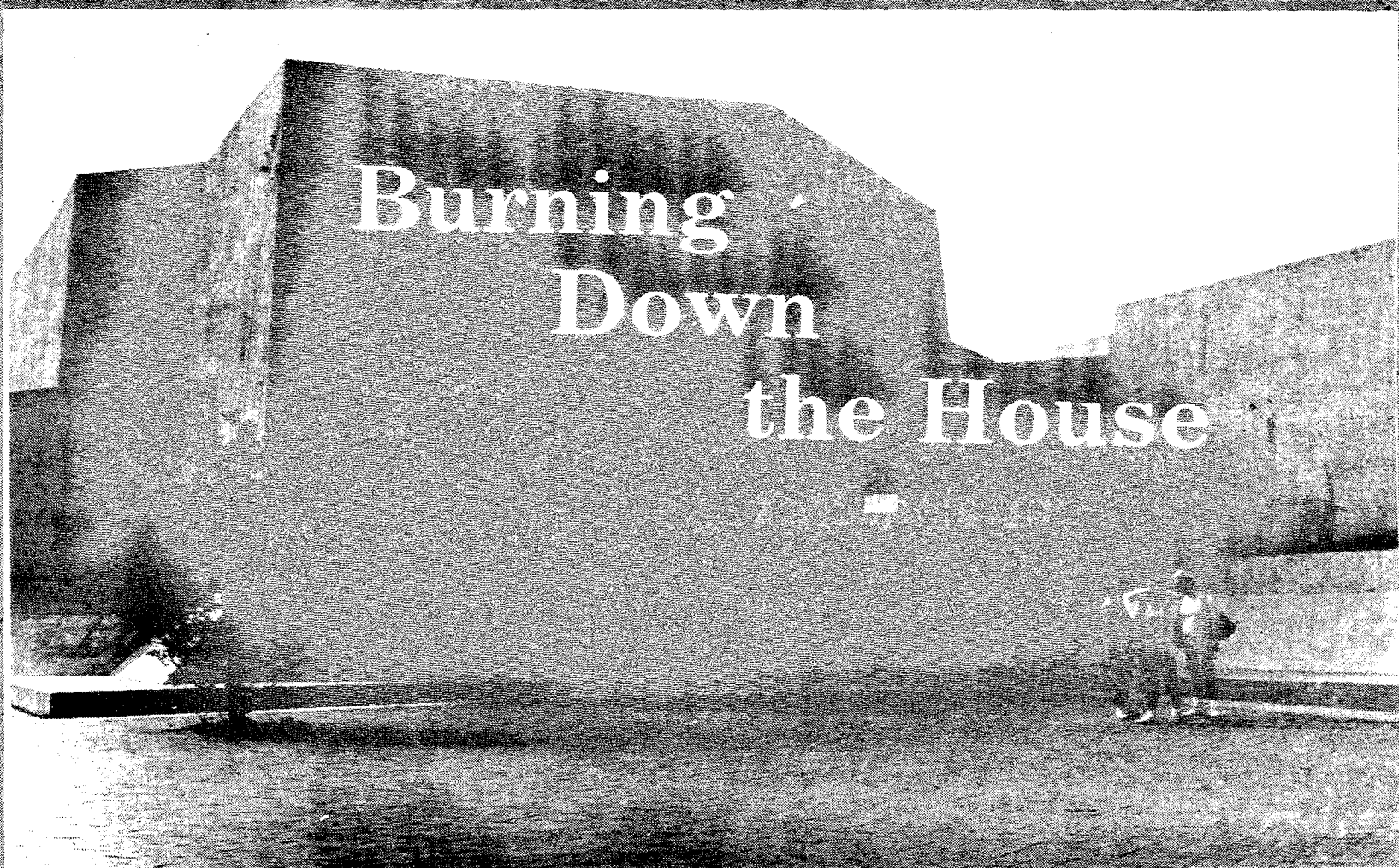


*The  
Stony  
Brook*

# PRESS

Vol. 8, No. 7 ● University Community's Feature Paper ● Oct. 24, 1986



## Burning Down the House

*Students And Faculty Call For Closing Lecture  
Center In Response to Possible Health Hazards*

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# ALL I WANT IS TO BREATHE

Fear of the truth has cost administration nothing, but it may just have cost students their health and possibly their lives. We all know of the fire that happened three weeks ago in the Lecture Center, but what we don't know is the effect the results of the fire has on us. Why don't we know? Because administration did not deem it important enough to run chemical tests at the time. Only recently have George Marshall, head of Environmental Health and Safety, and Robert Francis, Vice President for Campus Operations, ordered some testing of the charcoaled room in the Lecture Center.

Just three hours after the fire was extinguished, students and professors sat in class rooms with clothing over their noses and mouths trying to escape from what seemed to be just "rancid fumes." What they didn't realize was that just in the next room, toxins, the result of the fire, were permeating the walls and diffusing through the air. Francis and Marshall should have known, if not from expertise and experience, then from common sense, that a smoldering building without proper ventilation is not fit for human breathing. Firemen are not allowed by law to enter such a building without gas masks but yet hundreds of people sat in the Lecture Center without any kind of breathing apparatus or warning that the air may be unsafe. The main question here is why?

Why would administrators prove to be so negligent in their duties to the students? As paying the wages of Administration - we pay taxes and tuition, we have a right to be protected by those people we pay from hazardous situations, especially when that is exactly their job. Could it be that they were stupid and figured that everything was safe, or were they negligent and thought to cover up any evidence of an unsafe situation?

Of course, in a fire such as the Lecture Center, many things burn - plastic, wood, paint, ceiling tiles, wiring, etc. As any chemistry student can relate, gases are emitted when a given substance is burned or even just heated. The gas depends on what the substance is. Plastics, including chairs, wiring, and floor tiles, emit phthalates, vinyl chloride monomers, carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, phosgene, benzene, and hydrogen chloride, all of which are poisonous or carcinogenic. Those big red cleaning pads that we see everywhere, better known as phenol-formaldehyde

resin buffer pads emit just what one would think: phenol and formaldehyde. Phenol is acidic and formaldehyde is a pungent irritating gas. The combination of just the two alone would be enough to "do in" a set of lungs, but there is also the formica and wood to take into account. They produce chlorinated dioxins, nitrogen dioxide, and chlorinated furans. Presently, it is unknown what the ceiling tiles are made of but that's okay because they could only add to the deadly list.

Unlike a defendant in a trial, a situation such as this cannot be presumed innocent, but must be presumed dangerous until it is proven safe.

The day of the fire, Marshall should have ordered tests done to discover the health hazards involved. That same day, Francis should have moved all classes out of the building. Classes began at 8:30 that morning, three hours after the fire was extinguished.

Tests such as wipes - where a sample of resin caused by soot is collected from the walls or floor can help determine the toxicity of the environment. The first wipes weren't taken until almost a week after the fire, a week of classes, C.O.C.A. movies, and the opening of Bob Francis' new lecture center Study Lounge. In addition, the wipes were taken from light fixtures. These fixtures were high in the room, which is a problem, since the higher one is in a fire, the hotter it is, and the purer the products of combustion. In other words, the lower the places, such as the floors and walls, that are tested, the truer a picture of what chemicals were released in the fire can be obtained. These chemicals did not combust and diffuse through the air as much as the higher level ones.

A more thorough examination should have been and still should be done. We must demand that the results are acceptable, and that they answer such questions as why many students felt sick after attending class in the Lecture Center, up till at least two weeks after the fire. Why eyes were burning? And why did Marshall try to place the blame of negligence on professors, saying, "Why don't professors change the class rooms?"

Until such questions are answered, we have a right to have those classes relocated. Such places as the gym, and lecture halls in HSC should be looked into as possible alternatives for Lecture Hall classrooms. A little inconvenience now may be worth our lives later.

Twenty years from now, who knows - over 2,000 Stony Brook Alumni could have the same type of lung cancer, or worse, the same reason for their cause of death.

This one time, Francis and Marshall should be made accountable for their dereliction of actions, and if results prove that there was negligence, then we can't stand by and allow these people to continue protecting our lives, can we?

## Happy Seventh Birthday, Press

Cover photo by Anthony Tesoriero

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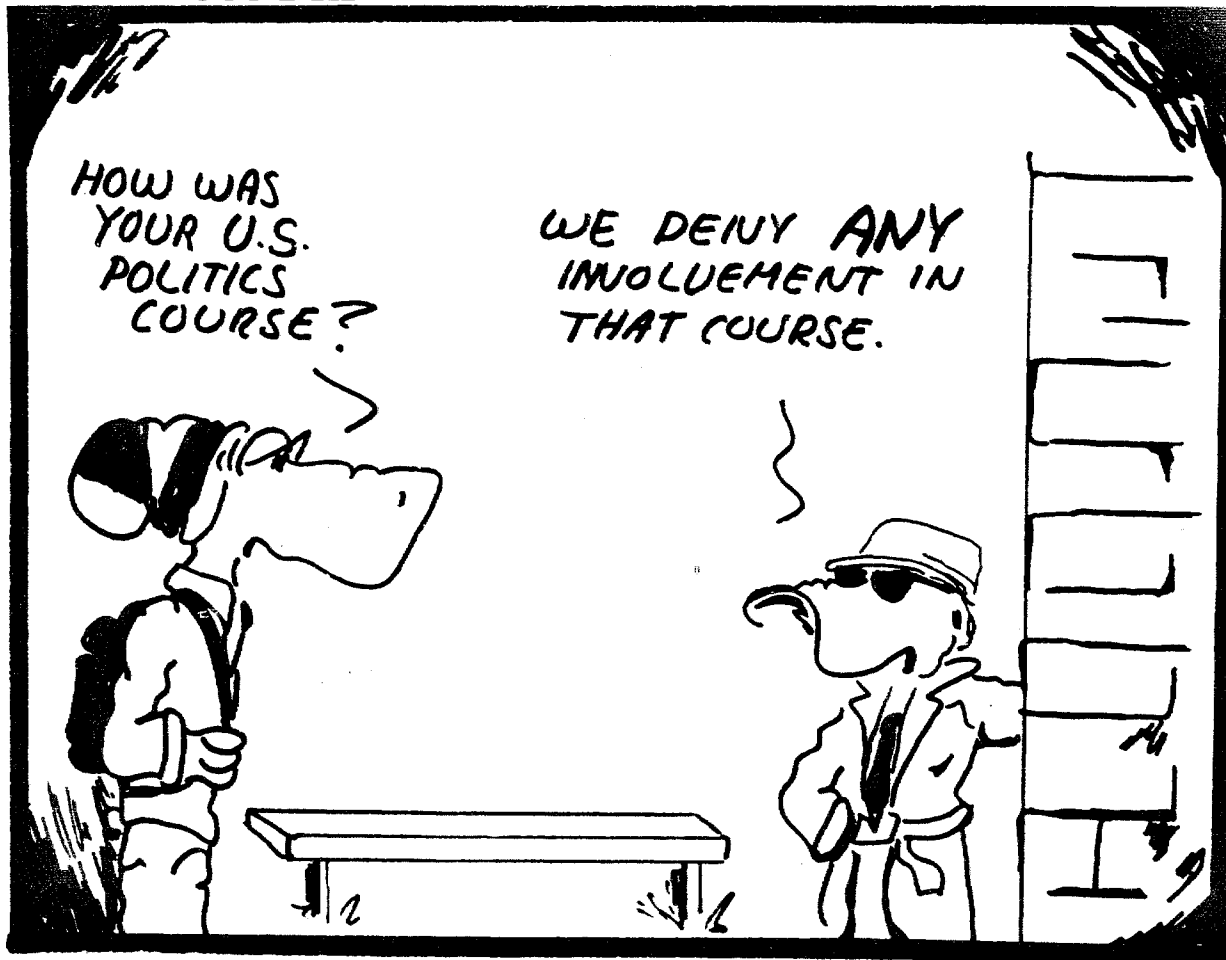
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## Press Pix





# Javits Boycott To Begin

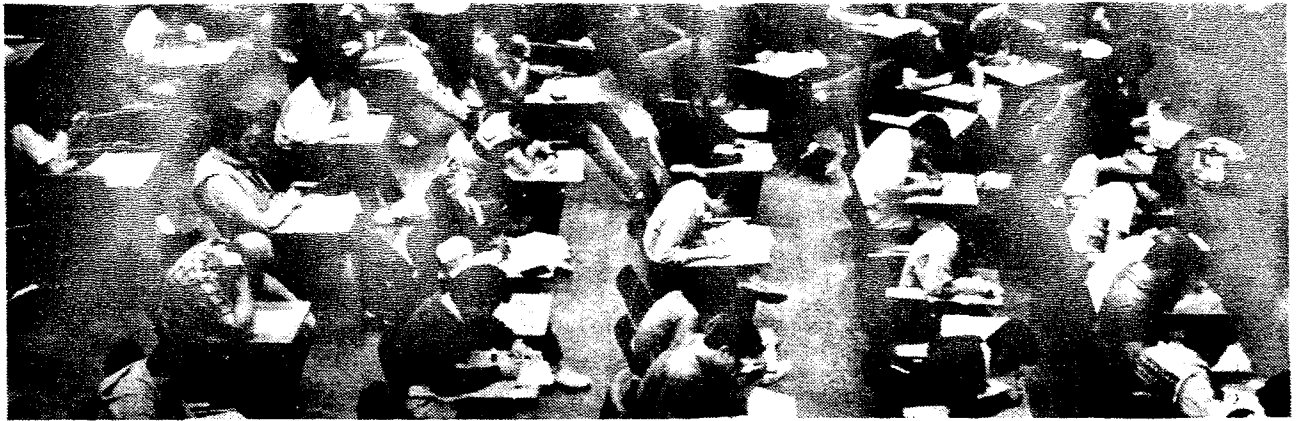
By Joe Caponi

In the wake of growing concern about the potential hazardous materials released in a fire three weeks ago in the Javits Lecture Center, a boycott of classes is being called for by Polity and the Graduate Student Organization, and the United University Professions Union is recommending that teachers do not hold classes in the building, until extensive tests of the building's safety are completed. In addition, all three groups are highly critical of Vice President for Campus Operation's Robert Francis's decision to allow the building to have remained open for the past three weeks without obtaining the results of the testing.

In response, Dr. Francis released a report yesterday morning defending his actions stating that he had "decided, in view of the heavy schedule of classes, the lack of alternative space, and reasonable assurance that no lasting threat to health or safety was present, to let the building remain open. The results of all tests conducted have been favorable in that no specific exposures have been quantified which would cause concern."

That statement was given out at a meeting Francis held with Chris Vestuto, president of the Graduate Student Organization; Marc Gunning, president of Polity; Dr. William Weisner, president of the Stony Brook Chapter of United University Professions, the faculty/staff union, Chemistry Professor and University Vice Provost Ted Goldfarb, and Richard Drury, and Dave DeLucia, from the New York Public Interest Research Group. Goldfarb, however, criticized the quality and range of tests that Francis had undertaken to determine the safety of the building, tests that were not even begun until almost a week after the fire. "My concern with respect to the tests are whether or not an adequate battery of tests were done to insure that material produced during the fire, whether airborne or deposited out, contained substances that might be hazardous to people's health."

After failing to convince Francis to order the closing of the building, the other in-



Students at a test in Lecture Center yesterday.

dividuals present at the meeting agreed later to recommend to their constituent groups that they not enter the building. Polity and the GSO are calling for an immediate boycott of classes in the entire building, and UUP is calling for at least the closing of the wings where the fire's effects were worst, if not the whole building. Gunning, Vestuto, Weisner, and Goldfarb were

unable to discuss the issues with University President Marburger as he was in Albany Thursday.

In a statement released by Gunning after the meeting, he wrote, "While the risk of exposure to hazardous or toxic compounds is hopefully minimal, the Polity Council feels that until more information is made available, students should not attend classes

in this building... even if hazardous conditions do not exist, the discomfort experienced by students and faculty due to continued exposure to fumes does not produce an atmosphere conducive to study."

This article was written with the assistance of Quinn Kaufman and Neal Drobenare.

Press photo by Anthony Tesoriero

## Chemical Combustion

Friday, September 26, 1986: A student Public Safety Auxiliary employee at the Fine Arts Plaza smelled smoke and located an apparent fire at the Javits Lecture Center. This fire involved the incomplete combustion of phenol-formaldehyde and phenol-acrylic floor buffing pads, vinyl chloride floor tiles, electrical circuit boxes and wiring, an industrial drum of Ajax, ceiling tiles, formica door laminate, plastic vacuum cleaner hose, a plastic-covered wooden platform, plastic trash bags, and a naugahyde chair, according to individuals in Environmental Health and Safety and students who observed the room after the blaze. Plastic chairs of a yet-unknown composition were melted.

Public Safety officers attempting to combat the blaze were driven out of the building

by "thick black smoke." Firefighters responding from the Setauket Fire Department required self-contained breathing apparatus to enter the building. The fire was extinguished.

Less than two and a half hours after the fire was extinguished, and before any tests for toxic fumes were conducted, students were allowed to re-enter the building, even though the ventilation system was inoperable. Regarding this almost immediate re-occupation of the building, Dr. Robert Francis, Vice President for Campus Operations, would later state: "After the fire is out and the combustion ceases, that takes care of most harmful effects." This misleading statement is clearly contradicted by national firefighting standards. According to the United States National Fire Academy:

*"The company officer must remember that toxic chemicals and gasses continue to do damage even after the flames are extinguished. It is at this time that firefighters want to remove heavy, bulky self-contained breathing apparatus. However, toxic gasses may still be present. This is especially true as a result of the number of synthetic products that are present in every building. Interiors may appear to be clean environments, but tests have shown them to be the most dangerous. The toxic gasses given off during the fire were forced into the walls and ceilings by the pressure created from the fire. These small walls and ceilings must now be pulled apart to ensure that the fire is completely extinguished. It is when we open them that these toxic gasses will be released. It is also the time that old insulation and possibly*

*Continued on page 5*

## Fest Rules

### Changing Rules Change Parties

by John Isbell

There have been changes in the annual G-fest over the years, and these changes have had profound effects on the fest, to the point of where its feasibility is questioned.

First, and most important, it is the first non-alcoholic fest on campus, and this lack of alcohol will pose a problem, as it was usually through beer sales that the fest was able to pay for itself, occasionally even making money. Sean Hodie, past Co-chair of Security for G-fest, and Jeff Altman, Acting chairperson of G-fest, were able to give me some information on past fests.

Three years ago the fest was able to make some money, several thousand dollars in fact. They had 140 kegs, at fifty cents per sixteen-ounce glass. They even gave away a free mug with the purchase of two beers. Since they bought such a large quantity of beer, the company gave them free cups and T-shirts, the latter of which were used to "pay" security.

Last year, however, beer could not be sold, accounting for approximately a loss of income amounting to \$8,000. Since beer sales represented such a large amount of income, the carnival was present in hopes of trying to make up for the missing beer receipts. Unfortunately, the carnival was not

such a great success. The incident with the water tank did not help any, either.

It seems that some unnamed person was to return the rented water tank used in the dunking booth. Unfortunately, she forgot about it and left it outside for about three weeks at fifty dollars a day, for a grand total of \$1,500. Fortunately, they billed it to Polity.

The University is making the G-Quad council more self-sufficient. Not only was the council unable to recuperate the lost beer sales, but they also had to buy their own cups and had to have shirts printed up, to the tune of about \$1500, to "pay" security. Fourteen officers had to be hired and paid full salary and overtime. A formal clean-up crew had to be hired, as well as a street-sweeper rented from the town of Brookhaven. The electricity consumed had to be paid for, as well as an electrician. Added to that was the cost of a DJ with a light show. Three years ago they hired a DJ for the weekend at a cost of \$1,200. Last year, they could not get the same man, as he was busy, and were forced to hire another at \$1,500 a day. Self-sufficiency is not the only concern of the G-Quad residents.

Some G-Quad residents feel that G-Fest is slowly moving away from the pit, where it

is traditionally held. It has gone from the pit, to the pit and the infirmary parking lot, the latter of which holds the carnival. If the administration has its way, claims Hodie, the Fest will probably be held in the ESS parking lot. Marc Gunning hopes G-Fest evolves into a Spring Fest, because it would "receive more support....If you can make it bigger and better, why not?"

Regardless, Hodie and Altman still maintain that in order for the fest to take place, those planning G-Fest would need the "support of the entire campus and of any organization with a large budget."

Prior to 1983, there were very few rules and regulations apart from noise control and other varied community ordinances. On occasion these rules had been broken, if only by accident. During G-Fest '82 there was a natural phenomenon where a strange cloud cover enabled those on Pond Road to hear the band just as though they were in the pit. Many complaints rolled in and Jim Black, then the Vice-President for University Affairs and Chris Fairhall, Polity Treasurer, proposed a 9:00 p.m. shut-off time for the music.

At the following Fallfest, Administration, not only remembered the complaints from the residents concerning the volume, but

also those from the community. They wanted to turn off the power to the band around 11:30, while the band was still playing. However, it was not to be so simple, it was a big band which everybody really liked. Finally Black was convinced that if he cut the power a riot would ensue. Although loud music is bad for public relations, a riot on campus would have been worse. The power was left on and the band finished the set 10 minutes later.

Life was pretty simple prior to 1983. If you had Stony Brook ID you drank; if you didn't, you were proofed and all you needed was a license. Fortunately for the students back then, the licenses were pictureless. All that was needed was the ability to forge a signature and commit a few facts to memory. Last Fallfest was a little stricter.

The University tried to get the community together for a big Fest in '86, hoping to make a profit similar to the \$7,000 made the previous year. This profit would be used to override other costs and expenses, such as a \$5,000 fireworks display, overtime for Public Safety, salaries for outsiders, such as the electricians, rented tents, and wrist bands, the last of which proving too impractical to use.

*Continued on page 6*

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# County Clerk's Race Heats Up

By John Dunn

Do you consider a political office which spends \$3,500,000 dollars a year, has a staff of 137 and appoints 9 people whose salaries range from \$30,000 to \$50,000 to be important? Ask someone who the County Clerk is and they'll say "who?" Few people know what a County clerk does, let alone who fills the job. Yet the County Clerk is responsible for all the aforementioned and much more. This year's race in Suffolk County is shaping up to be a close one, with the incumbent's record being the focus of the campaigning.

The Suffolk County Clerk's Office is, among other things, the depository for all documents affecting real estate, including deeds, mortgages, satisfactions of mortgages and judgments. The operations of the office affect individuals' buying, selling or refinancing their homes. Delays caused by the office can result in higher interest rates at the time of closing. The office is also responsible for safeguarding all court documents, both criminal and civil, for the Supreme and County courts, and other miscellaneous matters.

Bill Holst, a 34-year old attorney for CBS, is running on both the Democratic and Public Power Alternative to LILCO lines. A native of Nesconset, Holst is focusing his campaign on the ineffectiveness of the incumbent, Juliette Kinsella.

Kinsella, a resident of Greenlawn, is run-

ning on the Republican Conservative, Right-to-Life and Concerned Citizen's Against LILCO lines.

One fault Holst finds with Kinsella is her decision to enter into a \$400,000 lease with the publisher of the Suffolk Life newspapers in order to provide temporary storage of documents. Holst attacked the lease, which was entered into without any formal study, as "merely a costly and temporary storage problem...a problem the incumbent has been unwilling or unable to address in three years of office." He also pointed out that without a study it would be impossible to know how much space would be needed to protect the documents. Holst also mentioned that Suffolk County's Republican Comptroller has gone on record as calling the lease "a Sweet-heart Deal."

Kinsella defended her actions saying that she fought hard to get the county to appropriate space near the county courts. The county approved a lease that was fair and provides the much needed space, she said.

Reports earlier this year confirmed that documents under the supervision of the County Clerk were water damaged and had been fouled by nesting pigeons.

Holst has attacked the long delays that have plagued the office. The Torrens section uses a form letter which is sent to residents informing them of six month delays. "When delays have become so commonplace that a

form letter is used, it's time to take action," commented Holst.

Kinsella admits to months of delays but points out that all records are stamped and recorded when received and then filed later. She believes that most of the delays will be solved when the new computer system goes on-line.

Holst also attacks the incumbent's failure to have had the county building blueprints put on microfilm. Earlier this year, fire destroyed the Public Works building housing the blueprints. Because of this, even minor repairs will be complicated with the increased costs being borne by the taxpayers. "As taxpayers we spend three-and-one-half million dollars a year on this office...the County Clerk and the various employees are well paid...we deserve better service, not excuses," says Holst.

Kinsella takes credits for placing the clerk's fees in interest bearing accounts for the first time in the county's history, earning about \$500,000 in interest. She reports having made \$1,087,000 for the taxpayers of Suffolk which is returned to the town.

Kinsella recently got county approval to install a modern computer system which is expected to be installed by the end of the year. She also points to her efforts to protect and display the 200-year-old documents recently unearthed in the old county jail in Riverhead.

Holst describes Kinsella's plans as "too little, too late...and not the type of reform that will bring the record system of Suffolk into the 20th century." He continued, "Now, Mrs. Kinsella is only too happy to take credit for the modest changes that have taken place in the last few months. If she were really serious about doing her job, she would have focused on the troubles and taken steps leading to real solutions."

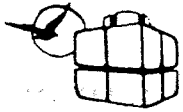
If elected, Holst will oppose any further leasing from Dan Wilmoth and would begin a program to index all Suffolk County property by section, lot and block number on computer, something Kinsella says is already done. Holst claims that the current system does not sufficiently cover the need, since deeds are only indexed to the present owners, rather than to all past and present owners.

Kinsella says that she will serve the people of Suffolk County with respect and professionalism.

The race for County Clerk is both an interesting and tight one, a race where each vote matters, especially yours. Get out and vote this Election Day!

*Note: Due to the unavailability of the County Clerk for comment, her quotes were taken from the October 22 issue of Suffolk Life.*

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## Javits Fire

Continued from page 2

asbestos will be distributed freely into the air and possibly inhaled by the firefighter without breathing apparatus. The area must be THOROUGHLY ventilated."

Dr. Francis's statement is also contradicted by the United States Fire Administration, which states:

"Nontrivial concentrations of nitrogen dioxide, hydrogen chloride, hydrogen cyanide, and benzene also are found. [in air samples taken after structural fires] Previous studies have shown that inhalation of these irritants along with carbon monoxide, especially when suspended with particles in air, is hazardous EVEN WHEN CONCENTRATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL GASES ARE BELOW THE ALLOWABLE SHORT-TERM EXPOSURE LEVEL. The study makes it apparent that firefighters have no way of determining if toxic gas concentrations are present at a particular fire, reinforcing the need for respiratory protection."

Three days after the fire, Mr. George Marshall, Director of Environmental Health and Safety, was quoted in *Statesman* as saying, "When the debris is cleared out and it starts to air out, then it will be all right."

Mr. Marshall's suggestion to relocate classes from rooms causing discomfort was countermanded by Dr. Francis, who stated that "our ability to follow these recommendations is limited." He added (without any evidence), "I did not feel that there was any cause for alarm about any long term effects... it's possible, looking backward, that I could have been wrong."

Even after admitting that the decision to reoccupy the building may have been a mistake, Dr. Francis has not ordered the temporary closing of the building, even seventeen days following this realization. Classes, examinations, activities, after-hours studying, and even COCA movies were allowed to continue as usual. As a sadly ironic symbol of the apparent non-feasance surrounding this contamination, Fire Safety officers were seen spraying air freshener into the air at the fire scene during COCA movies.

After an article regarding the fumes was printed in *Newsday* on Wednesday, October 1st., air tests were finally initiated on Thursday, October 2, and Friday, October 3, following a full week of student and faculty exposure. These tests on ambient air samples, taken a week after the fire, are essentially meaningless in evaluating the toxins and carcinogens that the students were made to breathe in the few days following the fire, as six days of cleanup, diffusion, and exhaust venting had transpired. Nonetheless, after six days of dissipation, ambient air tests revealed formaldehyde levels of 2-3 parts per million, a level in excess of what federal standards would allow to exist even in a formaldehyde factory.

Formaldehyde can cause respiratory irritation and burning of the eyes at levels as low as .1 ppm. Formaldehyde is a potent respiratory tract irritant, very mutagenic, and is considered a confirmed carcinogen, and has been found to eventually cause nasal cancers in both experimental animals and in man.

Despite a week of ventilation and diffusion, these tests also revealed phenol. Phenols are converted in the body to hydroquinone, which is a tumor producer, mutagen, a mitotic poison, and a carcinogen.

Despite these findings, and most notably despite the unanswered questions that exist regarding the potential toxins produced by the burning polyvinyl chloride, other plastics, industrial cleaners, ceiling tiles, and other items, Dr. Francis, after overriding Mr. Marshall's suggestion to relocate classes, allowed all activities to continue in this building even to this day. It is now 27 days after the fire, that the students and faculty have been breathing these unpleasant, unknown vapors without the benefit of appropriate chemical tests looking specifically for the expected toxins produced by these materials including, but not limited to, carbon monoxide, hydrogen chloride, vinyl chloride monomers, hydrogen cyanide, chlorinated dioxin, chlorinated furans, phthalates, and asbestos.



# Last Meals

## The Dorm Cooking Saga: Part IV

By Neal Drobenare

Marburger justified his decision to reduce dorm cooking for two reasons: to increase enrollment on the meal plan to increase its quality and to decrease damage done to the dorms attributed to cooking. Eliminating cooking to force people on the meal plan seems a poor alternative for a number of reasons. As we have seen in his first three years as campus president, there was a significant increase in the number of people on the meal plan, but no improvement

in his memo to Fred Preston that introduced his policy, Marburger first cited the Dorm Authority Property Condition and Safety Survey of the State University at Stony Brook of August 9, 1983. The report, by Authority Associate Engineer A. E. Kurnehart is critical of occupant cooking because, "the Authority can not condone cooking in buildings not designed or so modified for it," and because of the "unfair burden (cooking) places on the housekeeping staff." Mr. Kurnehart seems totally

have a higher amount of fires caused by cooking, it does not have a significantly higher rate of fires caused by cooking, than the other campuses. Marburger's figures are taken from the Legislative Committee on Expenditure Review Report, table 5 - Instances and Causes of fires. The report surveys eight campuses and found 566 fires, 348 of them at Stony Brook. It seems that S.B. is far more prone to fires. Even Buffalo, the other University center had only 36 fires. The report listed five causes of fires; cooking was one. Cooking accounted for 14% of the fires across the survey, but only 18% at the Stony Brook campus and 11% at Buffalo. While cooking fires did cause more absolute damage at Stony Brook, they only caused a small percentage more damage at Stony Brook than at other schools. If Stony Brook wanted to eliminate fire-caused damage it would have done well to concentrate on accident prevention.

One hundred and three fires were attributed to accidents between 1978 and 1981. Accidents accounted for 29% of all fires, arson; 26%, cooking came in third with 18%, unknown cause; 13.7%, and "other" came in last with 11.7%. Clearly neither of these two reports justifies Marburger's conclusions.

The program intended to modify the building's electrical systems and plumbing to handle cooking and its by-products. Millions of dollars were spent to do this and every building was renovated. If these renovations are not adequate it is not because there was not enough renovation but because the wrong renovations were done, i.e. the wrong wiring, installing plumbing with no grease traps, etc. This report can not definitively say this is what has happened but most of the evidence seems to be pointing in this direction.

If the program was never truly adequately budgeted, then how can the University explain the conspicuous wastes, such as the

purchase of curtains; the use of an IFR account, which charges 6.5% overhead instead of an FSA account which charges 2%; paying the program director and his secretaries' full salary; the purchase of sanitizers instead of dishwashers (This purchase was called a "waste" by Bob Francis; the sanitizers cost thousands of dollars and they all quickly broke down and had to be discarded); the purchase of non-industrial ovens and related equipment; spending exorbitant amounts of money on unneeded printing; and the list continues. The program was never managed right. Even Bob Francis has admitted that the program was mismanaged before he became Vice President.

It is not my contention that the present administration has mismanaged DCP grossly, though they have to some extent. The Toll administration allowed years of mismanagement to go uncorrected and let countless thousands of dollars go wasted. It is the University's responsibility morally and perhaps legally to provide the service the fees were collected for. It is unacceptable for one administration to say that it was the responsibility of the previous people and leave it at that. If the program is damaging the buildings (and this hasn't been proved) because the program was mismanaged then it is the responsibility of who ever is in charge at the present time not only to stop the mismanagement but to do everything needed to make the program work as it could have.

In effect the present administration's policy is one of washing its hands of the entire matter. But if the administration could eventually get all the people on the meal plan through other means and if there was no real damage from dorm cooking, why then did they move to eliminate it? Liz Wadsworth had the answer a decade ago when she said, "in any large system, an exceptional program makes people nervous."



ments in the management of FSA and of the meal plan itself. If existing trends continued, Marburger's goal of 3,500 students on the plan would surely have been met. If not, it seems absurd, in a society that values freedom of choice so highly, to force people on to a plan they don't want. The other open option would have been to improve the meal plan to attract a larger amount of participants.

Improving the meal plan significantly is a hard task, harder than eliminating the meal plan's alternative; the dorm cooking program. This reason alone does not suffice as a reason to significantly reduce dorm cooking.

The administration contends that the dorm cooking program was always inadequately budgeted and that presently, the program adds to the deterioration of the dormitory buildings. The damage though, has never been documented adequately. In 1977, Vice President Wadsworth noted that "there is no way to measure, at this time, the amount of damage, if any, that dorm cooking causes." Since then, no reliable method has been developed to do so. To back up his contention that dorm cooking does do damage, Marburger cited two reports in particular; the Dorm Authority Property Condition Report and the State Legislative Expenditure Review report.

unaware that the D.C.P. existed, and its purpose was to modify the building to provide safe cooking conditions and to pay for the additional housekeeping services needed. He also failed to realize that his authority had approved the Dorm Cooking Program. Liz Wadsworth once complained about continually having to defend exceptional programs like dorm cooking from cautious Albany paper pushers. That Marburger cited this report as proof that dorm cooking was damaging the dorms and that there was pressure to close the dorm cooking program is dishonest. If he had made the effort to explain the nature of dorm cooking to the Authority it is doubtful that the report would have condemned Stony Brook for permitting "unauthorized occupant cooking."

Marburger also stated that inspection reports by the Dorm Authority and the State Legislative review commission saw fire as the main cause of dorm damage associated with dorm cooking. "These reports document in particular an unacceptably high number (65) of fires attributed to dorm cooking alone on campus between 1978 and 1981, more than ten times the figure for the other campuses surveyed, which included Buffalo and Binghamton." The statistics the President cites are true, but misleading. Although Stony Brook does

## Fest Rules

Continued from page 3

Not only did it take time to put the wrist bands on, Scoop was able to show that they could be broken and taped back together without obvious markings. They reverted back to the primitive, yet effective, ink stamp with one provision: if the ink was smudged you had to go back and get restamped, and in order to be restamped you had to show proof of 21. However, proofing was a problem, since Stony Brook ID was not enough anymore — two forms of picture ID were needed. The decision to proof so strictly was not made by Administration until one week before the fest. As a consequence, many who lived "outside the walls" and had not learned about the double proofing, were turned away at the entrance to the drinking area, for lack of enough ID. One person said, "They might have had a million credit cards, but we couldn't take them." Some of those denied became violent and threatened the servers and proofers, resulting in Public Safety's intervention on frequent occasions.

Scoop was originally told that there was no limit on the number of kegs that could be bought, on the number of tickets that could be sold at once, and there was no limit on the number of beers a person could get at one time. Scoop staffed the concession stands accordingly. Administration had their own ideas. They figured on 4500 people coming to the fest and of those 4500 about 48.5% would legally drink. It was expected that of those, 80% would consume a beer an hour

from 4-12 on Friday and from 1-12 on Saturday. Making the further assumption that every keg held 200 twelve-ounce cups, Administration reached an astronomical number of kegs required for the fest. Convinced there was too much, they decided to cancel the beer. Fortunately, Marc Gunning, Polity President, came to the rescue.

He used the same formula with smaller percentages, allowing only 2 or 3 drinks a person for the weekend. He arrived at 178 kegs, only eight more than the previous year, yet a far cry from the 550 kegs that the administration thought were needed. Compromising at 136 kegs and 100 cases of wine the crisis was averted. By now, the unrestricted number of tickets and unlimited number of beers which could be given to an individual had become a thing of the past.

The restrictive hand of Administration was felt as servers were restricted to the age of 21 and over, a maximum number of 4 tickets could be bought per person at any given time, and an individual could be served only one beer at a time. Scoop had things planned out, but it was the last minute changes by the administration that caused the problems. These decisions were made without even consulting SCOOP, who had been running the beer concession stands for about six years. Said Gerard Karcher "They make up these rules and regulations without consulting anyone. They don't deal with it on the practical level as we do. They deal with it on the theoretical level. They don't know the effects their rules can have."

# Sanctions Sense

To the Editor:

Finally, someone has noticed the Emperor has no clothes. Amit Doshi's Viewpoint on South Africa (*Sanctions, Soviets, and Surrender*, *Press*, Oct. 16) is a beam of light in a cave of ignorance. It's about time that someone took the intellectual effort to put the problems of South Africa in perspective. This is not the first time sanctions have been applied by one nation to another. Doshi does a good job of showing what they have and have not done in the past.

Congratulations to Doshi and the *Press* for contributing thoughtful work to what has become a highly emotional and irrational exchange. He has provided badly needed historical, political, and economic background to the issue. Let us hope that this context encourages constructive debate in place of the recriminations which have marred discussions thus far.

Juan C. Sanchez  
Co-Chairman  
College Republicans

P.S. I would like to apologize to the university community for an error I made in the construction of a sentence in a Viewpoint that was published in the *Statesman* on Oct. 6 (*South African Sanctions Will Hurt Blacks*). In this viewpoint I stated: "Is it our goal to give the power to speak to South Africa to the ANC (a Marxist organization) and their violent means by which to achieve a peaceful end? This is a contradiction, Martin Luther King will agree. And through these means achieve living conditions in South Africa with those in ... Zimbabwe, where censorship of its own black press is common in President Mugabe's attempt to make this nation a one party nation (a totalitarian nation), and whose living conditions have steadily deteriorated for blacks since the abolishment of white minority rule." My attempt here was to make the reader infer as to what happens when Marxism or Socialism gets hold of a Capitalist economy, as in the giving of power to the ANC. However, some misunderstood that, in effect, what I had said to them was that "under white minority rule, conditions were better for blacks." After careful review of the paragraph, I came to the same conclusion. A racist and unjust sentence had made its way onto the pages of the press. I attribute this to my inability to fully utilize the English language, in not posing questions as to what my beliefs are. My friends know that I oppose racism and totalitarianism vehemently. It is now my job to show the university community that this is in fact the case. Once again, I apologize.

# Rugby Responds

To the Editor:

Since the conception of the Stony Brook Women's Rugby Football Club (SBWRFC) we have been trying to establish a reputation as a club sport of which the community could be proud. However, our team has a unique problem in that the mention of our name does not spark images of a game but of the sexuality of the players (i.e.: we are either lesbians or nymphomaniacs). We are always referred to as "those rugby women." Although women's rugby is a radical concept to a sexually insecure community, the essence of the game is like that of any other game: camaraderie, teamwork, sportsmanship and pride. And we are faced with the same problems as any other team.

The editorial in the October 16 issue of *The Press*, "Worn Sneakers" was a pleasant surprise. It was the first article about our team ever published in a Stony Brook newspaper that treated us as a team with team

problems. It specified that rugby is played by both men and women instead of ignoring us or focusing on our sexuality. It listed several of the many problems we face as a club, but there are much more.

In addition to those that you have listed, our field at South P-Lot is overrun with foreign objects such as glass and dog droppings. We have had problems with finding a knowledgeable coach who is willing and able to help us. We have little equipment - only two rugby balls to practice with, and uniforms alone cost each player approximately \$55, not to mention that many of us play without cleats because we can't afford them. We attend minimal amounts of tournaments due to the lack of money for entry fees; even then we must pay for our own travel and lodging.

We appreciate the open mindedness of the editorial staff of the *Press*, and we hope that you will come out and watch our next home game!

Sincerely yours,  
Vandy Shatkin  
(President, SBWRFC)

# Capitalist Morals?

To the Editor:

It is hard to know how to respond to Scott Dinowitz's letter to the editor in the October 16 issue of the *Statesman*. Yet, I feel a response is necessary because his letter sounds, on the surface, quite convincing.

Mr. Dinowitz states that "capitalism...is the **only** moral economic system" because it offers an opportunity through the free market for nations to gain more from peace than from war. He then goes on to state that socialism is regressive and reactionary and bolsters this statement by comparing socialism to serfdom. Mr. Dinowitz makes these statements as if they were agreed upon facts. They are not. It does not take a degree in economics to notice that the economy of the United States in the past fifty or so years was at its strongest during and right after WW II.

Secondly, Mr. Dinowitz claims that the West "enjoys unparalleled peace, prosperity and human rights" as a direct result of capitalism. It would seem to me that the subject of the verb **enjoys** in that sentence is a white, middle class, male and heterosexual. (I assume from the subject of his letter that Mr. Dinowitz, as I am, is white.) I am bewildered that anyone could claim, without any awareness of contradiction, that a country in which women and gays are not granted, even on paper, basic civil rights; and in which people of color, though they may have those rights on paper, are systematically prevented from fully "enjoying" them - I don't understand how anyone could claim that this country enjoys unparalleled human rights. A country which has systematically wiped out the pride and culture, if not the actual populations, of the nations who are native to this soil.

It is hard to know how to respond to this person because he does not see the conditions of the people I have just mentioned as oppressive. Or rather does not agree, or will not understand, that this oppression is a result of the legal, economic and social systems of this country. Therefore, I will not try further.

I would, however, like to say something about racism. Mr. Dinowitz claims that our unwillingness to "help" the oppressed peoples of Angola, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Afghanistan or South Africa is motivated by our racism. What I would like to say is this: One of the most subtle forms that racism takes is the racist's, in this case the white's belief that he or she knows better than those of color what is good for them. When Mr. Dinowitz implies that the motivation behind this country's sanctions against South Africa is a racist set of priorities in which it is less than important to save the Blacks in

that country from a "Kremlin-sponsored bloodbath" he falls into this trap.

I would simply like to remind him that the white minority government, which is not communist and with which the United States trades, has been responsible for the atrocities that apartheid has committed against the Blacks from its inception as South Africa's form of government.

Richard Newman  
Graduate student

# Impossible Error

To the Editor:

"Does the financing of your paper affect your editorial policy?" I recently asked *Statesman* Managing Editor Tim Lapham.

"No, of course not," he said. "For example, we receive full-page advertisements from the Army, but that doesn't stop us from running editorials attacking them. If they don't like it, they can - it."

Fortified by such principles, I submitted to Mr. Lapham a Viewpoint suggesting that Polity's mandatory student activity fee should be abolished in favor of a more democratic system of voluntary student funding. To my surprise, he chose to run the piece not as a letter, nor even a Viewpoint, but as the lead editorial (and therefore official position) of the next issue of *Statesman*.

The response was immediate: Polity withdrew all advertising from *Statesman*, and instead issued an "ad sheet" expressing "outrage to (sic) this irresponsible" exercise of the First Amendment, and threatening to withhold further advertisements "until such a (sic) time as *Statesman* redeems itself."

How did Mr. Lapham's principles fare under such a classic government attack on the press?

Not well: the following issue led off with an abject repudiation of the earlier editorial. Without explaining how mere words could be so dangerous, the editors claimed that a simple idea has "unfairly harmed" some unnamed but unquestionably powerful people. "We offer our apologies," grovelled the editors, "It was purely our own error..."

Such self-abasement and jackboot-licking in the face of naked power - a long fall from the once-proud *Statesman* vow to refuse Polity funding - betrays the hypocrisy of the paper's pretensions to editorial independence. If in fact the views in question do "not correspond to those of the *Statesman* editorial board," then it behooves that faceless entity to address the merits of an argument which, despite the deep commitment of the editors to venality, inexplicably "found its way onto the pages" of such an august periodical.

Is the absence of substantive rebuttal due to an insurgent rationality among the editors? Aside from Mr. Lapham, who ran the piece, another member of the board, who shall remain nameless, told me "Off the record, I agree with your point." Perhaps this flip-flop is due not to a change of principle, but to the fact that *Statesman* has not paid a dime of taxes in the past nine quarters. The result is that, as in Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, incompetence sacrifices integrity to subsidy, as the press becomes a wholly-owned subsidiary and lap dog of government. The students of this university deserve better.

Why is Polity so afraid of the students freely judging this matter that it must so crudely silence discussion? Such ominous use of the very organized coercion of government at issue emphasizes what is at stake. And yet the political dilettantes of the editorial board presume that increased subsidies are the solution, rather than the problem. One can hardly imagine to what paroxysms of patriotism the editorial page would be driven if the US Army bothered to read college newspapers.

Mark LaRochelle  
College Republicans

# Vote

To the Editor:

It's rare that single events can change the course of world history. It's rarer still when students can play an important role in such events. The November 4th elections can fundamentally alter our future. Indeed, these elections can determine whether there is a future at all.

Voting provides the opportunity for students to make our views known on vital issues facing the country. We can also give them clout by helping elect a Congress that shares our views.

Today's student activism reflects the conscience of our nation. Millions of people oppose the arms build-up, apartheid, intervention in Central America, cutbacks in student aid and other social programs and new levels of racism and discrimination. On these issues we share the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the U.S. people. It is the Reagan Administration and its supporters that are out of step with the people of our country and the world.

For six years students have been taking it on the chin. During the Reagan presidency tuition has gone up 34%. Every year we fight administration attempts to impose deep cuts in student aid. The funds axed from these and other social programs is diverted to the astronomically expensive arms build-up. This includes Reagan's Star Wars program that will cost an estimated 1 trillion dollars over the next 5 years.

Today we have real possibilities to end the nuclear arms race. But by their actions in Iceland, the Reagan Administration has blocked this process. As Rep. Ed Markey of Massachusetts said, "The president has sent the world a message that he does not want arms control and that he has put his faith in the stardust moonbeams of his Star Wars fantasies."

Eighty percent of the people of the U.S. support a nuclear test ban. The House recently voted for a moratorium on all but the smallest nuclear explosions. A majority also opposes Star Wars. The 18-month Soviet moratorium on nuclear testing means an historic agreement is within reach.

The administration can be compelled to reverse its disastrous course. But to do this, we need a change in the political balance in Congress. This November, we can do that, by electing a pro-peace and pro-people majority to the U.S. Senate.

What we do from now until November 4 to ensure a maximum turnout of the 12 million possible student voters can make the difference.

November 4 is a chance to serve the cause of peace and to reverse Reaganism. Let's do all we can, for our generation and our planet. We're sure we can win.

Brenda Davenport Dir. Southern Christian Conference Student Affairs SASU	Jane McAlevy Immediate past President, SASU
Lawanna Gelzer President, Florida Black Student Assoc.	Greg Moore Former President, USSA
Keith Jennings Atlanta Student Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism	Pedro Noguera
Everette Joseph President, SASU	Maryann Samad Leg. Dir., United Student Senate, City Univ. of NY
	April Taylor President, SGA, Fisk Univ.

*The Press  
Welcomes  
Your  
Letters and  
Viewpoints.*

# Das Kollektiv Responds

By Mitchel Cohen

I wanted to thank Robert Holtz of the Young Republicans for his perceptive and non-polemical remarks (*Press*, 10/16/86). I see he is bucking to be accepted into the Henry Kissinger school of polysyllabic ass-wipery, smearing the same old shit. As Holtz's mentor, Henry the K compassionately opined about people starving in Africa: "To give food aid to a country just because the people are starving is a pretty weak reason." Holtz's notions about compassion, justice, and truth seem to puppet his master's sympathies.

out under the noses of U.S. officials who still support the regime there. The weak sanctions bill recently passed by Congress — abolishes **some** trade between South Africa and the U.S., but it is so full of loopholes and exemptions as to make it hardly more than a moral victory for anti-apartheid forces in the U.S.

Finally, one only has to read **The Real Terror Network** by Edward Herman, any of the exposes by former CIA agents such as Philip Agee or John Stockwell, or magazines such as **Covert Action Bulletin** or **Counterspy** (both

"disinformation" — that rationalize the murder of thousands of people in the name of "fighting terrorism". Holtz is simply the local agent for the disinformation he himself states he finds legitimate. All right, lying to Stony Brook students in the pages of the *Press* may not hold the same power as lying to the international press on a regular basis but ... what the hell, every little bit helps fight the noble cause! Along with the human beings victimized by the secret wars Holtz supports, Truth itself becomes expendable in his game of power politics and voyeuristic world conquest.

I've been to Nicaragua, and I've seen for myself the beautiful society that people are trying to build. I find Holtz's apology for lies and murder disgusting. The historical record supports none of his assertions. Those who defend deception, disinformation, lies and murder should be confronted with the truth: they are either dupes or apologists for all that is evil, and they are on the losing side of history as well. While it is important that papers like the *Press* provide alternative views not allowed in the mainstream media — a distinction Holtz fails to make and thus find's "irony" when leftist viewpoints appear locally that call the mainstream press to task for printing government press releases as gospel — readers should be wary of those who uphold the right of the press, and the government, to lie, for such polemicists are doing, to them, exactly what they hold as valid for others.

Of course I don't expect you to simply believe me on faith. Check out the books and magazines suggested above for yourself. Talk to the dozen other Stony Brook residents who have been to Nicaragua in the recent past. Better than all that, go to the Young Republicans and engage them directly. See for yourself if their arguments hold together. Most important, think for yourself. Too many others would like to do your thinking for you, if you give them the opportunity. And let your voices be heard.

*Editor's note: In the letter submitted, Robert Holtz did not claim affiliation with the Young Republicans.*

## ...hundreds of children have been killed by the South African Army using implements of torture and death obtained from the U.S.

Holtz asks a lot of rhetorical questions in his diatribe, desperately seeking to vindicate his favorite government — the one that wraps itself in the red, white and blue as it lays waste to less militarily powerful people — but proves the opposite of his intentions. He suggests the U.S. has nothing to do with murder by asking: "Is the United States blowing the hands off children with bombs disguised as toys ...?". Sadly for us all, let alone Holtz's attempt to argue a coherent position, the answer to his question is a very loud "yes".

Dozens of children were killed when the U.S. government bombed Libya earlier this year, including Qaddafi's 10-month old daughter. His two young sons were critically wounded by the U.S.'s "anti-terrorist terrorism." And the list of children blown to bits by the U.S. bombs hardly stops there.

Over 15,000 Nicaraguan civilians have been killed by the contras, who are trained, armed, and "advised" by the U.S. government. Among them have been thousands of school-children. The contras admit to going after schools and hospitals as a priority, because those facilities are the most vulnerable to attack, and they also represent the most obvious achievements of the Sandinista government.

In El Salvador, the American-made regime continues to drop American-made napalm from American-made jets and helicopters, along with American-made anti-personnel weapons, on civilians. (The way the economy is falling apart under Reagan, soon the only items wearing "made in U.S.A." tags will be foreign dictators.) Widely used in the war against Vietnam, napalm has no military purpose whatsoever — it cannot affect buildings, property, or mechanical targets. Its only use is against people, often children. It burns the skin right off one's body. The fact that the press still refuses to cover the U.S. government's role in the horrible tragedy that has descended upon El Salvador is a convincing indictment of the stage-managing of the news to fit the interests of those in power. Indeed, when Raymond Bonner wrote several first-rate reports from El Salvador that did find their way, briefly, into the *New York Times* a few years ago, he was recalled from Central America and given a desk assignment reporting on the Dow Jones average instead.

In Northern Ireland, rubber bullets and anti-personnel weapons used by the British troops, which have killed dozens of children in the past couple of years, are manufactured in Ohio and sold to the Thatcher troops with the blessings of the U.S. government.

In South Africa, hundreds and hundreds of children have been killed by the South African Army using implements of torture and death obtained from the U.S. Just three years ago the U.S. government sold 2,500 electric cattleprods to the South African police for "crowd control". Steve Biko, and hundreds of others, were tortured with electric-shock instruments attached to their genitals. The torturers were trained by the U.S. "advisers", the instruments came from the United States, and the operations continue to be carried

edited by former government secret agents) to be shocked, horrified, and outraged by what U.S. government is doing, in our names, to people throughout Latin America and in other parts of the world, including the training of secret police and death squads in actual torture-training centers, some of which lie within the borders of the United States. The U.S. government is an equal opportunity destroyer.

Glib statements and facile phrases, by Holtz or anyone else, cannot hide this bitter reality. The terrorism conducted by personnel in the hire of the U.S. government has been, over the years, vast, extensive, and well-documented. In spite of this, the propaganda machine of those in power continues to spew lies — the current vogue word for lying is

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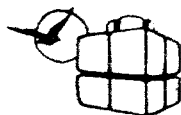
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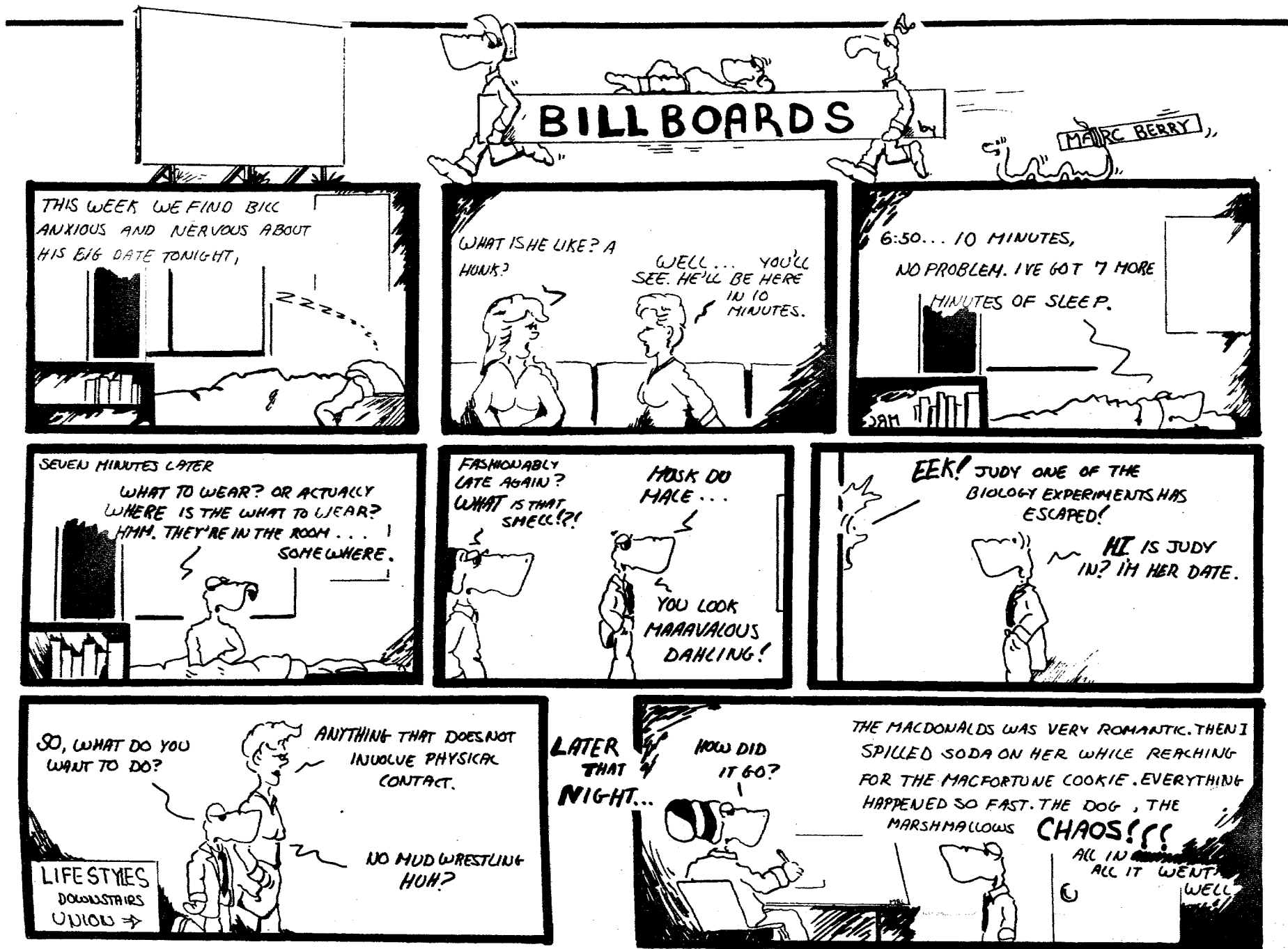
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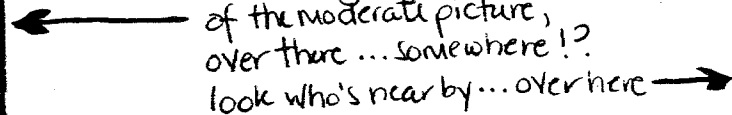
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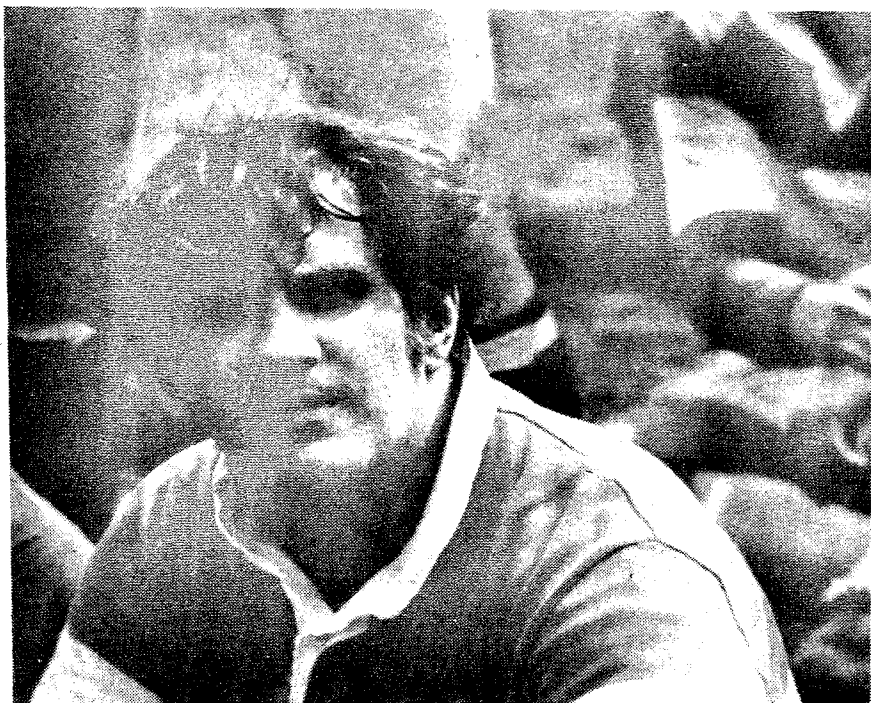
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**Sat. Oct 25th from 10:00 to 5:00**



**Stony Brook Men's Rugby Club  
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*- If you like contact sports,  
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*Bring Questions!*

*Bring Comments!*

**Thursday, Oct. 23**

**Topic: "Gay Dating/Romance"**

**New Time and Place: 8:00pm**

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**GALA: "Liberation Through Education"**

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# Loneliness Icing

## TV: Through the Looking Glass

by Craig Goldsmith

The Fine Arts Center Gallery has been converted to a television lounge, but the TV sets there will not receive the Mets game, nor *Star Trek*. These sets are broadcasting art.



The communications age is upon us full force. Technology has created a world community and has brought that community into "Everyman's" home through television. Unfortunately, television has traditionally been used as a tool of social control rather than a disseminator of information and ideas. Not that there are subliminal messages being broadcast over the airwaves, but television, through repeated assaults on the mind and eyes of the viewer spreads the ideas of the broadcasters throughout society.

People have faith in what they see on the tube. This faith extends from TV news-casting through to television sit-coms. Post-war generations are the most affected by this societal mirror (albeit a false one) as they have grown up with television. The structure of many family lives are dictated by the television set — living rooms, called "family rooms" by many, are set up to allow a proper viewing position of the TV no matter where the family sits. TV becomes the mode of thought, the main topic of interest.

The television broadcaster, the commercial networks in particular, have a constant audience of nearly fifty million people, prime-time audiences number even more. This puts the commercial networks in a position of incredible power, and unfortunately they have chosen to abuse their power rather than use it constructively.

There are however, a number of people attempting to use the medium of television in a purposeful manner; they are trying to make people think about what they are seeing rather than allowing the audience to laconically accept the images and non-ideas presented to them. The eighties' term is video-art, but that term does a disservice to what these people are trying to do. They are shooting for transmission of ideas, often about television itself, as well as an aesthetic quality.

The people producing the work that is currently being shown at the Fine Art Center are products of the video age themselves. They have attempted to expand the medium of video from the rather cinematically oriented style of commercial television, to a style that takes advantage of the qualities of video itself. Video artists (for lack of a better term) are attempting to define the language and syntax of video, much as the New Wave cinema directors threw out the theatrical ideals of Hollywood in favor of a cinematic style that is suited to film.

The Fine Arts Center is now running fifteen short video works until November 5. Varying in length from three minutes to half an hour, the works were selected to highlight a broad cross-section of this medium's achievements during the past fifteen years. The works on display range in subject from

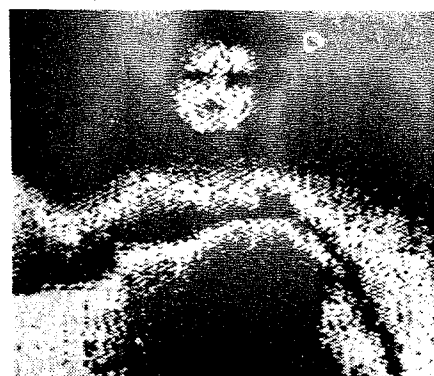
abstract audio-visual presentations, to statements on mass-media, to documentary work about minority squatters in Philadelphia.

The best of the works presented were biting satirical, digging into the flanks of commercial television and mass-media. "Perfect Leader" by Max Almy, 1983, is a cruel and heartless attack on the methods that the media uses to project the qualities of political candidates. Only four-and-a-half minutes long, it portrays an omnipotent super-computer responsible for creating a purely media oriented political leader. Using digital video techniques, and a brain-thumping, hardcore soundtrack, the viewer is allowed to watch a "leader of the people" being built up in layers, each designed to have a particular effect on the voters.

Anyone out there ever see Max Headroom, the self-proclaimed "face of the eighties?" Well, shit, Max Headroom's parents are the computer and the television. He is one of the most talked about celebrities this year and he doesn't even exist. "More charisma!" shouts the computer in "Perfect Leader," and with the push of a button it is done. Although "Perfect Leader" takes the media representation of politicians to a paranoid extreme, today's politicians are using the power of television to the largest extent possible. It is their best method of reaching people, and of presenting themselves in the best light. Television allows them to select what they want the viewing public to see.

A media advisor is one of the most influential in any political campaign. "Perfect Leader" is an attempt at portraying the consequences of the priority media receives from campaigning politicians. This year's elections have seen television spots for political candidates reach an unparalleled level of technological and visual sophistication. Ron Reagan is an actor, and he has used television to an extent never before imagined, and he has done a damn good job of getting himself (as he sees himself) across to the American public.

"Television Delivers People," by Richard Serra, filmed in 1973 is another attack on the methods and structure of commercial media organizations. Based on material culled from conferees on television advertising, "Television Delivers People" is a purely textual film: six minutes of titles roll past the screen, accompanied by the most offending Muzak I have ever heard. Serra



attempts to show how television is a medium which is patronized by advertisers. The advertisers are the real users of TV, the viewing public merely meant to be delivered into the hands of the merchant. "Commercial television is a manipulating device controlled by corporate interests," says Serra. The television companies are in existence for one purpose — to make money. And they make their money through advertising. It is their milk and bread. The viewer believes that TV caters to his desires, that the networks are doing him a service. Too bad, Mr. Everyman.

Commercials are not inherently manipulative, though, it is the people behind the commercial that decide its purpose. "30 Second Spots" by Joan Logue, 1980-1985, is a collection of six half-minute "commercials" that present the work and appearance of selected artists. Using video technology, Logue highlights the abilities of the six artists in a fashion that compliments each artist's own style and particular artistic medium. Laurie Anderson, a performance and video artist in her own right, is included in the set of commercials, which portray composers, dancers, and sculptors. These "commercials" do what real commercials should do — present information and ideas, rather than an inaccurate, slanted attempt at manipulating the desires of the viewer.

"R.M. Fischer: An Industrial," by Michael Owen and Carole Ann Klonarides, 1984, follows the same lines as "30 Second Spots" in its portrait of an artist and his work, using the format of the industrial instruction films shown to factory workers and shop students.



Fischer's sculpture is a hybrid of electric lamp design and industrial machinery. The form of the video was chosen to accentuate the flavor of Fischer's machinized, space-age lamps. Owen and Klonarides attempt at highlighting Fischer's bizarre work, however, becomes as sterile as the inside of a factory; any flow of aesthetic quality that could have been absorbed from Fischer's work is lost in a cold metal vacuum created by the style of the two filmmakers.

"Go For It, Mike," by Michael Smith, 1984 is a musical video that employs standard commercial television techniques to comment on traditional American mores. Only one of many such commentaries produced by Smith, "Go For It, Mike" is a humorous look at the American ideal of Manifest Destiny — the idea that America naturally expands to its geographical limits. Mike, an "Everyman" in pursuit of the American dream, rides a rocking horse across scenes of the Old West. Singing along with a hard-driving rhythm-and-blues soundtrack is a chorus of fellow "Everymen," telling Mike to "Go For It, Go For It, Mike!" Mike looks into the camera and smiling says, "Yes, I think I'll Go For It," and rides off in search of America. Mike is a humanized Zippy the Pinhead: naive, innocent, and totally unaware of the realities of society. "Go For It, Mike" insists that there are more Pinheads out there than is good for us. TV only heightens this naivete by presenting the viewer with an over-simplified version of the society in which we live, and this over-simplification becomes a pattern which people believe to be reality.

Three of the video works presented leave the realm of social comment behind and treat the eye and mind to a purely aesthetic experience. The least abstract of the three, "Sabda" ("word," as in the original sound of life), by Dan Reeves, 1984, is a sort of visual raga about Reeves' experiences in India during an extended trip in '83. Using actual footage and sound with the addition of a few well-placed pieces of text, Reeves commu-

icates to the viewer not what he saw in India, but what he felt, and how it affected his thinking. Using current video technology to juxtapose and diffuse various images, "Sabda" has an almost liquid flow, and a visual rhythm similar to the rhythms used by Indian musicians. "Sabda" is even more impressive because it was created by a Westerner, but catches the feel of Eastern thought as that thought is expressed in the lives of the people and their own endeavors. In keeping with the Eastern tradition, "Sabda" is a circular work of art. It doesn't matter at what point in the fifteen minutes long film viewing is started, the rhythm of the piece remains uninterrupted.

"Lake Placid 80", by Nam June Paik, 1980, is an out and out assault on the senses. Using incredibly sophisticated montage techniques, techniques available only to users of video, he brings four minutes of the Lake Placid Winter Olympics to the TV screen. Set to Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Good Golly, Miss Molly", "Lake Placid 80" is a barrage of sound and color, motion and sound. The true colors of actual events are changed, reverse video, slow motion and montage provide a taste of the adrenalin rush that olympic athletes must feel when they are competing in the world's most scrutinized sporting event. Actual information about the events of the games are hardly present, the viewer is unable to identify the nation that any athlete comes from, but the emotional impact of the video is striking.

The most abstract of all the works being shown, "Night Flame Ritual", by Reynold Weidenaar, 1983, is an exercise in both visual and musical rhythmic patterns. Using avant-garde clarinet music composed by the artist, "Night Flame Ritual" is almost cubist in style, contrasting textures, perspectives and color, but with the addition of motion. An attempt to describe what this piece looks like would only do a disservice to the artist, suffice to say that Weidenaar has fully exploited the qualities of his medium



to suit his purposes. No other work on display showed such a confident and wide-ranging knowledge of video as an art medium. Content is not the only thing of importance, video as a medium must be used to its full potential. If video's qualities are not exploited by the artist then that artist might as well stick to cinema.

The real problem with video as an art medium, or as a transmitter of ideas and information, is the viewer. Whether or not the commercial television companies are manipulating the audience to suit their own needs is of no consequence. It is the television watcher who must demand material of quality and content. Don't get me wrong, I love entertainment, but it must be realized that television is the most powerful method of information transmission and therefore social control, that the world has ever seen. That power must be used with discretion or we all suffer. This idea was echoed nicely in a film a few years back called *The Osterman Weekend*. At the close of the film, the hero, a talk show host, dares the viewer to "turn your TV off. Go ahead. I bet you can't."