

The
Stony
Brook

PRESS

Vol. XIX No. 4

Take a Walk, Johnny Statesman

October 15, 1997



The Missing

\$ MILLION

Aramark and the Big Corporate Accounting "Oops."

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The World According To Shirley

By Anne Ruggiero

The University at Stony Brook has some of the most involved, aware, and socially conscious students and faculty in the country. The Student Polity Association, the student body, and the faculty have always been concerned and involved, characteristics which were beneficial to the university community and an asset to the marketing of the school. But while President Kenny maintains a front for student activism, she and her staff are slowly rotting the community's infrastructure at its core. By methodically removing decision-making power from elected representatives, Shirley and her cronies are chipping away at one of the only facets which makes such a large state-funded university like Stony Brook so unique.

The interaction between the students and faculty has shaped the school's persona as one of enlightened learning and cultural awareness. Three weeks ago, dozens of visitors, staff, and students crowded into the lobby of the Student Activity Center for its dedication and heard Kenny and Vice-President Fred Preston exalt the praises of such an active student body, and reinforce the notion that the university exists primarily for the benefit of the students. Funny, isn't it, how the right hand will steal from the left? As the administration basks in the public relations glory of having such an involved academic community, it has dismissed its elected advisors and replaced them with administrative appointees.

Case in point: under Dr. John Marburger, President of Stony Brook until 1994, the academic departments elected faculty members to various University Senate advisory councils. These councils

would survey their field, identify problems in the community and report back to the administration with possible solutions. One particular group was the Senate task force on the campus environment, where elected faculty from various departments planned landscaping, monitored the placement of parking lots, tree planting, and looked after the general aesthetics and well-being of the campus. Upon the arrival of Dr. Kenny, the members of the task force received a memorandum stating that

"As the Administration basks in the public relations glory of having such an involved academic community, it has dismissed elected advisors and replaced them with administrative appointees."

their positions would be dissolved, and instructing them to submit applications to the administration. From these applicants and other sources, the president would appoint the new task force. Infuriated faculty members appealed to the senate executive committee, who agreed with their uproar over dismissing elected advisors and replacing them with appointees, and approached President Kenny on the matter. Kenny ignored their complaints, and continues to hand-pick her administrative minions.

Throughout the campus, an increasing amount of decisions are being made arbitrarily – an interesting concept considering that the university spends so much time exalting peer activism. Consolidation of power is never overt. Dr. Kenny appears diplomatic in her efforts, and will consult her advisors after hearing a complaint or suggestion, but hearing is not enough. As one faculty activist stated, "Allowing someone to speak and listening to what they say are two different things. The administration is not listening."

Exactly who is on the president's advisory board? Her advisors are private consultants, and therefore students are not entitled to that information, although said advisors have extreme relevance to

campus community life. We do know that members of the board include Len Riggio, (the C.E.O. of Barnes & Noble, so don't be surprised when Wallace's is usurped by that conglomerate), and one of Sen. Al D'Amato's former henchmen. Effects of Kenny's spreading totalitarianism are slow to manifest, but we are already seeing the results. University logos, the Student Activity Center, and Asian Cultural Center, all designed without student involvement, by architects chosen by Dr. Kenny. Sure, she consulted various committees, but when committee members are directly hired by the president, their votes may coincidentally mirror her preferences. Nepotism has its privileges.

In the Spring, 1997 Senate Survey, "the extent to which the Stony Brook Administration involves the appropriate faculty/staff members in the making of decisions that affect them," received a mere rating of 1.6 on a scale of 4.0. Will the review hold any weight? Who's to say that the administrators will listen to the comments and criticism provided? In the comments section of the survey, one representative was quoted: "I filled out this sheet as I have been the past two years, but I don't know why. These ratings seem not to influence what goes on around here a whit!"

A concerned faculty member stated, "I always thought that a university should be a place to demonstrate the value of human beings...to use their contributions." President Kenny has expressed a blatant disregard for the wishes of the community, both by replacing elected representatives with appointed advisors, and by surrounding herself, not with her Stony Brook peers, but with consultants from outside institutions. The administration has ceased to be a vehicle for addressing the concerns and needs of the students and faculty, and has instead become a cozy coffee clatch for Kenny's nearest and dearest friends, especially those who can further advance her public relations agenda.

RACING THE REAPER

By Michael Yeh

Hundreds of volunteer firefighters, emergency medical workers, and other enthusiasts examined the latest developments in rescue equipment at the second annual Long Island Firefighter and EMS Extravaganza in the Indoor Sports Complex on September 27 and 28.

This conference and trade show was held to raise money for the Islip Town Firefighters Museum Fund and the Firefighter Burn Center at the University Medical Center at Stony Brook.

The highlight of the event was a combined first aid and extrication competition, in which local emergency services personnel demonstrated their skills. Participants were presented with a scenario in which a 28 year old male driver swerved off the road to avoid hitting a dog. The "patient" had a penetrating head injury (thanks to the help of make-up artists) and showed signs of spinal injury.

"It's a training exercise for both extrication and EMTs," said judge Patricia Flanagan. Contestants had to remove a car door with the "Jaws of Life" to reach the trapped victim. In addition, they were expected to perform a complete patient assessment, control bleeding, and immobilize the patient's spinal column.

The teams were comprised of members from the Holbrook Fire Department, East Brentwood Fire Department, Flanders North Hampton Volunteer

Ambulance Corps, and a combined team from the Exchange Ambulance of the Islips and the Islip Terrace Fire Department.

"The teams are doing very well," said Flanagan, "They are giving good patient care."

The Islip team took first place for the best extrication and treatment. "Unfortunately, we do get a lot [of automobile accidents]," said Leigh Anderson, Chief of Exchange Ambulance. "To be honest, that crew was put together that morning."

In addition to the competition, continuing education seminars were offered on controlled substances, sexual harassment, casualty simulation, and other topics relevant to fire and rescue operations. More than a hundred vendors were also present to demonstrate their products, from novelty T-shirts and posters to rescue vehicles and defibrillators.

"It's been a fun weekend," said one EMS buff, "But I'm just disappointed that I couldn't find a 'We raced The Reaper' T-shirt."

Ironically, the University's EMS volunteers missed out on a lot of the fun. "The show seemed

okay, but I'm not sure," said Jason Hellmann, EMT-CC, Deputy Chief of the Stony Brook Volunteer Ambulance Corps. "We kept running out to the Rugby Field for calls."

According to Nick Campson, treasurer of the museum committee, this show offers local firefighters and EMS volunteers a chance to see the latest tools and techniques without having to travel to larger shows in Upstate New York. In general, Long Island fire departments have greater purchasing powers than others in the state, and often use newer and more advanced equipment.

The Islip Town Firefighters Museum was proposed to preserve and display equipment and memorabilia from volunteer fire departments in the Town of Islip. As with all towns in Suffolk County, Islip residents rely on volunteers to run their fire departments. In addition, the museum would serve to perpetuate the history of these departments, to engage in fire prevention and safety programs, and to honor the dedicated volunteers.

"The idea is to run something we hope will have continuous benefits," said Campson, "We want to maintain the heritage of volunteer fire service, which goes back to the 1800s on Long Island."



Rescue workers free a trapped victim in an extrication drill.

BEHEMOTHS OF BABYLON

By Chris Sorochin

The War Resisters League has declared October 24th "A Day Without the Pentagon." The purpose is to encourage the citizens of the Empire to contemplate how much better our lives would be if a whopping 51% of our tax revenue went to things other than lining the pockets of armaments makers who produce, in many cases, death toys even the military itself doesn't need or want.

Way back in 1960, outgoing President Dwight D. Eisenhower, not commonly known as a pacifist, warned that every dollar spent on the arms race was a dollar stolen from the needs of the people. He also cautioned against the rise of the military-industrial complex, an economic system based on producing tools of war, which requires an unceasing and ever-increasing policy of expansionism and interventionism to justify the growing costs. (One wonders what would have happened to Ike had he made these remarks at the beginning of his tenure rather than at the end - maybe the same thing that happened to his successor.) A militaristic economy necessitates a very active role in the shaping of US culture into one that sees itself as, paradoxically, the supreme guardian and savior of all decency and freedom, yet one that has no qualms about violating the same standards of decency and freedom when its leaders feel it appropriate. In another irony, it achieves its aim of being the largest, strongest, most unassailable power in history, yet one that constantly has to keep looking under the bed for enemies both within and without.

In 1945, a General Electric executive expressed the idea that the US needed "a permanent war economy." Since then, GE and Westinghouse, another regular passenger on the gravy train of military spending, have perpetrated the ultimate coup of owning two of the largest media conglomerates (NBC and CBS) that control public perceptions of the world in which we live.

Though slightly early for Halloween, on October 16th, the New York Free Media Alliance, a media watchdog group whose quixotic mission is to demystify the arcane sorcery of the "information industry," will conduct a trick-or-treat "Tour of the Terrible Mogul World," a chamber of moral horrors hidden among the gleaming office towers of midtown Manhattan. The tour/protest will visit the corporate megaliths that define the amount and slant of information most of us get on any given issue or story, always with their own bottom line in mind.

The pilgrimage will commence promptly at 4:30 in Times Square outside the headquarters of Viacom. Viacom is the parent company of MTV and VH1, entities that are busy commodifying youth culture, making sure that every impulse of independence, rebellion or original thought is neutered and shrink-wrapped in plastic for resale ("The genius of America is its ability to turn anything into a product" in the immortal words of Gary Nagle). Unions representing

broadcast workers, who've been getting the royal shaft in the piranha festival that has accompanied the deregulation and consequent shrinking of numbers of media companies into a gigantic few, will participate, as will the ever-subversive Bread and Puppet Theatre and maybe even drag-sensation Penny Arcade. We also expect participation from delegates from the Media and Democracy Congress, taking place that very weekend (though at an elitist admission rate which precludes the fully independent media from attending. What gives?)

From there, we'll process solemnly to the Disney Store on Seventh Avenue. Disney owns ABC and suffuses that network with its unreal, Technicolor worldview, including a blackout on Disney's "exploits" of third World sweatshop labor. While Disney CEO's make more in a year than most small countries, Haitian workers perform Herculean tasks for pennies a day under brutal conditions and would most likely be clubbed if they ever attempted to whistle while they work.

Next, it's on to the lair of the white worm, the pestilential Rupert Murdoch, a right-winger whose British tabloids are credited with the suppository-like insertion of Margaret Thatcher into the body politic of the United Kingdom. Media courtiers like Murdoch are instrumental in recasting reactionary political thugs like Thatcher and Reagan as "populists" who have the interest of the little people at heart. Australian-born Murdoch is such an admirer of the US (as a source of profits) that he took out citizenship so he could demonstrate his patriotism by scarfing up more media outlets. He also censored his satellite Sky TV when certain stories about the Chinese government displeased the modern-day mandarins in Beijing. Don't want to lose all those viewers, do we Rupe?

Last year, in what has to be the all-time greatest public relations blunder by an otherwise reputable charity organization, the United Jewish Appeal presented Murdoch with its Humanitarian of the Year award. To top it all off, the award was presented by none other than the infamous genocidal war criminal and poster child for Machiavellian cynicism, Henry Kissinger!!!

NBC is famed for ignoring or even cancelling guests that have uncomplimentary things to say about weapons, war, or nuclear power. They'll receive a special visit, as will that other "naked" station, CBS. This May, there was an explosion at the Hanford nuclear facility in Washington, also famous for the high rates of cancer, birth defects and other peculiarities that can be traced to Hanford's career as a weapons plant. Chances are you'll hear little, if anything, about this dangerous situation from the Atomic Media. The recent closing of Connecticut's four nuclear power plants didn't make the cut either, nor did

the warheads that rolled off a transport truck when it skidded on an icy Nebraska road. Or the "Mobile Chernobyl" bill that will turn interstates into radioactive hazards, as tons of nuclear waste are hauled from all over the country to Yucca flats, in an already heavily-contaminated area of the Southwest destined to become the world's largest radioactive waste dump. Or this summer's revelations that the above-ground missile tests of the 1950's contaminated most of the country and is predicted to produce high levels of cancer in those who drank milk as children at the time. And megatons more.

There will be one other stop: the Time & Life Building on Sixth Avenue. Back in the '80's, the then Time-Life Books got my personal "Lysol" award for its series designed to sanitize the Vietnam War in the public mind. "The US went to Vietnam with a pretty noble purpose," draws an Ollie North clone from an Army jeep in a TV ad for the series. Yes, indeed. I'm sure all those napalmed peasants and Agent Orange-afflicted veterans cherish the permanent momentos they carry of this government's nobility. The commercial promises "the war from the perspective of the men who fought it" (and still have their sanity) and intimates that the peace movement (not the war, mind you) "ripped the country apart." Actually, the antiwar movement brought lots of different people together, which is one reason the power structure finds it so unpalatable, as they prefer a divided and alienated populace.

To this day, Time-warner consumes news and excretes it as mindless soundbite goo, reducing complex issues to photo-op fluff and dumbed down dreck.

You see; we've now arrived back at the Empire and the Cult of Force and Death that serves it. Along those lines, there will be a convocation at New Haven's Church on the Green on Sunday, October 19th, to address the question of why the death penalty is still a fave of most Americans, when the rest of the civilized world has renounced it. Human rights advocates, including Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit will be there to tackle the question. (My guess: Empires thrive on anger, contempt for compassion and disrespect for life, especially empires on the way down. While the rest of the universe is allowed to progress, we are stuck in an inflexible backwater of Dark Ages thinking in a vain attempt to recapture the hardass virtues that allegedly made us great. Just an idle theory.) The forum will be sponsored by WPKN (89.5 FM), a totally independent and

listener-driven radio station that doesn't accept corporate or government funding. And they need your help. This month is their Begathon pledge drive. Please call (203-DUH-WPKN) and pledge whatever you can; they're always glad to get it.

But media control is far from the only Godzilla stomping through the prefab Japanese apartment blocks of our

please see "Babylon" on page 11



Dwight D. Eisenhower



From Walt to Sweatshops....

FIGHTING THE FOOD FIGHT

Over the years, The Press has seen its share of controversy. Our articles have consistently riled the campus community, prompted debate and raised hell.

Every semester or so, we print something which really gets a reaction... sometimes positive, sometimes not. It's one of the best (and worst) things about student journalism – instant, passionate feedback.

Upon the publication of our last issue, this phenomenon went to whole new levels.

Apparently, our section on Aramark and the student meal plan struck a chord. Within an hour of publication, reactions were pouring into our office.

Most students responded enthusiastically, telling us how disgusted they were with the food service. These tales would often lead into a recounting of Aramark horror stories; "They all laughed at me!", "They charged me twice the cost!" or the ever-popular "I was in line for twenty minutes!"

There were negative reactions as well. Some readers complained that we treated Aramark too roughly. The most common complaint was that we unfairly insulted the elderly women who work in the Deli.

Perhaps the most telling element of the comments we received is that almost no one defended Aramark. Whether they loved our articles, or hated our attitude, no one contradicted our main point:

Students are not happy with their food service.

There is no denying the anger students feel towards Aramark and their food-flinging minions. The campus is sick and tired of long lines, confusing prices and mediocre food. If Aramark doesn't do something soon, they're going to find themselves out of a lucrative food service contract.

In the interest of helping that possibility come to fruition, we are continuing our analysis of the meal plan and the problems with its execution. In this issue, we take a look at Aramark's contract with the FSA, and examine why there were no eateries open over last weekend's break.

You, dear reader, can take part in this investigative endeavor. Send or email us your Aramark horror stories – the very worst of your experiences dealing with our campus food service. We'll reprint the best of these tales in a future issue.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Appalled and Ignorant

From SBUHUMAN@aol.com
 Tue Oct 7 23:38:58 1997
 Date: Thu, 2 Oct 1997 18:47:58 -0400 (EDT)
 From: SBUHUMAN@aol.com
 To: sbpress@ic.sunysb.edu
 Subject: Cocerns in The Press

First of all I would like to say that I am appalled at the articles that your staff has written in The Press paper of October 1, 1997. I think that the editors of that paper should be terminated from writing such garbage and profanity concerning Aramark Foodservice! First it shows your unintelligence and immaturity of the way you speak about people and companies. Aramark is a major company with many great achievements under their belts. Students always think that it is better with the flip side of the coin. Have you no respect for the people that work there trying to help you through your day from not starving. Aramark I think has plenty of good places to eat on campus that are opened late as well. Get off your ass and walk there. They are situated all over campus. If you are too lazy to get there to eat then that is your problem not the workers or the company. I am very upset with the way you trashed the ladies in the deli who are just trying to make a living, at least they aren't too old to get off their ass every day to come to work to feed your faces. You all should be ashamed of yourselves and the way you spoke about them in the paper. They do not hurt anyone and are very nice and cordial to me when I eat at the deli. To the guy or dragqueen {your own words not mine} who wrote the article if you do not want people to look at you dont wear such an outfit that people just cant help to look at. Lets face it guy, you like to be looked at or else you wouldnt wear such an outfit around campus. Laughed at you ; say by the ladies is just an expression that Im sure you must get alot of in this school, it isn't

every day that you get to see a drag queen around campus! If you dont want people to talk about you lose the get up. You have no respect for yourself or others around you. You need the attention, like you said {you get depressed alot} try counseling buddy I think you need it. You are definitely not showing respect or maturity just by the way you speak to and about people. Grow up and get on with your life or whatever you may call it in the Happy mood that you seldom get into, but leave the ladies alone in the deli.

To the author of the other articles:

I see time and time again people going to get their food and saying comments on it or what it looks like, you have a mouth {eventhough it's garbage that comes out of it} open it and tell the management team what you would like to have or what they can do better to improve it. I do believe that there are comment cards all around campus in the dining facilities that students can write their comments on. I for one have friends that are from different colleges that have little or no variety at all on campus. All of you should be so lucky to have a Burger King, Taco Bell, Deli etc right here on campus, some just have one cafeteria only. My god people wake up will you, I think there is more than enough food and variety here on campus. I happen to like the workers that I come in contact with and they are very pleased to help me when I need something or just cant find it. Try to be human and you will see the light.

To the author of the Obscure Sub-Cultures Vol 9 :

It seems that you didnt know your former polity president very well that you say in your article she is one of the finest who have left the fold in order to better the situation for the students at Stony Brook. Obviously she took a job with Aramark to help out and get comments from her fellow students and happens to like Aramark otherwise she wouldnt have come to work for a company that she didnt care for. Aramark from my understanding has many benefits to working for their company, and many that are working there now at one time were students themselves.

PRESS

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David M. Ewalt

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Brian Libfeld

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Jessica LaMantia

Minister of Archives
Brian Schneider

Kingpin
Martha Chemas

Not Wearing Underwear
Rob Gilheany

Mascot
Ruby Firewall

Annoyances
Chris Cartusciello, Keith Filaski,
Jessica Kupillas, Lou Moran,
Chris Sorochin, Ted Swedalla,
Steven Tornello

Major Annoyances
Jennifer Choy, Mario Del Toro,
Elvis Duke, Jennifer Hobin,
Jermaine LaMont, Terry McLaren,
James Polichak, Nancy B. Regula,
Jessica Stack, Scott West

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• **HONORABLE MENTION:**
REPORTING

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In closing I think that the students that dont like Aramark dont really like themselves but like the attention that it gives them for writting such articles in a paper that I personally have no respect for. Whatever your agenda is for getting rid of Aramark I hope you only think before you open your mouth and let another foodservice company come in, and believe me I would go to other schools and just take a look at what you might be getting in the future if you decide to bring on another foodservice company, think before you leap !!!

Sincerely,

A Student,
T.W.

The Editor Responds:

It would be a serious waste of time for me to respond to your complaints, since you've effectively hung yourself with your own misspelled rope.

Nonetheless, I'd like to single out one of your statements for further scrutiny:

"I think that the students that dont like Aramark dont really like themselves."

You're an idiot.

A More Reasoned Response

To The Editor:

Re: "Go Ahead and Laugh," by Phil Russo

Normally I would never write a letter to go against any of the writers for the Press, both because I think the Press is the only source of truth on this campus, and, well, I don't write very well (if I did, I'd probably want to write for the Press itself).

Ok. First of all, allow me to describe myself before you assume I'm one of the "normal" people you (Phil) are attempting to differentiate yourself from. Most people probably know me from Taco Bell - I'm the one with the blue and purple hair, the screws coming out of my jacket, the bondage pants and the spikes. I squat in Manhattan, (well, that is, 'till Guliani and his fascist friends kicked me out), I start fights with cops for the sake of ending boredom (and vice versa). I'm not here for a rich, capitalist-loving, money-making future; I'm here because I want to make a difference. I want to go to law school. And no, not so I can conform, but so I can represent people like myself - the ones the city dicks over and refuses to defend - you know, us "weird people." I know that was a long intro, but, like I said, I don't want you to automatically stereotype me as yuppie conformist scum merely because I disagree with you (and if you don't believe me, ask Phil himself - he knows me well).

Now, to the letter. I don't know about you, but I'm not being weird for the "sake of being weird", I'm being myself. In fact, I don't consider myself weird - that's a label I get from society - it's nothing to be proud of. My goal is to become accepted despite how I choose to appear, not to appear weird. I wear blue hair because I like blue hair - not because I want to be different. I want to be the same - with blue hair. And it's people who hold opinions like you, Phil, who give "us" the reputation of being rude, anti-social, and unaccepting - much like was mentioned by a "normal" person in the Press a few weeks ago (I'm not sure exactly when that letter to the editor was).

Second, and more to the point, I (as well as other "weirdos" I've spoken to about your article) think that you are blowing the whole deli scene out of proportion. I'm the first one to say Aramark should get on its hands and knees and suck me. However, let's face up to two things. First, you yourself said you looked like a "demented drag queen." If I saw a demented drag queen walk into Taco Bell, I'd laugh too. If you

saw a demented drag queen walk into the Press office, you (meaning Phil, not necessarily the Press staff itself) would also laugh. Second, in response to the question "...have you ever been greeted in the deli before?" my answer is yes. As a matter of fact, Brian has never not said "hi" to me, and all the "old hags" always smile and say "hi", and are sure to tell me to have a good day. Now, again, not defending Aramark, if you want to find a decent person in the money-hungry, all-powerful food system, chances are Brian would be one of the first people you went to.

Finally (and this is the main motivation behind my letter), if I went to the deli and got harassed, I would go to the manager myself - I wouldn't go cry to my staff, and then hide in, the lounge while someone else said my case - if you're gonna make yourself something you need to defend, then be sure you know how to defend what you make. If you can refer to elderly women as "old hags" in a newspaper article for everyone on campus to see, why can't you say something face-to-face? And then, after saying all this shit, you fail to mention what happened when your friends went to the manager. Could it be perhaps because Brian may have been given a proper response? I don't think you should have asked anyone to not be woeful for you, because no one will. It would have gone without saying. I don't know about anyone else, but I personally don't feel sympathy for someone who curses out the elderly. Even mass murderers know to be nice to people's grandmas. And, still not knowing about anyone else, I can honestly say that I have never bought anything at the deli without one of the women greeting me politely and wishing me a good day.

So, there ya go. That's what I have to say. One final note: stuff comes back. If your goal was to teach people to respect you, cursing out old ladies would probably not be the best course of action.

Later,

Brigette De Gil

The Author Responds:

Thank you for responding to my article in a civilized manner; that's more than I can say for some people. To tackle some of the points you make, first let me state that I am not being weird for weird's sake either. I do what I do for myself, and for no one else. I do understand that you believe that I am blowing the "deli situation" out of proportion, but I don't think so. Blowing it out of proportion would have been to get the people in trouble with their manager, and then to badger the management to dismiss the parties who I believe wronged me. As it stands, all I did was write an article about an incident. I didn't call for a boycott, or say we should beat the older women to death. The confrontation with Bryan was not even my idea. I don't like confrontation, I'm a wuss. I freely admit that I am the biggest pussy in the world. I don't like arguing or fighting.

Now on to your point about seeing someone who looked like a "Demented drag queen." I would not laugh at a person who looked like that, and God forbid I did feel the urge to snicker, I certainly would have the decency to turn in another direction, or do it after they left.

The greeting issue is a matter of personal experience; it had never before happened to me in the deli. Some say they get it all of the time, and others say it never happens. Who knows, all I can say is that the giggling after the greeting is a rarity.

So now it all comes down to this: I suck for making fun of the elderly, but what a lot of people fail to realize is that I wasn't making fun of the elderly. I was making fun of people who I saw as insensitive and hurtful - that they were elderly had nothing to do with the article. It wasn't like I wrote an article called "Why I Hate Those Fucking Old People." I never

even mocked them for being old - I used the word old, but I never said they sucked because they were old. I called them hags and trolls. The word old was a descriptive word and nothing more.

And on that note, why should I respect a person just because they are old? There are a lot of KKK members who are elderly..should I respect them because of their age? Should I respect someone who killed a friend of mine solely because he is old? I don't think so, but that's my opinion. (I would just like to make it clear that I am not calling the older women in the deli KKK members or murderers, those are just examples.)

In conclusion: I am not going to struggle for respect..respect me until you know me, and once you know me, disrespect me for real reasons, not superficial ones. I will try to do the same.

Pricing Disparities

To The Editor:

I read some of your articles about Aramark. Great... Have you compared prices in the Union Deli to the SAC?

Item	Union	SAC
Nestle's Quik	.66	.84
Arizona (16 oz)	.69	.88
Arizona (20 oz)	.89	.92

If you haven't already, you might want to print a comparison guide of prices of all the "Advantage prices" throughout the campus and how they do not coincide.

Have a nice day,

Philip S. Brazina

The Editor Responds:

You've pointed out an interesting disparity. It's possible that Aramark justifies these higher prices with spin about how the SAC wasn't supposed to be on the meal plan, or other such nonsense. The fact of the matter is this: The Advantage Plan is so ill-planned and poorly executed that it is possible for an item to have a different cost at every campus eatery. When you're making up a cost in imaginary "Advantage" dollars, there's nothing keeping you from screwing it up - intentionally or not.

We'll look into this. Thanks for the letter.

The NRA and The Press!?!?

From: Broccone@aol.com

Date: Sun, 5 Oct 1997 23:22:59 -0400 (EDT)

To: sbpress@ic.sunysb.edu

I am a student here at USB and also a newly converted NRA member/advocate of the 2nd amendment. I know it sounds weird but I'm also a liberal. I really want to inspire some kind of discourse outside of the classroom about this particular civil liberty which is at the moment in a truly precarious position.

Does *The Press* or the *Statesman*, or any other school organization for that matter, have any affiliation to the National Rifle Association? Has any recent issues dealt with the legal, moral, and practical questions concerning the right to bear arms? I am interested in finding out the level of knowledge about guns people have on campus and whether that level is commensurate with the level of education, exposure to sentiments for or against, or other factors relating to region of origin, religion, race, gender, socio-economics.

The Editor Responds:

No, we try our very best not to associate with the NRA, and as far as we know, the rest of the campus shares this position.

Please don't shoot me.

The Missing Million

By Stephen Preston
Not from NYPIRG

I am no longer working with NYPIRG on the Consumer Advocacy projects. The reason for this is that after I put NYPIRG's name on my previous Press article, persons on campus (possibly Administration officials, but one can't be sure) notified NYPIRG's central headquarters. The central NYPIRG bureaucracy decided that NYPIRG would not want NYPIRG's name associated with any kind of on-campus consumer campaign (i.e. the meal plan). So NYPIRG headquarters in New York (in the guise of someone referred to only as "Peter") apparently notified NYPIRG at Stony Brook and told Vivian Berrios (NYPIRG Project Coordinator) that I was not to use NYPIRG's name in any other articles or in any meetings, nor to associate myself with NYPIRG in any way while I was working on such projects. This is in spite of the fact that NYPIRG has for many years been involved with all sorts of consumer advocacy (you may recall the NYPIRG Toy Safety project, the NYPIRG bank comparisons, NYPIRG's current campaign against the Lilco deal, the NYPIRG Small Claims Action Center, and many other NYPIRG projects). So I have agreed not to use NYPIRG's name in any other articles about the meal plan. Sorry about the trouble, NYPIRG.

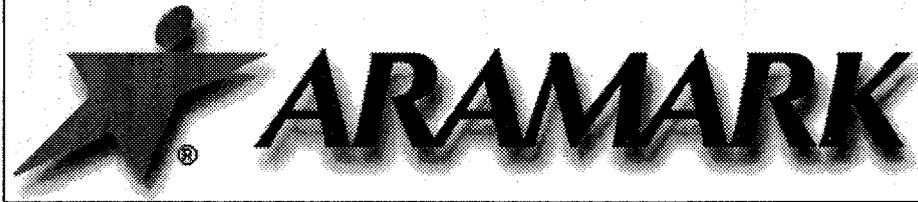
The Birth of Advantage

Now, having finished with the personal vendettas, we can go on to the main business, which is to expose some more problems with the Advantage Plan generally and Aramark in particular. Let's begin at the beginning: two years ago, when the Advantage Plan was first chosen. (No, not one year ago, as many believe, but we'll get to that later.) I will be referring to an untitled document written by Dawn Villacci as a member of the FSA's Food Finance Committee, a small group composed of herself and others whom she does not recall (except for the fact that one of them was Polity treasurer). This committee met before the Bidding Committee had sent out its Request for Proposals, and long before anything was published in the *Statesman* about the possible new meal plan.

At some time during the Fall of 1995, the Food Finance Committee was devising a new meal plan to try to solve some of the problems they felt existed with the old meal plan. One concern was unhappiness with the inconvenience of the dining halls, and so the new meal plan would be designed to allow students to eat at fast food establishments in the Student Union and Humanities. The other major concern was this, mentioned in the Declining Balance plan: "Students are unhappy with the difference between what they are charged for the meal plan (\$995) and what they actually get to spend (\$850). They do not understand what this difference represents, and believe they are getting 'ripped off.'"

This is of fundamental interest: note carefully the words used. The fact that resident students pay \$145 more than commuters or grad students would for the same items is not a problem in

itself; the problem is rather that students "believe they are getting 'ripped off.'" Thus FSA's goal was not to devise a fairer system, but to keep the students from believing the system was unfair. After recommending essentially the same Advantage plan we have now, they concluded: "We believe that although it is basically the same meal plan in a different format..., pos-



itive student perception of the resident meal plan will increase, as it did in Binghamton [whose meal plan was used as the basis for Advantage]."

Now, you have probably read John Giuffo's 3-part series on the Advantage Plan from last Fall (available on *The Press's* web site at www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Clubs/sbpress) and have probably also read Miriam Schussler's article as well (which should be available at the Polity office). Both of these gave an approximate way to compare Advantage and Retail prices, which generally portrayed Advantage prices as being tremendously inflated. The general reaction of the FSA's professional staff was that such comparisons were just unfair, since food cost is not related to retail price in any simple way, and one could not simply average things out. However, the Food Finance group had already done a simple calculation, using an average cost-to-retail ratio of 38%, and obtained the following estimate: "The committee proposes three price levels: \$915 (providing a student \$202 to spend, which translates into \$531 of retail spending money); \$1065 (...which translates into \$925 of retail spending money), and \$1200 (...which translates into \$1280 of retail spending money)." The middle figure of \$1065 would eventually become, of course, the "Standard Advantage Plan." It is interesting to compare this plan with



the previous plan: in the old declining balance plan, a student paid \$995 for \$850 of goods, getting overcharged \$145; in the standard Advantage plan, the student would pay \$1065 for \$925 of goods, getting overcharged \$140. Did

they feel this \$5 reduction would pacify students? Of course not! They felt that students simply would not notice as easily that they were still getting overcharged the same amount under the new plan. This is why every time someone proposes that the Advantage prices are too high, the response from the FSA is that the figures are not being calculated correctly.

Now why was the FSA pushing for the Advantage Plan so early? The reason I've been given is that the FSA staff, including Kevin Kelly and Dawn Villacci (who seem to have been pushing for it quite early), naively underestimated and misunderstood the roots of student

discontent. When asked if he thought recommending the Advantage Plan might have been a mistake, or if he would have done anything differently, Kelly responded that the only real mistake with Advantage was that it was not close enough to Binghamton's plan. Binghamton's plan was, he said, a far worse deal, but FSA should have given it to students because they wouldn't have complained so much. He gave the impression that the reason students were unhappy was that they did not understand the plan, and that the complaints of overcharging were generally unjustified.

I Think I Left Those Million Dollars In My Other Pants

I have a copy of Aramark's Profit-and-Loss (P&L) statement, covering the 1996-1997 academic year. Aramark claims to have lost \$38,000 over the entire school year (total revenues were about \$12 million). There are some serious problems with this claim, however. I will be referring to two sets of numbers. The first is from the 2-page ad that the FSA and Aramark purchased in the *Statesman* last year, saying "You have every right to know where your money goes!", etc. (*Statesman* or the FSA will give you a copy of this if you want it.) The second is the actual P&L submitted to the FSA. (I believe the FSA will give it to you, but if not, I will.)

The first important number is the total ("meal-plan-related") operating expense. The advertisement computes this to be \$6,001,599. It is then estimated that 8800 plans would be sold for the entire year (the FSA admitted early that this was a conservative estimate), and thus that each plan would pay for a share of \$682 of the fixed costs (later lowered to \$680). The second important number is the amount Aramark actually got to cover these expenses. According to Dawn Villacci, a total of 9550 Advantage meal plans were actually sold during that year, which implies that Aramark received (9550 x \$680 =)

"...it seems likely that resident students on the meal plan will overpay by around half a million dollars every year. This will translate, of course, directly into an increase in profit."

\$6,494,000. The third important number is the amount Aramark claims it received on its P&L, which is \$5,626,792.60. There are two obvious things to note here. Firstly, the estimate of students on the meal plan was off by 750 for the year, a rather large differ-

ence which amounts to an overpayment of the \$6 million fixed cost by half a million dollars (this money is pure profit for Aramark). Secondly, Aramark seems to have lost \$900,000!

Now I've been skeptical of Aramark, but I really tried to get some kind of explanation for these missing million dollars. I went to Dawn Villacci (who is the official link between students and Aramark on financial/contract matters), who didn't know. She called Bruce Incontro, an Aramark accountant, who seems to have never gotten her message and who wouldn't tell me anything when I asked him. (He told me seven times that he had "nothing to hide," which

(and Other Meal Plan Problems)

makes me suspect he was hiding something.) Incontro sent me to Ken Johnson, a FSA accountant, who also did not know and who tried to send me back to Incontro. But Incontro decided that it would have to wait until after this story was written, perhaps to give Aramark some time to find an excuse.

The underestimation of the number of students on the meal plan seems to be systematic. The FSA estimated 8800 last year, when the actual number was 9550. This year, FSA and Aramark estimated 9550. Obviously the actual number will be higher than that, because as we all know, the Administration admitted many more students than last year. With Administration planning to continue increasing enrollment by about the same rate until 2000 (or beyond), it seems likely that resident students on the meal plan will overpay by around half a million dollars *every year*. This would seem to translate directly into an increase in profit.

There are also other suspicious things on Aramark's P&L worth investigating. Here are some tidbits: Aramark claims its total labor expenses were \$4.39 million, though it had budgeted \$3.46 million; and Aramark claims its total "direct expenses" were \$1.42 million, though it had budgeted \$0.92 million (Part of this comes from an increase in a mysterious "Other" category, which is \$300,000 over budget. Another part comes from "Cafeteria supplies", which we know are either supplied by the FSA or are charged to students, i.e. the plates, cups, etc. These amount to \$350,000, about \$100,000 over budget.). Now, either Aramark's accountants and managers skipped their Budgeting 101 class, going under budget in almost every revenue category and going over budget in almost every cost category; or Aramark is being less than candid. Both are entirely possible.

The interesting thing is that the FSA does not have anyone investigating the Profit and Loss document. The FSA says the person who would ordinarily do that is on maternity leave, and the three people substituting for her are not doing this particular task. This is extremely odd. Wouldn't you think that if Aramark were making over \$1 million in profits, the FSA would want to lower the cost of the meal plan? It would seem reasonable for the FSA to want to go over this document carefully and investigate discrepancies, but the FSA's accountants don't seem to care. Thus, through either deliberate acts or carelessness, the FSA seems to be handing over an enormous amount of money to Aramark. This is only one of the many things that bother me about the FSA. Here's another one.

"The Contract Isn't Written in Stone."

That is a quote from the FSA's Contract Administrator Dawn Villacci, in response to my question as to why the prices and hours specified in last year's contract have been changed so freely. We all know about the change in hours, but it has been harder to determine all of the changes in prices. I will have to go over them as part of the FSA Dining Service's Pricing Subcommittee, and if you have noticed any discrepancies between last year's pricing and this

year's, or between prices of the same item at different locations, you should send an e-mail to me (preston@math.sunysb.edu). But while we may not have comprehensive data on exactly which prices have been changed, we certainly know that they have. Although there was a price list included with the contract, it was not binding in the contract ("At the end of each academic year, Aramark shall propose to the FSA price changes of those items that have increased/decreased in price. The FSA reserves the right to request documentation to be certain these price changes are justified. The exact increase/decrease will then be passed on to the customer"), and it has been changed frequently.

Here's another interesting thing, a correction to my last article. According to the contract, "Aramark shall have the exclusive right to provide food service at the locations set forth on Exhibit A" Exhibit A does not include the SAC. I could find no mention in the contract of any clause stating that if SAC had accepted a meal card, then Aramark would have to run the SAC. It seems as though the SAC could have been contracted out without affecting the contract. But this may be an oversight on my part, and is not terribly important.

Another clause of the contract: "Aramark shall provide monthly operating statements to the FSA with comparisons of actual expenses to budgets, as submitted. The Contract Administrator and the Resident District Manager will review these statements on a monthly basis. Attempts will be made to make adjustments to meet budget targets as necessary and appropriate." The meaning of this seems to be that if Aramark is over or under budget, then the budget should be modified. In particular, if the number of students was high enough that Aramark's revenues ended up being \$500,000 over budget (as it apparently was), the price of the meal plan should have been lowered and the difference refunded. So taking the contract literally, one would conclude that either Aramark has been giving figures to the FSA which are accurate, and the FSA has not lowered the cost of the meal plan (in apparent violation); or Aramark has been giving inaccurate figures to the FSA. I cannot be sure as to what extent this violates the contract, but it is certainly bothersome to me.

This contract was written to last two years, with possible renewals. Two years is not a long time. Inflation is not so high that prices will change drastically, and the contractor would not lose much money if they did. The University landscape does not change over a two-year time period without anyone knowing about it beforehand. This contract did not need to be rewritten in the middle of last year. The FSA does not need to modify the contract to ensure Aramark a large

enough profit to keep it on campus; Aramark would not dare to break its contract and abandon the campus for such a reason. If it did, it would never be able to get another campus to contract it. When the next contract is written, we must demand that it cannot be changed, and we must have strict penalties for any violation of it. In the meantime, we should demand that the FSA uphold what little is left of the original contract until it expires, and that Aramark refund any revenue obtained by overcharging.

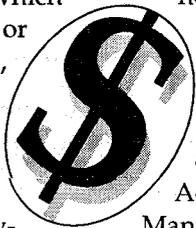
Conclusion

The FSA has done much to ensure that Aramark would not lose money. It did not request the usual 15% on catering sales, so as to help make catering more profitable (it ended up losing \$70,000 anyway, if one believes Aramark's figure). It has not carefully checked Aramark's P&L statements. It has allowed Aramark to raise prices at any time, and has not penalized them for prices which it found had been too high. It has given Aramark an extra \$500,000 profit by overcharging students for their fixed cost. It has penalized them a total of 40 times, for a piddling \$100 each, for gross violations such as temperature problems and pricing inaccuracies. (Kevin Kelly has stated that, because of the method used to assess penalties, there is an extremely low probability of Aramark getting caught).

Who is to blame? The thief who steals your wallet, or the policeman who watches idly as it happens? I have been told that it's all Aramark's fault, and I have been told that it's all the FSA's fault; I'm not sure which to believe. The one thing I am sure about is that it is not the students' fault, and you cannot let either FSA or Aramark tell you otherwise. The FSA must ensure that students are not getting ripped off; it is not enough to ensure that students don't believe they're getting ripped off. The FSA is the only group capable of checking Aramark in its profit-mongering.

I encourage you to go to the Aramark offices on the second floor of the Student Union (right next to the entrance to End of the Bridge) and demand to know exactly what happened to the Missing Million. But be careful as you approach: hold your wallet or purse close to your body, don't wear a lot of expensive jewelry, and make sure there are a lot of other people in the area in case you have to yell for help.

The Faculty Student Association, on the other hand, must be accountable directly to the students. The Dining Service Committee meets every Monday at 12:30. The room keeps changing every week, but Diane Lopez at the Polity office in SAC should be able to tell you where it is. Tell them exactly what you want from your meal plan, or write to me and I will try to represent you there. If the Dining Service gets contracted out again this year (though it might be better if it didn't), we will need the contract to be set in stone. Any other way just leaves the door open for abuse.



"...through either deliberate acts or carelessness, the FSA seems to be handing over an enormous amount of money to Aramark."

UNCHECKED BRUTALITY

By Joanna Wegielnik and Martha Chemas

"All persons under any form of detention or imprisonment shall be treated in a humane manner and with respect for the dignity of the human person"

"In the performance of their duty, law enforcement officials shall respect and protect human dignity and maintain and uphold the human rights of all persons"

-From the UN General Assembly Resolution; "Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment."

"The primary duty of all members of the service is to preserve human life"

-From The New York Police Department's Patrol Guide

December 22, 1994: Anthony Baez, 29, Puerto Rican; killed in a choke hold by an NYPD officer after his football accidentally hit a parked patrol car in the Bronx. June 13, 1996: Aswan Watson, 23, Black; shot 24 times and hit by 18 bullets while sitting in his car with his hands in the air in East Flatbush. December 18, 1994: Wen Ping Hsu, 17, Asian; hit by at least 35 bullets of the 250 rounds police fired at him in a shoot-out in Rego Park, the largest number of shots fired ever recorded by the NYPD. September 17, 1995: Maria Rivas, 25, Latina; killed by stray bullet fired by a drunken off-duty NYPD officer harassing customers at a diner in Washington Heights. May 29, 1994: Jose Fuentes, 15, Latino; shot in chest by an off-duty cop who claimed he was attempting a robbery in Bay Shore. October 30, 1995, West Islip: Calvin Edwards, 20, Black; Died in police custody while handcuffed, supposedly of seizures caused by drug overdose.

The above procession of names and circumstances originate from an exhaustive report on police murder conducted by the Revolutionary Worker last year. Many of these same cases are also listed in a report released last June by Amnesty International, "United States of America: Police Brutality and excessive force in the New York City Police Department."

In the twenty months between January of 1994 and August 1996, at least 100 people have died under questionable circumstances at the hands of police in New York and Long Island. According to Amnesty International, "while the incidence of corruption has reportedly fallen in the past two years, allegations of police brutality have continued to rise. Deaths in custody and police shootings rose substantially.....In many of the cases examined, international standards as well as US law and police guidelines prohibiting torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment appear to have been violated with impunity." Incidentally, when the Amnesty report was released last summer, it received less than minimal attention in the mainstream press. (The New York Times mentioned it briefly in Section D.) When asked to comment on the conclusions Amnesty reached, Mayor Giuliani dismissed the entire report as "hearsay."

One case of particular interest in both reports is that of Anthony Baez. He died of injuries sustained during his arrest by NYPD officers outside his Bronx home. According to the AI report, "[Anthony] was kicking a football around with his brothers outside the family home when the ball accidentally hit two parked police patrol cars. According to family members who witnessed the incident, one officer lost his temper and arrested

Anthony's brother David, placing him in handcuffs. When Anthony Baez questioned the officer's arrest and treatment of his younger brother, the officer [Francis Livoti] reportedly grabbed him, placing him in a choke-hold; he and other officers present then allegedly knelt on his back while handcuffing him behind his back as he lay face-down on the ground."

Choke-holds were banned by the NYPD in 1993, following concern over the death of numerous suspects from evident asphyxia. Anthony Baez' case is part of a disturbing trend in recent years in which unarmed suspects have died in NYPD custody after being forcibly restrained. His case also points to a second disconcerting trend; that of the growing and disproportionate number of African-American and Latino individuals that have died under disputable circumstances while in police custody.

A 1992 study conducted by the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Nebraska found that New York City ranked last in a fifty city survey of how well US police departments reflected the racial makeup of their populations.

It is also important to note that, while much of the abuse is directed toward racial minorities, the problem of excessive force within the police department is not confined exclusively to white officers. A police culture of violence and silence may exert as much influence on the current problem as does racial bias.

On Tuesday, October 7th, Anthony Baez' mother, Iris Baez, was a featured guest speaker during an on-campus "Stop Police Brutality" Forum sponsored by the Black Caucus, AASO, and UNITI Cultural Center.

Mrs. Baez relives and recounts her son's story to anyone who will listen. By teaching the people of New York the stark reality of police brutality and recounting the pain of losing her son, she has become a full-time activist, speaking at numerous engagements throughout the year.

Mrs. Baez spoke both about Police brutality in general and the problems of her son's case.

"When we start demanding to be treated like human beings, then they're going to take a second look at us," she said. "It's going to take us, as individuals, to say no, that's enough. We're not going to take it anymore."

Baez also discussed the legal proceedings against the officer who allegedly killed her son.

"[Officer] Livoti's case is going to the federal level this December," she explained. "He's only going to do one year on this case, but one year is more than any of these guys have ever been convicted on. When we start saying we've had enough, and we start calling on our public officials and hold them accountable for the deterioration of our neighborhoods, of our community, then we're going to see change. When we start demand-

ing, they are going to respond."

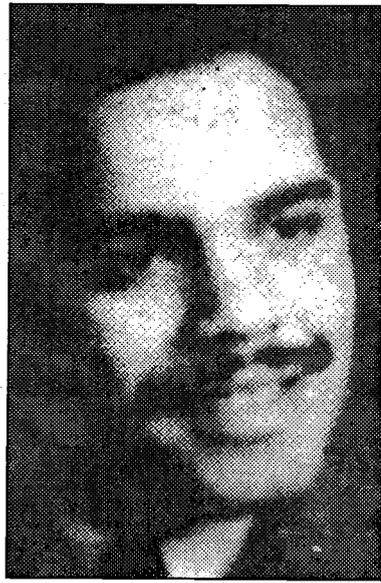
In 1992, while David Dinkins was mayor of New York City, The Mollen Commission was appointed to investigate cases of police corruption. In its report published in 1994, the commission found that not only patrol officers, but supervisors as well, often ignored evidence of unnecessary force. The Mollen commission, chaired by Milton Mollen, a former judge and deputy mayor of NYC, recommended that the New York Police Department create a permanent agency, independent of the NYPD, to continuously assess the NYPD's own corruption measures, and when necessary, to conduct its own investigations.

The City Council of New York, following the advice of the Mollen Commission, passed a bill to set up an independent review body. This

body's responsibility was to monitor and investigate corruption within the NYPD as proposed by the findings of the Mollen Commission. This bill was vetoed by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. Giuliani went on to establish his own council using the power of executive order.

Aside from the interview conducted with Ms. Baez, the AI report on the NYPD published in June of 1996 was a major source researched for the writing of this article. As of the printing of that report, one New York City police officer since 1977 has been convicted of a homicide while on duty.

The intolerable nationwide epidemic of police murder and abuse must come to an end. The message of Mrs. Baez cannot be ignored, nor can we as right-thinking citizens, allow these heinous violations of basic human rights tear apart the fabric of law and decency. As long as cops continue to wrong us with impunity, unchecked vigilantism will continue.



Anthony Baez

**STOP
POLICE BRUTALITY**

**OCTOBER
22ND**

WEAR BLACK

Stony Brook, Inc.

THE RETAIL (CAMPUS) VILLAGE AND THE CORPORATE ADVISORY BOARD

By Stephen Preston

Ever hear of the Campus Village? Probably not; the Administration has been quite secretive about the whole plan. In the Administration's private documents, it is referred to as the Retail Village, though in public (i.e. in brief mentions in Kenny's speeches) it is always referred to as the Campus Village. I will refer to it as the Retail Village to avoid confusion, since it seems that the plan of the Kenny Regime is basically to build a shopping center somewhere on campus.

The questions of why the Administration wants a mall on campus, and why they're being so secretive about it, must wait. But I can attempt to answer several other questions, based on some preliminary research I've done on the subject. The Kenny Regime seems to have the following scheme in mind: it wants the state to privatize University property so that Kenny can lease it to the developers, and let the developers build their own structure, which both enables them to build without using the state's construction company, and which also (and more importantly) enables the University or the owners of the Retail Village to operate without any oversight from the Faculty Student Association. This is roughly the same sort of scheme that was used to enable Charles Wang to build his Asian-American center.

The Administration has already proposed legislation to privatize some of its land and is waiting for approval from the state. Though Kenny has not made any public announcements or held any open meetings (which may be in violation of the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York, though the Administration will deny it) in six months, it is well-known that Dick Mann (one of Kenny's newest henchmen, the Vice President for Administration) has been working just about full-time on it.

Now ordinarily, when the campus wishes to run some kind of store or service on the campus, it goes through the Faculty Student Association, the non-profit organization responsible for the food service, bookstore, computer store, vending services, etc. Generally FSA either runs the service itself or contracts out and oversees the private contractor. In particular, the Retail Services Committee of the FSA would oversee the retail stores on campus.

Now the Administration has very aggressively, since last Spring at least, been trying to weaken the FSA. Historically, according to Bill Wiesner (chair of the Retail Services Committee and a faculty member), new Administrations generally are combative with the FSA, feeling they would be able to make higher profits off campus services than FSA could. FSA also has been belligerent to the Administration in the past, since it used to be mostly composed of faculty and students, whose interests often conflicted with Administration's.

But no longer. The FSA Board of Directors, which ultimately makes all of FSA's decisions, had 14 members last year, 7 of whom were students (4 undergrads, 2 grads, and 1 alumni), 3 of whom were faculty, and 4 of whom were administrative. Dick Mann, Henchman Extraordinaire, demanded that the FSA eliminate the alumni position and 2 other student positions, and since this happened at the very end of the semester with several students absent from the final meetings, the proposal was approved. Of course, it would have been hard to deny such a proposal, since the Administration has the authority to demand a restructuring of the Board at any time and can dissolve the FSA if it does not comply.

The Administration's significant influence on the new 11-member Board was evident from the first meeting of the semester. Dick Mann sat in the corner, all 4 administrators showed up, though only two students did (the GSO representative, Marc Colosimo, had requested a different time due to a conflict, but was and is still being ignored). Stan Altman, the Kenny Regime's Mercenary Henchman, spent most of

the meeting denouncing the FSA's structure. He and Daniel Melucci (Assistant Henchman) were concerned that there were too many students on the various committees (Dining Service, Retail Service, Budget, and Center Campus Facility Development), that "FSA should not be a tutorial for students; it must function as a business to serve the needs of the President." Melucci worried that committee chairs were not board members and that they might have too much freedom to make decisions with which the Kenny Administration disagreed. All Administrators present expressed concern that the FSA should not be able to make decisions or even recommendations on the Center Campus Facility (FSA is interested in getting student ideas on what sort of meals they'd like if or when a large dining facility is finally built in the center of campus; this is Phase 3 of the Student Activities Center planning). Dick Mann announced from his corner that "FSA is not the forum to argue issues of broader extent"; it should do what the University asks of it and nothing more, and should not attempt to direct policy.

I and an occasional faculty member spent much of the meeting arguing with Altman about student rights and the need for representation of the entire campus in Administrative decisions. Because of this (I'm not on the Board), the Administration tried to get the next Board meeting to be an Executive Session, which means the Board will be closed to the public. I cannot tell how other Board members feel about these tactics. The students have generally just observed passively, as Polity appointees often have on such committees. The faculty appear intimidated, and have offered that FSA will be "tied more closely to Administration than ever before." In the face of more extreme challenges to the independence of the FSA, faculty like Judy Lum (FSA President) and Jim Mackin (FSA Vice President) have been willing to oppose the Administration. However, the aggressiveness of the Kenny Regime in attempting to crush FSA is truly disturbing. Though the FSA has not always been efficient in defending student concerns, without it we'd have no control at all.

Even more interesting than the Administration's attack on FSA is Shirley Kenny's personal connections to developers. The Corporate Advisory Board is a group hand-picked by Kenny (presumably they are personal friends, but one can't be sure) to advise her on campus matters. Obtaining the membership of this board turned out to be a bit of a chore; after getting dismissed by George Meyer, I had to demand it through the Freedom of Information Law. I have not had much time to actually investigate everyone on this Board, since the Administration stalled it for over a week after I asked. But here's what I have:

Corporate Advisory Board Members

Richard D. Goldstein: There are several Richard Goldsteins, and I cannot be sure which one this is. One writes for the Long Island Voice on homosexuality issues, one is CEO of Unilever, but the most likely candidate is a guy who runs a business called "Richard Goldstein Investments," located in the Long Island area.

John Belle: Architect, was head of the group which restored Ellis Island, and possibly other projects.

Jeffrey Cohen: Republican, ran for State Assembly in Nassau County; won in 1990, lost in 1992. There is more of interest, but I have had trouble accessing it.

Milton Glaser: The graphic designer who recently designed Stony Brook's new signs "for free." Rumor has it he then collected money for actually building the signs, but this is unsubstantiated.

Richard Lippe: Lawyer, member of Project Long Island

Steering Committee, a group whose purpose is to encourage technological and other businesses in the area.

Michael Minikes: Treasurer of the well-known investment firm Bear, Stearns and Co. Bear Stearns was recently sued for illegal trading practices, but I don't know much other information about Minikes in particular.

Richard Nasti: Doubtless the most interesting member of the board. Dick Nasti graduated from Stony Brook in the late seventies and worked on Al D'Amato's Senate campaigns. Apparently he impressed the Republican party, for Pataki appointed him as a Board member of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (which oversees the LIRR, among other things), as well as other transportation groups. He was then given a position at the New York Post, whose owner was close friends with D'Amato. Soon after, the Post was discovered to be involved with the mob (no, seriously!) in

a scheme to steal newspapers to make circulation appear higher, or something like that. Nasti ended up being prosecuted for a misdemeanor (though there were grounds for felony charges) because D'Amato was also friends with the New York State District Attorney. He appears to be no longer with the MTA (perhaps because of the Post incident), but there is one organization willing to hire him... Yes, Nasti is now back at Stony Brook, and he serves as the Chair of the Stony Brook Council and on the Corporate Board. I would recommend the interested reader to look at issues of Newsday from around 1988-1992 or so, in which there are a lot of stories about this whole scandal.

Leonard Riggio: CEO of Barnes & Noble. Riggio recently gained notoriety as one of the members of the corrupt Board of Trustees of Adelphi University. He and 17 other Trustees out of a Board of 19 were dismissed and then sued by the state Attorney General for allowing Adelphi President Peter Diamondopoulos to steal money from the University for Manhattan apartments and other luxuries. Two members of the Board had been reportedly benefiting from connections to the University with increased business, though the media has so far said little of Riggio's connections. I attempted to find out which bookstore managed Adelphi, but could not. Barnes and Noble does not currently run Stony Brook's store, but it did five years ago, until it was ejected for service generally regarded as atrocious. Many members of the FSA believe that Kenny's announcement of plans for a new bookstore in the Retail Village is a scheme to get Barnes & Noble back on campus, and that her attempt to weaken FSA is primarily to keep it from interfering with these plans.

Robert A. Rosen: Naval Rear Admiral, retired. Is either President or CEO of a corporation (Robro, I believe) which develops retail shopping centers.

Cary F. Staller: Probably has something to do with the Staller Center, but I didn't find much publicity on him.

The data above is sketchy because I was trying to get it done quickly. It is obvious that nearly all the members have a vested interest in the Retail Village, including the retail developer, the two investment brokers, and of course the bookstore owner. Administration (in the person of Gary Matthews) has announced that no further information will be provided about Dick Mann's and the Corporate Advisory Board's planning of the Retail Village. We have to demand that Administrative decisions be made public. We cannot let them do this unhindered. I encourage everyone to go to the President's Office (3rd floor of Administration) or to Gary Matthews' office (2nd floor, Campus Services) and demand to know what is being planned, because it doesn't look like the Retail Services Committee or anyone else will challenge them.

"...the aggressiveness of the Kenny regime in attempting to crush the FSA is truly disturbing... Without [the FSA], we'd have no control at all."

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BIBI'S BIG BAD BOO BOO

By Daniel Yohannes

On September 25, in Amman, Jordan, two men carrying forged Canadian passports attacked Khalid Meshal with a device that stunned him and injected a poison into his body. Both men were captured by Mr. Meshal's bodyguard and Jordanian Police.

The facts have shown that the two men were agents of Israel's Mossad Intelligence Agency. Such an attack could not have been authorized without the expressed consent of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Mr. Netanyahu has not released a comment on the incident.

In order to ensure the safe return of the two agents, the Israeli government arranged for the release of Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the 61-year-old founder and spiritual leader of the Hamas movement in Palestine. Hamas is the group that has been widely accepted to be responsible for several suicide bombings in Israel. Along with Sheik Yassin, the Jordanian government was working to procure the release of an unspecified number of prisoners held by Israel. Israel was also forced to produce the antidote for the poison used during the assassination attempt on Mr. Meshal.

The victim of the botched assassination attempt was described as a relatively moderate political leader in Hamas. While the attack was described as retaliation for the recent bombings, the Israeli government has previously indicated that another Hamas agent was responsible for the most recent round of bombings.

The man released by Israel, Sheik Yassin, was serving his eighth year of a life sentence. The reform minded founder of Hamas is blind and unable to walk. His return to Palestine was the cause of a celebration unlike any other since the return from exile of the PLO leader Yassir Arafat.

These are the facts as they have come out in the international press. After failing to assassinate a moderate, political leader on foreign soil, the Israelis were forced to negotiate for their captured agents. Releasing incarcerated Hamas agents in exchange for Israeli agents is indicative of the validity of their initial incarceration. Sheik Yassin is a man of great importance to the Palestinian people, and his incarceration had a negative effect on their morale. The danger he posed was an intellectual one; he is a reformer and not a revolutionary. His release may be the one good thing to come of this fiasco.

The logic in this series of actions is flawed. I define terrorism broadly as the use of violence to achieve a political goal. Benjamin Netanyahu authorized an attack against an unarmed man on foreign soil as retaliation for an act for which the victim was not responsible. As Prime Minister, he is not above the law. He is engaging in the same tactics that he and indeed the world condemned when employed by Yassir Arafat, the PLO, Hamas, and other organizations working to ferment instability in the region. The man Israel failed to kill was the son of a mother, just as we all are.

Again, this attempt was in response to attacks the victim is not responsible for. But, as some

Israelis think, he is an Arab, a member of Hamas and therefore equally culpable.

The words spoken by Sheik Yassin upon his return to Palestine were not full of hatred. There was no apparent anger about his recent incarceration, no words of retribution. He spoke mostly words of peace:

"If they stop their attacks on civilians, land confiscations, house demolitions, and release the prisoners, then we will definitely ease up, God willing... It is inconceivable that a person should stand idly by while his soil is occupied and his people and homeland are degraded."

In other news, the US State Department released a list of organizations known to use terrorist tactics. Conspicuously missing from that list were any organizations based in the US. Denial of the reality may keep the public from dealing with the issues, but ignorance is never a valid starting point for an enlightening discussion of the facts.

Also missing from the list was the Irish Republican Army (IRA). This organization has been engaged in revolutionary warfare against the British for the past century, the latest in a long line of groups engaged in the struggle for a free Ireland. Truces have been declared before and failed. It is premature to declassify the IRA. Great Britain has a long history of interest in Northern Ireland and this being the year that a Chinese flag flies over Hong Kong, it's not bloody likely that the Roman Catholic Irish will be liberated from their ties to England.

A Big Story Goes Unreported: White Delusion

By Norman Solomon

Despite all the news coverage of race in this country, there's very little media attention to a serious hazard that white people face. In a word: delusion.

Today, three out of four Americans remain at risk – susceptible to frequent intimations that they're superior because they're white. Sunscreen is a big seller, but there isn't a product available to protect against the implicit touting of whiteness as a virtue.

Whites receive plenty of reinforcement for the conceit that the color of their skin somehow makes them smarter and better. Although messages of that sort have become more subtle in recent decades, a lot of media images and political rhetoric still encourage belief in such fantasies.

If newsrooms and media suites weren't so overwhelmingly white, this situation might be more widely – forthrightly – discussed in print and on the airwaves. Perhaps some pundits would voice concern about "white pathology" and wonder aloud at the extent of moral failures by Caucasians who live in the outer city.

But, as things stand, we don't hear much about the social sickness involved in the endemic propensity of white commentators to confuse their monologues with real dialogue on the subject of race.

Affirmative action is a flash point for the unsp-

ken – and often unconscious – playing field.

Out of touch with reality, these claims ignore the fact that racial prejudice and institutional bias continue to pervade American society – and that few blacks or Latinos can be found in the more lucrative and powerful professions. Given the lopsided statistics, the level-playing-field argument doesn't hold – unless, of course, one actually believes that racial minorities are inherently inferior.

A new twist in the debate contends that affirmative action isn't worth fighting for. Early this fall, in the liberal *Mother Jones* magazine, Editor in Chief Jeffrey Klein declared that "we need to admit that affirmative action has failed as a long-term political strategy" and "has eroded liberals' moral credibility as reformers."

Writing an introductory essay for a collection of articles on "America's Changing Colors," Klein explained that the topic's importance caused the magazine to devote "so much of this issue to rethinking race." But the rethinking was rather limited, as were the experiences and outlooks of the rethinkers.

While they appeared under the heading of "America's Changing Colors," all five of the articles were written by whites. That helps explain why, on one page after another, Blacks, Latinos and Asian Americans come across as little more than political chips to be moved by white hands.

In the process of urging progressive people to discard affirmative action as a loser, *Mother Jones*

itself displayed the causes and consequences of such a mentality: An all-white editorial hierarchy decided to publish a cluster of articles exploring race in America, written only by white people.

But apparently, Klein is untroubled by the magazine's position. He told me that although "as a transitional program it did a lot of good," now affirmative action "is a bad course to be going down."

Klein sounded satisfied with the special issue on race. "We've gotten a mixed positive response," he said. And he added: "The issue seems to be selling extremely well."

In media outlets, the results are grim when white people are presented as the arbiters of public discourse on race. Those who aren't white tend to fade into abstraction as "the other" – talked about extensively and heard from occasionally.

And so continues the dominant and ponderous white monologue on America's racial conflicts.

Two years ago, *Village Voice* media critic James Ledbetter wrote a series called "The Unbearable Whiteness of Publishing." Its conclusions are even more relevant now:

"Under the best of circumstances, the print media's domination by whites would be a stain of dishonor. In today's political climate, the persistence of whiteness leaves the press ill-equipped to raise persuasive challenges to the accelerating attack on civil rights."

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

"...on one page after another, Blacks, Latinos and Asian Americans come across as little more than political chips to be moved by white hands."

What Did You Just Throw on the Ground?

By Jennifer Choy

Have you ever wondered just how much the person who picks up your garbage must know about you?

Yes, people! The widely talked about, the excitement-catalyzing, the grimace-inducing, Bamboo Forest Clean-Up organized by none other than SEAC (Student Environmental Action Coalition) took place on Friday, October 10, and was a great experience indeed. By 3 p.m., enthusiastic people dressed to work hard for their precious environment were ready with their rakes, shovels, gloves, and large bags for garbage.

There have been plays and skits made just based on the memories signified by people's garbage that were picked up and collected by janitors.

Granted that we were all there for the purpose of cleaning up anyway, garbage was raked and picked up as soon as our feet left the cold and detached surface of the concrete and was cushioned by the expansive forest area, whether or not we were in the bamboo forest yet. Various structures, used to hold beverages ranging from water to soda to vodka to beer to chocolate milk, were all given the pleasure of being mixed together in the bag of sorts. Big pieces of cardboard were also found; some were formerly used to hold food, suggesting that either some starving, nutritionally deficient Stony Brook students somehow found ways to swipe stuff off the Aramark trucks while the trucks' dislodgers were busy taking drags from their cigarettes, or that Aramark itself is not only here to pollute the bodies of Stony Brook's students, but also to pollute the very ground on which we attempt to thrive. Random chairs were found lounging around in the shades created by the peaceful bamboo stalks, which were subsequently used for short respites after some dedicated acts of environmental praise, before they were brought down to join the rest of the objects of human abandonment. Some of the more perplexing containers found: several empty bottles formerly filled with paint thinner; one large bottle labeled as vodka, but one third full of a green, bubbly fluid, suspected to be mouthwash; another bot-

tle, labeled as some type of hard liquor, almost filled with an opaque brown liquid, suspected to be chocolate milk; a beer bottle compacted to the brim with soil. One of the more significant of discoveries made was what seemed to be one quarter of a car, covering a whole mass of blinds and random car parts. I can just imagine the scene of a couple of rowdy people running out to the middle of the forest just to get rid of a massive piece of metal and some blinds. Excitement to last a lifetime.

Have you ever been paranoid enough to suspect that your parents were going through your garbage just to find out more about you and what you do in your room?

Another substantial discovery was a big, now, apparently barren, area that seemed to be an underground volcano just about to spew pollution all over us. It turns out that this puffing area of ever-present darkness was the result of extreme arrogance, as it was the remnant of a fire deliberately started and fed with broken glass. It is sort of interesting how easy it can be to be destructionist, as this fire was so strong and lively, even mild digging of this ground or a few slight movements of the burnt dirt exposed red hot cinders and gave salvation to the intense heat trapped beneath its outer gates; a heat intertwined with pitch smoke that clung to our noses and disrupted our lungs. After prodding the area with curiosity, as well as a bit of disbelief regarding the extent of human stupidity and the human tendency to go for cheap thrills, it seemed best to shovel some of the not-much-more-than-charcoal soil into some garbage bags and haul it into oblivion, with all of the other collections.

Can you believe that some janitors purposely chose to venture into their seemingly unpopular professions because of their relentless desire to find out about people by going through their garbage?

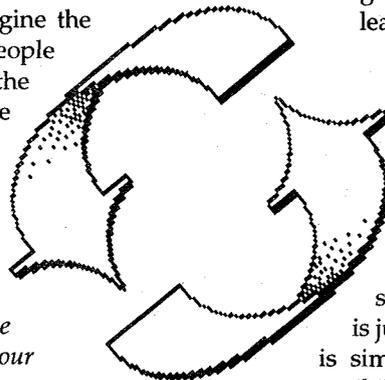
The bamboo forest and the areas surrounding it,

on first glance, don't seem too terribly burdened by garbage. However, by merely scanning the area and thus picking up whatever was singled out in the "which of these things just don't belong" game, one could easily deduce that those ever-evasive beings of the ignorant kind must quite enjoy leaving their droppings all over the place.

I know, people are often looking for ways to make their lives simpler. And frankly, the mere act of allowing one's muscles to relax and drop an empty can onto the floor, or even worse, consciously coordinating one's muscle actions in order to determinately pollute in a certain place, is a simple and simplifying thing to do. One thinks. That is just one side of the balancing equation. It is simplistic and easy to profess a lack of responsibility and leave hate droppings all over the place, but ultimately, the goal of simplifying life is not achieved. Garbage, in its accumulated form, one can affectionately term it: garbage, garbage, everywhere; cough, barf, choke, does not promote simplification. Garbage, garbage, everywhere; cough, barf, choke promotes a chaotic environment in which one and others will be disgusted to live in during every breathing moment.

When I was packing to leave for college, I made sure to check all of the things that I decided to leave behind for anything that might give my parents sinful thoughts, just in case they ever got infected with the desire to figure out their very purposes for living.

The situation after a strenuous, but renewing and exhilarating clean-up was relaxing and pleasant. The whole bunch of us, even with dirt on our shirts and skin, took the time and the occasion to settle down together for some talks, ideas, philosophies, and horrors. The Big Bang Theory. Religion. Suicide and murder. Native Americans. Subatomic particles. The laws of physics. Sassafras. Please join SEAC at its next event...coming up soon!! As always, be alert and earth-friendly; and don't forget to smile.



"Babylon," continued from page 3

modern lives. A shadowy, but extremely powerful entity known as the World Trade Organization has the power to undemocratically annul laws passed by any state whose leaders were whorish enough to sign the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). This body has the authority to decide if legislation by any sovereign nation is a "barrier to trade". Case in point: Monsanto's bovine growth hormone, a questionable bit of biological engineering which makes Bessie produce more milk (and, according to critics has many unpleasant side effects). Many consumers would prefer to know whether or not they're buying milk laced with this alchemical voodoo serum, but Monsanto has brought out full legal artillery against any truth-in-labeling law, even going so far as to prohibit companies from advertising that their products aren't made from manipulated milk. This summer, however, Ben and Jerry's won a case in Illinois allowing them to state that their ice cream is not tainted with BGH, which looks good, but the WTO may just decide to defecate in your Cherry Garcia. It's presently riding roughshod over all kinds of laws that protect

consumers, labor and the environment. After many years of resistance, the European Community will finally have to buy hormone-injected meat from the US (along with Monsanto's BGH milk). Also being challenged are US clean-air emission standards for cars and boycotts by states like Massachusetts of doing business with repressive regimes like those of Burma and Indonesia. One good thing that may come of this is that the organization may strike down the US blockade of Cuba, but that will be cold comfort indeed if all subsequent decisions are to be based on the needs of business elites to the exclusion and detriment of everyone else.

And again, the media will chorus that globalization is good, and furthermore, inevitable. Maybe so, but why not global agreements that give priority to a clean environment, safe products and decent wages and working conditions?

Police State Blotter: Officials in Oregon, one of the four states to have decriminalized the possession of small quantities of marijuana, have recently moved to recriminalize it. One top policy maker admits that it has nothing to do with drug use and everything to do with "expanding

police power of search and seizure." He must not have been a history major at whatever diploma mill specializing in criminal justice he attended, or he'd know that increasingly unreasonable invasions of privacy and property in certain British colonies more than 200 years ago led to some unforeseen and radical changes.

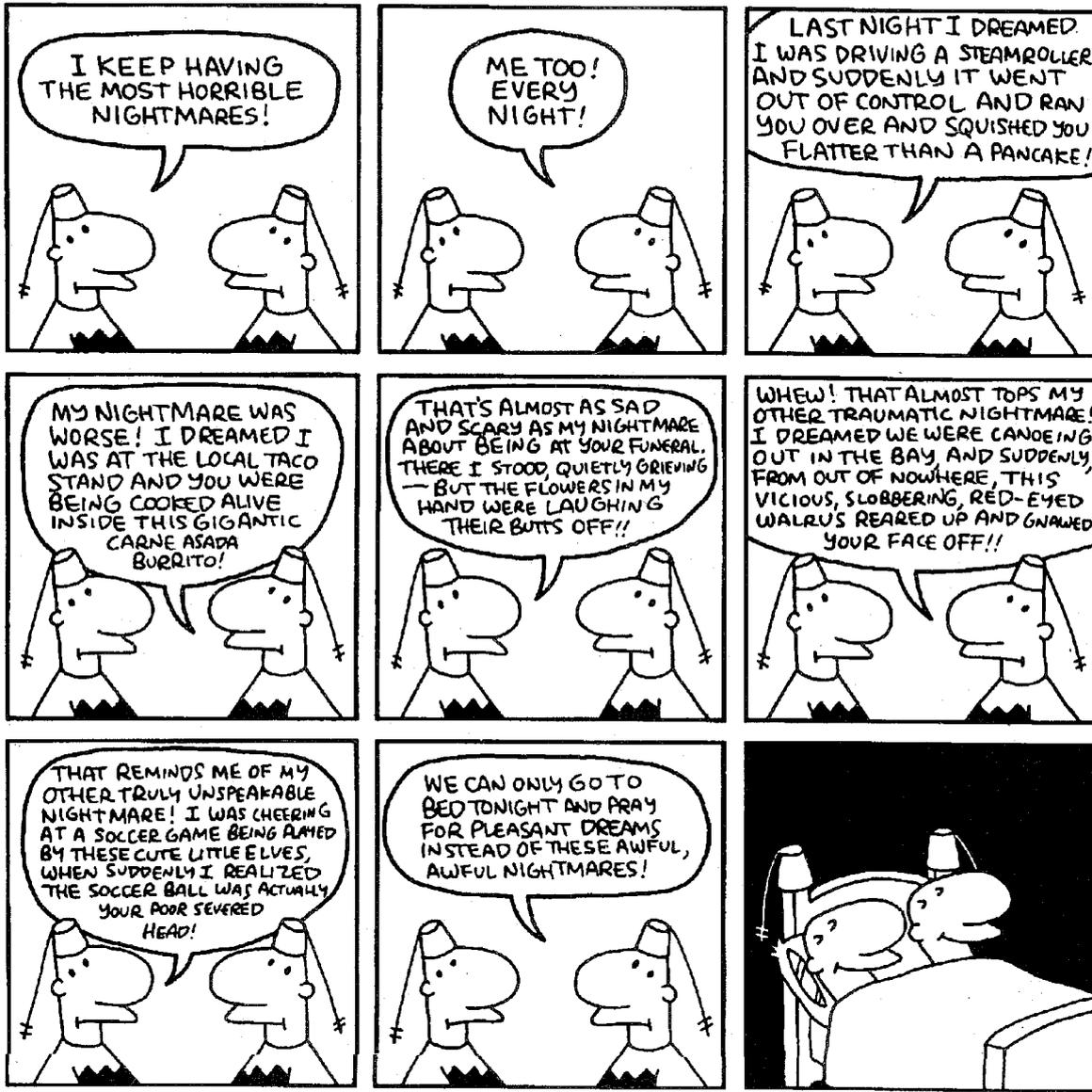
Catch-22: An acquaintance from Virginia informs me that in his merry old state (one of those colonies; on second thought maybe the changes weren't radical enough,) state troopers routinely set up arbitrary roadblocks off highway exits. They may demand license, registration and even ask permission to search your vehicle. Refusal of permission is considered "reasonable grounds for suspicion" now that the Fourth Amendment has been trashed, and the Browncoats take your ride apart anyway.

And speaking of expanded police powers, it's almost time for Rudy Mussolini to be re-elected Mayor of the putatively liberal city of New York. Be on the lookout for my "Coronation" column in the next issue. Drive carefully and watch what you drink.

COMICS

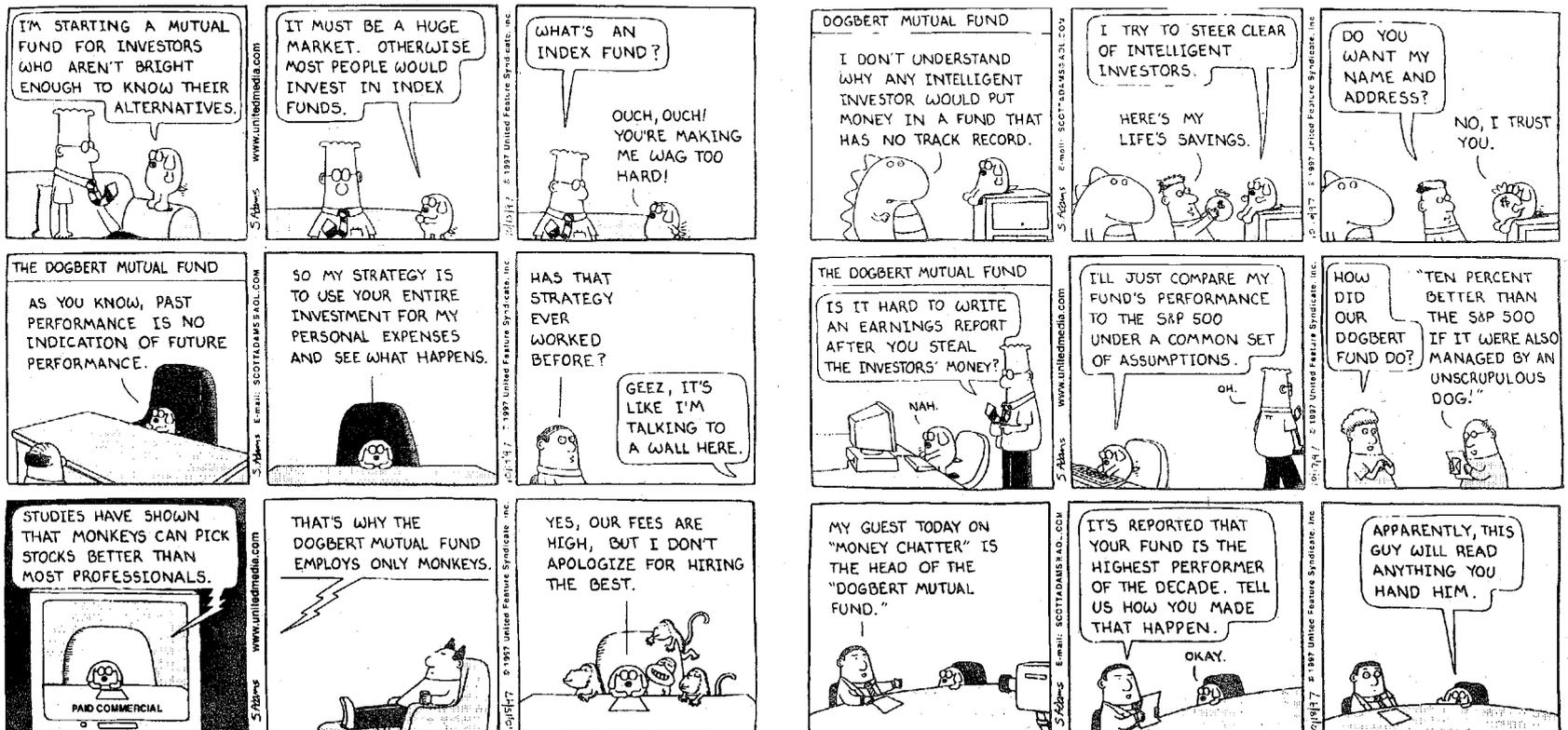
LIFE IN HELL

©1997
BY MATT
GREENING



DILBERT

by Scott Adams



The Stony Brook Press

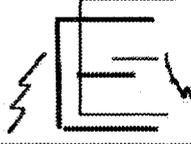
...IS CURRENTLY SEARCHING FOR STUDENT DRAWN CARTOONS AND COMIC STRIPS.

SUBMIT YOUR WORK TO US AND YOU COULD APPEAR IN THIS SPACE NEXT ISSUE!

OR DON'T SUBMIT ANYTHING, AND DIE MISERABLE AND PENNILESS.

BITCH.

Strike Force Echo, by Matthew Vernon Xavier Willemain

<p>Oh my God! Declare a state of emergency!</p> 	<p>What has happened Mr President? The left-wing extremist group who call themselves "vegeterrorists" have occupied all of the McDonalds' in the D.C. Area!</p> 	
<p>STRIKE FORCE ECHO</p> 	<p>The Devil</p>  <p>Strength: Unholy Power Weakness: Evil</p>	<p>Pirate</p>  <p>Strength: Swashbuckling Weakness: Pegleg</p>
<p>Ninja Master</p>  <p>Strength: Ninja Skills Weakness: Overly Agressive</p>	<p>Sleepie</p>  <p>Strength: Rare Insights Weakness: Always Asleep</p>	<p>Mafioso</p>  <p>Strength: Intimidation Weakness: Vindictive.</p>
<p>Vampire</p>  <p>Note: Shiny Parts Strength: Vampire Weakness: Faking It</p>	<p>My crack crew of highly trained para-military guys are the only ones who can handle this!</p> 	<p>NEXT ISSUE: EPISODE TWO... ACTION!</p> 

THE ANGRY SQUIRREL

 <p>Nvm!N YivvH VngvYzm! *</p>	 <p>When the revolution comes, my teeth will know the stain of sheep's blood!</p>	 <p>Bwah, ha, ha-ha! *COUGH*</p>	 <p>And don't try to deny me my minty freshness!</p>
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IN TWELVE ANGRY SQUIRRELS

* NOT TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL SQUIRREL

Top Ten Reasons Why Campus Residences Won't Return Our Phone Calls

- 10) They're using ACC phone lines
- 9) We're not Freemasons
- 8) They're all too short to reach the phone
- 7) Knocked unconscious by Al deVries' explosive flatulence
- 6) All lines tied up with 1-900-SEX-CHAT
- 5) Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld has been seen on campus
- 4) They're too busy helping out with President Kenny's evil Lobster Boy plot
- 3) Giant dormitory roaches took over their office
- 2) Bongggggg rrrrrriips!!!
- 1) Because there are *no* campus residences

Hey, Musicians!

As our more warmongering readers may be aware, our University's mascot, the Seawolf, isn't just a made up animal... it's also a nuclear sub! The Seawolf Attack Sub is a staple of U.S. naval warfare.

In honor of this ugly little coincidence, this issue's contest asks you to re-write SUNY Stony Brook's fight song... to the tune of the Beatles' "Yellow Submarine."

If you're unfamiliar with the song, the music is reprinted at right.

The chorus of the song must remain the same, more or less: "We're going down in the Seawolf Submarine, Seawolf Submarine, Seawolf Submarine."

Submit your entries for "Seawolf Submarine" to The Press by October 24th. Winning entry gets a free CD from our collection of promotional disks. Or, hell: take a couple.

Seawolf Submarine

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of ten staves of music. The first seven staves represent the main melody. The eighth staff is labeled 'Chorus' and includes the lyrics: 'We're going down in the Sea-Wolf Sub - ma - rine'. The final three staves repeat the chorus melody with the lyrics: 'Sea-Wolf Sub - ma - rine Sea-Wolf Sub - ma - rine We're going down in the Sea-Wolf Sub - ma - rine Sea-Wolf Sub - ma - rine Sea-Wolf Sub - ma - rine'.

You Will Die Eventually

By Louis M. Moran

I see people straining over what they eat every-day. Grams of fat per serving, carbohydrates, calories, raw sewage, and socialism per ounce. It's like some bizarre hobby. Who can have the purest food, the leanest intake, the skimmiest milk? Milky Way Lite... come on.

I watch in disbelief as otherwise normal people snarf powered shark cartilage and other ancient Chinese secrets like ginseng, garlic, and opium (well, it's not usually the health nuts with the opium). What is wrong with these people? No matter how healthy you think you're eating now, it is inevitable that in three years the FDA will inform you that what you've been consuming to attain immortality is actually a heinous carcinogen that's attacking your medulla oblongata and nether regions.

Clearly, I am not a healthy eater. I eat red meat like the carnivores we humans are. Ever notice that you have some fairly mighty incisors in your head? Those are for tearing flesh, folks, not for grinding up leaves and berries. Oh sure, your teeth will do that too, but what they really want, what you really want is some friggin' barbecue. Stoke up a steak over a fire, burn the outside and let the inside drip down your face in an orgy of grease and blood! Yeah! Rip it from the bone and wash it down with a beer and eat a donut. Ahhhh, now that was nice, wasn't it?

Sure, I eat fried food, candy, cookies (by the Chips Ahoy! sleeve), pizza, hot dogs, and iceberg lettuce (which is God's indifferent food, it is neither good, nor bad for you). I drink beer, soda (by the gallon, Barq's has bite), hard liquors, and river

water. And I drink whole milk, not that crappy 2% or god awful skim. That stuff is like water with a white crayon dipped in it. Why is 1% milk gray? That can't be good for you.

Give me the fat! I want all the fat everything comes with. When I order a triple scoop chocolate chip sundae with hot fudge, no, I don't want to try your fat free fudge! I want the fat...I want extra fat! Give me a tub of lard with that, and I don't want goat lard either. I want axle greasing lard. I want stuff so viscous it can be used as Vaseline (for medicinal purposes, of course).

I think all this working out is wonderful. I think it's great people want to tone up and be slim, and I truly wish everyone could be a bottomless pit like myself and eat and eat and eat without ever gaining an ounce, but since you all can't I think it's downright swell that you want to lose weight so I might find you more attractive... but... no matter how well you watch those calories, no matter how few grams of fat you ingest, no matter how many stories you climb on the Stairmaster at your local gym, you will die.

The fact of the matter is you will all die. You may die horrible deaths involving bumpers of fast moving automobiles or in bullet hazed skies of suburbia. You may die in a plane, a train or even in the arms of a Dane. You could buy it in a field, or to an ax some woman wields, but you will die, whether in your sleep or in the deep murky depths of a crocodile ridden lagoon or swamp being chewed to death, semi-conscious, after being rolled on the lagoon (or swamp's) icky floor. You will die. Do you want your last thought to be: "damn, I wish I had a burger today?"

The Lunatic's Ravings

By The Lunatic

Sing to the tune of the Gilligan's Island theme:

*Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale,
A tale of a really dumb school
that started cutting parking lots,
just like a damn fool.*

*The students were optimistic,
They thought they could find a spot.
The students lost another lot,
now there are only 4, now there are only 4.*

*The parking was getting worse,
The buses couldn't keep up.
If not for the students having no choice
They would be truly fucked, They would be truly fucked.*

*The president said let's destroy another,
To build an Asian cultural center.
With Mr. Wang
President Kenny, too.
He's a billionaire,
She ain't his wife.
The staff and professors
The residents
And commuters
Here at SUNY @ SB.*

Now that you know what I am talking about, let's discuss...

We all know parking is the biggest problem on campus. But do most people know how many parking lots have been eliminated or shrunk in the past five years? My guess is NO! So let me tell you.

Let's go back in time before the Student Activities Center loop existed. The empty field next to the SAC loop across from Kelly Quad used to be a parking lot. Granted it was unpaved, but it held more cars than the new lot by the Sports Complex. It disappeared during construction of the loop and never returned. There is still room for a smaller lot, but that wouldn't look pretty. Anyway, the SAC loop cut the size of the lots behind the Computing Center, ESS, and Physics (whatever you prefer to call the lot).

Next we go to the new bio wing on Life Sciences. Another unpaved parking lot was destroyed, yet one was built for the construction crew. I'm betting that it will also disappear when construction is done. So this was a rather small parking lot, and was technically 24-hour staff parking only. As with all other 24-hour lots, however, they never ticket after 4:30 p.m.

Finally we come to the old metered parking lot by the main entrance. It was a parking lot you had to pay for, but a parking lot nonetheless. It's gone too, replaced by the Asian Cultural Center, at which ground has yet to be broken.

Survey says: That's a lot of parking spaces. But to be fair, let's discuss all the new parking lots built in the past 5 years.

The new lot behind the Indoor Sports Complex is a nice size, and it isn't too far from campus. It is for both faculty and commuters. It is of no use to the residents or to people visiting the campus, however, because it is nowhere near where they want to go.

And of course there is the... Oh well, I guess that's it. So let's take a tally:

Parking lots eliminated: 3
Parking lots reduced in size: 2
Parking lots built: 1

These are great numbers for teaching your child to count or think backwards. But when you do the math, it looks to me like it's time for a parking garage instead of another building that adds to the problem instead of making it better.

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Fall Literary Supplement

Send us your poetry, short stories,
artwork, and photographs

Deadline for submissions is Friday, October 17th

LET'S GET CRITICAL

By James Polichak

Presented for your amusement: An assortment of brief, but reasonably well-informed rants about the little things that bug me.

The Long Island Voice

The title of this article is a bit of an inside joke: This past summer, *The Long Island Voice* printed a letter I wrote concerning an article they ran on the wonderful world of psychic powers. Their keen investigative technique consisted of having a reporter visit a few local psychics and some of their friends and customers. After eating some lunch and having his chakras realigned, the intrepid reporter concluded that, yep, people sure do like psychics. I guess asking for even an attempt at balanced reporting is too much to ask from a paper that often criticizes more "mainstream" media outlets for being biased. To clear up matters, briefly: There is absolutely no good evidence that anything resembling psychic or paranormal activity exists. All research with adequate controls has consistently failed to find any of the purported phenomena. And if you're the type to take personal anecdote as evidence enough, just be grateful that the people who made the TV you watch "Sightings" on weren't like you.

Campus Banners

Sure, they probably cost too much, but I think that they're pretty nice. They give you something to read and ponder while walking across campus. Some are more interesting, thought-provoking, cute, or whatever than others, but it's not like everyone around here scored 1600 on their SATs either. I want all of you out there to take a moment and think, "If there were no pretty banners to bitch about, would I be bitching about how crappy the campus looks?" At least one banner has been maligned out of ignorance (in the very pages of *The Press*!). It reads, "I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars." The malinger has challenged anyone to find a correlation between stars and grass, so consider this excerpt from *Science* (Sep 26, 1997, by Dennis Normile): None of us would be here today if it were not for supernovae. These violent explosions of old burned-out stars are responsible for scattering the heavy elements such as carbon, oxygen, and silicon created in the star's nuclear furnace.

Rudimentary knowledge of biology should clue one into the fact that, along with hydrogen, oxygen

and carbon are the principle components of all life on earth. Coincidentally, grasses also contain silicon, which makes them too tough for delicate tummies like our own. Stars and grass are not only correlated, but causally connected, albeit in a process spanning billions of years. And come on, "Time flies like an arrow, fruit flies like a banana" is just a cute little play on syntax, probably from Groucho Marx, not our President or Emily Dickenson. Finally, I'm not sure someone who says that a seventeen-word long sentence is capable of boring the shit out of her has the attention span to watch a TV commercial, much less attend college.

College Journalism

According to an article by James Ledbetter in *Rolling Stone* (Oct 16, 1997), 36,000 degrees are awarded in journalism each year, representing "between a quarter and a third of all the journalism jobs in the entire country" (p.74). As an unsurprising consequence, few would-be journalists find jobs in the field, and those that do receive the lowest starting pay of any field requiring college training. I whole-heartedly support the journalistic effort, but, given these statistics, does USB really need a journalism-major program? Do we really need to contribute to the glut of depressed, unemployed, and bitter journalism graduates? Perhaps as companions for philosophers?

Anti-Government Idiots

Who is the fucking moron quoted by Alejandro Cantangelo in October 9th's issue of the *Statesman*? The fucking moron who, when asked why he wouldn't register to vote, said, "Man the government ain't done #\$\$" (sic) for me!" I've got some advice: How about dropping out of the State University that you (presumably) attend, and immediately paying your Federally-sponsored student loans. On your way out, be sure not to use any of the federal, state, or locally built and maintained roads. It's just too bad you can't give up your government-subsidized immunizations and basic schooling (which seem to have had little effect, anyway).

Activist Smokers

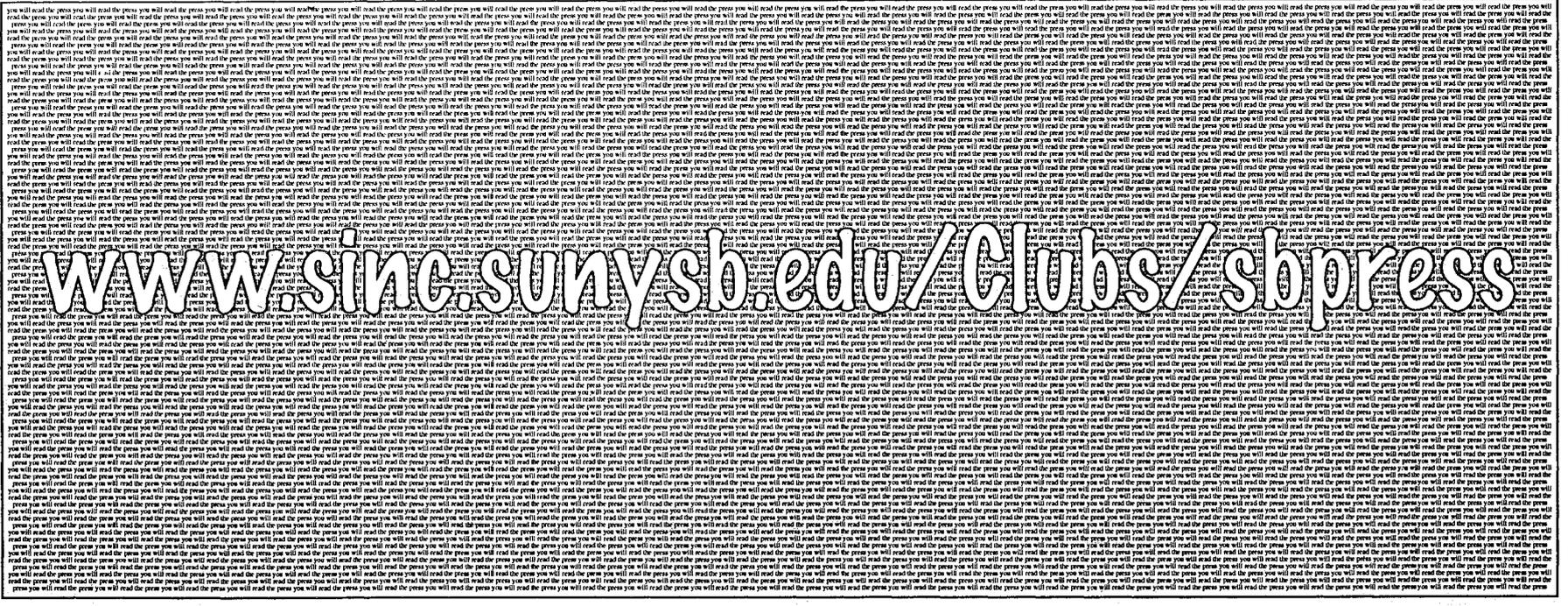
Why is it that some otherwise leftist political-types feel the need to equate their personal freedom with their ability to smoke wherever and whenever they want? While you're busy criticizing the government's assault on personal freedom keep some facts in mind. Cigarettes are a deadly drug.

Moreover, cigarettes are brought to you by the same huge, faceless, evil corporations that bring you \$150 sneakers made by third-world children for just pennies a day. (Hey, if Sally Struthers says it's enough to keep them happy, why isn't it adequate pay?) You only like cigarettes because those monolithic corporations have spent billions of your dollars on advertising. This advertising has made you associate smoking with being a cool, anti-establishment rebel, at least long enough to get you physically addicted. How's that for subversive?

By the way, one of the duties of a responsible government is to step in and prevent people, to the best of its ability, from harming themselves or others when they have proven themselves too ignorant, stupid, or irresponsible to take care of themselves. This is why we have laws against drinking and driving and smoking in public places. While you might argue that the government is wrong about the particulars of smoking prohibitions, to advocate no restrictions at all is ridiculous. Do the words, "nasty, brutish, and short" ring a bell?

Brain Functions

With regard to the last article I wrote: There is a sense in which a person does not use all of their brain. If you look at brain activity as a function of time, then any given area will be more active at some times than others. To take a trivial example, when you are moving your right index finger, the area of the brain in charge of executing the movement is more active than when you are not. The study of change in brain activity over time is becoming an increasingly popular area of research. By examining what areas of the brain are consuming more oxygen, for example, scientists can gain a clearer picture of which areas, on a relatively fine scale, are used for various mental activities, like sentence processing or pattern recognition. These techniques are also relatively noninvasive, allowing their use on humans - many people are willing to sit in a functional magnetic resonance imaging device, but very few will let you cut open their skulls and poke about. Note, though, that this is not the argument I was criticizing last time. That argument was the idea that large areas of the brain are not used, rather than that usage varies over time. That brain activity varies over time in no way makes the argument that people don't use most of their brain any less idiotic, nor does it do so for proponents of said argument. Thank you for your attention, and have a nice day.



In Memory of Amie Hanes, 1978-1997

By Philip Russo Jr.

Amie Hanes, a former Stony Brook student and a good friend of mine, died last month in Florida, where she was attending school. Needless to say, it took everyone by surprise. Amie was a beautiful person, inside and out, and I know that is how she would like to be remembered. I don't think I have to tell anyone how great she was – just ask anyone who knew her. My biggest regret in the world right now is that I didn't get to say good-bye to her, and let her know how much our friendship meant to me. I can't tell anyone for sure if there is a God, because I really have no idea, but I know that Amie is safe now. She is at rest, and she will never die in the hearts of her friends. I wish life wasn't filled with tragedies of this magnitude. So now the hardest part is getting on in a world without Amie in it. I just wish it wasn't so hard.



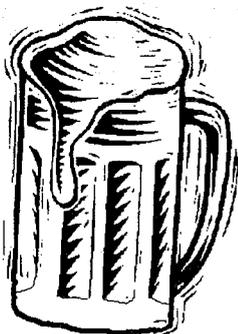
For Amie

*Sometimes sweetness leaves the world.
Sometimes beauty flies away on the wings of a bird.
Sometimes children want nothing more than to curl up in the arms
of their mothers and cry,
and sometimes mothers want to do the same,
and sometimes they can't,
because sweetness has left the world,
and beauty has flown away on the wings of a bird.*

*As we walk alone on the road of life,
we often encounter greatness,
and we often lose it, and the light on the road dims for a moment.
And it is not fair.*

*But now the road is in darkness,
and walking is impossible,
and all we can do is cry.*

*So today,
we must remember the good days.
The friendships that are soaked in
the light of the immortal.
But we must never cry our last tear,
or smile our last smile,
for we are all one in the heart of the universe.
And we are all alive in the hearts of our friends.*



Tara Inn

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Port Jefferson, NY

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SUNDAY

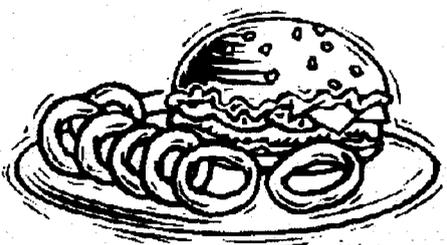
10¢ BUFFALO WINGS
\$4.50 PITCHERS OF BUD & MILLER LITE
STARTING AT 9 P.M.

MONDAY

10¢ BUFFALO WINGS
\$1.00 PINTS OF BUD & MILLER LITE
HELP-YOURSELF HOT DOGS

TUESDAY

GUYS & DOLLS NIGHT
EVERYBODY DRINKS HALF PRICE
STARTING AT 9:30 P.M.
FRIED CHICKEN DINNER \$2.99
INCLUDES 2 PIECES OF CHICKEN, SOUP,
SALAD, FRENCH FRIES OR RICE, BAKED
BEANS, COLE SLAW & VEGETABLE
STARTING AT 4 P.M.



WEDNESDAY NITE IS LADIES NITE

LADIES DRINK FREE STARTING AT 9 P.M.
AND FOR THE GUYS...
\$2.00 PINTS OF SAM ADAMS

THURSDAY

\$2.50 BOTTLES OF MOLSON
& MOLSON ICE

ALL DAY, EVERY DAY

\$2.00 ICE HOUSE
AND RED DOG
\$2.50 MICHELOB LIGHT
\$1.00 TARA BURGER
\$6.99 LOBSTER DINNER

Aramark Takes the Weekend Off

By Brian Libfeld

During the recent Rosh Hashanah holiday, while most of the campus was gone for the extended weekend, those students still on campus were left with few alternatives for food.

As many of you know, finding food on a weekend can be nearly impossible. On the weekend in question, specifically the Thursday and Friday of the holiday, Aramark was only expecting ten percent of the total resident population to remain on campus, and as such finding food went from nearly impossible to absolutely so.

Aramark and the Faculty-Student Association made the choice to close most of the eating facilities that would normally be open on those days (Benedict cafeteria, Papa Joe's Pizzeria, Bleacher Club, Taco Bell, Kelly-Deli, Stony Snacks, Humanities Xpress, EoB, and the Roth Food Court: Deng Lee's Chinese, Burger King, Seawolf Sub Shop, Changing Scenes and The Kosher Cafeteria.) For ten percent of the university's population, what was left, although limited, was enough to keep the students fed (Kelly Cafeteria, the Union Deli, and the SAC). The SAC is conveniently located for almost anyone on campus, Kelly is good for the eater who prefers quantity over any semblance of quality, and the deli will satisfy a strict carnivore's hunger.

So all seems well and good until you realize that, much like a normal day when the university has a dozen other lunchtime options, the SAC is still not accepting the disadvantage plan at lunchtime. During a normal weekday the SAC accepts disadvantage

points for breakfast and dinner, and is cash only from 10:30 until 3:00. Unfortunately for students hungry for some good food, unavailable at any of the other options open that day, the SAC was only open during the non meal plan hours.

In an attempt to determine why this was the case I spoke with one of Aramark's SAC cafeteria managers, Keith Waskowitz, who explained to me that they were unable to change the computers over for just two days to accommodate a few students. [students who doled out \$1000+ dollars, against their will in many cases, \$680 of which goes to pay the salaries of those employed at the SAC during the hours when disadvantage points are not accepted there. --ed.] Waskowitz was very helpful until he realized that I was a member of the student media, at which point he directed me to his superior, Lisa Ambrosio.

Ambrosio, to whom I identified myself immediately, took a defensive pose and refused to make any comment on the eating situation at all. Rather she directed me to speak to Bruce Incontro, a higher-up for FSA, who was nowhere to be found when I arrived at his office. I identified myself to his secretary as a member of the student media and left my name and a number where I could be reached. She responded by asking if I had written the good article or the bad one, as if that had any bearing on the situation. Then I left to scavenge for some edible food sans meat at the deli.

Incontro wasted no time in responding to me after I had left his office. he had his secretary call me. the only information she would give was that Incontro was not the person whom I needed to talk to. Rather I should contact Kevin Kelly, head of FSA.

Kelly proved surprisingly easy to find. I just dialed his extension and he was on the phone. What Kelly wasn't was direct. For every question I asked him, he answered had no interest in.

I asked why the SAC wasn't accepting meal cards when few other places were open, and the demands on it were less than a normal weekday lunch (The same question I had asked all the other three). He answered that it would not be cost effective to open another location. I didn't want another location, I wanted meal cards at the under-utilized location that was open already. He responded that opening another location would make little sense because of the small population of students eating on campus those days. I agreed. It didn't answer my question though. I told him that I, much like those few students on campus, did not want another location, but rather wanted to be able to use the one we already had. He argued that it would be inefficient to open another site. The point should be clear by now.

When I brought up the possibility of not being able to change the computers over to accept meal plan for just two days, Kelly discounted it as false. I didn't credit Waskowitz with the computer excuse until after Kelly had denied it.

I went to representatives of both Aramark and the Faculty-Student Association (which seems to be a misnomer. It implies students having the option of a relationship with the faculty) seeking not change, but merely answers. I asked a simple question and I was denied a simple answer, denied a complex answer, denied a truthful answer, denied any answer at all.

The Health Food Backlash

By Sophia Rovitti

I was always puzzled by a friend of mine whose idea of trying to lose weight was dipping her donuts in Diet Pepsi instead of regular. Since then, I have seen many dieters stocking up on Reduced-Fat Doritos and a wide assortment of SnackWell's products. It's as if it never occurred to them that if they were concerned about their weight or health or both that maybe they shouldn't eat so many devil's-food-cake cookies.

In general, most dieting that I have seen is pretty far from healthy. This is why I was somewhat amazed by a recent backlash I have seen against health foods. There seemed to be some confusion between eating health food and eating diet food. I agree that it can be sad to see so many people chomping down on fat-free double-chocolate cookies as though someone had taken a normal batch and magically sucked all the fat out of them. I mean, G-d only knows what shit they put in there. The American belief in that kind of diet food is thoroughly misguided. But I challenge anyone to defend the idea that something like Cool Whip Light is health food. I guarantee you will never see Cool Whip Light or Low-Fat Twinkies lining the shelves of Village Natural Food.

In fact, eating foods which consist primarily of chemicals that you can't pronounce is the antithesis of what I consider eating healthy. Having grown up under the wing of a health food nut, I never encountered any soda or typical American snack food at my house. By the time I was old enough to see the difference between what I was bringing into school for snack time and what other

kids were bringing, I resented not being able to eat Handi-snacks and drink Capri Sun like the rest of the kids. I hated that I had to eat my peanut butter sandwiches on whole wheat bread. I cringed every time I found out that we were having brown rice and steamed zucchini for dinner. Why couldn't I have chicken and Stove Top like the kids on TV?



But then a few things happened. At first, I started doing my own cooking, which meant that I lived primarily on Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. Later, I came to Stony Brook and have been forced to eat the food on campus ever since. Unfortunately, often the only thing resembling an attempt at providing healthy food here is stocking the deli with fat-free Entenmann's. But those of you who have not had the benefit of growing up around health food, don't be fooled. There is food out there that you can recognize all the ingredients of, that is naturally low-fat or fat-free, and don't contain things that sound like baby babble for G-d knows what (or at least that's

what they sound like when I try to pronounce them).

This is a very frightening thought for me, but yes, in a way I am becoming like my mother. I don't really drink soda anymore. I stick mostly to water or juice (though I must admit that I have an incredible weakness for Snapple Peach Iced Tea). I wish I had a kitchen in which I could whip up the simple, healthy meals that I used to get at home. (As a side note, I can no longer get these things at home. My mother has succumbed to a life of orange soda and coffee ice cream, though she still has some of the health food nut left in her and it comes out at times.)

Don't get me wrong, I'm not passing judgment on what people eat. Food should be enjoyed. If you really like the taste of Funny Bones and choose to eat them - cool, enjoy them. If you decide that it's better to eat the reduced-fat kind so that it's not quite so fat laden, okay, there may be some valid reasons to do so. If you just don't care either way and want to eat whatever tastes good and not worry about what's in it, well that's your choice too, but at least be aware that diet foods are rarely healthy and that they are not health food. If you don't find health food healthy then chances are it's not really health food. Fat-free and healthy are not synonymous. Fat itself is not bad for you. We all need it in our diet. Most Americans do eat too much fat (or so studies say), but the solution to this is not tasty chemical substances. Fat-free cookies may not have fat, but they also have very little nutritional value. Eating healthy is about eating things that provide your body with what it needs, not about avoiding fat when eating junky foods.

Improv Troupe Created at Stony Brook

By Hilary Vidair

When asked to describe theatre, most people talk of a play that is rehearsed and then acted out. They imagine an auditorium complete with a stage, lights, costumes, and so on. However, this is not the only way that theatre is performed. Another aspect of acting is the type that is not written or prepared. Here, there is no script to memorize, no movements to remember. Everything occurs spontaneously. Neither the audience nor the actors know what will happen in the advance. This is called improvisation (or improv).

Joshua Sperber, a graduate student studying theatre, and Mr. Saad, a graduate student in Physics, decided to begin an improv troupe at Stony Brook. The group focuses mainly on comedy and tries to emulate the funny things that happen in life. The goal is simply to entertain the audience while having a good time. Sperber says, "In improv, you live in the moment. You're not worried about what happened before, and you're not anticipating what will happen in the future. It's like when you're a child and you play. You're not worried about anything. You just want to play with your toys. We want to bring the reality of life onto the stage."

Right now, the troupe is training people to learn the art of improvisation. Although everything is made up, there are some guidelines that have to be followed. These techniques are taught through various exercises. They begin by playing games that involve word associations, instant responses, and speedy movements. This helps beginners learn to think both quickly and unexpectedly.

Another activity is called Blocking and

Accepting. Blocking is when you don't accept an actor's offer. In other words, you destroy the reality that the actor is trying to create. For example, after one player may suggest that they are holding a fish, their partner insists that no, they don't have a fish. Accepting is when you accept the actor's reality and build on it. The purpose of this exercise is to teach actors to avoid blocking. "It's like there are two gods," Josh explains. "Both have the power to create the rules, yet neither can negate reality." In order to keep up a spontaneous dialogue, each actor must stick to what the other is saying. If they do not, an awkward silence may occur, because the actor must take time to reconstruct his or her through process to go along with a new idea, or, worse yet, begin conflicting with their partner.

The group then goes on to engage in exercises like the typewriting game. In this game, one person acts as the conductor of the scene. He or she creates the main points of the story being presented as if writing the beginning of a book (and, yes, they pretend they are typing on a typewriter). The actors, with this theme in mind, go on to produce the rest of the scene. The conductor may interrupt from time to time to add more to the plot, or to restore order to an out-of-control scene. The actors then go along with these new ideas in the scene.

Another type of improvisation involves the spectators. A person in the audience tells the actors about a dream or experience they had which they would like to see performed. They pick out an actor for each character, and the actors do their best to recreate the scene. They often add their own ideas to the plot. This can be very interesting to see.

Eventually, the newly produced improv troupe would like to perform in places such as high schools, bars, and on the street. The group is looking for more people to become involved in the club. "We want some people who don't have any theatre experience," Sperber said. "We especially want people outside of the theatre department, people who hate theatre, because we need people who have a fresh outlook on life. Actors always play, they're used to it. We need people like scientists who work all day in the lab and then come here to play."

In terms of humor, Sperber claims, "You don't have to be funny, either. In order to be funny, you don't have to try. We want people who come to have fun and let go, but still have control. Actually, we don't know what the hell we want." This goes to show you that in improv, nothing is planned. Everything happens in the moment. "Everything you do, every time you tell someone a story or have a conversation, it's improv," he adds.

Sperber and Saad are also starting the improv troupe so that there is something out of the ordinary to do. The group meets on Friday afternoons at 4:30 PM for about one and a half hours, usually in Theatre 3 of the Staller Center. "We are trying to relieve the boredom on this campus. There is so much boredom energy here and we are trying to fight it. We're trying to make Fridays fun," Sperber says. "I think this campus is big enough to gather together a lot of people who want to learn improvisation and just have fun."

Top Ten Quotes Actually Overheard In The Press Office During Production of This Issue

- 10) "Thieves, Dark Knights, and Occultists are very powerful."
- 9) "I'm gonna go to their office and tell them to bend you over and sodomize you with one of their strap-on dildos!"
- 8) "I'll give you a dollar to stick in Ed's pants."
- 7) "Sodomy is anything but reproductive sex."
- 6) "I can't back up anything I say with facts."
- 5) "Joanna, don't just stand there dripping all over the place!"
- 4) "Excuse me... I smoke cigarettes and you eat staples! Talk about oral fixations!"
- 3) "The bitch got up and clapped when Captain Kirk got killed! Then I got up and walked away from the hussy."
- 2) "For me, fifteen dollars is worth a night on the street."
- 1) "Hey!! Hey!! Johnny Statesman! Take a walk!"

JOIN US!

Supermarket of the GODS

By Heather Rosenow and Joanna Wegielnik

A minor miracle has materialized in Stony Brook in the form of a most magnificent supermarket of the gods. We speak of course, of the newly renovated Waldbaums on route 347, which comes complete with its own bank and opens its doors to all with midnight munchies, 24-7. One night while searching for the cliched 7-11, a beaming green neon light from above called to us. "Come inside...miracles await you beyond my doors."

Upon entry, we found ourselves to be the dirtiest things in the store. The floors glowed like so many a star in the heavens with a fresh coat of wax just applied by The Waxer. The said machine was manned, by our friend and yours, Manny. From such contraptions, janitorial wet dreams are made. We found the store so clean you could eat off the floor.

A quick left upon entry will lead you to the legendary giggle patch, also known to employees as the "Bavarian Black Forest". This is referred to on the map by the nondescript term "Floral Area". Once you have hacked your way through this prism of potted wonders, you will find yourself in a pristine paradise of produce. Indubitably, this is one of the best stocked produce sections of any supermarket in the tri-state area. The turnip fairy obviously stopped here on her journey to Eastern Europe and bestowed a gift of at least 6 different types of turnip. One would have to travel to the Republic of Slovakia to find such a motherload of edible roots.

Moving right along, we find ourselves standing in awestruck wonder at an olive bar and a great

wall of cheese living side by side. Sicilian olives, black olives, pitted olives, Monterey jack, sharp cheddar, gouda, feta.....cheeeeeeeese, ooooo-lives. One of our most impressive conquests in this section thus far has been "Carry Out Cuisine-In Store Chef". There you will find ultra buys the likes of which nothing can compare. Sandwiches and ready-made pizzas for mere pittance. Just how low are the prices, you ask? Nothing in this section retails for more than \$3.99.

For the vegan in you, there is an "Incredibly Natural Food Selection" catering to insatiable granola needs. Nuts, berries, and bark to fill your heart's content.

Candy, candy, candy, candy.....where to begin? The Candy Aisle is possibly one of the greatest finds in our short uncultured lives here at Stony Brook. They have jumbo jawbreakers bigger than our Executive Editor's head. Needless to say they're HUGE.

Jellied berries, bleeps and sour babies fill our sad little bellies. Candy, candy, candy.....

Wafting from the middle back of the store, comes the distinct odor of numerous denizens of the deep. You can hand pick these fresh craniate vertebrates by their slimy little necks from the Shrimp Bar, which sits opposite slabs of still bleeding farm flesh. Remember! Be sure to remove the two chambered heart before you cook the little buggers! If broad caudal fin is your thing, be sure to check out the extensive Ichthyoid display next door to the dead crustaceans. Above the aisle of raw carnage hangs a sign which states, in threatening undertones, THE BUTCHER. This creature

only comes out during the day. We have yet to see him. However, he has left behind an resplendent fleshy display of domesticated cattle, swine, sheep, and goat. Only the edible soft parts, of course.

Once you have passed the shelved and mangled freeze-wrapped farm friends, a soft glow can be seen emanating from aisle 12; DETERGENTS, DISH, & CLOTHES.

If by chance you happen to find yourself under the influence of a hallucinogenic drug, and by sheer coincidence you happen to be in Waldbaums, we highly recommend a skip down aisle 12. Legal footnote: The Stony Brook Press in no way encourages or condones the use of drugs on campus or while doing your weekly shopping.

Due to time and space constraints, we cannot include all the wonders this store has to offer. Therefore, we'll make this last installment short and sweet. THE BEER. They have kegs. (Tap available at the customer service desk) Guinness on Draught. Sapporo. Enough said. To all the ladies in the house, THEY HAVE MORE MAKE-UP THAN GOD! Gallons of chocolate milk, half gallons of Yoo-Hoo and those three dollar buckets of neapolitan ice cream your parents used to buy which would make you sick for 12 hour stretches but you ate it anyway cause it came in a bucket and it was Saturday morning and the Smurf marathon was on.

Next Issue, same Bat time, same Bat channel: Nifty gift ideas to be found in aisle 10 (the gadget aisle) including the 6-Speed Burst of Power Mix-Master, nylon puffs, cow wall plaques, and employee vernacular: "You're talkin' Purdue, I'm talkin' Tropicana."

JUSTICE?

A Not So Funny Thing Happened To Me On The Way To Blockbuster

By Frank P. Fusaro

I have a simple story to tell which may help some of you if you ever go to traffic court. On Oct. 8, 1997, I was found guilty of running a red light on January 15th, 1997. Now I was a little off-kilter already because of the good Officer Kirby, who canceled this court date we had twice. Not to mention the fact that I had no idea of what to expect, but for the life of me I did not expect this kangaroo court that I had entered.

To start off with, I was sitting in front of a door in a building I never knew existed at 8:00 AM, when I could have been sleeping, wearing a suit (except for the dress shoes, but that terrible shoe accident is another story all together) with several others of my generation and complaining about the madness of this court and police system we seem to have.

Then, when we finally got into the office and looked for our name and rooms of trial, we sat and waited...and waited...and waited... Finally, at about thirty minutes after nine, this old cranky judge walks in (I say "old" and "cranky" only because those were the man's only truly distinguishing features--other than that he could be any other man on the street).

Now I know I've been jaded by "Night Court", "L.A. Law" and other court television programs, but I expected a little more than a man in a tie, but-

ton shirt and slacks (no robe) who you could barely hear, and who kept complaining to his assistant about his computer not working (just a note to everyone who goes to traffic court: you do NOT stand for the judge unless they say "stand"). He then proceeded to inform us how things went in court (burden of proof and such), then he began calling the cases himself and grumbling out sentences and acquittals. I hadn't noticed it at the time, but he seemed quite lenient to "adults", but seemed stiffer with those who I was just, only a short



time ago, ranting with. I would have to attribute my not noticing to my being nervous and such.

Then the call came, "Frank P. Fusaro" (yes, fellow drivers, that was the big call--no "State vs. Frank P. Fusaro," no "On counts of ..." just my name) and I sprang up with wide coffee-opened eyes and a nervous, "Yes, you honor," and I approached his bench (If ya know what I mean) (which was just an elevated reception desk with two computers, three people behind it, and two microphones in front.) And, with me, came the dreaded Officer Kirby, he was all smiles, and I was all nervous (after all, how many of you could afford a \$100 ticket, not to mention the inevitable insurance backlash.) The burden of proof was his: one officer of the law who "talked the talk" but wasn't "walking the walk" when I began questioning him on his position and the

time he took following me. Then came my, "Can I borrow that diagram your honor?" (he had been drawing one from the start of my case, probably to see what had happened rather than just hear it.) The judge was not pleased with my request, and in the middle of my question he cut me off and asked for my side of the happening. Then, as I tried to object, he asked me to "just explain your side of it, son." So I did, and as he looked me up and down, and as my "friends of traffic court" were thumbing me up for my getting Officer Kirby to contradict himself, he said "GUILTY" (well, he said a whole lot more, but "guilty" was all I heard and that was that.) I had two weeks to pay up, and was sent on my way (another suggestion, don't object in traffic court, "Contempt of Court" is a very real threat.)

So off I went to see the cashier, and NOT to pay, but to get an appeals form. But, guess what, you have to pay anyway, and if you win the appeal you get the money back. So there I was, \$100 poorer, and it was now almost 11:00 AM. I could have just as well paid for this by mail and only paid \$75 (no \$25 court charge.)

So, to all of you who have had experiences like this, I sympathize. For those of you who have yet to, take my advice, just keep asking for a change of date until the cop fails to show up, and ask for an acquittal then. But whatever you do, don't try and prove that you, a college student, were right, and that they, the cops, were wrong. It won't happen. Oh, and bring your own paper for diagrams so the judge won't sigh and look at you, annoyed.

GOONS in the MIST

By Guy Cleveland

GOONS IN THE MIST is a series that uses an anthropological approach to study a person on-campus known as the Goon. The Goon is a great mystery, one of the most unique humans who has ever walked the earth, and deserves a great deal of intense scrutiny. Hopefully, this study will provide that scrutiny.

This issue we will focus not on a series of observations, but rather a condensed study of the Goon's dietary habits. The phrase "you are what you eat," while hokey, is one of the tenets of modern medicine. Perhaps an answer to the Goon's odd behavior can be found in what he ingests.

First and foremost, the Goon has little to no table manners. He does not appear to know they exist, and does not feel a need to mimic the actions of those around him. Whether he does so in conscious defiance of social mores or because the connection between the behavior of others and his own behavior is not yet known.

This lack of table manners is manifested both by his tendency to reduce many foods normally eaten with dinnerware to finger foods. This includes roasted chicken, lettuce leaves, tomato slices, and scrambled eggs. Heavy on the eggs. In fact, scrambled is a rarity; the Goon mainly prefers his eggs fried, which he then throws on a roll, covers in tabasco sauce and bacon bits taken from the salad bar, and eats as a messy open-faced sandwich.

He is also greatly attracted to those meats which come in long, tubular shapes and are frequently treated with forks (sausage links) or slices of bread (frankfurters). The Goon tears into them with the zeal of one deprived of food for a long time in the not-so-distant past, and does away with both fork and bread. The pork goes in his fist, like a candy bar, and bites are taken systematically.

His thick net of facial hair acts as quite a sponge for the Goon's ingestion, catching bits and pieces of food, as well as a substantial amount of the liquid the Goon drinks most: milk. Not low-fat, not skim, not 2%, but the milk that has clots of fat floating on its surface.

It's almost like the man's dietary habits have created, in essence, a human garbage scow: something that can live off of food that would damage a normal person's intestinal health. But what do I know of the Goon's intestinal health? He fascinates me, but I'm not about to study his bowel movements.

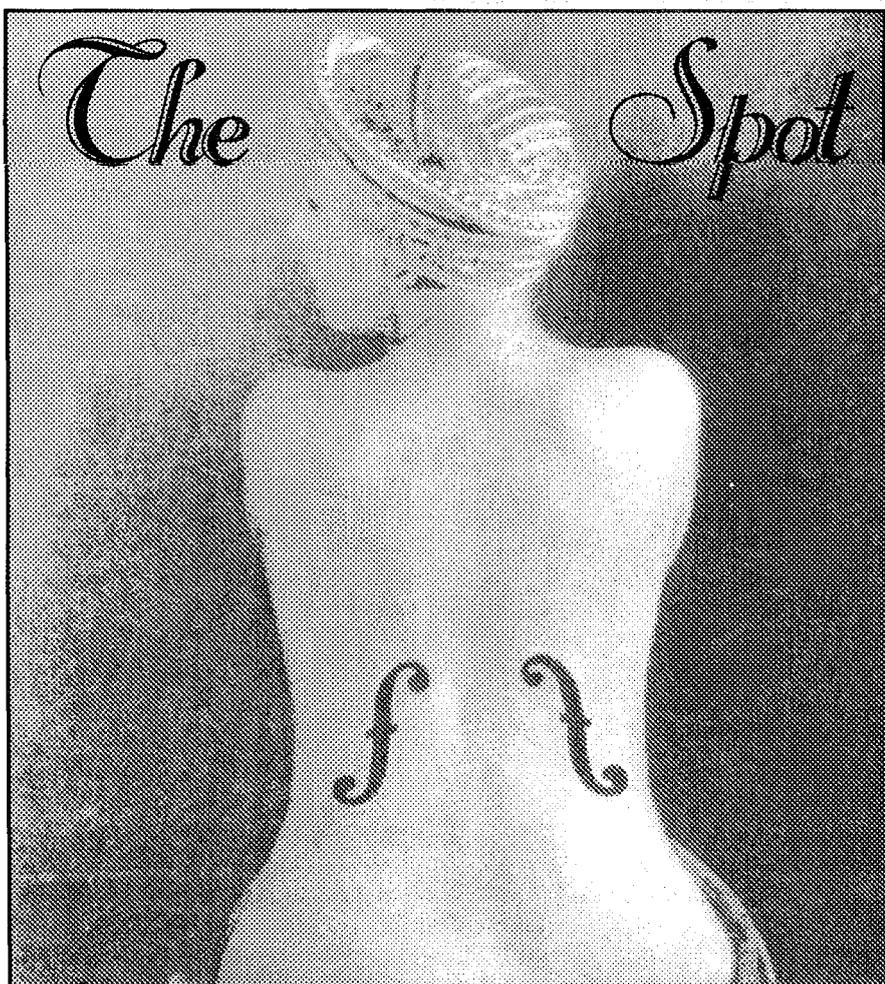
This is how he conducts many of his meals, but snacks during the day are another matter. Anything that can be eaten in the course of walking subsequently is: candy bars, bags of chips (his beard becomes a minefield of potato shrapnel), soda, bags of some candy obtained in the deli. And cigarettes quickly arrive to give an idle set of lips something to do.

Perhaps it is these kinds of habits that will explain the strange smell emanating from his

abode. It comes at one from below, almost like the ground was slightly steeped in it, and smells like some kind of bizarre, alien cheese. It has some earthly elements to it: there's certainly a lingering scent of nicotine, and a small percentage of the odor is caused by simple sweat. However, the smell does not appear to be present when one comes into close contact with the Goon (at worst, he smells of the food he has been eating, with a dash of good old big-guy B.O. for equal measure). Perhaps this is caused by gas, or the effects of long term exposure to the regular vapors the body gives off naturally, for instance, in the sweat or breath of an individual. What is done behind closed doors is not known to me, however, and the smell may actually stem from a causal relationship involving actions and elements thoroughly unconnected to digestion.

NOTE: I have had no reason to believe that the Goon is dependent upon, or even enjoys the presence of, alcoholic or other mind-altering substances. Although I have spotted him at a local bar, he was not drinking a beer, and I have never smelled the dry twang of marijuana drifting from his room. Perhaps he has discovered some other substance altogether...?

Next week: a study of the comparisons between the Goon's behavior and the not-necessarily mythic existence of Mexico's Chupacabra and his mountain dwelling cousin, Bigfoot.



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18th...	The Slant
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The ICELANDIC 80s

By Jill Baron



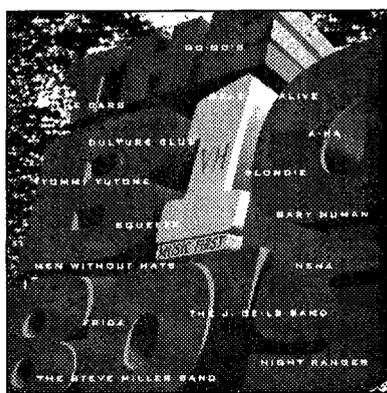
Bjork
Homogenic

Everyone's favorite Icelandic Imp is back with her third solo album (not including last year's *Telegram*, which was a remix album and contained only one new track), entitled *Homogenic*. A lot of new influences can be heard on this record; in addition to the orchestration heard on many tracks (provided by the Icelandic String Octet), Bjork seems to be getting in touch with her techno side lately. Honestly, I can't decide if I like it or not. Most of the songs are slow and moody; she seems to be straying from her more upbeat stylings, heard in such songs as "There's More to Life Than This" and "Big Time Sensuality" from *Debut*. But, personal preferences aside, her new style seems to work for her.

The lyrics, in usual Bjork fashion, are somewhat enigmatic - from the first track, "Hunter": "I thought I could organize[sic] freedom / how Scandinavian of me." I'm not sure what she's getting at there, but maybe I'm just touchy because I'm Scandinavian as well. Ho hum. The lyrics from

"All Neon Like" suggest Bjork may be a frustrated goth - "The cocoon surrounds you / embraces all / so you can sleep / foetus style." The sixth track, "5 Years", sounds like a video game - the machine-gun sound effects are kind of annoying because they tend to overshadow the vocals. "Alarm Call" is probably the most upbeat song on the record, and it contains my favorite line - "I'm no fucking Buddhist / but this is enlightenment." "Pluto" sounds like it was made for a rave - it conjures up images of alterna-teens in Jincos doing E. The second song, "Joga," is probably my favorite of the ten on the record. It's kinda eerie. I like it. Heh heh.

The net effect of the album is quite powerful, but individually, the songs don't really stand out. I think this CD makes good background music, particularly for a seance or a bondage-style orgy, but if you're looking for something to jump around to, stick with one of her earlier albums.



Various Artists
VH-1: The Big 80s

Being a connoisseur of 80s music, I possess many "Rock of the 80s" compilations, but I have to say

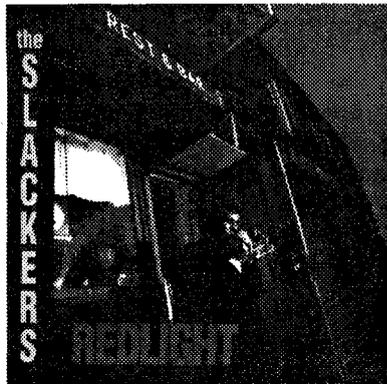
that this is the most perfect one I have seen thus far. For the most part, it avoids the pitfall of most 80s compilations, which generally have two or three really good songs and then are filled with... well, filler. However, with a few exceptions, this CD has delights for everyone, and even a little something for the kiddies.

My personal favorite (and judging from the reactions of the people in the office, I'm not the only one) is the whimsical hit "Take On Me" by Ah-ha. It's perfect in so many ways; so complex yet so simple - underneath the facade of jangley keyboards, you can hear the desperation in the singer's voice. This is a man in need. And you die-hard Ah-ha fans will, of course, recall the video - the distraught girl, the comic book coming to life, the snazzy animation, and the chilling climax in which the lead singer is caught in a world that is not quite real but not quite fake, so he proceeds to throw himself against walls until his true love (the aforementioned distraught girl) joins him in his comic book world. (Unfortunately, "Take On Me" was Ah-ha's only hit song, and after the frenzy surrounding it died down, they disappeared into the swirling vortex that claims the lives of so many of our one-hit wonders.)

Another highlight is "The Safety Dance" by Men Without Hats (not to be confused with Men At Work, of "Land Down Under" fame). What can I say, it makes me antsy. Other favorites include Nena's "99 Red Balloons" (although it's the wimpy English version), Gary Numan's "Cars", "Centerfold" by the J. Geils Band, and of course Tommy Tutone's love-sick anthem "867-5309/Jenny." So if you want to have a good time dancing around your room like a fool, this little blast from the past will do the job quite nicely.

SLACK TO THE FUTURE

By John Giuffo



The Slackers
Redlight

With the widespread popularity of certain artists claiming ska as one of their influences, a certain backlash is inevitable. Anytime an underground style or form is pushed into the mainstream, the practitioners of that form who have been plying their trade for years feel a certain resentment. So do the fans.

When Green Day and Rancid hit the MTV Big Time, true punks nationwide sold all their copies of Kerplunk! and Rancid, burned their tees, ripped the patches off their bags and jackets and spit on the bands and their constituent members (How's that eye, Lars?). Even Jello Biafra, the hardest of the hardcore was beat down by so-called punks for what they felt was his love of selling out. It's getting hard nowadays for good underground artists to make the music they love to make, when that very music may break big just because

it's IN now. Breaking big can be the death knoll for a band, because while they may have a modicum of success while the spotlight is on them, their core fans will feel slighted, and lose respect for the band on the way down the ladder of fame. What's a roots radical to do?

Go back to the roots.

While bands like the Mighty Mighty Bosstones have welcomed fame by doing just what they've always done, and by playing the music they've always played, albeit with many more videos than before, other bands have decided they have to reassert their connection to the real deal, their knowledge of where they are from. When the shit comes down on the turd wave, the rudest of the rude find shelter in the basics.

Tone it down, soul it up and put it out, the Slackers have been showing just how big their collection of Skatalites and Desmond Dekker rare 7's is by traveling closer and closer to Jamaica with each subsequent release. The Slackers first EP, eponymously titled, was a study in how to do the the third wave right. Born out of the cleansing fires of defeat that four years at the School of Visual Arts will bathe you in, the Slackers entered the 90's with upbeat, almost slam-danceable tunes such as "Ray Gun Sally" and "Sister, Sister." Pure, fun and filled with a youthful love of the fast and bouncy, the first EP established the Slackers as one of the most promising East Coast practitioners of the third wave philosophy. Their first full-length disc, the accurately-titled "Better Late Than Never," continued the tradition set down by the ep, but found the band in the position of time-travellers. Some of the tunes were firmly third wave, while others were clear attempts to show how much they loved where they and the music were coming from (Jamaica, 1958).

The Slackers second full-length finds the band on the new Epitaph ska label, Hellcat Records. Brett has seen the marketing possibilities ska presents, and decided to create a whole new imprint to compete with the small number of other labels that distribute ska exclusively (Bucket and the boys at Moon can't be happy they've lost one of their most promising bands to what seems like a blatant marketing attempt by So-Cal board-meeting-suit punks to capitalize on the popularity of ska).

Still and all, it's a phat outing. New York's finest kick up the dancefloor dust with "Cooking For Tommy," a Skatalites tribute tune that marks the roots territory by showing old fan and newcomer alike just what this East Coast shit is all about. "Married Girl" is the first song on the album that firmly plants Doc in Jamaican soil by bringing us into a cloudy Trenchtown dancehall circa '61, where the band has just settled in for a nice, long, sweaty session of jazzy-ska jamming. You'll almost choke on the smoke.

The thread is carried through songs such as "I Still Love You," "Fried Chicken/Mary Mary," "You Must Be Good," "Tin Tin Deo," and "Rude and Reckless." The band has slowed down, there's no denying that. The change is a welcome one however, for when Vic was a boy, he played boyish things, but now that he's a man, it's time to get mellow, rude and smooth. Co-Vocalist Marq Lyn, plays a much less prominent role; after having singing lead on most of the songs on the EP, he's hardly on this album. I wonder if that has anything to do with their new outlook, and Lyn's connection to their old outlook?

Down a cold beer, roll a spliff and listen up, cuz brotha, it's time to drop the roots science. Ska is ska, it ain't mainstream and it ain't No Doubt.

A MAN FULL OF HATE

By Keith Filaski

I recently learned that the average American watches four hours of television a day. This information came to me via an episode of Pop-Up Video on VH1. I guess there is some sort of irony in there somewhere. Pop-Up Video is one of the few shows that I can sit through these days, but can you really count a show which uses other people's creations as the basis for the show? Granted, there is always Mad About You, the best show on television for the past number of years (anyone wishing to dispute this fact is welcome to come down to the Press office so I can set you straight), but other than that there isn't much. The days of grade A sitcoms have vanished. And what made these shows great? I suppose a case could be made that the actors or writing make the show, but I believe that the theme song has a great deal to do with it. I mean, who doesn't, to this day, every time they hear the theme to Gilligan's Island. These songs live on today through reruns, through our memories, and through long bus trips. (I remember once singing the theme from The Brady Bunch for about twenty minutes on a ski trip bus ride.) Now that this long intro is finished, I would like to tell you about a new CD.



Just sit right back and you'll hear a satanic tale...

TV TERROR: FILCHING A DEAD HORSE (Reconstruction) is one of the scariest CDs I have

ever purchased. It describes itself as comprised of synthcore and coffinrock versions of TV theme songs. Basically, it is lesser-known, and some unknown, industrial and gothic bands slaughtering your favorite TV songs. It's so great that I don't even know where to begin. You never thought that you would hear these songs interpreted in these ways.

Out of the thirty-six covers on this album, the most notable must be The Electric Hellfire Club's version of the theme song from Charles In Charge. This electro-industrial band has been creating songs that mock, or praise, Satanism. (I'm still not convinced which is their true intent, but the majority of their songs are pretty damn funny.) Here, they have managed to change the meaning of the song into a praise of Charles Manson. "Charles in charge of our guns and our

knives/Charles in charge of who lives and who dies," are the Hellfire Club's lyrical changes. The music is also a drastic change, containing background samples of Charles Manson conversations, eerie bells, and electric guitars. The only problem with the track is that it is under two minutes long. Short and sweet, I suppose.

Perhaps equally disturbing is Numb's version of Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood. A brooding, monotone voice sings the song over church organs, distorted noise, incoherent samples, and a disturbing rendi-

tion of the song on what sounds like a toy piano. It sounds like one of those haunted house albums that you can buy for your Halloween party. The track ends with a bidding of "Sweet Dreams" followed by an explosion of pure noise. I will never see the opening scene, where Mr. Rogers puts on his sweater and changes his shoes, in the same way again.

On a lighter note, Loretta's Doll's version of Scooby Doo is nothing but comical. They have changed it into a Gothic tune. Picture the lyrics sung by any male Goth singer (they all sound the same) and you will be able to create a decent idea of it in your head. Adding to this is the addition of Scooby Doo samples in the background.

Along the same lines of Scooby Doo is Ikon's Gothic version of Gilligan's Island. There's even conversation by the band trying to sound like the characters on everyone's favorite desert isle. I don't think that the Skipper would look good in makeup and a cape.

My person favorite, however, is the Muppet Show done by My Glass Besides Yours. It sounds like two guys, one with a synthesizer and the other singing and beating his hand against a table, playing in a garage. They even announce in the beginning that the special guest is My Glass Besides Yours, "yaaaaaaay."

Some other songs covered are 16 Volt doing The Love Boat, Kill Switch...Klick doing Welcome Back Kotter, and Alien Sex Fiend's version of Batman. (I didn't even know that they were still around.) There really aren't any songs destined to become club hits here, but, this album is a must. Try singing these versions on your next car or bus trip.

THANK GOD I'M A (Not Dead Yet) COUNTRY BOY

By Ruby Firewall
(The Office Mascot you wanna pet--c'mon: you know you do!)

"A long, long, time ago: I can still remember how the music used to make me smile..."
-Don MacLean, "American Pie"

I remember it like it was yesterday, or the day before (and it probably was): I had stayed up way too late, and found myself staring almost mindlessly at a television screen assaulting me with an ad. for his "greatest hits" disc (or cassette, each priced to move at the respective scalplings of \$24.95 and \$19.95). We weren't talking about Slim Whitman or Boxcar Willie, here; we were talking about someone I had grown up groaning "ugh!" to (but secretly, and oh-so-guiltily, singing along with) on the radio. But there he was: making a comeback, of sorts, on my very television screen, and all I could think was, "Well, if the Monkees can do it, why the hell can't he? He may not be 'cool,' but at least he writes most of his own songs, and always plays his own guitar, right?"

Actually, what I really remember thinking is: "What the fuck is this world coming to? Who'll be next? Barry-fucking-Manilow!?"

But when his "privately built 'Long EZ' aircraft" went down over Monterey Bay Sunday and left me in a bit of a perplexed state, I suddenly realized that, for me, John Denver represented more than the totality of his most schlocky hits; he was another victim of "The Man's" cruel indifference to the people who could really make living in this world

worth a damned to the little persons such as myself.

"Waves broke against the rocks as the sun rose over the crash site, turning the sky pink and orange, when the searchers went to find his body."

-The Irish Times, 14 October 1997

Okay, okay, o.k, so you caught me: I'm neither Don MacLean worrying about losing spiritual and musical influences faster than he can replace them, but willing to trade his soul for one more incredible song that will rape the aforementioned for another brief moment of fame and (hopefully, somewhere down the road) one more encore with Garth Brooks in Central Park on HBO; nor am I some Mick newspaper trying to wax poetic about our lost, collective, Good-Friday (but I'll be back again soon...) messianic childhoods or any such bullshit. I also don't really give all that much of a damned about trying to make John Denver's death seem like any kind of significant (or even insignificant) part in God's "Masterplan" for the entire friggin' universe. We're not talking Princess Di (die, done gone dead) here, people; are we?

Or, are we talking about something along the same lines?

In an essay titled "The Mirror of Ourselves" in the 15 September issue of *Time*, Martin Amis points out that Princess Di (die, etc...) was "a mirror, not a lamp. You looked at her and saw your own ordinary humanity, written in lights."

Let's look at the "ordinary humanity" Denver reflected (and which I only became aware of after his all-too-soon and still-too-recent demise): one busted marriage, and a second, allegedly, on quite

shaky ground; two drunk driving arrests in 1993 and 1994, the former of which Denver pleaded guilty to the lesser charge of "driving while impaired," and the latter leading to a hung jury (the case would have been resumed in January of '98 if he hadn't bought the farm here in '97); a professional pilot father who instilled the love of flying in him (and ultimately caused his death--as all parents eventually do); and a self-confessed pot-smoking session on the roof of the White House during the Carter years. Denver was the real deal: willing to air his faults and foibles in public, and not ashamed to be proud of his "cakes on the griddle" or, apparently, his bong or his fifth of Vodka, either. (Thank God *American Journal* and *Inside Edition* give ordinary folks like me the real 411!)

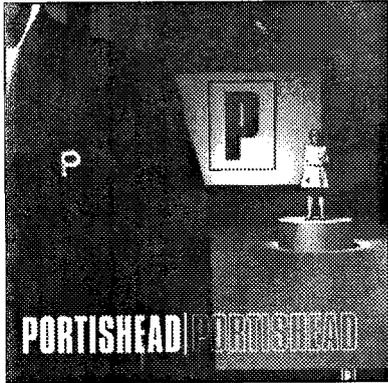
I can still remember what I was doing when Elvis and John Lennon died, and I'm not even going to try to hype Denver's passing to such mythic proportions.

Even though he didn't leave on a jet plane (or die of a coronary while straining stool or get shot by a crazed fan in front of his apartment building or get mangled in a high-speed crash in a Paris tunnel), John Denver will be missed.

**MADDEST OF ALL PROPAGAS GO
OUT TO BRIAN SCHNEIDER
FOR MAKING OUR ARCHIVES
A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO BE**

Chin Slinky

By Lowell Yaeger



Portishead
Portishead
Go! Beat/London

What if Siouxsie Sioux got together with DJ Shadow and The Automator and said, "Heavy on the effects, boys?"

All right, all right, I know the image that question conjures is utterly impossible, but it also perfectly defines Portishead's new album. Confronted with the daunting task of releasing a second album after a debut that helped put the term "trip-hop" on the map and sent multiple imitators rushing to the nearest studio with a Moog under one arm and a scratchy Billie Holliday record under the other, Portishead wrote a gaggle of songs, decided they sucked, and shelved them in disgust. Their concern was understandable; the only other trip-hop artists to survive the sophomore slump are Massive Attack, who did so when the genre wasn't even fully formed, and Tricky – and hey, all he did for an encore was reinvent hip-hop. No problem, right?

Based on the final output, Portishead did a fine job. Straying from the sample-laden, spy-movie pop of their first album, *Dummy*, Portishead explores new dimensions in both the musical wizardry of Geoff Barrow and the expressive vocals of Beth Gibbons. Barrow, who is rapidly earning his place among the ranks of such luminaries as Trent Reznor, Brian Wilson, and Steve Albini as both master of recording techniques and obsessive studio perfectionist, alternates between Goth, hip-hop, techno, and big band with skilled dexterity. The whole is then coated in a plethora of effects, from blatant sci-fi wankery to vinyl crackle to hip-hop scratching.

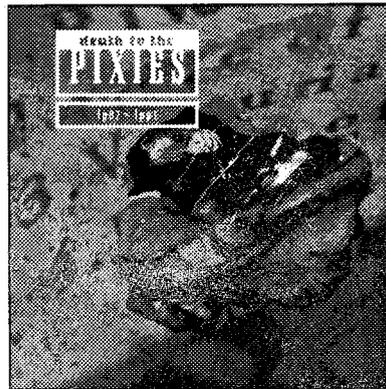
"Cowboys" opens the album with a series of beeps reminiscent of the *Halloween* theme song, and then unfurls into a broad study in crackly Goth-hop. Gibbons croons, her voice low and seductive in a mildly disgusting manner – the sound of an aging lounge singer disgusted with her job and her audience, cheeks rouged and skin yellowed from nicotine; she stops her siren song only when the music takes over with a series of overlapping beats and pleasingly incongruous record scratching.

"Half Day Closing," arguably the album's best track, begins with a sinuous bass line, a lot of eldritch ethereal sounds, and the distant vocals of Gibbons, which sound impassioned and bored at the same time. Imagine Gibbons recording the vocals independently, playing the tape on a stereo in a room with a mike placed near the speakers, and channeling that sound

into another stereo, where the rest of the band jammed around the sound of her voice, and that comes close to just how complicated the production on this song is.

There are a lot of nice little touches here and there. The attention to detail on the big-bandy "All Mine" and the Floydian drone at the end of "Undenied" all stand out, and Gibbons' lyrical range is refreshingly apparent. She shifts between miserable (especially on "Humming," where her banshee's wail of "so long" gets a little too obvious for her own good) and cryptic ("your swollen pride assumes respect"), one moment Billie Holliday, Diamanda Galas the next.

Except for a few unfortunate moments where Portishead are a little off – Gibbons' shuffling on "All Mine" make her sound less shultry than she thinks, and sometimes a guitar solo shows up and assaults the rest of the song's elements – this is an outstanding piece of work. Tricky only re-invented an existing genre; Portishead gave up on style altogether and just made music.



Pixies
Death to the Pixies
4AD/Elektra

People like to dismiss the Pixies as Kim Deal's first band, but few of them realize that her "first band" was the cornerstone of the convention that has come to be called "alternative rock." True, they haven't had any real hits and their albums sit, unloved, in the bargain bin at Tower Records, but without the Pixies, the long chain of events leading up to Nirvana never would have happened. Kurt Cobain admitted on numerous occasions that "Smells Like Teen Spirit" was a blatant Pixies rip-off; PJ Harvey's groundbreaking *Rid of Me* is as amazing as it is due to Steve Albini's production, which Harvey wouldn't have allowed had it not been for the aforesaid Albini's work on the Pixies' first record, *Surfer Rosa*; and David Bowie covered the Pixies' "Debaser" with his band, Tin Machine... which I guess is a little bit of a Dutch treat after all. And for those of you who don't know who PJ Harvey is and only



The Pixies

own *Nevermind* because everyone else does, take comfort in knowing that those Bush albums on your shelf wouldn't have happened either. Gavin Rossdale jocks the Pixies as much as Kurt and PJ, sometimes so much that he could be slapped with a copyright infringement lawsuit.

But people can't really handle the Pixies, because the music is so out in left field. Disjointed guitar, bizarre time signatures, crooned verses and screamed choruses are no place for the average alterna-kid, and Charles Thompson's sometimes-Spanish-always-cryptic vocals don't help matters any. The Pixies were liked by smart kids who understood what the band was up to, and there weren't too many of them: the people who get the joke about *Le Chien Andalou* on "Debaser" are a rare breed. So while the Pixies were actually together, they only had a cult following. And since they've broken up, the band's two biggest figures – Charles Thompson, who faded into obscurity as Frank Black, and Kim Deal, who wrote "Cannonball" and then also faded into obscurity – have had only one thing to say about their former band: that it was dead and forever would be.

Which makes a double CD greatest hits package released six years after the band's demise equally odd. Perhaps 4AD has come to the conclusion that enough people are hip enough to appreciate the Pixies now, but would rather buy one big package than five little ones. Unfortunately, the one big package is severely lacking.

The first disc, a "best-of" package, has all of the biggies: "Here Comes Your Man" and "Monkey Gone To Heaven" (both of which made it to video rotation on 120 Minutes), "Debaser," "Bone Machine," "Wave Of Mutilation." The other songs appear to have been selected based on the chooser's personal preference, like "Tame" and "U-Mass."

However, this best-of package, which clocks in at a bit longer than half of the second disc, finds certain songs conspicuous in their absence: "Is She Weird," the Pixies-penned tune that David Bowie performed on tour in the early 90s; "Levitate Me," a critic's darling and the focus of at least a line or two in nearly every music encyclopedia's entry on the Pixies; and the crowd-pleasing "Subbacultcha," and the deconstructed cover of The Jesus & Mary Chain's "Head On," which found the Pixies playing at their hardest, are all missing, when there was plenty of room available for their inclusion.

The second disc, a live performance recorded in 1990, is high quality and engaging, but it comes before both *Bossanova* and *Trompe Le Monde*. Only one song from *Bossanova*, "Rock Music" (which, due to its rote live version, doesn't earn any points), makes it to the performance. A lot of the songs overlap with the first disc as well, and some of them aren't much of a departure, especially "Monkey Gone To Heaven" and "Debaser." While the band does get rather intriguing on the obscure b-side, "Into The White," a lot of this music will evoke yawns from those familiar with the Pixies' work.

In short, *Death to the Pixies* is a nice idea, but it's pulled off rather poorly. A Dutch treat, indeed.