet, and once it became available, I bought it and it still holds up today.



## Puking, Crying and Rocking with S

BY OMER SHAH

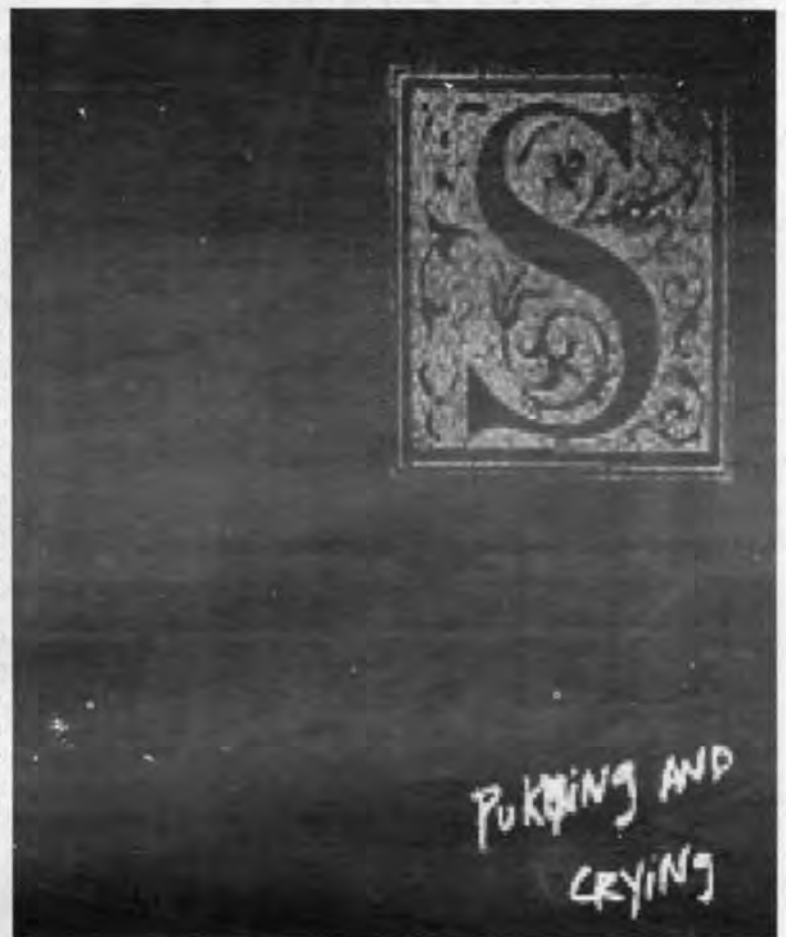
S is following in the tradition of Ben Gibbard, Kathleen Hanna, and that whiny bastard from Pedro the Lion - musicians who trade in their established musical sounds for something that beeps & clicks. I realize however reductive that statement sounds, but whatever. S is one Jenn Ghetto, of Seattle's now defunct Carrisa's Weird. *Puking & Crying* marks her second solo effort, but her first effort now that Carrisa's Weird is no longer. Firstly, I'm fairly certain that *Puking & Crying* might be my favorite album title ever. The album might be the perfect hangover album as well. Your iPod should rock this album when you march your sloppy ass over to the Kline from some first year's room, whom you will later avoid at Kline for the rest of your life. Actually, I take that back, this album is too good for your sloppy ass.

Those of you who are familiar with Carrisa's Weird



know what you are getting into with Ghetto's vocals: they are damn wonderful, due to that air of desperation Ghetto pulls off, which isn't contrived or irritating. The first track on the album, "Five Dollars," displays her vocals more than the rest of the record. "Five Dollars" is the gem of the album as far as I'm concerned, although this song is the most atypical. It's short and will appeal to the part of you that still wants to respect Liz Phair. It ends without end and leaves you wanting more of where it came from. The album teeters between dance floor and bathroom floor, a little bit Postal Service and a little bit Xiu Xiu. However, I feel those comparisons are pretty tired. This isn't the bubble gum of Ben Gibbard, nor is it Jamie Stewart's hysterics. S achieves much more. Another of my favorite tracks is "I'm Fine... Bye Bye," which is the perfect morning after song with lyrics like, "And you wake up, feeling stupid...what did you say? Who did you call? And the bruises all make sense now."

This album is about decadence and regret, as the title implies. It certainly isn't going to be the most welcoming first listen - as the title *Puking & Crying* might imply. So take ten dollars out of the booze fund and send it over to Suicide Squeeze Records and treat yourself to something that doesn't taste like booze, but will still be good.



## The Oscars: A History of Snubbing From Rushmore to A Streetcar Named Desire

BY EMMA DeCORSEY

I've been following the Oscars in pure fascination for several years now, and if there's one thing I've learned amidst the fashion show-cum-horse race-cum-presidential election of glorious American pageantry, it is this: when attempting to predict the winners, forget everyone you love and look at their political potential. This means that you, Bardian independent film whores, must drop your affection for *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (and mine for *Vera Drake*), stop mourning its lack of nominations, the passing over of Jim Carrey, and objectively look at the race as if you were picking a presidential candidate. I mean, look at it from an Academy voter's point of view: you'd rather have a beer with Jamie Foxx than say, a weirdo bohemian like Johnny Depp. Okay, maybe not, since you go to Bard. But you get the idea. But: this introduction aside, I offer you a collection of instances where the injustice has been simply too great to lay aside for politics. Some you'll remember, some you might not. It's really fascinating to see which of them still surprise us, and which of them were seen as great losses at their time but don't seem that shocking today. All in all an exciting ride through Oscar's equally glittering and infuriating past.

2004: Paul Giamatti's richly subtle and natural performance in *Sideways* is left off of the Best Actor list. Shame.

1998: Jim Carrey's impressive range was first discovered in *The Truman Show*, but no Best Actor nomination.

1998: One of the big recent Oscar losses was Bill Murray's last year to Sean Penn (which I will forever mourn), but an equally great injustice was leaving him off the Best Supporting Actor list in 1998 for *Rushmore*. He had swept the Critics' Awards that year, and this might have been a category he could have more easily won.

1997: Helen Hunt steals the Best Actress Oscar from Judi Dench's brilliant Queen Victoria in *Mrs. Brown*. Judi settles for a later Supporting Oscar for eight minutes in *Shakespeare in Love*, while Hunt's (ahem) great acting range has led her to... what?

1994: I'm sure all of you fans of *The Shawshank Redemption* might be surprised to know that Tim Robbins didn't make the Best Actor list.

1992: Jack Lemmon is left off of Best Actor for *Glen-garry Glen Ross*. I haven't seen it, but apparently his snub was a huge shock that year.

1991: Barbara Streisand fails to become the second female Best Director nominee in Oscar history for *The Prince of Tides*, enraging many housewives across America.

1989: *Do the Right Thing* is left off of Best Picture and Best Director for Spike Lee. This is basically where the African-American backlash against the Oscars in the 90s started, ending in 2001 when Denzel Washington and Halle Berry both won.

1985: *The Color Purple* gets 11 nominations, but none for director Steven Spielberg.

1980: *Raging Bull*, yes, *Raging Bull*, loses Best Picture to *Ordinary People*. The Academy does love their Robert Redford.

1978: I'd never have guessed this. Believe it or not, *National Lampoon's Animal House* got a huge Oscar campaign for nominations after it was a major box office success, and John Belushi was plugged for Best Supporting Actor. It didn't get anything, the studio was furious, and Belushi boycotted the awards.

1974: Jack Nicholson loses Best Actor for *Chinatown* to Art Carney for *Harry and Tonto* (which is about an old man and his cat). But don't worry, Jack goes on to win three Oscars to date, with a total 13 nominations.

1968: The shock of this year is the absence of Mia Farrow on the Best Actress list for *Rosemary's Baby*, mostly because everyone in Hollywood hated the politically-charged



Vanessa Redgrave so much they couldn't stand to see her be nominated instead of Farrow.

1967: *Doctor Doolittle* is nominated for Best Picture. Enough said.

1964: The headline of the year is Audrey Hepburn's loss of a Best Actress nomination for *My Fair Lady*.

1962: Not so much of an injustice, but the story is too good to leave out. Joan Crawford is left out of the Best Actress running for *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane*, when the last spot goes to her costar and rival Bette Davis. To get back at her, Crawford finds out that Anne Bancroft won't be able to make the ceremony and offers to accept for her if she wins. Sure enough, Bancroft wins for *The Miracle Worker*, and Crawford emerges triumphant. There's a rumor that Crawford actually kept Bancroft's Oscar for herself, but unfortunately it isn't true.

1960: Elizabeth Taylor wins her first Oscar for playing a hooker in *Butterfield 8*, but not so much for acting as for the fact that she'd had a tracheotomy the week before the ceremony. In doing so she stole the award from Shirley MacLaine, who's so wonderful in *The Apartment*. It's one of my favorite movies; see it if you haven't.

1957: Marlene Dietrich was so sure she'd be nominated for *Witness for the Prosecution* that she actually recorded an introduction to her Las Vegas show announcing herself as a nominee for the film. She didn't get it.

1954: Judy Garland was pretty much assured a win for her role in the brilliant remake of *A Star Is Born* (aside: she's really fantastic in it), but she was due to give birth in the days surrounding the ceremony. So a TV crew was assembled in her hospital room to broadcast her reaction upon winning, but shock of shocks - she lost to Grace Kelly for *The Country Girl*. The cameramen left Garland's room immediately after the announcement without a word.

1951: Marlon Brando loses Best Actor for *A Streetcar Named Desire* to Humphrey Bogart for *The African Queen*. Though I actually really like *The African Queen*, it's as much a tragedy on Brando's part as it is the number of times Bogart should have won for better roles.

1950: Judy Holliday, the original "dumb blonde," steals the Best Actress Oscar from both Gloria Swanson for *Sunset Boulevard* and Bette Davis for my all-time favorite movie, *All About Eve*.

1947: Possibly the biggest Best Actress shock ever. Nobody had any doubt whatsoever that Rosalind Russell was going to win for the film version of *Mourning Becomes Electra* - so much that the LA Times published the headline "Roz Russell Wins Oscar," when you'd think they would have learned after Dewey Defeats Truman. Even worse, the actor presenting the award started to say "Rosalind..." before looking at the name in the envelope, which turned out to be Loretta Young for *The Farmer's Daughter*.

1941: *Citizen Kane* loses Best Picture to *How Green Was My Valley*. Plus, the highly influential deep-focus cinematography loses to the same film. The only award it does win is for Best Original Screenplay.

1939: In the very first year of the Best Visual Effects category, *The Wizard of Oz* loses to *The Rains Came*, which is a movie about a flood.

1934: Bette Davis' breakthrough role in *Of Human Bondage* goes without a nomination for Best Actress. The public is outraged, but so is Hollywood, and so she became the first and only write-in nominee in Oscar history. She still lost, but it was to Claudette Colbert, who's wonderful in *It Happened One Night*.

1927-28: In the very first Academy Awards, for films released during those two years, *The Jazz Singer* (first movie with sound) was ruled ineligible for nominations because the Academy felt its vast innovation and popularity would make the competition unfair. It did, however, get an honorary award for "Engineering Effects and Adaptation Screenplay."

The following actors never won an Oscar: Richard Burton, Greta Garbo, Cary Grant, Deborah Kerr, Carole Lombard, James Mason, Robert Mitchum, Rosalind Russell, Peter Sellers, Barbara Stanwyck, Orson Welles.

The following actors were never nominated: Joseph Cotten, Myrna Loy, Ida Lupino, Marilyn Monroe, Edward G. Robinson.

Directors who never won: Charles Chaplin, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, Buster Keaton, Ernst Lubitsch, Michael Powell, Jean Renoir, Orson Welles.

# Elegy For The Living

BY CHARLEY LANNING

Does music eat, sleep, or breathe? Is rock dead? Does hip-hop have cancer? Absurd as it seems, someone somewhere is stroking his or her chin over such ruminations, falling into that awful trap of following today's beats like a soap-opera. It's odd then, that I find myself coining a concept album, with hip-hop's demise as its concept, as one of 2005's early masterpieces. That's right, ever-productive abstract beat man Daedelus has completed his opus, *Exquisite Corpse*, and it's being billed as an "elegy to hip-hop," the title referring, among other things, to the supposedly limp, pasty, though nonetheless beautiful, remains of the once-grand genre.



Well, I can't say I see the same corpse, and, ironically enough, I would cite *Exquisite Corpse* as evidence to the contrary; all the breadth and brilliance of this record would indicate the thing we like to call rap is just beginning to clear its throat. Some genuinely unique structures and textures appear throughout, making *Exquisite Corpse* stand tall among any recent electronic productions, and not just those you can bob your head to. *Compartmentalization* is immediately defied with the opener "Dearly Departed," a delicate bounce accentuated by some beautiful strings and vocals aching with nostalgia for 1945 - or perhaps for our "departed" genre? Daedelus' manner of juxtaposing the black and white vibe with the ill beats, most fully realized on his 2002 master work *Invention*, is in full effect here, creating simultaneous heartache and foot tapping. Building on the greatness of *Invention*, rather than simply meandering with mixed results as on 2004's thrown-together *Of Snowdonia* and

*A Gent Agent*, Daedelus weaves a coherent work of bittersweet string compositions like the instrumentals "Fallen Love" and "Just Briefly" and crackly poetic or vocal ballads like "Now & Sleep" with Laura Darling. The latter completely forgets reality and moves far beyond genre definition. The baby grand and dusty strings lift Darling's crooning higher and higher until the beat brings it all gently back down.

It's those vocals, among other lyrical contributions, raps, and free verses that really characterize the *Corpse*. The abundance of guests, with nine of the 14 tracks being collaborations, fulfills the second of the title's three meanings: a reference to an old French parlor game, *cadavre exquis*, in which a piece of paper is exchanged among a group until each member of the party has contributed a word, resulting in often strange, abstract, yet complete, sentences. This group word collage, or recorded mental diarrhea, however you want to look at it, has been labeled "mental contagion." So does Daedelus' collage live up to the legacy? Aside from it being his best work next to *Invention*, *Exquisite Corpse* is certainly loveable for its healthy balance of absurdity and poetic beauty. Like a bunch of 19th century Parisians riding the absinthe wave with pen and paper, Daedelus can produce with beat and voice results ranging from head-bumping skitiddy skat on "Welcome Home" with the great beat master Prefuse 73, to the sharper, more brooding poeticism of "Drops" with lyricist CYNE. "Drops," along with a few other instances of lyrical brilliance such as Mike Ladd's take on the "Welcome Home" theme, MF Doom's "Impending DOOM" ramblings, and the aforementioned melodic orgasm that is Laura Darling's contribution, comprise the substance - you could even say soul - of *Exquisite Corpse*. The notion of "mental contagion" is indeed of service here, with each guest's interpretation of the central theme amassing into a complete idea of simultaneous variety in texture and seamlessness in content.

Whether Daedelus is actually sarcastic in singing the sorrow for hip-hop, if he is in reality only remarking on the exquisite nature of his massive body of work, or the *Corpse* should be taken at face value, is all irrelevant. Whatever the listener's interpretation, *Exquisite Corpse* is undeniably convincing. The most impressive quality of Daedelus has always been his willingness to explore, and this record, aside from any particular allegorical meaning, perfectly exemplifies the most frequently successful results of such an inclination. That being said, it is arguable that, within the entirety of Daedelus' experimentation, there is mediocrity next to the incandescent. *Exquisite Corpse* is thankfully comprised mostly of the latter, only rarely slipping with somewhat aimless tracks like "The Crippled Hand" or the simply absurd "Cadavre Exquis" with French lyricist TTC. At his best, Daedelus usually comes up with something like



"Thanatopsis," the record's grand finale and concluding elegy. The title meaning a "meditation on death," "Thanatopsis" sees Daedelus go as far as he possibly can from the genre in question, employing the nasally vocals and crisp guitar percussion of Hrishikesh Hirway. Even as Hirway manages to fully illuminate the candid nostalgia *Exquisite Corpse* keeps hinting at, Daedelus chooses to propel the song to its climax with aggressive beatboxing, a juxtaposition that brings full circle whatever concept the listener had in mind. The only thing as convincing as the resolution this song brings musically is the last of Hirway's verses: "make no beauty of me/ place no coins upon my head/ let my legacy/ if there's one to see/ in what I did/ my only body shall not be/ some hollow sign/ of what I leave behind."

# Dreamcast: The Barely Living Dead

BY SCOTT SIEGEL

When thinking about the Sega Dreamcast video game console, it's easy to assume that its early demise in the console wars occurred because it brought nothing new to the video game industry. But the Dreamcast died for financial and commercial reasons, and not for any lack of innovation. Dreamcast was, in fact, a very powerful and influential system, and although it witnessed a slow death at the hands of the current generation of consoles, it was at the same time responsible for some of the greatest games and innovations popularized since its demise. Below are five games which broke the mold, and were all at one time Dreamcast exclusives. You can either try and pick up the originals, or obtain their sequels or ports on newer systems.

**Soul Calibur:** Released on September 9, 1999. Namco's award-winning 3-D fighter was a launch title for the Dreamcast, and easily overshadowed the other 18 titles released on that day, including Sega's own *Sonic Adventure*. With astounding graphics, an amazing soundtrack, and fast, fluid action, it's arguable that *Soul Calibur* remained the best 3-D fighter on any platform until the release of its sequel three years later. *Soul Calibur II* is currently available on Gamecube, Xbox, and PS2, and is just as good, if not better, than the original, which is saying a lot.

**Crazy Taxi:** Released on January 24, 2000. Yes, The Offspring plus Bad Religion makes for a god-awful soundtrack, but *Crazy Taxi* is still one of the finest arcade games ever. You drive a taxi through San Francisco, picking up passengers and taking them where they want to go. The faster you are, and the more reckless you drive, the more money you make. The game moves at 60 frames-per-second, making for a true sense of speed as you drive pedal-to-the-metal style throughout town. Good, old-fashioned arcade-style gameplay makes for an addictive game, and a surprising hit at parties. *Crazy Taxi* was eventually re-released on PS2 and Gamecube, and *Crazy Taxi 3* is available on Xbox. The original's still the best, although you can play the classic San Francisco map in the Xbox sequel.

**Chu Chu Rocket:** Released on February 29, 2000. With *Chu Chu Rocket*, Sonic Team created a frantic four-player puzzle game, the concept of which involves mice and outer space. Four players each have their own rockets, mice pour out onto the screen, and players must guide mice into their rockets using arrows. But there's cats, and deception. Then hilarity ensues. It's difficult to explain in words, but the game is very simple and insanely enjoyable. Also, *Chu Chu Rocket* must be appreciated for its role in video game history. It was the first console

video game playable online, and started a revolution of long-distance gaming that originated not from the Xbox, but from the Dreamcast and its little built-in 56K modem. Sega and THQ later ported *Chu Chu Rocket* to the Game Boy Advance. Controls are a tad more awkward due to the GBA's layout, but the game is still enjoyable and capable of supporting four players with one cartridge.

**Jet Grind Radio:** Released on October 10, 2000. Cel-shading has become one of the most overused styles in game graphics in recent years, culminating in the release of a cel-shaded *Legend of Zelda* game, but before it was tired and cliché, it was an original and totally freaking awesome element of *Jet Grind Radio*. Featuring a wild Japanese techno soundtrack, *JGR* allowed you to play as a member of a street-punk graffiti gang, rollerblading around the streets of a pseudo-Tokyo, tagging up the walls with your anti-establishment art and running from the cops when they try and kill your buzz. Although controls and camera angles were at times awkward, the game was so stylishly hip and graphically groundbreaking that everything else became less important. Sega released a sequel on Xbox called *Jet Set Radio Future*, and managed to fix most of the original's problems, while retaining the same style, adding faster gameplay and including more of that wacky J-Techno. Pick it up off of eBay for less than six bucks. The full game comes on a disc with the full version of the racing game *Sega GT 2002*, and both are worth much more than the asking price. God bless the sleeper hits.

**Rez:** Released on January 11, 2002 in Europe. Although it never made it stateside on the Dreamcast, most likely due to the console's dwindling popularity, *Rez* is available on the PS2 (that is, if you can find it). Otherwise, you can buy the European version and use an import disc to play it on a North-American system. *Rez* is an experimental shooter involving the manipulation of lights and sounds through the gameplay. You play as a program trying to hack into a system, and must fight your way through enemy defenses to reach your target. The trance-style soundtrack and visuals are affected by the shooting of your weapons. Two people playing the same level can witness very different visualizations and even hear almost completely different music due to differing styles of play. Though very intelligently crafted, the entire game has a very "psychedelic" feel that cause some poorly-informed gamers to pass *Rez* off as simply a tripped-out masturbation tool, mostly due to the release of a



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strange vibrator-like peripheral in Japan and a subsequent article written by a girl gamer regarding her "enjoyment" of the game. But looking past its potential for sinful behavior, *Rez* is still a highly enjoyable experience and continues to be unlike anything else seen on the market. Find it and play it. The vibrator is optional (and hard to locate, I might add).

These five titles hardly represent the entirety of unique and breakthrough titles which were released on the Dreamcast. If you'd like to hear more about the Dreamcast's innovations, read "Dreamcast: Sega's Last Scream," by Bebito Jackson, found online at <http://games.insidepulse.com/article.php?contentid=6420> Still not convinced? Come play these games on the 'Cast, and more, at bard x/y, every Tuesday night at 9:00 pm in LC 115.

SCOTT SIEGEL IS THE HEAD OF BARD X/Y  
ADDITIONAL VIDEO GAME REVIEWS  
CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT  
[HTTP://STUDENT.BARD.EDU/XY](http://STUDENT.BARD.EDU/XY)

# Mercato Tivolio: One Panini, Two Panini

BY MICHAEL BENHABIB

This newest addition to Red Hook's culinary scene is not only the town's first Panini shop, but it also serves up Italian pastas, desserts, and salads. If only the Bard lemmings would stop flocking to The White Rabbit for lunch they'd discover Mercato Tivolio, which bills itself as a Mediterranean market but is truly the area's most authentic Italian gourmet eatery - perfect for lunch, snack, or even an early diner.

Mercato Tivolio has a welcoming, rustic décor with wooden tables and small stools. On the left is a rack of European imports with sodas, jams, coffees, crackers, and olive oils as well as hard to find continental delicacies like chestnut cream and saffron mustard. Next to the olive oils is a sign that reads, "available to taste."

The owners, Francesco Buitoni and Michelle Platt, often give their visitors a warm hello from behind the counter and are always available to answer questions; I once found Platt explaining that paninis are "grilled sandwiches" made with "panini bread" to a novice customer. The panini menu starts with the basics: there is the simple Italia with fresh mozzarella, tomato and basil, as well as the Parma, which is basically an Italia plus a few slices of delicious prosciutto. Then come the more inventive offerings: the tasty Ibiza panini has fresh organic roast turkey, avocado, tomatoes, and Spanish manchego cheese. The Cotto panini has baked ham and gruyere, the Tonno tuna, tomato and avocado. All of these are fantastic. The combination of the freshest gourmet panini bread, cheeses, vegetables, and meats with superb preparation and presentation makes for a fine dining or snacking experience.

In addition to paninis, the market serves fresh pastas, including linguini, covetelli, and four different kinds of gourmet ravioli. It has mixed plates of cheese and vegetables. There are also several salads and a mouthwatering soup of the day. Among the many desserts is Panacotta, a delectable mound of cooked cream with custard and vanilla covered with strawberry bits. With such a varied menu one could easily put together a three or four course meal.

The food is a little pricey. Paninis run from \$7 to \$7.50 and pastas are similarly priced. Yet you have to consider that the prices are completely in-line with the competition. The popular Mediterranean and Smokin Sista sandwiches at The White



Rabbit both cost \$6.95. Yet at Mercato Tivolio, for a few cents more, you get what you pay for. Instead of that overpriced soggy bread, old cheese, and run of the mill cold cuts from The White Rabbit you get fresh cheeses, tender meats, and crisp bread. Plus, at Mercato Tivolio you can order a San Pellegrino Aranciata, Italian orange soda. Mercato Tivolio is way ahead of its competition. It's open until six or seven most nights, making it the perfect spot for a quick pasta or light panini dinner topped off with a delightful dessert. Mercato Tivolio also does take-out.

The only question is whether its secret location will keep it from becoming one of Red Hook's signature eats. Finding Mercato Tivolio at 7460 S Broadway is a bit difficult since it doesn't face the street. One enters from a parking lot behind the Red Hook Inn. If you can't find it give them a call at 758-5879.

With any luck it will thrive in Red Hook for years to come, and perhaps then Michelle Platt will get to stop explaining what a panini is to her customers. In the meantime it might just convince some Bard students planning semesters in Europe to stay right here in Red Hook - it's that good.

MICHAEL BENHABIB IS A HOST OF THE BINGE AND PURGE SHOW ON WXBC ALONG WITH BEN FEINGOLD AND JARED VAN ZWEEDEN. BINGE AND PURGE AIRS TUESDAYS AT 6:30PM. TUNE IN FOR MORE LOCAL RESTAURANT REVIEWS.

## Lists For The Sake Of Lists

BY JESSE MYERSON, MONROE ELLENBOGEN, GENEVIVE LYNCH

### Top 10 Most Obnoxious Things to Say

1. "You snooze, you lose."
2. "Prove it."
3. "Cry me a river."
4. "It's a free country."
5. "Deal with it."
6. "Do I look like a (thing that's just been requested) machine to you?"
7. "Who died and made you boss?"
8. "Move it or lose it."
9. "Shit happens."
10. "You're cruisin' for a bruisin'."

### Top 10 Best Songs, During the Playing of Which to Kill One's self

1. "My Way" - Frank Sinatra
2. "A Song for You" - Leon Russell
3. "The End" - The Beatles
4. "My Funny Valentine (Live)" - Chet Baker
5. "Autumn Leaves" - Tal Farlow
6. "Inner City Blues" - Marvin Gaye
7. "Into the Mystic" - Van Morrison
8. "Peace" - Ornette Coleman
9. "Toccata" - Claude Debussy
10. "Tonight, Tonight" - The Smashing Pumpkins

### Top 10 Top 10 Worst Songs, During the Playing of Which to Kill Oneself

1. "Mad World" - Gary Jules
2. "Adam's Song" - Blink 182
3. "Jumper" - Third Eye Blind
4. "O Fortuna" - Carl Orff
5. "The End" - The Doors
6. "False Advertising" - Bright Eyes
7. "The Impression that I Get" - The Mighty Mighty Bosstones
8. "Screaming Infidelities" - Dashboard Confessional
9. "Moonlight Sonata" - Beethoven
10. "Redemption Song" - Bob Marley

### 10 Other Songs

1. "Mmbop" - Hanson
2. "Barbie Girl" - Aqua
3. "Don't Stop the Beat" - Junior Senior
4. "Nocturne in Ebm" - Frederic Chopin
5. "Blinded by the Light" - Manfred Mann's Earth Band
6. "Farm House" - Phish

### 7. "Freddy Freeloader" - Miles Davis

8. "1812 Overture" - Peter Tchaikovsky
9. "911 is a Joke" - Public Enemy
10. "Velvet Rope" - Janet Jackson

Honorable Mention: "Sledgehammer" - Peter Gabriel

### 9 Colors

1. Chartreuse
2. Periwinkle
3. Red
4. Rainforest Mist
5. Mauve
6. Egg Shell White
7. China White
8. Green
9. Taupe

### 3 Phone Cards Companies

1. Zaptel
2. Big Zoo
3. And more!

### Top 10 Best Stars on the American Flag

1. The 23rd one
2. The 17th one
3. The 49th one
4. The 11th one
5. The 7th one
6. The 4th one
7. The 24th one
8. The 49th one (again)
9. The 12th one
10. The Infinityth one

### 10 Oil Companies

1. Corleone
2. Robeson
3. Exxon
4. Mobil
5. BP
6. Halliburton
7. Hess
8. Genevieve's face
9. KY
10. Teeth

### Top 10 Most Awesome Kick-Ass Guys Named Al

1. Al Roker- weatherman
2. Al Gore- Former Vice President of the United States
3. Aladdin- Fake Arab
4. Paul Simon- International Folk Success
5. Al- This guy Al
6. Albatross- Dope
7. Al Weinstein- Bard Student
8. Al Einstein- Like Probably Smartest Guy Ever
9. Tim Allen- Thespian
10. Al Pacino- Actor

### 10 Original Sports Team Names

1. The Secaucus Fatal Wounds
2. The Wisconsin Beer Nuts
3. The Iowa Caucuses
4. The Scranton Cashmere-Sweater-Wearing-Debutantes
5. The New Hampshire White People
6. The Tallahassee Tussin
7. The Yosemite Yarmulkes
8. The Annandale Warriors
9. The Arizona Orphans
10. The San Francisco Kids

### Top 10 Greatest Lists of 10 (or sometimes 9 or 3) Things Ever

1. 10 Oil Companies
2. 10 Original Sports Team Names
3. 9 Colors
4. 3 Phone Cards
5. Top 10 Most Awesome Kick-Ass Guys Named Al
6. Top 10 Best Stars on the American Flag
7. Top 10 Most Obnoxious Things to Say
8. Top 10 Top 10 Worst Songs, During the Playing of Which to Kill Oneself
9. Top 10 Greatest List of 10 (or sometimes 3) Things Ever
10. Top 10 Best Songs, During the Playing of Which to Kill Oneself

Thanks to Maida Ives, Emily McCabe, Evan Pritts and Jean-Luc Unger

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## Where Is This Other World Everybody Keeps Talking About?

BY MARIAH ERNST

### The World is Watching...Switzerland

I spent the three weeks prior to the World Social Forum (WSF) and International Youth Camp traveling through the Americas, leaving a paper trail of ticket stubs and foreign phone numbers behind me. But when I entered the grounds of the WSF and the International Youth Camp on January 23rd, located in Porto Alegre, Brazil, my own story ended and a story of solidarity began.

On January 26, 2005, the World Social Forum (WSF) officially commenced with a march of civil society actors, concerned citizens, musicians, dancers, and acrobats (often rolled into one) through the streets of Porto Alegre, Brazil. "This is the rhythm of Brazil," one of the students representing Sao Paulo University Bateria told me as we paused on an overpass to feel it undulate with the beat of the drums. In one of the most powerful expressions of solidarity during the forum, and certainly one that echoed throughout the five-day forum, 200,000 people converged to demonstrate both their collective passions and to celebrate the belief that united us all: that another world is possible.

The WSF was conceived in 2001 in response to World Economic Forum (WEF), a summit for the business, political, and intellectual elite that takes place annually at a ski resort in Davos, Switzerland. The WEF represents the world we are born into, one in which large predatory corporations represented by the IMF and World Bank impose neo-liberal economic policies that propel free trade exploitation while Angelina Jolie and Tony Blair discuss Southeast Asia's over-fishing crisis over canapés and caviar. At the WSF, 150,000 activists held teach-ins about everything from the water bottle industry in India to police oppression in Brazilian ghettos. We devoured fresh organic bread from the Peace Camp Co-op and locally grown mangos, then tossed our peels in the compost.

### I'm sorry. I don't speak Foreign

The Forum itself was held in thousands of large white tents and renovated warehouses that stretched over three miles of waterfront. The schedule was the size of a New York Times Sunday Edition, listing each event, speaker, location, time, and language. Interestingly, a very small percentage of the events were held in English. I guess in this world, English isn't the first language.

The massive tent conglomerations were organized into eleven separate interest groups, from social struggles to communications to ethics, cosmos, and spirituality. The first several days I dutifully scammed around to each area, toting paper, pen, and camera. I can now tell you about severe human rights abuses by Coca Cola in India and I can also give you the names and e-mails of eleven different youth activists working to stop the rape of the Brazilian rainforest. Although the teach-ins, workshops, and art exhibits were indeed informative and useful, the most profound events happened outside the forum, in the International Youth camp.

### Maybe It Was Simmering Brazilian Heat... Yes. It Definitely Was

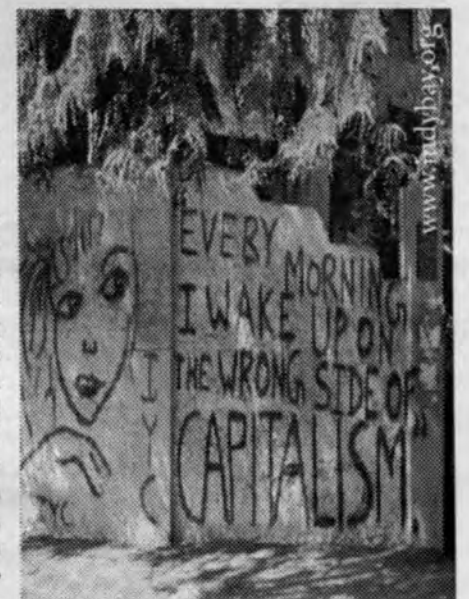
The International Youth Camp of the WSF started in 2001 as a communal living alternative for weary participants, but has since mushroomed into what some media sources have called "the heart and soul of the forum." For three months prior to the Forum, the Youth Camp hums along to the sound of independent media dispatches, international dialogue ("no hablo portugesá"), and volunteer construction. This year's Youth Camp in Harmony Park was built entirely by volunteers with recycled materials, including walls made from flattened juice boxes and roofing from crushed cans. Outside shower facilities and vegan co-op booths dotted the landscape. The day I arrived I was drafted to work on the mud thatch walls of the Che

Guevara medical tent. After the work was done, volunteers could line up for a heaping plate of delicious vegan cuisine in true communal style.

Participants from every continent flowed into the camp. The moment I walked into the registration area, one of the only English-proficient interpreters quietly shouldered the hammocks I had lugged across three countries and led me to his tent in the camp of the Quebecois. "It's no problem if you stay here tonight, our friends arrive in a few days so there's plenty of extra space." Every person who wandered into the camp was given a warm welcome and immediately adopted into one of the tent communities. Most communities, whether united under a single banner or engaged in different causes, held daily meetings where they discussed sustainable waste disposal, construction needs, and security patrol within their area, as well as organized activities. Everyone was given a voice.

Early in the morning we would flop out of our tent gasping as the blazing sun flooded over the horizon. Nearby on the road, legions of shower-fresh and name-tagged hotel participants were already strolling towards the ubiquitous white forum tents with schedules in hand. Sometimes we would check out scheduled events, but often we wandered around feasting on global human interaction. I navigated the avenues of human understanding, mustering all the Portuguese and Spanish words in my vocabulary. "We are Brazilian, Colombian, European, but we are human first," a dreadlocked Brazilian named Roberto told me. Roberto is one of the nomades intergalaktika, which is part of a community that travels around the country on a bus, sustaining itself by selling fresh bread. Whether it was through alternative living, direct action, education, or art, every participant was actively engaged in changing our world.

Drums sounded from all directions once the sun went down, beating like the pulse of the night through the clouds of dust kicked up by capoeira circles. The local liquor, cachaça, flowed as easily as smiles between strangers, but from the day I arrived until the night I left I didn't witness a single act of violence. In the Youth Camp, there was no war or military rule. It was built from the ground up by volunteers with recycled materials. Every participant had access to food and a radical education. Everyone was given a voice. Not only is another world possible, but for a time it was alive and well in Porto Alegre, Brazil.



Each IYC participant was "actively engaged in changing our world."

# Horoscopes

BY CLARE CONNECTION

## Aries (March 22-April 20)

I was watching the snow fall this morning, Aries, and noticed the way it seemed to cover and smooth all the rough edges, the flaws if you will. Like time, which supposedly heals all wounds, a good snowfall seems to "forgive" the world. But it's time to realize Aries that, as we'll see when spring comes and this muddy world is revealed again in all its imperfection, snow and time don't actually heal anything, they just conceal things for awhile. Maybe it's time you addressed an issue that you thought you'd put to rest, one that you thought time would heal or snow conceal. Because there are certain things you can't leave behind, and my guess, Aries, is that you don't really want to leave them, and shouldn't.

## Taurus (April 21-May 21)

In the now defunct sci-fi series *Roar*, a young prince named Conor (Health Ledger, in case you care) is on a quest, and the object of his quest is "the roar," the "roar of the land, the roar of the people, a voice that echoes through every living thing and is the power of life itself." This, admittedly, is a pretty bunk premise for a series. However, Taurus, you come into the world this month possessed of just such a roar. You're strong, you're connected, you're ready to sink your teeth into anything that comes your way, and the more you take on, the greater the benefits will be. Your quote of the month comes to you from Jorge Luis Borges: "Time is the substance from which I am made. Time is a river which carries me along, but I am the river; it is a tiger that devours me, but I am the tiger; it is a fire that consumes me, but I am the fire."

## Gemini (May 22-June 21)

2.2 billion years ago, the only class of organisms able to survive in the oxygen-bereft environment of early earth was something approximating pond scum. From these admittedly disgusting ancestors, all life on earth (including you, Gemini!) evolved. You may have come a long way since then, but don't forget where you came from. Take a look back at your origins this month, Gemini, at that fundamental moment when you became you, and be sure not to underestimate what you see. Because it was that green scum that not only provided the basis for your genetic material, but also made it possible for creatures like yourself to develop (by separating water into oxygen and hydrogen, and by producing methane, in which the hydrogen was trapped and lost to space. The oxygen that was left behind was the reason life was able to evolve—ah, science). So don't underestimate your primordial stages, Gemini, they may be the most essential ones, the ones from which you can draw something more valuable than anything else.

## Cancer (June 22-July 23)

Remember Driver's Ed? The first time you got into the driver's seat of a car? The first time you got your feet on those pedals, ready to go, revving that engine up? After years and years of making "vroom" noises and pretend steering with an invisible wheel between your pudgy hands, you had finally arrived, and you thought you were pretty hot shit I bet, didn't you? And then you actually tried to move forward, and realized it wasn't quite as easy as it looks when mom and dad drive the old fake-wood mobile to pick you up at soccer practice. The balance between gas and brake was actually pretty tough, and you nearly gave yourself whiplash that first day until you sorta maybe got the hang of it. This month, Cancer, you are having a bit of the same experience all over again: that stop/go, hot/cold, melt/freeze red-light/green-light series of back and forth jerks that could possibly make your stomach sick. With time though, you will learn to make these changes smoother, to ease into things, and maybe even master the process of transition.

## Leo (July 24-August 23)

Why has the ego gotten such a bad rap lately? From Buddhist monasteries everywhere the call has been issued to "kill the ego," citing the reason that "ego can convert anything to its own use, even spirituality. Ego is constantly attempting to acquire and apply [things] for its own benefit." And why not Leo? Maybe it's because lately you've been suppressing your ego that you

are feeling so dissatisfied right now. This month I suggest you wipe that third eye off your forehead, throw out your zafu, climb down from the mountain, and take a stand for *yourself* and what benefits *you*. Your new Guru? How about The Beach Boys? "Hang on to your ego" Leo!

## Virgo (August 24-Sept. 23)

I think that this month you recognize something beautiful and mysterious out there in the world to which the rest of us, wallowing in our angst and various seasonal affective disorders, are completely oblivious. As a Virgo, I'm guessing you have the desire to serve others, to share what you have discovered with all of us miserable fuck-ups who just don't see what you do. The problem is that maybe this time something is incommunicable: you simply don't have the words to describe this thing, and your inability to help others is tainting your appreciation of your own happiness. I suggest you sing, and sing loud. Something is happening and you can't stop it and you can't figure it out, so don't. Just sing as loud as possible, maybe even dance around a little, and if your tune is catchy enough, maybe some of us will start singing along.

## Libra (Sept. 24-Oct. 23)

Guess what Libra my dear, Venus is in your 12th house, and do you know what that means? No, I'll bet you don't. Let's take a quick look at Venus' mythology: Venus is the goddess of fertility, love, and pleasure. However, she wasn't conceived out of pleasure—Venus was conceived when her mother, Gaia, got so angry at her husband Uranus that she sliced off his genitals and threw them into the ocean, where they mixed with the sea-foam to give birth to the goddess of love. Venus was understandably not too concerned with maternal issues, and pretty much focused on pleasure, expending a lot of energy trying to get her own. So—any ideas? Well, you've been so devoted to your creative energies lately (which is as it should be), but have been trying to do it alone, and so have been making yourself depressed and insane. It's therefore time to merge in a real personal way with other people. And for this you too need to make a little effort. You're not the goddess of love, Libra, and even she needed to work to find her pleasure with others. As a psychiatric side note—do you think having foam for a mother and a disembodied dick for a father creates a complex in which one uses sexuality as a substitute for the real nurturing one lacks? Think about it.

## Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 22)

Oooh Scorpio...have you been working out? 'Cause you are lookin' damn fine. This month you've got that famous Scorpio mojo working over time, that "you-know-you-want-me-I-know-you-want-me" attitude, that "mmm-oh-yeah-that's-it-keep-doing-that." The question is what you are going to do with all this crackling sensual energy you're putting out. I mean, yes, you could lure almost anyone to you at the moment, but do you really want to? You're not, after all, one of what Adele Lang and Susi Rajah, in *How to Spot a Bastard by his Star Sign*, call the "we're-hot-so-shut-up-and-worship-us" fire signs." In fact, I think that your form of bastardism this month is to pretend to yourself that you *are* one of these people, when you and I both know that, no matter how good you may be looking, you aren't the type to be worshipped, but possibly need to be the worshipper yourself. Maybe it's time to stop playing mind games with yourself Scorpio, and instead of getting your own candle lit all the time, try lighting someone else's while the sexual wildfire's burning.

## Sagittarius (Nov. 23-Dec. 22)

On Feb. 2nd, Punxsutawney Phil crawled out of his hole into the light of a crystal clear sky. Of course, his shadow was there to greet him as well, and Phil reluctantly had to climb back into that hole for another six weeks. You, Sag, like Phil, have been in your metaphorical hole for a while. And you, like Phil, confronted with the solitude of a cloudless sky, are crawling deeper and deeper in, trying to protect yourself from those extra weeks of winter. The time alone is healthy in that it gives a chance to reflect, to process, and to reinvigorate all those tendencies that have been in hibernation for so long. But I know you Sag, and you are no groundhog. You value independence above all else; you need to be out under those skies, breathing in the cold air,

# Answers for the February 7th Crossword

BY JEREMY LOW

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getting caught in the snow storms ahead, and recapturing your freedom from everything your cave walls represent. Instead of being afraid of what's out there, maybe you should drop the groundhog act and try being a bird for a while, an albatross say, or a night owl.

## Capricorn (Dec. 23-Jan. 21)

Sade has something to tell you: "you are the lover's rock/ The rock that i cling to/ You're the one/ The one i swim to in a storm..." Meaning, I suppose, that in the midst of the swirling chaos of the world around you, you are in a state of solidity, of peace and quiet. It's like you're a racehorse in slow-mo, while the rest of the horses are going their normal speed and making all kinds of dust and stuff in the process. Or like you are standing there and the world suddenly goes into silent mode, like you just pressed the mute button. Meaning, I suppose, that for once you've just moseyed your way out of your chronic state of stress; that, or all those breathing exercises have finally done some good. And now, like Sade reminds you, you can help save other people from getting caught up in the chaos. Being a rock, they can cling to you for protection, and if that pisses you off, remember your stony nature: 1, 2, 3...petrify!

## Aquarius (Jan. 22-Feb. 19)

Feeling a bit slow this month? You look a bit like an ice sculpture to me these days, a glittering palace of snow, a snowman with no scarf on, the snow queen with her cold, cold hands. Brrrrr. Are you blocked in, frozen into the ice like a woolly mammoth or poor Mr. Shackleton? Or do you just need a little rest? In either case, don't forget that even a snow queen needs to get out once in awhile, even if it is just to get everyone else to "chill" out (ha ha). "Now I must hasten away to warmer countries," said the Snow Queen. "I will go and look into the black craters of the tops of the burning mountains, Etna and Vesuvius, as they are called- I shall make them

look white, which will be good for them, and for the lemons and the grapes."

## Pisces (Feb. 20-March 20)

There is a fable in *Phaedrus* that I'd like you to keep in mind this month, Pisces: "The Mountain labor'd, groaning loud, /On which a num'rous gaping crowd /Of noodles came to see the sight, /When, lo! a mouse was brought to light!" That is to say: although there is great expectation of this particular mountain's potential progeny, all it's able to produce is a mouse. I'm comparing you, Pisces, to the mountain this month, a mountain that seems to be disappointing everyone around it. But don't be fooled: the fable isn't a judgment on the mountain's failure to produce something extraordinary, but rather a criticism of those who "stood in awe" and projected their grandiose dreams onto it. To clarify: although it may seem that you are currently sub-par in the eyes of others, don't let their disappointed expectations make you doubt your proper choices or what results from them. A mouse might be just what you need.

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# Letters

BY ELLEN JORDAN AND STEPHEN TREMAINE

dear stephen,

I was writing to say: I can't help thinking that last night was peculiar and began somewhere in a kitchen and ended with a Pride Parade. Sometime along the way I forgot to tell you that I wanted to have a smoothie with you, and will in substitute be expecting it this evening; since, after all, it can't be that hard to find time to chat about a project or two that should now be getting underway.

What did you keep saying as the sailors filtered in and out of the door? Last night and the night before weren't they doing the same thing? Our favorite girl didn't even show up.

I can't find the microphone.

yours,  
ellen

dear ellen,

hello; have you been to see the new face of central park? I trust my friends, though some say the gates are "admirable" and some say "buggish." what should I think? meanwhile, I am trying everyday to turn my house into New York City.

nonetheless: I have no news. I am trying to see my life in meteorological, terms. I am worried now and then about global warming.

how is your work going? Our schoolmates are thieves and sweethearts. Agree?

disagree?  
eyes on the prize, ellen.

best,  
stephen

## We've Got Nothing to Lose *Reasons for Pessimism, Reasons for Hope*

The attitude of the enthusiastic student--the accomplished, aspiring or faux intellectual--towards free thought and the pursuit of knowledge is markedly different than the attitude of commercial American society towards these subjects. These past few months, however, have seen the former attitude lose its bearings and head towards the position of the latter.

One could argue that the re-election of George W. Bush was the turning point. After the overwhelming empirical case against the man was summarily dismissed by the majority of voters, progressive thinkers across the country seemed to trip over themselves in rushing to declare that those on the left had to abandon reason, had to "sacrifice" core values in order to appeal to the putative values of the retrograde conservatism pervading this country. It was as if the confidence in intellectualism possessed by so many progressives for so long had been shattered. What mattered was not the strength of one's argument, nor its innate ethical righteousness, but its appeal.

Perhaps the first casualty of this new paradigm fell this past month, when Colorado Professor Ward Churchill and Hamilton College—a liberal arts school similar to Bard in some respects—were condemned by the American Right. Churchill, it turned out, published an article several years back which called the victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks "Little Eichmanns," and Hamilton had invited him to lecture. For the left, defending Churchill should not have been a matter of agreeing or disagreeing with the essay; we should have risen to his defense because an academic in a democratic society must not be considered the equivalent of an elected public official, subject to the whims of the majority and compelled to conform to popular opinion. Yet, save for a few, the left was conspicuously silent. Hamilton canceled the lecture, and Churchill received death threats.

What is needed at the present moment is a reinvigorated leftist intellectualism that is not afraid of complexity nor of appealing to those outside our ranks. A rationale for supporting Professor Churchill, for instance, would be somewhat complicated, assuredly not immediately suitable for the likes of cable news—and so the burden is on us to simultaneously find new media of communication as well as to master those which predominate. And we must do this not by retreating nor by disguising ourselves, but by pursuing our aims with a determination that can only come when one has very little left to lose.

The Editors

## A Response to the Central Committee *You don't bite the hand that might one day hang you*

BY JEREMY LOW

While I do not like to go about parading the moral ineptitude of others, there are times when it is necessary to correct that which has gone horribly wrong. This is addressed to all of the members of the Central Committee, of our past, our doleful present and our still tenuous future. Tom said in his last Drab Report, you missed the point, friends. We as a campus are quickly becoming nothing but that for which we never stood. The Student Government is about serving the students of this campus and we have never put so much faith in you than we did last Wednesday. In case you forgot: it is not about how much money, but exactly how much faith the Bard students give you from which you draw your strength. If you neglect that faith and all which it stands for, then you neglect yourselves.

This community has supported itself for more than one hundred years and more than one hundred years ago someone said it better: you wish to have them hang from crosses of gold. You complain about how little there is to do on this campus. We complain that there is no more Old Gym; we complain that the social life of this campus is in the doldrums and we complain. The clubs of this campus, and the club-heads responsible for them, dedicate their lives to improving the lives of everyone here. We all put in countless hours and ask for nothing back but, maybe, at the least, a thank you. Yet you demand money from us and it hurts us all. Since when has this humble institution of self-rule been about making money? Do you not forget what we have all accomplished so far?

Like I said, it is this community which has raised us to where we now stand. And yet still it is the weight of avarice which threatens to crush those shoulders upon which we built everything we call our own. There would not have been half the parties with half again as good beer if it were not for the relationship we have built with Keegan Ales; and who among you acted on the part of the students (Bill excepted) to get even one of those parties off the ground? We at the *Observer* ask no money from Keegan's Ales and we ask none from the students but the bare minimum required to print. Call the *Observer* office sometime. Better yet, had you walked down here this Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday night you would have found us here. Why? Because we want to be here. Because we feel the calling of the student body. Because we care about something higher than just making money. None of us get a stipend, yet we collectively spend 150 hours down here in this shithole of an office every other week, just so you can read something by and for the students. Conservatively, each editor spends 30-35 hours or more down here every other week. In four days we will work the equivalent of a full-time laborer's week; and not only do we not ask money of the students, we don't want it. So I must ask, where do your loy-

alties lie and don't you lie to us, the students, when we see such displays of greed?

The Student Government is here by the grace of the students, so why do you flaunt our trust so? The \$350 pales in comparison to that trust, and this you must not forget. It was brought up that that money keeps you all honest; that it prevents the Central Committee members from trying to steal from the students; let me put this to you: *the vices of our past should make no excuses for the indulgences of our future.* Say that this is all empty rhetoric, but let me ask you: shouldn't the trust which we have placed in you already keep you honest? Would you not be doing all this if it were not for your dedication to the students? So why not help them by giving them that extra \$2100 to fund some more clubs that actually do something for them, and revel in your benevolence. But since you've insisted on destroying this relationship, I think you will be surprised to see how many others crumble with it. But I do not think that this is the case, because I solemnly believe that everyone here is ultimately ruled by their better natures and not their greed.

And so I end this.

*You missed the god-damn point friends.*

## Impossible Breadcrumbs

BY EDWIN BRODSKY

*O kitchen,*

impossible breadcrumbs, my brother is drunk again: calling from the bathroom of a Chicago bar, behind him a holy roman empire, shouting, empty-handed, their dirty glasses filling with light—I am in my kitchen. Red excavation,

my mouth, with its daily chance at correctness, an almost: how are you? *I am a power outage.* How are you? *Tied to the train tracks.* But he

hasn't said anything, pissing, distracted by the clatter of old men climbing the stairs; old men humming in the stairwell,

squinting for the watermark of their last words, those curled little girls in their stuck elevators.

## The Drab Report

By Tom Mattos

What is the Drab Report? It's taken many forms. Originally started by my great predecessor Mr. Michael "Indie" Marlin Jr. (who came up with the Bard-spelled-backwards theme, I'm not that clever), its original intent, I think, was to give a serious, short diatribe from the underbelly of this bloated, festering loafer we call Bard College. Mike wrote about the need for antiseptic soap in the bathrooms, paved roads, laundry service, questions of free speech and censorship within the *Observer*, and many more things that have now become indiscriminate in my memory from shit that I've scribbled.

Now that the Drab Report is mine, it's changed a bit from sticking to criticism and Bard issues to sort of a running diary of the things that matter to me. I've had Joke Reports, War Reports; I've Eulogized and Rationalized; I write some in twenty minutes and I write some over the course of two months. There is a distinct formula I usually follow as a method of getting to the point and out: quick joke at the beginning (usually one that makes the Drab Report self-aware), launch into a story that, by the end, serves as a metaphor illustrating how I feel about something more complex. End with the same joke from the beginning and Presto! The Drab Report is finished.

Fuck all that. It's time to get back into the serious and determined kill-the-folly mode I once loved: five-hundred words of well-constructed righteousness:

The current battle over whether or not clubs have the right to donate money directly to Zeyd's family is completely ridiculous and affirms all of my long-standing suspicions that the administration at Bard College does not value autonomous student thought and expression: it seems more like it's something they put up with rather than believe in. Under the student constitution, the Planning Committee has sole responsibility as to the allocation of funding out of the student convocation fund. The student convocation fund is made up of the seventy-five bucks the common student pays at the beginning of each semester. Just in case there is anyone out there over the age of twenty-two who can't add this logic up in their heads, let me spell it out for you: the current system allows for US to decide what we do with OUR MONEY. End of story.

Unfortunately, there are unnamed members in the administration who are not willing to allow clubs to donate leftover money to Zeyd's family. The reason these people are unnamed is because there is not a single person in the administration that is standing up and saying to the students "I am against this, here's why." The entire campaign has been fraught with bureaucracy, whispering in corners. Meanwhile there is a house somewhere in Palestine in mere rubble. "Let's wait and see," they keep saying. "Let's talk to a lawyer first and make sure this is legal," they keep saying. "Jump through this hoop then open either door A, door B, or door C, one of which will lead you to the correct path, with the other two will lead you to a nightmare of scheduling and discussions."

I'm sick of this shit. After paying 40,000 fucking dollars a fucking year at this place, is it too much to ask that the seventy-five bucks we pay ourselves can be spent on what we like? Go ahead: accuse me of looking at these events in black-and-white, knock me for smugness, denounce me for my naivete.

Make no mistake: the campaign to allow clubs to donate money to Zeyd's family is political. The most sickening part of this entire debacle is watching people let their politics stand in the way of helping a member of the community. Someone, somewhere, actually "worried" about Bard turning into a charity. Have we sunk this low? Many have told students that instead of donating money directly, we should use the money to throw a fundraising event and charge dudes two bucks at the door, and send THAT money to Zaid's family, as if every noble gesture on this campus has to have two kegs and some fool nodding his head to an Ipod attached. Here's my response to suggestions like that: Why don't you throw a fundraiser? And they never have an answer. Why? Because, to put it lightly, they ain't doing shit.

As a member of the Planning Committee, I stand by our decision to allow the funding to go to Zeyd's family, because I, like other members of the committee, stand behind students' right to use money according to their own discretion. If they wanted to throw a fundraiser, sure. If they want to donate the money, fine too.

I think it's time for the current regime to start respecting the wishes and the needs of the students. You tried to convince us that the crumbling, piece-of-shit building formerly known as the Old Gym was condemned by our fault, and now you're telling us there are appropriate and inappropriate ways to use our money. This is a private institution. You're technically allowed to do whatever the fuck you want. I'm wondering after all this, when you define for us what is appropriate and inappropriate, how far you will go. Shall I submit the next Drab Report to you, so you can cross out what you think is inappropriate before I print it? Or would that just be a little ridiculous?

This wasn't a Drab Report. It was a Bard Report. Shame.



# In Case You Forgot

## Rumsfeld remains, to most everyone's discontent, except the President's

BY NOAH WESTON

Donald Rumsfeld is a political chimera of sorts, comprised of all the ugliest beasts in the American menagerie. He has the hardened face of a Reagan, the leathery tail of a Nixon, the sinister talons of a Kissinger, and the glossy pelt of a Cheney. Even given those traits, without his charming, graveside manner, Rumsfeld would be just another cabinet secretary in the bunch. Lucky for us, lucky for freedom, there's a man within, a man who some like to call Don. He's on the warpath, and neither Congress, nor truth, nor even reality can overtake him.

In between writing entries in his dream journal, Rumsfeld found time to meet with the House Armed Services Committee. Over the course of their meeting, he discussed everything from the Iraq War to burrowing nuclear weaponry. Yes, burrowing, like an irradiated, explosive groundhog. In all seriousness, the feasibility and strategic worth of weapons that can destroy subterranean targets hold a

place of importance in Rumsfeld's vision for American defense.

As to the necessity of these weapons, he stated that, "There was no military requirement for a military aircraft, for example. There was no military requirement for unmanned aerial vehicles until they came along." Theoretically, these burrowing weapons will provide a solution to the possible obstacle of underground production and storage facilities that house weapons of mass destruction. Realistically, they will drain federal coffers and work against the causes of peace and disarmament.

Still, Rumsfeld seems convinced that the vaunted "Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator" will pay off as more than inspiration for penis jokes. He envisions it as a crucial weapon against the clandestine machinations of "our enemies," who amass diabolical devices of devastation in their exotic, secret lairs while stroking their exotic, secret moustaches. At every step of the way, Rumsfeld has the conse-

quences of using an RNEP in mind as he pushes for more research. He wants to see if weapons developers can minimize the weapon's lethality, making it more precise than ruinous. And if they can't? Well, at least "our enemies" are religious.

While the Bush administration chastises nations like Iran and North Korea for their weapons programs, Rumsfeld strongly implies that we have to continue ours, but only because you would have to be an idiot to trust Iran and North Korea! Is this a mixed message? Sure. Is that a problem? It is if you like transparent diplomacy and a less paranoid, adversarial world, neither of which is Rumsfeld's objective.

Whenever the Committee moved to the subject of Iraq, Rumsfeld's most costly failure, Don did not lend his comments the kind of steely assurance that accompanied his thoughts on Robust Penetration. Dana Milbank of the *Washington Post* shrewdly points to a disquieting trend in his responses, many of them amounting to "I don't know," or worse yet, a dis-

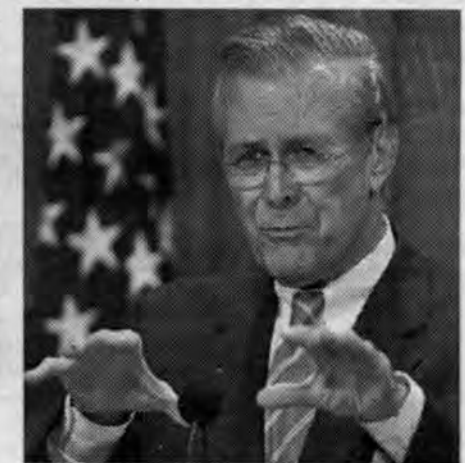
missive "I shouldn't have to." I thought "knowing" would be essential to Rumsfeld's job, but then again, "knowing" doesn't get you nearly as far in the Bush administration as guessing or, even better, lying.

For Rumsfeld, the job of Secretary of Defense means acting like a condescending parent to the country and its legislators. When confronted with a serious, critical question of military policy, he gives the sort of answer our moms and dads spouted when they felt like they had no defensible way to explain their actions. He might as well have told the House Committee that Iraq is "grown-ups stuff," since his attitude suggested as much.

Despite being able to treat prominent officials as if they were children, Rumsfeld has apparently offered to abdicate his position, remaining only at the President's behest. Months ago, the dissatisfaction with Rumsfeld over his mishandling of the war in Iraq became total outrage once the Abu Ghraib atrocity became public knowledge. Such fury would likely compel any official to step down. According to Rumsfeld, that pressure led him to submit his resignation twice to the President, a gesture Bush rejected, both in private, and implicitly in public when he expressed confidence in the Defense Secretary's performance.

Then, Rumsfeld told an American combat specialist, who complained about having to scavenge for supplies and armor in Iraq, "You fight with the army you have." Outrageous as that was, if the President wouldn't drop Don for failing to properly outfit men entering mortal peril, he certainly wouldn't let him go for simply failing to find more tactful words to say, "Stop complaining." This obviously has everything to do with the fact that Rumsfeld does not merely agree with the Bush doctrine, but actually embodies it. As many have said, and many will say again, Rumsfeld's presence is a testament to how unflinchingly the President stands by the Iraq debacle, despite the disastrous setbacks he has encountered due largely to hubris and incompetence.

With Rumsfeld standing resolute, we will likely have to rely on Congress to act as a stumbling block. Ultimately, Congress holds the purse strings for burrowing weapons and future skirmishes abroad. Rumsfeld's brusque manner may serve some good if it places some friction between him and the legislators upon whom he depends for funds, but that may not mean much if party discipline prevails over independent frustrations in the GOP. In this case, we should all hope that dissent is the rule of the day, or else we might see a bloody reprise of the worst that the last four years had to offer.



# Freedom: Occupation and All!

BY JESSE MYERSON

It is so much easier to put a "Support the Troops" bumper magnet on the back of one's car (they don't even leave sticky residue!) than it is to support them, or so our esteemed President makes me think: his proposal is that we support the troops until they get home. Then what? Well, then they should shut up with this tawdry "benefits" crap and get to supporting along with the rest of us! Ingrates!

See, after already having cut hundreds of millions of dollars in veterans benefits over the last few years, the latest Bush budget is in. *The New York Times* reported, "Senators of both parties said on Tuesday that President Bush's budget for veterans' health care would not provide enough money to maintain services at current levels, much less care for thousands of veterans streaming back to the United States from Iraq and Afghanistan." *The Times* also felt fit to print the news that the budget would "double the co-payment charged to many veterans for prescription drugs and require some to pay a new fee of \$250 a year for the privilege of using government health care." The ownership society marches on!

So does freedom, in Iraq, where democracy is in full effect! Despite the 75% unemployment rate, the utter Dresdenesque destruction of Falluja and the absence of any modicum of sanitation in many war torn cities where blood and sewage run with more freedom than could be found in Bush's inauguration address, the Iraqis had an election, the legitimacy of which no one can deny. Everyone, that is, except some wild eyed Communists who point out that there were no international observers, that of the 7,471 people who filed to run, only a handful publicly identified themselves, that locations for the 5,776 polling places were not announced before election day, and that most Iraqis thought they were voting for president, when they were just voting for a transitional governing body to establish a

Constitution, the creation of which will signal the arrival of an election for an actual legislature, to be followed, finally, by the presidential election.

Look, I mean to take nothing away from the Iraqis who voted. They have more courage than I may ever. In fact, it is precisely because of my esteem for those people (the main reason I opposed the invasion in the first place) that I wish they'd gotten a better deal than the shaft they did.

For instance, the United States does not seem to have any intention to allow their newfound democracy to flourish. The United Iraqi Alliance, which won a decisive majority in the elections, calls, in its platform, for US withdrawal, social security, a write-off of Iraq's debts, a cancellation of reparations and use of oil wealth for economic development projects. The US, on the other hand, looks ready to exercise the same strategy it had going into this disaster of a war: none. Bush wants to occupy the nation with his fourteen permanent military bases. "You don't set timetables," is what he had to say four days after the Iraqis voted for a group that wants to set timetables. Democracy!

Naomi Klein writes, "Iraq's elections were delayed time and time again, while the occupation and resistance grew ever more deadly. Now it seems that two years of bloodshed, bribery and backroom arm-twisting were leading us to this: a deal in which the ayatollahs get control over the family, Texaco gets the oil, and Washington gets its enduring military bases (call it the 'oil for women program'). Everyone wins except the voters, who risked their lives to cast their ballots for a very different set of policies."

Here's a fun bit: The Iraqi woman on the balcony during the State of the Union Address, Sofia Taleb Al Souhail, hasn't, it turns out, lived in Iraq for 30 years. It also turns out she's a millionaire, and her father was murdered by Saddam in collaboration with the CIA. In fact, she published for the "Foundation For the

Defense of Democracies," the Board of Directors, Board of Advisors and Distinguished Advisors of which include Steve Forbes, Jack Kemp, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Newt Gingrich, Gary Bauer, Charles Karuthammer, Bill Kristol, Zell Miller, Richard Perle and R. James Woolsey. These people will lie about anything.

Luckily, at least one Woolsey's got her head on straight: California representative Lynn Woolsey, whose resolution to bring the troops home has been signed by Reps. Xavier Becerra, John Conyers, Danny Davis, Lane Evans, Sam Farr, Raul Grijalva, Maurice Hinchey, Carolyn Kilpatrick, Dennis Kucinich, Sheila Jackson-Lee, Barbara Lee, John Lewis, Jim McDermott, Cynthia McKinney, Gwen Moore, Grace Napolitano, Major Owens, Ed Pastor, Charlie Rangel, Jan Schakowsky, Jose Serrano, Pete Stark, Maxine Waters, and Diane Watson. That's right: a whopping 24 members, or just under 4.5% of Congress, calling for the immediate withdrawal of troops (Kennedy's couple-a-years speech was off the hook, but ignored the basic problem: that no stabilization of the region can begin until the sources of instability withdraw), representing, as of just before the Iraqi election, the 58% of Americans who thought the war was a mistake and not worth fighting and the 46% calling for withdrawal.

The picture is bleak enough to make me hope these Christian folks are right: "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4).

(This article is also to be published on <http://jessemeyerson.blogspot.com>)

# The War on Retirement

BY LOUIS GODEREY

During his State of the Union Address, President Bush finally let the other shoe drop. Creating private accounts will not fix Social Security. This has been a long time coming since anyone who seriously considered the question could not come up with a realistic scenario where privatization would make the system solvent. In addition to the massive borrowing required to launch private accounts, the system would still require massive benefits cuts if not offset by an increase in additional funding.

The problem with this is, unless there is some increase in the current 12.4% payroll tax (half paid by the employee, the other half by the employer), benefits will have to be cut by a lot-enough so that over time it could put the whole system into ruin. Smelling blood in the water, President Bush has backed off his refusal

to seek additional funding by cracking the door to raising the maximum income cap (currently those earning over \$90,000 annually do not pay into the system). This would certainly add revenue to the Social Security trust fund, but would fall well short of any increase necessary to keep the system whole after 2052.

Details about what exactly Bush's reforms would look like remain intentionally sketchy, but variations on what is most likely his ideal plan are well known. The most infamous of these is Plan 2, the product of Bush's own Commission to Strengthen Social Security. It concluded that the best course of action was private accounts coupled with pegging rising benefits to price inflation rather than wage inflation. Prices tend to rise at about 1% a year while wages tend to rise at about 2%, thus the trust fund would pay out less to each individual each year, while theoretically sustaining the

recipients' current standard of living. A 1% difference may seem trivial, but compounded over time, it would open up a hole in the system that would ultimately sink it, ensuring that no one's standard of living would be protected.

On the same day that Bush gestured to open the debate about funding increases, insult was added to injury. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan continued his tailspin into partisan hackery by endorsing partial privatization. Not only was this a gross violation of his office (which is designed to be politically neutral), he seemed willing to ignore concerns about the massive borrowing (\$2 trillion initially and untold sums over coming decades) even as he voiced them himself. The man charged with maintaining our country's fiscal responsibility apparently doesn't know a deficit explosion when it is looking him in the face.

So quick Social Security's critics have

been to declare its failure, they forget that it is the best run government institution in our country's history. Since its enactment in 1935, Social Security has functioned much as it does today, as a supplemental income for the years when people become too old to support themselves. It is wildly popular, and wildly efficient—it operates with overhead costs of nearly 1%, while most privatized systems run surcharges of 20 - 30%. But the most striking example of its success is simply to look at the rates of seniors who died in poverty: before Social Security it was anywhere between one quarter and one half; today it is virtually none.

Such success is worth saving, and doing so would require very little pain on either end. With a modest and phased-in hike in the retirement age coupled with a 2 point increase in payroll taxes, we could secure the future of the system nearly through our own children's

Continued on page 18

The War on Retirement, continued from page 17

retirement. Why privatize then? When one does the math, it becomes clear that the motives for privatization are not rooted in arithmetic, but in ideology. Bush's declaration of entitlement reform is the opening salvo in the war to bring down the social safety net that was erected by the New Deal and the Great Society. This is nothing new; the achievements of Franklin Roosevelt have long been despised by the right. Ronald Reagan railed against Social Security dating back to the 1950s, when he called it a "sure loser." Social Security remains the right's icon of an inexcusable encroachment on liberties, as they distrust the very ideas of "social"

and "security." It is also a painful reminder of the inability of economic conservatism to see the country through its greatest crisis. This is not a new development in the philosophy of the Bush Administration either; it has always been the primary goal. Preemptive wars and limiting reproductive rights were never the major motivation, but turning back the clock on economic progressivism was and is. This is a war on many fronts, with tort reform, re-writing of tax code, and the starving of government spending all as equal targets.

The case in favor of Social Security is also ideologically motivated, in addition to being backed by fiscal sense. It is an obligation

to all levels of our society that while we will never put an end to all of life's cruelties, no person will be left behind.

There is another critically overlooked aspect in the Social Security debate. There is almost nothing that can be done to make the system completely solvent. It is impossible to predict long-range trends in government revenue, wages, life spans, and population size with the accuracy needed to account for every dollar and cent of future benefits. It is simply beyond our capability to turn the Social Security trust fund into an eternally self-sustaining entity. This in no way means we should destroy it in order to save it. Future generations will have to

revisit this issue, and it will be their challenge to extend it further down the road. Our responsibility is to preserve the moral covenant the system represents. Bush has previously referred to Social Security as a "generational promise," and in this he is right. It is a promise that growing old in America does not mean facing the indignity of destitution. It is an all too unique example of our willingness to support the well being of society as a whole, and it is worth protecting.

Who's On Your Shirt?

BY JANE WONG

Recently, my brother came home from the mall with a t-shirt from Hot Topic. When my mother saw it, she grabbed the shirt from the bag and told him that if he wore the shirt, she'd never speak to him again. The shirt depicted a man with a receding hairline and a sexy mole: it was good ole' Mao Zedong. However, my brother didn't buy the shirt to intentionally hurt my mother—he bought the shirt because he thought Mao was "cool." In fact, he had no idea who Mao was, other than the fact that he was a revolutionary in China and that the shirt was cool. It was only after my mother ever so politely informed him that many of our family members died during the Great Leap Forward that my brother started looking for his receipt.

It turns out that my brother isn't the only one buying a t-shirt without really knowing who's on it. Across the country, fashionable revolutionaries are being sold nonexclusively in stores and on the internet, my suburban mall included. Iconic figures are ever apparent in pop culture, with Mao reinstating his addictive revolutionary zeal with today's mainstream "alternative" kids who buy jeans with pre-ripped holes. Along with Che Guevara, Bob Marley, and Jim Morrison, Mao is being marketed as an image of nonconformity and radicalism in mainstream stores like Hot Topic and Intrinsic. At Hot Topic, you can buy a Jim Morrison or Bob Marley throw blanket for thirty-four dollars. Or you could buy what they call a Che "Brown Halo" shirt for eighteen dollars. If you go onto eBay, you can find hundreds of Che shirts along with keywords such as "retro," "emo," or "indie." Revolution and resistance continue to be hip as long as they are fashionable. And retro is fashionable. One product description read,

PEACE! LAND!  
BREAD! NAPTME!

"CHE GUEVARA T-SHIRT ROCKSTAR INDIE REVOLUTION." Apparently Che was a rock star. Or you'd look like one if you wore the shirt. In August 2004, Burlington Coat Factory ran a seemingly typical, cheesy television ad for back-to-school clothes. Except for the fashionable Che t-shirt one of the teenagers sported. And if that's not enough Che consumerism (intensified after the release of "The Motorcycle Diaries"), they make Che baby clothes, designed by Appaman

at lalaling.com, with the following description: "Featured in Time Magazine's holiday web shopping guide, 'Viva la revolution!' Now even the smallest rebel can express himself in these awesome baby onesies... Long live the rebel in all of us... there's no cooler iconic image than Che!"

It seems that, with the deaths of these revolutionary figures, who they were and what they stood for have been reduced to a single marketing concept. Over break, I saw one of my old friends wearing a Bob Marley t-shirt and said, "I didn't know you liked Bob Marley." To which she responded, "I've actually never heard anything, but he did a lot of pot." So, apparently Bob Marley's music has been nullified and the fact that he smoked pot lives on. Moreover, it sells! Rather than offer the attention (both positive and negative) that these complicated visionaries

lalaling.com



simplify the process for the general teenaged public onto a t-shirt that signifies one vague concept: rebellion. Today, nothing sells better than being different, radical, or alternative. With the grand selling power of these revolutionary iconic t-shirts, one would think that our society has become more progressive. However, these t-shirts only add to the romantic illusion of a progressive, liberal society. The t-shirt that one buys from the mall is inherently separated from the ideologies and movements that created it. With the popular idealism associated with revolution and rebellion, there is no need to acknowledge the negative realities of revolutionary figures. That would be way too much effort, wouldn't it? That would be too much dissent.

With Bard's ubiquitous reputation for being counter-cultural and ultra-liberal, it is not a surprise to see the faces of Che among others on ratty shirts across campus. Sure, it looks cool, but I can't help but wonder if the attraction to this idealized concept of rebellion and "being different" (yet, paradoxically the same) is part of the reason why you might have a Hot Topic shopping bag shoved guiltily into the garbage can.

If You Mess With My People, We Come Back With Millions

BY KRISTIA WEINER-CASTRILLO

Not too long ago, while sitting in my room doing homework, a friend IM'd over a link and insisted I check it out immediately. Assuming it would lead me nowhere important, probably another supposedly hot girl in the Bard Facebook whose profile photo was in need of my opinion, I reluctantly clicked on it. And there it was...the "Tsunami Song."

This is not going to be a mere anti-racist rant. I have no doubt that we have some race issues of our own on this campus, but that is stating the obvious. Aside from the more emotional argument I have against racism, as one who has been a target of it in many instances, simply because of the combination of the amount of melanin in my skin and my bone structure, racism is a logical oxymoron. When you are incapable of engaging in mature, serious discussion with another human being, and you have to resort to taking another's constructed race into the argument, you have lost to say the least.

The "tsunami song" originally aired on the morning show of Hot 97, the most popular New York hip-hop station. The morning show staff produced it. Snippets of the lyrics have been circulating all over the place, but let us look at the lyrics in their entirety:

There was a time, when the sun was shining bright  
So I went down to the beach to catch me a tan  
Then the next thing I knew  
A wave 20 feet high came and wash your country away  
And all at once, you can hear the screaming chinks.  
And then no one was saved from the wave.  
There was Africans drowning, little Chinaman swept away  
You can heard God laughing, swim you bitch-es swim.

So now you're screwed, it's the tsunami,  
You better run and kiss your ass awake, go find your mommy  
I just saw her float by, a tree right through her head.  
And now your children will be sold in child slavery.

(imitating Micheal Jackson)  
"Oh no, please not the kids. I'll pay for all the kids.  
all the little Indonesian kids, the little Asian kids, the Chinese kids.  
the black, oh well, not the black kids.  
the white kids, the Puerto Rican kids.  
I love them all. I'll pay for everything.  
I promise I won't touch them."

Even in nightly television network excerpts, only highlighted parts of the song have been spoonfed to the audience. This only adds to the lack of serious discussion surrounding the release of this song. If you do not circulate the actual medium, so that people can interact with it on the written page in its entirety, how do you then expect them to be able to form a real understanding of what is being said, and if/why they are angered by it? This is of course how rumors are formed. In a conversation with a friend, I was told that a number of other racial slurs were within the song. Upon reviewing the actual lyrics, I have learned that

he was mistaken. This is important to take into account. If the word "nigger" had been used in the way that my friend had described, then a different type of attention would have been given to it. In all honesty, I find it disappointing that so many white privilege-owning members of this society are so readily-sensitive about the use of the N-word, and yet feel it is okay to use the term "Chink" in a discriminatory manner. I understand that they may not use the term personally, but allowing this song to get airplay without resistance is just as violent.

My problem with the song and the actions taken against the song is that they fail to address some bigger societal issues. In most of the blog entries and news articles I have read about this song, the song's lyrics and the creators of the song are dismissed as "something crazy," and "so tacky."

While the senselessness of this song is obvious, the disgusting racism and sexism (amongst other things) displayed with pride in this and other songs apparently is not as obvious to many people. The use of the word "Chink," and even the use of the more politically-correct yet still problematic word "Africans," cannot be merely written off as being silly and stupid. Nor is the fact that people are still looking for the bodies of their dead family members, or the fact that this natural disaster is only going to make the situation worse for people who are already so successfully exploited by multinational corporations on a number of levels at this very moment.

This song would not have been allowed the extensive airplay that it was given if they had been targeting certain specific ethnic and racial groups, and using certain other specific racial slurs. This is not to give credit to this globalizing, mainstream, Western media which was, in fact, exemplified most by a stereotypically middle-aged white male news reporter, who was "blaming hip hop" for the approved use of such violent, racist language - but in fact, to criticize this very structure. As we all know, or should know by now, the individuals who produced the song are probably under the same corporate logo as the individuals who are being paid to speak against it.

I can't close this writing with a paragraph about racism and white privilege; that'd be an additional novel. Besides, some things are best left for the senior project. But I will say something even more obvious than my remark about the incredibly frustrating race dynamics on campus - power is in the people. Power is not given to the people, it comes from them. So let's get organized and get these people fired at the very least. I could not care less right now if you regard yourself as a Yuri Kochiyama-loving radical or not; you do not have to be well-versed in your Emma Goldman to understand that racism is a crime that cannot be excused. Getting the people who produced the song fired is just a start. Tell Hot 97 that when you mess with my people, we come back with millions.

There will be a protest rally against the Tsunami song and Hot 97 in Union Square, NYC on March 4th. You can email me at kc255@bard.edu for more info, as the time is still being decided. A subgroup will be marching for all of those who might be fired, to demand responsibility be taken where due.

OUR WEBSITE RETURNS THIS WEEK. CHECK IT OUT AT OBSERVER.BARD.EDU

# Letters to the Editor: Responses to The Moderator Review

## RESPONSE BY PAGE

### WHITMORE

Dear Michael and The Observer staff,

The article I just read in your February 7 issue felt truly mean-spirited and unproductive to me.

In the same way a beginning painter cannot produce something transcendent and Rothko-esque the first time she opens a bottle of linseed oil, the ambitious project of presenting (much needed) alternative sexual/sensual trajectories will come to fruition with practice and over time. Artists are allowed rough drafts. This includes you.

The way to support this group in achieving their

admirable social and artistic goals is hardly by raking individuals over the coals if you think they do not perfectly accomplish what they set out to do. On the first attempt, no less!

I understand we are working with insufficient modes of what constitutes productive criticism, and the scathing words I just read are an understandable response; they are in keeping with the normative mode of critique in contemporary America. So although I am saddened by your article, I do not blame you for it directly.

What would happen if we could improve our artistic endeavors by discussing work in ways that make its creators feel like changing? No, I am not talking about blind uncritical praise that stagnates the work; rather learning to pick out the living and authentic parts and saying, "this is really working, here you are really telling the truth, do more of this." Why tell the painter the marks all look the same, why tell the violinist the note sounds foul? She already knows and her efforts become centered around

aren't art? Yes, half naked, beautiful women and men are likely to catch an eye on the crowded-with-fliers-walls of Kline, and for that reason they just made good PR sense. But this is clearly not the only motivation.

I think that the radio station was the first to imitate *The Moderator*. Imitate is the wrong word here. They took the black and white model of *The Moderator* photos with the same familiar font and threw in pictures that didn't necessarily belong. Some of their choices were straight out sexy, but others, a boy hugging a toilet comes to mind, were just absurd in this format, and because of that, they became intelligent and humorous. What was WXBC telling us with this generative critique? Maybe that we've all seen sexy before and now it's time to do it differently. Maybe that the sexiest thing of all is not trying to be sexy, an act that's hard to avoid in an erotic lifestyles magazine. In that case, they might as well make a few jokes to make up the difference. Maybe they were saying that *The Moderator's* format is too heavy, too kitschy, or too elegant for its own good, and that they seriously need to lighten up.

Initially, *The Moderator* spoke back, as did several other groups on campus with an onslaught of sexy fliers. The fliers didn't last long before they were ripped down and taped up again in dorm rooms for more, umm, personal reasons. While the fliers were up, they were smart and funny, an effect that did not fully permeate *The Moderator's* other publications. Whereas the fliers were light, fun, sexy without offending, and unpretentious for the most part, the publications were too serious and a little too boring. The spirit we saw at the fall budget forum, where models ran naked through Kline, was undoubtedly silly but still well received by their audience. This sentiment of playfulness and rule breaking was not present in the recent publication. What we saw for the first semester was not what we got in the new mag-

azine. For this reason, Michael's critique seems adequate. He was not *The Moderator's* first critic, nor was the recent magazine their first attempt. Its creators were not humble and cautious about their work, in which case they might have elicited more gentle critique. They had already received generous feedback, in its more subtle forms, to guide their work, but its influence could not be read in the magazine. Michael's criticism has already begun a new dialogue. *The Moderator's* editors have recently asked for submissions from the public and genuinely seem to want a wider base of participation. If this is their response to Michael's comments, he can hardly be called destructive. Perhaps a critique in a harsher tone was necessary to show *The Moderator* that its reception might differ from its creators' intentions and that criticism, in its more tempered and artistic form, or in a more traditional tone, must be taken into account.

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the avoidance of mistakes, compelling her to repeat them again and again. Brenda Ueland brought this to my attention in her revolutionary book, *If You Want To Write*. You might enjoy it and find its contents useful.

I challenge you to consider the possibility that critique can be a generative act that produces a living entity; a responsible body of ideas on how to further expand and draw out the strengths of a given work. I often think about the innumerable artistic deaths that occur daily; strokes not painted, poems not written, as a direct result of the absence of generative critique. Are you willing to consider the possibility that your own writing might be emaciated by vicious criticism?

What I like most about your opinion article is the way you are able to honestly name the need on this campus for a new set of behaviors and ideas about sexuality which "push the envelope." In that portion of the article I felt you had stumbled upon something real with genuine possibility. I am curious to know more about what you think that might mean, how you think we might subvert the sexually mundane. What would you replace the mundane with? You might make a wonderful addition to *The Moderator* staff.

I leave you with one of my favorite passages. From Audrey Flack's *Art and Soul*:

"Attitudinal Vow For critics: "I will recognize that all artists, writers, and musicians are making art and not war—and I will treat them accordingly. In my reviews I will attempt to educate and empower rather than destroy. By taking this path, I can help create a renaissance of high art and I will surround myself with positive energy." To be repeated every night before bed.

P.S. Oh, and you may also want to consider running your comics past a few women for feedback prior to publication. I have been meaning to bring this to your attention for some time.

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nature is something we should all laud, but when one fails to achieve that which they have set out to do for their community they remise themselves of their freedom from criticism. It should not be forgotten here that *The Moderator* received funding from the student body and to them they are beholden, just as we *The Observer* are. If a student wishes to express his or her opinion in a student run and funded newspaper, then they are entitled to.

I agree with Page that there needs to be more discussion of the future content and purpose of *The Moderator*, but that is their prerogative. And it should be noted that they are taking care of this; we have all seen the signs in Kline and elsewhere calling for an open discussion. To us, to print the article, which I hasten to add is indicative of much of the student body's opinion, was less an indication of our agreement with Michael's point of view than an act fulfilling our responsibility to the community. We have an obligation to publish articles from campus writers, solicited or not (and Michael's was not), according with our personally held opinions or not, and that is what we have done.

## RESPONSE BY ALI FESER

Michael Benhabib's critique of *The Moderator*, as should have been expected, created a flurry of conversation, agreement, and argument. Page Whitmore's response, submitted to *The Observer* and printed in this issue, adequately voiced some of the primary objections to Michael's piece. Her main point, that the tone of Michael's article was just too mean is, well, true. As she herself points out, criticism in our culture is most often expressed through Michael's sort of distant and insensitive approach. Page's claim is true in most cases, but as the hippie offspring among us will attest, criticism is not always wrapped in disdain. We've got to remember those among us who were raised by pot smoking, live and learn, liberal parents and educated at the very best Quaker or Waldorf schools where they learned knitting before reading and may have spent a little too much time talking about feelings. In the outside world their numbers may not amount to much, but here at Bard, I think they've beat the rebellious children of well meaning Republicans by a long shot.

Along the way, those sweet and unused to disapproval souls picked up, at least to some extent, the model of criticism that underlies Page's argument. Wouldn't it be great, she insinuates, if instead of writing sassy and destructive commentary, you went out and made some art yourself? You can voice your opinions in a public way, and simultaneously demonstrate the changes that should be made. Page seems to think this is a wistful possibility, but, in truth, it's already going on. Those students mentioned above have already applied a gentler form of critique to *The Moderator*. Did Page miss the recent advertising campaigns that have lent eroticism a new life on campus? Who says those

## RESPONSE BY JEREMY LOW, SENIOR EDITOR

Printed above there is a letter to the editor critiquing an article which we ran last issue. The author of that article of writing made, what in my mind, were salient criticisms of the work of another Bard publication, *The Moderator*. Page's response, again in my mind, speaks to the lack on which she writes. While I agree that the dominant mode of criticism in America does not generate anything substantive, I do not believe that is the sort of article that we have published in the past or continue to publish now.

We can all agree with the above that a "beginning painter" will not produce a masterpiece on her first try; she will similarly not hold an exhibition of those early works. Yes, there is a difference between an artist such as a painter and a magazine, no matter how artistic its intent. Michael's criticism stems from something which Page forgets: that the artist here triumphed on her first try; those posters were amazing (don't say you didn't

# Do You Know How Our Student Government Works?

BY SARAH PERKINS

"Attention! Has anyone in the house got rolling papers?" That was the sentence that started off this year's budget forum. And thus was the mood set for the rest of the night. What is happening in the student government? Does anyone really know? How much of a say do we, the students, get in the decision-making anyway? The answer is that we are really all in control here; we just have to make it happen.

Bard College's administration is not the easiest system with which to work. As students we all know the trials and tribulations of trying to get something accomplished. As frustrating as it might be, though, it's also one of Bard's most special quirks. We are a school in which almost anything can be accomplished because the faculty and administration want this place to be about the students.

The Student Government exempli-

fies Bard's unique way of putting students in charge of their own decision making, as well as the complications and difficulties of working within the Bard system. Student government is made up of individuals who put an incredible amount of time and energy into managing many of Bard's decisions. However, it has become apparent to me that most of the student body really has no idea how these things work.

First of all, the student government is made up of several smaller boards, including the planning committee, the student judiciary board, the student life committee, and the educational policies committee. The jobs that these boards have, respectively, are "to raise issues and take action on those issues or recommend action by the College," "to provide student representation on administrative and faculty committees in all matters of concern to the college community," and to "administer allocated funds for student-run organizations" (for more infor-

mation, check out the constitution—it's online).

At the beginning of each semester, the planning committee and the central committee allocate money to each club on campus that submits a budget. The process begins with a meeting at which all budget writing rules and related information are explained to the club heads. The planning committee holds budget-writing workshops to help club heads as well. Each club then writes up its budget, detailing exactly how much money it needs and where the money is to be used throughout the semester. Copies of each budget are given to the members of the planning and central committees and club heads have the chance to sit down with the committees to defend their budgets. The committees then make their decisions about allotments of money and that brings us to the stage we all know and love: Budget Forum.

Budget Forum is one of my favorite and, at the same time, least favorite events at

this school. It is definitely something that makes Bard's system unique, and tries very hard to bring all students to equality.

However, the procedure is terribly flawed.

This system is supposed to be a democracy where everyone has an equal say, and topics are debated until people can understand them clearly enough to make a sound judgement. It doesn't work that way, though. This is a democracy, and until all people are looked upon equally, it will not be equal. Often judgement calls are made impulsively during budget forum and sometimes by the planning committee for personal reasons.

The most interesting aspect of our student government is how much control we really have. In fact, there is practically no administrative rule over the actions of the planning committee. There is an existing list that is supposed to monitor exactly where each fund

In Defense of the Wall

BY ROBIN KILMER

It is my best guess that the person who put up the signs in Kline condemning the use of the wall dividing the dishwashers from the diners has never worked in a cafeteria or a food court. As an ex-food court employee I will venture to convey to you all the pleasures of the wall and all the discomforts of being in the public eye at a food court (run by Aramark) located in a certain religiously affiliated Health Center in Kansas City.

A "retail associate," which is what the food court workers are called, is a multi-functional tool and an easily replaceable pawn within the structure of the food court. We work at the register, serve food, grill burgers, make sandwiches, stock the salad bar, count money, and wash dishes.

When I was a child I hated washing dishes, so it seems ironic that I found respite in the dish room at the food court of St. Joseph's Health Center. My primary job there was to serve food, which I did with a smile plastered to my face. Diners would usually shove their greasy fingers into the glass, leaving smudges (that I would have to clean up later) and ask, "What's that?" They would be referring to the chicken fried steak (resembling shingles), or the meatloaf (resembling road kill), or the roast beef, which should have been obvious anyway. The only two things that people could consistently identify were the chicken tenders, the mashed potatoes, and the gravy. There was the mud colored beef gravy, and the country gravy, which was called thus because we were in the Midwest after all, and we were never told from what creature it was made. The country gravy looked like a vat of Elmer's glue, and must have been made primarily of lard. After serving the mashed potatoes, I politely asked the customers, "Do you want gravy with that?" Since I was in a hospital, and the food court was filled with either ailing people or well people who were supposed to be helping ailing people, I felt like the question should have been, "Do you want a heart attack with that?"

Customers were demanding at best. The nights we served chicken tenders there would be lines that overflowed into the seating area. There were always too many people, all of them with desperate looks on their faces, so it looked more like they were in a breadline during the Great Depression than just overfed hospital workers waiting for their chicken tenders. I think some people decided to use their standing-in-line time to scan the chicken tender selection. The desire for chicken tenders always gave people magical skills, especially that of x-ray vision, and some diners could see the tub of tenders from the back of the line, even though they couldn't even identify roast beef with their noses a millimeter from the steam table. When it was time for the x-ray-vision people to get their share, they knew exactly which four chicken tenders they wanted. The one at the very back, on the left side, second to last. The one in the very middle, four tenders down and three to the right, underneath the one that's charred on one side. The one at the very front that's shaped like a stegosaurus and the one that's sticking up like a middle finger, right next to the one in the very northeast corner. This of course was a waste of time, because I always said, "Ma'am, they all taste the same," and then plucked out the allotted four chicken tenders.

This is the reason why I liked washing dishes in the dish room. There are no customers in the dish room, and that is the only place they're not allowed to penetrate and assault us with their arsenal of needs. I didn't have to see them because of the wall that divides the workers from the diners.

The food court always reminded me of the zoo—featuring the wild inhabitants of the Sarengetti plains: hyenas scrambling for the carcass of any given deep fried animal. Without the wall in the dish room I would have been exhibited as another solitary beast, condemned to deal with the scraps that others leave behind at the water hole.

Like a water hole, the dish room is a soggy quagmire. It is unrealistic to lobby for the destruction of all walls because there are health standards that have to be followed, especially in a food court. The rules are so stringent that they even control the way food is shelved—with meat at the bottom (so that juices don't leak onto other foods), and all the food lined up according to their dates. If there wasn't a wall between customers and the dish room, Bard students would be wallowing in pure filth and someone would want to crusade against that, too. There were always puddles of water, puddles of spilt gravy, puddles of spilt oil from the grill, noodles strewn on the floor of the dish room. I could have fallen and broken my back numerous times, and one worker did actually fall and bang his head on the metal sink and had to be carried to the emergency room. I never left the food court without crusted food on my pants. But I still found the dish room to be the most peaceful place in the food court.

In the dish room one's duties include washing the metal pans that contained the relics of the night's dinner: pans encrusted with dried gravy, pans with solidified chunks of mashed potatoes, chicken tender pans (which were the easiest to clean), etc. All the pans would be dumped into vast sinks until the hot water and suds ameliorated the grime residue enough for it to be scraped off with wire sponges and elbow grease, and then would be tossed into the conveyor belt, which sprayed more hot water and disinfectant onto the dishes. Sometimes I wondered what would happen if I put myself onto the conveyor belt. Would it take care of the grease stains on my pants? The belt would then unceremoniously spit out the dishes and I would stack them up in their proper resting places. I was also responsible for cleaning the china plates that the customers ate from, the ones I served their food onto. These would also find themselves on the conveyor belt. In one night I witnessed the life-cycle of these china plates. When working behind the food counter I saw them fresh and new, full of life and eager to take on any amount of potatoes, chicken fried steak and gravy. We had another conveyor belt, reserved for dishes and silverware, in a clandestine region of the seating area, guarded by trashcans and a tall, fake tropical plant. Customers would dump their plates onto the conveyor belts that would send the dishes to the dish room, which, of course, was hidden by a blessed wall. I would see the plates at the end of the day, after every battle, smothered and choked by massive amounts of food—much of the time their burden remained uneaten. I saw all the potatoes, chicken fried steak, and gravy

goes, but with the amount of requests that come in, and the receipts that are used as verification, this job is incredibly messy. It is almost impossible to be exactly sure where each penny goes.

Because of this the treasurer has the most tedious job of them all, yet every semester, members of the central committee are paid an equal \$350 stipend. At the budget forum this semester, an amendment was announced which would make the powerful positions of the central committee an unpaid job. Though the amendment failed, the issue was raised. Most students had no idea that \$2,100 from the convocation fund goes directly into the pockets of these individuals. The majority of people sitting around me that night didn't raise their hand at all during this amendment, and their votes were inevitably counted towards the amendment failing, rather than those votes be counted as abstentions. The matter was discussed, though for far longer than the six minutes that was allotted to the topic, and the idea to make this job work/study was voiced. However, the idea had been previously brought to the attention of the administration, but was proven to be too difficult a task to accomplish. My question,



Budget Forum, Spring 2005

that I had meticulously served still partially intact on the plate that I had put it on, and saw massive amounts of food being thrown away every day. But the good thing was that these people didn't get to see me wearing my hairnet and unflattering plastic apron and looking like an artist's palette, covered with assortments of food of various colors. I could sing and whistle in the dish room, I didn't have to regulate my behavior, and in the evening, after all the supervisors had left, my co-workers and I would have water fights with the hoses hanging by the sink, reaching record levels of dishevelment before leaving for the night.

If the workers behind the walls at Kline think along the same lines as I do, then taking down the wall to the area that is their only refuge in Kline would be doing them a great disservice. The best thing that a person can do for them is peek in, say a sincere thank you, eat all the food on the plates they have to clean, and throw away napkins, paper plates and plastic forks so they don't have to do it instead. In the case that there weren't a wall and the workers had the unhindered ability to observe the people whose dishes they have to clean, to hear our conversations about being so trashed the night before, to hear us bitching about Kline, to see handfuls of wealthy college kids attempting the derelict look, noting how they're covered in our food and we're not, will not help the workers wash the dishes, and will not make them feel better about being dishwashers.

INTERESTED IN WRITING AN ARTICLE? INTERESTED IN RESPONDING TO AN ARTICLE? COME TO OUR STAFF MEETING, THIS THURSDAY AT 8PM IN THE BASEMENT OF TEWKSBURY

Student Government, continued from page 19

though, is if the people of the student government have so much power, how come this task is so complicated? I would hope that the people that I have elected to be my student representatives have enough power to at least come to some fair conclusion about how my money is being spent. Finally, it is amazing to me that the paid members of the planning committee are turning down budgets because there is not enough money in the convocation fund, while they, themselves, are often taking two to three times the amount they are doling out to other clubs.

A second major vote that was necessary during the budget forum was over the case of Zayd, a student whose house was seriously damaged in the Middle East. The idea was to allow the clubs to, at the end of the semester, give their unused money to his family. The administration fought bitterly to prevent this from taking place. However, it is true that the constitution and the student government can be even more powerful than the administration. The vote was passed to allow money to go to his family rather than be put into the convocation fund for next semester. The convocation fund (\$75 per student, per year) is student money, and, by the constitution, we, collectively, are allowed to use it however we want. Honestly, if the student government decided that they wanted to spend all \$100,000 or so on, say, the construction of a new old gym, it would be completely legitimate, so long as two thirds of the student body thought so, too.

Finally, I want to conclude with a discussion about how the student government works more generally. The people who are elected onto the central committee must have served on another committee for at least one year prior to being elected onto the central board. This is a good concept; we want the members of the central committee to know what's going on and how the committees work, but once again, democracy is not truly working. One member of the planning committee told me that in his whole time working on these boards, there has never been an opposed election for someone who wants to be part of the central committee. Most people who become members of this board are basically expected to do it, based on their position previously. This is what frightens me. How can any change occur if the members and the members' ideas are never really changing and the power stays within the same circle? Tom Mattos, a member of the planning committee, argues that one of the best things that could happen with the student government would be if someone with no previous knowledge of what happens on the board were elected. He says that this would allow the freedom for someone fresh to bring in new ideas and change the cycle in which we have constantly been running. In the future, we will have a significantly greater amount of money with which to work as the activities fee (from tuition) will be increasing in ten dollar increments over the next three years. We need people with new ideas to change the way money is allocated and to change the hierarchy that exists within the student government today.

Remember the Smaller Nations

BY NRIPESH DHUNGEL

I realize that certain South Asians at Bard seem to be a little too outspoken, but I beg you to realize that I am usually quiet and good-natured and to ask that you hear me out on this one. It really is important. Not important in an "oh that's sad" way, but important enough that it will probably cause you to think.

I wanted to do the job of giving you the news, the "that's not so important news" from the "oh that's a country?" place. You know what I mean. I am doing this because quite frankly I cannot (and forgive me if this was important for you) give a shit about the Pope going to the hospital when my country is going into a seizure. I want to talk about a grave event that took place in the world last week. But before I go on, here are some really important events that the media has been so nicely supplying us unlimited information on:

- "Pope admitted to hospital" CNN, 2/1
- "Pope considered to be at risk" CNN 2/1
- "Pope leaves hospital, condition seems normal" CNN 2/1
- "Pope's health status unclear, fresh reports coming in" NY Times, 2/2
- "Sail boy from Sri Lanka, makes an amazing journey" CNN 2/2
- "First Indian to enter F1 championships" BBC 2/3
- "Watching television at night makes you smarter, say scientists" BBC 2/3

It is entirely pathetic that CNN acts as a soap opera digest for the Pope fans of the world, and that watching the news is like sitting on your fat-ass with a tub of popcorn, greasing your palms so that you can react to every incident with a bland "oh no!" or a "too bad." Please write to me (nd332) and tell me that the life of a sail boy is more important than the hostile takeover of a country.

Continued on page 21

Remember the Smaller Nations, continued from page 20

Rationalize to me how what the Pope does after getting up in the morning is more important than a country without any methods of communication for a week. Please help me see how "your freedom of speech, expression, and thought is no longer a luxury that this great nation needs" is less news-worthy than "watching anything at night stimulates the neuron cells." I say this because these were the events that were unfolding in my nation and what I listed was what the media considered news. The four Nepali people at Bard were cut off from their country, including family members, while the world danced to the tune of "important news." According to the media, that was the world on February first 2005: worried about the Pope, a boat boy, and stimulating your neurons.

For those of you who still are unaware of what has been happening in Nepal, let me take a moment to fill you in on the catastrophe that the rest of the world has decided to ignore. Nepal has always been a nation that needed something to happen. The Maoist uprising that had escalated since 1994 had built up into a full-scale civil war between the national army and the red army. Furthermore, since the dawn of democracy in Nepal in 1990, the level of political corruption and unable leaders has placed the nation's leaders at a position where they are not trusted by the people. Something definitely needed to be done. But what hap-

pened two weeks ago on February 1<sup>st</sup>, no one had expected

The royal seizure of Nepal has now placed the country back in the past. With telephone lines cut and internet services down, the people of Nepal remained out of touch with the world for over a week. Embassies that owned satellite communication links were able to spread the news of events taking place in Nepal but for the most part, there was no news coming from the Himalayan Kingdom. Two days after the takeover, the sacked Prime Minister Deuba government was replaced by a 10 member cabinet chaired by the King himself. In his proclamation to the nation, he explained that corruption and Maoist violence led the country into a downward spiral resulting in political unrest. He stated that "within three years, he will replace the institution of democracy and alleviate the Maoist problem." Many Nepali people feel that this is a promise he cannot keep. While there is little support for the King and his unconstitutional move at home, other nations of the world have definitely kept quiet for the most part. They all expressed "concerns" but no country has actually placed any direct pressure on the King.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of February, Nepal celebrated its democracy day under the strict watch of the authorities. To play it safe, the new cabinet again cut off telephone lines and disrupted any social gatherings.

For a little while I thought, maybe I am over-reacting. Perhaps my patriotic nature is causing me to exaggerate and the events taking place in Nepal aren't all that important. But then I began to imagine what would happen if something similar were to happen in Britain. What if the Queen woke up one day and decided to take over. She placed all ministers and government workers under house arrest, cut off communication to and from Britain, and declared a state of emergency after shutting down all the press. She said she just didn't believe the country was doing as great as it could have been. I can imagine the panic that would spread. You're probably thinking; "now that would be news...how exciting!"

Experiencing that personally was tough but after a couple of days, the takeover had been broadcast to the world and most people at Bard knew about the events taking place in our small nation. However, now a creepy question started to formulate in my mind. Where were all the activists from this very political campus? I mean it's great that we sympathize with so many events around the world and how we help whenever we can, but where were these people when a country just wanted to be heard? A country that was ignored by the media, ignored by world governments, and fucked by its own King was now also not an issue to the highly aware students of Bard. I understand that America didn't want to get

involved because we had no oil, nothing of use to the US, but to the people of America, the intellectuals of academia, weren't those human rights issues dying to come out? Wasn't the fact that journalists and activists in Nepal were being jailed without question enough to spark something? Let me be daring and say it: Nepal is not Palestine, but it is also a nation with massive unrest making *much* less than any country in the Middle East made ten years ago. Why isn't there a need for awareness about that part of the world? Are we ready to see that Nepal could very well become the next Iraq, if we let things go as they are? With political unrest and civil liberties taken away, the borders weaken and underground networks such as the Maoists, who are supported by terrorist networks of the world, would love to move in and set up shop in Nepal.

All in all, if Nepal as a nation were to look at the world, she wouldn't be surprised that nothing was done during her hardest times, but Nepal would be hurt that an academic environment claiming to be active in raising voices was as mute as the rest. Bard's "political arena" is proving to be a mainstream pop show for the masses to wonder at.

I apologize to all who did follow the events and were concerned. In fact, I encourage you to come speak to me about this. It would be great to start a dialogue.

## 2005 Baseball Preview Part I: AL West and NL West

BY JIM CHAMBERS

Baseball's popularity appears to have been on the up in recent years, spurred on by the Home Run race between Sosa and McGwire, and then of course by the renaissance of the Red Sox -- Yankees duel. The anticipation for this year seems even greater, in the wake of what could be considered the most exciting year in decades, and many big off-season moves, strengthening the juggernauts and making contenders out of mediocre ball clubs. This will be the first part of a preview, or prognostication, of the year to come, focusing on the NL and AL West.

### PROJECTED ORDER, NATIONAL LEAGUE WEST:

1. San Francisco Giants
2. San Diego Padres
3. Los Angeles Dodgers
4. Arizona Diamondbacks
5. Colorado Rockies

There's an outside shot at winning it for every team here save the Rockies. First, the Giants: This is a team coming off a huge disappointment of a season, having lost their playoff hopes on a Shawn Green grand slam in the last game off the year. Felipe Alou is a fine manager in my opinion, and the squad is greatly improved. Barely needing mention is Barry Bonds, who in my book shouldn't be playing. (Ahem, 'roids, see last issue's article) but is, and therefore should remain among the best in the game, if he does not hold the title himself. There are a few ways he could react to the Balco scandal; he could let it hurt him, it could help him, or he could just play ball the way he has been, which is MVP-caliber. That never hurts a team. Outside of Bonds, the offense should give him more support this year, with the additions of veterans Omar Vizquel and Moises Alou, (son of manger Felipe) who should add great offensive improvement to the 2 and 5 spots in the lineup respectively. One can question their capability at this point in their careers, but I'd take Vizquel and Alou over Michael Tucker and Alfonzo in those spots in the lineup any day. Leadoff man Ray Durham, despite questionable defense at 2<sup>nd</sup>, is a consistent 90-100 run player, and both Alfonzo and Grissom can swing their bats more than capably for 6 and 7 spot men. In the 3 spot is J.T. Snow, who hit .327 last year and has a nice glove. The rest of the Giants' defense is shaky at times, but again Vizquel will help on the part of the infield. Catcher Mike Matheny, acquired from St. Louis, holds the record for games without an error (252). The starting rotation should be solid at least, anchored by Cy Young threat

Jason Schmidt. Their 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> pitchers, Jerome Williams and Noah Lowry, are both on the rise, both young, and could have breakout years. I would particularly watch Lowry. The bullpen is questionable, but the addition of Armando Benitez to close certainly helps. The big question remains as to whether age will bring them down, but I think this will play more in their favor, at least this year, adding experience to a team that just imploded down the stretch last year, and blew an all but won World Series to Anaheim in 2002.

Next, the Padres: They lost David Wells, but added veteran Woody Williams, and have a very strong potential in Jake Peavy, who at age 23 led the league in ERA last year posting a 2.27. He could be a perennial 20 game man, particularly in pitching-friendly Petco Park. The other 3 spots are inconsistent, with Brian Lawrence, Adam Eaton and Darrell May, but if they turn on they could perform well. Dave Roberts adds good speed and defense in the leadoff spot, while Mark Loretta, Brian Giles and Phil Nevin, in the 2,3 and 4 spots, are all solid hitters. Ryan Klesko is coming off of a bad couple of years, but he is a savvy veteran. Khalil Greene has an outstanding glove, is on his way up and could nab a 5 spot. Catcher Ramon Hernandez is a great game-caller, and hits well when he needs to. Third basemen Sean Burroughs occupies the last spot on the lineup, is decent on defense and hits well on average.

The bullpen is strong, with 3<sup>rd</sup> all-time save leader Trevor Hoffman closing, backed up by good setup in Akinori Otsuka and Scott Linebrink. This is a team that could make or break their year depending on how they start up. If they apply pressure early, they'll stay in it.

The Dodgers lost a lot but added a lot. Green is gone, which is better anyway, one of the more overrated players in the game. MVP candidate Beltre is also gone, but the two spaces have been filled by J.D. Drew and Jeff Kent. Kent is a rock, and Drew will be great if he keeps improving. Milton Bradley is a highly talented ballplayer, but it remains to be seen whether he can keep his mood in check. No throwing bottles, Milton. On defense they have a gold-glover in Cesar Izturis at short, and a strong outfield. The rest of the infield is a question mark, and catcher David Ross has yet to prove anything. Fan favorite Jose Lima is gone from the rotation, but his career is in its twilight, and Derek Lowe arrives from Boston, having carried the Sox through huge games in the ALCS and World Series. His regular season was off and on, if not poor, but the former all-star should do better without the scrutiny of the Boston media. 1 and 2 men Jeff Weaver and Odalis Perez both had impressive 2004 seasons, and should they stay on par, they will be good

assets. Brad Penny and Ishii are iffy. Penny with his health and Ishii with consistency, but both have great stuff when they're on. The bullpen can be sized-up with one word: Gagne, which is French for "win." If you're trailing in the 9<sup>th</sup> to L.A., he'll beat you. Period. The Dodgers have tons of questions, but if their wild cards work out, they could be a contender in the west.

Arizona lost the Big Unit, but opened up a lot of cap space and now have a good rotation in place of a legendary Ace and four lame ducks. Javier Vazquez may fare better without the New York press, and Russ Ortiz had a solid year in Atlanta. Brandon Webb could be a star someday, and a better defense should help him get more W's. The final two spots, Villarreal and Halsey, are both green as it gets, and have yet to show much. On offense, they add Shawn Green, who needs to regain power, and Troy Glaus, who when healthy is a hitting monster. Luis Gonzalez, their 3 spot man, is coming off a shortened year and if he is healthy he is always great. On defense, their infield has had a makeover, and Craig Counsell at 2nd to Royce Clayton at short is a fine Double-Play set. The outfield is average, and the catching is sub-par. The bullpen is a set of kids who have potential but that's it. We'll see about Arizona.

Finally come the Rockies. Todd Helton unfortunately misses attention because of his surrounding cast, but he is one of the best power hitters of our time. Behind him is Preston Wilson, in center, who will be OK if he isn't hurt. Otherwise, the lineup is weak. Dustan Mohr can hit at times, as can Clint Barnes, but they're all aided by Coors Field. The infield is not bad, though they'll miss Vinny Castilla, and the outfield is also OK, with Wilson and Mohr. The rotation is unimpressive. Jason Jennings is a good pitcher, just good, though, and not an ace on most squads. The bullpen is a mess. Colorado will do what they've been doing, lose. If Helton were a Yankee, he'd be worshipped.

### PROJECTED ORDER, AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST:

1. Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim (Are you kidding me?)
2. Seattle Mariners
3. Texas Rangers
4. Oakland A's



Los Angeles Angels' pitching staff, including Brendan Donnelly (above), may help the Angels come out on top in the American League West

The Angels should run away with this one. Last year they were plagued by injuries and trouble with their pitching staff, and they still managed to take the west. This season they've tweaked a few things, and the competition is worse. The rotation isn't fantastic, but should be stronger this year, as Colon seemed to have found what he was looking for at the end of 2004, and Escobar's 11-12 record doesn't speak for the pitcher he is. (His run support was awful.) Jarrod Washburn and John Lackey both have to prove they can play all year and can do so consistently. Paul Byrd is a nice pickup as a 5<sup>th</sup> starter. He has some experience and takes up a lot of innings. If there are questions on the rotation, there aren't in the bullpen. Percival is in Detroit, but K-Rod will have his chance to flourish as a closer. With Rodriguez are Brendan Donnelly, Esteban Yan and Scot Shields, who could take over for any of the starters should they falter. Lefties are an issue, but youngsters Kevin Gregg and Matt Hensley will have shots.

The lineup is set here, and the bench behind it is deep. Adam Kennedy is still recuperating and Chone Figgins will start at 2B, and he should leadoff in place of Eckstein. He showed last year that he can play fine all-around ball, and will hold a spot even if Kennedy is healthy. The heart of the lineup can stand with any other, on both sides of the ball. 2-6 is Erstad, AL MVP Guerrero, Garret Anderson and seemingly ageless Steve Finley. The bottom of the order is unproven, with very promising Dallas McPherson at 3<sup>rd</sup> (who could DH when Kennedy returns), and Cabrera, Robb Quinlan and catcher Bengie Molina. Cabrera and

Continued on page 22

# CARNAL KNOWLEDGE

The Observer's Sex Column

Hi,  
 What is a safe way to give yourself an enema in the comfort of your own home? Is there anything one should be concerned about? What things should one definitely avoid? In fact, what are the pros and cons of having an enema? Any information you can give would be great. :)  
 Thanks

Everything you need to know is at this webpage (the instructions are quite involved):  
[http://www.geocities.com/valerie\\_cct/enemas.html](http://www.geocities.com/valerie_cct/enemas.html)

- Pros**
- An enema is a safe, effective, and natural way to cleanse the bowel.
  - Process relieves constipation
- Cons**
- If too harsh soap is used, it can cause colitis
  - Many people are too embarrassed to attempt process
  - The wrong position, temperature, or pressure can cause pain and cramping.
  - The process requires privacy, is time consuming, and requires preparation.
  - You must retain the enema solution in rectum for 5-15 minutes for it to work.
  - The enema bag takes several days to dry out, must be hung up, and cannot be put away wet.



Have fun!!!

Hi, I was wondering what the fascination with food and sex is? In America, for instance, whipped cream is a popular item to use creatively in the

bedroom, but what do they use in Russia or Italy?

It is not a coincidence that food and sex seem such good friends. The two have an intricately linked history. Fruit is a powerful symbol of feminine sexuality. Flowers are *pollinated* and the *fertilized ovary* of the flower grows into fruit. There is no mistake that this natural connection is linked to the common depiction of fruit to represent feminine sexuality. But that's just the beginning. Humans, in terms of psychology, have a certain affinity for experiencing the valued in ceremonial form. Eating is not done alone—it is a social activity, and a ceremony at that: The dinner table and every cultural variation of a meal. Sex is no different—the bedroom, the marriage ceremony. The gustatory system is closely linked to sexuality; after all, sexual pleasure is a sensation just as taste, smell, and hearing. Sex is not and should not be cordoned off from the everyday—everything, in fact is involved and sexuality is a powerful shaper of our reality. Just listen to the linguistic connections we use everyday: Apple of my eye, I'm hungry for you, sexual appetite (observe our unconscious connection of food and sex)... Also certain foods are known to have aphrodisiac qualities, such as oysters, dark chocolate, red wine, and certain herbs. Whipped cream is probably used because it requires licking off, an overtly sexual act, hence the fun. Europe or anywhere else doesn't have a hugely different sexual use for food, that is, there is not a cultural boundary for the use of foods in sex—food and the sensual are linked together in permanent correspondence in the human world.

send your  
**FUCKING**  
 questions to  
 gw876@bard.edu (Questions  
 on love, relationships, health, or  
 sex are welcomed)

this is not intended  
 to replace profes-  
 sional  
 medical advice.

## NI and AL West Preview, continued from page 21

Molina won't change much. OC's bat is good enough and both are excellent on defense. Molina calls a fine game. Mike Sciosca's squad is as good as any, and should make noise this year again.

Seattle should be on the up, having made some key additions this offseason. If you add two 100 RBI guys (assuming Sexson stays healthy) behind a guy who hit safely 262 times last year that's a ton of extra runs. Beltre was an excellent move, and he came at a reasonable price. Sexson did not; even though he has been a great player he missed most of last year, and I wouldn't give him \$12.5 million a year, but time will tell. His presence should help when he's in, whatever the price. Bret Boone had a bad year last year, but he's a player, and he will produce. In left is Raul Ibanez, whose production should also gain due to who's in front of him, and with newcomer Jeremy Reed and Ichiro solidifies one of the better defensive outfields. Pokey Reese will do a world of good for the infield, although his bat is nothing special. The catcher spot is a question mark, with Miguel Olivo starting with only potential to back him up and

not much hard experience. Mike Hargrove should play with the DH spot, as there are multiple contenders. The rotation is packed with promise, but nothing outstanding to date. Behind 42 yr-old would-be ace Jamie Moyer are Pineiro, Madritsch, Ryan Franklin and Gil Meche. Pineiro has a lot of promise still at 26, and look for Meche to move up in the rotation. The bullpen depends on Eddie Guardado's rotator cuff, and 2003 form from Hasegawa. Ron Villone is a good consistent presence in the pen, and is very versatile. Their performance depends on a lot of unknowns, as with the rest of the team. Did they do enough, and can they reestablish themselves as a power in the AL? Maybe. Now's a good time to do it, with Oakland out of the mix for at least a year.

Texas surprised a lot of people last season. A lot of youth and a lot of expectations are at work here. The lineup can hit top to bottom as well as any lineup in the game. The infield is superb, with 20-somethings Teixeira, Michael Young, Hank Blalock and Soriano filling the ranks. Soriano is the only defensive issue, but his bat is better than any 2B in the

game. The outfield adds Richard Hidalgo from Houston and he hopes to get back to top form. Laynce Nix showed good pop last season but needs to be more consistent, and Mench is solid. David Dellucci and Gary Matthews, Jr. could also get time in the outfield, and Dellucci, who will be the DH otherwise, is a great presence on the young team. The rotation is anchored by Kenny Rogers, who could fall off with age, and upstart Ryan Drese, who will get even better I think. The other 3 starters are big issues, particularly Chan Ho Park, but the bullpen behind them is strong, with Cordero closing and a lot of depth behind him. I think Texas either plays at 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> all year, or gets a spark and gives the top 2 runs for their money. Showalter is a great fit here.

I'm not as in love with Billy Beane as everyone else, not this year. Oakland has done well in the last few years, but the offseason left them paralyzed. They do have young talent, and a good farm system, but 2 of the big 3 are gone, and a 26 yr-old who may be on his way down is the veteran and the ace of the pitching staff. Rich Harden is a bright spot as well, but the

other 3 starters have never started as big leaguers, with 2 rookies and one young bullpener from St. Louis. Jason Kendall will help Oakland's lineup a lot, and they like guys who get on base like him. Kotsay appears to be getting better, but with Byrnes and Nick Swisher the outfield shouldn't present too much alarm for foes. With Dye gone, 3B Eric Chavez and DH Durazo represent the only solid power bats, and neither will post 35-40 HR's, but this is not a power team, so maybe that's not an issue. The bullpen is weak, although there is some hope that Dotel will really fit into his closing role in Oakland this year. They added Kiko Calero in the Mulder deal, but otherwise we're looking at youth and mediocrity. I don't see them doing much this year. People seem to have faith in this organization, and maybe things will go well in a few years, but right now there are too many powerhouses in the AL and not enough on this squad. They finish last, maybe third.

## A Woman's Place

BY GOGO LIDZ

An honorable Bard bachelor recently confided something truly reprehensible about the female population at this fine institution. As an attractive, unattached gentleman with a quaint off-



campus abode, he often hosts co-eds overnight. On numerous occasions, however, he has woken up in late afternoon to find the girl still asleep beside him; needless to say, the dishes unclean, the dog unwalked and the plates on the table unpancaked.

Disgraceful! Tragic! Absurd! If truth be told, at first I didn't quite believe him. I repaired to my room, donned my apron and got out the featherduster - the better to reflect. When I returned to the dorm, I spied some girls in an adjoining room. What were they up to? Knitting? Cooking? Swapping make-up tips? Well, not *exactly*. They were discussing pol-i-tics! And, furthermore, doing homework - not their boyfriends' homework, *their own homework!* Tell me: Exactly what is this diseased behavior that has infected the campus? Don't these girls go to college to find good husbands? Don't they wish to fulfill their dreams of becoming obedient housewives and devoted mothers? Don't they aspire to emulate our lovely sisters at Vassar?

This reminds me: I recently took a survey at Bard about rolling pins. Specifically, how many I kept in my room and how many of those I kept pressed with flour. I was one of many Bard birds surveyed. Yesterday, I got a peek at the results. Appalling! Only 7% of my fellow females roomed with a rolling pin, and only 11% of those were regularly floured. Disgusting! As we all know, at Bard there is a reputation to uphold - a difficult task indeed when girls behave so irrationally. The very same

poll was taken at Vassar, where it turns out 85% of the Mademoiselles keep rolling pins handy and all but one of them had been floured. No wonder Vassar's motto is Chaste Makes Waste!

At any rate, Bard's female population should pay heed. Just last week, a passionate bright young Tewksbury thing showed me her brand new leather watch. That's right, not a leather watch band, but a leather *watch*. Now, is that not a hoot, or is that not a hoot? Why would a Bard girl need a watch, and, above all, an expensive *leather* one? After all, in Tewksbury's kitchen there's a perfectly good clock next to the stove! The trust fund money she used could have gone for something really useful, like, say, monogrammed cufflinks for her beau. The poor girl must have a terrible self-image. I mean... *leather!* How absolutely telling! As Daddy always used to tell Mumsy: "Do you know why they call it 'PMS'? Because 'Mad Cow Disease' was taken."

Though I know not what radical thoughts are sloshing around the tiny heads of my female classmates, I do know one thing for sure: I would like nothing better than to work after graduation. I will vacuum My Man's dustiest carpets. I will remove the most stubborn of stains from His laundry. I will prepare the most glorious meals for Him. Good Lord! Whatever His heart desires. But never, ever, will I join Bard's laughable *de classe* class of "working girls." Why, they shame the living femininity out of womanhood! Do these brazenly vulgar creatures really think themselves "ladies?" The

thought of them sharing my sex (please excuse the uproarious pun) is abhorrent, repellent, loathsome. I have half a mind (please excuse the uproarious pun) to curtsy, scamper to the ladies room and vomit in my dorm's communal sink.



by  
Cameron Bossert



MAZE OF MALAISE

by Frankie McShowbusiness



JAWESOME by 93



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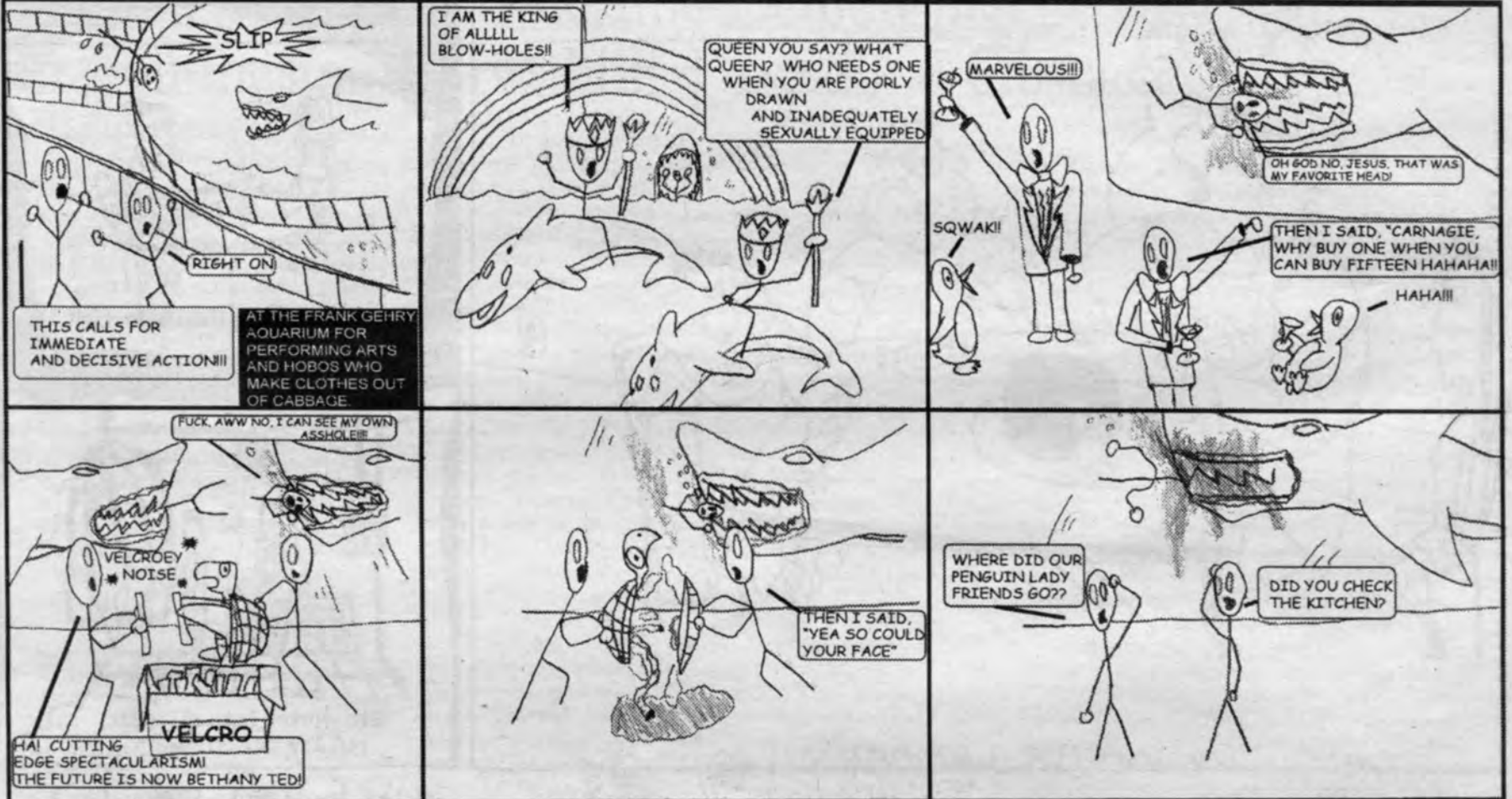
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EATING THROUGH AN  
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