

The Stony Brook Press

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'No Industry Research' Say Nuclear Physicists

By Jesse Londin

Contrary to the popular belief on campus, the physics department at Stony Brook is not engaged in any big-budget, top-secret, far-ranging energy-oriented research, according to C.N. Yang, Stony Brook's Nobel Laureate in physics. In fact, said Yang, only about one-third of the physics department is involved in any nuclear physics research project at all.

"I know of no research here at Stony Brook related to or funded by any nuclear industries," asserted Yang, who won a Nobel prize in 1957 for his work in parity non-conservation. "Our nuclear physicists' efforts are directed toward increasing man's knowledge on the structure of nuclei. It is very difficult for me to believe that any of the output of our department will be used in any way by the nuclear industry in the next 20 years."

Yang recognizes that within the campus community, many opposers of nuclear power tend to regard all nuclear research as highly suspicious, and see all resulting data as possible contributions to the advancement

of nuclear industrial technology. "There is a tendency in the public's mind to associate our research with the nuclear industry," said Yang. "This is totally wrong. We have nothing to do with them."

While Yang stressed that the University's nuclear research is impractical for use by the nuclear industry in the near future, he did discuss his own personal beliefs, and spoke favorably about nuclear power in terms of economics. "Right now we are paying about seven cents per kilowatt hour for the energy we consume here. In Chicago, where they use nuclear power, it costs only about three cents per kilowatt hour."

Years ago, Yang lived in Chicago where he studied under the world renowned physicist Enrico Fermi who built the first nuclear reactor in 1941. Yang said of nuclear power, "I think it is an issue about which there has been too much emotion."

In concordance with Yang's position, Max Dresden, Executive Director of the Institute for Theoretical Physics differentiated between the

work of nuclear engineers and the work of nuclear physicists: Nuclear engineering is used by the power industry; Stony Brook has no nuclear engineering department, and no nuclear engineers in the physics department.

Dresden said that ITP is concerned with researching physical theory. The Institute, which has 12 permanent members, four or five visitors and six to eight post-doctorals, is doing work mainly in high energy and particle theory, some relativity, and statistical mechanics. The nuclear work is not as extensive and deals primarily with nuclear structure such as the shapes and spins of nuclei.

ITP has become highly reputable in physicists' circles since its founding in 1966. The Institute is dependent of the physics department, although all of ITP's professors have tenure in the department. Its members publish papers, give lectures and are invited to conferences and seminars all over the world. Dresden said, "ITP is the best

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Being Iranian at SB: The View Home

By Chris Fairhall

and Melissa Spielman

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini tells his country to take arms and fight the United States. An American businessman with alleged CIA ties is reportedly arrested at Teheran's airport. Representative George Hansen (R-Idaho) visits briefly with 20 of the 49 hostages. Iran and the U.S. move to come before the United Nations, despite a consensus that nothing will be accomplished.

There is an anti-Khomeini rally at Stony Brook. Grafitti springs up on campus, most of which denounces Iranians. Americans in general and students at Stony Brook begin to show their anger at The Iranian situation.

Amidst the growing tension, Moshen, an Iranian student at Stony Brook, has granted The Press an interview. Moshen has been in the U.S. for three years, and is a junior who lives in the suites. His name is a nom de plum.

Moshen lives in a suite with five Americans. Every evening they gather around the television for news of Iran. Although the Americans are anti-Khomeini, the situation is discussed openly and with little friction.

Moshen is sitting in his suite room now, surrounded by boxes of macaroni and cheese, Chore Girl scouring pads, a Risk set — his suitmates' accoutrements of Americana. In fluent, accented English he describes the intertwined religion and politics of his native country.

He supports Islamic rule for Iran, and the Ayatollah's orthodoxy. Moshen has adapted to life in the United States in the three years he has been here and in some ways has assimilated. He still thinks that women should thoroughly cover their bodies, but he has had several girlfriends here. He will not drink or smoke, but he has stopped his daily ritual of facing Mecca and praying. He believes men should cover their bodies as well, but is currently attired in a T-shirt and shorts. He explains there is a practical reason

for women to conceal their bodies. "I'm a man and I have feelings that attract me to a female. I see a pretty girl with an open shirt and tight pants and I forget what I'm doing. And it doesn't satisfy me just to look. It ruins my mind."

"My cousin has gone through this problem too." Smiling, he claims that his cousin would be out of college by now if not for the constant distraction of women. "When he sees a pretty girl it ruins his whole day."

Despite his scant clothing, Moshen affirms that Iranian men must cover themselves, since "women feel the same way about men." He explains that he could wear little clothing in his house, but would not go outside in shorts.

Moshen intends to marry a woman who will wear traditional Iranian dress. Asked

if he will have more than one wife, he laughed, "No — I can't even afford one."

Although he has had many girlfriends in America, he says he would not have had that luxury in Iran. He adds that under Islamic rule, unmarried couples engaging in sex are forced to marry, and adulterers are jailed.

He does not disagree with Islamic law, though. He states that nothing in the Koran will be changed. "It has existed for 1,800 years, and it will be unchanged for another 1,800."

Moshen describes himself as "an isolated student in the United States." He has two cousins here, and is "concerned about what is happening in my country. I want to help my country."

He is in America partly because he felt there was little chance he would be

accepted to an Iranian university, and partly because a U.S diploma will get him a better job when he returns to Iran. He pays about \$1,500 per semester in tuition. His family is poor, he says, but he will not discuss how his education is funded. He predicts the United States will not deport all Iranians because they add to much to the economy.

He says that while those who are not citizens or who lack green cards will have to go back, he will not leave before graduating unless the Iranian Embassy asks him to. If he is requested by Iran to leave America, he may complete his degree in another country.

Moshen says he would not have returned to Iran while the Shah ruled. "It is like putting a bird in a cage," he explains.

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A plea for brotherhood replaces the remains of anti-Iranian graffiti on the Lecture Center.

SHAD Meets at SB To Plan Activities

By Fred Friedman

The SHAD (Sound and Hudson against Atomic Development) Alliance held its second annual Congress at Stony Brook, November 9-12, but curiously few Stony Brook students attended. Representatives of 52 local SHAD groups and 60 activist affinity groups participated in decision making sessions that will shape the character of New York's anti-nuclear movement for the next 12 months.

Proposals relating to SHAD structure, anti-nuclear outreach and education, fundraising, and a timeline for actions designed to shut down the downstate nuclear reactors at Indian Point, Shoreham and at Columbia University found themselves crashing between the Scylla of an "action faction" and the Charybdis of the "praxis axis." Like many other anti-nuke alliances, especially the "Clamshell Alliance" in New England, perhaps the best known, SHAD has many members who want to fight nuclear power from within the system, by lobbying, working for the election of sympathetic candidates and intervening in licensing hearings, and also encompasses those who believe that only actions which directly attempt to shut down nukes will be effective in the short and long term. The consequent disagreements over strategy and tactics often appeared to prevent any Alliance-wide decisions from being adopted on the spot; instead, such proposals as a blockade of materials entering Long Island's Shoreham plant, civil disobedience activity at the United Nations to protest nuclear weaponry, or a ratepayers' campaign to withhold utility company payments were left up to specially created, ongoing task forces. SHAD operates by a consensual decision making process requiring the consent of all members to any activity of the Alliance.

SHAD blossomed in 1979, and perhaps its

growth had been too quick. One June 3, the Alliance attracted more than 15,000 people to a rally against the Shoreham nuclear plant (slated to open in 1981) while over 600 jumped the nuke's fence, into the arms of Suffolk County police. A training committee had previously instructed those engaging in civil disobedience in the techniques of absolute non-violent resistance; a negotiating committee had kept in constant touch with the state to insure a peaceful symbolic action. A collective plea of "not guilty" stemming from a "defense of social necessity" is currently enabling the 600 defendants to bring the issue of nuclear power on Long Island into the courts, where Long Island Lighting Company officials have had to testify about the safety of the Shoreham nuke.

During the summer, in more limited civil disobedience at the Con Edison nuclear facility at Indian Point, Westchester, SHAD members chained themselves to fences and rallied to halt the operation of the plant. On October 6, many SHAD affinity groups attempted a direct action occupation of the nuclear power plant at Seabrook, New Hampshire, alongside anti-nuclear groups from all over the United States. The very next day, 3,000 people rallied at Hauppauge, the Suffolk County administrative center, demanding that pro-nuke legislators come out and defend their positions, and later vowing to vote them out of office. Many SHAD members also participated in a Wall Street demonstration October 29, 50 years after the stock market crash, aimed at clarifying the connections between finance capitalism, the profit motive and nuclear power. Over 1,000 were arrested while blocking the doors of the Stock Exchange.

But each of these activities had been built on long, painstaking, grass-roots organizing by a group that was



Fred Friedman/Long Island Clamshell

The Shoreham rally, June 3 --- rain and more rain, but the protestors persevered.

nonhierarchical, controlled from below, paying at least as much attention to the way decisions were made as to the decisions themselves. SHAD had, in 1979, reached out to ally with labor and third world activists who generally shunned anti-nuclear activity. At the Congress, Harlem Fight-Back, a New York City class organization, and Akwesasne Traditionals, a Native American group, both drew enthusiastic anti-nukers to

workshops, as did anarchist theoretician Murry Bookchin.

Even though few decisions were made at the Congress, the process for making them was begun, differences were aired, the long road to consensus was again trod. SHAD's rededicated themselves to ending a dangerous and destructive technology in their lifetimes; and to learning, once more, the joys and problems of working for social change.

Physicists Discuss Nuclear Research

Continued from page 1

thing that Stony Brook has to offer. It has a world-wide reputation; it enhances the value of every degree earned at Stony Brook."

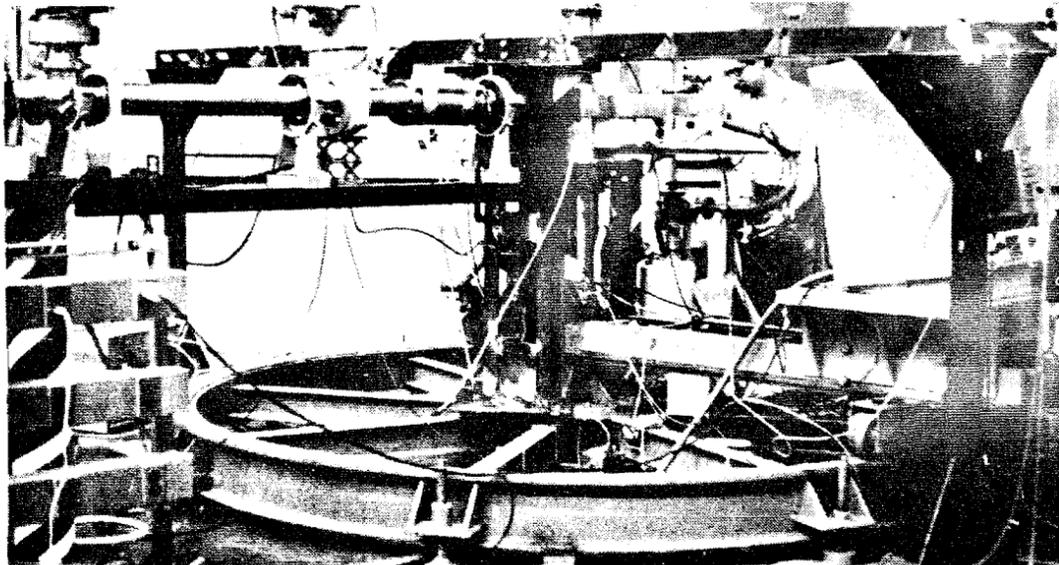
Of the Institute's nuclear theory work, Dresden said, "I see no way in which the nuclear industry could have any use at all for this." As for his own position on the nuclear power issue, Dresden said, "Nuclear power has been botched-up in a bad way. But that does not mean that under all circumstances I would oppose utilization of nuclear power."

Dresden cited a study of people who were exposed to "slightly higher" levels of radiation than the general population. This test population was found to develop less cancer on the whole, and slightly more leukemia.

"This study only adds to the confusion," Dresden said, concluding that as far as current knowledge goes, "radiation might be healthy!"

Aside from ITP, the pride and joy of Stony Brook's physics department is the Van de Graaff accelerator. According to Director Linwood Lee of the Nuclear Structure Lab, there are only about 20 comparable facilities in the entire country.

Except for periods of repair and maintenance, the accelerator is on twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, said Lee. "A voltage of 8 million is difficult to maintain," and so the accelerator operates at 70



Press Marty Marks

The Stony Brook Van de Graaff accelerator is one of about 20 comparable facilities in the country.

percent efficiency. This, according to Lee, is a very good record.

Each experiment can last up to three days. At the time of this interview, the area being investigated by Professor Peter Paul and his colleagues was "electron-positron pair emission from light nuclei as a function of bombarding energy."

According to Lee, the accelerator's annual budget is approximately \$600,000. Much of the cost of operation is covered by the National Science Foundation of the federal government. About 15 percent of the operating cost is paid by the state.

An additional \$3 million has been granted by the NSF for the construction of a super conducting linear accelerator. This booster accelerator, which is expected to begin operating early in 1982, takes a beam from the Van de Graaff and applies a radio frequency electric field which accelerates the particles to a higher frequency.

"The whole object of our research is to study the nucleus to find out things we don't know," said Lee. "No work in the physics department has anything to do with nuclear power. Nuclear power is a fall-out of nuclear physics," said Lee. "When Fermi

was bombarding heavy elements with neutrons, he wanted to find out what would happen. He didn't even know about fission."

Lee believes that nuclear power is the most viable energy alternative for the future of what he calls a "high technology society." Comparing nuclear power to the burning of coal and oil, Lee believes "The least harmful to mankind is nuclear." He added that "More people will be killed from falling off roofs while cleaning their solar collectors in the next year than will be killed from nuclear power."

Stony Brook scientists are also involved in "collaborative research" with the staff of Brookhaven National Labs. R.C. Anderson, Director of Brookhaven and Chairman of the Stony Brook Council said, "The bulk of our work and most of our energy goes into high energy physics. We use very energetic accelerators to do research. This has no bearing on the nuclear industry."

Brookhaven is involved in research for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and is budgeted \$10 million per year by them. This money, explained Anderson, is for various studies of safety systems. Anderson

maintained that Stony Brook faculty members do not participate in Brookhaven's work for the NRC, nor are they used as "consultants."

Nuclear research, both theoretical and experimental, is not the most extensive portion of the physics research at Stony Brook. Anderson said, "Most nuclear physics deals with an attempt to understand the nature of matter." Promoting nuclear energy is not the objective, although, Anderson offered, "One never knows where (the findings) can be useful in a practical sense. They may be used for a million different things."

Helping Cambodians Here

By Chris Fairhall

"This situation can cause the annihilation of an entire people," senior Gary Gross asserted. "It's a second holocaust. Three million Cambodians are dying. I think there is a lot that can be done." The 35 to 50 persons who attended the first meeting of the Committee for Cambodian Relief on November 19 in the Stony Brook Union apparently thought so, too.

Several members of the campus community spoke about different facets of the plight of Cambodian boat people. Acting University President Richard Schmidt, who is a neurologist, said he knew of "no place in recent history where so many people are starving to death" and History Professor Hugh Cleland played a taped recording of a speech from a congresswoman who recently returned from Indochina.

The audience, which was composed of few Orientals compared to Occidentals, offered suggestions ranging from having a benefit concert to letter writing campaigns to the United Nations. Since then, the committee has met earlier this week and is scheduled to meet today, at 4:30 pm in Stony Brook Union room 231.

Much of the 1½ hour conference consisted of statements. After Gross' opening remarks, Schmidt gave a lucid illustration of starvation.

"Few of you have seen people starve to death. Those I have seen are individuals who for some reason have not eaten," said Schmidt. "I don't know of any place in recent history where so many people are starving to death...A nation is being eliminated...It's been compared to the holocaust in Germany.

"They've been unable to produce their own food," he continued. "They are caught in the cross fire of politics.

"I am glad to see a good group has come out today. As you see, I don't suffer from starvation. Have you ever gone without food for two days at a time?" Schmidt asked those in attendance. He said that at one time he did. "I was quite uncomfortable."

Schmidt mentioned some of the results of starvation. "Some of the things that starvation does, of course, it kills people. The infant who cannot get adequate nourishment will be mentally retarded. This has been adequately demonstrated.

It's an abhorrent thing to contemplate," he asserted.

Schmidt said it is essential to "start a movement to get past the politics. There are a lot of people who would send food."

Cleland then played a tape recording of Congresswoman Barbara Mikulski addressing the Congress about her recent trip to Indochina "You've seen pictures," she said. "But it's more horrible than anything the media have talked about. Children are dying in Cambodia today due to Henry Kissinger's and Richard Nixon's politics."

Biology Professor Etof Carlson said, "If an adult is living on nothing but water, he

or she will die in five to 10 weeks." He added that malnutrition causes disease. "Diseases will kill. Persons most

"Have you ever gone without food for two days at a time?"

susceptible to being killed are infants and children."

Father Robert Smith, who works in the Interfaith Office, has let Gross use the facilities in his office in Humanities. Smith said he was disappointed that so little has been done for the Cambodians. "There are some things you just have to react to if you are going to stay human," he said.

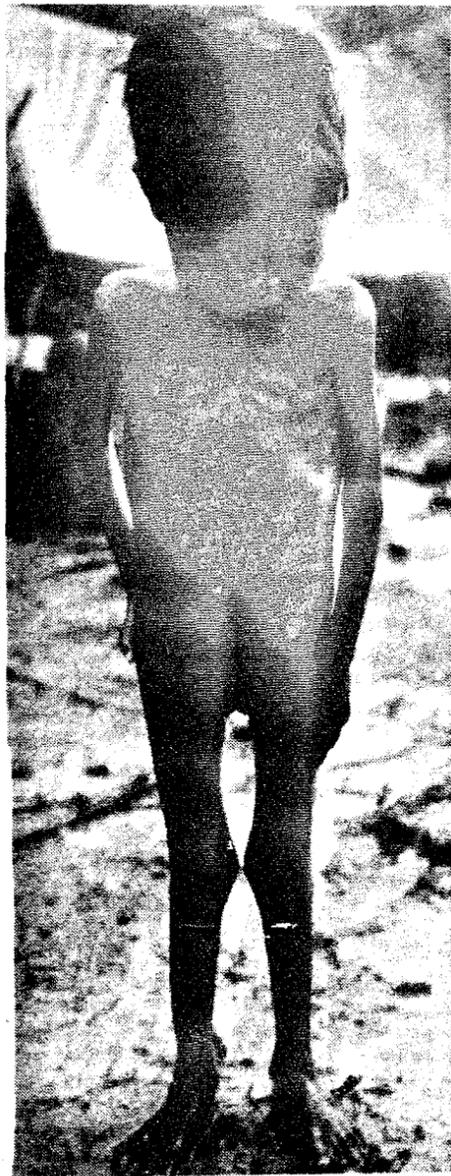
Rithipol Yem came to the United States from Cambodia several years ago. He said, "We are here to talk about a weaker nation that is being violated by a bigger nation. The problems that exist now are consequences of the Pol Pot regime." To help correct the Cambodians' plight, Yem said that the United States should "sponsor as many Cambodian refugees who are able to study and get educated in this country."

At the meeting's end, a list of suggestions was written on a blackboard. They included raising money for relief through having a benefit concert, getting students at Stony Brook to form a coalition, writing letters to national and international agencies and educating Cambodian students.

The focus of the meeting dealt with youth. Carlson said it was essential to get food to infants and children as fast as possible. "The greater the delay, the greater the amount who will be deformed," he said.



Children peer over a fence at a refugee camp.



This Cambodian child faces death from starvation or disease.

Iranian Student's View Home

Continued from page 1

"You can have political ideas here. With these ideas, I could not have gone back." Now that the Ayatollah is in power, he intends to return when his is finished with school.

Although Moshen supports Khomeini, he says, "I analyze whether what he does is right or wrong. Then I agree or disagree with him." However, he remarks, "I have never disagreed with him yet."

Moshen says most Iranians are pro-Khomeini, although they may not be in the future. Right now, he explains, Iranians are united behind the Ayatollah so they can fight the United States for the Shah. He cites a favorite Iranian argument; that allowing the deposed Shah into the country is "like accepting Hitler after what he did to the Jews."

"The President gets the blame for everything," adds Moshen. "Henry Kissinger and David Rockefeller put pressure on Carter to let the Shah come here...it's Carter who gets the blame for what Kissinger and Rockefeller did." Moshen hopes to see the Shah put on trial. "If I know my people," he asserts, "I don't think they will ever let him get away. They will show the world that a murderer cannot get away."

When questioned about the deaths ordered by the Ayatollah, Moshen replies, "Oh yeah, he has killed too. He has killed people who have killed people, like SAVAK. The Shah killed people who disagreed with his politics." He adds that Khomeini must cause many more deaths before he can begin to rival the Shah's record.

Although Moshen admits the Shah's reign was not totally negative, he gives

little credit. "He built buildings and Universities, but it could have happened with any other person."

Moshen is skeptical about the Shah's illness. When he came to this country, Moshen recalls, doctors said it would take six months to treat him. "To me, it looks a little weird that this person who was supposed to stay six months, then four weeks, may be leaving tonight."

He is pragmatic when asked why Iranians made no attempts to retrieve the Shah from Egypt or Mexico, his previous stopping places, replying, "Egypt doesn't need the oil." He explains that an Egyptian or Mexican embassy would never have been taken over because it was the United States which ruled Iran through the Shah.

Moshen claims that the holding of American hostages is not a terrorist action. Asked if it is worth the potential war, he replies: "That's a revolution." He explains that the United States must recognize the validity of the Iranian government, and respect its requests.

He says the students who took over the

students will kill the hostages, even if it is before Khomeini finds out about the attack.

"Khomeini is the sole dominating force in Iran," says Moshen, "but he is not a dictator."

Questioned about the hostages taken in Mecca, Moshen replies, "I was surprised that Khomeini went on the radio and said that the United States and Israel were behind it." When asked if that seems plausible to him, he shrugs, "You never know."

The Koran's instructions regarding hostages, explains Moshen, is that prisoners can be taken during a war, but they must be treated as guests. He adds that although the prisoners in the American Embassy are tied up, they are given three meals a day to the students' one.

The last question put to Moshen concerns anti-Iranian sentiment at Stony Brook. He says he "passed by" the anti-Khomeini demonstration in front of the Union, and has seen the hostile graffiti which appears and quickly disappears on and around

"If I know my people, I don't think they will ever let (the Shah) get away."

campus. But, he adds, Khomeini supports their actions. He does not think the Ayatollah has full control over them. "It is easier for him to say 'Kill them' than 'Release them.' If the United States attacks Iran those

campus. "I laugh and call the people who do it shallow minded," he remarks, and this does not apply to Americans alone. He says of Iranians, "I feel bad that they burned down the American flag."

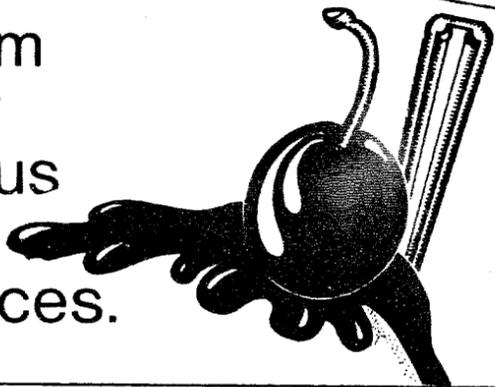
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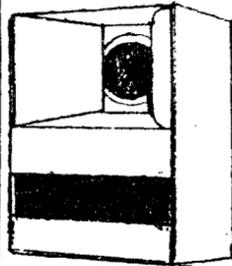
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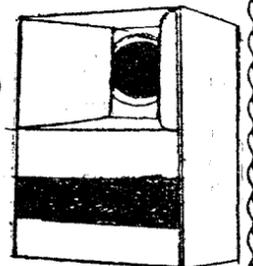
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Never-Ending Budget Process

By Chris Fairhall

This article is the second installment in a series about money at Stony Brook. Last issue's article dealt with the sources of Stony Brook's annual budget. This article deals with how the University allocates money internally.

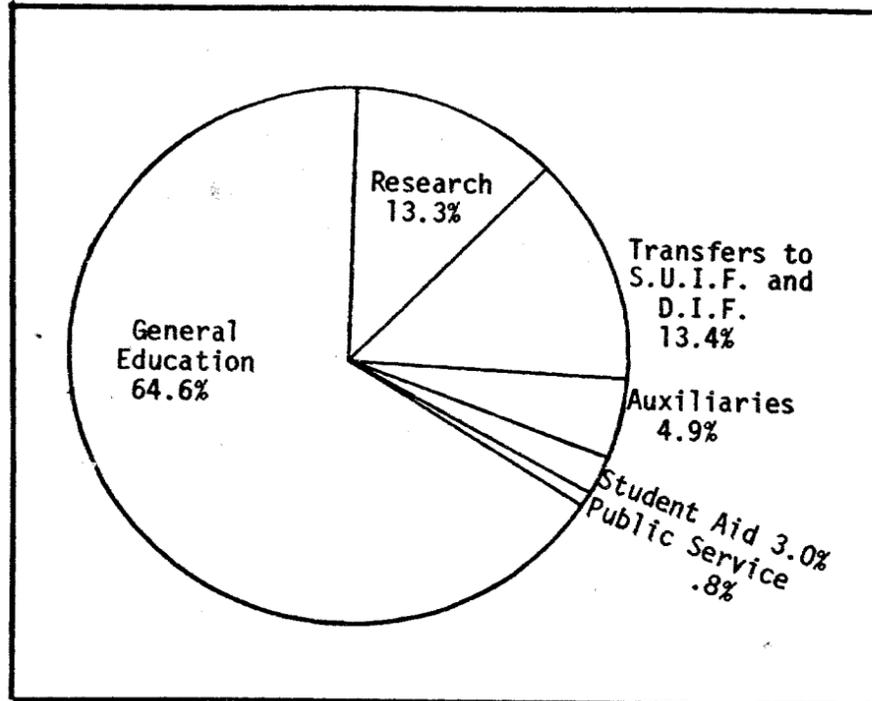
The process of requesting money from Albany for different programs and departments is complicated and often confusing. But there is always something consistent about it. "The final budget request is usually less than what we asked for in the first place," said Budget Director Larry Noonan.

He said that the budget Stony Brook works with is incremental. "We have a base budget and we build on it," Noonan explained. The University's annual budget is about \$105 million, and its yearly increase is about \$22 million.

University Controller Richard Brown said that Stony Brook takes in an annual \$160 million. While the University budget is about \$30 million less, the discrepancy results because the grants or auxiliary services are not taken into consideration.

The first step in the budgeting process is compiling a preliminary budget request. The incremental increases, Noonan explained, are for salary increases, price increases, work load of professors (which is tied to student enrollment), and "improvement money towards things that are not mandatory, but are desirable."

To work out a budget for an academic program, a department head makes a request to one of four provosts, who then discusses it with a member of the Academic Vice President's office. "The departments consult with the provosts and develop a list of what they need as improvements," said Noonan. This goes to the President's office and the Resources and Academic Programs which is part of the SUSB Senate. "RAP then gives its input to the President as to what it feels the priorities are," he added.



Non-academic programs work in much the same way, except they do not have provosts. At the end of this phase, Noonan said that the President goes back to the Assistant Vice-Presidents, each of whom is in charge of funding a particular area, and that a preliminary budget request is drawn up.

"From there we present our case to SUNY," Noonan explained. What generally happens, he said, is that SUNY Central will agree with mandatory improvements and work load and "give us a percentage" of what was asked for things that are not mandatory, but desirable.

Assistant Vice Presidents are important in formulating, revising and allocating monies. "The Assistant Vice Presidents decide essentially how much a particular department will receive. They have

control over budgets for departments in their purviews," Noonan said.

With academic programs, it is the provosts who determine what particular departments receive. There are four provosts in liberal studies: one each for physical and mathematical sciences, biological science, fine arts and humanities, and social sciences. Deans for the Graduate school and College of Engineering also allocate funds.

After the preliminary budget has been sent to Albany, it is returned and Stony Brook usually must cut part of it. The result of this is an adjusted budget. This is sent back to SUNY Central, "which cuts it again," according to Emile Adams, Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

The adjusted budget is then submitted to the Division of the Budget, which is part of the legislature. "Then from DOB if it is cut, it goes back to SUNY Central" and to Stony Brook, Adams said. After it is approved by DOB, the budget is given final approval by the state legislature.

Because the state has had its own fiscal problems of late, it appears that the final budget will fall very short of the preliminary budget. In general, however, it is not customary for a school to receive what it asks for in its preliminary request.

John Mullane, who is an Assistant to the Academic Vice President, said that because there is a hiring freeze in the state, "There are indications that our operating budget may be reduced. But there isn't anything specific."

Mullane said there is a freeze because the state is concerned about economic problems. "The state expects monetary problems, yet some of the legislators are saying there is \$300 million in excess funds because Governor Carey vetoed the bill which would subsidize the fuel bills of senior citizens and low income home owners.

There is also a supplemental budget which "takes care of those things that weren't anticipated," said Noonan. "For instance," he said, "if there was a major

increase in the price of fuel, it would go into the supplemental budget. It's not a shopping list though. It's clearly a process to meet emergency needs that could not have been foreseen."

While each Assistant Vice President is in charge of allocating money to particular areas, the two who directly affect students the most are the Academic Vice President and the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Adams is responsible for budgeting student affairs. The office oversees Residence Life, special programs including the international studies office, Financial Aid, Orientation, the Office of Records, Career Development and the Stony Brook Union, among others.

There have been many cutbacks in services and programs under Student Affairs. Its annual budget last year was about \$2.3 million. "It's the smallest budget in the University system to my knowledge," Adams asserted.

Some noticeable effects of the small budget for Student Affairs are that the Financial Aid office has limited office hours and that lines are long at the Office

University Controller Richard Brown points to the 1977-78 Current Fund Expenditures.



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of Records because not enough people work there. "Between 1975 and '77 we lost 15 lines, none of which has ever been replaced. We've had to absorb all the inflation, all the increases," Adams said.

Budget lines have specified amounts of money that particular programs can receive. A major problem with the academic programs is that the budget lines have remained relatively constant, while inflation has been soaring.

The two budget lines that Provost for Humanities and Fine Arts Sandy Petrey said he works with are for personnel and "other than personnel." He is responsible for dividing lines so that departments have a sufficient number of teachers. The "other than" category refers primarily to supplies.

A stable budget means that there is little room for growth of new programs. "The amount of money that Stony Brook has been receiving is more or less stable," Petrey said. "There was improvement in the personnel category. This year that will be stable," he said. "Our hope is that the budget will continue to grow."

Petrey described himself as a liaison between department heads and the Academic Vice President. "I talk to department chairmen constantly throughout the year. Their operational contract through the Administration is with us," said Petrey.

Sei Sujishi, who is provost for Physical Sciences and Mathematics said his division "probably gets more money" than the others. Budget lines have remained static with everyone, and Sujishi said, "We are going to have to work harder with less."

In order to have a large enough line to run science programs, Sujishi said there needs to be a large number of students. "We do the things that most Universities do, but we don't have the number of students" needed to support the programs, he said.

Changing the World

Millions of Americans are aware of the situation with boat people in Indochina, but, it appears that very few are trying to help the Cambodians with their plight. One exception, however, is Stony Brook senior Gary Gross.

From "just reading the paper and listening to what's going on," Gross said he realized that an entire nation is in a precarious position. "It's three million lives, and it's another holocaust. You have to care," he asserted.

Gross said that he "was made sensitive to the situation" because he worked with a Vietnamese during the summer. Taped outside his suite door in Hand College are posters and pages from newspapers which show a gruesome story of children starving to death in Indochina. At the bottom of a leaflet that he printed is, "Call Gary." But the phone has not rung, he said.

"No one helped at first. People in the building just weren't into it. I went around sort of testing them," he said. Though Gross did not admit disappointment, the tone in his voice gave him away. With poor reception from his peers, it did not appear that Gross would fare better with Acting University President Richard Schmidt.

"I made an appointment to see Schmidt. He was really nice," said Gross. "We spoke about it. He said Father Robert Smith (of the Interfaith office) was having a pot luck dinner to help out with the boat people." Gross was invited by Schmidt to dinner. "We spent most of the evening discussing what we should do. The big thing was when they said 'we'll support you,'"

Gross recalled.

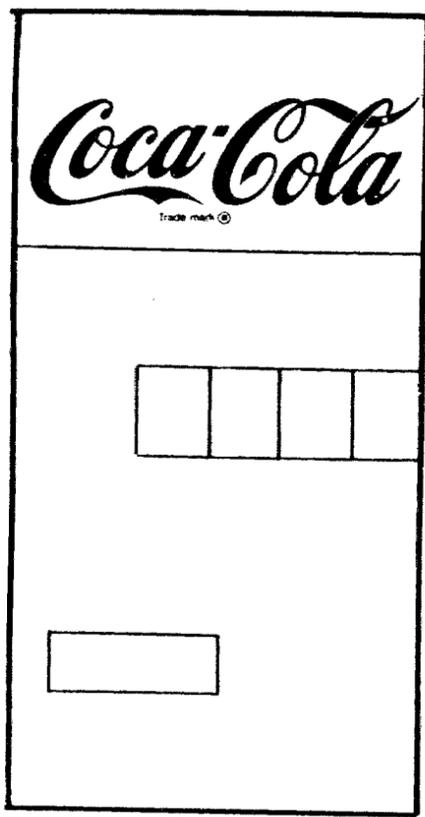
What resulted was the first meeting of the Committee for Cambodian Relief on November 19. Between 35 and 50 people attended the late afternoon conference in Stony Brook Union room 231. Gross and Smith spoke along with Professors Hugh Cleland and Elof Carlson. Schmidt delivered a poignant message about starvation, explaining that if depriving infants of food does not kill them, it will cause them permanent brain damage.

Numerous ideas were presented at the conference including writing letters to the United Nations and the State Department, and raising money for relief. "We're also hoping to sponsor Cambodian students at the University," Gross said. But in order to set in motion any of the ideas, he added, "It's important to get the press interested and get people involved. Optimally we want to get some rallies going and make ourselves heard by the state or federal government, or whatever it takes."

Gross said that Schmidt was pleased to find a student who was interested in the Cambodian situation. "He said he was looking for people who get involved," Gross explained. However, these people apparently do not surface too often.

One problem at Stony Brook, according to Gross, is that students spend their time partying or working on school related projects, and do not pay attention to the outside world. "People here have to realize this," he asserted. "They're obsessed with things that are so inconsequential."

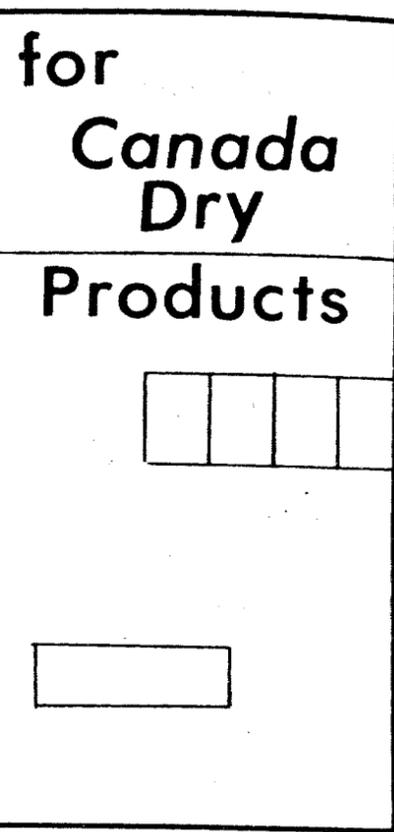
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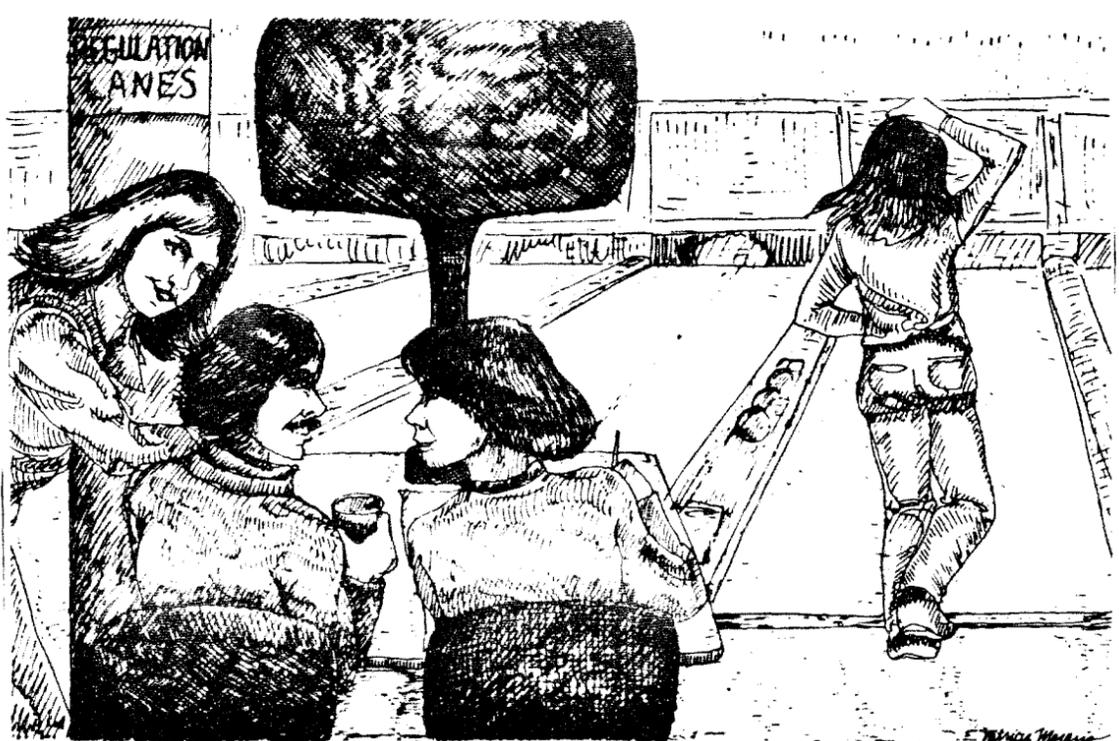
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Facing the Consequences of Imperialism

It is time for Americans to be objective about what our government has done on the international scene.

It is not out of the clear blue that "students" in Iran took over the American embassy and continue to hold 49 Americans hostage. It is not coincidence that the U.S. was involved in Indochina where there is a concerted effort to annihilate a nation. It is unfortunately typical of our government to screw up like this, and this time it is not getting off lightly.

Heads of the U.S. government looked like clowns when they tried to pull off the Bay of Pigs incident almost two decades ago. There is much hatred towards our government from Islamic people because it put and kept the Shah in power. Perhaps the holocaust will be resurrected in connection with the boat people, millions of starving people who can not have food shipped to them because of a horrid climate that the U.S. had a hand in creating.

American attitudes towards these situations show how misinformed our people are. Myopic students at college campuses (and it is ironic that it is students who supposedly learn to open their minds) are painting their walls with graffiti concerning "horrid Iranians." To a puerile mind, some of the vandalism must seem constructive because it shows that Americans can stand together to face an enemy. We hope the majority of Americans realize

that this is lunacy.

Perhaps Khomeini is warped and destructive and will not rule Iran much longer. Perhaps he will destroy Iran; perhaps to the detriment of western economy he will destroy the oil fields there. Regardless of what Americans feel about him, many Iranians support Khomeini 100 percent. For many years, Iranians were ruled by a hated despot who supplied the U.S. with oil.

What difference did it make that the inhabitants of a country were ruled by a man they hated so long as the U.S. got its oil? The answer is 49 Americans being held hostage and the possibility of war in perhaps the most heated area on earth. It appears that the price of oil is more than what one pays at the pumps.

Yet Americans still ask how this could happen. At Stony Brook, there was an anti-Khomeini rally. Actions like this indicate that our people are furious with Iran.

There should be anger focused at Iran; there is no doubt about that. But it should be understood that so far as Iranian sentiment is concerned, we are holding the former dictator who ruined their country. And not only that, we were the ones who kept this man in power while he was there.

Was it not just plain stupidity that caused the Shah to come here? Maybe President Carter is

naive, and did not realize that it would cause a dilemma for this country. Or, more likely, it shows that the power of America is vested in the almighty dollar, and that whoever controls the most bucks can practically set foreign policy. In this case, it was apparently David Rockefeller and Henry Kissinger who did just that.

We watch the safety of Americans fall into the hands of fanatics in Iran because one or two rich people wanted a favor of the President. Was the nation so blind as not to see that Iran would do something rash if the Shah came here?

Unfortunately, the answer is yes.

The Chairman of the Committee for Cambodian Relief said that students at Stony Brook were uninterested in helping the boat people. It is not because they were busy with political activities. It is probably not due to anything except apathy.

If people expended the energy to lift their heads out of their own little spheres and observe what happens in the world around them, they might be able to have a say in how things are run.

The problem seems to be that people can not open up their minds enough to see that the everyday problems with which they contend are inconsequential compared to problems throughout the world.

The Power of Common Sense

While spokesmen from LILCO will tell the public that nuclear energy is safe and economical, spokesmen from SHAD will contend that it is more expensive than oil or coal, and that it is impossible to safely store radioactive wastes.

The use of nuclear energy is an explosive issue that has resulted in protests around the U.S., including nuclear plant sites and the New York Stock Exchange. Alphabet-named groups are inevitably on the scene, each preaching about how wonderful or evil nuclear power is. The protests and formation of these groups tell us that this is a controversial subject worthy of debate. But it is only a small number of persons who can speak with intelligence about nuclear energy.

The layman just can not speak about a topic on which only a relative handful of people are knowledgeable. The scientists are the people to learn from; they are the people to listen to; yet they fight among themselves as to the advantages and disadvantages of nuclear power.

Physicists and engineers in

the area and throughout the world still dispute the dangers of nuclear radiation; they dispute whether radioactive waste can be safely stored; they seem to agree that an accident at a nuclear plant could be devastating, but some say the safety precautions are too good to let that happen, while the others snap out "Three Mile Island!"

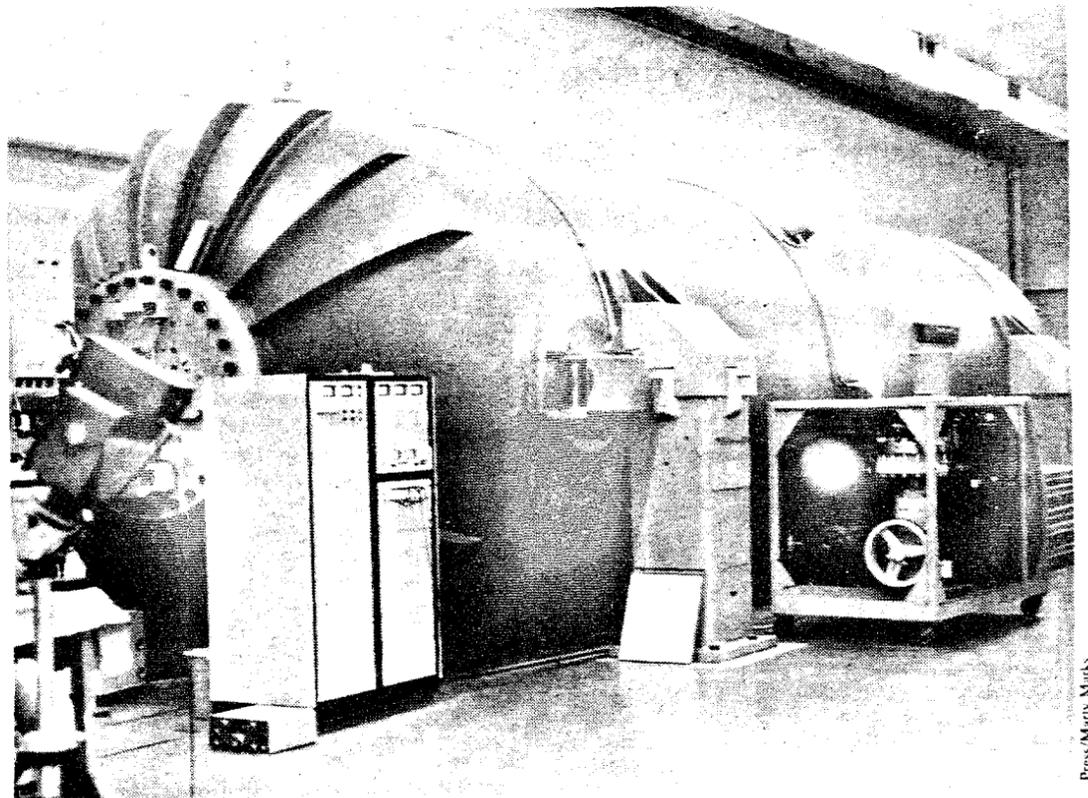
In this high-technology world, we are told -- and it seems apparent -- that we must rely on testimony by the experts. We are told that the world is too complicated for one person to understand more than a few of its workings. Society is in a moral dilemma over the use of nuclear power; it seems that no logical person could make up his or her mind because there is so much contradictory testimony from these experts.

If each person were a computer, surely his or her circuits would have burnt out by now in trying to come to a logical conclusion about the use of nuclear power. And this is where we are one up on the computer -- for we have the ability to sort for our-

selves the confused data, and seek out further information. Then, applying common

sense and a fair amount of intuition, we can find an answer to this quandary. And

it is this that is the power and responsibility of every individual.



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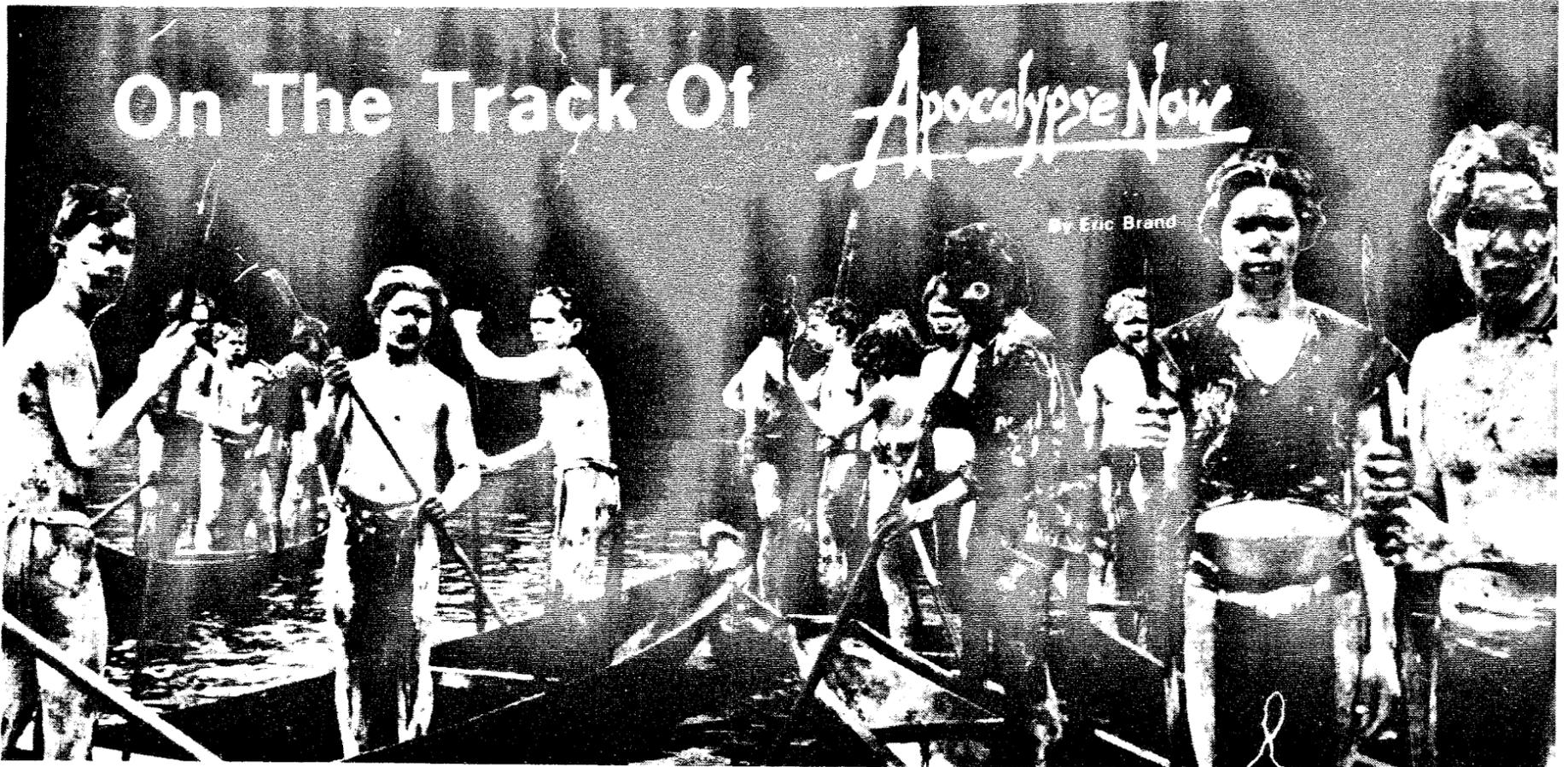
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We will publish again December 13.

On The Track Of

Apocalypse Now

By Eric Brand



After three years and \$30 million, after a monsoon, and a heart attack, after promise and rumor, *Apocalypse Now* is here—and the question is: has F.F. Coppola's gamble paid off? Was it worth the effort, the time, the money? Yes. Worth it, and more.

Brilliant in its visual imagery, its acting and its scope, Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* is magnificent cinema—but not perfect. The film originally was based on Joseph Conrad's novella, "Heart of Darkness," which dealt with man's basic good and evil, but then turned as a source to Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*, thereby drawing upon the myth-oriented *Death of the King* theme. And in addition, the moral problems of the Vietnam War are heaped on for good measure. Here is where *Apocalypse Now* fails—or rather, falls short—for by opting to incorporate three themes, Coppola has not truly succeeded with any one of them. The ultimate effect is that though everything comes out right in the end, you're not quite sure why.

Technically, the film is unparalleled. Coppola, (who has, to his credit, *Patton*, *The Conversation*, *Godfather Parts I and II*), wisely gathered together top talent. Cinematographer Vittorio Storaro (*Last Tango in Paris*, 1900, *Agatha*) and Production Designer Dean Tavoularis (*Bonnie and Clyde*, *Little Big Man*, *Godfather Parts I and II*), and literally hundreds on their staff, have created scenes of hypnotic and haunting beauty. Particularly striking visual images are the helicopter tableaux. Like birds of prey—perhaps even evoking a hint of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse—these harbingers of death and doom rise out of the horizon, silhouetted against the orange dawn. The destruction of the Do Lung Bridge is another visual high point. If the publicity is to be believed, "more than 500 smoke bombs, 100 phosphorous sticks, 1,200 gallons of gas, 50 water explosions of 35 sticks of dynamite each, 2,000 rockets, flares, tracers, and 5,000 feet of detonating cord are used in the 1½ minute finale." The effect is incredible. But most riveting is the climactic scene, a rapid-fire pastiche of music, emotions, tension, death, and symbolism. It is exhilarating and exhausting—and ultimately unnerving.

The acting in *Apocalypse Now* is uniformly excellent. Martin Sheen is remarkable as the ever-present Captain Willard, about whom the plot revolves. He is as intense as the madness of the war, yet as reserved as the asceticism his character demands. Sheen, the actor, is the one who suffered the heart attack, miles from nowhere, and in the middle of a hurricane; but he lived, and stuck it out, knowing this was the role of a lifetime. It is lucky for both his career and for us that he did.

Robert Duvall, as the Patton-like (and that is no coincidence) Lt. Colonel Kilgore is unforgettable. The character is not a part of "Heart of Darkness," but was created by screenwriter Coppola and John Milmus (*Dirty Harry*, *Magnum Force*, *The Wind and the Lion*), to serve as a foil to Colonel Kurtz. Duvall's portrayal of the blood'n'guts, iron-spitting, surf-board loving Kilgore is so rousing that you forget this man is a ruthless killer and his values are absurd. And with that by-now famous line, "I love the smell of napalm in the morning," Duvall can do no wrong.

Brando. Ah, Brando. It seems that if you like the film, you like Brando, and vice versa. Marlon Brando has become almost as great a legendary figure as the character he portrays: Colonel Kurtz. Provided you can go into the theater without the ridiculous insults of his detractors, without the cutting remarks about his acting ability, and without the rumors about his weight (gained, incidentally, to heighten his resemblance to the images of Buddha carved in the temple walls), and just see him as

Colonel Kurtz, you'll be all right. Brando is fine as the revered warrior whose methods are "unsound." If he mumbles, or is perceived as mumbling, well, dammit, it doesn't matter! He's supposed to mumble! What he's saying to Willard isn't that important. What's important is the general view he espouses—and that's obvious whether his words are intelligible or not.

The men that accompany Willard on the boat upstream are also portrayed outstandingly. Frederic Forrest (Chef), Albert Hall (Chief), Sam Bottoms (Lance), and Larry Fishburne (Clean), all slide into their very well-written roles effortlessly and with great animation. Some of the grimmest and some of the funniest scenes occur on the boat, and each of these men deserves much credit. But a resounding and respectful ovation belongs to Dennis Hopper, who for the first time I can remember, delivers a humorous, clever and poignant performance as a freelance photographer, Kurtz' desciple.

No less effective is the music for the film—indeed, the whole soundtrack, thanks in part to Sound Montage and Designer Walter Murch. I write "in part," because though the soundtrack is mixed beautifully, the selection of music is its underlying virtue. The film opens with "The End," a mystical, slightly disturbing, but very musical piece by The Doors. This song prepares us for the hallucinogenic, dream-like atmosphere that is an integral part of both the film and the war. Effective in a different way is Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries," which Kilgore blasts from his helicopters when he makes his attacks. It serves not only to scare the hell out of the enemy, but to exhilarate his men—and the audience. And that's the lunacy of the attack scene: that though a village filled with women and children is being struck, the powerful driving, uplifting music lets you do nothing but cheer the Americans on to victory. The choice is brilliant, because by involving the audience emotionally, causing that contradiction between instinct and morality, it is forced to face personally the hypocrisy of war. (It also makes one realize how puerile and facile is most popular music, that moves us only to dance, rather than to feel or think.)

But now we come to the main problem: the theme.

The plot is simple: a field commander, Kurtz, has gone (what the army terms) insane, and has set himself up as a god amongst the "savages." He is charged with murder and a special forces soldier, Willard, is sent to "terminate his command"—in other words, kill him. The three themes, outlined above, are fairly evident if you watch closely, but as the film progresses and they become intertwined, they also become convoluted.

The thematic treatment of the Vietnam war is fairly straightforward: there was no right or wrong; we had no right to be there; men do some terrible things in a war, especially this one. As Willard states in his narration, (expertly written by Michael Herr), "Charging someone with murder here was like passing out speeding tickets at the Indy 500." But the Vietnam War itself is handled much better and at greater length in *The Deer Hunter* wherein its effects at home and on the battlefield are examined. *Apocalypse Now*, though Coppola argues this isn't so, seems to accept the Vietnam War environment, and then do its damndest to ignore it. References to sides are usually in the form of "us and them," and not once is mention made of the U.S. in terms of the war, nor are the ordinarily-ubiquitous insignia of our country to be seen. Obviously, the intention is to make *Apocalypse Now* a parable for all ages, all wars and all men. In "Heart of Darkness," Conrad has Kurtz ruling over a tribe in Africa during the time of European colonization, rather than during a war. The travesties are just as horrible, yet the political overtones do not hinder our examination of the main theme. The difficulty, of course, is that Coppola

began making the film with one intent, and changed his mind as he went along.

The idea, four years ago, was to take Conrad's story and adapt it, update it. Marlow, the "hero" of "Heart of Darkness," travels deep into Africa towards Kurtz, and examines man's inner good and evil and his primeval tendencies. For most of Conrad's adventurer's, wrote Royal Roussel in *The Metaphysics of Darkness*, "the voyage is directed toward the ultimate origin of consciousness itself...Marlow attempts to descend through the intermediate levels of creation to confront the primal ground of existence." As with Willard in the jungle of Southeast Asia, Marlow goes deeper into the dark heart of Africa and of man. He finds that Kurtz, a man of great intellect and sensitivity, has taken his position of authority as the chief of a key Company station, and perverted it. He has set himself up as a "semi-demigod," worshipped and feared by the tribesmen. He has cut himself off from civilization, from his superiors. This is repeated in *Apocalypse Now*, though in the film, Kurtz is regular army. In both, Kurtz is tops in his field: competent, respected, hard-working, ingenious; he is being groomed for one of the top spots in the organization. But he rejects this, and sinks into pagan idolatry.

Willard has a similar background. Actually, the whole point is that Willard is similar to Kurtz. The closer he gets to Kurtz, the more evident it becomes that he is of the same cloth—ascetic, a maverik, intensely moral—and as Willard himself says at the outset, "If his story is really a confession, so is mine." When Willard meets Kurtz, he is really meeting himself, his "heart of darkness," or rather, what he could become if he allowed his darkness to overtake him.

Coppola's technique prods us to see the journey this way. As the film progresses, the scenes get darker and darker, and the people and environment get less and less "civilized." The last time we see artificial light is at the Do Lung Bridge, and this is the last outpost of civilization. After this point, all scenes are at dusk or night—and Willard is at the very heart of the jungle, the primal ground for existence.

Kurtz himself is quite a character: enigmatic to some, remarkable to all. He rejects society's trappings and teachings, (as Willard learns to do, discovering the hypocrisy and lies of society, thus finding he understands Kurtz). Though a major point is made of his being an eloquent, effective speaker, Kurtz tells Willard that words cannot describe the truth of existence, (echoing the Daoist philosophy, "The way that can be spoken is not the way"). He is a man that can as easily order the death of an innocent soldier as he can recite poetry. (It is ironic that he reads on screen "The Hollow Men" by T.S. Eliot, as the character of Kurtz in "Heart of Darkness" inspired the poem; but it is fitting because Eliot's Buddhist philosophy reflects Kurtz's own.)

But at the real center of all this—the center of the book and the film—is what Kurtz calls "the horror." The horror is at his recognition of "brutal instincts, gratified by monstrous passions." The horror is what each member of the audience perceives, of course, but Kurtz claims that one must see it, live with it, master it. This is his creed. Though his mind is clear, says his disciple, the photo-journalist, his soul is mad.

Kurtz tells Willard he has the right even to kill him, but not to judge him. He questions Willard on morality. "Have you considered the opinion of others?" And then, "Have you considered the opinion of yourself?" Kurtz demands Willard make the decision on killing him for himself.

What it comes down to is whether Willard chooses to accept the "horror," whether he chooses not just to acknowledge the horror, but to live with it, by it—or kill

Price's New Book: Passionate Account

LADIES' MAN
by Richard Price
Bantam Books
\$2.50

Reviewed by Mike Kornfeld

Is there more to life than "getting laid?" Many warm-blooded American males whose lives are consumed by a compulsive sex drive, would answer that question with a resounding "No." Kenny Becker would. He was always on the make.

"Anytime I was scared or felt hungry or needy around people, anytime my brain would slip into a survival head, the order from Central was Stick It In. When in fear, fuck. Out of all the artichoke layers of bullshit that made up my life, the only thing that never switched up on me was my dick!"

Those are the revelations of Kenny Becker, aged 30, a former door-to-door salesman (hawking room spray to shut-ins and getting a hard-on every time he stumbled upon—but never got into—an attractive woman), now unemployed, unloved, and utterly unsure of himself. Not coming, but rather, coming apart at the seams.

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Many of us have, at one time or another, found ourselves in such a predicament. Kenny Becker's situation is not unique. And, while Becker is merely a character—the focal point—in a new novel entitled *Ladies' Man*, author Richard Price's portrayal of him is strikingly realistic.

Ladies' Man is the gripping story of a guy (Becker) who walks out on his lady (who he laid and lived with for nine months) and into a week of desperation, of insecurity, of agony, of living hell.

The streets of New York City (in particular, the "red light" district with its singles bars and massage parlors, and nearby 42nd Street with its neon invitations to "live sex") form the

backdrop for this passionate account of seven days in Kenny Becker's life, a week neither Becker, nor readers, are likely to soon forget.

So explosive and so emotionally charged is *Ladies' Man*. You can feel the pulse, the bustle of the city. In its pages, the environs of the city and its many-faceted inhabitants come to life. So vivid and real are the characterizations, that Price's people practically pop off the page. That Price has an actor's eye for personal particulars, has been attested to by other critics.

Readers get an in-depth glimpse of someone everytime Becker walks the city streets or sips a stiff Martini, yet Becker never really gets to know any of them. He proves that it is possible to be surrounded by many people and still feel alienated and lonely. Becker feels lost and depressed in the big city. No scene seems right for him, and he checks out many.

Becker's whole life is wrapped up in an overwhelming urge to jack off—to have "jump, jerk, and squirt affairs." Yet, he finds only fleeting pleasure in picking up bar wenches and sleazes, for they, like him, are "sucking wind," and he finds himself getting into a philosophical head whenever he's around them.

"No matter what happened to you," he tells one chick, "no matter where you've been, you're here now, and now is what you got to deal with (as if he could), he banged the bar with his fist (though he'd have much preferred to bang her). You know you can spend your whole life thinking about the past and feeling sorry for what happened or didn't happen, but wherever you've been, you're here now and here and now are where you're gonna find the things you need.

The answer to our hurtin' is here, not back there." He felt like a hunter bringin' home game as they sat thigh to thigh in a cab. But he also felt angry and frightened; he wanted to bang her brains out."

Becker feels very disoriented and out of the stream of life. He's missing out on something vital to our existence. There's no amour in his life. "L'amour is all in life that we are fighting for," according to Ray Stevens. Yet, even when Kenny was living with LaDonna, love was an unknown intangible.

"Love. We fought like the U.S. Marines, and the only pleasure we ever got with each other was the hour between the end of a fight and sleep. That was the only time we really talked or fucked. The rest of the time we walked around afraid of each other, not really understanding or appreciating each other; what I found funny she thought pathetic or mean, and what she found funny, I usually considered a major yawn. I loved good balling and good movies. She was into modern dance and nightclub-type singing."

In fact, it was her singing, or rather his reaction to it, that drew them apart. Becker was jealous of anything that took her out of his bed. He didn't believe in her; he didn't care about her; he didn't love her—all he cared about was one thing. Without her, the sole joy he seemed to get out of his life was at those moments when he thought about how it used to be.

As you can see, Price does not beat around the bush, nor dally in high falutin' words. His language is today's language, verbiage that the people of the present generation can relate to—the kind of explicit phraseology that makes the statements which landed comic Lenny Bruce in jail during the '60s seem mild in comparison. Of course, Bruce used the language he used, in jest, to make a point. Price uses profanity because it's a very real part of our culture. And the novel's impact is all the more because of it.

Explicit language and descriptive phrases are not all that arouses our attention. Price has a penchant for metaphor (sexual and otherwise). While the phrase "grinning like a mule eating shit" might be considered hackneyed, lines like "Maurice chortled as he scratched furiously at his head, loosening enough dandruff to snow in Buffalo," and "My nose so stuffed, I wouldn't be able to smell a corpse in a phone booth," are striking.

Ladies' Man is a striking work of fiction. Price displays the kind of passion and depth in treating his subject matter that could only have evolved from personal experiences. Indeed, the author was born in New York City and spent his first eighteen years in a Bronx Housing project. The Bronx was the setting for his two previously published novels, *The Wanderers* and *Bloodbrothers*, both of which have become major motion pictures. *Ladies' Man* too could become a film; it could be the working and middle class urbanites' answer to Paul Mazursky's *An Unmarried Woman*, albeit from a male perspective.

In *Ladies' Man*, Price has displayed the best novelistic treatment of loneliness since Paul Zindel's *The Pigman*, and certainly, amongst the many novels on life in the '70s, *Ladies' Man* ranks as one of the best.



ascetic and celibate, (the pinnacle of medieval manhood!), is sent through a land turned to waste in search of the ailing king to enquire as to his health. Upon the completion of his task, the king is supposedly returned to vitality, and the Waste Land to fruition. This theme is certainly evident in *Apocalypse Now*, though I doubt it would be noticed except for Weston's book appearing on screen. For this reason, it does not really affect our perception of the plot, the characterization or the arriere-pensee, (so to speak). The big hindrance is the Death of the King theme.

In Sir James' ground-breaking investigation into the origins of beliefs, ceremonies, superstitions, and dreams, he tells of the eons-old precept that the health of the king and his kingdom are directly related, even symbiotic. And so, when a king begins to get old, sick—in many cultures, when he can no longer please his wives—his is sentenced to die. In this way, his soul, his essence, is then passed on to his successor, caught before it, too, can become sick. (*Le Roi est mort!, vive le Roi!*)

Well, Colonel Kurtz is certainly seen by his followers to be a king, and his kingdom is certainly sick: a chaotic, war-torn, bloody mess—apocalypse now. And Colonel Kurtz is certainly sick. He suffers from malaria and who knows what else; he's obese; he's quite assuredly anticipating an imminent death. So, he must die. Headquarters orders it, Willard says the jungle demands it—even Kurtz wants it. In a wild, gorgeous cinematic feast of a penultimate scene, the whole shebang is brought to a climax.

But the heavy symbolism of that scene, and the unclear message of the final moments leave the audience confused. To avoid giving away the end, I won't go into detail, but I will say only that the film misses—but just. Coppola has reached for genius and hit only (only!) brilliance. His spectacle is eye-filling, powerful, vivid, jolting, but in the final analysis just a notch below satisfying. *Apocalypse Now* is so good, so thought-provoking and fresh that one thematic flaw is upsetting.

In writing of his experience in creating the film, Francis Ford Coppola wrote that "...I, like Captain Willard, was moving up a river in a faraway jungle, looking for answers and hoping for some kind of catharsis." Coppola underwent his catharsis, and to our great benefit, found his answers. Unfortunately, he raises a few too many questions. Nevertheless, if you experience no other form of popular entertainment this year, experience *Apocalypse Now*.

Kurtz and thereby reject it. As Marlow, in "Heart of Darkness," states, "He had stepped over the edge, while I had been permitted to draw back my hesitating foot."

Coppola chooses to throw even more symbolic logs on his cinematic fire. It's possible that by adding the ancient mythological themes of *The Quest* and of *The Death of the King*, the film-maker hoped to tap our "racial memory" and subconscious and involve us both intellectually and

emotionally in his film. He cues us in to his incorporation of the mythological themes when the camera blatantly pans over Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*, lying on a table in Kurtz' room.

Weston's book is a treatise on the background of the legend of the Holy Grail "from ancient ritual to Christian symbol." It is the legend of *The Quest*, wherein a knight,



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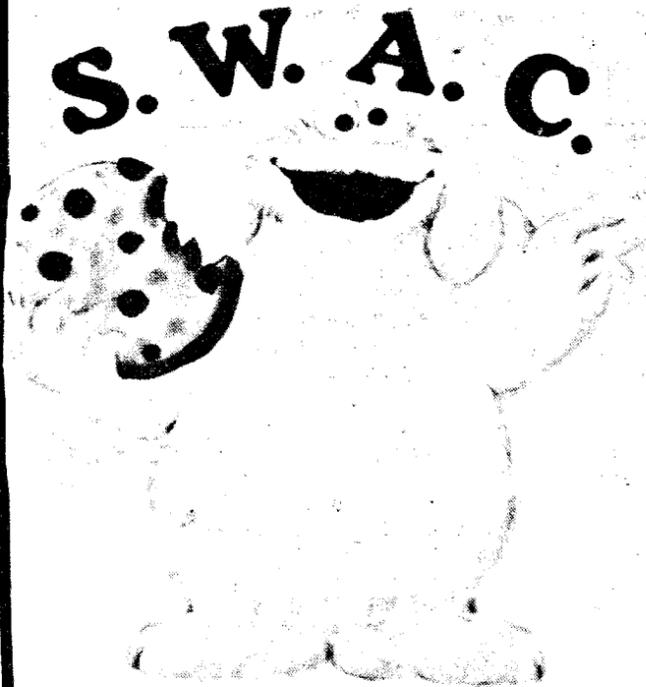
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'Fire Beneath': Out Before It Started

By Patrick Giles

They should have kept the original title: "Something About Oedipus" is a far more exact description of the newest "experimental" production (and I mean "experimental" in quotation marks) inflicted on the Stony Brook public. Vague, insubstantial, only tenuously related to the Oedipus myth, "The Fire Beneath" was one of the most punishing evenings I've ever endured. It lasted an hour—but God, what an interminable 60 minutes it was!

I realize that this piece, which has been "workshopping" and "rehearsing" since the semester began, was created for its opening here by Bill Bruehl and Ernst Muller and the creation of the text during this period was part of the experiment. I know that it was billed as "a work-in-progress" and must be regarded as unfinished, in a process-of-evolution, etc. But nine weeks of work should yield more than an hour of solid boredom and the more I think about it, the more I feel that "work in progress" is being used as an excuse, a way of meeting harsh comments with, "Yes, but we're just starting."

It should be said at this point that it's a terrible shame that Stony Brook audiences—lively, fairly open-minded, and receptive when you can get them into the theatre—have so little exposure to the bold experiments in contemporary theatre. We were privileged to see the Warsaw Mime at the Fine Arts Center a few weeks ago, and the excitement I felt on that evening is the real benefit of experimental work: You are seeing an image onstage that you've never encountered, and it stirs elements in you to which you're a stranger, as well. You're given more room to think and feel. "The Fire Beneath" may have been considered "experimental" 15 years ago, but right now it's about as avant-garde as Mickey Rooney and Ann Miller in "Sugar Babies."

Sitting atop his palace, playing the drums (no, I didn't make that up), Oedipus, the blind mother-fucker, is surrounded by his children, the prophet Tiresias who is also blind, the ghost of his mother-wife, Jocasta and the anxious Theban citizens. Everyone presses Oedipus for guidance, for a promise of the throne, for anything, but he says nothing until the final moments of year on the palace roof. The plot is a fairly neat link between "Oedipus Rex" and "Oedipus at Colonus" and there are several in-

teresting avenues to pursue here, (how did the children, who do not appear in "Oedipus Rex", learn of the terrible climax of that drama? How can they bear to live with it?) It's disheartening then that "The Fire Beneath" is unable to come to grips with any of its material. Muller, a local writer-director, and Professor Bruehl, a tenured member of the Theatre department have written a few interesting lines of prose, but the poetry is monotonous, with a plodding characteristic ("super-luminal speed" is not very easy to say; anachronisms such as "the refinery of his imagination" are jarring). There are also little twists: Why is everyone in the play who is not blind or dead a homosexual? And the text is so insubstantial that lines must be repeated to pad the play's length; I do not get much satisfaction out of hearing "The choice is yours" shouted in various combinations 30 times.

What really kills this piece is the abysmal direction. In an interesting report on The New Theatre Festival in Baltimore, published in Theater Magazine (Fall 1977), the writer mentions "an arrogant self-indulgence infesting experimental theatre work...I see it as the sin of Narcissism: 'Look at me. Watch me express myself. Watch me freak the citizens. See me abandon myself to my feelings. Watch me, I am bright, clever, well-educated. I am an artist. I have license.'" How the man who wrote those words could be the same man who directed "The Fire Beneath" is beyond me. The direction flings itself into every one of those sins: its compositions, motives, movements, performance structure and ideas are banal and weak-minded. They are the precise opposites of the passion and discipline that mark true, useful, avant-garde work. And our audience is perfect for this kind of bullshit. They can't be as discerning as they would be with, say, "Godspell," because the field "The Fire Beneath" rips off is new to them. If some of it is disturbing or boring, they might say, "Maybe it's just that I can't understand this stuff," and there's the tragedy: they probably could, if they had something challenging to think about, to provoke them.

A word must be mentioned of the colorful and shocking costumes by Timothy Miles (what a ghastly figure Jocasta makes, in white robe, hood, and face: chilling.) Thanks should also be extended to Melissa Maravell, who

created the grotesque masks and Susan Cincotta, who designed the beanies and acted as Costume Liaison for the production. Thanks also for Doug Kraner's hospitable playing space and thanks to the cast of the play who do not come off badly at all. Several of them have appeared in other productions and they handle themselves well; several new performers show interesting promise. I must congratulate Bill Lardi and Craig Haft for their hilarious duet, conveniently placed near the end of the evening so that the audience can be awake for the non-ending. I wish the cast had more to work with.

Still, *The Fire Beneath* was not a total wipe-out. I don't think it was as bad as last year's *Swanwhite*, which has entered mythic realms among Theatre majors for true awfulness (*The Swanwhite Awards* are presented to dubious graduates in May). And since the audience at least watched this piece and even liked it at times, this paves the way for the future advanced theatre work.

A few words, please, about "J.B.," which opened and closed so fast that even some hard-core SUSB theatre-goers missed it. Archibald MacLeish's modernization of the Job story (with some 1950's angst thrown in), hasn't aged very well; it needs a strong concept and hefty, judicious cutting to make it work, not to mention a gifted ensemble. Unfortunately, Stony Brook Drama couldn't provide any of these. It's painful to dislike a work that close friends and relatives worked on, but "J.B." was an awful production, and all I can say is how depressing two bad shows in one week can be.

There were a few light spots in all that cosmic darkness. Richard Zimmer has improved since *A Man's A Man*; he took his time, was funny, and I liked watching him. Allan Friedman's *Mr. Zuss* got monotonous after a while, but he had several fine moments. And Adam Weiner's "J.B.," which got off to such a shaky start, blossomed in the difficult climactic moments. It was strong, urgent performing. I don't know how he surmounted all that muck onstage, but he did, making the evening worthwhile. I'm hopeful the next SB Drama offering, "Equus," which opens on November 28, will be a more pleasurable evening. Otherwise, I might consider defecting to the Health Sciences Center.

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CAROLYN - I bet you think I disappeared from the face of the earth. Sorry to disappoint you; see you for dinner. Crinkle

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WOMEN'S CENTER is sponsoring a self defense seminar Thurs. Nov. 29 Meet at Women's Center at 6:30 pm to go to Smithtown Transportation will be Provided.

THERE WILL be a meeting of Amnesty International Monday Dec. 17 at 8 pm in SBS N302 A.I. is a human rights organization.

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The Stony Brook **P**RESS/Sports

New Team Starts a New Season

By Chris Fairhall

Head Coach Dick Kendall said if the basketball team wins 75 percent of its games, "We will have had a good season."

The key to winning this year is for the young Patriot club to learn to play together. "The offense is pretty good," said Center Eugene Treadwell. "We just need some time together. We have all the elements. The only thing we're lacking is experience." Treadwell is the freshman who is playing in Earl Keith's old position.

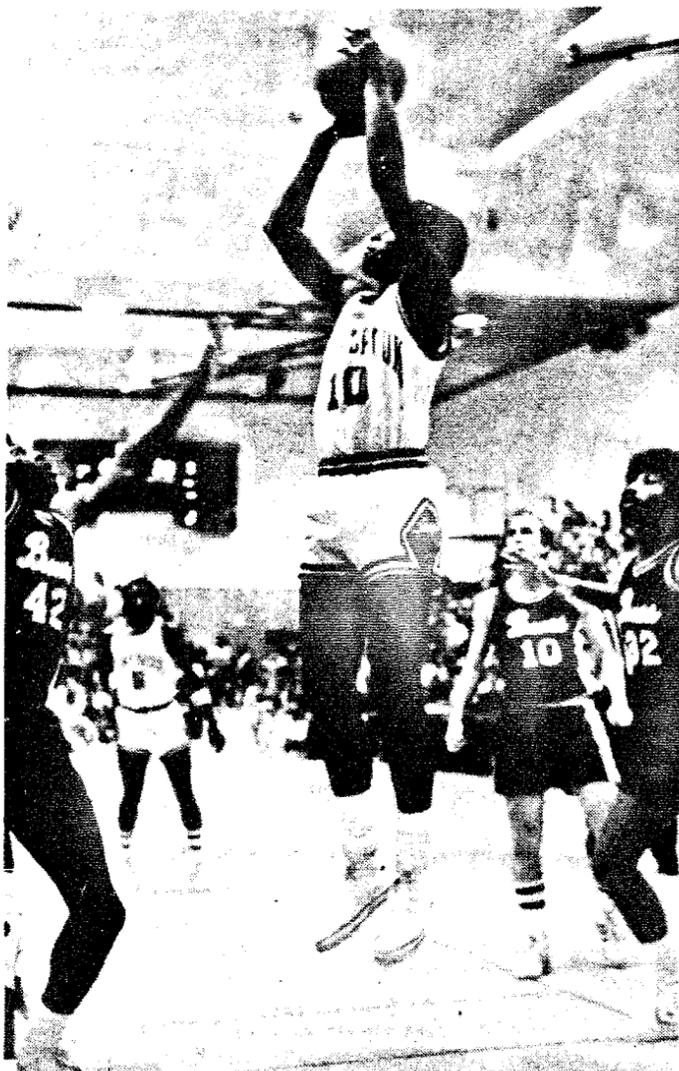
The nucleus of the Patriot team that won 23 consecutive games last year is gone. Keith, Larry Tillery and Wayne Wright have graduated.

Starting forward Keith Martin is also a freshman. Treadwell said that the two of them as well as Ricky Malave and Steve Robinson will have to quickly develop into good players. Treadwell said he thinks he is holding his own. "I think I'm doing pretty good for a guy who has to start and has to learn," he said.

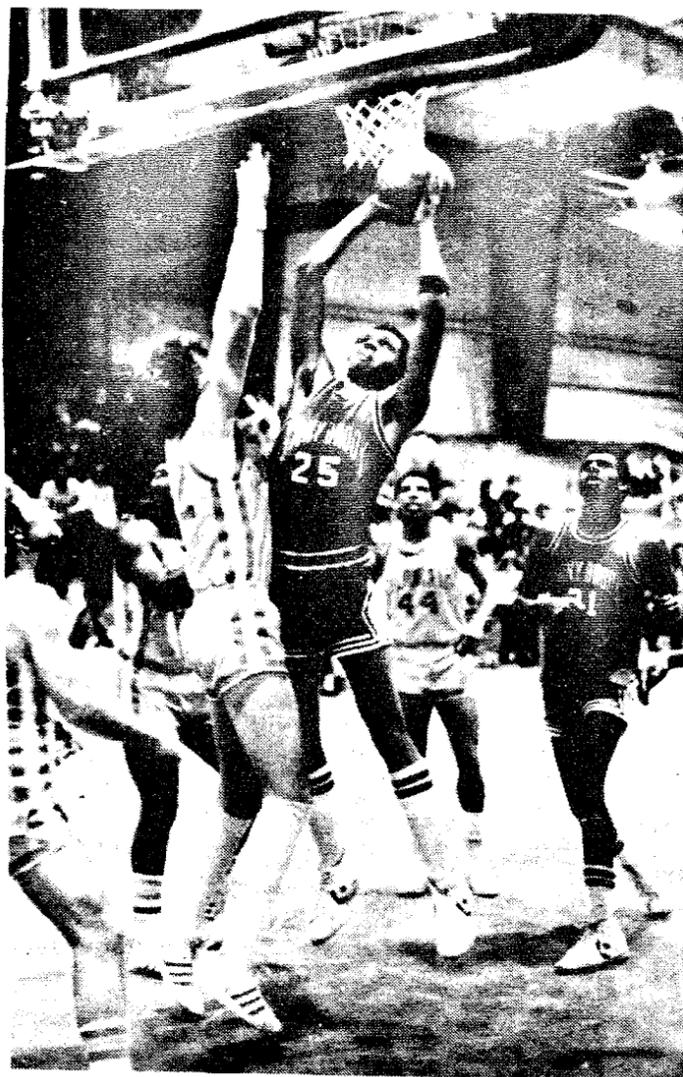
Joe Grandolfo, a 6-2 guard, said that a successful season depends upon the new players. "I think that the inexperienced players have to come through," he said. "They have to learn the patterns."

Starting guard Mel Walker was named co-captain for the Pats this year. He said that the new players are, "trying the best they can. They're getting there." He said that everyone must learn to play together. "We have to work hard. All the young guys that we have, we have to all gel together. We have to learn from our mistakes."

The Pats are 2-1 (as of Wednesday afternoon) and it looks like the team has had a good start. "It was practice every



Mel Walker has great agility for a 6-3 guard. The Patriots' opponents and spectators will see a lot of him driving through the lane, hitting on short jump shots.



Photos Courtesy of University Relations

day," said Kendall. "We had five weeks of super practice. Then we had a couple of bad practices; a couple were cancelled due to concerts. We haven't been able to come back since then," he explained.

In its first game, Stony Brook

defeated the Yue-Loong basketball team from Taiwan, 98-70. The team won 96-70 against Bouy State, but was defeated by Division II Virginia, 61-53. Kendall said that the Pats have a tough season because the team will have to play 11 Division II

teams. But the key to reaching the playoffs is not losing against Division II teams. "If we beat 11 of these schools, we'll go to the playoffs," Kendall said.

"They have been working out five days a week," Kendall asserted. The coach said that the

Patriots will try to take advantage of the size of their guards. Walker is 6-3 and 170; Grandolfo is 6-2 and 175. "The type of offense we're running is an advantage because the guards can go to the inside and play against defenders who are 5-10."

Season Starts for Women

By Vivienne Heston

Laughter is heard from Women's Basketball Coach Sandy Weeden's office. Spirits are high as swimming and basketball seasons are getting under way. There is a tremendous amount of bustle and noise around the gymnasium. Players are training and coaches are barking directions.

Women's sports have, in the past, been ignored by the campus and overshadowed by men's events. However, this situation is gradually changing. Interest is growing in the ever increasing varsity and intramural activities. Each year a greater number of freshpersons try out for the teams and these young women are talented. Seven out of 13 members of the Women's Basketball team are first year students. Change is occurring also in the finance of women's sports.

Last year there were five women's varsity teams, receiving \$17,000 of the annual budget. The eight men's teams were allocated \$30,000. Volleyball coach Fran Kalafer improved her part of the budget by 100 percent, but she said, "100 percent of a little bit is still a little bit."

Coach Kalafer went on to stress the importance of the recently passed Polity referendum. The referendum increased the student activity fee by \$10 and designates \$5.50 per student towards the men's and women's Intercollegiate Athletic Program. Students showed their overwhelming support for the increase, and little, if any, opposition was voiced. "The referendum was a great help and a positive boost for women's sports," said Kalafer. "It will allow a stability that we never had before and it will also help to equalize the intercollegiate program. We are at last able to offer track in the spring."

Problems still exist for women's sports at Stony Brook. There is a need for team rooms in the gym, but neither space nor funds are available for them. More uniforms and equipment are needed. The teams use state vehicles for transportation, which Kalafer described as "unsafe and unsatisfactory." There are no scholarships available for the University's women athletes and they receive no college credit for countless hours spent practicing and competing.

The enthusiasm and motivation of the women athletes is admirable. Basketball coach Sandy Weeden

is the president of the New York State chapter of the American Inter-Collegiate Athletes for Women (AIAW). Weeden arranged for Stony Brook to host the NY State AIAW Division I and II finals here. Everyone worked together and the event was a success. Stony Brook's volleyball team is in Division III.

Intramurals have blossomed and the co-ed volleyball and badminton activities are popular here, especially among campus residents and their respective dormitories. As the Volleyball season ended, two of the Women's Varsity players initiated a Stony Brook Volleyball Club. Stony Brook superstar Janet Travis and sophomore Darlin Covington could not bring themselves to put away the nets and wait for next season, and so decided to start a power volleyball club where students with a similar passion for the sport could play seriously.

The Women's Swimming Team will have its first meet at Stony Brook on Friday, November 30, at 4 PM against New Paltz. The Women's Basketball team will play its next home game on Tuesday, December 4 at 7 PM against Suffolk.