

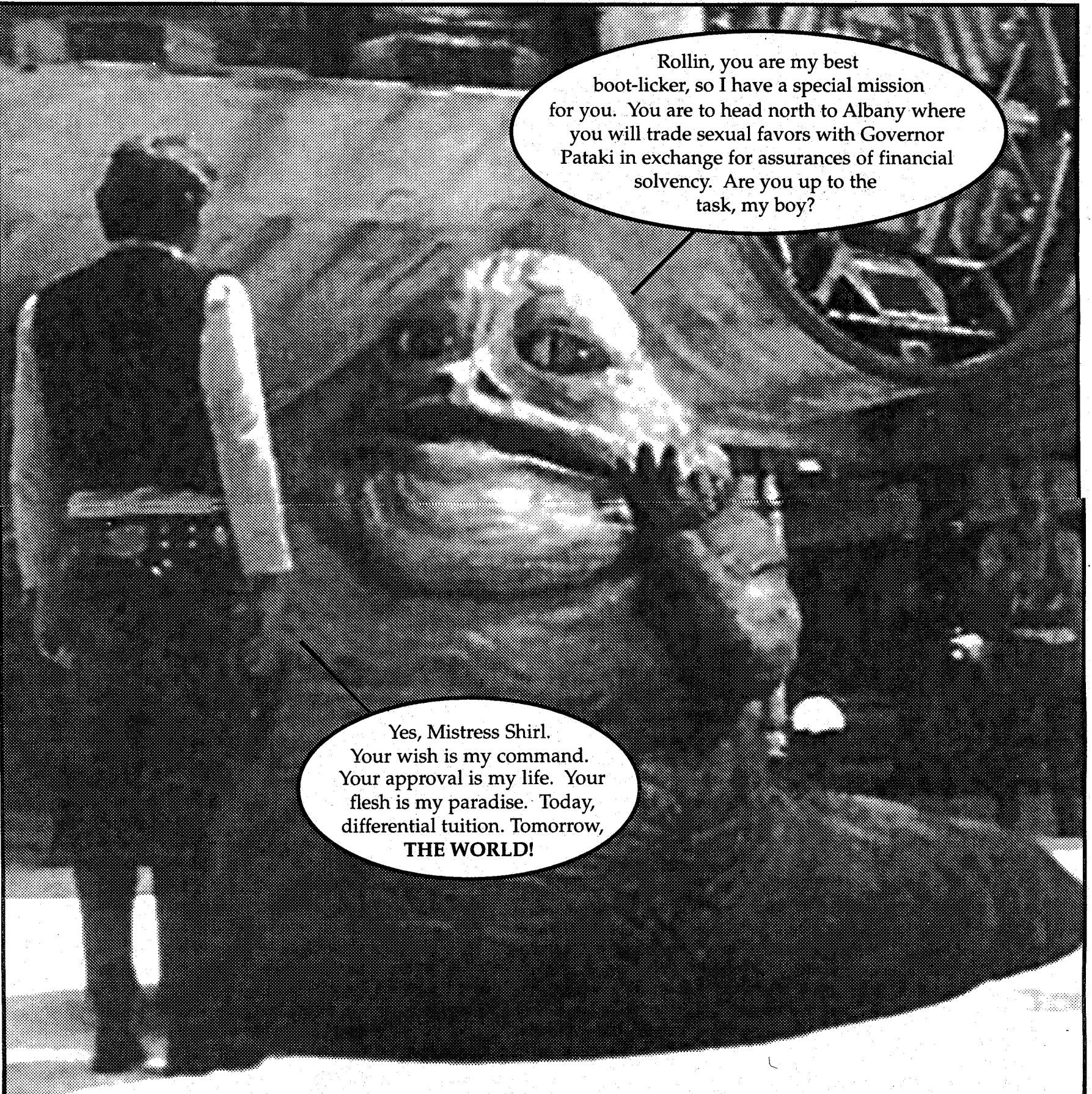
The
Stony
Brook

PRESS

Vol. XVIII No. 10

More Sensitive Than a Testicular Boil

February 4, 1997



Rollin, you are my best boot-licker, so I have a special mission for you. You are to head north to Albany where you will trade sexual favors with Governor Pataki in exchange for assurances of financial solvency. Are you up to the task, my boy?

Yes, Mistress Shirl.
Your wish is my command.
Your approval is my life. Your flesh is my paradise. Today, differential tuition. Tomorrow, THE WORLD!

These Are Not The Leaders
You're Looking For.

MENACE or MEDICINE?

By Nancy B. Regula

Does pot ever make good medicine? The advocates of Proposition 215 seem to think so. On Election Day in California, Proposition 215 was passed, 56 percent to 44. The policy issue behind the campaign was who is in control of America's drug laws, the government or the people. The greater issue though is the challenge to current drug laws. The first step is tolerance to certain uses of drugs in the medical field. The public is being exposed to a more merciful reason to moderate current laws against the use of marijuana.

Medical uses for marijuana seem to be far reaching. Federal drug-enforcement officials believe that using marijuana is useless and perilous. However the effect of marijuana on the body claims otherwise. Researchers have discovered that the active ingredient in cannabis, THC, closely resembles a chemical that the body makes naturally. The brain has receptor sites that can detect the chemical and the sites are located in the region responsible for motor activity, concentration, and short-term memory. Marijuana can disrupt all of these functions if detected by the brain. Now that laws have been passed in certain states which allow for therapeutic use doctors can prescribe marijuana to suffering patients. Some of the people who benefit from the government lift on the medical use of the drug are cancer chemotherapy and AIDS patients. For these people marijuana improves appetite and alleviates vomiting and nausea. Other uses include the relief of muscle spasms associated with epilepsy and multiple sclerosis as well as people suffering from glaucoma.

At the forefront of the campaign for Proposition 215 is billionaire financier and philanthropist George Soros. In America, Soros has attacked the notion that the drug problem can be solved by the courts and cops. Soros condemns the use of drugs in the schools

and in the home but wants the country to allow for medicinal uses of marijuana. He also poses the idea that the country would be better off if drug use was viewed as a medical problem and not a criminal one. Since 1994 Soros has given \$15 million dollars to drug-study programs in the United States and gave almost \$1 million dollars to support Proposition 215 in California and Arizona last year. Soros has also hired theoreticians of the decriminalization movement to staff the foundations he supports. Soros believes that Americans have a totalitarian mentality when it comes to drugs and refuse to believe that drug policy is doing more harm than the drugs themselves by filling prisons with nonviolent users and keeping the drug trade in the criminal underground. Soros hopes that there will be a move towards legalization, starting with making medical marijuana available to the sick.

Despite the passing of the bill in California which allows doctors to prescribe marijuana, drug-enforcement officials are challenging the new initiatives in court and have vowed to punish any doctor who prescribes cannabis to their patients. Such statements work to enrage a politically potent interest group, doctors. Doctors feel that they should defend their right to practice their profession as they see fit. Many feel that the government has no place in the examination room. Actions by the Federal drug-enforcement officials to find and punish any doctors and patients who discuss marijuana as an alternative treatment are threatening to step on First Amendment rights concerning freedom of speech between patients and doctors. Society has long supported privileged communication in certain relationships, such as that between a lawyer and client or a priest and parishioner. Such privacy should also be extended to that between patient and doctor and not have to be jeopardized due to fears by either party.

For years the government has listed marijuana as a

"schedule I" drug, which means that it is considered a substance with no apparent medical use and a high potency for abuse. Current medical research suggests no support for the claim that pot has any use in the alleviation of pain or anxiety but never before has the FDA approved the possibility of testing it. The worries that plague citizens now are not the act of marijuana being provided to people so much as the worry that this will open the door for greater drug use.

And this is exactly what some, but not all, of the backers of these initiatives wanted. A more lenient regulation of laws will lead to more availability and acceptability of marijuana and other drugs.

Barry R. McCaffrey, director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, the drug czar, has publicly warned doctors not to break the federal law by prescribing marijuana. He does not think that it is dangerous for Americans to use marijuana as medicine but he feels that there is no proof that it is any better than already available treatment. He feels that before we go rushing into embracing medicinal use of marijuana we should test out its effectiveness. McCaffrey thinks it is clear that the California proposition and others like it are pushing for the legalization of drugs, masking it in a concern for the patients it proposes to be fighting for. It sends mixed messages to the youth who are using drugs in increasing numbers. Making drugs present in the medical field makes it seem good and decent.

However McCaffrey's statements have prompted a group of California physicians to file suit claiming their rights to advise their patients are being infringed. So the policy issue remains—who is in control of the drug policy, the public voters or the federal government? Certainly public policy should reflect the public's view but poll after poll reveal that no voters want to legalize pot or any other drug. The theory is that medicinal use is a gateway to higher abuses. So the public and policy makers remain confused and the battle continues.

MEDIA INFATUATED WITH MADELEINE ALBRIGHT

By Norman Solomon

Madeleine Albright may have charmed Jesse Helms on her way to Senate confirmation as secretary of state, but she was merely flirting with a powerful lawmaker. Her real political love affair is with the national press corps.

This winter, both Time and Newsweek have described Albright as "media-savvy." She now elicits reverence from many journalists transfixed with her new superstardom as the highest-ranking woman ever in the U.S. government.

These days, old friends on the media mound are pleased to lob slow-pitch questions at Albright—and then lavish praise on her ability to hit them out of the park. It's not too tough to awe journalists who are eager to be impressed.

Before she began her four-year stint as U.N. ambassador in 1993, Albright was a regular analyst for the "MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour" on PBS. Weeks ago, when Bill Clinton named her to be secretary of state, the NewsHour reported with pride: "Her ease in explaining American foreign policy, which President Clinton mentioned in his remarks today, was honed partly on the NewsHour."

Albright provides tasty sound bites for reporters and news consumers who relish glib lines-of-the-day. Taunting Saddam Hussein and Fidel Castro has become one of her specialties. But she never seems to muster any outrage at repressive regimes that the White House looks upon with favor—whether China, Turkey or Saudi Arabia.

Perhaps because she's adept at lacquering her hard-edged rhetoric with a humanitarian sheen,

many liberal commentators express fondness for Albright. In a typical testimonial, columnist Christopher Matthews proclaimed her latest promotion "a tonic to the country's mood."

A lot of pundits have lauded Albright's ascension as a breakthrough for feminism. In the same spirit, Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California asserted that Albright's rise to secretary of state "will open up new doors for women—not just in this country but around the world."

Top officials of the National Organization for Women joined with leaders of other influential feminist groups last fall to pressure the White House on behalf of Albright—and then claimed credit as soon as she got the president's nod. This is the kind of narrow, shortsighted "feminism" that confuses symbols with substance.

Across the globe, poverty is especially devastating for women. Meanwhile—now more than ever—Albright is implementing the edicts of an administration that has put harsh economic agendas at the center of its foreign policy. In practice, that has meant pushing and cajoling Third World governments to cut public-sector subsidies for food, health care, housing and education.

These "reform" measures are being promoted by the State Department as well as global agencies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Their prescriptions are popular with investors. But poor women and families the world over are bearing the brunt of policies that slash at already-threadbare safety nets.

"We are not a charity or a fire department," Albright said recently. "We will defend firmly our

own vital interests." Left unexamined by news coverage are crucial questions: Whose "vital interests" is she talking about? Who's being protected—Wall Street or most Americans?

Neither mainstream journalists nor Albright's feminist boosters seem interested in exploring who profits and who suffers as this nation's diplomatic bandwagon rolls forward. When it comes to issues that many liberals and women's groups profess to be passionate about, Albright is well situated to get a free ride.

More curious observers might wonder why key members of former President Reagan's foreign-policy team—such as U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and Secretary of State George Shultz—have gone out of their way to praise Albright as a fine choice to run the State Department.

Albright is quite good at playing to the media—and she is acutely aware of their importance. During her tenure as U.N. ambassador, she referred to CNN as "the 16th member of the Security Council." The day after being sworn in as secretary of state, she appeared as a guest on CNN's "Larry King Live."

Madeleine Albright may be media-savvy. But, under the circumstances, that's hardly cause for celebration.

Norman Solomon is a syndicated columnist and co-author (with Jeff Cohen) of "Through the Media Looking Glass: Decoding Bias and Blather in the News."

DISTURBING THE PEACE

By Chris Sorochin

"I can't go around furnishing brains to the police; it is not to be expected."

-Mark Twain,

"My First Lie and How I Got Out of It."

There I was, at my habitual Port Jeff watering hole, trying desperately to unwind after a long, frustrating day of desk-jockey servitude. The man next to me was engrossed in the college basketball game on TV, saying he was a coach himself for a local youth group. Having a finely-tuned writer's sensibilities for character detail, I sized him up as the sort of stolid, civically-involved, higher-wage, basically conservative working man that's very common in these parts. At various intervals, his 14-year-old son and his equally pubescent friend came in and out, waiting for the game to end and a lift home.

The two kids aren't supposed to be in the bar, so dad gives them the keys to the car so they can wait someplace warm.

A bit later, who should stroll in but one of Port Jefferson's Code Enforcement officers. The Incorporated Village of Port Jefferson, in its infinite wisdom and paranoia, maintains an overstaffed and overzealous force of SCPD-wannabes. Their main function is to harass tourists for trivial offenses and draw some extra revenue into village coffers by writing tickets for said piddling transgressions.

I guess that whatever comic opera high command satisfies its lust for arbitrary power in this way has decided to utilize the winter off-seasons as an opportunity for the troops to practice maneuvers on the locals. Barney Fife requests that the man next to me accompany him outside. The guy doesn't ask why, which strikes me as a mistake (I'm against unquestioning obedience to authority, in case you haven't noticed). Another demonstration of how organized athletics can sap the spirit of independent thought.

In the absence of a video camera -isn't it just amazing how technology has revolutionized law enforcement- my friend "Nefertiti" (not her real name), who hap-

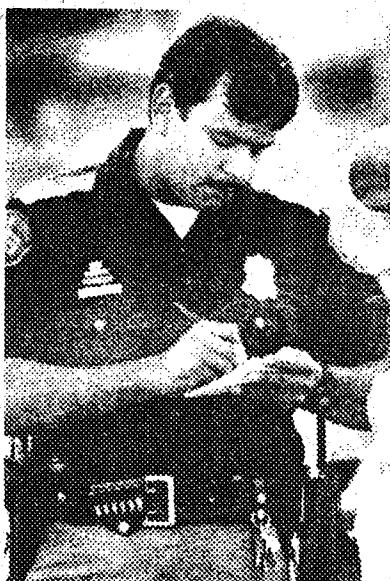
pens to be employed at the drinking establishment where this psychodrama is unfolding, goes along to act as a witness and to scavenge any stray bits of gossip-worthy material that the principal players may miss.

What happened was this: the two kids, being 14, had proceeded to "crank the tunes, dude" and put on the headlights. They were interfering with the faux-Victorian tranquility that Port Jeff strives for. It also seems that it's a violation of some obscure motor vehicles statute to have the car running and nobody in it with a license.

So what does Officer Einstein do? The sensible course of action would have been to explain to the young men, in a friendly and polite manner, that they were in violation and ask them to kindly turn off the car or he'd be forced to write them a costly summons. This approach is also good for community relations: potentially delinquent youth would have an example of law enforcement personnel as reasonable human beings rather than authoritarian dickheads.

In contrast, our glorified hall monitor radioed for reinforcements so that there was a grand total of SEVEN officers. That's right, SEVEN and five police cars (cue up "Alice's Restaurant") to confront two teenagers with a loud radio and a CYO basketball coach. I don't mean to read anything too sinister into this. It was a dreary winter evening and they all flocked to where whatever lackluster excitement was going down. They really should get out more often. It kinda makes you wonder what sort of social pool they recruit these guys from.

Anyway, the father is advised to "restrain" the youngsters and take them home in a cab, no less, because he's been drinking. He's not trashed or anything and the rent-a-cops don't have a breathalyzer, although I'm sure they'd dearly love one. But I guess they could always lie in wait for him and then rat him out to their big brothers on the Suffolk County force, so he's obliged to hang out for another hour until it's "safe" to venture out.



What was really spooky about this was that he was actually grateful to the wretches for not giving him a ticket. When his kid remarked, "That cop was an ass," he told him to shut up. This impresses me as an unwise parenting choice. The cop was an ass and it really undermines credibility to insist that kids refer to up as down and proclaim that 2+2=5.

Nefertiti added the crowning touch of surrealism by telling the man, "This is why you should vote Democratic." She must be referring to the Democratic Party of Egypt; surely she can't mean the Clintonoid pod-people who are busily making every conceivable effort (and some that aren't) to out-Republican the Republicans in hastening the end of the sacred right to go about one's affairs free from official harassment. I must be "soft on crime" to even entertain the notion that a person should be able to have a couple of drinks without being given a temperance lecture by some twit in a blue shirt.

On a subsequent trip to the Metropolitan Museum to view sarcophagi and mummified organs, I ask Nefertiti if the "victim" could retaliate by not giving Code Enforcement freebies for their Fourth of July weenie roast. "Only if he's able to make sure he never doubles parks or violates even the tiniest rule ever again."

Things could always be worse, however. At least everyone in my little anecdote is white and middle-class and thus not

marked for systematic and regular police harassment. The street outside my apartment building is a favorite place for Suffolk County pull-overs. They show up five cars at a time, lights flashing all over hell at all hours of the night. They stay a good long time and, because it's a low-income area, no one complained. I'd like to see them try that crap in Old Field or some other such enclave.

Just at 5:15 this morning, they were tormenting some middle-aged African-American man driving a jeep, probably on suspicion of DWB (Driving While Black). It is a fairly well-documented fact (someone in California videotaped the highway patrol and was predictably hounded for his efforts) that black people get special attention from the minions of the law, particularly if they happen to be driving something judged inappropriate for their ethnic group. Maybe when more of "us" have had experiences similar to what "they" undergo, we'll have what is sorely needed in our country: greater civilian control of police forces, large and small.



EDITORIALS

A TALE OF MONOPOLIES AND TOO LONG LINES

A few days ago, while standing on line in the Union Deli, it occurred to us that the lines for McDonald's in post-communist Russia were probably shorter than those suffered through at the Union Deli.

Given the testimony of random students on campus, we feel it is safe to assert that many students on campus would appreciate a part time job. Why then, is the Union Deli constantly understaffed?

More than once last week we saw a Deli manager take the helm at the cash register only for her to announce that her particular register would only accept Advantage cards, thus leaving cash paying students miffed, and on a much longer line than meal card plan holders.

These are the type of conditions that usually lead to class action lawsuits involving charges of monopoly, but such charges would never be feasible on a college campus, where a food provider is specifically contracted to create the type of monopoly conditions most communities rail

against in a court of law. We cannot blame Aramark wholly for failing to meet our needs, what we must do is examine the collegiate tradition of providing little, if any competition, on the traditionally hermenutic college campus.

Many campuses, have, of late, installed what could be likened to malls in their student Unions. Shirley has similar plans for us in the form of the campus village and as of yet has met little resistance in her ongoing sojourn to sell USB to the highest bidder. Perhaps it is truth they speak when we hear that the cost of University education is in constant rise while University tuition creeps to an all-time low-then again maybe its just opportunistic bullshit. Either way, you would think more students would be dismayed by the thought that their learning center is slowly being morphed into nothing more than an extension of the Smithhaven Mall, but apparently that is not the pressing subject during rush week.

THE BACK-STABBING TEXAN

Your Administration has betrayed you. University President Shirley Strum Kenny's ongoing bid to change Stony Brook into a fund-raising elite college is proceeding as scheduled. After having fought for differential tuition, our President consistently portrays an amicable image of her relationship with those powers that be (Pataki, D'Amato, Bruno, DeRussy, LaValle, et. al.) at the state level who are seeking to turn the SUNY system into a rich white suburban kids Ivy-league wannabe enclave.

Only those able to afford private school tuition rates will be able to attend Stony Brook and many of the other large SUNY schools. Pataki's plans for SUNY lie along the design specifications laid out by the conservative Christian grass-roots action committee known as *Change New York*. The conservative takeover of a once-proud and rational state has been given a hearty helping hand by a President's team that has forgotten who it is supposed to represent.

President Kenny has the option of forming a tight student-Administration coalition against Pataki's

dismantling plans, yet she and her robber barons in tow choose to shake hands and take promo shot after promo shot with those whom she should take every public opportunity to discredit and politically destroy.

Yet she kisses ass.

President Kenny and Differential Tuition-advocate/ Provost Rollin Richmond DO NOT REPRESENT YOUR INTERESTS. Not here, not in Albany.

The Thursday, January, 30 cover of *The Statesman* featured the following highlighted quote by an unidentified student: "[Kenny] is up against a lot of opposition and yet she stands up for our rights."

That students on this campus can still believe this shows that Kenny's media-outlet mastery is worth every effort she and her spin-doctor associates make.

Kenny and Richmond have publicly acknowledged the fact that differential tuition will serve to homogenize Stony Brook.

That's just the milky-white way she'd like it.

Inspired? Deflated? Intrigued? Perturbed?

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We accept commentary and letters to the editor either typed or via email.

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(A NICE PLACE TO VISIT, BUT WHO WOULD WANT TO LIVE THERE?)

By Philip Russo Jr. (The Fish)

It was a bright and sunny day about two weeks ago when I first came across the flier for The Stony Brook Press open house. The flier was a beautiful shade of pink and the greeting on it was obviously written by a very poetic soul. The flier invited me to join the hearty bunch of rascals who produce The Press on a bi-monthly basis, for "Sparkling Conversation". So on the day of the open house, I awoke at 6:30 AM with a spring in my step and a smile on my lips. I quickly opened my closet and found my best suit. (Until then I had only dared to wear such an outfit to church, for fear of the other boys and girls making fun of me.) I then dressed with the care and fervor of new lovers exploring each other's bodies. When I arrived at The Press at 8:00 AM, I realized that I had about five hours to kill. So I began, as any good student of this fine institution would, cleaning the windows of The Press office in preparation of the arrival of the God-like men and women who make up the editorial staff. And then I saw him, standing on the horizon like a beacon of hope in a darkened sea, the Reverend David M. Ewalt. He soon began to walk towards me, slowly and majestically, his movements as fluid as those of a beautiful swan. He

looked rather dismayed at the awful job I was doing on the windows, and then invited me, a lowly serf, into the spacious and impeccably clean Press office. After small talk over tea and biscuits, the others began to arrive. While I was sitting there watching the distinguished men and women of The Press stroll in, all I could think of was that I was in The Press office. Eating! For those of you who do not understand why I was in such awe, I will explain. Ever since I have come to this college, I have looked upon The Press as the only bastion of morality and good taste on this campus. So sitting on the plush, velvet-covered couch, in the office of my obsession, was the most exciting thing that I had ever experienced in my life. All of the members of The Press were soon present, and silently sat hands folded on their laps, until a young man who introduced himself as Sir John Giuffo announced that we were to begin this open house with a singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner". Next, the Business Manager, Martha Chemas, raised the flag of the United States to full mast and we began to sing. Led by the beautiful and talented Photo Editor, Jeanne Nolan, we sang until I openly wept on the shoulder of my friend, Michael Kramer. After the song, we all sat and pamphlets were distributed so that the new people could fol-

low along. Many people spoke that day, on a number of important topics such as womyn's issues, and the role of the Federal Government in our lives. But the most rousing speech was given by a man of great respect on this campus, Features Editor Lowell Yaeger. Mr. Yaeger spoke on the importance of the media on a college campus, and throughout the world. "A man," he said, "must perform his duties as a reporter diligently, without any misrepresentation of the truth." Lowell then went on to say that "a man is only great as long as the people trust him to tell the truth." I sat silently as words such as "responsibility" and "honesty" were given new meanings in my mind. I do not believe that I will ever forget that speech for as long as I live. When the speech was over, I once again wept openly, and I had to stand up and ask to be excused. I walked outside and could hear loud rock and roll music blasting from an office a few doors down, and decided I would rather cry in the company of friends than have my senses assaulted in such a crass manner. At the end of the open house, we were all invited to partake in some more tea and biscuits and were officially welcome as part of The Stony Brook Press family. It is unfortunate that I will now have to kill David Ewalt, so I can assume the position of Executive Editor.

MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR JESTER

By El Paisa

A tyrant in a far away land holds his people under an iron fist. Dissension from the despot's wishes is often fatal and all subjects are expected to sing and smile as they toil from day to day.

Our tyrant is specifically evil in that he holds his country to be a giant toy out of which he draws great enjoyment, often from their suffering. The king's puppets infiltrate the local towns in search of acts that might entertain the king. Oppressed peasants use song, dance, and comedy to forget their struggle and vent their frustrations. The most talented of these are selected to perform before the king, his family, and friends. If all goes well and the peasants please the king, they are showered with wealth and popularity beyond their dreams. On-stage the performer is lauded by his ruler, offstage he is once again one of the masses. To his people, the entertainer is a hero, a superstar, he has gotten "in" and stands as the hope for the eastern people. Along with these shows of stage and field, the king gives large dinners, after which the most talented of the peasant fighters beat each other, again if they please wealth and recognition are their reward.

Our tyrant is not only evil but deviously intelligent as well. You ask why does he give wealth and recognition to the people he hopes to control? The answer is simple; the man empowers those that pose no threat to his authority. The common, the ordinary, the lay man, the base of the ideological chain receive the wealth and popularity. Peasants too concerned with their survival for too long, peasants who have been forced to cheat, lie, and steal in order to eat, it is to these men and women that wealth and power is relegated. And here lies the tyrant's demented sense of humor, he gives the peasants a possible relief from his tyranny only to see it squandered on useless and impotent luxuries. Great feasts, fancy carriages, exuberant robes, and jewelry are all bought by the performer in order to satiate his two primal drives; one is to fill the absence of these goods in his previous life, and secondly he is driven to convince his people and himself that the robes and carriages will in fact make him equal to the ruler. Because the people want him to be accepted, because they need him to be their hope, they ignore the fact that their hero is only accepted when he performs, when he entertains, when acts to please.

Now this isn't to say that the people of our distant city lack a rebellious spirit, nor effective venues through which to impose it, but as mentioned their tyrant is clever, has many agents, and is quick to crush any dissent. The tyrant's job is made easier for when a rebellious man or group is crushed the peasants shed a tear, and continue to be blinded from action by the glimmering gold on the king jester's coat. On this they focus, captivated, they provide no threat to the king nor support to their cause, they remain a rich source of entertainment and humor, a sad black joke.

Shaq, Mike, Alomar, Bonilla, and all the funny men and actors, charity is bullshit, wake up and uplift the people. Be specific, you ask? A multimillion dollar Asian center will soon be built on-campus. Why not a Black center? Why not a Latino center? Why not both? Ask yourself when you cheer, laugh, or buy a movie ticket. Overwhelmed by the scraps of humanity bestowed on our brothers and sisters in the entertainment industry we lose vision, we lose courage, we stagnate and lose.

HELMS-BURTON CONTINUED

By El Paisa

Recently President Clinton delayed the passing of an article in the Helms-Burton act which allowed for litigation against foreign companies that choose to invest in Cuba. For a brief second, the thought passed through my head that perhaps Bill had taken a stand on something. I was wrong. The news of the President's six month postponement of the law came to me through National Public Radio, which is usually a reliable source of objective news coverage. As the report continued, I found that I was to be disappointed with N.P.R., as well.

In retrospect, I see that I've been naive to assume that thirty-some odd years of intentional misleading of the American people could be surmounted by facts and common sense. The radio broadcast reported the President's reason for postponing the law as being an increase in international pressure for human rights in Cuba. It is here where my problem begins: how is it that a country who trades heavily with nations like China, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Peru, and gives full support to said governments has the audacity to lead, rather force, a crusade for human rights? We all know how humane Chinese officials are to students protesting for human rights — anyone remember the tanks, guns, and massacres? Those friendly oil-producing states are indeed the bastions of human rights when they equate females to property. And Peru? It happens that those angry guerrillas in the Japanese ambassador's house seem to have a gripe with the government encasing prisoners in perpetual solitary confinement. This means no light, no visitors, a living tomb if you will, unless you chose to escape it all by bashing your skull into the concrete as several prisoners have done — sounds pretty humane!

To be clear, human rights abuses in other countries neither deny nor excuse their existence in Cuba. Back to the news report — in the interest of validity an N.P.R. correspondent reports from Cuba with tales of no food, tractors but no gasoline, and a country forced into the middle ages. By the end of the report, we are left with a picture of a barren land with starving people, and implicitly a rich and gluttonous dictator. What the reporter fails to mention is that there is a lack of everything in Cuba, in large part because the U.S. has used all of its global might to isolate the island from the rest of the world. How can a country run farms if it is kept from trading foodstuffs for gas, how can an economy grow if all markets are closed and only a few daring countries will trade with Cuba?

The embargo is meant to starve the Cuban people into revolting, it is condemned by nations throughout the world. It does not promote human rights in Cuba but rather keeps medicine and food from the people. It is no more complicated than this, the genuine concern for "human rights" is a farce, a smokescreen used to impose right-wing ideology on a sovereign nation. Why not take all of the naval and marine forces blockading Cuba and use them to carry the warehoused surplus of American grain to the starving Haitians, the starving elderly in the inner cities who survive on catfood, rebuild the Mississippi delta, but that would mean taking a stand and using common sense, and expecting this from politicians is naive, expecting it from the American people is hopeless.

COINTELPRO

THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY: "GET RID OF BOBBY SEALE!"

By Boyd McCamish

"Predictably, the most serious of the FBI's disruption programs [between 1956 and 1971] were those directed at "Black Nationalists." These programs ...initiated under liberal democratic administrations, had as their purpose "to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of black nationalist, hate-type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesman, membership, and supporters" ...Agents were instructed to "inspire action in instances where circumstances warrant." Specifically, they were to undertake actions to discredit these groups both within the "responsible Negro community" and to "Negro radicals," and also "to the white community, both the responsible community and to 'liberals' who have vestiges of sympathy for militant black nationalists."

-Noam Chomsky

Conscious disruptive campaigns by the federal government against black organizations can be traced back to 1917. In dealing with what was termed "red summer", Hoover sought to incorporate his actions against communist elements to include blacks. In this case however, blacks need only attempt to organize themselves for the purposes of collective bargaining in order to qualify for special prosecution. Marcus Garvey was a man who took it one step further, he attempted to organize blacks to better their position in society. He became one of the most wanted men of his time, his crime, at least on paper was a fabricated fraud charge, he served five years. After serving in World War I many blacks returned angry at the fact that their nation continued to disregard them after their service. As a result, many lively and thought provoking black journals began to surface. Many of which were militant in content. Garvey began what was known as the "New Negro" movement; its

objective was to raise black political awareness and to overturn white status quo supremacy. Garvey's organization was known as the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). After Garvey's arrest the UNIA was split apart. With such incredible power and overall authority, Hoover committed incredible

The Panthers formed in October 1966 under the leadership of Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. Despite the media portrayal as actively violent and militant in nature they were actually a community based organization. The now infamous 'ten-point plan' which the Panthers attempted to implement was by all interpretations, well within the bounds of the constitution and totally lawful.

Hoover couldn't care less and was quoted by the New York Times as saying the Panthers were "the greatest (single) threat to the internal security of the country."

The Panthers sought to organize what they called the "lumpen". Bringing together gang-members, prostitutes and the underclass, Seale and his cohorts wanted to organize the unorganized and start a new political movement. The Black Panther Party stood for community control of politics and economic self-sufficiency. The FBI saw the ability the Panther members had of forming coalitions and increase its membership. In just two years the Panthers

had 5,000 members and an even larger coalition organization.

Hoover set out, as he had so many times before to successfully break up the organization by creating dissent and suspicion amongst the membership. By pitting Seale against members of the United Slaves US, the FBI successfully instigated murders, divorces and overall confusion.

One incident involved setting up a fake mishap whereby civil rights leader Stokley Carmichael would be thought to be a CIA operative. Also, the FBI produced cartoons, which it sent to both the US and the BPP which depicted either party wanting to kill leaders of the other. The FBI constantly tried to take away popular support by claiming that the BPP was an anti-Semitic organization. Thus, upsetting and unnerving many Jewish supporters.

Despite the gun-toting pictures of BPP members and the false charges, the BPP tried to do what others only dream of; create a popular political movement for the most downtrodden. Apparently America isn't ready for that.



Martin Luther King marches with Floyd McKissick and Stokely Carmichael (right)

time and effort to see that "blacks stayed in their place." His actions were known to every administration in his time. He also had Congresses' full approval.

The great depression brought about such incredible economic misery that few groups were able to successfully campaign and form memberships. However, from 1941 to 1966 the FBI conducted a massive campaign against the NAACP. Remarkably, despite using 151 informants and compiling over 3,000 wiretaps no charges were ever filed. The FBI lobbied hard to have the entire membership of the NAACP listed as communists. Only a series of Supreme Court rulings kept them from having to list themselves with the federal government as 'subversives'. After effectively suppressing the NAACP, the FBI turned to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference SCLC. The bureau did everything it could to distract and complicate the civil rights movement. Out in the west, away from the southern civil rights movement something was brewing. Unaware at the time, Hoover would soon turn his energy and resources against the Black Panther Party BPP.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH CALENDAR:

(Schedule covers until *The Press'* next publication)

Wednesday, February 5th:
Friday, February 7th:
Sunday, February 9th:
Monday, February 10th:
Tuesday, February 11th:
Wednesday, February 12th:
Thursday, February 13th:
Friday, February 14th:
Saturday, February 15th:
Tuesday, February 18th:

Discussion: "African's role in the development of American Society." Uniti Cultural Center (Lower Level, Roth Cafeteria), 8:00 p.m.
"Get On The Bus," a Spike Lee joint. Staller Center Main Stage, 9:00 p.m. \$3 Students, \$4 Non-Catholic Mass featuring the USB Gospel Choir. Peace Studies Center in Old Chemistry, 5 p.m.
Concert: "Stolen Bones: African Influence on American Music." Langmuir Fireside Lounge, 9:00 p.m.
Art Exhibition: "Brave New World." University Affairs Gallery - Reception in Administration, Room 230. 4:00-5:00 p.m.
"Black Love Poems and Letters from a Rock Against the Wind." Poetry Center, Humanities 195, 7:00 p.m.
Art Exhibition: "Reflections," an exhibition of Robin Holder prints. SB Union Art Gallery
"In The Mood," a celebration of Black Love with poetry, jazz and more. End of The Bridge, 9:00 p.m.
Dance Performance, Uniti Cultural Center. 8:00 p.m.
Discussion: "What You Should Know About Affirmative Action." Whitman College main lounge, 8:30 p.m.

"ALL POWER TO ALL THE PEOPLE"

By David M. Ewalt

In the fall of 1966, two young, Black college students sat in an Oakland apartment trying to think up a name for their new political organization. The two radicals, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, were tired of the ineffectual, all-talk organizations that dominated the scene. Newton and Seale were enraged and fed up; they wanted a movement that would create change and promote human liberty, that would fight for the civil rights of African-Americans specifically, but promote the interests of all humankind.

To achieve this goal, Seale, Newton, and several of their friends had created a new group based on a ten-point platform and program; an agenda of social goals and demands for their Constitutional rights. It was a cohesive mission, led by strong and committed individuals, but there was still the problem of a name.

But then, while flipping through a pile of the many social and cultural periodicals they subscribed to, Seale stopped on a pamphlet from the Lawrence County Freedom Organization, a civil rights group in Mississippi. Their letterhead featured a drawing of a black panther, meant as a counterpoint to the rooster logo of a white-supremacist group based in the same area. Seale and Newton pondered the implications of the panther; when backed into a corner, they thought, a panther will try to go left to escape. If it's blocked, it'll try going to the right... and then if it finds it can't get away, eventually the panther will strike.

The two revolutionaries saw this as an allegory for the

struggle for Black civil rights throughout American history. They'd tried democracy, peaceful protest, and non-violence, and had been met with police dogs, tear gas, and gunfire. Now was the time for them to defend themselves.

And so the Black Panther Party was born.

The Panthers first came to prominence with their "Police Patrols." During these patrols, they would follow and observe police officers to make sure they weren't abusing their powers. The Panthers also carried loaded weapons along with them, ready to defend themselves or others should the police decide to do something stupid. Newton had practically memorized the California gun laws, and they operated entirely within legal boundaries -- carrying loaded shotguns and pistols to defend themselves, but never pointing them at someone or starting a fight.

The presence of these armed revolutionaries attracted a great deal of attention, which was, in fact, one of their goals. By making their public presence known, the Panthers were able to attract new members and increase their political power, organizing the "political-electoral machine."

Over the next few years, the party grew and grew, eventually encompassing more than 5000 members in forty-five cities. They organized and contributed to the community, providing free breakfasts daily to more than 250,000 kids before school, opening preventative medical clinics and

testing over a million African-Americans for sickle-cell anemia. Today, they remain mostly a historical memory, not an active political force. The members of the Panthers, however, are far from inactive, and on February 5th Bobby Seale came to Stony Brook to prove just that.

Seale is now the head of "REACH," an organization which promotes self-reliance and community activism. In a speech sponsored by the Minority Planning Board, Seale spoke about how today's students can get involved in the continuing struggle for civil rights and human liberty.

Seale addressed an enraptured crowd for over two hours, explaining how our society's revolutionary elements need to form coalitions and pursue common goals. He spoke on current African-American movements and African Nationalism, saying, "I believe in Black Unity, but only as a catalyst to unify this world." He also said that the perception that all White people are the enemy is "xenophobic bullshit"; and that all groups need to work together, to obtain "all power, for all the people." The government and popular historians have often pigeonholed the Panthers as a violent "bunch of hoodlums," but Seale proved they were much more than that, that their goals were of unity and the common good. "It's about human liberation," he said.

Bobby Seale now has a book, "Seize The Time," out in stores. It's a history of the Panthers and an exposition of his views, and should be a fascinating read. He's also working on a movie version of the book, to counteract the "complete bullshit" of the recent movie "Panther." He's also actively promoting his website (www.bobbyseale.com) and is a fervent promoter of using new technologies to organize and liberate.

If you're interested in civil rights, revolutionary movements, or anything at all progressive or radical, you should know Bobby Seale. He's a man of great vision, who helped bring about great change in the past, and is still working for the future.



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CLIP AND SAVE THIS AD

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Contract Meeting for T.A.s and G.A.s

By Scott West

The Graduate Student Employees Union has won its second contract and its members are invited to learn more about how the changes will affect them.

Teaching Assistants and Graduate Assistants are invited to meet in Javits Lecture Hall 109 this Thursday, February 6, at 7 PM to discuss the workplace changes in the GSEU's second contract. GSEU members will have the opportunity to vote by mail-in ballot on the new contract.

Present at the meeting will be Kathleen Sims president of the GSEU and Joy Mahabir, Executive Committee representative and chair of the Stony Brook GSEU Steering Committee. Sims is a graduate English student at SUNY Albany. Joy Mahabir is a doctoral student and former steward in the English department at Stony Brook.

T.A.s and G.A.s, who have signed union membership in the past, have already received a ballot with a contract summary at their departmental addresses. Ballots are due into the GSEU Albany office by the end of the day on February 21.

All T.As and G.A.s will benefit by the changes in the new contract, but only those who have signed a union membership card are full members of the union. Full members have the right to vote in union elections, including contract ratifications, and to run for union officer positions.

Extra membership cards and ballots will be available at the February 6 meeting. Departmental stewards also have membership cards as does the GSEU office in SBS 404N.

The GSEU was formed to fight the exploitation of graduate student workers, who often worked without adequate health insurance or rights to due process on the job. SUNY resisted for 15 years, but in 1992 T.A.s and G.A.s were finally permitted to hold a certification election. Graduate employees voted 6-1 in favor of joining the GSEU. GSEU members endorsed their first contract with the state of New York six months later.

That first contract expired in June 1995. Since then, representatives from each of the SUNY centers have negotiated in Albany with representatives of SUNY and the Governor's Office of Employee Relations. Negotiations were finally concluded at just after midnight on January 17, 1997. Over the nineteen months of contract negotiations negotiators from Stony Brook have included Casmir Adler-Ivanbrook and Charles Wright, of the philosophy department, and Leonard Finn, of the English department.

This contract currently before the GSEU membership improves on the first in the primary areas of health care, grievance procedure and wages.

In the old contract, the campus infirmary was the sole authorized health care gatekeeper. Now, health insurance is greatly improved by offering a choice of primary care physician. Pharmaceutical benefits will double to \$1200.

Full coverage for doctor visits will increase from 10 to 15 per year, with 80% coverage for further visits beyond a \$100 deductible. Other improvements include better coverage for diagnostic tests. A statewide joint labor/management committee on health care will be established in response to the frequent disputes over coverage and care.

The grievance procedure, which gives the membership the right to contest certain on the job situations has been expanded.

Wages for T.A.s and G.A.s have been stagnant for years. Following the successful completion of ratification, T.A.s and G.A.s will receive \$275 bonus this semester. In the Spring of 1998, another \$350 lump sum bonus will be given, along with a 3.5% wage increase. A second 3.5% wage increase will follow in the Spring of 1999.

GSEU Stony Brook staff made a trip Friday January 31 to brief Teaching Assistants at the Brooklyn Health Science Center on the new contract. About 100 GSEU members work in labs on the SUNY Brooklyn campus, making it the largest concentration of GSEU members outside a SUNY center.

GSEU is a local of the Communication Workers of America and represents nearly 4,000 Teaching and Graduate assistants statewide. There are approximately 850 T.As and G.A.s at SUNY Stony Brook.

The GSEU can be reached at 2-7729 or in SBS 404N. Office Hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 10-1 PM.

Che Spot

Graduate Student Lounge

Photo: Man Ray, 1931

Open Thursday through Saturday with live music

<i>21 and Over, ID Required</i>	<i>February 6th Free Association 7th The Reckoning 13th The Drens 14th Clocktower</i>	<i>Located in the Genny Brice Theater, Roosevelt Quad</i>
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You are cordially invited to an evening of elegance...
The event of 1997

*The Black History Month
Semi-Formal*

Saturday, February 22nd, 1997

*In the Student Union Ballroom
From 5:30 pm - 2:00 am*

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Tickets: \$12 w/SBID, \$15 w/out, \$15 Faculty/Staff

The catering will be provided by:

Copeland's

Keynote Speaker: Lauren Niles

Music by: DJ Kulcha

Dinner will only be served between 7:00 and 9:00 pm

Tori Stands in the RAINN

By Jessica Lamantia

In 1992, Tori Amos released her stunningly cathartic and beautiful collection of songs, *Little Earthquakes* (Atlantic). She addressed a myriad of extremely personal subjects, perhaps none more so than in "Me And A Gun", an acappella retelling of her own rape experience when she was in her early twenties. If one song, more than any other, touched a nerve, it was that. As a result, Amos began getting contacted by scores of women who had suffered a similar calamity. Her pre and post-concert meet-and-greets turned into mini-therapy sessions where dozens of fans per show confessed their own violent encounters. Tori offered what she could — a plethora of hugs and heart-to-heart talks that lasted into the wee morning hours.

Realizing that more was needed, Tori created RAINN (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network) in 1994 with grants from The Atlantic Group and Warner Music Group. The hotline was a logical extension of Tori's own self-healing. The trauma of rape and the reclaiming of your soul is the ultimate goal — making a phone call is the first step in this process. In cooperation with more than 600 rape crisis centers, RAINN provides free, confidential counseling and support 24 hours a day. Since its creation, the hotline has



Tori Amos, founder of RAINN

helped more than 110,000 sexual assault survivors.

I called the RAINN hotline to see how it works. You are initially met with an electronic voice that allows you to: a) speak with a counselor; b) get additional information, make a donation, or order a t-shirt; or c) speak with their business office. I pressed one and was immediately connected with a local rape crisis center on the Island, located in Hauppauge. I spoke with a woman named Barbara who said that since RAINN's 24 hour hotline has been available to the public, a significant increase in phone calls to their center has been noticed. At this particular center, the counseling positions are paid, but they are constantly looking for volunteers. The volunteer work would encompass everything from clerical worker to actual field work where you would go out into the community to speak or be dispatched to local hospital emergency rooms to comfort victims of rape and/or domestic violence.

I also spoke with the hotline number provided in the campus directory — the Response Hotline. Their premise is that if someone's in emotional pain, they usually wait until it's unbearable to reach out. So what this hotline does is called crisis intervention communication — where one person reflects or mirrors their own feelings in order to get to the heart of the problem. This hotline is open to anyone experiencing problems — not exclusively rape victims. The counselor I spoke with at this number, Arlene, said it was "vital to create a comfort-zone" and let the caller know they are completely accepted and

understood. The Response Hotline provides a tremendous service to the campus community as well as to Suffolk County as a whole. They recruit volunteers from campus to be trained four times a year, their most recent training ending approximately two weekends ago. They are not pushy and won't force you to talk about things you're not comfortable with. They are more concerned about your emotional health and well-being first and foremost, above any kind of legal action.

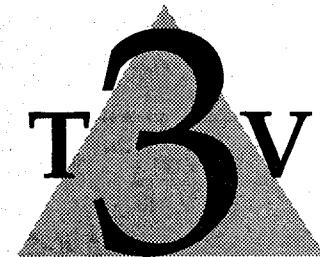
Tori understood that not many people would want to come forward to the police to report the rape. In fact, statistics show that one in four college women have experienced rape or attempted rape since age 14, and over half of these go unreported. In her case, Tori never brought charges. She's stated in many candid interviews that "if you come forward you're nailed... the law isn't supportive of violent situations against women... c'mon, I was a nightclub singer, I dressed sexy. Let's not kid each other, my case was closed before it began."

Although she blamed herself for a while, Amos has committed herself to becoming the Phoenix out of the ashes. Part of this entails getting up night after night in front of audiences to sing what has become her most haunting anthem. There is a place she attempts to get to whenever she sings "Me And A Gun" — sometimes she gets there, sometimes she doesn't. But her quest to free herself from the demons continues. "You can heal yet not forget," Tori says.

The number for RAINN is 1-800-656-HOPE. The Response Hotline is 632-HOPE or 751-7500.

Check out 3TV this February

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 5 pm Flesh and Bone 7:30 Ruff-Kut Reggae 8:00 Peter Tosh 10:00 Chain Reaction 12:00 Island of Dr. Moreau	4 5 pm Bopha 7:00 U.K. Today 7:30 Escape From LA 9:30 Menace II Society 11:30 Say Anything	5 5 pm CMV 6:00 Juice 8:00 She's The One 10:00 Apocalypse Now 12:45 Chain Reaction	6 5 pm Menace II Society 7:00 Boomerang 9:00 Say Anything 11:00 Island of Dr. Moreau 1:00 Escape From LA	7 5 pm Burly Bear 6:00 She's The One 8:00 Bopha 10:00 Chain Reaction 12:00 Apocalypse Now
10 5 pm Flesh and Bone 7:30 Ruff-Kut Reggae 8:00 Juice 10:00 Island of Dr. Moreau 12:00 Chain Reaction	11 5 pm Boomerang 7:00 UK Today 7:30 Menace II Society 10:30 She's The One 12:30 Escape From LA	12 5 pm CMV 6:00 Chain Reaction 8:00 Say Anything 10:00 Jip-Joint Theatre 11:00 Bopha	13 5 pm Island of Dr. Moreau 7:00 Escape From LA 9:00 Flesh and Bone 11:15 Apocalypse Now 2:00 Boomerang	14 5 pm Burly Bear 6:00 She's The One 8:00 Juice 10:00 Menace II Society 12:00 Chain Reaction



This month's movies are:

Flesh and Bone

Peter Tosh

Chain Reaction

Island of Dr. Moreau

Bopha

Escape From LA

Menace II Society

Say Anything

Juice

She's The One

Apocalypse Now

Boomerang

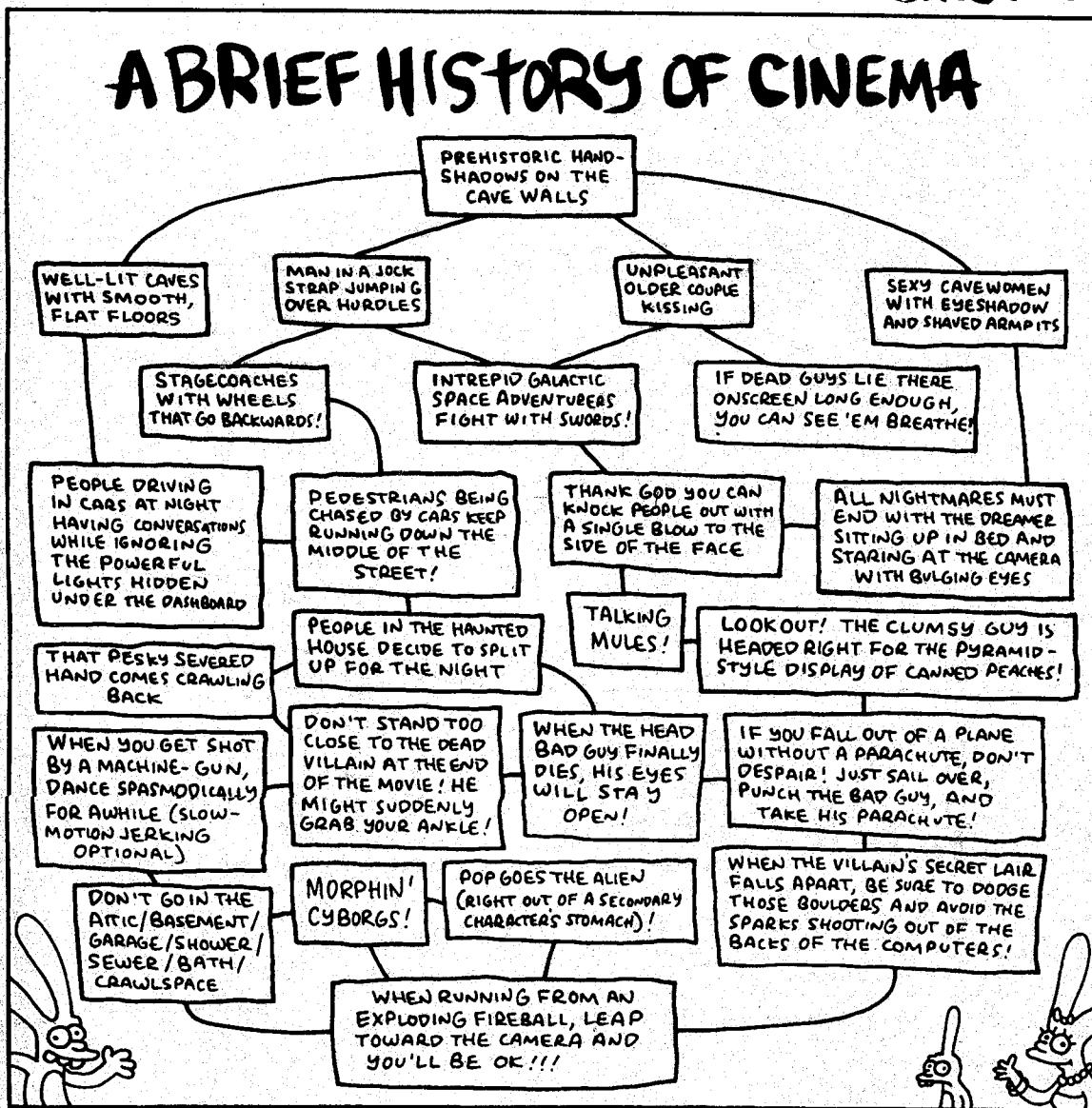
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Good luck this semester from 3TV!

COMICS

LIFE IN
HELL

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BY MATT
GROENING



Top Ten Items Found In Shirley Strum Kenny's Nightstand Drawer

- 10) Nipple clamps, ball gag and a cat o' nine tails.
- 9) Benedict Arnold biography.
- 8) Silver dagger for quick n' easy late-night backstabbin'.
- 7) Old scabs & toenail clippings.
- 6) Tube of Preparation H.
- 5) "People To Kill" list with John Giuffo's name all over it.
- 4) George Pataki's home phone number ("the offer still stands, Hon").
- 3) Candid photographs from Shirley's chaotic "disco dancing" days (Funkytown inDEED).
- 2) Shoehorn. (Don't ask, don't tell.)
- 1) Fred Preston.

ANNOUNCING

A New Stony Brook Press

CONTEST!!**"Why Am I Still
Here At 5:00 AM?"**

You see, this particular issue of *The Press* was, for some reason, a particularly big pain in the ass to produce. Generally, we spend maybe forty hours in a production weekend. This weekend, I believe the actual time spent in the office was about sixteen gazillion hours. Nothing went wrong *per se*, it just took us forever to do stuff we usually fly through.

So anyway, here it is, Tuesday morning at 5:00 AM, and I'm desperately trying to fill an oddly shaped space on some stupid page that only Mike Kramer reads, anyway.

So, here's the contest. Come up with an imaginative story which explains just why I'm still here. Be original and humorous, if possible. Whichever entry most satisfies this sleep-addled executive editor's mind wins. Winner gets a quarter page of space to fill with whatever they wish.

Send, deliver, or email your entries to the addresses on page three.

And god help me.



S O S.

By Cliff Rivera

The crescent moon rises, yet Kate sensed her watch was off, give or take a minute's worth. A wave of disgust — a loss of appetite, perhaps — possessed her to remove herself from time constraints: a disconnection of wires, a bob of the head, lucid dreaming.

Just listen...

Were it that simple, she'd have thought twice about going to the nunnery. When, then, she would have dropped to her hands and knees and eaten the bug, applied herself with every ounce of passion her heart so pleased — to gain enlightenment, if only a decent tan. Quite the contrary, of course it was due to false estimations, repeated accusations ("You'll burn in Dante's hell if you don't, fast"), that she anesthetized the ant, fed the widow's stomach, and deepened her web of estrangement. It's too early to tell if she'll suffer from Acute Radiation Sickness — a mild condition, no more of a blemish than, say, a tumor or zit.

"Sister Kate, from what has been assessed, your table manners, so to speak, are rather odd. In a less favorable light, if you get my drift ('Purity and innocence are to be consumed sparingly, not necessarily in one spoonful, which would be offensive—'); yes, yes, yes, Sister Soldier. So you see, Sisters, the bleakness is not in the curvature of the utensil, but in... its reflection."

Kate was highly interested in what Mother N. and Sister Soldier had to say, although the trickling perspiration from her lice-ridden cap prevented proper digestive tracking. She attributed their winks as an involuntary reflex as a result of the lighting of the room: artificially lit by a heated lava-lamp, suspended from atop a dangling cross; colorless nonetheless. Hell, the spoon was on the verge of splitting, by the unsteady wavering of Marilyn Manson, up and down, back and forth.

It was hard enough for Mother N. to teach Kate anything, much less diagnose her — a manic-bulimic, perhaps; no doubt her complexion had something to do with seasickness or her inability to do the butterfly stroke — that she gave Kate the spoon as a keepsake. Self-hypnosis was the key. (She considered Freud a heretic, psychoanalysis infesting the minds of the masses, potential disciplines.) "Poor girl," Mother N. thought to herself, "a steady diet of cheese might do the trick." Lacing meals provided a far easier means of damaging any threat of piracy, much to the delight of The

Chef, brought up on charges of Tom & Jerry-itis.

The Koran Mother N. was clutching to her breasts was irritating her arthritis, to the point of near collapse, so she asked God, finally, to grant Kate peace of mind — a valium and a prayer to lift her dampening spirits. Wishful thinking.

Kate was obliged to leave the room at that moment, for Mother N. was entranced in her own thoughts of the coming Apocalypse. Shuffling past Mother N. carefully, in case the Koran were to slip through her grip again (last time, the pistol went off, shattering the stained-glass window of Christ's Coming), Kate left the convent barefoot, spoon in hand, to become a student of aeronautics...

Prior to having fled the convent, Mother N. explained to Kate that her letters to the moon were mistakenly mailed to the North Pole and that Santa would return them, provided she enlisted as an elf. Kate complied, not knowing Santa was Satan — in transition. Having been fed on cheese and enduring stiff necks for so long (awaiting her carriage and reindeer patiently), Kate realized how stagnant the deck had become lately — polishing pews and crosses 24-7... Following a service, the place would be in complete disarray — mildewed shot-glasses, burning incense candles, vomit everywhere. Kate'd be assigned to clean-up duty, naturally. All were safely put away in the confessional, for lack of room and space; talk about anal retention on the part of His Baldness, The Pope, downing the last remnants from 40s nearby and wishing every passerby to "lee m'yamcah 'lone."

During those times, she'd secretly reread Revelations to herself, amidst straggling winos and dormant vagabonds, convinced the book would reveal the moon's intentions. The gate pierced her palms, she was sure of it, yet — save for a few scratches and solitary confinement without cheese — her skin seemed impenetrable. There was no evidence to support her flaring nostrils, body aches, thinning hair. The change was apparent, but where was the blood...? The mystery belied words, analysis. "What good is this magnifying glass if I still can't see a thing, Gosh Darnit!" Surprised by her sudden blasphemy, she sprinted past the unsavory onlookers, unaware that it wasn't "just callous" as Mother N. put it, but the moon's gravitational pull that had ensured her escape, unscathed.

Feet first onto the deck she glided, past stupefied nuns of all creeds and sizes; menacing faces to begin with, their fits of convulsive horror and glee burst the remaining bullet-

proof windows of Friedrich Nietzsche, celebrated preacher on The Sermon of Life, Immortality, and Death. Suffocating alongside Simon Rushdie under tight collars, he hollered, "Throw The Satanic Verses at her! Make her walk the plank! Do something!" Father Rushdie would have seconded Nietzsche's suggestion were it not for his own unwarranted muzzle. A collective sigh was about all he could communicate in accordance with his forced, silent plight. (Nietzsche was an invalid too, cared for by Mother N., who provided him with milk, unbuckled the belts, fed him cheese — self-restraint, rather than self-exile, was what tamed their primal urges to spoon-feed themselves — while Rushdie was fortunate enough to listen and wave his arms about in forsaken worship. The dulling of the senses: a warring trend practiced for generations.) Instead, Rushdie pounded His Baldness against the inside of their tomb, grasping but one of The Pope's flailing tongues: "Where's my yarmulke?! Where's it gone?!"

Unmoved by the commotion, Kate withdrew, anointing the entire ark by a wave of her spoon: "I christen thee free... I christen thee free... I christen thee free..." With that, His Baldness broke free from Rushdie's malevolent protests and cried out, "Fair mistress, Halt! This is a travesty, you as well as I know that." Their intimacy signaled a desperate plea, on his part, for a refueling of Cheerios and "chestnuts roasting on an open fire..." "My Lady, have you not forgotten your forefathers? Your roots await you. More so now, with the dawning of The Earth Summit Watch." Mother N. was appreciative of The Pope's boldness and added hastily, "Your Majesty's baldness shines rightly. You're gonna have to design your own wake-up call if you decide to flee... Kate, dear..." Panic-stricken, Mother N. was tempted to unload her pistol from The Koran, not knowing what she would do next: a going-away present for her wild one, perhaps...?

Kate pointed the spoon in Mothe N.'s direction and replied reassuringly, "I... christen... thee... free..." Sarcasmic exchange uplifted the masked sophistication of the moment, following Kate's infamous, now signature bon-voyage: a bare ass and then all was forgiven, despite The Chef's desire for one last photograph, a momento to assemble the rest of the Mickey Mice and Muppet Babies — ship-wrecked aboard Whitman's Conservatory For The Criminally Insane.

D I N N E R

By Josephine Hilfoss

I went to his house one night over the break, because he had offered me dinner. We were sitting in his room where he was playing his bass and I was trying, unsuccessfully, to sing along to "Sympathy For The Devil." Afterward we wandered into the kitchen. I made salad while he stir-fried some chicken. In the natural progression of our conversation many topics came and went. He told about his plans to study music for two years and how he would be getting a piano soon. We talked about the drugs I had done, and of course his incessant drinking. His eyes lit up as he explained the feeling which arises when you're standing on a board, and the water curls up over you and how sometimes if you're lucky, the sun shines through the wave to cast a blue glow around you.

My next question seemed natural enough. "So, how's work?" He looked down as a naughty little grin emerged, then an eerie seriousness. His voice was very monotone and he rolled his eyes as if the tediousness of it all annoyed him. "Last night some guy bounced off of a truck and landed beneath another car," he began. I stared at him blankly so as not to arouse any sort of discomfort. "Yeah, when he hit the truck his balls exploded! He was still alive when we got there. Then he just bled to death." I bit the inside of my mouth, and though appalled, my curiosity got the better of me. "Was he screaming?... I mean... what kind of noise does someone like that make?" I asked him. "No, he was just hyperventilating and twitching. When people get real

ly hurt they don't usually have the strength to scream, like when they get shot they just lay there and moan." He answered me as if I had asked him the color of his mother's car, or where the nearest gas station was. As we became more deeply submerged in the conversation, I found a strange inappropriate calm set over me. I found myself asking horrid questions about ten-year-old dead people. I learned that contrary to my belief, not everybody shits their pants immediately after they die.

Spock, his crazy dog, was looking desperately over the kitchen divider, so I squatted down and gave her kisses on the nose. We went on to discuss the thirty pounds of equipment which each officer must wear. This includes a bullet-proof vest which must be worn at all times, gun, nightstick, flashlight, radio, and (ooooo) handcuffs. He explained that the car engines cut out somewhere around 120 mph, and how he used to play music on his p.a. for the transvestites to dance to. One night, an eighty-year-old woman called the cops because her husband wanted her to turn down her radio. My friend and his partner explained to her that when you call the cops it is wise to put your crack pipe away. I also learned that it only takes three pounds of pressure to remove a human ear.

After eating our meal, which was delicious, he showed me some self-defense moves. He slightly wrenched my arm, so I bit him. It was then that he made the most shocking comment of the evening. "Ouch, quit biting me!" He said it like a little boy. Suddenly it dawned on me. He could get shot! I kept thinking it over and over, until a bitter sting

ing acid rose up from my stomach. I drank some wine, but that didn't help.

I started remembering him from high-school, just a playful punk who loved to flirt. And years later he would pass out on my couch and slowly his beer would tip in his hand, until I grabbed it in the nick of time. In fact, that might have been last Friday. When he's really shit-faced, I try to coax him into bong hits, like the old days. He forgets and gets so close, then he remembers he's a cop and he can't do that anymore.

I am thinking about my reaction to our earlier conversation. They say cops don't talk about their shit. I think it's because they live in two worlds. In one violence is fostered, and if they can't stomach it, they're ridiculed. In the other, it's abhorred. So many cops go home and clam up for fear something grotesque might fall out of their mouths. Other times I think, cops are worried they might start to get scared. They have a lot to fear, including fear itself. The point was made that cops never get a call when everything is normal. Many times it is those people which hate the cops the most, who also need them the most.

He told me one last story about how he told some high-school kids that if they were to relocate by only 100 yds., they could calmly finish their joint without being spotted by his colleagues. I took a deep breath and told him to be careful at work tonight. Our dinner had taken a while so he was already late. I gave him a deep hug and let his scent sink into me. On my way home I decided that, although I understand his pride, I wanted to find a way to get him out of this.

Hamburger's Twelfth Annual

By Brian Libfeld

There are very few traditions worth mentioning here at Stony Brook, our own little suburb of the city of Dis, but there are a few, one of which has been morbidly celebrated for many years. From the far reaches of New York, Long Island, and H-Quad come the freaks, the Iconians, and yes, the Hygenically challenged to celebrate death. They celebrate on a mid-winter's night, the second Wednesday of February, to appease one of the lost souls of Stony Brook. This spirit, known to most as Hamburger Boy, in life bore the name Sherman Raftenberg. Each year all celebrants gather at the position which is considered by most to have been the closest to where Sherman had his unfortunate accident. When all have assembled, a chosen representative recounts the tale of Sherman Raftenberg as it shall now be retold:

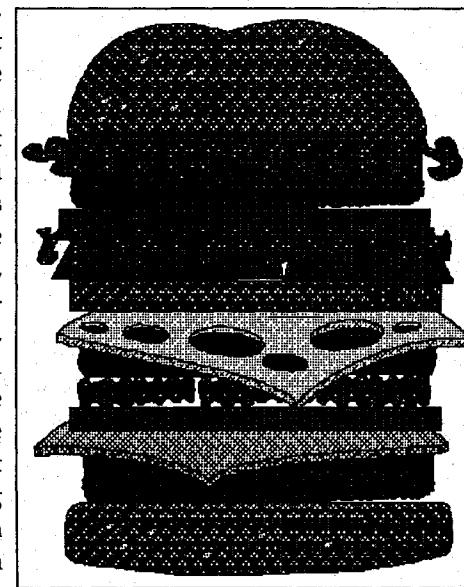
"It was a cold night in 1973, the drinking age in New York was still eighteen, and the university gladly took advantage of that fact. It was a glorious time, a time when you could purchase beer on your meal card in the Union deli or, if you were lucky, in your dorm. It was late in the evening and Sherman, a promising young engineering student, was returning to his home in 'Kelly A'. Along with him that evening were two friends of his whom he had been studying with, so accordingly they could barely stand, much less walk. It was at this time when they came across an open manhole, contentedly puffing steam up into the atmosphere. Sherman, being an avid fan of Star Trek, as well as a geek, was immediately reminded of a dramatic Kirk pose from a recent episode, one of those poses that comes right after landing on a unexplored planet and right before the nameless extra is killed off. Being slightly drunk, Sherman thought it would be the height of coolness to mimic Kirk, and as such he did. He leapt through and his friends agreed that he did indeed look cool. With this encouragement he leapt through the steam again, and his dim-witted friends, seeing it from a new angle, preached that it was all the more cool than they had originally thought. Now, Sherman was not exactly slightly drunk, he was in fact ready to taste the floor, and in addition to this he was a

freshman after all, and as such he thought if it was cool twice then a third time must be even more so. He again leapt through the steam, but this time, in a moment of lucidity he realized just how much of a geek he was being, as well as how truly stupid he must look hopping back and forth over a manhole, so he stopped. Unfortunately for him, this moment came in the middle of his third leap, and this being his major mistake he fell down the steaming manhole like an angel in Milton. His friends, being little shits, took to running, in hopes that their presence would remain a secret, and that their hangovers would be mild, leaving Sherman to boil at the bottom of the manhole shaft, twenty five feet down.

Well, it turned out that there were twenty four open manholes around campus when Sherman had his little fall, and strangely enough, they were all neatly barricaded up the next morning, and the university claimed miscreants had removed the barrier of the unfortunate accident. Throughout that day notes began appearing on the manhole from which Sherman's body had been recovered in the pre-dawn hours, which bore the sentiments of those students who had heard what had happened and were aware that the university was putting their safety at risk. The students put together protests and picketed the administration building. They forced the university to acknowledge their fault, as well as what could be done to prevent such an event in the future. (Yes, you read correctly. Students bringing about a change when they see something wrong with the university.) Sherman's parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Raftenberg were also trying to make the university take responsibility for their fault, and they filed suit against the university. The judge who presided, was unsympathetic to the Raftenberg's case but could not in good conscience rule in favor of the school. He did rule in the Raftenberg's favor, but awarded only one thou-

sand dollars for each second that their son had suffered, which was determined by the university to have been approximately eighteen seconds, although it probably took him over two minutes to die. After the court decision had passed, and a few years blurred the facts, memory of Sherman passed away, and he is only remembered by the department of Earth and Space Sciences who offer a scholarship in his name, and bored college students, who come out to appease his spirit each year, as well as chug some cheap beer."

After recounting the story the speaker, with some assistance, pulls open the manhole cover and begins the series of sacrifices. The first of these sacrifices is a bulging sack of White Castle hamburgers. White Castle hamburgers are the sacrifice of choice, because they are steamed, not fried. After the explanation of the sacrifice has been made for new ears, they are hurled into the manhole. After this has been done an individual hands over his sandals to the speaker and these are also hurled into the manhole. There is no explanation given for the sandals, and in fact that part of the



tradition probably arose out of boredom and a sick mind. After these sacrifices have been made and Sherman's spirit shows no sign of disapproval, the speaker takes three leaps over the steaming manhole in commemoration of Sherman's leaps, and all present scream for a period of eighteen seconds, in honor of the eighteen seconds of suffering Sherman underwent. Finally, the final moment of the ceremony comes, and everyone present runs away, as Sherman's friends did that fateful night to cleanse themselves of any affiliation with the ritual. This February seventh marks the twenty third anniversary of Sherman's death, and the twelfth will mark an unnumbered anniversary of the celebration of this event.

I wanted this to be a whimsical birthday poem for Liv Ann, but the Reverend wanted something funny, so now instead of sharing my heartfelt feelings with Liv Ann on her birthday, I'm supposed to make up something funny. I mean, whose twenty third is it anyway? Liv Ann's or Dave's? Well, Damn You Dave, I will speak my mind and drive you nuts! Happy Birthday Liver We Love You!!!!

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PRESS**

Maybe you can shut her up.

←

FEATURES

THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

Part I of III: America's Ethnic Mosaic

I will never forget the first time I met Juan.

The uptown 6 train was packed with grouchy rush hour commuters when I stepped on at 28th street. All eyes were on me as I tried to scarf down pastrami on rye while standing in the aisle, but I was too famished to care.

As the train made its way through the tunnels, a tall, thin young man stumbled in from the adjacent car. Despite the warm autumn weather, he wore a thick winter jacket, a knit cap, and gloves. "Please help me", he announced in a weak, tired voice as he held out a brown paper bag for coins. "My name is Juan, I'm homeless, and I have AIDS." As if on cue, many passengers turned their heads away from the aisle, shifted their eyes elsewhere, or pretended to sleep. A man wearing a pin-striped suit grimaced, stood up from his seat abruptly, and walked into the next car. "You don't have to touch me," said the panhandler as he strode down the aisle.

Juan was a handsome man, despite the deep red spots and lesions that covered his face, presumably from Kaposi's sarcoma. A neatly trimmed beard diverted attention away from his sunken cheeks. Ironically, I had just started a research project on HIV envelope glycoproteins at the Public Health Research Institute. An eerie feeling flooded into me as I associated the disease with a real human being for the first time instead of a row of anonymous samples in test tubes. Except for a few contributors, most of the passengers sunk down in their seats as he walked toward them, and then proceeded to stare at him after he passed.

As we pulled into the 42nd street station, I quickly wrapped the remaining half of the sandwich and approached him. I pressed the sandwich into his hand, looked him in the eye, and smiled. It was a forced smile, however, for I was overcome with sadness and pity.

I met Juan a few times in the following months. Although he was not very verbose, I found out that his family had abandoned him out of fear and shame. He had lost his job, his children, and his meager savings because of his illness. He had moved from Puerto Rico to seek his fortune, but he had only found sorrow. "The doctors don't speak no Spanish, and I don't got no money", he said in despair, after I asked him if he sought treatment.

Several years have passed since our last encounter, and I do not know what happened to him. However, stories like this are becoming increasingly common nationwide, as indicated by disturbing trends in HIV infection among ethnic minorities.

In the summer of 1981, the first articles describing signs and symptoms of AIDS appeared in *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, a bulletin published by the Centers for Disease Control. These articles reported the case histories of white homosexual men who contracted rare forms of pneumonia (*Pneumocystis carinii*) and skin cancer (Kaposi's sarcoma). In the next two years, similar symptoms were reported in intravenous drug users and blood transfusion recipients. Although heterosexual transmission was documented in 1983, AIDS was stigmatized as a disease of homosexuals, drug addicts, and immorality by the American public.

In the last decade, the occurrence of AIDS has shifted from white homosexual men to minority groups in the United States. According to Mario Cooper of the Harvard AIDS Institute's International Advisory Council, more than 50% of the men and 75% of the women with AIDS in 1995 were African Americans and Latinos. In addition, HIV infection rates have increased dramatically in the Native American and Asian American populations.

In a special reprint of the 1996 *Harvard AIDS Review* titled "Communities of Color", factors such as pov-

erty, racism, denial, homophobia, and fear are cited as obstacles to overcome in preventing AIDS.

African Americans are becoming infected with HIV at a rate six times greater than white Americans. However, many experts believe that dividing statistical information along racial lines is counterproductive.

According to Robert Fullilove, associate dean of the Columbia University School of Public Health, discussing race as a risk factor "implies that membership in a racial group puts you at risk of HIV."

Socioeconomic status is an important indicator of vulnerability, for studies have shown that poorer communities often have limited education and employment resources, and greater availability of drugs. In addition, injection drugs, which may pose risks for needle transmission of HIV, are more popular in inner cities.

Another complication in the African American community is a lack of trust for health officials. There has been a long history of health-related civil rights abuses against African Americans in the United States. For example, the Public Health Service denied treatment to poor African American men with syphilis between 1932 and 1972 in Tuskegee, Georgia. This "study", which indirectly caused irreversible damages or death in many patients, is often cited as evidence for a "conspiracy theory". In a 1991 survey conducted by the American

The AIDS Quilt: Displayed in D.C.

Journal of Public Health, 35% of African Americans "believed that AIDS is a form of genocide". Some people claimed that the virus was created by the U.S. Army and accidentally escaped or deliberately released into the environment. However, Manfred Eigen, of the Max Planck Institut fur Biophysikalische Chemie in Gottingen, Germany, calls this "pure nonsense". He contends that HIV and other related monkey viruses can be traced to a common ancestor about 1000 years ago by their RNA sequences. Despite much scientific evidence discrediting the conspiracy theory, many lay people still believe it, which can feed denial and fear.

Although Latinos make up less than 9% of the population, they constitute more than 17% of AIDS cases. However, Latinos are a very diverse group, with different origins, religions, races, and socioeconomic class. HIV exposure among Latinos is usually attributed to heterosexual contact or injection drug use. One of the greatest challenges is the different languages spoken, including various dialects of Spanish, Portuguese, and native languages. Also, Spanish-language brochures translated literally from English may be "culturally inappropriate", according to Heriberto Crespo, director of health education at the Latino Health Institute. Terms for reproductive anatomical structures and contraceptives may offend certain groups. In addition, the Catholic Church's viewpoint on contraception complicates campaigns for condom use.

Many Latinos have difficulty seeking access to health care. Some have jobs that do not allow time off for appointments. Also, language difficulties and fear of deportation can prevent undocumented people from getting the proper treatment.

Native Americans are perhaps the most invisible

ethnic group in the United States today. For centuries, the native population was decimated by diseases brought by European explorers, such as smallpox. In the 1400's, the population was approximately five million, but in 1900, there were only several thousand Native Americans. Many tribes have ancient legends predicting a plague that would destroy them. Today, many people believe that this dreaded disease is AIDS.

Many Native Americans are considered at high risk for HIV infection due to their socioeconomic status, poor health care, and high unemployment. The average income on reservations is less than \$5,000, and a third of Native Americans die before their forty-fifth birthday.

Although there are only about 2,000 documented AIDS cases in Native Americans, experts believe that the infection rate is rising steadily. A study in Los Angeles showed that "up to 90% of Native Americans with AIDS were classified as other races." In addition,

sexually transmitted diseases occur twice as frequently in Native Americans than the national average while injection drugs are becoming more popular.

As with other minority groups, Native Americans have historically distrusted the United States government. In addition to the long history of oppression and forced relocations, government workers often had vaguely defined duties. Many Native Americans with HIV were denied help because the agencies did not have clear policies for such cases. Also, federal funding for the Indian Health Service is decreasing, causing alarm for the future of primary health care in these communities.

Another group in which the AIDS epidemic has not been widely publicized is the Asians and Pacific Islanders (APIs). There are about 3,500 cases documented by the Centers for Disease Control to date.

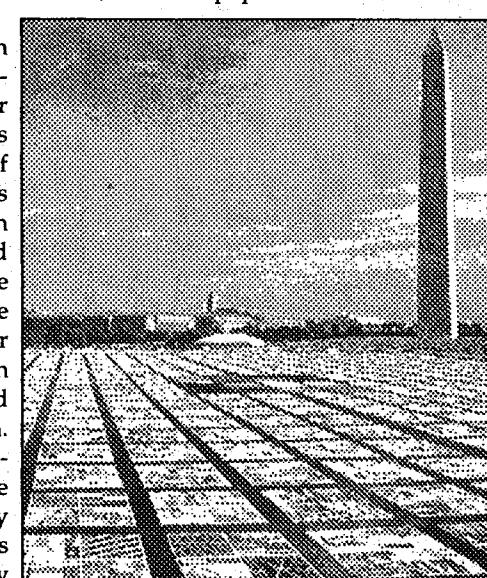
Asians and Pacific Islanders are placed in the same group by the U.S. Census Bureau despite many different cultures and languages. A common problem, however, is the perception of APIs as a "model minority" with high academic and economic achievement. This stereotype draws attention away from APIs living under the poverty line, drug use, homelessness, and AIDS.

Many new AIDS cases in Asian Americans can be influenced by the high rates of HIV infection in South and Southeast Asia. Epidemiologists expect the number of new infections here to exceed that of Africa by the year 2000.

The most common problem in Asians and Pacific Islanders is lack of communication caused by language barriers. Bilingual services are rarely found outside large cities. Also, many people without documentation fear deportation and are reluctant to seek medical attention.

The American people face many challenges in confronting the AIDS epidemic. We must keep in mind that our "communities of color" are at risk not because of ethnic backgrounds, but from factors including poverty and discrimination. We should ensure that government agencies reach out to all ethnic groups in the nation in prevention campaigns.

I often wonder about what happened to Juan, although I will probably never find out. Hopefully, with effective prevention and care programs, his story will not be repeated.



A REMEMBRANCE OF *ICONS* Past

By Ralph Sevush, Esq.

In 1982, members of the Science Fiction Forum left their dark little hideaway in the basement of Hendrix College and came up to the tiny office of the Student Activities Board to speak with me. They had a problem. They wanted to organize an SF movie festival, but didn't have any money left in their budget, so they came to me to see if the Committee On Cinematic Arts (COCA) would co-sponsor (i.e., pay for) their event. Thus I-CON was born.

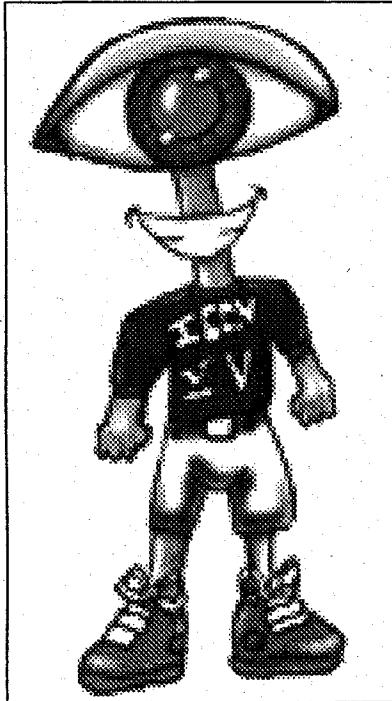
Back then I was "COCA Ralph", president of COCA, TUESDAY FLICKS, AMERICAN CINEMA, SAB CONCERT FILMS and, basically, a clearing-house for any group that showed movies on campus. This was in the ancient days before the proliferation of videocassettes, so films had to be leased from 16mm film distribution companies, not rented at the corner video store, and could be quite costly. By renting films in large numbers, I was able to obtain large discounts and thus make film programs an affordable event for a number of campus organizations.

As an aficionado of SF, I loved the idea of a film festival. I plundered the COCA treasury and helped to get some additional funds from Polity, as well. Carson Tang, president of the SAB Speakers committee, got involved and booked Gene Roddenberry, creator of the STAR TREK universe, as a speaker for the film fest. After further meetings, the SF Forum put together a roster of some writers and artists that they could talk into coming (for free, of course), as well as some of Stony Brook's own prestigious academics. Before we knew it, we had put together a full-blown science fiction convention in less than a month.

All we needed was a name. Mud-Con was suggested. In those days, the campus always seemed to be a half-built mud pit and so it seemed appropriate. Fortunately, it was voted down when we learned that an earlier aborted attempt to produce a campus convention went by that unlucky moniker. L.I.-CON came up but was rejected because it seemed awkward. I suggested a variation: I-CON. Short for Island Convention, it also had a quasi-mystical quality that everybody seemed to like.

The tag line I came up with for the ads, "Long Island's largest convention of Science Fiction, Fact and Fantasy", conveyed our desire to make I-CON into something unique, taking advantage of SUSB's credentials in the scientific community and the presence of legendary physicists and engineers amongst the faculty, and combining them with some of the most famous writers, artists and celebrities in the genres of SF, fantasy and horror.

Now we all had to do was sell the damn thing. We didn't do too badly, selling over 500 tickets for the weekend. Some people came to see a few



of the more bizarre movies (PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE drew a nice and extremely stoned crowd) and some of the more obscure artists and writers (I never did find out who that old man, Raymond Z. Gallun, was, but he kept coming as an I-CON guest up until his death. The I-CON committee eventually named an award after him. I assume it goes to the most obscure guest in attendance each year... but I digress). Most people, however, came to see Roddenberry. We had taken him out for Chinese food just before the show and this proved to be a mistake. It may have been an M.S.G. hangover (or maybe it was the three Scotches he threw down), but his show was less than awe-inspiring. People seemed genuinely glad to meet and speak with him anyway. I don't think anyone actually kissed his ring, however. Everyone involved with this first I-CON seemed

happy with the experience... happy that it was over. We had thrown it together so quickly that many things were overlooked or poorly done. We had a big, post-convention dinner meeting at the Beefsteak Charlies on Rt. 347 and Stony Brook Road (it's not there any longer) and after the third pitcher of Sangria, everyone stopped pointing fingers and started laughing and planning for the next year. We had a full year head-start for I-CON 2 but, being college students, we again waited for the last minute to get it together. We had some major problems, both financial and personal, but managed to get it up and running, and nearly doubling our ticket sales over the previous year.

Committee-member Dan Hank even produced a TV commercial for us (the cheesiest thing I've ever seen) that we ran during a STAR TREK re-run. It cost us about \$500, and I don't think anyone saw it, but we sat around the TV at midnight in the GOLDEN BEAR CAFE in the basement of O'NEILL College in G Quad, and we saw what we had wrought... and it was good. At least WE thought so. Our guests of honor were Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Asimov. He was not well and had to leave after the first day, but he was very excited and enthusiastic about being there, as was everyone who came in contact with this great and brilliant man.

George Takei ("Mr. Sulu" of STAR TREK) was a guest as well, and seemed a genuinely decent fellow. He came to a party in Irving College, on B-2, and got drunk with everybody. My friend drove him to his hotel afterwards, stopping along the way to pee by the side of the road with

Mr. Sulu (at least, that's how the story goes). Surprisingly, "Mr. Sulu" was up at dawn the next day and convention goers had the opportunity to jog through campus with him. I declined the privilege. We also had Robert Blalack, a movie SFX wizard who had done the effects on STAR WARS and many other big pictures. After this rather dull presentation, we showed STAR WARS in the Gymnasium (there was no field house back then) and everyone seemed to enjoy that, especially with the distinct aroma of Northern California cannabis permeating the air. The best part of the evening for me was driving Blalack back to NYC that night, and chatting about movies the whole way.

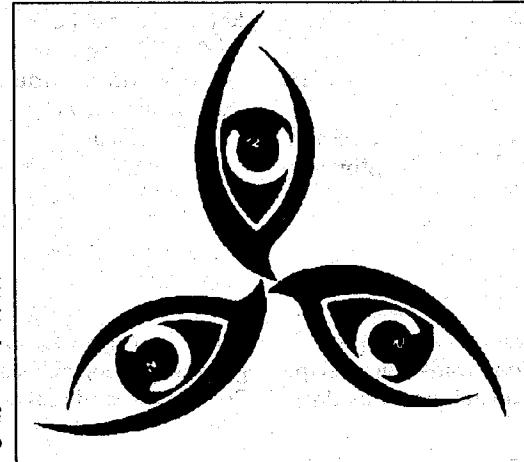
The films shown at I-CON 2 were paid for by Omni Magazine. (Omni was owned by Penthouse Magazine, which I suppose would raise quite a furor today, based on what I read about campus attitudes and the rise of the PC police. Maybe I'm wrong and you folks haven't yet given up on the First Amendment. But I digress...) Omni gave us free movies, posters and t-shirts (which were all eventually given away or stolen by the end of the weekend) as part of a cross-promotion with Heineken Beer, a beverage which was sold in great quantities throughout the convention. The writers and artists were happy to have such a quality brew, and so, apparently, were the students as cases upon cases of it ended up vanishing from the Student Union Cafeteria loading dock, only to find their way to the many parties that were held on campus throughout the weekend (I'm sure Mr. Sulu had his share). I understand that undergraduates can't get a beer on campus anymore. Too bad. I had some of my best and worst moments while under the influence.

I also recall all the equipment sitting in the Lecture Center... all the movie and sound equipment, and the dealer's tables covered with merchandise that we were responsible for, just sitting there behind those plexiglass doors. I decided to sleep in the Lecture Center that night to safe guard everything. I ended up having sex

with my then-girlfriend on the mainstage of Lecture Hall 100 while running A CLOCKWORK ORANGE on the huge screen above us. At least, that's the way I remember it... and Beethoven still brings a smile to my lips.

I finally graduated during the summer of 1983 to the surprise of my friends and the relief of my parents. Dan Hank ran I-CON the following year most ably, expanding it even further and getting guests like Harlan Ellison. After that, original committee member Ralph Schiano took over for many years, but I've been told that his excesses nearly drove the committee into financial ruin. At least that's what I've been told... I make no representations as to that statement's truth or falsity, thus attempting to avoid any libel suit.

See "I-CON," page 17



FEATURES

He's On Prozac

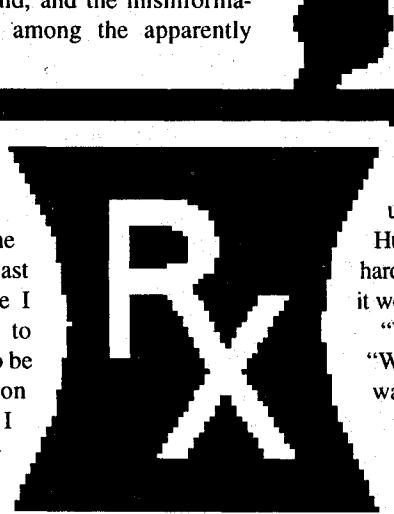
By David Doe

I'm on prozac.

Thought I'd let you know; thought I'd let everybody know. What could compel me to come out of the closet, let the cat out of the bag and loose the genie from the bottle like that? To 5000 people I don't know? The 20 people I do know could, and the stigma surrounding antidepressants in general could, and the misinformation and prejudice common among the apparently nicest and most open minded of people could—they all did. The series of events this school year only consummated my suspicion that perhaps the status quo was ready for a box in the ears. When I came to college last semester, I decided that since I was taking four pills per day to keep me sane I wasn't going to be able to keep the information from my five suitemates, so I didn't try. The result was immediate and rather shocked the hell out of me: for the rest of the semester all I got were jokes

about how, if I was feeling bad, I should just go pop another pill, and how I shouldn't be allowed sharp objects lest I attempt suicide. I think probably I'd have gone in for a homicide too. I could see the Statesman's headline: "Student stabs for sweetmates with knife before turning it on himself." Murder has its consequences.

I want to dispel the notion of what depression is propagated by the media and/or well-meaning public servants.



It's not sad. It's not angry. It's not pissed, dispossessed, enraged, horrified, scared, overwhelmed, hopeless; those are covers for what it is. It can't be defined. Normally we have a range of emotions which we've given names for over thousands of years, stable emotions—depression does not fall in to any of these categories. It can be pleasurable, in a way, it can make pain feel good, it can make you feel like your brain has been moved out of your head by about around six inches, but not up, not down, not left or right; another direction. Something else. This is the fourth dimension of emotion. It cannot be defined and canned and labeled. We know how complex ailments of the Common Chevy can be—and that's a beast we've created ourselves and understand totally. A complex ailment of the

Human Brain is relatively more complicated and hard to define, and we haven't really got a clue how it works in the first place.

"Work out." "Think about something else." "What have you got to be unhappy about anyway?"

Is that what you'd say to me if you saw me? Even the most well-meaning souls have responded that way. Everyone assumes you're SAD, or BUMMED or you're LAZY; you won't get up off your ass to help yourself—you have no idea.

You have no idea what it's like to love, hate, to stare at the sky below you and the ground above you and be everywhere never and nowhere forever, to be angry at the pavement for pushing on your feet so hard and angry at the air for pushing on your skin so much. Did you ever spend 15 minutes in the computer science building lobby at 3am, staring at the ceiling and spinning around? Was that ever the obvious thing you had to do? No. Yes, it's fucked up, yes, it's insane, but it's real and it's there

and there is one thing that can make it go away. Prozac, Welbutrin, lots of nice drugs labeled antidepressants. I don't give a damn what they are or who prescribes them or what the hype is or how many little notepads with happy people on them shrinks get. I just want to be able to know that what I'm feeling has some basis in reality. I'm sorry if that offends the puritan sensibilities of some of you (did you know that the christian 'scientists' were the ones who started the campaign to dis prozac in the public media a few years back? These are the same people who think you should pray when your kid gets the measles and let god have his way.) but I don't have a choice. I can't function without the meds. I don't care if this "depression" is real or if the sundry clinical diagnoses are bullshit or not. I care about being having some function of reality in me.

It's hard to explain a disease whose symptoms create an unwillingness to help oneself. We have a natural inclination as a people to be suspicious of someone who says their problem is that they can't fix it; that's the paradox of mental illness. We're used to somebody who has a broken leg or a cancer in their head, but someone who has chemicals in their brain that change the way they think isn't something we're prepared for as a society. What part of me is real and what is this 'depression'? I can feel more real when down than when up—but feeling real can be terrible. I'm not working in the system of medicine because I like it: it's a means to an end, for me and for everyone else with this problem.

To not know if what you're thinking is right or not is one of the most horrifying experiences possible. If you haven't been there, you have no idea how horrifying it is. The next time you see somebody's "on prozac" don't think about the drug. Think about the person behind it. You don't take it because you like it. You take it because if you don't, the pain's enough to make you want to kill yourself.

CHEAP CAR BUYS: PART III

By Martha Chemas

In Memoriam: The Post War Dream.

Fate first threw Carry and I together in 1991, when I was a senior in High School and she already had 120,000 miles on her German engine.

I was not really able to make her mine until I vaulted past that heady albatross, the Road Test. The day after I passed I was stretching her legs a little when I totaled her. Even more horrible was the circumstance that led to the near decimation: Hitting fast forward while looking for a song on a tape and subsequently hitting a parked Buick even harder.

Carry emerged victorious however, triumphantly displaying the invulnerability of the indomitable Audi spirit. Oh, the times we saw. My first foray into the highway adventure included a convict, the Van Wyck and my beloved Carry. The ensuing 65,000 miles were even more eventful. Many a summer night reached its apex as I raced downtown, power weaving while enjoying the melodious sounds my soon to be stolen Alpine provided me with.

Yes, Carry saw many tracheas, six to be exact, all ripped from her in the dead of night by some opportunist who thought nothing of maiming her and leaving her mute and slightly bruised. Each time I tended her bruises I gave her a better voice and eventually blew out the speakers and 10% of my own hearing, happily living up to the stereotype of a Queens chic blaring The Wu Tang

Clan at Five A.M. while cruising Lou Reed's Dirty Boulevard.

She was always the step child; boyfriend after boyfriend preferring their late model luxury or speed demon to my trusty Carry. She therefore became my own, a piece of my independence when I set off in the middle of the night attempting to escape the demons that plague us all once in a while.

She was conspicuously absent for the most traumatic moments of my life; in retrospect I appreciate this, as I never had to board her and make any horrible associations. I also appreciated her on a certain weird evening when some dude, high on God-Knows-What attempted to grab my neck from the sidewalk and the pickup left on her 100hp engine probably saved my life.

I loved my car. She was with me through thick and thin and she held out when the highpriced Boyfriend-mobile was in the shop getting its ABS fixed or some other such nonsense.

Yes, this is an obituary of sorts, a chance to speak truth rather than the rhetoric of the futility of the last Polity meeting or more empty blather about a Student Activities Center most students are too apathetic to bother boycotting. Carry saw me to Boston and Montauk and took me to visit friends I never thought I'd see again and survived the raging wrists of a psycho all the while providing me with the necessary tool for escape when driving was my only means of staying sane.

When I was younger I drove a Jaguar (badly).

It was a disloyal car that never reciprocated my feelings, much like the other cars I drove since my driving days began. They were pretty but unreliable, loving no one but themselves. This observation perambulated itself into reality, leading me to theories about human behavior and allowing me to philosophize about the difference between the human and the mechanic.

Carry came to be in November of 1980 and served faithfully until January 22nd of this year when she met her inevitable demise on Infirmary Road.

To add insult to her undignified death, Satan sent out the University Police (To Serve and To Protect) to ticket us for being parked on the grass.

Carry has not been laid to final rest, she awaits this rite in the Mendelson Quad Resident Lot while I scramble for transportation and evade wackos on the LIRR.

As of next week I will be four-wheeling and thus exploring the long forgotten joy of driving slowly. This will probably work in my favor since an unreliable debtor left me in the kind of financial arrears that only precedes leaving a speeding ticket unpaid and as a result having one's liscence suspended.

The current Boyfriend-mobile may take a back-seat to the new four-wheeler, thus establishing precedent. I move into the new epoch still longing for an old four wheeler and the dignity of my post war Audi.

Star Wars, Nothing But Star Wars

By John Giuffo

It's somewhat disillusioning to look back on all of my fondest childhood memories. My formative years were much the same as anyone else my age; defined and structured by American popular culture. I loved Disney, G.I. Joe, and The Transformers. Vividly hazy memories flood my eyes when I think of Saturday afternoons spent setting up Cobra deathtraps and G.I. Joe hideouts from which to make The Great American Last Stand Against Evil. Chocolate donuts and a round of Yo Joe! Cola for everyone surviving the circa-5 PM conflagration of Good vs. Evil. We were all heroes: Snake Eyes, Scarlett, Flint, Duke and me, all saviors of the best way of life on earth.

I look at the substance of my childhood pastimes now and I cringe. It's a difficult thing to try to reconcile morality with nostalgia. Disney employs slave labor to make their sacchrinized toy-takes on American mythology, G.I. Joe celebrates a dangerously poisonous view of American patriotism (unquestioning to the last) and the Transformers just got corny with age. What never changed though, was my

fascination with all things Star Wars.

I am an unapologetic drooling fanboy when it comes to Star Wars. I've got all the Micro Machines ships, I want the new blaster being sold by Kenner (not to mention a dozen or so other faithfully-crafted toys), and when I found out that George Lucas was to re-release the trilogy with new footage and improved special effects, I all but creamed my jeans.

Then I got angry. How dare that washed-up has-



been fuck with my favorite movies and my childhood? What unmitigated gall!

Lucas' greed threatened to color my view of one of the few things I had left from my childhood that I enjoy as much now as ever. What I didn't realize in my anger is that Star Wars has always been an omnipresent marketing monolith. I just bought into it a lot easier when I was eight.

That doesn't change my view of the greatness and importance of the film. Universally agreed upon as

one of the most influential tales of all time, Star Wars defined movies and movie-going for a generation.

It still has all the power it ever had to stir imaginations and awaken creativity. When it was released in 1977, it changed American pop culture forever. It upped the ante for most of the mainstream movies to follow it, and it redefined the moviegoing experience.

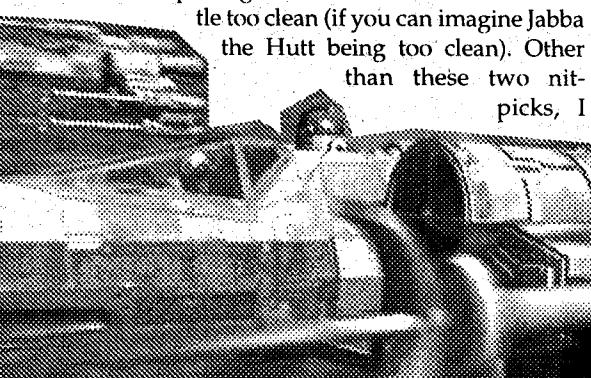
No one (except Press Business Manager Martha Chemas) hasn't seen it, and it's one of the most important cultural reference points America has. It's our collective mythology, an alternate past that only assholes and over-educated prigs don't like.

Lucas' snapped-up version promised to provide all the punch of its 20-year-old predecessor with a few new surprises added. He went back to his aptly named Skywalker Ranch to spice up the special effects which, when created in 1977, was ultra state-of-the-art. The technical wizardry was so influential that, even today, any movie company looking to make quality effects for their films must turn to Lucas' Industrial Light and Magic to keep their images up to a par American audiences expect (Independence Day recently bucked this trend, but only by going to Germany and hiring film students at cheaper wages).

So did Star Wars' re-release provide all the magic and excitement we were promised? Well, yes and no.

When I went to see it at the UA in Syosset (the largest single screen theater on Long Island) I was blown away by most of the new images. The desert search, the Mos Eisley scenes, the final epic battle, all jazzed up with new, mostly computer-generated images added. The additions mostly rounded out some of the rough edges Lucas thought the film had, while adding scenes 1977 special effects technology made difficult to accomplish.

I've only two complaints. Apparently, Lucas did not like Han Solo's motivation for blasting Bounty Hunter Greedo in the Cantina Scene, so he added a "first blood" shot by Greedo, hereby making Han's action one of self-defense rather than an obvious case of T.C.B. My other complaint is with the Jabba footage. He looked computer-generated. A little too fake. A little too clean (if you can imagine Jabba the Hutt being too clean). Other than these two nits, I



loved it. I plan on seeing the whole trilogy again.

So, given the end product, it's hard to fault Lucas for wanting to expose a new generation of American dreamers to his film the way it was meant to be seen. Yes, there is some definite greed at work behind the re-releases, but that's forgivable. Why should George Lucas be the only one above to buy a fleet of X-Wings to stage battles with?

And as I was leaving the theater, I looked at the little boy who was sitting next to us with his grandmother and grandfather. His smile reached both ears, and this in turn made his grandparents happy. It's just how I saw it my first time. That little boy was me 20 years ago, and I remember sitting between my Nana and Popie holding a tub of popcorn bigger than my head, ready to take a ride to a galaxy far, far away. It would define my childhood for me, inextricably tangling together imagination, feelings of contentment, emotional ties to those I first saw it with, and a hundred Sundays spent re-building the shattered remnants of an evil empire trying, but never succeeding, to regain power from a triumphant once-rebelion on my bedroom floor.

Thank you, George Lucas.

"I-CON," continued

Over the years, I would come back to campus to visit occasionally, and I would always come to I-CON. One year, my roommate and fellow alumni Mike D'Andrea, then an agent with a speaker's bureau (and the fellow who urinated with Mr. Sulu), arranged for an appearance at I-CON of TV's Batman, Adam West.

Mike was busy that weekend, so I accompanied Mr. West to I-CON and acted as his agent. Naturally, I had stepped into a hornet's nest, as Mike had neglected to inform me of some difficulties he was having with Ralph Schiano over the booking of Mr. West. Stuck in the middle, I had to explain to Batman why he had gotten stiffed on his portion of the fee.

In 1989, I came to the convention (thought my reception was always a little frosty after "the Batman incident"), bringing along this really nice girl I had just recently met. She feigned interest in all the nerdy stuff just to hang out with me for the day. We were married in 1992 and are currently expecting our first child.

I don't know who runs I-CON now. I stopped attending it a few years ago because no one recognizes me there anymore, and I feel like an intruder (also, because they expect me to PAY for a ticket). It has become like visiting the house you grew up in, now occupied by strangers. But that is as it should be.

I-CON has grown and, despite its peaks and valleys (and near collapse), has become a tradi-

tion on the SUSB campus as it approaches its 16th anniversary. I'm glad for that, but one must be careful not to let the tradition become an institution. Students should re-invent it every year for themselves, making mistakes and having fun. I hope you folks ARE still having fun running it, because in the end that's what you'll remember.

I think that's true of the college experience in general. I get the impression that students today, scared by a precarious economy and a horizon of limited expectations, approach college like a technical training school in which their sole interest is to assimilate certain data and master specific skills, rather than an environment in which to accumulate the experience and the wisdom required to live a whole and full life. Much of what I learned in college, much of my insight into people and into myself, much of what I value from that time, was gained outside of a classroom.

So, like the big guys said... your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go (go ahead, damn it, and split that infinitive!) where no one (PC strikes again!) has gone before...

Ralph Sevush is an SUSB alumnus, class of 1983, and currently an entertainment attorney practicing in New York.

MUSINGS

DR. BONG

I find myself having to share my pot with people that I don't like. Friends of mine bring friends of theirs over, and all of a sudden, I've got to share my good ganja with people who don't deserve it. What do I do? -- Greedy Weedy

Greedy Weedy: This is a tough question. Many times, I've been confronted with this problem. How can I share my pot with some people, but not others, without stepping on any toes? Why, just last week, I had to share my marijuana with a raspy-voiced, wispy-haired computer hacker! What to do, what to do. An essential part of marijuana use involves sharing. It's a social sport -- you've got to have people around, and sometimes, enemies become friends. If you like the people you smoke with, great. But if they smoke and run, then you've got a problem. But I digress. Sometimes, putting up with the annoying "friend-of-a-friend" is just part of the deal. There's little you can do about it, because even if you have no problem eviscerating Slappy the Secondhand Smoker in front of a room of a people, his friend (i.e. your friend) is going to be put in an awkward position. If you're close enough to your friend, you might want to take him aside later and say "Listen, I paid a lot for this pot, it's good, I like sharing, but he's an asshole, y'know? Let's call him up after we smoke." The only other option is to use a lighter to set the person you don't like on fire. This'll usually get the point across.

My friend and pot-smoking buddy has a bad head cold that shows no sign of going away. I really don't want to get sick, but don't want to

put a damper on my pot-smoking habits. What do I do? -- Antibody Adam

Antibody Adam: Ooh, nothing worse than sucking off a pipe covered in the saliva of the afflicted. Thoughts of the sneezing and moaning you'll be doing tomorrow can kill a high faster than a team of self-righteous Resident Assistants. There are basically two answers to this problem. The first is yours truly -- a bong. Unless you're a sick fuck who drinks the bongwater when done, there's a much reduced chance of catching cold this way, since the mouth goes IN the bong, not AROUND it. Just make sure Mucus Mike wipes his nose off before going in, because the last thing you need is a booger floating in the bongwater. If you don't have a bong, you have a problem, and that's where the second solution comes in. Just don't smoke. Shitty solution, I know, but it beats being sick, trust me. I've never heard anything quite as depressing as "oh by god I be zdoned."

I've got a great connection, but I think he's a NARC. How do I know? -- The Pot-Smoking Polack

If you think someone is a NARC, then automatically assume they're a NARC. The term "better safe than sorry" was invented 300 years ago, around a roaring campfire, while a group of colonial pioneers giggled wildly and tried to figure out what they put in the soup, but despite the saying's age, it still applies. And the government is positively asinine when it comes to pot laws. They'll put you away for a long time for a little bit of

reefer, and you'll come out with a size 18 asshole.

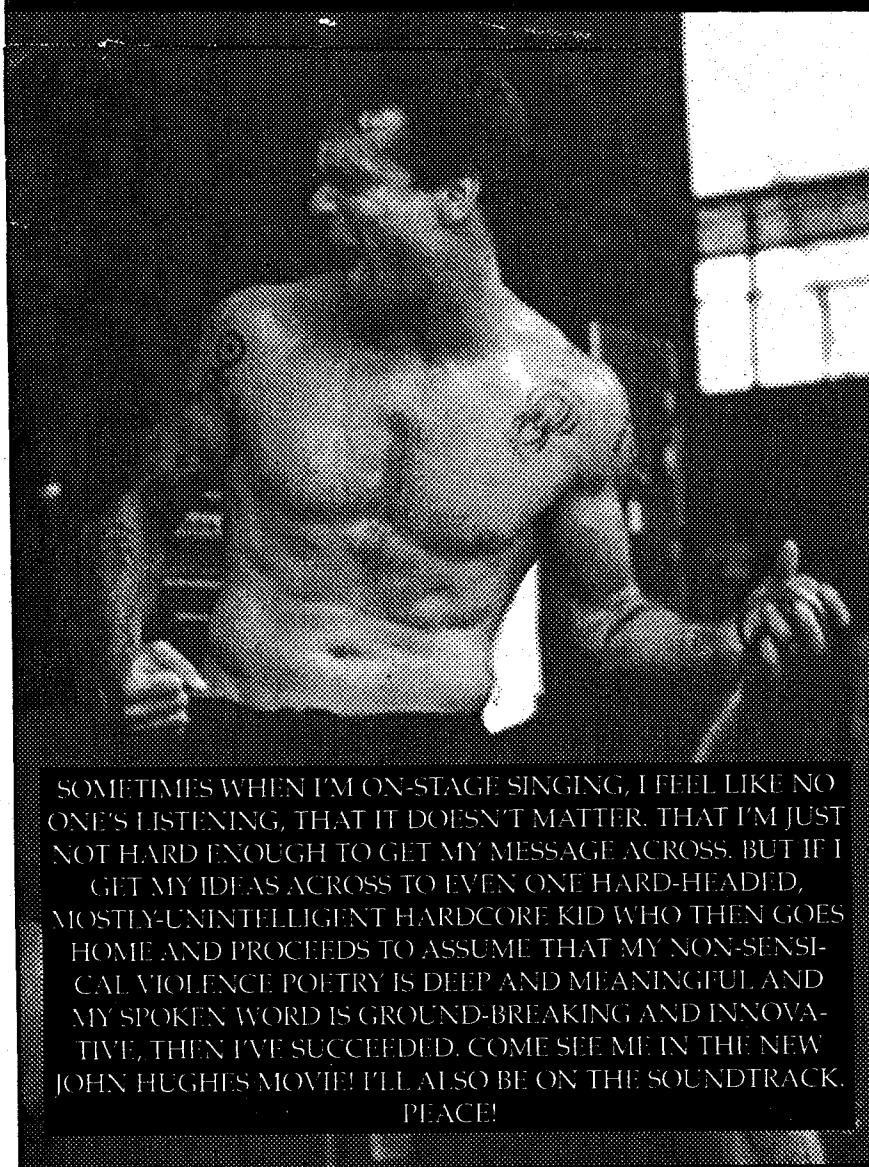
I'm dating this awful pusbag. He smells, has bad breath, no table manners, and says "hey?" after every sentence. He wears Italian silk suits and hangs out at Metropolis. But he has great weed! I mean, it's killer! One puff and I'm high! But the smoking usually ends with "Enzo" humping my thigh and falling asleep on my chest. What do I do? -- Anonymous In Astoria

Well, do you mind getting your thigh humped? I mean, if the shit's free... just kidding. There's no reason to swap spit with a douchebag just because he's got a good stash. If getting good pot means heavy petting with some club-hopping sack of pus, then that pot better come with three wishes and the ability to fly. It's just not worth it. Good pot is elsewhere, sister, you just have to look for it. Dump Dickwad and look elsewhere -- for good pot and good lovin'.

(Send love letters to Dr. Bong, c/o The Stony Brook Press, Student Union, Room 060, SUNY @ Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY 11794.)

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT: Bob Marley's birthday is on February 6 -- and so is Ronald Reagan's birthday! Both of them smoked copious amounts of weed. Well, maybe Reagan was just like that naturally, I mean, if you were married to that strip of beef-jerky/woman he was, you'd act a little odd, too. But I digress. To celebrate Bob Marley's life, please, smoke if so inclined.

HENRY ROLLINS' DAILY AFFIRMATION



THE WUSB TOP 25

WUSB, Stony Brook
January 12, 1997

ARTIST

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| 1) Hi-Fives | RECORD | Lookout! |
| 2) Tricky | And A Whole Lotta You | Island |
| 3) Built To Spill | Pre-Millenium Tension | Watnet |
| 4) Trans Am | Perfect From Now On | Thrill Jockey |
| 5) Moby | Surrender To The Night | Bad Music |
| 6) Bollweevils | A Christian Raver = Asshole | Dr. Strange |
| 7) Crumbs | Weevilive | Lookout! |
| 8) Zoinks! | The Crumbs | Dr. Strange |
| 9) Oval | Stranger Anxiety | Thrill Jockey |
| 10) Screeching Weasel | Whatever | Fat Wreck |
| 11) Huevos Rancheros | Bark Like A Dog | Mint |
| 12) Various Artists | Get Outta Dodge | Redroom |
| 13) Hansom Brothters | Compilation Shmompilation II | Virgin |
| 14) Spring Hill Jack | Sudden Death | Island |
| 15) Various Artists | 68 Million Sphincters | Shanachie |
| 16) Lickity Split | Skandalous Compilation | Double Deuce |
| 17) Fiona Apple | Volume Won! | Snoochie |
| 18) Simon Chardie | Bitch on a Piano | Upstart |
| 19) Cinnamon Toast | Bug Bite Daddy | Radio Pague |
| 20) Sneaker Pimps | Soft | Blows Dick |
| 21) L.E.S. Stitches | Mark Nimmer's Handwriting | Eyeball |
| 22) X-Rays | Snapped | Empty |
| 23) Stratotankers | Double Godzilla W/ Cheese | Homestead |
| 24) Allen Ginsberg | Gambit | Mercury |
| 25) Star 69 | Ballad Of The Skeletons | Nipples |
| 26) Bjork | Clean My Nipples | Assnugget |
| 27) Spacemen 3 | What The Fuck Is Her Problem? | Taang |
| 28) The Toasters | Redundant Indie Pop | Moon Ska |
| 29) Vampire Rodents | Hard Band For Dead | Sniff It |
| 30) The London Suede | Creamy Anal Crack! RUB! | Limeys Suck |

90.1 FM
Mark Nimmer

LABEL

- Lookout!
- Island
- Watnet
- Thrill Jockey
- Bad Music
- Dr. Strange
- Lookout!
- Dr. Strange
- Thrill Jockey
- Fat Wreck
- Mint
- Redroom
- Virgin
- Island
- Shanachie
- Double Deuce
- Snoochie
- Upstart
- Radio Pague
- Blows Dick
- Eyeball
- Empty
- Homestead
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- Sniff It
- Limeys Suck

Obscure Sub-Cultures: Vol. 4

By John Giuffo

Live-Action Role Players

In this installment of Obscure Sub-Cultures, we explore the fragile reality of the Live-Action Role Player, or LARPer, as the acronym-crazy members of the group prefer to call themselves.

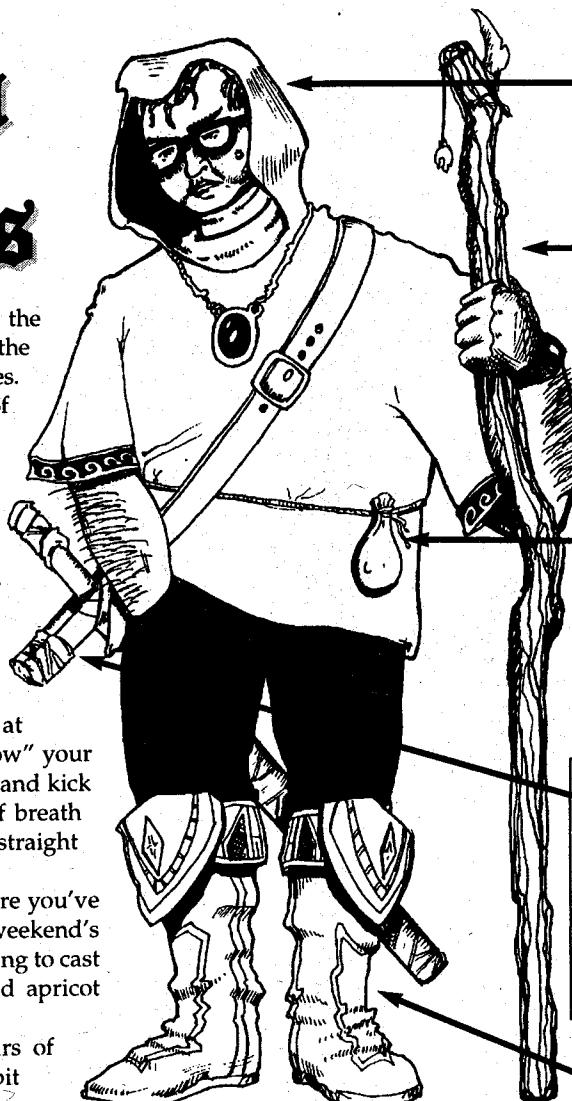
Live-action role playing combines the best elements of Dungeons and Dragons and schizophrenia to create an alternate reality for people too uncomfortable in *this* reality.

A visit to the annual ICON convention here on campus can give you a glimpse at the lifestyle of the Live-Action Role Player. Remember that 350 lb. girl in the chain mail bikini? You can bet your limited edition copy of Deities and Demigods that she's seen her share of LARP action.

When elaborate months-long campaigns consuming reams of paper and 20 players just don't do it for you, why not strap on a plate mail vest made from cardboard and aluminum foil, visit the Brach's candy stand at Waldbaum's to stock up on spell components, and "borrow" your grandmother's brooch to use as a ward against evil spells and kick back for a weekend of running around the woods out of breath while not bathing, and eating cold Chef Boyardee ravioli straight from the can?

True, it's no filk show, but it has its perks. Just make sure you've read and understand whatever D&D rip-off rulebook the weekend's coordinators have supplied you, or you'll find yourself trying to cast *Magic Missile* only to find out you must eat every dried apricot you've brought with you, and then you're fucked.

And maybe, just maybe, you'll find out that 12 years of Dungeons and Dragons playing does teach us all a little bit about courage.



Hooded Sweatshirt: \$14.99 at J.C. Penny's and some "medieval" trim from Frank's gets the LARPer his "garb" staple. Every good adventurer needs protection from the elements (not to mention ridicule) and nothing protects like a cotton/polyester blend.

Walking Stick: Woodland adventures often cover acres of land, and the copiously breast-ed LARPer needs assistance in battling the ever-present spectre of gravity. Bell is from old cat collar; the feather is from a pigeon.

Casio Calculator Watch: How else to keep track of ration depletion and Encumbrance/Movement calculations?

Bag of Holding: The resourceful LARPer uses the pouch he bought for dice (Oh, and what beautiful dice he has!) as a carry-all for the butterscotch candies and sesame seeds he uses as spell components. Only a clever somatic component separates the LARPer from mastery of all things magical.

"Boffer" Sword: Made from PVC piping and duct tape, the "Boffer" sword is a wood-freak's best friend (well, that and his hand) and it often gets him out of trouble when faced with certain doom from opportunistic NPC's. Held to his torso by the creative use of a vinyl belt from the Big and Tall Men's shop, the "Boffer" sword makes the LARPer ready for anything (except reality).

Boots: \$200 at ICON will get the LARPer stylish protection from the cold, as well as society.

INVADE OUR MINDS, PLEASE!

By Antony John Lorenzo

Our intellect is being assaulted, abused and siphoned by an uncontrollable force, an evil organization which aims to engulf humankind in a delusive, never-ending flurry of thirty minute brainwashing advertisements. To put it bluntly, psychic networks are evil and if I have to sit through another millisecond of their offensive, mindnumbing onslaught my brain will explode.

Firstly, these phony phone frauds are facetious foreseers of a fallacious future, for real. This future is created and determined by shamefully unqualified "psychics" who prey on the weak of mind to fuel a million dollar industry. They create a hallucinatory world deep within happy little television sets. Specific sounds and colors are used in these advertisements, they appear for specific amounts of time for specific reasons. Even more specific people are prompted to say specific things, they reflect their specific experiences with their specific choice of psychic friends.

Now it is a tactic of these "friends" to invade the minds of their target audience. Practically all of the various psychic networks employ soap stars or washed-up R&B icons to push the product. They are aware that fans of such celebrities are easily influenced and just as easily deceived.

As it happens, fans of Dionne Warwick have subjected themselves to years of her hypnotic love ballads. Repeated exposure to songs such as Heartbreaker and Walk on By have induced a confused, foggy state where that initial decision to call comes without second thought. Similarly, fans of daytime soaps are so heavily involved in the pretend worlds of Days of Our Lives and The Bold and the Beautiful that paying \$3.99 a minute to hear an operator read an expanded version of their credit history back to them is an essential part of their day. On the commercial, mysteriously satisfied callers re-tell of their psychic experiences; "She knew everything!" smiles the young professional, "She told me my wife was going to divorce me, I'm calling again!" Another young woman beams a broad smile; "She knew I just had a miscarriage! I was amazed!" Isn't something awfully wrong here? Am I the only sane person in the universe? Yes, I am, so please read on.

One prophecy a psychic friend is capable of is always kept a secret from the caller. It wouldn't be good for business if a psychic operator predicted to the caller the vast amounts of cash he or she would spend after becoming helplessly hooked; "I have a vision of you calling Psychic Frauds eight times a day for over two months. You will run out of money lose your job and be tossed out into the street by your landlord!

Ha Ha, you hopeless sap!"

Upon further examination of this industry, it is possible to foresee a scary future for mankind, where million dollar industries fatten their wallets by deceiving the general public. The scariest thing of all is that callers are led to believe that the psychics apparent knowledge of the past can only mean that their advice for the future should be heeded. Could this be the first step in the inevitable wave of mass medium conducted programming that has the ability to destroy mankind as we know it? I think it does. You see, as long as people rely on an outer establishment to attempt to see into the future there will be a group of people who (while often remaining stringently substance free) will be completely out of touch with reality, so involved in Dionne Warwick, daytime television and psychic friends that physical existence in the real world is no more. As long as there are these cleverly hidden engineers of evil airwaves there will always be the fear of a zombified takeover by lonely housewives and unemployed middle aged men persuaded by psychic friends to carry out various acts of terror on unsuspecting citizens who had the common sense not to call up in the first place.

Hey, that's what friends are for! Keep smiling!

Chin Slinky

By Lowell Yaeger

THE JESUS LIZARD, 1/25, IRVING PLAZA

What has eight legs, eight arms, and a tendency to expose itself onstage? Well, if it records muddy-sounding albums owned by a legion of rabid cult followers and is considered an unintelligible mess of blues-punk and noisy howling by everyone else, then it's probably The Jesus Lizard.

It's difficult for a band to overcome a reputation based on experimental noise rock. That's where the strength of The Jesus Lizard's live show comes into

play, a muscle they flexed last Saturday at Irving Plaza. The performance was both the last show on their current tour and their only NYC headlining appearance in two-and-a-half years, making for a highly excited crowd. (A crowd which was both pretty large AND well-behaved. You can more or less count on the people at a Jesus Lizard show to be there for the music, and not to fuck around. That didn't stop the giggling 12-year-old girls from showing up in force, though. What the hell were giggling 12-year-old girls doing at a Jesus Lizard show?)

After a forgettable opening act by Brainiac, a technopop band that combined the uncharming idiot stares of a Monkees cover-act and the on-stage showboating of Bush, The Jesus Lizard took the stage to a round of screaming and cheering. Lead singer David Yow looked at the crowd, an expression of bewilderment on his vaguely impish features, put down the 50-some-odd beers he had brought on-stage, and said "how can we play with you guys making that much noise?"

Less than 15 seconds later, the band tore into "Puss", a classic noiseabilly lament-about/ode-to domestic abuse, regardless of the soundlevel of the crowd. Less than 15 seconds after THAT, David Yow had ditched his tacky gold-lame cowboy shirt and was swimming the crowd, howling "I kick her down the stairwell/I think you can take her!" at the top of his lungs into a microphone that miraculously remained in his hand. The crowd was prepared for this stunt, a combination of strategic performance art and drunken carousing (David Yow has been known to toss back a few before a show, so much so that when I

spoke to him before a recent performance, I got buzzed off his breath). They were equally prepared for the sight of Yow's sweaty, scrawny buttocks, a side-effect of having his pants around his ankles upon returning to the stage.

Just getting started, folks.



Young, talented, and booger-free: The Jesus Lizard.

...a flick of ass-sweat,

...and a brief argument between the singer and a bouncer that nearly resulted in the 500.lb+ stage guard pummeling the tiny little vocalist into a pancake.

These were all secondary to the remarkable music being churned out by the band, a unit tighter than an adolescent nun's pussy and composed of musicians trained in jazz (guitarist Duane Denison), old-school punk (bassist David Wm. Sims), and O.J. Simpson-style skin smacking (drummer Jim Kimball).

The band bounced chaotically back and forth between The Jesus Lizard's relatively unstructured earlier work ("Killer McHann") to their more tightly-knit, but no less satisfying, later material ("Thumbscrews" and "Good Riddance"). Along the way, they managed to perform a new song suggesting that Jim Kimball, replacement for drummer Mac McNeilly, will fit in just fine.

After a rousing rendition of "Gladiator", the band departed the stage, only to return a few moments later for a 7-song encore that would include a cover of The Stranglers' "Shut Up" and a performance of the trademark "Seasick", a song that had Yow swimming the

crowd and screaming "I can swim!" into his microphone.

As the last chords of their final song faded

away, David Yow tossed a few pieces of errant clothing back into the crowd and admonished the showgoers to "be good and don't shit in your own mouth." Words of wisdom that I'm sure the shell-shocked showgoers, already coughing up blood from the internal injuries they'd sustained in the pit, took to heart.

A few stray pieces of interesting information, for anyone willing to listen. Lollapalooza negotiations have begun, and the names being bandied about include Korn, Foo Fighters, Tool, and The Prodigy. Alt-rock entrepreneur-cum-heroin addict Perry Farrell has also rejoined the planning group. Speaking of the demented little elf, he recently cancelled a slew of Porno For Pyros shows, on the pretense (read: pretentious) that the presence of David Navarro as guitarist led many to believe that a revamped Jane's Addiction would perform. Not so, said Farrell, narrowly avoiding a dangerous increase in his flagging credibility.

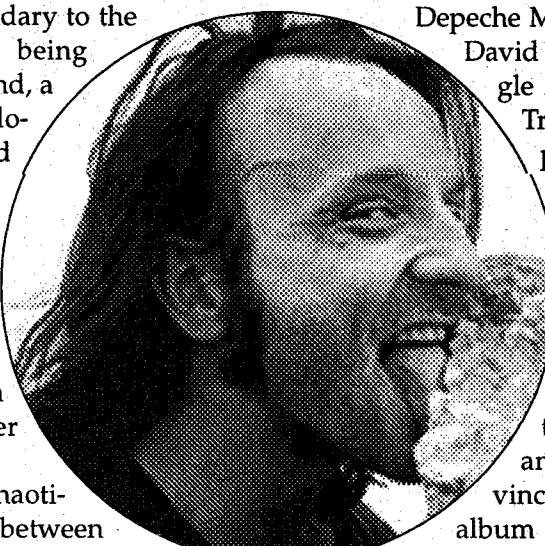
Is there a support group for people whose favorite well-established musical stand-bys are rapidly losing their charm? Except for a few nice touches, the new Nine Inch Nails and

Depeche Mode singles are utter crap.

David Gahan doesn't have a single new idea in his head, and Trent Reznor thinks he's playing Vampire: The Masquerade with Anton Corbijn. On the other side of the token, Live, a band I had previously found fit for ridicule and little else, has released a song I actually like — a lot. Both the song "Lakini's Juice" and the video have convinced me to pick up their new album when it comes out next month. What's next? A groundbreaking ballad about existentialism, set to a trip-hop/funk fusion backdrop, by Alanis Morissette?

Also in the works are new albums from Helmet (March 4!), Dinosaur Jr, and Faith No More. All of them should be touring as well, although no one in his right mind would want to go see an act as boring as Dinosaur Jr. Tool is also touring the East Coast again, this time with the Melvins as a support act — should be a great show, go check 'em out.

Last but certainly not least, aging punk Jello Biafra is getting busy again, this time planning the 200th release on his label, Alternative Tentacles. The album, a Dicks compilation whose liner notes are to be penned by the aforementioned David Yow and Fugazi's Ian MacKaye, should be out next month.



You don't want to know.



Take five, guys.