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VOLUME 18  
ISSUE 17  
JULY 29, '97

RAMEN  
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# KLAN ON THE ISLAND

By Michael Yeh

The American Knights of the Ku Klux Klan angered local residents and raised questions about racial relations on Long Island after announcing a planned "educational drive" at the Smith Haven Mall on Saturday, July 19.

This event was to be the first public Klan campaign in New York State since 1962. Suffolk County Police expected approximately twenty members to don their traditional white robes and hoods while passing out hate literature.

But the Klan's announcement provoked an angry backlash from local residents and civil rights advocates, and Suffolk County District Attorney James Catterson threatened to arrest any Klan members who showed up. The coordinator of the event, who calls himself the "Reverend Frank", cancelled the event after Catterson vowed to enforce a state law that prohibits masked people from assembling in public without a permit.

Rev. Frank claimed to be the New York State Grand Dragon, and was later identified as Frank DeStefano of Mount Sinai. DeStefano, who set up a temporary telephone number and currently screens two lines with caller ID, denied involvement when contacted by *The Press*.

Despite the cancellation, anti-Klan demonstrators gathered on a sidewalk outside the mall and at the Hempstead United Methodist Church to denounce the racist group. In addition, some shoppers changed their plans and joined the protesters.

"There will be a lot of dissatisfied people if the event was allowed," said a shopper who requested anonymity. "The KKK is becoming more of a threat today."

Even if the Klan had decided to proceed with their event, the mall management had plans to bar them from the property. "This is a shopping center for people's enjoyment and not a forum for such organizations to conduct their business," said marketing director Dennis Tietjen. "As private property owners, we have the right to refuse an organization such as this to come on our property."

"I think it would have been a very ugly scene," said Michelle Alfano, owner of the Peace Frogs stand. "They should be allowed to conduct their events, but not where others are forced to be part of it."

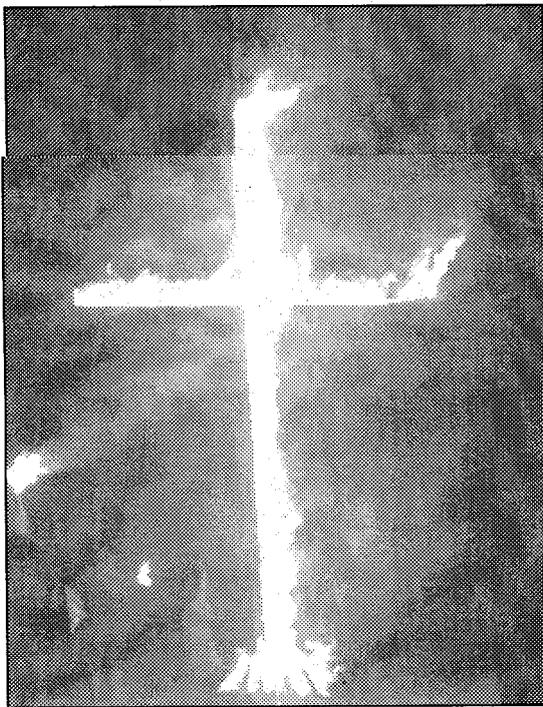
Despite these concerns, most people do not perceive any threat to racial relations in the local area. "I think most people are educated enough to know that this is a small group of people and their beliefs," said Alfano. District Attorney Catterson also believes that the group is poorly organized in this area.

"We have 1.5 million people in Long Island; eleven of them chose to dance around in bedsheets," he said in an interview with *Newsday*.

But according to Frederick Preston, Vice President of Student Affairs at the university, "racial tolerance on Long Island could use some improvement."

The Ku Klux Klan's ideology grew out of white Southern resentment over the Civil War and the chaos of the Reconstruction period. Scholars believe that the original Klan, named after the Greek words for "circle" and "cycle", was merely a social club. In 1865, six Confederate veterans founded this club in Pulaski, Tennessee with secret members holding ridiculous-sounding titles to enhance its amusement.

White sheets were adopted as the official uniform of the Klan after a few mischievous disguised horsemen created a spectacular distraction in Pulaski. As the membership grew, these pranks turned into threatening visits and violence against black families. Although the intention of the six original founders is often disputed, it became clear that anyone could wear a sheet to commit crimes.



In 1867, Klan leaders met in Nashville, Tennessee to create a specific agenda for the organization. They made a more rigid hierarchy, and made white supremacy the first priority of the Klan. After this meeting, the Klan became more active and carried out the now-familiar violent threats to blacks and Reconstruction sympathizers.

The Klan gained support in government and from the general population very quickly. By the late 1860's, there were very few white Southern opponents to the Klan. But, Klan groups and impostors (also known as the Black Ku Klux Klan) began fighting each other, and it is believed that Imperial Wizard Nathan Bedford Forrest ordered the Klan disbanded in 1869. Congress soon passed anti-Klan laws, but the group had already wreaked havoc in the south. White Southerners had reclaimed control of the local governments as a result of the terror that kept black voters away from the polls.

After a brief period of inactivity, the Klan reemerged in the early twentieth century. This revival was stimulated by massive immigration from Europe, American involvement in World War I, and a new Populist movement that

attempted to unite blacks and poor whites against factory and land owners. The Klan was reestablished as a benevolent society (go figure!) by preacher-salesman William J. Simmons, who made great profits from membership dues. More importantly, though, the Klan was not only against blacks and immigrants, but also opposed Jews, Catholics, Asians, bootleggers,

violations of the Sabbath, and other "anti-American" aspects of society. Lynchings, parades, and other public acts became common.

During the Great Depression, the Klan lost much of its support. Despite some increased activity in the 1960's against the civil rights movement, it has been relatively inactive since then. But, it has not disappeared completely, as shown by the recent controversy on Long Island.

There have been rumors that the Ku Klux Klan planned their return to the public scene during the summer when most minority students from the University at Stony Brook are not present. But according to Fred Preston, "something like [a university] hasn't really been a deterrent in other places where they have appeared or attempted to appear."

Students may help educate people about the importance of tolerance and the benefits of ethnic diversity through community service. The university is also planning a new Living Learning Center that stresses volunteer work. "We need to connect the classroom to the outside community so that there are more opportunities to have the kind of interaction and dialogue which enables us to make an impact," said Preston.

Nevertheless, Klan leaders promise to continue challenging those who support diversity. An unidentified member sent copies of a videotape depicting eleven hooded people circling a burning cross at an unidentified beach. Rev. Frank considers these events to signify the rebirth of the group, and plans to march in public.

"I think the best thing people can do is to tolerate things such as that rather than to let it stir them, and things like this will be kept to a minimum," said a Macy's employee and Stony Brook graduate student.

But others believe that a more active approach must be taken to combat hate groups. "Challenges like this from racist extremist groups like the Klan will continue to take place, for they're not going to fade away into the woodwork," said Preston. "People who believe in a harmoniously diverse society have to become and remain as active in promoting social justice and equality as extremist groups seem to be in promoting racial intolerance."

*"We have 1.5 million people in Long Island; eleven of them chose to dance around in bedsheets."*

# THE MEDIA'S BERMUDA TRIANGLE

By Chris Sorochin

*"In order to guarantee unity of thinking and to avoid a negative impact on political stability, all sensitive issues...are not to be covered."*

*"There have been over 10,000 cases of demonstration in the urban and rural areas within this past year. All of these are not to be covered."*

-From a list of new regulations imposed on the media by the government of China

It's always exciting to see a theoretical principle incarnated in the corporeal world. It tells you the stuff you're reading is not full of shit, lets you know you're on the right track and inspires you to press on.

It was April 27, the day of the Orwellian Presidents' Summit for America's Future. I, and thousands of other disgruntled citizens, gathered in a park for a rally and demonstration to let the morally repugnant triumvirate of Bill Clinton, George Bush and Jimmy Carter (and war criminal-cum-symbol of opportunity Colin Powell) know that no one with any gray matter whatsoever believes that a band-aid plug for volunteerism, the '90's equivalent of Gerald Ford's WIN buttons, is going to fill the yawning chasm created by the bipartisan war on poor and working people.

I hope representatives of the charitable and volunteer organizations inside the convention center informed the sultans of spin that the non-profit sector is already strained to the breaking point and can't possibly look after the hordes of people who are going to be cut off when the excrement hits the rotary ventilator from this bacchanalia of budget-slashing. I've just heard of several suicides by elderly legal immigrants who've been cut off from government aid, so the day has come.

Are the powers-that-be really so demented that they believe the average inhabitant of the US, who is already working massive overtime and/or a second and third job just to keep up, is going to spend what little free time s/he can steal working for nothing?

I keep thinking I live in Michael Moore's "Roger and Me", where the polyester-suited city poobahs keep trying to stave off economic desolation with a succession of hare-brained schemes to build morale, each more preposterous than the last.

The protest crowd was a healthy slab of humanity, highlighting the breadth and diversity of the pissed-off. There was every ethnic group you can imagine, labor groups, welfare rights groups, gay and lesbian groups, peace groups and more political and religious entities than you can shake a stick at. From Long Island, I was proud to behold Suffolk County's own Welfare Warriors and a few grungy fellow *Press* staffers. A particular focus was on Mumia Abu-Jamal and the burgeoning struggle against police brutality; Philadelphia is the epicenter of the trial and boasts one of the most corrupt and brutal law enforcement communities in the country.

One of the many rousing speakers noted that we must have more of all these different constituencies coming together for common causes and acting in solidarity with each other's individual causes, instead of retreating into

our own little universes to focus exclusively on pet issues.

Toward the end of the afternoon, we shut down traffic in downtown Philly with a huge march to the convention center. We circled the hall and, even though rain clouds glowered above, we stayed for more words of inspiration.

Oh, the right wing did make a Keystone Kops appearance. When we arrived at the center, there were about twenty studies in anal retentiveness from the Ayn Rand Institute, all with professionally made, pus-yellow wooden signs decrying the idea of doing anything to help anybody and urging passersby to read Rand's bilious books. Ayn Rand, for those of you who don't know, is a kind of icon for those looking for intellectual justification for being selfish scumbags. She wrote a whole series of books rhapsodizing on the beauty and wisdom of living life as a self-centered, apathetic parasite.

Anyhow, when the real unsilent majority flooded into the streets in front of the hall, the numbskulled nabobs of narcissism didn't know whether to shit or wind their watches. First, they tried to hug buildings. Then they moved to the back of the throng, their signs fading like rancid mustard stains. Finally, like a bad odor, they dissipated completely.

I didn't get back home until very late that night (Never, never, never take Greyhound--they're totally incompetent and rude), but it had been such an exhilarating day that it didn't matter.

Perusing the following day's *Newsday*, the story by one William Douglas went on about the summit, but said nothing about the massive protest outside, except for a few paragraphs about, and even a quote from (gasp!) the Ayn Rand geeks. If that isn't an insulting smack right in the nuts by the velvet fist of the corporate media, I'd be hard put to say what is. It was as if Noam Chomsky appeared in a nacreous cloud of television static and said, in a voice like seven thunders, "See, I told you so."

Since then, I've made several attempts to contact Mr. Douglas by phone at *Newsday's* Washington bureau. I wanted to ask him why he flushed thousands of us down the memory hole. Could he be so clueless as to not have noticed? Or is he part of a great conspiracy to make it seem that only covetous cranks would protest such a benevolent, humanitarian event? Think back to the Persian Gulf, when there were huge antiwar demonstrations (with up to one million participants in some European cities), but they just never got much media attention--all to "manufacture consent" and make it seem as if it was unanimous and only idiots would oppose it.

I guess it will have to remain a mystery, for Mr. Douglas, as we say in this racket, didn't return my calls.

## MAKING IT HARD FOR HOMOPHOBES

Gay Pride Month just wouldn't be complete without this tasty morsel from the amazing world of scientific research. Henry F. Adams and company published an article in the 1996 *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* detailing a study in which they tested a random sampling of men and rated them for homophobia. I guess everybody who grows up in this gay-unfriendly society is homophobic to some extent, but we all know the classic homophobe: he's not only stridently hostile to the openly gay, but is also extremely suspicious and looks for "tendencies" in others. Most of all he's deathly afraid someone is going to find tendencies in him and is

constantly trying to prove he's a "man's man" (interesting turn of phrase, that). He's contemptuous of guys he feels aren't manly enough and, interestingly, has little affection for women other than as vehicles for him to prove his masculinity.

The second part of the experiment consisted of attaching electronic gauges to the subjects' privates and showing them gay porn. Guess what happened? Right. The higher the homophobe rating, the more of a genital reaction they experienced, proving another fine old bit of folk wisdom. Even if guys with wired weenies may not exactly be an

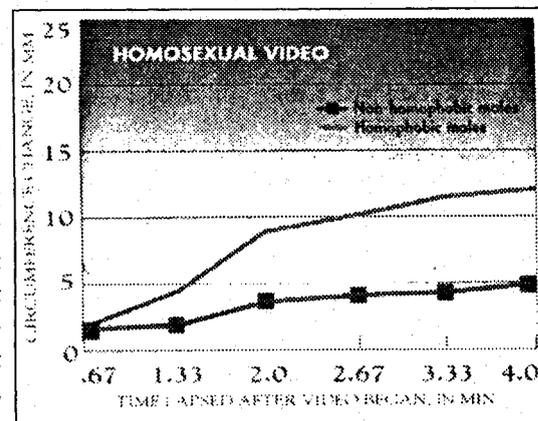
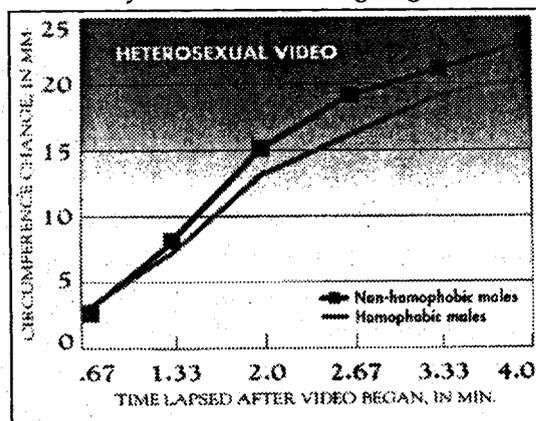
actual cross-section of society, further study is called for. They might hook up some of the more visible gay-bashers like Jesse Helms, that is, if he's capable of any sexual response at all.

## ALL YOU NEED IS HATE

At the post office: a male individual in front of me, who can't be any older than thirty, leaves the counter with deep disappointment. Why? It seems the only stamps left are those of the two swans forming a heart with their necks that say "LOVE". Yes, indeed, "love" is exactly the wrong message to put on your correspondence. Only sissies would go in for wussy stuff like that. Maybe that postal patron participated in Dr. Adams' little experiment.

## CLASS WARFARE

Fellow prisoners of the Long Island Rail Road must have noticed an interesting ad poster from Tri-State Consumer Insurance, captioned "Why should you pay high rates because of him?", the accompanying photo of "him" shows an obvious proletarian type lounging on the hood of a dented red Camaro, clad in the requisite uniform of blue-collar thugs: jeans, black leather jacket, flannel shirt and work boots. His chin is prominently stubbled and from his mouth dangles (horrors!) a cigarette. He must be a very bad man, kiddies. The urban-



continued on page 5

# DON'T WE FEEL STUPID?

Last year, two issues of *The Press* had covers which dealt with racism and intolerance in two southern states; North Carolina and Georgia. Both dealt with those issues in a our typically holier-than-thou, chauvinistic way. We felt that we could pass judgement on entire states because as New Yorkers, our problems with race relations aren't as pervasive as those in the south.

Thus we find ourselves humbled by the emergence of Reverend Frank, self-proclaimed Grand Dragon of the local Ku Klux Klan, and his fellow Klan members.

It's very easy to be critical of other people, because of what you perceive to be ignorance or intolerance. It's very easy for an editorial board of a college newspaper to be critical of places such as North Carolina or Georgia because of what we perceive to be widespread stupidity and bigotry. It's easy to criticize the people who live in those states as being contributors to that intolerance for allowing it to happen, for allowing that kind of hatred and separatism to fester and build. It's easy, it's entertaining, and that's why we do it.

What we didn't realize is how easy it is for the

supposed intolerance of the south to make its way into our lives.

We were never so naive to think that racism didn't exist in New York, any look at Real Estate practices, retail store employee behavior, police activity and employment practices will tell you that New York is, in many ways, just as besieged by prejudice as any southern state. But we felt that we were done with such problems as the Ku Klux Klan.

We were wrong.

Reverend Frank, a Mt. Sinai resident whose full name is Frank DeStefano, has taught us to be careful in our judgements of others, and to be watchful of complacency concerning race issues in our own backyard.

So thank you, Reverend Frank, your planned education drive had an unforeseen side effect: it educated us all about the need to stay constantly vigilant against the likes of all the Reverend Franks in the world, regardless of where we may live. You've given us some perspective, some enlightenment, and a new target for our jokes, all without realizing it.

## RANTS AND RAVES

To the Editors:

I'm a recent Stony Brook graduate and current student at Fordham law. It's pre-finals reading week for me, and I decided to study at my old alma mater instead of trekking sixty miles to Manhattan each day. While on a study break I decided to see what the Press had to say. Upon doing so I was pleased to discover not much has changed. Yes, it's just what I expected, The Press still holds itself to the highest standards of objective, professional journalism, perhaps even on par with The Village Voice. Take for example the recent article by Chris Sorochin "...because the Bible tells me so." After "bashing the bible," Mr. Sorochin goes on to chronicle his brilliant discourse with a racist freak which took place on the men's room wall. It wasn't just his sparkling political objectivity which I enjoyed so much, it was more his impressive command of the English language. Since being in law school I have not even such words as "dickhead" and "fuck" in print; but now I am relieved. I know that all I have to do is read the Press. (Can I get a sub-

scription?) All I ask is that the Press not change a thing; it's the paper's commitment to the highest standards of journalistic excellence which gives it such a high level of credibility. I'm sure Mr. Sorochin, and all other Press writers of his caliber, have brilliant careers ahead of them, if not as journalists then perhaps as janitors, where they can truly appreciate Press caliber political discourse as they clean it off bathroom stall walls.

Sincerely,  
Mike Reagan

*[Editor's Reply: Hey, dickhead! Who put your legal briefs in such a fucking knot? We're fucking sorry if you equate naughty fucking language with bad journalism, but we do understand where you're coming from. It's much fucking easier to dismiss something because it uses "swear words" (like dick, fuck, dickhead, dickfuck and Reagan) than to think about what it's fucking saying, isn't it?]*

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BE ON THE STANDS WEDNESDAY,  
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DUE SATURDAY, AUGUST 30TH.**

# CLINTON AND J.F.K

MEDIA MYTHS RIP

By Norman Solomon

Five years ago, everywhere you turned, journalists were comparing Bill Clinton to John Kennedy.

In the summer of 1992 -- when the Democratic National Convention showcased footage of a teenage Bill shaking hands with President Kennedy -- many news outlets proclaimed that manifest destiny was in the political air.

The media hype escalated as soon as Clinton won the presidency a few months later. Newsweek was euphoric about "a film clip that made its way into a widely seen campaign ad: a beaming, 16-year-old Bill Clinton on a sun-drenched White House lawn, shaking the hand of his and his generation's idol, John F. Kennedy."

With Clinton's victory, Newsweek declared, "the footage rises from mere advertising to the realm of prophetic history. For it documents JFK reaching across the years to a boy he did not know -- and to whom the torch of leadership now passes in an emphatic statement of America's desire for change."

Camelot II became a media obsession. "Now the torch is being passed to the generation that was touched and inspired by Kennedy," Time magazine reported in mid-November 1992. "Indeed, the most memorable moment in the convention video about the man from Hope was the scene of the eager student being inspired by Kennedy's anointing touch."

It's a sad commentary that so many journalists mouthed such bunkum with straight faces -- and that Americans didn't quickly laugh this grandil-

quence out of the court of public opinion.

Clinton and his top aides kept encouraging the JFK comparisons. And a lot of the press seemed happy to oblige.

When the former Arkansas governor took his first extended holiday since moving into the White House, he went to the stretch of New England coastline made famous by John Kennedy. The vacation at Martha's Vineyard included several hours on a much-publicized luncheon cruise with a yacht-load of Kennedys.

The New York Times coverage was typical on Aug. 25, 1993: "Thirty years ago, Bill Clinton the boy stood staring at John F. Kennedy, his hero, in the White House Rose Garden. Today, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and other members of the family welcomed Bill Clinton the president to the seas off the Massachusetts coast that his murdered predecessor loved so well."

But analogies between Clinton and Kennedy faded from news media during the mid-1990s. President Clinton did not live up to the courageous JFK image.

Ironically, neither did John Kennedy.

The real President Clinton bears quite a resemblance to the real President Kennedy -- beholden to economic elites, unwilling to cross big business or challenge the Pentagon.

After eight years in the White House, President Dwight Eisenhower delivered his farewell address on Jan. 17, 1961. The ex-general warned of "an immense military establishment and a large arms industry." He added that "we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex."

Like his hero JFK, Clinton shrugged off such concerns -- preferring to remain firmly in the pocket of the military-industrial complex. In that regard, as in many others, Clinton's presidency has been no profile in courage.

These days, few journalists are comparing Bill Clinton to John Kennedy. That particular canard has worn out its welcome.

But in medialand, the focus remains on personal styles and inside-the-Beltway maneuvers. Newer glib notions replace the cliches that have gone out of fashion.

Of course, everyone knows that politicians try to feed contrived images to the media. But many journalists act as though it's their job to swallow the hype -- and prompt the public to do the same.

Americans have long been skeptical -- even scathing -- about elected officials in Washington. "Fleas can be taught nearly anything that a congressman can," Mark Twain commented. In 1897, he wrote: "It could probably be shown by facts and figures that there is no distinctly native American criminal class except Congress."

But rather than just condemning politicians as a group -- or praising one of them as the bearer of a heroic torch -- we would do much better to scrutinize exactly whose interests they are serving. That way, we'll be far less likely to fall for the next media myths.

*Norman Solomon is a syndicated columnist. His book "Wizards of Media Oz: Behind the Curtain of Mainstream News" (co-authored with Jeff Cohen) has just been published by Common Courage Press.*

## BERMUDA TRIANGLE, CONTINUED FROM PG. 3

blight garage door behind him is covered with graffiti tags. Very, very scary, children. For some reason, while ubiquitous on the electronic trains, this lovely image is absent from the diesels, which I guess, in the diseased mind of some Madison Avenue suit, are considered too down-market.

On a recent archaeological dig, I unearthed an article entitled "No Risks Preferred" by James Ridgeway, first published in 1969 in the New Republic before it became a neo-conservative clearinghouse. Ridgeway describes how insurance company representatives would evaluate potential clients on things that had absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with driving ability. Things like marital status, employment (waiters, janitors and painters were taken a dim view of), race (surprise, surprise) and even housekeeping were considered grounds for denial of coverage, despite there being no empirical correlation between these factors and auto safety.

Almost thirty years later we can see an insurance agency boasting about its exclusionary tactics. All the more reason to do everything possible to keep these avaricious leviathans from completely taking over health care and deciding who lives or dies using such criteria.

### LABOUR PAINS

Our British cousins have just elected a phony Labour government, reminiscent of our own New Democrats. Tony Blair's denatured party is proud of its anti-union, tough-on-crime stance and promises to leave in place Maggie Thatcher's policy of shredding the social contract. Once the euphoria of having dumped the Tories wears off and people realize it's the same old thing dressed up in warmer, fuzzier tweeds, what will happen?

Across the Channel, the French have voted a Socialist government into power. Not to worry, however. If they try to wriggle out of the gilded cage of global capitalism, we have ways of destabilizing them and maybe ushering in fascist xenophobe Jean Marie Le Pen, whose success with the increasingly unemployed and resentful work force bears and eerie resemblance to events in neighboring countries a bit earlier in this century.

Our wonderful Congress is busy passing their annual package of junk legislation promoting school prayer, preventing flag "desecration" and most stupidly, recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital (without also recognizing it as Palestine's), precipitating even more riots in Palestinian areas.

Even more stupidly, Palestinian leaders, now that they have a moral high ground unambiguous to all but the densest of US media, have made it a capital crime to sell land to Jews. At least one unofficial execution has occurred. Way to shoot yourselves in the foot, guys. This gives plenty of cannon fodder to Arab-bashers of all descriptions and plays right into their stereotypes of hate filled, bloody-minded Muslim fanatics.

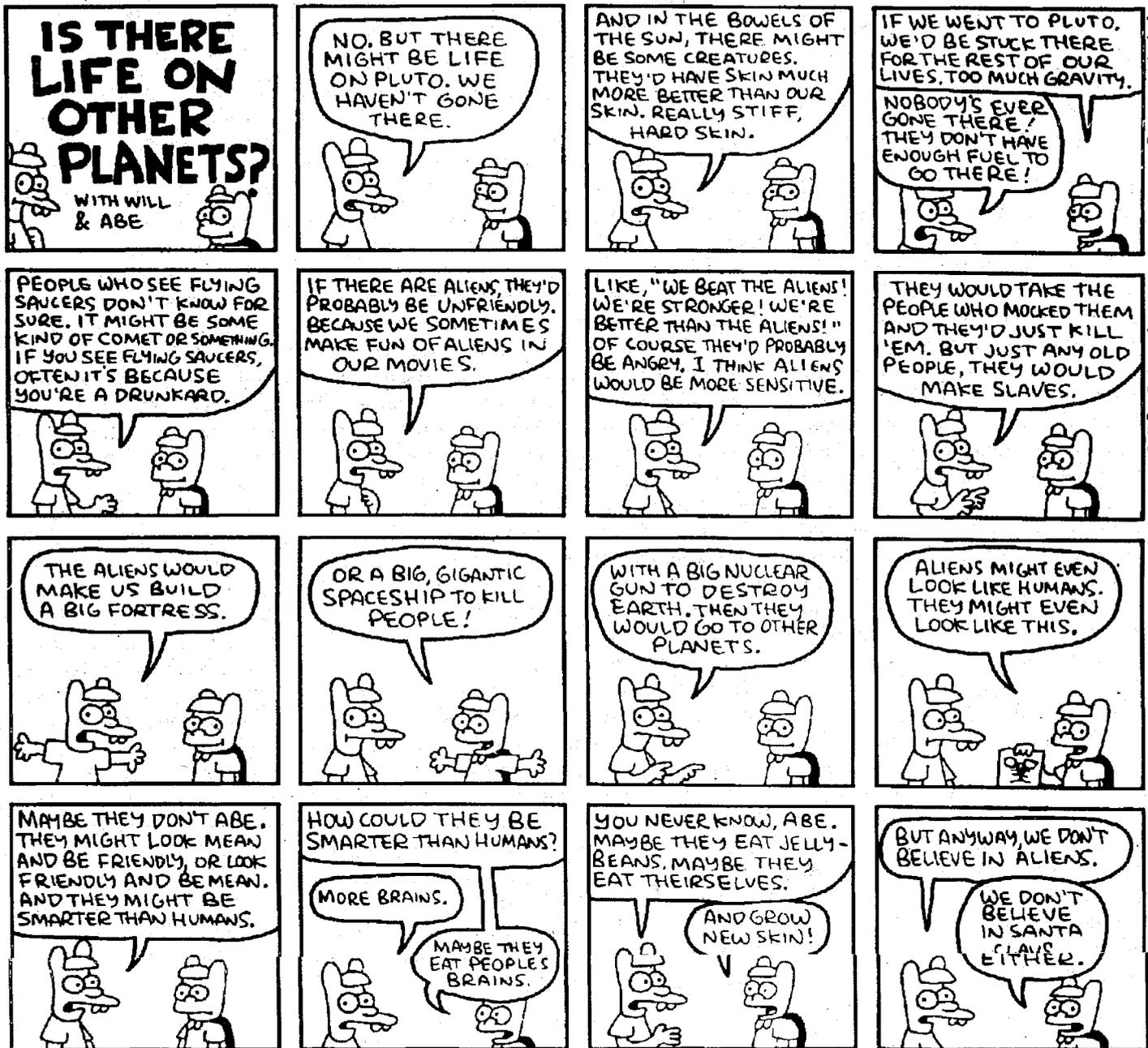
Little is said in most of the media about Israeli laws forbidding non-Jews, especially Arabs (even those who are Israeli citizens) to own land. Land obtained from Palestinians by coercion, trickery or outright seizure is never returned by the Israeli government.

This just in: protests have arisen in both the US and Germany against McDonald's. Mickey D's plans to open an outlet right across from Dachau, the notorious death camp, now site of a memorial and museum. Will the sign on the golden arches proclaim, "Over 11 million snuffed"?

Next time, bring pillows and blankets, for I may just add to your summer doldrums with endless vacation slides.

LIFE IN HELL

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## Top Ten Ways To Get Out of Jury Duty

- 10) Smear yourself in shit from neck to ankle and put on a neon orange leisure suit.
- 9) Every time the judge says something, rap it back to him.
- 8) Constantly quote lines from *Necessary Roughness*.
- 7) Stand up, grab your crotch and say "We object!"
- 6) Bring two puppets. When Judge speaks, wave one puppet around. When lawyer speaks, wave other puppet around. Surreptitiously make puppets kiss.
- 5) Spit for distance.
- 4) Start the wave in the jury box.
- 3) Throw up into your hands and then eat it.
- 2) Put your hand on Judge's hip. When he dips, you dip, then both of you dip.
- 1) Punctuate your sentences with hip thrusts.

# WILDWOOD HAPPENING

By Robby Quartz

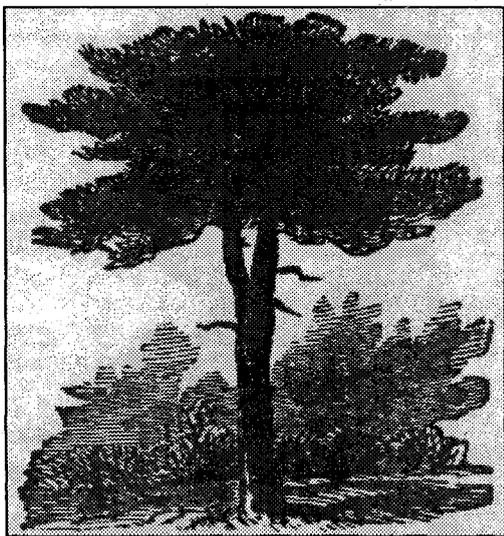
A lovely Saturday afternoon in July was a perfect setting for a semi-annual happening at Wildwood State Park.

The call went out over a month ago for counter-culture freaks to gather, cook vegan food, and play some acoustic music. The site was down a dirt road and off the beaten track, keeping us hippies away from those typical suburbanites that infest the rest of the park.

A few days before the happening, I saw the Smithtown News announcing that the Ku Klux Klan was going to march on Smithhaven Mall. So I called my friend Tim, and I said, "we've got to take some time out of our Be-In to say 'Fuck You' to the Klan." Our plan was to set up camp then come back to do an anti-Klan rally, then go back to the happening.

We got to the site around 12:30 and started to set up, then we got the word that the Klan had canceled the hideous display they were planning. That was great news, for now there was no reason to disrupt our gathering.

The Saturday of the happening came right after a wicked Friday night thunder storm that broke an oppressive heat wave. The weather was wonder-



ful, warm and dry as we gathered under the tall trees of Wildwood Park. As people came and the festivities were under way, we successfully hid the alcohol from the Park Rangers

There was a lot of painting going on as music was being played. Down the bluff was the beach. I found an isolated spot for a skinny dip, then made my way back to the site for more soy hot dogs, veggie burgers, and beer.

A photo from a previous Wildwood happening was of that sexy paper boy the Press has, that was run on the last issue of the spring semester.

We had three encounters with park officials. The first thing they said to me was, "Are you a counter culture freak?" I said "yes," and explained what we were doing there and the contraband was well hidden. Bully for us.

The latter part of the day started at twilight time. Our friend George Biddermann played a set of his songs. George is a singer songwriter who has recorded three tapes, is an activist and a union organizer. He played his songs for an hour and a half, and I did back up vocals, that was fun.

The sun went down and we packed up. The be-in was over at 930pm, until next year.

## CHINESE KUNG-FU PERFORMANCE

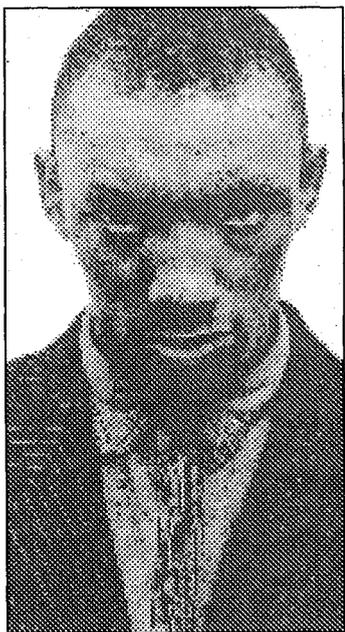
ON SATURDAY, AUG. 2, FROM 5PM TO 7:30PM, A TRADITIONAL CHINESE KUNG-FU PERFORMANCE WILL BE HELD AT THE AUDITORIUM OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES CENTER AT SUNY STONY BROOK. PRESENTED BY SIFU CHANG'S SCHOOL OF TEN THOUSAND DRAGONS, PERFORMANCE WILL INCLUDE MARVELOUS TYPICAL CHINESE KUNG-FU (WUSHU), LION DANCING, AND TAI-CHI. A CHINESE KUNG-FU MOVIE WILL BE SHOWN AFTERWARDS. FREE.

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## Chin Slinky, continued from page 8

from the ceiling, the low rider bicycles the "band" rode out on, or the mushroom cloud of dirt the moshers kicked up -- a cloud that would, by the conclusion of Korn's set, engulf everyone on Randall's Island and leave them with a second skin of crushed grass and dried mud.

Tricky was an absolute savior, delivering the concert from alt-rock posturing with a set of warped songs that ran the gamut from simple rock to techno to bizarre improvisational work. Both the unreleased opening song and the unappreciated extended version of "Vent" raised the hair on the back of my neck. A fiery little ball of energy, Tricky bounced in place behind his microphone, occasionally deserting



Tricky

it to give the band's female vocalist, Martine, a chance to sing. Besides being one of the day's biggest highlights, Tricky can also be credited for having arranged the most motley crew of the show: a bottle-blond bassist in camouflage, a keyboardist with a single dangling earring and shag haircut ("her name is Rio and she dances in the

sand"), a drummer whose long dreadlocks obscured his face, and a hippy guitarist surely on loan from the Marshall Tucker Band.

Nothing good can last for long, and Snoop Doggy Dogg showed up 15 minutes after Tricky's set to prove that point. The Lollapaganda booklet says that Snoop wants to be the first rapper in the Rock-N-Roll Hall OF Fame. If the best he can do is grab his crotch and incite the crowd to scream "beeotch", then he can let that dream go.

Tool picked a perfect slot to play, their chaotic pseudo-metal blending perfectly with the setting sun and dropping temperature. True to form, vocalist Maynard James Keenan arrived on-stage dressed as oddly as possible: white face-paint, false topknot, and a padded suit which gave him false breasts. (He was pretty stacked, too. Yum.)

Another one of the day's few saving graces, Tool put on a psychotic set that covered all three of their albums. Guitarist Adam Jones provided just enough feedback to enhance the music, without drowning it out altogether, while drummer Danny Carey produced enough percussive sound effects to make Mr. Bungle sound straight-forward. Keenan was at the top of his form, alternately signing and engaging in witty repartee with the audience, even going so far as to incite the crowd to say "yeeeeee-sssssss" in mockery of the preceding performance.

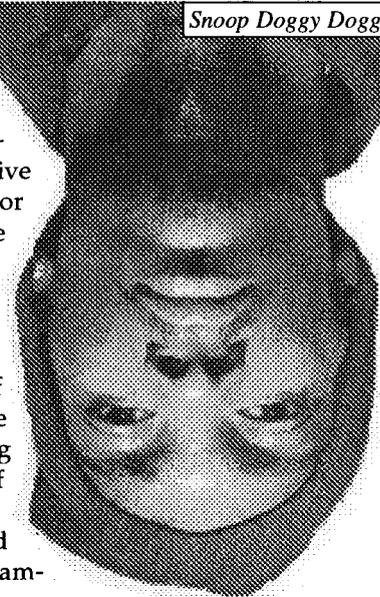
I couldn't stay for Orbital, the final band of the night, even though both James and Tool implored the audience to do so. The Lollapalooza festival -- all festivals, in fact -- is a good idea on paper, but in practice it leaves a lot to be desired. It's a long show, it involves a lot of standing and a great deal of walking, and the amenities that would make

such

a thing tolerable are either outrageously expensive (like water) or over half a mile from the main stage (like the muddy Rain Tent). I did get to catch most of their set while stuck in parking lot traffic, and if the ambient rhythms and razor-sharp sampling I heard were any indication of their live ability, then they're definitely worth seeing -- at least for their performance of "Halcyon", which got me grooving in the car to samples of Bon Jovi and Belinda Carlisle.

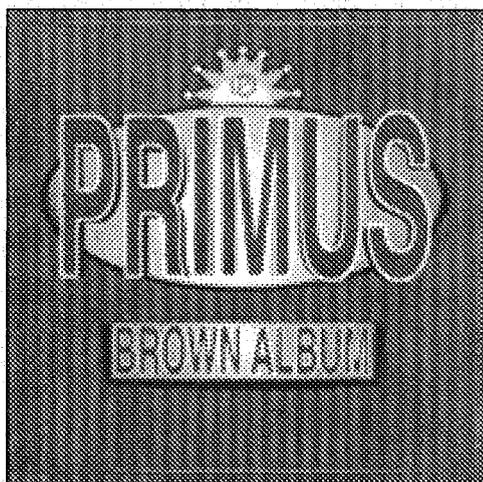
The biggest problem with this year's festival wasn't so much its lack of talent -- I've come to expect that from Lollapalooza -- but its utter lack of surprises. All of the bands that I expected to excel did so, while the bands I had little hope for provided me with no pleasant surprises (and Snoop Doggy Dogg sucked like a whore on a strawberry cumshake). "Artists Subject To Change"? One can only hope.

Snoop Doggy Dogg



# Chin Slinky

By Lowell Yaeger



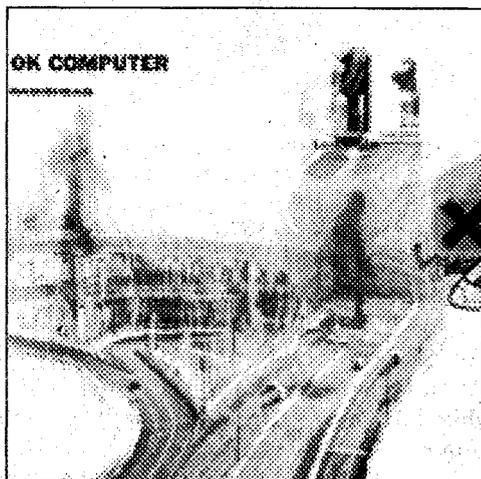
**Primus**  
**BROWN ALBUM**  
Interscope

Primus' new album has great packaging. The entire case is a misty gold color, and the inset booklet is covered in pictures and paintings whose sepia tones and old-fashioned artwork bring to mind scrapbooks and bistros: warmth and friendliness. Mmm.

The rest of the album sucks. Primus, if you'll remember, is the three-piece from San Francisco that blends thrash with funk and has a penchant for songs with silly lyrics ("Wynona's Big Brown Beaver", "Jerry The Race Car Driver"). At first, their odd sound was refreshing, then it was reliable, and now it's degenerated into something that's downright unlikeable.

Most of the songs on Brown Album are limp, and lack the energy that made earlier Primus so much fun. Tunes that should have become galloping mosh-fests rot into pointless noodling, and Les Claypool's wit and charm have become precious pseudo-poems about prostitution and beef. Guitarist Larry LaLonde does nothing to distract the listener from Claypool's fascination with complicated bass tricks, and new drummer Brian "Brain" Mantia is barely capable of keeping time, which is just about all he does. When he first joined the band, Claypool described him as a bundle of energy. If he's a bundle of energy, then Stephen Hawking's a fucking speed freak. I'd go into what's wrong with individual songs, but it's pointless -- this is just a whole lot of crap with a very apt title.

Great packaging, though.



**Radiohead**  
**OK COMPUTER**  
Capitol

Robert Smith can hang up his hat. The land of Misery has been seized, and the new King Of Depression bears a more-than-passing resemblance to Martin Short.

Radiohead's newest album, OK Computer, is easily one of the most depressing albums ever made. The Cure's Pornography, Dinosaur Jr's Where You Been, and the collective works of Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds are cloyingly optimistic next to this dangerously accessible tome of pain and dismay.

It's this very accessibility that makes OK Computer so hard to handle. Rather than forcing the listener to cut through layer after layer of dense musicianship to find a core of unhappiness at the center, Radiohead invites him or her in with an approachable style that has the listener humming along while contemplating suicide.

Most of these songs are cut from standard pop, thrown into a fuzz-box, and pasted against the wall with reckless abandon, making for a sound that's low-fi without being difficult to follow. This lends the entire affair a rough, uncompleted edge, which perfectly matches vocalist Thom Yorke's delivery.

Yorke doesn't so much sing as he does mumble, refusing to involve even 50% of himself in the job at hand. And it doesn't have anything to do with a sense of apathy or artistic ennui, but is rather a stylistic effect which lends the work a slackness that says more than any actual words could.

A loose concept album, OK Computer is about the daily drudgery of modern life and humanity's relationship with technology. The first single, "Paranoid Android", is about the snapping of a man fed up with life, but he's so drained and weak that the song never really cuts loose -- even though the opportunity presents itself many times. There are numerous instrumental leads where the song could collapse into fury and pain, and truly vent the rage and frustration it means to convey, but such an explosion never really happens.

The same can be said of "Exit Music (For A Film)", whose climax is a repressed howl of "we hope your rules and wisdom choke you", followed by a mournfully wailed "we hope that you choke" as the song winds down to its whimpering close. The harsh emotional lesson that both of these songs are trying to teach is that in real life, venting is pretty rare. More often than not, the anger gets sunk lower and lower, leaving a decayed cynicism that Yorke's vocals and the band's instrumentals perfectly reflect.

Not everything is pointedly flaccid, however. The biting sarcasm of "Fitter Happier", which finds a computerized voice reciting self-help instructions/demands over a discordant background, sounds perfect after the finger-pointing, displaced shame on "Karma Police"; "Electioneering" is a fine little fast-paced romp about modern politics, and the band uses bright-eyed, optimistic-sounding pop to create a genuine disparity with the lyrics on songs like "Let Down" and "Subterranean Homesick Alien".

Radiohead has elevated themselves from a decent rock band to expert musicians by applying a little bit of simple reality. While other artists also mine the pain of living a boring life in a boring world, few do it as realistically. Perhaps they would do well to heed the album's closing song, "The Tourist", which sees Yorke giving up in despair and pleading "slow down, slow down".

**LOLLAPALOOZA**  
(Julian & Damian Marley & The Uprising Band,  
Porno For Pyros, James, Trick, Snoo Doggy

**Dogg, Tool, and Orbital)**  
June 25, 1997  
Randall's Island

Lollapalooza's evolution as a yearly music festival can be seen on its ticket stubs. 1993's stub bore the cryptic slogan "Wherever You Go, There You Are", while 1994's exhorted the holder to "Take The Day Off!". 1997's simply says "Artists Subject To Change".

In short, it was just like most of the other Lollapaloozas. It was too warm, there were too many people, mud made a frequent appearance, and the security guards aimed their much-needed water hoses at the people who were already soaked to pneumonia-candidate levels. It wasn't a festival about musical expression and freedom; its bizarre line-up was

a reaction to public dismay in previous years, an attempt to sell more tickets than 1996's metal-fest. And of course, the plan back-fired:

supposedly, the shows have been selling so poorly that the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion refused to play when they found out their salary would drop. But since I don't want to waste limited space on gripes that have been aired time and time again since the festival's inception in 1991, I'll go right to what the show is purportedly about: the music.

The first act of the day, Julian & Damian Marley & The Uprising Band (whew, that's a mouthful), was entirely out of their element. They weren't bad, but they were young and unprepared for a package tour whose other artists live in a completely different world. After a few decent reggae songs, the brothers tried to knock the crowd out of its stupor with a cover of their father's "I Shot The Sheriff", to little effect.

A brief pause occurred while Porno For Pyros took over the second stage. Perry Farrell looked laid back and lounged around the stage with a jug of wine, waving it before the audience to "catch their love." This guy is an asshole. He led the band through four powerless acoustic songs, wiggling like an epileptic on Valium and smiling vacantly like a man with Down's syndrome. I hope he wilds up a bit before this fall's Jane's Addiction reunion, or he's going to disappoint a lot of fans.

Speaking of weak and ineffectual: remember James? James was the brit-pop band of the moment a few years ago with their caterwauled MTV hit, "Laid". With an ill-fitting cowboy hat and neck brace, the band's lead singer looked like a poor imitation of Bono, while the band struggled to perform music in front of a crowd that couldn't care less. The rag pamphlet I was handed on the way into the festival said that James thinks they're a very aggressive live band. OK.

Korn made spectacles of themselves for over an hour on the main stage. I suppose it says something about the average ticketholder that a band whose lead singer considers an Adidas kilt humorous can draw the biggest crowd of the day. I don't know what annoyed me more: the hubcaps strung

