

*The
Stony
Brook*

PRESS

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CROW

Up-Tight White Boys

What is an alternative, and who stands so wise as to judge others works or to cast stones? Perhaps the most pressing question is of the strange sickness which has come to permeate most of Stony Brook University, and has spread throughout almost the entire student body. Is this indicative of a trend within our society as a whole, or is Stony Brook the exception?

Exactly what is everyone so afraid of? Left to meander through life untouched and untouched, a facade of lies is created that allows sleep at night but otherwise accomplishes nothing. The forces of our culture, what we are constantly bombarded with day and night, what makes us believe in right and wrong, from where we derive our values and through them our very lives, what makes us forget all about imminent death, what controls us, also kills us.

Those who have put themselves in what they alone see as a position of power, who think themselves "politicians" or "representatives" of the students in some distorted vision will make ambiguous judgements for lack of better targets or any real understanding. It has been alleged that this publication has been neglect in its "duties" and "responsibilities" to the campus community; if we have published based on the capricious whim of the chosen few, those derelict editors they say, then we should take flack and have

our budget cut. We won't play along, however for these are the games of fools and therein embodied is a vast vortex of blank minds, backwards ideologies and hopeless pseudo-endeavors with no goal but to continue a miserable lot in life in some strange distortion of human happiness.

Freedom of the press is the most obvious reason for there to be no funding interference unless it has been truly justified and agreed upon in an intelligent forum. And while those dubious representatives of the student body confuse purpose and poetic license with incompetance and apathy, they have as usual missed the boat only to swim endless miles through Roberts Rules of Order and banal diatribes to arrive no-where but lost in a sea of sin and confusion. We publish for the students benefit, to educate and to present viewpoints. When a closed mind misunderstands the attempt to communicate it's obviously someone's fault, and if you're living the sheltered life where sleep is easy and values are n't questioned then perhaps you should think again before casting that stone.

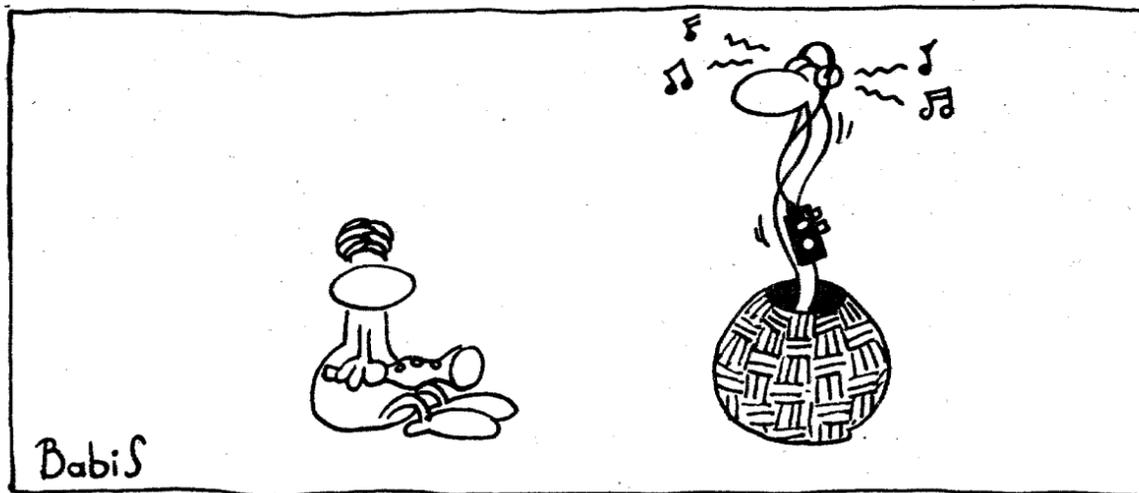
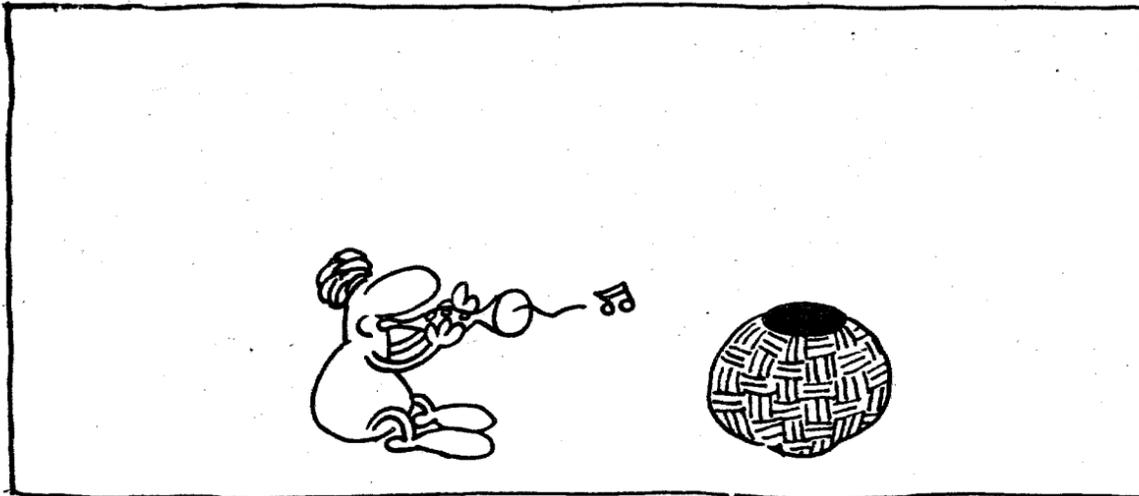
We must remember in all sanity that the truly important and pressing questions to human existance

have nothing to do with Stony Brook University, but if we must comment on this immediate environment around and what it has become it would be best to quote many of those who are part of the campus community: "It Sucks." The quality of campus life is at an all time low, while the aspirations and hopes of most students are strangely twisted ideas and ideals in perfect congruence to the conservative trend of today's society. But this is a university, the home of students who are the essential potential force for reversing such trends. Students have been left in recent decades as the main driving force for social change, and while our world is quite evidently in dire need of change, we sit in our end hall lounges cynical, apathetic and uncaring while being reprimanded for having an open container of beer with dinner.

No easy answers to difficult questions, especially when when you could never answer them in that state of Socratic ignorance which goes something like this: "the fact is that neither of us knows anything beautiful and good, but he thinks he does know when he doesn't, and I don't know and don't think I do: so I am wiser than he is by only this trifle." You See?

The Press Publishes Letters and Viewpoint Regularly.
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Press Pix



The Stony Brook Press

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No Aid

by Karen McMahon
NYPIRG Chairperson

For the over 10,000 students at Stony Brook that receive federal financial aid, there are some disturbing realities that we must face. We have all heard about the Gramm Rudman law and President Reagan's proposed budget cuts, but their effects are vague and ambiguous for students here at Stony Brook. A 25% cut in federal financial aid nationwide means very little to the average student.

What these budget cuts actually mean however, is that our rightful access to higher education may be severely curtailed over the next five years if things in Washington continue along their current course. More specifically, what it means for the Fall of 1987 is that upwards of 40% of Stony Brook students currently receiving financial aid may not be able to return to school if the Administration's proposals are adopted, according to an informal NYPIRG survey.

mental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG); 25% cut in National Direct Student Loans (NDSL); and 100% cut in State Student Incentive Grants (SSIG) (which helps fund the state TAP program). Again, these numbers are somewhat telling, but all in all mean little to the Stony Brook financial aid recipient.

The impact these cuts will have on New York State students makes things a little clearer. There would be a 75% drop in Guaranteed Student Loans. The result...three out of every four students now receiving GSLs would be ineligible to continue doing so. How will this affect Stony Brook students? Approximately 68% of Stony Brook students who receive financial aid receive Guaranteed Student Loans (approximately 7,000 students). If these cuts were to be adopted, an estimated 5,000 Stony Brook students would no longer be eligible to receive the loans. These facts certainly seem to hit home a little harder!

Stony Brook University is looking at a 10% drop in

do about it? It's high time we dispell the myth that students are apathetic and we begin to act. Every special interest group in the country is fighting for a piece of the ever diminishing funds available in Washington (especially in light of the Gramm Rudman law). If we sit back and simply hope that Congress and the Reagan Administration won't cut us out of our fair share of the pie, the facts layed out above will become devastating reality. While many of us won't be around next year to do anything about it, higher education will become a privilege for only those people rich enough to afford it.

We have to take on the responsibility of protecting our education. Politicians don't believe that students vote, read the paper, or care about what's going on around them. We need to come out strong and present ourselves as a united political pressure group. NYPIRG students have already begun this task by surveying over 500 Stony Brook students to assess the impact these cuts will have on us. Also, earlier this week, NYPIRG held a financial aid forum to present the facts about the cuts and the results of our survey. Unfortunately, painfully few students attended the event.

There are over 10,00 of us receiving financial aid at Stony Brook. We all need to write letters to our congressmembers urging them to vote no to any cuts in federal financial aid programs. We need to educate our fellow students, visit our representatives in their district offices, lobby in Washington, call them before key votes, and fight for what is rightfully ours. Time is of the essence. The next major vote is coming down April 15th. NYPIRG is launching the second half of our Higher Education campaign this week. Get involved and join us in our efforts to fight the financial aid cuts before it's too late!

For more information, contact Marianne or Karen at 246-7702 or stop by the NYPIRG office, Union room 079.

Politicians don't believe that students vote, read the paper, or care about what's going on around them.

That would mean 3,000 of us who now receive aid may not be returning as full-time students.

On February 5th, President Reagan proposed a 25% cut in federal financial aid programs, with a \$2,000,000,000 cut from a program that now amounts to \$8,000,000,000. The breakdown is as follows: 15% cut in PELL; 30% cut in Guaranteed Student Loans (GSL); 60% cut in Supple-

enrollment in the Fall 1986. If these cuts become a reality, hundreds of students will have no financial means of returning to school in the Fall 1987. Therefore, not only will the students be severely hurt by these cuts, but the University will also suffer through a drastic drop in enrollment. These are the hard and fast facts!

So what are we, the Stony Brook student body, going to

Right To Vote

by Lars Issacson

It was apparent in the Spring of 1971 that the 26th amendment to the United States Constitution — lowering the minimum voting age to 18 years — would be ratified, adding almost one million voters to New York's electorate. Instead of welcoming the new voters into the democratic process, the NYS legislature, led by Assemblymember H. Clark Bell, passed a bill to deny students the same voting rights granted to non-student citizens; during the debate it became clear that some legislators made their decision based on their perception of how students would vote.

The legislation defined residence as "that place where a person maintains a fixed, permanent, and principal home to which he (she), wherever temporarily located, always intends to return." The election boards were given broad discretion in the determination of student applicants' residence for voting purposes. The law allows consideration of an applicant's "financial independence, business pursuits, employment, income sources, residence for income tax purposes, age marital status, and other factors that it may reasonably deem necessary to determine the qualification of an applicant to vote in an election district within its jurisdiction."

As a result, local election boards drew up questionnaires to administer to students attempting to register. The decision to grant a student the right to vote is arbitrary; it is not stated how many questions one must answer "correctly" to win local suffrage, nor is it clear what the correct answer is.

Soon after the legislature amended the election law, students began a series of lawsuits designed to win fair and equal treatment. Students gathered information that told a sordid story: some election officials changed the information on applications, denied students the opportunity to fill out applications at general registration, or forwarded completed forms to the parents' county. Others rejected the applications without affording individuals a fair hearing, lost the forms, or failed to notify students of their decisions. Many

students only learned of their rejection at the polls on Election Day.

The first major voting rights victory did not come until 1980, when SUNY Albany students won a preliminary injunction against the Albany County Board of Elections.

New York and Alaska are the only two states in the country that still have election laws that use residency requirements to discriminate against student voters

Federal District Judge Neal McCurn banned enforcement of Section 5-104 in Albany County, prohibited the distribution of residency questionnaires, and forbade election boards from treating students differently than other citizens. McCurn refused to rule on the law's constitutionality until

presented with evidence of existing practices in other counties.

Students and their attorneys gathered the information and won temporary injunctions in Ulster, St. Lawrence, Cortland, Westchester, Oswego, and Otsego Counties. Final arguments on the statewide case were made in April 1983. As the 1984 presidential election approached, students impatiently waited for the decision which could establish their right to vote as equal citizens. In October 1984, Section 5-104 of the New York State Election Law was ruled unconstitutional. It seemed that the fight was over. Students took full advantage of their newly won right to vote from their current address. They held candidate forums, published articles and voter education information, and turned out in record numbers on election day — despite the tardiness of the October decision.

Shortly thereafter, New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams filed an appeal. On June 17, 1985, the Second Circuit Federal Court of Appeals reversed McCurn's decision, forcing students to continue their fight for suffrage.

Governor Cuomo recently announced his support of legislation to reform the election law to end discrimination against student voters. The battle for voting rights now shifts back to the original arena: the NYS legislature.

New York and Alaska are the only two state in the country that still have election laws that use residency requirements to discriminate against student voters. New York state students are treated as second class citizens; hundreds of thousands of students are locked out of the voting booth and are forced to vote by the cumbersome and unreliable absentee ballot system. Thousands of others, who cannot utilize the absentee system lose their constitutionally guaranteed right to vote. Simple amendments to the election law, supported by Governor Cuomo, will change this abhorant situation and restore the foundation of democracy — the right to vote — to New York state.

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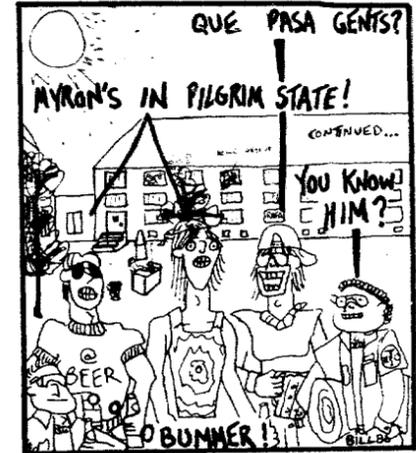
Experience the thrill of skydiving! Join the SB Dragonriders on April 12th or one of the other jumps this semester. No experience necessary — anyone can go. Interested? Want to hear more? Come to our meetings every Tuesday 7:30 pm Union Rm. 213. Come this Tuesday for info on the April 12th jump.

If you can't make the meeting, call Adrienne at 246-7801.

— Blue Skies —

Time Trippers

By Bill



Letters

Dear Colleagues

When Provost Neal announced his intention to step down from his post at the end of August, all of us lamented his decision and asked ourselves how it would be possible to maintain the momentum of renewal and development that he created during his half-decade of service to Stony Brook. Many of you approached me with the concern that the time normally associated with a national search for a position of this stature would occur during a period of stress and change on our own campus. If it were at all possible, an interregnum involving an acting Provost should be avoided.

The prospect for accomplishing such an efficient change of academic leadership seemed to us all to be enhanced by the well known quality of our own faculty. When other campuses seek deans and provosts, they come shopping at Stony Brook. Why should we not acknowledge our own talent?

As you know, I consulted widely with senior faculty, deans, and campus governance leaders to assess the support for an internal search. Shortly after Provost Neal's announcement, I met with the Senate Executive Committee and with the Presidential Advisory Committee on Affirmative Action. I announced my intention to explore alternatives to our usual search and selection process at the regular February meeting of the University Senate and described the composition of a Special Advisory Committee on the Provostship with whom I planned to meet to work out the details of our process. The committee consisted of Professor Yang, as chair of the previous Provost Search Committee, all the academic deans, the heads of the principal governance organizations, including Polity and GSO, and the members of the Provost's Advisory Council, which includes the heads of certain Senate standing committees.

This committee confirmed what by then was becoming campus lore: that for the first time in its history the Stony Brook University community was turning spontaneously to one of its own distinguished faculty to provide leadership in a time of need. The committee recommended that I approach Professor Jerry Schubel, a distinguished marine scientist and Dean and Director of the Marine Sciences Research Center, to determine if

he would serve as Provost. In the event that he would not, the Committee recommended that we proceed to undertake a more normal search process that would include other internal as well as external candidates. When informed of this proposal, Provost Neal and other senior administrators gave it their full support.

As you know, I did ask Professor Schubel and he has agreed to serve as Provost commencing on September 1, 1986. Because of the unusual nature of the search process and our concern for the stability in the Marine Sciences Research Center, Professor Schubel has agreed to take a leave of absence from the Directorship for two years, at the end of which time a decision regarding the terms of his subsequent service will be reached through a formal process. Professor Schubel is currently acting as Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Research, a responsibility for which we will seek another acting officer as soon as possible. A search committee chaired by Professor Leo Treitler is actively seeking to fill this position permanently.

While I am proud that our campus has matured to the point that we can come together in support of our own outstanding individuals, Professor Schubel and I are deeply concerned that the abbreviated nature of this search might be seen as a weakening of our commitment to the principles of affirmative action. That is by no means the case. We remain convinced that the interests of the University are best served by seeking the best candidates from among the entire population of qualified people. The task of discovering talented candidates among women and minority populations continues to be a priority and a challenge to our campus. The process we have just completed must be seen as exceptional.

I am personally delighted with Professor Schubel's acceptance, and will welcome him to the administration of an institution whose qualities fully justify his commitment and whose opportunities fully challenge his extraordinary ability.

Sincerely,
John Marburger
President

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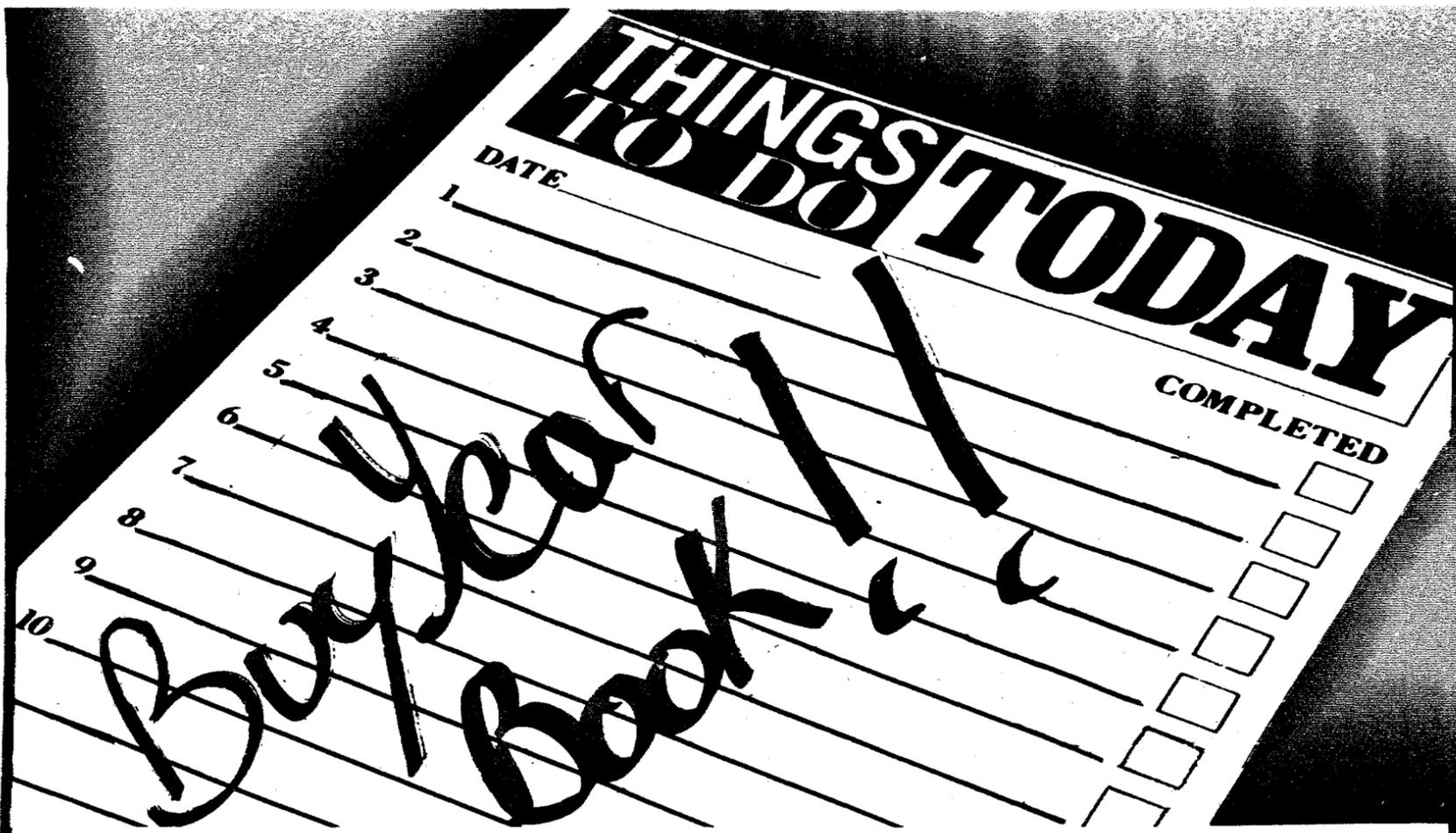
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| FRIDAY | | | FRIDAY | | | SATURDAY | | | SATURDAY | | | SUNDAY | | | SUNDAY | | | SUNDAY | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|-----------------------------|--|
| VIDEO ROOM #1 Lecture 100 | VIDEO ROOM #1 Lecture 101 | VIDEO ROOM #1 Lecture 102 | VIDEO ROOM #2 Lecture 103 | VIDEO ROOM #3 Lecture 109 | VIDEO ROOM #3 Lecture 110 | VIDEO ROOM #1 Lecture 100 | VIDEO ROOM #1 Lecture 101 | VIDEO ROOM #2 Lecture 102 | VIDEO ROOM #3 Lecture 103 | VIDEO ROOM #3 Lecture 109 | VIDEO ROOM #3 Lecture 110 | VIDEO ROOM #3 Lecture 111 | UNION BALLROOM | 100 | 101 | 102 | 103 | 109 | 110 | 111 | FINE ARTS MAIN STAGE | | | | | | | | |
| 6PM Film: "From STAR WARS to ...Jedi" | 6PM STAR TREK EPISODE | 6PM Cartoons: Superman, The Mechanical Monster, Hare Remover, Falling Hare, Bewitched Bunny | | | | 10AM FILM: ENEMY MINE | 10AM DR. WHO: THE TWO DOCTORS | 10AM FILM: STARMAN | 10AM DR. WHO: THE UNEARTHLY CHILD | 10:45 THE HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE Prof. John Caldwell | 10:45 PANEL: OUTSTAND- ING SF FILMS Sciacca, Asherman, Murray, Steinbrunner Peel, Rogers, Burns | 10:45 AUTO- GRAPHS Williamson, Longyear, Spinard, Hogan | | 11:00 FILM: ABBOTT & COSTELLO MEET FRANKEN- STEIN | 10:30 DR. WHO LOGOPOLIS | 10:30 FILM: THE RIGHT STUFF | 11:30 TIM HILDER- BRANDT SLIDE SHOW | 11:00 LINAC TOUR Gene Sprouse | 11:00 MY FAVORITE WORST FILM Rogers, Burns, Asherman, Steinbrunner Peel, Murray, Sciacca | 12:00 AUTO- GRAPHS Williamson Spinrad, Hogan | 12:00 JAMES DOOHAN | | | | | | | | |
| 7:15 JON PERTWEL | 7:00 STAR TREK EPISODE | | | | | 11:40 FILM: EMPIRE STRIKES BACK | 12:30 DR. WHO: THE TWIN DILEMMA | | | VIDEO: Japanese Animation | | | | 1:00 FILM SHORTS & PREVIEWS | 12:00 DR. WHO SPEARHEAD FROM SPACE | 2:00 FILM: THE THING (New Version) | 12:30 WRITER'S WORKSHOP with Bary Longyear | 12:00 LECTURE: NEW TECHN- OLOGIES FOR THE PREVENTION OF GENETIC DAMAGE Dr. Tice | 1:15 AUTO- GRAPHS James Doohan | 1:15 JON PERTWEE | 1:00 FILM SHORTS & PREVIEWS | 2:30 DR. WHO THE THREE DOCTORS | 4:00 FILM: THE TERMINATOR | 2:00 DECISION MAKING WITH INTELLIGENT MACHINES Dr. Ferguson | 1:00 PANEL: DC: THE NEXT 50 YEARS Heifer, Schwartz, Wien, Rozakis, Newell | 2:00 BRINGING NON-HUMAN CHARAC- TERS TO LIFE Longyear, Duane, Matzberg, Goulart, Gallun | 2:15 AUTO- GRAPHS Jon Pertwee | 2:00 ART SHOW AUCTION | 2:00 PANEL: THE PROS & CONS OF COLLAB- ORATION Godwin, Kaye, Williamson, Mars, Harwell |
| 8:15 FILM: STAR WARS | 8:00 DR. WHO THE THREE DOCTORS | 7:00 FILM: STARMAN | 8:30 DR. WHO: AN UNEARTHLY CHILD | 8:30 Japanese Animation: PATARULLO MISSION STARDUST | 8:30 JAMES SCOTT RADIO SHOW | 2:15 FILM SHORTS & PREVIEWS | 2:00 ROBOTECH | 1:45 SHORT FILMS | 2:30 PANEL: HUMOR IN FANTASTIC LITERATURE Goulart, Kage, Weinstein, Ryan, Stuart | 2:00 PANEL: "MAZING MAN Lob, Rozakis, Stephen, DeStefano | 2:15 SLIDE SHOW: THE 1ST SF CONVEN- TIONS Julie Schwartz | 2:15 AUTO- GRAPHS Pertwee | 5:30 AUTHOR'S BANQUET | 4:00 DR. WHO THE THREE DOCTORS | 5:30 LITTLE RASCALS | 3:00 OFFICIAL I-CON TURKEY ROBOT MONSTER | 3:00 HYPERSPACE David Lubov | 1:00 PANEL: DC: THE NEXT 50 YEARS Heifer, Schwartz, Wien, Rozakis, Newell | 2:00 COMICS: TRIVIA CONTEST Rozakis, Wein | 3:15 ART SHOW AUCTION | 4:00 PANEL: THE PROS & CONS OF COLLAB- ORATION Godwin, Kaye, Williamson, Mars, Harwell | | | | | | | | |
| 10:30 FILM: THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK | 10:30 DR. WHO: THE FIVE DOCTORS | 9:00 FILM: THE TERMINATOR | 10:30 DR. WHO: THE DALEK INVASION OF EARTH | 10:30 Japanese Animation: HEAVY METAL L'GAIM EPISODES | 9:30 FILM: THE THING | 4:00 PANEL: Working For TV & Film PERTWEE DOOHAN WEINSTEIN SPINRAD | 3:30 KOYANNIS- GATSI Introduced By SHELDON REAVAN | 3:40 FILM: THE THING | 3:00 PANEL: YE GODS Use Of A Supreme Being In SF & Fantasy Kagan, Godwin, Malzberg, Shwartz, Freisner | 3:00 PANEL: HOW A COMIC BOOK IS CREATED Rozakis, Marshall, Wein, Seinkiewicz | 3:15 WRITERS OF THE FUTURE Julie Schwartz Williamson | 3:00 PANEL: TIME TRAVEL & ALTERNATE HISTORIES HOGan, Gallun, Heck, Longyear, Long | 5:30 ROOM 213 UNION DINNER WITH THE STARS | 4:00 G.O.H. SPEECH Jack Williamson | 6:00 STAR TREK EPISODE | 7:00 OFFICIAL I-CON TURKEY ROBOT MONSTER | 4:00 SF IN COMICS: Wein, Schwartz, Newell, Duane | 2:00 COMICS: TRIVIA CONTEST Rozakis, Wein | 4:00 PANEL: THE PROS & CONS OF COLLAB- ORATION Godwin, Kaye, Williamson, Mars, Harwell | | | | | | | | | | |
| 12:40 FILM: THE RETURN OF THE JEDI | 12:00 DR. WHO: THE TWO DOCTORS | 11:00 FILM: HEAVY METAL | 12:15 DR. WHO: SEEDS OF DEATH | 12:40 | 5:00 FILM: THE RIGHT STUFF | 5:00 FILM: THE RIGHT STUFF | 5:30 DR. WHO: REVELATION OF THE DALEKS | 5:30 FILM: THE TERMINATOR | 4:30 THE EFFECT OF GAMING ON FANTASY Lee, Duane, Rosenberg, Hildebrandt | 4:15 STUNT DEMO | 4:30 SLIDESHOW THE THUMBNAIL HISTORY OF SF ART Vincent DiFate | 4:30 SLIDESHOW THE THUMBNAIL HISTORY OF SF ART Vincent DiFate | 8:30 UNION AUD. CABERET Starring Jon Pertwee & James Doohan | 4:00 FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI | 7:15 FILM: ENEMY MINE | 7:15 FILM: ENEMY MINE | 5:00 SLIDE SHOW: ROBOTS IN INNER AND OUTER SPACE Charles Pellegrino | 3:00 VINCENT DE FATE SLIDE SHOW Evolution Of a Cover Painting | 3:00 PANEL: THE NEXT 20 YEARS IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLI- GENCE AND ROBOTICS HOGan, Ferguson, Pellegrino, Rankin | 5:30 PANEL: THE ROLE OF THE VILLIAN IN SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY Spinrad, HOGan, Schwartz, Freisner, Long | | | | | | | | | |
| 2:55 FILM: THE RETURN OF THE JEDI | 2:15 DR. WHO: THE TWO DOCTORS | 1:00 FILM: FLASH GORDON | 2:30 | 12:40 | 8:30 FILM: RETURN OF THE JEDI | 12:10 FILM: AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON | 10:00 DR. WHO: LOGOPOLIS | 11:00 STAR TREK EPISODE | 5:30 PULP SF VINTAGE FILM CLIPS WITH CHRIS STEIN- BRUNNER | 5:00 DR. WHO: UNEARTHLY CHILD | 6:45 COSMO- LOGY & ARCHITE- TURE IN SCIENCE & SCIENCE FICTION Sheldon Reavon | 7:30 PANEL: SPEILBERG: HERO OR HORROR Burns, Rogers, Murray, Asherman, Sciacca | 7:30 WOMEN IN SF & FANTASY Duane, Wood, Freisner, Schwartz, Stuart, Kagan | 8:30 FILM: ENEMY MINE | 7:15 FILM: ENEMY MINE | 8:00 I-CON FEEDBACK PANEL | 6:00 FILM TRIVIA CONTEST Murray, Sciacca, Asherman Rogers, Burns, Peel, Steinbrunner | 4:00 FILM TRIVIA CONTEST Murray, Sciacca, Asherman Rogers, Burns, Peel, Steinbrunner | 4:00 PANEL: THE ROLE OF THE VILLIAN IN SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY Spinrad, HOGan, Schwartz, Freisner, Long | 5:30 PANEL: THE ROLE OF THE VILLIAN IN SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY Spinrad, HOGan, Schwartz, Freisner, Long | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 3:00 | | | 2:20 FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH | 2:20 FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH | 10:00 STAR TREK EPISODE | 11:30 FILM: SLAUGHTER- HOUSE FIVE | 8:30 DR. WHO: UNEARTHLY CHILD | 7:30 PANEL: SPEILBERG: HERO OR HORROR Burns, Rogers, Murray, Asherman, Sciacca | 7:45 PANEL: HOW I STARTED WRITING Matzberg Rosenberg Goulart Hogan Spinard Gallun | 8:30 PANEL: SPEILBERG: HERO OR HORROR Burns, Rogers, Murray, Asherman, Sciacca | 8:30 READING: MARVIN KAYE | 8:00 FILM: A CLOCK- WORK ORANGE | 7:15 FILM: A CLOCK- WORK ORANGE | 8:00 FILM: A CLOCK- WORK ORANGE | 5:00 ILLUST- RATING COMICS Buscema, Heck, Harris, McCloud, Anderson, Rankin, Springer, Heifer, Milgram | 4:00 FILM TRIVIA CONTEST Murray, Sciacca, Asherman Rogers, Burns, Peel, Steinbrunner | 5:30 PANEL: THE ROLE OF THE VILLIAN IN SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY Spinrad, HOGan, Schwartz, Freisner, Long | 5:30 PANEL: THE ROLE OF THE VILLIAN IN SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY Spinrad, HOGan, Schwartz, Freisner, Long | | | | | | | | | |
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For A Bowl of Pottage: Part III

by Mitchel Cohen, of the
Red Balloon Collective

It was the mid-1970s, the years "nothing was happening," or so we've been told. But the women's movement was breaking down age-old barriers, the lesbian and gay movement was forcing many people to confront and overcome the way we'd been conditioned, and the various and sundry student radicals, involved in all of this, were also rediscovering the works of Marx and Engels, and rescuing (and sometimes unfortunately re-imprisoning) "scientific socialist analysis" from the jaws of those frumious bandersnatches, the doctrinaire and dogmatic parties of the old left.

Across the state, students of every stripe and belief attempted to find new ways to struggle against the budget cuts. For too long we'd petitioned, begged, pleaded, grovelled, rallied, and moaned. Red Balloon members followed up our successful activities at Stony Brook [see my two previous articles in *The Press*] in the mid-1970's by organizing creative direct actions against the budget cuts statewide, with the aim of *keeping our buildings and services open* in the face of administrations trying to shut them down!

As news of our Stony Brook "open-ups" of the gym and library spread, Lynn McSweeney, Yvette, Marja, myself, my brother Howie and half-a-dozen others johnny-appleseeded the SUNY system. We distributed our newspapers everywhere, exposed the corporate, banking, and government connections of the Board of Trustees, joined building takeovers, helped to organize others, sharing our skills in order to help keep them from falling into the same traps that we'd learned, through bitter experience, to avoid. We generated a good deal of excitement wherever we went. At Stony Brook we were just your ordinary meshugennah radicals; on other campuses, however, people invited us to address their gatherings, help plan protests, and leap contradictions in a single bound. Look, up in the sky, it's a bird, it's a plane, no it's Red Balloon (oops—I think it was a bird, yuck). One can never be a prophet in one's own land.

We, of course, had no desire to be prophets anywhere. Our mission (should we choose to accept it) was to help shape a movement across New York State and in the neighborhood that taught people new ways to fight for their rights that depended on their own collective initiative, creativity and commitment, not on begging the government or other third parties to do it for them.

Fred Friedman, another early Red Balloonie, was organizing a similar campaign at SUNY Buffalo, and Marcia Prager was doing likewise in State College, Pennsylvania. Similar core groups of people at Binghamton, Oneonta, Albany, Cortland, Purchase, New Paltz, Cornell, and Hostos Community College—our regular stops on the Red Balloon Magical Mystery Tour—launched sit-ins to *keep things open* and to make the banks—not the workers—pay for it. At Hostos Community College in the Bronx students took over the whole school. They invited teachers from all over the city to participate, and for months they turned it into a "learning for its own sake" experiment, a free university for all! Stony Brook students in and around Red Balloon actively in supported the primarily Black and Latino students at Hostos, and regularly participated in their efforts. In all the excitement, the state of New York seemed much smaller than today; dozens of Stony Brook-trained organizers turned up all over the place as if they were subway stations just a few minutes apart.

Much of the activity was co-opted by SASU, which at that time was largely composed of young white bureaucrats-in-the-making. SASU called a rally in Albany, to be addressed by the now-much-ballyhooed Jacob Javits [see my next column on that odious "bagman for the banks," as he was then called, titled: "Beating a Dead Horse"]. SASU's intention, as always, was to convert the direct actions of the movement (in which people were learning how to seize back

control over their own lives), into lobbying the legislators (that is, begging third parties to do it for us in exchange for us promising to vote for them in the future).

Albany was a-blizzard the day of SASU's betrayal. Speech after speech called on us to be nice to the bankers who were foreclosing on our futures by closing down services and squeezing dry the universities. A radical core managed to gather from all the different campuses as the snow piled up and the winds whipped the banners. All of a sudden, a few people from Binghamton with black anarchist flags began to "charge" the capitol building. They were quickly joined by students carrying red flags (not to be outdone), and others, including the Red Balloonies. Someone blew a plastic trumpet (da da da *dum* da da!) and, to the dismay of the SASU lobbyists (who talked on and on about "responsibility" and not letting ourselves be "marginalized") hundreds of students stormed the winter palace, pelting it with snowballs, red and black flags, and war-whoops. Marja, an eighteen year-old Stony Brook student, said, "It was the most exciting moment of my life." As thousands turned away from the SASU speakers to either take part in or watch the charge up the steps, t.v. cameras and newspaper reporters ground out photo after photo that, when they appeared in the papers the next day, made us

to your recruiting stations and set up my anti-war table, can I?"

"No, of course not."

"Then don't talk to *me* about freedom of speech, you hypocrites. If I can't speak in your recruiting stations, then you can't speak on my campus!"

Ilze picked up one end of their table. Everything crashed to the floor: the movie projector (*sprang! crash! thwapppp!*); the literature; the banner. No one knew what to do. Can't hit a woman, the old male-Marine ethic (unless it's in Vietnam or Central America; then you can rape, torture, burn down houses).

A few people in one of the dogmatic leftist groups that plagued Stony Brook, like other campuses, at that time, came up to Ilze. "Come on, Ilze," one said, "we'll go upstairs and have a meeting about what to do!"

"A *meeting*?" Ilze screamed. "A fuckin' *meeting*? You people have more meetings. When're you going to *do* something? Like *now*! We need *action*!"

A handful of Ilze's friends and hallmates came by; a few people from Red Balloon; a few others from the Women's Center. Some of the people had never had a political thought in their lives. But when they saw Ilze dancing around with just a couple of others taunting the Marines (who were down on the floor

"You people have more meetings when're you going to do something? Like now! We need action!"

seem a lot more heroic than it really was. Indeed, the front page of the *New York Daily News* screamed in inch-high headlines: "10,000 Storm State Capitol." This was terrifically inspiring to read (even if it was completely untrue, off by some 9,600, but who's counting?). By the next day all those people who had stood around and watched, back on their campuses, swore they'd been part of the action.

These actions helped unclog the cobwebs in the minds of student activists. Why be penned-in by the "accepted" forms of protest? Let's face it: one of the reasons people get involved in the struggles of the day is not just because they're concerned with what's happening to *others* in the world, although this is an important part of it; they're also *bored silly* by this mass-produced plastic society. Far from being an "impure" reason for getting involved, boredom is, I believe, one of the *best* reasons. In a society that abolishes all adventure, the only real adventure is the abolition of that society!

Maybe this was what triggered Ilze's involvement. Ilze had envisioned herself more of a Russian princess than a revolutionist. Who knows the exact processes that each person goes through in their mind as they begin to change their lives? It's different in all people, but there are several patterns or themes that weave their tender fingers through the mind, massaging the longing for a different way of living, some meaning to one's life, and the hope and opportunity for it to be achieved.

One morning, Ilze, wearing a red velvet dress, her long blonde hair making her look highly unlike the caricature of a "radical" that most non-radicals imagine (in fact, almost no revolutionary looks the Hollywood part), strode up to the U.S. Marine Corps recruiting table in the Fireside Lounge in the Student Union at Stony Brook. She hollered: "Get the fuck off my campus, you murderers!"

One of the recruiters chuckled: "Be a good girl and run along." Another said: "What about *our* freedom of speech?" Ilze, newly involved in this sort of thing, came up with a fitting novel response: "I can't go in-

trying to gather the various sprockets and reels of their equipment), they joined her. More and more danced in a giant hora around the Marines singing: "I wanna kill. I wanna napalm babies. Join the Marines, learn to kill, see the world (from inside a coffin)!" Someone had a kazoo and began buzzing "From the halls of Montezuma, to the shores of Tripoli," at which point everyone else would stick their tongues out and, in supreme childish ("oh, how *un-serious*," the dogmatic leftists moaned) fashion, razzed: "Phhhhhht, Phhhhhht." Eventually, around sixty people took part in the giant dance around the Marine table. The Marines themselves were exiting, stage right. Split. Ilze received an administrative reprimand. Her first of many exciting moments in the sun.

Was it boredom? Was it "political consciousness?" What was it exactly that drove Ilze, at that particular day, to choose her side and to act? Why not the day before? Why not a few days later, instead? Did it all depend on what she ate for breakfast, or what side of the bed she got out of, or who she was sleeping with at the moment and how she felt about it. How come some days you feel very brave, the molecules are all just right, the colors slant at an invigorating angle, you feel invincible, and full of humor, while other days it's just the opposite, you just want to curl up in your little corner of the world like a snail, buried beneath the accumulated weight of a billion sighs?

A good poet describes these experiences, and has an intuitive sense about them. An organizer, more than the poet, has to understand them, make it all conscious, figure it all out.

And, of course, *act* off of that knowledge.

For all the virtues of Ilze's exemplary action, there were also important shortcomings. Do we only want to kick the Marines off our campus? What about out of the rest of the world? Do we only act when they appear, as though we were Pavlovian dogs salivating as the ruling class rang the bell, in the form of sticking the Marines in front of our faces?

What type of activities should we *plan*? At the

Resident's Rights

by Jane McAlevey
President

Student Association of State Universities

The future of public higher education in New York is in serious danger. We've heard it all before: we know about the blatant cuts to our federal financial aid. We are aware of Governor Cuomo's slashes to valuable programs like child care and minority recruitment and retention. We also know of outrageous cuts in SUNY faculty that we are facing in the state budget.

Most of us also know that there will be increases in dorm room rent but very few of us really know everything about the plan that has been proposed to implement these increases. Dorm self sufficiency is probably the most vague, ambiguous, unpredictable and harmful plan ever created to shift the state responsibility of funding a public university completely onto the students. It was developed by the SUNY Board of Trustees and was recently approved by the governor; right now it is up to the New York State Legislature to stop this proposal before it effectively removes the state from the state university business.

Self sufficiency means that we will be paying for everything that is required to maintain our dorms. As a result, dorms that are more expensive to operate will be more expensive for students. These variable room rents will result in students choosing a school not necessarily because of its academic program or its location or any other positive

attribute but because of the cost of its dorms. This will clearly hinder SUNY's mission to provide equal access to a higher education and could very well jeopardize the future of schools with inherently higher utility, security or maintenance costs.

Students at schools like SUNY Stony Brook, which are slave to such ominous forces as LILCO (Long Island Lighting Company), will now be slave to astronomical dorm room rents. Concurrently, schools in upstate New York, where utilities are considerably cheaper, will look a lot more attractive to the prospective student.

Self sufficiency will also create variable room rents on each individual campus; lower income students will be concentrated in the older, more decrepid dorms while the more fortunate students will tend to live in the higher quality housing. Surely, the State University of New York is not the place to mimic our often ghettoized society. Further, the detrimental effects of variable room rents will not be offset by financial aid (dorm costs are currently not covered by state aid because they are not considered "educational expenses" even though dorm living is mandated on many campuses, costs more than tuition and was originally intended to be for educational purposes).

Self sufficiency means that we will be paying more because there will be no state support. Students could be paying as much as \$250 per month for a room that they

share with another person and a bathroom that they share with as many as 40 people. Students will consequently move off campus and landowners in the neighboring communities will no doubt raise off campus housing rates; dorm occupancies will increase and of course dorm room rent will once again jump to even more staggering proportions. Here we see the rims of a dangerous bottomless pit.

It sounds like the state wants to thrust SUNY dorms into the free market. However, the free market does not force consumption on anybody; SUNY does. Ten out of 22 state-operated SUNY campuses require students to live in the dorms. Once in the dorms, students on all campuses are denied the rights guaranteed to other tenants by the state and federal governments. Students have no lease. Students often must leave their room during vacations. Students are subject to campus wide quiet hours and liquor policies. Students on many campuses are forced to use the meal plan. SUNY wants to charge students as if they were tenants but are not willing to treat them as anything more than second class citizens.

Self sufficiency, if enacted will serve to dilute the power that we as SUNY students have. No longer will we be able to organize as effectively against dorm rent hikes since each campus will be effected differently. We have got to make sure that self sufficiency never becomes more than what it is — a bad proposal that could mean the end of public higher education in New York.

Social Responsibility

This April 10th the University in Society Project, in conjunction with student and other socially progressive organizations, will be initiating "A National Day of Reflection and Action on the Social Role of Higher Education."

The organizations initiating this action on campuses throughout the nation plan to "organize forums, teach-ins, moratoria on classes, and other educational events to discuss the social role and responsibility of higher education, and begin to take action." The United States Student Association and the Student Association of the State University are two of the sponsoring groups. This project calls upon all students to organize and take part, with the following call to action:

In the mid 1980's American colleges and universities are at a crossroads. Federal and state funding for higher education is on the decline. The loss of student aid, at a time when tuition increases out pace inflation, is making higher education less and less affordable. Liberal arts offerings are being cut back to make way for more hi-tech research. While small numbers of students are trained to become an economic elite, most students, when they graduate, enter a job market offering few possibilities for productive meaningful work. Colleges and universities have defaulted on their commitment to culturally diverse programs; Women's and Third World Studies have to search for resources, while women still contend with systematic discrimination and black student enrollments decline nationwide. And new initiatives, both from campus administrators and from outside groups, threaten to narrow the space for student politics and the range of ideas presented in the classroom.

What purpose can the University be serving when it restricts who is admitted and what is taught? When it overlooks the needs of those traditionally excluded in order to focus instead on narrow vocational training? When it

allows the limitation and intimidation of intellectual debate and student involvement?

Students, faculty and staff have attempted to meet these challenges to open and quality education, and to create an alternative vision of our schools:

On Equal Opportunity

Students have campaigned hard to protect federal and state educational funding, while questioning the turn towards educational exclusiveness, hoping to make higher education a possibility for people from varying backgrounds.

On Money and Ethics

Students and faculty have worked to end the economic support of our institutions for South Africa, responding to that nation's majority as it presses the claim for freedom. The campaign for socially responsible investment has taught us to question the impact of our institutions' policies on the communities and world around us.

On Employee Rights

Employees have organized to win dignity on the job, even while administrators hire expensive law firms to decertify campus unions and keep wages down. We have learned to ask whether the schools' own policies are consistent with their humanistic goals.

On the Purpose of Research

Students and faculty have refused "Star Wars" research. We have learned the importance of having research agendas set on campus, rather than by the flood of Pentagon dollars. And we have learned to question the ways that money and minds are committed when so many social problems are calling out for study and action.

On Freedom of Speech and Association

Students have begun to raise questions of democracy and freedom in response to newly created or resurrected

disciplinary codes which limit campus politics.

On Academic Offerings

Students and faculty have organized independently and sought to institutionalize Peace Studies and Environmental Studies, questioning the definition of what is a legitimate academic discipline, and attempting to address important social developments.

The academic community must continue pursuing these questions in an organized and serious way. It is time to rethink the role and responsibility of the university in our society. How can higher education open its doors widely, committing itself to developing the potential of a broad range of students? How can it lend its research and critical thought to the social challenges we must still address? How can it foster a varied and vigorous intellectual and political life? What is the place of higher education in an open and democratic society?

Higher education in the United States has always held many promises: the promise of a socially and culturally diverse institution open to all groups in society, regardless of ethnic background or economic status; the promise of a meeting ground where citizens learn the skills of active participation and the value of public service, open debate, and critical thinking; the promise of a place where the excluded and disenfranchised can look for hope in their struggle for equality. We take these promises seriously, and commit ourselves to making them real. In our activities, we hope to demonstrate the kind of openness — to ideas, to questions, to one another and to the world around us, that characterizes education at its best.

Join us April 10th. Let's reclaim our education.

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Red Balloon Continued

same time Ilze was initiating her actions there was a strike going on at a nearby factory that we didn't feel the urge, or thrill, to fully support. What?! Not get out there every day on the picket lines? Not support the striking proletariat?! "They're working on defense contracts for missiles," one Balloonie said. Another said: "They're making a lot more money than you and me already, why should we support them?"

At the time, a huge discussion tore through Red Balloon about this. Even when the body was willing, sort of, the enthusiasm just wasn't there, similar to what it felt like when the public school teachers went on strike and the students, en masse, refused to support them! "What, you want me to support that prick who gave me a 75 in social studies because I just wasn't into ancient Egypt and memorizing the dates the different Pharaohs ruled? Let'm die!"

Is there really any one way of deciding these kind of questions? So much depends on feelings people in the group have for each other, not only on what is objectively correct. *Both* have to be present in any radical or revolutionary group. You there, dogmatic leftist! Do you know what color eyes your close comrades have? Do you touch? Are you tender? Do you have long, deeply romantic talks about dialectical materialism on the floor of the computer center, under the tables, while making love?

I don't ask this frivolously. Because the *objective* and the *subjective* must no longer be allowed to remain split, like a watermelon. Boredom is as much a valid motivation for subversive activity as political analysis, although to succeed the two threads must be consciously interwoven.

It was in this context that Ilze and I launched the Marxism for Beginners classes ten years ago, with an

eye towards understanding our feelings and the mechanisms that conditioned us to be this way, and towards feeling our understandings, to experience what it means to be in absolute, uncooptable, permanent revolution against the rulers of capital, not only because they are hateful, odious, and murderers, but also because the life they offer us is boring, tedious, wasteful, stupid, and without meaning.

Most of the people who have taken the course will never be the same again, in a good way. Most of the people who were part of Red Balloon when it started fifteen years ago are still active today, in one way or another, in trying to change their own lives, at the same time trying to change the world. Many of us are still in touch with each other. Slowly, every so slowly, we are beginning to draw together again.

Ready?

Draw.

Basset Hound Mystery Bonanza

by Warren Scott Friedman

"The Real Inspector Hound," by Tom Stoppard, is a rather curious oddity of a play. It's quite amusing to be sure and quite unusual to be even surer yet. The play presents a rather scathing view of critics, portraying them as vain, pretentious, egotistical and elitist individuals out for personal gain and glory, a view which obviously cannot be endorsed here. The play is certainly not without its appeal however and under John Morogiello's direction it is given its proper ever-so-daffy English spirit.

Morogiello clearly favors this type of British slapstick comedy and is quite good at it. One is left wondering, however, why it is that such a unique comic talent must hide under the guise of London and the ghost of Monty Python and forego his own native heritage. The production would be just as humorous in its delirious slapstick mode without adopting the English accents, which begin to wear thin anyway (with the exception of one member of the cast who is authentically English).

Still, there is much more to be enjoyed and commended about the production which appeared this past week at the Fannie Brice Theatre. Tom Stoppard's play is actually a play within a play. We, the audience, are viewing a badly acted and absurdly written murder mystery which is being reviewed by two critics, Birdboot (John Morogiello) and Moon (Michael Schwartz). The focus of Stoppard's play is on these two reputable critics. One showers extravagant praise upon pretty young actresses in order to seduce them in bed while launching their careers at the same time.



Photo by Scott Richter

The other is merely a stand-in for the first-string critic of a newspaper, who earnestly proclaims "Stand-ins of the world, Stand up!" while fantasizing about murdering his first-string superior, Higgins. The play eventually develops into an intermixture of reality and fantasy as the two critics become intertwined into the play they're reviewing and take on the lives of the characters onstage.

Director John Morogiello handles the transition between these two scenarios well. When Birdboot first steps onstage into the play and assumes the character of Simon Gascoyne it is quite effective. The two worlds of fantasy and reality collide in an interesting and clever twist of fate handled adroitly by Morogiello.

The timing and execution of the production rarely falter though midway through it becomes in danger of "not delivering on the promise of the first (half)," mirroring the very flaw that Birdboot and Moon quote regarding the play they are reviewing. Though the momentum slows a bit as the evening grows older the ending is sharp and funny and does make good on the promise offered at the onset of the well-assembled production.

The performances are appropriate in style for this type of madcap English romp. Stand-outs amongst the cast include Georgia Aristidou, last seen in Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, who here manages to pull off a comic tour-de-force as Mrs. Drudge, the demented housekeeper whose physical appearance

borders on the likes of the Hunchback of Notre Dame. David Reichold, also last seen in *The Three Sisters*, is quite enjoyable as Simon Gascoyne, the sly playboy currently a mass of jitters on the run from the police.

John Morogiello delivers a compelling performance as the critic Birdboot, reveling in his decadent, pompous and narcissistic ways. Morogiello has proven himself an outrageously funny comedian in his own *We Put Out* which appeared last semester at the Fannie Brice Theatre. Here, however, he is able to fit his unique comic talents to a role and still be funny without stepping out of character. He just might be a fine character actor as well as a comedian if he allows himself the opportunity to develop in this way.

Sabado Lam, as Major Magnus, has improved upon his acting since last seen in *We Put Out*. His English accent is not very good however and hence, his performance strains toward credibility. Rounding out the talented cast are Michael Schwartz (a nice job as the discontented, stuffy, second-string critic, Moon), Nance (ever-so-catty as Felicity Cunningham), Robbie Van De Veer (the debonair Lady Cynthia Muldoon) and Peter Laager (a likeable performance as the bumbling, inefficient Inspector Hound). Robert Antis must be commended for the thankless task of portraying a corpse, having to lie on the floor perfectly still and silent for the entire duration of the performance, as powerful a dramatic statement as any.

Backed by Scruffy's efficient lighting design and Ben Hoffman's effective sound design, *The Real Inspector Hound* is a much worthwhile, enjoyable venture.

Theatre

Multiple Personalities From The Upper West Side

by Warren Scott Friedman

"Dentity Crisis," by Christopher Durang, is a ridiculous play with a ridiculous premise, which is no excuse for its inherent stupidity. The play, directed by Martha Banta, opened this past Sunday in the Fine Art Center's "Theatre Three".

The play pokes fun at psychoanalysis, transsexuality, schizophrenia, multiple personality and just about every other neurosis and psychosis in the book. This is yet another of Durang's lovable odes to all the crazed loonies of the world, and in Durang they have found their true champion. The play has no real plot but is rather a frantic charade of a thoroughly neurotic family undergoing some serious identity crisis.

The bizarre and overexaggerated nature of the play and its characters is obviously not to be taken literally and surely there is some message that Durang is trying to state amidst all the hysterics. "Dentity Crisis" obviously has something to say about each and every one of our own varied identities and about the myriad of personalities which reside in us all. Yet it is so grandiose in its heightened surrealistic nature that we are overwhelmed by its perverse and grotesque antics.

"Dentity Crisis" is on the order of some strange freak show one might encounter in the circus. It has a certain humorous quality attributed to its overwrought, bizarre nature but then settles into an off-the-wall stupidity which brings about its final collapse.

It is unfortunate indeed that Banta has chosen to make her directorial debut with such an ill-chosen piece. Clearly evident, however, is her talent in working with actors and assembling a cast. Under these unusual,

extenuating circumstances, each of the actors seems to have a reasonable understanding of their characters and a sense of where they fit in, which is no small triumph. The cast works quite well together and respond to each other with spontaneity. Banta has done what is right for the play by not confining the actors to any rigid role constraints, but instead allowing them to explore and innovate with their characters and with each other. It is to her credit that the production stays within bounds most of the time and doesn't go too far overboard, breaking into all-out pandemonium.

Lisaane Demoga is an absolute nutty delight as Edith Fromage, inventor of cheese, banana bread and glue. Perrin Salat offers a crazed portrayal of a multiple personality, taking on the various roles of husband, son, father, brother, grandfather and count simultaneously in a virtuoso performance. Bernadette Braun does a nice job as Jane, the troubled daughter, who, in actuality, is the only sane member of the household.

Alex Wang functions as a transsexual psychoanalyst and Megan Martin, his wife (later his husband after they both agree to undergo a sex-change operation and role reversal in order to put the spark back into their marriage). Both play their parts convincingly enough and in the spirit of fair game which is more than all that can be expected.

Meticulous attention has been given to each and every last detail of the production. Ben Hoffman's lighting design and Hadley Taylor's sound design are both excellent. And though no one is credited with the set design, it obviously has been attended to with a great deal of care and is truly something special.

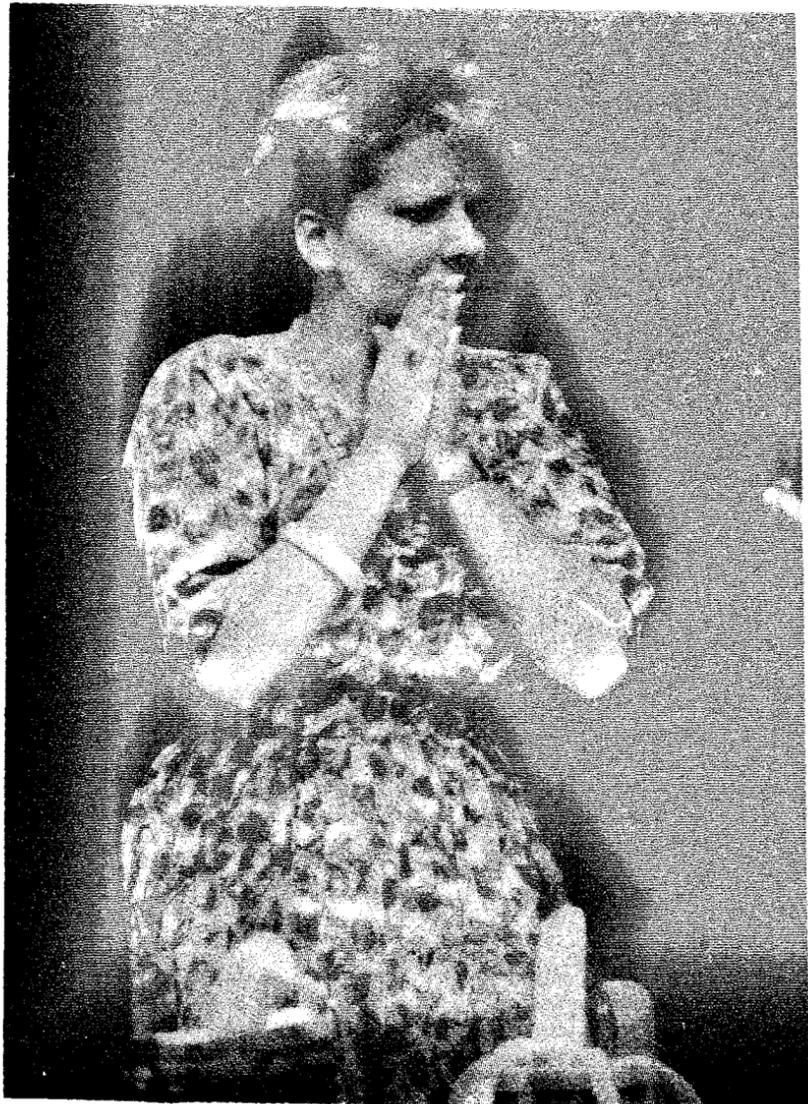


Photo by Scott Richter

Hoover Factory

Big Tears and Elvis Costello's Latest

by The Mighty Yeats

All caught up in the various and sundry complexities of being such a witty and passionate singer-songwriter-performer, Elvis slipped into a virtually unparalleled artistic decline (see Bob Dylan) landing face first in trench rot. After 1981's **Imperial Bedroom**, an album that culminated his previous concerns, Costello meandered dumbly into muddy horn sections, questionable duets, and empty numbers bogged down in magnetic fields of supposedly sophisticated tune-smithing that registered precisely one notch below unbearable on the grand listening scale. Such is the danger of creative peaks—after hitting one, it takes a while, if ever to regain that originally existing quality.

Imperial Bedroom was, for a pop album, a perverse leap into the sordidness of the metaphysical bedroom which delved into the grim facts of mattress dilemmas: the thin line between love and hate, deceptions, and pervasive fucked-upness bordering on dangerous. The work finally finished the point that took the fellow seven albums to make and though responsible for lots of good music, too ridiculous to be mentioned here. After this master-work, in terms of material, singing, arrangements and what ever else makes an album tap, Elvis couldn't go any further with his resident topics.

Even the music changed. **Punch the Clock**, and **Goodbye Cruel World** had their moments but were essentially disposable products of postured emotions by a fat millionaire. The foamy New Wave Elvis had surfed in on had strangled itself to death and resuscitations occurred rarely, if at all. **Crunch the Brock** and **I'm Rich and Miserable** combined to make a fitting epitaph.

But through the gloom, up ahead with Italian dancing shoes, Elvis persisted. Struggling with sound, searching for soul, scratching at silence, he embarked on a solo acoustic tour that must have helped to renew and reform his sound. (Note to wise-guys: the tour happened before the release of **Goodbye Cruel World**, but after the recording and production of it and included

no songs, not one, from the album.) He formed an alliance with Texan-rocker, whiz roller, record-contractless T-Bone Burnett, ace producer, all around great guy, and even released a single with him under the name Coward Brothers. Costello then essentially dropped the Attractions, though not entirely, and enlisted a fantastic compendium of seasoned studio and professional musicians; jazz greats Ray Brown and Earl Palmer, the core of Elvis Presley's TCB band, James Burton, Jerry Scheff and Ron Tutt, plus L.A. session master Jim Keltner, and took over a California recording studio.

The Costello show—**King of America** album results in launching Elvis back into the trusty cassette deck on an extraordinarily regular basis while beginning a new period of transition that will probably take him another seven albums to conclude. Striking because its good and problematic because it's not like anything he's done before, not even remotely. Bounce synthesizers, funk rhythms, and lyrics aimed towards textbook recognition have been obliterated, are now extinct. Studio wizardry has been kept to a minimum. Distracted confessionals with dubious realities have been abandoned. Replacing these once thrilling qualities on **King of America** are new, and yes, also thrilling qualities—more adjectives—acoustic emotionalism, controlled ambiguities, scathingly perceptual docu-dramas, and exiled political reveries.

Costello plays acoustic guitar on the entire album, stand-up bass is used, an occasional snare drum and mandolin to add color, and sings like a cold coyote cries. The sound has always been there, it was always the basis of his works, so it's like going backwards to go forwards in a way because all the while it is a progression. More exactly, these are his beginnings. However, he isn't beginning here, he's returning there after never really being here in the first place and infusing the entire effort with zealot's relish and professional's polish.

Word on the street has it that Costello, through this album, is unburdening his soul



Before



After

about some of his past endeavors and brilliant mistakes. In interviews he says that the image he once worked so diligently to cultivate was in fact a farce born from false considerations and mistaken calculations. He got caught up in the affair and lost sight of what really is. Songs like "American Without Tears" and "Brilliant Mistake" seem to focus on this subject—but not in any sort of grand or pretentious way. Just matter of factly.

The mattress dilemmas and love politics that make for the countrified weepers, "Poisoned Rose" "Indoor Fire Works" and "Jack of all Parades" afford Costello the room to move and all work real well. The faster cuts on the album are also successful, "Glitter Gulch" and "The Big Light," as is the cover of the Animal's "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood." In "Loveable" particularly, the number sounds as if it might fall flat after the initial movement ends and the heart of the song takes over. But 3/4 of the way down the chorus picks up and arrives at

an unanticipated swing summit top, with help from David Hidalgo's back-up vocals.

To be sure, Costello is the most prolific mainstream composer around today, and for some time now. **King of America** reinstates Elvis back to a form he's never had but was always capable of. And while the Attractions only play on a few cuts, the band he's assembled works perfectly to assure a great listening album by any standards. More importantly, it represents a step in the direction towards another peak somewhere down the line. And while the artificial products of the Record Companies and Radio Radio stations fall flat at footsteps too swift to be captured, trying to anaesthetize the kinds of ways people feel, Elvis may indeed be just another battered and packaged product convenience, like two-ply trash bags, but still, even if, there is a visceral intensity present that makes him seem a little more worthwhile and memorable. Besides, Elvis is a prophet.

Concert

Lost Vegas Night

by Ed Bridges

First take: The instant projection of an image. Girliness and innocence through big, baggy clothes, dimples and tomboyish blonde hair only the girl next door could have, reservedness in temper and movement.

Second take: The distant destruction of past misconceptions. Homer's Calypso is given equal time. Firm and unmoving politics. Insightful, inosyncratic images of past loves and experiences, emerging through the age old custom of speaking and spelling stories.

Third take: Suzanne Vega's persona emerging through an acoustic guitar and a microphone. Through gentle bobbing. Through the mesmerized looks of an audience thoroughly entertained. Through the stories heard over the hour and with music.

About fifteen or twenty minutes late, the unassuming young lady with the cute dimples came onto the stage. To a warm reception she opened up the night with an a cappella song of scenes and images from a diner; instantly catching everyone's heart, she moved on to picking up an acoustic guitar which she didn't put down till the end of the show (save for one song). She played rhythms complemented by the leads of a



Photo by Ed Bridges

back-up guitarist, and the ambience of keys, and the rhythmic base of drums bass. A highly personable young lady, Miss Vega

established a relaxed and cheerful rapport with the audience, who made themselves comfortable by sitting on the floor of the

ballroom. Further, she projected a genuine appreciation of having the audience there to see her; when she says "thanks for coming" she means it.

By simply telling stories that she thought interesting, stories about movies and diners, she was able to tell everyone about herself in an entertaining and thoughtful way, never seeming the least bit self-centered or egotistic but always unassuming, unpretentious, and personable. In short a really 'cool' person, someone you can enjoy while reclining on the floor and without having to get sweaty. Her songs developed the same rapport her stories did, except with a musical background. Informing the audience of her personal, political and literary interests through pleasing and well chosen, insightful and lyrical situations and phrases.

Suzanne Vega came like a tropical rain-storm of good music to this drought-ridden hole we call a campus. Hopefully, this will serve as a precedent and will repeat itself in the future, and maybe, hopefully, will mean less of the Hollywoodglitzbullshit of performers that have appeared here in the past (e.g. Alisha, Phantom/Rocker/Slick, the Hooters, etc.). Time to start crossing fingers.