

PRESS

the stony brook

the community news and features paper

Vol. XXVI, Issue 15

"If it's the right cock, it's the right person!"

July 20, 2005



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Analysis of the Downing Street Memo

By Marcel Votlucka

WHAT IS IT?

The document now known as the Downing Street memo is a summary of a meeting between Richard Dearlove, the head of British intelligence, and senior Bush Administration officials. It dates from July 23, 2002, just as the Bush Administration was starting to make a case for invading Iraq but before it had officially declared its intention to do so. The memo was leaked to the *Times* of London, which published it on May 1, 2005 in the midst of Prime Minister Tony Blair's reelection campaign. The British media has reported on this memo and its implications, but the mainstream media this side of the Atlantic has neglected this story with impunity. Only now are media outlets beginning to look into this document. Congressman John Conyers held a public hearing in Washington DC on June 16 regarding the memo and its implications. Here we will look at the text of the memo and summarize what it says and its significance.

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

It was decided that military force would be needed to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime, and that WMD and the threat of terrorism would be focal points for building a case for war: "Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD."

Officials were already considering two options: a short air campaign followed by an invasion force of 250,000 troops (which would take some time to implement), and a faster campaign "initiated by an Iraqi casus belli," supported by a continuous air campaign. The latter was felt to be a "hazardous option." According to the memo, "the most likely timing in US minds for military action to begin was January, with the timeline beginning 30 days before the US Congressional elections." This suggests calculated political timing to shore up support and reduce congressional accountability once the war began.

The memo calls for a plan to issue an ultimatum to Hussein to allow UN weapons inspectors back into the country, so as to provide a legal basis for military action. The Administration was dead set on "regime change." They showed little concern for postwar planning or the diplomatic process. But legal concerns were high on British officials' minds. "The Attorney-General said that the desire for regime change was not a legal base for military action. There were three possible legal bases: self-defense, humanitarian intervention, or UNSC authorization. The first and second could not be the base in this case. Relying on [UN Security Council Resolution] 1205 of three years ago would be difficult." So they suggested working out a new resolution: "We should work up a plan for an ultimatum to Saddam to allow back in the UN weapons inspectors. This would also help with the legal justification for the use of force."

They understood that the case for war was weak; humanitarian intervention was not an acceptable basis for military action and there was scant evidence that Hussein was amassing WMD or had ties to Al Qaeda. There was no imminent threat against the United States. The memo says: "[T]he case was thin. Saddam was not threatening his neighbors, and his WMD capability was less than that of Libya, North Korea or Iran."

The officials were also keen on the political context; if Hussein refused to comply with the UN inspections, it could not only provide a

legal justification for military force, it would also legitimize the war in the minds of the public.

The memo provides an enthralling look into how officials were starting to form plans for the execution of the war. They paid attention not only to practical military concerns, but also legal and political issues. What has gained the most attention, though, is the following statement [emphasis added]:

"[T]he intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy. The [National Security Council] had no patience with the UN route, and no enthusiasm for publishing material on the Iraqi regime's record. There was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath after military action."

CONTRADICTIONS

Bush and Blair answered questions from the media on June 7, 2005. A reporter asked Blair this question, "On Iraq, the so-called Downing Street Memo from July 2002 says, 'Intelligence and facts remain fixed around the policy of removing Saddam through military action.' Is this an accurate reflection of what happened? Could both of you respond?" Blair responded, "Well, I can respond to that very easily. *No, the facts were not being fixed in any shape or form at all* [emphasis added]." The Downing Street memo clearly indicates, however, that "facts and intelligence were being fixed around the policy."

Bush claimed, and still claims, that military force was "the last option." Responding to the reporter, he stated, *"somebody said, well, you know, we had made up our mind to go to use military force to deal with Saddam. There is nothing farther from the truth. My conversations with the Prime Minister [were] how can we do this peacefully . . . both of us didn't want to use our military* [emphasis added]." But again, the memo proves him wrong, stating as follows: "Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD."

The authenticity of the memo has gone unchallenged by Blair and Bush. Some pundits have claimed that the memo is a fake or that it is incorrect, but they have provided no evidence to back up their claims. Moreover, there are the conflicting statements of Cheney, Powell, and Rice to consider, regarding Iraq's military capabilities. All had made statements in the lead up to war that Hussein was amassing and stockpiling WMD and was proving to be an imminent threat to the US and Arab countries. However, before 9/11, all three had gone on record stating the opposite; that Hussein was not a threat and did not possess capabilities to strike at the US. These and other contradictions are well worth investigating. Something is not adding up.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS?

Basically, what this suggests is that British and American officials were tailoring their intelligence in order to prop up their policy and agenda. This implies they picked and chose whatever facts bolstered their case for war—giving little credence or consideration to

(or even ignoring) whatever facts contradicted their case. In other words, officials were being told primarily what they wanted to hear. The Administration had an agenda (invading Iraq) and it seemed that only those facts that supported and justified their agenda were worth consideration (however tenuous those facts may have been).

Given the political and legal context behind the war, officials believed that seeking a UN resolution would grant needed legitimacy to the war effort. This occurred in late 2002, but weapons inspectors failed to turn up substantial evidence that Hussein was amassing or stockpiling WMDs. Bush immediately (and falsely) chalked this up to Hussein being uncooperative (he was in fact cooperative). According to the memo, "the [National Security Council] had no patience with the UN route, and no enthusiasm for publishing material on the Iraqi regime's record." This could explain why, with only a couple of months allowed for inspections to take place and despite little evidence supporting their case, President Bush hastily issued his ultimatum to Hussein and began preparations to invade Iraq. He and his people were dead set on going to war, no matter what.

Much of this is not new or shocking info to critics of the war, who have been pointing out such items for the past two years. However, the memo provides a 'smoking gun,' evidence to back up the critics' claims. The implications are numerous and severe.

If it is true that the officials were fixing and tailoring the intelligence to suit their needs, this means that President

Bush intentionally and knowingly misled Congress in his case for war. In fact, one can argue that he and other officials, including Richard Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, and Tony Blair, lied to the UN, to Congress, to the British Parliament, and to the public. This is clearly illegal and holds serious implications for all those involved.

If it is true that the President intentionally deceived Congress and indeed twisted the intelligence, this would violate the Federal Anti-Conspiracy Statute, which makes it a felony "to defraud the United States or any agency thereof in any manner for any purpose." In addition, the issuance of knowingly and willingly false statements to the Congress violates the False Statements Act of 1996. These are impeachable offences.

Not only that, but this would mean that tens of thousands of innocent Iraqis, and over 1,700 US and Coalition troops, have died as a result of the invasion and occupation propped up and justified by deception, lies, and political games. This too holds serious moral implications for those involved in the scheme.

Finally, it means that Bush and co. have jeopardized national security by fabricating evidence, making false and contradictory claims, and intentionally misleading Congress into ceding unilateral power to the President to make war (this in itself raises serious constitutional issues over who has the authority to declare and wage war). Furthermore, they have poured billions of dollars, valuable time, and finite manpower into the invasion and occupation of a country that posed no credible 'imminent threat' to the United States.

"Bush claimed, and still claims, that military force was 'the last option.'"

Text of the Downing Street Memo

By Marcel Votlucka

SECRET AND STRICTLY PERSONAL—UK EYES ONLY

DAVID MANNING

From: Matthew Rycroft

Date: 23 July 2002

S 195 /02

cc: Defence Secretary, Foreign Secretary, Attorney-General, Sir Richard Wilson, John Scarlett, Francis Richards, CDS, C, Jonathan Powell, Sally Morgan, Alastair Campbell

IRAQ: PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING, 23 JULY

Copy addressees and you met the Prime Minister on 23 July to discuss Iraq.

This record is extremely sensitive. No further copies should be made. It should be shown only to those with a genuine need to know its contents.

John Scarlett summarised the intelligence and latest JIC assessment. Saddam's regime was tough and based on extreme fear. The only way to overthrow it was likely to be by massive military action. Saddam was worried and expected an attack, probably by air and land, but he was not convinced that it would be immediate or overwhelming. His regime expected their neighbours to line up with the US. Saddam knew that regular army morale was poor. Real support for Saddam among the public was probably narrowly based.

C reported on his recent talks in Washington. There was a perceptible shift in attitude. Military action was now seen as inevitable. Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action, justified by the conjunction of terrorism and WMD. But the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy. The NSC had no patience with the UN route, and no enthusiasm for publishing material on the Iraqi regime's record. There was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath after military action.

CDS said that military planners would brief CENTCOM on 1-2 August, Rumsfeld on 3 August and Bush on 4 August.

The two broad US options were:

(a) Generated Start. A slow build-up of 250,000 US troops, a short (72 hour) air campaign, then a move up to Baghdad from the south. Lead time of 90 days (30 days preparation plus 60 days deployment to Kuwait).

(b) Running Start. Use forces already in theatre (3 x 6,000), continuous air campaign, initiated by an Iraqi casus belli. Total lead time of 60 days with the air campaign beginning even earlier. A hazardous option.

The US saw the UK (and Kuwait) as essential, with basing in Diego Garcia and Cyprus critical for either option. Turkey and other Gulf states were also important, but less vital. The three main options for UK involvement were:

(i) Basing in Diego Garcia and Cyprus, plus three SF squadrons.

(ii) As above, with maritime and air assets in addition.

(iii) As above, plus a land contribution of up to 40,000, perhaps with a discrete role in Northern Iraq entering from Turkey, tying down two Iraqi divisions.



USG Senate Meetings

It's a
madhouse!

It's a
madhouse!

It's a
madhouse!

Current Events

The Defence Secretary said that the US had already begun "spikes of activity" to put pressure on the regime. No decisions had been taken, but he thought the most likely timing in US minds for military action to begin was January, with the timeline beginning 30 days before the US Congressional elections.

The Foreign Secretary said he would discuss this with Colin Powell this week. It seemed clear that Bush had made up his mind to take military action, even if the timing was not yet decided. But the case was thin. Saddam was not threatening his neighbours, and his WMD capability was less than that of Libya, North Korea or Iran. We should work up a plan for an ultimatum to Saddam to allow back in the UN weapons inspectors. This would also help with the legal justification for the use of force. The Attorney-General said that the desire for regime change was not a legal base for military action. There were three possible legal bases: self-defence, humanitarian intervention, or UNSC authorisation. The first and second could not be the base in this case. Relying on UNSCR 1205 of three years ago would be difficult. The situation might of course change.

The Prime Minister said that it would make a big difference politically and legally if Saddam refused to allow in the UN inspectors. Regime change and WMD were linked in the sense that it was the regime that was producing the WMD. There were different strategies for dealing with Libya and Iran. If the political context were right, people would support regime change. The two key issues were whether the military plan worked and whether we had the political strategy to give the military plan the space to work.

On the first, CDS said that we did not know yet if the US battleplan was workable. The military were continuing to ask lots of questions.

For instance, what were the consequences, if Saddam used WMD on day one, or if Baghdad did not collapse and urban warfighting began? You said that Saddam could also use his WMD on Kuwait. Or on Israel, added the Defence Secretary.

The Foreign Secretary thought the US would not go ahead with a military plan unless convinced that it was a winning strategy. On this, US and UK interests converged. But on the political strategy, there could be US/UK differences. Despite US resistance, we should explore discreetly the ultimatum. Saddam would continue to play hard-ball with the UN.

John Scarlett assessed that Saddam would allow the inspectors back in only when he thought the threat of military action was real.

The Defence Secretary said that if the Prime Minister wanted UK military involvement, he would need to decide this early. He cautioned that many in the US did not think it worth going down the ultimatum route. It would be important for the Prime Minister to set out the political context to Bush.

Conclusions:

(a) We should work on the assumption that the UK would take part in any military action. But we needed a fuller picture of US planning before we could take any firm decisions. CDS should tell the US military that we were considering a range of options.

(b) The Prime Minister would revert on the question of whether funds could be spent in preparation for this operation.

(c) CDS would send the Prime Minister full details of the proposed military campaign and possible UK contributions by the end of the week.

(d) The Foreign Secretary would send the Prime Minister the background on the UN inspectors, and discreetly work up the ultimatum to Saddam.

He would also send the Prime Minister advice on the positions of countries in the region especially Turkey, and of the key EU member states.

(e) John Scarlett would send the Prime Minister a full intelligence update.

(f) We must not ignore the legal issues: the Attorney-General would consider legal advice with FCO/MOD legal advisers.

(I have written separately to commission this follow-up work.)

MATTHEW RYCROFT (Rycroft was a Downing Street foreign policy aide)

(Originally reported in the *Times* of London, May 1, 2005)

Another Right Bites the Dust

By Joey Safdia

"...nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation."

This phrase should be recognizable to anyone who ever set foot in a high school U.S. History class. It comes from a whimsical little romp called *The Fifth Amendment* (not to be confused with *The Fifth Element*) and it guarantees that no person can be executed, imprisoned, or have his/her private property seized without "due process," or a fair trial by a jury of one's peers. It also guarantees that the State cannot take your home or business for the good of the community without fully compensating the original owners.

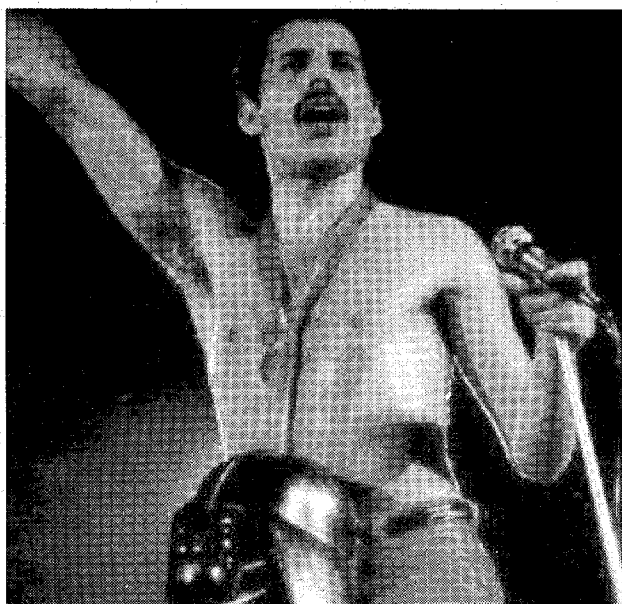
Evidently, the current U.S. Supreme Court justices never took U.S. History.

Recently, the Supreme Court ruled it was legal for local governments to seize private property and sell it to developers who want to put the land to public use. In other words, a local government can now, at a whim, take your home even if you own it and sell it to a wealthy entrepreneur looking to build a hotel or a mall. The Court announced this decision after several Connecticut homeowners filed suit when the city planned to turn their homes into offices, a hotel, and a health club.

This is such a blatant violation of the Fifth Amendment that one couldn't even imagine how the Court reached this decision. Due process has just been thrown right out the window, since the government can now take your property any time it wants. And while the amendment clearly states that "public use" is not a valid excuse for the state to seize property, the Supreme Court has now said otherwise. And for some reason, I doubt the people losing their homes and businesses are receiving "just compensation," unless every single household is receiving an amount of money equal to the value of the houses they lost.

As an added bonus, this law also violates the Fourth Amendment, not just the Fifth. This amendment states: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported

by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized." In other words, your home cannot be so much as searched, let alone taken, unless a warrant has been issued. And for that to happen, there needs to be "probable cause." You need to have done something. But not anymore! Now, to be kicked out of your house all you have to do is fall into the crosshairs of a greedy and wealthy tycoon who wants to increase the size of his already impressive bank account by putting a hotel in your backyard.



**DYNAMITE WITH A SCHIAVO BEAM,
GUARANTEED TO BLOW YOUR MIND,
Courtesy of 80's excess**

Some people may argue that whether or not it's unconstitutional, this decision is a good move on the Supreme Court's part since land will only be taken away to serve the public. People won't be losing their property left and right, and when they do it will better service the entire community and not just one household. Personally, I think that is the dumbest thing I've ever heard. I fail to see how a family being kicked out onto the streets in order to build a health club benefits the community. It benefits the club owner, but what about the family that is now homeless, or the people that have lost the business they needed to put food on the table?

How does that help society? Allowing people to live in their own houses and not in the gutter is more beneficial to society than a mall. The world is filled with malls. I'm sure if a person lives in the United States, he/she is within driving distance of one of these shopping behemoths. And where does it end? First they kick families with children onto the streets to build hotels and shopping malls, then they kick them out to build military bases, then they build environmentally unsafe factories, then weapons research labs, then nuclear missile testing sites? The most disturbing thing is, this scenario isn't that far-fetched. Basically you no longer own your home, you just live in it until someone bids on it like an auction, and then the auction begins. In a few years, the highest bidder for the house your family "owns" will be a cigarette company that wants to build a lab to see how long babies can survive when addicted to nicotine. Yeah, that's real beneficial to the community.

This is part of a disturbing trend that has been plaguing America for the last few years, namely the violation and overruling of the most important amendments, the Bill of Rights, by the government that created them in the first place. We are seeing free speech and separation of church and state becoming a myth, the Fourth Amendment has been overruled by the Patriot Act (which isn't even an amendment), and just wait a few years and see what happens to freedom of the press when those high school students who think the government should censor the media are in control. And going back to freedom of speech, that doesn't exist in the airwaves anymore. The Federal Communications Commission is an agency created by the government, its members appointed by the president, and its actions not voted on by the American people. Yet it controls the content of all radio and television broadcasts, meaning anything they see that they don't like gets censored. That is not freedom of speech. Our basic rights as human beings and American citizens are disappearing, and soon the society our founding fathers dreamed of will be replaced with a Christian theocratic dictatorship with capital punishment and soldiers stationed in people's homes during peacetime.

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The Antics, Controversies and Promises of the G8 Summit

By Joan Leong

Billions of people worldwide watched the broadcast of Live 8, the global concert raising awareness of the plight of the African people. Many popular rock and pop musicians performed in ten different countries. The event was brought together by Bono and Bob Geldof, rock legends who are also prominent activists. The objective of Live 8 had a much more important underlying agenda than just entertaining the masses. They wanted the world's leaders to hear their cries against poverty and to pressure them to formulate an authentic strategy to alleviate the suffering of millions.

The Group of Eight summit was held in Gleneagles, Scotland and hosted by England's Prime Minister, Tony Blair. The attendees were Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, Russia and the United States. Any event with such monumental potential for peace and ending poverty cannot occur without a hitch. The first day, hundreds of violent protestors were arrested in Scotland but they were quickly silenced by 15,000 anti-poverty and globalization activists. The second day of the summit, several bombs were set off in London leaving over fifty dead and hundreds injured and cut the meeting short so Blair could race home. Despite these distractions, much progress was made but many more issues have yet to be resolved.

The biggest achievement of the summit was doubling aid to Africa to \$50 billion by the year 2010. This continent is in dire need of outside help in all areas such as the economy, health, and citizen unity. The money will be distributed for more peace-keeping troops, access to HIV/AIDS treatment and the development of agricultural techniques and small businesses. In addition, eighteen of the poorest developing countries debts were annulled, fourteen of which were African nations.

While Blair and others praise this effort, critics are crying out, "too little, too late." Anti-poverty campaigners and experts on African aid were shooting for \$50 billion a year; instead the summit left them short of their goal with \$10 billion a year. One of the central reasons why Africa is so poverty stricken is due

to the wide amount of corruption of their government leaders.

Now, the African leaders must comply with the G8 regulations before receiving aid. They must promise to provide democracy, human rights and halt corruption.

However, some demands are not beneficial to these impoverished nations. For example, on the issue of free-trade, many western countries demand that in return for aid they must purchase goods and trade with them. Most people in Africa are uneducated about the free-trade market and how to cultivate their own businesses to maintain success and profits. How are they expecting these people to afford their products? They must first learn how to stabilize their own industries before they can trade and buy western goods.

The money should be distributed locally, so that there is more confidence that the money actually go towards helping the poor and not into a corrupt leader's pockets. Also, there should be more funding for educating the people on how to nurture their vast lands for agricultural goods. Many public African figures are speaking for their citizens when saying it's all talk and they'll believe the westerners when they see it. Who can blame them? Aid packages from western nations have been distributed in the past and they haven't seen any progress or relief yet.

Other aid efforts include pledging \$3 billion for the Palestinian Authority to build an independent Palestinian state in land occupied by Israel. The money will also be used to help the Palestinian Authority take control of the Gaza Strip when Israel plans to remove the Jewish settlers next month. Increased violence between the Israeli and Palestinian security forces are threatening the cease-fire and peace truce made between Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and President Mahmoud Abbas.

In total, the amount in aid to all developing countries was increased from \$80 billion a year to \$130 billion. Prime Minister Blair was able to successfully get the leaders to comply with giving 0.7% of their yearly economy to foreign aid by 2015. The United States was the only country that stubbornly agreed to pledge 0.16% to foreign aid. Applause was doled out to

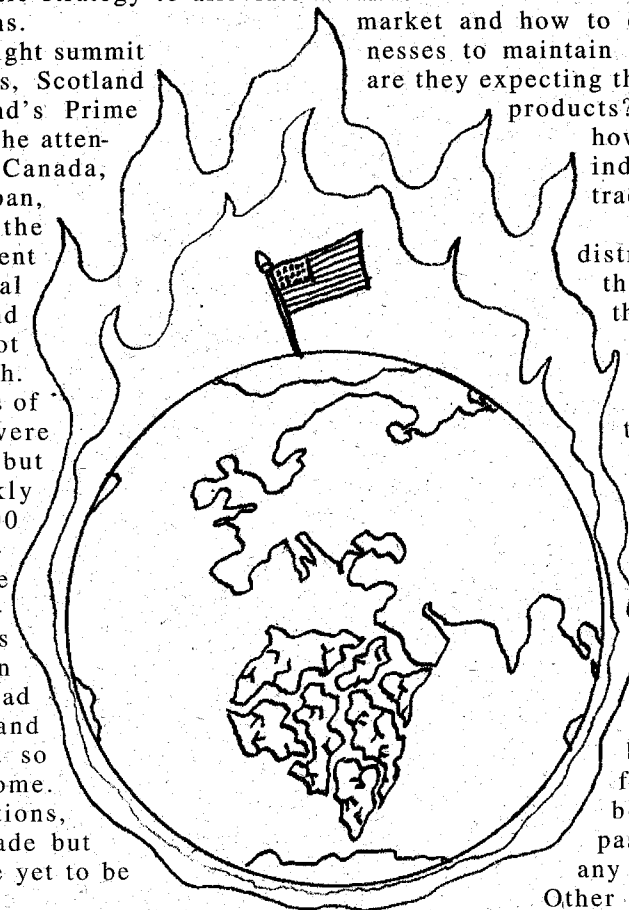
Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi for promising to double assistance to Africa within three years and to increase their foreign aid contribution by \$10 billion within five years.

This time around, the G8 countries took a real step to focus on issues that do not revolve around their self-interests. However, there were several important issues that have yet to be resolved. The second most important issue on the agenda after aid for Africa was global warming.

The only stride that occurred was that the United States (*finally, about fucking time!*) admitted that there is scientific evidence that global climate change was caused by harmful greenhouse gas emissions. Sixty-eight nations and every single country that attended the G8 summit have already signed the Kyoto Treaty (which asks for mandatory caps on greenhouse emissions) except the United States. President Bush believes that abiding by these terms would "wreck the U.S. economy." This is a huge disappointment for the G8 leaders and environmentalists who hoped that the US would get on board since the developed nations are the primary contributors to hazardous greenhouse gas emissions.

Developments pertaining to global warming were a ten-page plan pledging for progress in energy efficiency, conservation and cleaner fuels. Another committee is set to meet in London on November 1 to further discuss targets for progress in climate change. All G8 countries are expected to attend and China, India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa have also been invited. Additionally, no progress of eliminating unfair trade practices for African countries has been reached. While they agree that those African nations should no longer be forced to liberalize their markets in return for aid, no commitments have been made. Easing the poverty situation in Africa will never occur until richer countries stop taking advantage of the African markets and practice fair trade policies. They need to be able to stabilize their own economy in the long-run before opening up their markets to the outside world.

The summit wrapped up in three days. To hold them to their word, Blair made the leaders sign the final pledges in front of cameras. Tony Blair was fairly pleased with the increased aid to Africa that he so adamantly pushed for and called it a "real hope." However, his attempts to hide his disappointment in the failed issues of trade and climate change policies were apparent. "All of this does not change the world tomorrow. It is a beginning, not an end," stated Blair to the public on the final day. Historic strides have been taken and now the world is waiting for their leaders to carry out their promises for a better future. I hope they do not disappoint the jaded masses.



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Guys... Where's the Exit?

Where do I begin? The Army recruits people and they want a certain amount of people every month. They have projected numbers for months and for years and in May they didn't meet their projection. In May, the army recruited around 60% of what they wanted to. So less people are joining the army in May. June is a different story where the Army met their quota for the first time in months. It's no coincidence that the Army made it numbers in June, the month where young adults (read "oldest kids") are graduating or dropping out of high school. But don't let June fool you, just because the Army met their quota for one month doesn't cover the fact that hundreds of thousands of troops are coming home. The reserves called up two years ago are hitting their maximum 24 months tours and coming home. The Army reported that these troops are leaving vacancies in jobs like MP (military police) that can't easily be replaced.

Sounds great! Who wants to join up and fight an insurgency in its "final throes?" C'mon it sounds like fun, here let me use this baseball as a proxy and I can teach you how to throw grenades after eighth period.

Enough digression. We're in a foreign country. We're nation-building and inciting civil war. Sorry Dick, the insurgency is not in its final throes. I hear that Falluja could become a warzone again. The Iraqi government said that Americans can pull out of some smaller towns in Iraq. I want to leave as much as the next guy. But with stories of the Iraqi army not polic-

ing skirmish zones correctly and leaving militants behind I can't help but ask, "What condition are we leaving things in behind us?"

I'm not saying that we should stay the course and finish up in Iraq. I'm not saying I want everyone home right now. We can't keep fighting because the costs of war are constantly rising and the number of troops we have is growing smaller. I'm not saying that we should leave because I believe we fucked things up in Iraq and we can't leave it in its current state. The Daily Show said it best, I'm paraphrasing but we made a "mess o' potamia."

So in the meantime between now and us leaving we're doing the same thing over and over again. Eat, sleep, and fight insurgents. We're in a war of circular logic and no one is breaking the chain of irrational thought. The insurgents fight us because we invaded their home and stomped around. We fight insurgents because ever since 9/11 we've waged a war on terror and we don't let terrorists win. So we don't leave. So the insurgents fight and round it goes. Why don't we try leveling with them? Why not extend the olive branch? I think it would be better than battling ourselves to (military) exhaustion and (economic) depression.

After 9/11 everyone with a clear head said that a war on terror was stupid because terrorism is an idea. It's stupid because no matter how hard you try you will never get everyone to like you. Forget win or lose, it's stupid because it will not end.

Of Sharks and Terrorists

The summer of 2005 was relatively mundane in terms of news stories. Tropical storms. Competition among the cities of the world for the honor of holding the 2012 Olympics. The incessantly covered Natalie Holloway disappearance. Shark attacks in Florida frightening swimmers in New York out of the water.

Aside from the Live-8 concerts that raised awareness of Africa, site of many of the developing nations discussed at the ongoing G-8 conference of world leaders, nothing of world relevance was covered. The journalists of television news reported mostly fluff (Jennifer Garner and Ben Affleck are married) or harped on horrible events, like the likely murder of recent high school graduate, the American, Natalie Holloway, in Aruba. South Korea's offer of energy assistance to North Korea is a great idea and could promote peace between the two nations. It was also glanced over by media if it got any attention at all. Terrorism as of late, was more of a topic of speculation and partisan politicking, not a tangible threat like it was after 9/11. On July 6, just days after London was announced to be the city that will house the 2012 Olympics, London was attacked.

In the midst of the rush hour commute, the underground subway and bus was bombed by a terrorist group related to Al Qaeda. The British Broadcasting Corporation, the BBC, has reported "more than fifty people" have perished as a result. Like September eleventh, victims were from all over the world, and bod-

ies are still under rubble, like on 9/11.

Though news analysts think the bombings are unrelated to the 2012 Olympics being in London, there is definitely the view that this irrational act is a reaction to the G-8 Conference. Others, such as the Ayatollah Mohammed Emami Kashani, one of Iran's leading clerics, have argued that the Iraq War is another rationale for these attacks. Britain is the main ally of America in this cultural war involving actual warfare.

However, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, aware of Britain's history of resilience after bombings (from the Blitz on London by the Nazis to attacks by the IRA [Irish Republican Army], in recent times), refuses to be bullied. He is determined to not let terrorists undermine what makes Britain great. Britain is a country that celebrates diversity, more liberal than America and has many checks on the powers of government. Blair, according to the BBC, believes that "with this type of terrorism security measures aren't the only solution." In addition, Blair has noted the fact that Islam is not the enemy.

I believe that the American people, particularly those living in New York City, should not only support our British friends in their resilience but to also be inspired by it. To continue to be a liberal society, despite terrorists, is something we should all hope to achieve.

Wanna Know Where You Can Stick Your Opinions?

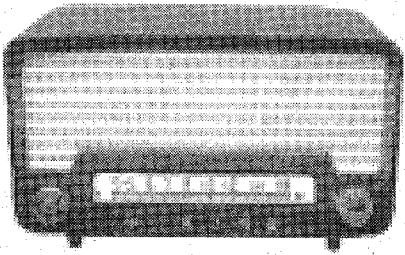
(Hint: It rhymes with "Stained-Glasshole")

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or website-it-up big time at

www.thepress.info

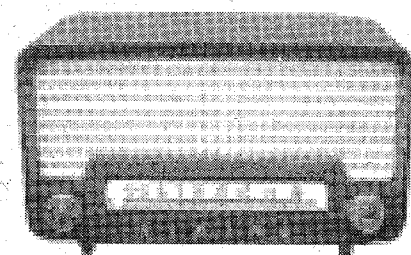




News in Brief

~For Lazy People~

Compiled by Marcel Votluka



INTERNATIONAL

World Tribunal on Iraq examines Iraq war and occupation

The World Tribunal on Iraq convened in Turkey on June 24. The tribunal consisted of a three-day series of hearings and panels, supported by eyewitness and expert testimony, investigating various issues regarding the war and occupation of Iraq. Indian author and activist Arundhati Roy said, in her opening remarks, "We are here to examine a vast spectrum of evidence about the motivations and consequences of the U.S. invasion and occupation, evidence that has been deliberately marginalized or suppressed... This tribunal is an attempt to correct the record." A second goal of the tribunal, as stated by Roy, was to provide a historical record of evidence and testimony, presumably to put the masterminds of the war on trial as war criminals.

The tribunal's ultimate verdict holds that the invasion and occupation was illegal under international law as well as a violation of the basic human rights of the Iraqi people. It demands that the US pull its troops out of Iraq, and condemns the UN Security Council and the Coalition governments for aiding the illegal invasion and "failing to stop war crimes among other failures." The tribunal's charges include: targeting the civilian population and infrastructure with "indiscriminate force"; imposing punishments without charge or trial; torturing Iraqi soldiers and citizens; making illegitimate changes in the law; censoring the Iraqi media; and creating conditions that are adversely affecting the status of women. It also affirms the right of the Iraqi people to resist the occupation.

More details are available www.worldtribunal.org.

WMD claims "implausible" according to British diplomat

Pre-war claims about Iraq's WMD program are "totally implausible," according to a British diplomat who worked with UN inspectors. Carne Ross worked as a liaison with UN officials investigating Iraq's alleged weapons programs, and he claims that the intelligence did not substantiate what the American and British governments were saying about Iraq's supposed capabilities. "I'd read the intelligence on WMD for four and a half years, and there's no way it could sustain the case that the government was presenting. All of my colleagues knew that, too." Ross' remarks add him to a growing list of officials coming out of the woodwork to condemn the Administration's mishandling of pre-war intelligence.

NATIONAL

Reporter sentenced to jail time for refusing to reveal anonymous source

Judith Miller, a reporter for the *New York Times*, was sentenced to jail on July 6th for refusing to reveal an anonymous government source in the outing of CIA agent Valerie Plame two years ago. Plame was revealed to be as a CIA agent in a column written by Robert Novak. Karl Rove, an adviser to President Bush,

is suspected of being that anonymous source. However, Novak has not come forward to reveal his own complicity in the outing of Plame; it was he, not Judith Miller, who wrote the revealing column. Moreover, it is a felony to reveal the identity of an undercover CIA agent such as Plame.

At the heart of the case is journalists' rights and responsibilities in using anonymous sources. Most newspaper and journalism codes of ethics caution against using such sources, except when absolutely necessary and if the information is verifiable. But anonymous sources have broken huge stories in the past, including the Watergate scandal, so Miller and her employers were caught in a bind here.

There is a substantial political subtext to the matter. For one thing, suspicion rages over whether the official (most likely Karl Rove) who leaked Plame's identity did so as retaliation against her husband, former Ambassador Joseph Wilson. Wilson traveled to Africa before the invasion of Iraq to investigate claims that Iraq was obtaining uranium from there in order to make nuclear weapons. Wilson found no evidence backing this claim, which was nonetheless used as part of the case for war. Wilson has been very critical over the war in general, and he participated in a hearing in Washington D.C. examining the case for war.

Meanwhile, some pundits are praising Miller for willingly facing prison in order to protect her source, but others are lashing out at Judith Miller for presenting herself as a martyr, going to jail in order to protect her sources, because she wrote articles in the *Times* corroborating the government's fabricated evidence in its case for war. Indeed, this is a complex case with powerful implications for journalism, the media, and the Bush administration.

Disapproval to Administration and Iraq occupation grows

Recent polls show that six out of ten Americans oppose the war in Iraq, and that the public in general is growing more dissatisfied with the progress of the "War on Terror." As a sign that this sentiment has found its way into the halls of power, fifty members of Congress are forming The Out of Iraq Congressional Caucus. Its mission is to lobby Congress and the White House to end the occupation of Iraq and bring US troops home. In addition, Republican Senators Chuck Hagel and John McCain offered harsh criticisms of the administration's handling of the Iraq war and occupation. In reaction to Vice President Cheney's assertion that the Iraqi resistance is dying out, Hagel said, "The reality is that we're losing in Iraq. . . . Things aren't getting better; they're getting worse." McCain expressed similar sentiments; when asked if the resistance is dying down, he answered simply, "No."

Congressional research reports to be made available to public

Research and reports once exclusively made available to members of Congress will now be available to the public thanks to a new website. The Center for Democracy and Technology, a civil liberties advocacy group, operates the website as a solution to a lack of public access to information Congress has taken for granted. It comes as a

welcome development to advocates of open and transparent government.

The website, www.opencrs.com, allows users to search through a database of nearly 8,000 reports from the Congressional Research Service. The CRS presents research and information to members of Congress to use in its legislative duties. The reports cover topics ranging from Social Security to the PATRIOT Act to the war in Iraq to renewable energy policy. It also encourages users to ask their members of Congress to send them yet unreleased reports, as a means of furthering the project's aims.

LOCAL

Trees by University entrance razed

Despite protests and criticism from students and faculty, the University clear cut the trees around the Main Entrance at the end of the semester. The trees were razed in preparation for construction of a new entrance, and it is part of a larger project that includes installing new curbs and widening some roads around campus. Supporters of the project say the new roadway could alleviate traffic problems around the entrance and improve safety for drivers and pedestrians. However, many members of the campus community claim the destruction is excessive. Opponents of the project had also cited environmental and aesthetic concerns and suggested alternatives to the university's administration. Critics also contend that the University failed to invite open and honest discussion about the merits of the project and ignored the community's concerns.

Demonstration at military recruitment office in Brooklyn

The New York City Counter Recruitment Campaign held a rally in front of a military recruitment office in Brooklyn. The group educates parents that they can choose to have their kids' personal information withheld from military recruiters. A clause of the No Child left behind Act stipulates that public schools must provide military recruiters with students' personal information to use in recruiting efforts. The protesters were also concerned over deceptive tactics used in the recruiting process. Military recruiters regularly make promises of free education and benefits, as well as career advancement, in order to entice students (especially working class kids and minorities) into joining the military. However, the group claims that two-thirds of students never receive college funding and only 15% graduate with a four year degree. Protesters also claimed pervasive discrimination against minority recruits.

In a related story, the New York Civil Liberties Union demanded that the military release info on its recruiting tactics, including the criteria by which recruiters target students, the information they give to students about military careers, and complaints filed by students and their families, according to a NYCLU press release. The release continues, "The letters to the recruiting commands of all four military branches ask what if any mechanisms they have in place to deal with complaints and to protect student privacy."

Downing Street Memo Examined in Capitol Hill Hearing

By Marcel Votlucka

Amidst media complacency about the revelations of the Downing Street memo, Congressman John Conyers is embarking on a crusade for accountability on this matter.

Conyers chaired a public hearing on the Downing Street memo in a small room in the Capitol on June 16. The hearing examined whether there is cause to formally investigate President Bush for possibly misleading or lying to Congress in his case for war. The hearing examined the infamous memo and six recently leaked documents that corroborate its contents. In addition, a CIA analyst, a constitutional legal scholar, and former ambassador Joseph Wilson gave testimony at the hearing.

According to the Downing Street memo, British and American officials may have tailored their intelligence according to what best suited and justified their policy aims, focusing only on facts that bolstered their case. Indeed, the memo indicates that "the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy." The memo goes on to describe the US' impatience with diplomatic options and a lack of concern for post war planning. It also concedes that self defense was not a legitimate case for war, as there was no imminent threat, and that humanitarian intervention was not an acceptable legal justification. Therefore, officials chose the UN option as granting legitimacy.

The contents of the six recently leaked memos show that British officials had an astute understanding of the political and legal issues connected to the impending war. The documents describe American officials as impatient and eager to proceed with "regime change." British officials, by contrast, opted for using diplomatic institutions in order to legitimize the war. They sought a sound legal ground in order to legitimize military action. British officials thought the case for war was weak because there was scant evidence of a connection with al Qaeda or that Iraq was accelerating weapons programs. "[The case] 'does not stack up. It sounds like a grudge between Bush and Saddam.' They also believed that 'regime change' was not an acceptable legal case.

One memo suggested the strategy that Hussein be forced to accept weapons inspectors and suggests military options in the event that Hussein hindered inspectors. As it turned out, inspectors found little evidence of WMD in the prewar period; Bush falsely chalked this up to Hussein hindering their efforts, thus legitimizing military action in the eyes of the Administration.

Blair has denied that he decided to jump on board the war train early, as critics charge, but the documents also mention that Prime Minister Blair pledged his country's commitment to the war effort in April 2002 at a summit with President Bush.

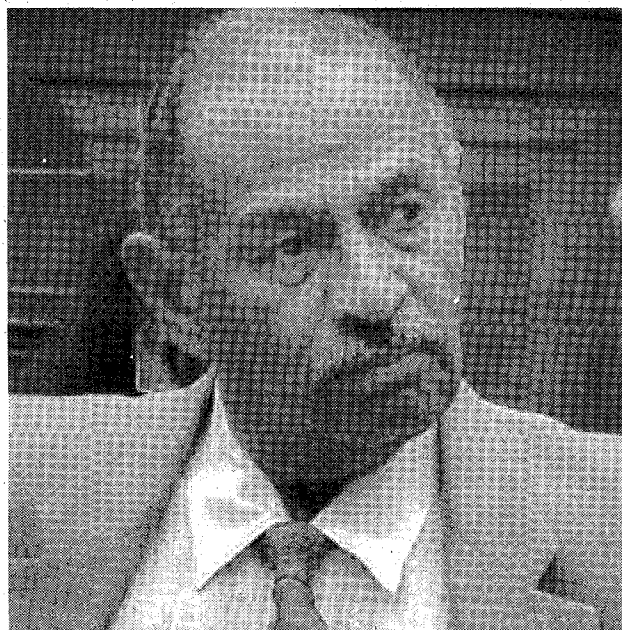
Neither American nor British officials have challenged the authenticity of the Downing Street memo.

The hearing deliberated not only on the memos themselves but also on testimony from three expert witnesses. One of these was Ray McGovern, a former CIA analyst and intelligence briefer for President George H. W. Bush, who explained how inspections in Iraq were working, and that Hussein's stocks of missiles were dwindling. "[The inspectors] destroyed them. They cut them all up. There were about ninety of them. So it was working."

McGovern also testified that Vice President Cheney and CIA director George Tenet put undue pressure on intelligence analysts during regular visits to CIA headquarters. He

said, "...Cheney [would] come in. He would like a briefing, and right over his shoulder [would be] George Tenet, who everyone knew was cooking things to what he thought the President wanted." CIA analysts, in their briefings to the President and Vice President, were apparently pressured to provide information that backed up their case for war, paying little heed to contradictory info. This is an example of the claim in the Downing Street memo that "intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy."

McGovern argued that this interference with the CIA was "unprecedented."



CONGRESSMAN CONYERS,
Courtesy of www.house.gov

Former Ambassador Joseph Wilson testified that the British intelligence collected before the war, regarding uranium from Africa that Hussein was allegedly stockpiling, "wasn't worth the paper it was printed on." The claim that Hussein was stockpiling yellowcake uranium was thoroughly debunked. Wilson also brought up an admission from Paul Wolfowitz, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, in *Vanity Fair*, that "we settled on weapons of mass destruction as something we could sell." This coincides with the Downing Street and other memos showing that WMD were to be used as a prime justification for military action.

Legal scholar John Bonifaz discussed the legal context of the Downing Street memo in his testimony. "Pre-emption has no place under international law," he said. "You have to prove an imminent threat." Indeed, British officials understood that neither humanitarian intervention nor "regime change" were suitable legal bases. Bonifaz argued that if true, the revelations in the memos imply that the Administration intentionally misled Congress; this is suitable grounds for impeachment.

Indeed, the legal and constitutional ramifications are of prime importance in this case. At the hearing, Conyers and his allies questioned whether Congress violated the Constitution in ceding unilateral authority to the President to wage war. Article 1, Section 6 of the Constitution specifies that Congress must issue a formal declaration of war—this was not done. Conyers, in an interview with journalist Amy Goodman on the radio program *Democracy Now!*, asserted, "So, we're talking about who determines how we go to war. . . who has the right to declare war, and were we properly informed? Misleading the Congress and the American people is a very serious matter, and what we're trying to do is document, Amy, on

evidence around and outside of the Administration the fact that it was a clear intention of President Bush to go into Iraq months before he ever got the permission from Congress."

In brief, the hearing aimed to examine these and other questions that have festered for two years since the invasion of Iraq. The hearing is significant because it is the first step to an official inquiry into whether the President deliberately misled Congress in his case for war. Again, this is a felony and an impeachable offence, and if the allegations are true, an impeachment inquiry would be the next step.

The hearing is also significant because it examines issues and questions that the mainstream media has neglected to follow. The Bush Administration has apparently chosen the same path; in early May, Congressional Democrats sent a letter to Bush including five questions about the effort to fix intelligence, with no response from the White House.

Undaunted, Conyers tried again to send these questions to the President. After the hearing, he and the other participants went to Lafayette Park across from the White House for a rally. He brought a second letter calling for an official inquiry into whether Bush deliberately misled Congress. 122 members of Congress and well over half a million Americans signed the letter, thanks to grassroots efforts on the part of MoveOn.org and other groups. Radio host Randi Rhodes urged listeners to visit her website and sign the letter. Rhodes also broadcast part of the hearings live on her June 16 show (C-SPAN and Pacifica Radio affiliates broadcast the hearings in their entirety).

The letter contains the five questions from the original petition from early May:

- 1) Do you or anyone in your administration dispute the accuracy of the leaked document?
- 2) Were arrangements being made, including the recruitment of allies, before you sought congressional authorization to go to war?
- 3) Was there an effort to create an ultimatum about weapons inspectors in order to help with the justification for the war, as the minutes indicate?
- 4) At what point in time did you and Prime Minister Blair first agree it was necessary to invade Iraq?
- 5) Was there a coordinated effort with the US intelligence community and/or British officials to "fix" intelligence and facts around the policy, as the leaked document states?

It remains to be seen how the White House and the media will respond to these events, if at all. White House spokesperson Scott McClellan has so far dismissed the memo and the hearings, "this is simply rehashing old debates that have already been discussed." GOP leaders attempted to prevent Democrats from holding the hearing in the Capitol; it was not an official hearing. But with public support of the President's handling of the war at an all time low, Conyers and his supporters hope that this proves to be an accountability moment for the Administration and Congress.

During the hearing, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee apologized for Congress' complacency in the lead up to war. "I want to apologize on behalf of the institutions of this nation. We were caught up in emotion. . . we ought to send soldiers to war on the basis of truth."

Author's Armchair

By Andrew Pernick

Judging by sheer statistics alone, there are many, possibly several hundred, struggling fiction writers on this campus. I am one of them. With 30 chapters behind me and with my book about to go into print, I thought it might be a good idea to share some of the things I have learned with you in the form of a regular column on fiction writing. There is, however, one thing I must point out at the outset: I self-publish and, since getting oneself published by one of the several dozen major publishing companies there are would not only be something I have no experience with but also be something that is so complex as to require more words than my column allows, I will not address this particular issue in this, or future, column.

Let us begin with one thing that is common to every writer, regardless of genre and regardless of the fiction/non-fiction dichotomy: writer's block.

Psychologically, writer's block is nothing more than anxiety of the act of writing. It is quite similar to a batter choking at the plate. Every writer, even the fantastically successful, best-selling ones, experiences this problem at least once per creative work, and every writer, given time and effort, eventually climbs out of this slump.

But this issue is not simply one of time and effort. There are many types of writer's block and there are just as many solutions. There is no "one size fits all" solution that is guaranteed to work for all writers just as much as there is no universal trick that helps in all situations. The key to conquering writer's block is to first understand the cause.

The most obvious form of writer's block comes about when an author has painted him or herself into a corner through the course of the

book's plot. Things have unfolded in a way that you didn't plan for them to. The plot has gotten away from you. The fix here is to stop trying to actually write and to relax and rethink your plot as a whole. Does your current situation place the entire plot in jeopardy? Does the hitch you've encountered only damage a subplot? These are critical questions that must first be answered before the writing process can be resumed with any real success. Regardless of your writing rituals (and we all have them),

regardless of how much you may hate planning things in advance, take the time to look at your plot from a global perspective. Sketch out how you want things to proceed and start considering ways to alter either past chapters (if you don't have an audience already reading your work) or future ones.

Don't start writing again until after you have a plan to get the plot back to where you want it to be.

Careful planning will sidestep this sort of situation in the future. The

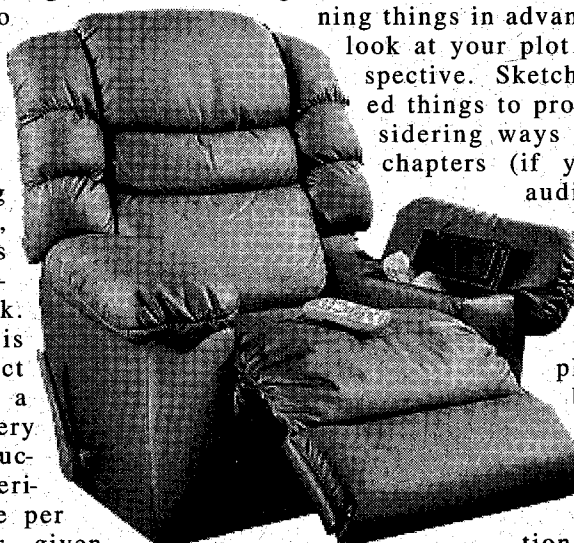
key is to stop the organic nature of your writing and introduce a bit of structure to save yourself from a dead end. The other key is not to panic. Plots evolve and we can either adapt our stories accordingly or we can start from scratch. The latter is most likely the least attractive option.

Another form of writer's block is introduced during the character creation phase. Sometimes you have an idea for how a character should be but just can't write as or for that character. Maybe you just can't enter a character's head. This is actually a lot more common

a situation than runaway-plot writer's block. It's also far easier to fix, if you think about it. I have a trick that works wonders for me, but it only works if you try it. Let's say I have a character named Kemuri who is supposed to be awkward, shy, withdrawn, and nervous, but I can't write for her for some reason or another. So, try this: write a monologue as if you were Kemuri speaking into a microphone. Do this for several pages, including every affect, defect and aspect of her personality that you can until you find yourself thinking exactly the way you want her to think. This usually only takes about 3-5 pages. Then, once you've done that, like magic, you're in her head and writing for her will be a breeze. If you're lucky, you might even be able to adapt some of that monologue to fit what you need for where you are in your fiction. For added depth, make this monologue an autobiography but remember - fictional characters, just like real people, gloss over entire portions of their lives, so don't obsess about getting every detail down; just focus on getting a general flow going and you should very easily be able to think as and write for that character.

The last common form of writer's block stems from a loss of inspiration. This will happen, no doubt about it. Relax! For some people, this is a sign that they need to take a break. For others, it's just a sign that they need to reexamine that which first sparked their imagination. The key to maintaining one's inspiration is also the key to being a great writer - read as much as you can, regardless of genre or topic. This will keep your mind fresh and will probably yield ideas that sitting idle never would. Just read and relax and your inspiration will come back to you in no time. Take my word on it - I've lost my inspiration about 6 times over the course of 30 chapters and, every time, just by reading a bit of this and a bit of that, I've been re-inspired and have had fresh ideas every time.

Until next time, borrow what works, fix what doesn't, and fake the rest.



Liberating Katie Holmes

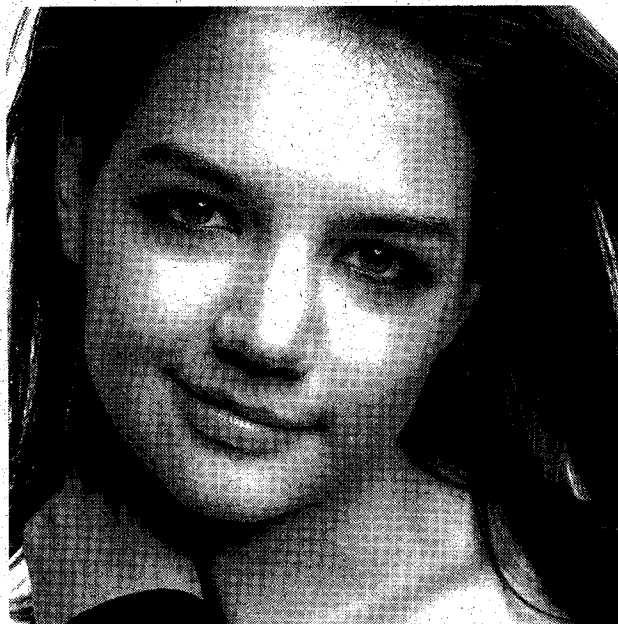
By Laura Positano

Katie Holmes once was the epitome of an independent young woman. On the popular nineties show, "Dawson's Creek" she was the irrepressible tomboy. With tremendous range in her ability to play different characters in movies, Holmes proved herself a versatile actor since "Dawson's Creek." She had substance, grace, and intellect. She still does, yet now she has been receiving more attention for her relationship with Tom Cruise than for how well she can imbue a scene with meaning.

The future Mrs. Tom Cruise, the woman who is so in love that her films that she promotes are seemingly secondary to affirmations of Tom. Tom Cruise still is a hunk to many women, so I can understand her being proud of her luck to an extent. However, to increasing numbers of her fans, Katie Holmes has been enraptured in something beyond the typical adoration of another that love brings. She has become almost a victim; helpless and trapped into an abyss of a relationship that is already diminishing her spotlight. To them, her romance with Cruise threatens to devour her identity completely, until all that remains is the "future Mrs. Tom Cruise."

Both Holmes and Cruise are famous actors, who currently are promoting films; Batman and War of the Worlds, respectively, so there has been speculation that is just a publicity stunt. Other rumors relate to Cruise's religion, Scientology, one that Holmes now worships

alongside her fiancé. Scientology is a popular religion among the celebrity crowd, but there are those who view it as a cult. The fact that Holmes now has a scientologist companion who



THE SCIENTOLOGIST IN TRAINING, Courtesy of L. Ron Hubbard and a gang of psychos

accompanies her to interviews with the press, like when she was interviewed recently for "W" Magazine, does raise questions about her

autonomy.

Hence, her fans have been so moved by her plight that she has become an icon, in the sense of being almost a damsel in distress figure. The Free Katie movement has begun, with tee shirts and websites devoted to the cause of liberating Katie Holmes. Though the Free Katie trend has become a fashionable movement to espouse, the more serious implications of a woman needing rescue from a relationship should be examined.

Most women in our society have been trained, even as little girls through fairy tales like Cinderella, to find a man. As teens and into our twenties, we find men we consider charming and worth sharing our lives with. Autonomy is still able to be kept, but being known as so and so's girlfriend, with all its benefits and privileges, does affect our identity. Dating men with more status, like Cruise, can be either a help or a hindrance to a woman seeking to be more successful, like Holmes. Love is great and wonderful, but too often intelligent women, like Ms. Holmes, allow it to be an all-encompassing entity.

What I hope that women who are observing this transformation of Katie Holmes' identity, from that of a talented actor to a future bride of a more successful man, realize is it can happen to anyone. So free Katie, but first, free yourselves from the notion of all enveloping love that erases your identity as an individual.

Anime

Read or Die the TV: BUY ME!

By Andrew Pernick

Three sisters, two of whom are bibliophiles, meet an author in Hong Kong. Sounds like the setup for a joke, right? Well, no if you're speaking about Hideyuki Kurata's masterpiece, *Read or Die the TV*. The series, which follows the adventures of the Three Sisters Detective Agency and their missions, which mostly involve either retrieving stolen books for a publishing company or protecting their author/friend, is nothing short of sheer brilliance. The three sisters themselves, Michelle Chan, Maggie Mui, and Anita King, are "paper masters," people who can use sheets of paper to accomplish any task, from flying (via forming a giant paper airplane or an enormous, animated bird) to fighting (via becoming a bow with paper arrows, mythical beasts, or projectile sheets of paper). Their author/charge is the acclaimed Nenene Sumiregawa who, at various times, is hunted by mad bombers and a vicious, evil international conspiracy to rule the world by taking over the world's publishing companies, libraries, bookstores, and newspapers. While other reviews, which can be found all over the Internet, focus on the Japanese-language version, and which also discuss the plot in depth, I will focus on the superb English dub.

The ADR (or Additional Dialog Replacement, the process by which words are added or removed, or the wording of phrases are changed, to make the English dub match the characters' lip movements) is nothing short of being the shining example by which other anime should be judged.

Hunter Mackenzie Austin, of *Haibane Renmei* fame (where she voiced Hikari) successfully brings the mix of strength, leadership, sisterly love, and occasional immaturity her role as elder sister Michelle Chan demands. There are times where her acting shines through so strongly that you could swear that voice-acting is second nature to the young woman. Her ability to sound bright and sunny yet in command in spite of the difficult dialog and demanding acting situations makes her steal the show.

Newcomer Sara Lahti is nothing short of perfect for the role of the androgynous yet warm and comforting middle sister Maggie Mui. She, to be blunt, owns the role. Whoever discovered her and signed her on for this part kicked this show from excellent to near-perfect by doing so. She is a star in the making and it will be well worth it for Geneon (the company that released *Read or Die the TV* stateside) to keep her as a permanent addition to their already-deep pool of talent.

It is almost impossible to reconcile the fact that Rachel Hirschfeld voices 12-year-old

Anita King in this series with the fact that she voiced 4-year-old Hana in *Haibane Renmei*. The voices are just that different. Hirschfeld brings so much energy to the role that one can feel what it is like to be that age again. She mixes angst with anger, silliness with seriousness, love and hatred so well that her character suddenly seems much more than fictional — there are times when Anita King seems like a living, breathing person, all thanks to Hirschfeld's efforts.

Wendy Tompson (in real life, Tricia Dickson) seems to be typecast in semi-serious, semi-angry roles. Her first role of note was as ultra-poor, socially awkward and easily annoyed cram student Mayuko Chigasaki in Yoshitoshi Abe's *Niea_7* and as Nenene Sumiregawa, the author who seems to be the damsel in distress of the series, she repeats her performance in some respects but brings a sense of irony and a touch of motherly love to the role. Acting as the Three Sisters' landlord/charge (as the Three Sisters Detective Agency is hired as her bodyguard in the first episode), the role of Sumiregawa is one that demands both sobriety as well as humor, things Tompson gives the character with relative ease. Like Anita King, one can almost see Sumiregawa as a person, not as a fictional role.

Another paper master, for whom Nenene has been searching for five years, is the legendary Agent Paper a.k.a. Yomiko Readman, voiced by Hellena Taylor (who is also occasionally credited as Hellena Schmied). The character is British and therefore has an inherent sense of awkwardness and social clumsiness that Taylor masters. From the first frame in which Yomiko is shown, we can see Taylor's brilliance as an actress and we live and die through her emoting. Yomiko is being hunted by the evil conspiracy because she possesses a book they need to accomplish their master plan, and Taylor injects a sense of urgency into a role that would, without it, be a cliché. To be honest, Taylor also owns her character.

Yomiko's best friend, whom she has sworn to protect at all costs, (not her love interest as has been implied by some reviews) Nancy Makuhari is voiced by my favorite voice actress, Carrie Savage, who came into prominence by voicing Rakka in *Haibane Renmei*. Seriously, find every anime Ms. Savage has had a voice in and buy it! She's that good! In the role of Nancy, she brings a voice so well-suited for the role that you instantly feel for her character, who is also being hunted by the evil conspiracy. Her voice is a mixture of sadness, anger, and concern (the lattermost comes into

play especially where Yomiko is concerned). Even if you are so unlucky that you haven't seen anything else Ms. Savage has voiced, you would want to do anything for her after hearing her speak. Her voice is that good. Hell, from the moment I first heard her speak, I wished I could marry her for that voice.

The leader of the conspiracy, Mr. Joker (a.k.a. Mr. Carpenter) is voiced by J.B. Blanc, who you may remember from his role as the pirate leader Luigi Vampa in 2002's live-action *The Count of Monte Cristo*. Blanc, a classically-trained British actor, brings a sense of dignity and refinement to a role that would, without Blanc's talents, otherwise be flatly evil. Blanc adds depth and believability in the way that only a talented craftsman such as he can. Carpenter's assistant, Wendy Earhart, is voiced by the lovely Siobhan Flynn, another relative newcomer to the voice-acting scene. She aptly and deftly brings a sense of individuality to what would otherwise be a role of blind obedience. The pair give the conspiracy a very human, very believable face and, to hear the two of them describe their master plan, the end result doesn't seem half bad, however evil their methods may be. Their pawn, 12-year-old Agent Junior, is portrayed by voice-acting veteran J.D. Stone, who infuses the role with the indifference and frustration, as well as the awkwardness, being a 12-year-old hit-man would require.

Also worth noting are a few members of the supporting cast. First is Patrick Seitz, who voices Nenene's editor Lee Linho. Seitz brings a sense of frustration that is believable, especially considering that his character has been waiting for Nenene to finish her new novel so that he can edit it for the past five years. Seitz's last major role, for those playing the home game, was as Karuchie European Restaurant owner Shuei Karita in *Niea_7*. The veteran J-Ray Hochfield, who has a tendency to voice eccentric characters (Kuu in *Haibane Renmei*, Niea in *Niea_7*), yet again takes on an outside-the-mainstream role in this anime, this time as Natsume Nishizono, younger sister of the up-and-coming novelist Haruhi Nishizono and classmate of Anita, a character who is always trying to plug autographed copies of her sister's books. Last, Sarah Little, who really needs no introduction as her talent is that multifaceted, plays several minor roles in this series. She always seems to play upbeat characters used to introduce important elements of the plot or salient aspects of a character's personality, as she did as Kana in *Haibane Renmei* and as Chiaki Kumatsu in *Niea_7*. It is a shame that she is not used more extensively here; as there are many minor characters that could benefit from her talents.

In short, *Read or Die the TV* is the paragon of English voice-acting, and the actors and actresses involved deserve standing ovations, even if they can't see you clapping as you watch the DVDs from your living room. This series is beyond a must-see, it is beyond a must-download. Make the investment: this series is a must-buy, for the voice-acting alone. Listen to the voices in the series for the first 10 minutes of the first DVD (of which there are 7, totaling 23 episodes) and you will be hooked. Buy this series—you deserve it.



The Stony Brook Press Anime Collective Presents:

Ask Your Favorite

Evangelion Character Anything

By Joe Rios

Dear Rei,

I am afraid that my parents are going to get divorced. I don't know what is going to happen to me, or how I am going to manage not having both parents in my life. Is there anything I can do to stop them. Please help.

-Cindy, Huntington

Dear Cindy,

I am not your doll. Do not pester me with these inane human questions of love and parents. I have no parents. You do not know how lucky you are. Go away.

-Rei

Dear Shinji,

I am very afraid of my stepfather. My mother loves him, but I don't trust him. I have thought about running away. What do you recommend?

-Jeff, Islip

Dear Jeff,

Don't feel bad...it's ok to be afraid of fathers. They are evil cruel people who do mean things to you and the people you love. Don't run away, be strong...I mustn't run away. I mustn't run away. I mustn't run away!!!!!!

-Ikari

Dear Kaowru,

There's this guy I really like. I think he is the cutest, and he's really nice, but I can't seem to get anything sexual out of him. What

should I do to "get his gears turning?"

-Mary, Seaford

Dear Mary,

I happen to have just the right steps to seduce any man for you. Show up at his workplace while he is on break. Start humming something classical to get his attention. Talk to him a bunch, and in no time you'll have him in the shower room right where you want him. Trust me, this one works on even the shyest of boys.

-Kaworu

Dear Gendo,

My parents want me to be a doctor, but I want to be a nurse so I can help people without having to deal with so much extra stuff. I was wondering if you knew what I should do in this situation. I am so torn.

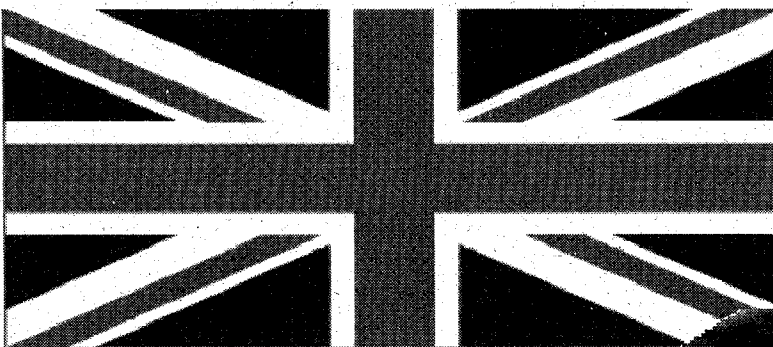
-Jenna

Dear Hotcakes,

Hey baby, let Dr. Gendo set you up with some of his "special medicine." Hey wait...how old are you? Never mind, I don't care. Bring your sisters and your mother too while you are at it. You can find me relaxing at my love palace in Tokyo3. I'll be waiting for YOU!

Xoxoxo

-Gendo



Ask a Foolish Brit Anything

By A Foolish Brit

Dear Foolish Brit,

Is it okay for someone who's twenty-two to still want to play with bubbles? I mean, I love bubbles and I never got past them when I was growing up. Everyone makes fun of me now. What should I do?

Bubbly in San Francisco

Dear Bubbly,

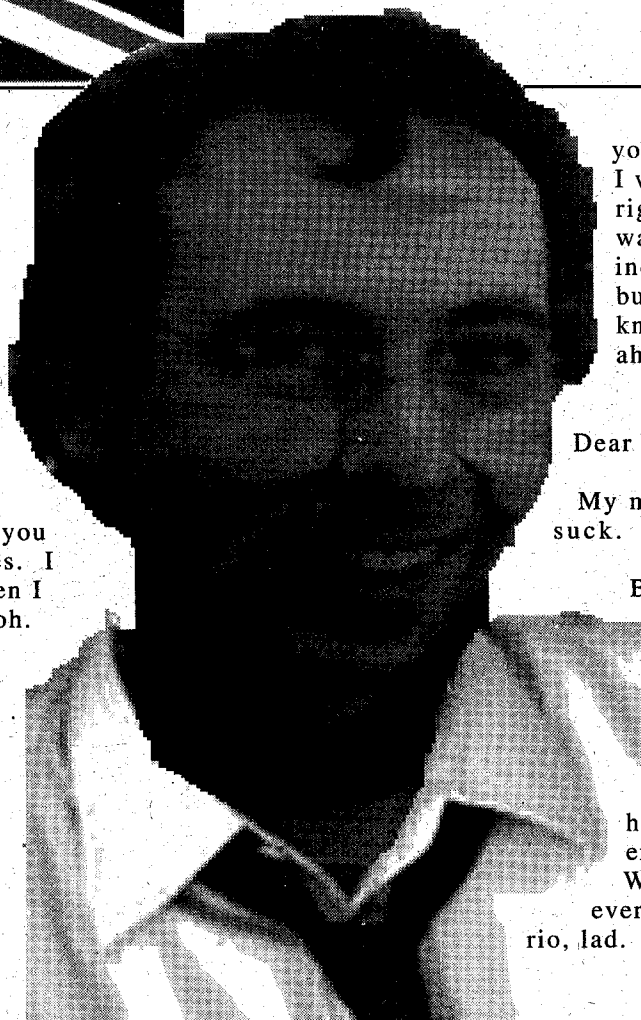
I believe, hmmm... bubbles, you say? Right-oh. I- mmm... bubbles... cheerio, lad, cheerio. I mean, blighmey, I- I- I do believe you said bubbles, right? Hmmm... I like bubbles. I was a young lad in Manchester, I believe, when I had bubbles. It's very... hmmm... yes, right-oh. Indeed.

Dear Foolish Brit,

Is it okay to have sexual relations with someone who's five years younger than you are? I mean, she's 15 and I'm 20. Do you think that's a problem?

- Over-age in Colorado

Dear Over-age,



Right-oh, lad. Right-oh. I... emmm... I do believe you said five years, hrm? Five years, blighmey. When I was a young lad in Liverpool, hmmm... Liverpool, right... my Popsy used to put on the kettle as I watched the Tellie. I- right, hmmm... indeed, lad, indeed. Five years. Well, I say, hrm, a bit of light butter on my bagel, if you know what I mean. You know, a bit of, erm, sugar, and spice, and everything, ahoorm, well, right-oh, I guess, yes.. nice? Hrm?

Dear Foolish Brit,

My mother thinks you're the greatest, but I think you suck.

Booya in Idaho

Dear Booya,

Well, dear me, right-oh. Blighmey, young lad. I... hrm... sodding yeah. I say, ahoomm, bligh me and my mother's auntie. I, yes, hrm... could you repeat the question? You wouldn't by any chance have a- hmmm... water closet, ahoomm, erm, around, erm... would you? Yes, yes. I was a lad, right-e, in Wales, and my Mum used to take me to the chemist every other weekday, right. Yes, umm.. hmmm... cheerio, lad. Cheerio-bloody-o. Right.

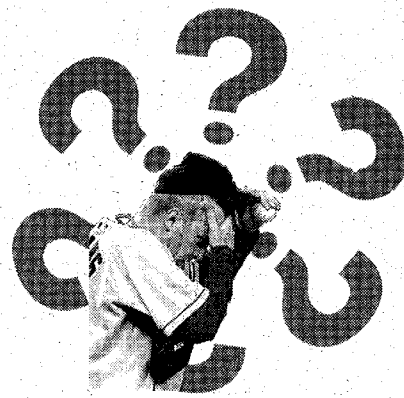
The Comics Section

Bring, bring!



Bring, bring!

Curt Schilling reacted,
"Merciful heavens! The
Red Line emergency
neighborhood watch line!"



"But can I answer? My right
hand has gone to sleep from
propping up my huge head!"

"Such is the life of a
tragic hero. But...
perhaps...miracles can
happen? I must remain
resolute!"



Solving Crimes!

YOUR 2004 WORLD
SERIES CHAMPION

By Matt Willemain

Fightin' Mysteries!

"Sweet
Savior's
salve!
I've been
able to
slap the
reciever
off the
phone!"

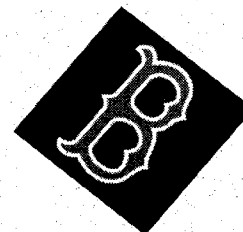


"You've
got Curt
Schilling
on the
line, pal!"



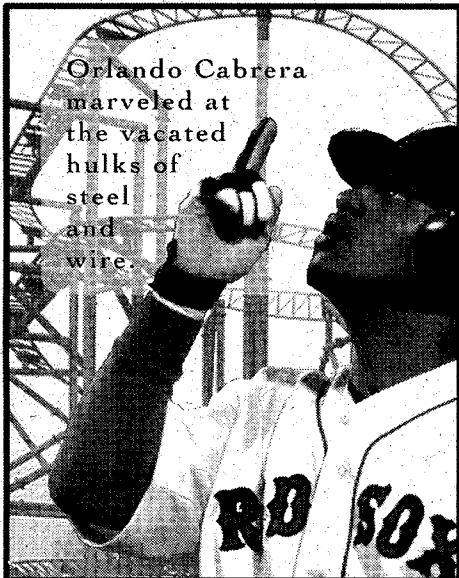
"What's that, you say?
Mysterious loiterers and
nogoodniks creeping
around the old, abandoned
amusement park? Oh,
no, it's no trouble."

Episode Seven:

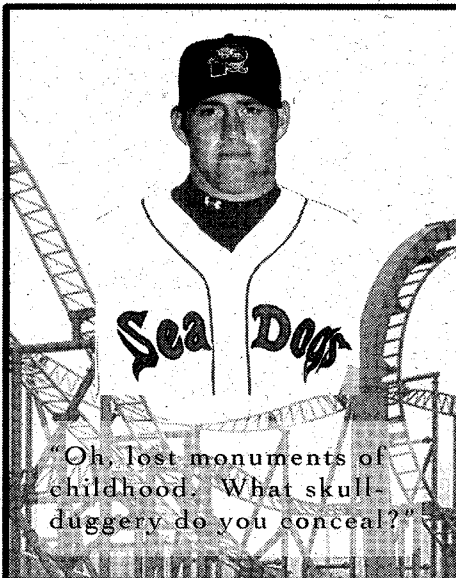


Not So
Amusing

Orlando Cabrera
marveled at
the vacated
hulks of
steel
and
wire.



"Oh, lost monuments of
childhood. What skull-
duggery do you conceal?"

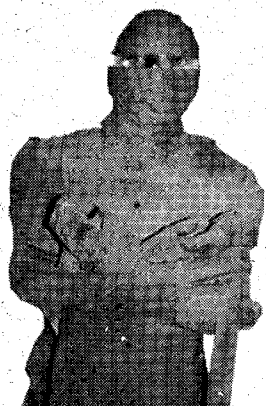


"Ok. Terry Adams and
Pedro Astacio have gone
to check out the bumper
car bumperium. I think
we should start with the
house of horrors."

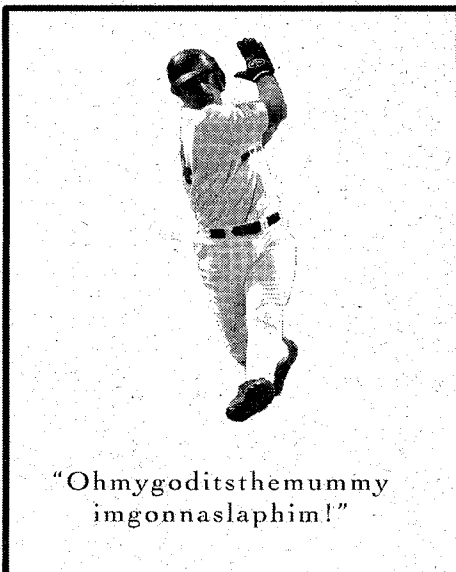


"But can I overcome the
childhood memories of that
day I dropped my ice cream
in a similar spook house?"

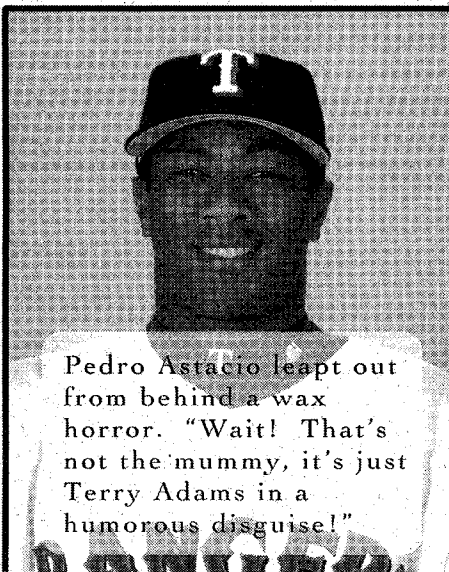
The Mummy!



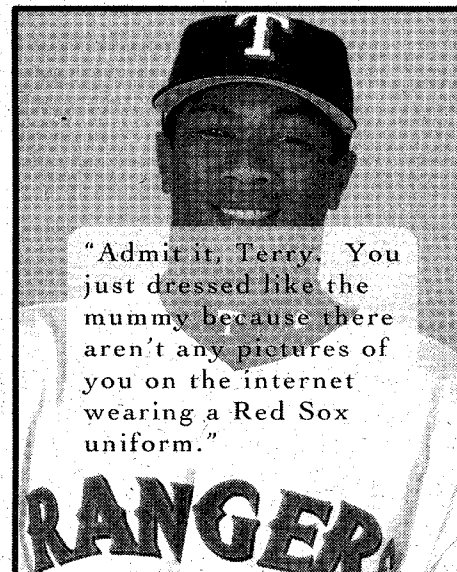
"Ohmygodisthemummy
imgonnaslap him!"



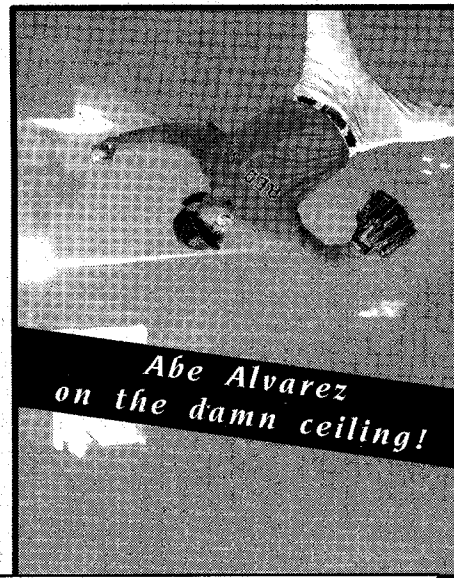
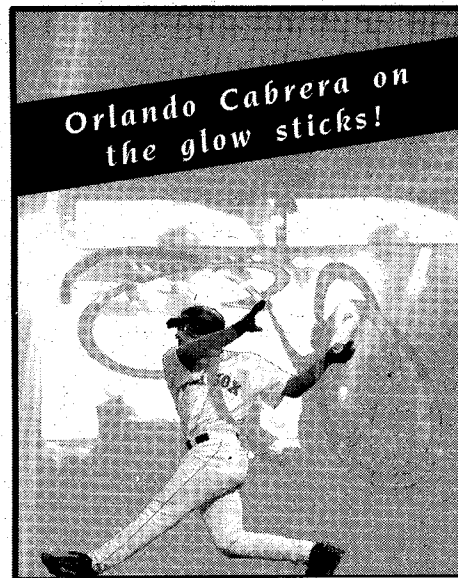
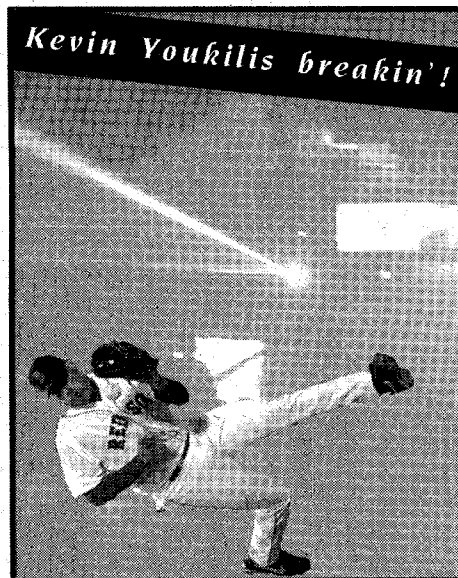
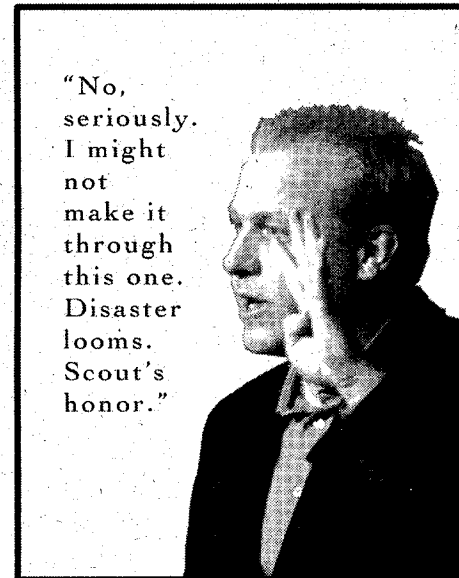
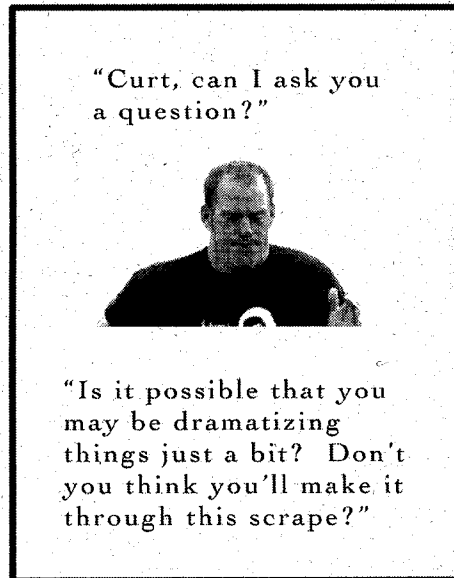
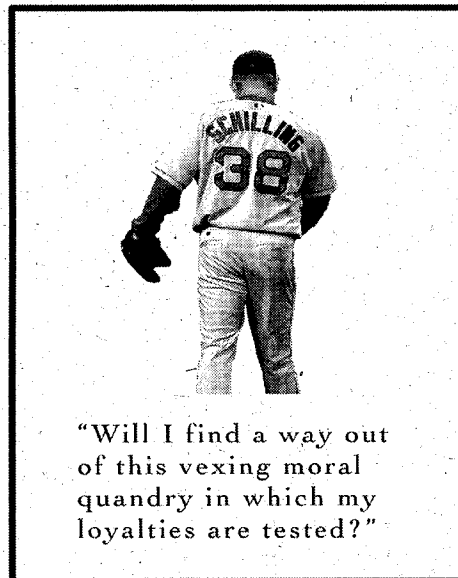
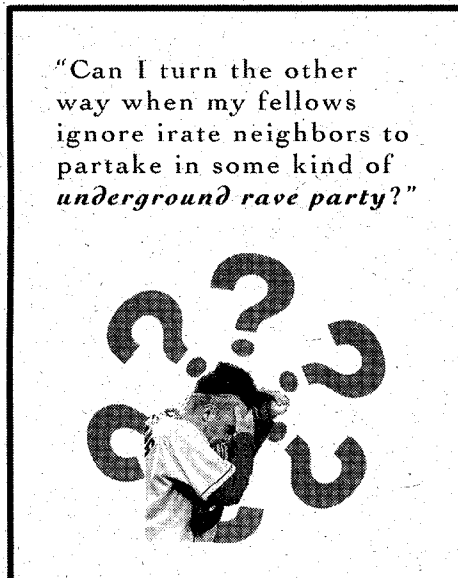
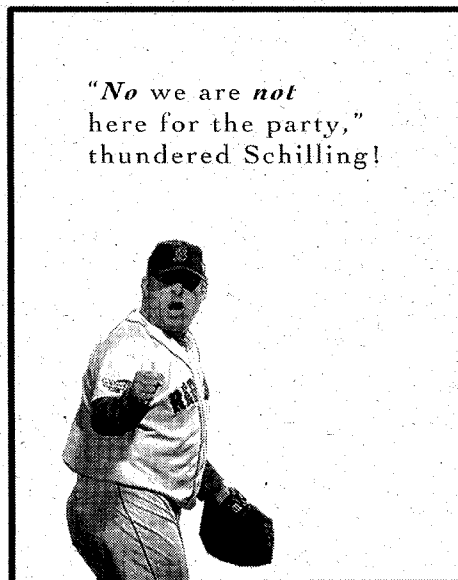
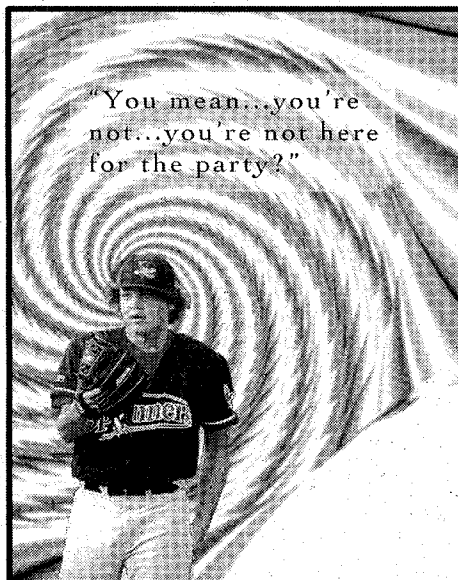
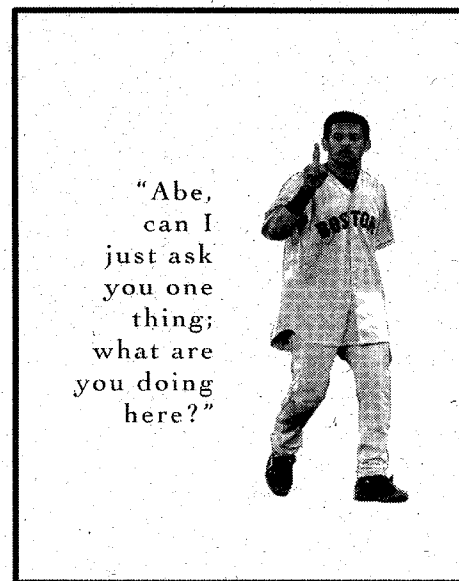
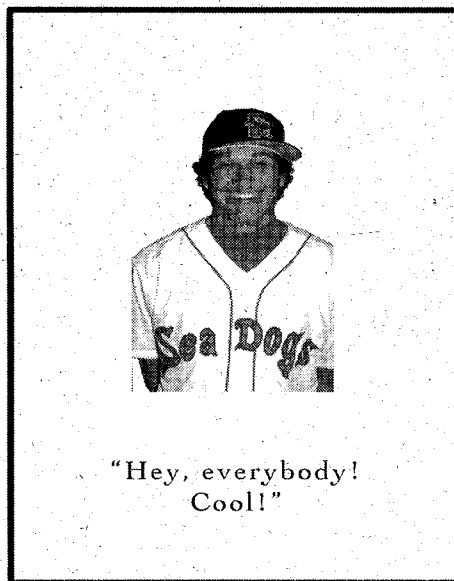
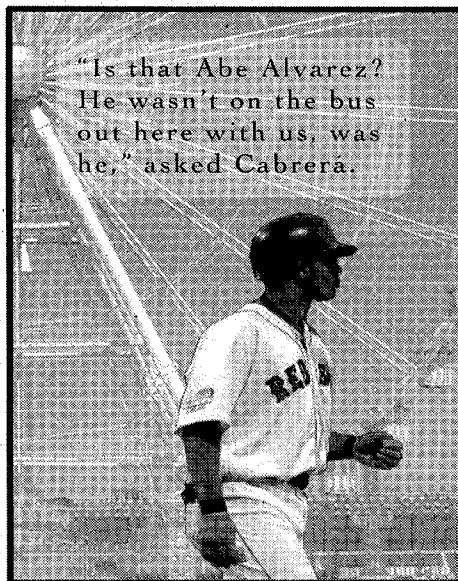
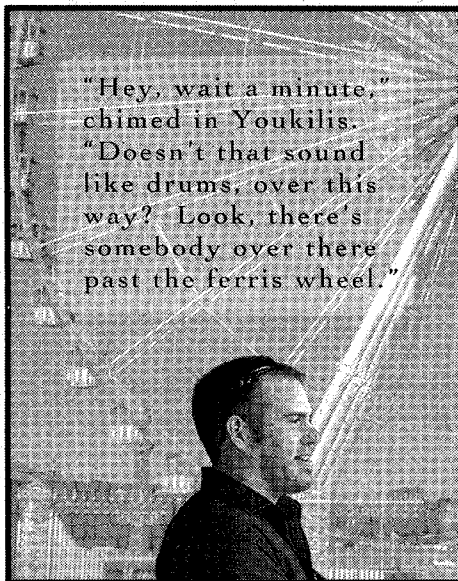
Pedro Astacio leapt out
from behind a wax
horror. "Wait! That's
not the mummy, it's just
Terry Adams in a
humorous disguise!"



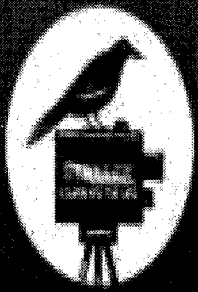
"Admit it, Terry. You
just dressed like the
mummy because there
aren't any pictures of
you on the internet
wearing a Red Sox
uniform."



The Comics Section



By Matthew Vernon Xavier Willemain



2005 STONY BROOK FILM FESTIVAL JULY 21-30

10 Days Celebrating 10 Years

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

The highlight of summer at Stony Brook is the annual film festival at the Staller Center. Celebrating its tenth anniversary, the Stony Brook Film Festival kicks off on Thursday 21 July. Forty five bucks will get you into more than twenty full length features and over a dozen shorts over the course of ten days. The festival prescreens Hollywood studio pictures along with top independent and international pictures, and is definitely worth it for anyone, student or otherwise, anywhere near this campus. For more information about this summer's festival, which complements the movies with special events with filmmakers and food for those who shell out some extra cash, visit stonybrookfilmfestival.com.

8:30 PM "Marilyn Hotchkiss' Ballroom Dancing & Charm School"

5:00 PM "When Night Falls (Stille Nacht)"

7:00 PM "Steal Me"

9:30 PM "The Godfather of Green Bay"

4:30 PM "My Girl (Fan Chan)"

7:00 PM "Smile"

9:30 PM "My Tiny Universe"

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

3:00 PM "Mondovino"

7:00 PM "Alice in Glamourland (Ellis in Glamourland)"

9:30 PM "At Last"

7:00 PM "Jesus, Mary and Joey"

9:30 PM "Rancid"

7:00 PM "Amazons (Amazones)"

9:30 PM "In My Father's Den"

7:00 PM "Wilby Wonderful"

9:30 PM "Forgiveness"

7:00 PM "Loggerheads"

9:30 "Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress (Balzac et la petite tailleur chinoise)"

7:00 PM "Heavens Fall"

Dying Gaul"

8:30 PM "The Five of Us (Elles Étaient Cinq)"

The Comics Section

Hey buddy! Fuck you!!!

Oh Boy... here we go again!

By: Joe "Wicked Pirate" Rios

Are you SURE you want to do this comic... I mean, those sunburns look painful.

Yeah Man, it's ok. It really doesn't hurt that much

Ok man... The following is a college Boys Public Service Announcement

Wha???

SMACK

The point of this demo was to state two things:

1. Wear Sunblock!
2. If you get burned, don't try and be a tough guy...

If you do, some asshole might smack you!

Gyah!!!!

This is Where the Magic Happens

By Rob Pearsall



TOP TEN

Reasons to Stay At Stony Brook

10

It's a *bargain*,
tuition is sooo low!

9

I *love* the food!

8

Administration gives you a lot
of *love*!

7

There's a *circus* in SAC
Ballroom B Tuesdays at 7pm!

6

Construction makes campus
beautiful!

5

I can test *model airplanes* on this
wind tunnel of a campus!

4

Bookstore prices are *fair and*
competitive!

3

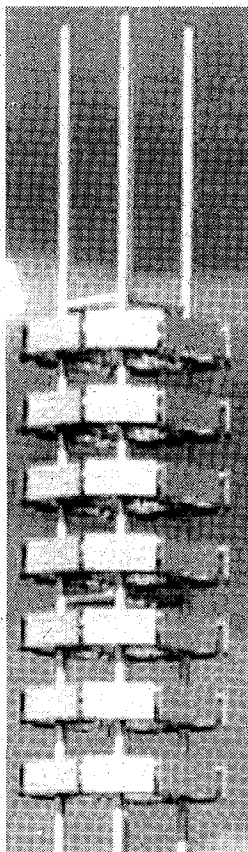
There's are *Krispy Kremes* in the
Union Deli!

2

The *close, tightly knit* community!

1

I always *have* a spot to park
my car!

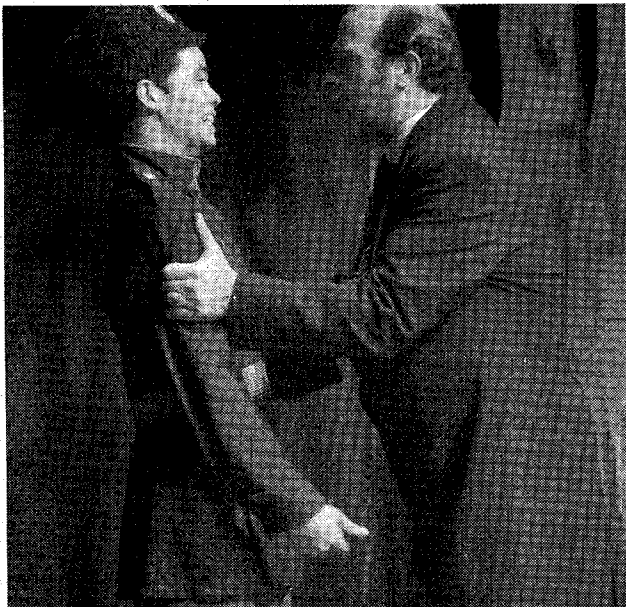


HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

Chekhov May Not Be for Everyone... But this Performance Was! *Three Sisters* Review

By Adina Silverbush

I was told prior to seeing *Three Sisters* (which was the first Chekhov play I ever saw) that Chekhov's plays were often long and uneventful. Although I admit the four acts of *Three Sisters* was not a short play, it was a very eventful one. Real lives were being lived and lost, as realizations of the harsh realities of life and love unfolded. In the almost three hour production I was drawn into the characters of Chekhov's play that I found myself deeply moved and hanging on their every word.



SPIT IT OUT! DON'T EAT THINGS OFF THE FLOOR!
Courtesy of Jowy Romano

Three Sisters was performed in Staller Theater II from April 21-May 1 and was directed by Deborah Mayo. On the surface the play was beautiful with wonderful costumes, a magnificent set, and very elaborate lighting techniques to show the changes in seasons that came with each act.

As for the acting, it would be very difficult for me to point out a single actor as I feel this was such an ensemble piece. Everyone was extraordinary, absolutely amazing! No one was over-acting, and likewise no one was under-acting. I felt everyone was playing their roles exactly how Chekhov himself would have directed it.

After talking with many who saw the play there were mixed reactions. Chekhov, is difficult for many to watch since the action of the play takes place off stage. (What's the point of seeing a play if you can't see the exciting parts?) I found many students felt the play moved slow at first but as they got drawn into the characters they enjoyed it overall. There was not one person who didn't agree that the presentation and acting was great, even if they still object to the work of Chekhov! Although, I must admit it was difficult to keep track of the characters by name since they all had very long, very Russian names! Also, I was glad to see an ethnically diverse cast...it's funny how the play that is suppose to be all Russians had so much diversity, and *Hair* was done by a bunch of white kids!

I found myself connecting with all three sisters, all who had tragic lives. Olga, (Sophie Vanier) the oldest sister, was a very strong woman who maintained order in the home. She set the rules and raised her sisters. Although she was such a strong presence on the stage her life was unhappy and unfulfilled. All she wanted was someone to love. Masha (Louisa Johnson) the middle sister, was not in love with her husband. She was married young and to a man she had no interest in. The one man who she did love was married as well; to a woman he couldn't stand. He was a military man and leaves at the end of the play to go to battle. A tragedy of the time this play took place is that divorce was not an option and everyone, including the sisters' older brother Andrei (Brenden Riker), was in marriages that they were unhappy with. Irina (Ashley Hurst) the youngest sister, only really desired one thing, to go back to Moscow the place that the sisters grew up. "Every thing would be better in Moscow" she would say over and over again. She sees how unhappy her sisters were with love and she wanted to save herself from marriage until she was truly in love. However even she becomes engaged to a man she

does not love because he was a "decent" man and Olga told her to. He ends up being killed in a duel.

Although the sisters go through such hard times the play ends with the sound of a military march. This is a happy tune yet it symbolizes something that is not happy, a war where their friends and loved ones are leaving them. Although their lives are unhappy Olga tells them they still must live. This was a very sad reality for me in the audience. To think that one will go through life knowing that they will never be truly happy and that the three sisters will never actually make it to Moscow. I did not laugh at the jokes in this play because I was too caught up in the sadness. I did not cry at the end of the play because of the death of Irina's fiancé or because of the war, I wept for the people that go through life simply to live.

This is an Editor's Note.
The article below is not a review, I swear.

Contrary to Popular Belief, Father Karras' Mother Does Not Suck Cocks in Hell

By David K. Ginn

It was confirmed last Wednesday during an interview with Satan that Father Karras' mother does not, in fact, suck cocks in hell.

Satan said, when asked about the accusations, "I don't know where people are getting this information from. I mean, [Exorcist author William] Blatty's book was obviously skewed in its facts. Mrs. Karras has been with us a long time, and she certainly hasn't given us any trouble. It might be nice every once in a while, for something like what Blatty describes, but I'm afraid it just doesn't happen around here. I mean, this is the place of eternal damnation, after all."

Many people from all over the world are shocked at this recent discovery, although some claim it's an attempt by the Dark Lord to cover up yet another scandal.

"I mean, we all saw the evidence," says Rachel Lower, 23, of Vermont. "I think it's very obvious what happened down there, and the 'great' Lucifer should be impeached immediately. This is not the way for a dark lord to behave. I mean, is the person you want running your eternal damnation?"

Martin con Juevos, from the Forensic Journal of South America, expressed his skepticism in a recent article:

"... and it would appear that our own

Dark Lord has indeed covered up the facts in an otherwise embarrassing scandal. We found Mrs. Karras' cigar in the dungeon room, and when we brought the team in we found a plethora of evidence against Satan. I mean, we examined the liquids and tissues found, and let's just say that the results weren't pretty. He's guilty, and he's doing all he can right now to sweep this one under the rug. He tried to do the same thing during the Black Plague, and this time we're not going to let him get away with it."

Others, however, feel that even if the accusations are true they do not warrant an impeachment of the Dark Lord.

A group called Civil Libertarians for Civil Liberty, centered in northern Idaho, claims that sexual activities are the business of the Dark Lord, and not the people he damns. In their most recent newsletters, they accuse the media of "over-exploiting an otherwise meaningless event." Others also believe that the situation is a "cold case", being a scandal running into its fourth decade. These people believe that the media should just "let it go." We will not, however, let a case like this slip by us, whether it's moral or not.

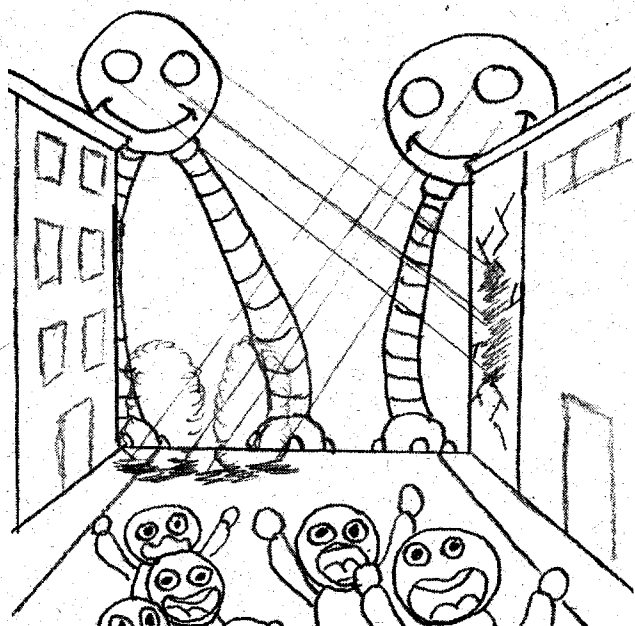
More on this story as it comes.
No pun intended.

HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

War of the Worlds

By Eddie Zadorovsky

Aliens have always been a source of speculation. It is quite possible that there are other forms of life outside of our universe. How could you not consider such a thought in this vast endless universe we occupy? Well, director Steven Spielberg seems obsessed with the idea in yet another film about extraterrestrial life outside of our current habitat. In his latest version of alien life form we have *War of the Worlds*, based on the best-selling book by H.G. Wells about an alien invasion.



ALIENS CHASE TOM CRUISE (FAR RIGHT)
Courtesy of Joe Donato

If there is any such competent director to pull off such a visual catastrophe of an alien invasion, Spielberg is the man. The man has a knack for visual flair and again gets to employ the use of his doctorate in alienology, as this is the umpteenth film about such a subject! The film has all the pizzazz and visual splendor one would expect of a potential summer blockbuster by Spielberg, being that it is his forte (ex: *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Jaws*, *Jurassic Park*). As always Spielberg doesn't disappoint on visuals as the film possesses spectacular images and scenarios of intense tension and destruction. Yet for all the visual impact and intensity of the ever unfolding alien invasion, is it the weak story and characters that the aliens should have invaded first, with the possibility of giving them life as well as purpose.

Yes, I agree the story and characters are not really the star of this film; it's the special effects that are what this film is all about. The characters are just an excuse to be shown in constant peril as well as being thrust into unsafe and risky situations, and yes that is fun. As for the story, it is as simple and lacking as the character development.

Tom Cruise plays Ray, a divorced arrogant deadbeat dad who takes his kids for the weekend while his pregnant ex-wife takes a weekend excursion to Boston with her new man. The two kids never take kindly with time spent with Ray, especially the son Robbie (Justin Chatwin) who despises Ray as being, and meaning, nothing to him his whole life, and throughout the film is in constant quarrel and defiance of him. On the other hand we have his daughter Mary Ann (Dakota Fanning) who might have a little more understanding and acceptance of her father but also isn't impressed. During the

duration of the weekend at Ray's house in Bayonne New Jersey, Ray tries to bond with the kids but to no avail. Meanwhile, above head the sky turns increasingly thick and dark with circling clouds that expel strong winds and forceful lightning, which strike with such precision and pinpoint accuracy at particular spots among the Bayonne streets that soon after, strange occurrences follow. What follows next are scenes of mass destruction to buildings and mass confusion among the people as huge soaring tripod ships emerge from the depths of the ground hell-bent on destroying all humans in their paths with disintegrating laser beam light. The capacities and abilities of these tripods are so extravagant and advanced that nothing is going to stop them. This initially is fun because its simple human vs. machine, we are not subjected to some lame superhero, or some secret bomb from the government to end this, from the instant the ships hatch from the ground it's all about annihilation. From that moment on its "Run Forrest, run!" as Ray takes his kids and makes like Forrest Gump.

There are brilliant scenes of mass destruction and confusion, in particular the cracking and uprooting of the streets in Bayonne New Jersey (which was always in need of repair anyway). Also, the capsizing of a ferry as hordes of people try to cross the bridge to board a ferry is mesmerizing. There are several scenes of enormous tension. One in particular which I found to be very unnerving had nothing to do with the aliens, but a spectacular staged scene where Ray and the kids are in a van heading towards the bridge which is ambushed by a very unsettling crowd, that scene is breathtaking and not to be forgotten. As well as another scene where Ray and his daughter are trapped in a basement where they have taken refuge with a loony guy named Harlan (Tim Robbins) which is being probed by one of the aliens snake lights, as well as several aliens themselves, the scene is a shameless rip-off of the scene in *Jurassic Park* where the kids are trapped in the kitchen with several hungry c u r i o u s Velociraptors, but nonetheless still chilling.

These scenes are not a problem at all; the film is loaded with them and they're extravagantly staged and executed, and are the main focus and selling point of the film (better yet they should've cast Tom Cruise as the lead alien based on his current alien antics in the press and media, there would be no problem with

acting there). The problem with a film of this magnitude where spectacular action scenes and adrenaline are the main focus is not to insult your audience with cop-outs. Examples would be when lightning from the skies have bombarded the whole town leaving and draining all cars of their power of mobility within miles, what do you know Ray just happens to find the lone car in all of Bayonne that works? I guess that car got to Meineke beforehand! Another incredibly dumb scene was the sudden patriotic stance taken by the son Robbie. After running through miles of destruction and carnage a hill is approached during their travels where the air force is in battle with the tripods. Robbie insists on leaving Ray so he can see the Tripods and to understand what it is they're doing, he is mad and wants to fight? Um ok Robbie I am sure Dr Phil is the alien captain! Could someone also explain to me in the course of a night and next morning how Ray manages to get from Bayonne New Jersey to his ex wife's place in Boston by merely walking? Also wouldn't you know Robbie is already there? I guess he walked twice as fast as Ray?

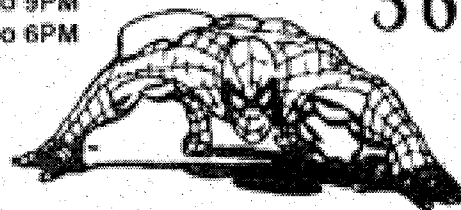
The ending leaves a lot to be desired with all the sophistication and advancement of the aliens, your going to tell me the air is a problem for them! Then explain to me the scene in Harlan's basement where multiple aliens leave the ship and search the basement? Seems to me the smartest thing the aliens did at all during this invasion was not to invade California first; they must've known of the smog all that time.

Despite such nitpicking the film is fun! The entire 135 million dollar budget is up on the screen; nothing is spared. The real star of the film is the special effects, and action scenes. They are abundant in pace and duration and Spielberg handles them well with intensity and tension. As you leave the theatre you will be entertained but you will also leave scratching your head about unanswered questions.

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Podcast Revolution

By Jowy Romano

This country is facing a serious threat to its democracy. Control of the media is slipping more and more into the hands of advertisers and large corporations. If things continue going down this path, the democracy we all love will be no more. Our only defense against the people who are looking to take control is independent media sources.

A new form of independent media has emerged recently. Audio blogs or "Podcasts" are becoming a very popular way to bring information to large numbers of people. Podcasts are basically radio shows in the form of digital audio files. People can subscribe to these shows with one of many podcast aggregator programs. The podcast aggregator will then automatically download any new episodes of the shows that are subscribed to.

Recently a new way to download podcasts has emerged. Apple's iTunes software now supports podcasting. You can choose from thousands of podcasts on apple's directory and have them automatically uploaded to your iPod for listening on the go. The release of these new features extends the reach of the podcast revolution to millions of iTunes users.

The reason podcasting is so revolutionary is that anyone can make one. All you need to get started is a microphone, a computer and some web space. Then record your show, upload it to your web space and create an RSS (a file that will let podcast aggregators know when you upload a new show and where to download it from). Starting a podcast is easy enough for even the casual computer user.

If you look through any podcast directory, you'll see the extremely wide range of topics covered. You'll also see that the people making these shows range from a few teenagers in a basement to big corporations like Disney. Everyone has an equal opportunity to get their voices heard. The top ten podcasts for July at podcastalley.com are proof of this. The top ten includes This Week In Tech, a podcast by former Tech TV host Leo Laporte, The Dawn and Drew show, a couple from Wisconsin talking about their sex lives, Earthcore, a podcast novel and a religious podcast called Catholic Insider.

I encourage everyone reading this to go listen to a few podcasts. You'll see for yourself how fun and convenient it is. Imagine being able to listen to radio covering the topics you want whenever you want. You will also be supporting a medium that is totally free of outside control. And then if you're feeling really ambitious, start a podcast of your own! As long as you have something to say people will listen.

HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEW? AND WHICH TABLE GOT THE PIE?

Crashworld Twists the Rules of Sci-Fi/Fantasy with Style

By Marcel Votluka

Grab your sword, shine your shield, and don't forget your magic spell book—you're about to embark on a fantastic journey! Andrew Pernick's *Crashworld* is an epic tale of swords and sorcery, with several innovative twists.

The novel is set in the world of Gana, which, on the surface, is stuck in a medieval era of valiant knights, chivalry, nobility, oppressive serfdom, rustic towns, mysterious forests, monsters and magic. But there's more than meets the eye. 350 years before the events of the novel, a mysterious event occurs that radically transforms Gana, leading to the introduction of advanced technology. The zenith of these technological advancements are contraptions called Devices, which the author likens to "Palm Pilots on speed," allowing citizens access to vast amounts of knowledge. Despite the advent of this incredible technology, Gana's society remains locked in the medieval rhythms of yesterday.

It is in this world that several heroes emerge to struggle against a formidable evil foe that seeks to subject the entire planet to a cruel technocracy. The story follows the young knight Jack, the quiet genius Sally, the brave and tough princess Jamie, her lover Sarah, and their escort, the wizard Zarathud. Their journey starts off as a diplomatic mission, but after a catastrophic event that obliterates an entire city, things quickly turn dark and dangerous. As the heroes journey on and piece together the puzzle, the mysteries behind the world of Gana and the origin of the fantastic Devices come into the light. And of course, no epic journey to save the world would be complete with plenty of romance; Jack and Sally's blossoming love affair is a big part of the story, but so is Jamie and Sarah's relationship. And, will Zarathud finally find the independent, free-spirited woman he seeks?

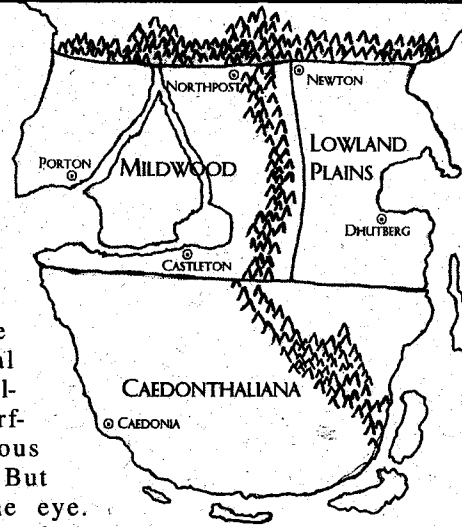
All of this alone would make for an enthralling story, but Pernick seeks not to write just another entertaining story; rather, he seeks to break new ground, and he plays with the

tried-and-true conventions of the genre with impunity and glee. For instance, Pernick turns the archetypical "ranger" character (personified by Aragorn of *Lord of the Rings* fame) completely on its head. Lady Jamie defies the stereotype of the "ranger" as being an ultra-masculine, ultra-heterosexual male with a secret royal past; she is very much a feminine woman, a lesbian, and makes no secret of her royal lineage. She is exactly the opposite of what a fantasy buff would expect of her character, and that

is exactly what Pernick is going for. Her love affair with Sarah, a commoner as well as a thief, is sure to raise some eyebrows within the world of Gana, to say nothing of the reader.

But Pernick doesn't stop there. There is, of course, the element of advanced technology and electronics within a medieval world. At first this concept would seem incongruous, but Pernick makes it work effectively; the Devices are not mere window dressing or just an exotic touch, but rather they are an intrinsic part of the story. Moreover, Gana's society espouses some rather progressive social values, celebrating egalitarianism and gay rights, and with a middle class instead of a sharp divide between rich and poor. Zarathud, though a wise mage, doesn't have the answer to every question; he is not omniscient. All in all, Gana is quite unlike your average fantasy world, and this makes the novel as a whole all the more compelling because of the skill with which Pernick weaves these disparate elements to make a solid and enthralling novel.

Therefore, it is this reviewer's humble opinion that *Crashworld* is one of the most innovative sci-fi/fantasy novels in recent memory. Anyone who thinks they've seen it all in sci-fi/fantasy fiction ought to visit Pernick's website, www.andrewpernick.com, and start reading right away—you will be hooked. And don't just trust me, trust loyal readers Carrie Savage and Sarah Little, famous voice-actors for such excellent anime series as *Haibane Renmei* (which I am told, is the author's favorite!).



☒ Swords

☒ Sorcery

☒ Technology

☒ LESBIANS!

CRASHWORLD

— A NOVEL —

www.AndrewPernick.com



POEMS

By Yve Koon

Silence

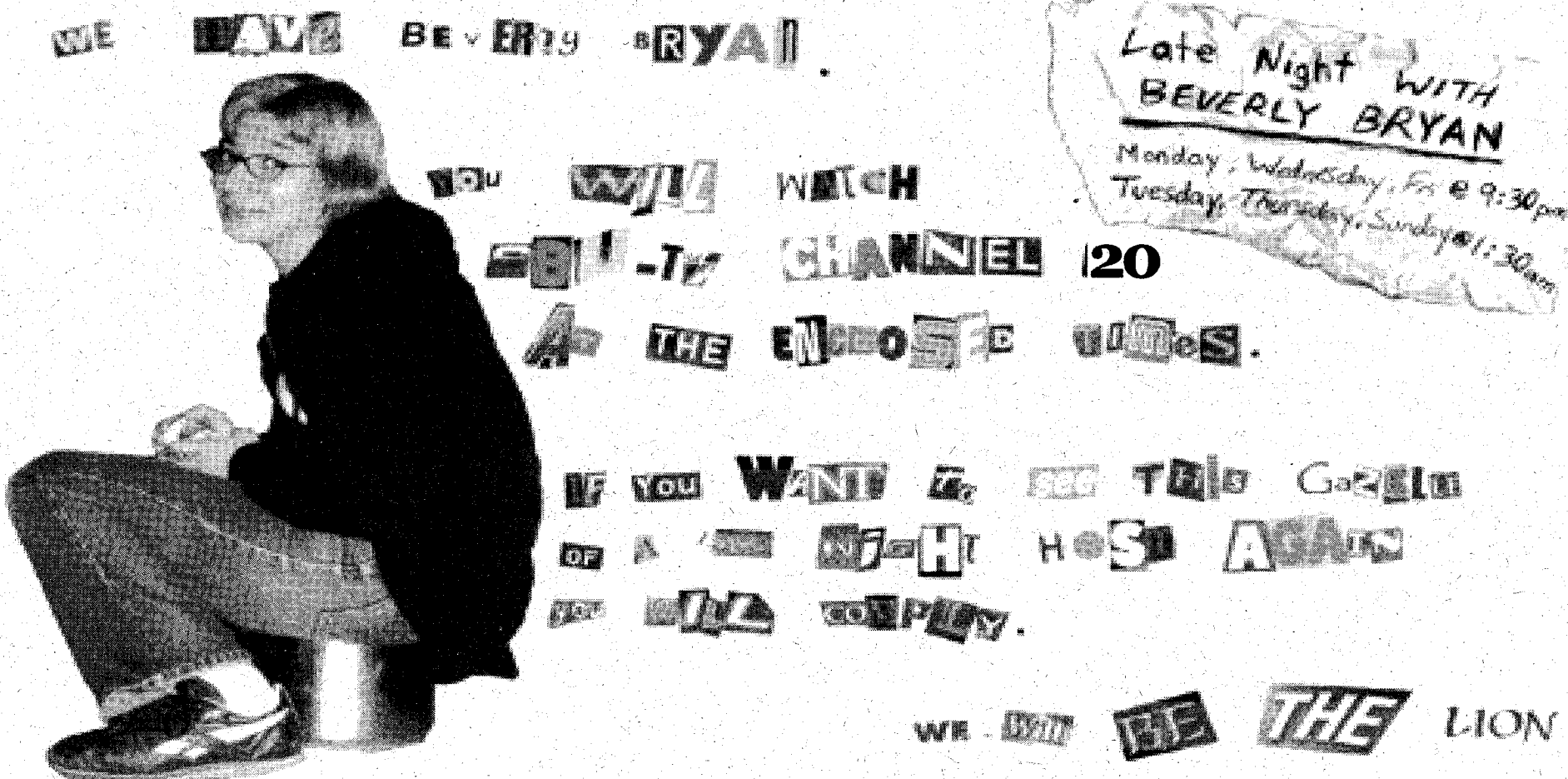
Silence. It is what stops me from speaking my mind. It is the action I take instead. It is what traps me inside my own head. It is the sound I want to hear. I swallow my pride and never speak, nor act against it. I work without heart, without resistance, with this lump in my throat. My jaw sealed shut, my jaw clinched together, words and emotions waiting to seep through for you to hear, waiting for their chance to make you see all the pain you've caused waiting for you to feel what I feel. If you could only stop shouting, stop yelling, stop belittling me, maybe then you could hear how I weep in silence. I want to shout and yell back at you, but I know that would make me no better than you. Besides, you wouldn't listen to what I had to say anyway. Every time I've tried to tell you all this, you've knocked me down and shut me up with more screaming. A smack in the face, a punch to the eye, countless whip marks all over my body. I remember every blow I took, every scar you gave me, but never did I ever strike back. Never did I disrespect you as you have to me. Never could I treat you less than human, as you treated me. You've taught me to bottle up my pain, to run from you, to never trust you. Is this what you had in mind? You wanted your child to fear you? I cannot eat, sleep, nor live a day without a frightful thought that I had done something wrong, and you were around every corner, waiting to punish me. Your laws of right and wrong dismisses everything, even your own words. You stand there and contradict yourself, confusing me. No matter what, I am doomed by your hands. So I sit here and suffer in silence.

A Toast

Here is a toast to you. To the times you've made me want curl up into a ball and die. To the moments I use to cut myself to make sure I was alive. To the beautiful sight of my own blood. To the joy of feeling pain, instead of emptiness. Here is to the idea that I was nothing. To how you beat that brilliant idea into my head. Literally. To the bumps, bruises, and the scars. To the tears you would not let me cry. To all the made up excuses I had to give to my elementary teachers. Here is to the long nights I could not sleep because you dragged me out of bed by my hair. To your hand that smacked my face. To the meat cleaver you swung at me. To the science test that was four points shy from a perfect score. To knowing that it was that test that made you hurt me. Here's to all the shit you did to fuck me up. To the knowing that no matter what you've done, I could never disrespect you. To the fact that I could never strike back, ever. To my feet that continue to return me to you. And to the love I still feel for you.

In My Mind

I have here in my hand a knife. The knife I used to kill you in my mind. In my mind, you attacked me for the last time. You treating me like shit all my life was your crime. This is what drove me to kill you in my mind. The glistening dark rich blood that flowed down from your neck all over the floor. The look on your face...realizing way too late that you had gone too far. You had pushed me too far. Thud, the sound of your body when it drops to the floor, splattering the pool of crimson red everywhere. Empty, lifeless, just the way you use to make me feel.



DEATH EGG ZONE



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