

the stony brook

# PRESS

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Vol. XXVI, Issue 9 "Wait a minute...My coat doesn't go in the fridge!" February 9, 2005



# Conspiracy to Take Over Student Government Exposed

By Andrew Pernick

Documents obtained by *The Stony Brook Press* prove that a conspiracy exists to take over U.S.G. in a naked grab for power.

## Attempted Coup

*The Stony Brook Press* has obtained irrefutable evidence of an attempt by a campus group to overthrow the duly-elected U.S.G. Irfan Syed, Chair of CORE, the Committee of Religious Entities, which was established by U.S.G., is attempting to usurp all of U.S.G.'s powers to himself and make U.S.G. answerable solely to him. Syed, as Chair of CORE, wrote to U.S.G. President Jared Wong, "CORE officially recognizes USG, and it is from henceforth established that USG shall fully abide by the CORE Laws."

In an interview, former U.S.G. Executive Vice-President Esam al-Shareffi said, "you can see that if CORE is allowed to continue, that it would dictate the Undergraduate Student Government and, through virtue of that, since U.S.G. gives funding to clubs and organizations on campus, pretty much every club and organization on campus would have to answer to this CORE."

The Undergraduate Student Government created a subcommittee, consisting of Syed and Rustum Nyquist, and chaired by Syed, to find a way to fund religious clubs and organizations within the scope of the U.S.G. Constitution consistent with state and federal laws, according to al-Shareffi. Soon after, a bill entitled "CORE Laws" was introduced to the Senate; this bill, sources say, was written without Nyquist's knowledge by Syed and possibly a third party. The bill passed the Senate by a narrow margin and was not vetoed by U.S.G. President Jared Wong.

As soon as CORE was established by U.S.G., Syed became its chairman. *The Press* has been unable to learn who, if anyone, was selected to work with him, as the CORE Laws required. The Senate established CORE to allocate funding from the Student Activity Fee among legitimate campus religious groups; however, Syed perverted the CORE Laws to control all campus clubs and organizations. Syed's ego throughout this matter is evident from his designation of groups seeking funding not as "applicants" but as "suppliants," defined by *Princeton University's WordNet* as "one praying humbly for something."

The CORE Laws, as enacted, allow CORE to deem any club or organization a "religious entity," bringing that club or organization under CORE's control, and with Syed as at its head, CORE declared itself in complete control over any club or organization it deemed such an entity, effectively giving Syed complete control over virtually all campus clubs. Syed did not stop there. As CORE's first official action, he declared U.S.G. a club subject to CORE's authority. In a letter to U.S.G. President Wong, Syed, as Chairman of CORE, wrote "CORE hereby recognizes Undergraduate Student Government (USG) as belonging to at least one of the following categories: [a] CORE club, organization, agency, body, [or] service provider. By the power vested in me, CORE officially

recognizes USG, and it is from henceforth established that USG shall fully abide by the CORE Laws [emphasis added]."

"You can see how it's a bill that is not designed to help clubs but instead to give someone certain power," said al-Shareffi.

al-Shareffi and Nyquist, seeing that CORE had effectively overthrown the legitimate student government, filed a Writ of Judicial Relief with the U.S.G. Supreme Court, seeking to prevent "the enforcement of the CORE Laws until such time as the USG Judiciary hears the case before it and renders a judgement." The Supreme Court issued the injunction, suspending CORE until vacancies in the court can be filled and the case can be decided.

According to al-Shareffi, "in every hearing in every case, the respondent, who in this case is Mr. Syed and the U.S.G. Senate, have never sent any representative to the U.S.G. Supreme Court."

Acting with Syed is Senator Andrew Thompson. The two worked not only to bring down U.S.G., but to force out individual members of the student government, and weaken, if not destroy, various student groups.

According to Bill Lewis, who participated in many of Syed's meetings and has intimate knowledge of the inner workings of the conspiracy headed by Syed, including planning many of the specific actions taken, "Irfan Syed is, and was, the one in total control of his fight with U.S.G. His number two man is Andrew Thompson. Basically put, no one, under any circumstances, is allowed to do anything without the express consent and permission of Irfan Syed. No bills are allowed to be passed, no friendships or acquaintances are allowed to be made, no social gatherings are allowed to be attended with anyone who has any association with U.S.G., unless you have received permission and the blessing of Irfan Syed. Otherwise, he will turn on you and make you out to be the enemy."

## The Forced Resignation

al-Shareffi also says that he was forced to resign as Executive Vice-President of U.S.G. due to a conspiracy to slander and malign him. He claims that the lies and misinformation were spread by Syed and Thompson and were "the main factor" behind his resignation. al-Shareffi acknowledged that his letter of resignation cited his workload as the reason for his resignation, but he told *The Stony Brook Press* that the pressures brought on him by Syed, Thompson and others involved drove him from office.

Part of the plan to oust al-Shareffi was a falsified letter circulated on the letterhead of U.S.G., attributed to al-Shareffi, but actually

written by Thompson at Syed's direction. The fake letter claimed that Christian groups as well as Hillel and Chabad are "not open, they are elitist." The letter further claimed that "it is obvious that clubs like Gospel Choir, Chabad, and M.S.A. [Muslim Student Association] use meetings as a way to guilt less active members. I myself have fallen victim to this. We cannot allow religion to run this campus." In discussing how the letter was to be phrased, Thompson wrote to a co-conspirator, "I'm also going to insult MujadeenRider [sic]."

In an interview al-Shareffi said, "I never wrote this. . . everything here in this letter is clearly an impersonation, not something that was written by me. . . Just to correct the record, I fully support all the religious groups on campus, I hope that they are funded."

Lewis admitted that he participated in drafting the fake letter.

In addition, Thompson, on numerous occasions, impersonated al-Shareffi on stonybrooksucks.com, even going so far as to use both al-Shareffi's real e-mail address and screen name. To ensure maximum readership, Thompson wrote that he would "do Esam [al-Shareffi] posts only over the weekdays."

Said Thompson of al-Shareffi, "We're taking him out."

Thompson further tried to discredit al-Shareffi by trying to paint al-Shareffi as being against EOP via a forged post on stonybrooksucks.com entitled "EOP HATERS."

al-Shareffi told *The Stony Brook Press* that he was "not surprised" to learn that Thompson was behind the forged posts. He went on to add that, "It's really a shame that a U.S.G. senator [Thompson], and Mr. Syed, who is a very intelligent person, would use their resources and their skills in destroying something where they can just as easily be helping it and helping the student body as a result. Instead, they've chosen to take this path which I believe is illegal, and certainly is immoral and reprehensible."

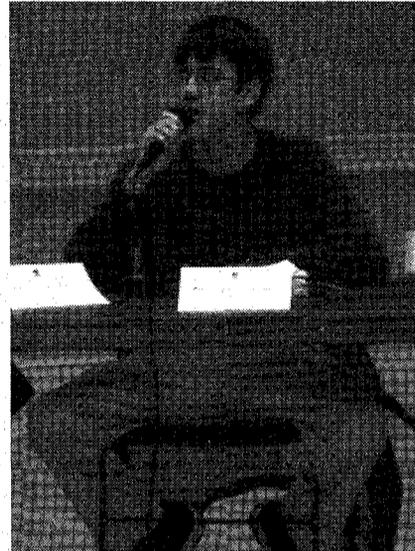
Sources have alleged that Syed was attempting to "train" Senators to follow his wishes in an attempt to increase his control over U.S.G. Said al-Shareffi, "it is very obvious that there is a group of senators that are in a bloc that has either been influenced or trained or what have you to vote certain ways on almost every issue. . . it seems very clear that either all of these senators think very much alike in an extraordinary way, or more likely, these people have been influenced or trained to give their views."

Syed said of Senator Joanne Marino, "We have to train her. . . She has one week to comply."

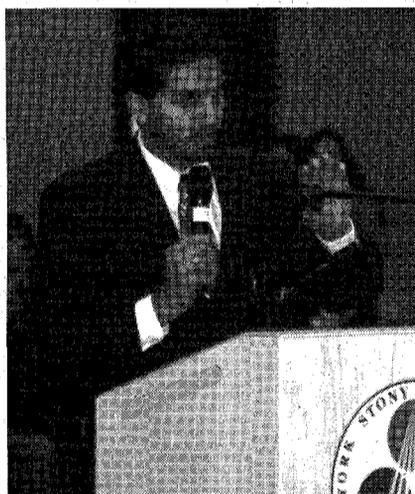
Thompson declined to consent to an interview. Attempts to reach Syed for a comment failed.

## Attacking EOP

al-Shareffi was not the sole target of this conspiracy. In addition to Syed, Thompson



SENATOR ANDREW THOMPSON,  
Courtesy of Joe Filippazzo



IRFAN SYED,  
Courtesy of Joe Filippazzo

Continued on next page

# High School Students Think Media has "Too Much Freedom"

By Marcel Votlucka

*"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."*

-The First Amendment to the Constitution

One in three high school students believe that newspapers ought to get government approval of stories before they may be published. A survey conducted by the High School Journalism Institute at Indiana University shows an alarming trend among students toward accepting media censorship.

36% said that newspapers should get government approval of stories, while slightly more than half believe that the press ought to be able to publish freely. Moreover, 32% say the press has "too much freedom," while only 10% believes it has too little.

The survey polled over 100,000 students and 8,000 teachers; 83% of students believe that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions—as opposed to 97% of teachers.

These findings mimic those of the 2004 State of the First Amendment survey, which found that not only that large majorities would be willing to increase government regulation in the media, 40% believe the press has too much freedom.

This is in spite of the fact that nearly 80% of respondents said that the media is responsible for acting as a watchdog on government.

In a similar vein, 2003's State of the First Amendment survey revealed that 34% believe that First Amendment freedoms "go too far." Other findings from that survey regarded the war in Iraq: about two-thirds of respondents

agreed with the government's policy of embedding reporters in combat zones, and about the same number said that the government should review these journalist's reports from combat zones prior to publication. Furthermore, 68% said that the media did a "good" or "excellent" job covering the war.

This is in spite of nearly half of respondents saying that they believe Americans have too little information about the government's



AND NOW...THE EVENING NEWS,  
Courtesy of Chris Williams, Marcel Votlucka

anti-terrorist efforts. It should be noted that in the lead up to the Iraq War, antiwar protests were largely ignored and the vast majority of sources used by news organizations were from the government and military.

Overall, these recent surveys confirm suspicions that many Americans believe the press has too much freedom and are unaware of Constitutional protections of freedom of speech and freedom of the press. In addition, there is

much speculation as to why students are so accepting of censorship these days.

"Even professional journalists are often unaware of a lot of the freedoms that might be associated with the First Amendment." So says Jack Dvorak, the director of the High School Journalism Institute. His view is that students are not learning enough about First Amendment rights and freedoms in their classes—to say nothing about American adults. The aforementioned survey of high school students concluded that civics classes should do more to educate students about the First Amendment and its protections of free speech and the free press.

In contrast, libertarian commentator Michael Tennant argues that this pervasive lack of understanding of first amendment issues is due to government-run public schools systematically dis-informing students. He points out, "the overwhelming majority of Americans have been educated in government schools. If you were in charge of shaping the minds of future generations, would you teach them how to defeat you and your grand designs for the future? Well, neither would the government; and since it has a near monopoly on shaping the minds of future generations, it's only natural that most people haven't a clue as to what their constitutional rights are nor how they should be exercised and defended."

There is plenty of disagreement regarding the origins of this lack of knowledge of the rights and freedoms enshrined by the First Amendment, which leads one to wonder: what implications does this have for the future? According to Knight Foundation President Hodding Carter, whose company conducted the aforementioned survey, "Ignorance about the basics of this free society is a danger to this nation's future."

## Conspiracy (Continued...)

By Andrew Pernick

Continued from previous page

clearly wanted to grab power. Thompson complained that, "My belief is that my ideas for USG are being hindered by these undesirable elements in Senate." He blamed this on EOP. After referring to them as "fucking retards," who are "too stupid to argue," he said, "EOP will be taken care of in time too."

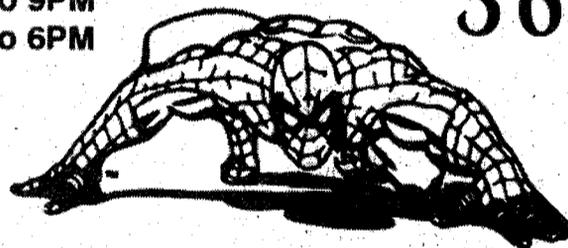
Thompson further called EOP "a cruel organization acting entirely in its own self-interest, totally disregarding anyone else."

Syed and Thompson were working towards the defeat of EOP in the October 2004 student elections. Of that, Thompson wrote that their hoped-for defeat "will be for all the injustice done in the name of EOP one of the many acts to rectify their involvement in student elections."

Said al-Shareffi, "EOP has been targeted, NYPIRG has been targeted, many people have been targeted by Mr. Thompson and by Mr. Syed." The reason for Syed's animosity towards NYPIRG could not be verified.

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# Rate Hike! Rate Hike!

## Pataki Recommends Tuition Increase

By Marcel Votluka

Governor Pataki is proposing increasing SUNY and CUNY operating budgets through a tuition increase while cutting the financial aid necessary for many students to pay for it.

Yet another tuition increase is part of a list of recommendations in Governor Pataki's 2005-2006 Executive Budget. Among his recommendations is a \$500 tuition increase for SUNY students and a \$250 increase for CUNY students, coupled with a restructuring of the Tuition Assistance Program which could result in reducing awards to new students by as much as half. Pataki's budget also calls for eliminating financial aid funding for EOP, HEOP, and SEEK programs. While the proposed budget increases SUNY and CUNY operating budgets, these increases will be supported by tuition revenue for the most part.

A NYPIRG press release provides an overview of the budget proposals, criticizing the governor's plan as hurting students already struggling to pay for their education. SUNY tuition for out of state students was increased last year too, so the proposed hike compounds already expensive education costs.

In-state undergraduate students currently pay \$4,350 in tuition costs, while graduate students pay \$6,900. When we add in room and board and other necessary expenses, the

total cost of attending Stony Brook averages \$13,000.

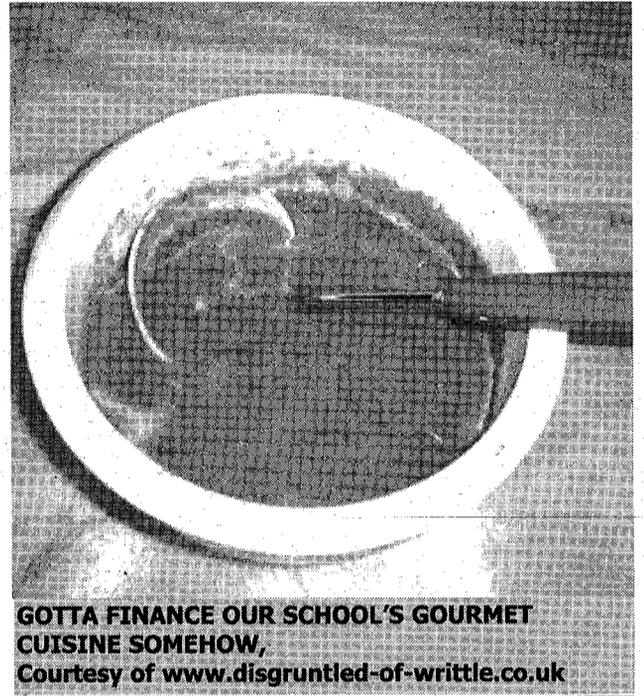
Critics argue that the proposed budget would put even more weight on student's backs. 75% of full time enrolled students at Stony Brook receive financial aid, with an average award of \$9,121. Incoming freshmen would likely see this figure dwindle as their tuition rates grow. On top of that, the budget proposal calls for automatic tuition increases each year.

Furthermore, NYPIRG includes in its criticisms a glaring lack of accountability in the system, and points out that there is no guarantee that the money gleaned from the tuition hikes will be put to practical use. Other states have tried similar plans, and students have seen additional rate increases despite the fact that these were unspecified, and thus unexpected; NYPIRG questions whether this situation will repeat itself here.

Stony Brook students could be among those hardest hit by the budget proposals; it is expected that students here could pay up to 50% more than students at other SUNY schools in the event of a tuition increase, given this university's greater expenses compared to other SUNY schools.

Therefore, NYPIRG and Stony Brook students are calling for the state government to

reject the proposed tuition increase in favor of a plan that is less harsh. One SB student complains, "A combination of tuition hikes and financial aid cuts will price students out of an affordable higher education."



GOTTA FINANCE OUR SCHOOL'S GOURMET CUISINE SOMEHOW,  
Courtesy of [www.disgruntled-of-wriddle.co.uk](http://www.disgruntled-of-wriddle.co.uk)

## The (Disastrous) State of the Union

By Michael Prazak

"Did you here about that? The President wants to take Social Security and privatize it. He wants to take that money and put it into the stock market. Have you followed the stock market? Why not just bet it on a horse!"

- David Cross, comedian

This last Wednesday president George W. Bush presented his State of the Union speech to Congress, as well as to a bewildered and deeply divided public. Unfortunately, it read like a trite and standard reiteration of many of the core tenants his administration has heralded and celebrated. No conciliatory or inclusive sentiment was expressed, as he bulldogged through the policies he intended to enact. Granted, the State of the Union address is typically used as fantastical sounding boards for whatever president and administration happens to occupy the White House. It goes without saying that many of the upbeat and "progressive" ideas stressed during this speech will most likely get tied up in congressional red tape and never see the light of day. Thus, the actual content of the speech is usually ephemeral and merely reflects more the state of the political consciousness, and less the state of the Union. Typically this lurks within what isn't said, the interactions in the silence between pauses and the distribution of applause that sends the political aficionados into a tizzy. On this ground, this State of the Union was a veritable feast of scandal and dirt.

The focus from the media has been on two particular topics, which incidentally also provoked the biggest reactions from the assembled peanut gallery. First, Social Security reared its New Deal head and yawned a dry breath of air through the halls of congress. According to Bush, its breath was plagued by halitosis and was deeply in need of a legislative mint LifeSaver. He hoped to drop its dentures nightly into a cup full of individual responsibility and private control. By taking Social

Security, and placing it into the hands of private individuals and industry, Bush is ignoring the historical origins of the system. His claim that Social Security must change for "changing times," is nice in sentiment, but weak in application. It smacks of the secretly profiting the rich anchor-weight that has been Bush's bread and butter since his installation into power. By privatizing Social Security, he places responsibility for it onto the individual, which implies more faith in the good of man than the socialist origins of the system. The reason we now have Social Security in place is that it was noted that our nation might not always be on economic stable ground. It may wane and falter, and therefore it is the responsibility of our government to provide for us, with the wealth and power we, the people, have placed in its hands. Succinctly put, Bush is relying on economic growth and stabilization for our country; history has proven dreams like that as dangerous to believe in.

The second topic of controversy to exhaust onto the crowded, decidedly Anglo-Saxon, floor of Congress was that of the expansion of freedom and democracy in a global sense. Here is where the Bush ideology loses any logical footing. It's full of contradictions and paranoid delusions where people aren't people, they are milling ants in need of the blinding light of freedom to remove the drapes off the world they live in. On that ground, Bush is out of his fucking mind. He criticizes the active usage and implementation of clean and safe nuclear energy in other countries as attempts to gain weapons of mass destruction while claiming to be a proponent for that very same usage in our

own nation. Additionally, he hasn't been the steadiest of allies to nations actively moving towards democracy and social freedom. Freedom, where is thy lion-like roar that cowed the butchers and murderers of the lands of Moses and David, when dealing with Tibet; when faltering behind the idealistic youths whom

rebelled and bled on the streets of Tehran for the same freedom we are supposed to represent? It wasn't there. If Bush would simply be honest about the reasons for engaging Iraq, more pragmatic about the policies he enacts many would likely be able to at least look at him in a more forgiving light. However, to hide behind ideals like freedom and democracy is unfair to both the people of this nation, and even more so, the people of the world.

One of the brighter sides to watching the State of the Union was witnessing some of the first active and vocal dissent in government towards the policies of the Bush administration. From

open and loud criticism of the spiel on Social Security, to the stern faced and rarely clapping now infamous right side of the gallery, we are maybe witnessing the generation of some cajones in the Democratic Party. I'm hoping this dissent leads to something more productive, but only time will tell on that account. Until then, it only stands to reason that Lieberman is an android sent back in time by a Republican government in order to ensure the watering down of the Democratic Party. Do you kiss your mother with those lips Senator Lieberman? Shame on you, for our country, and your mothers sullied cheeks.



FIFTH TERM! FIFTH TERM!  
Courtesy of [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)

# The College Democrats

By Joe Filippazzo

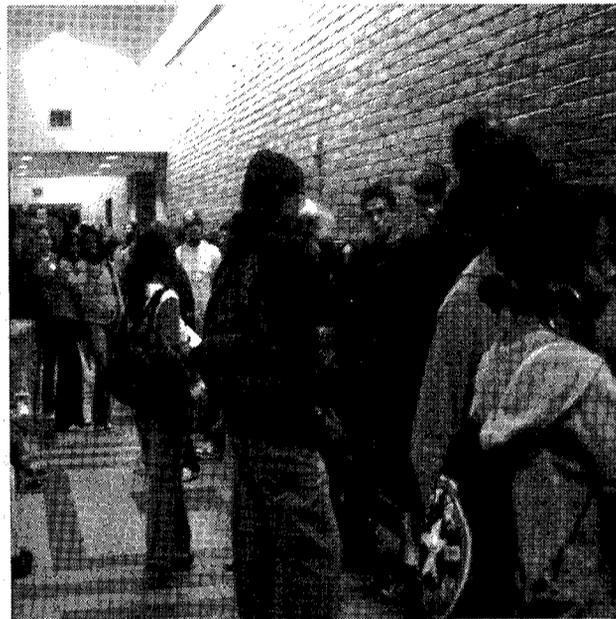
The Stony Brook College Democrats, although a fairly new presence on campus, have already begun to make a name for themselves both on the local political scene as well as on a broader statewide level. With help from the Stony Brook campus chapter of the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), the College Democrats have successfully made Stony Brook University a political force in Suffolk County. Due to the efforts of the College Dems in collaboration with NYPIRG, Stony Brook students have single handedly affected the outcome of several major local elections and together they have shown the people in Washington that they *will* pay attention to us or else.

Currently, the College Democrats are headed by President Krystyna Baumgartner, Vice President Ted Glinka, Secretary Christine Mahon and Treasurer Ilya Gerner. The group's goal is to serve as a liaison between the campus community and the Democratic Party at large. Primarily based in grassroots campaigning, they hope to increase student involvement in public affairs which affect the Stony Brook community most. Current Brookhaven Democratic Committeeman, Election District 233, Jeff Licitra shared with us a little history of the College Dems and his view of what the organization's successes have been as well as a glimpse at their major future goals in student advocacy.

Licitra began on Democratic presidential primary candidate Wesley Clark's campaign in September of 2004, but was told that our campus needed a Democratic base first. Licitra contacted the Brookhaven Democratic Committee about starting a campus chapter of the College Democrats. After teaming up with fellow Stony Brook student Ian Cook, Licitra and a group of about six others threw together an executive board and got the club registered. Their goal was to get the club up and running and making a difference in time for the November elections. As a founder of the organization, Licitra describes the initial response of the campus community to their efforts. "Most people were really receptive and like, 'Where the hell were you before?'"

According to Jeff Licitra, the most prominent difficulty the College Dems noticed when they first were starting out was the lack of avenues through which they could get the word out. "The campus has no means for people to

know that you exist," explains Licitra who attributes the situation to a terrible flyer policy, a dearth of advertising venues and involvement fairs which were few and far between. He notes that their most successful attempt to get the word out was dorm storming, knocking on doors and actually conversing with other students to show that they are involved. The response was incredible and it showed in the polling results of the November 2004 elections.



THE LINE TO VOTE ON ELECTION DAY,  
Courtesy of Jowy Romano

The initial results were a total voter turnout of 2,627 not counting approximately 200 provisional ballots. John Masher, a representative from NYPIRG, the group which was ultimately responsible for the vast majority of voter registration, reported the total number of registered voters at 2,985. Voter turnout for Stony Brook University was the highest of all the SUNY schools at an official number of 2,618, of which 2,045 voted Democratic and 369 went Republican. "It was clear to everyone that we were the only ones getting out and going door to door," Licitra remarked, "and we had an unfair number of people with similar beliefs." Licitra reflects that the College Democrats had all the right ingredients to do something spectacular on campus for the Democratic Party. "Firstly,

we had an amazing pool of latent talent and incredibly motivated people, and secondly, the College Republicans were noticeably absent." With no other political presence on campus, the College Dems used their small entourage of about twenty to make signs, flyers, schedules, totem poles and everything else they could think of in an incredibly organized effort to get the vote out for students.

"It wasn't so much that we did something great, but that we had people to step up," recalls Licitra who added, "We knew people were going to vote for [John] Kerry but the difference was that we got people to vote for Bishop and Englebright." Both Tim Bishop, the Democratic Candidate for the New York's 18<sup>th</sup> district of the United States Congress, and Steve Englebright, the Democratic candidate for the 4th district of the New York State Assembly were elected on a very narrow margin which could be attributed to the great number of Stony Brook student voters. Also, the usually very conservative county of Suffolk went to John Kerry by an estimated 1400 votes. Although this didn't have as much of an effect on the national election, anyone who thought their vote didn't count for much can see how important it is to speak up. We have to be able to tell the people in Washington that if they don't lobby for things such as lower tuition and student rights in general, we will make sure that they do not get reelected.

While Jeff Licitra has stepped down from his position of president to pursue other endeavors, he is still involved and excited to see the organization take off. Licitra even speaks of a long-term goal of setting up a College Democrats network throughout the SUNY system to maximize their effectiveness. With over twenty regular members now, and a veritable laundry list of progressive causes to advocate, the College Democrats are truly helping to improve the quality of student life at Stony Brook University.

*The College Democrats have their weekly meetings at 12:50pm during Campus Lifetime in the Union Bi-Level. For more information on upcoming events or how to get involved, visit [www.stonybrookdems.org](http://www.stonybrookdems.org).*

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**With a Name Like Bush,  
 It Has to Suck**

fruit n 1 ) useful product of plant growth; an edible and sweet reproductive body of a seed plant. 2 ) a product of fertilization in a plant; the ripe ovary of a seed plant with its contents and appendages.

-The New Merriam-Webster Dictionary

Fruit is a nice portable snack that supplies a hungry traveler with a much-needed dose of sugar, rejuvenating calories of readily available energy and vitamins. Oranges are yummy and sweet, they come with their own eco-friendly wrapper and they're good for you. Florida makes their claim to fame on sunshine and oranges, which indeed go hand in hand. Growing fruit provides masses of people with work, effectively sustaining more people second-hand as well as with their own direct supply of scrumptious nutrition. Furthermore, fruit smells great and looks pretty, to the point that one can find wax replicas of fruit at grandma's house and one can purchase imitation fruit-funk lotion and impose peachiness on a hundred yard diameter around where they stand. Yum.

Unfortunately for fruit and people alike, there is a history of Republican slander of fruit. Ronald Reagan, who preferred jellybeans to fruit, made an attempt to classify tomato ketchup, a fruit product, as a vegetable. Public school lunches would have been thus deprived of creamed corn, or soggy green beans, or tater tots, since the presence of the tomato paste and vinegar would act as a proxy vegetable. Indeed, this policy would have reduced government spending. Great. Fuck the children, they don't need health if their parents can't afford it.

They're trying to give fruit a bad name.  
 The most recent inauguration of the incumbent

empero...er, President, was a grand parade of what makes the USA number one. It was open to all who would attend. This is the land of the free, after all. Fruit, however was not allowed.

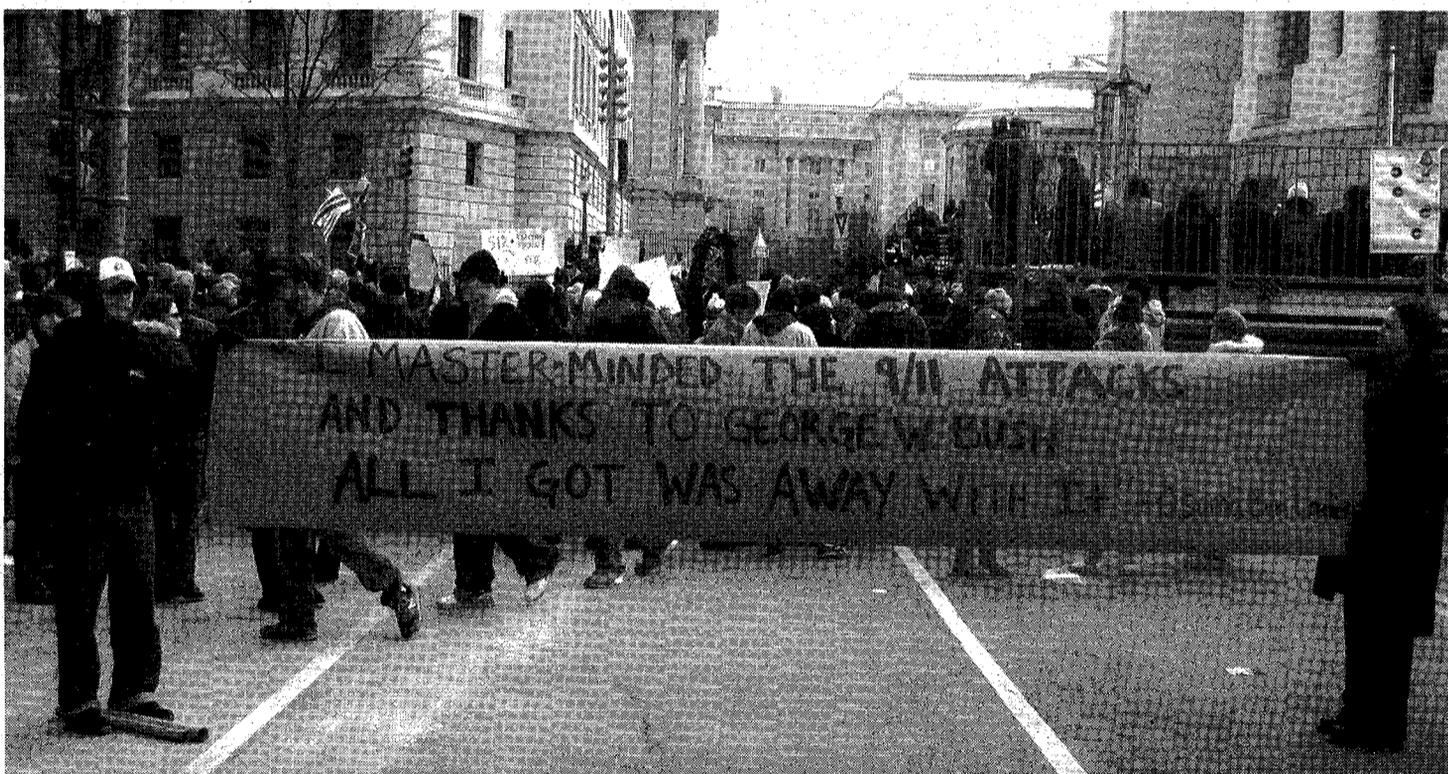
It was felt by Bush's inauguration committee that forty million dollars worth of security weren't enough to keep the ripe ovaries of the seed plants in check. Snipers, riot squads, cavalry, state troopers from all over the south, regular enlisted men, choppers and the secret service are not enough to protect the celebration from the tyranny of the pomegranate.

Of course, with the expedient service at the security gates designated for those people not invited, or without sixty-dollar tickets, the fruit-threat was neutralized and the poor people who came for a taste of freedom were relieved of the dangerous al-Qaeda sleeper-cell in the guise of the useful product of plant growth.

The population control at this year's inauguration was exclusively to prevent the embarrassment that the Commander-In-Chief suffered during his first ascension to the throne. He's illegitimate, he knows it and he doesn't care.

Those of us who wished to participate in our democracy and exercise our right to peaceful assembly without having to pay for it (in addition to the costs of special favors from the public treasury for the donors of the forty million dollars in inauguration funds) were treated as second-class citizens and were effectively silenced and pacified. The ceremony, like the presidency, is a farce. It unabashedly flies in the face of the ideals in our constitution as well as our proud traditions. Bush and his regime hate freedom. And fruit.

Eat a peach.



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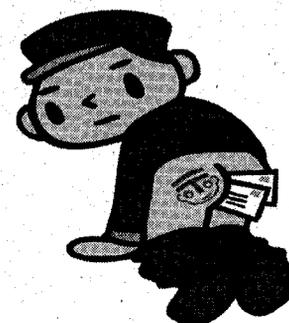
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# Auschwitz Liberation Remembered

By Laura Positano

Sixty years later, Auschwitz still means hell. A place that personifies all the destruction hate and bigotry have the potential to unleash, Auschwitz's inferno was stopped in 1945.

Auschwitz was the largest concentration camp, slaughtering mainly Jews but also other groups which irrationally intimidated the Nazis. Intellectuals, secular and religious alike, who could sway opinion against Hitler, were exterminated. Gypsies and disabled people, not to mention Soviet prisoners of war, were murdered too.

The crazy rationale for this Holocaust was that all these different victims were not really human. They were sub-par in Hitler's Nazi philosophy. Since the Jews, the gypsies, the disabled, et cetera, were not Aryan perfection, it was deemed okay to torture them.

It was viewed as glorious to annihilate children, forever destroy families, and steal optimism. Those who were strong were either forced to be slaves; doing exhausting work, or had to help with the killing of their neighbors in the gas chambers.

I remember when I was a peer educator in high school that there was a Holocaust survivor who shared his experiences with the class. The horror of the smells and the inhumane acts he witnessed as a young man still affected him as an elderly man. Such dehumanization; beyond the horrific gas chambers, starvation and diseases left untreated like typhoid filched lives.

Sometimes, diseases were deliberately given to prisoners of Auschwitz by Nazi doctors. These men knew no such thing as the Hippocratic oath. They infected prisoners for supposed medical knowledge. The ovaries and the testicular areas of some unfortunate fertile Jewish prisoners were irradiated to the point of becoming infertile. Other outrageous "medical" (and I use that term quite loosely since no doctor in their right mind would do such actions) experiments were performed on prisoners. Most of these prisoners were killed shortly after being used in these insane experiments.

The cold, calculated genocide that ended millions of lives finally ended with the Allies (the Russians, the British, the Americans and the French) liberating the camps. Since then, Holocaust survivors have tried to prevent another Holocaust by informing as many people as they can about what happened. Curators of Holocaust muse-

ums around the world attempt to achieve this objective.

Many students have read the "Diary of Anne Frank," an actual diary of a thirteen year old Jewish girl who kept believing in the goodness of humanity, even though she eventually was forced out of hiding into a concentration camp. Her fate was similar to many children imprisoned in the concentration camps. Her mother died, her father was separated from Anne and her sister into the men's camps. Because of the unhygienic conditions of the camp, she died of typhoid, a few months before the concentration camps' prisoners were liberated by Allied soldiers in 1945.

So people nowadays know of the Holocaust's existence (though some actually deny it ever occurred). Awareness would ideally lead to the end of stupid reasons for killing people-on the basis of religion, race, politics, et cetera. Yet while people may be more educated about the travesty of such foolishness, genocide continues to occur.

The resilient, albeit understandably emotionally scarred, survivors of the Holocaust are living testaments to the survival of the human spirit. Most of them attempt to teach younger generations about the lessons their undeserved hard times taught their souls. Whether it is to grandchildren or students in a classroom, the hope that drives these teachers is to not repeat the past. To not allow the losses they endured, of their families and their friends forever lost, to be in vain.

## INDEX

Conspiracy On Stony Brook Campus	Pages 2, 3
National Embarrassment	Page 11
Iraqi Election	Page 18
Reviews	Everywhere
The Living Tribunal	Pages 24, 25
Ask Amberly Jane	Page 27
The Anthropomorphic U.S. Constitution	Page 30
Media Ethics	Page 38

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# The Future of Democracy in Iraq

By Jorge Sierra

First things first. Thank God the election in Iraq was a safe one. We knew that insurgents hostile to election, particularly the al-Qaeda sympathizers led by Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, would pull out all the stops to intimidate and attack Iraqi voters. Various mortar and suicide attacks did kill some 35 people, but it was hardly a bloodbath. The images on the front pages were those of courage and triumph, as eight million people—60% of registered voters—went to the polls. By most accounts the elections were a resounding success. Those of us who were tense about the fate of Iraq's courageous voters now celebrate their expression of free choice and the beginning of the end for the insurgency.

For the insurgents led by al-Zarqawi made a terrible mistake. They have committed terrible atrocities: blowing up schools, killing the families and children of pro-government or pro-US citizens, massacring scores of patriotic young men as they signed up to be police officers and soldiers. The Shiite Muslims had already rejected the violent extremism of their own Muqtada al-Sadr once. Al-Zarqawi's campaign, as experienced by the Shiite majority, has been so ruthless, so bloody and terrible and evil, that they have nothing to lose by voting. The minority Sunni Muslims at least could choose to keep their lives if they stayed home, but for everyone else there were only two choices: death, and death with hope and courage. It makes sense that a majority of the Shiite and Kurdish minorities are willing to risk their lives for their future. Now, things are so bad for the anti-US insurgents that they've been reduced to propping up action figures in their hostage videos.

The biggest winners, of course, are the Shiite majority, particularly the religious Shiites loyal to the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, a moderate religious leader and the spiritual leader of Iraq's Shiites. According to

foxnews.com, among the 111 "lists" of candidates running for election to the National Assembly, al-Sistani's predominantly Shiite candidates are projected to have the largest number of seats, followed by the Kurds (???) and the secular pro-democracy party endorsed by interim Prime Minister Ayyad al-Allawi. The next Prime Minister will be selected indirectly from the National Assembly. This body will also be responsible for writing a constitution. Both Allawi's and al-Sistani's parties are publicly committed to the future of Iraq and the democratic process.

I'm a little worried, though. This is an important victory, but it does not yet win the War in Iraq. To win the War in Iraq and that country's struggle for autonomy, our troops stationed there will face some more tough periods, and the people of Iraq will face even greater perils. Now that there's hope and it looks like President Bush is vindicated for a while, let's not develop amnesia and call this a quagmire the minute things go badly again. If we're going to believe in his vision of a democratic Iraq, a more just world, and a world that is safer for our own interests, let's not forget the fact that it really is "hard work." With the new government anticipated to request the US troops to stay and train its armed forces, it looks like we're going to retain a military presence for a while longer.

The most immediate challenge for the Iraqis is the low Sunni turnout, which were exacerbated by calls for a boycott and threats against potential voters. The Shiite parties, particularly Allawi's, did run some Sunni candidates on their lists, but there's little question the Sunnis will be underrepresented. However, the new government still needs the cooperation



ROCK THE VOTE,  
Courtesy of [www.powerlineblog.com](http://www.powerlineblog.com)

of predominantly Sunni areas of Iraq to avoid civil strife and pass the Constitution once it is drafted. This is something we cannot help the Iraqis with. We can train their army, maybe even capture Zarqawi, but the Sunnis don't really like us. This will require Iraqi-style diplomacy.

Beyond that, there is bound to be some disappointment and conflict. There will come a time when the hopes of everyday Iraqis will hit a wall amid the murky realities of their divisions and false ideas. When that happens in our country, we get demonstrations, maybe a little violence, sometimes we even throw a president out of offices. Then it seems to cool down a bit and people get on with their lives. That doesn't always happen in other countries. Imagine where we'd be if someone had poisoned Thomas Jefferson in 1800? Well, that could happen in Iraq.

Right now, the most powerful man in Iraq is the Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. He demonstrated that his commitment was first and foremost to the people last year by demanding a rapid democratic transition while at the same time being willing to work with the UN and distancing himself from the violent tactics of Muqtada al-Sadr. More importantly as far as the US is concerned, he is on record as not really interested in creating an Islamist state. But al-Sistani is almost 70. His influence can't last forever, and I don't think even he is up to the task of uniting Iraq. If and when the upcoming government fails—as all democratic governments must (it's part of the job description), it is imperative that Iraq establish not just a democratic process, but a strong democratic tradition before the balance of power shifts. The elites who have the people's best interests at heart will not be able to win without the people right by their side.

I think maybe they have a chance. The images coming out of Iraq—people carrying the elderly to the polls, voters jubilantly displaying their ink-stained fingers, women praying as explosions test their courage—show that Iraqis can take responsibility for their future. But it will not be easy. We have seen courage of the Iraqis. Will we have the courage to continue standing by them when the times are tough? When we let go, will they be able to stand on their own, when several other so-called democracies have fallen? Let's not make the mistake of blind optimism again. We have to continue investing in Iraq's security.



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# Tsunami Parody Sparks Outrage

By Justin Rowe

A controversial parody song about the Asian Tsunami disaster has resulted in outrage from the Asian community against radio station Hot 97.



The hip hop station, which was #2 in the NYC Arbitron fall ratings for Fall 2004, has received numerous emails, protests and planned sponsor boycotts in response to the "Tsunami Song," a parody song based on the 1984 hit "We Are the World," on their popular morning show hosted by Miss Jones.

The song refers to the people involved in the disaster as "screaming chinks" and also references to child slavery and pedophilia. The song, written by show producer Rick Delgado, was performed by Miss Jones, comic Todd Lyn and others on the staff.

After playing the song for the first time, host Miss Jones got into a heated on-air argument with Miss Info (an entertainment reporter of Asian descent who did not participate in the making of the song) who openly objected to the song. At one point in the conversation comic Todd Lyn remarked that he was going to "start shooting Asians" and Miss Jones told Miss Info that she's only complaining because she felt superior because she is Asian.

To add further insult to injury, the song was replayed four times before the eventual suspension of the morning show staff. As a result of protests by the Asian community spearheaded by Queens councilman John Liu, boycotts that urged sponsor companies such as McDonalds and Sprint to withdraw their ads, and negative worldwide publicity, the station fired producer Rick Delgado, comic Todd Lyn and suspended host Miss Jones and other staff for two weeks (Miss Info was not suspended, but took time off from the show).

In a response to the controversy Hot 97 issued an apology and also announced that their parent company Emmis Broadcasting would donate two weeks worth of salary for the suspended participants and a additional million dollars for Tsunami relief efforts.

However Councilman John Liu and other Asian community leaders want further punishment to the morning show staff that includes the firing of Miss Jones and urging Hot 97 to assume total reasonability and a \$10 million dollar donation to Tsunami relief efforts.

These events couldn't have come at a worse time for Hot97. The long time hip-hop radio leader in the New York metro area is being fiercely challenged by two-year old rival Power 105, owned by Clear Channel. The song debuted the same week former Hot97 morning hosts Star and Buc Wild premiered their show on Power 105.

Ironically Miss Jones was a former staff member of Star and Buc Wild's old morning show.

# Airbus' Aggressive Moves Make Boeing, Conservatives Uncomfortable

By Morgan Wilding

New York City—Airbus, the European aircraft manufacturer, has recently begun an aggressive international campaign aimed at taking over Boeing's business both in the US and abroad.

The EU-based company, which recently unveiled their expansive A380 project, is trying to compete with American-based Boeing Corp. for dominance in the international aircraft market. The new Airbus design, which can carry from 550 to 850 passengers or 150 tons of freight, depending on internal configuration, represents an astronomical investment for the company, which was recently criticized by the United States at the World Trade Organization for being subsidized by the EU. The project is estimated to have cost Airbus a whopping \$16 billion, with an additional \$4.3 billion in EU subsidies. Airlines from around the globe have already placed orders for just shy of 150 of the new A380s, and the massive aircraft is expected to first hit the market with London-Sydney service for Singapore Airlines in mid-2006.

The A380 is a significant competitor to Boeing's 747, and is in a very different class entirely from the new 7E7 Dreamliner that Boeing has spent a considerable amount of time and resources developing. The A380 offers only 35 more seats than a 747 in its standard configuration, but sports 49 percent more usable passenger space. Industry experts predict that many airlines will include features such as gyms, bars or lounges to increase passenger comfort on long flights, and Virgin Airlines has even mentioned plans to put an in-flight casino and full-sized double beds on board. More economically-minded companies may fill the extra space with additional seats. By contrast, the more conservatively-sized 7E7 offers 220 to 280 seats, depending on which of 3 variants airlines purchase, with no significant recreational space. The 7E7 is not scheduled to debut until 2008.

Airbus, in developing the A380, has considerably stretched itself. The project is more than \$2 billion over budget, and sales of the new mega-liner have not been as strong as desired: experts say that 250 of the aircraft must be sold at a \$218 million price tag merely to break even, over a hundred aircraft more than have been ordered thus far. Even with this current financial deficit, however, the company is developing a direct competitor to the 7E7 named the A350, which is expected to have a longer range, greater capacity and fuel efficiency than its Boeing counterpart.

These are not the only aggressive moves Airbus has taken in competing with Boeing recently. The company has reportedly set aside \$600 million to invest in an American facility to produce an air-to-air refuelling tanker

for the US Air Force. Airbus is scouting all 50 states for a location for the factory, which would wind up being primarily an installation plant. The plan, according to Airbus officials, would be to fly a "shell" version of the plane from primary plants in the EU to their American base, where equipment and technology systems would be installed to USAF specifications. The move is aimed at trading the creation of

thousands of new jobs in the US for a key contract with the Department of Defense. This would most likely pave the way for future opportunities currently held exclusively by American contractors. It is speculated that Airbus would work in cooperation with Lockheed Martin, the world's largest defense manufacturer, but this is as yet unconfirmed.

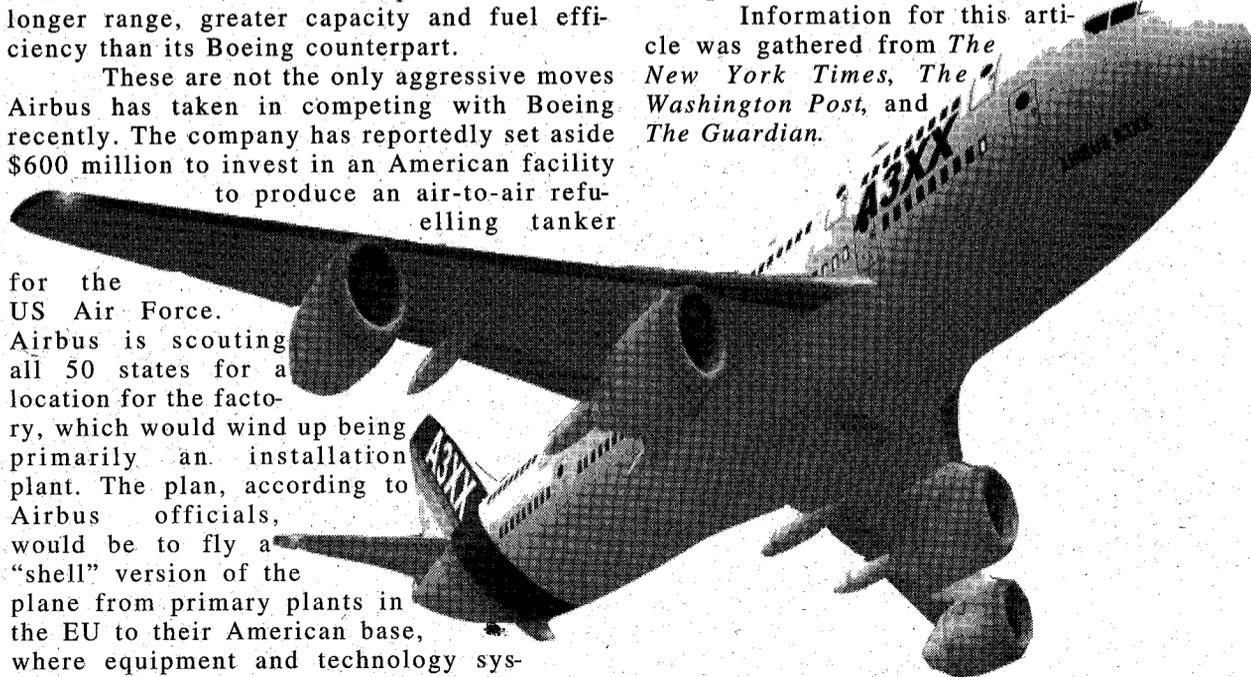
This is a move to directly compete with Boeing for a \$100 billion Pentagon contract, a maneuver that sets many conservatives on edge. While a significant number of new jobs would be made by the opening of Airbus plants in the US, some are concerned about spending so much money with a foreign company. Marvin Samburg, a USAF official, said that the contract was "too important an asset to give away" to a non-US firm. The underlying fear is that the money spent by the DoD would not be recirculated into the American economy, but would be deposited in EU coffers instead.

The move also makes Boeing very nervous, especially in light of its recent failures. In addition to a scandal last year that occurred when former senior Pentagon procurement chief Darleen Druyun was recruited by Boeing after awarding a major contract to the company, Boeing has also recently lost an initial \$23.5 billion contract to sell and lease roughly a hundred tankers to the USAF. Airbus also outperformed Boeing in the past year, selling 320 aircraft versus Boeing's 285, and is expected to maintain a stronger sales record this year as well, especially with the introduction of the A380.

In a final cutting sting to Boeing, the new Airbus designs are more environmentally friendly than the currently available Boeing models, including the 7E7. The A380 is purported to use 20% less fuel per passenger than currently available aircraft, and has lower emissions levels than current standards require. While environmentalists say that the difference is not highly appreciated because it would only barely meet new emissions standards expected to be introduced next year, the image of being more environmentally-concerned may cause some airlines to opt for the Airbus models rather than their Boeing competitors.

The A380 is expected to make its inaugural flight in March. It has a wingspan of 262 feet and a maximum flight capacity of 1.5 million pounds.

Information for this article was gathered from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Guardian*.



# A Line in the Sand

By Kevin Eric Clark

This Wednesday night, as I dropped in and out of the SBU Press office it occurred to me that perhaps I should have had to buy a ticket from the campus box office to watch the activities taking place within. I was watching with morbid fascination one of the more popular sports on college campuses in this country, hating our President. The several gathered members of the Press crew could scarcely let Bush get through a sentence without loudly attempting to one-up one another with sardonic, amateurish quips about how negatively they thought of Bush and his crazy ideas. The timing was what struck me the most. Only five days earlier, the seemingly impossible goal of holding Iraqi elections had actually bore itself out in a way that should have given even the most ardent Bush haters pause.

I find it quite interesting that those who are often the most critical of our country, our government, and our President are those who are sitting in some of the more comfortable seats that this world has to offer. Take for example, the staff of the Press. Some of the most virulent and ostensible reaction throughout Bush's State of the Union address occurred when Bush broached the topic of Pell grant funding. Now, when Bush ran in 2000, I was approached with the idea that if Bush won, I wouldn't get anymore Financial aid to go to college, or at the very least, it would be severely cut at some level. The thought was frightening, but lo and behold, my financial aid checks were never diminished even through the tumultuous and turbulent post 9/11 and war economy. So when people tell me now that Bush is looking to cut our tuition assistance, or that he is disingenuous when he asserts that he wants to increase it, I simply put the issue into the perspective of my own life, and I can't buy the argument. This objectivity is sorely lacking, in my opinion, particularly in places like the basement of our Student Union. All of the members of this hate-fest, to my knowledge, have had an opportunity to attend college. Do they ever stop to think what an unbelievable gift that is? Perhaps they pay their own way, perhaps they receive assistance from parents, government grants, student loans, or academic or athletic scholarships, but unless there is something I don't know about, the circumstances that allow them the chance to get an education are largely contained and perpetuated within this country, and created by policies and

practices that stem from that ominous Texan, George Dubya. But as I mentioned, this type of vitriol is not objective political discussion, it's sport.

The castigation by no means was limited to that topic, there was plenty of spite left for topics like Social Security reform and the war in Iraq. I remember Janeane Garafolo say once that she could barely watch George W. Bush on television because of the visceral, sickening reaction she had to his voice and likeness. I don't think that the feeling is unique to her, I believe that there is a large portion of this country that don't just disagree with Bush politically, or even dislike him personally. They have a predisposition to despise him, to loathe every word he utters, and every tick he makes. Unfortunately, this type of Pavlovian response is stifling, in my opinion, real public discourse.

I can only imagine last weekend what



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must have been going through most liberals' minds last week as they watched an almost unfathomable number of Iraqis take part in an election that was being overseen by American soldiers. As Jon Stewart so aptly put it, he thought he might "implode." The mental monologue was something like this: "This is not supposed to happen! Why are these people justifying a policy and vindicating a man whose likeness I've spent the majority of the last five years hating with such crapulence! Why the hell did I waste that money to go to D.C. last month! Come on, snipers, where are you?!" Please forgive the morbid humor. But the point is that Bush

went to war in Iraq, and I know that a lot of people out there think it was for oil contracts or personal satisfaction, but those ideas were unfruitful. Michael Moore couldn't prove them, nor could Robert Greenwald or Al Franken or Randy Rhodes. We probably will never know exactly why Bush invaded Iraq, but what we do know is that American troops intervened in a brutal and oppressive dictatorship and furthermore that the people of Iraq are vastly supportive of at the very least a representative form of government.

The problem is that the leftist position in the political discussion across this country is so incoherent that it can't really be digested by anyone who does not just arbitrarily dislike Bush. As Bush discussed the war on terror, an observer in the Press room lamented "There wouldn't be any terrorists if we would just stay the fuck out of other countries business!" Well, unless that guy has a master plan to build a time machine and go back in time and undo the major foreign affairs of the US since WWII, his solution to the global war on terrorism is rather flawed. I hate to have to take a page from a guy as partisan as Sean Hannity, but there are people around this entire world who hate you and want to kill you for no good reason at all. The same way you hate Bush, they hate you. And I am not just talking about Muslims or extremists, either. As anyone who is familiar with The Big Lie knows, hating America and in particular our President is a not a pastime reserved for the dungeons of college campuses, it is a global epidemic. At a certain point, you have to draw a line in the sand.

I disagree with the President as strongly as one can on issues like Gay Rights, abortion, stem cell research, etc. I take issue with the way that he attempted to galvanize support for the Iraq war and the way his subordinates handled it on a logistical level. I can disagree with his politics and still understand that he represents a country that has been unconscionably kind to me and that I love dearly. Dissent is great, its necessary and commendable, but at a point it becomes ridiculous. I hope that in the next four years we can find some real common ground in the debate, one that acknowledges that no nation is a benevolent utopia (certainly not this one) but that our grand experiment is not worthy of this kind of animosity regardless of whose manning the helm.

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# A National Embarrassment: The Post-Election Democratic Left

By Jorge Sierra

A couple of weeks ago, I caught a live broadcast of then-Secretary of State nominee Condoleezza Rice testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. She obviously had a good command of the issues, but I also saw her weak moments. Dr. Rice seemed sheepish as one white-haired Democrat scolded her for refusing to make a strong personal renunciation of policies allowing torture of American-held detainees, particularly since her reticence could put American troops in danger should they be captured. Naïve idiot that I am, I actually thought this was a pivotal confrontation, surely the highlight of the hearings. Here was a Democrat who was actually standing up for the people without grinding an axe. How often does that happen, especially since they've lost the election and started running around like headless chickens?

But instead of that much-needed challenge to the Bush administration, the evening news headlined that *embarrassment*, and the whole country learned that Condoleezza Rice is not a doormat as the anti-Bush fanatic Barbara Boxer made a complete fool of herself accusing Dr. Rice of deceiving the American public. I felt cheated.

Ever since they lost the election, the left wing of the Democratic Party seems to have made a habit of stealing the show and making fools of themselves with crazy outbursts. Howard Dean, the favorite to become the next Democratic National Committee chair, was recently caught saying that he hates the Republicans. Is this some kind of joke? In December the new Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid said Clarence Thomas was an embarrassment to the Supreme Court because his opinions were "poorly written." If you think that's the real reason he opened fire on Thomas I got a bridge in Brooklyn I'd like to sell ya. Finally, we have Ted Kennedy's tirade just before the Iraqi elections. He apparently wants us to start pulling troops out of Iraq RIGHT NOW to end President Bush's incompetent stewardship of the invasion and let the Iraqi people to know we're on their side (as they fight for their lives against an insurgent menace determined to stomp their freedom out of existence). Well, at

least he gave a reason.

Maybe I'm missing something, but the Democrats have a bit of a problem distinguishing themselves from the far left, and these outrageous displays are not helping, since most people do not like the far left. Now, I'll grant that party leaders and far out leftists naturally draw more media attention than those boring white-haired guys. However I still think that the most vocal Democrats are actively using the media to harangue the Bush administration and



ALTERNATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY SYMBOL,  
Courtesy of Chris Williams

propel the party alignment further toward the left. In the process, we get a distorted image of the alternative to the Bush administration's policies. Now obviously the Democrats are going to lie about how big bad and evil the Republicans are (that's what politics is all about), but consider why people like Boxer, Dean, Kennedy, and maybe even Reid would want the only alternative to the Republican party, the good guys in the next us-versus-them crusade, to be them. Then consider whether they'd have a snowball's chance in hell of winning the next election.

My problem with the Democratic party isn't simply that it's moving too far to the left. It has also made trashing President Bush into a 24-hour sport. The confirmation hearings of Bush's cabinet nominees, particularly the hearing of Alberto Gonzalez, his nominee for Attorney General, became sideshow referendums on the President and his policies. Democratic House and Senate leaders Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid started attacking President Bush's anticipated Social Security reform proposal before they even heard it. With all their energy spent attacking Bush, left-leaning Democrats have forgotten to stand up for the people's interests, present alternative ideas, and give us hope. For example, many Democrats state that there are more urgent things to reform than Social Security, and maybe they're right. However, when they attack a necessary reform effort without formally presenting their own important reforms, it is they who are being regressive and the Republicans who doing things that help people in this country in tangible ways. In their stubbornness, the Democrats are fast becoming a party of left-wing conservatives, and I'm not talking about Joe Lieberman.

I think the leftists in the Democratic party need to fight their battles more intelligently. They need to get over the shock of the election and get back into touch with the ideas, not the people, that they voted for. They're going to be effectively anti-Bush and anti-Republican the moment they open their mouths about anything, so why shouldn't their air time actually have some substance to it? The people of this country need to know precisely how the Bush administration's policies inflict harm to people who do not deserve it, not why we should believe in paranoid conspiracies. We need to know which party can do the best, not which party can shout the loudest. The Democratic Party still has some time to decide whether to modify its ideas or advocate them even more vigorously. The overblown attacks we have witnessed so far represents the easy way out and a clear-cut path to defeat.

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# Queer Pride

By Marcel Votluka

Do you believe that certain things must be questioned?

I certainly do. I've always been fascinated by those who put things we take for granted into question. I've always been transfixed by those who are different, non-conformist, contrarians, individualistic, "weird," "strange," "odd," or, for that matter, "queer." Those who challenge our society's sacred cows and accepted mores, particularly regarding sex and sexuality, have always earned my undying respect and admiration. Why? Sometimes the old ways of thinking just don't work, or they don't work for everyone, or they're not fair, or they don't respect human individuality and the free spirit. There isn't often room in this society to truly be yourself. And that is why I am queer. And I love it!

What is "queer?" anyway? What it all boils down to, basically, is a celebration of difference and diversity, particularly within the realm of sex and sexuality. These are things very close to each and every one of us; these are the essence of our humanity. We are conceived, born and live our short lives through sexual energy and expression. To deny one's sexual nature is to deny one's own self. And this is what queers understand in a very visceral way. When I say the word "queer," I don't mean it in a negative or derogatory sense. Instead, I use it in a positive, inclusive sense to describe those who don't quite "fit in." By calling myself "queer" I am acknowledging that I am not mainstream, that my very existence (in my case as a homosexual) pushes the boundaries and puts certain things into question. Queerness is all about radical individualism at its core, focusing on sexuality.

This, of course, is not a bad thing but a good thing, if you answered "yes" to my opening question. I am, more than anything else, a radical individualist. What this means is that I am always true to myself and to what I feel. I value myself and others as unique, special, and valuable, and I fail to see the need for judging people as "deviant" simply because they don't quite measure up to what they're expected to be. For instance, as a queer, I avoid taking "sexual orientation" and "gender" too seriously and I am accepting and encouraging of those individuals who wish to transcend those boundaries. And I am unapologetic and bold in my acceptance. "Queer" is very much a political identity

as it is a celebration of radical individualism.

I argued in a previous essay, ("What's in a Label?") that we get too hung up over rules, gender roles and expectations regarding who we fall in love with, who we choose to share sexual intimacy with, and how we choose to express ourselves. I argued that these rules were based on heterosexuality, and that anyone who breaks these rules—gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transsexuals, transvestites, S & M practitioners, androgynous people, transgendered people (hastily



**SAME SEX MARRIAGE RALLY, WERE YOU THERE?**  
Courtesy of Jowy Romano

judged as mentally ill by psychologists), or otherwise "queer" people—are outcasts. Even "masculine" gals and "feminine" dudes are looked down upon—the latter are called dykes and bitches who will never be married while the latter are beaten up to a chorus of epithets. Our society demands acceptance and conformity to rigid rules that rarely represent what people truly are inside.

Why does it have to be this way? And why not challenge the heterosexist system instead of submitting to it blindly? These were some of the questions I ask. Being queer means asking these kinds of questions...and not being afraid of the answers.

I am queer not because I wish to divorce myself from society but because I think things

must be shaken up from time to time. Stagnation is unhealthy—dissent is healthy and necessary. Every once in a while you've got to take a good look at yourself and question those things about yourself and your sexuality and your place in this world that you usually take from granted.

Maybe heterosexuality shouldn't be the standard by which you frame your views on sex and sexuality. Maybe man-woman isn't the only legitimate pairing that can exist—maybe the love between two men or two women is just as valid. Maybe expecting (or worse, forcing) yourself and others to conform *exactly* to definitions of what is supposed to "masculine" or "feminine" behavior simply based on what lies between their legs is a social construct that really doesn't make much logical sense. Maybe sexuality is really a more fluid thing than society teaches us, and shouldn't be held so rigidly—you are either straight or gay? Or maybe bisexual? Come on now, things aren't so black and white in real life, as Alfred Kinsey would have you know.

Being queer means taking a step back, taking a close look at these matters and deciding that perhaps the way things are is not the way they should be because not everybody fits in and perhaps *you* don't quite fit in either. To "fit in" means to subvert your own individuality and deny who you are.

Being "queer" is about being different, deviating from the norm and valuing diversity in sexual and personal identity and expression. Being "queer" means being proud of those qualities that set you apart because they are positive and constructive. It means not taking the traditional ways of thinking about sex, sexuality and gender roles and expectations too seriously, and exploring new areas of human sexual individuality. Being "queer" is not something to be ashamed of; it is something to celebrate because we celebrate individual self-expression instead of self-repression. We celebrate the sanctity and validity of all safe, sane, and consensual relationships and sexual activity between consenting adults (this is a very important principle!). We support those who want to think and act and live "outside the box," so to speak.

And that, in a nutshell, is why I'm proud to call myself "queer." And if you believe that certain things must be put into question, you can understand why.



Hey, did you hear about The Press?

The Press? Yeah, I heard about them.

Well?

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

Really?!?

Word yo. Raccoons.

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

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# Dissolve Deutschland

By Natalie Schultz

What is the point of a democracy in which the people are not free? Does such a state actually qualify as a democracy at all?

Most people are not aware that the freedom of speech and expression does not truly exist in Germany. The fact is, any and all symbols of Nazi Germany are not allowed within the borders of Germany, including swastikas and the book *Mein Kampf*.

I'm sure that some of you reading this are thinking that it is good that such things are illegal in the now democratic nation that was not too long ago the perpetrator of two world wars. So, I ask you this: how would you like it if the drinking of British tea was outlawed in the United States? After all, we fought for our independence from the British and dumped their tea into the Boston Harbor. What if the French outlawed the eating of cake? After all, Marie Antoinette, whom the French revolutionaries beheaded, was known for saying "Let them eat cake!" Not the same, you say? Well, as I mentioned in my article defending Prince Harry last issue, Iran sentenced Salman Rushdie to death for writing the *Satanic Verses*. I'm sure that many of you reading this feel that that was a bit extreme. But hey, Iran is not a democratic country; there it is no problem to outlaw a book or symbol.

So, a non-democratic country like Iran

does not have to protect the rights of its citizens. If that is the case, then how is it OK for a supposedly democratic country to not protect the rights of its citizens? How can the citizens of a country that outlaws something it does not like claim to be truly free?

"Deutscher Menschen, if you cannot, or are too afraid to stand up for your rights, then why should you be able to claim to be a democratic people?...[Y]ou might as well dissolve Deutschland altogether."

The German people have long been viewed as a proud people. So, citizens of Germany, I beseech you: Stand up for your

rights! Stand up for your freedom! Tell your lawmakers that you want the right to read any book that you want to read, to possess any symbol that you want to possess. You don't have to go out and purchase *Mein Kampf* or don a swastika armband. But the fact is if Germany is to truly be a free democracy, then the German people must be free to express themselves in any way they so choose.

Deutscher Menschen, if you cannot, or are too afraid to stand up for your rights, then why should you be able to claim to be a democratic people? If this is the case, then you might as well dissolve Deutschland altogether; after all, what good is a subversive false democracy? Only those who fight for their rights deserve a country of their own. German people, I pity you. You don't even realize how voiceless you are. At least here in America I have the right to criticize your lack of freedom.

Germany is a large country in the democratic European Union. It is the only country in the EU without the freedom of expression. But, rather than the German people asking their lawmakers to extend to them the same rights that the people of all the other EU member states have, German lawmakers are trying instead to take away the rights of all other members of the

Continued on page 15

## What Happened to Nationalism?

By Matthew Augustine

So, the election in Iraq was a success, and the Bush administration is riding high on it. You have to hand it to him, whether you're a Bush basher or not, it's good to see things having gone well. Formerly oppressed people partaking in democracy is an amazing thing to witness, first in Afghanistan, then Ukraine (without direct intervention from us, but worth mentioning), and now Iraq. On the front page of the Times was an image of an Iraqi husband and wife whom had just left a polling place. Their son sat atop his father's shoulders holding a sign which said "Peace Iraq" it was immensely touching.

I identify myself as a moderate republican, riding more on republican economic policy than social policy. That being said, I've found myself unhappy with a lot of the behavior of this administration. I've written quite a few things criticizing Bush, it's easy to criticize. It's much harder to swallow your pride. So, I'll be the first to do it. I hope that everyone who has posters on their walls of "Fuck Bush" recognizes that what's happening in Iraq and in the world right now is a good thing, because it is, undeniably. Whether you agree with what brought it about or not is a different story. Yet seeing people whom were under a dictator for almost 30 years exercising their right to have a say (most for the first time in their lives) is truly awesome, in the literal sense of the word.

Yesterday, Bush gave his State of the Union address. Bush was introduced to the joint house of Congress and it was to a standing ovation by both Democrats and Republicans. I felt an overwhelming sense of nationalistic pride. I actually said to my girlfriend, (whom I had to get drunk to get her to watch it with me) "This is the legislative body of the most powerful nation to ever exist in the history of the world, and look how they welcome him." Bush had a huge smile on his face, he was basking in his glory, and I say let him. The man has dealt with so much shit, has probably experienced so many sleepless nights. I was honestly happy for him, let him smile today, tomorrow he's free game again. Right here right now however, I say he

deserves it.

There is a sense of vindication, a burden lifted. All of our critics who said it couldn't be done are blushing as they offer their words of support. Bush won't say the obvious "I told you so," as historic as it would be, because it could have gone either way, no one knew for sure. It's not over yet, but it's looking up, finally. Halfway across the world the French are shitting themselves, and I love it. Don't get me wrong; I love my French fries, French toast, and French women just as much as the next guy. However, the constant rhetoric from Jacques Chirac makes me wish I could slap him, twice. It must be terrible to base your foreign policy in anti-Americanism (while being a "dedicated" ally I might add) just to have the base fall out from under you. Yes it was a success, fuckers. Au revoir. Across the world our critics are silenced, or at the very least not jumping down quite as hard. The stage is set to start repairing some damaged relationships.

Presidents have an unfortunate position in that they take the blame even if things are not necessarily their fault. If Russia hates us, the president is to blame, damn him. What was the Cold War anyway? If the economy is doing poorly, it's his fault. If gas is \$2.30 it's his fault! Always him. Yet, if something is a success, if we intervene on Kosovo's behalf for the greater good of the world, it's our army, our foreign policy, our great country. Yet, Bush invaded Iraq not us. Go figure. There's a sense of detachment when you're unhappy with something, which a lot of people are about Iraq. As such, people find a way to play down the good things and focus on the bad. "Well Bob, the Sunni populace did not participate in great enough numbers to assure legitimacy." Shut the fuck up, maybe that's true, but even the far left lib-

erals wouldn't deny it was a resounding success. It's ok to say you were wrong, daddy won't beat you.

Back up for a second and take a little bit of pride, share in the glory, this is your country. Partisanship is a fact of life in a two party system. Some would say we have one of the most partisan political systems in the world. Battle lines are drawn for the future; the administration has its work cut out for it with social security, stem cell research, budget deficits. Both Democrats and Republicans are aware of this.

Yet, there was John Kerry, one of the Presidents' biggest critics, standing amongst his Democratic peers welcoming the President with open arms at the State of the Union. It was beautiful and encouraging, as are the sprouting democracies across the world. Why don't we all take the cue and smile with the president, just for now. After everything we've been through, with 9/11, harsh international criticism, kidnappings and suicide bombings. With over 1,400 men and women having given their lives so

these people could be free. If you aren't happy for Bush, for our nation, at least recognize the sacrifice and that it wasn't in vain. So, for now I smile, I refrain from being a pessimist, and I drink this glass to us.

Picture Courtesy of Chris Williams

# Plastic Beauty: Is it Worth it?

By Laura Positano

Britney Spears may have some talent, but what really gets the attention of many male fans is not her vocal ability. As unlikely one is to meet someone between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five unaware of Ms. Spears, one would be just as unlikely to not know people wanting plastic surgery. Noses in need of shrinking, bums and other areas in need of enhancement. Everyone has heard a version of these complaints from friends, coworkers, maybe even themselves.

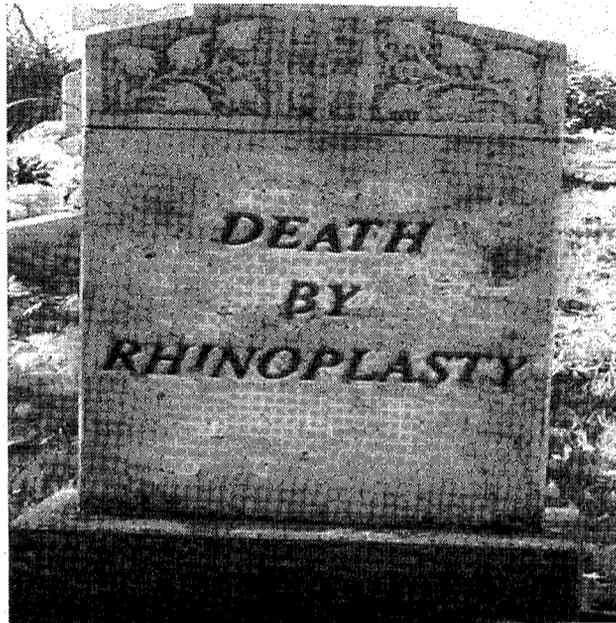
Young adulthood is an uncertain period of changes. Becoming a student, juggling a full-time job and a full-time course load simultaneously, or starting a family, are pressures that can make one insecure. The advertisements for plastic surgery on the radio and in newspapers imply that plastic surgery is close to a panacea. Many people in their twenties and late teens listen to the radio, hearing those ads that incessantly proclaim the miracle of plastic surgery.

Thus, the fact that increasing numbers of people in this age group have undergone plastic surgery is not surprising. Approximately 8.3 million Americans "had a surgical or nonsurgical cosmetic procedure" in 2003, states the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ASAPS). Those of traditional college age had twenty-four percent of the plastic surgery done around that period. This translates to an astounding 2 million "cosmetic procedures" noted in the ASAPS survey.

Curiously, the people currently in college grew up with *Baywatch* and Britney Spears—national icons rumored to be tainted with saline. Could the mainstream popular culture of our youth have resulted in augmentation being the most common plastic surgery for our generation? Plastic surgery may make one look beautiful or handsome in

one's perception but it can also be disastrous.

Only type in "plastic surgery mistakes" in a search engine and you will see ugly, misshapen legs that underwent liposuction, noses crooked from "nose jobs," et cetera. Some photographs of plastic surgery



CYRANO DE BERGERAC'S HUMBLE GRAVE, Courtesy of Chris Williams

mistakes are too disgusting and gruesome to describe here. If you are considering having plastic surgery done, seriously think it over. Find out if there is any way to improve your physical appearance short of surgery.

Are there any exercises or any figure enhancing clothes (i.e. pants with butt padding) that can enhance your looks? Try also to get to the emotional reasons that may have prompted you to want plastic surgery. If

there are no exercises or clothes that can accomplish that result, and if there are no psychological issues at work, then research.

Detailed research into plastic surgeons could reduce the likelihood of disfigurement, infections and, though it is rare, death. Ironically, the writer of the feminist book *The First Wives Club*, which the movie of the same name was based on, died due to plastic surgery complications. Such complications prompt reputable plastic surgeons to not encourage everyone to get nip and tucked.

Individuals that undergo "extreme makeovers" helped by a scalpel are said to have improved self-esteem, according to the web sites of several plastic surgeons. Maybe plastic surgery does help people feel better, improving their self-image. Yet how deep and how real is this newfound self-esteem if one plastic surgery is still not enough?

I am aware of the fact that some plastic surgeries are not for cosmetic reasons (i.e. "nose jobs") but are to improve quality of life. Deformities from birth, severe burns, survivors of breast cancer et cetera, have their lives impacted not only by the physical conditions but by society's obsession with beauty. I hope that people with such situations will find the means to get enough money for plastic surgery. Plastic surgery, in their case, really can be almost miraculous.

For the rest of us, plastic surgery is more optional than a need. We just have to realize that no matter how often we can afford to get plastic surgery, the beauty of a person depends upon the state of their mind. Growing spiritually, contributing to the community, and being open to new ideas, will bring as much confidence as an expensive liposuction. Cellulite, or the lack of curves or muscle definition, do not cancel out our worth.

# Walkman, Tsunami, and God

By Dahmane Mazouzi

A couple of weeks ago, I headed to the city. I was sure to find there the proper radio Walkman I always wanted and Chinatown was the place to be to find the best bargain. After having a glance at all the different kinds of radio Walkmans, I found one cheap store. I decided to purchase the latest Sony SRF-H11 model. I do not even understand what these codes stand for but they really captured my attention as if the more there are, the farther the radio reception will be. I think those electronic companies were inspired by the popular series *Star Trek* and all the difficult term they used to name their electronic devices. "Captain Kirk, could you pass me the XP567 34 TH 67 to electronize that monster?"

Anyway, after bargaining with the lady at the store I finally got a good deal. I paid 15 bucks and saved 5. I knew I could save more, but the lady was a hard-headed businesswoman and because it was the last one, I did not want to run the risk of losing that deal.

I felt really happy when I left China Town as a result of the good deal I had made. I had gotten what I wanted and had saved money as well. What a good day really. On my way back to Stony Brook on the L.I.R.R. I figured I would use my brand new radio Walkman and would not feel the usual headache of the train commute.

I then decided to pop into a bookstore to buy some books. After choosing some, I headed for the cashier. I had brought a 50 dollar bill and a 20 dollar bill that day and had already

spent 15, but when I put my hand into my pant pocket I realized that I only had 5 bucks left. What had happened then? After thinking of the many scenarios that could have happened I finally came out to the conclusion that I must have dropped them when I put my hand into my pocket to deposit this blasted 5 dollars and

"As 'the heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of,' life also has its reasons which human reason knows nothing of."

pulled it out. What a tragedy, really. After driving myself crazy to find the best bargain I finally lost 10 times what I had saved because of this blasted Walkman. And yet, the day had started so marvellously for me that the only thing I was not expecting was this to happen. "Why me?" I was asking myself.

I headed to Penn Station to take the train back to Stony Brook after cursing the 5 dollars I saved, that damn Walkman, and my pocket. I really ruined my day with that deal. Instead of purchasing a 15 dollar radio Walkman I could have bought a very good 70 dollar MP3 player at

Walmart and listen to the music I wanted with the money I lost that day.

That was it. I just sat down in the train and waited for my heartbeat to slow down. That day I fully realized how terrible it was to sit in the opposite direction of the train if you know what I mean. So I decided to use my super headphone radio Walkman and relax. On the radio I came across a discussion on the Tsunami. The moderator was glorifying the fabulous generous outpour of aid from Western countries, especially from our nation. With intense emotion, he criticized some countries for not acknowledging all the good our nation has provided for the countries hit by the Tsunami. He claimed that in spite of our tremendous generosity, our country is and would always be seen as evil and that those countries in need would never thank us for what we have done especially as far as the Tsunami is concerned. "What those countries should do is to thank the United States," he was stating. I wish I had the latest Nokia cellular with so many XP339 RT544's in my possession to inform mister moderator about the inside story of this global telethon.

Briefly, approximately a month ago in South East Asia north of Sumatra, the ocean went mad. An enormous 400 mile/hour wave of about 65 feet heading for the shore of several Asian countries devastated India, Thailand, Burma,

Continued on page 16

# Dissolve Deutschland Continued...

By Natalie Schultz

Continued from page 13

European Union.

German lawmakers, both liberal and conservative, have called for the ban of any and all Nazi symbolism throughout the entire European Union in the wake of British Prince Harry's wearing a swastika armband to a costume party. Silvana Koch-Merin of Germany's Liberal Party said "The whole of Europe once suffered under Nazi crimes, therefore it makes sense to ban Nazi symbols across Europe." In a similar statement, Markus Soeder, General Secretary of Germany's Christian Socialist Union said "In a Europe grounded in peace and freedom there should be no place for Nazi symbols. They should be banned throughout Europe."

So I ask you, what right do the Germans have to tell the rest of Europe what they can or cannot do or say? The Nazis burned the books they did not approve of, Germany today bans such books; what truly is the difference? Germany has instituted reverse propaganda; they outlaw the negative aspects of their past. The Nazis forced Germans to display the flag of the Third Reich, the swastika; today Germany outlaws that symbol. How, in all honesty, is the one action different from the other? Both tactics force an acceptance or rejection of symbols upon the people.

Today, we are supposedly engaged in a war to spread freedom throughout the world in order to eliminate terrorism. The theory is that humans thrive when they are free, but when repressed humans will go to extreme lengths to free themselves. The problem is that different people view freedom in different ways. In a democratic society, freedom includes the freedom of expression, including expressions that may offend some people. If one can criticize the Nazis for subjecting Germany and most of Europe to the ideals of the Third Reich, then how can you at the same time support a law that bans such symbols today? Isn't a law outlawing something the same as a law mandating that same thing? Forceful prevention is the same as forced acceptance.

I've mentioned in articles before that the repression of expression will only lead to disaster in the long run. In Germany the Nazi past was repressed for many years after the war; an easy accomplish-

ment when all Nazi symbolism was banned from the country. In the 1960's and 1970's West Germany and other parts of Europe experienced this backlash first hand. The Red Army Faction was a radical left-wing terrorist group that attacked Germany's rich and powerful elites as

"Forced democracy is false democracy."

well as U.S. military installations that they saw as emblems of American imperialism, killing 30 to 50 Germans and Americans. Fighting against what they viewed as the mindless materialism and fascist tendencies of German society, the RAF received support from Middle Eastern terrorists as well as East German Communists who provided logistic support, sanctuary, and training during the 1980s. In an RAF safehouse in Paris flasks of deadly botulism toxin were found.

Just a bunch of crazy left-wing commies you're thinking? Not exactly. After WWII, with the help of western ally nations such as the United States, Germany embarked on a frenzy of memory repression and economic expansion. The goal was to rebuild an industrial powerhouse allied with Great Britain and the United States against the communists in the East, and at the same time completely forget any and all aspects of their Nazi past. In the 1940's and 1950's, the German people tried desperately to get on with their lives and forget the past. Once the German economy rebounded, the Germans embraced consumerism full-throttle. By the 1960's and 1970's, the children of these Germans began to question their Nazi past, but this was basically a no-no; their parents didn't want to remember anything, they just wanted to be a part of the new happy consumer democracy and pretend that WWII never happened. So, perturbed by their questions going unanswered, and seeing their parents as mindless buyers into the American dream, some of these young Germans began to protest, and in some cases

they became radical members of

RAF.

The question must be asked: Would such a radical force ever have been so easily formed, brewing for years beneath the surface of a post-war Germany that enabled itself to ignore its past by focusing on economic development with a strong western government walking hand-in-hand with the USA? Terrorism is reactionary; terrorists become terrorists because for one reason or another they feel that they are not free to be who they want to be. The insurgents in Iraq do not want a pro-USA democracy; we call them evil. But, if you think about it, they do have a point; why do we get to control how other countries are run? Forced democracy is false democracy.

George W. Bush himself said that in order to achieve liberty, you must love it. But how can we force someone to love something? Love is an emotion and emotions cannot be controlled, even through propaganda. Only open discourse, the willingness to accept differing viewpoints, not to automatically discount opposing viewpoints as evil, can lead to an open, accepting society. I don't expect the whole world to come together in a free-love hippie commune sense; but if we are at least willing to engage in open debate, to allow every person to express their own viewpoints, to live their own lives the way they want to, then, and only then, will we achieve a more peaceful society.

Rather than outlawing *Mein Kampf*, Germans should be allowed to read it and discuss it. It is commonly said that if you don't learn from history, that history is bound to repeat itself. How many wars began simply because people were either forced to do something or forbidden to do something? Rather than ban Nazi symbolism from the EU, German lawmakers would be wise to lift the ban on such items within the borders of Germany itself. The German people should have the right to read and discuss *Mein Kampf*, not hide from it. Just as Americans in the South have the right to display the Confederate flag, even though some people are offended by it, Nazi symbols should be legalized as well.

Wouldn't it be better to approach someone wearing a swastika armband and engage in a good ideological discussion rather than have that person hiding out in his or her basement preparing for the coming war? Most people assume that such people are ignorant fools; it's easy to judge when you don't listen. We have a tendency to write off people with whom we do not agree as idiots; be careful, ignored idiots have plenty of time to plan their attack. Maybe if we give those with whom we do not agree a chance to discuss their opinions, then they won't feel that the only way for them to be free is to get rid of everyone else.

Sweden, one of the most liberal nations in the world, has a legal National Socialist Party. If a country like Sweden, a country which many people, liberals in particular, would love to emulate, is able to tolerate the freedom of expression, of all expression, then why can't other "democratic" countries as well?

OK, so maybe Deutschland doesn't need to be dissolved; it just needs to be opened up. Opened up to debate and opened up to freedom within its borders. But if the Germans are not willing to open up, they can at least not try to placate themselves by limiting the rights of others.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION?  
Courtesy of www.meo.org.hu

# Walkman, Tsunami, and God Continued...

By Dahmane Mazouzi

Continued from page 14

Malaysia, and Sri Lanka, swallowing up numerous islands in the Indian Ocean and even disrupting the shores of Africa, including Somalia, Tanzania and Kenya.

Right afterwards, a strange spirit of competitiveness, of overbid even, seized countries and their leaders, international organizations and companies and even their citizens. The humanitarian battle was launched and its winner will be the one who would offer the most, who would show the most compassion,

still have a great influence on today's world and also show off our intervention capacity. Also to use politics as a way to polish up one political image with public opinion by enhancing one's prestige and one's hold. Thus, the Tsunami is in the middle of an economic war this time. It is not by mistake that the two nations which have so far provided the biggest help are our nation and China, which as a matter of fact, will be the great rivalries of the next decades. Therefore, for those who want to understand today's world, they must also see the aftermath of the Tsunami as a political event.

Still listening to mister moderator, he then tackled the subject of God. "Where was God during the tsunami and if He does exist how could He do that?" I was astonished and to be honest, I did not understand the question. In brief, he was saying that since we have a contradictory concept (in other words, God as being good and a natural catastrophe which has killed so far 170 000 people) therefore God cannot exist. What an argument. If only I could remember the name of that moderator, I would have asked him why God made me lost 50 dollars.

For a believer, everything that happens on earth is directly related to God, good or evil. There is no doubt about this. Is God responsible for the Big Bang? A believer would say yes. Pascal claimed that "God is an infinite sphere whose centre is everywhere and circumference is nowhere". Therefore the question of whether God is behind the Tsunami in particular or not does not make any sense.

Believer or not, human life is a succession of crises and resolutions, but still we find it hard to see this as a balance. We

try to find answers in everything we encounter. Since a human being has the capacity of observing and philosophizing about the world that surrounds him, he tends to want answers for everything. Understanding gravitation through the fall of an apple is something supernatural and profound. Who would think of one of the fundamental laws of the Universe when looking at a tree leaf falling? But to hear Mister moderator claiming that God cannot exist in reply to the question why did God produce the Tsunami made me realize that from the time I understood I lost 50 dollars until the moment I put that radio headphone on my ears, my nightmare was not going to end.

Most of us truly believe that pain is something absurd, a split, incoherence in the logic of our conception of the world. Nevertheless, if asking minimum questions is something coherent, trying to find reasons in all pain is something impossible and can lead to greater pain or unacceptable remarks. Whether we believe or not, the question of God comes up when thinking of a tragedy or catastrophe. Why? If we do not believe in God, why should we tackle the subject of God as far as pain is concerned?

Is pain a failure? How does such a good and great God tolerate such a catastrophe? How can He have created this earth in which a constant death threat and tears are in the air?

I really think that the question is misposed. We should rather try to grasp the

effect the Tsunami may have on human beings. I suppose that its impact may be interpreted differently from one individual to another. Nevertheless, one possible effect could lead to a meeting. A meeting with oneself. A time for a change. We live such a hectic existence that we rarely stop for self introspection. We take refuge in anything our society has to offer: work, hobbies, distractions and other things that may distract us. We try not to think of ourselves, as if thinking about our life hurts us.

Pain hits anyone anytime anywhere without exception. In fact, it does not apparently have any real cause and this is what makes it so dramatic. No cause, therefore no remedy, no escape. Comparing my weird day in the city with the Tsunami tragedy made me come down to earth with modesty and revealed my fragile humanity and vulnerability. Nowadays, in our societies, simple hazards of life like the loss of 50 dollars may affect us so much that we cannot imagine experiencing such a catastrophe as the Tsunami. Tragic events disturb us, call us into question, shake up our accepted ideas, break up illusions or erroneous beliefs which we may hold. Putting oneself in a state of crisis to look into our lives. This could be a way to interpret a tragedy but still always the same question comes to the mind of the individual experiencing such crises: "Why me?"

As "the heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of," life also has its reasons which human reason knows nothing of. Above all, if I could explain pain on earth, I might also explain God then...

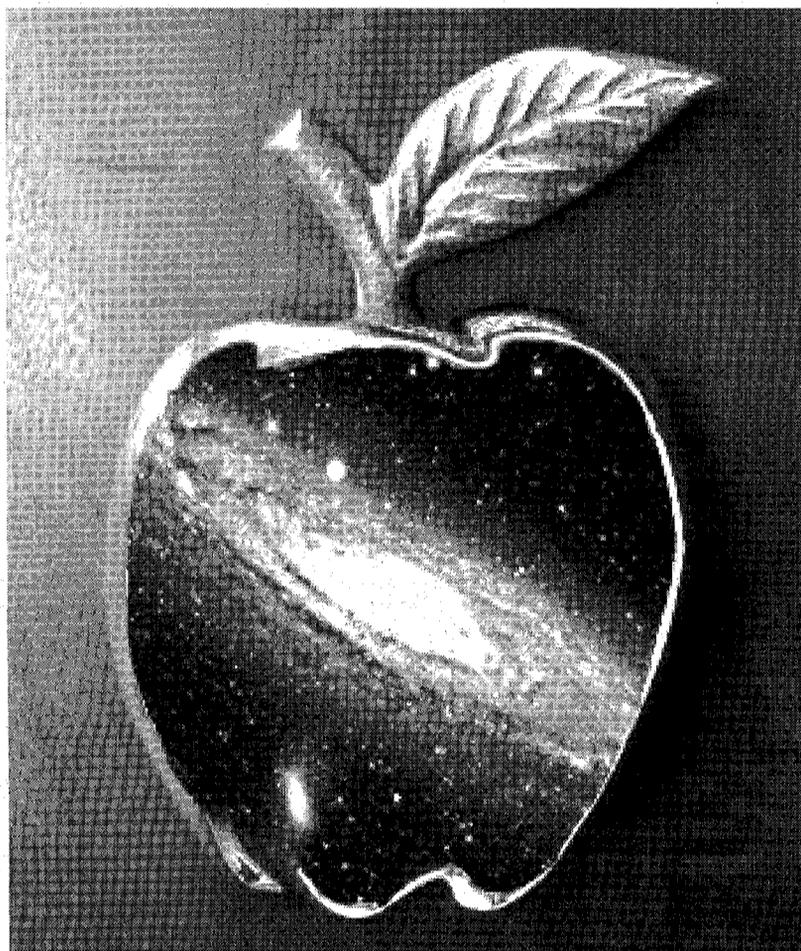
If you have any comment, please contact [dmazouzi@ic.sunysb.edu](mailto:dmazouzi@ic.sunysb.edu)

Dahmane Mazouzi  
Stony Brook University Student

Footnotes

French international newspaper *Le Monde*.  
January 11, 2005.

<http://msnbc.msn.com/id/6790989/>



THE UNIVERSE IN EVERY BITE,  
Courtesy of Chris Williams

generosity and imagination.

Will they really keep their promises? I doubt it. History has shown that they rarely do so.

A year after the tragic earthquake that hit the City of Bam in Iran, killing 32,000 people and injuring 18,000 [1], how far have we got as far as humanitarian promises are concerned? At the time, in the general emotion produced by the earthquake, one billion dollars was promised as part of the international aid. A year later, just more than 17 million dollars has been received by Iran. The international community's generosity has only lasted as far as the media effect was. The countries' promises vanished as soon as the cameras left for another tragedy, leaving Iranians with their nightmares...and with only less than 1.7 % of the promised aid [2].

Would the Bam syndrome be repeated again? Time will tell.

It is normal before such a disaster that the world acts in unison in order to provide financial and physical help to those devastated areas. Nevertheless, what drives the international community to express so much compassion? Because what we have seen so far is a real humanitarian war.

Only naïve people think that a natural catastrophe can interrupt rivalries between the great powers. On the contrary, it exacerbates them. The objective is to demonstrate that we

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# He Shall, From Time to Time, Make My Head Spin

By Krystyna M. Baumgartner

On Wednesday night, President Bush delivered his fifth State of the Union in front of what is perhaps the most partisan Congress we've had since the early 1900's. In his hour-long address, he laid out an agenda that left me questioning what he really intends to do. His rhetoric did not match his record, nor, in some cases, did it match the budget proposal he sent to Congress for the 2005 fiscal year.

President Bush said that he wants to strengthen community colleges and increase the size of Pell Grants. And yet, he has proposed freezing the funding for Pell Grants in his proposed budget for the last three years. Recently, he supported a new formula for determining eligibility for Pell Grants that would cut 90,000 students from the program. As far as community colleges are concerned, the President has not worked much toward strengthening them in the past. He said in his address that more people should be able to attend community colleges. But, in his budget for the 2004 fiscal year, President Bush tried to cut \$3 million from the Perkins Program, which helps community college students afford college. Congress, thankfully, stepped in and prevented the cut in funding. What we need is more

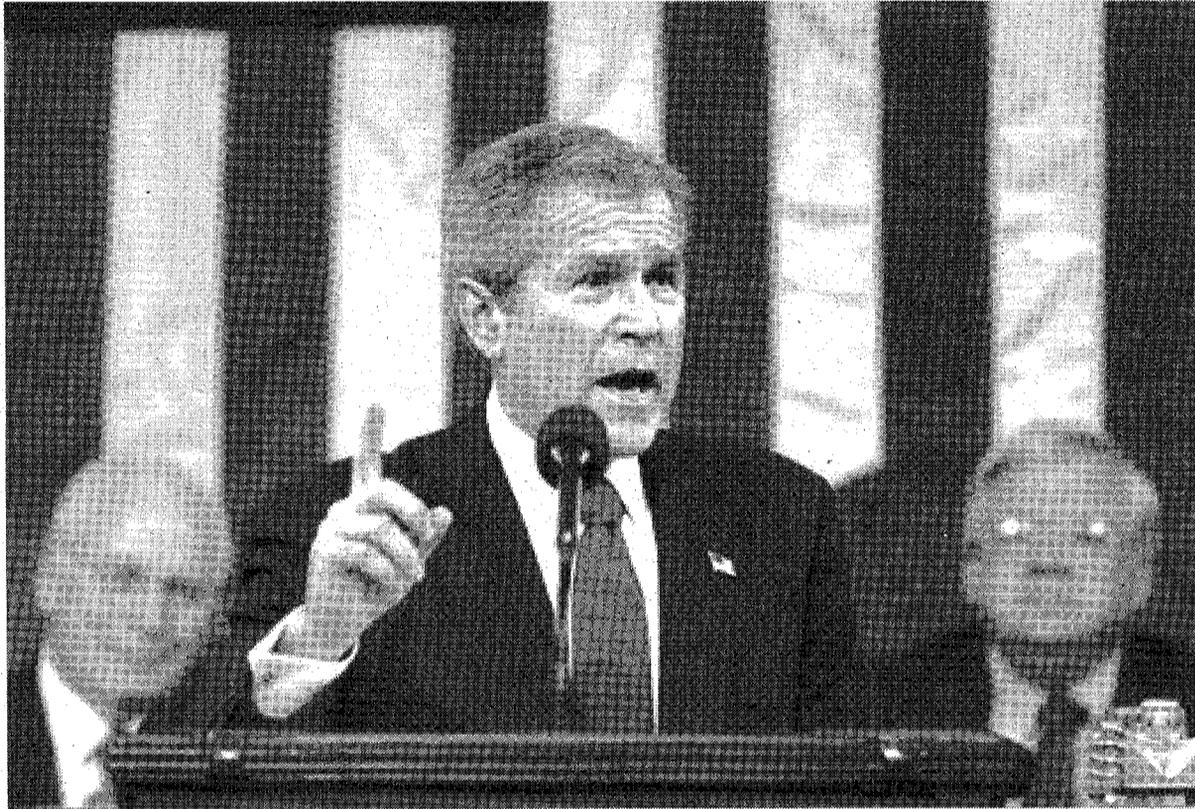
funding being put into these programs. We need to make higher education affordable so that more people can get a college education. We live in an age where it is essential to have a college degree in order to be competitive in the workforce.

In the realm of primary education, President Bush talked of the success of his No Child Left Behind program. He said that test scores are higher and that the gap is closing for minorities. He now wants to spread the program to high schools. What he failed to mention, however, is that the Association of Governors has signed a statement saying that they are already overburdened by what they call an unfunded mandate. And the President is not trying to help them. Quite to the contrary, in his budget proposal for this year, he allocates almost \$10 million less than is promised in the legislation for this program. All this will accomplish is putting added strain on the system.

President Bush spoke glowingly about Iraq and about the free elections that were held there recently. He even honored our brave men and women of the Armed Forces, giving them the recognition that he had held back at the beginning of the war. He did not offer an exit strategy to bring them home, however. Instead, he told them that he would not set a timetable for their return because that would give the terrorists hope. I urge the President to protect our soldiers if he plans on keeping them over there. Do not make them scrounge through garbage dumps to find scrap metal to cover their trucks with. Do not make them ask for bulletproof

vests from their families. These are things that he has an obligation to provide them with. He is their commander-in-chief, the one that sent them to war. He should not turn his back on his troops. Instead, he should provide them with the weapons and armor that they need to get home to their families alive.

After speaking about Iraq, President Bush delivered one line about North Korea. He said that we are working with other nations to reduce North Korea's store of nuclear weapons.



**SOCIAL SECURITY, EDUCATION, AND PEACE ARE GONE DUE TO BUDGET CUTS**  
Courtesy of [www.hollandsentinel.net](http://www.hollandsentinel.net)

I was glad that he at least mentioned North Korea, as this was the one thing that I really wanted to hear him talk about. But what he said was nowhere near to what I wanted to hear. United States Intelligence believes that during Bush's first term, North Korea quadrupled its store of nuclear weapons. Quadrupled. And according to Charles Pritchard, who was Former Secretary of State Colin Powell's chief official in handling North Korea, the White House cannot prevent them from continuing to build their arsenal. He said that the efforts that Bush spoke of are not working. But it appears as though the President intends to continue along this vein in trying to handle the North Koreans. Who knows, maybe in four years, they'll not only have built up their store of nuclear weapons even further, but may have decided to test them on the American soldiers at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. It is time to get tough with North Korea. I am not saying that we have to go to war to get them to reduce their arms supply. I am saying that we should use diplomatic channels that are so often overlooked—summits, economic sanctions and the like. If you think that those are not effective, just remember that Kennedy ended the Cuban Missile Crisis with a blockade.

The entire address built up to the President unveiling his Social Security plan. The reason that President Bush spent so much time talking about his plan during the State of the Union is because he knew that he held the attention of millions of Americans hostage for the hour that he was on. This was vital because the Republican leadership does not want to sup-

port Social Security privatization. They clapped and cheered enough during his address, but behind the scenes, they told him that he did not have their support unless he can sell it to the American people. And that is what he was attempting to do in the State of the Union.

President Bush started by praising Social Security as a great moral success of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. He then proceeded to tell the American people that by the year 2032, the program will be bankrupt. Forget that this goes

against reports that economists outside of the Bush administration have released, which say that the system will only be able to provide about 70-80% of current benefits, but that it will not be bankrupt. Put that aside and pretend that Social Security will in fact be bankrupt in the year 2032. What President Bush proposed is having "voluntary personal retirement accounts" into which workers can deposit part of the portion of their paycheck that now goes into Social Security. He claims that this will ensure that in retirement, you will have your own savings in addition to Social Security benefits.

This is where the President's plan derails. He has just claimed that Social Security is going to be bankrupt. If this is true given the amount of money that is now being

put into the system, then how will it be able to provide benefits to citizens when people are now taking part of the money set aside in their paychecks for Social Security and putting it into private accounts? Won't the system go bankrupt sooner if this is allowed to occur? I think that the President needs to do a little bit more prep work on his program before he tries to sell it to the American people. At the very least, he should practice what he will say when someone points this out, as I know that I am not the only one who has noticed this tiny little problem with his plan.

The underlying point to privatizing Social Security is that the system needs to be fixed. But creating these private retirement accounts is not going to fix the system. It will only serve to further cripple the system by funneling money out of it. We need to create a means by which money can be funneled into it. Perhaps the President can offer a plan in which he repeals the corporate tax breaks that are now in place, as well as the tax cuts given to the wealthiest 1% of Americans. What will he do with all of that extra money you ask? Put it into Social Security.

Words are nice, Mr. President, but you once accused Senator Kerry of not having a record that matched his rhetoric. Now I am turning that accusation on you. If you said one correct thing in your address on Wednesday, it was that four years of debate are enough. Now is the time for action, the time to do what is in the best interest of the American people.

# The Iraq Election and its Aftermath

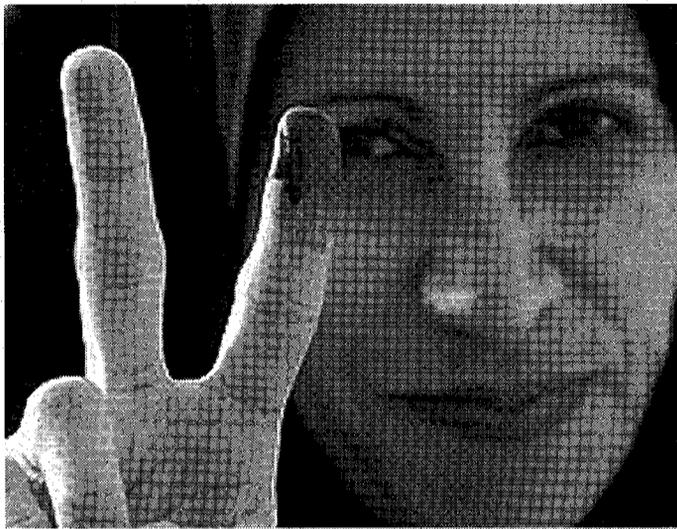
By Joan Leong

For the first time in over 50 years, the people of Iraq and its expatriates were able to vote in a free election. This election's goal is to choose 275 members for the new National Assembly. The members are responsible for drafting a new constitution by August 2005 which will then have to be sanctioned by the Iraqi public. They are to elect a new President and two deputies who will later appoint a Prime Minister who will choose the Cabinet. The seats of the Assembly will be handed out according to the proportion to the amount of votes they received. The National Assembly is to act as a transitional regime until a permanent government is established in December under the new constitution. The frontrunners for this election is the extremely influential cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani of the United Iraqi Alliance, who is a Shiite Muslim-dominated party. His party also consists of a small number of Kurds and Sunni Muslims and the familiar name of cleric Moqtada Sadr who has clashed with US troops in the last year. The other party expected to dominate this election is the Iraqi National Accord who is led by interim Prime Minister Allawi of the Iraqi List known for his pro-American views. The party is mostly secular but has a few Shiite and Sunni candidates. The Kurdish Alliance List is the minority party of this election and they represent the Kurdish voters from the North. However two of the most influential Sunni groups are boycotting this election because they believe that the free elections are a farce as long as Iraq is still occupied by the US.

There is an estimate about 19,000 candidates who are expected to run for office. Also, every third candidate on the ballot is a woman. These are definite improvements to the previous Saddam's Baathist regime where women had no rights at all. Any Iraqi citizen over 30 years old with a high school diploma and no high-ranking positions in the former Baathist regime can run for office. Any citizen over 18 has the right to vote, and even the expatriates can vote in 14 different countries. The day of the election, Iraqi citizens defied the insurgents' violent threats

and went to the voting polls. They proudly displayed their ink-stained finger to prove they voted and it was also to show election workers that they couldn't vote again.

The promise of widespread massive violence to challenge the elections was not upheld by the insurgents; still, the day did not pass without tragedy. Approximately 45 people were



PERSONALLY I PREFER THE "I VOTED" STICKERS,  
Courtesy of CNN

killed this day and an estimated 71 others were wounded by suicide and car bombs and mortar attacks. There were roughly 7 million people at the voting polls on that historic Sunday. That is about half of all registered voters and about 35% of all eligible voters. Of the 3 million votes already counted, 2.2 million of those votes already belong to the United Iraqi Alliance, the Shiite party most predicted to obtain the majority of seats. The surprise in this election is the Kurd minority; despite only making up 19% of the population will likely win about 25% of the assembly seats. This is due to the separate Kurdish parties running as one single coalition and the overwhelming Kurdish voter turnout. Their polling stations were also in the more secure, US-protected north region where there

has been less insurgent violence.

The voter turnout is the highest in the history of free elections in Iraq and is deemed a win for the Bush Administration which had such a difficult time in trying to establish a stable regime in Iraq over the past two years. Many consider this day the greatest day of their life and many are hoping this will be the beginning of the end of the US occupation. However, the President's State of the Union speech on Wednesday night clearly shows that he has no idea when he is going to start pulling the already worn-out troops in Iraq. Bush's defense is that they are keeping the troops there to ensure the new government will be able to make a smooth transition. It is obvious to anyone with their eyes open that the US has no intentions to ever leave this country to fully govern itself. The American media does not focus on the fact that there are already about 4 permanent military bases on the Iraqi soil and the word on the grapevine is that there are about a dozen more to follow. The American news channels showed the Iraqi people dancing in the street the day of the election, but it's all for show. It will be quite sad, when they realize that even after their permanent government is established, they will never be free of the US. Sure, their citizens would have voted for their leaders and sure, they voted for their constitution, but we will know the US will be controlling Iraq behind the scenes. We have nearly 890 military bases around the world, and I cannot foresee the United States' imperialistic character to slow down anytime soon. If the Bush regime's intentions were truly what he claimed they were, there would be no permanent military bases in Iraq. But, of course, they have an ulterior motive, they want to have eyes in the Middle East and maneuver their control when they see fit. The final results of the elections are expected sometime in the next few days. After that, the world can only wait and see who is next on the We're-going-to-free-you-but-first-we-have-to-kill-you list.

## Confessions of an Oscar-holic

By Sarah Cassone

The morning of January 25<sup>th</sup> was an extremely uneventful one. The 77<sup>th</sup> Academy Award® nominations were announced at 5:30pm PST to a mostly silent press audience. Normally, you'd hear a few gasps of surprise or some excited murmurs yet the crowd was relatively subdued.

I sat at home, utterly bored. Yes, I was happy the people I liked were recognized (DiCaprio, Blanchett, Swank, Winslet) but they were to be expected. There weren't even any good snubs to get my blood boiling.

The biggest shock was Mike Leigh's nod for Best Director (*Vera Drake*.) Yet, it barely made a dent with me. I adore Leigh (how can you not?) but I was hoping for more extreme, unconventional shocks like Michel Gondry, (*Eternal Sunshine...*) Michael Moore, (*Fahrenheit 9/11*) Walter Salles (*The Motorcycle Diaries*) or Quentin Tarantino (*Kill Bill Vol. 2*). *Vera Drake* is a controversial film, but Leigh is a much-loved director.

My previous articles on *Sideways* and *Ray* lived up (sadly) to my expectations. *Ray* was recognized for Best Picture and Director, beating out other deserving films, based solely on its powerhouse star vehicle and its box office revenue. Their campaign continues to be bril-

liant, releasing the film on DVD the Tuesday after nominations were announced, while it's still playing in about 500 theaters. *Sideways* was snubbed for Best Actor (but really, that's more of a Giamatti thing, who was also snubbed last year.) Many pundits believe this hurts its chances - I don't believe it affects it either way.

The other shocks came in the technical categories (but really, how exciting is that? Not very.) The Polar Express gained two tech noms but was snubbed for Animated Feature. My Dream List article panned out correctly in terms of who/what wouldn't be nominated. I can't claim surprise or even too much disappointment, as I'd already resigned myself to the fact.

Post-nomination talk showed a three-way race (though I claim a two-way) between *The Aviator*, *Million Dollar Baby* and *Sideways*, with *The Aviator* having an advantage given its 11 noms and larger than life appeal. And then

came the DGA's (Directors Guild Awards) which recognized Clint Eastwood (*Million Dollar Baby*) as Best Director. This posed two questions:

Is *The Aviator* still the front-runner? What the hell does Scorsese have to do to finally win?

Martin Scorsese has never won a DGA, Academy Award and his films have never won an Oscar® for Best Picture. Why? Is he unlucky in his yearly competition, usually being placed against Actors-turned-Directors? Or is it becoming some comic Susan Lucci-ish joke? I have no answer. Perhaps the Oscars will derail from the DGA's as it's done a few times in the past. Perhaps *The Aviator's* PGA (Producer's Guild Awards) win still makes it the frontrunner.

The ballots have gone out, the intense campaigning has begun, and the films are going into wide(r) release. All we can do now is sit back and watch how things play out on February 27<sup>th</sup>.

The Cinema Arts Centre in Huntington is having an Oscar Night party at 8pm on Sunday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Admission is free.



NAKED GOLD GUY  
Courtesy of oscar.org

# HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

## Nas - Street Disciple

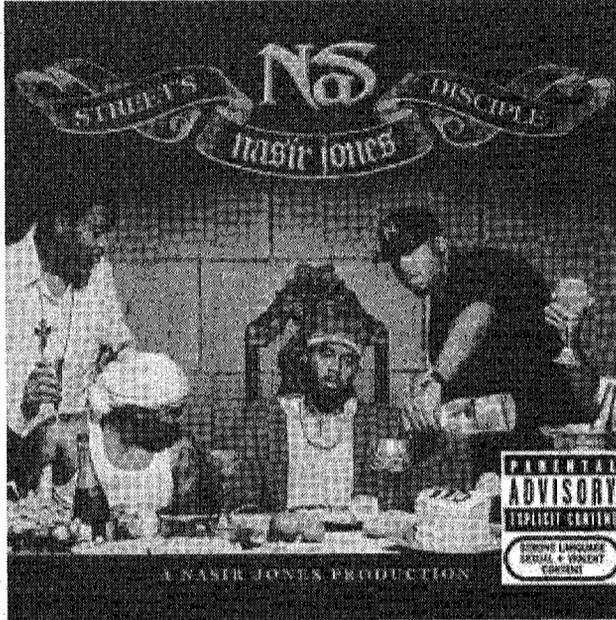
By Joan Leong

Nas is one of the most influential and respected rappers of our time and this album was able to reflect his talent and voice. *Streets Disciple*, his seventh album has numerous tracks revealing his political state of mind and other important social issues prevalent in the African-American community. Despite his achievements with this album, you also have to take it with a grain of salt, a large grain of salt. There are several disturbing tracks about his sexual past with women that I had to skip because it was just entirely too crass. *Streets Disciple* is a two-disc compilation of songs ranging from his resentment of the Bush Administration to his regretful past to crime and violence ruining his peers.

The first track on disc one is called "A Message to the Feds, Sincerely, We the People," is a bitter song about people who are constantly targeted by the feds. He seems to blame white people it seems because he calls the feds Abercrombie and Fitch, Diesel wearing marksmen who see him and his peers as trouble. He blames them for the death of innocent women and children and for mixing up the coke they sell on his streets. There is a strong statement in this song because he believes their spirit will never die and one day his enemies will get their just desserts. Probably my favorite song off this album is "The American Way" featuring his fiancée Kelis. "Vote for who now? I'm American too but I ain't with the President's crew. . . . Try to lead my sheep to the slaughter house. . . . The black vote mean nothing, who you gonna elect? Satan or Satan?" I think he speaks for a great deal of the American public during the 2004 election when our choices of candidates were a crappy Kerry and Satan. "I don't care about the candidates. . . they burnt this country to bits. . . that's the American way." He cannot relate to the presidential candidates because they are all phonies who just want the Black vote when in reality they honestly do not care about anything. I highly recommend this song and it actually pretty catchy.

Another song I would recommend is "Live Now" and he encourages everyone to live life the right way. He has seen the people around him lead tragic lives and the goal of the song is inspire you to change. There is a performance by a girl named Scarlett that was touching. She traveled all over the world partying and having promiscuous sex and just supporting a wild lifestyle and now she regrets it all because along the way, she contracted HIV. She tells you all that the material things in life no longer matter and she wishes that she could

have been that kind of woman Nas would have married. The song "Rest of My Life" follows along the same theme, about how Nas turned his life around from a life of crime and poverty to success. He tries to inspire all the kids his old neighborhood that he went through the same thing and that they do not need to turn to crime because they can overcome that.



I WISH I KNEW NAS LYRIC TO PUT HERE, Courtesy of Amazon.com

"Just a Moment" is a tribute to people all over the world who live and die tragic lives. He gives his sympathy to the troops in the war, the children dying in Africa, the single mothers who bust their asses, for the hip-hop moguls who have passed, and for all the victims in the world. "Reason" is another track that reflects how disillusioned he is with people. The cop who is supposed to protect us is actually a serial killer, the father who left their women and children are all featured in this song about how fucked up this world we are living in. I think all the praise-worthy songs were confined to the first disc, except for the over-the-top disgusting hidden track. "She'll scream. . . when she piss, she's gonna bleed in the whole stool. That's how much I want to bang and touch her pretty thing." I think that is self-explanatory why it sucks.

Disc Two is full of mediocre tracks, like they were made for the radio and they did not have the same impact as the first CD. "Suicide Bounce" and "No One Else in the Room" featuring Busta Rhymes and Maxwell were obviously

made for radio hits because they were entirely catchy, melodic and second-rate in comparison to his other tracks. I wish I could tell you what they were about but I do not have the remotest idea what was said. "Virgo," "Making of the Perfect Bitch," and "Remember the Times" were songs I fully and completely hated. In "Virgo" he brags about fucking girls because he could and is just very cocky about the whole thing. "Makings of the Perfect Bitch" was just awful because I thought it was very childish in the way he was trying to be all macho by describing his perfect woman as a submissive sex-toy who fulfils his every wish and does his taxes. It was just stupid.

"Remember the Times" is hands down the worst of them, because he brags about his decorative sexual history. He claims he has done it with anything with a vagina from girls in wheelchairs, to midgets, twins, mothers, girls with funny odors, girls who tried to eat his excrement, etc. He brags about all his trips to the abortion clinic and the time he got a urinary tract infection. Nas tries to redeem himself in the end, by saying he is no longer that way and his priorities have changed and he is a changed man. But he only sums it up in five lines and in one line he said EWW. Well, it isn't easy to forget what I just heard and it was all just very, very, very gross. He does seem to have a sweet side though because he has a semi-romantic song dedicated to his fiancée Kelis called "Getting Married." It has genuinely sugary lines in it because he loves Kelis but don't worry, he machos it up by throwing in a few cuss words here and there. But I liked it because...I'm a girl and he wants to give her a Cinderella wedding and promises her the world and who doesn't like hearing that. "Bridging the Gap" is a touching song because it features his father Olu Dara, a jazz musician on the trumpet. Father and son are both entirely proud of each other and it's just a great song. The last song is a loving dedication to his daughter Destiny and it redeems him in my eyes for those previous nasty songs.

This two-disc album was pretty well done. I would recommend this CD but I would tell you to skip most of disc two. Nas is one of the only rappers today that I respect and wouldn't mind listening to. He brings up very important issues in today's society like discrimination, poverty, crime and war. Sometimes he appears too cocky and his album cover art is of the Last Supper and he is Jesus. But, whatever floats his boat. Other than the songs degrading women, you should give Streets Disciple a chance.

Swords

Sorcery

Technology

LESBIANS!

# CRASHWORLD

- A NOVEL -

[www.andrewpernick.com](http://www.andrewpernick.com)

# HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

## Briefly Brief Briefing

By Tara Lynne Groth

Instead of seeing a DVD review and thinking to yourself, *I could just watch the movie and decide for myself*, here's some insight on two DVDs released at the turn of the New Year with additional information you will not find on the back of the box.

**Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind** Collector's Double Disc Edition  
Director: Michel Gondry  
Screenwriter: Charlie Kaufman  
Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst, Mark Ruffalo, Elijah Wood  
(Released January 4, 2005)

What is on the original single-disc edition?

**A Look Inside *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind***— Jim Carrey is always a good laugh, but the real surprise is the revelation that no blue screen was used in filming.

**A Conversation With Jim Carrey and Director Michel Gondry:** If you can tolerate Gondry's thick French accent this is well worth the viewing. At least watch this for a scene where Carrey drives a bed (a VW is converted into a mattress with wheels) around a gas station—this was omitted from the film.

**Feature Commentary With Michel Gondry and Screenwriter Charlie Kaufman:** Again, if you can tolerate the French accent of Gondry, go for it. Charlie Kaufman disappoints and only offers commentary worth commenting on during a handful of scenes.

**Deleted Scenes:** Disappointing, the reasons are obvious why these didn't make the feature. They're slow or contain too deep a tone than the feature itself.

**Polyphonic Spree "Light & Day" Music Video**  
**Lacuna Commercial**

What is on the amazing 2-Disc Collector's Edition?

Everything above!

**Inside the Mind of Michel Gondry:** Unfortunately none of the additional features that include Gondry have subtitles. If you can decipher his accent, he addresses this language barrier and makes fun of how people think he's a genius because he sounds smart with an accent. Of course, he *is* a genius. Gondry discusses his determination to create all special affects with the camera and not in post-production. One of his ideas was to have a car under the ice in the famous scene where Joel (Jim Carrey) and Clementine (Kate Winslet) are lying on the Charles River. This was never done, but lends an example to how Gondry creates his films.

**Anatomy of a Scene: Saratoga Avenue:** The musical score, special effects, and the challenges the actors faced are documented in-depth regarding this specific scene in the film. Fun factoids are revealed...during this scene the composer shakes boxes of Tic-Tacs in the score, it is revealed that Clementine is walking with only a single leg in one shot, and Yonkers residents are barricaded off the street.

**A Conversation With Kate Winslet and Director Michel Gondry:** To complement the

Carrey/Gondry Conversation on the original DVD release and filmed in late 2004, mainly a self-indulgent-patting-of-each-other's backs. Winslet (Academy Award Nominee for Best Actress for her performance in this film) should stick to the acting and avoid being interviewed.



THIS MOVIE TOOK PLACE ON OR NEAR LONG ISLAND!  
Courtesy of Tara Lynne Groth

**Deleted/Extended Scenes:** Quite impressive, and still the reasons for being cut are obvious. There is an altered scene between Joel and Clementine where Clementine is "seducing" Joel in her apartment over Blue Ruins. A scene entirely left out of the final film between a character who was never on-screen, Joel's ex-girlfriend Naomi, is shot as they break up in a park.

**Hidden Section:** I found this entirely by accident. Insert the Collector's Edition Bonus Disc, on the main menu make sure the first link (Inside the Mind of Michel Gondry) is highlighted. Press the top arrow key and the cursor will highlight a checkered link at the bottom of the screen. Select this and watch a short, very short, probably ten seconds, cartoon created by Joel Barkish. This is titled "Misadventures of Superdog" and features a dog walking upstairs, a door is opened and he is swallowed by the breasts of a cartoon rabbit. It looks like a rabbit at least Yes, extremely different, as is *Eternal Sunshine*.

**Garden State**

Director: Zach Braff

Screenwriter: Zach Braff

Zach Braff, Natalie Portman, Ian Holm,

Method Man

(Released December 28, 2004)

What does New Jersey offer without having to go through a tunnel?

**Audio Commentaries** by **Writer/Director/Actor Zach Braff, Actress Natalie Portman and Filmmakers:** Reveals how Braff created the story from pieces of his own life that are expressed through his character Andrew Largeiman. An example of what's discussed...During the scene where Andrew and Sam (Natalie Portman) meet in a neurologist's office, the command for getting the seeing eye dog to hump Andrew's leg is "Who's your bitch?"

**Outtakes and Bloopers:** Not worth commenting on.

**16 Deleted Scenes:** The most I've ever seen on a DVD! The extended scene of Andrew getting pulled over by a cop is brilliant. Watch the alternate scene of Andrew and Sam in the bathtub to see Zach Braff's attempt at weeping.

**"Making-Of" Featurette:** Extremely entertaining. Ian Holm predicts his character will break away from gravedigging and become a "rudimentary guitar instructor." Quite the humorous cast.



# HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

## The Fiery Furnaces: EP

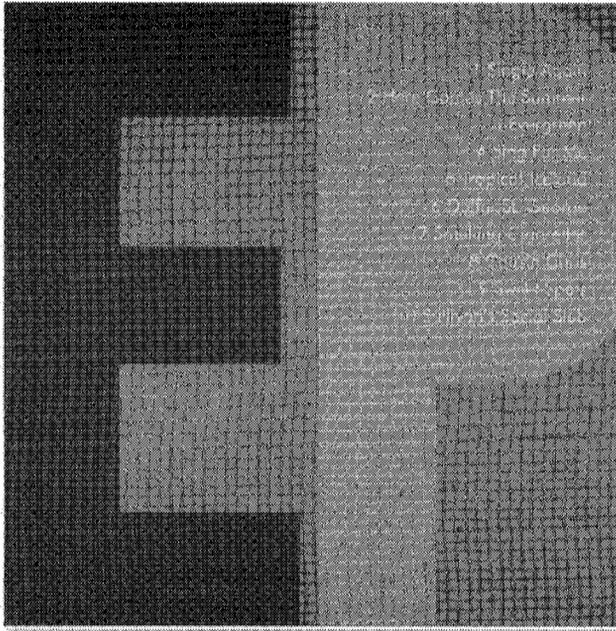
By Seth Maggiore

So what does a band that comes from relative obscurity to tour with Wilco in a matter of two years do for an encore at the start of 2005? Release a collection of their B-sides, of course. Although this move would confuse most music executives, it makes perfect sense for fans and new comers of The Fiery Furnaces. *EP* offers the like an opportunity to explore this band's colorful and, to say the least, fascinating back catalog of songs.

This brother-sister duo (Matthew and Eleanor Friedberger) based out of Brooklyn has been making noticeable strides since their inception as abasement project in 2002 with the release of two critically acclaimed full length albums, *Gallowsbird's Bark* and *Blueberry Boat*, in addition to extensive touring both nationally and abroad. With plans for another full-length album to be released this year in the works, and a supportive record label, there's no indication that the group is losing momentum. Yet with so much going on for The Fiery Furnaces they have flown under the publicity radar undetected, for the most part anyhow. The reason for this is fairly simple: they're too good at what they do. They have taken their knacks and developed something new, which either confuses or detracts many people. What's left is an audio adventure for all those who don't shy away from strange or different music, which is a reward for those who care.

The first track and most recent single, "Single Again," is a prime example of the band's storytelling ability. The song begins with a blaring electronic beat, which sounds like it's from a futuristic dance song, then progresses into a narrative of a woman who wishes to be free from her abusive, eventually homicidal husband. Although the subject matter may sound unappealing, the song becomes upbeat with a pleasant plot twist and an ironic ending. Other equally terrific songs from *EP* are the bitter-

sweet ballad "Evergreen," ironically amusing "Smelling Cigarettes" and the ultra-dubbed, wonderfully dizzying remix of "Tropical Ice-Land" (Originally from *Gallowsbird's Bark*).



IS THIS THE FRONT OR BACK COVER?  
Courtesy of our wondrous photo staff

Credit must be given to the immense amount of talent displayed instrumentally as well as lyrically. With blatantly obvious influences such as The Who, the hectic drumming and timely guitar performances would make Keith Moon and Pete Townsend proud (which is truly amazing considering that Keith Moon has been dead for almost 25 years). The piano parts at some points in *EP* are extremely critical and magnificently played, often times creating a backbone for songs that sometimes seem like they lack direction.

At first listen The Fiery Furnaces

could be mistaken for a cheap electronic meets minimalist rock rip-off, with the standard loud sound effects accompanied by simple chord progressions. This false conclusion is unfortunately a product of cynical people who have fallen into a nasty habit of judging things at face value. Sometimes it's hard not to be this way considering all the crap that's out there musically, but just below the surface an original sound can be discovered; one in which elaborately detailed storytelling, great dubbing and amazing instrumentals merge for a melodic quality that's more contagious than chicken pox in a class of first graders.

In conclusion, this CD is great. Every little detail makes you love it more and more with subsequent listening, such as bountiful references to drinking, journeying to quirky places and apparently absolute adoration for alliteration (I guess that's contagious as well). Even the title is paradoxically amusing because this collection of scattered B-sides feels more like a planned out full length album than the bastard leftovers which composed their previous EP's. This is due in part to the way The Fiery Furnaces recorded some of their songs continuously (a tactic derived from their live shows), few creative inhibitions and an overall lax feeling in their music (probably attributed to the fact that they don't expect many people to buy it). In a money-hungry music industry where collections of sub par B-sides are often pushed off on us to make rich people even richer without really doing anything, The Fiery Furnaces managed to use it as an opportunity to make something unusual. The result is one of the most underrated, unappreciated and overall fantastic bands around today are giving you, the listener, and an awesome album for about \$10. In other words buy the damn CD and enjoy it.

## Hi Hi Puffy Ami Yumi, I Will Have Sex With You Both!

By Michael Prazak

So, I walk into the Press office, intent on finding an empty couch to lie upon and sleep away my remaining education. But fuck, there were people all over the place. This was disconcerting; therefore I immediately viewed all of these people as enemies of freedom. My freedom to lie on a couch and take fucking naps. I remained vigilant and steadfast in my dedication and would not compromise. For the couch is like a fire, that warms those who lie upon it, but burns those with weak immune systems. So eventually I find my way onto the couch, people talk, things are handed out, and articles are promised. It slowly dawns on me that I am at a staff meeting, and I'm supposed to be doing a job of some sort. Something involving vouchers and carbon paper, whatever, everyone there is a fascist.

While there, I noted that a single CD had not been handed out for review. So I inquired as to what this CD was. Our eternally informed and omniscient features editor Melanie Donovan said "Put some pants on, Jesus Christ!" After conceding to Ms. Donovan's terms, she then told

me that the CD was from a band called Hi Hi Puffy Ami Yumi, a Japanese pop sensation and host of a cartoon network Television show. So I naturally decided I would review this CD, as nothing newsworthy had sparked my interest in the recent weeks.

For starters, it has to be said; Japanese pop music is way better than American pop music. A self-aware and self-parodying quality is always apparent, and that alone differentiates. However, in terms of song quality and variety, Puffy Ami Yumi completely defecates on pale-faced gaijin demons like Buritoni Supirusu and Kurisutena Agyurea. Exhibiting qualities from doo-wop to modern day pop punk they display an awareness of rhythm and tone far beyond their years...or at least their producers do.

Therefore, if you enjoy the voices of squeaky Japanese girls, out of a pornographic context, then this CD is for you!



"WHATEVER, EVERYONE [IN THE PRESS] IS A FASCIST."  
Courtesy of www.nt2099.com

# HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

## Ani DiFranco Knuckles Down in the Company of Her Friends

By Christine Tanaka

So, I'm going to be honest with you. This album has been playing in my car since the day it was released, with the exception of the State of the Union address, and will probably still be playing in my car when this gets printed. Ani went solo on her last album *Educated Guess* and a lot of Ani fans loved it, but couldn't help missing the drums and the horns. On the other hand, some of her most loyal fans were completely turned off by the production and vowed never to buy another Ani album. Some of them bought this new album anyway and ended up falling back in love with Ani DiFranco.

In her new album *Knuckle Down*, Ani reintroduces drums and experiments with a new type of band. Ani has been touring around the country (and other countries) with a new bandmate Todd Sikafoose, who plays the string bass. On the album, instead of having a brassy background, she is now accompanied by strings and percussion (violin, string bass, electric guitar, piano, melodica, wurlitzer, chamberlin and, my favorite, the glockenspiel).

However odd her choices of instruments, she is always able to bring them together to make a fabulous album. (Can I just say glockenspiel again?) If you've heard all of Ani's albums, you realize that she doesn't have any one kind of style. Every album is different from the last and, of course, that includes this one. In the past, when hearing her new albums, it took me a couple run-throughs to get into it; but I only needed to listen to *Knuckle Down* once to get into it.

Lyricaly, Ani usually has a little more

political edge to her songs than is shown in this album. Don't get me wrong, she didn't completely abandon her politics, I was just expecting more since the election just passed. Then again, it's January, the election was in November, so she must have written these songs before then, in which case I would expect her next album to be more political. I digress.

The album moves pretty smoothly, starting with "Knuckle Down" which was pushed back from her last album *Educated Guess*. You can see the lyrics and music of this song are very much like those in *Educated Guess* (it is just produced completely differently) and it seems to help connect this album to the last. The third, fifth and twelfth songs, "Manhole", "Modulation" and "Recoil", respectively, are also amazing songs. If I weren't so afraid of making such awesome songs played out in my own head, I would put these songs on repeat forever! Okay maybe that's a bit much, but you get the point, they're good. I think the only song I haven't really gotten into is "Minerva". It's not because of the lyrics, I think it's more the melody, which isn't as catchy as most.

If you didn't already know, Ani DiFranco is also a poet, as most musicians are. Her spoken word piece "Parameters" (track 8) is

a chilling account of walking through your own home in the dark and realizing that you're not alone. I think this may be one of my favorite of her poems. Thirty-three years go by / And not

once do you come home / To find a man sitting in your bedroom / That is / A man you don't know / Who came a long way to deliver one very specific message: lock your back door you idiot / However invincible you imagine yourself to be / You are wrong. She's commenting on the fact that you may think you know things so you don't concentrate on them, and then you realize that things change when you're not looking. New as you are, really, to the idea that / Even after you've long since gotten used to the parameters / They can all change / While you're

out one night having a drink with a friend. The picture she paints in your head as she makes her way through this poem is very vivid.

All in all, Ani has made me fall in love with her music all over again. Ani grows gracefully in her music style and is always able to tie it back in to her roots in one way or another. She never ceases to amaze me with her insights on life, love, society and politics. My final thoughts on this album as a whole, in one word, *excellent!*



I'VE GOT STRIPES TOO,  
Courtesy of Christine Tanaka

## An Overwhelming Review The Residents: Not Available

By Andrew Thompson

YEARS AGO, WHEN THE TEETH WERE AS WHITE AS TEETH AND PUPPETS SPAT EITHER INTO FIRES, A STRANGE OCCURRENCE HAPPENED IN THE HEART OF LOUISIANA. SEVERAL CHILDREN WERE BORN, CHILDREN WHO WOULD GROW UP KNOWING THE COMFORTS OF SELF-IMPOSED OBSCURITY AND THE CHARM OF WEARING EYEBALLS OVER THEIR HEADS (ONE WOULD CHOOSE A SKULL) IN ORDER TO HIDE THEIR IDENTITIES. FROM A RELIGIOUS EDUCATION THAT WOULD APPEAR IN MANY OF THEIR LATER RECORDINGS, EITHER SUBTLY OR NOT SO SUBTLY (LIKE GOD IN THREE PARTS), THEY TOOK THEIR BIZARRE PHILOSOPHY FROM THE INTENSE DISLIKE OF ANYTHING POPULAR. POP MUSIC WAS SARCASTICALLY "COVERED" BY THEIR EVENTUAL BAND. RELIGION WOULD HELP THEM TO AVOID OUTRIGHT CRUELTY TOWARDS ARTISTS THAT PRODUCED MUSIC FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF TURNING A PROFIT. ALSO THEIR ALBUMS THAT SPOKE OF GOD OR A GOD-LIKE FIGURE STAYED RESPECTFUL OF HIS IMPORTANCE.

LOUISIANA DID NOT OFFER THIS STRANGE BAND AN ENVIRONMENT PROPER FOR THEIR ODDITY. ONLY IN CALIFORNIA COULD THEY FIND A PLACE THAT WELCOMED SUCH UNUSUAL CHARACTERS. THEIR FIRST ALBUM WAS SENT TO WARNER BROTHERS, AND WHEN IT RETURNED WITH THE

WORDS "SEND BACK TO THE RESIDENTS," THEY HAD FOUND THEIR NAME. OVER TWO DECADES WOULD PASS BEFORE THEIR DEBUT ALBUM WOULD BE RELEASED THROUGH THEIR RALPH RECORD LABEL. RALPH RECORDS INTRODUCED THE WORLD TO THE RESIDENTS THROUGH THEIR FIRST RELEASE "MEET THE RESIDENTS" WHICH HAD THE OLD "MEET THE BEATLES" ALBUM COVER TOTALLY WRECKED. FIFTY OF THE RESIDENTS RECORDS WERE SOLD BEFORE THEY WERE FACED WITH LEGAL ACTION FROM A LABEL WITH ACTUAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES.

I COULD BEGIN TO DESCRIBE THEIR FIRST ALBUM, BUT THIS REVIEW IS ABOUT THEIR SECOND, WHICH IS BETTER MUSICALLY AND THEORETICALLY. THE ALBUM'S TITLE "NOT AVAILABLE" SHOULD CLUE THE LISTENER IN TO WHAT SORT OF ECCENTRIC CHARACTERS THE RESIDENTS ARE. IT WAS THEIR THIRD RELEASE BUT SECOND ALBUM THEY RECORDED. OFFICIALLY THE DEBUT'S LATE RELEASE WAS ATTRIBUTED TO A DISCUSSION WITH A GERMAN PHILOSOPHER ABOUT HOW NOTHING SHOULD EXIST UNTIL IT HAS BEEN COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN. HOW MUCH OF THIS STORY IS TRUE CANNOT BE PROPERLY CHECKED, SINCE THESE MUSICIANS BASICALLY ARE TOTAL PRANKSTERS AND HAVE A DISTORTED SENSE OF REALITY. ARTISTS SUCH AS THE RESIDENTS RELEASE MUCH

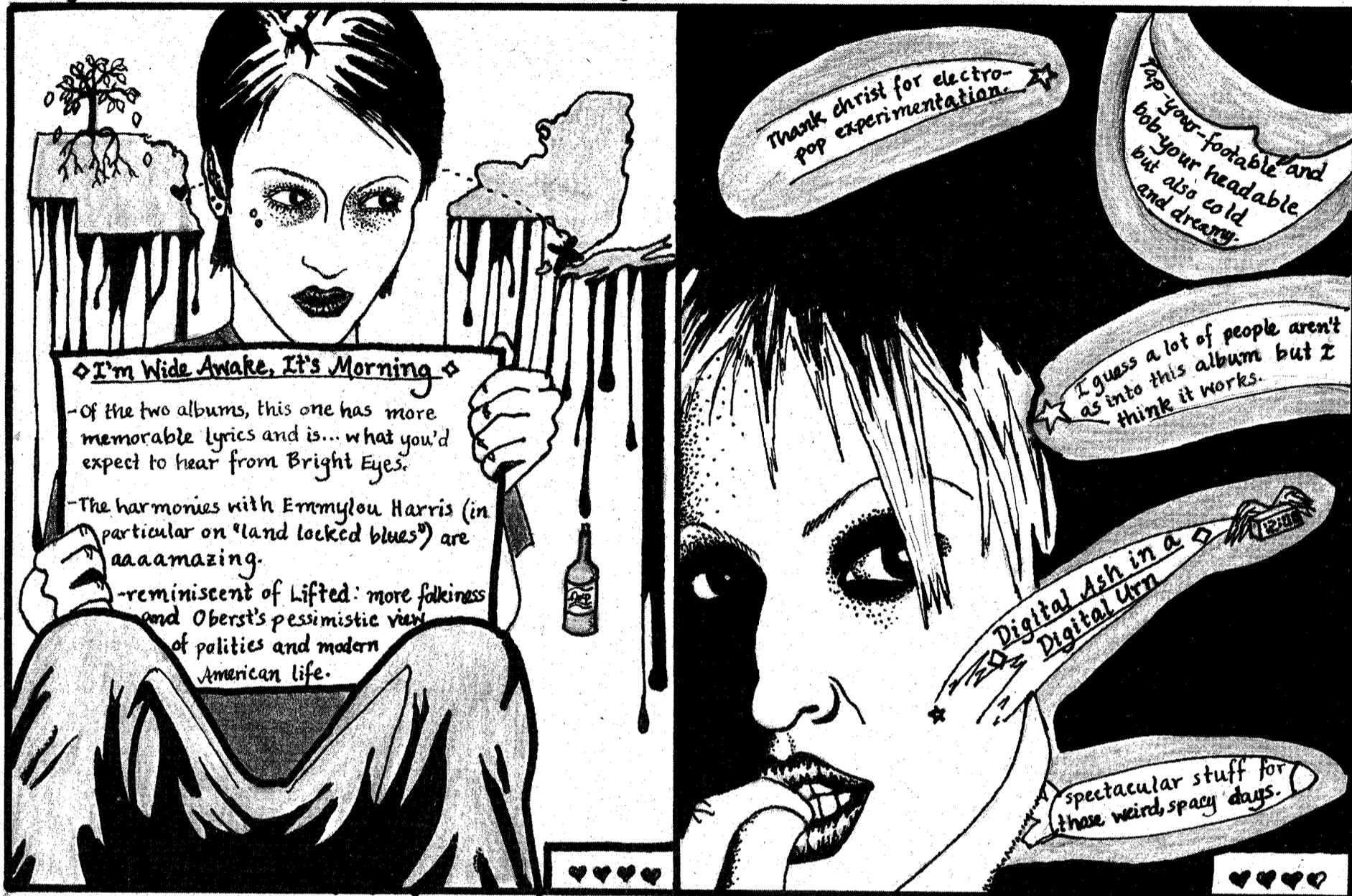
MATERIAL BUT RARELY HAVE CONCERTS; THEY LIVE IN OBSCURITY ON THE FRINGES OF MOST MUSIC SCENES LIKE PLUNDER PHONICS AND AVANT-ROCK. STAYING SAFELY INSIDE THEIR COSTUMES, THERE REMAINS NO NEED FOR EXPLANATION OR TAKING THEIR MUSIC AT FACE VALUE. RATHER, THE LISTENER SHOULD JUST RELAX AND ALREADY ENJOY ECOTERIC MUSIC BEFORE DELVING INTO THIS BIZARRE UNIVERSE.

IMMEDIATELY THE ALBUM BEGINS WITH "EDWEEND" AND A CYMBAL CRASH. AFTER THE CRASH YOU ARE TREATED TO A SOMEWHAT SURREAL CREATION OF CRUISE MUSIC, MADE WITH THE HELP OF NATURAL HORNS AND SYNTH VIOLIN CHORDS. THE SYNTH SOUNDS PERMEATE MOST OF THE ALBUM, AND THEY ARE THOSE OF THE AND-LOG SORT (SINCE IT WAS ALL CREATED IN THE 1970S, IF YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE SYNTH SOUND, JUST TURN IT OFF BECAUSE ITS PRESENCE IS FELT ALL OVER THE ALBUM). AN ODD CHANT COMES IN WITH THEIR ELECTRONICALLY ALTERED VOICES PROVIDING RHYTHM. PIANO CHORDS INTERMINGLE WITH THE SYNTH, AND A WOMAN'S VOICE, QUITE PRETTY, OFFERS ALMOST SOME CONNECTION TO REALITY. DRUMS AND THEIR CHANTS SUDDENLY COME TO THE FOREFRONT,

Continued on page 34

# WHERE'D THIS COMIC COME FROM?

A disjointed and nonsensical CD <sup>over</sup> review: Bright Eyes ~ Steph Hayes

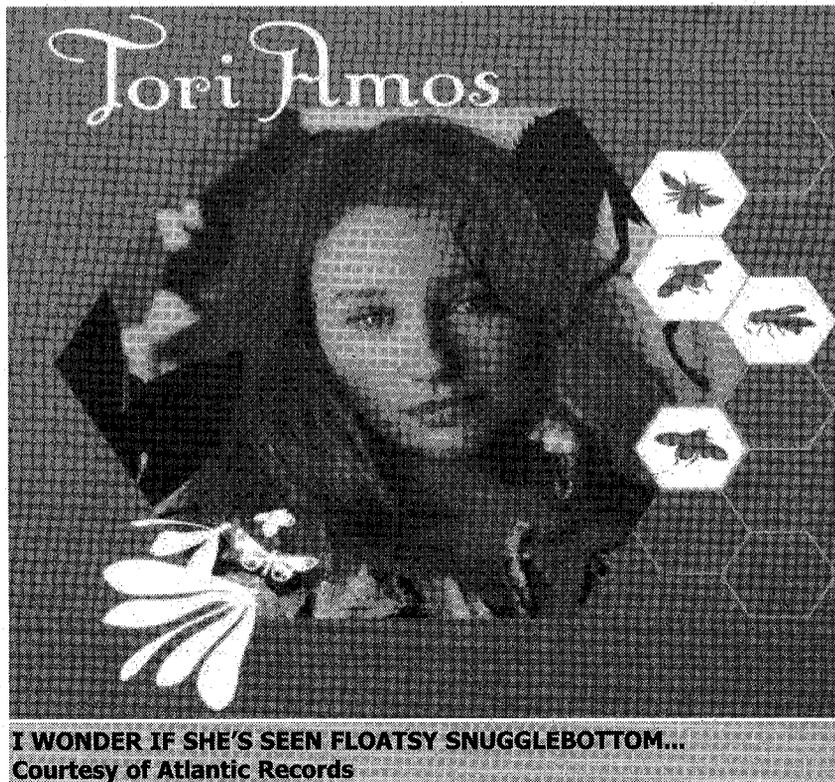


## Tori Amos Sleeps With Butterflies

By Melanie Donovan

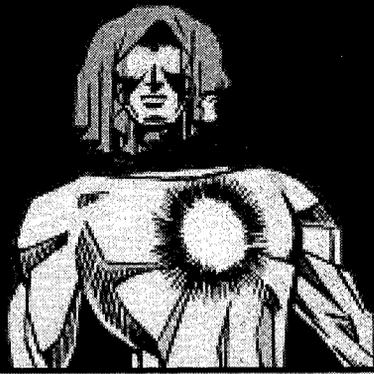
This Tori Amos CD is a CD single, which means there is only one song on it. It does not even include a remix, not that Tori Amos' songs need to be remixed. So, there is only one song. The song is entitled, "Sleeps with Butterflies," and is from the album, *The Beekeeper*. *The Beekeeper* will be released February 22<sup>nd</sup> and is the follow-up to 2002's *Scarlet's Walk*. Fans will also be interested to hear that *The Beekeeper* will indeed be released in a special limited edition version, complete with the 19-track album as well as an extended 24-page booklet and a bonus DVD.

Tori Amos is a great artist and songwriter, she has a lovely melodic voice that shows in this one song. With her voice she cannot go wrong, but I have to say the lyrics to this song are a bit weak. Amos is known for her meaningful songs and poetic lyrics, but I would say this one is just mediocre. With lyrics like, "...But I believe I'm worth comin' home to / Kiss away night / This girl only sleeps with butterflies..." it does not show the Amos



quality here. There are also points in the song where it sounds like she is using a British accent; and not a very good one, at that. It is not a horrible song, but it is definitely not her best. I just hope the rest of the album can make up for this. "Sleeps with Butterflies" is a very simple song, which has that Joni Mitchell folk sound. She does keep her emotional side a part of this song, as it usually is with any of her other songs.

The soothing sounds of Tori Amos can always calm and comfort a person. Tori's music is widely followed because of her mix of vulnerability and mysterious sexuality, topped off with her stunning beauty. So if you are a Tori fan, then you can snuggle up with your acoustic and unwind with this peaceful song about girls and butterflies...yes, how very nice.



# The Living Tribunal Passes Judgement On:

## Fantastic Four: Hereafter

### The Fantastic Four: Hereafter

Endowed with super powers after their stolen spaceship was bombarded with cosmic rays, the Fantastic Four have dedicated their lives to fighting evil in all its forms. In *Hereafter* we find Reed, Sue, and Johnny attempting to save Ben Grimm from the ultimate of perils...heaven.

## PHYSICS

Since I'm an angry, bitter jerk and physics has drained any spark of youthful exuberance and imagination from me, I feel prone to approach most Living Tribunal comic books with impatience and skepticism. The Fantastic Four, however, strikes a little too close to home and dredges up memories of those wonderful days in the early to mid-90's where I would lie on my bed reading the latest Marvel creations that cost only a buck twenty-five. I'd pop some Pearl Jam or some Weezer into the tape player and join Reed, Sue, Johnny and Ben on their most fantastic of adventures. Well, my nostalgia has hereby gotten the best of me and I intend to stick by the Fantastic Four as they have stuck by me during those lonely teenage years.

Reed Richards goes by the name Mr. Fantastic but this true believer thinks that it's the understatement of the century. Not only is his body endowed with super elasticity, but he was a goddamn genius long before their space shuttle was bombarded with cosmic rays giving its passengers unimaginable powers. Stretcho's abilities can easily be explained through the theories of modern physics. Originally, I thought that Reed would be able to stretch his body simply by spreading out his molecules but upon reconsideration this cannot be the case since he would thus be drastically altering his density. Basically, if he stretched out too much, he would evaporate. Since cosmic rays are just ionized particles and high energy electromagnetic radiation, it would be perfectly reasonable for a high concentration of said rays to cause a genetic mutation in one's DNA. Skipping the euphemisms, Reed Richards would have the ability to "control" his cancer. Just as one controls a muscle to bend one's elbow, Reed wills the cells in his arm to multiply and extend his body in any direction as any shape he wants. In order to accomplish this, however, Reed would have to supply his body with an enormous amount of energy. My "Cancer Control" theory is corroborated by the high caloric intake Reed necessitates and demonstrates in the pages of FF #509 wherein he eats two cartons of Chinese food, a large bag of tortilla chips, a cup of coffee, and an entire large pizza.

Sue Storm is the Invisible Woman. Piece of cake. The human eye "sees" things when it detects photons of frequencies within the visible spectrum emitted by the surface of an object. The only way Sue could become invisible is if she could somehow redirect photons from things behind her to the front of her body. She

accomplishes this by extending her cosmic ray-mutated hair follicles to cover her entire body. I believe that Sue's body hair has a particular index of refraction which diverts incident photons at Brewster's Angle. Her body hair works as an intricate fiber optic cable system with total internal reflection. All she need do is retract her hair and the fiber optics are covered by her epidermis.

Benjamin Grimm was also transformed into something fantastic on that fateful day aboard the spaceship. His body is covered in orange rock-like plating that is very hard to penetrate. When Ben was exposed to the radiation, I believe his skin mutated and now produces an excessive amount of calcium which becomes very rigid and dense like rock. He is orange because his diet consists mainly of mechanically processed cheese. 'Nuff said.

Johnny Storm is better known as the Human Torch because he bursts into flames and is able to project blasts of fire at will. Johnny is probably the most fantastic of the four in my opinion. You see, what happened when he was exposed to high amounts of radiation, his skin, the largest organ in the body, gained the ability to produce high amounts of combustible gas which he can now project through his pores. This is comparable to the Bombadier Beetle (an actual insect found in nature) who uses a similar bodily function as a defense mechanism. When the Human Torch says, "Flame on!" however, he actually means, "Gas on!" since it is not actually fire that he is projecting from his skin. That would be ridiculous. Instead his skin emits the combustible gas and, akin to mercury fulminate, vibrations in the air cause his excrement to instantaneously ignite. Much like a pilot light stove, the constant expulsion of gas keeps the actual flame away from his tissue. Due to the high pressure of the gas leaving his skin, Johnny's body temperature should drastically plummet. This can be shown through the simplest of thermodynamics equations,  $pV = nRT$ . This cooling effect is countered by the heat generated from the flames, thus preserving the Human Torch's body in a state of perfect thermodynamic equilibrium. To top it all off, he can fly by projecting his flame downward which produces a thermal updraft and allows Johnny to swoop into action.

As you can plainly see, the Fantastic Four are perfectly feasible. Not only are they here to save us from intergalactic threats and world domination, but they are also respectful of the equally fantastic physical laws of nature. Excelsior!

## SOCIOLOGY

*The Fantastic Four: Hereafter* is a fascinating sociological study. This graphic epic provides so much insightful commentary that it is difficult to adequately discuss everything within this small space. Therefore, for the purpose of this dissertation we will focus on two articles of commentary.

Let us begin by examining the second issue, where we see the Fantastic Four in Heaven in their quest to resurrect Ben Grimm, also known as "The Thing." The angels, displeased that mortals have infiltrated their sanctum, attempt to kick the FF out of Heaven. The rationale given is that they are displeased that the FF are not yet deceased; therefore they do not belong in Heaven. However, a closer examination reveals a clear case of racism fueled by xenophobia.

According to the social disorganization theory of deviance, social instability—ostensibly caused by an influx of outsiders such as the FF in this case—leads to a disruption of the community's moral values and norms. Such disruption is due to the conflicting norms and practices of the dominant group and the outsiders. The FF being mortals, they have a penchant for behavior inconsistent with the mores of Heaven—they are labeled as "sinful" in accordance with the angels' essentialist norms. In the eyes of the denizens of Heaven, the presence of "sinful" mortals invalidates and negates the standing of Heaven as a utopia of absolute good. Indeed, one could reasonably conclude that the presence of the FF actually nullifies any and all good within the celestial community. The harsh implications of the essentialist system of mores are rather self-evident in this case. Viewed in this light the angels' apparent racism and xenophobia is understandable, as it is a function of their fragile social cohesion.

Now let us continue by examining an advertisement on page 20 of issue 1, which depicts a young boy receiving a buzz cut by Captain America. The product is a "Haircuts For Heroes" home haircut kit, including guides on how to emulate the hairstyle of one's favorite Marvel superhero. Conflict theorists (especially of the Marxist school) would propose that such an advertisement is representative of corporations' desires to control every aspect of our lives simply to make a profit. In this case, Marvel Inc. wishes to determine which hairstyles our children shall sport, capitalizing upon the laziness and cheapness of suburban mothers. Conflict theorists would argue that the greed of CEOs combines with the apathy and mindless consumerism of American families to result in a culture of corporatist slavery, while Stan Lee makes a profit. This would result in a devaluation of the ordinary citizen/consumer, a lowering of self-esteem that could lead to deviant behavior as a reactionary measure against the prevailing social system.

However, functionalists would argue that the actions of Marvel Inc. in dictating hairstyles through their marketing machine, are vital to the prevailing social order, keeping deviance in check and keeping society running smoothly. In this case, the individuality of the potential haircut recipients is not an issue. By exercising social control through the usage of revered pop icons and clever product placement in beloved comic series such as FF, Marvel Inc. is attempting to instill a respect for social conformity among its readers. The FF, then, are presented as figures to emulate, real-life heroes to worship, the end result of which is a successful reduction of juvenile delinquency and the massive social ills associated with it. And, after all, who wouldn't want hair just like Johnny Storm?

In closing, *The Fantastic Four: Hereafter* provides an intriguing look into the underlying social mechanisms behind deviant behavior and the holistic workings of society. For this reason it is a must-read for any student of sociology worth his or her salt.

# The Living Tribunal Passes Judgement On:

## Fantastic Four: Hereafter

### PSYCHOLOGY

They call Reed Richards Mr. Fantastic. While a seemingly egotistical moniker upon first glance, one peek at his curriculum vitae will quash any thoughts of derision your comparatively feeble mind may wish to concoct. While the superpower bestowed upon him by cosmic rays is his patented elasticity, the ability that separates him from the rest of the superhero herd is his super-genius level intellect. While most of us enjoy leisurely activities such as reading, watching movies or invading countries on false premises; Reed discovers parallel universes and creates pocket dimensions to use as cup-holders. By all accounts, Reed is the intellectual authority of the Marvel Universe. When it comes to death, however, Mr. Fantastic has a learning disability.

It all started with the demise of his best friend and teammate, Ben Grimm; better known as the rock-skinned Thing. During a battle with Dr. Doom, the Fantastic Four's tin-plated nemesis managed to wrest control of the Thing's mind away from Grimm and used his inordinate strength to subdue his friends. In order to prevent the Thing, still being controlled by Dr. Doom, from killing the Human Torch, Reed had to kill Grimm in order to save the helpless Torch. In the moments after the Thing's death, Reed experienced an emotion that he seems to be completely incapable of understanding: helplessness. Mr. Fantastic had just murdered his best friend, and there was nothing he could do about it.

Whereas most rational human beings would accept the loss and begin the grieving process, Reed fails to grasp the reality of the situation. Rather than being with his family at this difficult time, Reed absconds with the Thing's deceased body and puts it in stasis in his lab at Fantastic Four headquarters. Instead of going through the traditional stages of grief outlined by pop psychologists everywhere, Reed goes through several stages of being a bitter asshole. While the other members of the team consoled each other, Reed isolated himself in his lab and desecrated his friend's body to satisfy his own selfish need to eliminate his feelings of guilt.

Despite all of his impressive knowledge and skill, the concept of learned helplessness seems to fly over the head of Mr. Fantastic. In other words, when one encounters death a number of times, it becomes clear that there is nothing he or she can do about it. To Reed, the idea of someone being gone forever is beyond him. If this is how Reed reacts to the first true mortal tragedy in his life, he is going to have a very difficult time in the years to come. He has to realize that some aspects of existence are beyond even his considerable grasp. Even though this particular occurrence ends with Reed succeeding in the end and retrieving the Thing's body from the afterlife, he needs to understand the true meaning of death in order to be a healthy individual.

### PHILOSOPHY

Knowing the unknowable, seeking the eternally hidden, these are the tenets that drive the Fantastic Four. When confronted with the death of one of their most stable and stalwart members, Benjamin Grimm, they react in the only way they know how: by exploring. But how does one explore so boldly as to pierce the veil between the living and the nonliving? One could easily argue against the concept of life after death even existing, that it is simply an illusion we grant ourselves in order to make life more bearable. But these are comic book characters, therefore the rules of life and death are fluid and easily revocable.

To attempt to use them as a analogy for what happens in our physical world is misleading and bears very little fruit. Instead the interaction they have with their afterlife and their "God," as it was, becomes a fascinating reflection on the mythology of the comic book hero. Their creator is the man who originally drew them, Jack Kirby, and thus it is he who ends up healing and inspiring the group. He makes the point that they are actually the eternal; that they are the ones who will go on existing, while the "real" world will change and eventually end. As Mr. Kirby so succinctly put it "my creations find the humanity in God."

It's an interesting interpretation of the creation mythos and brings to mind many philosophical concepts. The idea of our creator as not a perfect and eternally good figure can find a tacit implication in the works of Descartes. Although he would adamantly proclaim the universality of the Church as well as the Catholic faith, implicit in his writings is a challenge of the standard concept of God. A misleading demon, who has utilized all of his power in deceiving our physical senses. However ominous and dark this sounds, it is meant to imply that one should not limit themselves to a perfect and always good ideal of God.

Thus, Cartesian philosophy is the driving spirit behind the interactions portrayed in this Fantastic Four story. They come into contact with God and are shocked by the actual characteristics of their creator. A frail old man sitting at a drawing board, long since deceased living on only through his creations. However, this is not meant to imply that they come away from the experience completely underwhelmed. This is, after all, a representation of their God and not their God himself, subject to the mind of the writer of the story. Unfortunately, abstracts, in this sense, can go on eternally, so I choose to focus on the positive aspects.

It's part of the magic of myths and stories. They allow us to view ourselves in an intimate relationship with Gods and heroes. They tell us about ourselves and we in turn inspire them to legend. We are collaborators, nuff' said.

The Living Tribunal is

Joe Filippazzo, Marcel Votlucka, Mike Billings and Michael Prazak





# A Delayed 2004 Season in Review In American Soccer

By Antony Lin

The year has come to an end and it is time to reflect on what happened throughout American soccer.

## Major League Soccer

The 2004 MLS season saw DC United taking the Cup title over Kansas City Wizards by the score line of 3-2. DC United head coach, Peter Nowak, won his first title in his first year as head coach after getting off to a slow start in the season. Young soccer phenom, Freddy Adu, became the youngest player in all of professional sports to win a title at the age of 15.

U.S. Soccer Player of the Year, Landon Donovan, appears to be headed back to Bayer Leverkusen of the German Bundesliga. Donovan, on loan from Bayer Leverkusen, led the San Jose Earthquakes to MLS Cup titles in 2001 and 2003.

Former Dallas Burn, now Real Salt Lake forward Jason Kreis becomes the all-time leading scorer in MLS.

MetroStars midfielder Amado Guevara was named MVP for the season.

Midfielder DaMarcus Beasley leaves the Chicago Fire and heads off to PSV Eindhoven of the Dutch League and makes immediate impact.

All-time New England Revolution goal-scorer and 3<sup>rd</sup> all-time US National Team goal scorer, Joe-Max Moore announced his retirement

## U.S. Men's National Team

The US Men's NT finished the year with an impressive record of 8 wins, 1 loss and 6 ties. Currently the team is on a record 13-game unbeaten streak. The Nats stayed unbeaten and

finished in first place of the semifinal round of World Cup qualifying.

The final round of the World Cup qualifying hex schedule for the US is as follows:

Feb 9 @ Trinidad & Tobago 2:30 PM ET ESPN2

Mar 26/27 @ Mexico 1PM ET Telemundo

Mar 30 vs. Guatemala 8PM ET ESPN2

Jun 4/5 vs. Costa Rica TBA

Jun 8 @ Panama TBA

\*Top three teams qualify for the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

Sep 7 @ Guatemala TBA

Oct 8/9 @ Costa Rica TBA

Oct 12 vs. Panama TBA

## U.S. Women's National Team

Came away and took home the gold in the Olympics the past summer in Greece. U.S. got its revenge on Germany by defeating them 2-1 in the semifinals and took the gold by defeating Brazil with the same score line.

Pioneers and legends, Mia Hamm, Julie Foudy and Joy Fawcett ended their remarkable careers. Hamm and Foudy played their last emotional match on Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> and defeated Mexico 5-0, while Fawcett sat out for the match.

- Head coach, April Heinrich inks a three-year contract to remain as coach.

A lot has happened in 2004. 2005 looks to have another exciting-year in American soccer, aside from World Cup qualifying.

Two expansion teams in MLS, Club Deportivo Chivas USA, based in Los Angeles, and Real Salt Lake will make their debut.

FC Dallas, formerly Dallas Burn, will open in their newly built soccer-specific stadium with a capacity of 21,000, known as Frisco Soccer and Entertainment Center.

Former MetroStar striker Clint Mathis returns to MLS, this time for Real Salt Lake, after a successful stint at Hannover 96 of the German Bundesliga.

After labor conflicts between the U.S. Soccer Federation and the Player's Association, a deal has finally been reached, but only for a year.



YOU'RE COMING DOWN WITH ME BITCH,  
Courtesy of www.netreach.net

Aug 17 vs. Trinidad & Tobago TBA  
Fourth place teams go into a home and away  
playoff with an Asian nation.

Sep 3/4 vs. Mexico TBA

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# Ask Amberly Jane

By Amberly Jane

It's me again. Just a dirty thought invading clean minds everywhere. Yes, kitties and transgressors, squares and stoners, it's time once again for another semester here at The Brook.

Beware of the food, which is vile, and the administration, who are sinister—instead look to the grand crystal vision: those moments of deep joy when your legs are wrapped around something great and you are lucky enough to get lost in the screaming wallop.

Yeah, I started the semester off with a *bang*—the cops came pounding on my door the first night. Swell, I thought, I was wondering where to get the best donuts.

Three pigs, my bitch RHD and a random RA, to be exact, complaining of smoke and a certain smell.

What can I say, my RHD had it in for me ever since we exchanged words over a disciplinary notice I received for a day I wasn't even here. Where was I? Upstate at my grandmothers funeral. I threw the goddamn thing at her and told her to take care of it.

So the fuzz, who were unfortunately not at all like Super Troopers, looked at my cigarette, shined a flashlight into my ashtray, and in all their grand mental skill asked me what the ashtray was for. Lick it, dick, and let me know.

What do you want, I'm a fucking criminal. I don't believe in the law, I don't respect authority, and I encourage others to do the same.

At the moment a disembodied hand sits next to my computer. It's from a JC Penny mannequin...my niece and I stole it together. Some say it's creepy, especially since I dripped red paint on it, but I find it soothing—it reminds me not to be a fucking tool.

Hope you all had some kind of wild, defiant adventures over winter break—maybe got lost in an orgy of black men, like someone I know, or tripped the light fantastic.

About half of my break was pure elation and delirium. After cross-country plans were thwarted by fascist parental overlords, Emily, my companion, and I gave her parents the finger and flew to California anyway.

How can I successfully convey how different the vibe is on the other coast? People are friendly. Nice, even. They consider it Shangri-la. There is no garbage on the streets, no honking, no screaming, no attitude...people are actually happy to be alive.

If a grown man wants to skip around Santa Cruz wearing a pink ballerina uniform with matching pink parasol, then he does so with a smile on his face. And no one bothers him.

"Bush Man" of San Francisco, an apparent local legend, sits behind a garbage can on Fisherman's Wharf all day, and jumps out at

tourists from behind two shrubby branches. He makes a living at this, and many naughty people gain great joy from watching unsuspecting tourists jump back in surprise.

Yes, Cali is a tolerant place (although I should note that their smoking laws are quite fascist—in the town of Davis, you can't even light up a cigarette on the street!).

While there, I witnessed a sight I thought I'd never see: An old man with a cane attempting to cross a busy San Francisco street at less than a snail's pace...I totally expected honking and angry motorists to yell, "Get in the box!" But to my utter surprise and total chagrin, I saw a gang member jump up from the street and kindly escort the old man off the road, without stealing his wallet.

So yeah, people are different on the other coast; they do their own thing, and are just so goddamn pleasant about it. My dad says it's because they are either "funny" (meaning gay), or "high" (meaning high).

Either way, my kind of people. Unless you haven't noticed, Long Island and outlying boroughs don't exactly breed the happiest, most well-adjusted humans. Of all the fucked up people I know in this world, most of them come from the island.

But on to bigger and better things. Sure Cali was fun and so blissfully warm, full of hot tubs and trips to the beach, Harold and Kumar, and Katamari Damacy.

We visited the Winchester Mystery House, where the dwarf heiress to the gun fortune believed dead Indian spirits (feathers, not dots), were telling her to build a bigger house—so she built a mile's worth of staircases and doorways to nowhere.

Oh, and an ex-Jehovah's Witness gave me the best blueberry herb ever. So pungent.

And then I come back to the Brook for yet another semester and what's to welcome us, but a blizzard. So I have to layer my plumage and dress like Jabba the Hutt in order not to freeze in this godforsaken weather.

It got so bad that I was literally mesmerized by this girl on line in front of me at Kelly. She wasn't wearing a coat, and I just stared at the thin strip of tan skin showing under her shirt—she lifted her arms, and I was treated to a shot of those lovely just-above-the-ass dimples. Mmm, the sight of skin.

Oh, and you all should be proud of me. January 28 was my first time *ever* actually looking up a book at the library, instead of just finding a quiet spot to masturbate.

...Speaking of the Big O...

Dear Amberly Jane,

OK, I've waited for someone to ask this question, but it's never come up. I would consider myself a pretty knowledgeable man in

bed, I'm attentive, and I always want my partner to finish—I never want her to be unsatisfied. :)

Lately, tho, I have this new girl, and I think she fakes orgasm sometimes. How can I tell for sure? (Besides the Meg Ryan moans and screams...)

Signed - Slightly unsure

Dear Unsure,

You could ask her. But then again, she may not want to admit it. For god's sake, don't fish for a reaction by telling her she deserves an Oscar after sex.

Studies show that 70% of women fake orgasms. That's a lot of frustrated women and inept (or oblivious) men.

But hurray for you, because you actually care if your woman gets off.

Here are some signs that she didn't reach the beast:

1) Her noises don't match what's going on. If you are eating the weeds, and take a break for a second, and she is still moaning mechanically, that's not a good sign. It's like someone who keeps dancing after you turn the radio off.

2) Her breathing. If she is breathing hot and heavy while having an "orgasm," and then turns it off like a switch right after, she is probably faking.

3) And here's the big One—it's all about the PC muscle. It grips the penis, and I don't know about most women, but when I cum, this thing goes nuts (spasms involuntarily and ripples with aftershocks).

Remember, these signs don't mean she is faking for certain (Who knows, she might just be like this).

If you're interested, there are a few different reasons why your chickie feels she must fake. She may have *never* had an orgasm. I know, this may seem weird, considering some guys just need a little warm breath to get off, but sadly I have known many women who have never reaped the rapture.

Also, she may get sore really fast. Thin vaginal walls, you know, or she doesn't produce enough love juice.

She may feel like there is too much pressure on her to "perform"; she feels like her orgasm is important to you, and she wants to appear normal, and cum already.

Or she may just want the sex to end as quickly as possible.

Either way, talk to her, be open and gentle and shit, and hopefully she will open up and tell you what you need to do.

For questions, or to give me a heads up, and tell me where it's stuck. E-mail: AskAmberlyJane@hotmail.com.



## TV SUCKS!

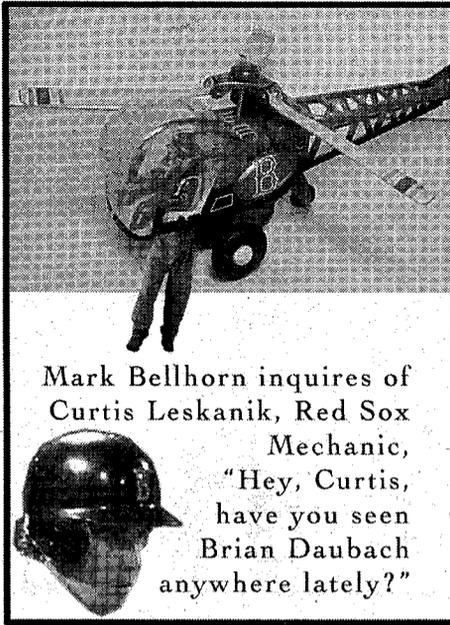
BUT YOU CAN CHANGE THAT

### JOIN SBU-TV 20

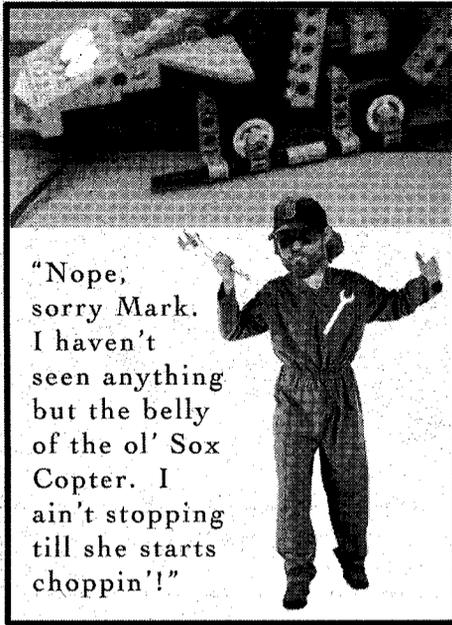
WE NEED DIRECTORS, PRODUCERS, EDITORS  
CAMERA PEOPLE, CREW, AND FRIENDS.

DROP BY ROOM 074 IN THE UNION BASEMENT

OR EMAIL SBUTV@IC.SUNYSB.EDU



Mark Bellhorn inquires of Curtis Leskanik, Red Sox Mechanic, "Hey, Curtis, have you seen Brian Daubach anywhere lately?"



"Nope, sorry Mark. I haven't seen anything but the belly of the ol' Sox Copter. I ain't stopping till she starts choppin'!"

Solving Crimes!

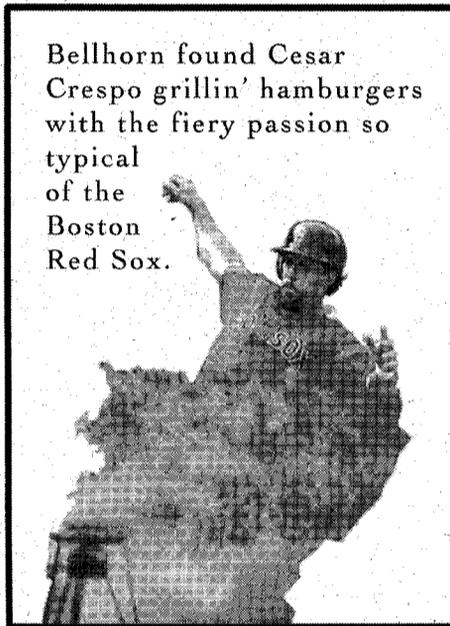
YOUR 2004 WORLD SERIES CHAMPION

By Matt Willemain

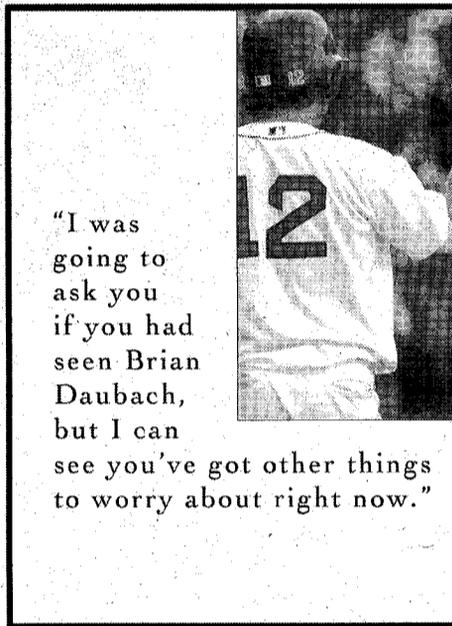
Fightin' Mysteries!

Episode Three:

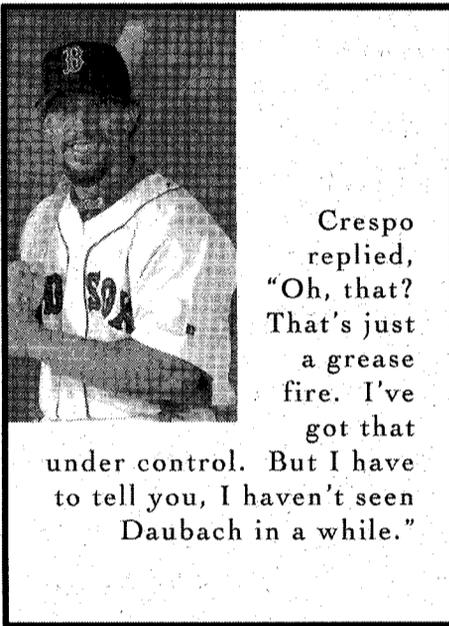
Cold Shoulder, Fat Tuesday



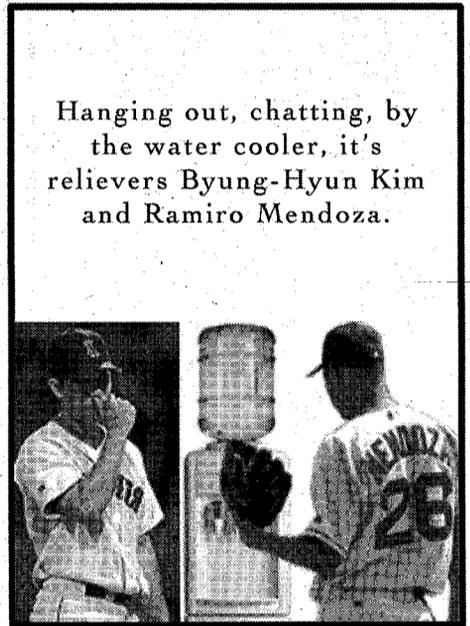
Bellhorn found Cesar Crespo grillin' hamburgers with the fiery passion so typical of the Boston Red Sox.



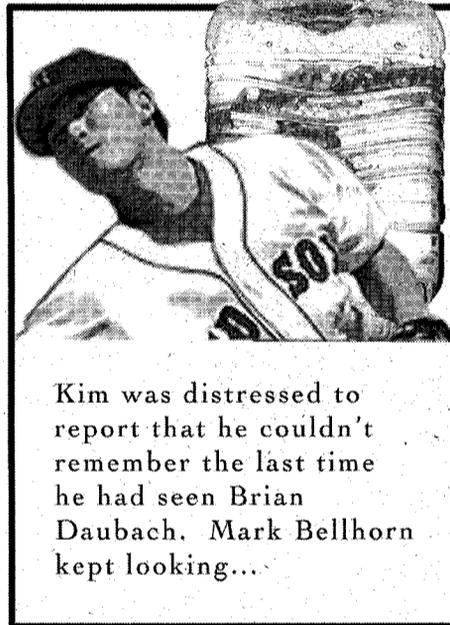
"I was going to ask you if you had seen Brian Daubach, but I can see you've got other things to worry about right now."



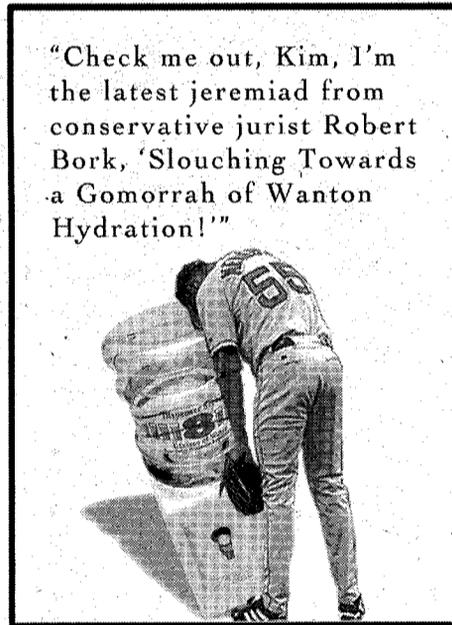
Crespo replied, "Oh, that? That's just a grease fire. I've got that under control. But I have to tell you, I haven't seen Daubach in a while."



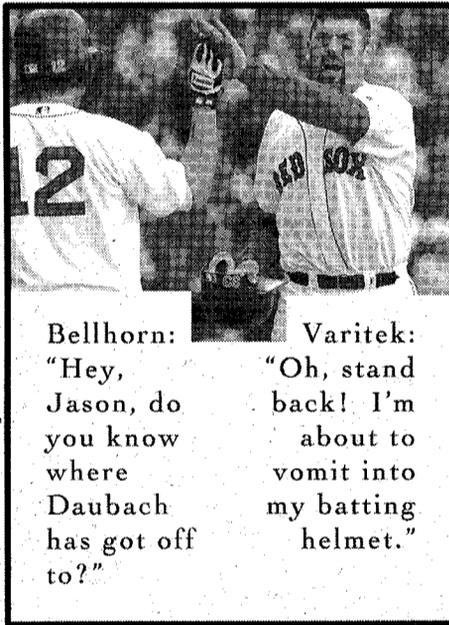
Hanging out, chatting, by the water cooler, it's relievers Byung-Hyun Kim and Ramiro Mendoza.



Kim was distressed to report that he couldn't remember the last time he had seen Brian Daubach. Mark Bellhorn kept looking...

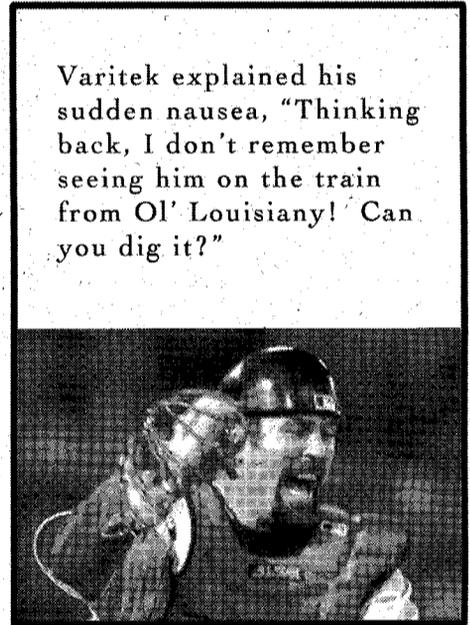


"Check me out, Kim, I'm the latest jeremiad from conservative jurist Robert Bork, 'Slouching Towards a Gomorrah of Wanton Hydration!'"



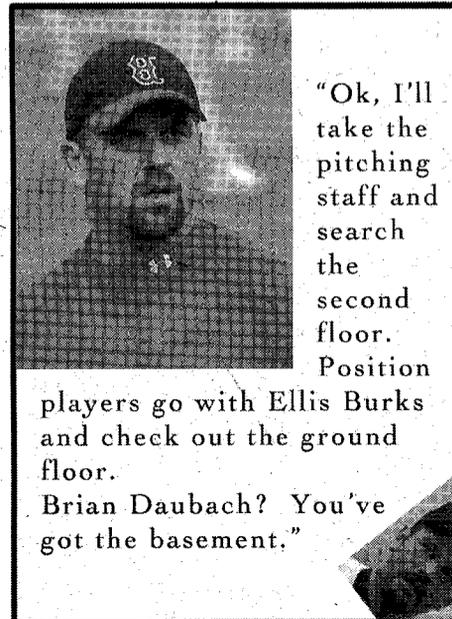
Bellhorn: "Hey, Jason, do you know where Daubach has got off to?"

Varitek: "Oh, stand back! I'm about to vomit into my batting helmet."

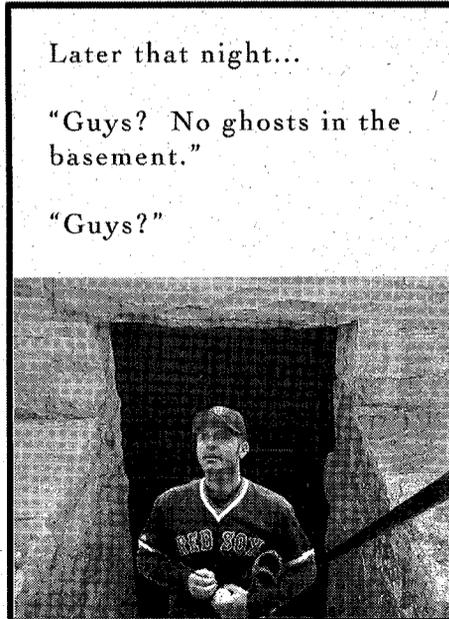


Varitek explained his sudden nausea, "Thinking back, I don't remember seeing him on the train from Ol' Louisiany! Can you dig it?"

Previously, on Your 2004 World Series Champion Boston Red Sox...



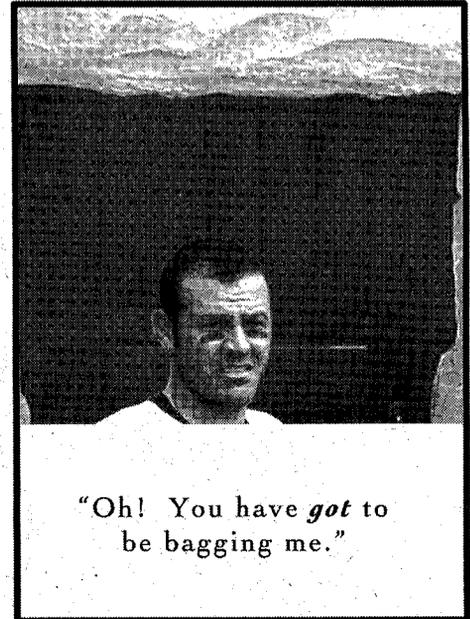
"Ok, I'll take the pitching staff and search the second floor. Position players go with Ellis Burks and check out the ground floor. Brian Daubach? You've got the basement."



Later that night...

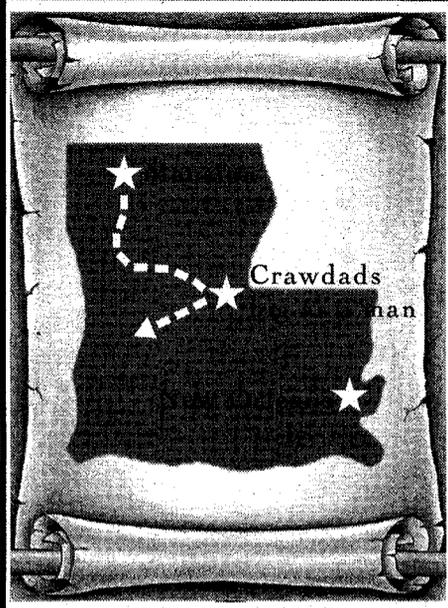
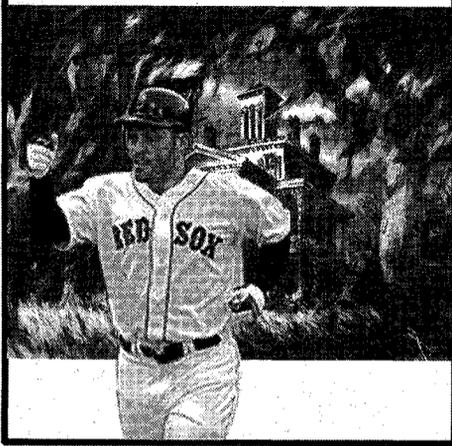
"Guys? No ghosts in the basement."

"Guys?"



"Oh! You have *got* to be bagging me."

Daubach said to himself, "Well, maybe if I get a move on to N'Orleans I can make Mardi Gras!"

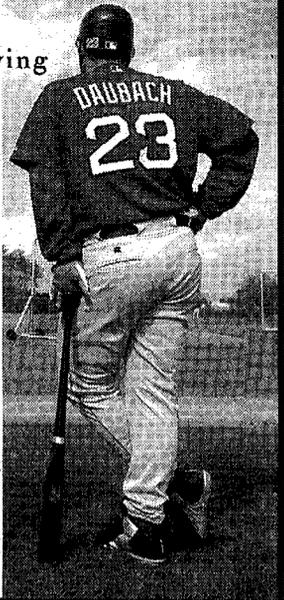


A little girl:



"Help me, mister! My cat is stuck up in a tree!"

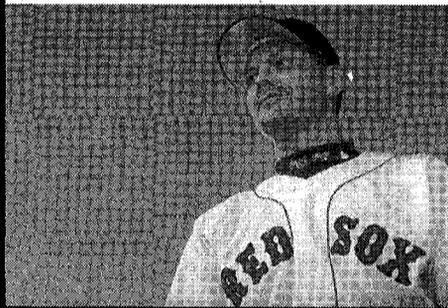
Daubach was hurrying along on his way. "I'm sorry, honey. I've got to keep moving if I'm going to get where I'm going."



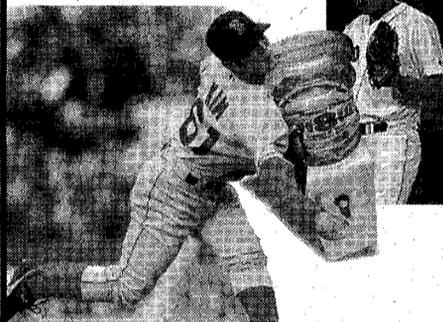
Undeterred, the little girl continued,

"Please, mister. I'd go rescue the cat myself, but I'm very sick. I don't know how he got up that tree, anyways. It's a mystery."

"What's that, you say? A *mystery*? Well, hell, am I a 2004 World Series Champion Boston Red Sox or ain't I? I *fight* mysteries! Revelry can wait, let's get that cat of yours out of the tree."

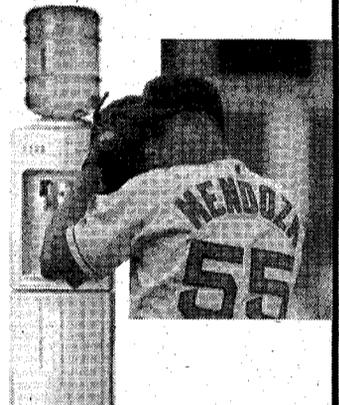


Meanwhile, at the water cooler...

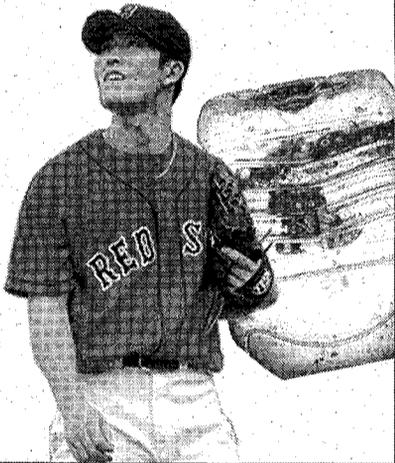


As Kim moved for another cup of water, "Hey, Mendoza, you ever think about big questions?"

Mendoza replied, "No, friend, what are you talking about?"



"Like, what if God was one of us? Just a... just a *slob* like one of us?"



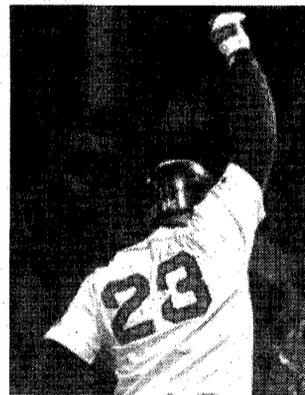
The cat was saved!

The mystery fought, Daubach continued on to New Orleans.

Time for dancin'!



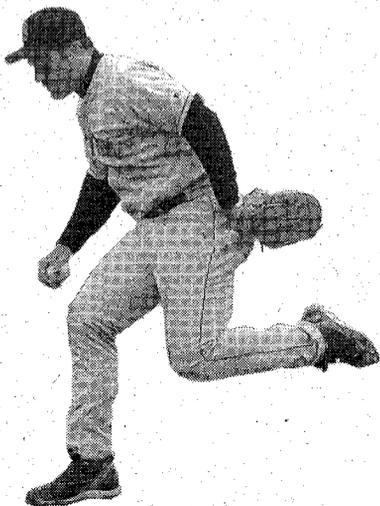
Jump Up And Get Down!



Disco Fever!



Skank!

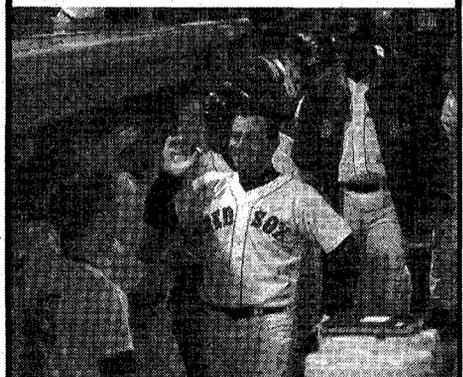


Food Poisoning!



The Sox Copter is *go* for interstate travel!

Back in New England, Daubach told his story.



They cried, in unison, "Kudos!"

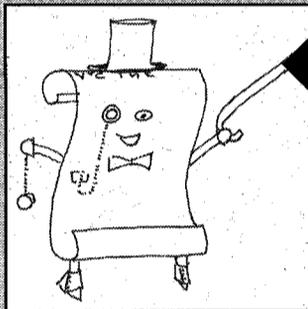
# TOP TEN

Things the Statesman Will Give You For an Article to Fill Their Empty Pages

- 10 Their Dignity
- 9 \$5.00
- 8 \$7.50
- 7 \$10.00
- 6 \$20.00
- 5 \$20.00 and \$13.46 in money that didn't come from your student activity fee
- 4 \$33.46 and your photograph in the paper
- 3 \$33.46, your photograph in the paper and an old Roth Pond Regatta craft
- 2 \$33.46, your photograph in the paper, an old Roth Pond Regatta craft, a water cooler and dreamy pinups of former editor Mansoor Kahn
- 1 All that stuff and the chance to learn how to write as a sycophant for authority

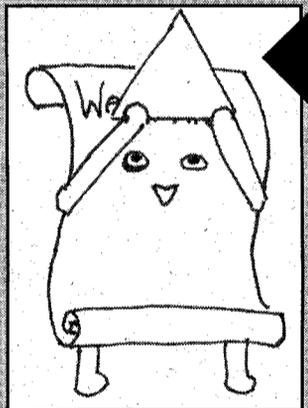
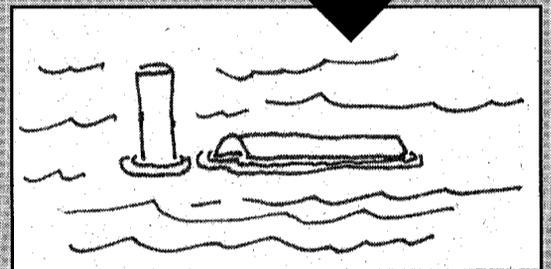
## IT'S EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE ANTHROPOMORPHIC US CONSTITUTION!

I WONDER WHAT KIND OF KOOKY SITUATIONS HE'S GOTTEN HIMSELF INTO THIS WEEK?



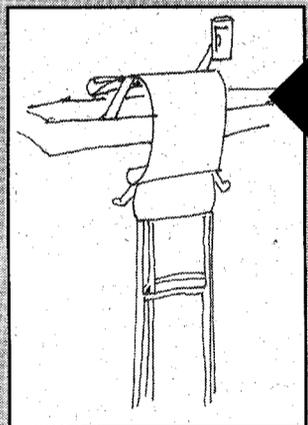
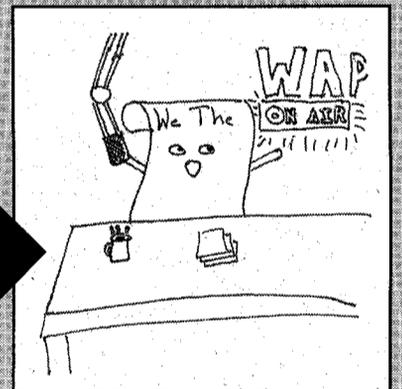
Undercover Among the Swells.

And I wonder if fish laugh...or cry.



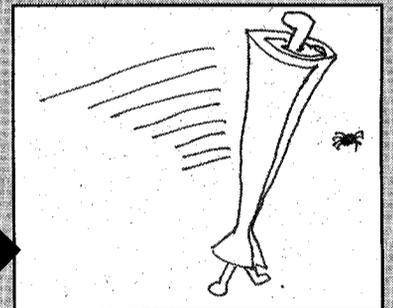
The Triforce of Courage means no more bed-wetting.

Gooooood Morning, Iraq!

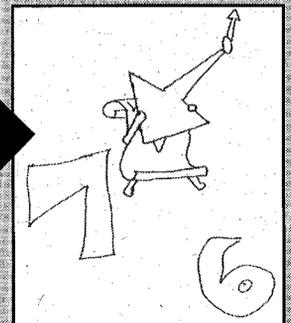


Late night at the bar with the guys, minus the guys and the late night

Most constructive use in four years!



In retrospect he wishes he could retract the 'yes' vote for the Municipal Bond to construct the clock tower. Now it's 1:35, do you know where your constitution is?



By Matt Willemain

TUNE IN NEXT ISSUE FOR EVEN MORE TOM-FOOLERY AND HI-JINKS!

## HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

# Million Dollar Baby

By Eddie Zadorozny

Boxing is a sport? That is revealed here in the states, where boxing is accepted with such praise and acceptance. The masses come out whenever the stakes are of celebratory magnitude. For example, they come out for those matches involving such boxing notables as Tyson, Ali, Leonard, etc. We, the masses, love it, we come out in droves, and get caught up in all the hype of watching two people pummel each other to near comatose states, over not so much as a title, but an absurd pay purse (the real incentive).

I am not so much a boxing fan, but I do watch the occasional over hyped event, just like every other American. Yet I have never forgotten the comment my high school

social studies teacher made about boxing. "I will never watch boxing. I don't consider it a sport, where the idea is to defeat your opponent by constant pummeling and pounding with the hopes of bringing your adversary to the point of unconscious or near death." I always felt some truth to that statement after analyzing it at such a young age; to me it seemed to make sense.

Is that what we watch boxing for? Is that sport? One cannot deny the thirst for the sport that incorporates determination, drive and focus. These are the mental qualifications that are never shown, the preparation of the training, the research of other opponents and the lifestyle changes, and sacrifices, you and those associated with your camp of instruction make.

I will admit that I entered the theater with the expectation of seeing an above average tale of a boxing saga with a woman as the title character, taking and giving the punches. I was pleasantly surprised, upon the viewing, that it was more than your typical boxing film, but more so it was a deep drama involving a triangle of characters, with redemption and hope as its main drive. I had just seen the best picture of the year!

The picture is simple in its premise at first. Hillary Swank plays Maggie Fitzpatrick, a thirty one year old destitute woman who has been working as a waitress since the age of thirteen. Her only aspirations in life are to become a boxer and to defeat the inevitable fate anticipated for her, a life of destitution, as her family and siblings have done so well. A man she has her sights on, to help her with this goal, is Frankie (Clint Eastwood), an aged, headstrong fight trainer who runs an old school boxing gym.

Frankie sees Maggie and says 'no', and repeatedly says 'no'. He says 'no' for two reasons. One, she is a girl, and two, at thirty one she is too old. Frankie links the age

factor to that of a ballerina, telling her that "A ballerina doesn't start training at the age of thirty one." Again, Maggie must overcome and persevere, she is determined and resolute in her pursuit.

Scrap (Morgan Freeman), a former

fighter who has fought for thirty three years,

lives at the gym and was trained by Frankie himself, knows the personality and flaws of Frankie. He sees in Maggie what others have not; determination, drive and focus, all the while overlooking the fact of her sex. He relates his impression of Maggie to Frankie and gets him to reassess his thoughts on training her. Frankie reluctantly agrees. Maggie excels quickly and is soon fighting in championship fights as well as excelling in a bond with Frankie, who is very empathetic to his new protégé. All is well until tragedy unfolds and the film's direction becomes even more engrossing, as if you yourself were in the ring taking the punches. The rest of the film must be seen without any knowledge of its second half to truly have the effect it will have on you. Not that knowing would lessen the impact, but erase all your perceptions and absorb the unexpected that will impinge on you emotionally!

The three main characters are very simple in their quests and purpose in life. The three of them make up a triangle, each connecting to each other in a way that displays the veracity in each, thus making each more respectable as humans with morals and standards. The beauty of this is how simply this is told through circumstance and event. The ease of this is comparable to that of watching a black and white film, just two colors to tell a story, despite all the substance you get with color, which flushes things out and make things even more appealing to the eye as a image. This leads to another aspect of the film which I loved; though it is in color, it felt like it was black and white, almost like an homage to film noir.

The use of silhouette in the film is very obvious and quite a feat. One scene in particular is when Maggie, late at night, is boxing on the bag, which Scrap is witnessing from a distance. The light that shines on her from above really brings her into such a focus against such a blacked out background, it's as striking as lightning. Another is when Frankie comes to Maggie to explain to her that he will train her as she is standing next to the punching bag. As one character comes forward into the light to talk, the other is pushed back into a total black abyss, it's like each character is boxing with its darkened, outlined frame. It's brilliant camera work.

The actors are all amazing. All of their Oscar nominations are justified and warranted. Most impressive is Clint Eastwood as Frankie, his character goes through an avalanche of emotion; he gives the character compassion despite the circumstances. His directing is also first rate, as he has proven before (*Mystic River*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, etc). His works are to be admired in the field of film, especially *Million Dollar Baby*, because he has just created the film of the year, it would be a crime if it didn't win best picture.

*Million Dollar Baby* rated PG-13 for violence, language, disturbing images, released by Warner Brothers.

# Beijing Modern Dance Company - Rear Light

By Dustin Herlich

Direct from China, the powerful, fast-paced and energetic Beijing Modern Dance Company dances to the music of Pink Floyd's "The Wall." Their first U.S. tour, the company goes to the Joyce Theater in New York City after Staller Center. Catch them here! Tickets: \$34.

That's all it says on the Staller Center web page. Sounds interesting enough, but for 34 dollars, it's a little out of the reach of most college students, and way far out of my reach right now. Along comes not a spider, but Alexandra Duggan, Director for Student Activities. Alexandra was nice enough to secure a good amount of free tickets for a number of students, and being a member of student media, I was sent a notice asking me if I would like to reserve a ticket and come watch the show. It's hard to resist the urge to just repeat wow about 750 times and fill the half page. I have to thank Alexandra for the tickets. It was really nice to see Norm Prusslin and Joan Gumbs at the performance as well.

This was the first event with some culture in it that I had been to in an embarrassingly long time and perhaps that contributed to why I enjoyed it as much as I did. The production was definitely a modern dance performance and usually that's not my favorite medium for creative expression but this was spectacular. Modern enough to be less boring than some traditional ballets I've seen, but not modern enough to be called abstract interpretational dance. It was a perfect in-between.

The dance was exceptionally precise and well choreographed. You have to assume that a professional company of this caliber would only be as exacting and flawless as they were, but I still say the synchronicity was noteworthy. Much of the on stage maneuvering was fairly complex, and sitting as high up as I was, I could see an almost aerial perspective of the performance. The view from up top I think really let me get an extra perspective, and extra angle of beauty those in the front rows completely missed out on.

The imagery flowed seamlessly with the music, and the music we already know is spectacular. It was a very moving display of movement. The dance really was a good visual statement to compliment the sounds. Lighting and prop use really made the experience enjoyable. The audience participation segment really made me laugh out loud.

While any opportunities to see them in this country right now may be over, I'd highly recommend that anyone who has the opportunity to see them. I was lucky to see them for free, but I'd be happy to pay to see them in the future.



BEIJING MODERN DANCE COMPANY,  
Courtesy of [www.theparamount.com](http://www.theparamount.com)

# The "W's" PRICE IS RIGHT!

By Vincent Michael Festa

Have you ever wondered if this whole presidency was just as cheap and gimmicky as a game show? The razzle-dazzle of lights, colors, and constructed sets were not just for the American public but also in a television studio in the White House? And what if George W. Bush were to be...a game show host? Look no further than CBS' new prime-time entry right after the world news: "*The W's Price Is Right*"!

"Here it comes! Washington's most exciting hour of fantastic cash, prizes, and current events! The fabulous 60-minute *The W's Price Is Right*!"

That's right. You lovely people reading the *Press* will finally get to know all those elusive answers to those burning questions, and this new version isn't just for Atlantic City housewives, macho college frat boys, and the Navy Academy, either.

What if you saw how our dear and beloved President Bush decide on what countries to take over? Ever yearn for an easy-to-swallow solution for corporate justice? How about if us citizens, soldier boys and girls, and the working-class take part in the fun by attempting to win government money, finding peace, and earning jobs in an exciting and flashy setting of lights, jazzy music, and hoopla? "John Q. Republican, come on down!"

So here's a run-down comparison between what would be played during the real show "*The Price Is Right*", and what would go down during a would-be taping of *The W's Price Is Right*.

**TPIR host:** Bob Barker.

**WPIR host and Commander-in-Chief:** President George W. Bush.

**TPIR announcer:** the late great Rod Roddy

**WPIR announcer and Vice President:** Dick Cheney

**TPIR spokesmodels:** silent but sexy females that endlessly caress home appliances with a smile.

**WPIR spokesmodels:** The Bush twins (Laura and Barbara).

The show would open up with George W. making his entrance out of a Secret Service helicopter outside of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue and walking into the glitzy and glamorous party atmosphere. Now, the original TPIR would have a "Contestant's Row" with an item-up-for-bids (or IUFB). The contestant that comes close to

the actual retail price of the item without going over gets to play a bonus game. Instead, WPIR totally disregards Contestant's Row with contestants personally appointed before the show, so they get right up and go play the bonus games right away!

Here are the bonus games played between the real TPIR and how WPIR would play it as follows:



THE HOST OF THIS WONDERFUL SHOW, THE ETERNAL BOB BARKER, Courtesy of Vincent Michael Festa

**TPIR: "10 Chances":** contestant tries to unscramble a mix of three sets of digits of prices for three items in ten chances or less.

**How WPIR would play it:** Bush's life-long corporate CEO friends unscramble and reassemble missing numbers, overlooked figures, shredded pieces of paper, and un-recovered documents to clear their name in ten chances or less.

**TPIR: "Any Number":** player uncovers digits "0" through "9" to help reveal one of three prizes, ranging from a car, appliance, or mere change in a piggy bank.

**How WPIR would play it:** a hard-working middle-class citizen uncovers digits "0" through "9" to help reveal one of three prizes, ranging from constitutional freedoms, a several-hundred dollar tax break, or minimum wage.

**TPIR: "Blank Check":** player with a huge feathered pen writes out an amount on a huge paper check that adds to the price of the prize to reach a certain price range to win. Losers have their checks voided out with a big red "VOID" stamp.

**How WPIR would play it:** renamed the "Gun Control Bill Game", a contestant for gun control writes a bill for background checks of weapon holders and waiting periods. George W. declares that the bill would be signed "as soon as it reaches his desk" and the contestant would win. Unfortunately, contestant ends up losing after all.

Or, renamed "The Patriot Act", John Ashcroft drafts the entire 120-plus page act in front of the patriotic audience and Bush signs it. Ashcroft takes home a toaster.

**TPIR: "Bullseye":** contestant multiplies a selected item with its price ("two of the Trojan X-Large!") to aim for a certain "bulls-eye" price range in this giant bulls-eye-like game.

**How WPIR would play it:** Donald Rumsfeld multiplies a selected item with its price ("100,000 soldiers shipped to Baghdad!") to aim for a certain "bulls-eye" price range.

Or, airplane pilots aim to fire missiles at Saddam's palaces and hideouts.

**TPIR: "Cliff-Hangers":** players guess the correct price of three prizes. Wrong guesses are subtracted from the real prices and are added onto a mountain-like scale of 25 spaces. A cardboard mountain climber complete with *lederhosen* (!), a pick-axe, and accompanying yodeling music climbs the mountain setting in difference of the prices. As long as he doesn't fall to his rocky demise, the player wins.

**How WPIR would play it:** this time, an American G.I. complete with *top-secret army gear* (!), a firearm, and accompanying Afghanistan rhythms climbs the mountain setting in search of Usama bin Laden.

**TPIR: "Clock Game":** contestant attempts to guess the correct prices of two prizes in thirty seconds in "higher-lower" fashion.

**How WPIR would play it:** grieving family member of a son or daughter off at war in the Middle East attempts to guess the correct length of time of the return of their loved ones and the overall end of the war in thirty seconds in "higher-lower" fashion. (C'mon, it's way higher than that.)

**TPIR: "Flip Flop":** player may or may

# The "W's" PRICE IS RIGHT! Continued...

By Vincent Michael Festa

not choose to "flip" or "flop" one or both halves of a price of an item correctly.

**How WPIR would play it:** John Kerry is a contestant for this pricing game. Yep, another cruel joke by Bush and the Republicans!

**TPIR: "Golden Road":** player walks through a "golden road" and meets up with each prize, then must guess the right digits that are used for the later prizes down the road. Player wins a car for filling in the missing digit for the car prize using the previous prize's price (say that three times fast!).

**How WPIR would play it:** Bush appoints potential U.S. Supreme Court judges through an interview process and meets up with each interviewee, then must guess the right answers that Bush would most likely to hear. Judges finally get their seats when they correctly answer what side of the presidential coin they're on.

**TPIR: "Grand Game":** contestant chooses four products out of six that have the same price. Correct answers makes the sign stretch from \$1.00 to \$10, then \$100, then \$1,000, and finally \$10,000.

**How WPIR would play it:** Bush forgoes the formats and stretches the National Deficit from the thousands to the millions, then billions, and finally trillions.

**TPIR: "Hole-In-One" (or "Two"):** contestant tries to putt the golf ball into the hole in hopes of winning a big prize and money bonus.

**How WPIR would play it:** Bush tries to putt the golf ball into the hole for six months in result of winning election.

**TPIR: "? Off":** lucky ones through process of elimination find \$10,000 inside one of 16 happy-birthday boxes.

**How WPIR would play it:** college graduates through process of elimination find their jobs and their careers inside one of 16 happy-birthday boxes. Grads discover that the

box is empty due to outsourcing and instead finds an empty bag of Cheet-O's.

**TPIR: "Now And Then":** out of six products in a circle, a contestant chooses one and guesses if a product is priced now or years ago.

**How WPIR would play it:** Out of six big oil companies, an SUV-driving soccer mom chooses one and guesses if a current oil price was priced now or *weeks* ago.

**TPIR: "One Away":** contestant takes five incorrect digits and flips them one digit off either way to guess the correct price of a car. After the changes, contestant asks "gentlemen, do I have at least one number right?"

**How WPIR would play it:** Condoleezza Rice, after being questioned at the 9/11 Commission asks "gentleman, do I have at least one answer right?"

**TPIR: "Plinko":** hands down TPIR's most famous game. Players take their chips, drop them through the vertical peg-filled playing field, and watch

the chips fall as they may when they plunk down into any one of nine money slots.

**How WPIR would play it:** hands down Washington's most famous game. Bush takes his chips, drop them through the vertical peg-filled playing field, and watch the chips fall as they may when they plunk down into any one of nine potential countries for take-over. Right now, North Korea sounds good...wait a minute...it lands on Iran! American audience applauds!

**TPIR: "Pathfinder":** player stands in the middle of a playing field of 25 digits, then tries to step on each digit to find the right price of the car.

**How WPIR would play it:** Bush stands in the middle of a playing field of questions and testimony, then tries to use his dad's pull and money to find the path to get out of the draft.

**TPIR: "Range Game":** winners watch a red range climb up the board and with the red button stop where they think the correct price of the prize is. Bob Barker, in this game, goes on record saying "not to press the button before the range starts otherwise it won't work and we can't start it again for 37 hours!"

**How WPIR would play it:** Bush watches a red range climb up the board and with the red button stop where he thinks the correct distance from the poor to the "%1" should be. Bush, in this game, goes on record saying "not to press the button before the range starts otherwise it won't work and we can't start it again for 20 more years!"

**TPIR: "Safecrackers":** contestant un-cracks a safe-load of prizes by dialing in the correct "combination" or price to win.

**How WPIR would play it:** U.S. soldier un-cracks a safe-load of WMD's by dialing in the correct "combination" or price to win. Instead, U.S. soldier finds no WMD's but manages to find Saddam locked in the safe.

**TPIR: "Three Strikes":** participants pick numbered chips out of a bag to light up and reveal the price of a car. Three "X's" (strikes) are also thrown in to help hinder the participant.

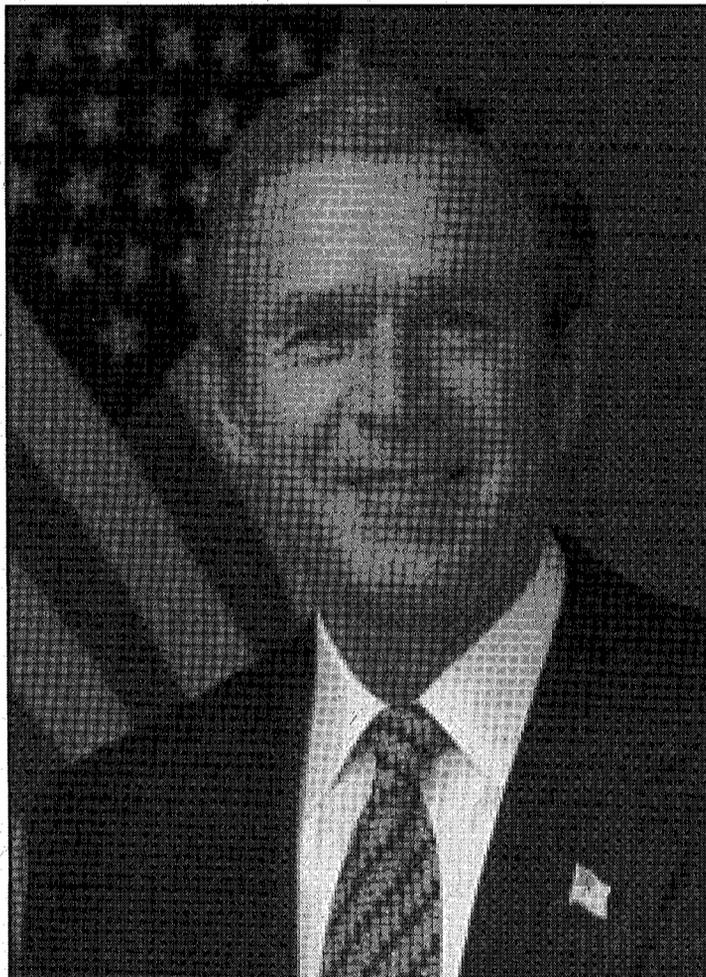
**How WPIR would play it:** Bush blatantly ignores the set behind him and cleans out the bag full of missing, absentee ballots from Democrat voters for Al Gore from the 2000 U.S. Presidential Election. And screw strikes! Does Bush really need them?

After the variety of three and six pricing games are played, the real TPIR would bring out the huge, space-age, sparkly thingie called "The Big Wheel" and participants aim to spin for as much change as possible without going over to win. WPIR's participants instead spin for real pocket change. Don't forget to spin the wheel all the way around otherwise it doesn't count and you *don't* get to spin again. (Wow, that pocket change must be very important to the Whitehouse.)

And finally, TPIR winners of the wheel get to bid in the final "Double Showcase" to win a huge set of prizes including cars, trips, and even more appliances. Not so on WPIR! Instead, flag-waving hopefuls can win anything from amnesty, deployment, freedom...even a handshake from the President!

Now you know. A marriage of hot-button American issues, hard-line controversy, and a couple of dishwashers thrown in for good measure. "All this can be yours, if W's Price is right!"

But try not to overbid. I hear that's bad.



THE CONTESTANT WHO ALWAYS GUESSES WAY OFF,  
Courtesy of Vincent Michael Festa

# Overwhelming Review Continued...

By Andrew Thompson

Continued from page 22

would dedicate.

"THE MAKING OF A SOUL," THE SECOND SONG, IS EVEN LONGER. IT CONTINUES WITH THE THEME OF TRAVELING MUSIC MIXED IN WITH ODD CHANTS. THESE FIRST TWO SONGS COMPRISE OVER HALF OF THE ALBUM'S RUNNING TIME AND EVENTUALLY THIS SONG BREAKS UP IN A DIFFERENT, MUCH LESS EXPECTED (IN CASE SOMEBODY THOUGHT THE FIRST ONE WAS PREDICTABLE) FASHION. THIS SOUNDS MUCH MORE DRAMATIC STATEMENT THAN THE FIRST SONG, WHICH FELT LIKE THAT OF A POLITE INTRODUCTION. EVENTUALLY THERE'S A DROPOUT OF THE TORTURED HORN WHICH BECOMES ANOTHER CHANT THAT DIES TO BEGIN A STRANGE SPEECH THAT SEEMS A BIT SELF-AWARE AT TIMES. "BUT FAIRTAZY MOVEZ AHEAD/FOR THE ICEMAN JUST TOOK A TURN FOR THE BETTER." WHEN THEY REALIZE THEIR OWN ODDITY, THEY SEEM TO CONFIRM IT WITH SUCH A WEIRD STATEMENT.

FINALLY, THE LAST THREE SONGS OF "SHIP'S A'GOING DOWN," "NEVER KNOW QUESTIONZ" AND "EPILOGUE" ALL RESOLVE THE TENSION SET UP BY THE FIRST TWO SONGS. "SHIP'S A'GOING DOWN" IS PROBABLY THE MOST ABRUPT OF THE COLLECTION FOUND. SCREAMING, HOLLOWED OUT SPACES, AND THE CUT IN BETWEEN THIS CALM AND HYSTERIA IS PARTICULARLY FASCINATING. THE TWO SPEAKERS HAVE A CONVERSATION WHERE THE CALM QUIETS DOWN THE SCREAMING, CONFUSED INDIVIDUAL.

"NEVER KNOW QUESTIONZ" IS THE RESOLUTION AND TRIUMPH OF THESE CHARACTERS. THEY SEEM TO HAVE BUILT UP TO THE HAPPY CONCLUSION OF ALL THE PROBLEMS WHICH MADE THEM SO HYSTERICAL. THEIR JOURNEY TO A PLACE THAT INITIALLY OFFERED SO MUCH ANGER AND FRUSTRATION MADE THEM DEPRESSED, UNTIL THEY REALIZED THE GOOD THAT COULD COME FROM IT. AN EVOLUTION INTO WHAT SOUNDS LIKE PARADE MUSIC MAKES THIS APPARENT TO THE LISTENER. "EPILOGUE" LOOKS BACK ON ALL THAT HAS HAPPENED, THE EQUIVALENT OF A CONDENSED VERSION OF THE MAIN IDEAS.

THE RESIDENTS ARE TRULY AMONG THOSE FEW ARTISTS WHO CAN MAKE "CONCEPT ALBUMS" AND NOT FEEL RESTRICTED. RATHER, THE CONCEPTS THEY USE HELP TO GIVE THEIR MUSIC CLARITY. SONICALLY, IT IS QUITE OBVIOUS WHEN YOU LISTEN TO THEIR FIRST ALBUM WHICH SEEMED SHATTERED AND DISORGANIZED IN COMPARISON TO THIS STRONG EFFORT. "NOT AVAILABLE," ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT STRANGE, DOES HAVE CERTAIN ATTRACTIVENESS MUSICALLY. OVERALL THE CHANGES ARE DRAMATIC AND FREQUENT ENOUGH TO MAINTAIN A LISTENER'S INTEREST, DESPITE THEIR APPARENT DISLIKE OF POPULAR MUSIC, THE SEPARATE SECTIONS OF EACH SONG SEEM TO CATER TO A SHORT ATTENTION SPAN AND BROUGHT ON BY THE VERY THING THEY HATE—POPULAR MUSIC. IRONY IS FUNNY.

# Another Overwhelming Review Boards of Canada: Geogaddi

By Andrew Thompson

THERE I AM, LYING AROUND DURING THE BLIZZARD, THE SNOW SLOWLY PILING UP AROUND MY BUILDING AND WINDOWILL. DESPITE WHAT EVERYONE SAID, IT WAS A SLOW-WORKING SYSTEM, BUT IT EVENTUALLY COVERED ALL I COULD SEE FROM MY ROOM WITH ABOUT A FOOT OF SNOW. WHEN IT WAS FINISHED, I LOOKED AND SAW THE BEAUTY OF LARGE FORCES WORKING SLOWLY AND SUBTLY TO EVENTUALLY TURN INTO A BREATHTAKING (OR ANNOYING IF YOU WERE MOVING IN) DISPLAY OF NATURE'S PATIENCE. USUALLY NATURE TAKES ITS TIME IN THE SLOW BUILDUP TO ANY CLIMAX. IT TOOK A FEW DAYS OF FREEZING WEATHER BEFORE THE SNOW BEGAN ON SATURDAY.

BOARDS OF CANADA WORK IN THE SAME SLOW PACE, NEVER INCREASING THEIR PACE TOO DRAMATICALLY. SMALL EVENTS COME TOGETHER AND CULMINATE INTO HEARTFELT EMOTIONAL MELODIES, WHICH LIKE THE SNOW, ALWAYS SEEM MORE DELICATE THAN THEY REALLY ARE. SUBTLETY HAS BEEN EMPLOYED FROM THIS

SCOTTISH DUO SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THEIR WORK (WHICH BEGINS IN THE EARLY 90S). ANALOG KEYBOARDS ARE HEAVILY WORKED, BUT INSTEAD ARE TREATED AS THEY SHOULD, AS FADED MEMORIES FROM AN EARLIER ERA.

ON THEIR FIRST ALBUM, "MUSIC HAS THE RIGHT TO CHILDREN," THEY VIVIDLY PORTRAY THE SIMPLICITY OF CHILDHOOD THROUGH DECEPTIVELY SIMPLE MELODIES AND FADED PICTURES OF CHILDREN. USING AN UNCHANGING

PUT OF THEIR SONGS RATHER THAN BECOMING ANYTHING WITH POP APPEAL. YES, THE MELODIES WERE SLOW-MOVING AND THE LYRICS POETIC, BUT THEY HAD NO PLACE IN THE VAPID COMMERCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE EARLY 90S. AUTECHRE BEGAN WITH SOME OF THESE IDEAS BEFORE THEY BECAME INVOLVED IN SONIC EXPERIMENTATION FOR THE SAKE OF IT. BOARDS OF CANADA HAVE EVOLVED, BUT NOT TOWARDS RELENTLESS EXPERIMENTATION. RATHER, THEY REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF ALWAYS MAINTAINING AN IMPORTANT CONNECTION TO THEIR AUDIENCE.

THEIR INTENTIONS ARE QUITE CLEAR IN SONGS LIKE "SUNSHINE RECORDER" WHICH BEGINS WITH A SWELLING AND RECEDING DRONE MELODY, BEFORE DELVING INTO DELICATE MELODIES THAT FLOAT ABOVE THE DISTORTED VOCAL SAMPLES, ALL OF WHICH CULMINATE INTO A SINGLE VOCAL SAMPLE SAYING "A BEAUTIFUL PLACE" IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SONG. SAMPLES HERE BECOME PART OF THE SONGS HERE, IN AN EVEN BIGGER WAY THAN THEIR DEBUT ALBUM. "1969" IS ANOTHER HIGHLIGHT, WITH A BEAUTIFUL BUILDUP THAT INCLUDES A CATCHY RHYTHM AND A MELODY THAT SEEMS BEST REPRESENTED BY THE ALBUM'S COVER, A FADED PICTURE FROM A KALEIDOSCOPE. LIKE THAT PICTURE, THE MANY MELODIC ELEMENTS SWIRL TOGETHER INTO AN UNDERSTANDABLE MASH-UP OF MANY DIFFERENT ELEMENTS.

I MENTION FRANK ZAPPA SIMPLY BECAUSE HE WAS A MASTER AT EFFORTLESSLY BRINGING TOGETHER MANY DIFFERENT IDEAS INTO ONE SONG WITHOUT SEEMING PRETENTIOUS. OBVIOUSLY BOARDS OF CANADA TAKE HIS IDEA, BUT AT A MUCH SLOWER PACE. THEIR FOCUS IS PROVIDING SEVERAL DIFFERENT IDEAS AND MORPHING THEM TOGETHER, ALL THE WHILE THEY COME TOGETHER TO A CLIMAX NOT OFTEN OBTAINED IN ELECTRONIC MUSIC.

USUALLY WITH ELECTRONIC MUSIC THERE IS A CERTAIN TEASING OF THE LISTENER, HINTING AT A BEAUTIFUL CHORUS OR MELODY BUT NEVER ACTUALLY DELIVERING. WITH BOARDS OF CANADA, THEIR ENTIRE PIECE IS A SLOW BUILD UP TO SOMETHING HEARTFELT AND SINCERE. UNLIKE MOST ELECTRONIC MUSICIANS, THEY DO NOT TEASE THEIR LISTENER BUT RATHER BRING HIM/HER EXACTLY WHAT THEY HAD BEEN HINTING AT FOR THE WHOLE SONG. "ALPHA AND OMEGA" DOES THIS THROUGH ITS WINDING KEYBOARD MELODIES BEFORE IT DISSOLVES INTO STATIC AND VOCAL REMNANTS.

DESPITE THE NAME, BOARDS OF CANADA ACTUALLY ARE FROM SCOTLAND, A PLACE I HAVE HEARD NOTHING BUT WONDERFUL THINGS ABOUT. HOW IT HAS CLIFFS RIGHT OVER THE SEA, THE JAGGED ROCK JUST ENDING WHERE THE SEA BEGINS. IT SEEMS TO BE AN IMPROPER TRANSITION, BUT FROM PHOTOGRAPHS MY FRIENDS HAVE SHOWN ME, I REALLY COULDN'T PICTURE IT ANY OTHER WAY. THE MANY MELODIES THAT BLEND INTO EACH OTHER AT FIRST SEEM TO BE AT ODDS, UNTIL YOU LISTEN THROUGH THE WHOLE ALBUM AND REALIZE HOW PERFECTLY NATURAL IT ALL IS. JAGGED EDGES FROM BEATS ARE SMOOTHED OUT WITH GORGEOUS ANALOG SOUNDS FROM A FORGOTTEN TIME IN ELECTRONIC, WHEN IT WAS ABOUT CONNECTING ON AN EMOTIONAL LEVEL WITH THE LISTENER, RATHER THAN PROVIDING STERILE BACKGROUND FOR DANCE MUSIC. BOARDS OF CANADA HAVE HELPED TO INFLUENCE MANY NEW ARTISTS TOWARDS A MORE HUMAN APPROACH TOWARDS ELECTRONIC MUSIC, ONE THAT INCLUDES RESPECTING THE LISTENER'S INTELLIGENCE.



THIS BELONGS TO ONE OF THESE TWO ARTICLES, CAN YOU FIGURE OUT WHICH ONE?  
Courtesy of Andrew Thompson

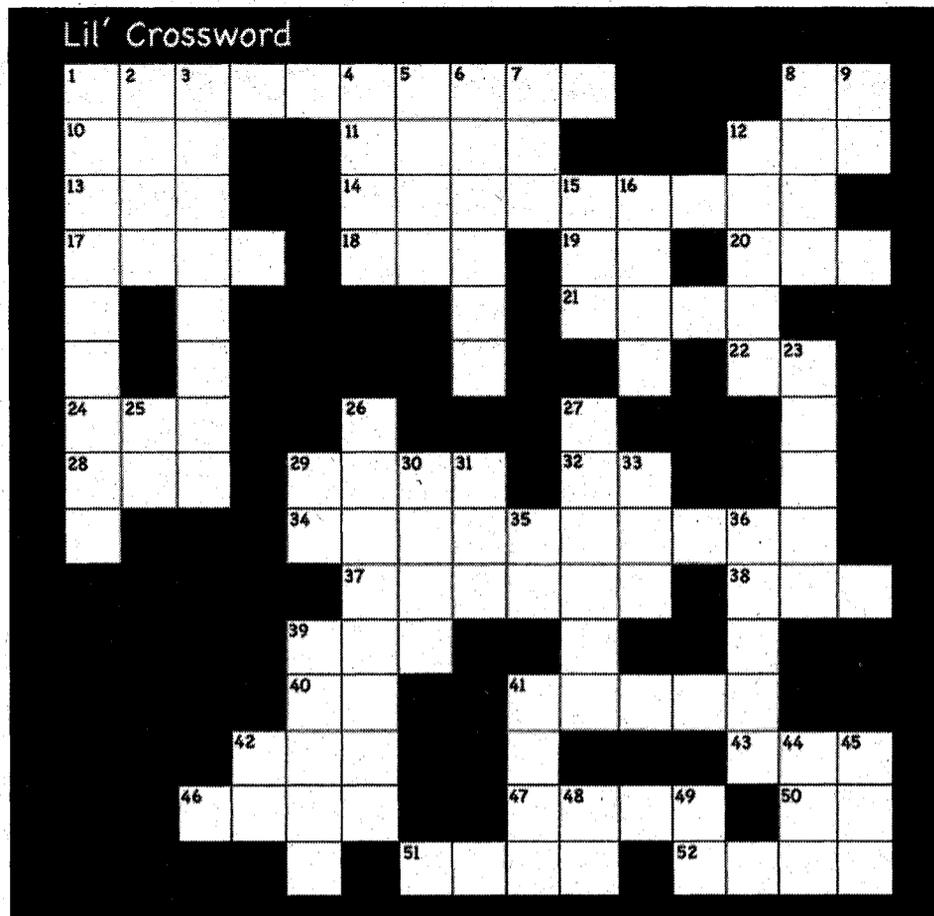
CHUGGING BEAT THROUGHOUT THE SONGS, THEY DIFFER FROM MANY OTHER ELECTRONIC ARTISTS IN THAT THE FOCUS IS THE MELODY, NOT THE TRICKS THEY CAN DO THROUGH COMPUTER PROCESSING. THEY TRULY ARE COMPOSERS OF MUSIC AND NOT JUST SIMPLY COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS. STRENGTH LIES WITHIN THE COUNTERBALANCE BETWEEN A LIBERAL USAGE OF INTERLOCKING MELODIES AND OLD SAMPLES.

"GEOGADDI," THEIR SOPHOMORE EFFORT, IS AN OBVIOUS IMPROVEMENT UPON THEIR DEBUT. THEY INCLUDE MORE ELEMENTS INTO THEIR SONGS, INCLUDING DISTORTED CHORUSES MADE FROM SAMPLES. UNLIKE THE USUAL COMMERCIAL ALBUM, THE BEGINNING IS NOT CHOCK-HEAVY FILLED WITH GREAT SONGS AND TAPERS OFF INTO FILLER BY THE END. THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE DISC, THE MUSIC REMAINS SONG FOCUSED, AND CLEAR. MELODIES THIS TIME ARE EVEN MORE ROOTED IN ROCK-LIKE IDEAS, TAKING NOT ONLY CUES FROM "SHOEGAZER" BANDS LIKE SLOWDIVE BUT ALSO THE MORE PSYCHEDELIC ELEMENTS FROM SONGS LIKE "PREACHER EN REGALIA" FROM FRANK ZAPPA.

BOARDS OF CANADA IS; IN MANY WAYS, MUCH MORE INDEBTED TO ROCK IDEAS THAN ANYTHING FROM TECHNO. OBVIOUSLY BOARDS OF CANADA OWE MUCH OF THEIR IDEAS FROM THE "SHOEGAZER" ROCK MOVEMENT IN THE EARLY 90S. "SHOEGAZER" BANDS WERE USUALLY THOSE WHICH FOCUSED MORE ON THE EMOTIONAL OUT-

ACROSS

1. Capable of walking hither... and yon
8. Derek, Diddley, Hazzard
10. Introduces the maiden name
11. First name of Burt Reynolds ex-wife
12. 40 cubic feet, or 1 gigacalorie
13. Dino bone swimming pool
14. Conventional coordinate plane
17. John Locke defined it as "whatever is the object of understanding when a man thinks"
18. Soccer phenom Freddy
19. Kathleen Turner's Warshawski
20. Last letter of the English alphabet
21. Glamour Mag
22. Sun God
24. And when your album sales wasn't doin' too good / who's the doc that he told you to go see?
26. The last day of Ramadan
29. Birthplace of President Clinton
32. US State which recently elected not to send Alan Keyes to the US Senate
34. Notched
37. 1.2 million member international service organization
38. First name of *Futurama* guest voice who declared, "That does not fempute!"
39. Will never grow up
40. Ticker symbol for Greyhound's corporate parent
41. Brand name polyester film



42. Not a wide area network
43. Comes in many varieties, such as freeze and laser
46. Speck
47. Family of audiovisual compression standards
50. US state which houses the Spruce Goose
51. Makes your shoe fancy
52. Location of 1993 Israeli-Palestinian negotiations

DOWN

1. This place and the far side of the world
2. Ye olde timey honey wine
3. Condition that doesn't mean Jeff Bridges and John Goodman are saps!
4. South American name for proposed hemispheric trade agreement
5. Mario crony
6. It's kickin' in now

7. University in Henrietta, NY
8. Along with blood, the price of coal
9. There's no clue for the word "on" that doesn't insult your intelligence
12. Brand name stun gun
15. The bumper stickers claim she was framed
16. Where you put your grains when they ain't in yer belly
23. When Shakespeare's players address the audience in lieu of their fellows
25. US State with the longest name
26. French Région historically contested with Germany
27. Narrator of *Styx's* "Domo Arigato, Mr. Roboto"
29. Initials of New York's 51<sup>st</sup> governor
30. Indebted laborer of Spanish America
31. Arboreal Tolkien imagining
33. Your mom is a great one of these
35. Recently received unprecedented exclusive rights to produce NFL video games
36. Film critic who wrote a movie panned by his peers in 1970
39. Actor Oliver
41. Active ingredient in Ecstasy
42. Ye olde timey exclamation of surprise
44. Tool for pokin'
45. Investigative agency of the US Congress
48. Boat or cruiser
49. Five, in Japanese

By Mathew Willemain

All eyes are opened,  
And students become aware.  
Come, friends, and join the...

# Haiku d'etat

By Tom Clark

Lighters embody  
Man's defiance of the sun,  
As smoke slowly swirls

Under midday sun,  
Drip, drip the icicle melts,  
Splashing mud below

Furious scribblings  
Characterize the style  
Of Haiku d'etat

My thoughts of fancy  
And yearning for her affords  
Respite from writing

Trapped in memories past,  
For she and I were once one;  
A time too fleeting

If given the chance,  
Would one choose enlightenment  
Or undying love?

The impermanence  
Of life and love reminds me  
That time is precious

And though I have lost  
Her favor, I still have the  
Most precious Dharma

Haiku d'etat is a thematic poetry column. I usually focus on the haiku form, but sometimes I spread to other forms. The idea behind this column is that free verse is too oft-abused, and hopefully I'll write something good eventually. This installment's topic is about my ex-girlfriend. Send hate-mail to [tdclark@ic.sunysb.edu](mailto:tdclark@ic.sunysb.edu)

# Michael Jackson's Super Bowl Party Tips

By James Blonde

Jury selection has started for the high-profile pedophile trial of 80's pop star Michael Jackson.

The jurors, dubbed THE JACKSON 12, by the media, hold in their hands the power to either exonerate a falsely accused innocent man, or incarcerate a sexual predator.

No matter where you stand in your belief of his innocence or guilt, one can't help but get the feeling that this is going to be a long and strange trial. Move over O.J. there's a new trial of the century in town.

## THE CHARGES.

The 46 year-old eccentric King of Pop is being charged with 10 felony counts of sexual misconduct involving a 13 year-old cancer patient, stemming from all-boy slumber parties at Michaels fantasy-like Neverland ranch.

The accuser, his family and lawyers contend that Michael plied the boy with alcohol, sleeping pills and pornography. Recently leaked court documents describe the victim being fondled and masturbated by Whacko Jacko.

If this all sounds familiar, that's because this is, almost verbatim, what Michael was accused of over a decade ago in '93, when he sidestepped allegations and settled out of court for a reported 20 million dollars.

Since then, Santa Barbara District Attorney Tom Sneddon, has been on Michael's case like stink on the homeless. Evidently DA Sneddon carries a grudge worse than my ex-wife, and has devoted the last 12 years of his life to bringing justice to the moon-walking, boy touching Jackson.

If found guilty, Jackson faces hard prison time, not being able to buy his way out of it, with being broke from spending his millions on lawyers fees and hush money...

On travel for the scores of sickly and disadvantaged children he carries around with him (hey, you gotta have your posse)....

On happy meals and Chucky Cheese for aforementioned posse (Hey, you gotta eat)... The rent and service of the fifteen Slurpee machines he has in his bedroom (hey, what better to wash down all those Happy Meals?).

On upkeep on the bones of John Merrick, the elephant man (forgot about that one didn't you?).

On high priced zoo attendants and monkey chow for Bubbles the Chimp (when Michael spansks the monkey...it's a real monkey. When Michael blows bubbles...he gets fur in his mouth [insert rim shot here]).

On plastic surgery bills to alter his penis so the victim won't be able to identify it in a line up.

On rocket fuel for his jetpack, and fake alimony for his ex-fake wives.

## THE COURTROOM

The judge ruled in favor of the media's presence in the court, but told Michael not to talk to reporters about the case, issuing him a gag order. Apparently confused, Michael responded in his soft-spoken effeminate voice, "Gag? No I don't gag, their little wee-wees are too small."

Michael's lawyers, upon their clients' advice, are not only happy that television cameras can be admitted, but insisting they're allowed, in an attempt to influence the public. The Jackson camp also filed these requests with the Judge:

Michael wants cameras that will shoot him in a flattering light and always shoot him from his best angle, the one where his nose job

doesn't look like a horribly botched science experiment.

Michael's lawyers requested that Michael receive McDonalds Happy Meals with only Peter Pan toys every day of the week (on the weekends he will resume his regular diet of dining on the pubies of small boys).

None of the jurors will be allowed to personally address Michael or look him directly in the eyes, for fear of realizing he's lying.

That Michael be allowed to be 20 minutes late to court and dance on the roof of his SUV after the court proceedings—oh wait, he does that already.

And finally Michael requested that he get to personally cross-examine his accuser in a closed door, special hearing located at child actor Frankie Muniz's backyard, with an inflatable pool full of Mountain Dew Code Red flavored slurpee.

## THE FAMILIES

Members of the famous musical Jackson family, still reeling from Sister Janet's wardrobe malfunction last Super Bowl, are expected to come out in full force to support their former, child star family member. Expected to crawl out of the woodwork are all the lesser known Jackson family members, such as Tito Jackson, and married (read; straight) eldest brother Jackie Jackson for a last ditch effort to be on television, not involving a VH1 "Where are they now?" segment.

## THE SISTER JANETS' NIPPLE

According to Rate The Music, Although Michael was watching his sisters' performance on a giant movie screen, he missed it.

"I was looking right at (the screen), in a movie theatre, I didn't see it." Claimed Michael, shortly after the now famous wardrobe malfunction.

"(I was) in a movie theatre, and it was huge on the screen and I didn't ever see it. So I heard all this controversy the next day and I said, "That's not true, I saw none of it." Michael was too busy getting popcorn, Smirnoff Ice and sleeping pills for child actor Frankie Muniz, who accompanied Michael to the theatre to watch "the big game."

After the game they returned to the Jackson Neverland ranch to read comic books with a flashlight under the blankets of Michael's bed, which is so big, boasts Michael, he can fit twenty or thirty boys on it.

His sisters' nipple wasn't the only thing that went unnoticed at the Super Bowl party, according to sources close to the Jackson camp. "He seemed uninterested in the Lingerie Bowl,

lusty halftime ads featuring those hot Miller light catfight girls or even the cheerleaders.

It was almost like he didn't even know there was a sporting event going on. He seemed more interested in the buffet, which featured kid-inspired foods like Lunchables and Polly-o string cheese."

## THE EVIDENCE

Police raided Jackson's palatial Neverland ranch recently, looking for physical evidence linking Michael to his accuser. They found porn with the child's fingerprints on it, pills and a stash of liquor in the two-story bedroom of Michael. Sources close to the investigation said, also confiscated were stacks of vanilla porn, such as Playboy and Penthouse, and some more hardcore titles like Hustler and Cheri. Also found, the most damning evidence against Michael, were "erotic material," including pictures of nude children.

In addition to the 17 books, 55 magazines (Jackson's lawyers say 23 of these magazines are from 1933, and are considered collectors items), there were four computers seized and 2 DVD's of adult movies found, one allegedly involving lesbian sex. In contrast to my own pornography collection, which is exclusively involves lesbian sex.

Police speculate these materials, all legal by even the most puritanical standards, were all bought by Jackson's staff, family or by one of the numerous hanger-ons, that Michael surrounds himself.

Most notable of these members of yes-men is what the media is calling "the fat-guy who holds Michaels umbrella." Evidently if you're as rich as Michael, no one around you, will tell you, that your boy-loving is getting out of control, or that your eccentric behavior could be taken the wrong way by a not too forgiving public. Or that telling the BBC's Martin Bashir, in the 2003 documentary "Living with Michael," that it was OK for adults to share their beds with children, or sleep with same sex prepubescent children.

If I was being paid hundreds of thousands of dollars just to carry Michael Jackson's umbrella, I wouldn't say anything to him about how it's a bad idea to show up to court dressed like Cap'n Crunch, or wearing a mask, no need to upset the cash cow right before the big show.

Michael, in what could only be a publicity stunt, showed up at a California K-mart recently with his menagerie of bodyguards, Make-a-Wish cancer patients, and child actors, including Frankie Muniz.

One well-wishing onlooker, holding a sign reading "SMOOTH...BUT NOT A SMOOTH CRIMINAL!" shouted a question to Michael as he entered the K-mart.

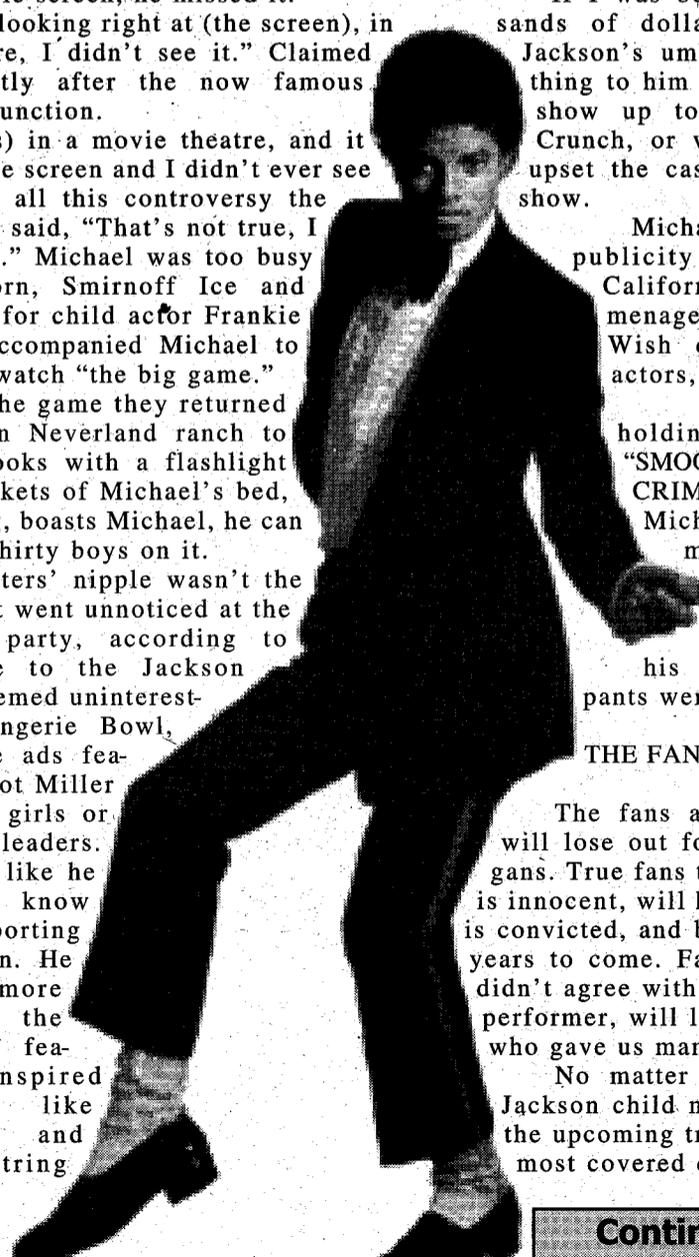
"Michael, what brings you to K-mart?"

Jackson replied in his soft voice "I heard boy's pants were half off."

## THE FANS

The fans are the ones who ultimately will lose out for Michaels' sexual shenanigans. True fans that blindly believed Michael is innocent, will have their bubbles burst if he is convicted, and be the butt of jokes for many years to come. Fans who liked the music but didn't agree with the sexual orientation of the performer, will lose a musical icon and artist who gave us many years of entertainment.

No matter which side of the Michael Jackson child molestation issue you are on, the upcoming trial promises to be one of the most covered events in recent history.



Continued on next page

# Michael Jackson's Super Bowl Party Tips

Continued...

by James Blonde

## Continued from previous page

Only an acquittal will change the public's opinion and put Michael back on top [Insert little boy joke here].

### THE CONTROVERSY

I don't know if a straightforward sex crime can be considered a controversy.

"Controversy" was a hit by Prince in the eighties. Now there's an eccentric musical artist that never got too crazy—all right, he changed his name into a squiggle for a minute in the nineties, but overall he stayed away from touching the boys. Or if Prince did, he didn't pay millions in hush money to cover it.

### THE SIMILARITY TO OJ'S TRIAL

The one glove.

Except in Michaels' case, it had silver sparkly sequins and rhinestones on it, and was often used to rub the peeps of little boys.

Hey Michael if you're reading this, and I'm sure you are, I, James Blonde underground cartoonist, have a suggestion for you. Don't hide your freakishness, run with it, I think the average American will buy the "I'm too weird, no one understands me because I was a child star" defense.

But you have to step it up a little.

Dress for court like a Boy Scout Master.

Or a Catholic Priest.

Have fun, Run with it.

Trade in your gold armband, gilded with charms, for one with a swastika on it.

Be creative, be honest.

Tell the world that "Billy-Jean" was written for a young boy. Tell the world how your marriage to Lisa Marie Presley was a hoax. And how you artificially insperminated your one-time nurse in a secret marriage of convenience for the sole purpose of breeding children, and are presently cloning young boys in your secret science lab in the basement of the Neverland ranch.

who spent forty days with Michael filming a documentary.

Other possible witnesses include Emanuel Lewis, who has stuck with Jackson since the beginning, who might get on the stand and testify, that is if he can get Michael's penis out of his mouth for more than three minutes.

Check local listings for "VH1's Michael Jackson's Secret Childhood," presently playing on cable, for some disturbing footage of 9 year-old Emanuel Lewis—yes, Webster—in a little Michael Jackson outfit, one glove and all, dancing with a 26 year-old MJ, in his secret apartment he rented after he bought his parents home, back when he was still cashing those *Off The Wall* checks.

### THE SUPERBOWL CONSPIRACY

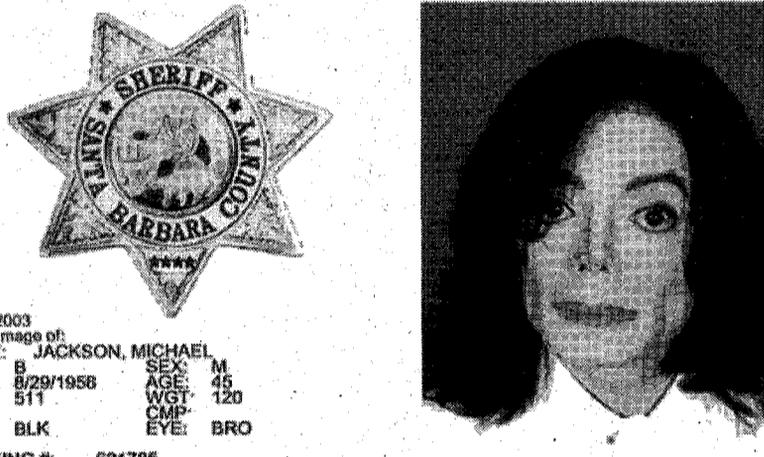
The Super Bowl is a special time for the Jackson family. Sister Janet's Super Bowl halftime-show wardrobe malfunction of last year is still ingrained in people's memories.

Not to be topped, Michael's Geraldo Rivera interview, was shown Super Bowl Sunday after the game, where he awkwardly stated his innocence, reading a written statement that appeared, was written by someone else and not given to the gloved-one until mere seconds before the interview.

The Jacksons and the Super Bowl, every year we get to see a boob.

And this year's game was played in Jacksonville, Florida. A coincidence? I think not.

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Dept.



11/20/2003  
Photo Image of:  
NAME: JACKSON, MICHAEL  
RAC: B SEX: M  
DOB: 8/29/1958 AGE: 45  
HGT: 511 WGT: 120  
BLD: BLK EYE: BRO  
HAIR: BLK  
BOOKING #: 621785

**BILLIE JEAN ISN'T HIS LOVER BUT YOU SHOULD WATCH OUT FOR THE KID THAT'S NOT HIS SON...**  
Courtesy of [www.Foxnews.com](http://www.Foxnews.com)

### THE WITNESSES

Reports coming out of the courthouse, from secret court papers leaked to the media; claim that former child stars Macaulay Culkin and Corey Feldman are slotted as potential witnesses, as well as BBC journalist Martin Bashir,

## Sources Say...



Earlier this week, an Islamic terrorist website, posted this picture of what they claimed was a captured American soldier.

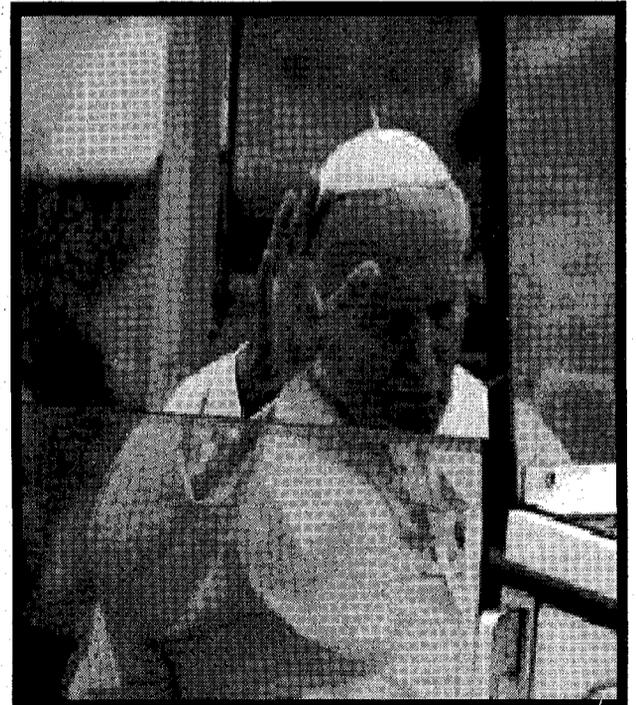
Fortunately, it turned out to be a hoax, and actually was a picture of an 12" military action figure.

This didn't deter the intended message of terror.

Sources say, worried parents are locking up their Enduring Iraqi Freedom Barbie's at night, and making sure they know where Weapons of Mass Destruction Ken is at all times.



## Sources Say...



The Pope, in addition to being hospitalized for the flu, is getting up there in the years. Sources say, you can tell the Pope is old, because the blinker on the Pope-mobile has been on for the past ten miles.

# Media Ethics: Photography

By Dustin Herlich

For this week, we're going to explore the ethics, rights, responsibilities and legality of picture taking, particularly in regards to photojournalism. The ethics and laws involved with photography in general can be a little fuzzy, and when you throw the press (the general press, not necessarily *The Stony Brook Press*) into the mix, things get even more complicated.

The first tip I can give you is don't ever take any pictures. Go find yourself a nice safe job writing national briefs for *Kidsday*. Yeah, that's the answer.

**"Joe Filippazzo and...Fred Preston sharing the blood of a baby while dancing...around a fire fueled by the hopes and dreams of students."**

Ok, now that we've gotten that out of the way let's deal with the issue at hand more directly. So say you're walking down the street, or for our purposes, the Zebra Path. It's 4:00am, and you've walking back from your friend Bill's awesome hookah party and you see none other than *Press* editor Joe Filippazzo and University Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Fred Preston sharing the blood of a baby while dancing in a circle around a fire fueled by the hopes and dreams of students. Quickly you pull your camera out and snap a picture.

When you develop the picture, not only do you realize that those two were engaged in the sanguine feast, but there were also a few other people in the picture who you don't know. You think one of them was the guy from the counseling center who was arrested for kiddy porn, but you're not sure. What do you do about printing this picture? On one hand, you have obviously public people, and on the other, you have private citizens (the random students). The picture is printable as long as it runs unedited and in conjunction with proper supporting materials. If it's a factual event, it's printable as news. Just don't replace Joe's head with mine, because then you can get in trouble with libel and slander laws (see my article on libel and slander from last semester, available at [www.thepress.info](http://www.thepress.info)).

The general rule of thumb with pictures is, use your head. Taking pictures of a drug deal might land you in trouble with the dealers, and you may not live to see your pictures printed. Celebrities have occasionally become violent with paparazzi, and probably rightly so. Who or what you are taking pictures of makes a big difference in terms of legality.

Pictures of roads, bridges, tunnels, etc are verboten. The best way to get yourself investigated by an anti-terror organization is to sit around taking pictures of the Brooklyn bridge or the inside of the Lincoln tunnel. It's really too bad that this is the case nowadays, but it's a reality we have to deal with. You can get permission to photograph these things, and I highly recommend you do before taking pictures. There is very little leeway in these matters.

You can snap as many pictures as you'd like of people out in public places, and don't need permission from them as long as they don't see you. If they see you taking pictures, they can require either compensation or force you to not print the picture, but if they don't see you, it's allowed. Pictures of children are a little bit

of a fuzzy issue. There are laws that protect children, and anyone hiding in the bushes snapping shots of kids is asking for trouble. Everyone owns their own image. News organizations are allowed to run images and pictures for free usually, but commercial photography requires a release or compensation for the subject being photographed.

Re-printing pictures you've obtained from another source, such as pictures of a person given to you by a family member or a child's class photo, require the permission of the family and or school (in the case of the school class picture) to be printed. Parents get testy about pictures of their children, and rightly so.

Laws regarding photography vary from state to state (a good resource on this is <http://www.photosecrets.com/p14.html>) but, really, common sense rules supreme. Most laws just reënforce what you already should know. Some notable exceptions are detailed on the web site, like buildings built after December 1990. But, once again, purpose means everything. Are you selling this image, or using it for a newsworthy purpose? Where was it taken? Whose equipment did you use? Were you on "company time?" All of these questions need to be taken into account to decide both who owns the image, and how the image may be used.

While, legally, in many places you can use a person's image if obtained candidly, I would strongly suggest you not use your brand

new 1600mm telephoto lens to shoot inside bedroom windows. That's a great way to land yourself in a world of trouble. Again, since laws vary regarding images obtained in public, check out a reputable source such as the Student Press Law Center (<http://www.splc.org/>) and see what they have to say. One thing I must also caution against is pictures that you take of a surveillance nature. No Private Investigator's license? No permission? Do not pass go, go directly to jail or be beaten to a pulp. If you're following someone around, documenting their actions photographically and they are not a person in the public eye, you'd better believe they have the ability to take action against you, from orders of protection to prosecution for harassment and stalking. Don't do it. Even people like actors and actresses who *are* in the public eye have boundaries. Following people around to work, and to the gym and to class are good ways to land yourself in trouble. If you think someone really merits being followed, hire a professional or alert law enforcement.

Photography is a fine hobby, an excellent profession and a fantastic form of journalism. Be safe, be responsible and use your head. Maybe above all else, don't forget your credentials; Your P.I. shield, your SPJ or ACP membership, etc. Without those, you could land yourself in a world of hurt if you're taking pictures of the wrong thing at the wrong time and the wrong place.

## ALIX OLSON

OPEN MIKE, POETRY SLAM, MUSIC AND DISCUSSION

Tuesday  
February 15th  
at the  
University Café  
Student Union  
7:00PM-11:00PM

### In Honor of V-Day

V-Day is a global movement to stop violence against women and girls. V-Day is a catalyst that promotes creative events to increase awareness, raise money and revitalize the spirit of existing anti-violence organizations. V-Day generates broader attention for the fight to stop worldwide violence against women and girls, including rape, battery, incest, female genital mutilation (FGM) and sexual slavery.

"Alix Olson is a brilliant performer, an ingenious poet, a serious thinker, a funny person. She brought me to my feet."  
-Howard Zinn

Brought To You By: [www.vday.org](http://www.vday.org)

Students for Choice

The University Café

Undergraduate College of Human Development

University Counseling Center

Protestant Campus Ministry

The Wo/Men's Center

Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic

# Shitting in Public

By Matthew Augustine

You know what the worst feeling in the entire world is? When you have to take a shit and you're in a public place. Or, anyplace that's not your home. We've all been there, in the middle of dinner at some fine dining establishment, that familiar gurgle, perhaps slight stomach pain, then the feeling of "oh fuck". No one wants to take a crap in a public restroom; so many things can go wrong.

First, what if there are a lot of people in there? They will hear, they will smell. Sometimes, a courtesy flush just isn't enough. Some of my shit really, really stinks. Now, I don't particularly mind it, as a matter of fact, like a well placed fart I sometimes take a certain pride in the odor. However, there is a sensation of moral wrong, of (dare I say) crudeness associated with doing so in public. They are people too after all.

Second, what if someone hears? The funny thing about this is I really can't think of anything wrong with someone hearing. I've walked in to lesser mortals who have no inhibitions about shitting in public, they just let her rip and I simply think to myself "Well that's that isn't it" (with a certain feeling of envy I admit). However, I cannot help but get neurotic when I think of someone hearing me. What if they laugh at me? What if they stand on the toilet in the stall next to me, look over that flimsy ass wall and point? What protection do those hollow metal structures and their cheap ass peeling peach paint afford me? Not enough. The fact that they might just shrug it off does not even enter my mind; it's a race against the door. When I hear someone come in, I hold it, when I hear them leave I get as much out as fast as I can. If they don't want to leave and I'm desperate, sometimes I'll just let it go as I flush. This like-

ly only accentuates the predicament, as the guy on the other side is probably giggling at my lackluster thrust at ingenuity. Never mind when I hear the door, thinking whomever is with me has left, just to hear a cough, or the sink run right after a nice refreshing round, a repeated plunk, plunk. Sometimes they rain down so hard I feel water on my ass. The horror, seriously.



PERFORMANCE ART PIECE OF...NEVERMIND,  
Courtesy of [www.anthropology.pdx.edu](http://www.anthropology.pdx.edu)

The worst, is when I'm sitting down, have my newspaper stretched out and folded perfectly (What a pain in the ass the *Times* is) this of course I never do unless I'm alone. For some reason the idea of someone knowing I'm reading while I'm shitting is also unsettling. "Oh, he's

bunkering down for the long haul" Damn straight I am. So, I'm good to go, I spread my ass cheeks sufficiently so as not to accidentally shit myself, ready...and someone walks in. So, I wait. They then proceed to enter the stall next to me, unzip, pants around the ankles (Yes, sometimes I peek underneath) and begin to shit. Motherfucker. Now I actually have to wait as this dude relieves himself, careful not to make any noise with my paper (He can't know!) and desperately force my anus closed listening in jealousy at his willful disobedience of my goddamn natural rights. Between Hobbes, Locke, and Smith I'm sure it's touched upon somewhere.

This is not even mentioning the devil of all things excretory, the diarrhea at someone else's house. After a biggie-sized double quarter pounder at good old McDonalds, or having eaten a pizza (just one more slice). You have to go to the bathroom, you're not leaving for another 2 hours, and it has to be done. You cannot go to the bathroom across the house, because they will know, they will suspect. So, you go to the one that's right next to the dining room where everyone is, and you try to be as quiet as possible. Maybe you flush once or twice, perhaps you make some other feckless attempt to camouflage those wicked, wicked sounds you are unleashing. You can smell yourself, you think the space under the door is a bit too big, fear it wafting on over to your peers, fear opening the door and everyone laughing. Yet, when you're done you run the water for a minute, maybe wash your hands, open the door—wincing of course, to find that things are as you left them, no problems. That is until your girlfriends mother walks by you with an "Excuse me" and closes the bathroom door behind her. Game over.

# Everybody Needs a Bosom For a Pillow

By Amy Wisnoski

I hate the expression "stressed out." Thanks to the (inexplicable) popularity of shows like *Friends* and the recent uprising of teenaged aspiring poets hammering out their latest jam at the local Starbucks, busy schedules and pretentious self-importance, I've noticed that in the past few years the popularity of crediting being "stressed out" for a nasty intolerant attitude has increased dramatically. It seems as though everyone I know is always "stressed out." Whether it is from a busy schedule, or a neglectful boyfriend or a really stubborn hangnail, everybody has had a really bad day. Everyday. And I am by no means excusing myself from this lot of indulgent gloomy brats. I know what it's like to have class all day, work all night and people to interact with all night.

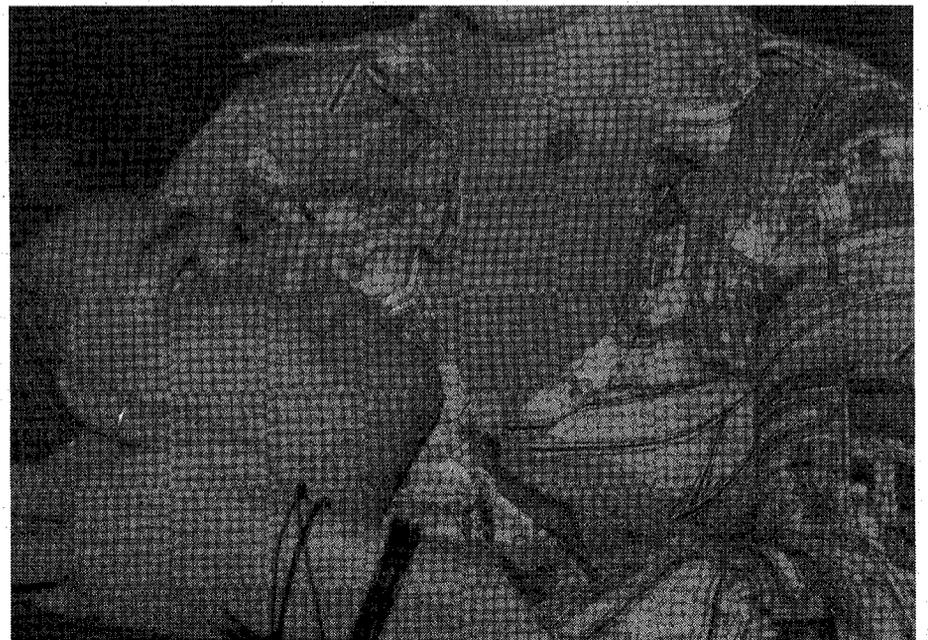
Except, when I stop and think about what I actually have to do each day I have no choice but to recognize the fact that I really don't have that much on my plate. And you probably don't either. It seems as though it's so much more acceptable to be bummed out for no good reason than it is to be artlessly cheerful. Think of the last conversation you had with someone you had never met before. Chances are decent that the conversation began with a mutual gripe about something. Not that there isn't a lot to be concerned about; AIDS, poverty, the 2004 Presidential Election. All I'm suggesting is that maybe it would do each one of us a tremendous amount of good if we could set aside some time each day to be unabashedly happy. Even now just reading that sentence over, I realize how ridiculous and naïve that sentiment is and I'm tempted to delete it and change the tone of this article to embrace disparagement and depres-

sion rather than chastise but I just can't do it.

I know that there are plenty of moments throughout our lives when no other emotion but despondency is appropriate, and I would encourage the handful of people who thoughtlessly paint a smile on their face each morning to weigh in on some of the truly disturbing things going on in the world today and see if their grin is still as solid, but I can feel myself slipping into a black hole of melancholy, thinking of everything that's wrong and never all the things that are right and I really wish I could learn to see things more brightly. It's paradoxical though, because the pattern that seems to be forming in our lives is not one that supports the growth of optimism; the more I learn, the sadder I get. And worse still, that sadness will ripen over time and bitter cynicism will replace earnest concern. Is this what our parents wanted for us when they insisted we further our education? Were they really just jealous of our unfettered hope and ambition? Children never worry about impending nuclear war, or the staggering numbers of people without homes or how many carbohydrates are in a rice

cake. Their dreams know no limits and yes, while they are young those dreams are encouraged but much sooner than anyone expects their aspirations are forced to be lowered and quite frankly, their hearts are broken. And worst of all, we will all, undoubtedly, generate the exact course of action on our own children.

So never mind. I guess I understand why most of us are frowning. But it would be nice if we could get back to smiling, even if only for a while.



DAMN, THAT SURE WOULD BE A NICE PILLOW,  
NOW IF I COULD ONLY FIND A BLANKET,  
Courtesy of Jowy Romano

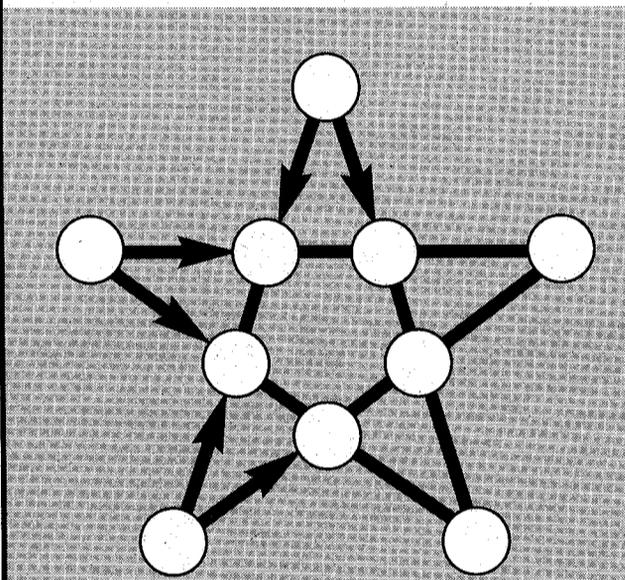
# Crossword Puzzle!

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14							15		16				
17						18		19				20	
21								22	23		24		
				25									
26		27		28				29					30
31				32									33
34			35		36			37		38	39	40	
41				42		43	44						
45					46				47				
48				49		50							
			51							52		53	54
	55	56							57	58			
59							60	61					
	62						63						64

- Henry of 70's sitcom
- Area over which one reigns
- Pseudonym
- Prefix meaning of different kinds
- Adjective describing works of Vonnegut and Moliere
- \_\_ vogue
- Resembling a duck
- Range of hearing
- What a messenger will do with a document
- Had a meal
- Dynamite
- Clinical term for chodes, grundles, taints, geetches/sandbars, etc.
- Cable rival
- 1996 horror film featuring a cameo by 1 across
- Word implying a choice
- Breakfast food chain
- Each, abbr.
- Shinning
- Warehouse or bus station
- Highway robber in Spain
- Second Romanov who acquired Ukraine
- Turn a blind eye
- Type of camera typically used by experts
- An agent used to control rioting crowds
- "What goes around, comes around" belief
- What you will all do eventually
- Suitable or convenient in Mathematics
- Ukrainian skater's first name
- Need in Nice
- Check, with on
- la \_\_ vita
- How the Brits may refer to us
- Talking horse
- "Papa \_\_ rolling stone"
- Briefly
- "I am \_\_ crook"
- Action done with yarn
- Lyric poets, or people who play the lyre
- Greatness
- Square root of -1, Planck's constant (as requested by Joe the Physics Studying Editor of the Press)
- Closer
- Stock Market Abbreviation for Goodyear Tire company
- What deep and demote have in common
- Cookie with a cream filling
- Neighborhood in Paris where you'll find the Moulin Rouge or Amelie Poulin
- Word often sung
- Focal
- Cat with spots
- Hail Mary, Span.
- \_\_ Lanka
- Sports gear trademark
- One who secretly went to Vegas with his love
- A very long time
- Word following chicken or small
- It's raining cats and \_\_
- Holiday \_\_ (hotel chain)
- Having to do with the wind
- World largest metaphor which sunk in 1912
- Adjective describing something done with the ear
- Placid
- "I \_\_ disgruntled college student"
- Cigarette brand
- Distributed Student Information System abbr.
- \_\_ vogue (yes, again)
- What tried and spied have in common
- Dallas Symphony Orchestra abbr.
- What moon and sooner have in common
- Violent southern sheet-wearing ignoramuses
- Planet where the Green Lantern power source is located

## Word Pentagram!

The following words can be found in the word pentagram below. Place the letters of these words into each of the circles so that all six words fit.



If this takes you more than a minute I pity you.

BEAT  
BEAD  
LEER  
LAND  
REEL  
RANT

All puzzles by  
Ann Pashenkov

8	15	4	1	1	4	12	3	25			24
15		11		24		16			24	25	11
3	25	21	16	3	19	24	2		11		19
22		6		25		13		18	15	5	6
2	3	25	4	6	23	13			25		5
24		4		2		24		17	3	22	14
22		2		13		24			2		
25	24	24	22			23	24	17	24	13	2
14			24		13			4			6
	23	24	7	3	2	24		9	6	6	2
			3		24			24			3
12	6	25	25	3	21	13	24		4	25	25

## AlphaPuzzle!

Welcome to the AlphaPuzzle! Every number below represents a letter of the alphabet. Use what you know about the English language to crack the code. To start you off you've been provided with four letters... Good luck!

Level of difficulty :

4/10, or, if you graduated Middle School you should be able to do this.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M  
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Z											C	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
						V					L	

DEATH EGG ZONE