

The  
Stony  
Brook

PRESS

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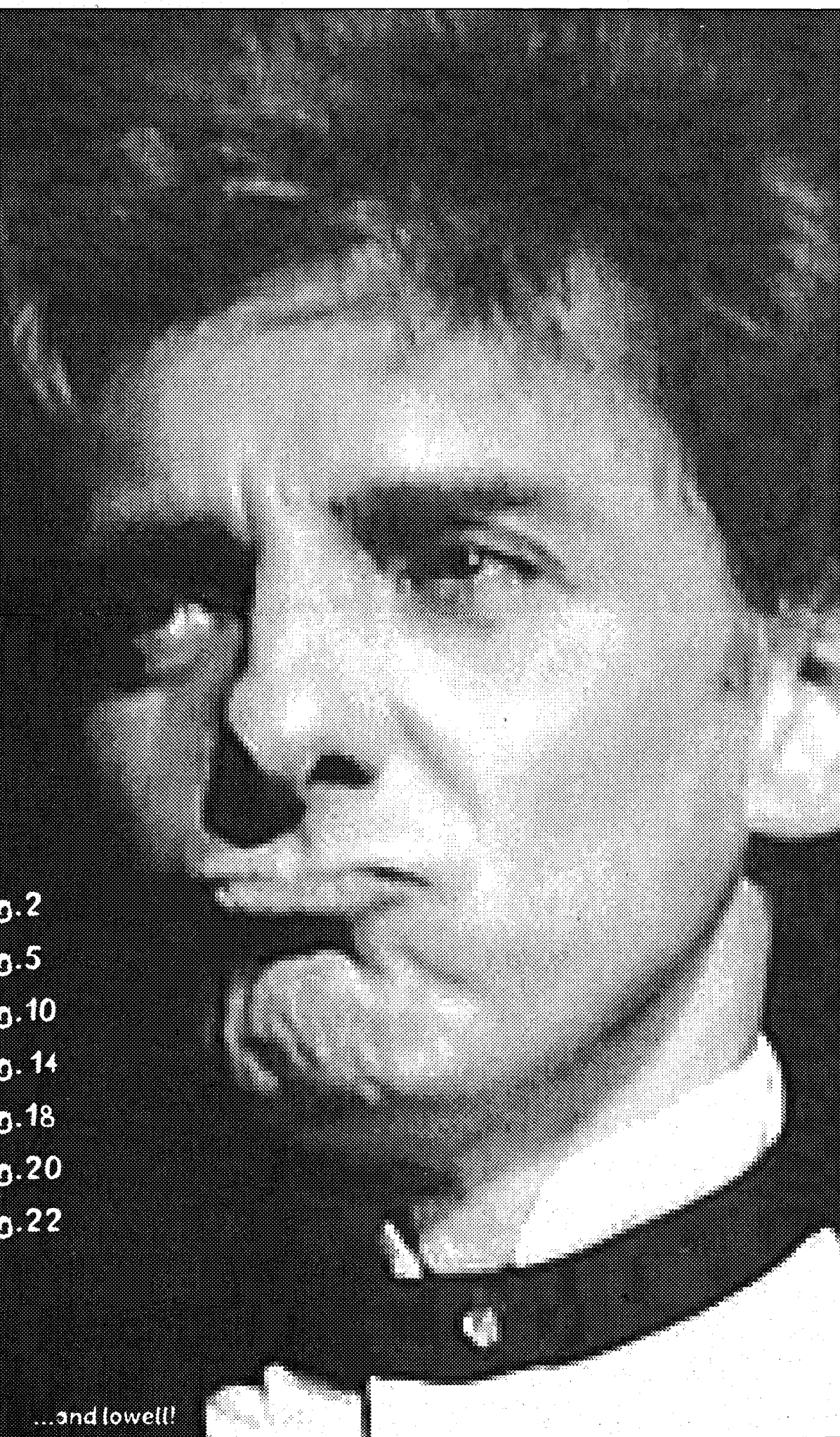
The University Community's Feature Paper

April 7, 1997

*Inside our  
tribute to  
Barry  
Manilow:*

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...and lowell!



# CONTROVERSY KEEPS ELECTION RESULTS IN LIMBO

By John Giuffo

A coalition of candidates for Polity office has brought suit against members of the "Students First" ticket, leveling 14 separate charges of wrongdoing. Among the complaints are charges of pollwatcher corruption, slanderous campaigning and illegal campaign practices.

The coalition, made up of Matthew Mahoney, Paul Perrone, José Peña, Vincent Medordi, Bradley R. Hausman, Michael Mahoney, Joshua Alpert, Jugdeep Singh and Matthew Edwardsen, filed an appeal of Election Board Decisions on March 31st.

The appeal is seeking to overturn a number of Grievance Board decisions made after the March 18th and March 19th elections. The grievance board is convened whenever a particular candidate feels they were treated unfairly in some facet of the annual Spring elections.

A judiciary board Supreme Court has been convened to review the complaints. Arguments started last Wednesday, April 2nd, ran over until Friday evening, and will be completed this Tuesday. Nine student justices, headed up by Polity Judiciary Chair Stacy Harris, are hearing the complaint list against the "Students First" ticket, comprised of Monique Maylor, Diane Lopez, Sayed Ali, Jawond Brown, Christopher Grant, Donna McGowan, Vivian Salazar and Alejandro Cantagallo.

If found guilty of the charges, the members of the "Students First" ticket face punishments ranging from vote penalties to disqualification from the election, to the entire election being nullified. The complaints also call for a new election, asserting that any results from the March elections are suspect and therefore invalid. The Polity Judiciary has ordered the election results held up until the matter is settled.

The charges also seek to appeal what the plaintiffs feel is bias on the part of members of the election board.

"I really think the process was violated by the pollwatchers," says Bradley Hausman, candidate for Vice President. "If you have pollwatchers that violate the rules, you have to do the election over again."

Hausman would like to change the process by which members of the election board are chosen. "Not just the election board, but I think that there needs to be more of a check of who becomes pollwatchers," Hausman said. Among the complaints are charges of illegal electioneering by pollwatchers, who are supposed to be impartial observers.

Monique Maylor, Polity vice-president, and candidate for president characterized the charges as frivolous. "The majority of them are lies," said Maylor, who feels the hearings are politically motivated.

Among the charges aimed at Maylor are assertions of her involvement with circulating a phonemail message which claims that the opponents of the "Students First" ticket "are going to take us in a direction that we do not need to go in. A direction that we have not seen on this campus in 20 or 30 years." The male voice on the phonemail message identifies himself as Andre English, chair of the Black Caucus.

José Peña, candidate for vice president, points to the message as the one thing he is most upset with. "I don't know how they can justify the phonemail message," said Peña. "It destroys our reputation with the students, right away it does something that we can not repair. How can you even combat a charge of racism?"

Hausman agrees. "Of all the stuff in the election, that's the one thing I took personally."

Maylor insists that the plaintiffs are misreading the content of the message. "I think the charge of racism is a low blow. How do they know there was racist intent?" asked Maylor. "It was referring to the lack of involvement -- they didn't know about Pataki's budget, they had never gone to Lobby Day, they had nothing but bad things to say about Polity. I didn't see any racist intent at all." Maylor asserts that she wasn't involved with making the phonemail message, and that she was angered by the fact that it was forwarded around without her approval.

Maylor is also charged with spending more money on her campaign than the \$150 election board by-laws allow. Records show that she spent \$208 at the Polity

Print Shop, and she's being charged with accepting ads from 3TV, which start at \$20, and a full page ad in *Blackworld*, a \$125 expense. Maylor claims she didn't know outside contributions were included in the spending cap, and all money spent over \$150 came from funding sources outside of Polity. She was fined 0.5% of the votes for her by the Election Grievance Board in the original filed grievance.

Curtis Morris, editor-in-chief of *Blackworld*, said the ad space was available to anyone desiring to run an ad, but that only Maylor approached him about it.

The hearings are scheduled to continue this Tuesday, and a verdict is expected before the end of the week.

Hausman wants the election held again, and the "Students First" candidates disqualified from running. "I would like to see the entire election thrown out, all the way down the line, including the referenda. Everything. Because if you have pollwatchers that did something, you must throw out everything, because that's how it works in the real world."

Peña isn't particularly interested in having anyone disqualified, but says he desires more fairness in the process. "My main concern is that the results of the election reflect the true opinion of the student population."

Peña is also disappointed that the hearings have to happen. "I personally know some of the people on that ticket," said Peña, "and they are very talented and very good people. They did not need to resort to this. It looks bad for Stony Brook students."

Maylor feels the hearings will vindicate her, adding that she is upset about the damage that the charges can do to her reputation. "I would encourage any student to confront me with anything that they've heard, because I'm not the monster they are making me out to be."

*Following this article on page 6 is a copy of the appeal of grievance board decisions handed to the judiciary. Brackets indicate a change has been made in the official, admissible version.*

## GRAD STUDENT NEWS

By Scott West

The Graduate School is intending to make a change in the way some TAs and GAs are paid. In the future, grads may be prohibited from earning more than \$9572 in the academic year from state funding sources.

Nothing the administration is proposing will prevent departments from paying less than \$9572 for a full year's work. Only the Union will do that.

Currently, the actual salaries paid TAs and GAs vary greatly, from \$15,000 to less than \$5000. \$9572 is an arbitrary amount set by the Stony Brook Grad School as the optimum pay for an academic year's work. Many Teaching and Graduate Assistants in the Humanities and Social Sciences earn more through work in more than one department. For example, some TAs in the Music department also work in the Music library. Departments with greater resources will pay TAs and GAs more outright.

In January of this semester, paychecks were partially withheld from at least 9 TAs, who had been offered a rate of pay exceeding \$9572. The Graduate School acted to repress TA and GA salaries which exceeded \$9572. Until now, no attempt has been made to enforce the \$9572 standard, either to raise or lower pay.

Of the numerous TAs working in more than one department this semester, the Graduate School singled out four individuals for pay cuts: three were hired to work in English and Women's Studies and one person was working in History and the Transfer and Evening Studies Office.

Each was offered between \$2300 and \$2500 for the additional work.

The Graduate School withheld the pay for the second class, without prior notification. By the time the reduced paychecks reached the TAs, they had already taught two weeks of classes, reducing the workload. The Humanities TAs were performing work for which they would not be paid.

Working with the departments, the Graduate School, and campus Human Resources, the GSEU and the individuals involved succeeded in getting pay restored during this semester.

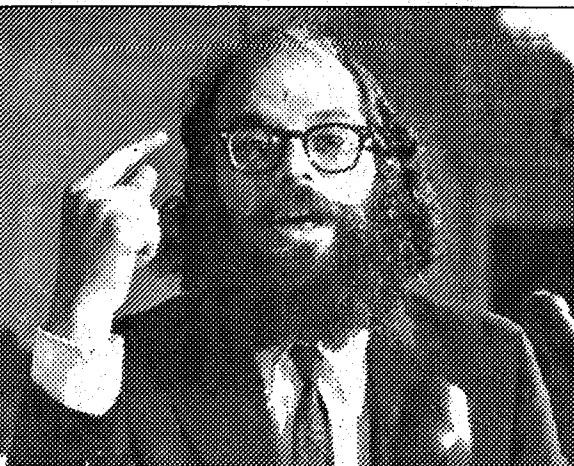
In the Sciences, TAs are generally paid above \$10,000 in the academic year by a single department.

In Biochemistry, upper level TAs are paid around \$12,000 in the academic year. This semester the Graduate School is attempting to reverse past practice by insisting these TAs receive only \$9572 from state sources.

Subsequently Graduate School Dean Lawrence Martin allowed that Biochemistry might pay TAs from Research sources to supplement the now reduced state support. However it is unclear whether this is policy or talk, and what effect this might have on their legal status as members of the GSEU bargaining unit.

At present the issue of pay for the Biochemistry TAs remains unresolved, with the Graduate School insisting that it acted properly in withholding pay without prior notification.

GSEU stewards are collecting information now on how its members are paid. Work will continue on protecting pay through the summer.



### And The Beat Goes On... RIP Allen Ginsberg 1926-1997

Today America mourns the loss not only of a great poet, but a great man.

Allen Ginsberg is best known for his poetry, most specifically for his masterpiece, "Howl!" His writing helped create the "Beat Generation" and expanded the limits of free speech in our society.

But beyond his words, Ginsberg was also a role model and a revolutionary. He led marches, raised consciousness and influenced many. Throughout his life, he stood for expanding boundaries and expanding yourself.

Allen Ginsberg died on April 5th of complications from liver cancer. Though his body has passed, his spirit is still with us.



# THE REVOLUTION

## WILL NOT BE TELEVISED

By Chris Sorochin

"If at age 18 somebody's old enough to be drafted, to vote and get married, they should be old enough to have a beer. And if not, change the age limit to 21 for all of it."

- Rep. Peter Klug R-Wisconsin

Oh, the shame and humiliation of it all. Last semester I devoted about a third of an article to the institutionalized inanity of the drinking age of 21 and especially New York State's new "Zero Tolerance" law and I did so in complete and total ignorance of important cracks in the glacier that manifested themselves last year. My humblest groveling apologies for having missed this important development.

First, in March, the Louisiana Supreme Court said "Laissez les bons temps rouler" by ruling that the 21 law was discriminatory against those who otherwise had the "responsibilities and obligations" of adults, but were still treated like children when it came to alcohol consumption. Louisiana was the last state to succumb to the hypocrisy of 21 and the first to dump it. Unfortunately, after several months (and god knows how much money and pressure by Mothers Against Drunk Driving and other groups), state attorney general Richard Ieyoub reinstated 21, giving the flaccid rationale that the state has a compelling interest in preventing highway fatalities.

Then, in June, there was a bipartisan effort in Congress to divorce the drinking age from federal highway funds, giving the states back their rights to set the age themselves and not be financially blackmailed by Washington. Again, unsuccessful and accompanied by heavy lobbying from MADD.

It doesn't take a hardened cynic to figure out that the efforts to lower the drinking age are backed by some fairly big booze industry bucks and not for altruistic motives. I hate to advocate jumping into bed with the Great Satan, but if the supposed good guys avoid the issue, what choice do you have?

There's no good reason this can't be an issue for the left, which leads me to wonder why not one of the lefty rags that I read regularly was good enough to keep their readership apprised of these events. They routinely defend the rights of pornographers and convicted felons and they're positively ga-ga over the recent referenda that passed in California and Arizona legalizing marijuana for medical use (to which I chorus amen and hallelujah), but where were they on this?

One big problem the left has is that they seem to do their damndest to fulfill the stereotype of leftist as humorless. Birkenstock-clad, dialectic-spouting, granola-munching, sexless geeks with weird facial hair and absolutely no regard for what the average schmuck enjoys. And the average schmuck (and schmuckette) enjoys his/her beer and/or cigarette.

When the left stay silent or even supports invasive attempts to legislate morality, they lose a chance to make much-needed points with, pardon the expression, the masses. *Nation* writer Katha Pollitt recounts her astonishment on meeting French leftists on a trip to Paris. They all smoked cigarettes! And had their own bar!!

Ever been to a leftoid shindig in these parts? Lemme tell 'ya, it requires fortitude. It's likely to be vegetarian, which is no biggie because if you're not into that, you can always eat before you go, but there won't be any smoking and if there is beer or

wine, absolutely no-one is going to get tanked and get crazy. In my opinion, this entire miasma of goody-goodyism, intended or not, is absolutely counterproductive. People who would otherwise be willing to listen to progressive ideas on universal health care, full employment and corporate welfare are turned off by the perception that first they must penetrate layers of politically correct folkways.

Also, the more I think about this new "zero tolerance" bullshit, the more suspiciously rancid it smells. Someone who's under 21 can lose their license for having had just one drink. Wait a minute. Isn't restricting the evening's revels to just one so you can drive the sort of responsibility that we'd like to see more of? Shouldn't it be rewarded rather than punished? All of these questions lead one to suspect that it's not really about making the roads safer. It gives MADD a distinctly low-tide aroma. Where do they get all that money to be everywhere lobbying and browbeating and propagandizing? These queries are beyond mere mortals, even men's room messiahs like myself. So I've crystallized my concerns in an erudite missive to none other than Marxist demigod (and attack dog) Alexander Cockburn. In the Pantheon of Political Enlightenment, Cockburn ranks just below Noam Chomsky and he delights in puncturing sacred cows. I hope he's not too busy with the CIA-cocaine and TWA 800 shoot-down coverups to oblige.

### ... OR ON THE RADIO, EITHER

Since his 1981 conviction for the murder of a Philadelphia police officer, journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal has published two books, *Live From Death Row* and, most recently, *Death Blossoms*. He has also given taped commentaries produced by the San Francisco-based Prison Radio Project. The writings and commentaries address not only prison life and capital punishment, but the economic and cultural roots of racism in US society. Many observers believe that Mumia's original trial was rigged, with eyewitnesses coerced and the judge prejudiced. Having been a member of



Mumia Abu-Jamal

the Black Panther Party and involved with the radical back-to-nature group MOVE, as well as a dogged reporter of police brutality in Philadelphia (which boasts one of the most corrupt police departments in the country), the

Fraternal Order of Police seems bound and determined to speed a politically-motivated execution. So fervent is the FOP's desire to see Mumia dead and silenced that they've engaged in campaigns of harassment of both the publishers of his books and National Public Radio when they planned to air the commentaries. Pennsylvania has also recently enacted legislation making it much more difficult for the media to get access to prisoners as a direct result of Mumia's articulateness and incisive reporting.

One radio outlet that has broadcast the commen-

taries has been Pacifica. Until several weeks ago, Pacifica was carried on the Temple University radio station, Jazz FM, which, with six sister stations, serves large areas of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. University officials have canceled their contract with Pacifica when they began airing Mumia's maximum security insights.

I phoned the university president's office (215-204-7405) to register my displeasure. They're keeping a count, so maybe if they heard from you, it wouldn't be a total loss. I also called the station (215-204-8561) and was told that the staff there are under a university-imposed gag order and are not allowed to say anything except that it was a university, not a station, decision.

By far the most interesting call I made was to George Ingram (215-204-8564), Temple University's version of Fred Preston. His rap was that the station wanted to play more music, but he did acknowledge that the death row commentaries played a part in the decision. He said that if banning them was good enough for NPR, it was good enough for WRTI. When I asked if he was aware of the pressure campaign from the FOP on NPR, he nearly belatedly that he was under no pressure from the FOP, which was not what I had asked him. I think he doth protest too much: if police organizations would target a major publisher and the national radio network, they wouldn't blink at going after a university right there in Philly. Maybe it was preemptive self-censorship.

The early-morning phone conversation took a very interesting, but not surprising, turn when Mr. Ingram stated that it was a university decision. I asked if the students or faculty had voted on it. No; university administration! And who, I probed in dentist-chair fashion, might these administrators be? Professors? Corporate types? At this point, Mr. Ingram began to do his impression of Three Mile Island and sputtered out that he had given me quite enough information, "Sir" (I can always tell I've struck pay dirt when I'm testily called "Sir").

I certainly hope that someone with greater journalistic skills than I is doing some digging into the connections of the Temple administration. After all, Judge Albert Sabo, who's presided over all Mumia's trials, is a member in good standing of the Fraternal Order of Police.

On the same subject, have you heard the PBA spots on some of the more commercial radio stations? They describe how hard and dangerous it is to be a cop and imply that reform in police departments is something "decent people" wouldn't want.

Q What can this mean?

A. Give yourself half credit if you said that it means the PBA has too much money and power. Award yourself an "A" if you divined that complaints against police brutality, and consequent calls for investigations and fundamental changes, must be on the rise, necessitating some p.r. damage control.

### FOR YOU WE'LL MAKE AN EXCEPTION

The Israeli Knesset is currently considering to legally institute the use

see "Revolution," page 17

**"Live From Death Row"**  
The story of  
Mumia Abu-Jamal  
Will be shown on Wednesday,  
April 16th at 8:00 p.m. in  
Javits 105

# REJECTION OF AN ELECTION

Page 2 of this issue details a number of allegations brought against the "Students First" ticket by the remaining candidates for Polity office. The charges have caused the election results to be held until the matter is settled, and the student population to wonder why the winners haven't been announced.

Among the 14 complaints filed last Monday are charges of corrupt pollwatchers, illegal and immoral campaign practices and campaign overspending. The charges are long and involved, and the arguments for and against -- as heard during last week's judiciary hearings -- are compelling while at the same time tedious.

At the base of the allegations is good old Polity infighting. It's nothing new, and any Stony Brook undergrad familiar with Polity should be familiar with such nonsense.

The coalition of complainant candidates do have a number of good points, though. A number of *Press* staffers have reported witnessing pollwatchers informing student voters about a write-in candidate, Monique Maylor -- a blatantly illegal and biased offense. We've also witnessed unfettered electioneering by Maylor supporters at poll sites. Both offenses are part of the plaintiff's complaint list, although no *Press* staffers are involved in the judicial process.

Monique Maylor also spent more money than is allowed under election board by-laws. Ms. Maylor claims she didn't know that outside contributions were included under the

spending cap, but ignorance of the law is never a defense.

Ms. Maylor and the "Students First" candidates also have a point. A number of the complaints smack of petty infighting, and many of them seem to be based on hearsay and a nitpicking attention to technicalities.

This much is certain: the election board did not do its job in making sure that the polls were being watched by unbiased employees. Pollwatchers broke rules, and the election was tainted as a result. None of the returns can be trusted or believed, as they are all suspect.

The election should be held again, with better oversight of pollwatchers. Polity should begin by hiring a different crop of pollwatchers, and perhaps assigning a paid Polity employee to oversee each polling site.

It's a pity that Ms. Maylor's supporters decided the best way to get their candidate elected was to cheat, since she's the best candidate for the office of President (Paul Perrone was clueless as to the details of Pataki's budget proposals, and Matt Mahoney didn't even feel like showing up to the judiciary hearings).

Perhaps a new, more closely monitored election will result in the best candidates for office winning their respective races. Polity has shown it's ability to adapt all of the less appealing aspects of politics for use at Stony Brook, let's pray they've also learned how to clean up the mess.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Berkeley of the East

#### To The Editor:

Back in the late '60s, Stony Brook was known as the "Berkeley of the East." College campuses were once thought to be the centers of political thought and action. Since that time, this school has moved to the other end of the spectrum. Apathy has taken over both here and across the nation as a whole. Students who once would have stood up for their rights, now stand back and complain.

The question has to be asked, "Would Pataki have threatened a \$400 tuition hike if he feared a student uprising?" The answer is, "of course not." Pataki would only do this if he felt that the students would accept it.

Is the Stony Brook administration any different from Pataki? Would the new SAC have been built in a way that excludes students from eating there, if there was a fear that students may take over the building? Would the administration even consider closing the commuter lounge in the library if they thought students would rise up?

When was the last time that a real protest occurred at Stony Brook? When was the last time that a large number of Stony Brook students did anything about an issue besides complain?

When SASU went to Albany on February 24, there was a bus that could hold 40 people. Only 10 people were on that bus, with an additional 20 more already in Albany. For all of the SUNY and CUNY schools, there were only about 100 people there. There are 10,000 undergraduates students at Stony Brook alone. With only 100 people from all of SUNY, there is no wonder why the governor ignores us.

Many people use the excuse that, "Albany is too far away." On March 13, the Committee on Higher Education was here on campus, from Albany, wanting to hear statements from students and faculty alike. People showed up, but the turnout could have been far better. Being right here on campus, this excuse cannot be used.

No matter how hard Polity may have worked in the past, without the support of the students as a whole, it means nothing. When a few people stand up and fight, they are looked upon as a minority. If people care strongly about an issue, they should stand up for their beliefs; if only a few people come out, they must be the only ones that care. The administration as well as elected officials in Albany see these few and believe that they are the only ones that care.

It has been 30 years since the name "Berkeley of the East" was used, but it should not be forgotten. I am not advocating the taking over of buildings, or any other violent tactics, but I think there are many things that students should do.

Students must demand to be informed on the issues. Here, at Stony Brook, we have many newspapers, a radio station, and a TV channel. Unfortunately, even with all of the resources, we are not being informed. On March 3, *The Stony Brook Press* published an article entitled "Save *The Statesman*." As we all know,

*The Statesman* has more advertisements and other worthless articles than they do news. Sports and music are important, but the "issues" should be the most important. College newspapers should be filled with controversy, not advertisements.

Students spend much of their free time complaining amongst themselves, believing that their opinions will not make a difference. These opinions must be expressed. Let the administration know what the students are thinking, or write letters to the school papers. If the administration believed that a large number of students cared about an issue, they would surely listen.

Students should as well hold protests. If news crews are called to protests with many students, the public would be better informed of the issues. The public may not know how much a \$400 tuition hike would hurt students. If the public saw that Pataki was hurting the students, they might vote him out in the next election. Students must go out and vote, both in school elections and public elections, to help decide who will lead the community. In order for a protest to be successful, it must be filled with many people. YOU must become involved. Do not assume that other people will.

The time has come for the students at Stony Brook to stand up for themselves. Apathy feeds upon itself. We as students must change this cycle. Students must "speak out" in order to be listened to.

-Josh Alpert

### Students First!

#### To the Editor:

This goes out to thank with utmost gratitude, all the clubs, organizations, Fraternities, Sororities and The Students who endorsed and supported the "Student First" Ticket during the Polity Elections. We would not have had a successful campaign without your support and encouragement all the way. We are as anxious as you are to find out the Polity election results and we apologize for the delay due to certain inconveniences that are beyond our control. At the moment there is a plea that has been presented to the Judiciary Board to have the Elections nullified due to various uncertainties that were faced by the candidates during the elections.

We again apologize for any inconvenience and hope that you continue supporting us so that we may represent you to the best of our abilities.

-In Unity,  
Monique Maylor  
Diane Lopez  
Sayed Ali  
Jawond Brown  
Christopher Grant  
Donna McGowan  
Vivian Salazar  
Alejandro Cantagallo

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## Gaffney's Graffiti

### To The Editor:

Have the members of Bob Gaffney's County Executive anti-graffiti task-force lost their minds? I mean, these people sure know how to waste taxpayer's money. In an effort to end graffiti, Bob Gaffney's task force has now declared that a rock is a "historical monument." This "historical" rock sits off the side of Nicolls road near the main entrance of Stony Brook University. It will become a memorial park so college students will no longer paint on it.

We have criminals painting churches, synagogues, businesses and personal property. Instead of protecting this property, we will spend tens of thousands of taxpayer's dollars to protect a rock. What will Mr. Gaffney's task force do, have a Police SWAT team waiting for some college student to come along and paint his girlfriend's name on the rock? How much money will this cost a year in upkeep of the lights, plants, flags, landscaping, bronze plaque and security? Did Bob Gaffney approve this?

No one wants spray paint on public and private property. It is a problem that needs to be attacked in a way that will solve it, but it will not be solved by making lame political points. Let's tackle the problem in areas where it will work best but not on a rock.

-Bill Walsh

## Unfair treatment by I-CON

### To the Editor:

There's only two black persons in the I-CON Science Fiction, Inc. (I'm not aware of any others, unless they're being bused in) I'm one of them, and here's my story...

### BACKGROUND:

As a State Civil Service staffperson, I'm connected with many things on this campus: I've gotten African Cultural Historian, Tony Browder, here on campus twice (one program won an award), I've had Montage Creative Writing and Video & Filmmaking meetings here on campus (Montage is a non-profit org. dedicated to the arts. I'm one of the co-founders), I'm hoping to strengthen my ties with the Theatre Department here on campus for radio theatre productions, and voluntarily, I am the Assistant Arts Director for this University's radio station, WUSB, and Radio Theatre Track Leader for the I-CON science fiction Convention (at least, I was...).

### PROTEST:

I am writing this e-mail to protest the unjustified systematic elimination of the LIVE RADIO THEATRE TRACK from the I-CON Science Fiction, Inc. It's very possibly that I'm dealing with the Mount Rushmore of Mis-management at I-CON, and I'll explain why I say this... Before the possibility of bringing legal action against the I-CON is pursued, I would like to present my case to POLITY (Student Government SUNY Stony Brook).

1. I submitted a budget proposal in writing in November 1996. Given directly to the President of the University Chapter of the I-CON, Jennifer Thomas. The evidence of this: this document was created in WordPerfect 5.1 and is dated in the computer on the day it was created and hand-delivered by me.

My problem: Can someone tell me how can I submit a written budget proposal directly to one of the I-CON presidents and then NOT be given a budget, venue, or a reasonable window of time to perform?

2. THE FIRST BLOW: approximately, 2 1/2 to 3

months before the I-CON convention (April 4, 5, & 6), I was told by my Department Head that the radio theatre track wouldn't be able to perform for I-CON 1997. I suggested to my Department head that since the Cabaret was scheduled to be in the Javits Center, and they need acts, maybe the radio theatre track could perform. I also ran this suggestion by the I-CON President for the University. My Dept. head agreed that suggestion could work.

My problem: If I hadn't made that suggestion, then the months of hard work, time, and money put in by my theatre troupe, would have been GONE WITH THE WIND. As the President & founder of The Montage Radio Theatre, it is my responsibility to look out for the people in my theatre company and to work for the revival of the art of radio theatre. I couldn't tell the cast and crew members that after weeks of rehearsals and preparation, we would NOT be performing at I-CON 97. a. THE SECOND CRUSHING BLOW: A week or two went by, and I was informed by my Department head that we would only have 20 minutes to perform at I-CON 97 in the Cabaret. Twenty minutes??? After a year of waiting, we only had 20 minutes to perform??? We wanted to perform the following at I-CON '97:

1. "I Wanna Live Too!" - a science fiction story - approx. 30 minutes.
2. "Thicker Than Water" - a Twilight Zone type story - approx. 12 minutes.
3. "They're Deadly" - a science fiction MONOLOGUE - approx. 5 minutes.
4. "The No. 2 Greatest Discovery" - a 3-character radio play - approx. 18 min.

3. To add insult to injury, I was approached by the I-CON Board President, Jeff Nagel, and told on Tuesday, 3/11/97, after the meeting, that the Live Radio Theatre Track was being discontinued.

My problem: At this point, we had less than a month to the I-CON Convention. If any thing is more demoralizing and discouraging to a theatre company is this kind of news. I would have to tell my cast & crew that the I-CON was discontinuing our track. Couldn't Jeff Nagel have waited until the I-CON was over to approach me with this grim news? Better yet, couldn't we have had a meeting to see if anything could be reconciled?

But what was the justification for discontinuing the Live Radio Theatre Track? Jeff Nagel gave two reasons:

1. The Live Radio Theatre Track was NOT cost-effective.
2. I had broken the I-CON chain of command when I tried to secure a room for the radio theatre track.

I'd like to respond to these two things (the only time I heard them was when Jeff Nagel told me on 3/11/97. He didn't e-mail me, write me, or try to tell me of his concerns prior to this date):

There's a few tracks in the I-CON that are not cost effective: For example, there's a track that secures films and then shows them at a designated venue every I-CON convention. There's no separate admission to see these movies—just the overall I-CON admission. The Writers' Workshop for the I-CON had a zero budget last I-CON and it has a zero budget for I-CON 1997—how's this track cost-effective? (By the way, the I-CON is a not-for-profit organization comprised of VOLUNTEERS).

After finding out that we only had 20 minutes to perform, I made some inquiries as to what was available in the Javits Lecture Center on my own. I believed and still do, that after waiting close to a year and having submitted a budget that our Track deserved more time. I did not make any attempt to break the I-CON chain of command, but I did something else...

As President of the Montage Radio Theatre, I secured April 6th from 3:30 - 5:30 pm in the Student Union Auditorium, so that our troupe

could perform ALL the plays we intended to do for the I-CON—similar to last year's I-CON. If I hadn't done that, our theatre company would have waited close to a year just to perform for 20 minutes. This event on April 6 is EXCLUSIVELY a Montage event, even though it occurs during the I-CON Convention.

I did what the I-CON didn't want to do. I got an auditorium with a stage. I got our theatre company AMPLE TIME to perform all the radio plays we need to. It's a triumph of the little guy vs. this bureaucratic machine. Although I'm part of the I-CON, I'm not part of this Mount Rushmore of bureaucracy.

### REVIVAL OF RADIO THEATRE:

A lot of people don't know what radio theatre is. Whereas some science fiction conventions only sell audio tapes of radio theatre (Star Wars, Star Trek, plays from the Golden Age of Radio); the I-CON had LIVE PERFORMANCES of radio theatre—original plays for science fiction, fantasy, and horror.

### PRIVILEGE OF EXPOSURE, DENIED:

One of the privileges of radio theatre being a part of the I-CON, is that we can invite some of the high-powered actors and writers of science fiction, fantasy, horror movies, and television to be a part of our performances. Any of these celebrities can participate or decline, they are under no obligation.

### PROPOSALS FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY—REJECTED:

I proposed to Jeff Nagel, President of the Board of I-CON, that the Radio Theatre Track could be self-sufficient (financially) if we were given permission to:

1. Charge admission for radio theatre
2. Allow individuals and businesses to become sponsors and then list these sponsors on the programs handed out to the attendees of the performance.

Both of these ideas were rejected by Jeff Nagel. The Cabaret Track, however, charged a separate admission for I-CON 96. For I-CON 97, it was agreed that the Cabaret would not charge a separate admission. Privileges for some, and not for others...

I request a hearing with Polity over this matter.

Bradley Arrington  
CSEA Civil Service Staff, SUNY Stony Brook  
President & Founder, The Montage Radio Theatre  
Assistant Arts Director, WUSB

[Editor's Note: You're a nut. Get over it.]

## SBVAC Gives It All

### To The Editor:

I was particularly impressed by your very favorable article on the Stony Brook Volunteer Ambulance Corps in the 3/3/97 Press. As Faculty Advisor and Chair of SBVAC's Advisory Board (as well as Assistant Chief with the Setauket Fire Department), I'm keenly aware of the tremendous effort that SBVAC's volunteers give on behalf of all of us every day. In fact, SBVAC was the first organizational recipient of the University's Chief William Schulz Memorial Award for Community Service this past December. Your article will have made a big difference in informing the campus community of the significant role that SBVAC plays here. Thanks for the nice salute to USB's emergency responders.

Leo J. DeBobes  
Director  
Environmental Health & Safety

# "Election Complaints", continued from page 2

## Appeal of Election Grievance Board Decisions

Plaintiffs: Matthew Mahoney, Paul Perrone, Jose Pen~ Vincent Medordi, Bradley R. Hausman, Michael Mahoney, Joshua Alpert, Jugdeep Singh, and Matthew Edwardsen. 7

Defendants: Monique Maylor, Diane Lopez, Sayed Ali, Jawond Brown, Christopher Grant, Donna McGowan, Vivian Salazar and Alejandro Cantagallo.

We, the plaintiffs feel that the penalties assessed by the Election Grievance Board are not proportional to the violations that occurred. In addition, there were other violations where no penalties were assessed. Finally, we are requesting that the entire election be done a second time. All of our supporting documentation is on file with the Election Grievance Board.

### Complaint 1: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article XV Section 4

There are witnessed accounts of pollwatchers informing students of write-in candidates for President and Sophomore Representative at polling stations in the Stony Brook Union, Jacob K. Javits Lecture Center and in the Frank W. Melville, Jr. Library. This was a clearly partisan action. For this reason the election should be nullified.

### Complaint 2: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article XV Section 2

At the polling stations in the Frank W. Melville, Jr. Library and in the Stony Brook Union there are witnessed accounts of students not being required to show proper identification. For this reason the election should be nullified.

### Complaint 3: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article IX Section 10

There was a phone mail sent out by Andre from the Black Caucus claiming that some of the candidates, not on the, "Students First" ticket, if elected would set minorities on this campus back twenty or thirty years. This statement indirectly states that those candidates are racists. Monique Maylor's voice is on the message as well as her phone number. This was a malicious act intended to slander other candidates. We feel Monique Maylor, Diane Lopez, Sayed Ali, Jawond Brown, Christopher Grant, Donna McGowan, Vivian Salazar and Alejandro Cantagallo should be disqualified for this offense. All of those candidates were a part of the, "Students First" ticket and all of the candidates benefited from this phone mail. [It has been determined that it is not Monique Maylor's voice on the message.]

### Complaint 4: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article IX Section 4

The voice mail mentioned in the previous complaint was campaign material that was not approved by the Election Board. We feel Monique should be severely penalized for this offense.

### Complaint 5: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article IX Section 10

There is a witnessed account of an announcement by Monique Maylor at the Whitman College Legislature meeting where she claimed the other candidates for President intended to dissolve all of the cultural

organizations on campus due to the lack of a European heritage organization. This is an obvious claim that the other candidates for President are racists. For this offense we feel Monique Maylor should receive a fifteen percent penalty. This is because there are two hundred and fifty students in Whitman College, and that number comprises approximately fifteen percent of the total number of ballots (the Polity Executive Director estimated there one thousand eight hundred ballots).

### Complaint 6: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article IX Section 2

Monique Maylor exceeded the maximum cost for a campaign. We understand she spent over two hundred dollars at the Polity Print Shop alone. She also had a full page add in Blackworld as well as an add on 3TV. Altogether she spent well over twice the allowed one hundred and fifty dollars. For this offense we feel Monique Maylor should be disqualified.

### Complaint 7: [Stricken from complaint list by agreement of both parties.]

### Complaint 8: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article XI Section 5

There are witnessed accounts of electioneering within eyeshot and earshot of the polling station at the Stony Brook Union and the Jacob K. Javits lecture center. They were passing out flyers for the, "Students First" ticket, Monique Maylor and Diane Lopez. For this offense all candidates on the, "Students First" ticket should be penalized at least ten percent each. In addition Monique Maylor and Diane Lopez should be fined an additional ten percent for their individual offenses.

### Complaint 9: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article XVII Section 5

There is a witnessed account [excerpt stricken by agreement of both parties] of Diane Lopez removing one of Paul Perrone's posters. For this offense we feel Diane Lopez should be disqualified.

### Complaint 10: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article XVII Section 1

There were nine people present as part of the Election Grievance Board. There are supposed to be exactly five. The Election Board Chair, one other election board member, two members of the polity judiciary, and one member of the council comprise the Election Grievance Board. Therefore, all decisions made by the Grievance Board should be nullified.

### Complaint 11:

There is no provision in the Election Board By-Laws for having the candidates' platforms at the polling stations. In addition, some of the polling stations did not display all of the platforms.

### Complaint 12: Violation of Election Board By-Laws Article m section 1.1

The Election Board had the responsibility to setup a debate that would allow the candidates to debate the issues at hand. The debate that occurred was neither fair nor was it informative for many students, for the following reasons:

1. Due to starting far later than the 12:40 p.m. scheduled start time, the majority of students had to leave after only hearing from the presidential candidates and only part of the vice-presidential candidates' statements. The candidates for secretary were the third group to speak, first starting at 2:20 p.m., when campus life time ends at 2:00 p.m. Several candidates had to leave early as well in order to attend classes.
2. Upon opening up the floor to questions from the audience, limits were set on the number of questions in order to save time. These limits were then disregarded when a large number of biased questions were asked at the expense of those students not on the, "Students First" ticket. The additional questions caused the debate to run much later than it should have, preventing candidates for other positions from having an audience to speak to, without bringing any new information to light.
3. When members of the audience and passers-by became loud, it was the responsibility of the moderator to regain order, this was only attempted when Monique Maylor was about to speak. Candidates not on the, "Students First" ticket were forced to speak over the noise.
4. The debate was for candidates, being that Monique Maylor was not on the ballot, she should not have been given the privilege of participating in the debate.

5. During the Vice-President debate, a question was asked by a member of the Minority Planning Board, "What issues do you think affected the minorities on this campus the most this past year?" Bradley R. Hausman responded the budget cuts were the biggest issue facing minorities. The questioner tried to correct Mr. Hausman, but the moderator would not allow it. When Diane Lopez answered, she mentioned the budget and nothing was said.

We believe that the debate was used to mock those students not on the, "Students First" ticket. For this reason, the election should be nullified.

### Complaint 13: Violation of the Election Board By-Laws Article VII Section 5

All candidates were required to attend a meeting at 5:00 p.m. on March 9. The by-laws state, "No one may become a candidate without attending this meeting." Monique Maylor did not attend this meeting, therefore she should not have been permitted to become a candidate. For this reason Monique Maylor should be disqualified.

### Complaint 14:

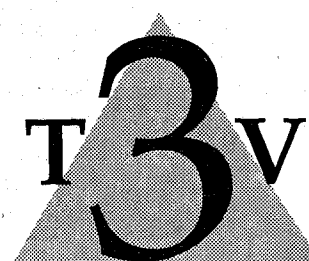
Matthew Mahoney, Vincent Medordi, Michael Mahoney, Joshua Alpert and Jose Pena were penalized, and were not given the opportunity to defend themselves. As a result, we feel all penalties for said candidates should be revoked.

As a result of the compilation of these violations we, the plaintiffs feel the election should be nullified, another election held and all candidates on the, "Students First" ticket not be allowed to run for any position.

Submitted by: Matthew Mahoney, Paul Perrone, Vincent Medordi, Jose Pena, Bradley R. Hausman, Michael Mahoney, Joshua Alpert, Jugdeep Singh, Matthew Edwardsen [Accompanied by signatures]

## Check out 3TV this April!

| Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday   |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>7</b><br>5 pm The Name of the Rose<br>7:30 Ruff-Kutt Reggae<br>8:00 Allegro non Troppo<br>10:00 Lifeform<br>1 am Vital Signs      | <b>8</b><br>5 pm The Temp<br>7:00 U.K. Today<br>7:30 Long Kiss Goodnight<br>9:30 Majority Mix<br>12:00 First Wives Club | <b>9</b><br>5 pm CMV<br>6:00 Internal Affairs<br>8:00 Lawnmower Man<br>10:00 Jip-Joint Theatre<br>11:00 Buckaroo Banzai | <b>10</b><br>5 pm Vital Signs<br>7:00 Lifeform<br>9:00 Allegro non Troppo<br>10:30 The Name of the Rose<br>1:00 Damage | <b>11</b><br>5 pm Burly Bear<br>6:00 Buckaroo Banzai<br>8:30 First Wives Club<br>10:00 Long Kiss Goodnight<br>12:00 Lawnmower Man        |
| <b>14</b><br>5 pm Long Kiss Goodnight<br>7:30 Ruff-Kut Reggae<br>8:00 Vital Signs<br>10:00 Buckaroo Banzai<br>12:00 First Wives Club | <b>15</b><br>5 pm Congo<br>7:00 U.K. Today<br>7:30 The Name of the Rose<br>10:00 Majority Mix<br>12:00 The Temp         | <b>16</b><br>5 pm CMV<br>6:00 Lawnmower Man<br>8:00 Internal Affairs<br>10:00 Jip-Joint Theatre<br>11:00 Lifeform       | <b>17</b><br>5 pm Allegro non Troppo<br>6:30 Damage<br>9:00 Vital Signs<br>11:00 Congo<br>1:00 The Temp                | <b>18</b><br>5 pm Burly Bear<br>6:00 First Wives Club<br>8:00 Buckaroo Banzai<br>10:00 Long Kiss Goodnight<br>12:00 The Name of the Rose |



### This month's movies are:

The Name of the Rose

Allegro non Troppo

Lifeform

Vital Signs

The Temp

Long Kiss Goodnight

First Wives Club

Damage

Lawnmower Man

Congo

# We're Your Station!

## Good luck this semester from 3TV!



# THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

## Part III of III: New Insights, Renewed Hope

For the first time after 15 years of disappointment and horror, promising new treatments are offering hope for people living with AIDS. Last November, a promising new treatment strategy using a combination of anti-viral drugs was revealed at the 11th International Conference on AIDS in Vancouver, Canada.

After the initial infection, human immunodeficiency virus appeared to enter a dormant phase within T cells in the immune system, only to erupt in a massive assault months or years later. When the virus returned, traditional drug therapy was often ineffective in preventing the destruction of the immune system. In addition, drug-resistance strains emerged rapidly, reducing the effectiveness of the treatments.

The HIV virus spends its life hijacking white blood cells called CD4+ T-lymphocytes and using them to produce more viruses. The virus consists of two strands of ribonucleic acid (RNA) that encode genetic information and some enzymes enclosed in a protein coat. When HIV finds a T-lymphocyte, proteins on the viral surface bind to a molecule called CD4 as well as other receptors on the cell. This allows the virus to enter the cell, where the enzyme reverse transcriptase converts the RNA to deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA).

This piece of DNA is slipped into the cell's genetic material with another enzyme known as integrase. The T cell produces viral proteins and RNA with its own resources, which will be used to create new viruses. As these proteins are produced, they are cut into small pieces with protease enzymes. Then, the viral molecules assemble and bud off from the cell membrane to infect other cells.

Anti-viral drugs target various stages of the life cycle, halting the reproductive process. One of the first drugs to be used in treating AIDS was AZT (3'-Azido-2'-deoxythymidine), which inhibits the reverse transcription step where DNA is made from the viral RNA.

Normally, a single strand of DNA consists of four possible alternating nucleosides linked with phosphate molecules. The phosphate molecules act as a "glue" that holds the chain together. AZT resembles the nucleoside deoxythymidine, and reverse transcriptase would place AZT where

deoxythymidine belongs. But, reverse transcriptase cannot add the next phosphate molecule onto AZT, and DNA production stops.

Also, reverse transcriptase can mistakenly bind to the AZT in an irreversible manner when AZT is abundant. This process is known as competitive inhibition, and it renders the enzyme nonfunctional. Another drug, 3TC, is closely related to AZT and also blocks reverse transcription.

In December 1995, the Food and Drug Administration approved the first of a new class of drugs called protease inhibitors. Protease inhibitors interfere with the protein-cutting enzyme near the end of the reproduction process.

Part of the insight that led to the development of the new treatment came from a better understanding of the "dormant" phase in which HIV levels dropped in the blood temporarily. Patients

with HIV showed high concentrations of virus in the first few weeks after infection and the late stages of AIDS, but the virus practically disappeared during the time between these stages.

Dr. David Ho, Director of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center in New York City, and Dr. George Shaw of the University of Alabama at Birmingham demonstrated that the low viral loads did not necessarily mean that the virus was absent. Instead, they claimed that the immune system may be successfully removing the viruses as they were formed. But, the immune system eventually becomes exhausted, which allows HIV to increase in number again.

Therefore, Ho and Shaw postulated that if one could abruptly stop viral replication, the immune system would have a chance to rebound. Unfortunately, none of the drugs available were powerful enough to stop HIV. In 1994, protease inhibitors became available for clinical trials. Using mathematical models derived by Dr. Alan Perelson of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, they predicted that a combination of AZT, 3TC, and a protease inhibitor would be more effective. This is because the chances for the virus to mutate into a form resistant to all three drugs were only 10 million to 1.

Within a few weeks after starting a "cocktail" treatment trial, 70% of the patients began to have improved health. In many patients, the virus

became undetectable in lab tests, and their immune systems can effectively handle the opportunistic infections that were often fatal to people with AIDS.

Although this treatment offers new hope to patients as well as physicians, it is still not a cure. Nobody knows if these drugs will continue to be effective or if viral particles can still hide in the lymph nodes, the brain, or the testes. It is not clear if the drugs will show toxic effects after long-term use. Also, this treatment is extremely expensive, and is not currently available to most of the people living with HIV in the world.

Nevertheless, when people from the future reflect upon the AIDS epidemic, 1996 may become known as the year when despair gave way to hope, and when people realized that AIDS may not be invincible after all.

### SCIENCE & SOCIETY BY MICHAEL YEH

For more information about HIV/AIDS testing and treatment, contact the following organizations:

Gay Men's Health Crisis  
129 W. 20th St.  
New York, NY 10011  
(212) 807-6655

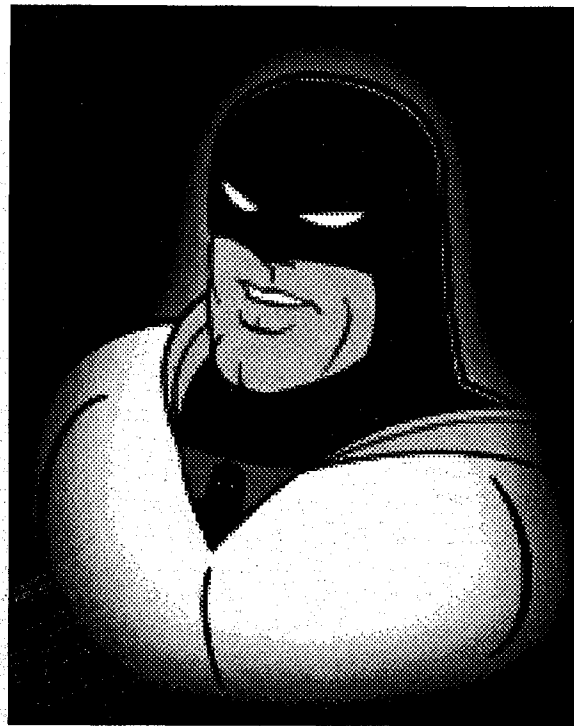
AIDS Clinical Trials Information Service  
P.O. Box 6421  
Rockville, MD 20849-6421  
(800) TRIALS-A

Centers for Disease Control National AIDS Hotline  
(800) 342-2437

National Association of People With AIDS  
1413 K St., NW, 7th Flr.  
Washington, DC 20005  
(202) 848-0414

AIDS Healthcare Foundation  
6255 W. Sunset Blvd./16th Flr.  
Los Angeles, CA 90028  
(213) 462-2273

National Minority AIDS Council  
1931 Thirteenth St., NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
(202) 483-6622



## Hey, Kids!

I'm a popular cartoon character used in this publication without the permission of the copyright owners!

Help keep crimes like this from being committed in the future...

Join *The Press*!

# The Information Superhighway For All

By Nancy B. Regula

With the invention of the world wide web, the value of networked communications on a global scale has become clear and attractive to the masses of humanity. Since its inception, the internet has continued to grow rapidly. In early 1995, access was available in 180 countries. And there were more than 30 million users. It is expected that 100 million computers will be connected via the public internet by the year 2000. The internet has supported global collaboration among people and organizations, network innovations, information sharing, and rapid business transactions. The advent of the internet, as with any technological advancement, has brought progress as well as problems. The abundance of information available via the net is difficult to categorize, since it is not an electronic library, and presents a problem to users who wish to access this information. Computer security is another problem faced when storing information on the internet. Copyright statutes are difficult to maintain and laws regulating such spheres are new. Putting the net to work for the masses will be the challenge in the years ahead. E-mail has become the means of interconnecting most of the world and public internet users, but those applications do not begin to access the gigantic raw information available.

Internet technology was developed chiefly by American computer scientist Vinton Cerf in 1973, as part of a United States Department of Defense Advanced Research Project & Agency (DARPA) project, managed by American engineer Robert Kahn. In 1984, development of the technology used to bring about the internet and the running of the network were turned over to the private sector as well as to government research agencies for further development.

The internet is an open interconnection of networks that enables connected computers to communicate directly. There is a public internet and many smaller, controlled-access internets, known as enterprise internets. The internet has gone from being the communications division of engineers and scientists to the primary province of information exchange for all. So much traffic has built up along the information superhighway that President Clinton announced his plan on creating a separate system for scientists and engineers, entitled the Internet II.

Internets are assembled by using many kinds of electronic transport media which includes telephone lines, optical fiber, satellite systems, and local area networks. Internets can connect to almost any kind of computer or operating system. An internet is usually implemented, using international standards, into software which runs on a connected computer. The computer which is connected to the internet is called a host. Computers that contain the information to be accessed by a host computer are called routers. The computers that are part of the public internet possess unique registered addresses and obtain access from internet service providers.

The characterization of the internet as the world's library for the digital age is perhaps a misnomer. The collection of multimedia resources known as the World Wide Web, was not intended to act as a library for the retrieval of organized publication and information. While it is true that

the web contains not only books and papers but advertisements, video recordings, and transcripts of interactive conversations, its contents are so widely dispersed that it is difficult to obtain a thorough collection of information deserved. Organizing the web, or electronic indexing, is required, as information is added to the internet. If the net is to continue to grow and thrive as a new means of communication, traditional library services will be needed to organize and access the networked information. The librarian's categorization must be supplemented by the computer scientist's ability to program the task of indexing and storing information.

Presently, computer technology organizes most of the information on the internet. Software

automatically classifies and indexes digital data on the net. Automating information access is advantageous because it avoids the high expense of human indexing. However, as anyone who has ever sought information on the web knows, automated tools categorize information in such a way that it may be difficult to locate certain data. The classification of information by an automated system is done in such a way that a search frequently contains references to irrelevant web sites while leaving out others that hold important material. In contrast to human indexes, automated programs have difficulty identifying characteristics of a document such as its overall theme or whether it is a poem or a play.

The structure of electronic indexing can be understood by examining the way in which search engines assemble indexes and locate information requested by a user. Programs commonly called web crawlers are dispatched to every identifiable

site on the web. Each site is a set of documents, called pages, which can be accessed over the network. The web

crawlers download the pages and examine them, extracting any possible indexing information. The process of indexing can be done in many ways, depending upon the particular search engines installed. A search may include locating what words are abundant in the document or what key phrases appear. This data is then recorded and placed in the engine's database, along with an address where the file resides. A user will then utilize a browser, such as Netscape, in an attempt to locate information in the search engine's database. This inquiry will yield a list of addresses from web resources that can be used to connect to sites identified by the search.

Computer security has developed technologies both to protect single computers and network-linked computer systems from accidental or intentional harm. Such damage would include the destruction of computer hardware and software, physical loss of data, and the deliberate invasion of databases by unauthorized individuals, colorfully called hackers. Most invasions of computer sys-

tems are for international or corporate spying or sabotage, but hackers may penetrate further despite safeguards. The most widely used safeguarding system used in the United States is the Data Encryption Standard (DES), designed by IBM. DES involves a number of basic encrypting procedures that are repeated several times. A growing concern is deliberate infiltration into computer programs, with the possibility of implanting a virus which may, if undetected, progressively destroy databases and other software.

It is impossible to thwart off the spread of information and anything that can be reduced to bits can be copied. Some people feel that the ease of duplicating information on a computer heralds an end to copyright. The possibility of universal access to great works and crucial information is undermined, and generally the information on the internet is perceived to be of low

value. The reason for this problem is the authors and publishers cannot make a living by giving away their work. Uncontrolled copying has made it so that authors do not release their best work in digital form.

As technology brings more security, better-quality work will reach the net. Although it may not be free, it will most likely cost little because of lower expenses to publishers for billing, distribution, and printing. The additional security is brought about by the development of trusted systems: hardware and software that can be relied upon to follow certain regulations. Those regulations, called usage rights, specify costs and conditions under which a digital work can be transmitted. A trusted computer would, for example, be unable to make unauthorized copies or to play audio or video selections for a user who has not paid for them. Publishers can distribute their work in such a way that it can be displayed or printed only by trusted machines.

What is the advantage of a trusted system for the consumer? With the option of having less control over the equipment and data in their possession, why would a consumer opt for this system? The answer to that is that unless intellectual property rights of publishers are enforced, many of the most desirable writings will never be available via the internet. The trusted systems make it possible for entire libraries to go on-line, as well as bookstores, newsstands, and movie theatres. This approach to protecting authors' rights may avoid the need for further regulations in the future that could stifle digital publishing.

The dynamics of a competitive marketplace form the largest obstacle to building protection for digital rights. Several companies already have trusted systems in place. This software is mostly incompatible and proprietary. Although technology could provide for this digital commerce, the greatest benefit of the net will only surface when consumers and various others work together.

Today, the aim of computer technologists is how to organize knowledge on the internet with the goal of making it more useful. This would include simplifying the desired information as well as simplifying the way in which that information is accessed. The internet is an extremely useful tool, but its greatest benefits are yet to be realized. Future advances in networking will prove some current professions obsolete, with the ease and relative inexpensive nature of accessing internet information.

*"...unless intellectual property rights of publishers are enforced, many of the most desirable writings will never be available via the internet."*

*"...the characterization of the internet as the world's library for the digital age is perhaps a misnomer..."*



# BORDERS-HUMOR US!

By Boyd McCamish

In the past few weeks Border's Books has responded to a barrage of complaints about its handling of increased efforts by employees to organize their workplaces. The managers who respond seem clearly concerned about the welfare of their employees- in answer to them I say, Humor Us!

For once why doesn't this superficially intellectual business enterprise say, "We know that democracy doesn't or shouldn't end when one punches in for work and therefore we will recognize any union our employees deem best." Surely the managers and other supervisors aren't naive enough to take these attempts at unionization as personal affronts.

Although, it is well known that management, good hearted management, historically have seen attempts by employees to organize as a sign of personal failure. I have no doubt that for the most part the managers are good and fair people, and as such would consider, seriously this proposal.

SHOCK the business world, recognize the unions! Think of the free press! The CEO of Borders, undoubtedly on the front page of all the major papers stating that democracy and fairness are the rule of law at Borders. According to management, Borders has the most generous benefits in the business. So when the company and the union sit down at the table, all that will be required is a signing of the existing agreement, the bank account number of the union for the dues, and a firm handshake- hell maybe even a hug. Can you imagine the horror for those people over at Barnes and Noble? They'll be at the bargaining table quicker than you can say "Triple Mocha Latte" real fast three times. Thus, any fear of unequal pricing in the business will be nullified. Seems simple. don't it?

Now, recognizing the union might be good enough for some people, but I say Border's can do better. In addition, they should instill in their employees the principles of good trade unionism. The Border's and their employees could form workplace inspection teams, whereby the managers could keep tabs on the employees by making sure to remind them to go to union meetings, volunteering for voter registration drives or helping the homeless. In return, the union members might send little memos to regional directors voicing con-

cerns about managers who are working too much- or even employees taking certain liberties with inventory. This would be such a place of mutual respect and friendship it might be a new age for employee-employer relations. Perhaps I'm being selfish here, I don't mean to sound like these are original ideas. I know as well as anybody that I didn't think them up- and because Border's proudly sells a variety of Karl Marx's volumes, I know they're as familiar with them as me.

Border's also offers a wide variety of text by Dr. Noam Chomsky, who, amongst other things has been outspoken about industry's systematic attack on trade unions, particularly since WW II. Now perhaps I'm being melodramatic, but can't you just

see a manager disciplining an employee about uttering the word union in the store as he leans against copies of "The Chomsky Reader", or Dr. Elizabeth Fones-Wolff's "Selling Free Enterprise"? Ahh, the irony!

Now I know that in the past twenty years, unions seem to have become complacent. However, it's only fair to say that union organizers- not unlike sharks have a keen sense for smelling blood. Sure, Border's has for the most part handled the talk about unions with calm rebuttals and polite rhetorical responses. But make no mistake about it Border's- people see the sweat on your brow. Keep up the denials and you'll have Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) organizers scotch taping themselves to your front windows. Have you ever talked to these people? Coo-Coo nuts I tell you, these people are not well.

Personal Aside- I'm an editor of the Stony Brook Press, a student run newspaper. As a courtesy to past graduates we mail the paper to any of them that ask for it. One such alumnus works at a Border's which proudly displays the paper in the newspaper section. Since I'm in charge of distribution I made sure to mark the manila envelope with the always impressive "Union Yes" slogan to show solidarity with my fellow wage earners. Four days later I got a call from her saying that her manger said that if another envelope came down with that slogan, they would not display the newspaper, and she might be looking for another job.

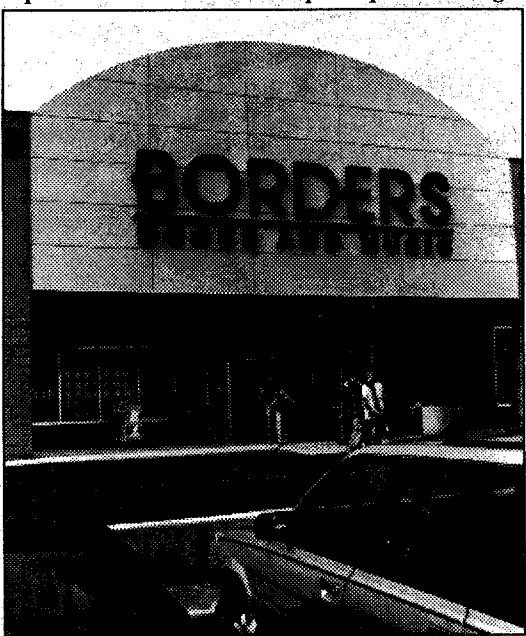
The management of Border's loves to say that their employees are the most intelligent in the business. Intelligent people may know what is right but they are also smart enough to rationalize the notion that it doesn't pay to be a hero- to rock the boat.

The issue of workplace democracy is slowly creeping into the American consciousness. If this is true then Border's ought to act now. It was recently reported that the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) cut a deal with a Las Vegas Hotel- recognize the union cards without going to a vote and they will be more considerate when negotiating with you. That message should not be lost by the upper-management of Border's. In the not so distant future this could be the norm. It's worth noting that signatures on authorization cards are all that is needed for union representation in Canada. Those crazy Canucks.

Now, like many union sympathizers I realize that under most corporate bonus systems quarterly profits are the benchmark by which performance is measured. This is a vital reality in understanding what motivates people to fight unions tooth and nail. An objective observer realizes that by design in a capitalist economy the interests of the employer are almost diametrically opposed to that of the employee, if you accept the idea that profit is derived from unpaid wages (see Marx or A. Smith - social sciences/economics department). If that's true then it would be foolish to think that the management of Border's is any more sympathetic to labor rights than the most overtly tyrannical mine owner or nursing home operator. Let us not be fooled by misguided letters in defense of Border's by well intentioned or misguided managers who innocently defend this corporation strictly on the basis that they have a good relationship with their direct underlings and thus so to most the whole company. The real people in charge of Border's fiscal prowess are there because they know how to cut cost without any consideration of the human consequences. Of the few management memos that have found their way on to the internet, the message is clear- in light of the recent wave of union interest make sure to dissuade all employees from seeking further information on unions and try to be more concerned when employees ask why they don't get paid more. Above all, suppress any talk of unions or the changes that might come as a result of unionization.

All in all Border's should not be treated with kid gloves. With conventional "heavy" industry shipping off overseas, our transformation to a primarily service economy is proceeding ahead of schedule. Thus, Border's and companies like it can no longer be viewed as employment anomalies which fall outside the lines of union representation. In the coming years, these places will be the standard (sadly), of employment by large corporations.

Humor us, Border's! Recognize the unions, and if what your saying now is true, a vote for decertification will no doubt be coming soon. Then you can become that shining example of how unions are just old antiquated forms of employee manipulation.



## What are you lookin' at?

(join the press)

# BEHIND THE BROWNSTONE CURTAIN

By Mitchel Cohen

"They think they can live some place and not pay rent. That simply doesn't work. You have to pay rent."

-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani

What high government official lives *rent-free* in a beautiful mansion on Manhattan's luxurious Upper East Side while sneering at poor folks trying to squeak by a couple of miles downriver? Why, it's none other than New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. He offered his philosophical tidbit quoted above while ordering the eviction of a few dozen Lower East Siders squatting a handful of the thousands of abandoned city-owned apartments.

Nor is it just his imperial majesty, the Mayor, who doesn't abide by his own imprecations. Back in 1994, Mayor Giuliani signed pro-landlord vacancy de-control provisions into law which enabled landlords to hike rents through the roof once an apartment had been vacated, so long as it rented for more than \$2,000 a month. Among City Council members who voted for those provisions were, as expected, the odious Antonio Pagan and Peter Vallone; but the bill also received support from such erstwhile "progressive" Democrats as Una Clarke, Ken Fisher, Lloyd Henry, Mary Pinkett, Annette M. Robinson, Anthony Weiner, Enoch Williams and Priscilla Wooten, among others. (Leading the fight against the bill on the City Council were Sal Albanese, Tom Duane, Ronnie Eldridge, Guillermo Linares and Joan McCabe. Also voting against it were Stephen DiBrienza, June Eisland, Andrew Eristoff, Kathryn Freed, Karen Koslowitz, Howard Lasher, Sheldon Leffler, Helen Marshall, Stanley Michels, Morton Povman, Adam Clayton Powell Jr., and Israel Ruiz.)

landlord make ends meet. If anything, the opposite is true: It enables the giant landlords to further consolidate their stranglehold on city real estate. Just 12 percent of landlords own 71.2 percent of the City's regulated apartments; a group of less than 3,000 landlords owns an average of 238 apartments each.<sup>1</sup> As one writer explains it, "Deregulation wouldn't distinguish between Donald Trump and an immigrant widow with one six-unit building in the Bronx. Many small landlords say that getting breaks on their taxes and water bills would help them more than being allowed to charge higher rents."<sup>2</sup>

Unlike the Mayor, more than 5 million New Yorkers actually pay rent for their apartments, around half of them in units that are rent-stabilized or rent-controlled for which they pay a monthly average of \$538.<sup>3</sup> Also unlike the Mayor, who saw fit to raise his own salary by \$35,000 – he now makes \$165,000 a year – between 1990 and 1993 the real income for NYC households fell on the average by 11 percent. More than half of all NYC households report income low enough to qualify for Federal housing assistance, and a quarter of them live beneath the official poverty line.

So why is it so hard to find a newspaper willing to condemn the Mayor and speak out for tenants who occupy the overwhelming majority of housing units in the city? Whenever rent deregulation comes up for a vote, as it will this month, the media blankets us with puff pieces imploring us to pity the poor landlord saddled with "a thirty floor

apartment house, struggling to pay for utilities and repairs because rent control curtailed his income."<sup>4</sup>

Poor landlord. With all the ruckus landlord organizations are raising to end rent stabilization, you'd think there'd been a splurge in the rate of landlord suicides to match that of poor people evicted from their apartments. But we have yet to see that. Nowhere in the *NY Times* – or even the *Post* – has a column appeared headed: "Another Rent-Control Related Suicide," or, "Landlords to Kevorkian: Come to New York, Assist Us!"

I once lived in a building in Park Slope where the landlord wrapped fire-crackers around the edge of the roof and set them off in the middle of the night to drive out the tenants living on the top floor. The same landlord blared Nazi songs outside the door of tenants who'd survived the concentration camps in Germany and broke into apartments, removing sinks, toilets and even personal memorabilia. He even once pointed a gun at my head to drive me out. I returned from a seven-day vacation to find that the landlord had emptied my apartment, carted all my belongings to the city dump (ach, those 74 notebooks of poetry!) and had already moved in somebody else at three times my rent.

Extreme? Sure. But only by degree. Some landlords, it is true, do have trouble making enough profits off of their tenants to continue living rent-free themselves. They might even have to pay a bit of their mortgage out of their own pockets, maybe get a job.

Unlike landlords, a majority of NYC renters mum of 30 percent of their income on rent. For many working class and poor families, fully one-half their income goes to rent. In Brooklyn, where I live, the figure in a number of areas goes even higher, approaching 70 percent. (In contrast, Cuba has passed a law setting the *maximum* rent at 10 percent of income.)

When combined with the portion of income earmarked for food it is not unusual that 75 to 90 percent of household funds go to just those basics, leaving little left for other other necessities (clothing, transportation, insur-

ance, health care, etc.). In fact, the median income for rent stabilized tenants in the city is \$19,000 a year.<sup>5</sup> What will happen to all those people if rents are deregulated?

With all the hue and cry from landlords to get rid of rent stabilization you'd think that every apartment fell into that category and that landlords were going broke. In truth, only one-third of the people in Brooklyn live in rent-regulated housing. But even that's not good enough for the landlords. They want *every* unit deregulated so they could demand whatever rent increase the market would bear.

**Giuliani: Never Met A Rent He Didn't Hike**

Every time rent deregulation comes up for a vote we hear the landlords' propaganda machine spinning into overdrive: "Rent control causes home-

lessness." That's the claim made by Lee Sterling, the executive director of the American Property Rights Association (which bankrolls *Landlord/Tenant News*), and by many others. It's not a new thought, although it has been utterly refuted in study after study – but hey, the landlords need some rationalization to hang their checks on.

The landlords' "logic" runs something like this: If a city is rent-controlled, landlords won't invest in their properties because there's not much profit to be made. Investors won't invest, neighborhoods will be redlined, and housing won't be built. Too

many people will be able to remain in their apartments illegitimately because – oh, the shame of it all! – the landlords won't legally be allowed to throw them onto the streets. (Of course, as enterprising chaps, in real life they'll find all sorts of ways around the law.) Then, so the argument goes, landlords will begin

abandoning their unprofitable enterprises, the buildings will crumble, people will be forced out their apartments anyway, and a housing shortage ensues. As population increases and the temperature drops, the demand for housing further burdens the system and homelessness becomes a modern-day Victorian plague.

That is how, we are told, rent control leads to homelessness and abandonment of property. But one of the leading studies on the matter utterly refutes every facet of the landlords' contention that rent control causes homelessness. In "Scape-goating Rent Control: Masking the Causes of Homelessness,"<sup>6</sup> the authors point out that three out of the top four cities in the U.S. with the most severe homeless problems do not even have rent had rent controls, have suffered massive abandonment. On the other hand, Berkeley and Santa Monica, California, which limit rents, haven't. So the landlord groups pull the old bait and switch, offering an endless series of shifting rationalizations as each previous one is debunked. Blame shifts, in turn, to insensitive tenants for refusing to abandon their rent-stabilized apartments so that landlords can re-rent or condo them at higher rates! According to landlords, a true "free market" would spark the construction of more housing which, in turn, would curtail homelessness. Right! As Applebaum et al. show in impressive detail, one would be hard pressed to find a single city where "the free market" led to the construction of affordable housing without substantial subsidies from government. Left to market forces, nowhere has the construction of new housing alone put a significant dent in homelessness.

Instead of blaming rent-control regulations for the rise in homelessness, why not blame the banks for refusing to invest in low-profit areas? Or builders for refusing to build new affordable housing because they can make greater profits off of luxury buildings? Or landlords who warehouse apartments in order to *create scarcity* in the first place to jack up the rent? Or the City for not allowing homeless people to squat abandoned buildings and fix them up *with* the unions, while they learn needed skills?

In campaigning to eliminate one of the few safeguards tenants in this city have, some landlords have gone so far as to paint halos around their leaders, portraying Sterling, for instance, as "the Martin Luther King Jr. of landlords." (Yes, the *Landlord/Tenant News* actually wrote that!) Next they'll be finding virtue in

*continued on next page*



# Money Scandals: "Mr. Smith" Goes To Washington

By Norman Solomon

Few politicians are as idealistic as the hero in the classic movie *Mr. Smith Goes To Washington*. But the nation's capitol is teeming with journalists who resemble another Mr. Smith — the guy in George Orwell's most famous book.

In 1984, Winston Smith was employed to dispose of inconvenient bits of history. In 1997, the process in real-life newsrooms may be more subtle, but it's often quite Orwellian. Certain awkward facts just don't get into America's media picture. Case in point: the current uproar over foreign money in last year's campaign. China is suspected of seeking to influence the outcome of some U.S. Congressional races in 1996. That's bad — very bad. When the United States maneuvered to sway the Russian presidential race in 1996, however, that was good — very good.

"YANKS TO THE RESCUE" blared the cover of *Time* magazine's July 15 issue, featuring a 10-page spread about a squad of U.S. political pros who "clandestinely participated in guiding [Boris] Yeltsin's campaign." American resources poured into Russia to help Yeltsin win at the polls. The reaction from journalists? Not even a whimper about the principle of non-intervention in another country's elections. Actually, the United States makes a habit of such interferences around the world. "U.S. leaders routinely channel millions of tax dollars to political parties in other countries," a Cox News Service article explained. "Private institutes ... have used these federal funds to supply equipment, services, training and expert advice on strategy and polling to political parties and other private groups in more than 100 countries."

When the exceptional article appeared in late February, it didn't cause a ripple in the national media pond. "I haven't had any response to the

piece," Cox reporter Andrew Mollison told me a few days ago.

Mollison's in-depth story delved into direct U.S. aid to political parties "scattered around the globe and through the alphabet from Albania to Zambia." So, his story was out of sync with the prevailing media script, which typecasts the U.S. government as a victim — not a perpetrator — of anti-democratic plots by foreigners.

The D.C.-based National Endowment for Democracy has rarely faced tough scrutiny from news outlets. Established in 1983, it gets annual funding of \$30 million from the federal treasury. The money is used to assist favored political forces overseas. Forty-one of the Duma members now sitting in the Russian parliament, for instance, received campaign ad from one of the endowment's conduits.

Today, the American press — obsessed by Asian money in U.S. politics — would lose its self-righteous tone if it reported some relevant history. A few examples:

**ITALY:** The CIA provided \$10 million for campaigns in Italy's 1972 parliamentary elections and passed along another \$6 million for the June 1976 elections.

**CHILE:** In 1964, eager to defeat socialist Salvador Allende, the CIA got behind the Christian Democratic Party's presidential candidate, Eduardo Frei. "The CIA underwrote more than half the party's total campaign costs," says journalist William Blum. His definitive book, *Killing Hope*, recounts that "the agency's overall electoral operation reduced the U.S. Treasury by an estimated \$20 million — much more per voter than that spent by the Johnson and Goldwater campaigns combined in the same year in the United States."

Six years later, Chile's voters elected Allende

president, despite continued U.S. backing for his opponents. Allende died in September 1973, when a U.S.-supported coup ushered in 16 years of bloody dictatorship.

**AUSTRALIA:** In 1973, when the newly elected Labor Party government charted an independent course in foreign policy, the CIA got very busy — dispensing large amounts of money to conservative parties. Under enormous pressure, the government of Prime Minister Edward Gough Whitlam fell in 1975.

**EL SALVADOR:** The CIA boosted Jose Napoleon Duarte to victory in the 1984 presidential contest. Irked because a farther-right candidate lost, Sen. Jesse Helms complained that the CIA had secretly donated \$2 million to Duarte's campaign. "In other words, the State Department and the CIA bought the election for Duarte," said Helms.

**NICARAGUA:** After a decade of the Contras' guerrilla war financed by U.S. taxpayers, the incumbent Sandinistas lost the 1990 election to the pro-U.S. presidential candidate, Violeta Chamorro. Researchers, including former CIA analyst David MacMichael, calculated that U.S. aid to electoral foes of the Sandinistas totaled \$26 million between 1984 and 1989 in a country with just 3.5 million people — the equivalent of a foreign infusion into U.S. politics of nearly \$2 billion.

Such information belongs in media coverage of the current foreign-money scandal. But America's journalists have dispensed with unpleasant history.

Winston Smith feared for his life. What's their excuse?

*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."*

*continued from previous page* the epidemic of lead poisoning among kids: "Well, at least it blocks the radiation!"

I do have some sympathy for small landlords up against the giants, just as I have sympathy for local bodegas up against huge supermarkets. It's a battle between the little guy (though not so little) who wants to make a million bucks off of other people versus those who've already done so and want to expand and diversify their investment portfolios. But in truth, supermarket prices are usually less than in small stores; and rent-stabilization, which is supported (albeit barely) by some giant landlords in exchange for tax abatements not available to smaller ones, does offer at least a drop of protection against huge rent increases, though not much else.

In reality, without rent control and stabilization, we all become helpless victims of the landlord. We'd have no right to stay in our apartment and automatically renew the lease, with legal protection from unreasonable eviction. There'd be no limitation on what rent the landlord could charge, no Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption; no succession rights for family members and loved ones; no right to a continuation of current services and repairs; no ability to form tenant associations for fear of retaliation and evictions. Without protection, "tenants would be at the mercy of the New York City market every time their lease ran out. And we all know how little mercy that is."

There are alternatives to being forced to choose, yet again, between the evil of two lessers. But they require us to challenge the way we normally think of things, our assumptions, our way of framing the questions. Why, for instance, is it taken for granted that someone has a right to make any profit at all from such a nonproductive enterprise as the rent-

ing out of apartments? Such fiefdoms are blood-sucking vestiges of medieval times. Why not ban profits in housing altogether? As a transitional measure, we could allow landlords a period of time — say, five years — to recoup their investment, after which they can be put on fixed income. Why should we go on assuming that anyone has a right to a guaranteed and perpetual profit, that banks have a right to refuse to invest, that builders have a right to refuse to build unless they're guaranteed tax-abatements and millions of dollars in incentives (let alone in rent), that landlords have a right to keep apartments off the market to drive up the price (hey, it's *their's*, they can own it, they can do whatever they want, huh?), and that the City has a right to evict, bludgeon and imprison squatters in order to keep them out of the thousands of vacant City-owned and deteriorating apartments?

## New York's Magnetic Personality

Finally, we get to the landlords' last gasp: "Rent control is a magnet attracting homeless and low-income people to our city. And we (supposedly) can't afford it." Clearly, many factors besides rent-control lead people to migrate from one town to another. But let's accept the landlords' claim, here. The obvious answer for the landlords, if they believe their own argument, is to push for a federal rent control program that equalizes the situation across the country, instead of pummeling poor and working class tenants in New York.

It'll be a cold day in hell before the landlords push for rent control, federal or otherwise, or a repeal of vacancy decontrol. For them the name of the game is profits. Everything else is a ruse.

And a ruse by any other name would stink just the same.

That is why the Housing Solidarity Network is attempting to coalesce buildings already on rent strike into a united front: A citywide general rent strike. Like other groups, the Network is demanding, of course, maintenance and strengthening of existing rent stabilization laws. But they're also demanding a moratorium on eviction of squatters, across the board rent rollbacks throughout the city, and an end to the criminalization and sweeps of homeless encampments.

The Housing Solidarity Network can be reached at (212) 713-5743. The city-wide coalition, Showdown '97: Coalition to Save Rent Regulation, can be contacted via the Met Council at (212) 693-0553, or (for neighborhood activities) the City-Wide Task Force on Housing Court (212) 982-5512 after 2 pm.

## NOTES

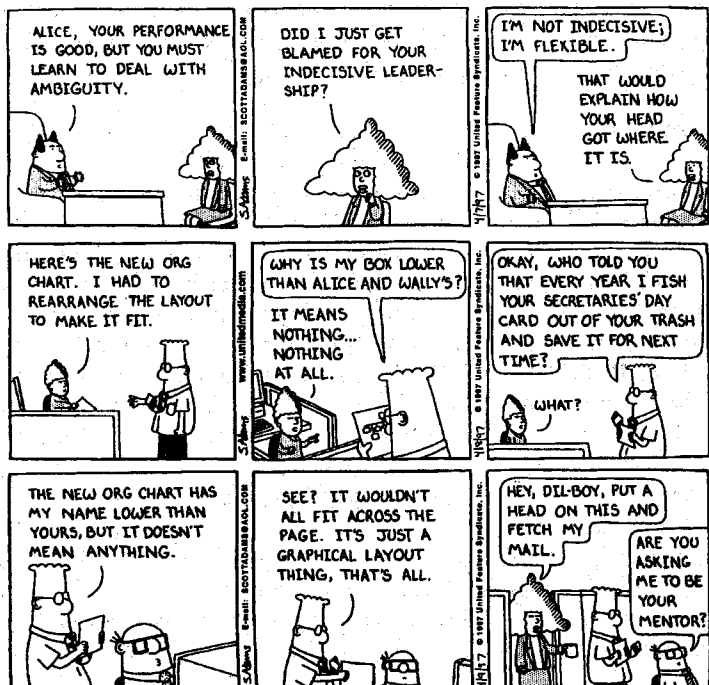
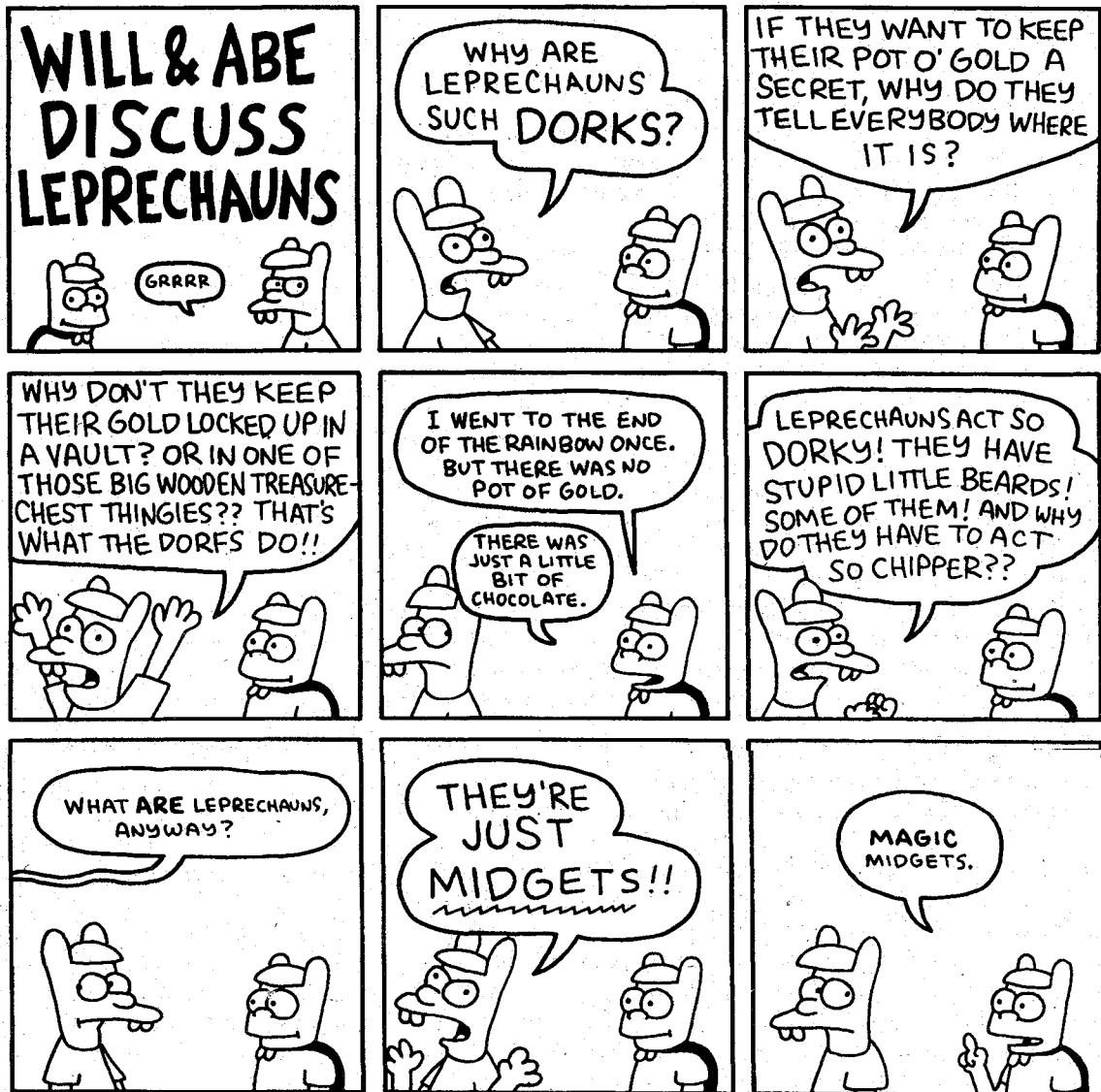
1. Metropolitan Council on Housing.
2. Steve Wishnia, *Tenant/Inquilino*.
3. Housing NYC, "Rents, Markets and Trends '96," NYC Rent Guidelines Board. Figure is the average for Brooklyn, and varies in other boros.
4. *Landlord/Tenant News*, August 1991
5. 1993 federal NYC Housing and Vacancy Survey.
6. Applebaum, Dolny, Dreier and Gilderbloom, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Spring 1991.
7. Steve Wishnia, op. cit.

*The author is a member of the Brooklyn Greens/NY State Green Party, the Red Balloon Collective, and the Committees of Correspondence. He is a Stony Brook alumnus.*

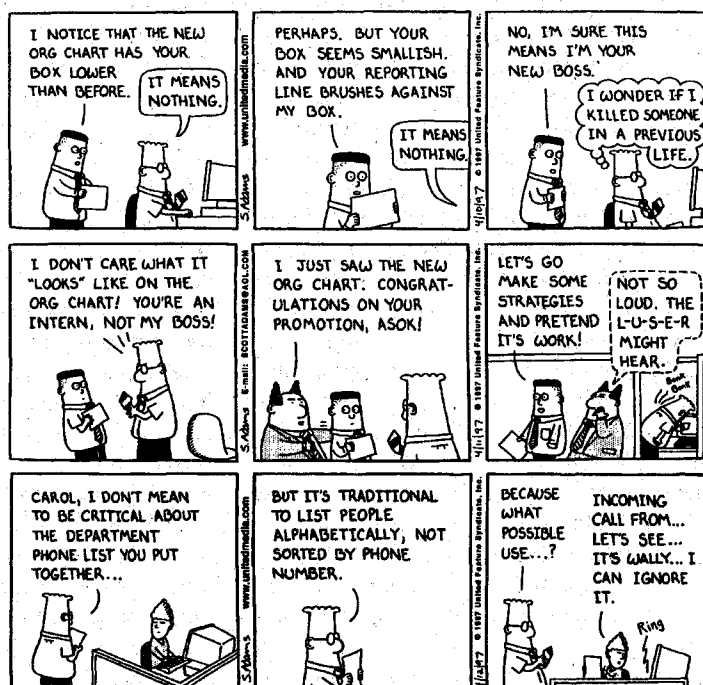
# COMICS

LIFE IN HELL

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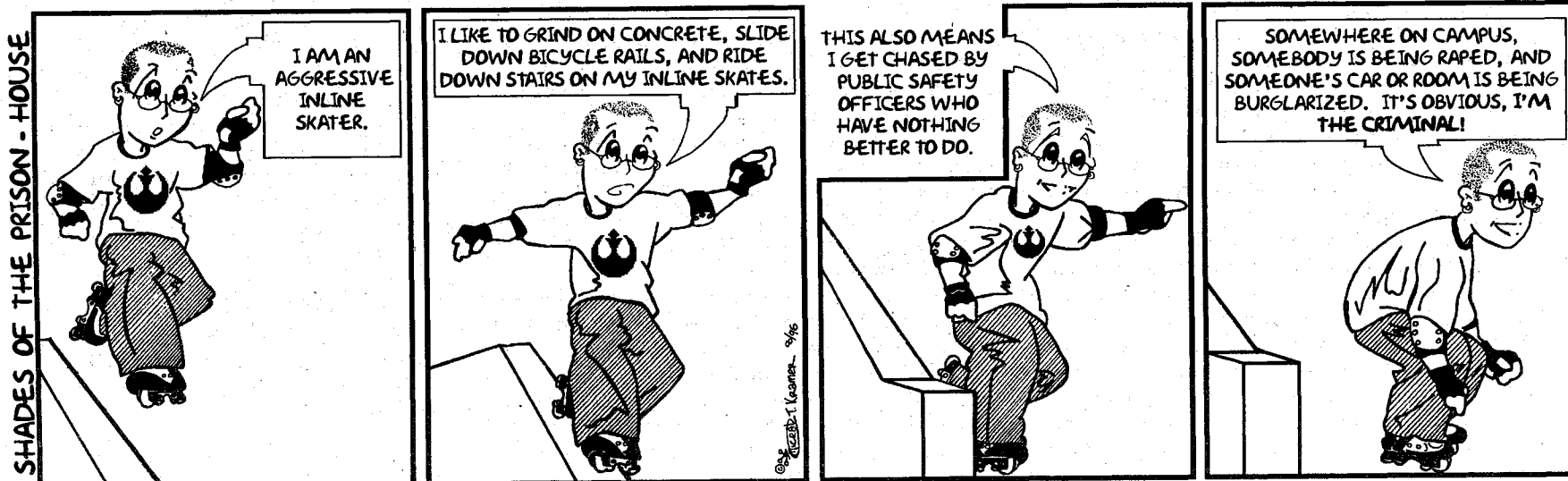
Dilbert ® by Scott Adams





# Top Ten Things Overheard at I-CON

- 10) "NO! It is a clear violation of Star Fleet regulations to send both a captain and a first officer on an away mission!"
- 9) "I wanna go see René OW-BER-JUN-OISE!"
- 8) "Who's that geek with the big feet?"
- 7) "Is that real sheepskin? Charming."
- 6) "She's cute."  
"The one with the hair?"  
"No, not her."  
"The one with the goiter?"  
"Yeah, her."
- 5) "Mr. Ellison asks if you could stop breathing so loud."
- 4) "You should get an ointment for that or something."
- 3) "Is that the girl from the TOOL cover?"
- 2) "Hey... why don't I bathe? I'm covered in dirt! I smell like shit! I haven't showered in a week, I'm 40 years old, I still live with my mom, and I'm dressed like a Klingon! I should... WAIT! BAD THOUGHTS, BAD THOUGHTS! Ooh, Magic cards!"
- 1) "Where's the Montage Radio Theater Track?"





# THE LAST ST

By David M. Ewalt

I'm not quite sure where to start. I suppose the most logical place would be with an explanation of just what Beer Fest is.

Beer Fest began, more or less, in the spring of 1995. I was in my second semester of editorial service to *The Press*, then as the News Editor. Possessed of a singularly irrelevant sense of history, I was fascinated by the past of *The Press*, how it had started and what it had been before. As such, I frequently made excursions to the dusty back room we call "the archives," where old issues of the paper are stored amongst broken file cabinets, unused desks and ancient business records.

During one of my searches through volumes past, I stumbled upon an issue barely a year old. The cover of the issue was graced by a particularly bracing picture of a female Presser grimacing horribly and holding a can of cheap beer. "The Not-So Great American Beer Festival," read the caption, and inside they did just that. Driven either by the desire to fill space in the paper or to get weak-knee inebriated — or maybe both — the editors had assembled a wide variety of universally disliked canned beer and put together a taste test. Pabst Blue Ribbon fought tooth and nail against St. Pauli Girl to see which brew could most offend the palates of those unlucky enough to participate.

Which beer won (or lost, as the case may be) the title of "worst beer" escapes my memory, nor was it particularly important at the time. What did matter is that the already yellowed tabloid in my 19-year-old hands represented two things; access to alcohol and something to write about.

Beer and filler. Only nineteen and already thinking like a journalist.

I immediately took the issue to my good friend Liv Ann Bacerra, then *The Press'* Business Manager, and also the only staff member who'd been around the year before. Liv, no stranger to a brewski herself, agreed most heartily that the exercise should be repeated. Plans were made for only a few weeks later.

And so Beer Fest was born.

What my editorial forefathers had doubtless intended to serve only as an excuse to get drunk on *Press* time rapidly became something of note and ceremony. With the careful planning worthy of "a tradition" we set the theme for the night as "Ales and Lagers." Several members of the *Press* staff — Liv high-ranking amongst them — were well known "beer snobs" and wanted nothing to do with the urine-colored swill of the year before. Posters were hung about the office, not so much to announce the event but to reinforce in us its importance.

Eventually, the day of the tasting arrived. Early on a Saturday morning, Ted Swedalla, our Executive Editor, arose from his crumpled bedsheets and visited the beer distributor down the block from his house. Using funds collected throughout the week from anxious participants, Ted bought a six pack each of ten different bottled lagers and ales to be reviewed in the taste test. Knowing the *Press* staff all too well, he also bought a case or two of "cheap stuff" to consume once the tasting was finished.

Lacking appropriate off-campus housing, Beer Fest was set to occur in the *Press'* offices in the basement of the Student Union. This presented a problem, as the consumption of alcohol was against the rules of the building, and as several under-age staffers were scheduled to participate. To avoid persecution, it was decided that the beer tasting would begin at eleven o'clock, when the union was relatively empty. Furthermore, we would partake in the taste test in the

back of the archives, away from prying eyes.

Thanks to an unfortunate incident on Mother's Day the year previous, involving Ted, an empty twelve-pack, his car, and a telephone pole, our Executive Editor was now a committed non-drinker. As such, it was decided that only he could be trusted to administer the tasting, pouring each brew into paper cups so that our reviews would not be tainted by brand loyalties.

We took to the archives in groups of three that night, covertly getting drunk in an open and active university building. When the Union closed to the world at midnight — only us "student journalists" allowed to stay within — the party spilled out of the archives, into the office and the hall beyond.

At this point, things started to get nasty.

Press members are notorious for their ability to speedily and consistently tuck away beer after beer, but on this particular night they seemed a band possessed. Within the space of two hours the dozen or so people in the office had consumed completely the sixty bottles of quality brew reserved for the tasting, and were greedily tearing into the backup quantities of "cheap stuff."

At this point I noticed a strange woman in the office. She appeared to be in her early thirties and wore tight black jeans and a leather jacket. I could not for the life of me remember her coming as someone's guest, and since the building was at that point closed to visitors, her attendance was even more mystifying. I put her out of my mind, though, assuming she was with one of the staffers. I ignored her until she started to get lusty.

At this time in the *Press's* history, we had on our staff one young male staff member who was, much to his consternation, suffering from a prolonged and painful case of virginity. He was quite obsessed with the problem, and often brought it up in conversation. When the leather lady found out, she offered to help.

Right then.

In the hallway.

The staff member declined the invitation, though, and the party proceeded. The leather lady would eventually disappear from the office as mysteriously as she arrived.

My memories of the rest of the night are blurred by both time and drink. I remember Doug Vescuso trashing a corner of the office, and I have a vague recollection of Scott Lusby and I spending at least an hour standing next to the stereo and loudly singing along to a Mr. Bungle tape.

All in all, it was a relatively benign *Press* party, considering nobody got hurt and there was no police involvement. Despite that fact, though, I still felt uneasy about the evening... there was something that felt wrong about the whole thing. An evil pallor hung over the festivities.

I feared I had opened a Pandora's box with the Beer Fest. Nonetheless, a year later, we repeated the whole thing. Cheap excuse to drink and all that.

Bad idea. The third annual beer fest was even more foul than the second. Beer Fest '96 found us tasting expensive imported beers from around the world. As luck would have it, we managed to find an empty

house to hold the party in. This meant we didn't have to worry about Public Safety, and it also allowed us to get a bit wilder.

As luck would have it, most of the people who participated in that debacle are still on our staff, so I can't give all the juicy details out in print (I will in person if you come down to the office, though). Suffice it to say the following events occurred involving members of our staff;

1) Our then-executive editor, a socially retarded virgin, made out with a drunken staff member right where everyone could see them. It was kind of like watching your dad make out with one of your friends. Not pretty.

2) A guest of one of our editors got sloppy drunk and puked on every surface in the bathroom except for the toilet bowl. Then she fell in the puddle.

I'm sure there were other scary moments, but my mind has buried the memories in order to protect my psyche.

So it was with some trepidation I began to plan this year's beer fest. Yes, despite the continuing evil of the festivities I had decided to try again. Hey,

we'd done it three times already, it was a tradition!

Well, fuck tradition. Beer Fest must be stopped.

Beer Fest Four, "The Microbrews of New York," was one of the most surreally evil evenings I've ever experienced.

Now, don't get me wrong. Everyone involved had fun, as they do every year. The beer was mighty tasty, and the location was our best ever. We held the festivities at The Spot, Stony Brook's graduate student lounge and one of the coolest joints on the island.

But even that kind of cool couldn't fight back the curse of Beer Fest. As the hours passed and the bottles emptied, the evil within reared its ugly head.

From the get go, there was just something off about the night. The music was good, but a bit weird. The beer was pretty good, but just not right. The other patrons of the Spot that evening were kind of... wrong. There was a subtle -but oh so present- cast of evil to the entire gathering.

As all the participants of the beer fest are not only still on staff but within strangulation distance of me as I write this, I'm afraid I can't go into the sordid (and were they ever sordid!) details. Suffice it to say it involved unforeseen hook-ups, the usual spit-swapping and public nudity.

We were only a few hours into this weird-fest when Associate Editor Boyd McCamish and I decided something must be done. An evil presence had taken over Beer Fest, and it grew stronger every year. It had to be stopped.

And so I officially exorcise this demon. Beer Fest has come to an end. I will allow no more of these events to take place, for fear of the repercussions.

Then again, there is that whole cheap excuse to drink thing...





BEER

FEST

FEATURES

## THE PROCEDURE

Beer Fest 1997 featured "The Microbrews of New York State." As such, ten different brews were provided by our generous hosts at The Spot. Some of these beverages are still available there, while others can be found at any respectable wholesaler's.

Testing was conducted by six members of the Press entourage, all males. It has not been determined whether this testosterone imbalance affected the results, but hey, all the chicks showed up late, it's their fault. In the name of accuracy and good science, the participants recorded for posterity what they had eaten before the tasting, in case the foodstuffs contaminated the scientific accuracy of the project. The participants (and their stomach contents) were:

John - Fishburger and fries.  
Dave - Cherry Yogurt  
Lowell - Chicken Sandwich  
Scott - Yoo-Hoo  
Boyd - Chicken Parm. Sandwich  
Brian - Empty stomach

The tasting was administered by Wilbur Farley, an employee of The Spot. He poured a small sample of each brew into six paper cups, which were then delivered to the tasters without their knowledge of the contents. Beverages were tasted and then rated on a scale of one to ten in four different categories; Bite, Flavor, Aftertaste, and Iquaci (a catch-all category used to rate undefinable qualities).

Each taster was given a scoring sheet on which to record their ratings, as well as any comments they felt relevant.

Once the tasting had finished and hangovers had come and gone, the scores for each beer were tallied and totaled.

## THE BEERS

Beer #1, McSorley's Double Dark: An early favorite in the competition. The tasters cited its full, rich flavor and referred to its dark, "woody" flavor. Only Lowell dissented from the pack with his analysis; "A nice, nutty flavor. But I don't suck nuts."

Beer #2, McSorley's Ale: A lighter-toned, less-

appreciated cousin of the Double Dark. John speculated that it was "brewed in a Brooklyn basement," while Lowell compared it most unfavorably to seltzer water.

Beer #3, Susquehanna Gold: Boyd rated this brew amongst his two favorite beers of the evening. Everyone else disliked it. Brian called it "unfinishable pus from a mad-cow disease infected calf," while Lowell speculated that "someone vomited into a Budweiser vat." Scott's note for this beer indicates an early level of intoxication; just what "Winter sushi lager" means we may never know.

Beer #4, Genesee Cream Ale: "Old Genny" fared even worse than the Susquehanna Gold. Boyd pointed out that "this is what they drink in mobile homes on the 28th of the month," and John asked the question, "was there beer here?"

Beer #5, White Knight Light: The only light beer included in our survey, White Knight got a mixed reception. Dave pointed out its unpleasant "sour apple smell" and John compared it to turpentine. Undeterred by peer pressure, Scott rated this his favorite brew of the night, praising it for its "clouds of barley."

Beer #6, Hampton Gold: An unremarkable beverage. The only comment it received worthy of note is Scott's cryptic "fruit of Schenectady."

Beer #7, Grail Ale: An ugly, ugly brew. Thin and medicinal, it met with great derision from the critics. Lowell said that it "tastes like spittoon stew," and Brian asserted that "only Boyd could like this crap." Boyd, however, showed more taste than Brian credited him for, commenting that "this is the stuff they give you before they pull your teeth." Dave went a step further, explaining that the beer made him "wanna lick

someone's ass to clean my palate." Scott's comment was nonsensical once again as he gave this brew "the robo pound for nastiness."

Beer #8 Neptune 66: Perhaps by virtue of its following the el-crappo Grail Ale, this beer was loved by one and all. Lowell put the feelings of the tasters best when he said, "It made my nipples explode. I

don't know if that's good." Still in his own world, Scott called this beer "the Ginger Rogers special."

Beer #9, E.S.B. Big City Ale: One of the more favorably received beverages. Dave called this "a good beer for getting shit-faced and beating people up," while Boyd settled for "drinkable." Due perhaps to a light buzz, Lowell's only recorded comment was "go eat a fat man's ass!"

Beer #10, Old Slugger Ale: Last, and almost worst. Brian attempted to give this thin, flavorless brew a score of -33, explaining that "despite this being the final beer, and my buzz as a lightweight, I still couldn't bring myself to finish this." Dave continued on the violence theme, commenting that this brew "punches you hard in the kidney, takes your wallet and leaves you bleeding in the gutter." Lowell was quite definitely in an altered state as he recorded this, his final comment: "You think me? You not me. NEVER ME."

## THE FINAL TALLY

Once the festivities had ended and all the scores were tabulated, clear winners and losers appeared. Neptune 66 was the best rated brew, and the personal favorite of four of the tasters. McSorley's Double Dark also fared well. Genesee Cream



The Loser: Grail Ale

brought up the rear as the worst beers of the night, though mere numbers may not adequately express just how bad they were.

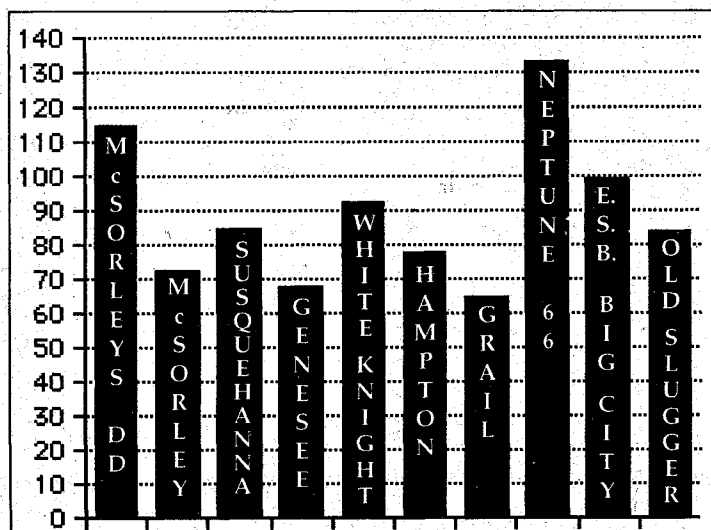
## THE AFTERMATH

Beer Fest '97 proved to be a useful endeavor, as it allowed us to discover two delightful new beers. Neptune 66 and McSorley's Double Dark are both brewed in small quantities, but can be found fairly easily within New York state. They may also be available soon on a regular basis at The Spot.

Beer Fest also allowed us to discover a great danger lurking in the state of New York: Grail Ale. Stay away from this stuff, it'll shrivel your taste buds and tangle your intestines.

## BY THE WAY...

The nifty headline for this spread, "The Last Beer Fest," is constructed out of letters cut from cases of beer. These are all beverages enjoyed by The Press on various occasions, but are not necessarily those brews featured in the article. If you're the first to identify from which beer each letter was taken, we'll give you a six pack of Neptune for a prize.



The graph: If you're gonna drink, be scientific about it.



# Jane Says...

By Jane

I'll never forget the first time I did heroin. This may sound like an entry from the Basketball Dairies, but my life is nothing like Jim Carroll's. Unlike the street-junkie, I grew up in picturesque suburbia, with a loving family and a tree in our front yard. I graduated with honors from a top private school, but didn't have the average high school experience. My friends and I always smoked pot and we took ecstasy when we went to raves, but things got more intense senior year. As the majority of kids were watching Beverly Hills 90210, we were living Pulp Fiction. We were upper middle-class kids who believed we were invincible. We truly believed we were invincible.

Tricia, Kate, Adrian and I were always together. I didn't think much of it when the others first did coke, it never interested me, so I didn't bother trying. I figured my friends were just experimenting, they had tried a bunch of different stuff. Then they started sniffing bumps instead of smoking joints before class. Tricia and Kate got way involved with their cocaine, started dating cokeheads and our friendship drifted. Adrian was a mess. The paranoia was the worst part. He believed that he was under surveillance, his phones were bugged and cameras filmed his every move. When I joked about the little men who watched him while he slept, he got pissed at me for mentioning it over the phone. So you see, things seemed a lot better when he switched to heroin.

It wasn't peer pressure, I went through a complete thought process and formulated an actual reason to do heroin. I had never been as close with someone as I was with Adrian and there was no one else like him. I wanted to experience everything with him. Heroin was a major part of his life and I felt that I needed to

share the experience. He wasn't shooting up, I was naive and thought snorting heroin wasn't as serious. I can be such an asshole.

One night we were getting ready to go to a club, Adrian kneeled before me on the bed as I painted his lips red and put fake eyelashes above his Aryan eyes. I flashed him a timid smile, there was no need to speak, he was already portioning off a few thin white lines. Leaning over the edge of the bed, I picked up the straw and inhaled the heroin off the marble table top. It was so easy. I went down twice more then a twinge struck my optic nerve. The chemical syrup coated my throat as the intoxication set in. I lifted my head off the pillow and the air continued to cushion it. I smiled and gently kissed Adrian. It wasn't sexual, he was my best friend, he was part of me and affection came naturally. His lips were so soft and I could recognize the taste of heroin on his tongue. I had never felt so complete. I was in love, but not with Adrian.

Heroin was my life for the next five months. Doing a little heroin every day didn't seem as bad as our friends who took weekend binges on all sorts of drugs. We had our Wednesday and Friday routine of heading down by Tompkins Square after school to pick up our dope. It was a neighborhood where crack vials on the sidewalk were as common as cigarette butts. We were two trendy kids who didn't belong in the scene.

One afternoon there was a film crew in front of our spot (needless to say Adrian didn't handle this too well). Our dealer wasn't there, so we tried a few other places, but couldn't find any heroin. I was getting anxious, I suppose by junkie terms I was feigning for a fix. Eventually we gave our money to a homeless smackhead. He went into a storefront and came out with four bags. He kept one, we thanked him and parted. Back at the car, we each unfolded a small envelope. I

sniffed a pile of the pencap and looked up at Adrian. The look on his face confirmed that something was wrong. He tasted the powder and told me it was coke. My hands were shaking as I tore open the third, tasted it and threw the envelope. Cocaine scattered across the dashboard. It was the lowest point of my life, I was crying hysterically because I didn't have a drug.

It's scary to look in a mirror every morning and not see your own reflection. I suppose my break-down woke Adrian up. Until that day he had never even seen me cry. We both knew we had to stop. There really wasn't any dramatic withdrawal symptoms. I was nauseous, clammy and irritable; I just told my parents it was PMS. Adrian had it worse, he couldn't eat and he had already lost a lot of weight. We both stopped snorting and went away to school.

The last time I was with Adrian we sat in a quiet bar discussing high school over a pint. Things were so different. We laughed because we were getting old and boring. It's no wonder, in our twenty years we had aged more than most do in a lifetime. I was so proud of him. Instead of spending money on drugs he was buying equipment. His music was evolving, he was so talented and destined to be famous. I'll never know what happened to Destiny. And I'll never know why he went back snorting.

I didn't go to Adrian's funeral. I couldn't face the accusing eyes. The pain of knowing that I had sat right alongside him and shared the very thing that killed him. The pain of losing him was suffocated by guilt. The guilt that I hadn't stopped him in the beginning. The guilt that it was him and not me. The guilt that I wasted the time I had with him on drugs. But what hurts me the most is that I swear I'll never snort again and I'm not sure that I believe myself.

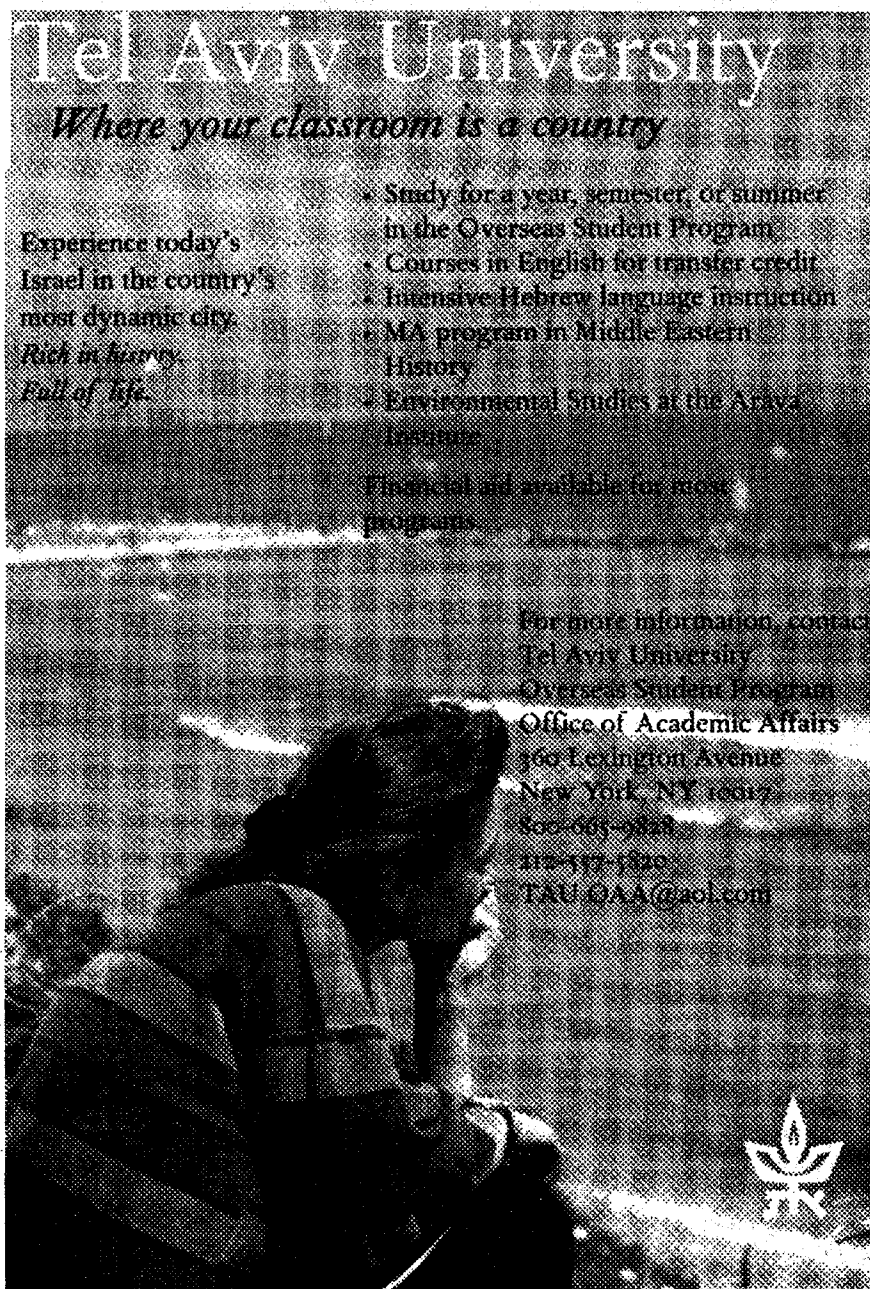
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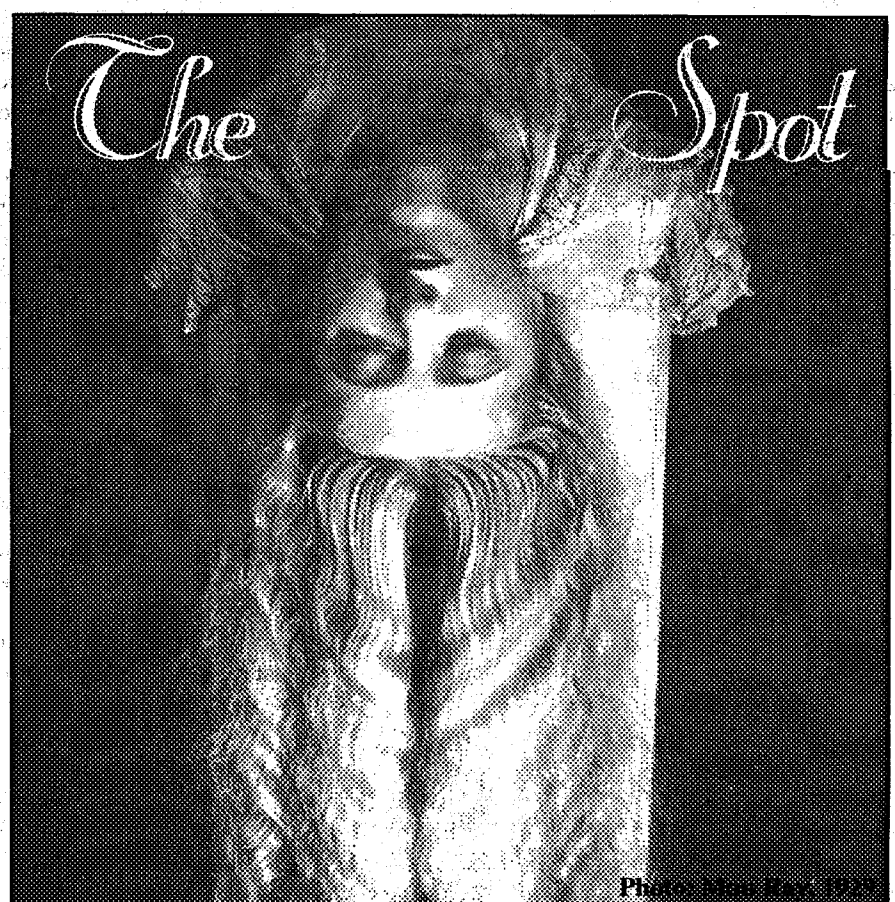


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# You're Not a Jedi Yet...

By Scott J. Lusby  
Press Editor Emeritus

I went to the movies tonight. Saw *Return of the Jedi* again. Yes, I've seen it before, as most of us have. But the allure of seeing it in the theater again, as well as catching the new scenes, was too great for this science fiction fan to resist.

But, as many people now realize, the *Star Wars* films were not just flashy (for their time) action/adventure films. They were more, so much more...

As I watched the action unfold, I began to think about my current situation. As of about 4 months ago, I have been teaching 8th-grade Language Arts (the North Carolina middle school equivalent of English) at Apex Middle School in Apex, NC, a short 15-minute drive from where I reside. I have enjoyed my brief tenure there; students are responsive and look forward to coming into my classroom. And I have taken a great deal of pleasure in this- it means that I am doing my job. However, some problems have arisen that I had not foreseen.

You see, one of the things that I have gone out of my way to do in my classroom is to incorporate a "looser" style of teaching. By this I mean that I have been unafraid to share certain aspects of my personal life with the students in an effort to get them to open up with their own experiences. This has succeeded; they feel as though whatever they share is important, and this is precisely what I have tried to instill.

As an offshoot of this more student-centered classroom, I have been somewhat loose in my discipline of certain transgressions. Don't get me wrong- I do not tolerate not completing homework on time, nor do I tolerate being late to class, etc. I am extremely strict with regards to these typical transgressions. However, I tolerate less structure with regards to classroom demeanor, such as not necessarily raising hands, bathroom breaks, etc. I didn't figure this would be a large problem, as they were still learning in my classroom, and enjoying it. I figured this was precisely the point.

I was wrong.

Mistake Number 1: By telling students bits of my personal life, I may have succeeded in encouraging

my students to open up more, but I have also opened myself up to the dreaded adolescent "grapevine." This is my fault; I gave them too much information to play with. I first learned there was a problem when I found out from one of the school's administrators that the students are saying that I was kicked out of West Virginia University for drug use. This is not so; I was suspended for my GPA, which suffered primarily because of excessive drinking. While all of us know that this is a common problem, the students don't. They don't see it that way. While my intentions in telling them about my WVU experiences (that, no matter how completely one messes up their lives, one can always turn around) may indeed have been noble and even necessary for them to hear, my professional reputation has suffered because of it. Plain and simply, I should have found another way to convey this message- one that didn't include anecdotes from my personal life. This is one of the central themes of the *Star Wars* trilogy (was wondering when I'd get back to this, huh?)- the redemption of Darth Vader. Vader represented the epitome of evil, yet, when it came time to cash in his chips, he opted for good and saved Luke's life. Maybe I should have used this instead of my own life...

My loose classroom demeanor has created problems as well. While my students do not abuse these policies in my class, they are now starting to confront the other teachers on my team with them. Middle school teaches on a team concept, where the Math, Science, Social Studies, Health and English teachers work together in the instruction of the students. We all have the same kids. While this has obvious benefits to the students, it becomes crucial for the teachers on each team to communicate effectively with one another, as well as to keep codes of discipline uniform throughout the team. By being a little more lenient in my classroom, I have, to a certain extent, undermined the other teachers' ability to dispense appropriate discipline. They have kids interjecting answers in class without raising their hands; when told they can't do that, they respond, "But Mr. Lusby lets us do that." This is wrong. While such strictness does not exactly fit my style, I must crack down more for the benefit of the rest of my team. This is

not a solo act, as I have found out. Again, *Star Wars* teaches us what a band of committed people can do, and what happens to self-centered organizations.

What does this mean for my career? It means that I have to change certain things about myself when I teach. I have to discipline myself to watch what I say in front of the class, as well as in any situation where these students may be present. Strange as it may seem, I am a role model for these kids, and I have to act like one. I believe *Star Wars* talked incessantly about discipline throughout.

In the end, as *Return of the Jedi* began to wind down, I found myself comparing my life to Luke's. Tried as he could to deny it, Luke ultimately had to face Vader again- confront the demon that haunted him. To this end, I couldn't help but wonder if there was some demon from my past that I needed to confront, so I could move on and become a teacher, as Luke became a Jedi. I came up with West Virginia. Ever since I went back to school in 1992, I have been trying to prove that I could succeed- prove it to my father, my mother, and everyone else who had something to say about my failure at WVU. WVU became my "cave of evil," my Darth Vader, and it became my single strongest motivator throughout school. It had a lot to do with my excellent GPA at both Suffolk CC and SUNY-SB. I wonder now if I was obsessed with it...

I thought, once I finally graduated from Stony Brook, that I had finally put it behind me. I had succeeded. But now, through my own doing, I am confronted with its ghosts again, threatening to destroy me as I strive to move forward in my career. I have been so self-absorbed with trying to run from their shadow that I've completely lost sight of the fact that I've already escaped it. I'm here, teaching- doing what I love. I thought I had something to prove. I didn't realize, until just now, that I don't have anything to prove anymore. I now know I need to let it go, once and for all.

I suppose I could build a funeral pyre in my fireplace and burn all the pictures and other memorabilia from WVU, as Luke did for Vader. Perhaps this is a bit much; maybe it's enough to just let its memories fade, and move forward.

Funny- all this time I thought I was.

## "Revolution," continued from page 3

of "moderate force" against those deemed "enemies of the state". If your euphemism sensors are temporarily out of whack, that means torture. If it passes, Israel will be the only country in the world to have legalized torture. And one doesn't have to be a Talmudic scholar to figure out who will be the "enemies of the state" on the receiving end of these interrogations.

Our own Congress is discussing a bill in which the US would not sell weapons or provide military aid to any country that violates certain standards of human rights. It's a great idea, but unlikely to pass, because some of our biggest clients are purely by coincidence, some of the most repressive regimes going, like Indonesia, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, all of whom have legions of lobbyists prowling Washington and greasing palms, to say nothing of the weapons industries, who would lose out tremendously if the US suddenly became picky about who we sell to.

The political juggernaut known as the Israel lobby, which only the most intrepid politicians dare defy, has already pushed to insert language exempting Israel from these pesky concerns. No doubt other miscreant nations will get their own exemptions and we'll have another selectively-

enforced standard that anyone who can afford a couple nights at the White House Motel will buy their way out of.

One more thing, again largely unreported: one of the biggest reasons the US government worked so feverishly to eject Boutros Boutros Ghali from the chairmanship of the UN was that he refused to suppress a Dutch report on the Israeli bombing of a refugee camp in Qana in southern Lebanon last spring. The report concluded that it was not a regrettable error as the Israelis claimed, but a premeditated atrocity.

### GENERALLY IGNORED

Last December, twenty-one retired US generals and admirals - top brass of the military, not puerile peaceniks - issued a statement renouncing nuclear weapons and calling for their total abolition. You'd think such an event would cause quite a stir in public discussion. You'd think so, if you didn't know how the mainstream media is dedicated to quashing any viewpoint dangerous to the status quo. It didn't make the "paper of record", the New York Times, although an op-ed piece did condemn these crusty old soldiers as naive.

### SPOOKWATCH

•Did any of you catch the pukefest that was the confirmation hearings of Anthony Lake for head of the CIA? Before he pulled out, that is. He had to swear allegiance to the Cold War culture of secrecy and repudiate any idea of change in the company.

•Situations to watch: the FMLN (the leftist party against which Reagan funded the death squads) has won the city elections in San Salvador, capital of El Salvador, a big stepping-stone to national rule. Look for some sort of covert destabilization effort if they resist neoliberal economic policies, or try to do subversive things like raise wages.

•Mobutu Sese Seko has been the iron-fisted dictator of Zaire for as long as anyone can remember. We haven't heard too much about him, mainly because he's another pliant servant of Western economic interests. But he's just been overthrown by rebel forces. We could conceivably expect some sort of "peacekeeping" effort if whoever comes to power is unsatisfactory to the ruling elites of the US.

•It's income tax time, and you know what that means: remember that more than 1/2 of your tax dollar goes to warmaking and deprives us of the decent standard of living many poorer countries enjoy. Spread the word.



# WRITER ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER

By Garrison Hoffman

One of the more fascinating characters appearing in I-CON XVI's round-up of who's who in sci-fi was undoubtedly Harlan Ellison. Throughout a 40 year career as an award winning author, scriptwriter, and columnist, the fiery and opinionated Fantastist has also worn the hats of a college flunky, a part time delinquent, and a political terrorist.

Although the irascible word-slinger declined an interview with *The Press*, we did manage to corner Harlan's long-time friend and

associate Barney Dannelke. Mr. Dannelke proved to be a wellspring of useful information and was able to verify a number of provocative rumors punctuating Harlan's otherwise illustrious career.

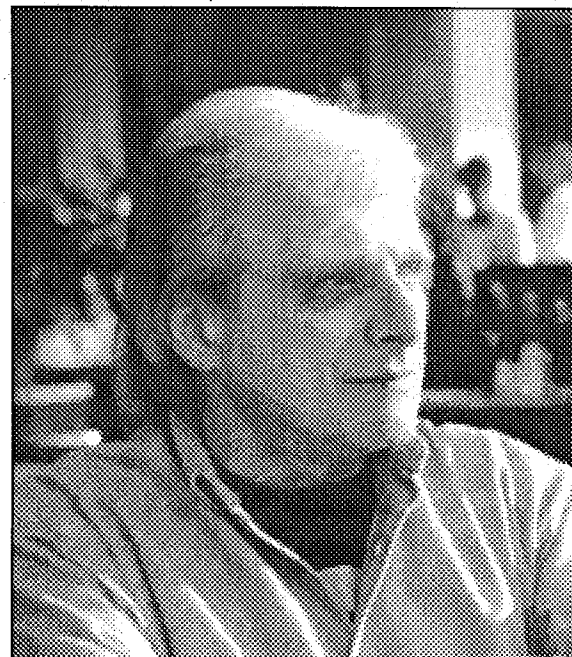
In *Fantasy Science Fiction's* special 1977 Harlan Ellison edition, Robert Silverberg described Ellison as a man who was "insecure, physically fearless, extraordinarily ambitious, hyperkinetic, and dominated any room he was in." Perhaps even more definitive is the story relayed by Barney Dannelke of an interview with Arthur Byron Cover for *Vertex* magazine in which Harlan was asked if he felt compelled to do things as well as everyone else due to his diminutive stature; Harlan responded by grabbing the man by the throat, saying "No you idiot, better, I have to do it better!"

The mountain is high, the river runs deep. Ellison was dismissed from Ohio State University after only 18 months for, among other things, "rudeness" to a professor of creative writing who told the aspiring author that he was untalented. True to his indomitable nature, Harlan not only went on to succeed as an author but sent the misguided professor copies of all his published work for roughly a quarter century, until the man finally retired, fading into bitter memory.

Harlan also spent 10 weeks with a Red Hook, Brooklyn gang known as the Barons. These experiences became a resource for his novel *Rumble* (also titled *Web of the City*), *Gentleman Junkie*, *The Juvies*, and other tales of urban delinquency.

It is perhaps that very fist clenching delinquency which has kept the attention of Harlan's generation and globe spanning readership. He has fought for free speech and against popular monstrosities like Gene Roddenberry and Marvel Comics; on Saturday night he even expressed publicly a desire to discharge a large caliber weapon into Jesse Helms' head.

Surely he has earned the Lifetime Achievement Award presented to him last year, but where does that leave the 63 year old author, is this now the twilight of his career? Probably not. Harlan Ellison books con-



## Harlan's Likes And Dislikes

| Likes          | Dislikes            |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Ralph Nader    | Jesse Helms         |
| Jonas Salk     | Wes Craven          |
| Hydrox         | Oreos               |
| Libraries      | The Internet        |
| Ovaltine       | Real Chocolate Milk |
| Typewriters    | Word Processors     |
| Marvel Comics* | Marvel Comics.      |

\*As part of a lawsuit settlement between Harlan and Marvel, Harlan receives copies of everything Marvel produces.

tinue to roll off the presses as he continues to work, as he reportedly will continue to do until he types his way into a congestive heart failure, his cold, dying hand reaching for the key marked RETURN.

Harlan responded by grabbing the man by the throat, saying, "No you idiot, better, I have to do it better!"

## Harlanisms

Pseudonyms of Harlan Ellison and their uses:

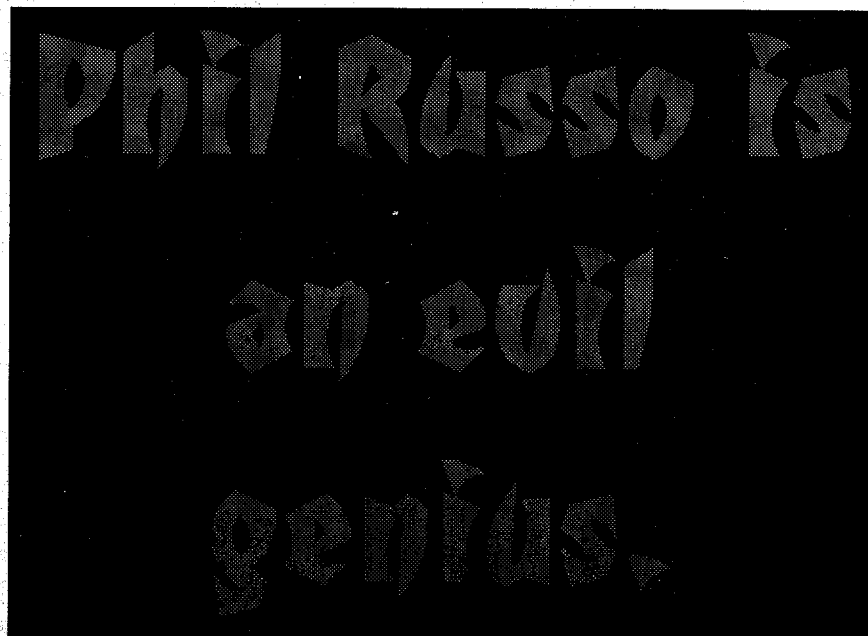
|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Nalrah Nosille.....   | yrev lanigiro   |
| Sley Harson,          |   |
| Landon Ellis.....     | Harlanisms  |
| Price Curtis.....     | a one time Harlanism  |
| Paul Merchant.....    | an erotic fiction Harlanism   |
| Ellis Hart, Jay Solo, |   |
| Jay Charby.....       | more Harlanisms   |
| Wallace Edmonson..... | an non-canonical Harlanism and main character.  |
| Cordwainer Bird.....  | a Harlanism used to denote material once pure, now soiled by irreverent television producers. |

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# Bitching and Moaning: Campus Wildlife

By David Wiernicki

Most people, upon quickly perusing the USB campus, decide, quite irrationally, that there is no interesting wildlife.

This is wrong.

Once you've lived here for a while, though, you begin to notice the incredible diversity this campus possesses. So, in order to enlighten the uninformed and make my editor happy, I will now give a quick review of the different types of wild animals seen in the area.

## ROTH QUAD CATS

Anyone who has walked around Roth quad late at night has seen these graceful felines. They tend to roam in large groups, and are all exactly alike, varying only in size and injury types. They seem to be a mirror of southerners, particularly Georgians, in that they are all related, they aren't very smart, and they eat trash out behind Burger Kings. Unfortunately for the cat lovers among us, however, they aren't particularly social—any attempt at communication with a Roth Quad Cat will result in its immediate and rapid withdrawal from the area. Rumors have circulated about the strange "coincidence" that the cats hang out behind the Roth BK, and not without reason. There are two possibilities—either they eat what BK leaves behind, or there is a secret Cat Breeding program going on, whose aim is to reduce those pesky "overhead costs" Aramark seems to hate so much. I tend to favor the second possibility.

## SQUIRRELS

Ok, so they aren't that interesting, but I've got a half page to fill up here and I'll be damned if I won't come through for the Reverend.

Anyway, the main good thing about squirrels is that they're fun to freak out. If you happen to see one about a foot up a tree, the fun thing to do is run up to the tree and hug it. Despite the fact that nearby frat boys will laugh at you (ok, everybody nearby laughs at you) it's a nice experience because the last thing a squirrel is expecting is the complete

cutoff of its only escape route. The other nice way to freak out one of these animals is to wait until you find one sitting on the edge of a garbage can, and stare at it while walking up to it slowly. Once you've gotten within a few feet, wait a while to get the squirrel's heart rate up even more. Then jump up in the air and yell, "PSSST!" The squirrel will vaporize.

## DUCKS

Ducks are stupid. In general, they suck. They don't do much, they don't look interesting; en totale, ducks just bite the big one. Dave likes ducks. He's wrong.

## GEESE

The geese are pretty cool. They aren't particularly bright, but then again nobody at Stony Brook is that smart in the first place. The only downside to geese is that they have no concept of "paths" and "don't shit in the paths." If, walking down from the BK, you find fifteen geese standing around and looking at each other, check where you walk. Geese also aren't very polite. If you go too close to one, it will make a sound like, "PSSSSSSSSSS!!!" which, translated from Goose, means, "PSSSSSSSSSS!!!" Then it'll try to kill you.

## CROWS

There seem to be two crows at USB, which is surprising, because crows are not eligible for TAP or PELL. They tend to hang around the, ahem, forest, between Roth and Javits. They sit in trees and look at you like you've done something wrong when you walk past. If you look at them back, they go, "YAAAAAK!" which, translated from Crow, means, "YAAAAAK!"

## RABBITS

Rabbits, which are close to being a legitimate form of wildlife, are as such rare on campus. The only one I've seen was traveling across Tabler Quad at roughly seven hundred miles per hour, looking scared.

## COCKROACHES

Surprisingly enough, I've only seen one of these. It lived in my room for around three days, in which we saw each other a number of times.

## ENCOUNTER 1:

Cockroach: Oh, shit.

Me: Aaaargh, a cockroach is sitting on my table!

Cockroach: My simple nervous system tells me I should get out of here.

Me: This is the first cockroach I've ever seen, and I'm scared.

[At this point, the cockroach ran like the devil under something. The next time I saw it it was sitting in the top drawer of my dresser.]

## ENCOUNTER 2:

Cockroach: Oh, shit.

Me: Oh, you son of a bitch! You're in my dresser! Argh!

Cockroach: My simple nervous system tells me I should get out of here.

Me: This thing makes my skin crawl.

[I proceeded to slam the top drawer of the dresser closed, very hard.]

Me: Hahahaha, you exoskeletal son of a bitch! You'll never get out of there! You're going to starve to death in my dresser! I don't need to change my clothes for a week anyway!

## ENCOUNTER 3:

Cockroach: Oh, shit.

Me: How the fuck did you get out of my dresser, you little bastard?

Cockroach: My simple nervous system tells me I should get out of here.

Me: OK, I'm sick of this. You're gonna die, motherfucker.

[I then grabbed the nearest flat thing I could find, and smashed it onto the cockroach with much more force than necessary.]

Me: Good thing I don't listen to this Alanis Morissette CD anymore anyway.

Well, unfortunately, this ends the list of relevant campus wildlife. And, as always, remember that all the mentioned animals are indeed wild and as such should be treated with extreme respect at all times.

# Oh No, Not Me

By Young J. Logan

## Eyes

Those eyes are staring at me:  
Judgmental eyes, of hatred.  
Those eyes are categorizing me  
To put me into a group.  
Denying my human nature.

So you thought you could label me  
And put me into a stinking group?  
You will never see the truth,  
You will never see my heart,  
Nor will you ever know what love is.

Poor people; they're victims  
Because you have blinded their heart,  
You, eyes of animals and beasts.  
You have gone against their openness  
To separate a group of people from another.

Keep looking at me;  
Try determine my identity,  
And hate my looks with all your force  
Because in my mind  
I have gouged out my own eyes  
To become blind,

UNTIL I KNOW THAT YOU NO LONGER EXIST.

My Spring Break sucked the worst.

First off, I wanted to buy a cheap guitar during the vacation that costs about \$75, but couldn't get it and had to hear my mom preaching about \$5000 she owes to her mom. I hope my job applications come back as soon as possible.

Anyway, the following story is not even about that. My Spring Break sucked from the very beginning—the day I went back to my parents.

I was waiting for my train at Bridgeport Train Station in

Connecticut. It was about 6 PM, and I had taken the Port Jeff. Ferry from Long Island to Bridgeport. The sky was filled with a magnificent purple hue, and I was still able to glimpse the bright red sun going down the horizon; I felt as if God were the greatest painter in the universe.

So I was fancying myself with this majestic background, when three tall kids dressed up in all black passed me by, two of them glancing at me, and one shouted, "Chink!"

I was ready to kill him. I barely restrained myself from cursing; it was as if I was put under a curse not to say the word. I formed my mouth to say it, but I couldn't articulate. I tried to fight the force that prevented me from cursing, but the spell that was bound to me felt like a shield, suppressing my evil with good...

...Okay, I lied. I was just scared to death; I thought they were going to beat the crap out of me.

Nevertheless, I did find myself with my upper teeth stuck to my lower lip when they were gone, and I tasted blood on my lip. I don't know why they said such a thing to a person they haven't seen before. (Dur... maybe they were racists??) I don't accept "race" in the first place, and I don't even consider myself an "Asian" American, for the nation's and unity's sake. I remembered my English professor telling me about a British woman who came to the U.S. and was called "Asian American" by her employer. The woman laughed at the senseless term, saying "In England, there's no such thing as 'Asian' British, and I'm not even an American." And one more thing: "race" is an ancient and dead term; it was used in the old days when there was no communication between different people, only to separate a group from another. Let's face it. No human beings represent pure culture; such a human would be considered a pure art. (Yeah, and this world is perfect as HELL.) There is something that comes before culture and that is humanity.

I have an identity, and it's shown by my actions; identities should be based on who you are, not where you come

from or what you look like. I'm not saying that everyone should "lose" his/her race, although I'm suggesting it. If you do indeed believe that you belong in a race, just please don't categorize and stereotype people other than you; don't assume someone else's identity by the shape of their face or the color of the person's skin because it makes me SICK when you do. If each and every one of us doesn't see color before we human, then we'll get rid of most of the problems in this world.

Okay, enough about my sermon, because it wasn't the only thing that happened on that day.

I noticed a guy next to me, with a nose ring and a cap that read "D-Generation". He looked like a pretty boy gone to Metal-land; he looked like Tom Cruise with blue eyes and blond hair, only with a more feminine look. I asked him what time it is, and became shocked to hear "I don't know, dude" in a very girly voice.

He was a girl.

Apparently she had no make-up on. She boldly asked me how old I am, and I told her my age and found out she's 24.

We got on the same train and started talking and shared our lives. I gave her my autobiography; I told her from "I think Metallica is gone now..." to "...but I still love them..." to "...my dad used to beat the crap out of me when I was a little child." I felt better to know that we were both abused children, like some stupid products of unwanted relationships and marriages.

She felt like a sister to me.

She gave me her number just before I took off, and four days later I called her, only to hear some grunge male voice answering; he turned out to be her boyfriend and suggested that I shouldn't call her anymore.

Oh, and here are my last words: when you go out next time and see a person, ask yourself, "what am I assuming about this person?" because it is really dumb to assume anything.

## C R A S H

By Eli the Bearded

Last Sunday I went to see David Cronenberg's film of J. G. Ballard's "emotional autobiography"[1] *Crash*. Based on the lines I saw for a matinee, this film will be in the theatres a while, but if you must see it ASAP, buy your tickets early.[2]

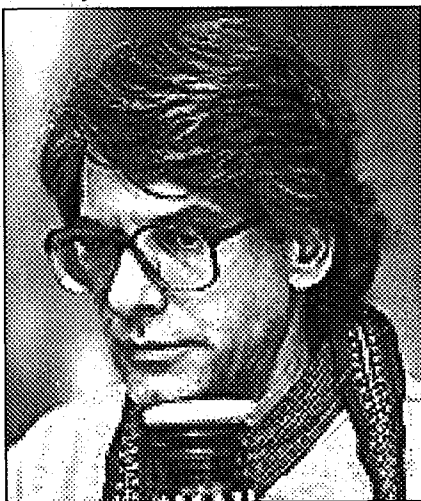
Unlike some wannabe lamer sex flicks such as *Striptease*, the NC-17 rating of *Crash* correctly marks the film as one with true adult intellectual content as well as that sex/nudity stuff which so upsets the censors. *The Cook, The Thief, Her Wife, His Lover* is last film I have seen that so well combined strong mental stimulation with abundant sex.

James Spader playing the lead character James Ballard was a good casting choice in my mind partly because I so strongly remember him as Graham in *sex, lies, and videotape* where he had a strong attachment to his car and a dysfunctional sex life. James Ballard, the jaded Hollywood producer, can easily be Graham a few years down the road.

The whole film exudes mid sixties to mid seventies J.G. Ballard content. The transformation of sex and death by machines remains a recurring motif, as well as being explicitly mentioned. The leg brace Ballard gets in the hospital resembles a polished chrome web of phalluses violating synthetic gashes and holes in the leg. The imprint of a hood orna-

ment on the hand of a dead man is later turned into the basis of a fetish tattoo.

Additionally the isolation of the uber-urbanite is emphasized in a number of scenes. After a car crash, Ballard is placed in a huge ward at a local hospital, but he is the only patient among the dozens of beds. He lives with his wife on an upper floor of a huge highrise[3] where they spend their time fucking and/or staring at traffic on that, oh so American contribution to global landscapes, the interconnected concrete ribbons of highways.[4]



Director David Cronenberg

Elias Koteas plays Vaughan, the most advanced artist of the car crash, wonderfully. The book was published in '73, and the film made in '96, so one crucial part of his character has de-emphasized in the film: he drives a 1962 black convertible Lincoln Continental.

This is J.G. Ballard's favorite fetish car[5] — the exact make and model of vehicle a certain John F. Kennedy rode in down a Texas street not far from a grassy knoll and book depository.

But besides this glossed over aspect of his character, Vaughan is at once the powerful sex figure and architect artist of the autowreck he should be. The scars he wears through the film are trophies of his past creations and fetishes for current sex.

Books from this period in J.G. Ballard's life have

very little character development, so the movie follows this lead. This might make the female characters seem very slim roles. The trick is to realize that the three main women Catherine Ballard (played by Deborah Unger), Dr Helga Remington (Holly Hunter), and Gabrielle (Rosanna Arquette) are really the same character in progressive stages of development. Similarly James Ballard becomes Vaughan.

The cinematography is by Peter Suschitzky, who as also done *Mars Attacks*, *Naked Lunch*, *Empire Strikes Back*, and *Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

J.G. Ballard expressed great reservations in a 1983 interview about the book's prospects as a movie. He greatly feared it would become "Disneyfied." His own comment on Cronenberg's version was that it made him feel young again. What more needs to be said?

[1] As opposed to his childhood autobiography, *Empire of the Sun*, which was also made into a movie.

[2] The line at the Angelika on Houston St was longer than the one when I saw *Kids* there.

[3] J.G. Ballard wrote *Highrise* in 1975.

[4] Somewhere I have book with an interview with J.G. Ballard in which he calls the "concrete cloverleaf" (the curved ramps of exits and entrances to highways) the "American flower".

[5] In listing the books in his library, J.G. Ballard listed a medical text on car crashes first and the Warren Commission Report second. (See *Re/Search: J.G. Ballard*.)

## Fun With Cool Whip

By The Baking Goddess

Cool Whip is one of the most interesting and versatile items found in supermarkets today. It is fairly inexpensive and has countless uses. Here are a few ideas for what Cool Whip can be used for.

### Cool Whip Cheesecake

Prep time: 10 minutes

Chill Time: 3 hours

#### Ingredients:

- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. Cream cheese (not whipped if possible), softened
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. Cool Whip
- 1 store bought Graham Cracker Crust
- Canned Pie Filling, or Fresh or Canned fruit of any variety, if desired

•For a lower fat recipe use low fat cream cheese - fat free Cool Whip lo-cal crusts are also available

#### Preparation:

- Mix cream cheese and sugar in a large bowl until smooth.
- Stir in the Cool Whip
- Pour into pie crust and Gently spread so it is even.
- Refrigerate for 3 hours or until set.
- Top with fruit or pie filling to taste

### Whipped Topping Body Paint

Prep time: 5 minutes

Countless hours of enjoyment

#### Ingredients:

1 pkg. Cool Whip (any size)

Flavorings: you can use any combination of these or create your own (all measurements depend on amount of Cool Whip)

1/2 cup chocolate syrup or chocolate powder

1 small pkg. Pudding (any flavor)

1-2 tablespoons fruit or vanilla extract

1/2 cup fruit juice

Also needed: a paint brush or other applicator

#### Preparation:

Mix Cool Whip and flavoring(s) until

smooth

Use applicator and apply  
Use your imagination  
•Remember

Cool Whip is Oil Based and therefore is not safe for use with latex.

### Cool Whip Pudding Pie

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Chill Time: 1-2 hours

#### Ingredients:

1 (12 oz.) pkg

#### Cool Whip

1 small pkg

Instant Pudding

1/4-1/2 cup milk

1 pre-made graham cracker crust

Fruit Topping if desired

#### Preparation:

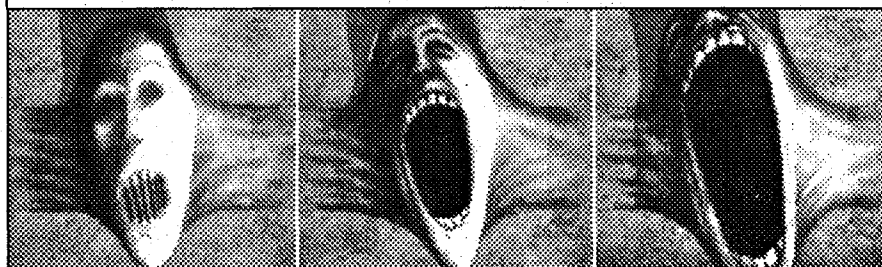
Mix 1/2 pkg. Cool Whip and Pudding in a large bowl until smooth and pudding is dissolved; Add milk if needed.

Pour into crust

Top with remaining Cool Whip

•Add Fruit as a layer after the pudding mix or top pie with it when serving

## THE SCIENCE FICTION FORUM



### LESS SOCIALLY CHALLENGED THAN YOU MIGHT THINK

Every Wednesday - TV Night

Current sci-fi, fantasy & horror shows that you were too busy to watch the first time they aired. i.e. Xena, Bab5, X-Files, DS9, Simpsons...

Every Thursday - Movie Night

Various movies of all genres, selected per request

Harriman Hall Basement- Call 632-6598 for info

# FILASKI: A MAN FULL OF HATE

By Keith Filaski

Very rarely will I buy a CD single for more than \$4. Stores like Tower rob us by sticking an "Import" tag on the disc and jacking the price up to \$8.99, and for what? For the radio edit and a b-side that usually sucks anyway? I don't think so. Why bother when you can simply take a trip to the city one afternoon and find the disc for a reasonable price? Sure, the trip costs a few bucks, but go in with a thorough list of albums and you will make out in the long run.

Did I mention that I bought a CD single from Tower for \$8.99 this week? Sorry. I can justify my purchase however. It was the *We Have Explosive*

single (Astralwerks) by The Future Sound Of London, one of the bands leading the crossover techno fad, right behind The Chemical Brothers and the Prodigy. Thankfully, however, FSOL aren't being killed by overplay as are these bands.

The reason that I talked myself into the purchase was due to the fact that it had nine versions of the song which aren't found on FSOL's latest album, *Dead Cities* (Astralwerks). That's a dollar a song if you think about it. And a better per song price than most full-length albums. At least, that was what I was telling myself as I handed over the money to the cashier. (Have you ever noticed how most Tower employees won't acknowledge your exis-

tence? Sure, they ring you up and take your money, but do they have a nice day? No. Excuse me Mr. I-Think-I-Have-A-Real-Job-But-Don't.)

As with most bands along the same lines as FSOL, their remixes deviate either enough, or entirely, away from the original to make each track worth the price.



FSOL

"We Have Explosive (Pt. 1)" and the radio edit are the only tracks that stay faithful to the original. With the remaining tracks, you will occasionally recognize a sound or two from the original or might hear the song filtered and manipulated beyond recognition, but a number of the songs have no resemblance to their origin. This fact, however, only makes it seem as if you have bought an entire album for nearly half the price. Not a bad deal.

The Dil Funk Remix is just that, a dance-funk version. Quite a change from the harsh, noisy, near-industrial sound of the album version, and yet it works very well.

Another track good for the opening samples, if nothing else, is Pt. 3. A voice saying "Pick up the phone. Hey bone head, pick up the phone" repeats, forcing you to smile. A little levity on the dance floor is always a good thing.

The remaining versions range from near-jungle to more ambient, making what is already an impressive song into one that seems to take life. It has

now acquired so many personalities that there is a version for all moods and occasions.

Although I wouldn't normally, I recommend picking up this single. I don't believe that you will be disappointed, and I am sure that if you look hard enough you will be able to find it for less, making the purchase even more worthwhile. Case in point: I recently found FSOL's single for the song "Lifeforms" used and dirt cheap. The smart CD junkie is a happy CD junkie.

Parting from the normally drab and horrid local band scene is the gothic band Nomenclature. Actually, to call them a true gothic band would be somewhat misleading. On their five song, self-made cassette, *Live Presentation*, goth guitars and goth etherialesque vocals are often laid over near techno beats, such as on the track "Unreal". It is indeed an interesting combination and one that I am sure, given time, will catch on. The band will just have to wait for the initial "what the fuck is this?" reaction to pass.

Comprised of vocalist Gerard Young, guitar/MIDI-guitar player D. Douglas Danahy, and vocals/bass/drum-programmer Bilian, Nomenclature are bringing something new to the music scene. I've been getting tired of listening to all of the local torture-tec bands competing with one another, when all of their songs sound so much alike anyway that no one really cares. Innovation is always good, and to combine two distinct genres as gothic and techno takes talented musicians, which Nomenclature truly are. So keep an eye out for them. It's the best of both worlds: the Chemical Sisters, if you will.

THE PEACE CENTER AND THE STONY BROOK PRESS PRESENT

## "Live From Death Row"

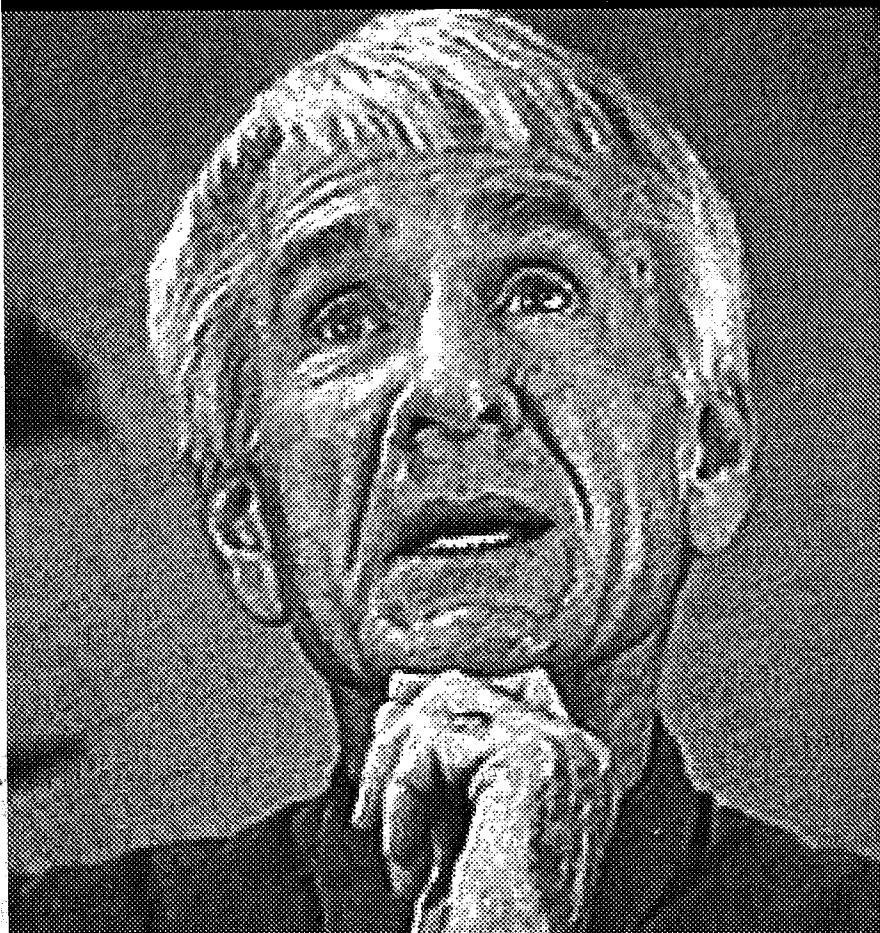
the story of Mumia Abu-Jamal



Mumia Abu-Jamal is a journalist and political activist, now awaiting execution following his unjust conviction in 1981 for the murder of a Philadelphia police officer. "Live From Death Row" tells the story of this American political prisoner.

**Wednesday,  
April 16th at  
8:00 p.m. in  
Javits 105**

MARSHALL APPLEWHITE'S DAILY AFFIRMATION

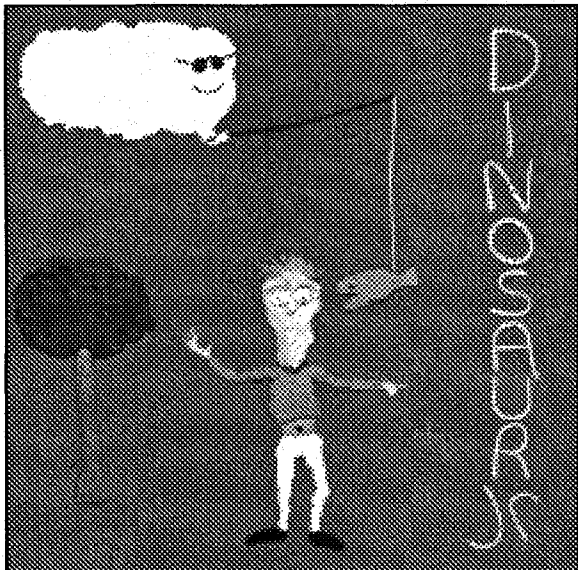


Woo! Comets! Woo! Ghosts! Woo! Woo! Spirits! Woo! Hale-Bopp! Woo! Higher Source! Gonna do web pages! Drink the Kool-Aid! Woo! Woo! Gonna run for President in 2000! Woo! America wants big business as government! Woo! H. Ross Perot for President! Woo! Gotta kill myself! Woo! Gotta go to I-CON first! Woo! Cops become cops out of a sense of altruism! Woo!



# C h i n

By Lowell Yaeger



Dinosaur Jr, *Hand It Over* (Reprise/Blanco Y Negro)

The last few years have not been good for J Mascis. He went from independent music pioneer with the ridiculously influential *You're Living All Over Me* to a failed experiment in alt-rock commercialism with *Without A Sound*, a flaccid album that attempted to ride on the coattails of its well-esteemed predecessor, *Where You Been*. An epic of loss, emptiness, and ultimate redemption, *Where You Been* established J Mascis' ability to write songs that express their meaning more — much more — through instrumentation than most lyrics could. It may not sound like much, but a lot of "pop-rock" artists just do not have this ability. Dinosaur Jr have it; Dirty Three have it; I'd be tempted to say the Melvins have it if I could be sure they have a meaning to convey. It's a sound that makes one forget the lyrics, which are a secondary concern in Dinosaur Jr's case anyway: solid sentences rarely bubble up from the nasal swamp that is Mascis' voice, and when they do they make little sense.

But then came the bad years. Dinosaur Jr played Lollapalooza during the dinner slot and then went on to release an album of silly pop tunes with little emotional investment to them. The following album, a live acoustic affair authored under the name J Mascis (a misnomer since, much as Nine Inch Nails is Trent Reznor, Dinosaur Jr is J Mascis), was equally low quality, and things began to look bleak for good ol' J. His lack of good output was rapidly forcing the band down the path of formulaic repetition, a path which would eventually end at a place populated by critics saying witty things like "J Mascis' age and inability to contemporize his neo-grunge guitar histrionics have made the band live up to their namesake."

With *Hand It Over*, J Mascis refutes all of that speculation and returns wonderfully to form. Perhaps suffering another emotional catastrophe like the kind that reportedly informed *Where You Been*, Mascis has sharpened his sound but held onto his roots, allowing him to cover all the bases without getting pigeonholed.

The album begins with a catchy pop-metal riff on "I Don't Think", and then runs down to "Nuthin's Goin On", which opens with a So-Cal punk chord but eventually collapses into a heartfelt rock ditty — espe-

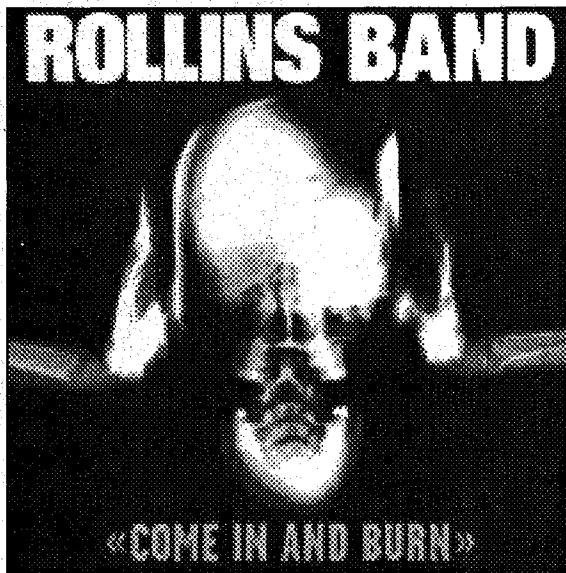
cially on the guitar solo, which no longer sounds horribly out-of-place, as it did on the last few albums. Other songs, like "Sure Not Over You" and "Can't We Move This", are standard Dinosaur Jr fare, fun to listen to but by no means ground-breaking. However, one track, "Alone", begs discussion.

An 8-minute exploration of loneliness and isolation, "Alone" represents the peak of Mascis' ability. Before 30 seconds have passed, the guitars and listless drumming have explained the theme of the entire song to me. Despite Mascis' problems with enunciation, I can still get a sense of emptiness and reclusion from his misery-inducing wail. Other artists have alluded to Mascis' legendary lethargy before (see Sonic Youth's "Teenage Riot"), but this song hammers the final nail in the coffin. And the size helps, even though the point is made early on: it doesn't end. Mascis' suffering has little chance of coming to a head. And although I'm sorry he's upset, I'm also glad, because without full emotional involvement, there would be no intense solo at the 4-minute mark that so perfectly express the pain Mascis is trying to convey.

The album is produced by Kevin Shields of My Bloody Valentine (one of the most name-dropped bands in history), and it shows. On "Nuthin's Goin On", the primal guitar solo ends with a series of rapid squeaks, and the lines of "Can't We Move This" are punctuated by sudden snippets of sequencer beats. But that's not such a bad thing, since while Mascis' music can be very good, there's plenty of room for interesting little experiments.

Mascis' own curiosity has always led him to try and incorporate weird stuff into his songs, which is good because while it rarely works, it still doesn't drown out the rest of the song. He experiments with the trumpet on "I'm Insane", which does very little for the song per se but sounds nice regardless, and flirts with folk structure on "Gettin' Rough".

This experimentation probably won't turn up again; Mascis rarely repeats little tricks like these. Whether that's a good or a bad thing is irrelevant. What's good is that Mascis is back in a time where the pop-music-listening public (the people that will ensure the slow and steady commercialization of ska, punk and techno) will pay him little to no attention, leaving him with the freedom to be himself and produce more excellent work.



Rollins Band, *Come In And Burn* (Dreamworks)

Stop me if you've heard this one before:

Hi kids! Hank Rollins here. My new CD, *Come In And Burn*, is a steaming platter of music that will make you want to jump around like a steroidal orangutang. While the four other people in the band (their names aren't important) lay down some decent pseudo-metal, I'll rhapsodize on angst, misery, and the pain of living in a modern world where morality and honor are destroyed by the onslaught of faceless capitalistic opportunism. Pain! Pain! Pain! Pa--

Oh, you have? Figured as much. Rollins has been spewing this particular line of bullshit in one form or another for years now. Without the guidance of a solid punk scene to keep him in check, and lacking the ability to realize that he's no longer (if ever he was) an icon, Rollins has become a snare drum: all noise and little substance. And in the process, he's managed to suffocate some excellent musicians who continue to work in the shadow cast by his sweaty pectorals.

The story is no different on *Burn*. Once again, Rollins Band is a group comprised of two parts: Rollins, and the band. And it's a shame that Rollins' name is what sells the band's records, because the band itself is quite talented.

Chris Haskett is a successful guitarist who, in the right environment, could give Helmet's Page Hamilton a run for his money. In collaboration with Theo Van Rock (who is listed in the liner notes as "rok juicer") Haskett makes for some truly interesting effects, spitting high-pitched sirens out of his peculiar brand of six-string skronk. On the album opener, "Shame", he covers the instrumental breaks with bizarre little squirts of noise, and slides the strings through enough distortion to provide a truly disturbing wind sound. And on "All I Want", he shifts between standard and creative riffing effortlessly, allowing his innovative playing to come to the forefront without outshining his colleagues in the rhythm section.

Which, I might add, is tighter than an 18th-century New England spinster. Anyone willing to brand Sim Cain's drumming as "competent" isn't listening closely enough to hear the rapid rolls between beats. But he doesn't show off when he doesn't need to, and most of the time is spent in collaboration with Melvin Gibbs, a bassist who cut his teeth on jazz and funk. This isn't left to waste, either, as Rollins Band proves time and time again by juxtaposing lounge/funk with a chunky metal sound as they did on their most popular tune, "Liar". (Incidentally, they aren't completely creative: the album's first single, "The End of Something", is a laid-back revision of the aforementioned song.)

This band, in short, is capable of quite a lot. Whether they're jamming aimlessly between P-Funk's Mothership and a hardcore ghetto or pounding out aggressive rock (some of the bass work on "On My Way To The Cage" makes me think Gibbs' fingertips are a wasteland of calluses), there's something good going on, and they're light-years ahead of anything they've produced before.

Unfortunately, their frontman isn't quite as impressive. While his talented cadets march in file behind him, the drill sergeant spits out a line of drivel that would make an impressionable 12-

# S i n k y

year-old roll his eyes in disgust. He can't sing, but that's not really a problem; the problem is that he compensates for his lack of singing ability with barked frustration, infomercial condescension and spoken-word insincerity. And it just doesn't work, especially when the lyrics are so dreadful. Here's a little sampler of Rollins' worldly wisdom:

- "I starve, I starve, I make the colors go."
- "If I saw your body burning in the street, I'd put you out... with gasoline."
- "On my way to the cage, I'm stepping hard on four-leaf clovers."
- "You smile at me, I smile back. You ask me how I am. I tell you that I'm fine."
- "The pressure's pulling tight across my bones, and I think 'man, you'd be better off stoned!'"

How can we expect to take his pain and misery seriously when we watched him giggling about fame while sitting in a hot tub and being filmed by MTV not two years ago? This is the same man who's signed up for cameos in every crappy movie imaginable, from David Lynch's *Lost Highway* to *Heat*. He's nothing but a talking head, and a relatively dense one at that. Was I the only one jumping up and down in glee when Dolph Lundgren took his four-eyed ass out in *Johnny Mnemonic*, or did that make your \$7.50 worth it as well?

## Summer Festival Update

There are six -- yes, six -- big festivals scheduled for this summer, and more keep cropping up in the news every day. So if you like long outdoor concerts, put your stock money on Coppertone. The scoop so far:

<insert sarcastic pun beginning with L here>palooza: No official word on this year's Lollapalooza yet, but everyone else in the known universe is listing the same names: Korn, Tricky, Snoop Doggy Dogg, The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, and, inexplicably, Foxy Brown. Various news agencies, from MTV to the Internet's Addicted To Noise, have backed up Korn and Snoop Doggy Dogg, both of whom along with Foxy Brown have taken the initiative and gone to press with their involvement. Tool hasn't said yay or nay as to whether they'll be playing the festival, but everyone else insists they are, including their friends in the up-and-coming Failure, who are booked to headline the second stage for the latter half of the tour. According to the band,

they will play the final set of the second stage and end with 15 minutes to spare before Tool's slot (the second-to-last).

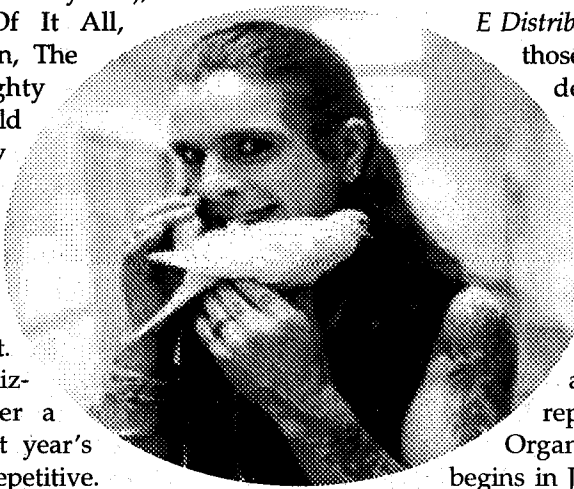


The Chemical Brothers

Vandals, Lo Presher), your up-and-coming acts (Blink 182, Lagwagon, Hepcat, Reel Big Fish), your big draw acts (The Suicide Machines, Less Than Jake, Face To Face, Pennywise), and your veterans (Sick Of It All, Helmet, Social Distortion, The Descendents, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones). Should be a good show, if they don't make the mistake of stopping at Asbury Park again -- a disaster that made the show seem more corporate than a Phil Collins concert. Kudos to the tour organizers for putting together a package which uses last year's bands but doesn't seem repetitive.

Beer Distributor's Convention '97: Yes, the unthinkable has happened. Ozzy Osbourne, in one of his more lucid moments, has decided to capitalize on the thriving underground metal scene and put together a summer tour based on that very genre. In addition to his own solo appearance, there will also be a very special Black Sabbath reunion. Ozzy, Geezer, and Tony will be present, with Faith No More's Mike Bordin filling in on drums while Bill Ward does whatever it is that washed-up drummers do. Also appearing on the main stage will be Marilyn Manson

*Get Off My Lawn:* While there has been official announcement of division (i.e. what bands will be playing which dates and stages, etc.), the official 1997 Warped Tour line-up has been posted. You've got your lesser-known acts (Royal Crown Revue, Millencolin, The



Ozzy Osbourne

Marilyn Manson

(always assuming Satan doesn't take him back in embarrassment), Pantera, Type O-Negative, Fear Factory, Machinehead, and Powerman 5000. Second stage is "hahd-coah" ville: Coal Chamber, downset., Vision Of Disorder, Neurosis, Drain

S.T.H., and Slo Burn. I'll probably camp out in front of the Budweiser tent and watch the drunken metalheads pass out from dehydration during Pantera's set. One final note: if you live in a city relatively controlled by Puritans, i.e. Censornatti, expect to drive well out of your way to catch this one at MW Memorial. Still, with a Black Sabbath reunion being a mercurial thing at best, it's probably worth your time.

*"That's not gonna be good for business"; "That's not gonna be good for anybody":* In perhaps the oddest corporate-sponsorship move ever, Skoal (the guys who make the chewy stuff with the cancer in it) is funding an alternative music tour entitled ROAR -- Revelation Of Alternative Rhythms or Rip Off America Royally. The tour only costs \$10, probably because Skoal makes more than enough money addicting people to tongue cancer, and will feature Iggy Pop, Sponge, Linda Perry, The Reverend Horton Heat, The Bloodhound Gang, and Tonic. The side stage is, at press time, unannounced.

*E Distributor's Convention '97:* For those of you looking to enjoy decent electronic music and/or needing an excuse to take drugs that blur the line between narcotic and hallucinogen. Featuring a veritable who's who of "mainstream" techno acts, this as-yet-unnamed (some reports are calling it the Organic tour) 20-date circus begins in July and will feature The Chemical Brothers, Underworld, Prodigy (who will actually release a new album in early June, instead of just spitting out a series of costly import singles), Orb, Orbital, and Meat Beat Manifesto. Should be a lot of fun, but if you won't be dropping anything except \$5 for dinner, bring a book: many techno acts are notorious for providing little, if anything, to look at.

*The Return of Biz Markie!!!:* After last year's overwhelming success with the Tibetan Freedom Concert -- that West Coast festival featuring every band you'd like to see over a couple of mind-numbing days of media coverage and full-length concert sets -- Beastie Boy Adam Yauch is organizing a sequel, to take place in New York on June 7 and 8. The actual line-up and exact location have yet to be announced, but U2, the Beastie Boys, The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion, Biz Markie, and Perry Farrell have already agreed to perform. Biz Markie! Biz Markie's back! Biz!

## Coming Attractions

Next issue should bring reviews on albums by The Chemical Brothers, Daft Punk, and the ever-charming Ben Folds Five.



The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion!!!



# IMPRESSIONS OF I-CON

By John Giuffo

Hints of leather and old books hang in the air as I climb the stairs down to the floor of the arena in the Indoor Sports Complex. As I reach the bottom, I finish pinning the ID badge on my shirt and someone stops in front of me. A large man in his fifties, long graying hair tied back, bends down to put a stack of comic books into a worn green satchel; his tight once-black Dr. Who tee slides up to reveal pink ass crack. I follow the crack up, past scraggly hair; there's a woman with him. She leers through coke-bottle glasses at a display of chain mail beach wear bracketed by cheaply made *katanas* and *batleths*. Behind the sword rack is a bookshelf. Dog-eared hardcover copies of *Stranger In A Strange Land* rest beside the newest Star Trek novel. My eyes lose a little focus, I pan the room; cavernous, noisy, electric. A gaggle of goths share resources enough for a signed *Memnoch*. To their left, a 13-inch screen races through *anime* previews; high-pitched Japanese screams accompany demonic laughs. The goths walk past the screen and my eye rests on the cute one, her red hair matching the hilt of a faux-jewel-encrusted dagger on purple velvet. Behind the dagger display, I see the *Wizards of the Coast* table: paper-crackheads scope *Magic: The*

*Gathering* rares. A druid passes, felt hood bright green with a disturbing brown tint. His stick/staff houses a stolen yellow road hazard warning lamp with amber aspirations. The black electrical tape is peeling off. His shoes are brown loafers: they look vaguely plastic. He's standing on the center lane of the maroon track. My eyes follow the track back towards me, and I catch a last glimpse of Dr. Who—boy crack as he struggles back to his feet and walks past me. He smells of hot dogs and Ben-Gay. I remember this. I know here. I'm at I-CON.

I look at the schedule of events. It's 3 o'clock Saturday, and René Auberjonois takes the stage set up on the side of the arena. He plays Odo on Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, and he plays hero to hundreds here. I don't stay: the man somehow loses his charm when Kraus isn't yelling, "I hear yoooouuu-u!" at him on Benson.

I have a choice of panels: "Fiction of Burroughs," "How to Get Published in Today's Market," "The Anime Industry '97," or "Mars: Another Stunt or Will We Go to Stay?" Another year, and the promise of I-Con vastly outweighs the reality, such as it is.

I walk around the arena a few times, checking

out the dealer's tables. Next Generation-era phasers are displayed near the newest Star Wars stormtrooper blaster rifles (they're molded white plastic even though the movie version is black: toy makers can no longer manufacture black toy guns). All of a sudden, the merchandise turns to a blur. It blends together, it's all the same. I feel bored.

I feel bad for feeling bored. All around me, people are wandering, wide-eyed, checking out the wares and each other. I-CON is a pseudo-masquerade. People who, on any other day of the year, would be seen in three-piece business suits have no problem strapping on a prosthetic nose and forehead and playing Klingon for a weekend. Elves, dwarves, wizards, Star Fleet officers and Babylon 5 devotees all dress up and play übernerd and revel in the company. I feel left out.

I walk out. I-CONners crowd the stairs, and I push past the sci-fi family which must stay together because they play together. I walk to Javits: most of the other events are taking place there. There's nothing that interests me, so I go home.

Later on, Dave tells me he's going to see another installment of "La Blue Girl," and asks if I would like to go. Having seen last year's screening for all of five minutes, and being disgusted by what I saw, I decline.

I have a complex set of feelings concerning I-CON. There was a time in my life when all I wanted to do was to be a comic book artist. I studied, practiced and worked at it. I was in the D.C. Comics New Talent Program, on the fast track to the industry, networking with, and learning from, all the best and biggest comics industry professionals. I loved the Justice League of America and the X-Men and Sandman (still do) and Star Trek. When the semi-annual comic convention would visit the Pennsylvania Hotel, (opposite Penn Station) I would cream my jeans a month before in anticipation. I lived, ate, shat and breathed comic books, and I was happy.

Fantasy is perhaps one of the best ways to have fun. To pick up a book, watch a movie or play a game which, for a while, can take you from *here* and

bring you *there*, is a wonderful thing. I still read sci-fi, I love Star Trek, I still pick up the occasional Neil Gaiman comic and you can bet your ass I saw

the rereleased Star Wars films. My love of these things is what still excites me about I-CON. The reality of the convention is what disappoints me.

I don't feel like I fit in because my need to live in the *there* is not what it used to be. I still enjoy these things, yet I don't fill my life with them. I'm sure that most of the I-CON attendees are the same, yet that isn't readily apparent. It's the level of detachment from reality that bothers me. When *here* is too painful to live in,

*there* becomes that much more attractive. Many people attending I-CON live in the *there*, and that isn't healthy. People who spend too much time in the *there* find returning *here* an uncomfortable proposition. When you spend too much time in your fantasy life, you don't learn the skills necessary to interact in your real life.

At the end of last year's I-CON, I decided it would be fun to go see "La Blue Girl," an animated Japanese hentai film which features demons raping high school girls with large prehensile penises. The lecture hall in ESS 101 was jam-packed. I sat down with Ted, Lowell, Dave and Jeanne and watched as scene after scene of demon rape flooded past my eyes. At one point, the demon ejaculated into an animated girl who looked all of ten years old, and the audience burst into laughter as the glowing pink demon-ejaculate ripped the girl apart from the inside.

I left.

An entire room of people sit and watch and laugh as an animated demon rapes and kills an animated girl. I don't fit in at I-CON, and I don't want to.

