

**THE
STONY
BROOK**

PRESS

Vol. 14 No. 5 • The University Community's Feature Paper • November 11, 1992

WINNERS...



Inside This Issue

**LAWSUIT
SETTLED**

page 2

**HOW SAFE
IS THE
WATER?**

page 7

**RIVERS
OF CHINA
REVIEW**

page 12

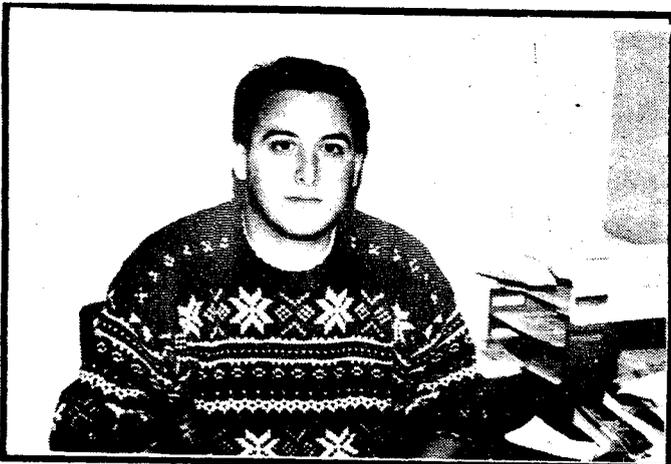
It's Settled:

Levy vs. Press, Statesman, and Polity Lawsuit Settlement Reached

By David Yaseen

A defamation lawsuit by former student Ira Levy against the *Stony Brook Press*, *Statesman* and *Polity* was withdrawn by the plaintive last week with an agreed statement from both parties. Plaintive Ira Levy withdrew his liable lawsuit and in return both parties drew up a statement that he was innocent of any improprieties, and the student papers reported the events fairly and accurately.

Levy had claimed that he was slandered by the two newspapers and *Polity* after the student government made accusations against him. Levy originally asked for



Statesman Editor Dave Joachim

\$900,000 damages in the suit. It was agreed that no cost and no money would be exchanged on either side. Levy said after the trial "I'm happy, I got what I set out to do. I've cleared my name."

Polity Lawyer Leonard Shapiro said "It went amazingly

well...There was insufficient merit to begin with, the plaintiffs attorney withdrew the case prior to the presentation of the defendants case. I was confident from the beginning, that we would be victorious, and justice prevailed."

According to David Korsnick, lawyer for *Stony Brook Press*, *Statesman*, and the two former writers, if the trial were to have continued, it may have gone on for over a week. After Levy had taken the stand, lawyer John Ray told Judge Lester E. Gerrard that he intended to call possibly more than six more witnesses. Gerrard commented that he would not allow a parade of witnesses, and asked Ray to present to him with a list of potential witnesses. The trial ended after five and a half days of testimony.

The defense received the stipulation that: "The news articles were fair reports of the student council meetings and the media defendants reported on these meetings accurately and responsibly," Defendants Robin Rabii, Dave Gamberg, Geoffrey Reiss, Mitch Wagner, Polity and the two papers were reassured that they would not have to pay any damages to Levy.

Levy had originally claimed that when *Polity* had charged him with "alleged embezzlement" the student government had defamed him. *Polity* had accused Levy in 1983 of taking money from the proceeds of concerts. He also charged that after the articles had been written by the *Statesman* and *Press*, his credibility had decreased.

Dave Joachim, current Editor of *Statesman*, said that "We essentially won." Joachim said that both parties cleared their names. "He was not on trial, we were. He didn't get money. He didn't get an apology, he lost."



Press Editor Greg Forte

Joachim added that although *Statesman* won the lawsuit, the system beat them. *Statesman*, along with the two other two writers, is now left with the burden of paying about \$10,000 in lawyers' fees a piece. The three parties brought in David Korsnick, a libel expert, to handle the case for them. Although *Polity* Lawyer Leonard Shapiro had volunteered to represent the case for everyone, they chose to go with Korsnick because of his experience with liable cases.

Former *Press* Editor Joe Caponi said "I'm a little disappointed with the way it ended. Overall, I think the good guys won in the end. It's too bad we didn't get a decision that would prevent these types of lawsuits in the future."

The current *Press* Editor Greg Forte said "I thought the whole case was ridiculous from the start. I didn't think Levy would win from the beginning. I'm glad it's over."

Marius X Speaks

by Shari Nezami

On Wednesday, November 4th at 7:00 PM the African American Students Organization sponsored a lecture by Marius X at the Uniti Cultural Center. Marius X is currently the assistant to Conrad Mohammed at Temple number 7 in Manhattan. The Temple is operated by the Nation of Islam, currently headed by Minister Louis Farrakhan.

The Nation of Islam was founded 60 years ago by Elijah Muhammad. At that time, he stated, God appeared to him in the person of Master Fared Muhammad. God, incarnated in the person of Fared Muhammad, then went on to tell Elijah Muhammad that he been sent to uplift the Black man in America and to teach him knowledge of self. Thus the Nation was founded. Today it is headed by the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan.

Marius X's lecture was entitled *The Survival of the Black Man in the 21st Century*. However, he spoke on a variety of topics. He began by greeting the crowd of roughly 20 to 30 with "peace, the same greeting that Jesus used to greet his disciples and he didn't speak English, he spoke Aramaic or Arabic." He then went on to give thanks to Almighty God for Moses, Jesus, the Prophet Muhammad, and "especially for the Honorable Louis Farrakhan."

He then went on to tell the mostly African-American

crowd of students that it is not simply enough to get a degree at a university such as Stony Brook, because "all that is is a permission slip for you to go beg the white man for a job." He spoke of many Black people who had attained "B.A.'s, M.A.'s and PhD's but still don't have a job." According to Marius X, it is not enough for a Black person to attain an education at an institute of higher learning, he or she must then use that knowledge to further the social, political, and economic interests of the Black community at large. As an example of this, he spoke of Indian and Chinese immigrants who "come here, work hard, and then take that knowledge back to help their people." He criticized Black people for their failure to help one another: "Why is it that Black people don't even own their own supermarkets in the ghettos? All those years you lived there, you never realized you needed a supermarket but along come an Asian person, he knows you need one." He then went on to say that "Black people beg for what they need, but they go out and buy what they want."

He also spoke about the need for a separate Black state. In his view, it was natural for Black people to want to separate from whites. "You don't see red ants living with black ants do you?" Not only do Black people need to have a separate state, but this state should be headed by the Minister Farrakhan for, according to Marius X, he is the only Black leader today who can offer Black people a strong and viable economic, politi-



cal, moral, and social plan and structure by which to organize this type of state. However, the audience was never informed of what this plan is. Marius X did speak of the difference that joining the Nation of Islam had made in his own personal life. He stated that he had not previously respected Black women, and that this was one of the things that Louis Farrakhan had changed in him. "When you call a Black woman b-i-t-c-h you might as well be calling your own mother that, because the Black woman is the first self-created being. When God created Himself out of the triple darkness of space the first thing he did was create the Black woman." He also told Black women that they should respect themselves more. "Don't go runnin' after no skinny, flat-behind white feminist." He commented when speaking about the pro-choice movement that abortions were a white invention, fine for white women but do not work for Black women. "Don't you ever kill your Black baby, I don't care if you had an abortion in the past, I'm not trying to make you feel bad, you did that out of ignorance, but now you know."

Marius X also criticized Black men for not being responsible to Black women. He stated that the reasoning behind this was rooted in the time of slavery. In those days, enslaved Black men and women were not allowed to marry, if a Black woman was to get pregnant, her baby would be taken from her and sold. Because of this, Black men's consciousness about fami-

continued on page 8

AND LOSERS

Numbers of the '92 Election

by Auke Piersma

There is a new era in American politics, and as college students we will be directly involved. The next President of the United States is Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton. This brings the first change of parties in the White House since 1980. This is also the first time since 1980 that a single party controlled the White House and Congress. This dramatic shift in power was propelled by harsh economic times across the world.

The election itself, has some evident numbers. The electoral vote was 370 for Governor Clinton to 168 for President Bush while Ross Perot carried no states. However, the popular vote stood at 43% for Mr. Clinton, 38% for President Bush, and 19% for Ross Perot. No candidate was able to establish a clear majority. This led to Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole commenting that Mr. Clinton did not get the people's mandate. Democrats claim that no one could have a mandate with three strong candidates as in this election year.

The exit polls of CBS and NBC both showed the economy as the number one issue for voters. The next two issues were the deficit and the health care system. Throughout the campaign President Bush stressed his foreign policy experience, family values, and lower taxes. The polls showed that the people did not see these issues as important and this may have hurt Bush his reelection effort. It is interesting that the abortion and the environment were also low in the exit polls. This may have hurt Clinton in his campaign. The most important thing to come out of the exit polls, however, were the comparisons of people's interest in this presidential campaign to the 1988 presidential campaign. 48% said they had an interest in the 1988 presidential campaign and 72% say they had an interest in the 1992 presidential campaign. While in the last thirty years there has been a steady decrease in voter turnout, this year shows a remarkable 4% increase.

In this election year the Senate had only a slight change in the makeup of its seats. There are now 58



President Bush waves goodbye to onlookers

Democratic seats and 42 Republican seats. This leaves the Democrats short by two seats to have the ability to end filibusters. Despite the numbers staying almost the same many faces in the Senate will be quite new. There are six women in office now, including a pair from California; Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein. The most notable new face is Carol Mosley Braun, a black woman, who is the first ever in the Senate's history. There is also an American Indian from Colorado, a first in the last 60 years of the Senate.

There were two significant local Senate races, in New York and Connecticut. The Republican incumbent Al D'Amato closely beat Attorney General Robert Abrams in the most expensive Senate race in New York history. It was also a campaign that ignored the issues and emphasized character attacks. The final percentage for this race was 51% for D'Amato and 49% for Abrams. The Connecticut race was much calmer and more civilized. Democratic incumbent Chris Dodd won easily 61% to 39%.

The other body of Congress also has some major changes occurring in it. First, the Democrats have lost nine seats in the House, and now stand at 259. The new house will have 47

women, an increase of 28. There will also be 38 blacks in the house, an increase of 13. Of local interest, George Hockbrueckner defeated Ed Romaine by 2%.

More election day wonders were provided by the referendums including covering such topics as abortion, euthanasia, homosexual rights, and term limits. A Maryland initiative was accepted which will ease restrictions on abortion. An Arizona initiative was rejected which was to eliminate public financing of abortions. There was a California initiative that was narrowly defeated which would have allowed doctors to perform euthanasia. An Oregon Amendment to allow discouragement of homosexuality by government was rejected. All 14 states want to have term limit initiatives passed in them. There is a question as to how constitutional they are. This issue could be something the Supreme Court will have to decide.

I asked two Political Science Professors and a respected graduate student from the department about their predictions for 1996. Professor Segal sees Elizabeth Dole as a possible Republican nominee. He also sees Perot as a possible entry into the race. Professor Scarrow sees Jack Kemp as the Republican Nominee and believes that Ross Perot will not run again. Bruce Jenna, a noted graduate student, sees Jack Kemp or even Jim Baker as the Republican nominee. If you wonder what they said about Dan Quayle, they all agreed that he would run and not succeed at all for the nomination.



Have we seen the last of Ross Perot?



LGBA SITS ON ROTC

by Dean Markadakis

I learned a few new things today. First, I learned that under no circumstances should anyone ever ask Bill for a cigarette. Second, I now know that when you buy a bagel in the Humanities cafeteria, you pay more for two cream cheese things than you do for one. It wasn't until I slurped the last few drops of my second glassful of lukewarm blue Kool Aid that I realized how significant my third discovery was. (through Kool Aid I have achieved enlightenment). You see, there's a terrible injustice occurring on our campus and we, the students, are the victims. No, actually, everyone in the Stony Brook community is a victim. Actually, everyone in the SUNY system is a victim. Hell, we're all victims — every last one of us. Humanity is the victim. Let me explain. Last Wednesday, the Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Alliance held a sit-in in the lobby of the Union protesting the active recruitment of the R.O.T.C. on our campus. You see, the Department of Defense discriminates against gay people on the basis of nothing really legitimate. The University does not wish to

promote discrimination by allowing any company or organization which discriminates against non-heterosexuals to recruit on this campus. The Armed Forces, however, are welcome on our campus despite their blatant discriminatory policies. It just doesn't make any sense. In fact, any organization that wishes to represent itself on campus must sign an agreement which states they do not discriminate against people on the basis of their age, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, etc. Clearly, there is a concrete incoherence here. Why the double standard?

What makes this even more of an outrage is the fact that there is money involved in this whole R.O.T.C. business.

Their policy is this: "we'd like to give you this money to get a good education and help you in attaining the American dream, and we'd like to allow you to serve your country like any moral red-blooded American should, and we'd like to train you to survive in the wilderness and kill people with sharp metal objects and high powered gun things, but you see, we can't let you do shit because you like members of your own gender."

About 30 students attended the sit-in which began at around 12:30 and spanned the entire length of Campus Life Time and then some. After a brief exchange of degrading epithets with Public Safety, the freedom music kicked in drowning out



the all-too-familiar Stevie Wonder tune emanating from Stony Snacks ("I just called... to say.... I love you..") and the sign-making commenced. "ROTC IS UNAMERICAN," was the slogan of the day with four students wielding signs which professed this possibly accurate accusation. There were snickers, cackles, eye-rolls, and grueling cries of moral outrage aplenty from innocent bystanders who at this point had infested the Union lobby. The R.O.T.C. men (if you choose to categorize them as so) stared, laughed, and glanced at each other seductively. They made sure the sitters did not violate their space, childishy crying fire hazard each time a sitter moved a little too close to their table. Of course Public Safety responded with requests to get the hell out of the way and let people run from the damn fire. The sitters seemed apathetic yet pissed off.

President-elect Bill Clinton claims he'll rescind the Department of Defense directive that prohibits gays from enlisting in the military. This will undoubtedly meet some fierce opposition from various Christian Fundamentalist groups, right wing Republicans, writhing homophobes, and idiots. Mr. Clinton seems to be irritated by the military's discriminatory policies and has been active in trying to pass legislation in the past. It looks as if the military's trend in recruiting will soon change because of Mr. Clinton's efforts. Give that man a glass of Kool Aid.



USB Weekly On the Rocks

By Greg Forte

The campus newspaper *USB Weekly* may be in jeopardy of losing its referendum budget if it doesn't start printing soon. A motion that would have allowed its funding to be removed was voted down by the Polity Senate last Wednesday evening. The motion came as a result of *USB Weekly* failing to come out at all this semester.

Commuter Senator Mike Lyons made the motion that their funding be removed. During the meeting, he commented that the newspaper has not printed one issue since the semester began, and that they are over ten issues behind. According to Lyons, he feels that it is unfair that this club is receiving money from the students because they have not been achieving their goals. The motion also included the provision that the money from *USB Weekly* go towards the other campus media. This would include *Blackworld*, *Stony Brook Press* and *Statesman*. The Senate voted against it, mainly because it did not feel that enough time has elapsed before the paper should be dissolved.

John Vermilion, the Acting Executive Editor for *USB Weekly*, has been in contact with the Polity office, and is scheduled to show up at the next Senate meeting. Vermilion could not be reached at presstime.

According to Polity President David Greene, the campus paper should be given more time. "*USB Weekly* should be given a chance to try to re-organize themselves. This is a four-year referendum, and only two years have passed. Next year, if *USB Weekly* wants to start up, they can. I would much rather see something done where the money is there for them, and if they decide to use it, they are able to do so."

Statesman Editor Dave Joachim said that he had spoken to Vermilion and said he would assist him in trying to get a staff

together. Joachim said that this would be difficult because Vergolino said he didn't really have the time. "Right now, they really don't have anybody in charge." Christina Brown, former Executive Editor for the *Weekly*, is also no longer there.

Joachim suggested that he disagreed with the motion. He commented "I don't believe you should take away funding away from them without giving them a chance to put something together."

USB Weekly is presently on a four-year referendum with *Statesman*, *Stony Brook Press*, and *Blackworld*. Each paper receives \$9200 per year from the media referendum, which passed last Spring. If the Senate motion had passed, each of the remaining papers would have split the remaining money left over in the *USB Weekly*'s account, and would have shared the remaining money from the referendum. Over the next two years, each paper would receive an additional \$1500 per semester. Since the money has already been paid to Polity, it cannot be taken off the referendum.

However Joachim did add that the from *USB Weekly*, could be used to pay for a legal bill which has to be settled. "We [*Statesman*] can use this money, and it would still being toward the media cause, and be justifiable..."

But according to volunteers at the paper, *USB Weekly* has already called it quits. Steven Shapiro, the Editorial Page Editor, said that he has already signed the papers dissolving the one-time broadsheet paper. But according to Greene, a club can not officially be dissolved unless Polity officially recognizes the fact.

Shapiro added that most of the former members of the staff graduated last May. As a result, the paper was left with very few people to do the bulk of the work. Also, since many of the staff were new, few knew how to run a newspaper.

Several people jumped ship, and abandoned the paper citing poor managerial skills.

When *USB Weekly* first started, it had accumulated several debts. This is because it had no source of funding. According to Shapiro, *USB Weekly* had started out the semester facing a \$5,000 debt. This was because of expenses incurred the previous semester. Much of the debt arose from printing costs, computer bills, and overhead cost of moving into Central Hall. Computer leasing costs, printing bills, and various other supplies had to be paid off by SPA. By the time the referendum was passed, the \$4600 that was collected for the Spring of '91 went to past bills that the paper had accumulated. According to Shapiro, Polity also collected almost \$2,000 in lost advertising revenues that were never collected by the staff.

The campus publication distinguished itself by having a broad sheet format, and layout similar to the *NY Times*. To many, it was an immediate success.

The paper's first Editor was Otto Strong, a former *Statesman* writer. He was best known for his column that appeared in *Statesman* called *The Funny Bone*. He eventually resigned from *Statesman* to form *USB Weekly*. Strong graduated last May, and is now writing for the *L.A. Times* in Los Angeles.

When he left *Statesman* he took several writers and photographers with him. *USB Weekly* had at one time had a staff of over twenty people. Presently, that number is now around three. When many of the original staff graduated last May, nobody filled their seats at the paper. As a result, it started to fall apart.

Since then, the status of the paper is still unsolved mystery. Unless *USB Weekly* gets moving, they may be as extinct as the dinosaurs.

How Safe is Long Island's Groundwater?

by Allan Peda

Is the drinking water on Long Island a potential source of the many health problems attributed to it by citizen groups? Studies have been completed that may indicate excessive risks of cancer here on the Island. One obvious link common to all of us on Long Island is our dependence on a water source which supplies most of our drinking water: the underground water table, or aquifer. Nowhere is the expression "out of sight, out of mind" more true than in the attitude of most people to this water source. After all, if asked about the nearest body of water that is most vulnerable to water pollution on Long Island, most people would probably mention Long Island Sound.

Some background is in order to better understand this scenario: try to visualize the process of rainwater falling on a suburban area. Water flows over the streets, lawns and driveways, picking up whatever chemicals that are in its path. Eventually storm water is routed to a storm sewer, or is collected by a recharge basin to be slowly released into the underground aquifer.

Think about this—the primal state of the Island did not include expressways or shopping malls, and there were no septic tanks or cesspools. The initial European settlers of this area were largely dependent upon farming, cattle, or fishing, and simply dug wells by hand when they needed water. Rainwater would fall on the ground and would then rapidly intercalate into the ground, eventually reaching a saturated pool of water, or aquifer.

Yet, as the population of the Island grew, this method of obtaining water has hardly changed. Wells are now dug by professional drillers, and specially designed grouts are used to seal the well casing, but the water used here for drinking, bathing, and cooking, is still drawn from the ground. Many studies have been done regarding this issue, but, despite the fact that it affects almost all Long Island residents, it is not given a very high profile in the local news.

A 1987 report prepared for Suffolk County as part of the Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan went so far as to state that "contamination by synthetic organic chemicals is presently the greatest threat to Long Island's water supply." This same report continues, "primary sources of these contaminants are industrial/commercial solvents, petroleum products, pesticides and herbicides." For example, in Nassau and Suffolk counties, at least 88 public water supply wells have been abandoned due to contaminants exceeding government limits. In these counties there are approximately two hundred sites where petroleum contamination is currently being cleaned up.

To be fair, due to the development of new regulations about this issue, the present rate of release of petroleum products (such as gasoline) is probably decreasing. Unfortunately, underground releases may go undetected for many years, and after detection, these releases may take even longer to clean up. In short, the worst could be yet to come.

In agricultural regions, pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers penetrate this subsurface aquifer in much the same manner, and in these cases the real extent of contamination can be much greater. While the concentrations of these chemicals may be low in any one area, the large total quantity of pollutant spreads across the affected acreage. Large areas along the heavily irrigated West Coast have been damaged by this type of irre-

sponsible use of chemicals. You may even be contributing to this problem from activities at home. Household waste chemicals that are dumped down the drain often wind up in a cesspool where they are not fully metabolized by bacteria, and are slowly released to flow toward the groundwater below.

One very visible example may be as close as your nearest gasoline station. If you pay attention you may notice that at some stations there is a tall cylindrical column rising upward, often surrounded by an innocuous fence. This is an air stripper designed to remove

very tight soil-pollutant complexes form. In these cases, as much as the soil is rinsed with clean water, some pollution always manages to come off into the water. This area of chemistry, officially known as surface chemistry, is not that well understood with regard to soils. To complicate things further, there are microbiological reactions which can create different compounds with entirely new properties, some even less desirable than the pollutants themselves. For the most part however, these pollutants are merely held in place, to remain in the soil until the capacity for holding these foreign compounds is exhausted. It may be at this point that the contamination is first noticed.

The type of action just described is very slow; the most rapidly moving groundwater on Long Island may take thirty years from initial percolation into the surface until it is removed by well. As mentioned, foreign chemicals such as gasoline can be held in the soil by various reactions which move the contaminants from the water into the soil. Water may appear clean upon passing through the soil, but what has happened in reality is that these foreign compounds are being held in place to travel at a slower rate than the surrounding water. So, if a contaminant is held on the average in a soil particle of gasoline five times longer than it would travel in the water. A hypothetical particle of gasoline in the aforementioned "fast" aquifer would take 150 years to be rinsed from the soil. Note that other compounds may stick even more closely to the soil, and take even longer to travel. In "cleaning" the water, nature pollutes the soil itself, impeding effective cleanup.

Getting back to basics, it must be noted that all of the drinking water on Long Island comes from precipitation. On the average, 44 inches of water fall on the Island each year. This represents a fairly generous amount of water when compared to many other parts of the country. A little under half of this water winds up seeping below the ground into the groundwater.

According to my sources, we wind up with about...hold on to your hats, 70 trillion gallons of fresh water beneath the Island. Since 1/200th of this water is replaced annually, it would take about 200 years for this water to be replaced, on the average, yet because the island is composed of multiple aquifers, the deepest and slowest layers would take substantially longer to recycle, on the order of 1000 years for the lowest layers. Yet with all of the water coming from one source, the water supply is at particular risk. It is this vulnerable system, that of a sole source aquifer which we must protect.

We must realize that the extensive development of the Island from what was a loose collection of rural towns into the extensive suburban sprawl that has become so familiar to us has irreversibly changed the character of the island. Ironically, the very attractiveness of the Island, including a seemingly unlimited supply of clean water, has led to it becoming changed in completely unintended ways. As in most environmental debates, concerned citizens must eventually reach a point where we agree that enough evidence has been gathered to spur us into action, whatever that may be.

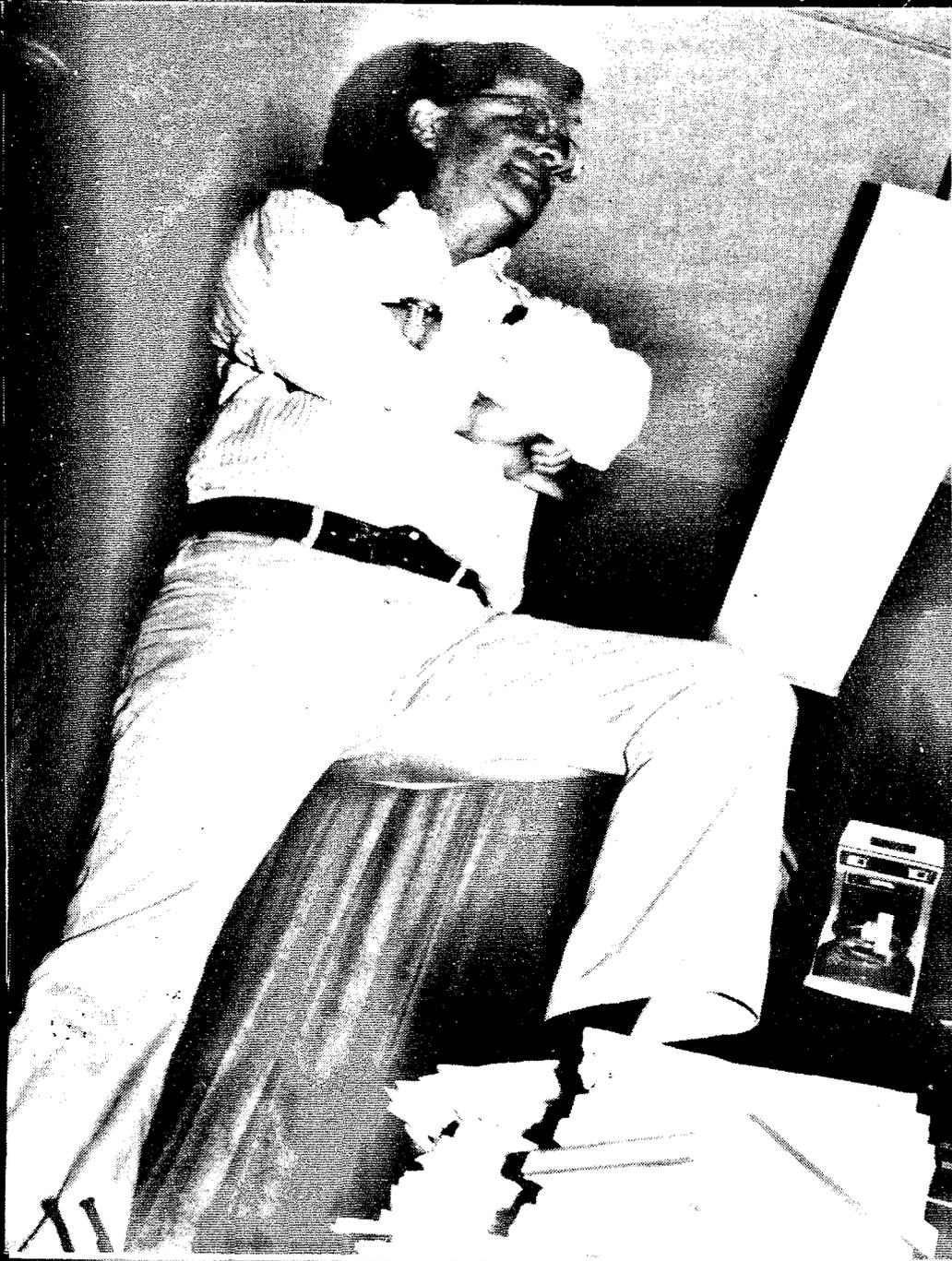


gasoline (volatile petroleum hydrocarbons) from the groundwater. Other extraction devices exist, but no matter how the cleanup is carried out, any experienced engineer is well aware that such cleanup procedures are not panaceas. The eventual removal of these foreign chemicals often requires years or decades. There are two primary uncertainties causing this problem: Nobody can ever learn the true composition of an underground system; and the true nature and extent of a chronic spill may be a complete mystery to all involved, especially if it had continued undetected for years. As a result, in many of the larger groundwater pollution cases, nobody can ever be certain that all residue has been removed.

In discussing this problem with people not directly involved in the environmental field, I often encounter the notion that water is mysteriously cleaned by "nature." The answer to this is yes and no, but mostly no. The water may be cleaned, but the chemicals in it still exist, partially decomposed perhaps, but mostly moved by translocation onto soil particles in a process referred to generically as sorption.

In this process, the water that may initially come through the soil appearing clean has actually deposited its contamination onto the soil particles. It would be like cleaning a table with a sponge; the dirt is not gone afterward but is actually on the sponge. As a result, any water coming into contact with this contaminated soil will pick up some of the residual compounds. This effect may impede the goal of cleanup in cases where

The People In Your Neighborhood



Marshall Spector

In this, and the next few issues of the Press, we will be taking a photographic look at some of the faces and images of Stony Brook faculty. In this issue Fred Grine (physical anthropology/anatomy) examines fossilized teeth; Curtis Marean (archaeology) pieces together bone fragments; John Shea (archaeology) crafts stone tools; and Marshall Spector (philosophy) triumphs over his paperwork.

by Garrison

“A man finds room in the few square inches of his face for the traits of all his ancestors; for the expression of all his history, and his wants.”

-Emerson



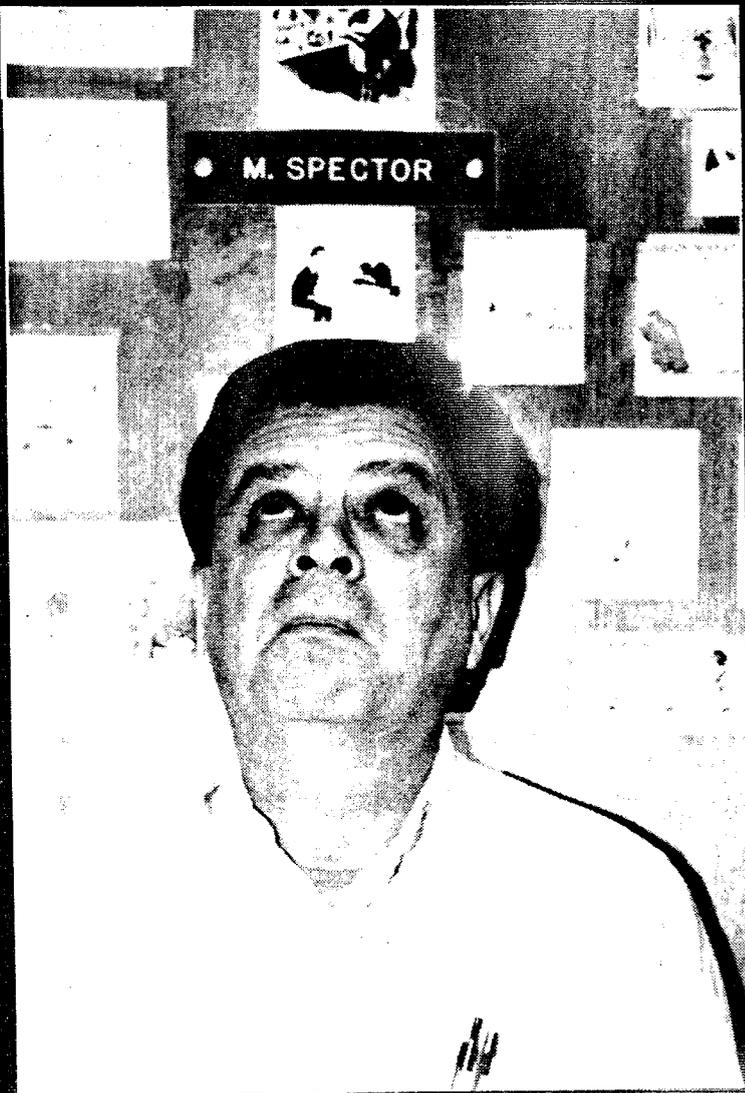
John Shea



Fred Grine



Curtis Marean



Marshall Spector



John Shea

Along the Color Line:

Fighting for Lower Auto Insurance Rates

by Dr. Manning Marable

Most urban Americans are "ripped off" when it comes to auto insurance. City drivers with safe driving records frequently pay two or three times the rates of suburban drivers.

Several years ago, Johns Hopkins University researcher Susan P. Baker, reviewed the records of fatal automobile accidents in over three thousand cities. Baker discovered that the greatest percentage of auto fatalities occurred on rural roads, where fewer drivers use seat belts. The safest American city based on fatal accidents per population? Manhattan, the central borough of New York City, is actually the safest place to drive! Yet Manhattan has some of the very highest auto insurance rates in the country.

During a recent visit to Baltimore, I learned that the city's residents pay two times the auto premiums as suburban residents just beyond the city limits. Compared to rural Maryland residents, Baltimore citizens pay up to four times more for the same coverage.

Community leaders and activists from African-American, working class, low income, and religious groups recognized that the outrageously high auto insurance rates in Baltimore were blatantly discriminatory and unfair. Millions of dollars which left the city every month in auto insurance premiums could be put to more productive uses. Three years ago, they created the "Citywide Insurance Coalition," with the goal of bringing down the city's auto policy rates from the stratosphere.

In November, 1989, the Coalition requested that Mayor Kurt Schmoke, an African American, to finance

a \$52,000 feasibility study for the creation of a publicly-owned, non-profit auto and home insurance cooperative. Schmoke ignored their request, until the city's Interdenominational and Baptist Ministerial Alliance pressured him. In January, 1991, Schmoke reluctantly released \$26,000 for the study. Finally in August, 1991, the feasibility study was completed. The study showed that if city residents initiated a self-insurance program, that they would receive, at minimum, a twenty-one percent drop in premium costs in the first year alone, approximately \$250 per vehicle in the city. The savings would be even greater in the second and subsequent years. The cost to set up the insurance cooperative would be more than \$100,000, but residents would save millions and millions of dollars on their 250,000 vehicles.

Support for this reform-minded proposal began to build rapidly. The largest community coalition in Baltimore's history came together, with 164 organizations by last summer. Members of the City Council praised the idea of a nonprofit insurance cooperative, and voted their unanimous approval. A task force established by the mayor studied the plan for nonprofit insurance, and gave it a favorable review.

However, despite all of the activism, enthusiasm, and grassroots efforts, the local media gave very little publicity to the Coalition. And Kurt Schmoke, a mayor widely noted for his advocacy of "community empowerment," is at best highly reluctant to embrace and support a popular proposal which would save his constituents millions of dollars. Is the relative absence of media coverage and Schmoke's curious behavior a result of behind-the-scenes leverage by the powerful, private insurance companies?

This fall, Schmoke released \$50,000 to begin a final study to determine the exact rates to be used in the policy, and to establish a business plan. The overall study plus other indirect costs would come to \$160,000. Unfortunately, Coalition leaders have been told that they must raise \$60,000 before the mayor will agree to kick in the additional amount of \$50,000. It could be that Schmoke hopes the Coalition's energy and resources will collapse by this latest delaying tactic.

We cannot afford to let the Baltimore campaign for lower auto insurance rates die. The Citywide Insurance Coalition is leading the fight to empower Baltimore's working class and low income people of all races, with the motto "the self-assured can self-insure." A successful urban-based, non-profit insurance cooperative would not only lower premium payments—it would create a model for public activism which can build economic and social bridges across race and class boundaries. Publicly-owned cooperatives can provide other services and goods which the general population also needs. That's the reason that large, corporate interests are running scared. By forwarding donations and letters of support—to A. Robert Kaufman, President, Citywide Insurance Coalition, 2001 North Hilton Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 21216—all Americans can contribute to the struggle for greater economic justice.

Dr. Manning Marable is Professor of Political Science and History at the University of Colorado-Boulder. "Along the Color Line" appears in over 250 publications, and is broadcast by more than 60 radio stations internationally.

THE "VISION THING"

by David Yaseen

It has been said that the American public doesn't care about issues, that we are more concerned with things like a candidate's personality, past, and "character." While it is impossible but to grant that a large segment of the electorate would rather not have to make voting decisions according to highly detailed and complex policy proposals, we hear at the same time an outcry from other areas, especially the media, that the issues go largely unmentioned in most political campaigns. This cannot be attributed solely to the ignorance of American voters, but rather to the education of their experience.

It is not only aversion to the intricacies of policy and the shallow nature of media coverage and advertising that keeps voters from the "real issues." Rather, it is their experience. They know that what candidates say that they will do while on the campaign trail is often quite different from the actions that they take once elected. Whether this is due to opposition from within other parts of the government, the exigencies of circumstance, or to the mendacity of the candidate himself or herself means nothing. The voters know that there is usually little correlation between campaign promises and governmental action.

What we need is some means of holding the candidates to their words. There should be some component of political campaigns in which they are asked questions about their policy and their answers are written down, and can be held against them once elected. If candidates promise actions and initiatives that they do not take once in office, voters should have a means of cashing them for their dishonesty. This is not to say that it would then be impossible for elected officials to pass notes that say "Don't take me seriously on this—

it's a campaign thing. Just vote against it, and we'll be fine." But it would bring some element of truthfulness to the process.

Honesty about the actions necessary for the country's best interests often can be political suicide in our current system. Walter Mondale warned us in 1984 that our spending was out of hand, that we could correct the imbalance that was building in our economy by raising taxes and allocating the money towards investment in the future. His doom was sealed there and then, because Reagan was in the other corner, telling people that low taxes and high spending was what we needed. Because voters were not willing to take a painful look at the country's balance sheet and see the obvious, their votes went in the direction of the man who would tell them what they wanted to hear. Had our good friend Ross Perot been a major-party candidate with constituencies to protect, his message would not have contained so many astringent economic policies. Nobody wants to be told that they require amputation when there is a second opinion available. As it happened, his status as an outsider who would "clean house" far outstripped his economic policies in the minds of his supporters; the fact that he remained an underdog for the whole race meant that voters were not forced to take into serious account what his budgetary proposals would mean if enacted.

Although we think that it is a good thing for politicians to be in tune with the public, we look down upon the cynicism of "pollwatching"—that indicates to us a lack of resolve and character. The idea of leadership includes "vision," a world-view and set of convictions that are strongly held. One of the reasons that we have a representative democracy is because the Founding Fathers did not think that the general public knew enough to govern the country. What follows from this is that we are to elect those people to office that know

something about the good of the country and what is necessary to achieve it. Watching the polls indicates a lack of leadership and a desire to get into office that goes beyond any thought of the good of the nation, because it leaves major decisions to the undereducated public. It is worse still if a candidate has a vision that he/she knows will be distasteful to voters; then the thing to do seems to be to run the campaign on a platform dictated by the polls, and to run the country on another. If this sounds like tyranny or dictatorship to you, you are correct.

How is it possible, then, to make campaigns more truthful and forthcoming? We could limit the length of the campaigns, thereby forcing the candidates to enunciate their positions clearly and simply. Would this make it more difficult for the public to make determinations about the candidates' personality and manner that are seemingly so important to us? Who cares? That's what appears to be the problem now.

The candidates' histories, probably the best indication of how they would act once in office apart from their proposals, would be no less available to the voters than they are presently. In the interest of getting the word out to the public, candidates would be forced to come out with position papers that would comprehensively describe their positions on all relevant issues. These papers would have to be carefully researched and prepared *before* the campaigns, and be less suspect of pandering to the polls. If the campaigns were shorter, we would attract to public office people who have their own opinions upon how the country (state, county, etc.) should be run, and not the polished performers that we get now, who have almost unlimited opportunity to test out various positions upon voters and modify their opinions accordingly.

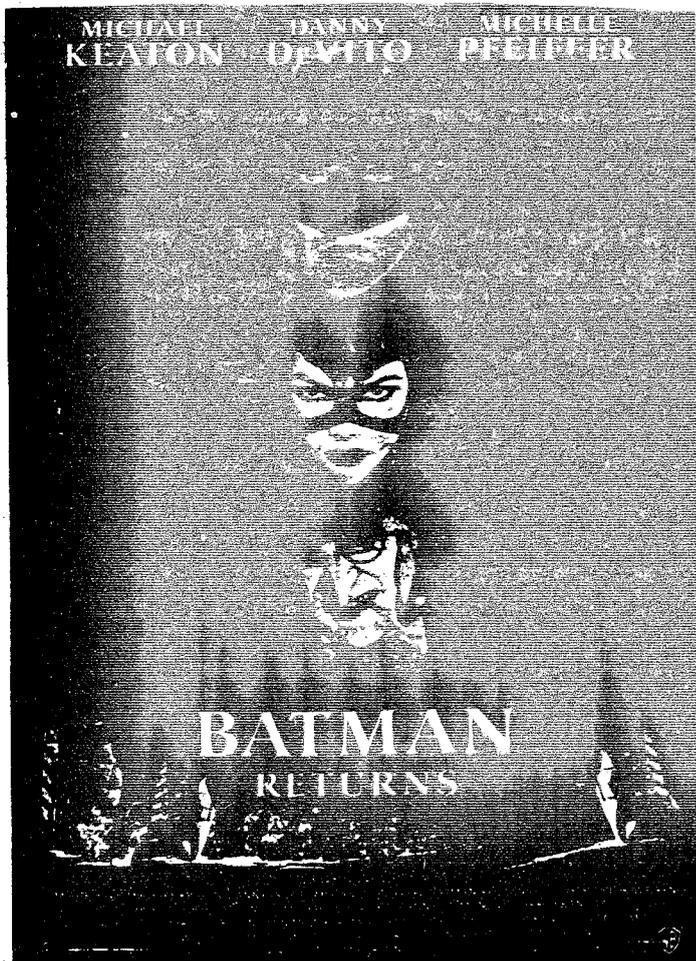
LGBA AND THE CENTER FOR WOMYN'S CONCERNS PRESENT

the invasion

THE TECHNOFEST RETURNS thursday, november 12

tabler quad cafeteria

doors open at 9:00 p.m. \$5 tickets are going FAST
no admission after 11:30 p.m. at the Polity Box Office



PLACE: JAVITS 100
TIME: 7:00PM,
9:30PM, 12:00AM

ADMISSION: ON CAMPUS \$1
OFF CAMPUS \$1.50
DATE: 11/6 - 11/8

Food Service Committee Next Meeting will be November 11, 1992 in Room 226 of the Student Union 11AM-12:20PM. If any comments about the Meal Service, Meal Cards, etc., please put them in writing and drop it by the Polity Suite Room 258 in the Student Union.

The Commuter Student Organization has several positions available. If anyone is interested in running for Pres., Vice Pres., Secretary, Treasurer or any Senate seat submit an issues platform to Polity before Wednesday Nov. 11. For more information call CSA at 632-6455.



Dysfunctional Fables

The Python And The Teddy Bear

by Rachel S. Wexelbaum

In a San Francisco studio apartment there lived a python who spent his days lying dejectedly on the rocks in his terrarium, wishing for someone to hug. You might find this odd, for snakes are not known for their sociability or friendliness, but that's because they hide it really well so that squeamish women don't whack them over their heads with clubs or pocketbooks. Anyway, this python lived with a sculptor who worked with glass and steel girders to create hard, cold edges sharp and straight as razors. Everything in his apartment stood out in harsh black and white with no soft corners—even the sculptor's hair had been molded into spikes all over his head—and the python felt very much alone.

Unbeknownst to the python (for he slept nights), the spiky chiseled sculptor had a girlfriend named Candy whom he liked to invite to his apartment to see his latest work. Candy was the complete opposite of the sculptor—she was round and curved in all the right places to the point of being bubble-headed. Anyway, the sculptor had been going out with Candy for five months before they decided that they were not compatible, and after they broke up the sculptor cleaned out his closet and found something that almost made him vomit.

It was Candy's teddy bear Marvin.

Marvin was the most sickeningly cute teddy bear that you could imagine. He had shaggy blonde fur with big black eyes, a red button nose and a little smile stitched to his mouth. He wore a big red bow around his neck and had a tiny pink heart-shaped belly button on an overstuffed potbelly. Marvin was soft, cuddly and absolutely disgusting, and he smiled up at the sculptor with innocent glass eyes.

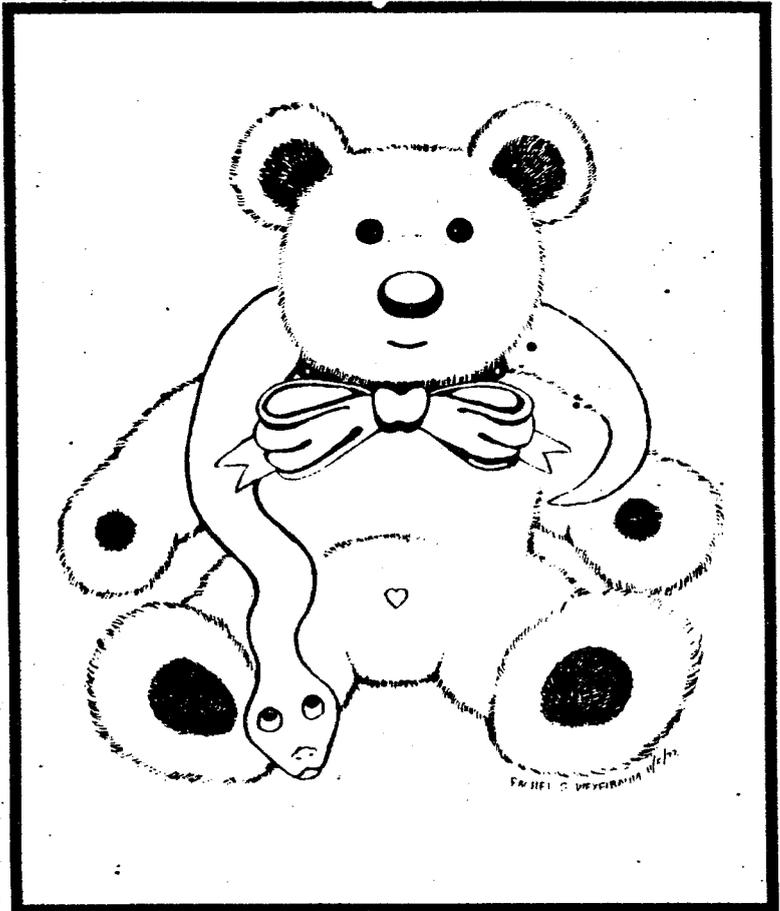
"Daarr!" snarled the sculptor as he grabbed Marvin and threw him in the middle of the living room. "God damned bear!" And he stumbled off to his bedroom to smoke a joint.

When the python saw the teddy bear fly into the room he thought a meteor had landed, and his heart leapt for joy. Now he would have a soft, fluffy playmate whom he could hold and love. After pushing the screen off the top of the terrarium with his nose the python slithered out of his tank and moved toward Marvin, who smiled good-naturedly as the python gently wrapped himself around him.

Then he began to hug. Years of being without a friend were no longer repressed, and he swore never to let go of Marvin for as long as he lived. He squeezed tighter and tighter, enjoying the soft plush fur and the smell of shredded synthetics and crushed nutshells as the teddy bear's glass eyes began to pop out of his head. When the sculptor returned to the living room he applauded the python's efforts, and when the poor snake realized what he had done he slithered back to his terrarium to bury himself under the wood chips in shame.

MORAL: To become too intimate too quickly with a silent smiling stranger can lead to tragedy for you as well as him or her.

MORE IMPORTANTLY: If you know how to push the lid off your terrarium, you should not wait for love and adventure to come to you.



COMICS

S.B. JUNGLE

S.B. JUNGLE # 92

HEY LEON! YOU'RE THE POLITICAL SCIENCE STUD. EXPLAIN SOMETHING TO ME.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE ELEPHANTS WANT PRESIDENT BUSH, BECAUSE THEY ARE FOR THE REPUBLICAN PARTY...

...AND THE DONKEYS WANT CLINTON DUE TO THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY...BUT.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHICKENS?

THE CHICKENS DON'T WANT PEROT BECAUSE THEY THINK HE'S FRANK PEROT.

*OWNER OF MANY CHICKEN SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Drawn by TONS - the punk cartoonist

Offend of me came home one day to find his house ransacked. Everything of value had been stolen except miraculously the 35mm camera.

Hey the house has been ransacked but miraculously the 35mm camera is still here.

to my friend filed a police report, and over the course of the next two weeks he finished up the roll of film. My friend sent the film to be developed.

Cheese

When the film came back there were pictures of my friend's cat, his friend's sailboat, and several pictures of a butt belonging to an unknown person with everyone in the households toothbrushes stuck up inside of it.

It turns out the robbers had taken pictures of themselves with every household member's toothbrush stuffed up their asses, and then left them for the victims to discover on their own.

Honey, you might want to put that toothbrush down. I've got something to show you.

How do you react to that? What do you do? Imagine, two weeks of using a toothbrush that's been wedged up some anonymous pranksters' ass. How do you tell your eighty-year old grandmother?

Don't bother me now, I'm not more teeth than an ash.

Wesley grandma faces the camera shut.

A River Runs Through the Brook

by Catherine Krupski

The walls in the lobby to Theater Two are graced with feminist quotes from famous people, such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Katherine Mansfield. The lobby itself is filled with stretchers wrapped with gauze and mirrored sections placed in the middle. In the concession stand, usually bustling with the exchange of cash for candy, there are two television sets on opposite ends facing a mirrored wall. There are two different tapes playing, and on the screen are people's faces. This is the artwork of MFA student, Karl Kneis. This is his response to "Rivers of China," the play written in the eighties by Alma de Groen and about to be performed in Theater Two. Mr. Kneis had an exhibit in the Library Gallery, "Visinotional Autopsy" at the beginning of the semester. What kind of play would merit this type of response?

"The Rivers of China," which has nothing to do with China, or even a river, is two plays in one. It revolves around the central themes of feminism, Katherine Mansfield (a famous writer during the 1800's), and the supernatural.

It appears as if the stage was spaciouly divided into quarters. The back of the left side was a bedroom, with antique furniture, and the front resembled a sitting room. The right side also had a bedroom, this one appeared more modern, and the front had only a chair. The backdrop was a cement wall with an image of Medusa on one side.

The play begins in present-day Australia. A woman tells her lover that he is only good for sex, talks too much, and feels too many emotions. He was reciting poetry to her, that of known writers and his own. She could care less about his rambling. She leaves him sitting in bed and he calls her a bitch. Isn't she, though? Not really if you switch their places. Behind him, dressed in turn-of-the-century attire, are Katherine Mansfield and G.I. Gurdjieff. They walk across the stage and to the bedroom on the left, which turns out to be a room above a cow shed. She is elegantly dressed

supposedly helped the psyche, which was led by Gurdjieff. This turns out to be the final stage of her life.

Meanwhile, it turns out the bitchy woman is a doctor and her lover is the janitor at the same hospital. In this half of the play, a man almost kills himself, but another doctor, a female plastic surgeon, performs the surgery. She hypnotizes him and when he wakes up, he believes

develops strong emotions for him; a kind of male bonding. Wayne kindly provides him with the writings of the real Mansfield and completes the biography for him, while he is living it. He reads "his own" works and is appalled that the personal journals and unfinished works were published after her death. I loved this scene because I always wondered what writers would



Carlos Jesse Benitez as G.I. Gurdjieff and Valerie Clayman as the real Katherine Mansfield.

that he is Katherine Mansfield trapped in a man's body. Weird enough? Wait, it gets better. The two plays are synchronized. For example, the two Katherines have simultaneous coughing fits.

The two halves of this play begin to fit together. As the modern-day Mansfield comes out of his coma, the

think if they only knew that a loved one published their innermost thoughts against their wishes. He begins to pick up information that he was not given by the doctor during the hypnosis. For example, he develops a similar illness to hers. It seems as if she were reliving her life in the present. Rachel, the radical feminist and plastic surgeon, explains why she did this; she created him totally harmless and full of pure thoughts.

In the beginning, there were two confusing abstract stories that became synchronized footsteps. There were suspenseful parts to it. The play was so weird at times that it totally tuned you in. Seriousness was not the absolute tone of the play—there were humorous parts to it as well. This play definitely played on one's intelligence; it had more references than a Dennis Miller monologue.

"Rivers of China" was directed by visiting Australian Theater professor, Rod Wissler, who appeared in "Brief Lives" earlier this semester. Fresh from her appearance in her performance piece, "Momma, I Hear Voices," is Valerie Clayman. She gives a convincing performance as the dying writer. The play will be playing in Staller Center November 12-15. It will make you think about the times we used to live in, then and now.



Don Gregori and Vinay Pathak portray Wayne and the modern-day Katherine Mansfield.

and coughing as if she were about to die within the next minute. What is she doing there? This becomes the question of the play. She is a popular feminist writer of her time and she is in the Institute of Harmonious Development of Man. This was a form of Western Zen technique that demanded immense physical labor and

real Mansfield is also beginning her healing, which takes the form of peeling carrots and digging ditches. She then finds out that Gurdjieff does not believe in the rights of women.

Wayne, the studpuppy janitor with brilliant literary knowledge, befriends the modern-day Mansfield and

