

—VIEWPOINTS

Stony Brook at the Crossroads

By Joe Bollhofer

As a graduating senior, I would like to mention some issues and facts about the University that might be of interest to returning students, especially those who are dissatisfied with life here.

Most of those who complain about academic and residential life here have legitimate gripes. There is still much to be done before Stony Brook can rank, all around, with the best. Almost any aspect of this school can be improved. Fortunately, many are on the way. Unfortunately, we are here at a time when trial and error changes are occurring and causing inconveniences.

The management of the Department of Public Safety is an excellent example. Since moving onto campus, I have come into contact with Public Safety officers on several occasions. Most of these have involved their absurdly inconsistent and arbitrary ticketing practices. They have made news recently with attacks upon women and other atrocities. These are the men that are selected to protect us? When I read recently that an officer was fired for something and it was learned that he had a prior criminal record, I couldn't believe it. Doesn't somebody check first? I have come to realize that some of these men are of somewhat less than upstanding moral calibre. If the issue of handing them guns ever comes up again, don't let it happen.

The housing situation is another good example of something that needs much improvement — it is pitiful. Determining whether a student receives housing on the basis of how close he or she lives to campus is necessary, sad but true. More dorms need to be built. But if the undergraduate resident population grew to 8,000 or 9,000 from the 6,300 at present, the inadequacies we deal with now, such as a small gym, long lines, insufficient parking and sparse public protection, would be magnified. Clearly, these and other resident services must be improved before the resident population can be allowed to grow.

There are other smaller things wrong with this school, such as short library hours, administration decisions like the recent craziness of paying room deposits on one day and not being able to register for



engineering courses unless you have that major, teaching assistants that don't speak English, the library elevators (we should all get three credits for that ordeal) and dorm dressers that require you to open the bottom drawer and work your way up (who the hell designed them?).

I feel, though, that more things are going right than ever before. I'd like to think that many are due to our new University president. His town meetings and allocation of \$25,000 for social/recreational use in the dorms are steps in the right direction. Those of you who remember John Marburger's predecessor, John Toll, are probably as thankful as I that he left. Remember

the hearty laughter shared by students and faculty alike when he was hit in the face with a pie at the dedication of the bridge from the Stony Brook Union to the Library? That single act seemed to be the embodiment of much pent-up frustration with an unresponsive president. Unlike Toll, Marburger seems to care about people. He appears optimistic aimed at improvement.

There are many signs of improvement around campus that newcomers might not be aware of. The buses run on better schedules. Campus lighting has improved. The campus has finally been landscaped

and, although many shrubs and trees won't be of adequate size for a few years and there is too much blacktop in the central mall (I'm waiting for them to put in street signs and turning lanes), we can finally be sure that we won't have to contend with "mud city." Bus shelters have been built, the one in South P-Lot finally becoming more than sheets of tin that were down more than they were up. The latest improvements include bright paintings on the bus shelters and at various spots on campus and, at long last, a real commuter center. This center is crucial to the quality of commuter life and I don't think that many people realize just how important a part it will play in making commuters feel involved and welcome. It makes the basement of Gray College look sick. (No offense to Gray.) I just wish that had happened four years earlier. Congratulations to those who pushed for it.

Stony Brook is on its way toward becoming one of the most well-respected universities in the country. The Hospital and Health Sciences Center will do wonders to advance Stony Brook's reputation. Many say that the Fine Arts Center is destined to become the cultural center of Long Island. With the growth of Social Sciences and Humanities has come concern for people and a decline in the acquiescence that seemed to permeate this place four years ago. Large turnouts for events other than parties such as for speakers like G. Gordon Liddy and Barry Commoner indicate that indifference is no longer the popular sport. New organizations and clubs have established themselves. The management and quality of news writing in Statesman and The Stony Brook Press has never been better. Few people understand that both news sources are necessary and are as different in their respective purposes as are WUSB and Fortnight.

While a publication such as Statesman is essential to an informed community for its wide, on-the-spot coverage, so too the Press is needed for in-depth, investigative reporting to get the story behind the story. As one wise editor once said, the Press is a complement to Statesman, not a supplement. When these and other news sources work together with groups such as the New York Public Interest Research Group (NIPIRG), stories of great relevance will be uncovered. As college students, we are in the unique position of having resources available to us (namely, a learned faculty and a communications network) and of being able to afford to uncover and speak out against injustices (chemical contamination of Long Island's groundwater is an excellent example) without the fear of losing our jobs.

The present student body, faculty and administration are at the birth of a well-respected reputation for this university. Stony Brook may be 20 or so years old, but this is the real beginning. The construction has been virtually completed. This is what there is to work with to form a cohesive University community. The man in the president's office seems to care. That is the key. Whatever transpires in the next several years will set the tone for the future. Returning students owe it to themselves and to the University to utilize and develop their talents in writing, thinking and all other efforts by getting involved with campus publications and organizations to keep things going in the positive vein that they have just recently taken. As Ralph Nader said recently to a NYPIRG convention at the Spring Conference in Albany, "The only time success comes before the work is in the dictionary."
(The writer is a senior Social Sciences major.)

CCARP: Outrageous Claims

By Julie Gerstomb

I am outraged by the full page ad that the Campus Committee for Assault and Rape Prevention (CCARP) had in Statesman's April 24 issue in the form of a letter to University President John Marburger and the campus community. I am a female member of the campus community and a member of the Womyn's Center, although I write this as an individual responding to CCARP's report and my views are not necessarily agreed with by other members of the Womyn's Center.

What outrages me is the two sentences on the rape survivor's hotline in which CCARP claims to have cooperated in the establishment of the Rape Survivor's Hotline, which is supposedly opening this semester. Well, let me say to CRAP (oh, excuse me, I mean CCARP) that if they did in fact cooperate at this particularly crucial time, then perhaps we will have this vitally necessary service. Is CCARP aware that two women from the Hotline Collective have recently broken every rule of the organization and on personal opinions (of two women against 20 have gone against even a mandate from the office of the vice-president of Student Affairs and kept the Hotline from opening)?

Is CCARP aware that four women were assaulted in showers in Stage XII D in the past two semesters? Some students believe the assaulter is either a legal resident of the Stage XII complex or that he just "crashes" there. I am a former resident of Stage XII C and I can verify that strangers, even non-students, often find rooms, lounges or other places to crash in. A friend of mine who lives in Stage XII D told me that the women have billy clubs and are supposed to go to the bathroom in twos. Before CCARP has the gall to publish another statement about what they are doing, I demand to know what is being done by CCARP about the crisis in Stage D.

Another thing which disturbs me about CCARP's mistaken bid for praise is their citing the Department

of Public Safety as a member of their committee. Since the recent publication of information about the members of the department — such as accusations of sexual harassment against members of the department; the recent discovery of one officer with a woman in a room in Tabler Quad by the RHD and the alleged subsequent bullying of the RHD by this and other officers in the department; as well as the fact that these officers have no credential check done on them — I wonder if campus security should be involved at all in any attempt to secure bodily safety for women on campus. What does CCARP have to say about this? I want to see some women hired for security — women with credentials like judo, a gun license and rape awareness training. Then maybe we would see some action in a case like Stage XII D. I don't think the current security force gives a damn except maybe Jeanette Hotmer.

Last but not least I am outraged that CCARP had nothing more to say about the Rape Survivor Hotline than that CCARP helped establish it. All the lofty members of CCARP together haven't matched one-millionth of the sweat and toil of even one member of the Hotline staff in the organization of this grass roots service. If there is one page on what CCARP has done to remedy the problem of assault and rape of women on campus, then there must be 10 whole issues on what the members of the Hotline staff have been doing for the past two years to get this service established. CCARP can fund this since they apparently have so much money to throw around.

Why don't you give the Womyn's Center a call, CCARP, and find out what you could really do to cooperate to get the Rape Survivor's Hotline going.
(The writer is a senior biochemistry major and member of the Womyn's Center, although this viewpoint does not necessarily represent the views of other members of the center.)