

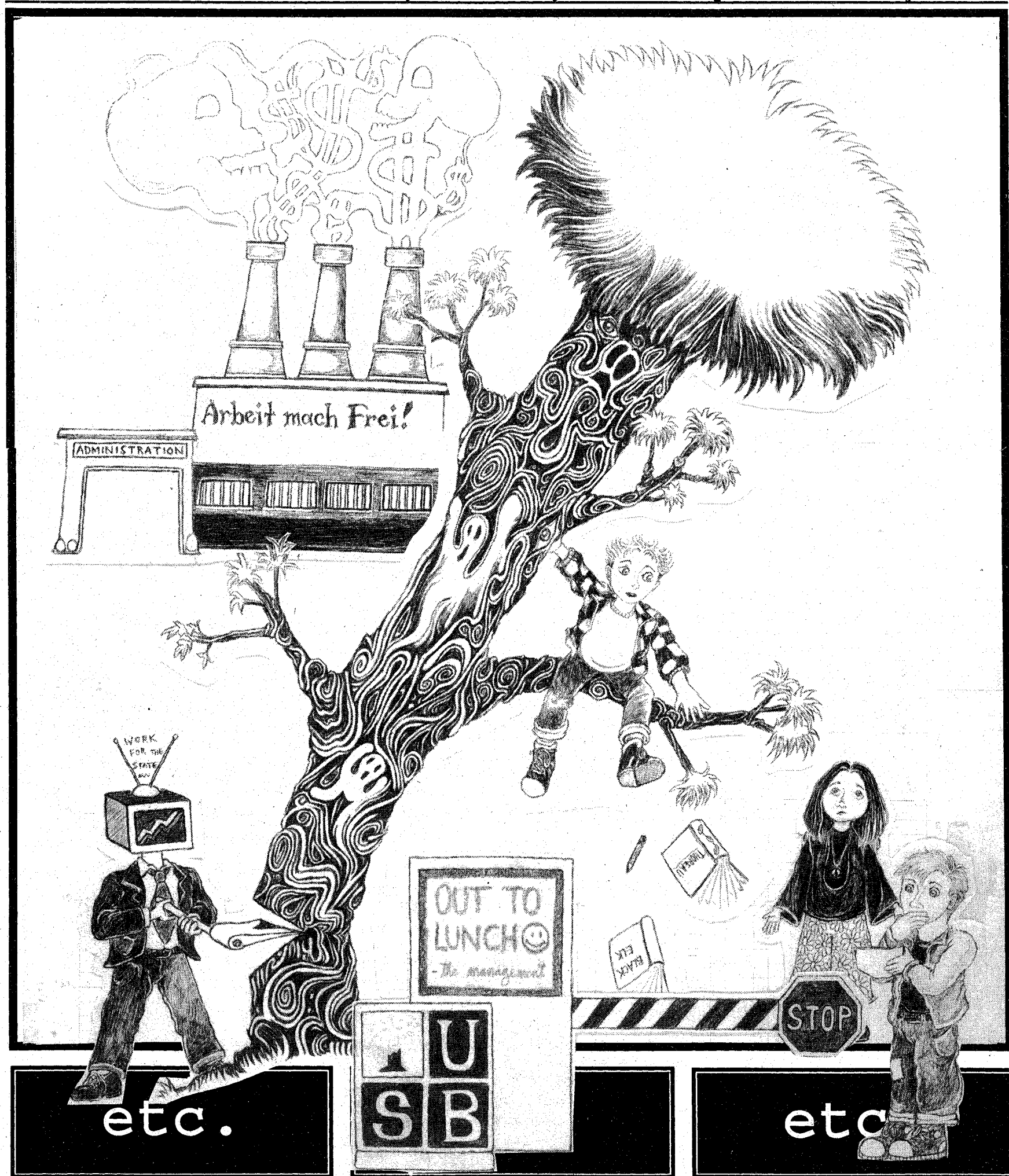
The
Stony
Brook

PRESS

Vol. XV, No. VIII

The University Community's Feature Paper

February 8, 1994



The Final Cut

By Lauri McKain

People now visit a small town in Virginia. A field where a body part was retrieved is now famous. Spectators peruse the streets, stopping in small gift shops to buy shirts that say, "Manassas, VA: A cut above the rest" or bumper stickers that read: "Don't slice it, don't dice it, BOB-BITT." Voices on the street can be heard whispering of John Bobbitt's latest job at Snap-on Tools.

If you are male you will laugh nervously, finding new comfort in the cross-legged position that was never a favorite of yours. If you are female you will lean in, closer to the speaker, hungry for every juicy detail that you may learn.

Welcome to America: the land of free enterprise. As Long Islanders, we were probably the least shocked by the horrific details that made the front page time and time again.

It started as a mere press release. I remember hearing the slight story as reported on some obscure page in my local paper. I was sitting in the lunchroom of my office last summer when a nurse I work with read it aloud, loving every minute of it, as my female co-workers cheered (and booed) at all of the appropriate moments:

After her alleged rape, a Virginia wife cut off the penis (cheer cheer) of her sleeping husband (cheer cheer) with a 12-inch kitchen knife (cheer). She then left the scene and, while driving, tossed the detached penis into an abandoned field (cheer cheer).



Later that evening, police officers retrieved the organ (boo) which was then reattached in a nine and a half hour operation. Surgeons expect full recovery (boo).

The knife-wielding wife was of course Lorena Bobbitt, who claims to have acted out of desperation: a desperation that stemmed from the years of violence she'd received from her marine/husband John Bobbitt. Abused women across the country began to look to Lorena Bobbitt as a life-sized heroine and followed the story closely. Experts admitted they expected few copy-cat crimes, unlike the dozens that usually follow such "popular" news events. For many women (and men) that one retaliation was enough. Lorena did the unforgivable when she cut off her husband's sacred member that hot summer night last June, but she now serves as a symbol to all of mankind what a human being could be driven to do out of mere desperation.

But America was not satisfied with the slight story on the obscure page. We wanted to hear more, we wanted to hear it all...and we did.

Soon both sides of this criminal suit necessitated the hiring of entertainment lawyers; I braced myself for a great press circus that would even put Amy and Joey to shame. And I got what I expected. If it wasn't for Tonya Harding (alleged as of yet), the Bobbitts would have covered the front and back page of every paper across America for the entire month of January. They had Court TV and all of the news shows monopolized for months and their expensive entertainment lawyers did a commendable job winning their story slots on not only Hard Copy and A Current Affair, but on late night as well. And wasn't John Bobbitt's invitation to join Howard Stern on his pay-per-view New Year's Eve



special the cake topper?

And who am I: just one more writer (joining the masses) barraging my editor with just one last Bobbitt article. If one tenth of the attention that this case received were given to the millions of cases of violence against women yearly, this country would be in much better shape, but instead we're looking for the story for our hype-happy society. And once we find it we milk it for all it's worth. Until now I thought it was just Long Island and wrote it off as another fault to add to the list I've compiled over the years, but now I shamefully realize it's my entire country.

This country that Lorena Bobbitt immigrated to in the hopes of realizing her American dream has allowed her to be raped, sodomized and abused by her husband and then went on to rape and abuse her themselves in the form of press coverage and exploitation. But she's Latin American; she should have realized that that's what this unwelcoming country has proved to be like time and time again. Well, she got American justice when a group of twelve of her peers handed down a not-guilty verdict but it's too little, too late. She knows she needs help, and though the penis proved to be mendable, will her mind

be that pliable under the direction of doctors? One thing is certain, it will surely take longer than nine and a half hours, and after all of that, will she ever be able to re-enter society? Would she want to?

After she learns to forgive herself, will she be able to forgive America? The America that is now gaining from her anguish in the form of novelty items that will be paraded across this country as constant reminders of the years of abuse she endured waiting to wake up from her American nightmare? I

think, once again, we're asking too much.

Debates flourish across the country regarding Lorena Bobbitt's complicity in this heinous crime—why did she stay with a man who continually raped, sodomized and beat her? Many say that when the going got tough she should have left, but is it that easy?

Lorena Bobbitt came to the United States hoping to cash in on the American dream that so many immigrants envision on their voyage to the "Land of Opportunity." Her marriage to a U.S. Marine officer soon turned from a dream fulfilled to a nightmare-reality. And she is not alone.

When she entered the United States, she entered a country where more than a million women a year, to varying

degrees, will undergo the same treatment she received from her husband, John Bobbitt.

In 1990, Senator Joseph Biden introduced his Violence Against Women Act, which has finally made its way to the Federal Crime Bill that Congress will soon confront. In order to support Biden's Act, the Senate Judiciary Committee issued a compilation of reports entitled "Violence Against Women: A Day in the Life of America." This 22-page report exposes the America that Lorena Bobbitt became a part of: a world of sexual assaults, physical abuse, and to many women, one of knifings and shootings. The most sobering point this report

reveals is that the majority of perpetrators are the husbands and lovers of their victims.

This proposal allocates more money for law enforcement, victim services and preventive education. And for women like Lorena Bobbitt, it allows battered immigrant women to petition on their own for legal status, thus lessening the dependence these women have on their abusive husbands.

The Bobbitt case, despite the laughter it provoked, is no joke. I urge everyone to support the Violence Against Women Act that can remedy the situations millions of women are placed in each year.

MJXII Hospitalized After Accident

Former Press Arts Editor Found Hours After Hit and Run

By Rob Gilheany

Edward Sullivan Jr, better known as MJXII (pronounced M-J. Twelve) was seriously hurt by a hit-and-run driver several hundred feet from the Ronkonkoma rail road station the night of January 31.

M.J. was struck by a tan or beige 1982 or 1983 Plymouth Horizon. Police are investigating leads in the Farmingville area for the owner and operator of the vehicle. Police found the grill of the car at the scene of the crime according to Detective Bruce Croce of the fourth precinct.

A taxi driver found M.J. three hours later and he was taken to Stony Brook University Hospital

with multiple fractures in his leg and pelvis. He is in critical but stable condition.

M.J. was the arts editor of the Stony Brook Press from 1991-92. He has major contacts with the rave scene and our arts section reflected that. During his tenure, the arts section was packed issue after issue. He spoke up strongly at a Polity meeting where our funding was coming under attack because of a controversial article that appeared in the news section. He was a controversial arts editor, who was banned from the Poetry Center because of a harsh story he wrote.

Anyone with information on the hit and run, or the car involved can call the Fourth Squad detectives at 854-8452.

Read
The Press.
(It's weird—
but in a good
way.)

Stumped For An Explanation

By Garrison

Walking along the paved pleasant paths of the Academic Mall, I have, of late been reminded of a small furry Dr. Seuss character who once claimed, "I speak for the trees!" Well it seems that the troubled truffelas here at S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook have no such spokes creature. In fact, I find our photosynthesizing friends curiously left out of common conversation altogether. Still I wondered, "where have all the trees gone?" I decided an inquest was in order and so I inquired. What follows is a montage of some of the more presentable responses I received.

I began with Jim Docherty, a senior undergraduate who seemed like he would be knowledgeable in such matters. Jim said, "I find it utterly amazing that a school with one of the best ecology departments in the country couldn't create a better balance between expanding and maintaining the plant life of the campus."

As moving as Jim's heartfelt statement was, I still felt I needed to know why the trees were disappearing. I decided to seek someone even more knowledgeable. I soon came across a third year graduate student who calls himself David Strait. 'If anyone', I thought, 'would know why they cut down the trees it will be this man!' I asked and he replied, "They did? What trees?"

Still holding fast to the notion that there is a definite correlation between age, education, and wisdom, I went straight to one of the oldest people I know, Dr. William Arens, Professor and Chair of Anthropology, who

only shook his head and said, "Disgraceful." Not really sure if he was responding to my question or my presence, I decided to leave.

In retrospect, I can't be sure if leaving was the best idea. My next source, who wishes, for reasons which will soon become apparent, to remain anonymous, stated that the trees were cut down by aliens from Oregon who, because of the sad plight of the spotted owl, can no longer exploit the west coast forests, were wondering if the east coast sycamores could support a logging industry.

I have also heard through the rumor mill that the trees were cut down by mistake, just for fun, and because the grounds people don't like cleaning up all those leaves.

The most intriguing response came from a man clearly not expecting to be tenured anytime soon, Prof. John J. Shea, also of the Anthropology Department, but of archaeological persuasion. Dr. Shea quietly informed me that someone in the Life Sciences Department has extracted fossil DNA

of *Castoroides*, a giant beaver that lived in Pleistocene North America. From this sample, 'they' have apparently been able to grow this formerly extinct species right here at S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook. Unfortunately, it seems that the experiment has gone awry and is currently running amok, eating the trees on campus! [Hold on to your safari hats, folks. Pleistocene Park is on its way!]

For any and all interested parties, I also spoke with Vicki Katz of the University News Service, who was able to reach Mr. Robert Goldie, the Project Associate of the architectural landscape firm contracted by the S.U.N.Y. Construction Fund. Briefly recapitulated, here's what I found out:

The trees were removed as part of the new construction including the new student center, but not the cogeneration plant construction.

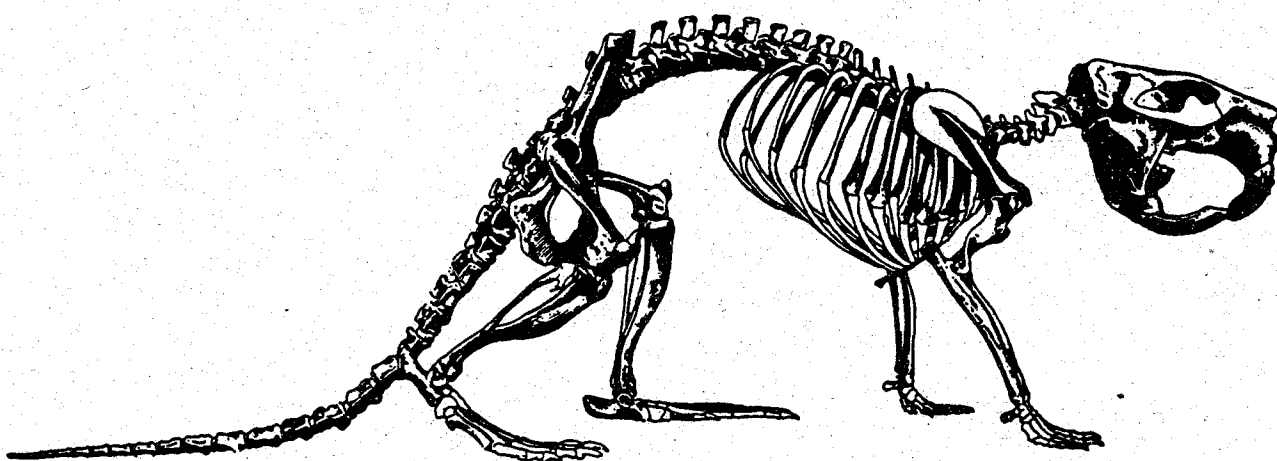
Within the construction area, 52 trees and 12 shrubs were determined to be not likely to tolerate transplanting and were removed. 87 trees and 158 shrubs were transplanted to a nursery to be added, along with 194 new trees and 546 new shrubs when re-landscaping begins. The new trees will be groves of Honey Locust. They are shady, fast growing trees



that do well in pedestrian rich areas. 89 trees remain unmolested; unless, that is, a giant Pleistocene beaver should come along...



Progress.



Castoroides, a giant beaver, about 7.5 feet in length, from the Pleistocene of North America (Romer, 1966, *Vertebrate Paleontology*).

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No Place to Hide

One of Administration's most onerous public relations tasks has long been to convince people that Stony Brook is not just a commuter school. "No," they try to tell the public, "this is actually a vibrant, pulsating environment, a true community of intellectual and artistic spirit and endeavor, a place you would actually want to spend time IN. For some unknown reason, all of the plans and schemes sponsored by the University have somehow fallen short, and all opinions, from the somewhat-official (polls and inspections by consumer groups) to the informal (ask any student), portray USB as being in the bottom quartile as far as quality of life.

Gee, that's funny. There are all kinds of things happening on campus: they're building a new cogeneration plant and an improved Student Union, there's theater/music/art at the Staller Center, and great activities like Tokyo Joe's and Campus Lifetime. They actually bother to try to make our lives more entertaining—hell, we've even got cable TV in our aesthetically pleasing and architecturally diverse dormitories—what more could anyone ask for? All of this, and cool oases of public space evenly distributed all over campus, with benches and everything.

With all of this going for the campus, people are letting their feet do the voting. The result: an overwhelming mandate for "anywhere but here." Let us examine the reasons behind this seemingly unfath-

omable phenomenon.

The key to having a place where people choose to congregate is that it be comfortable for them to do the things they like to do. This is where we here at Stony Brook seem to have a problem. The things we like to do are: have parties, hang out, listen to music, and in general experience the independence of college life. This is complicated by the fact that the University has seen fit to regulate each and every aspect of dormitory life. There are legions of RA and RHD stormtroopers constantly on the lookout lest our exuberance overly distract us from our studies, a draconian (and unrealistic) alcohol policy, and the pervasive feeling that you're being watched and your actions will be used against you in the kangaroo court of Student Affairs if you don't toe the line.

The situation is worse for commuters: in addition to the unsavory prospect of having to get to South P in order to leave, the University has actually decreased the quality of the spaces available to them by removing the couches in the Commuter Lounge and replacing them with bench-style seating. Although the old couches were getting pretty bad, they should have been replaced by more couches, thus maintaining the one place on campus available to commuters where they could stretch out and relax.

The University is so concerned with enforcement of rules and prevention of

unseemly incidents that the life has been completely bled from campus. Way back when, as many in the Admin building know, Stony Brook was one of the coolest spots on the Island. Coincidence or no, at the same time RAs and RHDs did not interfere in students' lives. Instead they concentrated on residents' safety rather than on disciplining them, as their training pressures them to do. Although there is no scientific "Stony Brook Fun Index," it is safe to say that school spirit declined as authoritarian presence increased.

Some might object that a relaxing of rules might have the exact opposite effect: it might make people think of Stony Brook as a party school that parents wouldn't feel safe sending their kids to. Sorry to disappoint the control freaks out there, but in the freewheeling late 60s and early 70s we were the "Berkeley of the East," that attracted the best students who had the most fun (and got the best jobs). Sure there were disparaging reports of hedonistic goings-on here, but it was water off a highly respected university's back.

Administrators should be reminded that the image of Stony Brook (and enrollment figures) could only go up if students were having a good time here. What our fearless leaders need to do is get out of our faces. Let us get out from under the whole authority trip and run our own show. The GSL is a good start. More campus bars should soon follow; it is a way for the school to let

The Stony Brook

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Weld Naked

students have their fun and keep an eye on things at the same time (while helping to prevent DWI tragedies to boot).

Hi Kids!

Just wanted to tell you that we're not that *other* paper, so you won't see any fluffy, useless, wannabe news here. You *will* see high-quality, just-for-fun stories, art reviews and insightful and poignant commentary. Maybe we'll get some comics this year, too. Who knows? Oh, and by the way, this is the only time this semester you will ever see us refer to ourselves. That's a guarantee. *Some* newspapers [sic] fill their pages with self-congratulatory nothingness (like you care about those losers, anyway—we know you don't care about *us*, that's why we keep *us* out of the paper). Anyway, hope you enjoy. Any comments or input or, dare I say it, participation are encouraged. Even if you hate us, show your guts and drop a line.

Hope you don't get caught,
—All of us at
The Stony Brook Press.

Along the Color Line: A Lost Generation

By Manning Marable

The social crisis of urban America threatens the prospects for an entire generation of African-American and Latino young people. The economic deterioration of our central cities, the loss of jobs and the decline of investment, are only part of the story. The loss of recreational facilities such as theatres, public parks, bowling alleys and playgrounds, reduces the environment for social interaction among young people. The deterioration of city services, unequal educational facilities and higher taxes drives middle and upper class people out of the central cities. All of these factors combine to create a context of hopelessness and social alienation.

Consider the proliferation of teenage pregnancies and single-parent households. When I was growing up in the 1960s, teenage pregnancies occurred, but were not generally considered customary behavior within the black community. Today, a radically different situation exists. In each of the past five years, more than one million teenage girls became pregnant. In 1989, 49 percent of teenage pregnancies resulted in birth, with the remainder ending in either abortion or miscarriage. For African-Americans, the two-parent household is becoming almost extinct. Twenty-five years ago, two out of five first-births by black women under the age of 35 were out of wedlock. Today, the ratio is two out of three. A black child born today has only a one out of five chance of growing up with two parents until the age of sixteen. And for single African-American women living below the Federal government's poverty level, about 65 percent of them have children, double the rate for poor whites.

The most tragic aspect of the growth of out-of-wedlock births are the so-called "boarder babies." About 22,000 newborn infants are abandoned in hospitals each year. Approximately 74 percent are black, with another eight percent Latino. According to a 1991 study by the Department of Health and Human Services, more than three-fourths of all boarder babies tested positive for drugs and nearly half are born prematurely.

Consider the issues of homelessness. The Department of Housing and Urban Development only spent about \$823 million on homelessness in 1993. But this amount can barely scratch the surface of what is a far more pervasive crisis than government officials are willing to admit. According to the research by Professor Bruce Link of Columbia University about three percent of all Americans have been homeless during the past five years, and a surprising seven percent had been homeless at some point of their lives. This translates into two million American who are homeless in any given year.

In New York City, the overall figures for homelessness and their racial dimensions are even more devastating. Nearly one-quarter million New Yorkers have lived in public shelters over the five year period between 1988 and 1992. African-Americans are 16 times more likely to become homeless than whites. And black children are the most likely candidates for homelessness, with one out of twelve spending some time in a public shelter. Overall, about eight percent of all black residents of New York City, nearly 150,000 people, used the public shelters during the five year period.

Teenage pregnancies, "boarder babies" and homelessness all combine to create a social context for rage, fear

and social disruption. But to comprehend why such problems exist, we must not indulge in the conservative illusion of blaming the victims of oppression. Neoliberals and even some black intellectuals blame the social crisis on an absence of "values," or the problem of "black nihilism." Actually, the fundamental factors behind the chaos are inequality and class exploitation.

Do most people deliberately choose to become homeless? Or are they homeless because the value of the monthly rental subsidy to New York City's 300,000 families on welfare has declined 42 percent since 1972, while local housing costs have skyrocketed? By 1989, nearly half of all low-income families in the U.S. were spending 70 percent of their income on shelter alone.

Instead of condemning teenage mothers, we need constructive and innovative programs for teen parents, both male and female. They need training in parental skills, child care, health and employment counseling. We need to focus on pregnancy prevention measures for teens, including sexual education in the schools. By elevating the confidence, self-esteem and career objectives of young women, we will see teen pregnancies begin to decline numerically. Instead of blaming victims, we need progressive measures by government and community-based organizations to save those in what is becoming a lost generation.

Dr. Manning Marable is professor of History and Political Science, and Director of the African American Studies Institute at Columbia University, New York City. "Along the Color Line" appears in over 250 publications and is broadcast by 75 radio stations internationally.

I Have a Nightmare...

By Sensate Mass

Once again, a controversy involving Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam has surfaced in the nation's consciousness, and once again at issue are remarks of vilification made by the man who is perhaps Farrakhan's most senior underling, Khalid Abdul Muhammad. In a speech given to an audience of 150 Kean College students and faculty last November, Mr. Muhammad called Jews "the bloodsuckers of the black nation." In the past he has made many other such remarks about Jews, and made statements that many outside of the Nation of Islam consider to be derogatory to women, Catholics, gays, and other groups.

Understandably, the outcry from those who have been attacked by Muhammad, especially the Jewish community, has been loud and sustained, but there are people in the black community who continue to support the Nation of Islam on the grounds that it has a positive influence on black youth. Many maintain that young people, especially males, who are associated with the Nation generally do not become involved in criminal activities, work harder at becoming educated and are positive role models. Also, the Nation has long been involved with sponsoring both governmental and private initiatives aimed at helping the black community. For these reasons, the Congressional Black Caucus has in the past attempted to "reach out" to the Nation so that the two groups' efforts to improve conditions for the country's blacks could become better coordinated.

Just last week, Representative Kweisi Mfumi (D-Md.) has made statements to the effect that, although Muhammad's rhetoric is indeed detestable, it should not lead to a total censure of the Nation or of its agenda. Let's examine this a bit more closely: Although one of the principal leaders of an organization makes speeches whose xenophobic, nationalistic, and intoler-

ant tone sound awfully close to the propaganda of white supremacists, Nazis (both neo- and Hitlerian), and other ethnic- or nationally-oriented fascists, the fact that a diet of such inflammatory invective helps to prevent other evils from befalling its members by giving them a false sense of superiority, the group doesn't deserve to be made an outcast from decent society. That's what it sounds like, and it's wrong.

Groups that unify themselves on the basis of hate have historically been very good at instilling a sense of discipline and dedication in their members, often enabling them to work together with greater efficiency and sense of purpose. But, however appealing that sounds in and of itself, it makes a difference what those goals are. Sure, Hitler made the trains run on time. He exponentially expanded the productivity and efficiency of German factories. But the organizational and motivational feats for which he was noted did not bring better lives to his people. He had them all working together, harder than ever before, to build the tools of murder and destruction. The flip-side of the productivity of militant hate organizations (Muhammad speeches often feature exhibitions with military-style "drill teams") is the destructiveness of the goals to which they are directed.

What could be the purpose of Muhammad's instillation of hate for Jews and other groups other than to cause his followers to take action against them? Is it possible that the true intentions behind such blistering attacks revolve only around the unification of the flock, and the collateral damage done to black-Jewish relations is only incidental? Probably not. While life-or-death competition is the first rule of the natural world, it is our success at rising above this aspect of our ancestry that underlies all of humanity's progress, and our failures that mark each and every one of our setbacks. Cooperation is humanity's greatest achievement, and suspicion and hatred its greatest downfalls.

The youth of the Nation of Islam is diligent, clean-cut, and less prone to fall victim to the afflictions of the streets than are their non-member counterparts. But what good is all of this if their energy is channeled destructively, to be used for tearing down instead of building up? It is quite likely that not all the Nation's members agree with Mr. Muhammad's defamatory characterization of Jews (and nearly every other non-black group). However, no denunciations of Muhammad or his rhetoric have come from within the group, and few have come from the black community as a whole, with some courageous exceptions.

Farrakhan has since suspended Muhammad from his position at the nation, and actually said some nasty things about the tone of the Kean College speech. But he defended the "truth" in what Muhammad said, and thereby implicitly the appropriateness of communicating that "truth" to others. Had the speech been less venomous and spiteful and more "fact" oriented, Farrakhan would have defended his apostle to the death against all comers. So, what looked like a rebuke of Muhammad was actually a calculated public relations move that did not change the implied or expressed support of the Nation of Islam for the bigoted views of Muhammad.

Regardless of the cosmetic characteristics of the Nation of Islam's members, their intolerance is not to be tolerated. Blacks have certainly suffered much at the hands of whites in American history, and even today, based upon simple, stupid racial bigotry. While it is right and necessary for blacks (or anyone else) to refuse to tolerate this kind of prejudice where it occurs and to work against those individuals or organizations who practice it, it is wrong in both the moral and practical senses of the word to return such treatment in kind. All that such actions produce is a growing level of mistrust between racial, ethnic, and religious groups and make two wrongs where before there was one.

Art at

Words and Photos By Robert V. Gilheany

ABC No Rio is an oasis for art and music on the lower east side of Manhattan. They are hosting *Manufactured Myths and Maps*, an anti-imperialist art exposition that is currently running from February 2nd to the 26th.

All the artists are activists in the struggle for Haitian liberation, and the return of democratically elected president Jean Bertrand Aristeed. Most of the artists were detained at Guantanamo Bay at the concentration camp the Bush administration set up for Haitian refugees that candidate Clinton rightfully attacked, but President-elect Clinton did a 180 on. A federal judge closed down the camp.

Haitian artist Frantz Pierre-Charles' work is very bright and colorful water color paintings of the Haitian country side and sunsets. He also does beautiful scenes of the Caribbean sea that have boats and helicopters, reminders of the U.S. interdiction policy.

Rejin Leys also from Haiti does black and white prints depicting the chaotic situation of the prisoners

at Guantonamo Bay. They were being spoken to in English, not in their native Creole. Guantanamo was a camp where they were keeping people who were suspected of being infected with HIV, or infected with AIDS. Her print of pirate boats with an American flag bottom was great.

Fellow Haitian Colin Anisser's work is an intricate depiction of the Haitian community and country side with an eye in the sky watching. His portrait of Aristeed in a prison cage with a U.S. hand holding the key is provocative.

Haideen Anderson of Brooklyn is an activist involved on the Haitian issue. She is also a member of the Red Balloon Collective, and has been involved with Save the Audobon and Earth Day Wall Street Action. Among other things, she is a puppeteer. She made a two faced puppet with Uncle Sam on one side and a face representing the U.N. on the other. The faces were held up by a stick that was painted in a flag motif with two Budweiser cans on it. This piece ties together corporations and American hegemonic foreign policy.

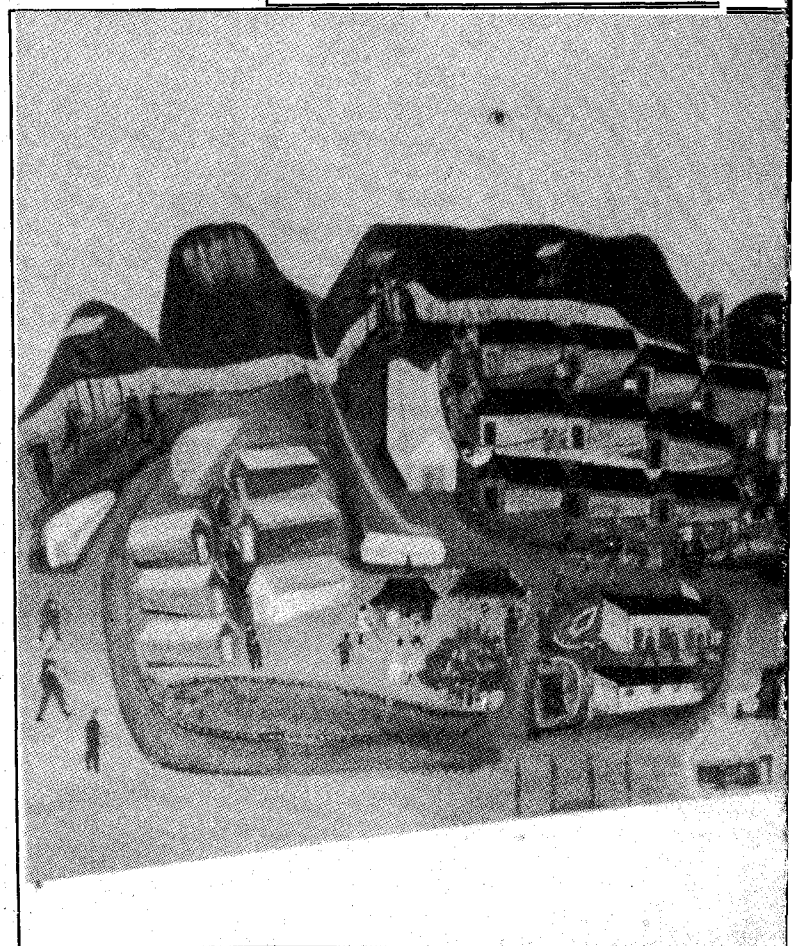
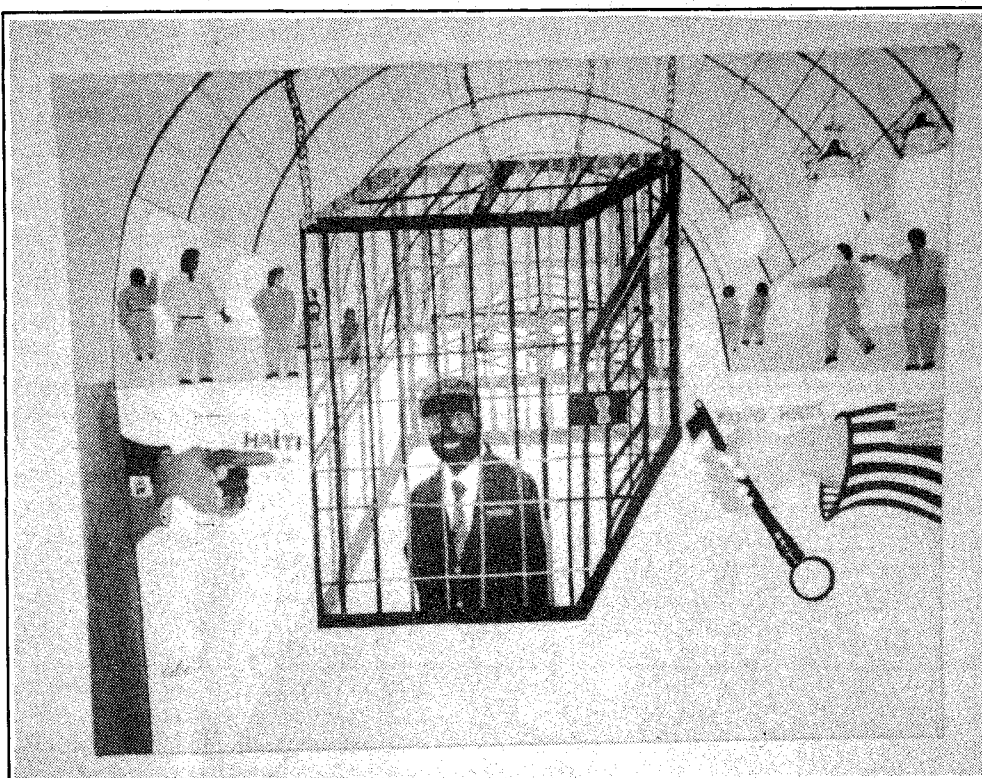
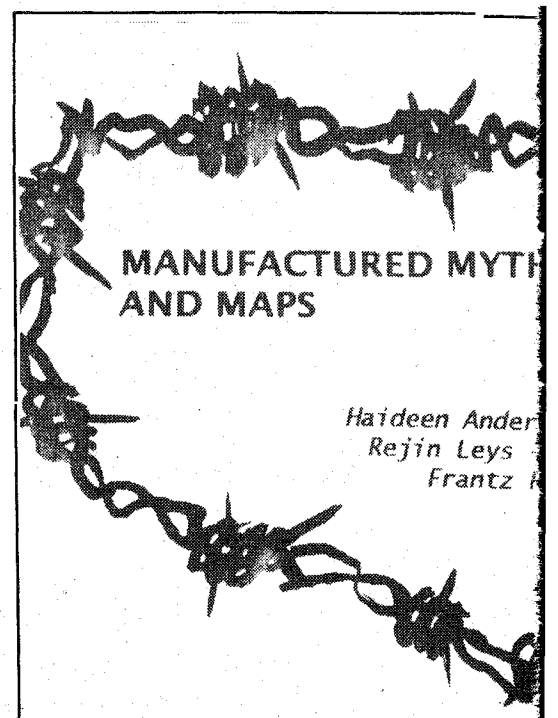
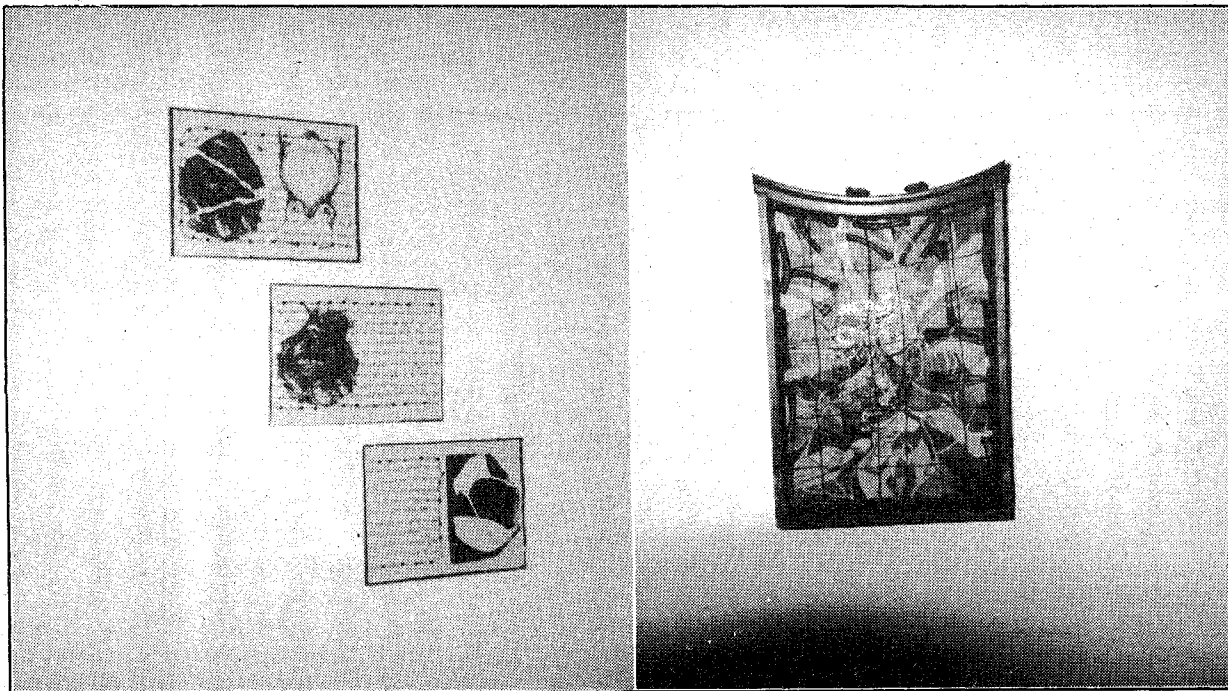
She also paints the inside of drawers with bright complicated designs that have a wonderful effect.

Her roommate Liana Franchin-Patterson made a paper mache globe with toy solders placed all around it, with an American flag on the bottom. It symbolizes international militarism and the U.S. playing the role of world cop.

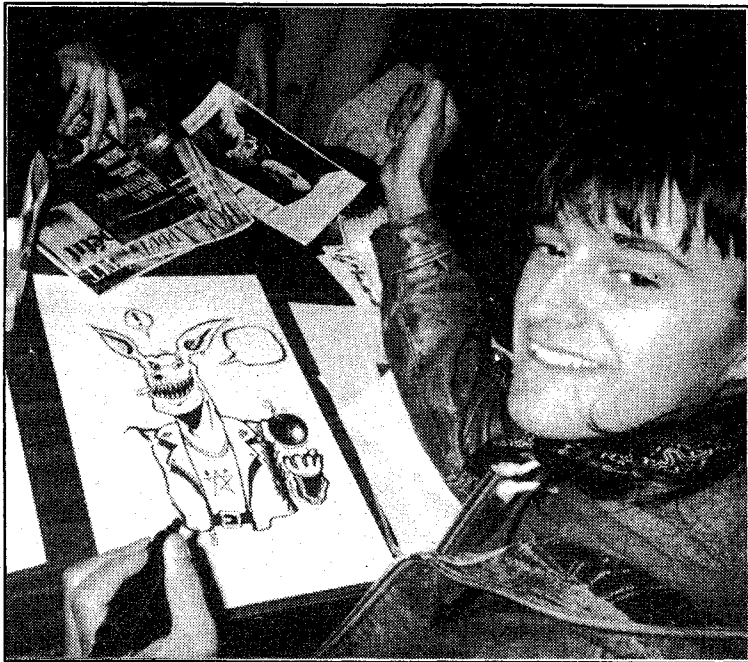
There was a space at this art showing for participation from people at the event. People drew and produced some of their own work at the event that was added to the show. It created nice vibes in the atmosphere.

ABC No Rio has been hosting art exhibitions upstairs for a while and on Saturdays, downstairs they have punk rock shows. Many bands have played there from New York City, the rest of the country and Canada. They are great shows for only five dollars—you can't go wrong. A few bands from around here played there such as Scape Grace and the 1.6 Band.

ABC No Rio is located at 156 Rivington Street between Clinton and Suffolk, a block away from Delancy Street.



ABC No Rio



L-R: Frantz-Pierre Charles, Regijn Leys, Haideen Anderson

Statement by the Artists

Manufactured Myths and Maps:

Haideen Anderson, Colin Anisser, Rejin Leys, Laureore Michelet, Frantz Pierre-Charles

Why are national borders so often seen as natural? In reality, many peoples have been divided by these artificial lines which are laid down to create nation states. Each time a line is redrawn, people are forced to flee or be killed. Instead of creating sanctuaries, borderlines of nearby countries are obstacles which, if refugees manage to cross, often are entryways into further hardships or imprisonment.

Whole ideologies have been constructed to maintain the illusion of these dividers. In the United States, patriotism isolates us from people outside these borders and attempts to prevent us from being critical of the power structure within. We live in a Democracy, and have the freedom to choose between a Republican and a Democrat, the same way we choose between brand X and brand Y cheese doodles. This is the American way of life, where you can buy happiness in a plastic bag. The Statue of Liberty is the antenna that broadcasts the American Dream to potential immigrants who, when they arrive, are then accused of invading our shores and feeding on a shrinking national pie. Of course there are exceptions, if you are fleeing from an evil empire or a small red island, you're welcomed with open arms. If, on the other hand, you come from a country whose ruler dines regularly with Uncle Sam, such as Haiti—in fact most of the Caribbean and Latin America—the border will not soften for you.

The work of this exhibition attempts to reveal what is behind the U.S.'s myths, created for popular consumption in order to manipulate us; and shows resistance to these lies as well as visions of our alternatives.

MANUFACTURED MYTHS AND MAPS

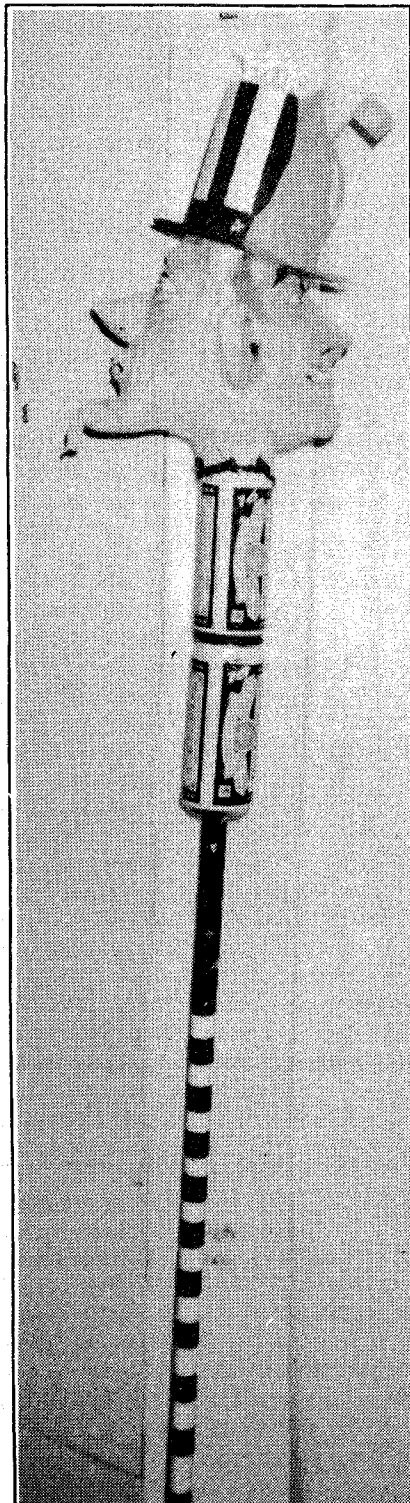
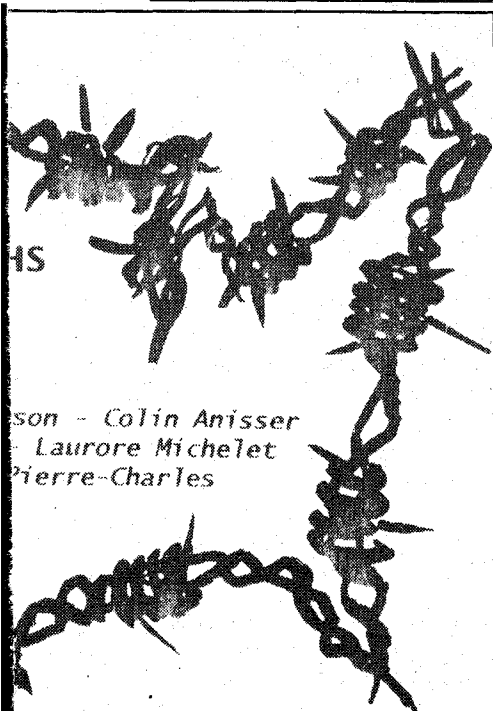
Program schedule:

February 2 - 7 p.m. exhibition opening and graphics workshop (create your own posters and stickers).

February 9 - 7 p.m. Graphics workshop continues (Cutting stencils and using them).

February 16 - 7 p.m. "Tombe, Leve" a film on popular organizing in Haiti, by Patricia Benoit; and painters Colin Anisser, Laureore Michelet and Frantz Pierre-Charles will talk about their experiences as refugees in Guantanamo, a U.S. refugee concentration camp.

February 23 - 7 p.m. Covert and overt U.S. intervention (in Haiti) and strategies for fighting it; with members of Haiti Anti-intervention organizing committee.



Vivan los Zapatistas

By Robert V. Gilheany

A revolutionary insurrection rocks Mexico. At 4:30 a.m., New Year's Day, Indian peasants captured four towns in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas. The rebels are the Emiliano Zapata Liberation National Army (E.Z.L.N.), named after the Mexican Indian revolutionary Emiliano Zapata.

The E.Z.L.N. is tied to the tradition of their namesake both politically and culturally. They are the Indian population of southern Mexico who have been struggling against all forms of exploitation for 500 years. Zapata fought for land reform and the return of communal form of land ownership that was busted up by wealthy estates that grew coffee and, later, cattle ranchers. In the 1910's, Emiliano Zapata waged a revolutionary war against the 35-year dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz that was coming under attack on many fronts. The most radical and progressive forces were represented by the Indian immigrants in southern Mexico were lead by Zapata and the movement in Northern Mexico was lead by Pancho Villa, a Mexican peasant who stood for land reform, taking the landed estates and redistributing them to the poor. He was a great believer in universal education. Villa impressed radical journalist Jack Reed who was traveling with him at the time.

Capitalist-imperialist intervention was aimed at marginalizing the Villa and Zapata forces. In 1911, the U.S. Embassy, with President Taft's ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, and assorted criminals maneuvered for the full of Diaz and had him replaced by a Diaz general, Victoriano Huerta. Diaz stole the election from moderate Mexican politician Francisco Madero. After a struggle and compromise negotiation, Madero came to power, but had no intention of land reform or any of the fundamental change that would benefit the vast majority of the Mexican people, and what Villa and Zapata were fighting for.

Zapata realized that Madero was a sell out and a phony hope for change and moved against him. The Right did not trust Madero. The American Embassy worked with the Huerta forces that moved against Madero and sacked the National Palace. Huerta was a fat, Right Wing fascist, cigar chewing general held over from the Porfirio Diaz

regime that ran an iron fisted rule over Mexico. The vicious nature of the Huerta regime revived revolutionary forces against it.

Taft's presidency ended and Woodrow Wilson's Administration did not recognize the Huerta government. Capital needs stability and Huerta could not put down the insurrections. Wilson also said the Huerta came to power illegally. Wilson backed a wealthy landowner, Venustiano Carranza for the presidency. Wilson would try to intimidate the Mexicans to tow his line by sending in troops to places like Vera Cruz. Wilson's military incursions into Mexico only hardened Mexican resolve for self-determination.

The Mexican constitution was written in 1917. It gave right to labor, and communal land ownership, but the Mexican government had been dominated by wealthy landowners. There was a period of reform when General Lorenzo Cardenas came to power in the late 1930's. He advanced land reform and nationalized the oil companies. But by 1940, conservative big business politicians came to power. It was the end of any land reform and they froze wages. They killed workers in 1958 and student activists in 1968.

In the last ten years, international capital and the one-party state of Mexico has been encroaching on the economics and cultural life of the Indian Misito and Myan population of southern Mexico.

Cattle ranching is the most destructive form of big agribusiness in all of Latin America, in the sense that they chase more peasants off land when they expand. That leads to the cutting down of more old growth forest. Eighty percent of old growth forest are gone from Mexico as in the rest of Latin America. This is leading to global warming and erosion. Vegetarianism is a radical strategy that fights the expansion of cattle ranching.

There is a visceral relationship between the Indians and the cattle ranchers. The ranchers are the large landowners. The Misito and the Myan people are the poorest of the poor, super-exploited people of Mexico. The history of these two groups is the struggle of land reform. The indigenous population right to their communal land system is now in serious danger because of the recent N.A.F.T.A. (North American Free Trade Agreement). The removal of

tariffs on American agri-business will undercut local prices for foodstuff produced by Indian communes. The E.Z.L.N. see N.A.F.T.A. as a "death sentence" to them and their living arrangements.

Chiapas is the southern most state in Mexico. It borders Guatemala, a military Garrison state that has a violent history. Peasant workers, labor activists and human rights advocates have been the victims of abuse by the Guatemalan regimes that gets millions of dollars a year in military aid from the United States. The violence includes putting people in concentration camps called "model villages." Refugees have crossed Guatemala into Chiapas over the years. The governments of Guatemala and Mexico have talked about building a wall on the boarder, called the "Friendship Wall." These refugees are primarily Myan, so they bring their experience of fighting fascism to the E.Z.L.N.

The E.Z.L.N. has a bill of rights for women called Women's Revolutionary Law:

1. Women, regardless of their race, creed, color or political affiliation have a right to participate in the revolutionary struggle in any way they desire and capacity determines.
2. Women have the right to work and receive just salary.
3. Women have the right to decide the number of children they have and care for.
4. Women have the right to participate in the matters of the community and have charge if they are free and democratically elected.
5. Women and their children have the right to primary attention in their health and nutrition.
6. Women have the right to education.
7. Women have the right to choose their partner and are not obliged to enter into marriage.
8. Women have the right to be free of violence from both relatives and strangers. Rape and attempted rape will be severely punished.
9. Women will be able to occupy a position in the organization and hold military rank in the revolutionary armed forces.
10. Women will have all the rights and obligations which the Revolutionary Laws and Regulations give.

The following is the full text of the declaration from the Lacandon jungle by the Zapatista National Liberation Army:

**TODAY WE SAY ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
TO THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO:
MEXICAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS:**

We are a product of 500 years of struggle: first against slavery, then during the War of Independence against Spain led by insurgents, then to avoid being absorbed by North American imperialism, then to promulgate our constitution and expel the French empire from our soil, and later the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz denied us the just application of the Reform laws and the people rebelled and leaders like Villa and Zapata emerged, poor men just like us. We have been denied the most elemental preparation so they can use us as cannon fodder and pillage the wealth of our country. They don't care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a roof over our heads, no land, no work, no health care, no food no education. Nor are we able to freely and democratically elect our political representatives, nor is there independence from foreigners, nor is there peace nor justice for ourselves and our children.

But today, we say ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. We are the inheritors of the true builders of our nations. The dispossessed, we are millions and we thereby call upon our brothers and sisters to join this struggle as the only path, so that we will not die of hunger due to the insatiable ambition of a 70-year dictatorship lead by a clique of traitors that represent the most conservative and sellout groups. They are the same ones that opposed Hidalgo and Morelos, the same ones that betrayed Vincente Guerrero, the same ones that sold half our country to the foreign invader, the same ones that imported a European prince to rule our country, the same ones that formed the "scientific" Porfirista dictatorship, the same ones that opposed the Petroleum Expropriation, the same ones that massacred the railroad workers in 1958 and the students in 1968, the same ones today that will take everything from us,

absolutely everything.

To prevent the continuation of the above and as our last hope, after having tried to utilize all legal means based on our Constitution, we go to our Constitution, to apply Article 39 which says:

"National Sovereignty essentially and originally resides in the people. All political power emanates from the people and its purpose is to help the people. The people have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter or modify their form of government."

Therefore, according to our constitution, we declare the following to the Mexican federal army, the pillar of the Mexican dictatorship that we suffer from, monopolized by a one-party system and led by Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the maximum and illegitimate federal executive that today holds power.

According to this Declaration of War, we ask that other powers of the nation advocate to restore the legitimacy and the stability of the nation by overthrowing the dictator.

We also ask that international organizations and the International Red Cross watch over and regulate our battles, so that our efforts are carried out while still protecting our civilian population. We declare now and always that we are subject to the Geneva Accord forming the E.Z.L.N. as our fighting arm of our liberation struggle. We have the Mexican people on our side, we have the beloved tri-colored flag highly respected by our insurgent fighters. We use black and red in our uniform as our symbol of our working people on strike. Our flag carries the following letters, "EZLN," Zapatista National Liberation Army, and we always carry our flag into combat.

Beforehand, we refuse any effort to disgrace our just cause by accusing us of being drug traffickers, drug guerrillas, thieves, or other names that might be used by our enemies. Our struggle follows the constitution which is held high by its call for justice and equality.

Therefore, according to this declaration of war, we give our military forces, the EZLN, the following orders:

First: Advance to the capital of the country, overcoming the

Mexican federal army, protecting in our advance the civilian population and permitting the people in the liberated area the right to freely and democratically elect their own administrative authorities.

Second: Respect the lives of our prisoners and turn over all wounded to the International Red Cross.

Third: Initiate summary judgments against all soldiers of the Mexican federal army and the political police that have received training or have been paid by foreigners, accused of being traitors to our country, and against all those that have repressed and treated badly the civil population and robbed of stolen from of attempted crimes against the good of the people.

Fourth: Form new troops with all those Mexicans that show their interest in joining our struggle, including those that, being enemy soldiers, turn themselves in without having fought against us, and promise to take orders from the General Command of the Zapatista National Liberation Army.

Fifth: We ask for the unconditional surrender of the enemy's headquarters before we begin any combat to avoid any loss of lives.

Sixth: Suspend the robbery of our natural resources in the areas controlled by the EZLN.

To the people of Mexico: We, the men and women, full and free, are conscious that the war that we have declared is our last resort, but also a just one. The dictators are applying an undeclared genocidal war against our people for many years. Therefore, we ask for your participation, your decision to support this plan that struggles for work, land, housing, food, health care, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace. We declare that we will not stop fighting until the basic demands of our people have been met by forming a government of our country that is free and democratic.

JOIN THE INSURGENT FORCES OF THE ZAPATISTA NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY.

General Command of the EZLN

1993

From the darkest reaches
of the infernal abyss;
The Stony Brook Press
presents...

Arcane Answers

(an advice column of diabolic origin)

Dear Azazel;

I seem to have attracted the attention of a social maggot. I can't seem to shake him off. He is relentless in his twisted pursuit as a result of some pathetic assumption that I paid him any attention or am planning to do so in the future.

I took pity on the poor sap and decided to actually talk to him in order to straighten him out. He took me to his room and asked me out. Before I could express my lack of interest, he started kissing me and came in his pants. He has absolutely no self-esteem. I can't seem to make him listen and comprehend that I don't like him. I don't want to see his pale, skinny, obnoxious face.

How should I make him leave me alone without committing a major felony.

-Despairingly Writhing in

Unrequited Disgust

Dear Desperate;

What in Hell's name have you got against maggots? Quite frankly, you sound like just the sort of listless, maggot-hating, naive, obnoxious, petty, quibbling, rabbinic, slap-happy tart that doesn't know her hole from an ass in the wall. I noticed you that you never considered having your boyfriend speak with the



young maggot in question. Might that be, perchance, because you are uninvolved?

You called his armorous assumptions pathetic, yet you seem to have taken quite an interest in the lucky lad. Not only did you accompany him to his room, but now you have written a desperate plea for help to the wisest being in the cosmos.

It's no wonder you couldn't express your disinterest. I also think that this pale, skinny, obnoxious, no self-esteemed maggot must be a king among his kind to have gotten over on you- or are you just that loose?

It is quite natural that this maggot-king be relentless, as you are not only granting him the attention he solicits, but he also manages to reach his objective, although he must go through a lot of underoos.

I'm sorry, Unrequited, but I just don't see any bona fide disgust here. All I get is a couple of young, desperate, drooling, sexually neurotic crotch-hoppers just trying to stay satisfied. If you really want to make him leave you alone, I suggest you try what I find myself telling so many people these days: Be Yourself.

-Azazel

Please send all correspondence to
The Stony Brook Press
Room 060 & 061 Student Union
Stony Brook New York 11794-2790

Blondes Have More Homework

By Barbara Byrne

As if the add/drop rush isn't insane enough, some of us are forced suddenly to escape from the grip of killer Tasmanian dingo professors at the last possible moment. The two weeks provided by administration for the ultimate decision—to stay or flee for your life from a course—just doesn't seem to be a sufficient amount of time. Disillusionment or even intense dislike for some of the staff here at Stony Brook sometimes occurs too late, and we are forced to withstand torturous atmospheres and abusive attitudes. Fortunately my professor inadvertently revealed a crucial personality defect one day previous to the add/drop deadline.

I arrived at class fully prepared (or so I thought) to take a quiz on the eighteenth century poem I had spent hours trying to decipher, with a dictionary and book on mythical gods at hand. After realizing I had achieved a BIG FAT ZERO, I became curious as to how others had been able to answer the questions that seemingly emerged from the fiery pits of hell. As I glanced over my neighbor's shoulder, the answer was staring me smack in the face: footnotes. As it seems, the students who had the suggested, but clearly NOT REQUIRED, anthology from a previous course found the esoteric answers effortlessly within courteously provided footnotes. The text from which I had studied was taken from the library, and was insufficient in supplying the footnotes from which all of the quiz questions were taken.

As any responsible student would do, I reacted. I humbly approached the professor, and explained that I was unable to answer the questions from the library book charged out under her suggestion for those who

could not afford to buy the forty dollar anthology. "I took this book out of the library—" She snatched the book out of my hands at the speed of light and searched for the poem. When she found it, she aggressively snapped, "This is complete. This is the complete poem."

Regardless of whether the poem was complete, the book did not feature the needed footnotes written by an expert of British literature as found in the anthology. Therefore, my knowledge of it was not complete. This was not because of a lack of effort, (the dictionary and the handbook on mythical gods were of no help) but because the information I needed was unavailable. Unless, of course, to compensate for saving myself \$40, I was expected to do extensive research within the two days before the quiz, (similar to that which was done by the experts who prepared the footnotes).

I explained that I had spent hours reading the poem carefully—twice—but was unable to realize the answers to the three questions. Like any concerned professor, she replied: "you could not answer any of them? Are you a natural blond or brunette?"

What?! I suppose that was some sort of attempted, but unsuccessful, wit. Make of it what you will, that is a response even an individual with a doctoral degree may give you. Who knows what lurks in the minds of the educated! What would have her response been if I were black, Asian, etc.? "Was it you or your ancestor that got off the boat from Africa?" or "Did you just get out of the rice paddies today?" What about the professor? "Did you really get your PhD or did you just walk in off the street and start teaching the class?" From your attitude and appearance, I would have guessed the latter...

How could she have responded?

1. "I didn't realize these things were not obvious for a first, or even second, time reader of the poem itself, but were clear only within the anthology."

2. "Next time I will take into consideration students who do not have the anthology, and I'll try to ask questions that I think students will know from reading the content of the text alone."

3. "If you have any questions, come either to my office hours, or those of the T.A. before the quiz."

But, unfortunately none of these responses were offered.

Now that I won't be attending this particular course any longer, I am not privileged to appropriate the valuable knowledge provided by this seemingly scholarly individual. I find myself left with an unanswered question: So tell me professor, you seem to have all the answers, what if I were a blonde? And exactly what does that have to do with my quiz grade? Maybe some statistics major should do an investigative report on the relationship between hair color and quiz performance.

I have always been thoroughly aware of the prejudices of the world and the discrimination that occurs everyday. But so as to not become completely abject about humanity's injustices, I put my faith in the power of education as able to curb the barbaric mind. I chose to believe that those of higher intellectual knowledge, for the most part, had surpassed this great barrier of ignorance (or at least had been provided with intelligent responses). I believed that education was the answer, a cure-all that would open minds and eventually rid society of unfavorable stereotypes and misconceptions which, used even in jest, actively pollute the minds of the masses. It seems I was wrong...

Dysfunctional Fables

THE SHARK AND THE POODLE

By Rachel S. Wexelbaum
to everyone who can eat my shorts

Australia is an island of wonder and strange creatures. It is the flattest, driest continent, still largely uninhabited by humans. Perhaps this is the animal paradise we have been looking for...

Most of Australia's human population lives in coastal cities. These cities provide shelter for people and animals more bizarre than anything one would find in the nation's interior. They live on the coast because urban creatures cannot take the heat of Australia's central deserts. There one must be strong, conservative and provincial to survive. They also live on the coasts because they have been pushed to the limits of existence.

Shark waits there for his next victim. He is the legendary great white with two sets of teeth and a belly full of undigested hate and fear. He cannot stop moving, so he never sleeps and is always hungry. His glass eyes are cold and unseeing like a plastic toy, one not to be purchased for children six and under. Shark cannot die unless they shake him from the water. Shark waits...

People in the cities live in fear of Shark. They tell their children not to venture out too far, not to talk to those who live on the edge. "They will drag you under with them!" shout concerned parents. "They never want to go alone!"

But Wandering Poodle was not afraid. He had traveled the world in search of a mate, and nearly lost his life in the process. Not just any vagabond could invite a purebred poodle to dinner, and Wandering Poodle was the type of guy your parents warned you about. Long-haired, bespectacled and raggle-taggle, Wandering Poodle was not even all poodle. His father had been a wolf, his mother part

German Shepherd. He did not fear death. To him death was a chivalrous rival like a slick opponent at a chess tournament or fencing match, someone he could match grin for grin.

People stared at him as he casually walked down the street, and the small creatures quickly found places to hide. He walked toward the harbor, a poodle without a people. Finally he made it to the harbor and sat on the pier, staring into the deep blue water.



Shark circled around the pier, waiting for Wandering Poodle to fall. He gnashed his teeth and laughed like a madman, but Wandering Poodle paid no attention. He concentrated on the swirling waves and Shark's streamlined shape. How beautiful, he thought.

Wandering Poodle longed to touch Shark. He wished to swim with him in that same circle around the pier and tag him with a tap on the fin, but he knew that would be an insult to the great white god's

dignity so he chose to remain on the pier, watching.

Shark wondered why the poodle did not panic. He wondered why this impudent creature did not fall into the water like he was supposed to. Was it a trap? A plot to overthrow the king of the sea? It was certainly a challenge.

Hours went by, then a whole day, and the city people grew curious. They took off work to watch this spectacle, a poodle trying to outstare the shark. The rivals learned to communicate with each other in a language inaudible to the spectators, but visible if they only opened their eyes.

"That bloody shark will kill'im!" shouted a man.

"Maybe we should rescue that poor dog!" sighed a young woman.

The crowd began to get skittish as they wondered what should be done. Before they grew too wild a stonefaced man stepped out from the masses. "Idiots!" he barked. "Don't you see that the poodle is endangering us all? He keeps the shark too close to the harbor. Right now we could kill them both!"

Shark lost interest in other prey; he only wished for this poodle. He could not see the men approaching with clubs, guns and spears...

And Wandering Poodle, who had found peace at last, landed on the bloated body of the great white god.

MORAL: To keep harmony, peace and love is to let it be.

MORE IMPORTANTLY: Those who set the standards for good and evil are the worst of all.

Break a Leg!



Capture that Kodak moment!

Write that Nobel-prize winning CD review!

Inform the University Community of the injustices students suffer.

Meetings are held every Wednesday at 1:00 in room 060 in the Student Union.

Join The Press

Color and Style: David Allen On Display

By Barbara Byrne

David Allen's brush strokes of intense color, emotion, and momentum have created the many abstract expressionistic paintings now on display in both the University Art Gallery in the Staller Center and the Melville Library art gallery. The eye-catching beauty of the work will stop you in your tracks should you be passing through the library's main lobby during the routine rush of the day. Stop and take a look. All the works are a pleasure to look at, thought provoking and most definitely worth your time.

Milk, appearing in the MFA (Master of Fine Arts) show at the Staller Center art gallery, consists of severe lines of stimulating color interwoven around the images of a bowl of milk and a gavel. The first image, at the far right, has the gavel suspended at a threatening distance from the bowl as if to land with a splash. Within the image in the lower left, the gavel has struck; this image seems to be only a moment later in time. The harsh splash of milk is inverted, creamy liquid flows downward toward the surrounding bright pink, purple, and turquoise colors.

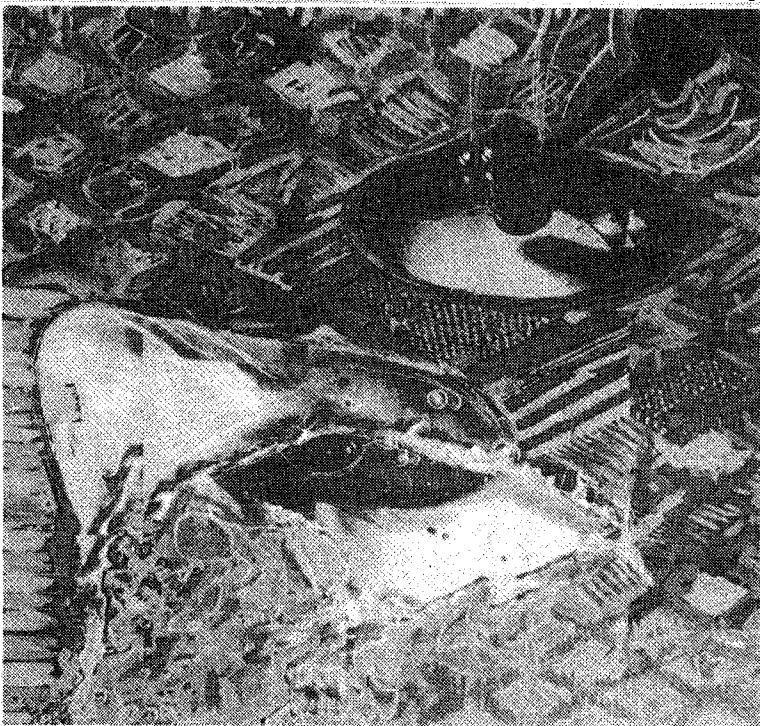
This piece was produced by Allen for the play *Silence* which was performed last semester on campus. Allen explains that the gavel represents the law, while the milk and bowl are symbolic of feminine qualities. This work was produced with the use of enlarged photographs for the background and subsequently thick paint was applied over most of them, leaving only the two images described above uncovered.

Drawing, is one of Allen's black and white paintings. The movement of black lines over a white background are like those made with a pencil in a quick sketch. These strokes were made with a brush by hand, and the sketch-like appearance may have resulted from the swiftness with which it was completed. Drawing was finished so unusually quickly that even Allen himself was surprised.

He usually works for short periods of time (approx-

mately a couple of hours), but within these time frames his focus is intensely energetic. He says music, such as The Breeders or Nirvana, usually helps to focus him because their sound is similar to the mood in which he paints. For Allen, painting is a spiritual, mental and emotional exercise that gets his mind ticking. He feels it to be therapeutic, and begins to crave it if he has not painted for a significant amount of time.

The exhibit in the Melville Library displays approximately nine of Allen's favorite creations, all of which are untitled. There seems to be a close relationship between each of the paintings; the movement of the strokes are distinctly and indubitably his own. "Using



the same creative tools for each painting is a way of bringing the individual works together," he explains. These tools may include such unique devices as cupcake pans and pasta slicers.

The creative process used by Allen is consistent for each canvas. Large areas of color are first applied to

cover the canvas completely. Then he paints shapes or lines on top of these colors with either brushes or odd objects. Lastly, he adds thinner lines of black or white on top of these colorful shapes as the finishing touch. Allen describes his process as enabling the paintings to "have a history in which some of the past layers are hidden beneath the surface color, while some of the layers remain revealed."

Allen mostly begins his work with primary colors because of his immediate attraction to them. Secondary colors are added later. Allen chooses one bright color to dominate the painting, chooses another as its complement and places it as a partner along side the curves of the more dominant counterpart. "I enjoy putting a softer opposing color next to the dominant one," Allen said. "I like to think of it as the one which is shy." One piece is described by Allen as the interior of the human body. He explains that the use of fleshy colors and reds have created this effect.

Allen believes painting is like a performance that happens over quick, separate periods of time and then put on display for others. "When one labors over some idea, puts that idea into material form, it is difficult to then part with it," he stated. "Even more uncomfortable is the display of all these private moments built up onto a surface, like a narrative of one's history read aloud to unkind ears."

I found Allen's work to be beautiful; he describes this as precisely the effect he had hoped to create: "I want to reestablish a bond with the world while creating something of beauty, a word seldom mentioned in the current climate. Beauty has become an insult to the aspirations of art. I, however, still linger with the idea that a component of art is the way in which it looks."

David Allen's artwork, along with six other Stony Brook artists, will be on display through February 26th in the Staller Center University Art Gallery for the MFA exhibit. The main library display will be held until February 18th. So, if the lectures on Biology, Physics, History, (or whatever) are getting dull, or if you just enjoy viewing fantastic artwork, visiting these galleries between your classes would be absolutely refreshing and worthwhile.

OPENING UP A JAR OF FLIES

By Scott J. Lusby

The latest effort by Alice in Chains, *Jar of Flies*, is an acoustic EP produced by Dave Jerden (who also produced their breakthrough album, *Facelift*, as well as their previous release, *Dirt*). Hard-core Alice in Chains fans out there will realize that this is not their first acoustic work. 1992's *Sap*, which featured guest performances by Ann and Nancy Wilson of Heart, was their first foray into the realm of un-distorted guitar. Yet, aside from the fact that both *Sap* and *Jar of Flies* are acoustic, there aren't many similarities between the two.

On this latest release, long-time Chains bassist Mike Starr has been replaced by former Ozzy bass player Mike Inez (1992's *No More Tears*). Inez's musical influence can be heard immediately upon pressing "play" on the CD player. Both his style and composition differ from Starr's, and are apparent on every song that he had a hand in. Lyrically, both lead vocalist Layne Staley and guitarist Jerry Cantrell continue to do all of the group's songwriting.

Like all of Alice in Chains' efforts, *Sap* had a psychedelic feel to it, with swirling bongos and other assorted percussion strewn throughout its compositions (most noticeably on "Brother"). *Flies*, although not totally void of their trademark psychedelia, concentrates less on this and more on basic acoustic rock. Fortunately, however, *Flies* maintains the same dark, disturbed style,

both musically and lyrically, that had made me an Alice in Chains fan. Songs such as "Rotten Apple," the EP's first track, and "Nutshell" continue to hammer away at



the darker side of life's experiences. On both of these songs, both lyric and song compliment one another perfectly, creating the sensation of hopeless and impending

doom that has permeated all of their previous work.

Ironically, the highlight of *Flies* is the single, "No Excuses." This song departs from the normal "gloom and doom" pattern of their writing. Musically, the song stays away from minor chords, thereby establishing a more upbeat feeling to it; lyrically, Cantrell paints a slightly rosier picture than normal with such lines as "You my friend/ I will defend/ And if we change/ Well I'll love you anyway." All this combines into a rather uplifting composition, and a pleasant break from Chains' usual barrage of sorrow-filled music.

Unfortunately, the other five songs on *Flies* just don't seem to have the same seductive powers as previous efforts did. "I Stay Away," "Don't Follow" and "Swing On This," while lyrically similar to most Chains songs, fail to draw the listener in with their music. And the instrumental "Whale and Wasp" is plain, and simply not all that interesting. This could possibly be due to the addition of bassist Inez—maybe the rest of the band hadn't quite "meshed" with him musically at the time of *Flies*' recording.

All in all, *Jar of Flies* rates as a decent effort. Unfortunately, it fell a bit below of my expectations from Alice in Chains. All three of their previous releases have been staples in my music library—above average work bordering on outstanding. This EP, although not relegated to the trash bin, won't see any regular play in my disk player, save for maybe a song or two.

ROMEO: A BIT RARE

By Lauri McKain

Romeo is Bleeding is Peter Medak's desperate attempt at the film noir genre that has become so popular in Hollywood these days. We finally see the versatile Gary Oldman minus the make-up and facial contortions that have become his signature style in current cinema. Oldman is Jack Grimaldi, and through voice-over narration, he tells us the mistakes of his past.

The opening scene, true to noir style, is set in the Holiday Diner, a dark and deserted restaurant-bar in Arizona. Jack is thumbing through his wedding album as he leads us back in time five years to New York City where the story of his demise takes place. Although the viewer comes to hate the annoying voice-over that constantly intervenes, it is necessary to the development of Oldman's character. He introduces us to the love of his life, his sweet, unsuspecting wife Natalie, played by Annabella Sciorra. The camera looks down into the backyard of Jack and Natalie and he murmurs, "I could tell her anything." And the viewer wants so much to believe that.

But as we get to know Jack, his true character is revealed. His profession as a NYC police sergeant forces him to watch the Mafia and we see Jack as a voyeuristic predator hungrily watching the thonged,

multiple lovers of his mob-boss prey. And then we are introduced to his comic bimbo girlfriend Sherri, convincingly played by Juliette Lewis. We soon find out that Jack is on the take, crossing the lines of his ordinary life, into one of crime, and he seems to be driven by more than mere financial hunger.

Jack's sexual appetite seems never to be satiated and he admits to making the wrong choices in life.

Jack gets involved with Mona Demarkov, a mob hit-woman played by the 6'2" actress Lena Olin. Her primal sexuality and husky voice seduce Jack the Dreamer with promises of money and sex. She becomes a blur of lingerie that is worn with a bestial grin. Her interaction with Jack is one of dominance and control as she reveals her animalistic character that is displayed through her extreme acts of violence.

Mark Isham's trumpet solos lead us through dark alleys, bloody scenes and frightening violence while the cinematography mixes shadows and smoke swirls that altogether make up the noir genre. But there should be more to it than that. The viewers find themselves laughing at the unrealistic dialogue, and even Olin's deliciously evil performance is met with chor-tles as she runs down a street handcuffed, half-naked, with an arm half-blown-off that again borders on the unrealistic.

But realism was never a goal of film noir so if you can get past the horrible representation of women (a docile housewife, a bimbo and a psycho) and enjoy the border-on-bondage sex scenes, the frequent

close-up shots of women in thongs and the mastication of a man every woman would hate, than you'd give this movie more than the star and a half the commercial critics gave it.



Gary Oldman and Lena Olin from "Romeo Is Bleeding."

He tells us he is driven by an inner voice that all men possess which makes them follow their sexual urges, thus leading them to destruction time and time again.

While helping the Organized Crime Task Force,

Diary of a Madman

*"I will give them a clue
but nothing too clear
I will kill all the whores
and not shed a tear"*

*"Sweet sugar and tea
could have paid my small fee
But instead I did flee
and by way showed my glee
by eating cold kidney for supper"*

By Garrison

These words are attributed to a man, now long dead, but living on in eternal infamy as one of Great Britain's most notorious serial killers. They appear in a diary believed to be of Victorian age, who's author concludes, "I give my name that all may know of me, so history do tell, what love can do to a gentle man born. Yours truly, Jack the Ripper. Dated this third day of May 1889."

The Diary of Jack the Ripper is actually much more than just a diary. The first part of the book details the discovery and subsequent investigation of the original diary, apparently a Victorian manuscript which turned up in Liverpool three years ago in the hands of Mike Barrett. The second part consists of a facsimile of the diary, followed by a transcript. The final part discusses whether or not the diary is genuine, including arguments both for and against.

Part one is the main section of the book and reads

much like a novel. It is a narrative written by Shirley Harrison and like the book, is threefold. Primarily, it is the story of Jack the Ripper, the lives he touched and ended, based upon the "known facts" compiled from photographs, newspapers, police reports and previous investigation. It is also the story of (perhaps) another infamous Englishman: James Maybrick, a cotton merchant who's American born wife, Florie was sentenced to hang in a sensational trial for supposedly poisoning her husband with arsenic.

Even if one does not accept that Jack the Ripper was James Maybrick, there is no denying that the two tales spin a fascinating web of murder, intrigue, and Victorian debauchery that could put any dime store paperback to shame.

The diary would seem to truly be the diary of a madman. It reveals the unbridled, creative passions of a serial killer, punctuated by the quaint mannerisms of a quiet, Victorian gentleman. It bears the most intimate thoughts of a man who has remained unidentified for over one hundred years:

"To my astonishment I cannot believe I have not been caught. My heart felt as if it had left my body. Within my fright I imagined my heart bounding along the street with I in desperation following it. I would have dearly loved to have cut the head of the damned horse off and stuff it as far as it would go down the whores throat. I had no time to rip the bitch wide, I curse my bad luck. I believe the thrill of being caught thrilled me more than cutting the whore herself."

Almost as an aside, Harrison also tells the story of how Mike Barrett came into possession of the diary, his obsession with it, and of all the myriad ways in which they have attempted to confirm or deny its validity.

Bringing up the rear of the book is the debate over its authenticity. Not surprisingly, this section of the

book also comes in three parts: first, a statement by the original publisher (Smith Gryphon Publishers) as to the diary's authenticity, then a report by Kenneth W. Rendell concluding that the diary is in fact fraudulent, and finally, a rebuttal from the publisher again.

I found *The Diary of Jack the Ripper* to be well written, informative, and full of graphic photographs which more than satisfied the morbid interests which prompted me to pick up the book in the first place.



James Maybrick, in a photograph (above), and as sketched by police (right).

