

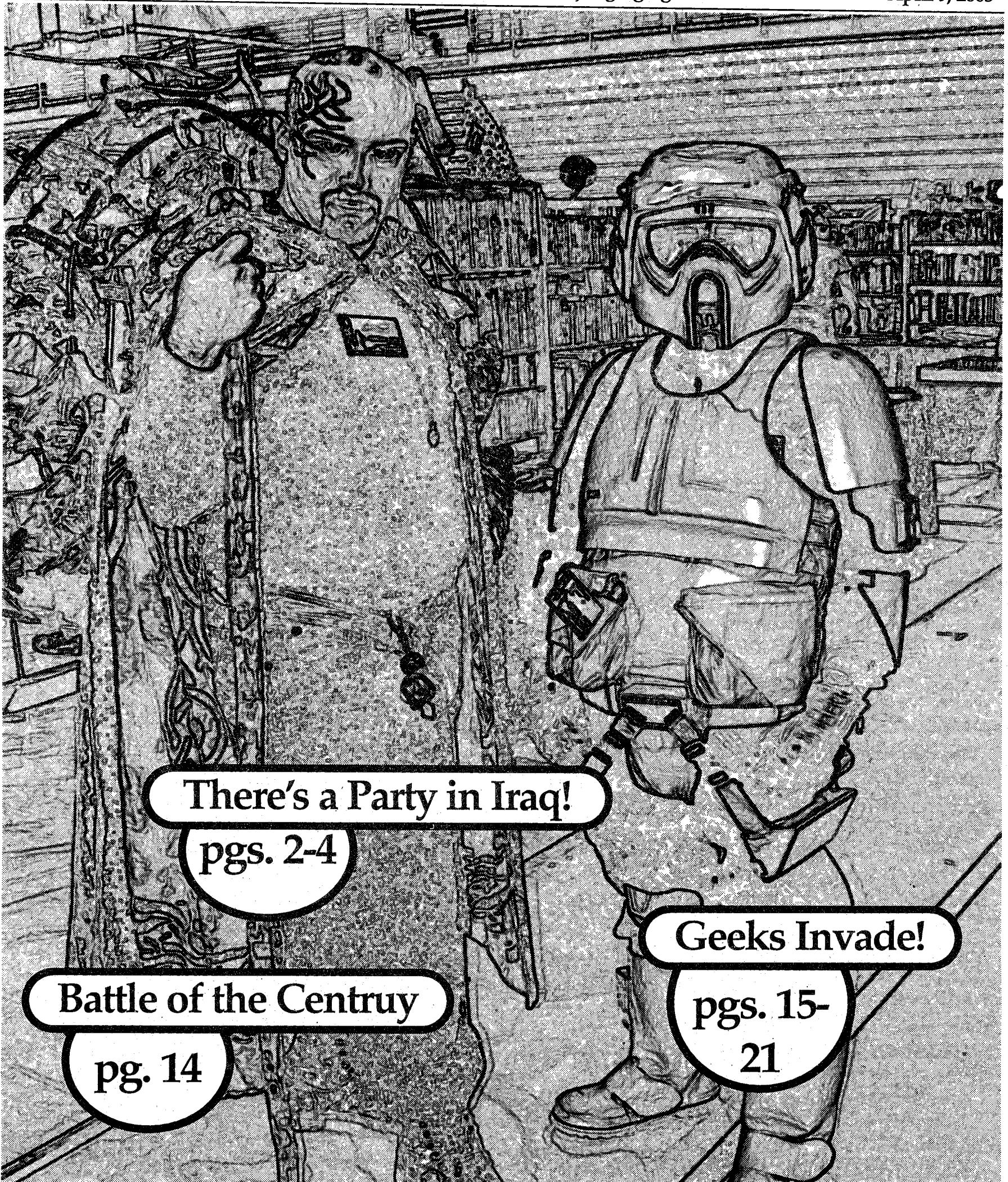
THE STONY BROOK

PRESS

Vol. XXIV, Issue 11

"I came here to avoid the judging light"

April 9, 2003



There's a Party in Iraq!

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Battle of the Centruy

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Geeks Invade!

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Business as Usual; Au Contraire

By Jackie Hayes

At eight o'clock Monday morning Stony Brook campus began to wake up, coming to life after the weeklong spring break. Many returned to the hustle and bustle of student life, finding refuge in textbooks and distraction in conversation. The general attitude on campus seemed to be "business as usual" despite the fact that war with Iraq had commenced a mere four days prior. On the surface there seemed little if any indication that students had been impacted by the nation's decision to pursue war with Iraq. Yet at around noon faint chants of "No Blood for Oil" could be heard amongst the buzz of campus life as over 70 Ward Melville high school students marched to the center of campus in protest of the current war.

The students from Ward Melville out of their classes and proceeded to walk another four miles to join with the speak-out and march against the war on campus in front on the SAC. Along with Ward Melville students, the crowd was composed of students from Stony Brook, Suffolk Community College, SUNY Farmingdale, Stony Brook staff and community members. Chad Kautzer, one of the founding members of the Social Justice Alliance, welcomed everyone and opened the stage to any comments about the war. For the next two hours students, staff, and community members voiced their concerns and implications regarding the War on Iraq.

Faculty member Jackie Smith, a member of the Sociology Department and the Coalition Against the War, voiced her concerns regarding the fate of international policy. Smith stated that those who are opposed to the current war were in support of "a consistent application of international law." The U.S. is pursuing a unilateral war without the backing of the United Nations. Chapter 1 of the U.N. Charter details the U.N.'s purpose, which is, "To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace..." The charter stresses the importance of

peaceful and collective action in the hopes of avoiding violent conflicts. Eleven out of the 15 Security Council members had expressed reservations about the war, supporting instead the idea of allowing the inspections to continue. The U.S. has turned its back on the U.N. and on a collective, nonviolent resolution to the Iraqi conflict. Although the U.S. has turned its back on international law in the past, specifically during the Kosovo bombing campaign, it seems that this is the first time since the formation of the U.N. that its fate has rested on the outcome of one war.

Bill McNulty, a local church member and an advocate for the closing of the School of the Americas, discussed his feelings about the motivations behind the war on Iraq. Bill commented that, "if we don't gain control of that oil, our lifestyles will be threatened," he continued stating, "the big boys make \$92,000 an hour and that's the lifestyle they're trying to protect." Although the issue of oil as the sole motivator is debatable, the fact that certain politicians are profiting from this war is not. Vice President Dick Cheney was a former chief executive officer of Halliburton Co., a position from which he stepped down in 2000 when he decided to be Bush's running mate. Halliburton Co. recently won the main Iraqi oil well firefighting contract. The U.S. Agency for International Development is also requesting bids for the initial reconstruction work that will be done in post war Iraq, a bid that could be worth up to \$900 million. Among the top five bidders is Halliburton Co.

McNulty, as an advocate against the School of the Americas, discussed the connection between the SOA and the war on Iraq, stating "that [the School of the Americas] issue dovetails right into this issue, because let's not forget that way back when 9/11 happened he said we must shut down those terrorist training camps, wherever they exist. Well, SOA is a terrorist training camp. Let's start by closing that one down." According to the School of the

Americas' Watch graduates of the SOA, "are responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses in Latin America." Some graduates include Manuel Noriega and Omar Torrijos of Panama, Leopoldo Galtieri and Roberto Viola of Argentina, Juan Velasco Alvarado of Peru, Guillermo Rodriguez of Ecuador, and Hugo Banzer Suarez of

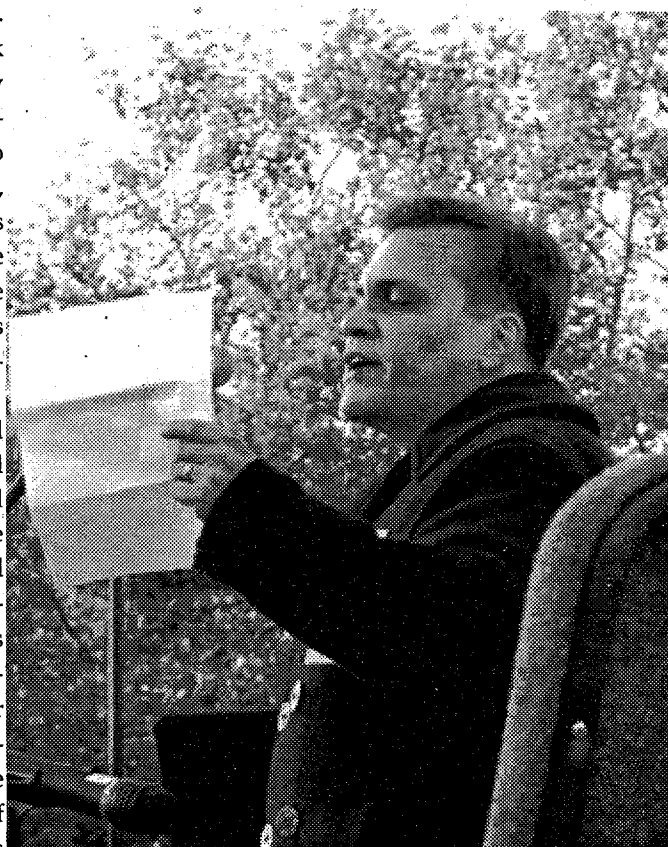
Bolivia, who are all notorious dictators. McNulty then asked others to join in the anti-war protests being held every Saturday from 10-11am along 25A.

Patricia Luhman, a Ward Melville high school student, expressed the anti-war sentiment felt by herself and her fellow classmates. Orem Misholy, Ana Loot, and Matt O'Leary were among the other Ward Melville students who spoke out against the war. One student commented, "I hope for the safe return of my own friend." Many

expressed equal concerns for the welfare of American soldiers and Iraqi civilians. Chad Kautzer stated that "we support our soldiers" in response to shouts of "traitor" and "support your troops" by three students standing behind the protest. Kautzer explained that the protesters were in favor of the safe return of American troops. Mike Lopez, a SUNY Suffolk student, stated "I am supporting the troops, I want to bring them home, I want to see my friends alive."

Jolyon Lubinstein, an English exchange student who became involved with the anti-war movement in England, also addressed the shouts of "traitor" from the three students standing behind the protest. He explained that in England protestors "don't have the guise of being unpatriotic for speaking out." He also compared the two movements stating that the European movement is, "a lot more highly organized and a lot more strategic." When asked about his thoughts on the campus turnout he stated he was, "disappointed" explaining that he expected more people.

Even if Monday's speak out brought a little over a hundred faculty, students, and community members, this does not mean it is "business as usual" on campus. Aside from the speak-out, many groups campus-wide have been organizing against the war on Iraq. There is a Stony Brook Coalition Against the War that is sponsored by Long Island's Food Not Bombs, Musicians Alliance for Peace, the Muslim Student Association, the Socialist Alternative, the Social Justice Alliance, United University Professions: Stony Brook University Core Chapter, and Students for Peace and Humanity, along with eight other endorsing organizations. If you would like to find out more about this organization or other anti-war events happening on campus visit www.sbcoalition.net.



Worth A Thousand Words

By Chris Sorochin

One of the most poignant and effective of the dozens of creative tactics being used to raise consciousness and protest the current invasion of Iraq was one that I first encountered the morning of February 15, as I walked to the subway on my way to the New York City segment of the massive antiwar protests that took place that day. All along Clinton Street, Brooklyn, U.S.A., stately with historic brownstones, on almost every lamp post, was a photo. There was no accompanying text, save for an identification of the location and timing of the photo, e.g. "Baghdad, January 10, 2003." Captured in each one were one or more of the common people of Iraq.

These were not horrifying atrocity shots, like those coming out of Al Jazeera and other sources (and censored from US mainstream media), but pleasant pictures of everyday folks of all ages, children playing, a wedding party, a stall proprietor and his son, and many more. Some looked serious, or pensive. Most were smiling broadly for the camera, despite the many travails most Iraqis face on a daily basis. No demons. No rabid animals. Not even any anger, although I'm sure the photographer could have found ample subjects.

The genius is that since there's no polemicizing, no haranguing and no guilt-tripping, just smiling faces of people on whom "our" government is about to drop tons of things that explode and poison the environment. Maybe one or two of the faces will remind you of someone you know and how exactly you would feel if someone were to do similar things to them. It's an effort to make a link between the faces of the World Trade Center missing that appeared all over the city and its environs in the fall of 2001 and those who may be victims of the next major crime against humanity.

A more direct predecessor of the project is the "Forbidden Faces" project of the American

Friends Service Committee back in the 1980s, when the administration of that other mental giant, Ronald Reagan, began making threatening noises towards the Soviet Union and wasting huge amounts of resources on a gluttonous military buildup against what Ronnie liked to demonize as the Evil Empire. The Quaker organization published a book of photos of ordinary Soviet citizens to show the US public just who was in Reagan's gunsights. The AFSC is completely nonviolent and perpetrates many good works around the globe, yet they somehow made the Denver Police Department's infamous list of "terrorist" (read "activist") organizations to be watched and harassed.

Photographer Paul Chan spent two months (December, 2002 and January, 2003) in Baghdad with the Iraq Peace Team, a humanitarian organization. He took hundreds of photos of Iraqis at their daily lives. Back in New York, the Baghdad Snapshot Action Crew posted them throughout the metropolis. Two female members, one seven months pregnant, were handcuffed, held in jail for seven hours, grilled and warned not to attend the protest because many of the cops there would be rookies looking to kick some ass. The women were charged with "illegal posterage," one of ex-dictator Rudy Giuliani's ridiculous "quality of life" violations, a misdemeanor which usually results in a ticket. Apparently pictures of smiling folks pose a very serious psychological threat to some people.

Other than the NYPD, who have the gall to pass out flyers at Flatbush Avenue Station asking taxpayers to urge the city government not to cut their budget, the pictures seem to also get under the reptilian skins of some morally moribund civilians. I've noticed that some people have made attempts to counteract the alfresco exhibit of conscience. One individual had downloaded a screed from some syndicated cement-

head about how the entire Iraqi population was practicing military training and it showed a picture of a young boy in a uniform with a rifle, the member of some Ba'athist Boy Scout Troop to offset all those innocent pictures of kids playing and laughing. Whoever duct-taped this addition had also written in pen: "Do you think these women and children want Saddam to have weapons of mass destruction?" Well, maybe not, but I think they must know they're much more likely to be the targets of US weapons of mass destruction.

Other miscreants have been less intellectual about it. I've seen photos that have been defaced. Unlike attempts by those who simply don't want posters on their property and try to remove the entire square, many of the Baghdad photos had had the human figures purposefully scratched out of them, reminiscent of the crude way the Taliban fanatics eliminated representations of human or animal figures from public places in Afghanistan.

March 24 saw a walkout on classes by area students. About 70 people from Ward Melville High School marched to Stony Brook campus to join students from SBU and Suffolk community College, as well as members of the local community for a rally followed by a march to the offices of local representatives in Setauket. Along the route, local activist and radio personality Bill McNulty was handing out these souvenirs of Baghdad, several people to whom he gave them threw them to the ground with muttered obscenities, quite the way Dracula would react to a cross.

I'm sorry I wasn't there. It would have been fascinating to ask these people just what they feel is so offensive about photos of average people being happy that catapults them into paroxysms of rage. Could it be that the realization that what's going on over there is not a video game is too much for some to bear?

Reasons to be Cheerful

By Chris Sorochin

Would it be too trite to recall the opening lines of "A Tale of Two Cities": "It was the best of times. It was the worst of times..."?

The temptation now, especially for those of us who are of a cynical bent, is to become dispirited and depressed. And for good reason: despite the best efforts of huge numbers of people, George W. Bush, the evil changeling in whose behalf the 2000 Presidential election was hijacked, is now waging a completely illegal (time to get out your copy of the Geneva Conventions and wave it in the faces of all comers) and very murderous invasion of Iraq. W's henchmen have promised Blitzkrieg, American-style, necessitating the removal of a tapestry depicting Picasso's "Guernica" from the Security Council chamber at the UN, so that Colin Powell wouldn't have to make his pitch for saturation bombing against the fortuitously veracious backdrop of people and animals being incinerated in a maelstrom of modern high-tech warfare.

As of now, it looks as if the invading forces will eventually prevail, at least in the short run and rumor has it that the warmongers, not ones to rest on their ill-gotten plastic laurels, will soon turn their malevolent gaze to Iran and Syria as candidates for some high-latitude attitude adjustment.

Their Israeli adjuncts, to whom were promised an additional \$10 billion (on top of the \$3 billion they get annually), will undoubtedly use this opportunity to implement their "Final Solution" to the Palestinian problem. Earlier this

week, an Israeli bulldozer (manufactured by Caterpillar) killed a US solidarity activist, Rachel Corrie, who was trying to prevent one of the growing number of house demolitions carried out by Israeli forces in the Occupied Territories. Reportedly, US forces are planning to take a page from the Israeli playbook and use bulldozers in the invasion of Iraq. The Israelis, ironically, developed their urban warfare strategy at the time of their 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Their model? Well, it was the German strategy for "pacifying" the Warsaw ghetto during World War II.

As we all realize by now, our elected representatives are less than useless. Instead of condemning Bush's aggression, both House and Senate have sent Dubya near-unanimous air kisses in the form of resolutions of support. Lots of political ass is being both kissed and covered by these gutless worms and let's all light a candle to St. Anthony, patron of lost causes, that the electorate remember their perfidy come election time. Did you know that all it would take to start impeachment proceedings is one--that's ONE--legislator with sufficient spine to stand up and get the ball rolling? You'd think that if they could waste a couple of years sticking it to Clinton for getting blowjobs in the Oval Office, they could go after George II for trying to raise Armageddon. But wait, I keep forgetting: this is America and violence is always less likely to inspire outrage than sex.

One more blob of infamy is that our oh-

so-patriotic leaders, after passing their rah-rah nothingburger "Support the Troops" resolution, voted to cut, among other things, \$25 million from veterans' benefits. Most of those affected will be veterans of the first Gulf War. Obviously, the troops aren't to be supported after they've outlived their usefulness.

But enough gloom. I said I was going to be positive, so let's start seeing our existential beer mug as half full, shall we?

The truly miraculous and wonderful thing, the peacenik wet dream come true, if you will, has been the overwhelming opposition to this invasion, all over the world and coming from all sectors. I don't know which makes me want to turn cartwheels more, the idea that other governments are actually standing up to the US, making the UN come close to looking like an organization that might be able to accomplish something, or the quasi-miraculous blossoming of skepticism amongst normally gung-ho individuals.

Just the other day, I was at my local butcher, an enterprise presided over by a gruff older man the missus and I refer to as Old Man Staubitz, exactly the type of guy you'd think gets off on John Wayne movies and drinks at the local VFW.

Well, there I was, waiting for my pork loin as Old Man Staubitz was holding forth on the tenacity of his business: "Staubitz has been here through World War I, World War II, Korea,

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Editorial: I-CON's Last Stand

I-CON. The symbol of geek pride has stood triumphant on this campus for 22 years. I-CON or Island Convention is, as many put it, "the one cool thing left on this campus." If this year's celebrations have been any indication of what is to come, I-CON's time is growing short. Last year, *The Press* was able to fill enough pages with content from the convention that we almost set a record for longest issue in our history. This year, we're scrapping for pictures. Dealers said that this year was unlike any other in that business was down at least by half. Some vendors are even considering not returning next year, no matter where the convention is held.

You can blame a lot of things on the lack of attendance this year. The economy has taken serious dives, coupled with the fact that ticket prices are up, keeping many away. There are also rumors going around that the staff organizing this year's I-CON was simply ineffectual at doing their jobs properly. Volunteers were scarce this year, as even as late as Saturday committee members were heard asking for volunteers to staff events. Indeed, many programs were cancelled, and even more were run terribly. A perfect example of this was a video game tournament, whose staff member simply did not want to

stand there and run the event, so she cancelled it. That's not the way to run a convention.

The heart of all these problems, though, can in fact be traced to the real underlying issue which is destroying the last thing people have to look forward to in their bleak lives on campus. Campus administration wants I-CON out. Since I-CON is student run and operated, and operates as a club, it does not make enough money for the university. The administration has made almost any event here prohibitive, even corporate ones. Security costs have needlessly doubled, and that's just the tip of the iceberg.

The current ruling body of the university has very effectively instituted the oldest and harshest form of control over its subjects - repression. The university has completely repressed its subjects (the students) and now because our morale has been crushed, we will follow like lambs to the slaughter. We've been forced to become a university of lemmings. Don't let this happen. Fight for your right to have clubs and activities on campus. Force them to give us our fair share of the money we put into the school. Don't let their ultimate goal of privatization ever happen. It's a public university. It's up to the public of the university to keep it that way.

Editorial: A Higher Form Of Patriotism

President Bush has a knack for controversy. He opened his term of office on a sour note, and again he throws the public into a whirl. This time however, the world is the playing field, and the stakes are higher.

International support for the war in Iraq is almost nonexistent, especially amongst the world's civilian population. Protests are occurring worldwide and almost daily, and reflect the persistence of global public opinion. Yet opinion abroad does not appear to match with opinion at home.

During the beginning of his campaign, the polls stated two-thirds of the American public supported Bush. But how accurate is this statistic? Yes, we all know there are lies, damn lies, and statistics, but are the answers as simple as yes and no?

Reality is not the black and white the media makes it out to be. The shades of grey have depth, and are not represented at all in statistical polls. Various individuals have

been quoted as saying, "I'm not for war, but I have no choice but to support it." Or, "I don't support the war, but I support the troops."

These are the aspects of public opinion that go unrepresented in mainstream media. We are told to support the war, or risk being labeled a traitor. Hermann Goering, one of Hitler's high-ranking officials said, "The people don't want war. But after all, it's the leaders of the country who determine the policy... All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism, and exposing the country to greater danger."

Lets not confuse America with a fascist dictatorship. We do have the right to exercise our free speech, and we should use it. Patriotism is not the blind support of your country and its government. A true patriot realizes when his country needs correction. That time is now.

Letter: Stop Accidentally Bumping Into My Ego!

Dear Stony Brook Press,

Again, I'm taking time from my poorly edited police blotters to write you another editorial.

You wrote that you would debate "point by point" "at another time and place" the merits of NASA's recent manned space missions. I forward to your scholarship about that.

Now, I'm complaining about the childish article in the March 24th The Stony Brook Press, entitled "How Many Girls Got Raped On Friday" by Joe Flip and the insulting comic strip, "DK vs. The Crotch Grabber" by Phil Pipitone.

Both attempted to laugh at the events of Feb. 28th in which a female student was sexual assaulted on campus and a man was arrested for that assault. Both events were very serious and not at all humorous and to be made fun of.

For a mature article about that incident, look at "Campus Sexual Assault Leads To Arrest" on the cover of the March 27th issue of The Stony Brook Statesman written by me.

Readers of my article will notice that I put in the arrested man's name. An arrest does not mean guilt. The man might have bumped into the woman and accidentally touched her crotch. When he tried to apologize, she yelled at him. Scared, he ran off. I don't know if that's what happened. I wasn't there and couldn't contact the man to get his version of events, despite several attempts. But neighbors and friends of this man should keep that in mind before they shun and persecute him.

Both Joe Flip and Phil Pipitone owe an apology to women or an explanation of why they lost their decency.

Sincerely,
Maury Hirschhorn
A Stony Brook Student

Dear Me,

I am the greatest writer of all time. For further articles by me, please refer to something else written by myself. Chances are it will also be great. If journalism was a space on the Monopoly game board, I'd be Geraldo Rivera Boulevard or perhaps even Peter Jennings Place. I will pass go. I will collect 200 dollars. And I will write a great article about it. Me.

But enough about you. Thanks for clearing up that pesky little "arrest doesn't mean guilt" thing. For another great clarification of the United States Judicial System, please refer to the much more mature unsubstantiated letter written by me where I put words in the mouths of lesser journalists and my concept of satire is completely eclipsed by the satellite of my overbearing sense of journalistic self-righteousness. Me.

I don't know when mature became synonymous with boring. Perhaps it was the March 27th issue of *The Stony Brook Statesman*. I know not. I can't speak for every light-hearted approach to the incident but as far as my article is concerned, did you even read the last paragraph? And as far as "innocent until proven guilty" is concerned, do you realize that your article was entitled "Campus Sexual Assault Leads to Arrest"? And as far as your article is concerned, wasn't it great?

Me.

Sincerely,
Joe Flip
A Stony Brook Student

Letter: May I Please Receive a "What What?"

Hey folks!

Thanks for sending the two February issues - I love to get 'em - keep me on the list!

The newspaper is looking really strong - lots of good articles, good mix of news and arts and cartoons, on-and off-campus issues, all well presented. Keep kicking ass!

I was on campus with my kids to meet up with some friends outside ICON Saturday. My old buddy Ralph Sevush and I stopped by the Press office but there was no one home.

From my kids' perspective, the funnest things on campus were the fountain, the book

sculpture in front of the library, and the medieval jousting on the Grad Physics lawn. Least fun place: basement of the Union!

See you all soon!
Joe Caponi
SB Press

Joseph Caponi
Editor, ChannelWeb Network
<http://www.channelweb.com>

A Morning With Crew

By Nicole Pesce

There is the faintest hint of light in the sky, and the wind whines its way across the deserted Stony Brook campus.

In sneakers and sweats, a group of students steps outside to brave the dark and cold at 6 a.m. They make their way in twos and threes down empty paths and parking lots towards the gray and white Sports Complex. The back door is propped open with a yellow wet-floor sign, and the halls still glisten from the previous night's cleaning. The silence is broken by the sound of muffled shouts that grow louder as the newcomers approach the indoor track and climb the steps.

On the lower level of the track, half-hidden in a corner right of the bleachers, a group of students spreads out and goes through a series of stretches. This team is not dressed in the reds and grays of varsity, nor are they required to be at this predawn hour. It is the crew team, and their dedication brings almost 50 members here six days a week at 6 a.m.

The athletes split into four squads - men's and women's varsity, and men's and women's novice. The novice members have rowed for less than a year. The varsity squad has more experience.

Cory Vilaplana, coach of the women's varsity squad, brings the women to the upper level of the indoor track. They run laps and undergo rigorous leg exercises. Balanced on the palms of their hands and their heels, they crabwalk down one side of the track, jog around the bend and perform a series of lunges down the other side.

"My legs hurt," groans one girl in a pink bandana.

"Good!" says Vilaplana, but a smile cracks his stern exterior.

Vilaplana rowed as an undergraduate at

Stony Brook. After earning a degree in Biology in 2000, he returned to help coach the team. "Unlike other sports, there is no individual glory," he said. It does not matter who is the best, but rather how well the team works together. The men and women practice six days a week so they can work together as one tight unit.

Rowing is physically demanding, Vilaplana said. Although it appears as though upper body strength is necessary to row the eight-person boats across 2000 meters of water, a majority of the load is on the legs.

"It takes about 80 percent legs, 20 percent upper body," he said. Across the Sports Complex, in the hall overlooking the racquetball courts, Michael Chang watches as three members of the men's varsity team strain against three rowing machines, their strokes synchronized, their faces sweaty and red.

Chang, too, rowed as an undergraduate at Stony Brook University from the team's beginning in 1997. After graduating with a degree in English, he stayed behind to coach the men's varsity squad.

"I wanted to see the team do well," he said. The men's varsity team won the metro cham-



pionships last fall, beating out Fordham University, which was very uplifting. "It was a good race, we worked hard for it," he said proudly.

The three rowers finish, and the other teammates clap and cheer.

It is now 7:15 a.m.

Chang finds that practicing so early each day weeds people out.

"It's a test of commitment," he said. "If these eight guys come out early six days a

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Reasons to be Cheerful

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Vietnam...

"Uh-oh," I thought, "here it comes," expecting a barrage of jingoism, but to my shock and awe heard "...and this is the first time we're the aggressor, and we're led by someone who's almost a dictator."

And that's just one of many pleasant little epiphanies I and others have been having lately. Of course, I'd quibble that this is not the first time we're the aggressor, but you've got to crawl before you can walk. There's a new consciousness in the air. It seems that all our long and painstaking efforts at educating the public as to the duplicity and manipulation of the power structure and their media acolytes have finally paid off in spades. Is the propaganda machine simply not trying, or have we finally succeeded in short-circuiting it so that it plays only as a parody of itself?

Back in the '60s, there used to be a poster that said, "What if they gave a war and nobody came?" Unfortunately, we haven't yet reached the point where soldiers themselves refuse en masse to take part, but the worldwide response has been heartening. Even in counties whose governments support Bush's "Coalition of the Willing," majority opinion is firmly against. Many cities, like London, have seen the largest demonstrations in their history in the last couple of months.

Normally reticent religious leaders like the Pope and even military people like Scott Ritter and Norman Schwarzkopf have criticized Bush's planned crusade as madness. Can it really be true that Dick Cheney's daughter is now in Jordan, and considering going to Iraq as a human shield? It's probably not, but in today's all-bets-are-off climate, where we don't know what will happen next, would it surprise

anyone?

At the risk of sounding like a '60s throw-back myself, it seems as if there's some great cosmic shift going on in the collective mentality of the human race, like that oft-repeated story of the monkeys on one island who learn to eat their coconuts in a new way and the knowledge spreads subliminally to the monkeys on all the other islands, even though there's no contact. Can it finally be that we're ready for a major evolutionary leap—the "Age of Aquarius?"

Don't get out your love beads just yet. After both World Wars and Vietnam, there was a feeling that we'd never engage in the same murderous folly again. Lofty proclamations were made and organizations like the League of Nations and the UN set up to usher in the new era of peace. But it never came about, partly because people quickly forgot the lessons of the carnage and devastation they had so recently observed. But this time people were moved to speak and act before any shooting started, not in the immediate aftermath. This is almost unprecedented—in 1998, a planned attack on Iraq by the Clintonites was put off for ten months due to a massive international outcry and the willingness of a few brave souls to publicly point out the falsehoods and hypocrisies in the pro-war argument.

All those publicizing the humanitarian catastrophe that sanctions have caused in Iraq can take a well-deserved bow, as can all those promoting media literacy and exposing the biases of the mainstream sources of information. Let's not forget those of us in the independent media who have provided such a valuable counterweight and all those Internet geeks who made off-the-grid instantaneous worldwide communication a reality for so many. Thanks to the 'Net, Americans are no longer restricted to the views of

the U.S. corporate media and can now access facts and views not commonly heard in this country. Big ups, of course, to all those high-profile folks who've gone out on career limbs to increase awareness. Let's all buy Dixie Chicks CDs to offset the redneck boycott. And how about Michael Moore at the Oscars? I'm personally looking forward to riding the coattails of the whole new popularity that might be breaking for dumpy middle-aged slackers who survived working-class Catholic upbringings in the Rust Belt. Go, Mike! Do it for your people!

Perversely, we also have to thank folks like Dubya and his handlers and cronies. Their naked arrogance, greed and dementia have made it nearly impossible to paint a happy face on many of their policies and actions. You just can't fool all the people all the time.

Let me close with just a few words about patriotism. Though the actions of my government fill me with shame and disgust, the actions of many of my people fill me with pride. Standing up to injustice is what the American vision is supposed to be all about, so let's celebrate the fact that protests are occurring from sea to shining sea.

Next time you see someone flying the US flag, go up and thank them for supporting the protestors. Better yet, fly the flag yourself, and lest anyone get the wrong idea, grace it with some peace symbols.

OK, kids, we've had our recess of self-congratulation, positive reinforcement and warm fuzzies. Time to go back to the school of hard knocks and continue the struggle against an illegal and immoral horror being perpetrated in our names.

Billy Joel's MOVIN' OUT (aka, "Promises, Promises")

By Ralph Sevush

I scored a pair of free ducats to the Broadway production of Movin' Out, the dance musical based on Billy Joel songs, which was conceived, directed and choreographed by Twyla Tharp. The missus and I went the first night back after the recent musician's strike, so Mr. Joel himself was there, along with news crews, to show his support for the returning musicians. He left at intermission. If only I could've done the same, but the wife wouldn't hear of it; she doesn't get out much so I endured the rest of the evening without too much pouting (though I may have nodded off there for a while).

Lets get some things straight. I like Billy Joel. I like a lot of his music (especially the work pre-"The Stranger"). I also love musicals, and I love the dancing that goes on during musicals. Astaire and Kelley. Gregory Hines. The Nicholas Brothers. I love Michael Kidd and Michael Bennett. I love Bob Fosse's work. In fact, I saw Fosse twice. While I usually enjoy Susan Stroman's stuff, I'm not big on Tommy Tune. Still, I've seen enough hoofin' in my day to enjoy the art form.

But I hate ballet and modern dance. Hate 'em both. Hate 'em like liver, like cauliflower. Like fat-free/sugar-free ice-milk products. Like wars of aggression waged in my name. And, God knows, I've sat through more than my share of endless nights at the Joyce Theatre, and have had my nuts cracked by enough Nutcrackers, so its not like I've never TRIED to like them. But, while I occasionally enjoy the music, the highly formalized, ritualized series of movements such dancers are limited to are so dull that they are as excruciating for me to endure as they seem to be for the dancers to perform. And the level of pretension at most dance recitals I've attended achieves a height so great as to make the view of most normal pretensions seem like paramecium undulating below it.

And don't let anybody kid you. Twyla Tharp is the über-choreographer of both these fiendish forms. And Movin' Out is her diabolical transmogrification of harmless pop songs into tedious exercises in time displacement. If ever further proof of Einstein's theories was needed, here

it is. Time, it seems, IS relative and 2 hours of Tharp may actually last years. With this show, she becomes a verb: to "tharp" - meaning to attenuate pointlessly, with pretentious intent. For example: "Michael Cimino really tharped the Western genre when he made 'Heaven's Gate'."

Tharp uses the Joel song "Scenes from an Italian Restaurant" as the leitmotif and narrative through-line of this interminable evening. We are faced with the story of "Brenda and Eddie", the king and queen of the prom. Its the early 60s, and Eddie breaks up with Brenda, goes off to Vietnam with his high school buddies, and those that come back, come back damaged. As are the girls they left behind. It's a promising enough premise. Unfortunately, unless you read the description of the scenes as they are described in the program, you might not get what's going on, as there is no dialogue, just Joel's unmodified lyrics and Tharp's dancer-ly gesticulations.

Also, the music is comprised entirely of Joel's pop songs. They are, by definition, self-contained and (for the most part) superficial. Not that that's a BAD thing. But pop songs are intended for 3-4 minutes of radio play. They are intended to be repetitious and catchy, with simple ideas that can stay in the head. It is not Tchaikovsky. Of course, Joel has written more subtle layered songs too, but these have been scrupulously left out of this show, for the most part, in favor of the more recent top 40 hits... "Uptown Girl," "We Didn't Start the Fire," "Goodnight Saigon," "Pressure," etc.

What does dance add to these perfectly nice songs? Absolutely nothing. When you adapt a stage show from a work originally created in another medium (book, film, song, etc) it takes a lot of work to come up with theatrical devices to reinterpret it into something dramatic. Such an adaptation into a new medium takes deconstruction and reconstruction. See, for a great example, the current movie version of Chicago. In Movin' Out, on the other hand, we see characters dancing out the behaviors described in lyrics. During the song, "Captain Jack" (about drug addiction), we see Eddie acting out the injections and delirious addiction like some deranged dancing mime on

acid.

Now, this is not to say every moment of the show was dreadful. The piano player who performs all the songs does a great job of evoking, without emulating, Billy Joel's distinct sound. And the dancers are certainly athletic and accomplished. There are even a few moments of theatrical magic, especially the Vietnam scenes. Act II, overall, accumulates a bit more power and energy before leading to its conciliatory, life affirming, utterly clichéd ending. Yet, on the whole, the dance adds nothing to Joel's self-contained lyrics and melodies but boring repetition. What is the point of all of this?

Money, of course. Producers now think there is gold in the music libraries of pop stars. Since the 1960s, "Rock Operas" have faired well on Broadway... from Jesus Christ, Superstar to Hair to Rent. But when Tommy, a rock opera originally written for an album (and then a movie) and not the stage, did well, producers looked and went "hmmmm". Although Paul Simon's Capeman was a disaster, it was at least partly because Simon wrote all new songs that nobody much liked. But Smokey Joe's Café ran a loooooong time, and the Abba musical, Mamma Mia, is now a big hit, too.

So why not Billy Joel? Good question. And it might've worked, too... but for all the damn dancing. Still, the show garnered mostly good reviews and it is selling pretty well as a consequence. So what do I know? Well, I know I hate ballet and modern dance, dammit. And if you do too, you'll be wise to keep your distance from this middlebrow attempt at a highbrow homage to lowbrow pop culture.

It's a shame too, because Billy Joel's recent album of classical music, as well as his moodier, more reflective songs, indicate a depth of emotion, a talent for melody, and a narrative content that would do well on Broadway. But I'd prefer to hear him write an original score rather than try to retrofit pre-existing songs into this pointless dance recital.

Billy Joel's movin' out... only not soon enough for me.



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Edgar Degas: An Ardent Passion That Never Ceased

By Ana Maria Ramirez

Flipping through the pages of the Arts section in the New York Times one day I came across an article about the recently opened exhibit, Degas and the Dance, at the Philadelphia Museum.

Hilarie Germain Edgar Degas was one of the revolutionary pioneers who broke forth into the art world during the Impressionist movement. But instead of having an interest in plein air landscapes, like Claude Monet, he chose to create a true portrayal of modern-day Parisian life. Many of his subjects were members of the working class: the dancers of the ballet, the riders of the horse track and the work of laundresses. And what composes more than half of the works that compile his oeuvre is the world of the Garnier Opera ballet dancers.

However, reading further in the article, its writer, Richard Woodward (who is also editor of Double Take magazine), suggests that for Degas, one ballerina was the same as the next. The beginning of the article states, "Edgar Degas loved dancers but loathed women: so goes the theory of the artist and the man."

Woodward then goes on to discuss Degas' mastery in radical modes of perspective and compositions in his renditions of modern life and dance. After exalting the painter's notable talents, he shifts into describing the struggling life of one of Degas' models, who was the subject used to create the legendary sculpture Little Dancer Aged 14.

This ballerina, like many others during this time, began at the Parisian Opera to help her impoverished family earn money and modeled for Degas for more. The name of the infamous ballerina was Marie van Goethem. "After missing 11 classes, she lost her position at the Opera," as Woodward writes, "[which] perhaps resulted in driving her into prostitution." He mockingly adds that the "Little Dancer became a Little Tramp". The article later concludes, "...more likely, however, he never gave her another thought. There were hundreds of other Mariés to draw at the Opera ...that she vanishes from his life and from history after 1882, her ultimate fate in the city unknown, traces of her existence found mainly in one of the signature works of modernity is almost more poignant."

After reading those last few lines, I couldn't comprehend how an artist who rendered such beautiful (for the inability to find a better word) and emotion-generating works could feel such apathy to a subject matter that composes up to half of it oeuvre.

During Degas' lifetime and afterwards, many critics, not just Woodward have labeled Degas as a misogynist only objectifying these dancers stating, as their defense that any sign of individuality of the dancers is absent.

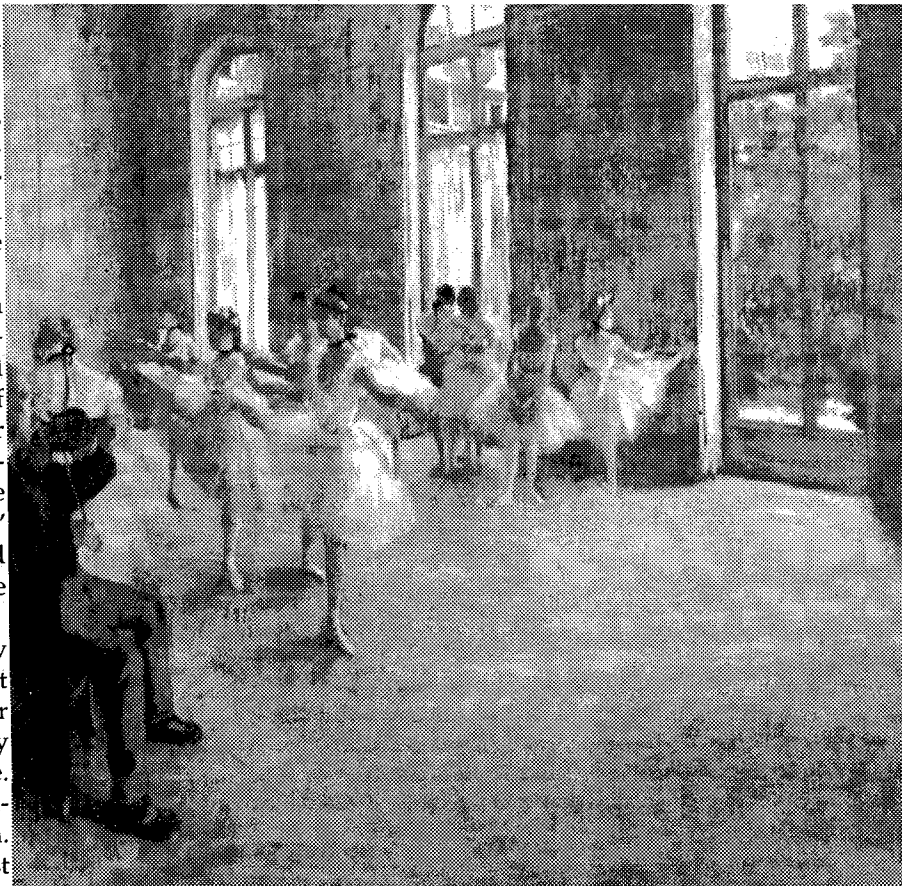
But I couldn't believe Woodward or any critic for that matter, who described Degas as a misogynist and who explained Degas' passion as only infused by the formal aspects of the "dance" and not the individuals rendered in them.

Coincidentally after invitation from a friend, I took a very long trip, a pilgrimage in certain aspects, to view Degas' ballerinas. I wanted to see for myself if any of the works on display

had a sense of objectification or any remote traces of distance or coldness left by the artist on the canvas.

Even if his work came out during Impressionist movement, Degas, at the start of his career, desired to portray his works in a Realistic style. Artists like Rafael, Leonardo DaVinci, Titan and most especially Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, were Degas' greatest influences. What makes Degas' use of the realistic style cunning is to confront the conventions of it.

Did these master painters illustrate works true to life? Or was it more their own perceptions or ideals of it? Ingres in particular, accentuated and elongated the curves and back of a woman's body to enhance her voluptuousness, but this was hardly a realistic depiction.



When having the privilege to meet Ingres, he advised Degas, "Draw lines, young man, many lines, from memory or from nature; it is in this way that you will become a good artist." Degas took those words and never let go. So with his privilege of observing the dance classes at the Opera, Degas made sketches for future paintings.

When first entering the exhibit one can see Degas' sketches and drawings. They give evidence that he held to Ingres' advice with his profuse study of the lines that compose the dancer's body.

And with this, Degas rhythmically represents motion. A leg in a sequence of a dance step or the stretching of a yawning ballerina or one adjusting her stockings are just some of the contorted positions he captures. His sketches are a work of art on their own.

Degas opened an unseen world for the viewers (the ballerinas behind closed doors) by not showing the opulence and elegance seen when the curtains rose on opening night; instead he painted the arduous and strenuous practices that compile their every day lives, the sweat and grit of these fatigued working women.

He was one of the lucky few allowed behind the dance studio doors and Degas took this to his advantage with use of perspective. In many of his paintings there isn't a central focus, but simultaneous action all throughout the piece. He also places objects like wooden columns or a

spiraling staircase in the forefront to obstruct part of the view. Many times he crops figures on the sides of the canvas, and with both of these give the viewer a voyeuristic feel.

One pastel drawing, called A Coryphee Resting, is a perfect example of this. The exhausted dancer depicted here is shown hunched forward with her legs opened, forgetting the proper, rigid stance a dancer is known for.

His early use of pastels, like the one mentioned above, show a hint of color.

In some works, the blue color of a ribbon is reflected over the dancers' white skirts and even crossed over onto the skirt of another, creating a great luminosity. The use of color in his early stages is a foreshadowing of what is to come later on in Degas' development.

Through his works Degas exhibits his mastery with light and shadow, emphasizing the contortions of each stance; illustrating the dancers defined calves and arms; their perfect poses.

Walking deeper into the galleries, the viewers are then shown his proficiency in depth. His 1874 Dance Lesson embodies much of what Degas desired to execute with his works. The scene shows a dance practice in progress. He positions the dancers at an angle, beginning at the forefront moving down to the background, generating great depth. Several dancers poof up their skirts, others look on towards a dancer in mid-step, while others in the background speak to one another.

In most of the artist's works, the dancers hardly ever face the viewer and are unaware of what others around them are doing, as if too engrossed in what they are doing to acknowledge anyone else.

Even with the emphasis on the scenes behind the curtain, there are some paintings showing glimpses of the performances and Orchestra Musicians is one of them. In the background are a group of dancers standing to the left while one performs for the audience. The white and pink of their costumes with the forested scenery create an ethereal atmosphere. However, this is juxtaposed with the backs of three musicians. The dark soberness of these figures barricade the viewer from the dancers and bring the viewer back to reality, reminding them that it is all just a performance.

In the latter years of his life, as mentioned above, Degas began to use color as a subject in itself. By 1899, Degas creates works, which he described as "orgies of color". At the same time, Degas was less interested in detail, but instead in the linear forms that compose the body.

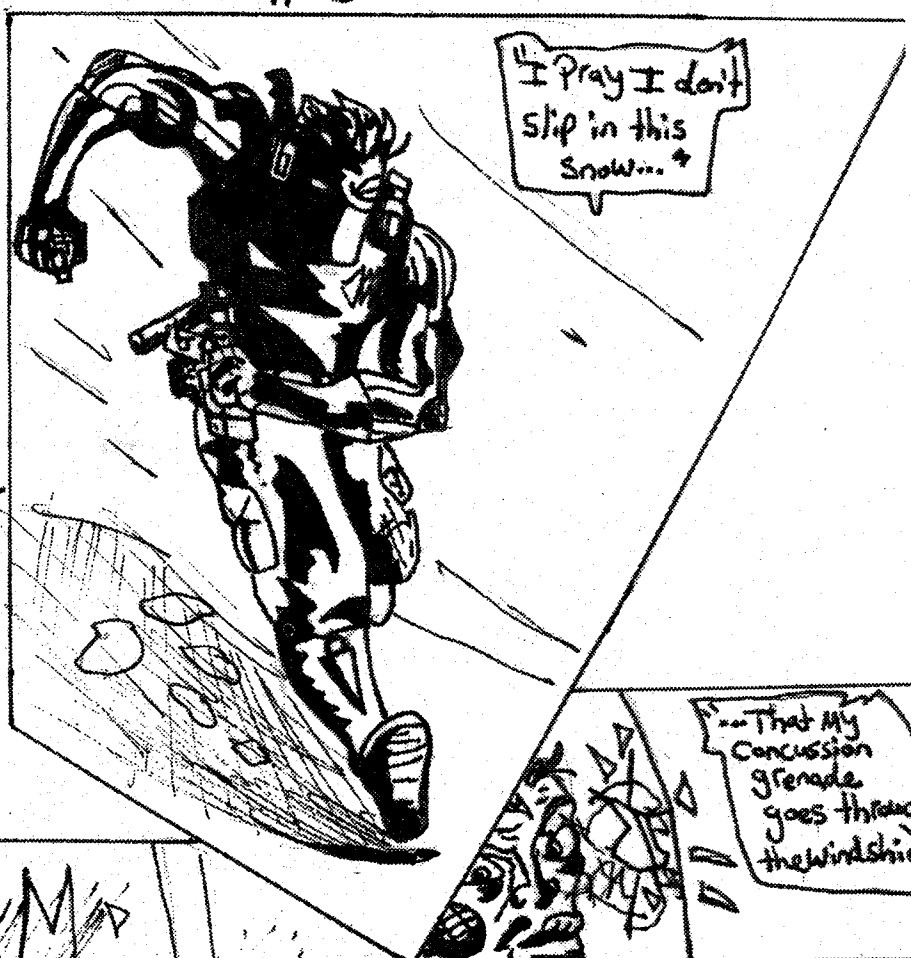
Three Dancers in Yellow Skirts is an example of the transition to color. The vibrant, impacting yellow in the dancers' tutus melt into, and at the same time protrude from, one another.

After exiting the last gallery, it was clear to me that Degas abandoned idealistic images; he did not paint the ballerinas as docile and delicate (as ballerinas were known to be) but instead he painted the struggles of the working class, the struggles of the ballerinas, as they exerted themselves with each difficult step. The way he uses vibrant color, his never-ending study of the female form and finally his choice to use the dancers as a vessel for his ideas proves his passion towards his subject matter and to the Parisian ballerinas.

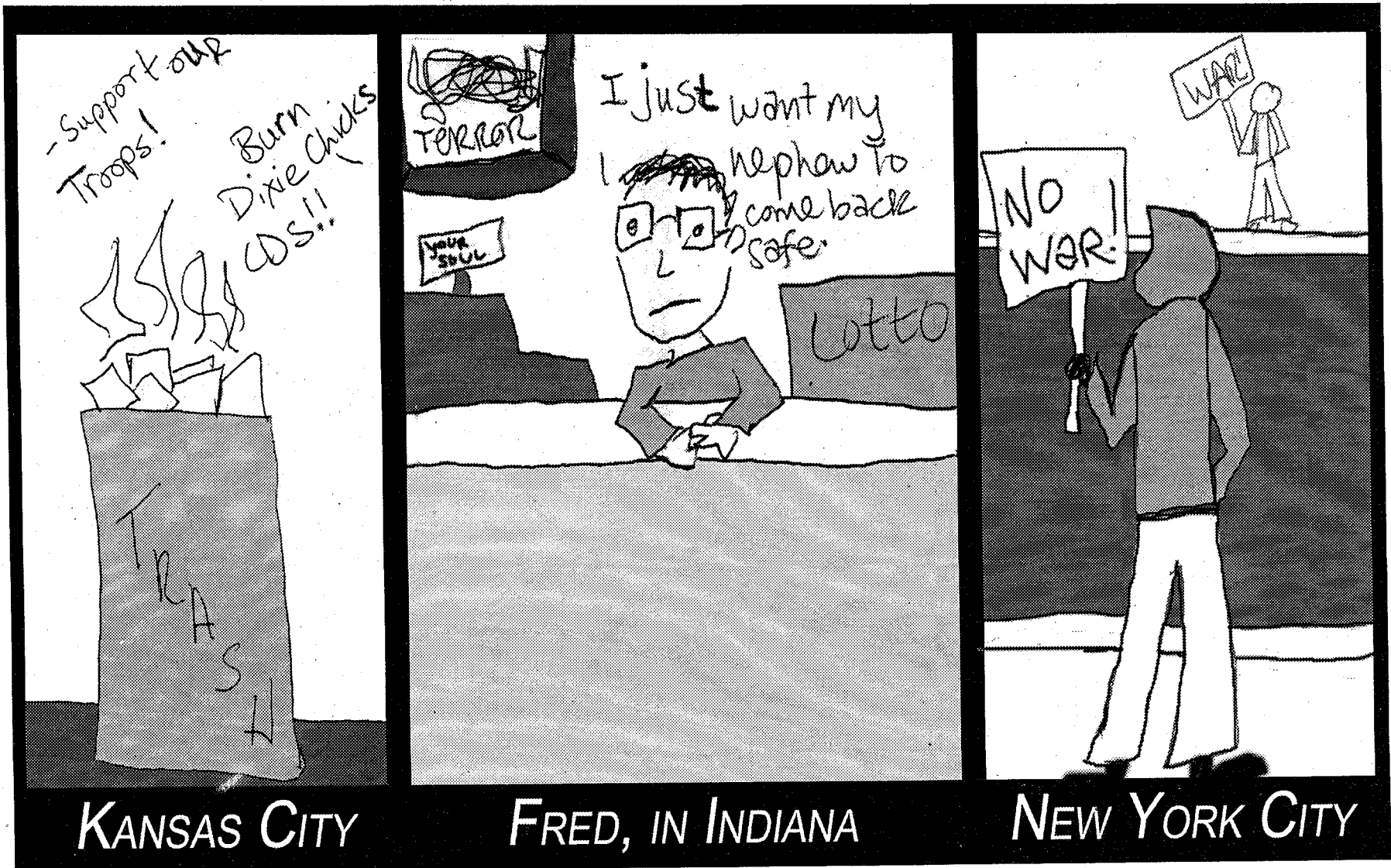
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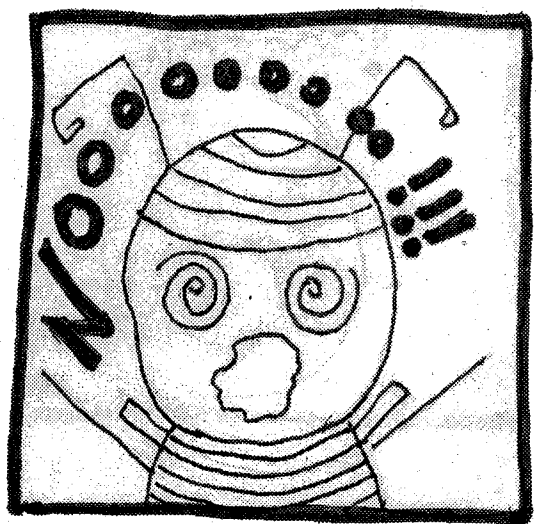
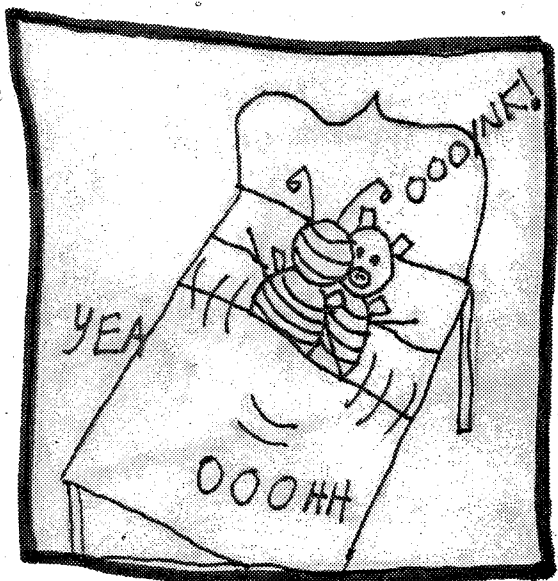
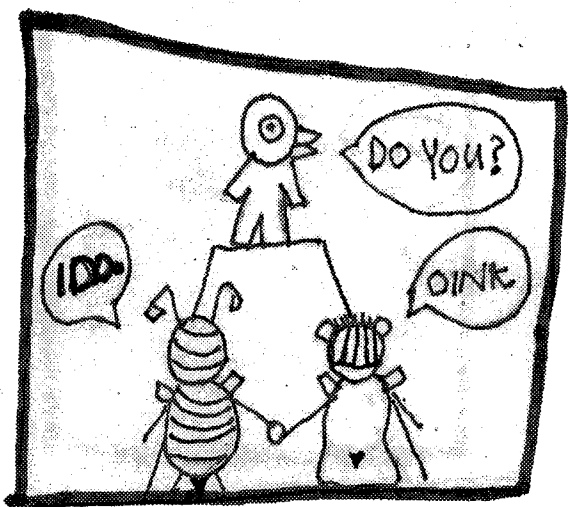
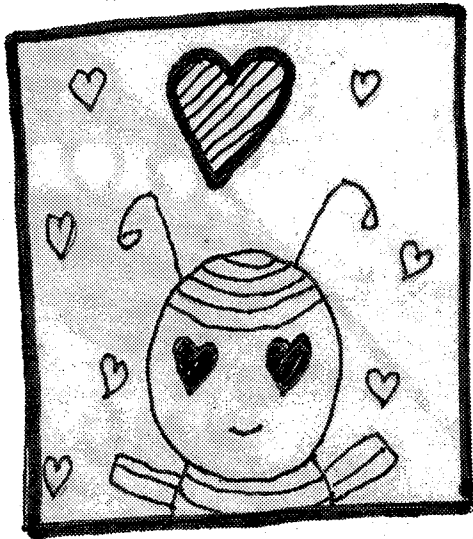
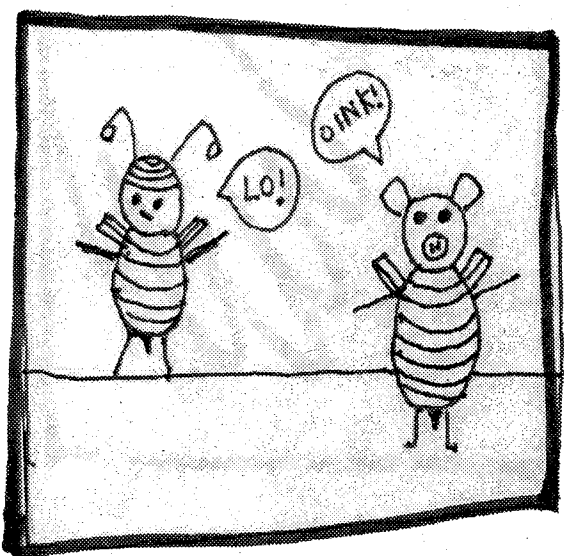
By Peter HAMMARBERG
Dedicated to the Memory of
Kenneth CHAPKA 1943-2003







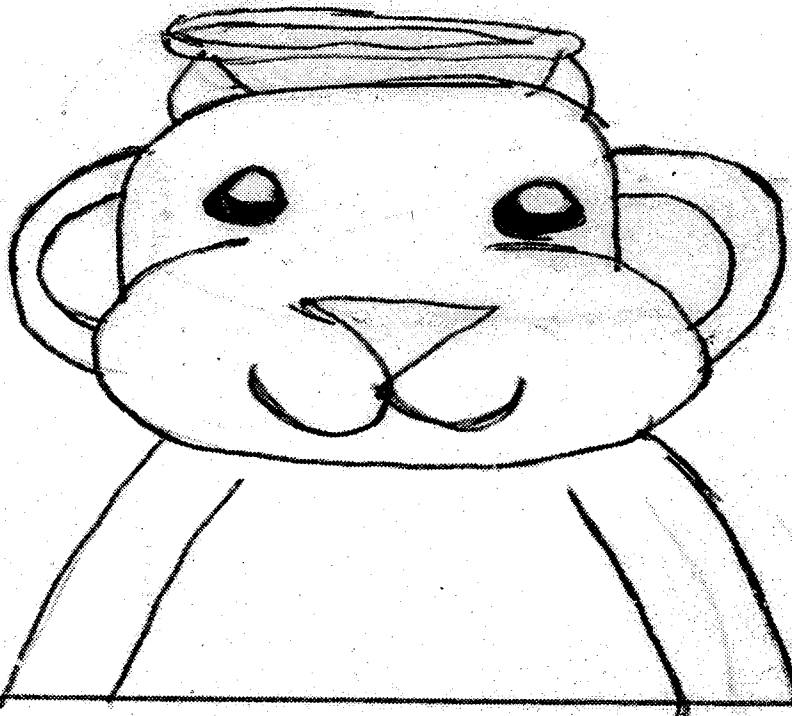
#4 BEE DOGGY + PIGGY BEE & THE OINKING GAME



BY: NINA ZAKHARENKO

MONKEY TALES

I swear these horns are just here to hold up my halo.



Pamela Gradowitz



There were three of us then. Weekly, we'd make a pilgrimage to the mall, in order to acquire useless shit and hit on underage chicks...but that didn't matter then, since we were underage, too. Yet, it was in the mall where it all began...

Aww-yeah! Japanese punk rock!

I hate punk rock.

...but why, Phil? You're not obsessed with the East like me & Darrian, and you aren't that fond of punk...enough to actually buy a CD...

I'm just glad I got this new, big-ass CD rack!

Hey, nice rack!

You, too!

That reminds me...

Maxim? What bullshit...

Of course you do, Krojack - you hate everything. I'm glad we established that for the readers, since this is our first issue and all...anyway, now I just need to pick up some books for class...

And that's where it happened...

Aha! Moby Dick!

Pfft! You said "dick!"

So I did.

I like the articles...

Ugh, that's all that's in the news... stupid freakin' Taliban!

Book club... or evil terrorist front!

You no want... savings?

No.

But how can we be certain?

No, thanks.

Well, perhaps I can interest you in some...

That's actually pronounced TALLY-BAN...

So it is...

Would you like to join special club for extra savings?

RANCID BACTERIA! HA HA HA!

Aargh! <koff> Fall back! We need some Zithol!

That time, we barely escaped...

We realized then that the world was no longer safe...it needed a protector...or, protectors. At that moment, Der Kommisar was born, each of the three taking on the name of a different composer...

John became Amadeus, master of his own ultimate weapon, the PSYCHOSTICK!

Krojack became DeBusse, wielder of the rack & wearer of protective Du Hast goggles and Krojacket

And I became Bach, the unofficial leader, and a walking tank in my Mandolinian Combat Armor!

...and we had discovered a threat that must be stopped!

Woot! Der Kommisar, Issue #1: The Origin is dedicated to John and Mark, the original Der Kommisar, as well as honorary members Frank and Melissa! derkommisar@bobanett.tk is the addy for all your fan letters and, most importantly, hate mail!

NEXT:

Penicillin-pumping action as Der Kommisar battles Captain Bacterium in a winner-take-all-fracas!

Cliche, huh?

TOP TEN Battle of the Century

Things We Could Spend War Money On

Galactus

Shirley Strum Kenny

VS

10 Exactly 1 Apple Juice at the Union Deli

9 40's and Hoes

8 War with a country that actually poses a threat to us (Canada anyone?)

7 A Functional Student Government Constitution

6 Expanding the U.S. Empire and beginning an era of neocolonialism...wait...

5 A never ending I-CON Bonanza!

4 Statesman editors' "Retention Fees"

3 An arsenal of brand-new, really hurtful mom jokes

2 hi qualitey edukasion

1 SOMETHING IMPORTANT

PRO

- Mastermind behind the demise of Ego, The Living Planet
- Bestows the power Cosmic like it's going out of style
- Silver surfer will always hate the Devourer of Worlds but, alas, will remain a lackey till the end of his days
- Planets don't sass or write snide articles
- Hasn't procreated in 4 millennia
- Would dedicate a week to his own self-esteem, but Galactus is bigger than that

- Mastermind behind Lobster Boy
- Bestows the Power Academic like it's going out of style
- Fred Preston will always hate the student government but, alas, will remain a lackey till the end of his days
- Weak Wonk Shabba-Doo!
- Hasn't procreated in 4 millennia
- Reppin' the LBC
- Punk-as-fuck

CON

- Drops a deuce comparable to a binary star system
- Ladies are intimidated by his huge... uh... smile
- Eats planets
- Beats his wife
- Don't take shit from NOBODY!
- Thanks to the internet, there's no future for incorporated planet-eating

- Whatever you can think of that sucks about SBU is probably her fault somehow
- Ladies are intimidated by her huge... uh... university
- Eats wallets
- Survives on student apathy
- Don't take shit from NOBODY!
- Would probably shoot down "Maury Hirschorn Week" in a second

An Interview With Sean Chen, A Marvelous Artist

By Adam Schlagman

"Sean Chen has been drawing comics professionally for nearly a decade. He began his career at Valiant Comics where, for four years, he drew titles such as 'Rai' and the 'Future Force,' 'Harbinger,' 'Bloodshot' and finally 'X-O Manowar.'"

"Sean became known for his hyper detailed style, superior draftmanship and clear storytelling. After a brief stint at DC Comics he landed his big break with what would probably be the title he is most identified with, 'Iron Man.' As part of their 'Heroes Return' relaunch, Sean, along with writer Kurt Busiek began a memorable 3 year run beginning with issue #1 vol. 3 a few years later he began a 2 year run on the ultra popular wolverine series beginning with #159. Sean is currently the artist on 'Elektra,' which will debut in May. (ICON 22 Booklet)"

Q) How did you get started in the comic book business?

A) First I created a portfolio in which I kept it updated by putting in my newer work and taking out my older work as I improved my art. I attended the San Diego comic book convention and I showed my portfolio to Barry Windsor-Smith, who was the head of Valiant Comics at the time. Thanks to him, I was able to work on various Valiant titles.

Q) Did you want to be an artist your whole life?

A) Yes.

Q) So did you go to art school?

A) Yes, I attended Carnagay Mellon University and I was an Industrial Design Major. I also took drawing classes on the side.

Q) What are some writers that you would like to work with?

A) I would love to work with Alan Moore someday and Kevin Smith.

Q) If you could draw any book, what would it be?

A) Probably a team book, maybe something like the X-Men.

Q) How long does it take you to draw a book?

A) A whole month, so I am only able to work on one book at a time.

Q) How do you go about handing in your artwork?

A) I hand my work into Marvel once a week in person just to show my face, so that I get more offers.

Q) Are there any artists that you really admire?

A) Barry Windsor-Smith, he's been my mentor.

Q) What is your favorite drawing that you have ever done?

A) Probably the first Wolverine cover I did in issue #159.

Q) What kind of character do you like to draw?

A) Characters in costume, because they are much easier to draw. Unfortunately Wolverine almost never wears his costume in the comic anymore.

Q) What did you work on before drawing Iron Man for Marvel and after working at

Valiant Comics?

A) I worked for DC Comics on a Superman Annual and a couple mini-series there.

Q) What was it like switching to Wolverine from Iron Man?

A) It was a huge change because Iron Man is a high tech book, while Wolverine is a very grimy book, but I had to prove that I could draw that type of book.

Q) How do you prepare for drawing a new book, like Elektra?

A) I had to do a lot of research on the character and her background by reading her comics.

Q) So you read all of the Frank Miller stuff?

A) Of course.

Q) Did you enjoy the Daredevil movie?

A) I liked it in general because it is tough to tell such a complicated story in such a short amount of time.

Q) So do you get to see Marvel movies like X-Men 2 before they come out?

A) Not that early, usually around a week before.

There is a showing for the whole staff.

I'd just like to thank Sean Chen for letting me interview him during ICON. So thank you and keep up the amazing work. Your art is fantastic. Now everyone go out there and pick up his Elektra book, which begins in May.



Hey, did you hear about The Press?

The Press? Yeah, I heard about them. Well?

I heard that they only like people with racoons on their backs.

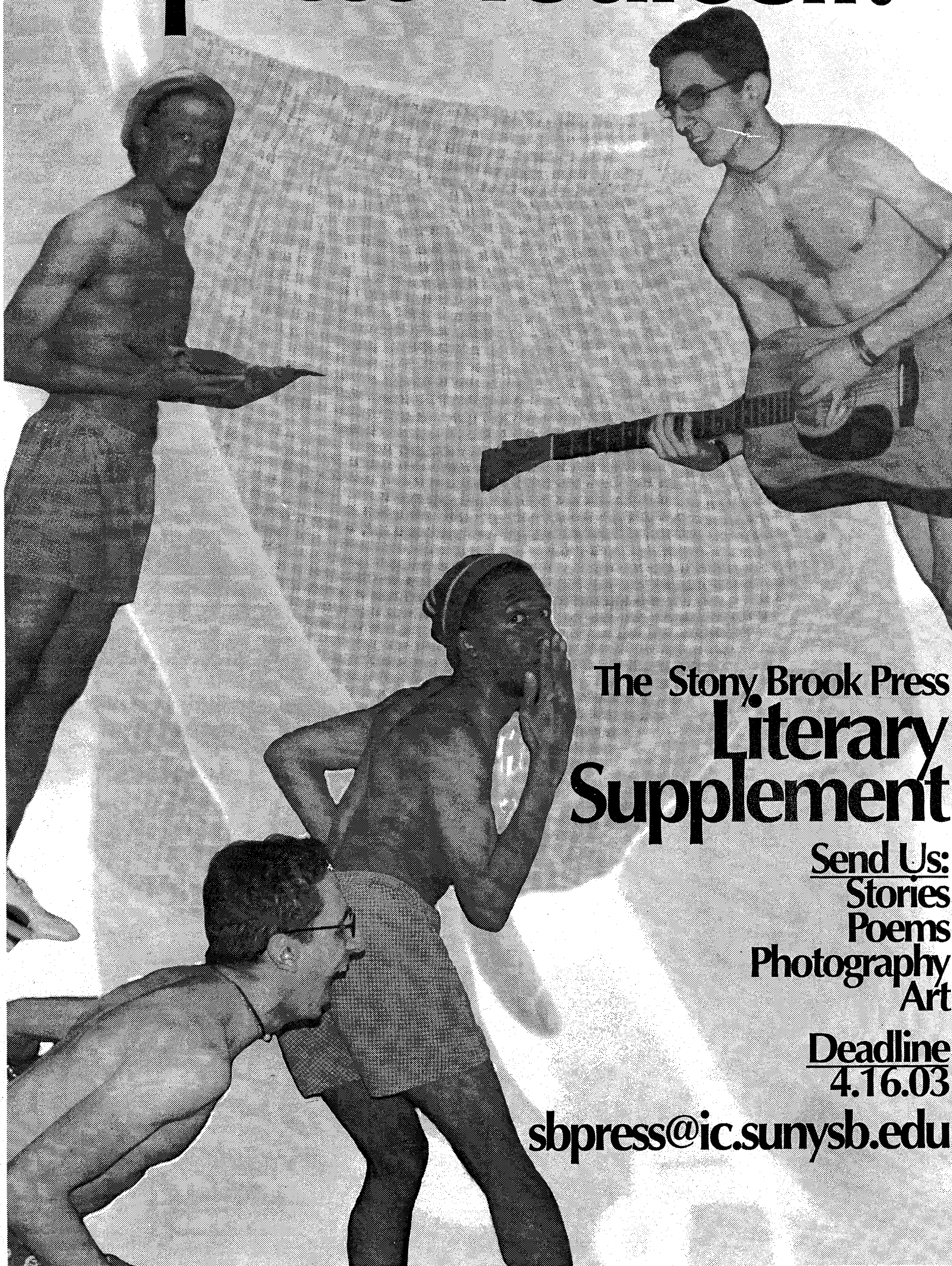
Really?!?

Word yo. Racoons.

Boo-yah baby, I'm in like Errol Flin!

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Opening Day... A Lowdown Dirty SHEAm

By Ralph Sevush

I called in sick and drove to Shea with John, a Cubs fan. Its okay, though, he's from the mid-west, so I don't hold it against him. We were going to meet KC in the parking lot; KC, source of all tickets and king of the tailgaters.

The Grand Central was backed way up, so I took the Van Wyck but missed Exit 12a and ended up taking 12b to Junction Blvd, taking the streets of Queens back to the park, via Roosevelt Ave, under the 7 train. I still got there faster than those poor suckers sitting on the Grand Central. I imagine them now as skeletons, still sitting in their cars, frozen in time. I parked in the lot on Roosevelt across the street from Gate C, by the Tennis stadium. It was \$10 for parking. Ten dollars. They just keep cutting the flesh from your bones, don't they?

We walked around looking for KC's tailgate party, but we were late and they were gone. Headed into the stadium, on this bright, sunny but brisk mid-afternoon. I'm thinking, "Hell, this ain't so bad. I've been colder." I was thinking of the night game in August I saw at Candlestick Park. THAT was sick cold. This? Not so bad.

We go up to our seats: Right behind home (section 2) but rear Mezzanine, so we were under the overhang and there was no sunlight. We stopped for snacks. Get this: \$4.50 for a hot-dog. I kid you not. Four-fucking-fifty. Crackerjacks? \$4.25. Hot chocolate? A little cup of powdered hot cocoa, with NO LID because they ran out, for \$1.75. Yearbook, \$10; scorecard, \$4. With the ticket, the parking, yearbook, scorecard, hot dog, fries and hot chocolate, I'm already in for over \$75 before I've sat down.

The park looks the same, with a new coat of paint. More signage than ever. The field is cut in alternating rays emanating from home plate. Very nice, in a "Better Homes & Gardens" sort of way.

Then, of course, the game starts and my day turns to crap. I'm immediately realizing that Glavine, a control pitcher who relies on "touch", can't feel the ball and thus can't locate at all. We'd better score a lot today.

And, down 4-0 after the first, we come back with two runs against Wood in the 2nd. I'm thinking: "Okay, we can make a game of this."

But we don't. That, it turns out, was it for the hitting. Mikey hit a few shots hard, right on the nose, but to dead center, and Patterson pulled them in. Nobody else did much at all. Oh, yeah: Burny hit a pair of doubles. Big whoop.

Defensively, it was just as I'd feared in the pre-season. Uncle Floyd kicks one around the alley in left-centerfield, allowing guys to race around the bases. Malomar fielded two routine grounders to his right, falls down both times and throws neither hitter out. "Cey Hey" Cedeno? He made a nice diving catch in the early innings. Then, he misplays a deep fly by 40-something feet, turning Bellhorn's out into a 3-run triple.

Well, at least the bullpen sucked too. Strickland added to the depressing walk total. Then, Bascik got his shot... 9 runs, 2 innings. Wow. Could he be mailed to Norfolk in a FedEx box? Lloyd pitched an okay inning, and so did Weathers, but he forgot to cover First Base, causing yet another error.

Speaking of errors, the only thing scarier than Cedeno in center were the two, um, ladies sitting behind us, calling out their sexual attraction for Joe Mac and Mikey in voices like drunken foghorns, high on Rhino-horn powder. I'm sure that the testicles of every male within 30 rows shot up into their respective abdominal cavities every time these Gorgons caterwauled their lustful intentions.

By the seventh, the cold had penetrated our bones like melanoma. It was a killing frost, whipping through us like an angry dominatrix with a cat-o-nine-tails and a mean hangover. The hot chocolate, uncovered, had long since frozen and I was licking it like a popsicle. I went to piss in the fourth, but could scarcely feel my legs, and couldn't find my dick. It was getting dangerous out there, and all we were doing was waiting around to see if Sammy would hit #500. He didn't. He walked. And so did John and I, back to the car.

It was easy getting out of the lot. I thought I'd be smart and take the Grand Central west to the Triboro, and up 87. But, of course, we got stuck in traffic due to construction. NYC construction is much like the Mets... arbitrary slabs of rehabilitation, more for cosmetic purposes than anything else, and generally resulting in worse conditions than when it started.

Final thoughts:

- I'm not worried about Glavine. I think he'll adjust. And this cold can't last forever. Unless we've drifted out of our orbit away from the sun, in which case we've all got bigger problems to worry about.

- The "Cey Hey" kid is proving to be everything I feared. He was my biggest concern going into the season. As my buddies in the I.R.A. say: "FREE TIM O'NIEL and pass the Guinness and C4!"

- I'm still pissed we gave Fonzie's money to Uncle Floyd and his Mets debut did nothing to assuage my dissatisfaction.

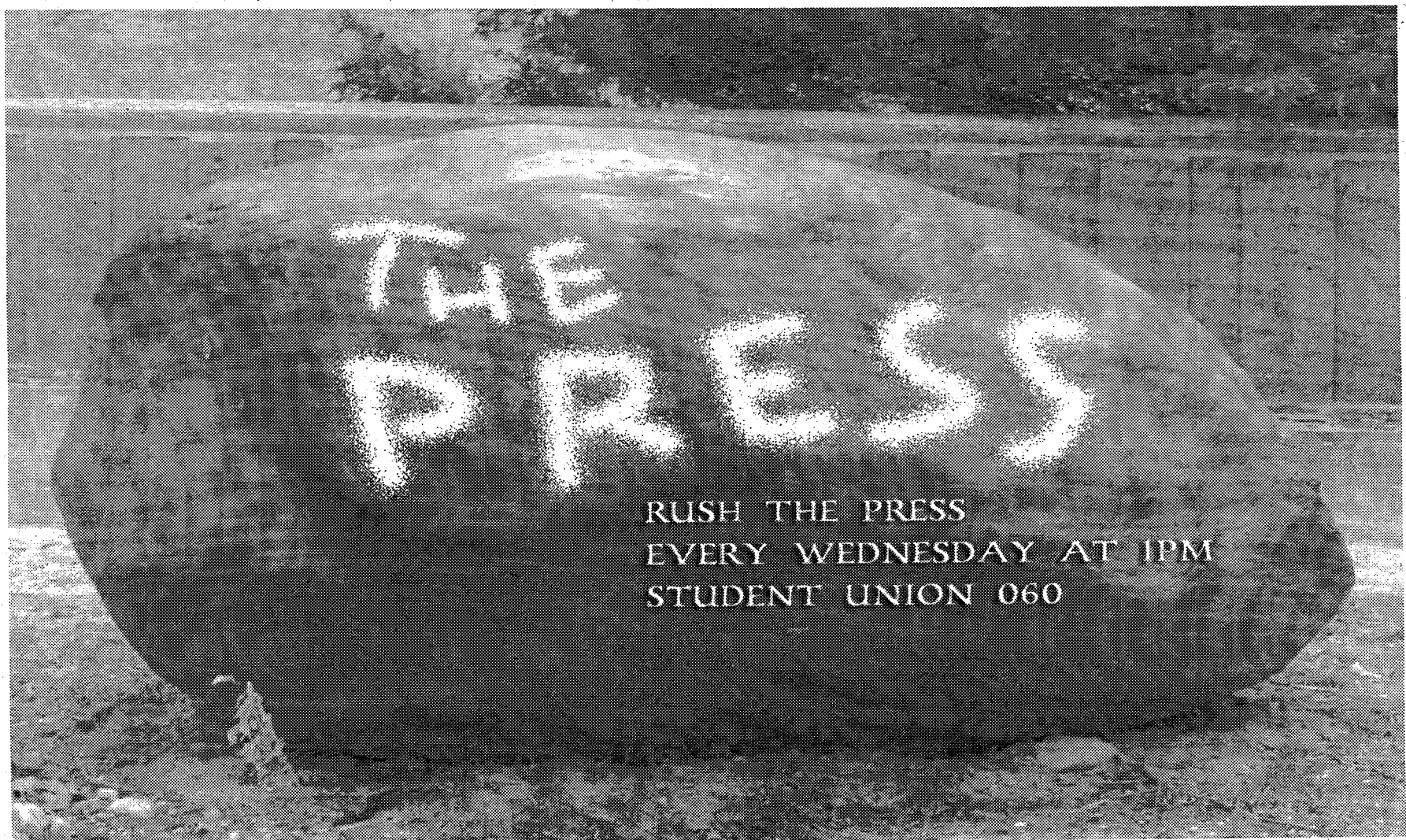
- Vaughn looked pretty good around the bag. I think he'll have an okay year. He may get back his stroke... if he doesn't have one first.

- Burny hit two doubles, but lets not get too excited. He started off pretty good last year, too.

- Malomar looks really fucking old.

- Bascik is only here because Astacio is on the DL, but should that have come as any big surprise? We are short on quality major-league starters. But then again, who isn't? Still, when Cone's arrival is awaited as if he's Doc coming back from rehab, we've got a serious problem on our hands. And Shane Reynolds ain't gonna fix it.

- Art Howe says "he's not going to lose sleep" over this disaster and that "it's early". Well, no shit, Artie. But don't ever say that again or I'll come down there and beat the living crap out of your balding pate with a tire iron. I swear by whatever God you choose, I will do this. I'm not kidding. Okay, I may change my mind later, but that doesn't mean I'm kidding now.



Jane Fangirl... or Jane "Waste-Of-Time"

By Phil "Slim Gatsby" Pipitone

Anyone who went to I-Con on Friday evening probably saw a group of I-Con staffers waving around a poster and plugging the hell out of some event they were calling "Jane Fangirl." Due to all the hype, and for a lack of anything better to do (except maybe go to a seminar on furies...however interesting they may be, though, the people in full costumes kinda weirded me out), your reporter, Phil "Slim Gatsby" Pipitone, decided to attend the event. From what meager information I was able to glean from the hype, it was supposed to be a geeks-win-a-date-with-a-fellow-geekette gimmick. Sounds hilarious, eh? That's what I assumed. But you know what happens when you assume. You look like a fucking idiot.

I attended the event with one of my friends, and we arrived a few minutes after the scheduled start time. However, the event hadn't started, and wouldn't for another ten minutes or so. Apparently, the organizers had neglected a key element: they didn't have a fangirl. Eventually, though, they found an apparently unwilling forumite named Nadia. Absolutely stunning, and I marked her as losing five points for being late. Well, mentally, and it didn't count for anything, since the men, supposedly, were competing for her, and not the

other way around.

It was far from entertaining, though; boring and annoying was more like it. There was still much waiting, as they apparently were still figuring out logistics. It came across that they either didn't know what questions they were going to ask to eliminate contestants, or how they would ask them. They decided, though, to randomly select nine of the dozen or so potential contestants, and then split them into two teams based on their views on the War in Iraq. This was the third strike to me, where I pretty much lost interest and began reading the issues

of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles I had purchased from the dealers room. Politics at I-Con? No, thank you.

What followed was total disorder, disarray, chaos and some more synonyms. The questions asked ranged from the obscure to the cliché, from "Which is better...gas giants or terrestrial planets?" to "which would win a battle, the Enterprise or a Star Destroyer?" The answers from the contestants were just as bizarre. The

latter, for example, had answers ranging from "The Star Destroyer, its a warship, not an envoy of peace!" to "Well, you couldn't have something from one universe encounter something from another universe, because anything will be destroyed when it leaves its own universe." Wondering what the "correct" answer was? "Stars are pretty and shouldn't be destroyed." Oh, and the question regarding the planets? I'm not sure, but I think it was "purple."

At some point, everyone just started talking randomly, yelling things out to Jane Fangirl, interrupting one another, etc. I suggested that someone bring some order to it and that people talk in turn. In response, I was scolded by Nadia and accused of just being annoyed by one thing or another (she was kind of drowned out by the constant outbursts of the contestants).

Then, the people in anthropomorphic animal suits didn't look so bad after all. My friend and I were mulling over walking out when a group for another event came in and told the Jane Fangirl crew that their event was scheduled just then, and that the Fangirl stuff had to leave. So, the event was cut short (thank the maker), and Jane picked four contestants to move on to round two, where Jane would determine their Saturday I-Con schedules.

I didn't follow up on the results of the Jane Fangirl contest. It was something that sounded cool and had real potential to be a fun, funny event, but it definitely needs some work. Pre-planning, better scheduling, and a better attitude by the people involved. I'll give it a shot at next years I-Con, if they run it again. Hopefully, the event will be organized and will be run better on its second try.



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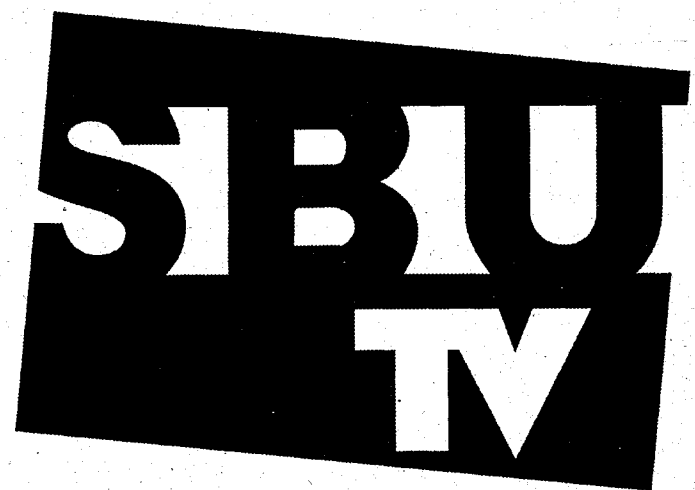
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Revenge of the Very Sluggy Interview

By Andrew Pernick

Picking up where last year's I-CON issue left off, the Press met with web-cartoonist Pete Abrams, creator of the immensely popular "Sluggy Freelance". Since this daily comic (www.sluggy.com), which receives over one million page-views per month, is constantly evolving, the Press had no problem coming up with a new list of questions for what is fast-becoming a Stony Brook Press tradition, the Very Sluggy Interview! Not only did the Press get the chance to bask in the "Lite-Brite"-induced glow of his awesomeness, Pete, but we even got to experience Pete ripping on his Goats.com friends/rivals Jon Rosenberg and Philip Karlsson! Like last year's interview, this one requires the same warning: The following interview may contain potential spoilers.

Stony Brook Press: Since most horror movies have more than one sequel, is there a "Kitten 3" in the works?

Pete Abrams: As long as it's profitable...um...of course I'm not in it for the money, we might be outsourcing the third [Kitten movie parody]... no comment.

SBP: Is HeretiCorp dead or are they marshalling their forces for a massive revenge campaign against Riff, Torg and company?

PA: Well, you know that the head of Hereti Corp, which is still alive and kicking, isn't going to be satisfied cooking fries for the rest of his days so you can be sure something is in the works, [but] as to how well it will go or how long it will take, that's not known at this point.

SBP: And what about where or when we'll see Oasis again?

PA: The next chapter in the Oasis story? I can't really pinpoint when that's going to occur, I've got to get through some other stories first. It used to be I'd plan out stories and know how long they'd last. It's hard to say because the stories are taking so much more time now to tell. But it's on the board so I know it's going to be happening, but I don't know when I'll be getting to it.

SBP: We keep being taunted by the name of the strip, even to the point of having [colorist] Joe "Sunday" finish explaining it to [Sluggy staffer] Trillian as the first line of a filler strip! Where does the name "Sluggy" come from?

PA: Well, actually the name...oh wow! Look at the time! I gotta get back. My publisher's expecting me for a very important meeting. Anyway, the interview's been a pleasure.

SBP: I'll take that as a "no comment." Will there be a return to Hogglerynth [in Sluggy Freelance's "Harry Potter" parody]?

PA: It's definitely in the works. A lot of people absolutely loved it and some absolutely hated it but I had far too much fun with it. I'll just try to keep them short and sweet and to the point.

SBP: The Flash trailer for "Torg Potter" was a great departure from Sluggy-norm. Any plans on doing something like it in the near future? Possibly for this summer's parodies?

PA: I actually got Flash because I had been animating the Sluggy anniversary strips. They had all been black and white so animated gifs would do the job. When I looked at the calendar and saw that the five year anniversary was on a Sunday, I realized I really should try to do animation in color. I

loved playing with Flash so I saw [the anniversary] as an excuse to buy Flash. Then I wanted to do even more with Flash so when it came time to do the parody, it ended on a Sunday which left me with lots of days open so I saw that as another opportunity to have fun with Flash. So, any chance I can to have fun with Flash I will.

SBP: And will we ever meet the real Torg Potter?

PA: I can't say that right now; I haven't read the next [J.K. Rowling] book.

SBP: And what about learning [main character] Torg's real, full name?

PA: We've never really learned the last names of any of the main characters. It's kind of become almost like a rule that I wouldn't reveal that kind of thing. But I guess there's nothing really holding me to that so it's not a big secret. It's not like his last name is going to be Streisand or something. Wait. Actually, that would be kind of funny. I don't know if or when. I'm not totally opposed to it but it's generally against the rules at this point.

SBP: "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" is ending this May after seven seasons. Will you be bringing back Muffin and her vampire-baking crew in honor of the real show?

It would be a great way to bring [Sluggy vampire] Sam Sein back into the action...

PA: Sam will be coming back sooner than you think. I don't know if I'm allowed to do another Buffy parody because of parody laws. It's not a bad idea; I just don't know if I can do a full-fledged parody.

SBP: How did the idea for the "Meanwhile in the Dimension of Pain" Saturdays start and is it considered canon Sluggy?

PA: "Meanwhile in the Dimension of Pain" came about because I kept finding myself being buried more and more under the workload and whenever I'd try to work ahead I'd always get bottlenecked on the Sundays because the full-color Sundays would take extra days. By freeing myself up on Saturday I thought it would give me a little more time and refresh me a little bit more an help me get around the bottleneck. It's worked fantastically; I feel that I've been on my game for the general strip a lot better than I've been in months and I no longer feel the stress and the pressure every single weekend. I'm very, very happy with the decision to take the break. As far as whether it's Sluggy canon: it is because I go over every strip with Ian [McDonald] and make sure that everything is moving in the direction that I want. A lot of people think it feels different from regular Sluggy but that's mainly because of Ian's style of telling a story differs from mine and that's more of what they're picking up. But everything's been approved and I've been writing a lot of it.

SBP: Where did the whole Burt "My whole world is a crotch" joke start? Is this a parody or some obscure reference or is it just one of those randomly weird-yet-humorous things we should accept as normal for the Sluggy universe?

PA: Actually, many years ago my accountant, whose name is Burt, was telling me a story about an artist who painted a picture of a crotch. I asked him what he thought of it and he said "Well, it's a crotch!" And he asked to be put in the strip and I told him I knew exactly what I was going to do and I took advantage of Burt not to make fun of but to point out a lot of the more vibrant and intense personalities I met at my state college days in the Fine Art department. His story, matched with those memories, combined to form that creature we know of as Burt.

SBP: Gwynn can't see without her glasses but she can see the ghosts in the house. If the real world is blurry to her, shouldn't the spiritual world be even more so?

PA: Well, a lot of people say Sluggy gets wordy at times but I have to cross so many T's and dot so many I's. The fact that she can blurrily make out people means even blurry ghosts she can make out as blurry-dash-blurry but she can still see them so she still knows when there's something going on over here. And she can feel the cold spot and she's not BLIND blind she's just not seeing too well.

SBP: And Gwynn's role in the [at present ongoing] "Kesandru's Well" storyline isn't as active as her role has been in the past. In most ghost or occult tales, even those from Hollywood, the witch character plays a far more aggressive role in saving the day. Considering Gwynn's magical abilities, shouldn't she be doing more than just library work?

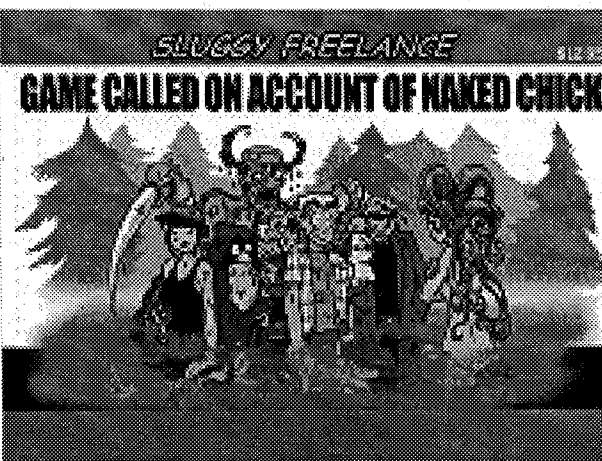
PA: Well, the story is going to change a lot within less than seven days from now so you'll probably see her more in action at that point in time.

SBP: Given the pace of the comic, isn't [metamorphic alien-secretary] Aylee due for another form change?

PA: You would think that she would have changed by now after being in cryogenic freeze for so long so there is something wrong. But it's not me being lazy! You're going to find out about that in another story.

SBP: And where did the idea for Aylee's metamorphoses come from?

PA: What happened was that Aylee was originally scripted as a one-shot character for the Sci-Fi adventure back in the first month of the strip. At the end of it I set things up with the alien coming back to their [Riff and Torg's] dimension so by the end of that story I decided I wanted to bring Aylee back at some point in time as an interesting character. And then having her become Torg's secretary, I just loved the whole concept of her trying to fit into this world and get along. What happened, though, was my first book got published and Aylee was going to be showing up in the second book and my publisher said that I might be infringing copyright laws because Aylee looked too much like the [H.R.] Geiger alien. So I either had to lose her as a char-



Continued on page 20

Revenge of the Very Sluggy Interview

Continued from page 19

acter or do something to keep her and that's when I used the changed form idea to keep her around. It's turned out to be such a fertile area for new stories and development and growth and I'm very glad I did [the form change ideas].

SBP: There appears to be a rivalry between you and Goats.com's Jonathan Rosenberg and Philip Karlsson. Last year there was even the Jello Cage Match via a box of Lime Jello in a coffee can. Where does this animosity come from or is this just an act?

PA: I don't have any animosity for them whatsoever so I don't know where this has come from so...what did they do again?

SBP: Remember the Jello Cage Match last year?

PA: Oh, they do Jello Cage Matches for a living? I wasn't present for that.

SBP: You signed the Jello box...

PA: Yes, but I wasn't involved in any wrestling so I guess they must have done the wrestling. Who are these people again?

SBP: Nevermind. What has changed behind-the-scenes of Sluggy Freelance since last year?

PA: So much is changing on a fluid basis in Sluggy. We got "Meanwhile in the Dimension of Pain." I guess most of the changes happened after the new year when I said that I would be taking Saturdays off and be taking more time off. I still love doing it [the comic]. I'm amazed I've been able to do it for five years and I think definitely taking Saturdays off and taking more vacation time will allow me to keep doing it since I've got a lot more stories to tell and they're stuff I'm really excited about.

SBP: Has there been any progress in printing or rerunning the "Fire and Rain" story with the [originally embedded song] lyrics?

PA: My publisher has looked into it and it looks like it's going to be a "no deal" because it's not like I'm big enough that the record companies would say "Hey, you're pretty big; let's cut a deal and you could promote our songs and we won't sue you or we won't charge you an arm and a leg." As it is, we're just like any schmuck off the street and they just say "To even talk about it, it's going to cost you a minimum of X hundred dollars and then there's going to be this fee and that fee before we can even discuss deals because we don't even have to talk to you." What I'm hoping to do before the book is released is to do something better than to simply strip the lyrics out. I'm not sure what, though. Don't be expecting to see lyrics there. I'm sad because the lyrics made the story so much better. It's not like I'm stealing money out of the record companies; I was just doing a story and it was really cool! Neil Gaiman even said he read it!

SBP: What do you see as the future of the web-comic industry?

PA: Ah! I don't know! The entire time I've been doing it, people have been trying to guess where it [the industry] is going to go, how people can make a living at it, and what's the best business model for web-comics in general to work. I've just been doing what I've been doing so I don't really have a business model; I just do what makes sense because that's been working so far. I would have thought that web-comics would have hit bigger by now than it has but I'm just one of many people who guessed wrong and we're just waiting to see where it's going to go. I'll be here, though.

SBP: Are there any crossovers with other web-comics in the works?

PA: I don't think so because it's very difficult for me to participate in a crossover because of my schedule; most other, normal, human beings work ahead of time. Most web-cartoonists have work weeks or months ahead of time but I'm basically

drawing the comic for the next day that day almost every single day of my life so it makes it tough to coordinate. The one crossover I did with J.J.D. "Illiad" Fraizer's] UserFriendly was easy: I sent him one of my characters and I took one of his and we just did what we wanted to do with them for a week. That's what made that crossover work. I'm not opposed to the idea of it, it just seems almost impossible to organize it.

SBP: What do you think of this year's I-CON compared to last year? And what do you think of this year's I-CON overall?

PA: No Hobbit Dude! He was cool! We need more Hobbits, definitely. Definitely more Hobbits. What else? More people from LEXX! I like that show. Overall? I think this Con's great. My one complaint is that I don't like Con's on college campuses because there's never any parking unless you're in the Rocky Horror troupe; they'll send out the van to pick YOU up, but NO! No matter how big you are, you can't find parking, you can't find directions! Outside of that general plague, which every Con on a college campus suffers from, I really like I-CON.

SBP: And how much of I-CON do you get to see and participate in?

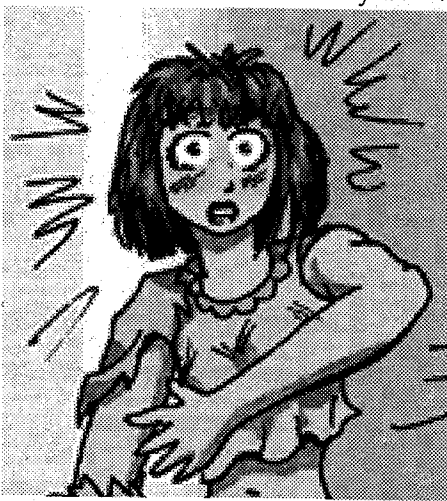
PA: This year I was able to check out some of it yesterday and I'll be spending most of the day Sunday just browsing the shops and seeing what's going on. I even got the chance to play a single game of HeroClix here so this year's a lot different from last year in that I'm actually going to be able to experience a lot of the Con. I'm looking forward to that.

SBP: Is there anything else you would like to add?

PA: I'm having too much fun at I-CON to think of anything witty! What was that about the Jello and the Goat-Man? You mean that guy from Saturday Night Live? Nevermind, then, I have nothing else to add.

SBP: Alright, then. Thank you.

PA: You're welcome.



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Define the truth with us.

-Is shaving your head and beard punishment enough for treason?

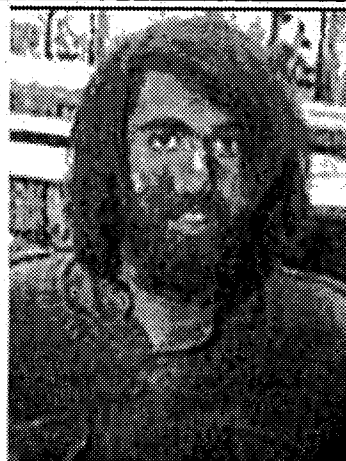
-Why did the Taliban buy up 30% of the world's pretzel stocks on January 1st?

-How did Pat Buchanan's book *Death of the West* end up amongst the flyers dropped on Afganistan?

-Which one of the girls in Hanson did I have sex with?

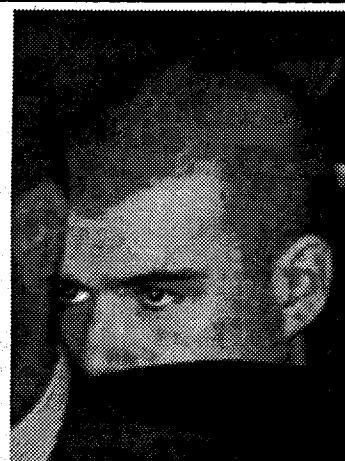
-The Shirley Strun Kenny-Enron connection (c'mon, you know there has to be one).

-Where do we go? where do we go now, Sweet Child, Sweet Child, Sweet Chieeieild of mine?



John Walker Lindh, Staff Writer. Come join him in our cold and wet basement room. Follow the stench of the corpses to room 060, basement of the Union.

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I-CON Believe It, Can You?

By Scott Perl

Here we are again, another year another I-CON festival. How can I-CON be described? There are so many ways that people view I-CON. People that are not interested in science fiction or aspects of sci-fi probably seem to steer clear of the offerings of this event. It is unique, though, to see groups of people dressed up as their favorite sci-fi character, or to watch marathons of old sci-fi shows that have long since left the screens of our idiot boxes, but I feel that I-CON can also be described as a sort of "family reunion" based upon the memories and thoughts of past science fiction shows, movies, and events.

Although some parts of I-CON can be viewed as very excessive, in the end it's all in good fun. I am reminded of last year's I-CON when a friend of mine and I were followed by a duo of "ninja's" wearing facemasks and black garb. Once again, all part of the fun and games that I-CON has to offer.

One has to ask, and I'm sure many have, when and how was I-CON started. Well I being one of those curious people looked into it. The outcome of my search was less than I expected but it was a start. Upon asking several vendors, I-CON staff, and searching numerous web sites for a history of I-CON, this is what I was told: (Story A) The Island Convention (I-CON) was originally called MUD-CON, and that it was started by Stony Brook students because they felt that the lack of activities

was overwhelming. (Story B) I-CON was started by the original members of Stony Brook's science fiction forum. (Story C) I-CON at Stony Brook University is actually one branch of I-CON conventions across several colleges and universities in the United States.

The last story I decided to pursue further. And it seems that it has some truth to it. After an hour of searching the internet and speaking to the leadership of Stony Brook's I-CON, I found I-CON conventions and groups that manage and fund these conventions throughout the United States including, the University of Iowa, the Mindbridge Foundation, The Science Fiction League of Iowa Students (SFLIS), DEMICON in Des Moines, The Science Fiction Association of Bergen County, New Jersey, Albacon (Albany Science Fiction Convention), WorldCon, PhilCon (Philadelphia's version of I-CON), ShoreCon (convention on the Jersey Shore), just to name a few.

These conventions also attract the actors and actresses that played the roles of the shows and films that are at the heart of these "CON's." They have long been a huge part of the conventions in part due to the characters that they have presented to the viewers.

Another unique part of every I-CON festival is its games, events and films. Everything from sword duels to discussion groups on favorite sci-fi, fantasy, and role-playing games to anime voice



over challenges can be found all across campus during this one of a kind weekend held every spring here at Stony Brook University.

Ask Amberly Jane

A Column by Amberly Jane

It's been a strange week. The weather couldn't seem to make up its mind. And Jesus, ICON brought thousands of sun-deprived virgins with pale green monitor glow, all engulfing Stony Brook, clutching swords and comic books and Jenna Jameson XXX action figures, trying to stave off joystick withdrawal and get their original 1977 plexiglass R2-D2 helmets signed.

I met Voltaire, director, animator and self-described "Goth community funny-man." From what I hear Voltaire is a perennial favorite, and he has one of those maudlin dense beards that poke out three inches past his nose. He told me about some new kind of sex he had discovered with his girlfriend.

"Up until recently, I thought there was only great sex, hate sex, and terrible sex," he said, wringing his hands. "But last night we discovered terror sex. Scaring the living shit out of my girlfriend while I am having sex with her." His girlfriend, sitting next to him at the time, smiled at me, limply nodded, and continued to sit there looking pretty.

The rest of ICON was simply a blur. I met Julian Glover; he asked if I wanted his autograph. I said, "No, do you want mine?" And let's not forget Centaur the Scapegoat and the 40-year-old, certifiably obsessed men who make fuzzy mascot uniforms - and have wandering paws, I might add. And spring break was a blur, too. Strip clubs, lap dances, Niagara Falls and an alien encounter.

Right now it's early in the a.m. and I'm feeling kinda stewed. And the drug that fills my system puts me in a reckless mood. I want to drink a little rum and have a lot of sex. Doing everything the opposite that dear old Dad expects.

Pornography was a recurring topic this week. There was Demon Porn at ICON, and an entire sociology class of mine devoted to the tawdry topic. Opening the mail bag, I discovered that some Stony soul found her boyfriend in a precarious position as well.

Q: Dear Amberly Jane,

Last week, I walked into my boyfriend's room and caught him masturbating over the porn in Hustler. He tried to explain it, but now I just feel undesirable. Does this mean I'm not enough for him?

Signed - "Unhappy in H Quad"

A: Dear "Unhappy,"

God no. First of all, I'm convinced that if they could, men would keep one hand on their penis at all times. So flogging the bishop is almost a natural extension of self - even in relationships with available poon.

I wouldn't worry about your desirability, most guys see masturbation as a supplement to sex, not a replacement for it. It's a harmless way of satisfying an urge. Think of it this way. A home cooked meal is nice. Wholesome. Good for you. But after eating at my Uncle Marty's for two solid weeks, all I really wanted was a Whopper and fries. I didn't love my uncle's cooking any less, I just wanted some quick, clandestine variety.

But I have a better idea for you. This is crazy. Are you ready? The next time you enter his room without knocking, why don't you ... help him! Get in on the action. Strip for him. Watch porn with him. Porn is so good. I myself have a nicely diverse collection. And Hustler's not so bad. I read it for the articles.

Q: Dear Amberly Jane,

What happens when you love the person you are with but you need to leave them?

Signed - Paul

A: Dear Paul,

Man, this is a heavy one. Well, I don't think there's any possible way to avoid heartbreak and sorrow. Sometimes, for whatever reason, you can love someone but also realize that you just can't be with them. I used to think that love conquers all, that you can get over any hurdle in a relationship, any obstacle, and be reunited as one. But these days I'm not so naive.

I guess it all comes down to how much you're willing to sacrifice. Happiness? Passion? Your side of the bed? Everyone must have a line that doesn't shift - otherwise in the end you've got no one to blame for your unhappiness but yourself.

I say cut your losses and part as friends.

Q: Dear Amberly Jane,

Should I buy a dildo for my girlfriend for her birthday? Do girls appreciate that sort of thing?

Signed "A Man with a Plan"

A: Dear "Man,"

Some girls definitely appreciate that sort of thing, but I think we are surely the minority. Assuming that your girlfriend wants to spice up her sex life with toys, picking out the appropriate dildo or vibrator can be a very personal experience. You don't know if she wants rotating beads at the tip, a giant tongue, a vibrating egg, or a dildo made for dual exploration. Not to mention strap-ons, the selection of Cyberskin or latex, and the eternal choice of one shaped like a real penis or a simple silver bullet. There are thousands of choices. And size is important: no horse cocks for beginners.

Why don't you ask her to come with you to your local sex retailer? Not only would it be a beautiful bonding experience, but if she refuses, that's a good indication to just go with perfume for the birthday girl.

However, if surprise is your sole intent, then there is a really cool toy I recommend, a stimulator with a remote control. These are almost too much fun. Have your girlfriend slip it in, and fun is sure to ensue. Some even have ranges of 20 feet. Trust me, there's no better way to stand on line at the bank.

One Nation Under Oil

By Emily Gustafson

In this world of pacifists and activists, I decided to be an activist and voice my opinion. I wish to express my discontentment with this war. And I know that many people mirror my sentiments, while others may think me to be "unpatriotic" for not supporting my country and its armed forces. It is not as though I do not support the troops in this war. These are the people I hold in the highest regard, because they entered into a contract under false pretenses. Most soldiers know not what they are getting themselves into, most being fresh out of high school, all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, thinking boot camp will be an equivalent to high school football practice. It is an irony that old men start wars and young men die in them. Soldiers in the U.S. are promised money for their services. Many of Saddam's soldiers are in his service mainly for money and the protection of their families. Does anyone else see the similarities between Iraq's methods of recruitment and those of the U.S.A.?

The government has fed its soldiers the same propaganda that it has fed its people and the world. Contrary to what the government and its puppet-press have force-fed its people, this war is not righteous nor democratic, but rather it is about money, oil and the control of both. This war is a continuation of the neo-Imperialistic foreign policy the government has adopted since post-September 11th. Bush is relating this war to September 11th, when it has very little to do with the war in Iraq.

September 11th happened because of an extremist group run by Osama bin Laden, who the American government financially supported in the 1980's. And I should also mention that the Reagan and Bush Sr. administrations also approved financial loans and sales of weapons to Saddam during our war against Communism.

Follow me for a minute: The Bush family made their money from oil. Bush Jr. wanted to destroy the Arctic and drill for oil there. When he made his argument for "foreign oil independence", he forgot to mention that millions of dollars spent on equipment, supplies, and everything else necessary for drilling would produce only 6 months worth of oil, and would not enter our oil inventory for about 10 years. Once the American people refused to let him destroy the environment, which he is so hell bent on doing, he creates a war and continues the "family vendetta." And in the process feeds the American people, and the rest of the world, this propaganda about democracy and "Iraqi freedom." More like "Iraqi oil."

The problem with oil is not the location of it, nor the abundance of it, but rather the way it is consumed and the fact that Americans consume too much of it (and, frankly, consume too much of everything). America is only 5% of the world's population and yet it consumes 25% of the world's resources. The growing trend of SUVs is propagating our dependence upon oil. Our government subsidizes gas, oil and coal, so unlike European cit-

izens who pay almost four times what we pay for gas, American citizens pay artificially suppressed prices. So even if you support this war, the next time you go to the pump you support the enemy.

When does preemptive mean a greedy superpower bullying and attacking the rest of the world for its own purposes, when its people are already gluttonous and mass consuming? America is the most powerful country in the world at this time. We cannot claim to be the most democratic country and then abuse international law. At this point in our history, we should not use war as a solution. In this conflict we should have spent more time on democratic methods. This war is based on fiscal reasons and not moral reasons. Bush has requested from Congress another \$75 billion to fund this war for the next 30 days. We could rebuild and educate all of Iraq with that money. Hell, we could buy Iraq with that money. Or we could fix the problems in our own country with that (health care, elder care, social security, public education, just to name a few.) Our last war against terrorism utterly destroyed Afghanistan, and they never found Osama bin Laden. Will this war produce the "weapons of mass-destruction"? Or will it just leave another poor and starved country in worse shape than before? And which country is next to fall to the thievery of the U.S.A.?

A Morning With Crew

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week, you know you can rely on them."

Julie Goldstein, the lone female member on the men's varsity team, rolled her eyes.

"You never get used to it," she said of waking up early. After practice, many members of the team grab breakfast together before heading right back to bed to get what sleep they can before their classes.

Goldstein is the coxswain on the men's team; that is, she directs the boat and shouts out the pace for the rowers to row.

A veteran of the men's squad for three years, she has watched the team grow and change.

When she first joined there was "basically no varsity....We used to have four members, and now we have 14 guys," she said.

Cassandra Innocent, a sophomore at Stony Brook and a new recruit to the women's novice team, went to her first practice on a Wednesday morning last fall, the novice team's "hardest" day. Despite her ulcers and her "abhorrence" for getting out of bed early, she found a love for pushing herself and is determined to stay on the team until she graduates.

"I've seen four rookies back out already,

and it's all good because it reminds you that this stuff is hard and maybe not for everyone," she said.

While the team has enjoyed retention of dedicated members recently, it has had to struggle with a myriad of problems that have frustrated its attempts to become a strong contender in larger races.

The lack of facilities for indoor training in foul weather, such as the snowfall of the last few months, has been a major problem that Randy Ng, a representative of the team, has focused on. As an underclassman, Ng rowed first on the novice squad and then advanced. More recently, he has discovered a joy for working behind the scenes to give his team the facilities and recognition it deserves.

"We don't get the same respect as the varsity teams from [the] administration in terms of being an actual team," he said in a later interview. "We don't get that same advantage and priority to get space."

Although officers at the Campus Recreation Office as well as the Fledgling Sports Club Advisory Board are available to provide aid to sports clubs, Ng said that facilities are out of their jurisdiction.

Chang takes his squad from the racquetball courts over to the indoor track, where the

women have already finished. The varsity tennis team is now running laps there, however, so Chang sets his men up running up and down the steps outside the arena.

"It's a matter of puzzling it out," Chang said about finding space. "We usually get things done."

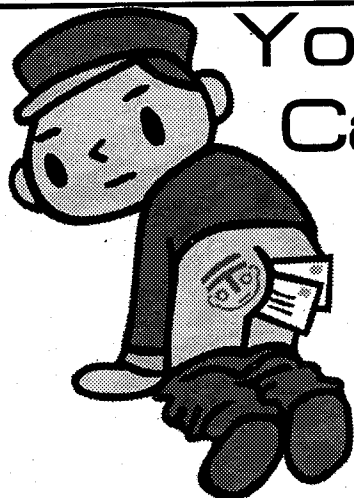
Financial difficulties are another obstacle that has often beset the crew team.

With the surge of recruits, the team's budget is stretched to its limit. There are not enough boats to fill all the people, though Chang sees it as "a good problem."

"People don't realize that the boats cost as much as a car," Ng said. Buying boats costs close to 20-25 thousand dollars, not including oars and launches.

Despite its struggles, the team went to Miami, Fla. for spring break. Team members paid for the trip.

In Florida, crew members were able to go out on the water daily and scrimmage with other schools. The vacation served to really prep them before their season starts in April. "We've been through every obstacle," Ng said. "We've been down before, but we're never out."



You Wanna Know Where You Can Stick Your Opinions?

(hint: It Rhymes With "Stained-Glasshole")

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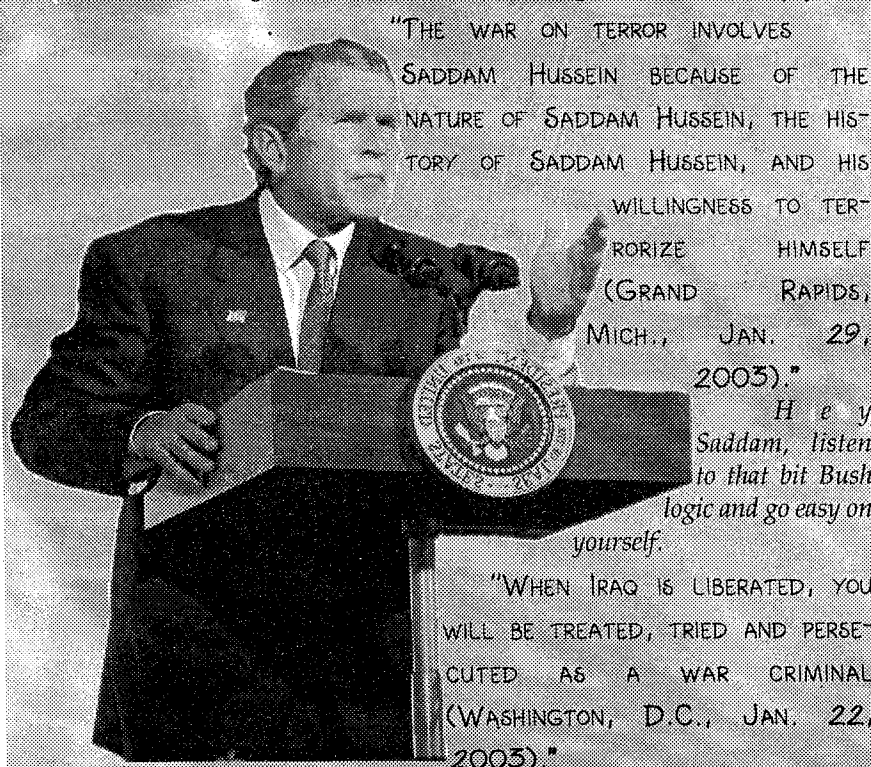
PEARLS OF WISDOM FROM OUR CLUELESS LEADER

BY ADAM SCHWARTZ

Even as I write these words the 48-hour clock to war is winding down. By the time you read these words we will be neck deep in a conflict characterized and caused by a ruthless leader with weapons of mass destruction at his disposal to be used on civilians of a sovereign nation. This "leader" (who was never actually elected) holds a deep personal vendetta against the country he wishes to terrorize. His diluted intelligence, precarious whims, and gross misuse of power will leave him to be remembered as one of the great tyrants of the 21st century. If you haven't already figured it out I'm not talking about Saddam.

There are so many more sentiments of a serious nature to be tossed around concerning the President of The United States of America, but they have all been said before and they will all be said again (and again).

So let's just get to making fun of him already. The following quotes are all completely true, unabridged and unaltered, verified and re-verified, and all straight from the mouth of George W. himself. Enjoy.



Now I'm confused. Is he addressing Saddam Hussein or the Salem Witches? Oh well, persecution, prosecution, close enough. Right, George?

"THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON WHO HUGS THE MOTHERS AND THE WIDOWS, THE WIVES AND THE KIDS UPON THE DEATH OF THEIR LOVED ONE. OTHERS HUG, BUT HAVING COMMITTED THE TROOPS, I'VE GOT AN ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO HUG, AND THAT'S ME, AND I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE (WASHINGTON, D.C., DEC. 11, 2002)."

Say what?

"I WAS PROUD THE OTHER DAY WHEN BOTH REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS STOOD WITH ME IN THE ROSE GARDEN TO ANNOUNCE THEIR SUPPORT FOR A CLEAR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: YOU DISARM, OR WE WILL (SPEAKING ABOUT SADDAM HUSSEIN, MANCHESTER, N.H., OCT. 5, 2002)."

Despite the harshness of this ultimatum, Saddam was on the phone 10 minutes later with his answer.

"YOU SEE, THE SENATE WANTS TO TAKE AWAY SOME OF THE POWERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BRANCH (WASHINGTON, D.C., SEPT. 19, 2002)."

Maybe it's just that you want all the power, Mr. Screw-Checks-And-Balances.

"THERE'S AN OLD SAYING IN TENNESSEE - I KNOW IT'S IN TEXAS, PROBABLY IN TENNESSEE - THAT SAYS, FOOL ME ONCE, SHAME ON - SHAME ON YOU. FOOL ME - YOU CAN'T GET FOOLED AGAIN (NASHVILLE, TENN., SEPT. 17, 2002)."

It's all right, George: we know what you're going for here; besides, clichés can be hard to spit out under pressure.

"I'M A PATIENT MAN. AND WHEN I SAY I'M A PATIENT MAN, I MEAN I'M A PATIENT MAN. NOTHING HE [HUSSEIN] HAS DONE HAS CONVINCED ME - I'M CONFIDENT THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE - THAT HE IS

THE KIND OF FELLOW THAT IS WILLING TO FORGO WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, WILLING TO BE A PEACEFUL NEIGHBOR, THAT IS - WILL HONOR THE PEOPLE - THE IRAQI PEOPLE OF ALL STRIPES, WILL - VALUES HUMAN LIFE. HE HASN'T CONVINCED ME, NOR HAS HE CONVINCED MY ADMINISTRATION (CRAWFORD, TEXAS, AUG. 21, 2002)."

And now, the most powerful man in the world is babbling incoherently.

"I FIRMLY BELIEVE THE DEATH TAX IS GOOD FOR PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE ALL THROUGHOUT OUR SOCIETY (WACO, TEXAS, AUG. 13, 2002)."

There's one tax I won't mind paying in the least.

"THE PROBLEM WITH THE FRENCH IS THAT THEY DON'T HAVE A WORD FOR ENTREPRENEUR (GEORGE W. BUSH, IN A CONVERSATION WITH BRITISH PRIME MINISTER TONY BLAIR)."

OK, but do the French have a word for "amazingly stupid jackass"?

"THIS FOREIGN POLICY STUFF IS A LITTLE FRUSTRATING (NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, APRIL 23, 2002)."

Who would have imagined that being the President involves a few headaches? George, why don't you take a break and go color?

"IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE FOR THE UNITED STATES SENATE TO ALLOW ANY KIND OF HUMAN CLONING TO COME OUT OF THAT CHAMBER (WASHINGTON, D.C., APRIL 10, 2002)."

Here's one of the smartest things he has ever said, because the last thing we need is more politicians.

"AND SO, IN MY STATE OF THE - MY STATE OF THE UNION - OR STATE - MY SPEECH TO THE NATION, WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT, SPEECH TO THE NATION - I ASKED AMERICANS TO GIVE 4,000 YEARS - 4,000 HOURS OVER THE NEXT - THE REST OF YOUR LIFE - OF SERVICE TO AMERICA. THAT'S WHAT I ASKED ... 4,000 HOURS (BRIDGEPORT, CONN., APRIL 9, 2002)."

Where are the speechwriters when you really need them?

"SOMETIMES WHEN I SLEEP AT NIGHT I THINK OF [DR. SEUSS'S] HOP ON POP (WASHINGTON, D.C., APRIL 2, 2002)."

Shit, I had my money on Green Eggs and Ham.

"WE'VE TRIPIED THE AMOUNT OF MONEY - I BELIEVE IT'S FROM \$50 MILLION UP TO \$195 MILLION - AVAILABLE (LIMA, PERU, MARCH 23, 2002)."

Lets cut him some slack: he's the President not a goddamn calculator.

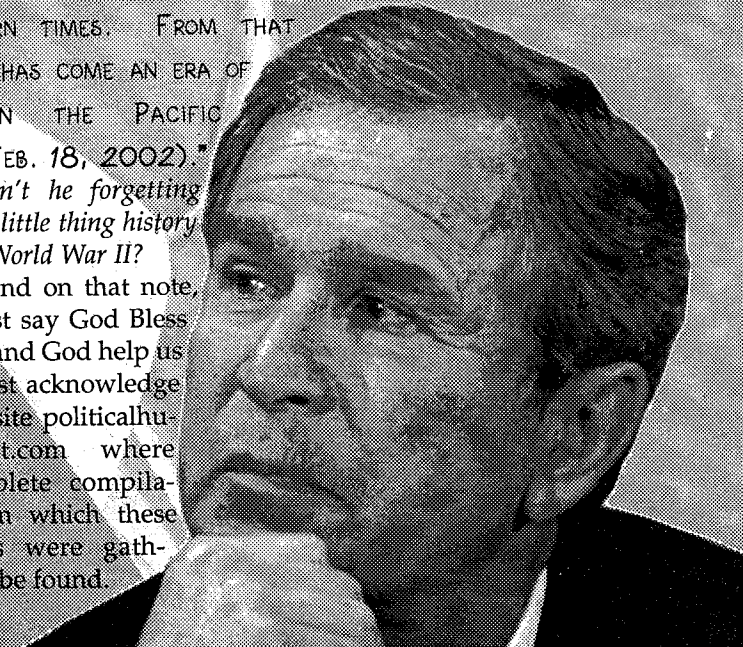
"I UNDERSTAND THAT THE UNREST IN THE MIDDLE EAST CREATES UNREST THROUGHOUT THE REGION (WASHINGTON, D.C., MARCH 13, 2002)."

I wonder who helped him with this bit of profound insight.

"MY TRIP TO ASIA BEGINS HERE IN JAPAN FOR AN IMPORTANT REASON. IT BEGINS HERE BECAUSE FOR A CENTURY AND A HALF NOW, AMERICA AND JAPAN HAVE FORMED ONE OF THE GREAT AND ENDURING ALLIANCES OF MODERN TIMES. FROM THAT ALLIANCE HAS COME AN ERA OF PEACE IN THE PACIFIC (TOKYO, FEB. 18, 2002)."

Isn't he forgetting about that little thing history buffs call World War II?

And on that note, let me just say God Bless America and God help us all. I must acknowledge the web site politicalhumor.about.com where the complete compilation, from which these selections were gathered, can be found.



Dear Editors and Staff of
The Stony Brook Statesman,

A long, long time ago, in an era far from memory, our two organizations worked together, and annual softball games were a mainstay of the truce between us. *The Press* broke off from *The Statesman* 25 years ago, and since then, we have each gone our separate ways, developing a unique style, and a unique following. It has been an interesting journey. At some times we have taunted and pranked each other, and at other times, we have worked together on intensive investigative journalism. Now we invite you to join together with us.

The Stony Brook Press formally challenges *The Stony Brook Statesman* to a game of paintball. Times have changed, and softball is passé. Arrangements are being made for a weekend near the end of the semester. It will cost some money, but what's a few dollars between friends?

Dear hall mates, its your staff versus ours. Let's put our Newsday awards, pseudo-journalism, and pride aside. Winner gets to gloat. Loser gets to go home and cry.

Lovingly yours,
The Stony Brook Press