

The  
Stony  
Brook

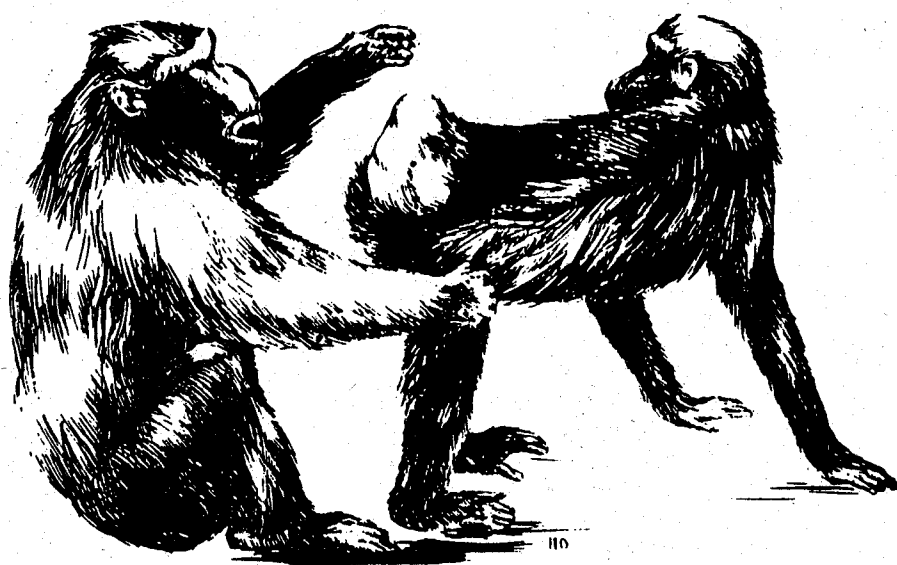
# PRESS

Vol. XV, No. XII

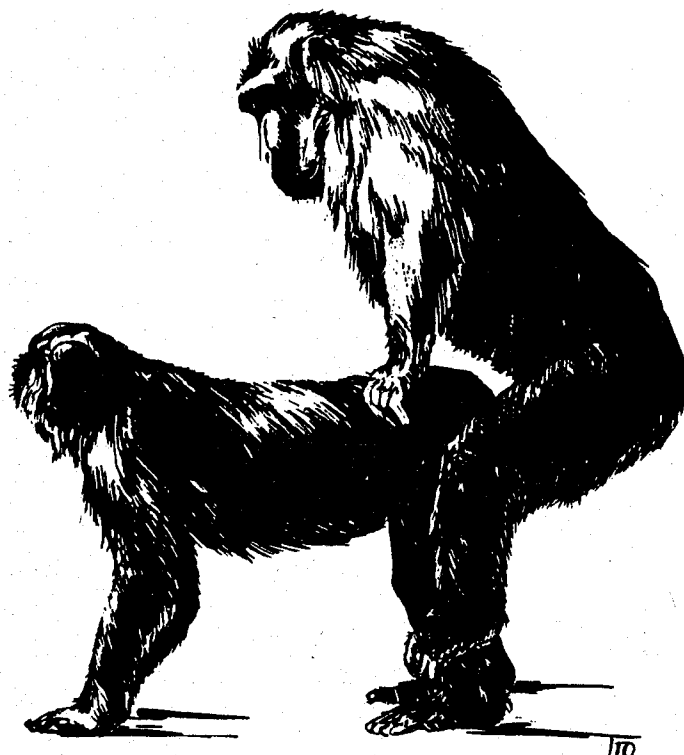
The University Community's Feature Paper

April 12, 1994

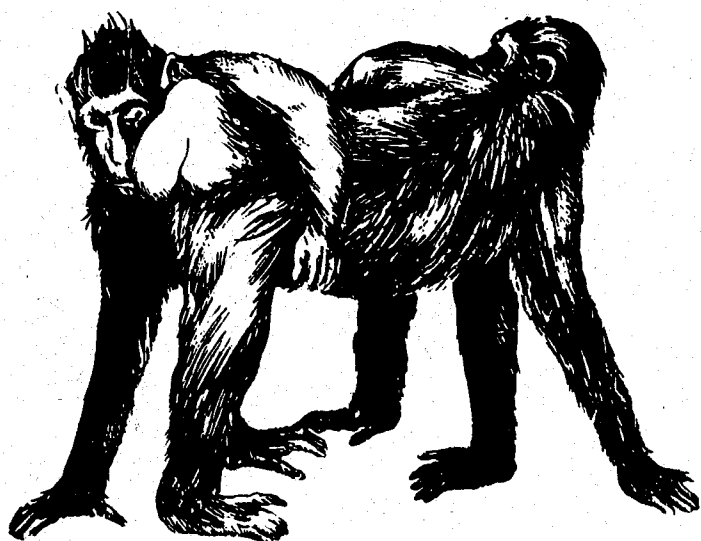
## *Ah, Sweet Spring*



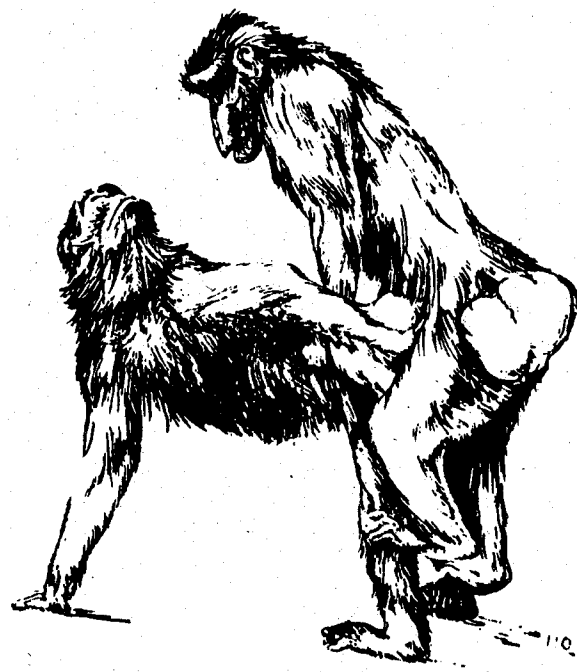
A



B



C



D

New Age  
page 3

Red Balloon  
page 8 & 9

Gay Rights  
page 10

The tense relations between North Korea and, well about every country with the exception of Iraq and Chile may seem odd but show a keen sense of world politics on the part of North Korea. Their only real mistake has been to sign a nuclear non-proliferation treaty which puts them at a disadvantage while countries such as Israel, India and Brazil can develop nukes unhindered. What most Americans don't understand is just exactly what does North Korea intend to do with a nuclear device. In our minds, we see only limited options for nuclear weapons.

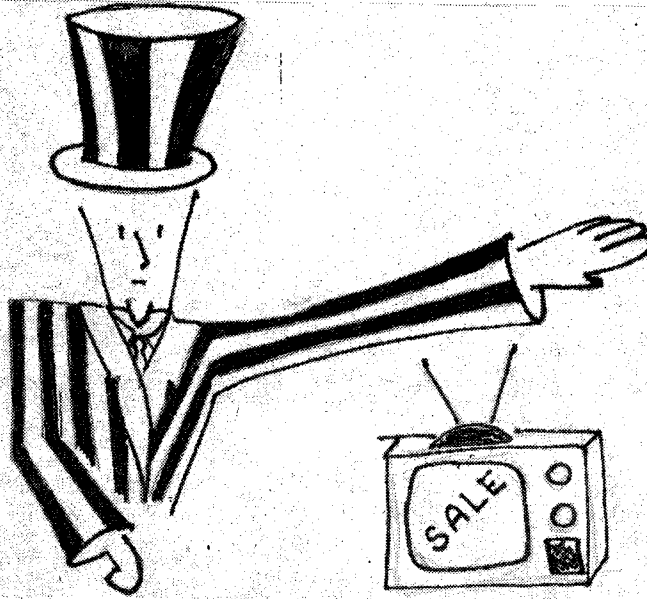
What do we think North Korea will do with a bomb?

1. Toast South Korea: Understandable seeing how the Korean war never ended, but not very practical. What is the purpose of torching vast areas of otherwise usable land only to render it unusable, although decreased lighting costs from the radioactive glow are a mitigating factor. Then again, any attempt to occupy radiated areas will cause widespread cancer, genetic mutations, and fallout, these are the embarrassing facial acne of a pubescent developing country. Consequently, their ambassadors will be snubbed at social functions and be given derisive nicknames.

2. Sell it on the open market: In this case, profits aren't going to exceed the investment costs unless they can increase supply dramatically. However, this seems unlikely since the two major oligopolies frown on any competition in this market. The U.S. only bestows nukes as a show of affection and cold war solidarity, which should mean that there are plenty of willing buyers, but the black market could be flooded by cheap Soviet nukes at discount prices. Besides which, many countries recognize that nukes aren't readily usable and draw more attention than cheap chemical and biological weapons. In short, nuclear weapons are a good buy only as a last resort, or if you can manage to accumulate enough to make you a serious threat to the big guys so they can only balk when you use them in limited war and issue idle threats decrying your actions.

3. Sit on them and try to accumulate enough to become a major power: While this sort of fox-hole mentality suits a country which has forces pitted against ours on their boarder, its doubtful that America would let this happen. Its a good guess that superior air power could

# SELLING PEACE



reduce North Korea's weapons programs to a big smelly hole in the ground. At present, any use of nuclear weapons by North Korea could result in retaliation that would make Hiroshima look like a barbecue.

All in all, it seems like a futile effort to develop nuclear weapons. Unless of course you intend not so much to win a war, but to lose a limited nuclear war. You see, having all of your outdated communist-inspired-technology factories destroyed would make you eligible for aid from foreign countries.

But wait you say, America is tapped out. If there's one thing that we've learned from the fall of the iron curtain and the televised Persian Gulf war, its that America is on a budget. We're no longer in the business of rebuilding our former enemies. This is true, but happily, for the past several years, another economic power has agreed to take its place as the big spender in foreign aid. By coincidence, this power can empathize with the effects of American radiation. The practical upshot is that North Korea believes that they're a shoe-in to have their economy rebuilt by Japanese yen. Within twenty years, they could become an economic power exerting tremendous influence on the U.S., its new factories giving them an edge South Korea and Thailand could only dream of.

America has one weapon to stop this from happening,

Capitalism. As Marx once noted, capitalism molds all other societies to its own image. For this reason, it seems obvious that the way to end North Korea's infatuation with obtaining a nuclear arsenal is not to send Patriot missiles to South Korea, or even to enact trade sanctions, but to send them what the people of North Korea need to overthrow their government and breed mediocrity, namely American culture. All the expense of financing a military force along their boarder, and the added costs of nuclear research must have an effect on the peoples of North Korea. In short, they are jealous. While South Korea gets the Olympics, McDonalds, and has started to build cheap cars, North Korea has the distinction of being one of the only practitioners of an ideology that is no longer fashionable, an overabundance of rice, and tons of cheap second-hand bicycles from China.

All of the dollars which we spend to defend South Korea could be put to better effect in advancing capitalist corruption. Rather than spending millions on troops, we should be sending televisions, wiring cable to each

household and pumping hours of senseless blather into their unsuspecting minds. Deploying Patriot missiles at millions a non-returnable pop does nothing when compared to developing shopping malls on their own soil. Why impose economic sanctions, when what we really should be doing is expanding our markets into North Korea to create a model suburbia. Once this is accomplished, people will return to their selfish nature and demand benefits from their government now. What young North Korean would feel obligated to serve his country and die fighting imperialist forces given the opportunity to sit at home and play video games and rent movies? For once our foreign policy would provide an influx of wealth rather than being the tax burden it is today.

The final blow to North Korea will come with the sowing of seeds of grass. This institution is vitally important to our nations unity, for our country is literally made up of lawns, we are all equal when we rest beneath the sod. Look at how Japan has finally been subdued by baseball

fields and golf courses. True, at one point they revered rock gardens and natural beauty, but now they now under capitalism, they see there is beauty only in that which is manufactured and weeded. The American dream is a home with a white picket fence, and a yard. It is this yard which will be the end of Nuclear development in North Korea, for once there are yards, they will swallow up all the resources of their people to weed and mow they will take pride in them, and from this pride will come NIMBY activists. Citizens who do not want Nuclear reactors in their back yard.

## Top 10 Ways to Tell Spring Has Hit Stony Brook

By Ted Swedalla

10. You can get from the train to campus without a team of sled dogs.
9. The racial tension flower is in full bloom.
8. The bees and wasps outnumber the cockroaches.
7. Weekends begin on Wednesday.
6. The construction workers are taking an extra 10 minutes on their breaks, as if that was possible.
5. For a few hours Polity remained upright and stable before succumbing to its own internal mechanisms and fell on its side.  
(Oh, sorry—that's an egg.)
4. Short skirts and tight shorts.
3. By-laws disappear faster than melting snow.
2. The trees between ESS and Central Hall are beginning to bud.
1. Seawuss fever!!!

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# The New Age Mask

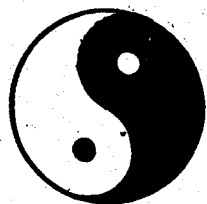
## When Spirituality Becomes Trendy and Big Business

By Shari Nezami

In the past decade Americans have seen the rise in a movement called New Age. This movement centers around the idea that one can attain spiritual perfection, or just be "spiritual" by doing little more than listening to tapes, paying outrageous fees to attend "enlightening" seminars, and playing with crystals. The movement borrows concepts from many of the world's greatest traditions, such as Taoism, Buddhism, and Islam, and then systematically turns those teachings inside out, the result being a watered down wishy-washy do what makes you feel good spirituality which misleads those who follow it into thinking they've actually set out on some sort of path.

How does the New Age movement do this? In the first place one must examine the kinds of people the movement seeks to recruit. Most followers of the New Age movement are the remains of the the 1960's and 70's free-love, hippie movements who now having sold out on their previous "values" and "ideals" are now seeking spiritual solace. Of course, New Age leaders do not think twice when it comes to maximizing their profits.

The core of the New Age movements' crisis rests in the fact that it is unable to provide its followers with any real direction. The movement's leaders themselves often know little about the traditions they speak so frequently of and are incapable of grasping the central tenets of these traditions. An example of this is the frequently mis-represented Taoist tradition. New Agers mistakenly make use of the yin-yang concept, making it little more than a vehicle through which one can express their sexual appetites. The yin-yang concept in China and other areas of the Far East is intimately connected with a vast cosmology which centers around a duality through which the ultimate Unity of Reality is expressed. Activity and Receptivity are the main principles through which this yin-yang duality is expressed.



This duality can be seen at work on the macrocosmic and the microcosmic levels, but it is intimately tied to the Ultimate Reality, or Tao.

Unable to incorporate this cosmological understanding into their narrow Western material based world view, New Agers wish to completely disregard Ultimate Reality and simply focus on the human being as if he/she lived in a cosmological vacuum. They are weary of trying to instill any discipline in their followers, a pertinent aspect of all Eastern traditions, and merely placate them, while emptying their pockets, by selling them the New Age slogan "You're perfect just the way you are." This is in complete opposition to the role of Eastern traditions which aspire to take man to a state of human perfection, to say that one has the potential to reach perfection and to say that one is perfect just the way one is are two completely juxt-opposed points. Again, New Agers have missed the point completely.

Another much mis-used tradition is the Sufi tradition of Islam. One of Sufism's central theorems is a focus on God's Love and Mercy, through which human beings seek to gain nearness to the Real. Sufi practices revolve around ritual incantation and spiritual travel through which, once again, one seeks spiritual perfection. However, these spiritual practices, never take the place of ritual religious practices and are only used in conjunction with them. In New Age mentality this translates into "we don't need to do anything but meet once a week and sing songs." California "Sufis" are famous for this sort of thinking and lack-logic.

These are just a few examples of the flaws within the New Age movement, however it is the thread which holds the movement together. New Agers, devoid of any real spiritual awareness and too lazy to make a commitment to any tradition at all, Western or Eastern, seek to practice this sort of self-delusion. In a nation already too devoid of any real values or direction the New Age movement does little more than to take age old traditions and denigrate them into free-sex and crystal worship.

# Egypt In Crisis:

## Pan-Islamic Movement Threatens Government

By Shari Nezami

A growing Islamic movement in Egypt is becoming an ever increasing threat to the government of Hosni Mubarak. The movement which has expanded in recent times has swept through both the rural areas and urban areas of Egypt. In more rural parts, the Islamic movement is supported by an ever increasing number of poor and often ill educated part of the Egyptian population. However, this movement, has been, and continues to be more than just a protest of the lower echelons of Egypt's society. A growing number of Egypt's upper-class educated elite, along with members of the bourgeoisie and college students, seem to be behind the movement to oust Mubarak, thought of as a joke by many Egyptians and outside observers, and to establish an Islamic government much in line with the one established in 1979 after the Islamic revolution in Iran.

To date the Mubarak government has arrested numerous people including at least 25 University professors. Egypt has long been a center of Islamic learning and many of the oldest Islamic University's are in Egypt. Outsiders observe that this ingrained Islamic heritage combined with ever worsening economic conditions and Mubarak's strong ties with the west, have been the perfect seeds for the sowing of an Islamic backlash. Egyptians, much like neighboring Algerians, have risen up demanding the establishment of an Islamic based government. If the movement were to succeed many fear Egyptians' economic and political problems would merely worsen.

They point to the problems currently plaguing Iran as a hint at what is to come in the near future if Islamic groups in Egypt are successful. Iran, once ranked as one of the wealthiest nations in the world, is now suffering from severe economic depression coupled with rapid inflation. Even basic food staples such as rice, must now be imported into the country, where as previous to the revolution Iran not only imported no rice, but was itself an exporter of rice and rice products, among other things.

Given the fact that Egypt lacks Iran's huge natural gas and oil reserves, if the country were ostracized by the West, along with other North African countries fearful of the spreading of Islamic ideology, it would seem the country would have sealed its own economic doom. President Mubarak, surely aware of these facts and fearful of losing power in Egypt, has begun a merciless suppression of all Islamic movements within the country. Starting with university professors and moving all the way down to peasants, anyone suspected of supporting the pro-Islamic movements is being arrested, some never to be heard of again.

As foreigners continue to observe the events taking place inside Egypt they are beginning to grow fearful that the events that took place inside Iran in 1979 will re-occur again and again inside other countries with large Muslim populations. What Westerners fear most now is the return of the Islamic empire, especially an empire within which so much of the world's needed natural resources lay. With a world wide population of approximately 1 billion and growing world wide anti-western sentiment, pan-Islamicism may just be Washington's new "red scare."

# Mega Beaver Sighted On Campus

By Garrison

Not long ago, I wrote an exposé about the disappearing trees on campus. At the time, I believed the "official story," that the tree removal was solely due to campus renovation and Cogeneration construction. I could not possibly have known that this whole business of so called "construction" is actually part of an elaborate cover-up scheme which the University is employing in order to save face (i.e., retain funding) for those bungling oafs over in Life Sciences.

The Kobeh Project, as it was originally known, was fairly uncomplicated. The Ecology and Evolution Dept. made an "unofficial purchase" last year of several types of fossil DNA. Among these was *Castoroides*, a species of giant beaver which lived in Pleistocene North America. This sample was injected into the fertilized zygote of a modern rodent. The egg, with its new DNA codes, then grew into a living, breathing, 600 pound beaver. Congratulations guys, it's a girl!

Unfortunately, while those wily geneticists seem to excel in mucking around with Mother Nature, they know little about zookeeping. The giant beaver, called Beatrice, escaped sometime in early August of last year. The whole ordeal might have gone unnoticed except for two complications: 1) beavers have a taste for tree bark; and 2) Beatrice successfully evaded all attempts at being apprehended. While the team

appointed by Health and Safety continues their efforts to capture Beatrice, it was decided that rather than try to explain a sudden appearance of rather large gnaw marks on the local timber, it would be easier to remove them altogether (out of sight, out of mind, as it were). The only resultant problem was to explain why all those trees were being removed; hence, the Cogeneration cover-up.

As responsible members of the University community, it is our civic duty to bring this shameful attempt at deception into the light. Any Beatrice sightings should immediately be reported to the proper campus authorities. Although there is a \$10,000 reward for her safe return, capture should not be attempted by anyone without the proper training. Beatrice is a vegetarian, but any rodent the size of a bear can be dangerous when cornered.

If you do come into close contact with this Pleistocene Peril, remain calm, rodents can smell fear and sometimes react violently. As she is near-sighted, Beatrice will most likely pass you by. In the unlikely event that you are attacked, bend over, put your head between your legs, and kiss your ass good-bye.

Special thanks goes to John J. Shea, Ph. D., of the Department of Anthropology for his assistance in this investigation, and to the researchers of the Zooarchaeology lab for their helpful information on Pleistocene megafauna.

Work for a  
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# USB—half done

Warning! Division I plans have gone into effect! It's bad enough students will be suffering an identity crisis once the ridiculous Seawolf logo becomes official, soon they will be inundated with a plethora of sports games at many different complexes and stadiums.

The University has proposed to build a new soccer complex near South P Lot. They also want a mini-lacrosse stadium somewhere else with little or no parking lots.

This is what students want? How many students at Stony Brook, the school with an excellent research reputation, would want to go to a game? Sure they would go to see Duke kick serious Seawolf ass, but that isn't exactly what Admin had in mind.

When asked about Administration stepping in with the part-time editor status debacle at Statesman, Fred Preston said he didn't want to take power from the students. Admin did exactly that when they decided to go Division I in order to help recruit more students and keep the current ones here on weekends. What do students want?

For starters, concerts. What ever happened to the old days when bands like U2 played here? It was well over a year ago that Bob Dylan visited campus. There are so many

new bands, so many varieties and open-minded students that any quality band playing on a Saturday night would keep students here.

This would help the existing apathetic suitcase mentality that has infested the campus. When sports complexes and stadiums are built (and with what money?), they will attract in the years to come, but don't overlook the meal tickets that are here now.

It is difficult to cater to the desires of all, but taking a few pains now may help the Alumni Association. Maybe then students would admit that they graduated from Stony Brook.

Instead of expanding the number of buildings, why not take care of the current buildings and supplies in them? Spreading resources thin is an easily made mistake, but should be taken into consideration before the deed is done. If the Indoor Sports Complex is a glorious example featuring the latest advances and only creates more problems than its worth, it doesn't seem economically sound to build more of these white elephants.

The existing buildings are health hazards that just don't seem to be able to be fixed in this life time. It's the same lame old story; either the work request never went through,

or what was needed just wasn't in stock. The bureaucracy always leaves the job half-done.

Renovating the dorms are great. It must be nice to have a room where there is heat, little or no roaches and no asbestos warnings.

Supplies on campus, i.e. chalk, erasers, desks, would make any disgruntled student feel as if the university cared.

If recruiting "intelligent" students is the aim of this university, then what does that say to the current students attending now? USB tried to sell itself as the "research university" and only half succeeded. It is successful on the graduate level, but is still a magnet for pre-meds who think they have a chance at the medical program across the street. This job is half done and Admin already wants to jump on the sports bandwagon.

If going Division I is also in the plan, then will these academic standards be waived in order to enroll the best ball player who can't spell?

Of course, by the time USB is known as a serious contender on an athletic level, many students here will have graduated and will want nothing to do with this school. School spirit also thrives in other aspects that aren't so hard to reach.

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The Stony Brook Press is published bi-weekly during the academic year and twice during the summer intersession by The Stony Brook Press Inc., a student run and student funded non-profit corporation. The opinions expressed in letters and viewpoints do not necessarily reflect those of the staff.

Advertising policy does not necessarily reflect editorial policy. For more information on advertising and deadlines call (516) 632-6451.

Staff meetings are held Wednesdays promptly at 1:00 pm.

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## Litigate Naked

### Letters

#### NYPIRG Not So Bad

To the Editor:

I would like to address the recent article printed in *Statesman* (*Questions Arise About NYPIRG*, Feb. 14) that I feel was blatantly unfair reporting about the New York Public Interest Research Group, Inc. (NYPIRG). I find it insulting that an organization that easily passed its last referendum on our campus, with over 85% of the students voting in support of it, must be subjected to such inordinate criticism as a front page article written by a student who does not even go to SUNY Stony Brook, and who happens to be a public supporter of Charles Manson. Your newspaper has clearly been doing anything but unbiased reporting concerning this organization.

I have been associated with NYPIRG since my Junior year at SUNY Stony Brook, and it has been one of the few genuinely positive experiences I have had at USB. I was an intern on the Higher Education Campaign on campus in the Spring of 1993. This campaign organized and lobbied to restore the massive budget cuts that have crippled our SUNY system, and USB in particular. I was able to really make a difference on an issue that held the quality of our SUNY education system at stake: an issue not too hard for a USB student to believe in.

This current semester I have been working as a full-time legislative intern for NYPIRG in Albany. It has been a tremendous experience. I have learned more in three months here than I learned in three years at

USB. I organized a lobby day for Higher Education, in which over 200 SUNY and CUNY students met with over 130 state legislators. I am in the process of completing a statewide survey of 140 car rental companies, which found that most of them discriminate illegally against college students. These are only two examples of the tremendous tasks NYPIRG has helped me to accomplish for USB students.

NYPIRG is an asset to our school because of the educational opportunities that it offers to anyone interested. I have been given opportunities to do things that I would never have gotten anywhere else. When I look back at the positive things I have done at Stony Brook, I will always remember NYPIRG.

Sincerely,  
Larry Gallo,  
former *Statesman* reporter  
past President IFSC,  
past Vice-Pres., TKE

#### Pray For Unity and Order

To: The Staff at the Stony Brook Press

Though there is racial disharmony and confusion on Stony Brook Campus, there is a greater force at work... a universal will constantly seeking to express itself in ever more orderly ways - life will grow ever more alive - love will become ever more loving because there is a higher power at work. Afro-

American, Oriental-American, Indian, Caucasian, all will succumb to a universal order that works for good.

Prayer is a Catalyst for unity and order.

"I am in divine order" places us in unity with the ruling principle of the universal. Plato, *The Republic*, "justice is established when each thing is what it should be and each person does what he should do - hence, order..."

Confucius: central idea... called li... li is the greatest... embodies the laws of heaven and regulation, the expressions of human nature. He who has li lives and he who has lost it dies. Scholars translate li as; propriety, reverence, standard of conduct, the right way of life... hence order.

Hindu, dharma, allocating everything its own nature... be true to yourself and you are in order with the universe.

Taoists, Lao-Tzu - the names that can be given are not absolute names but are "in tune" with the way things work... and everything must work for and towards a universal goal.

In short gentle souls... use the law of reciprocity... follow the golden rule... do unto others... what you would have them do unto you.

—In Unity for Harmony

P.S. Arcane Answer: though tongue in cheek is horrific, invites the negative and creates darkness.  
P.P.S. May each of you be surrounded by light, love, power and presence of God.



# Along the Color Line:

## The Politics of Identity

Part Two of a Two Part Series  
By Manning Marable

A central question in the cultural aspirations of oppressed people is the issue of identity—how we see ourselves sets the parameters for what we can become.

Identities can often heal and empower us. In my own family, "names" have conveyed incredible psychological and cultural power. Our names make certain statements about tradition and heritage, our aesthetics and sense of collectivity, our vision and ultimate purpose in life.

At the age of nine, my great-grandfather Morris Robinson was sold on an auction block in West Point, Georgia, in 1854—sold by his own white, slave master father. The white owner who purchased him was named Marable. So Morris Robinson became, by accident of sale, Morris Marable. At the end of the Civil War, when Morris fled the plantation, he took something else from the white Marable beside his name—two huge oxen and forty dollars in gold. This was, for Morris, probably an early version of "affirmative action." But like chitterlings, the pig's intestines which white folks discarded and which sustained countless black households for generations, Morris took Marable's name and turned it into his own.

My youngest daughter was named for Sojourner Truth, the great abolitionist and freedom fighter for our people. The name itself has influenced "Soji" to become a poet, a young public speaker, and to participate in public demonstrations—all before the age of fifteen. If our identity inspires and challenges us, we can remake ourselves and become a people of courage

and vision.

But identities may also severely hinder us. If we construct artificial barriers of language, sexuality, or tradition between human beings, we can end up perpetuating stereotypes, instead of communicating with each other. Identity is a door through which we may encounter another dimension of the human experience. But that should only be the beginning, not the end, of our interaction and exploration of each other's values, traditions and cultures. No single group has a monopoly on "truth," "wisdom" or "beauty." No culture should ever be measured in hierarchical terms, as being "high" or "low."

The politics of narrow identity, of "us" vs. "them," is always inherently reactionary. Consider the controversial speech of Khalid Abdul Muhammad at Kean College last year, which nothing less than a vicious anti-Jewish diatribe. He referred to Jews as "blood-suckers" who deserved the Holocaust. But he also described homosexuals as "faggots" and focused much of his attack against mainstream black leadership. Similarly, Farrakhan has attacked feminism as a "threat" to black manhood, and even justified boxer Mike Tyson's rape of a black woman. A central theme of such rhetoric—the sexism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and reactionary nationalism—is hatred.

But what bothers African-Americans and other people of color is that the demands for us to condemn Farrakhan are rarely replicated among whites when they must confront their own hate-filled demagogues. When David Duke vehemently attacked black people, winning a majority of whites' votes in Louisiana in his campaigns for governor and the Senate, the U.S.

Senate did not issue statements of condemnation. When Patrick Buchanan indulges in frequent race-baiting, homophobic and sexist rhetoric, there is no call for white male leaders to denounce one of their own. When Senator Fritz Hollings of South Carolina described African diplomats as "cannibals," the Senate said nothing. Why the double-standard on hatred?

Farrakhan's popularity is rooted in the deep dissatisfaction and alienation felt within the African-American community toward white power. Despite all of our efforts, we are losing ground in the struggle for equality. Our "race" becomes the essential vehicle through which we seek to assert our humanity and struggle for self-respect. Yet if we define our politics simplistically, as a narrow definition of ourselves—whether as African-Americans or Latinos only, or working people or women only, or Christians or Jews only—we surrender any hope for creating an agenda to liberate all people who are oppressed. Our struggle must be to destroy the oppressive institutions of racism and the very idea of race itself, while maintaining our cultural heritage and identity of struggle. We cannot accomplish this by denigrating others. The farthest boundaries of our identity should never stop until reaching the horizons of a common humanity.

*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.*

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## Hold Your Fire (Part I)

### Reflections of the Past

By Elf Björn

High school. . . Who thought it would ever come back to haunt you? Well, I know it's in the back of my mind daily. It's been four years since I graduated, and now, more than ever, I realize its significance.

But why do I understand its role now? Maybe it's because I find myself in similar situations. I know that sounds crazy, but it's true. I'm sitting in a calculus class again; at the same time, I'm utilizing the practical information I gained from high school and AP biology. High school may not be a high point in my life in some respects, but in others, I wish I was back there.

Life in high school was, comparatively, simple. There was somewhat less competition. One didn't compete against a sea of hundreds of faces for a single grade. One was just compared to the class of maybe thirty students. On a larger scale, a student competed for valedictorian with several hundred, rather than thousand, others.

In all honesty, sociability is much easier in college. A large factor is maturity. In high school, students think that they attain all of the social graces necessary to make them stand out. Well, they do stand out, but not necessarily with the same reputation that they desire. In college, one finds that maturity has officially set in. True, there are the instances of childhood recurrences. But, on the whole, an adult knows what is appropriate and what is not.

So, why all this talk about high school? Teen years are very informative years. One can go through life thinking that they are storehouses of knowledge. In fact, it reminds me of a poster my mother bought for my brothers and me: "Hire a teenage while they still know everything." If only that were true. Practically speaking, however, it's not that far from the truth. The difference is that the vast information stored in the head of an adolescent is raw and untamed.

High school provides the foundation for the remainder of the life. (Seem a bit silly?) How many of you sit in classes that are merely extensions of the regents courses (for NY residents) from a few years ago? I'll bet it's a majority. Physics majors may find that regents physics was a joke next to their current experiences. But, it was in the eleventh grade that you were taught of the relationship between distance, acceleration and time. Biology. . . sure, photosynthesis may seem basic and unimportant (I know I'll never be a plant. . . why do I have to learn this). But, did you ever stop to consider the relationship between plant cells and animal cells? Math Classes teach the definition of a tangent. The tangent gives the rate of change of virtually anything. The list just goes on and on.

I know that when I look back on high school, I smile. I often go back to thank my mentors. After all, without them, where would I be?

Conversely, we've all sat through classes in which the instructor was simply abominable! Poor grades are often the reflection of poor teaching (or so we think). I know that my high school physics teacher for the first semester was incompetent. However, I feel I gained from the experience. I took it upon myself to learn the material on my own. I became a master of vectors. Maybe there's a message that everyone can take from that. Do with my statements as you please, however.

All in all, I'm very proud of my high school experience. I grew quite a bit. I thought I knew everything, and realize now that I knew nothing. Wasn't it Plato (or Confucius) who said, "True knowledge is realizing how little one knows"? I suppose I've attained true knowledge. I also realize that, at present, I know nothing (in comparison to so many others—I'm not completely clueless).

So, my message to you is that you should look back at days gone by and do your best to smile. Those times weren't as bad as you think. They really taught you more than you could ever imagine.

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# Some Reflections on the Occasion of the

By Mitchel Cohen

Part one of a three part series

This autumn, the Red Balloon Collective will be 25 years old! Happy Anniversary!

We began at SUNY Stony Brook as the Independent Caucus of SDS in 1968; Red Balloon itself emerged the following year, the most politically active in stony Brook's history. I was 20 years old and still a sophomore, after four years in and out of college. Roberta Quance was a recent transfer from Oberlin. And Jack Bookman was planning to commemorate the opening of the then state-of-the-art computer center with an action against the University's ties to the Department of Defense.

That was the initial core. (Where are they now? I occasionally get reports of their good works, but I haven't seen wither of them for years.) Soon, there were fifteen of us in the collective. At first we helped put out several underground papers at Stony Brook—first, "Introspect," the radical alternative to *Statesman*, the odious official student paper, and then one issue of "Vanguard," which we worked on alongside others in SDS; but we finally decided to start our own paper. After two days of going over possible names: "Vanguard this," "Proletarian that," "Worker the other thing," Roberta was ready to five it up. Already, 18, 19 and 20 year olds were jaded by the "old left's" sterility. We didn't want any part of the boring, lecturing style of The Militant (Socialist Workers Party), Challenge (Progressive Labor Party) or other papers sold regularly on the campus at that time.

I had just finished a poem, which I read to the 15 people living in the supposedly six-person suite. One line went: "The cat leapt out of the tree last night/through the air like a red balloon." Frustrated, Jack said, "Hey, let's just call it 'Red Balloon' for now. We can change it next week if we want." Our first official action as a collective: Popping liberal Allard Lowenstein in the face with a water balloon in from of 400 people in the newly-opened Student Union building as he fulminated against radicals and denounced our attempts to drive the military recruiters and war-related research from the campus.

Over the years, hundreds of people have at one time or another considered themselves part of our loose-knit Red Balloon collectives. Most of them are still active in fighting for a better world, although not always with the same radical flare or direct action politics.

Some of our closest friends and most creative spirits are dead. Chris Delvecchio (a week shy of 24 years old when he was killed last year), Patty Staib (28), Pat Dalto (33), Kate Berrigan (24), Bob Rosado (in his 30s). Others are still marching to the barricades, as well as tearing down the barricades within. You can find us in ACT UP actions and in organizing support for the Haitian people's right to self-determination. We've created alternative health clinics and fight for women's reproductive rights. We try to break at least one law a day, do guerrilla-art attacks and take part in urban rebellions. We work with political prisoners, struggle against racism and white supremacy and, through efforts like the Earth Day Wall Street Actions and the Save the Audubon Coalition, fight against nuclear power, genetic-engineering and the destruction of the environment, exposing the corporate and government connections to just about every horrible occurrence under the sun. You can find us in Marxism classes and in anarchist, feminist, gay, lesbian and bi-sexual workshops. Along the way, like so many others, we've had to wrestle with various philosophies of organization,

way of conceptualizing our own purpose.

Unlike much of the Left, we do not try to recruit people into our collectives; that would require us to construct a "program" to sell people. We believe that that way of doing things has impaired the left. Instead, we

try to strengthen existing movements, help people to form their own direct action collectives and underground papers, and then link them together. With all the regrouping of the Left going on, I hope that these reflections on some of our experiences could help articulate some of the questions the new wave

of the Movement still has to face.

## A Head Full of Ideas that are Driving Me Insane

"He was always buying bottles of hair oil to cure his baldness, and he forgot to turn off the gas jets, but he was a good fellow."

—Adolph Kammerer, who was a shoemaker in Zurich Switzerland, speaking of V.I. Lenin, to whom he rented a room in his house, 1916.

In 1975, Marja—a Stony Brook student who had recently enrolled as a "cadre" in Red Balloon—was looking forward to the day we would become large enough as a collective to engage in that ultimate Left ritual: The Purge. Unlike the rest of the Leninist left,

*We try to break at least one law a day, do guerrilla-art attacks and take part in urban rebellions.*

and especially the Trotskyist sects, Red Balloon has always stood apart in assuming that you couldn't purge people until your organization had achieved a certain critical mass, regardless of how desperately one longed to appeal to the authority of Lenin's *Better Fewer But Better*. Consequently, purges were activities that could only remain a futuristic gleam in Marja's eye, a golden age to look forward to, delayed gratification, since Red Balloon never quite held onto its core members long enough to build up enough of a critical mass to be able to purge them.

Marja was involved in quite a few actions with Red Balloon. She was there when we kicked off the Senior Citizens Organizing Committee (which, after a sustained campaign, won rent rollbacks for thousands of elderly people who lived in state-subsidized low and middle-income co-ops in New York City), and when we toured the campuses of New York state setting up literature tables, distributing the newspaper and organizing direct actions around all sorts of local, national and international issues.

Marja was also there when we took over and held the gymnasium at Stony Brook during a wave of protests against statewide budget cuts. Others wanted to sit-in in the administration building and criticized us for our "lack of seriousness." But we asked: What if students, instead of shutting down universities to protest tuition hikes and cutbacks in services (as had occurred

in the CUNY and SUNY protests of the past two years), began opening them up—building by building, libraries, gymnasiums, study areas keeping them open all night for people to use and forcing the university administration to shut them down, permitting us, as Marx put it, to "retain the moral ascendancy"?

Then, when the government or university bureaucracies tried closing the buildings at 11 p.m. due to cutbacks, we'd say, "No, we're not going to let you, we're going to keep them open so people could use them and study."

The tactical advantages were obvious, and we began to break out of forms of action that, though one powerful, have largely been co-opted and integrated into the system. We would not be "protesting" but would be directly putting part of our vision of the type of society we'd like to live in into effect.

So in April 1975, sixty students divided into four different clusters (designated by the color of the armband each person was given) and each group trundled off in a different direction through the bowels of the campus. One squad marched up to the administration building (a diversion to keep Public Safety bottled up). Another headed for the computer center. The remaining two groups circuitously made their way to the gym and set up camp inside. Instead of shutting it down—the main tactic of previous sit-ins—this time our goal was to open it up for public use, and to prevent the university from curtailing access.

For two weeks we kept our actions going. We started by taking over the gym and keeping it open all night, which gave us the tactical advantage of winning over a lot of the jocks. The idea of "open-ups" instead of building "shut downs" met with mass-support. Marc Stern, a grad student in history, explained the "historic forces at work" to the exasperated keepers of the gym, and he managed to procure a sackful of basketballs in exchange for his I.D. card. Since his was the only card confiscated, Public Safety tried to hold Marc responsible for repair costs to the now liquid-stepped door mechanisms that could no longer be used to lock people out.

The hum takeover turned out to have been a stroke of genius. Many more students came out of the dorms to join us in the middle of the night. Basketball games at four in the morning, sixty people on a side and five basketballs down the main court proved to be a great way to relieve some of the destructive sectarian tensions built up during endless meetings. "Well," said one wizened participant, "this sure beats faction fights."

Using the gym as our base, we avoided "friendly fire" and began making sorties into other areas of the campus, establishing a forward bunker in the "Emma Goldman Reference Room" in the library. Night after night we refused to leave the study areas. Public Safety—known not as "pigs" but as "mooses" (they weren't smart enough to be considered pigs)—massed in the reference room, the closest they'd ever come to a

book, Marja said. Each night, the head of Public Safety read to us from the Rules of Public Order. "Oh, bedtime stories," Lynn McSweeney would chuckle, as folks curled into their sleeping bags, yawned, and stretched out on the floor.

Sometimes there were 150 people; other times as few as twelve, plus all those studying students. Steve Wishnia,

later to form the terrific punk group *False Prophets*, had off his shoes, socks, shirt, and sometimes his jeans and underwear by the time Public Safety approached him on their sweep through the large room. Each time Steve slowly drawled: "Give me a minute to get dressed, it's

*"According to Marx," she began, "the working class is going to rise up and kill all the bourgeoisie. Then we'll have the dictatorship of the proletariat, no one will be hungry and we'll all have free medicine, education, transportation, peace and live in harmony." That was it. "Any questions?" she asked.*



# Red Balloon Collective's 25th Anniversary

cold out." While they tried to hurry people along others were hiding under the card catalogues, or were making love upstairs behind the microfilm cabinets. When Public Safety came with cameras one night to identify us they were surprised to find that we'd been tipped off and were all wearing Groucho Marx masks.

Every night it took the police hours to get us out of the library. People would hide behind the cabinets, under desks. In the month-long effort no one ended up being arrested, we suffered no "collateral damage" and we had enormous student support. What if the demand, "Open'm up!", instead of "Shut'm down!", rocked every campus?

The media highlighted our actions, especially when we renamed our home

base the "Che Guevara Memorial Gymnasium," red and black flag flying proudly from the flagpole out front, and promoted ourselves as "Cuban-backed students." When the police mobilized to arrest us, we telegrammed Fidel Castro, pleading with him to send Cuban troops immediately to Stony Brook to save us. We ended one press release by demanding "the entire wealth of the North American continent—except for the Hackensack McDonalds." Why we chose to exempt that particular culinary entity we didn't know ourselves' but our instinct paid off in terms of media reports that helped to stay arrests. The university received a ton of calls from newspapers wanting to know why we'd specifically omitted that industrial burger joint.

The surreal, circus-like nature of the protests was heightened by the realization that, had we sat-in demanding the closing of the same facilities the administration would have acted in the same way. Parodies of the "bureaucratic mind" began appearing on campus walls. Older participants related tales of demonstration in years past. In 1969, the Independent Caucus of SDS—the immediate precursor to the Red Balloon Collective—had taken over the administration suite of offices in the old library one night just to see how the bureaucrats would react. We did similar non-actions periodically to test the police and administration response, so we'd know how to plan for heavier actions. In one action, a few of us had decided to sit peaceably out in the hall just before closing time.

"It's time to clear out, the building is closing in five minutes," we were told. Until that point we were just seven people sitting in the library.

"Well, we can only leave if the administration meets our demands," someone mumbled, carefully concealing the joint that had been passed around.

"What are they?"

"Well, we're just demanding amnesty," someone ad-libbed.

"Hey," one moose said, "we got a conjunction against that!"

"Oh yea, and, but, or or?" and we all howled.

The moose took a step back, clearly confused. He conferred on his walkie-talkie and then glared at us. "The university won't negotiate demands for amnesty. You have to leave."

"Well, we refuse until we're granted amnesty. We're not leaving." Actually, we'd done nothing yet that was illegal. The library was still open. We just sat.

The cop called for reinforcements. "Gotta situation here," he squawked into the walkie-talkie, which crackled as if in indignation. "Unless you leave right now you'll be placed under arrest."

"Just give us amnesty and we'll leave right now, before the library closes," we pleaded, as the stoned laughter swept us all.

"Can't do that. Against policy." Aha! Gotcha! Catch-22.

"We won't leave home without it."

This went on for half an hour. More police were

called, administrators were awakened from their slumbers, more students gravitated to the library to see what was going on. "What's the demands?" someone shouted through the doorway, magic marker in hand.

"No demands. Just amnesty."

"For what?"

"For sitting here."

"No demands? Hey, finally a demonstration I can agree with! No demands! No arguing!" Within an hour over three hundred students had joined the "protest." A reporter from *Newsday* asked:

"What are you protesting?"

Someone who'd just seen "The Wild One" answered in his best Marlon Brando impression: "What've you got?" Others said: "They won't give us amnesty."

"Amnesty for what?"

"For sitting here."

The reporter couldn't figure out what the bunch of 19- and 20-year-olds were up to. Neither could the administration. Neither could Public Safety. (Neither could we.) It was two in the morning. An administrator whined: "Why don't you all just leave?"

Cop says: "They can't. I gotta fill our reports."

We say: "We'll leave if you give us amnesty."

"Amnesty? For what?"

"For sitting here."

"Hell no. The university has a policy against giving amnesty. We're gonna bring you all up on charges."

"Then we can't leave."

By six in the morning, with half the campus outside the library watching the absurd denouement, a negotiating team had succeeded in winning some reforms in exchange for our promise to leave then and there. If we did, no charges would be brought against us.

"What? No charges? And we've won some reforms?" We looked at each other in disbelief. "Maybe we should hold out for more reforms," some suggested.

We'd been officially denied "amnesty," because that would be against university policy. So the administration negotiated a settlement. "With whom? Who negotiated for us? Oh, Student Government. Who the fuck asked them to?" The liberals were always butting in when things were going so well and no charges would be brought against us. All the administrators were very happy at having earned their salaries that night. Good thing they hadn't offered us amnesty from the start or we might never have won the reforms that we weren't even demanding! Who ever warned? "Don't yell theater in a crowded fire?"

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

As new of our Stony Brook "open-ups" spread, Lynn McSweeney, Marja, her roommate Yvette, myself, Van Howell, my brother Howie and half-a dozen other Balloonies from Stony Brook began johnny-appleseed-ing the State University system. We distributed our newspaper everywhere; the well-researched lead articles "Why You Should Cheat on Your Exams . . . And How to Do It" and "Who Rules Our Schools?" exposed the corporate, banking and government connections of

the Board of Trustees and attacked the competitive, militarized model of education, while upholding a shared, cooperative vision of how people should live. We joined building takeovers on a dozen campuses and helped organize others, generating a good deal of excitement wherever we went. At Stony Brook we were just you everyday meshuggannah radicals; on other campuses, however, people invited us to address their gathering, help plan protest, share skills and leap contradictions in a single bound. No one is a prophet in their own land.

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

Fred Friedman, another early Red Balloonie, was involved in a similar campaign at SUNY Buffalo, while also organizing the first nucleus of the statewide Graduate Student Employees Union. Marcia Prager was doing likewise in State College, Pennsylvania. Similar collectives at Binghamton, Oneonta, Albany, Cortland, Purchase, New Paltz, Cornell and Hostos Community College—our regular stops on the Red Balloon Magical Mystery Tour—launched sit-ins to keep things open and to make the banks, not workers' taxes, pay for it. (We felt obliged to demand where the money should come from to pay for the other demands against cut-backs, and more and more students began doing that also. That whole attempt politicized the issues and allowed people to make connections that they otherwise would never have made.)

At Hostos Community College in the Bronx, students took over the whole school. They invited teacher from all over the city to teach classes and for a month the college became a truly free university. Stony Brookers supported the students at Hostos, who were mostly Black and Latino. We helped teach courses, took others, helped find teachers and defended the magnificent liberated zone against the cops. In all the excitement the state of New York seemed much smaller than today; dozens of Stony Brook-trained-organizers turned up all over the place as if campuses hundreds of miles apart were just subway stations on the D train.

At one stop, SUNY Albany, we participated in an inspiring event. Albany was a blizzard the day of a statewide rally against the budget cuts. Speech after speech called on us to be nice to the bankers who were foreclosing on our futures. A radical core managed to gather representatives from all the different campuses as the snow piled up and the winds whipped the banners.

All of a sudden, a few people from Binghamton with black anarchist flags began to "charge" the capitol building. They were quickly joined by students carrying red flags (not to be outdone by anarchists) and others, including the Red Balloonies. Someone blew a plastic trumpet (da da da dum da da!) and, to the dismay of the rally organizers—young bureau-

crats-in-training who talked on and on about "responsibility" and not letting ourselves be "marginalized"—hundreds of students headed for the Capitol, pelting it with snowballs, red and black flags and war whoops. As thousands turned away from the speakers to either take part or watch the slippery "charge" up the steps, TV cameras and newspaper reporters ground out photo after photo that, when they appeared in the papers the next day, made us seem a lot more heroic, or crazy (depend-

*continued on page 10*

*The liberals were always butting in when things were going so well and no charges would be brought against us.*

*At Stony Brook, we were just your everyday meshuggannah radicals; on other campuses, however, people invited us to address their gatherings, help plan protests, share skills and leap contradictions in a single bound. No one is a prophet in their own land.*

# Breaking the Silence

## Human Rights Violations Based on Sexual Orientation

By Robert V. Gilheany

Amnesty International (AI) is a world renowned human rights organization. AI is a world-wide voluntary non aligned movement whose purpose is to protect human rights. Most of AI's activities point out grave human rights violations committed by governments, but they also oppose violations by opposition groups. AI works to free political prisoners, oppose torture and the death penalty. AI also opposes opposition group hostage taking and governmental extra-judicial executions and "disappearances" otherwise known as death squad activities.

In 1991, AI expanded its mandate to protecting the human rights of lesbians and gay men. The work of human rights protection means that the goal of the organization is to defend freedom of all people from violations of their physical and psychological integrity. Sexual orientation is an integral part of human identity. AI sees its work as part of a freedom fight that protects people in the private selves and their public identities. By adding the protection of the human rights of lesbians and gay men to their mandate that includes the protection of prisoners of conscience, the rights of ethnic and racial minorities, indigenous peoples, refugees, women and children. These groups have been vulnerable power relations to dominant groups in society.

AI's move to supporting the rights of lesbians and gay men has been a long time coming. In 1979, AI confirmed that people imprisoned for advocating gay rights would be taken up as prisoners of conscience. In 1982, in condemned medical procedures designed to alter one's sexual orientation, AI said that it constitutes torture, and in 1991, the organization expanded the mandate. Now the AI-USA released a report on violations of human rights based on sexual orientation. AI states that the report is a survey and not an all inclusive document on the human rights violations of lesbians and gay men.

A cross section of cases are presented in AI's publication documenting human rights abuses from countries like Turkey, Iran, Romania, Mexico, the United States and the Middle East.

Renildo José dos Santos, a Brazilian local counselor, who came out of the closet and pronounced his bisexuality, was abducted and killed. On the evening of March 14, 1993, he was violently abducted from his home. His headless body was found two days later and torture marks were left on his body. Witnesses believe that some of the men involved were plain-clothes police officers.

Dos Santos was vocal about death threats and it is documented that he was speaking out about threats he was receiving for the previous three years.

He was also the target of official Brazilian government harassment for proclaiming his bisexuality. A parliamentary commission investigated his personal life to see if he committed acts "incompatible with parliamentary decorum."

Torture and ill treatment of people in detention has always been a concern for AI. AI has documented cases of torture and ill treatment of lesbians and gay men in detention. *Breaking the Silence* states that in Romania, gay men are routinely targeted for ill treatment and torture. Doru Marian Beldie, 19, was arrested in Bucharest in June 1992 for allegedly having sex with a minor. The police beat him with truncheons about the hands and feet to force a "confession" out of him. Police use violence to force "confessions out of people and to illicit names from people. They have been victimizing lesbians and gay men in this fashion. AI is active to expose these abuses.

Beldie got four years for having a consensual gay relationship. AI said that he has been repeatedly raped in prison.

Rape of people in detention is a form of torture. AI sees rape of people in detention as an assault designed to break down someone's sexual identity. Rape is used against female detainees. The rape violation against lesbians and gay men is compound because often judicial and legislative remedies are not available to them.

AI opposes forced "medical" treatments on prisoners designed to change their sexual orientation. These procedures involve behaviorist electro-shock aversion therapy, i.e. *Clockwork Orange*.

Turkey has been pointed out as a country that carries out grave violations of human rights based on sexual orientation. AI pointed out systematic harassment by Turkish police of gay men and transvestites. They also harassed reporters covering a press conference; they tried to force reporters to take an AIDS blood test, arrested activists for advocating equal rights for lesbians and gay men.

AI heavily criticizes the Middle East for persecution of lesbians and gay men. Iran officially let's people be put to death. During 1992, at least 330 people were executed. Other Muslim countries follow Islamic law. Homosexuality is punishable by death in many of these countries. AI is appalled by this gross violation of the right of lesbians and gay men in those countries. Some

of these countries include Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Sudan and Oman.

Fear and ignorance leads official in many countries to link HIV status to homosexual identity. In Mexico, two prominent gay activists were arrested for educating the homosexual community about HIV and running a clean needle exchange program. AI feels they were railroaded into prison on trumped up charges. José Reyes Potenciana and Gerardo Ortega Zurita did a lot of AIDS prevention work among prostitutes in Mexico City. They were arrested in July 1993, held incommunicado and beaten by police. They were convicted of having sex with a minor, but were vindicated on appeal after AI intervened in the case.

The Los Angeles Police Department was cited by the AI for human rights violations in the beating of a gay Latino Robert Cervantes during an arrest at an adult cinema for "lewd conduct and related cases." The cops were found guilty of using excessive force and Cervantes was awarded punitive damages.

AI cited a Virginian judge for violating the rights of a lesbian mother. The judge cited her sexual orientation as a reason for her losing a custody battle. The judge said that lesbianism is against the law in Virginia.

The criminalization of homosexuality in many states is a violation of the human rights of lesbians and gay men. These laws stigmatize them as criminals. Lesbians and gay men whose private acts of love can have them arrested, forcing them to live in constant fear. Police and vigilante groups that target non-straight people are trying to force the lesbian, gay, bisexual community back into the closet and limit their freedom and expression of who they are and attempt to block the right to live freely as themselves. AI and other human rights organizations see this as an attack on the persona and psychological integrity of a whole group of people. The right to be free from that is fundamental and the basis of all human rights work.

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So we shall let the reader answer the question for himself. Who is the happier man, he who has braved the storm of life and lived, or he who has stayed securely on shore and merely existed?

-Hunter Thompson

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### *Red Balloon continued from page 9*

ing on your preference) than we really were. Indeed, the front page of the *New York Daily News* screamed in inch-high headlines: "10,000 Storm State Capitol." This was terrifically inspiring to read, and by the next day, back on their own campuses, all those who had stood around and watched swore they'd been part of the action. True, only around three hundred radicals raced through the blizzard (fantasies of the Russian winter palace propelling us on), slipping into the state capitol building through a few windows and an open door while 9,700 watched, but then our press coverage always exceeded our capacity.

Today, Marja remembers those days as "the most exciting time" of her life, even without actually having been involved in purging anyone—her life's ambition. Imagine how much more orgasmic she'd have felt had she actually undergone that apical experience!

A year after she'd departed Red Balloon, but still friendly to us, part of our periphery, I invited her to explain the "Communist Manifesto" to our first Marxism for Beginners class at Stony Brook. A dozen young students, bushy-eyed and brightly tailed, waited on Marja's words of wisdom, making sense of the holy texts. Marja's presentation was . . . terse . . . to say the least. "According to Marx," she began, "the working

class is going to rise up and kill all the bourgeoisie. Then we'll have the dictatorship of the proletariat, no one will be hungry and we'll all have free medicine, education, transportation, peace and live in harmony." That was it. "Any questions?" she asked.

"Yes," one 17 year old timidly asked the 20-year-old "expert," Marja. "Did you say we have to 'KILL' all the bourgeoisie?"

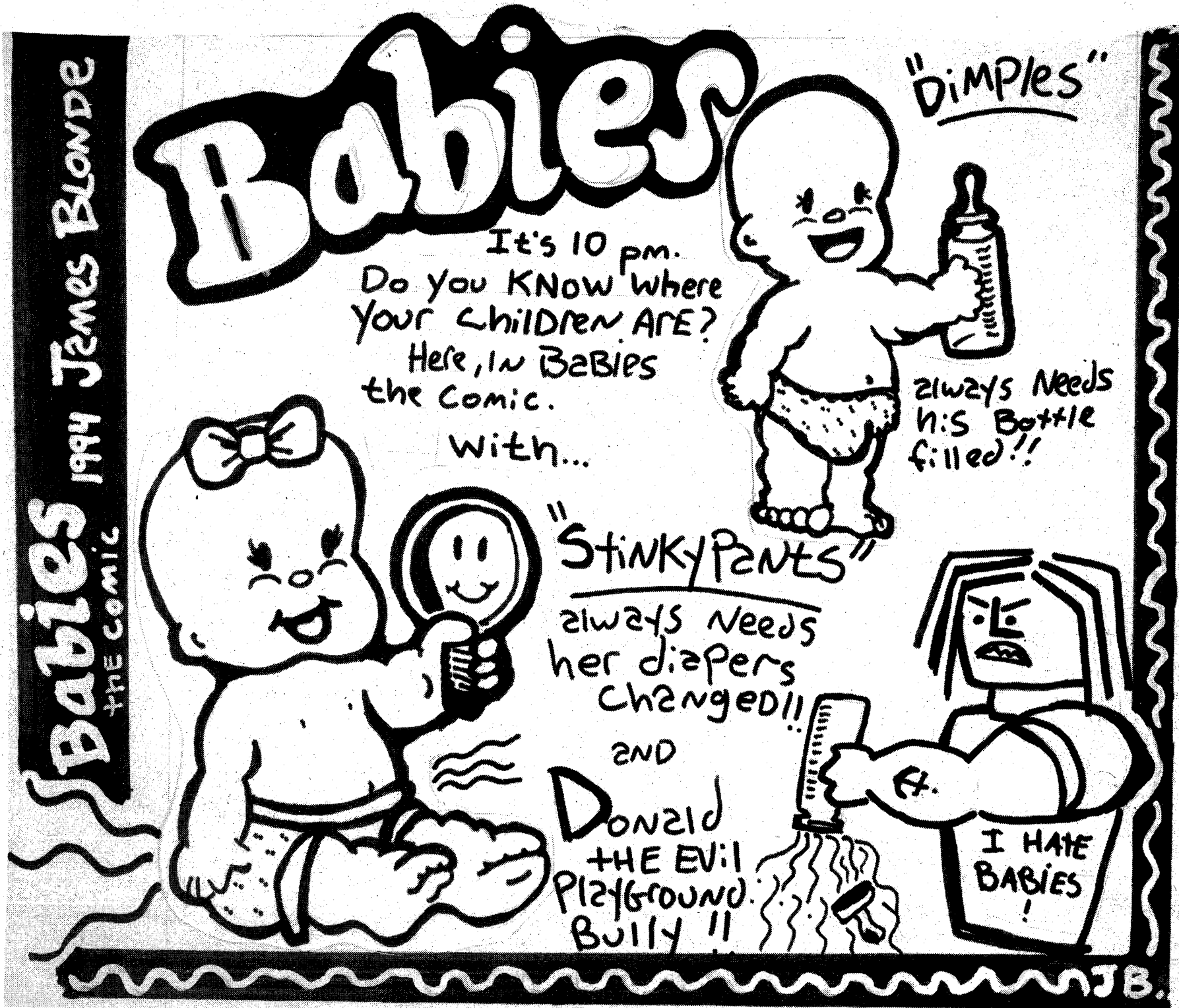
"Well," Marja conceded, "maybe we'll only have to kill half of them, and jail the rest."

Once the room had cleared after the world's quickest "Marxism" class on record, I asked her "So how come you're not still in Red Balloon?" I was curious that she had no sense of Marxism as a comprehensive philosophy of human emancipation and the possibility of human freedom.

"Because I don't believe that the working class will actually do all Marx says it has to, here in the U.S., to make a communist society actually happen."

"Ah, you haven't lost your vision," I concluded, "just your faith." Five years later I got a letter from Marja, who had become a born-again Christian (but a "liberal" one, as she put it), saying that perhaps this time she had found her faith.

Part II will continue in the next issue of *The Press*.



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For more information, Call 632-6460

# **STUDENT POLITY ELECTIONS**

are

April 19th and 20th

The following are needed:

**Election Board Members**

**Pollwatchers**

Please fill out an application in the Polity Suite,  
Union Room #258.

For more information, call 632-6460.



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

# Arcane Answers

(an advice column of diabolic origin)

Dear Azazel:

I am on the verge of being awarded my Ph.D., and excited at the prospect of the new respect that will be mine with the title "Doctor" and those important initials after my name. But my delight has been blighted. My advisor told me that in academia only insecure half-wits ever use the initials Ph.D. on business cards and such. I am desperate for a little respect and I always thought I would get it with those magic letters. Now I fear that using them will make me a laughingstock. What to do?

- Perturbed, Ph.D., Pending

Pending;

I don't know what program you're in, but I suspect neither you nor your advisor have what it takes to be even a half-wit. Respect is not something which can be gained or lost by the addition of a few initials after one's name. If using them is going to make you a laughingstock, you're probably a hair's breadth from being one anyway. However, if I had your choice, I'd rather be "Dr. Laughingstock, Ph.D."

During the Middle Ages, man took great delight in bestowing titles upon himself, such as Sir, Esquire, Lord, Count, etc. These titles were pretty much

meaningless except to say, "Hey, I'm not just some street dullard, I'm a swell guy-



and I can prove it. Someone with real power thinks I'm groovy enough to call myself Lord Dullard." For some inexplicable reason the general populous seemed to buy into this line of bull and nobles everywhere ran about committing all sorts of heinous acts in the name of this king or

that in the hopes that they might persuade some majestic schmuck to tap a sword on their shoulders and grant them a title.

The upshot of all this is that "Doctor" is one of the few titles still in use today, and "Ph.D." is generally considered to be a really neat thing to have after your name. It is suggested, however, that you use the title "Dr." carefully, lest you should be constantly interrupted over dinner and such when people ask you to look at swollen tonsils and bizarre skin disorders.

Perturbed, start practicing your new signature. Work hard and get that degree. Once it's in your hot little hands, insist on using your title- even your own mother should address you as "Dr. Perturbed." If your advisor gripes and moans, thank him for his wisdom and guidance through the years, buy him an expensive bottle of wine, and tell him where to shove it!

- Azazel, Ph.D.

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

## Never Stop Talking

By Lauri McKain

It was the winter after the summer I moved to California that I met Merry. And it was through Merry that I met Wilson.

I was browsing in the shoe store where Merry worked when we started talking. We exchanged numbers and two days later she invited me to dinner. She cooked Italian, I brought wine, and we've been friends ever since.

In the spring we threw Merry a going-away party. Her long distance love had popped the question; she was leaving in a week. I remember that night vividly: four policemen had been acquitted of the assault of a black man, Los Angeles was ablaze with rioting, and I met Wilson...

That night we talked for hours as we watched the television in disbelief. It was two weeks later, at a barbecue, that he asked if we could get together. He didn't tell me where we would go, "Just dress casual and leave it up to me," he said.

...He gave me a single red rose when he came to the door. We went for a drive through the foothills of Los Angeles, and he brought me to the house he grew up in. I met his mom and she showed me his baby pictures. We talked for hours about our childhoods, exploring our kindred natures. There was never a dull moment, never a lull, and when I got home, my jaw hurt from smiling...

...At two o'clock in the morning we went for a hike in the hills behind my house. The moon was full and we vowed our friendship would lead us there. I fell, skinned my knee, so he gently held my arm as we

continued to walk. Again the talking never ceased and the smiling lasted all night. He told me stories of his childhood in Colombia and I told him stories of my childhood in New York and we laughed at the similarities. That night, under the moon, our bond of loyalty was formed that we each promised to treasure always...

...Our telephone conversations lasted for hours. He would call me at midnight, what we considered "Prime Time." We would talk of our todays and tomorrows, loves and hates. Of our friends, families, goals and dreams. We promised to never stop talking...

...We went to the fair and on top of the Ferris wheel we told each other our biggest secrets, our worst sins. We were comforted in knowing our best friend was our confidant. The more we shared the more we trusted—together we could come to no harm...

...We met friends for dinner and sat at the end, intent on the privateness we were used to. I loved to see him talk and laugh with his friends, but I loved it more when he talked and laughed with me. A photographer came by and took our picture, the only picture I have to remember the peace we shared that summer...

...We took a moonlit walk on the beach and gave money to a beggar. He blessed us for our kindness and told Wilson he was a lucky man. We laughed and hand in hand, down the shore, we walked, once again vowing to reach the moon...

...We decided to get each others names tattooed on us, but we never did. We dared each other to do

the things we were afraid to do ourselves. We fell asleep on the beach and so we were late for dinner at his mom's. We stormed into the house stifling our laughter as his mother scolded us, but I lost control when he kicked me under the table. Later, as he hugged me goodnight, he said he would always protect me, and I cried, thanking him for being my best friend...

...We went to a party and danced for hours. We sat in the backyard describing our dream houses, and the party moved out to join us. Our friends envied the close friendship we shared and asked what our secret was. Never stop talking we said...

...He wrote me a poem. No one had ever written a poem for me before and I treasured it. Everywhere I went I had it with me and still do. He call me My Sweet and told me I was the sweetest person he'd ever met...

...At Merry's wedding I caught the bouquet. We sat outside in a gazebo and talked about what our weddings would be like. We held hands and were happy. It was a perfect day. He told me I looked beautiful and my eyes teared as I thanked him...

...I had fallen in love with Wilson, but Wilson, as he'd been months before he met me, was in love too...

...I was sitting in my car as I saw him open his door in the morning. His face lit up when he saw the dozen roses I'd placed on his doorstep for him. He picked them up and closed the door so I didn't see the look on his face when he read the single word I'd written for him...Goodbye.

...And we never spoke again.

Spring is here—

I can smell the delicate crocuses, the fresh mud waiting to burst out into green  
grass, the nascent cherry blossoms—  
and the ripe armpits of the fat kid who did not use deodorant all winter.

Yes, there is always something to inspire a person—act on your impulses!

Can you smell new love, or a relationship gone sour?

Can you see with your third eye?

Can you hear the music no one else can hear?

Can you feel the hand of God on your shoulder?

Can you taste the excitement and idealism of youth, the blood of revolution?

Then maybe you have schizophrenic delusions OR you should consider writing for

## **THE 1994 STONY BROOK PRESS SPRING LITERARY SUPPLEMENT.**

We accept all poetry, short stories, one act plays, artwork and photographs.  
Deadline is April 28th.

Please send all work to  
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**DIFFERENT VOICES CREATE BEAUTY,  
NOT DISSONANCE.  
DISSONANCE RINGS IN THE EARS OF THE READER.**

## Dysfunctional Fables

# THE TORTOISE, THE HARE AND THE ROCK

By Rachel S. Wexelbaum  
for Aesop, a little man hired to entertain kings

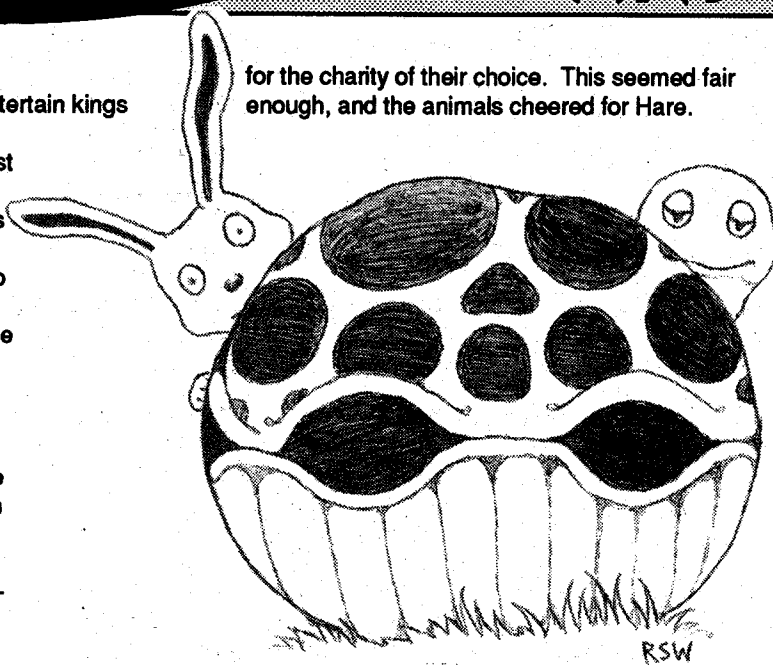
In America they'll bet on almost anything, from racehorses to snails. It is amazing how humans find amusement in the useless harried movement of animals who do not share in the prizes of their masters. I always wonder how the animals feel about this. Does the roar of wind in their ears stir passion in their hearts to make it to the finish line, or is it the sting of the whip? Do the animals believe in sportsmanship and competition for reasons other than survival?

One thousand years ago Aesop proved that animal sportsmen are driven by ego alone. Hare only raced against Tortoise to try and make himself look important in front of the forest community. Of course he failed miserably, because "slow and steady always wins the race". This fable, with its important moral, had been passed down from generation to generation of hare and tortoise populations.

Every so often a hare wants to hold a rematch. He will harass his turtle neighbors until they produce a competitor, and they will reinact this race over and over again. Hare's ego, however, is never soothed because Tortoise always wins. This is because Hare is too arrogant, too presumptuous—he is quick to challenge, but too good to compete.

Finally, in this century, Hare delivered an apologetic speech to the forest community. He apologized for the behavior of his ancestors and wished to organize one last marathon. The entire forest community could participate, and the prize would be a check written out

for the charity of their choice. This seemed fair enough, and the animals cheered for Hare.



Tortoise watched Hare's speech on television and sighed. He wished Hare would just forget about his defeat and move on to more important causes. Nevertheless Tortoise knew that Hare would be insulted if he did not run, so the next day he filled out a form and mailed it to the marathon committee. Then, before he was about to walk away, Tortoise thought he would play a joke on Hare. He filled out another form for a mystery contestant and dropped it into the mailbox with a snicker.

The day before the marathon, Tortoise and his friends pushed a big rock out of the pond on to the starting line. They dried it off and painted it like an enormous turtle shell. Tortoise and his friends were so amused that they did not notice the trail of paint they left behind...

On the day of the marathon, all contestants gath-

ered on the track. Hare had collected the list of participants and called out their names to check if everyone had showed up. Then Hare spotted Rock on the track. It had not called its name, nor made the slightest whimper, and Hare quickly grew irritated. He stripped down to his red running shorts and joined the race. "We'll see if you're better, Tortoise," he sneered through his buck teeth. "GO!"

And they were off. Rock did not move. It could not see. It could not appreciate the wind roaring through its ears or the sense of power in its legs. Rock relied on powers stronger than the ego to get motivated, and those powers were the laws of physics. The track was built on a downhill slope, and it would only take a small push to get the ball rolling. This push was provided by a forest elder who thought he could lean against Rock to take a nap. Rock wanted no part of this, and it began to roll downhill at rapid speed.

It bowled over many contestants, maiming some for life. The competitors began to run for their lives, off the track and as far away as possible. Soon the only participants left in the race were Tortoise, Hare and Rock. They were all old hands at this game. Who would win?

Rock won, of course. Very few creatures can run as fast as an object with high mass rolling downhill. But sore losers do not want scientific explanations as to why they failed—they want revenge. This is why the story of the Tortoise and the Hare will never end.

### MORAL:

No force can stop the power of ego,  
unless it squashes it dead.

## The Alternative Cinema Spring 1994: On Narrative Fragmentation and its Multiple Forms

In addition, before selected films there will be several Warner Brothers cartoons (to be announced).

### April 12 The Conformist

Bertolucci's breakthrough film equates the rise and fall of Italian Fascism with the dreadful life of the protagonist for whom conformity becomes an obsession after a traumatic sexual experience in his youth. His most visually satisfying film, it is based on the novel by Alberto Moravia.

Cast: Jean-Louis Trintignant, Stefania Sandrelli, Dominique Sanda, Pierre Clementi. Also showing, prior to our main feature: Anamorphosis, a unique and fascinating animated investigation of the illusionary art of anamorphosis, a method of visual distortion used in 16th and 17th century paintings which plays with the relationship between the eye and what it really sees. (15 minutes) 1970, 108 min., color, Italy. Italian with English subtitles.

### April 19 Poison

Inspired by the writings of Jean Genet, Poison

is a unique and imaginative mixture of innovative and popular film styles. Named best feature film at the Sundance Film Festival and attacked by the American Family Association, it represents a startling, disturbing examination about group think and the psychology of victimization.

Cast: Scott Renderer, James Lyons, Larry Maxwell, Edith Meeks, Susan Gayle Norman. 1990, 95 min., color/b/w, U.S.A. In English.

### April 22 The Last Picture Show

It is the most impressive work by a young American director since Orson Welles' Citizen Kane. Adapted from a novel by Larry McMurtry, the film tells a series of interlocking stories of love and loss as it miraculously recaptures life-styles and attitudes—sexual, social, political—that have vanished from the national consciousness. Behold our farewell to the semester, a most authentic slice of Americana.

Cast: Timothy Bottoms, Jeff Bridges, Cybill Shepherd, Cloris Leachman, Ellen Burstyn. 1971, 118 min., b/w, U.S.A. In English.

*The Press  
would like  
to thank  
the  
Graduate  
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Lounge/  
The Spot.*

# Philosophic Paths of Perception:

## Nadine Robinson and Cassandra St. Louis at the Union

By Rachel S. Wexelbaum

From March 22 to April 7, the Union Gallery displayed the artwork of Nadine Robinson and Cassandra St. Louis, two Stony Brook art majors who have a future.

Nadine Robinson's paintings greet you at the door. A person might call them "signs", as most of them are stencilled texts on enormous canvases. They are products of the "Art=Language" movement, where art reflects investigations of possible relationships between words and images. The "Art=Language" movement occurred in the 1970's in response to Andy Warhol and Marshall MacCluenn, who will go down in art history for his famous statement, "The medium is the message." Artists of the "Art=Language" movement believed that the thinking process and the philosophy behind the art was more important than the actual work itself. The main function of art is to express abstract ideas by using images. Words, too, are symbolic images which express abstract ideas and therefore are suitable building blocks to create art.

From Robinson's seven idea paintings, two capture her ideology most clearly. One is a quote from the German philosopher Hegel, stencilled in bold black block letters on white canvas. It says: "Art no longer counts for us as the highest manner in which truth furnishes itself with existence". This statement is a radical post-Enlightenment concept. Hegel (or Robinson) is saying that in the old days, humans did not have a written language. They had to express themselves first through action, then speech, then drawings on a cave wall. These drawings allowed truth (the story of a hunt or battles with another tribe, for example) to exist for generations to come. Without the story to go with it, however, a

modern audience would only get half of what the artist/historian had recorded. This is why people created written languages and printing presses—to recapture every feeling and event in a compact, easy-to-carry form. Words have now become the highest manner in which truth furnishes itself with existence, thus serving the same function as art ("Truth is beauty, beauty is truth"—Keats, "Ode to a Grecian Urn"). The second painting was an enormous black canvas with a stencilled message in small white letters on the bottom: "I'm just making the last paintings which anyone can make". It just goes to show that a thought is always in the process, never to be seen except in the mind's eye of the artist and the viewer with the help of words.

Cassandra St. Louis, unlike Robinson, needs no words to get her point across. Like Robinson, however, Louis believes that "art is a means of expression and an instrument of self-expression, not an end to be appreciated". Her style is influenced by Dali and other Surrealists. Unlike Surrealists, however, she is not interested in showing the absurdity of the universe but the emotion behind her own life and her connection to nature. Eyes, tears, hands and leaves dominate many of her paintings and sculptures. Many figures are behind bars, and others sit in contemplation, yet none appear isolated.

The eyes look you right in the face as you walk inside. Titled "Self-Portrait", this painting depicts an inside/outside view of the artist. Two dark brown eyes painted across a long canvas reveal a person imprisoned and someone standing defiantly before the world. The eyes weep, and they stand on one side of a river. On the other side of the river a nude woman dwarfed by her surroundings is studying the weeping eyes. An untitled sculpture of a teardrop reveals the same theme. The figure inside the

teardrop is unknown—only its hands can be seen clutching the bars of its prison, but a little person who appears sympathetic and contemplative is close by. It is kneeling before the teardrop, unsure if it wants to join the prisoner or not.

An untitled sculpture of a blue eye weeps tears and leaves. Another painting titled "Don't Cry my Baby" shows a little girl asleep in the middle of a litter-strewn wasteland. She is on top of the Earth, which is weeping or melting. Soon there will be no Earth left and the little girl will have nowhere to sleep. Robinson is not only making a strong pro-environment statement, but she also is showing that there is no separation between herself and Nature. She is so much a part of it that she can weep leaves. The figures in her work are also a part of Nature, painted in Earth tones, naked and free.

The most interesting work was "Self Portrait" or "After Portrait of Old Woman" (painted by Rembrandt). St. Louis painted herself as the old woman in Rembrandt's painting, a bespectacled African-American woman dressed in medieval Dutch clothing. Rembrandt was a renegade artist because he was one of the first European painters to paint the common people and portraits of businessmen as opposed to nobles. If he were in America, Rembrandt would have transcended racism and would paint African-Americans, Indians and whoever else struck him as aesthetic.

Robinson presented an intellectual message while St. Louis provided an emotional one. Both artists, however, communicated their ideas effectively and coherently no matter what medium they used. Of course, that was their intention. This exhibit was a refreshing change from art just created for the aesthetic. Isn't a message presented beautifully more important?

# A Morality Play with Ambience

## Medieval Lit. Class Presents Everyman

By Catherine Krupski

One-pot stew, Irish potatoes, Provencal Tomatoes, assorted home-made breads and cakes, pudding and pies waited patiently on a counter outside Theater One in Staller Center for hungry souls to feast.

This was the intermission of *Everyman*, a play presented by Professor Spector's Medieval Literature class.

The entire production was put on by the class with no help from the Theater Department (i.e. actors); the class broke off into various committees, each student contributing their hidden talents (and connections) to success of the play.

The costumes were furnished by the Costume Committee, some of which came from Professor Spector's office, remnants from plays past.

The cooking committee made food from traditional recipes to give even more ambience to the production and lend spice to the performance.

"It was harder to cook than today's foods," says student Jill Posner, a member of the cooking committee, "it takes much longer. Today's fast food is easier to cook, but back then it was much healthier." She was in a sub-group of the cooking committee responsible for vegetables.

"It took two hours to cook it," she says. "It was really basic, mostly garlic and salt."

Also during the intermission, Professor Spector read Chaucer for the audience in its original form, translating the text as he went. This always makes one marvel at how the language has evolved in to the version we have today.

The actors of the play put on an excellent performance. Due to the length of the part, Everyman was

split by two classmembers. The class also agreed that the part of Everyman didn't have to be portrayed by male actors, considering how the theme is universal and can be applied to both sexes.

Linda Burns was excellent as Everyman in the first



act and Victoria Harkness who played the lead in the second act also put on a good performance. Brett Goldblatt was superb as Death, giving the audience an eerie feeling.

Death approaches Everyman and tells her of her death, which will come soon. She tries to call on the most reliable things in her life and they all forsake her:

Goods, Beauty, Discretion, Strength, and Five Wits.

Since Everyman had satisfied her desire for material things before God, she was considered a sinner. Just before death, Everyman repents all sins with the help of knowledge. He too eventually leaves Everyman. The only one that stays with Everyman to face Death is Good Deeds.

The moral of the play was clear—those things that many hold closest to them in life mean absolutely nothing when the final score is tallied and we must answer to a higher being. It was interesting to see how these things which eventually all leave us as we get older actually leave Everyman.

Professor Spector has put on a play every time he has taught this class, which has been for twenty years. When it came time for the class to decide what play to put on, he was able to help narrow down the selection by offering his many years of experience. The class learned that working with live animals wasn't the best thing and anything with too many scene changes would require too much money, something the class didn't have access to. The play had been held at a church off campus until this semester and the directors arranged for a theater in Staller Center.

After attending one of these plays a few years ago, I was amazed at the students performance, enjoyed the food and swore I would never register for that class.

Many students in the class stumbled upon many of the trial-and-error attempts of working for their various committee. Each one is a group effort and with the failure of one's participation, everyone fails. However, the students put on a great show and offered authentic medieval food. This play, and meal, was enjoyed by all who attended.