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March 9, 2006

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Terrorist Group Set to Lead Palestinian Government

By Joan Leong

After sweeping the January elections, the Hamas militant organization won over 70 out of the 132 available seats on the Palestinian Legislative Council. The European Union and the United States State Department still currently recognize the Hamas party as a terrorist organization. With Israel imposing sanctions and many other Western nations refusing to deal with terrorists, the Hamas party has many challenges facing them. On February 21st, the Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas officially asked Hamas to start drawing up the plans for the new government. Ismail Haniya is the Prime Minister-elect for the Hamas party and is expected to lead them. Haniya is hopeful that the plans will be finishing up within two weeks and has stated that Iran will play an increasing role in Palestinian politics. Haniya is working alongside Hamas' top leader, Khaled Meshal, who is still hell-bent on the withdrawal of Israel from Palestine. Meshal is an exile and is currently in talks with Iran, which is the Hamas party's biggest open supporter. "Talking to Israel is a waste of time as long as there is no talk about withdrawing from Palestine," states Meshal.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called on the Hamas party to renounce their violent party platform and recognize Israel, but went unanswered as they refused to change anything. Palestinian President Abbas warned the militant group not to ignore previous agreements with Israel, but so far the group has shown little interest in upholding any ties with Israel. President Abbas, however, also warned Israel against making any unilateral moves against the Palestinian people. He



Two party systems work great!
Courtesy of the other guys' corruption

asked that the people of Palestine not be harmed because "they expressed their choice democratically through the ballot box." More fuel is placed on the fiery fight as Israel is expected to invoke economic sanctions, bar Palestinian workers from Israel, and seal up its last remaining borders along the Gaza Strip. Radical leader Meshal isn't worried as he asks the Muslim community to continue to

fund the Hamas party, even if the West refuses to do so. "If the West does not provide economic aid to Palestine, it can get the support from the Arab and Islamic countries," Mr. Meshal said.

Israel is not making idle threats, and Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has a "three walls" plan in dealing with the militant organization. The first involves Israel's West Bank border barrier, political efforts to hinder the Hamas Party from being legitimately accepted internationally, and halting funding from other nations to the Hamas Party. Syria, Lebanon, and Iran are only a few nations openly recognizing the military group; however, recently, much to Israel's dismay, other nations have extended invitations to the group. Russia is under much critical opposition after inviting Hamas leaders to Moscow to discuss the current state of affairs. The meeting was only a friendly talk asking the party to renounce its violent ways and to recognize Israel's right to exist and isn't expected to make a dramatic change in the Palestinian-Israel conflict. However, the move by Russia was a slap in Israel's face for befriending a terrorist organization sworn to destroy them. In defense, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated, "the group has come to power through democratic and legitimate elections, and there's a need to respect the Palestinian people's choice." Many Israelis and Russians alike are extremely angry at the Russian's diplomatic move. The President of the Russian Holocaust Foundation, Alla Gerber, has considered this move as being the equivalent of embracing

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Intelligence Agencies Take Back Reclassified Documents

By Alex Walsh

Sam Fisher, kicking terrorists and taking hostages,
Courtesy of Alex Walsh



An American intelligence document, published twelve days before the Chinese army entered the Korean War, stated, "full scale Chinese Communist intervention in Korea ... is not probable in 1950." That document was later declassified and released to Matthew Aid of the National Security Archive, an organization at George Washington University that makes declassified government documents available to the public. In October 2001, the document was reclassified as part of a review of information released to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

This review, performed by a group of government agencies including the CIA and every branch of the military, has resulted in over 55,000 pages of documents pulled from the shelves of NARA's libraries. Some of these had already been published in the State Department's historical series *Foreign Relations of the United States*. Some, such as the Korean War document, seem to have been pulled for no reason other than to cover up the government's mistakes. For a few, no clear reason can be seen at all. For example, one of the reclassified documents was a 1962 telegram from the ambassador to Yugoslavia containing a translated Belgrade newspaper article about China's nuclear program.

The re-classification program has been operating in secret since 1999, accelerating under the Bush administration, but was not noticed by the public until December 2005. It is a response to an executive order from the Clinton administration concerning Classified National Security Information which required all historical documents more than 25 years old, except those that fell into certain exempt categories, to be declassified. The CIA and other intelligence organizations resisted this order to the point that Secretary of State Madeline Albright said the record of foreign relations was in danger of becoming "an official lie." Later, the CIA, the four military services, the Defense Department, and the Department of Justice submitted a letter to NARA claiming that some of their documents had been mistakenly declassified. Fifty-five boxes of files were removed from the NARA archives for review. From these boxes, 1,400 documents were removed to be reclassified. In addition, the boxes themselves were not returned to the archives, so even the non-classified information within is now unavailable to the public.

Carried out by subterfuge (officials performing the review for the intelligence agencies marked boxes with labels claiming they were being reviewed under a NARA directive), outlined in a secret memo which officials refuse to comment on, and lacking any Congressional approval, the program spread from the NARA archives to remove

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Music for Peace Festival Coming Soon

By Dawn Chambers

Consider, if you will, your favorite piece of music. How long do you think it took all the people involved to create it – the composers, the performers, the engineers, the marketers, the audience? It's an astonishing feat of cooperation that we barely consider. Music people work together, regardless of personal differences, they all contribute to a whole product, and that product can make a lot of people very happy.

After the horrors of 9/11, a group of music students right here at Stony Brook decided to use the model of musical cooperation as the basis for the Musicians' Alliance for Peace (MAP). At first they played benefit concerts for community organizations, such as September Eleventh Families for Peaceful Tomorrows; they are still active in this area and have held benefits for the many disasters of 2005. By February 2004, MAP had organized the Music for Peace (M4P) project, a local and global series of concerts, lectures, art, dance and ideas.

From March 28th through April 2nd, the Stony Brook community will be invited to join in the Music for Peace Project 2006. All events are free and are on the Stony Brook campus. We have piano music and cello music, South African jazz and Columbian dance music, hillbilly music and music for meditation. We have South Indian dance, Filipino dance, and Korean drumming. We have yoga and art and panel discussions and food. We have Winona LaDuke, Native American activist, author, and former vice-presidential candidate, for our keynote speaker (see below for a schedule). Meanwhile, performers and peace-lovers from all over the world are being

invited to dedicate their events to peace during the same six days. Last year saw 185 concerts in 26 countries over a weekend – perhaps this year that number can be trebled.

Whether you like classical piano, yoga, jazz, or just a good party, there's an M4P event for you just around the corner. Check out www.M4P.org for details. If you know anyone anywhere in the world who might like to dedicate a concert, a performance, a ceremony, or any other event, have him or her put it on our free calendar; go to the homepage and click on "join". If you would like to volunteer to assist at information tables, distribute fliers, serve food, or be in a parade, email the contact person below. Above all, come to a Music for Peace event and enjoy yourself.



Last year's Music For Peace Parade
Courtesy of www.mapi.org

See More Anti-war Coverage on Page 7

Winona LaDuke. Native American and Former Vice-Presidential Candidate, to Speak at Wang Center

By Dawn Chambers

Musicians' Alliance for Peace is very proud to announce that Winona LaDuke, internationally acclaimed author and campaigner for the environment, will be their keynote speaker for the 2006 Music for Peace Project. Ms. LaDuke will be speaking at the Wang Center Theater at 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 1st.



The title of her speech, "Environmental Justice: Ecology and Diversity," reflects her long-standing concern for Native rights and for the environment. This concern, rather than partisan politics, was her platform as vice-presidential candidate for the Green Party in 1996 and 2000. Her proactive solutions to environmental and social justice issues have earned her the Thomas Merton award, the Ann Bancroft Award for Women's Leadership fellowship, the BIHA Community Service Award, Ms. Magazine's Woman of the Year, Time Magazine's nomination as one of fifty most promising young leaders, and the Reebok Human Rights Award. With the money from the Reebok award, Ms. LaDuke began the White Earth Land Recovery Project (www.nativeharvest.com), a grassroots organization that buys back land and secures sustainable employment for the White Earth reservations, where she lives with her three children. Ms. LaDuke also co-chairs the Indigenous Women's Network and is Program Director of the Honor the

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MUSIC FOR PEACE PROJECT 2006; SCHEDULE OF EVENTS Contact magdawnc@care2.com for more details
Open mike events and parades TBA

Tuesday, March 28, 2006	Wednesday, March 29, 2006	Thursday, March 30, 2006	Friday, March 31, 2006	Saturday, April 1, 2006	Sunday, April 2, 2006
The Piano Project Staller Center Recital Hall 12 noon The Piano Project: concert 1 4 pm The Piano Project: concert 2 8 pm The Piano Project: concert 3	4 pm Concert/program: Bakithi Kumalo and the South African All-Stars present "Set it Free: A Journey Through Apartheid" University Café 8 pm Concert: The Musicians' Alliance for Peace: an eclectic concert by members of the Musicians' Alliance for Peace Staller Center Recital Hall	4 pm Art opening: A Mantra for Peace (international art exhibit) Music for Peace Festival Reception Wang Center 8 pm Concert: The Stony Brook Contemporary Chamber Players Staller Center Recital Hall 9:30 pm Concert: JAM night, featuring Hi Red Center and Charlene, Adam and Tim's band Tabler Arts Center	12 noon Concert: Kent Gustavson and Gabe Shuford of Stolen Shack Appalachian Bluegrass Baroque Jazz University Café 4 pm Concert: Colin Carr, cello with Thomas Sauer, piano Sonatas by Profkofieff, Beethoven, and Chopin Staller Center Recital Hall 8 pm Concert: Ray Anderson and Friends Charles B. Wang Center Theatre	10 am Meditation instruction with Karen Porterfield Wang Center Chapel 1 pm Speaker: Winona LaDuke, Environmental Justice: Ecology and Diversity Wang Center Theatre 4 pm Sacred Space concert Wang Center Theatre 8 pm Dance concert: Sativasur and Folklore Urbano Columbian Jazz Tabler Arts Center	12 noon Meditations for Peace concert Wang Center Chapel

The Music for Peace Project: Stony Brook sponsors include: The Musicians' Alliance for Peace, The Charles B. Wang Center, The Department of Music, The University Cafe, The Graduate Student Organization, The Graduate School, Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action, College of Arts and Sciences, The Office of Student Affairs, Undergraduate Student Government, Office of the President, NYPIRG, The Humanities Institute, The Office of the Provost, The Latin American and Caribbean Studies Center, Undergraduate College of Leadership and Development, The Social Justice Alliance, The Department of Africana Studies, The Program in Women's Studies, Catholic Campus Ministry.

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Chalking is Part of Campus Life, Bitch.

When we at *The Stony Brook Press* were advertising for our Open House recruiting event earlier this semester, we wrote a message to you, our fellow students, on the ground with sidewalk chalk. The university administration, after weighing the terrible possibility that Stony Brook may never again see a light rain or snowfall, swiftly dispatched a cleanup crew so that someone (with poor taste) would be satisfied with the way the grounds looked. And then, to compensate for that work, the Department of Student Union and Activities sent us a bill for \$25. Bullshit. We're not going to pay.

Chalking is reasonable and commonplace. It's a longstanding, widespread, traditional method of communication on many campuses. It's established student culture.

The university publishes a policy that anyone chalking will be prosecuted for vandalism. This is insane. The administration would never expose themselves as so draconian, and they wouldn't insult a judge by trying to argue in court that sidewalk chalk damages the sidewalk. The university threatens to prosecute you to intimidate and harass you. It's like when a cop tells you about the six other tickets he *could* give you, so when he gives you one ticket, you thank him, even though the accused speed he wrote on that ticket doesn't even match the radar gun he just showed you.

We expect the university administration to treat the students with respect. This kind of bullying is unacceptable.

The administration was quick to point out that *The Stony Brook Press* does not own the grounds of the university. No, of course not. But who does? Not the Department of Student Union and Activities, and not University President Shirley Strum Kenny. The people of New York own this university. People like, oh, I don't know, you and . And what did the people decide to do with it? We decided to build a college here. Did we go to the tremendous expense of constructing this college so we could have immaculate landscapes to photograph for a glossy college prospectus? Absolutely not; we built this school to teach; its reason for existence is the development of students.

Part of the university's job is to produce graduates who are ready to engage in public life off campus, not just workplace cogs, but citizens active in civic associations and democratic self-government. The university's priorities are wrong if their idea of how the concrete looks trumps real values of community.

Stony Brook student life is in crisis: documented student unhappiness (nearly unmatched nationwide), plainly apparent apathy and ghost-town weekends represent a failure of the mission of the university. Dumping unwanted programming on the students from above won't solve the problem. The only solution is to untie the hands of the students. We need to radically reshape the rules about promoting events, the amount of advance notice and paper-

work required for reserving space, the overkill security requirements for concerts, the limits on with which vendors, and how often, student groups can spend their money — two reimbursements a semester, is that supposed to be a joke? — and so on.

Taken together, these policies, however well-intentioned, combine to a "death by a thousand papercuts" to meaningful student activities. They aggregate to an oppressive system that interrupts, in real practice, the First Amendment rights of students to free association and free speech.

Ignoring the student life crisis to take campus beautification to needless extremes reminds us of critics of President Kenny who have described her administration as obsessively focused on public relations while the university rots from the inside out. Look at the state of the public sphere in the US today. The rates of participation in our elections, especially among younger adults, are a national disgrace. And what does the administration worry about? Aesthetics?

The bills for cleaning up chalking, like the one the Department of Student Union and Activities sent the *Press*, are meant to be prohibitive. The admitted purpose is to prevent people from chalking the campus. The administration feels that, without this check, hundreds of events programmers would cover the grounds with chalk. This dramatized slippery slope doesn't move the *Press*. The administration is afraid widespread chalking would be visually anarchic. Instead, we would see it as evidence of a robust democratic culture on campus, and an exciting and inviting student life of which we'd like to be a part.

One administrator described a "doomsday" scenario to the *Press*, in which twenty-five chalk messages in front of the Student Union would distract attention from the new School of Thought Walkway, meaning that all the money spent on that project was wasted. The administration ran a contest soliciting student designs for that walkway, and picked a winner. Then they threw out the winning design and instead paid a professional to redesign the walkway. Using the student design would have not only significantly reduced the expense of the project, more importantly it would have represented at least one whisper of student participation in shaping the space in which we live. Bad example, guys.

The suggestion that the entire campus' appearance would suffer a deathblow from ubiquitous chalking, while surviving the construction we see everywhere, rings hollow. And what about the ugly lightpost banners that remind us of Rudy Giuliani's whitewashed police state? Why does the administration think it is their place to decide what is and isn't an attractive campus?

Jef Raskin, who graduated from Stony Brook in 1964 and went on to help create the Apple Macintosh, said, "The hierarchy of a school is this: it is all there for the benefit of the student, who is therefore in command and

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More Editorialin' Read On, *Now*.

may demand of it what she or he will in pursuit of learning. The faculty and the libraries are the direct servants of the student, and the administration is at the bottom of the hierarchy, merely serving to deal with the necessary financial and physical resources so that the faculty is not distracted from paying attention to its masters, the students." Simply put, we the students are the main reason why this university exists, and should, with the faculty, be the masters of the university. Don't forget, we also form the overwhelming majority of the university community, in spite of the dramatic increase in the number of administrators during President Kenny's tenure.

So what do we do about the chalking policy? Do we seize the administration building in protest or give ourselves up to rampant lawlessness? The *Press* is looking to the Undergraduate Student Government to navigate the university bureaucracy and promptly eliminate the rule against chalking.

The question of formal systems is always this: will this institution bring us justice, or is it a hamster's wheel designed to waste our passions and energy while we go nowhere? The administration's argument in the chalking dispute is particularly fee-

ble, and so this seems like a good way to test how well the mechanism of taking our problems to the student government works.

Decades ago, when students were engaged as a vital part of the US community, impacting the national conversation on issues like civil rights and the war in Vietnam, Stony Brook was the first school in New York to establish an autonomous student government, independent of the university. That government, the Student Polity Association, was a student government built entirely by and for the students. It fought for the students, on campus and off; for example, Polity was part of the historic struggle to win us the right to vote here in Suffolk County. What else did they do? Who knows. The administration refused to give Polity records to the archivists in the library. Three years ago, President Kenny decided it was her place to dissolve that government, and replace it with one more to her taste. Many of our peers who serve in Kenny's USG are once again asking for our vote. Let's see what they can do for us. And let's see what the formal process, the one the administration points us to when we have a dispute, can do.

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Perhaps it is the beginning of the end for Camp X-Ray.

Following the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, the United States established a military detention center at its naval base at Guantanamo Bay in January 2002. During this time, the Americans were still rallying around the flag in droves and our patriotic bumper stickers had not begun to fade. Guantanamo Bay was hailed as a victory by the Bush Administration, proclaiming that the actions in Afghanistan had all but eliminated the Taliban along with their cohorts, the leaders of al-Qaeda. The prisoners that were sent to Guantanamo were characterized as the most villainous haters of freedom that came from all over the Muslim world to fight for a regime which plotted constantly on how to destroy the powers of globalization. To all but the most compassionate liberals, that last statement is not hyperbole. Afghanistan became flooded with madrass-indoctrinated warriors, who left everything and nothing behind in order to defend the Taliban.

If, perhaps, the Bush Administration was categorically wrong on, at least some of, the analysis of these prisoners, it would be easier to propose the elimination at Camp X-Ray along with an unknown amount of other detention facilities overseas. President Bush has labeled these prisoners enemy combatants, rather than prisoners of war, thus denying the privilege of having the protection of the Geneva Accords. To his credit, Bush was correct in denying them the Geneva provisions. Doing so would dishonor every soldier, in any country, from the protection that is due upon them in exchange for service. President Bush made it clear that these were enemy combatants, who did not follow the rules of war and would not distinguish military targets from civilian targets at home or abroad. As these fighters were also stateless, proclaiming allegiance to militant Islam, rather than an accountable country, President Bush was forced into a difficult situation. On one hand, he was unable to release the prisoners and, on the other, there was no legal ground upon which he could justifiably detain them.

As President Bush is wont to do, he acted unilaterally and detained the prisoners wholly within the Executive Branch, that is, under military security. Initially, all but those with the most acute understanding of Human Rights raised protest regarding the status of the enemy combatants. These voices, though, were but a faint din in the celebrations of victory. The judicial concerns of the Presidents actions could be dealt with later; the

national concern was for the President to have a free hand in securing America from future terrorist attacks against the United States.

Today, more than four years after X-Ray's establishment, the United States has not ended the War on Terrorism; rather, it has expanded into a military operation, which is known as the Long War according to Pentagon officials. In such a scenario, there is no conceivable end in this military campaign, for the reach of international Islamic terrorism is world-wide with a supportive base ranging from the Mediterranean, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Such

"I am absolutely clear that the US has no intention of maintaining a Gulag in Guantanamo Bay. They want to see the situation resolved and they would like it other than it is. However, that is the situation that they have."

-Jack Straw, British Foreign Secretary, February 21, 2006

a war, if carried through to its end, could last for more than a generation if our last Long War, the Cold War, provides us with any insight.

As this war has expanded from Afghanistan into Iraq, we can also expect it to expand, in form, into the Horn of Africa, Syria, pockets of Indonesia, and any other country which may, in the future, defy our cooperation. In such a situation, it would be expected that poor and ignorant Muslims living in an urban slum or amongst tribal village leaders, will seek existential vilification fighting under the banner of anti-Imperialism. Without a justifiable solution to these enemy-combatants, the number of detention camps will continue to grow and will no longer be considered an anomaly in a government system where the rule of law cannot be broken by the will of men. Such a situation is not inconceivable now as the public has learned not only of Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, and elusive CIA "black sites", but, as *The New York Times* reported on February 26th, that another military camp, similar to X-Ray, existed at Bagram Air Force Base outside of Kabul, Afghanistan.

It would be optimistic to hope that President Bush will acknowledge any wrongdoing in the handling of the prisoners, as he has yet to admit mistakes which are trivial in comparison to Guantanamo. It is also unlikely that Congress will pass legislation on this issue, unless, come November, the Democratic Party wins sweeping landslides in both Houses. For this reason, the only

viable option that these prisoners, who have been held incommunicado, have is the judiciary system. Unfortunately, the courts are structured to be reactionary and changes through them are often slow and incremental. Recently, though, court decisions and international scrutiny has pressured the Bush Administration to act according to the traditional norms of human rights.

Journalism, led by investigation and divulged secrets, has also played a hand in forcing the President to act in light of public knowledge. Rumors of hunger strikes at Guantanamo Bay were reported and later acknowledged by the military. Human rights groups, such as Amnesty International, among others, criticized the military's response to the hunger strikes, in which the hunger strikers were placed in restraint chairs and feeding tubes were inserted through their nostrils and fed into the stomach; such actions are reported as causing severe pain as the food enters stomach. The former Chief Medical Officer at the base reported the story to *The New York Times* with a more positive spin on it—the staff was "providing nutritional supplementation on a voluntary basis to detainees who wish to protest their confinement by not taking oral nourishment". It is up to the reader to determine whether this justification actually justifies.

Abroad, the US's allies in the war on terrorism have also commented on the indefinite legal status of the prisoners. British Prime Minister Tony Blair has called Camp X-Ray an anomaly in the American legal system. Mr. Blair's Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, referred to the situation as a Gulag when he stated, "I am absolutely clear that the US has no intention of maintaining a Gulag in Guantanamo Bay. They want to see the situation resolved...."

Domestically, the case for the prisoners is improving slightly. On Friday, March 3rd, the Pentagon released the names, countries of origin, and interrogational transcripts of nearly 317 of the 490 prisoners at Guantanamo, by order of a US District Court ruling brought on by the Associated Press citing the Freedom of Information Act. In response to these actions, a spokesman for Amnesty International, the human rights watchdog, said "This is extremely important information, we've been asking ever since the camp opened for a list of everyone there as one of the most basic first steps for any detaining authority." Although these are only first steps, they can be important in that they may serve as the wedge which will open the cracks in President Bush's doctrine that complete Executive control of the prison is essential for the war on terror.

Author's Note: The case for Human Rights at Guantanamo Bay or any other region of the world can be discussed at the Stony Brook chapter of Amnesty International on Wednesday's in SAC 311 at 7:00PM. For more information please contact amnesty@ic.sunysb.edu or amnestyusa.org.



Stony Brook

► Social Justice Alliance ◀

For Global Justice and Human Rights

Mondays 5:00 pm SAC Third Floor Lobby

Abortion is a Moral Dilemma

By Maddi Scheckter

Reclassified Continued...

By Alex Walsh

Continued from page 2

documents from Presidential libraries.

Secrecy in government documents is a rising trend. According to Lee Hamilton, a former Congressman and current head of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, in 1994, there were 4 million national security classification decisions made, increasing to 15 million in 2003. 100 million pages of documents were declassified in 2001, as opposed to only 28 million in 2004. Responses to Freedom of Information Act requests generally take far longer than the legally required 20 days, and are often denied. Hamilton, who worked on the government's 9/11 Commission, said in an article for the *Christian Science Monitor*, "Several senior officials have estimated that 50 percent of classified information does not need to remain secret."

The program was revealed in December when Aid noticed that several documents he had copied years ago had gone missing from the National Archives. After he and several other historians complained, Allen Weinstein, the nation's chief archivist, directed the re-classification program to halt their activities while the Information Security Oversight Office audits the pulled documents. The ISOO audit is intended to determine whether all of the information hidden in the program, which was scheduled to continue until 2007, really needs to be kept secret. Many of the writings are still publicly available in non-NARA archives, and Aid has made 18 of the pieces he owns available on the National Security Archive website. Some historians are concerned that their possession of the now-classified documents makes them subject to prosecution under the Espionage Act.

Weinstein has scheduled a meeting with representatives of the intelligence and military organizations to discuss the future of the program and his office's audit. He assured concerned historians that if the re-classification was not halted permanently, it would at least "be guided by better standards and it will be more transparent."

On February 21st, the Supreme Court decided it would revisit the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003. The Act was passed, but never put into effect because New York, California, and Nebraska declared it unconstitutional. Furthermore, the Act does not ban abortion after a certain time period; it is only concerned with the method by which it is done. The federal law has no health exception clause, because according to law-making defenders it is "never medically necessary" to perform PBA to protect a woman's health (emphasis mine). Never is an interesting word here, because medical professionals, also known as the people who know what is medically necessary for protecting people's health, disagree; they claim that PBA is, in fact, sometimes the best method for performing a late-term abortion.

Why this discrepancy? Probably part of it has to do with the fact that partial-birth abortion is not pretty. It is a gruesome procedure involving pulling the fetus into the birth canal and puncturing the skull. It sounds like something out of a gore flick from the '70s (the sort that gets banned in over 30 countries), and it's nice to believe it is never necessary because it isn't pleasant to imagine a world in which it is. In many cases, however, when there is reason enough for getting an abortion after the first trimester, PBA is, in fact, the safest, least-invasive method. In many cases, it is done because it is the method most likely not to interfere with fertility.

Although the Supreme Court's decision has caused a lot of alarm among women's rights defenders, the deci-

sion in and of itself should not. What is surprising is that they did not decide to review the Act earlier, since it is protocol to review federal acts that are found unconstitutional by state judiciary. What is alarming, however, is the new make-up of the Supreme Court; with Sandra Day O'Connor gone, it could very well decide to re-instate the act. This would be a blow to the women's movement and could threaten the future of abortion rights. Banning partial birth abortion, which, by the way, is a term invented by politicians and not actually used by any medical professionals, would just be one step to overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

When it comes to abortion legislation, it is important to remember that abortion is a moral dilemma. Because it cannot be medically determined when life begins, and there is a separation of Church and State in this country, issues like abortion must be considered personal. With any political issue that is based on interpreting morals through the law, it is important to remember that black and white areas on either end do not disprove the gray areas in the middle.



Give Peace a Chance

THREE YEARS TOO MANY!

A week of anti-war actions marking the third anniversary of the illegitimate invasion of Iraq

<p>4:00 pm Tuesday 14 March Wang Center Auditorium</p> <p>Meeting Face to Face: The Iraq-US Labor Solidarity Tour, Stony Brook Premier</p> <p>27 minute film and discussion with the filmmakers, including producer and SBU Prof. Michael Zweig</p>	<p>12:50 pm Wednesday 15 March Academic Mall by Melville Library</p> <p>End the Occupation Petition Kick-Off</p> <p>Join SJA in collecting signatures on petition cards against the war to be delivered to Rep. Bishop and Sens. Clinton and Schumer</p>	<p>6:30 pm Thursday, March 16 Academic Mall by the SAC</p> <p>Candelight Vigil for the War Dead</p>	<p>11:00 am Saturday, March 18 King Kullen on Rt. 25A Setauket</p> <p>North Country Peace Group March With Vigil, Music and Speakers</p> <p>Local peace groups' event. Speakers include WUSB's Bill McNulty, a former <i>Press</i> "Person of the Year"</p>
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Organized on campus by the Social Justice Alliance, answering a national call by United for Peace & Justice

Winona Laduke

Continued...

By Dawn Chaser

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Earth fund. Through her work with Honor the Earth she has traveled with many musicians, among them the Indigo Girls, to spread the message of respect and caring for our planet and its inhabitants.

Ms. LaDuke, who is an Anishinaabekwe (Ojibwe) enrolled member of the Mississippi Band Anishinaabeg, is a vibrant and inspiring speaker and a true exponent of peaceful and respectful solutions to conflict. You are cordially invited to come to this free event.

For information about this and other Music for Peace events, email magdawnc@care2.com.

By Rob Pearsall

The current state of Iraq is still tumultuous. An article appearing on BBC.com declared that “in cities such as Baghdad virtually every single adult male has a gun.” Explosions rocked Baghdad on Tuesday, the 28th. The series of bombings killed 57 people and wounded 170 more, as reported by *The New York Times*. The first was a car bomb in central Baghdad. The second was a car bomb in a crowd in eastern Baghdad. A suicide bomber blew himself up in front of a gas station where people had gathered to buy kerosene.



Soldiers in Iraq
Courtesy of Tim Hoffman at CMU!

Insurgents launched mortar fire into the town of Doura on Sunday killing at least 16 Iraqis. The area was attacked earlier in the week by a car bomb that killed 11 people. Two US soldiers died in a roadside bombing on Sunday and two UK soldiers died in a roadside bombing in southern Iraq on Tuesday.

Despite a curfew in place in Baghdad from 10pm to 6am, the streets are still unsafe. The curfew did bring a relative calm but the bombings on Tuesday brought an end to that. Killings in response to an attack on a Shiite shrine in Samarra on the 22nd continue. The city morgue officials put the toll at 379 with 246 of them being in Baghdad.

President Bush said in a press meeting that the Iraqi people have a choice between chaos and unity. President Bush also has a choice. The public opinion in America that invading Iraq was a mis-

take is shared by more than just the American people. A poll, conducted by the GlobeScan research firm across 35 countries, showed an international concern that the threat of terrorism has increased, that removing Saddam was a mistake, and that a slim majority thinks the troops should stay in Iraq. In Iraq, the opinion on troops staying or not is split with 49% favoring an early withdrawal. Nearly all Iraqis support the removal of Saddam Hussein.

Also in Iraq, political leaders are working to end the sectarian violence. Efforts like the one made by Sunni clerics and Shia militias provide hope for a peaceful Iraq. There is a fear of civil war erupting in Iraq. John D. Negroponte, the director of National Intelligence demarcated the benchmark for civil war in Iraq as a total loss of central government security control, the disintegration of the central government or unauthorized militias gaining

the “upper hand.” In the event of a civil war, Negroponte declared that Saudia Arabia and Iran taking sides was a “possibility.”

What’s done is done and foreign troops are on Iraqi soil. The Iraqi government has taken steps toward controlling uprisings and the insurgency but as long as there are troops, there will be fighting. I think we need more than a Strategy for Victory in Iraq. We need something more definitive but our president continues to use vague wording and ideals to speak about the situation. It’s great that heads of religious groups in Iraq are taking steps toward a more cohesive nation.

Public opinion polls are always inaccurate, but they are a good gauge of general interest. It’s comforting to this writer that Americans are not the only dissenters of the war in Iraq. I don’t know if Bush will go down as the worst president in U.S. history but he will be one of the most ignorant. Bush has ignored voices like Cindy Sheehan here in America and he’s going to ignore the voices of the rest of the world’s nations. He did when he entered Iraq and he’s ignoring them now as Iraq falls into disarray.

Sources for this article include articles from *The New York Times* and the *BBC News*.

The US Congress Still Has Not Recognized the Armenian Genocide



On March 1, the College of Human Development hosted a program called “Human Rights: Why Should You Care?” Two undergraduate students, one graduate student and a faculty member introduced issues concerning human rights historically and in the present. The term ‘human rights’ was coined at the end of World War II once the world was made aware of the atrocities that occurred in the Nazi concentration camps throughout Europe. The idea of human rights did not originate with World War II; historically the idea of universal rights and natural rights had been speculated upon by a number of philosophers and thinkers.

The first speaker of the program, Francisco Borja, emphasized the idea of natural (human) rights as proposed by John Locke and Thomas

included a history of the Armenian people and the persecution that they suffered during the Armenian genocide that lasted from 1914 until 1918. In an effort to rid the Ottoman Empire of ‘infidels’, the government implemented actions much like the ones that we are familiar with from the occupation of the Nazis in Europe. The only difference was that the Armenian people were Christian, not Jewish. Many people in the audience did not raise their hand when Arin asked if they had heard of the Armenian genocide. This was an important presentation because it proves that often times, people’s human rights are violated without anyone knowing about it.

Chad Kautzer, of the Philosophy Department and Social Justice Alliance, spoke about the importance of action in the fight for

You Should Give a Damn About Your Fellow (Wo)Man

By Jena Annise Harris

Hobbes. The right to life and the right to freedom as introduced by these two philosophers provided the starting point for many of the constitutions that are in place all over the world today. Borja also included in his presentation the idea of the right to property as a natural right. However, Locke and Hobbes’ justifications for the right to private property enabled Britain and the United States in their efforts to colonize all over the world.

Arin Piramzadian’s presentation included a history of the Armenian people and the persecution that they suffered during the Armenian genocide that lasted from 1914 until 1918. In an effort to rid the Ottoman Empire of ‘infidels’, the government implemented actions much like the ones that we are familiar with from the occupation of the Nazis in Europe. The only difference was that the Armenian people were Christian, not Jewish. Many people in the audience did not raise their hand when Arin asked if they had heard of the Armenian genocide. This was an important presentation because it proves that often times, people’s human rights are violated without anyone knowing about it.

Chad Kautzer, of the Philosophy Department and Social Justice Alliance, spoke about the importance of action in the fight for

human rights. He used the example of a people’s movement in Bolivia to illustrate his point. In Bolivia, the privatization of water prevented the masses from having access to clean drinking water. It was only through the people of Bolivia’s united effort and protest that progress was made and their human right to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being was obtained. The fight for human rights is an everyday struggle and, as Chad put it, “Human rights are always claimed within the context of opposition.”

The final speaker, Dr. Susan Hinely of the History Department, reflected on violation of human rights on a global scale. Human rights take on many different forms, but some human rights violations that occur require a global justice system in order to be corrected. Hinely’s presentation, which was cut short by time constraints, focused on atrocities like slavery, torture and genocide. Within the context of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, these three crimes are of the highest concern and must be prevented in order to ensure global rights within every nation.

These presentations gave rise to many questions about how human rights can be achieved for everyone. The injustice in the world is not limited to a government’s actions towards its nation, or a nation’s actions towards another. The ideas that provide a base for human rights begin with each individual and it is only through our effort to respect each other that it can be achieved.

Illegal Immigrant Housing in Suffolk County

By Karen Shidlo



The American Dream. So attractive in theory, so impossible to attain in real life. It is precisely this ubiquitous belief that hard work and persistence will lead to financial freedom that is the source of the problem of illegal immigrants in the United States. Tens of thousands of men, women and children infiltrate the country through the borders in search for a life of stability for their families, but which most will never realize. Though they have bad reputations and are antagonized here, these “aliens” are the backbone of the economy, but they are at the bottom of the hierarchy, working menial labor for less pay than an American and without any benefits.

Long Island has borne witness to the harsher aspects which face immigrants, mostly Mexican, having played the stage for violence. The local Hispanics are subject to verbal and physical abuse

Suffolk Executive County Steve Levy shifted the blame at Mexico’s government and proposed ameliorating relations with immigration officials and contractors as potential solutions to the illegal immigration problem. His real answer to the problem, though, is “deputization,” a means for police officers to detain undocumented immigrants; his faith in it lies in his hope that it will put an end to unscrupulous landscaping and contractors who rely on illegal immigrants.

Levy has been accused of being racist, with organizations which assist Hispanic illegals claiming that he has been centering on Latinos, despite other nationalities cramming in small houses all over Long Island. He has also been accused of encouraging antagonism towards immigrants, whether illegal or not, setting them up to be dangerous and not worthy of respect.

Having had a chance to interview the County Executive in my journalism class, I can say with confidence that his reasons for acting harshly towards the immigrants are dubious and as much as he denies that xenophobia is not related to the matter, I believe that a certain degree of racism plays a role in his decisions. He stated that it is not his responsibility to look after those whom he evicts out of overcrowded houses, saying that his human compassion only extends so far and that the illegal immigrants were aware of consequences before they arrived in America.

At one point during his talk, Levy’s

from their white American neighbors, women and old men getting beaten up in parking lots and in the streets.

manner of speaking became fiercer and his gestures more dramatic as he cried out loud that the Mexicans have a home, that they should return to their country because they are not homeless. Whilst this is true, the way he voiced this showed aggression and a lack of empathy for the situation of the immigrants. He only mentioned the threats they posed and did not linger long on the violent attacks upon them by their neighbors.

After having quoted statistics at us, he smiled with satisfaction, but I was not convinced. I find it hard to believe that the immigrants strain taxpayers to such an extent that it is reason enough to kick them out of housing without offering them any social services; he claimed that they get treated in American hospitals for free and crowd the schools, all of which citizens have to foot the bill for.

My opinion is that these Mexicans and other illegal immigrants must be suffering to an unbelievable degree that they would risk their lives to sneak into this country and put up with low wages, abuse from employers and neighbors, no health benefits and little prospect of improving their standard of living. I believe that this country is wealthy enough to sustain them being here and is also more dependent on them than it cares to admit, as what kind of educated, white American is willing to do menial labor? I say let them in and treat them as the human beings which they are.



Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy
Courtesy of a photo-grapher

Top 10 Reasons To Become a Feminist (If You Aren’t Already)

By Rachel Eagle Reiter

Top 10 Reasons to Become a Feminist (If You Aren’t Already):

By Rachel Eagle Reiter



- 1) Feminism empowers women to be all that they can be and to do all that they can do for the world.
- 2) Feminism is the politically correct way of understanding and dealing with core gender related issues.
- 3) The F word is not tabooed the way it once was; feminism is for the entire family.
- 4) By empowering women, all of society will benefit—men included.
- 5) It’s a ladies’ world; men just help us reproduce (and move heavy objects).
- 6) Anything a man can do, a woman can do with more finesse.
- 7) Ladies first...first in the political arena...first in the legal realm...first in medicine...
- 8) If need be, women are willing to struggle to get to the top.
- 9) Women can no longer and will no longer be pushed down, held back and bound by tradition.
- 10) It is not men who should be credited with building empires, but women, who birthed the emperors.

Palestinian Government Continued...

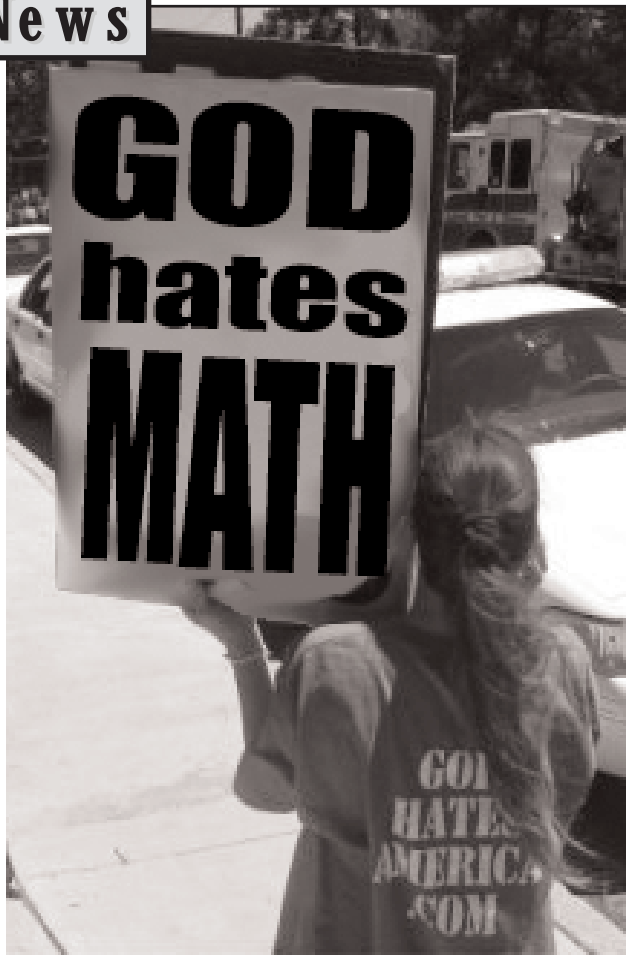
By Joan Leong

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Hitler. “If today the world offers its hand to Hamas,” she says, “it is the same as if it had offered its hand to Hitler.” While Russia is facing much criticism from everywhere, there is some praise for them to be the first to break the international isolationist stance against the group.

Has Russia opened the doors for the Hamas militant group to be slowly recognized? Perhaps. This week, South Africa invited the group to an assembly to share their experiences on the transition from apartheid to democracy. They are agreeing with Russia’s stance on Hamas legitimately winning the January elections and want to be part of the effort to welcome the new leaders of the Palestinian government. They are also attempting to encourage Hamas to end its violent demonstrations. South Africa is hoping to engage with the

new Hamas government to guide them to bring about peace and stability in the Middle East. So far, Israel’s efforts to isolate Hamas are not going according to plan. In the following weeks, the world can only wait to see if the violent militant group will succumb to the mounting international pressure to neutralize. While there seems to be little compromising on Hamas’ part, hopefully with help of the Fatah party and other party influences the new form of government will turn out to be something the international community can stomach. The Western world may refuse to deal with a terrorist organization but if more countries are willing to recognize them as Russia and South Africa has done, perhaps they will renounce their violent party platform. We may not expect any miracles, but they could possibly reciprocate the diplomatic decency other nations has shown them.



In the last issue, the esteemed *Stony Brook Press* published an article by Jacob Gray entitled “Religion is a Problem”. He outlined, with a mathematical equation, how there is a “zero percent probability that any one supernatural belief is correct.” Furthermore, he delineated the ways in which religion of all varieties has negatively affected society and has hindered the progress of

God Doesn't Like Math - A Commentary

By Caroline Ann D'Agati

mankind. Lastly, he calls upon the reader to “move on” and abandon the antiquated notion of religiosity as the “primitive superstition” that it is. I politely hold a different perspective.

At the onset of his article, Mr. Gray proposes a “simple mathematical model” as evidence that no religion has any probability of being correct. In other words, every theory of the supernatural is equally wrong and untenable. Though I am not sure whether this theory appeals to me less as a theist or as a liberal arts major, the whole idea of explaining God with mathematics is a tad sophistic. I do not mean to be condescending or to imply that the idea is ridiculous, but it is very misguided. Religion is not about being able to prove anything, nor does it have to follow reason or logic. The presence of God is something the soul senses and there does not have to be a reason why. Trying to fit the immenseness of religion into a math equation is like trying to scientifically explain why a poem or a song is beautiful. Sometimes there is no explanation, sometimes words do not suffice. This is not to say that very logically-thinking people cannot be religious – quite the opposite. However, I would say that though logic might leave someone open to religion, it is something mystical that makes them believe.

Correspondingly, Mr. Gray believes that religion is a great burden to society and that it has produced nothing but violence and conflict throughout history. In fact, he emphatically states that “The only thing that religion has done for the

human race on a global scale is cause war.” He corroborates his claims citing the travesties of the Crusades and radical Islam. Looking at history, it would be foolish to maintain that horrible things have not been carried out in the name of religion. However, it is unfair to say that because religious perversion occurs it invalidates the whole belief system. One must look at the cultural significance of religion in these instances. In the societies of both the Crusaders and, say, the Spanish *Conquistadores*, religion was the culture; it is impossible to separate the two. This means that, in all probability, most of these men had no real faith in their religion. Had they a real concept of the love of Christ, they would not have been able to carry out the monstrous acts that they did. And in their case as well as that of the radical Islamists, the depth and enigmatic nature of religion inherently lend themselves to perversion and misinterpretation. If a few dark illustrations can dismiss an entire subject, science would not be safe either. One could just as readily raise the situation of Dr. Mengele and the corrupt medical testing throughout WWII Germany and Japan. I would also like to reinforce the fallibility of the human element in these examples. God is not corrupting people, people are corrupting God. As for religion having no universal positive effects, no evidence in the world can prove that, and all evidence points to the contrary. The peace that religion gives encourages

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Religion and the World We Live In

By Esam al-Shareffi

I have decided to write this article specifically to address the numerous valid questions and issues brought up by Jacob Gray in “Religion is a Problem” (Issue IX) as well as the general coverage over this contentious topic that was brought up in the last issue.

Specifically, I would like to prove that religion in the Modern Age, *a priori*, is not a negative but is rather one of the greatest bulwarks for public morality, order, and harmony, and that even in the most extreme occasions, its overall benefit greatly outweighs any harm that might come as a direct result of religion. In order to prove this point, I will to revisit many of the questions spelled out so elegantly by Mr. Gray and provide my own thoughts on the matter. Hopefully at the conclusion of this article a more balanced view of religion can be espoused and public debate and discussion on the matter would commence in earnest.

The first point that Mr. Gray makes in his article is a construction of a mathematical construct, wherein the basic premise is that each modern day religion is one of a nearly infinite number of explanations or theories, to explain things such as what happens after we die. Since there is no scientific proof for religious theories, Mr. Gray claims that one theory (the Abrahamic or Judeo-Christian religious doctrine, for instance) would be equally as valid as “after we die, we might all go to a place called Copulahktabullshitalzonia and eat pineapples for all eternity.” Since a virtually infinite number of such “equally weighted” theories is possible (again, equal weight since there is no scientific proof to either theory,) the logical conclusion would be that the probability that any one theory is

correct is therefore zero.

There is, however, one glaring problem with this mathematical construct. Particularly, this “minimalist” approach is a very complicated fallacy of logic (do not worry if you did not learn about this in philosophy class, for you will not find it taught there, you need only think about it.) For instance, suppose I have a plastic cup sitting on my table in my dorm room. I did not put the cup there, however, nor do I know how it got there. I can therefore, in theory, construct a virtually infinite number of explanations to explain why it is there. For instance, my roommate could have placed the cup on the table while I was away. Another explanation would be that my friend left it there as a present for me. Another explanation is that a plastic cup salesman left the cup on my table as a free sample while I left the door open when I went to the bathroom. Yet another explanation can be that the cup moved on its own and decided to use my table as its home for the next 2,000 years. While some of these explanations may seem more probable than others, according to Mr. Gray’s construct, if we assume that every theory without scientific proof is equally probable (recall that we were not there to observe how the cup got to the table, thus we have no scientific proof as to how it indeed made the journey), then the possibility that any single theory is correct is zero... and as such there should be no cup on the table! (If you have any friends who are philosophy majors, impress them with this tale; it will likely drive them insane.) Anyway, we know that the cup is there, so something must be amiss... and indeed there is something amiss. Namely, just because we do not have scientific proof that some-

thing happened, this does not mean that it never took place. You might be quick to object that we “know” that cups don’t move by themselves, but if we base our knowledge on what we “know” to be true, then each person’s construction of reality will be different, as we each know and believe in different things (and thus for some religion might be possible, or even a certainty, while for others impossible). You might even be tempted to say that we know that cups do not move on their own because “SCIENCE” tells us this, but if we go by a purely scientific view of the world, as you just saw, there would be no cup on the table because there is no scientific proof as to how it got there. As such, we must be willing to live our lives with a mixture of belief and science, and it is in this wobble room that religion can (and in my opinion, does) exist.

Another important point Mr. Gray brings up in his article is that, and I quote: “THE ONLY THING THAT RELIGION HAS DONE FOR THE HUMAN RACE ON A GLOBAL SCALE IS CAUSE WAR.” Unfortunately, humans are a very warlike species, and will use any excuse, real or imagined, including differences in religion or “religious decree” to fight. Mr. Gray mentions the Crusades as a prime example, but a closer examination of those conflicts reveals many other motives behind them beyond religious differences. For instance, European kings and bishops were loathsome of the numerous knights running around the countryside with little to do when the continent was at peace, ransacking villages and causing public disorder. As such, having a war, for any reason

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God Doesn't Like Math Continued...

By Caroline Ann D'Agati

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people to be more considerate of their fellow man. A faithful person's belief in God encourages them to seize life and celebrate it like the gift that it is. They do not "live to die", they live to make the world around them more ideal.

Finally, and perhaps most interestingly, is Mr. Gray's analysis of the capabilities of man. His praise of the aptitude of human beings and the notion that religion is "one of the sole survivors of the ideals that have been long dead since our primitive past," yields the article to an incredibly Nietzschean philosophy. The article espouses similar concepts to those that Friedrich Nietzsche identified in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. In this work, Nietzsche proclaims that "God is dead." Despite these three words being the *casus belli* for many

theists, Nietzsche's quaint promulgation was not one of defiance. He was merely telling the world of this new breed called the "*ubermensch*" or "superman" who was so evolved that he no longer needed God. This new class of men was composed of those strong and original enough to create their own concepts of morality. It was essential to abandon the passéist models presented by their society and generate new ones. In other words, spiritual evolution. This intriguing philosophy would lead one to the conclusion that someday all religion will be eradicated once everyone has reached their peak of spiritual enlightenment. Another logical deduction would be that those who still remain faithful to a deity are not as advanced as the supreme Supermen. So, whether someone is a Sikh, a Zoroastrian, or a Presbyterian, they are inferior and have yet to make it over the evolutionary hump.

It is unfair and a trifle obtuse to discredit the notion of religion. No, it cannot be proven, but that is the point of faith. The history of religion has been marred by many unfortunate events, but there is no institution whose past is totally pure. It is not the fault of religion that people so consistently misuse it. That is still no reason to deride people who have faith in God. Faithful people are no different than anyone else. As Mr. Grey entreaties us to "have faith in science," he reveals something very telling. Perhaps everyone is a believer. Everyone has their God, be it science, family, Yahweh or money. In the heart of everyone is their foundation, their basis for living, that which makes them want to live until tomorrow. Is it really so laughable to be living for something so splendid, so glorious that we cannot explain it?

Religion and the World Continued...

By Esam al Shareffi

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(why not use religion?), to keep these troublesome knights busy seemed like a good idea. That was of course just one reason; political differences, opportunities to gain land, wealth, and prestige, as well as numerous other non-religious reasons are attributed to the Crusades. Furthermore, the net effect of that mindless violence was eventually positive, in that it increased trade, promoted exposure and cultural contacts, and was actually a main impetus in the beginning of the Renaissance. Not to bore you more with historical facts that you could access by either taking an introductory history course (or better yet, watching the History Channel or surfing through wikipedia) even the most well-known "religious" war was mainly based on temporal matters, largely devoid of religious considerations.

Some would also be tempted to consider modern day "religious" incidents, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or the "War on Terror". While I am no political theorist, a close examination of these conflicts also shows that religion plays only a minor role, and is often an excuse or a justification, without which humans would still find ways of perpetuating conflict. In particular, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, at this point, is mostly about which side gets what land, access to water and other strategic resources, and is therefore a political and social issue, despite the seemingly religious nature. Likewise, the War on Terror is essentially a logical political development as a result of the shifting of the World Order from a world with two superpowers, each fighting for influence and control, to a world with only one superpower. Since the United States is extremely powerful, more so than any nation in the past, its enormous military, economic, and political power allows it a truly global influence, with which comes a great deal of problems, particularly from rivals who have no hope to face the US on the conventional battlefield and thus resort to desperate and reckless terrorist attacks. These attacks capitalize on the ability to use minimal resources (a small bomb, a human being, some cash) into maximum

effect (fear, death, and destruction). As the Second Law of Thermodynamics and our experience and common sense confirm, it is much easier to destroy something than it is to build it. (Think about the cost and effort in building a house related to destroying it... or the amount of effort and energy it takes to clean your room, compared with how much of the same it takes to make a mess.) Make no mistake or misapprehension, there are those in the world out there who truly mean to kill and harm us, but religion is not the cause of this.



Science + Religion = BFF
Courtesy of volcanic activity and an artist

In fact, religions, when utilized without corrupting or hijacking them, have always helped maintain stability, sustainable growth, and moral values without which it would be impossible to live our lives. I will take myself as an example. Without the influence of religion on my life, I would very likely drink alcoholic beverages whenever I had the chance and use mind-altering substances that would keep me in a constant state of happiness or stupor. Alternatively, I might decide that the best way to achieve my ends in life would be to follow self-interest absolutely and exclusively. I would think nothing of harming or killing a

rival if he or she were in my way, so long as I was able to cover it up (in a world with no religion). While other people might not be as unscrupulous as I, I sincerely believe that the world as we know it would be much more chaotic and unstable than it already is without the restraining influence of religion. If, in today's world, which in the eyes of some is "corrupted" by religion, we have truly shocking numbers of murders, rapes, and other serious and less serious crimes, imagine a world in which so many people like myself, "freed" from the moral restraints of religion, began to operate in a cold, calculated, (some might even say "scientific") manner, plotting through life guided only in a self-interested and rational way, killing those who oppose them, robbing others when in need of wealth, forming criminal associations and enterprises, and plundering their way through life. Imagine the harm caused by just one such person released into the world, and then imagine the hundreds of millions, perhaps billions, who would no longer be guided by the more humane and civil doctrines of religion... would that be better than the world we now live in? I think not.

I wanted to delve deeper, to address even more questions, such as the fact that the vast majority of scientists, even those who have made fundamental advances to the world we live in, such as Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Newton, Boyle, Faraday, Mendel, Plank, and Einstein, to name but a few, believed in G-d. In fact, one of Einstein's most famous quotes is: "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind." I think by now, however, my rant has caused most to stop reading... if you still are, let me briefly conclude by saying that we should follow Einstein's advice and appreciate our modern world, with its freedom of religion, and realize that a world based solely on scientific reasoning is "lame" and more importantly, does not tell the whole story, for there exists much that is not, or cannot, be proven by science. Religion has made the world a better place, and it has only had the misfortune of being misused and corrupted by those who would use its powerful influence for evil and unintended effects

Editorial Space: Some people take religion seriously, like these folks here. Others don't. Tomato, Tomato. The pronunciation doesn't come through in writing but trust me, they're said differently.

Wish They All Could be California Girls (if by Girls You Mean Anesthesiologists)

By Michael Prazak

In a classic battle between the legal and the moral, a recent stay of execution for convicted murderer Michael Morales has brought to light inconsistencies in California's capital punishment laws. Problems arose when a federal judge, under suit filed by Morales, declared that the execution required the presence of two anesthesiologists to ensure the prisoners be spared any "cruel and unusual" suffering during the administering of the drug cocktail intended to kill him.

These two specialists bowed out of the process at the 11th hour citing ethical concerns raised by the wanton harming of a human. In response to this the federal judge, Jeremy Fogel, ordered a licensed medical professional to administer the drugs required for the execution. No doctor heeded this tempting call, and the 24 hour death warrant passed without a death to give it purpose.

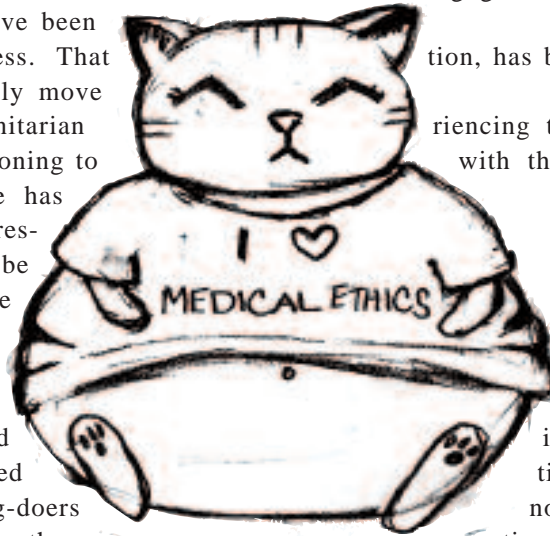
The general response of the court has been to tweak the method to make it much less likely that the executed will experience anything upon administration of the drugs. This would, hopefully, eliminate the need for a licensed professional to oversee the procedure. This is the classic governmental response to any conflict of two moral concerns; to remove one or the other from the equation.

This entire case is based on the storied history of capital punishment, its misuses and tragic repercussions. We've gone from stonings, to hangings, to crucifixions, to decapitations, to firing

squads, to electrocutions, to...well...let's just say we've been real creative about the process. That being said, it seems the only move we've made in a more humanitarian direction is the step from stoning to hangings. Everything else has either been segues or regressions. What could never be guaranteed in any of these cases was the main issue under question: whether or not the victim was suffering.

Every time mankind has tried to reconcile the need to wrathfully punish wrong-doers with their fragile moral egos the results have been less than stellar. The usage of the guillotine, viewed as a calm and measured step into a humanistic age, upon its creation, was littered with tales of still living heads gasping for air and looking around seconds after death. It wasn't until the advent of modern medical understanding that we realized that the human brain could retain awareness for up to a minute after its severing from the rest of the body.

Electrocution gave us vibrating, burned, still living ghouls, smoldering with a seemingly defiant rage at their executioners. Hangings produced daintily dancing disjointed marionettes, eyes



agog, slowly turning blue. The most recent attempt, lethal injection, has birthed tales of paralyzed consciousness, murderers experiencing their bodies' growing rigidity with the helplessness of any victim they may have wronged.

It isn't too hard to argue that convicted murderers receive the punishment they doled out to others, however, that is not the issue at hand in this case. We cannot, verifiably, guarantee that any victim of capital punishment will not suffer during their execution, unless we develop a method of atomization. Something, my inside sources inform me, is not forthcoming, at least not for executions (these crazy physicists think it might have scientific applications...well, other than killing folks).

Combine this with the repeatedly proven failures, both statistically and individually speaking, of our penal system and you have a cocktail of whole lots of wrongful, pain filled death. Perhaps we're merely consigned to an existence as a hypocritical nation. At least if we accepted this, we could, nationally, look at ourselves in the mirror and say: "well at least I didn't lie to me today."

Suck on This, O'Reilly

By Michael Doggett

In a now-infamous statement made in late December, Bill O'Reilly predicted that *Brokeback Mountain* would not do well in certain areas of the country. "They're not going to see gay cowboys in Montana," he assured the Fox News faithful. Unfortunately for him, Montanans turned out in droves to see the film. According to the *Missoulian*, the movie grossed over \$33,000 in its first four weekends in Missoula, was number one in Whitefish and Helena, and enjoyed its best opening in traditionally conservative Billings.

Why was O'Reilly wrong? One reason is that he doesn't understand Montana. If he did any research before making such a stupid statement, he would have known that it has a history of violent labor movements, a strong presence of environmentalists, a tradition of protecting individual liberties, and a political climate that is volatile and polarized between the urban and rural parts of the state. In the Montana town where I live, Ralph Nader received the highest percentage of votes of any US city, and benefits are given by the University of Montana to same-sex couples – a decision that was



There's plenty room for tolerance in Big Sky Country
Courtesy of the Federal Park System

upheld by the Montana Supreme Court. In fact, Pacific Northwestern politics are generally fought over the environment, economy, and social entitlement programs.

Perhaps a different question should be asked of students, academics and pundits: what advantages can one gain by making summary statements about a culturally and politically complicated area of the country? I heard two such arguments about the United States from the right and the left while I was in New York. They tend to sound something like this:

1) There is a place (in O'Reilly's case, Montana) where traditional morality is still practiced, where people respect their elders, where family values are still important, where God matters, blah, blah, blah, etc.; or

2) Every location outside the Eastern seaboard and Southern California is a giant wasteland of conservative idiots who don't understand the complexities of modern life and the necessity of a liberal economic policy.

People who hold either view don't mention that Montana elected a populist Democratic governor who is pursuing a domestic solution to the high price of oil, New York State elected a Republican who is the longest continuously serving governor in the United States, and New York City retained a conservative Republican mayor who bought an election out of his own pocket.

The people who impressed me at Stony Brook acknowledged what I discovered when I moved to such a diverse place – that something must be very wrong for me to be able to meet the

most racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic, sadistic, provincial people whom I have ever encountered – because such hatred is not based on the ignorance of, or underexposure to, different sociological groups.

It should not have surprised anyone that *Brokeback Mountain* was a success. The movie was a well-produced, compelling love story. The current obsession with sexual morality is the result of Bush-Reagan conservatives who, in a concession to Southern evangelicals and right-wing religious organizations like the Catholic Church, have so forcefully pushed their agenda of hate and bigotry disguised as compassion that even very conservative Western politicians like Dick Cheney, who is a native of the state where *Brokeback Mountain* was set, distanced himself from Bush's ban on gay marriage, stating in August 2004 that "people ought to be free to enter into any kind of relationship they want to... At this point...my own preference is as I've stated, but the President makes policy for the administration. He's made it clear that he does, in fact, support a constitutional amendment on this issue."

The success of *Brokeback Mountain* in America, the ignorant and incorrect comments of a reactionary Roman-Catholic pundit, and Bush's all-time low approval rating of 34% don't signal any dramatic change. They expose what has been developing for a very long time in places like Montana: many people are embracing the quality that Republicans promised in their elections – compassion.

NEWS-IN-BRIEF

Compiled by Rebecca Kleinhart, Claudia Toloza and Alex Walsh



Leaked Video - Bush Was Warned About Katrina

After hurricane Katrina, which devastated the city of New Orleans, a blame game began between the federal and local government regarding the response to Katrina. Much of the blame was directed at FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and more specifically at former FEMA chief Michael Brown. Recently, however, video footage obtained by the Associated Press shows that President Bush had been warned of the magnitude of disaster that Katrina might cause once it reaches New Orleans. In the August 28th footage, President Bush is informed that Katrina may breach levees and that there may not be enough rescue response available. Despite the warnings made by disaster officials during this last briefing before the storm hit, the President did not ask any questions. Footage of the video is available at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/03/01/AR2006030101731.html>

US-India Nuclear Deal

On March 2, President Bush finalized a nuclear deal with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The agreement, which would give US nuclear technology to India, still has to be ratified by Congress. President Bush has warned that this may be difficult, as India has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. There is already bipartisan legislation being debated in Congress to block the move, as opponents say it makes a mockery of the international non-proliferation system.

Under the terms of the agreement, the United States would recognize India as a nuclear power and share technology and materials with the country. In return, India would separate its civilian and military nuclear programs and open its civilian reactors to inspections. Fourteen of its twenty-two reactors have been reclassified for civilian use. President Bush said the deal was in America's interest because an Indian nuclear program would take pressure off global demand for energy. In addition to the Congress, the nuclear accord would have to be approved by the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group. The NSG was formed to regulate civilian nuclear trade, and it makes decisions by consensus. Several members of the group have expressed misgivings with the proposal.

Guantánamo Prisoner List Released

As part of law suit filed by the Associated Press, the US Defense Department has released the names and nationalities of some of the prisoners being held at Guantánamo Bay. The names of approximately 300 of the estimated 500 prisoners were released. Since 2002, the federal government has held prisoners at Guantánamo, labeling them as "enemy combatants" without

releasing their names until now. The documents that were released to the Associated Press containing the names of detainees had been previously released in 2005 with the exception that the names of the detainees had been blacked out. The release of this information is part of a Freedom of Information Act law suit filed by the Associated Press in attempt to get information about the prisoners at released.



Kabul Prison Riot

Six inmates at Kabul's Pul-e-Charkhi jail died in four days of rioting. The prisoners, wielding knives and clubs, forced guards out of a cell block housing 1,300 prisoners. Al Qaeda and Taliban prisoners incited the riot after officials imposed new orange uniforms, in response to an escape by seven prisoners last month. Afghan government and NATO soldiers, including several tanks and armored vehicles, surrounded and barricaded the prison, keeping the rioters inside. Negotiators agreed to a deal with the inmates on Monday, February 27th, but unrest flared up again the next day. On Wednesday, Afghan police claimed they had restored full control over the prison, and the rioters were escorted to another cell block.

The prison was built outside Kabul during the 1970s, and was notorious for prisoner "disappearances" during the communist era. There are now about 350 al Qaeda and Taliban prisoners there, among a total population of about 2,000.

Condi's Week in the Middle East

Days after the controversial Hamas party took control of the Palestinian government, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice traveled through various countries in the Middle East to meet with interfaith leaders in a continuing effort to promote dialogue between the United States and its allies. Rice made her way through Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates from February 20th-24th, meeting with the Grand Sheikh Mohammed Sayed Tantawi of Egypt, Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora, and other representatives for various faiths. Although the reported purpose of the tour was to promote "interfaith dialogue", the topics strayed to politics in Palestine, Iran's relationship to the United States, and the takeover of US ports by Arab shipping company P&O. In an interview on Egyptian Television, Rice confirmed Iran to be a "troubling presence", citing support of various terrorist organizations and their refusal to abide by international code when dealing with their nuclear arms program. She also recognized Hamas, the new ruling party of Palestine, as a terrorist organization, stating, "You cannot have one foot in the camp of terror and another foot in the camp of politics." However, Rice stressed that humanitarian aid would not be cut, stating in a press conference in Saudi Arabia that "the Palestinian people will continue to need help." While in Egypt, Rice was asked to com-

ment about her hopes for the future of democracy in the Middle East. Says Rice: "There will be a democracy that is for Egypt and Iraq or for any other people on this Earth because democracy is the only form of government in which human beings truly get to express themselves."



EU Aid to Palestine

The European Union has offered a 124 million euro aid package to the Palestinian Authority. The Authority's caretaker government, which is administering the territory until the new Hamas government takes power, had warned that it faced financial collapse within weeks. The EU has not sent aid to Palestine since the January election, and Israel has withheld tax money collected in the Palestinian territories. It does not give any money directly to the government, but earmarks 64 million euros to go to the poor through UN agencies, 40 million for energy expenses, and 20 million to pay government employees.

The Palestinian government and the United States both welcomed the deal, but Israel objected. An Israeli official called it "the wrong decision at the wrong time to the wrong address." Despite this substantial aid to the interim government, the European Union and the United States intend to review their aid policies to Palestine when the Hamas government comes to power.



65 Miners Dead in Mexican Blast

An explosion in a Mexican mine on February 19th has resulted in the death of 65 miners, as well as sweeping strikes in mines across the country and condemnation of the Mexican government by the United Steelworker's International Executive Board. Although work to find the miners has been postponed due to the amassing of methane gas inside of the mine, officials have been able to declare all of the miners dead for the same reason.

According to *The New York Times*, the mine, Unidad de los Conchos, was deemed unsafe by inspectors two weeks before the explosion. The owners of the mine, Grupo Mexico, claimed to have fixed all of the problems, barring one: inspectors had found a faulty switch on a machine that was supposed to shut off power when gas levels in the shaft rose too high. Curiously enough, Grupo Mexico miners went on strike over fourteen times before, citing safety and health issues as their grievances. The explosion has also led to more problems for the Mexican mining industry as 4,000 Mexican miners have decided to strike for two days in two of Mexico's largest copper mines.

Currently, rescuers are attempting to pump out the methane gas and replace it with oxygen, making the conditions safer for workers to retrieve the bodies. Xavier Garcia, President of Industrial Minera Mexico, stated, "We are making our best effort with our heart in our hand to resolve this problem."

Computer Space: The First Frontier *A 70's arcade game retrospective*

By Vincent Michael Festa

35 years ago, an electronics and entertainment phenomenon started, one that would usher in the beginning of an entertainment era and its references to pop-culture: the very first video arcade game, known as Computer Space.

Invented in 1971 by Nolan Bushnell and a lesser-known Ted Dabney, Computer Space entered an era of electro-magnetic machines such as love-meters, fortune-tellers, and arm-wrestling machines. Computer Space, despite doing poorly quarter-wise, would pave the way for video arcades to steal the spotlight and to push the attention away from the electro-magnetic scene.

Bushnell, who graduated from the University Of Utah with a degree in electrical engineering, with Dabney, took the idea of the first-ever computer game, Spacewar, and waited until the price and size of the parts to produce it were feasible. In 1971, the units were finally completed, manufactured, and distributed by Nutting Associates across college campuses and bars.

Computer Space was built as a slick, curvaceous, sparkly, and glossy upright cabinet that housed a video screen inside. It had a square console for coin slots and many colorful buttons for one or two players (later on it would include joysticks). Each button press commanded player ships to rotate, thrust, and fire, all the while avoiding enemy spacecraft.

On-screen action was displayed by vector-beam graphics, which looked like objects solely drawn by straight lines by connect-the-dots, and was only the first step in graphical programming.

Unfortunately for the game itself, players

ended up giving up on the game. It was too sophisticated and so far ahead of its time that players were taken over and were too confused to play any further, thus Computer Space drifted from the scene. But not Bushnell...

After attending an electronics fair and witnessing a video-pong variation on Ralph Baer's creation, the first-ever home video game system, Odyssey, Bushnell teamed up with Al Acorn to create Atari Games and simplify the game and released it in another cabinet as Pong in 1972.

Set up in a local tavern in Sunnyvale, California, the game caused lines wrapped around the tavern just for people to play a game with two knobs, two moving rectangles on both sides of the screen and reflecting off a tiny square. It was a big-time commercial success. The quarters themselves jammed the machine and had to constantly be re-emptied by Acorn.

Despite ripping off the idea from Baer and paying \$700,000 through a court settlement, Atari was king of the arcades and led the way to other various trends and innovations different than those of the arcades of today:

*The endless amount of Pong clones that were manufactured due to Atari's own success of Pong, Pong Doubles, and Quadrapong.

*Arcade game tables with screens in the middle, called "cocktail" machines.

*Transparent artwork, or "overlays" were used to overlap the black and white images to produce a color playfield until the late 1970's where the first touches of real video color were created.

*Projector-screen games that used movie film to create gameplay, such as Wild Gunman

(Nintendo, 1974), and F-1 (Atari, 1975).

*The first-ever controversial arcade game, Death Race (Exidy, 1976).

*Driving games and sports games.

*The first gun-shooters (Wild Gunman, and Quak by Atari, 1974).

*Gun-Fight (Midway, 1975), considered to be the grandfather of "fighting games", but not considered the first player vs. player game.

*Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs creating Breakout (Atari, 1976) before building the first Apple computers.

*Sprint 8, the first ever 8-player arcade game and 8-player arcade racer (Atari 1977).

*Games with viewfinders and player-only points-of-view (Dark Invader by Ramtek, and Sea Wolf by Midway, both 1978).

*The first-ever Video Pinball (Atari, 1979).

*Space Invaders (Taito, 1979) and Asteroids (Atari, 1979).

*Maze games similar to *Tron's* lightcycles.

*70's dominance of vector graphics.

*The conversion of laundromats to arcade parlors due to the arcade craze and potential profit.

Without controversy, there would be no Mortal Kombat. Had it not been for games like Wild Gunman, gun games such as House Of The Dead and Area 51 might not exist. The same can be said for Sprint 8 when in the 90's players connected eight at a time to race against each other in San Francisco's Rush or Outrunners. Loads of one-on-one fighting games may never have had that idea in play if not for Gun-Fight. And vector graphics made one final go in the 80's with the now legendary Star Wars games.

Arcades may have severely changed from their heyday in the 80's, and all there is to it now is Dance Dance Revolution, San Francisco Rush, Tekken 5, and many ticket redemption machines. For any game-goer in any generation we should thank Computer Space for giving us some of the best entertainment in our lives.



Television: The Ultimate Social Lubricant or Pestilent Deterrent?

A critical quandary By Alison Schwartz

Ah, television. Where would the world be without the glorious box of wires to supply countless hours of effortless amusement?

Parents would probably be forced to *raise* their children and accept responsibility for the outcome of their impressionable offspring, rather than plopping their youngster in front of an inanimate object and later using its programming content as a scapegoat for immoral behavior in the tumultuous teens. People would actually have to resort to picking up an object composed of many sheets of paper marked with stringed little symbols called words, moving their eyes to and fro while interpreting their meaning and periodically lifting



their arm to turn a page. Perhaps socializing at someone's humble abode would result in actual interpersonal connectivity.

My feisty brand of Daria-esque sarcasm aside, I believe that television noise often usurps legitimate communication when spending time at someone's house/dorm or, if we may fast forward to the future, when marriage progresses into comfortable boredom. We allow a contrivance of sugarcoated banality to banish uncomfortable silences.

Which brings me to my main focus: television as a social lubricant (or deterrent as is the case in the aforementioned scenarios).

If there is no source of relativity, it seems that one can often rely upon discussion of the latest episode of wildly popular shows like *Lost* and *Grey's Anatomy*. Yet, let us ponder: could someone be considered a pariah for avoiding television indigestion? Can the discussion of television favorites bridge gaps between two diverse strangers? If someone chooses to abstain from exposure for a certain stretch of time, or to not even own a television, is he or she labeled culturally inept, rejecting the ideals and notions of modernity?

Before television, how did everyone spend his or her time? Maybe they all just sat around in their togas, questioning the perception of reality, pondering the nature of existence and theorizing about the instinctual inclination toward a herd mentality. Who knows? What those intellectual buffoons were doing with their time is anyone's guess. Maybe they were building a legacy so that *Lost*

Continued on page 19

By Vincent Michael Festa

Every day of my life I am reminded of just how low the intelligence level of the public is.

I am forced to wake up, get out of bed and drive to a place called work, thanks to a schedule that tells me to. It also tells me to prop myself right behind the register so that I am forced to deal with the public. I have the line of people run by, and several of them make me wonder where the educational system failed. When they ask me questions that can easily be answered by turning around and reading the signs, I have that tendency to lose it and show them the way.

“So, everything is 20% off, right? 20%? Really?” The response helps race my bloodstream and fuel the fire in sheer amazement of just how much people use their heads.

At school the problem is less severe, I’d say about 90%. There have been people I’ve come across that just don’t “get it”. People who ramble on the phone even more when I tell them I’m in the middle of something. Or maybe they keep asking the same questions I just gave a simple answer to. Sometimes they have no idea that the things they do irritate people to no end, because they repeatedly do it. Highly... fucking... annoying.

I know of people who don’t even work but just waste their lives sleeping around, hanging out at night with nothing to do but act like animals and

talk about women like they’re throwaway objects. It’s all about cars, cash, crack, and cootchie, and that’s all they care about. Nothing real.

Turn on the TV screen. Turn a page. What do you see? Lowest-common-denominator entertainment. Daytime circuses like *Jerry Springer* and *Maury* still amaze me in that they do their part in the whole never-ending quest to drive society’s IQ down to the single-digits. Jessica Simpson with her “Look at me! I’m stupid! Isn’t it cute?” personality. News shows and presidential debates that no longer challenge with fast balls, accusations, and hard questions everyone wants to know about. Instead, it’s all hazy memories, fuzzy kisses, and fancy petting. The desperately needed answers fleet on by without notice. The media is a now mind-numbing narcotic.

Nothing is controversial or challenging anymore. Everything is safe. It has to be that way so that big-time corporations make their money to survive. They want you to be like everyone else, to be safe and secure, nothing subtle, nothing outrageous, nothing that attracts attention to make people think. Just stand up straight, smile, and shut up. Either that or follow the leader instead of being the leader and thinking for themselves instead of doing or saying what others tell them to!

Stories of how hurricanes were engineered



My friend’s dad looks like Tom Arnold

by corporations. How the Jews were to blame for 9/11. The white fundamentalist religious people who tell you who to go against because they’re not like them or you’ll burn and sear in hell if you don’t believe. False beliefs romanticized by the babble-ons. This is all I hear!

What the hell is going on? Is there anyone else here besides me who is so fed up with the massive amounts of stupidity? It drives me up the wall that people cannot think for themselves anymore or just how people can drag you down emotionally because there is nothing there to begin with. I’m just sick of the non-progress.

All there is are the wrong people who waste time about nothing except shouting out empty slogans, or the right ones who aren’t shouting loud enough, or not at all. And where are the ideas flying around in the atmosphere? Is there anyone looking for them? A glorious sunbeam in the sky instead of a dampener?

Why can’t I find someone who has the same interests as me? Someone who can think critically or controversially? Someone who can act or dress differently than the majority? Someone to talk about obscure films and off-white topics, who has a smart insight on life? One who can jump into a conversation and talk about the Berlin underground music scene, industrial and noise music on tape such as *Nurse With Wound* or *Consumer Electronics*, or record shopping for vinyl, instead

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Freshman Fatties?

By Olga Kaplun

Burger King Whopper, soda, and fries: \$4.59. A small container of pineapple: \$4.10. Your health: priceless! Giving up more money for less food, now that gets pricey. If you have a five-dollar bill in your pocket, you want a bigger bang for your buck, so why should you go around hungry? And to think that there’s doubt why “freshman fifteen,” or obesity, is hitting an all-time high!

The price of health food on Stony Brook campus is skyrocketing, not to mention there is a good probability that said health food will be rotting or scarce. When you’re in the dining hall and the aroma from the freshly cooked pizza wafts toward you, it’s highly unlikely that you will gravitate toward the salad with the browning leaves. If you have the choice of getting a small container of pasta or a large container of pasta for the same price, hmmm...which one would you choose? And what is the likelihood that after you try the bitter and juiceless fruit that you will keep purchasing it at that same costly price just because you know it’s better for your health?

“Most college campuses in the country report 31 percent of students as overweight or obese,” according to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) Web site, and “65.2 percent of all Americans are overweight or obese.” Yet, they’re trying to pin that on the need to gain a few extra pounds, especially for women so they can “curve out”. I wouldn’t mind curving out like “Miss Piggy” (appearing with Jessica Simpson for the Pizza Hut commercial) by eating pizza, since the health food on campus is untouchable. Then the news comes up with a new statistic that the freshman fifteen is a myth, and instead of gaining

fifteen pounds, the gain is actually ten. Even then, ten pounds in one year? Either puberty is making a comeback in college freshman or that number is an abnormally high average.

Although prices and tastes might be the biggest aspects of this issue, they are not the only factors. It isn’t easy to achieve a mind like Albert Einstein and be fit like Paris Hilton. Attaining good grades takes time and dedication, which leaves out the gym and other sports one participated in when in high school. Overwhelming classes and stress might cause a little overeating, but who gains fifteen pounds from studying chemistry? Researchers try to blame sleeping patterns, and psychol-



Burgers make you ugly
Courtesy of Ad Marketing

ogists believe the weight is gained from a newly-acquired freedom from parents who no longer have as much control in their child’s life and over that child’s eating habits. Somebody must have forgotten to tell them that high school seniors have access to the same kind of food, and most make

their own lunches.

Free food at college events, meant to lure in students, also doesn’t help the demographic. It is the one time to see sophisticated and intelligent people metamorphose into animals that haven’t been fed in ages. Free midnight breakfast at Stony Brook University has lines wrapped around the building twice, with students pushing and showing each other to cut ahead. When money isn’t an option, and neither is healthy food, then it becomes difficult to eat just one portion; so can it be hunger that’s at stake, or is it just a “mass feeding frenzy?”

The “gluttony” must stop! But how? Phil Dordai, the writer of *Losing the “Freshman 15” by Design (Architecturally Speaking)*, proposes to change the structural design of the university to make climbing up the stairs and strolling to classes more appealing. Despite how good that sounds, wouldn’t it make more sense to invest all that money in better, cheaper food?

A solution must be reached, and quickly, as the demographic for overweight college students is growing by a waistline. Money is too valuable to spend on spoiled nutritious foods, so instead of building and beautifying, schools should invest their money for the needy college students with the lack of nourishment, providing the healthy foods that they need.

Stony Brook Day in Albany

By Claudia Toloza

The day started out early, 6 o'clock on the morning, with students meeting in the South P parking lot to board the buses headed to the state's capital for Stony Brook Day in Albany. After a long bus ride many Stony Brook students, staff, and faculty arrived at the Legislative Office Building to begin a day filled with meetings with various politicians.

Students were assigned to a group leader and each group had a list of specific politicians they had to meet with. The objective of the day was very unclear to many of the students who had signed up for Stony Brook Albany Day. Many students had no idea what they were supposed to say to at the meetings with their legislators. Essentially, the main objective of Stony Brook Albany Day was for students to meet with legislators to thank them for their support of Stony Brook University, and also to voice any concerns they had.

The group I was with got to meet with several politicians including David Gantt, Andrew Hevesi, and Charles Lavine. The meetings with both David Gantt and Andrew Hevesi were a bit disappointing because we only got to meet with their aides. The meetings were rather short; their aides basically noted that that both Assemblyman Gantt and Assemblyman Hevesi were big supporters of higher education and were receptive to concerns regarding state schools.

The best meeting of the day was with Assemblyman Charles Lavine of the 13th Assembly District in Nassau County. As we stepped into his office he greeted every person that walked in with a handshake and introduced himself simply as Chuck. Assemblyman Lavine was very down to earth and seemed genuinely interested in the concerns of the students. Some of the issues that were brought to his attention were the need for increased funding for the nursing program and also the International Studies Department. One nursing student brought to the attention of Assemblyman Lavine that very few students are accepted into the nursing program because there is simply not enough funding to accommodate all the students who apply. She also mentioned that once students are accepted to the program there is a lack of staff to teach the classes and the equipment they use for practice is outdated.

Other students brought to the attention of Assemblyman Lavine the lack of funding and support for liberal arts programs. One student, senior Lisle Ferreira, spoke about the lack of support for the international studies program at Stony Brook University. The International Studies program at Stony Brook University is only offered as a minor and is very short-staffed with Sociology Professor Timothy Moran serving as both the Director and only professor of the program. As she explained, "...the program is growing rapidly and the school

has not been able to accommodate all the students interested in participating in the program. International Studies is a growing field that is especially important in the global world that we live in today and the University has to keep this in mind."

After hearing the concerns voiced by the students, Assemblyman Lavine, who has met with President Shirley Strum Kenny in the past, promised to mention to her the concerns that he had heard at their next meeting.

Although my group only got to meet with one actual politician, there were other groups who were fortunate enough to speak to other politicians. Such was the case of seniors Simren Chawla, Lissette Alberto and junior Mehdi Boujida who got meet and speak with Assemblyman Ruben Diaz. Assemblyman Diaz represents the 85th Assembly District of the Bronx. Ruben Diaz, unlike many politicians, according to Chawla, "was very down to earth and open." When students voiced their concerns to Assemblyman Diaz, "...[Diaz] seemed interested and wanted to know figures. He seemed like he would advocate for us... he showed concern," said Lissette Alberto.

Stony Brook Day was definitely marked by a large presence of the student body. The most represented group was the health science and nursing students who came out in full force wearing their white jackets to advocate for their programs. Perhaps next year, students in other programs at Stony Brook will come to Albany to support their area of study and organize themselves like the health science students did. All in all, Stony Brook Day in Albany was a long day, but an interesting one nonetheless. It is definitely a great opportunity for students to actually do something about their concerns and show the legislators that they should not forget the concerns of college students because after all college students are their constituents as well.



...show the legislators that they should not forget the concerns of college students because...college students are their constituents as well.

STILL NOT SATISFIED?

If you couldn't get out, couldn't speak up, or
just don't think they get it,

LOOK TO YOUR RIGHT



and give our fine representatives a piece of your mind.





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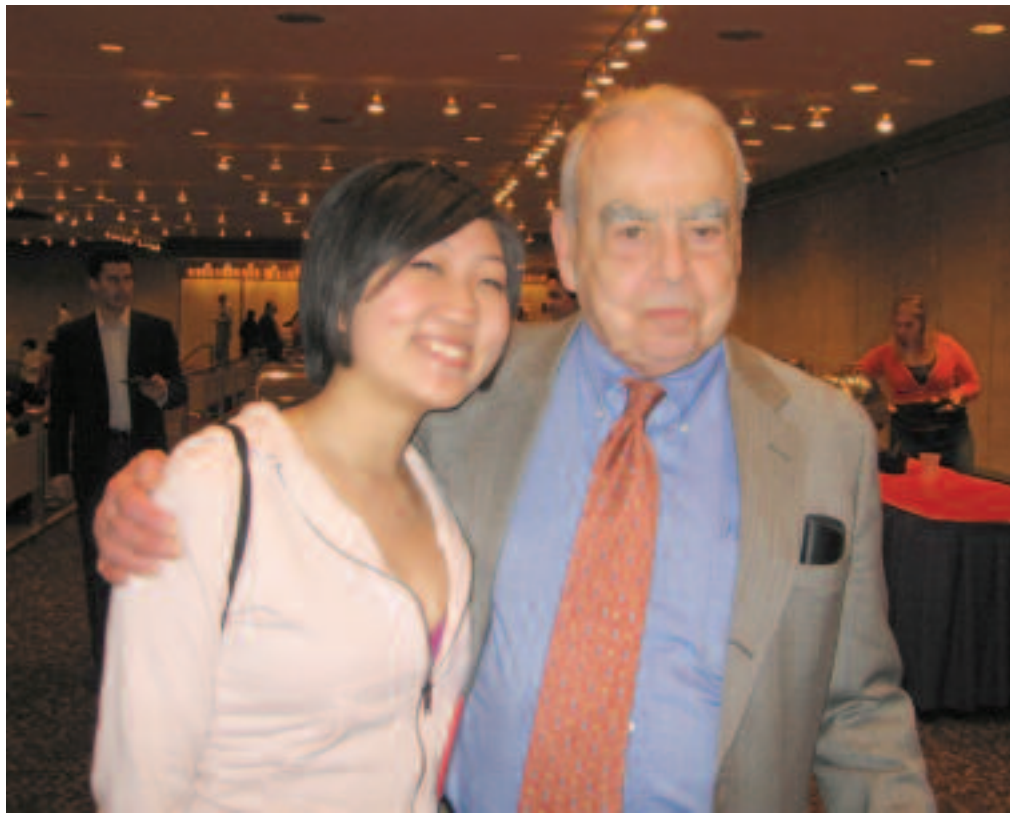
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STONY BROOK PRESS: PUT THE DISCLAIMER UP YOUR ASS

By Matthew Rammelkamp

Due to multiple statements that are beyond cavil, and theories that will, most likely, offend anyone who has any connection, no matter how tenuous, to the events of 9/11 (including, but not limited to, having been alive on that day), The Stony Brook Press must ensure that those who might consider reading the following article be forewarned that, due to the author's many and numerous vitriolic complaints about The Press' editorial process, the following article has not been edited in any way, shape, or form and thus appears verbatim from the author's original submission, fallacies, lies, slanderous statements, half-truths, and irrational musings included.

Last semester I submitted an anonymous article to the Press in which I totally lost respect for whoever the editor of the article and the editor-in-chief was at the time. At the time I was determined to get the truth out yet concerned for my long-term freedom and safety that I sent the Press the article from an anonymous e-mail address on a public computer. The title was "How Explosives, Not Planes Took Down The Towers." Although at the time the information was very underground and unaccepted by even the far-left, I was not with concerned with called the often dreaded "conspiracy theorist." Oh yes, many would have called it wacko, disrespectful or even quackery, but that wasn't my concern. Actually the real reason I submitted it anonymously is because I remember reading in the Press a few years ago that the secret service subpoenaed newspaper archives to keep track of political activists. Well, I'm already on their list so fuck it.

I now feel that since other well respected members of our government and across the world have begun to speak up and question the official conspiracy theory of the events on 9/11, I am no longer jeopardizing my own safety by openly talking about the issue. However, those who are speaking out are not Noam Chomsky (gatekeeper of information for the far-left), and they are not Howard Zinn (although A People's History of 9/11 is being re-written with the spread and debate of this information). They are not Michael Moore or Ralph Nader. The people who are speaking out are the Former German Defense Minister Andreas von Buelow, Rocket Scientist and Businessman Robert M. Bowman, Economist Morgan Reynolds, and even Former Assistant of the Treasury in the Reagan administration Paul Craig Roberts who was also former Wall Street Journal editor, and the one who conned the term "Reaganomics." This is not to mention the consensus opinion among fire engineering experts, witness accounts from hundreds of firemen who were in the building on 9/11 and have been threatened to shut the fuck up, and simply the slow motion footage of the towers collapsing. For me, the obvious key to the puzzle was how the landlord of the WTC buildings, the media, and the NYC fire department all admit that building 7 was taken down with planted explosives (it wasn't hit by a plane!). They just don't talk about it. Who would find the time to, and find it necessary to demolish the building farthest away from the North and South Towers, which only had a couple small, localized fires? People who demolish buildings for a living claim it takes two weeks up to two months to plan for and plant the explosives in a building in order to demolish it.

It is ironic how credibility is gained from popular figures (who might have not even taken an engineering class in their life) but not the actual

experts. It is in this way that people like Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore are "gatekeepers." One is a linguistics professor and the other an obese filmmaker. Yet the minute they go on TV or give a speech about it is the minute you believe it. But if they don't mention it, you won't even consider researching it. What if Moore made a movie about how the three buildings in New York were taken down by explosives placed by our government – rather than making a movie that Hollywood would actually allow so that he can still make a fortune?



Unlike Hollywood, the internet – an uncensored medium so far – provides a growingly popular yet still alternative view of the events of 9/11.

Who are the Experts who agree with me? The world of engineering, chemistry, physics. These are the questions that should determine what we believe: How the building fell: The temperature that melts steel and how hot the building got from fire; the speed the towers fell versus the speed of freefalling objects; etc. Many of you can research this information on your own since you are enrolled in these classes. Look up the information, ask your professors, and find the answers. One thing that you will find is that the official story of 9/11 is itself a huge conspiracy theory. Well actually theories are used to guesstimate what one doesn't know. If the government knowingly carried out the attacks – their conspiracy theory is just a blatant L-I-E. They've done it before, this is nothing new. I only believed them because I was fooled. The planes hitting the towers were an illusion. The explosives were already planted. Adolph Hitler is famous for saying "Make the lie big, make it simple, keep saying it, and eventually they will believe it...The greater the lie, the greater the chance that it will be believed".

In the words of Mr. Reaganomics, "Why is it largely accepted that the Bush administration lied about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and yet many still believe they told the truth about 9/11?" In order for a tiny minority to control a majority you need to make the sheep control each others opinions and minds. Think for yourself and

don't be worried about ridicule.

Since most people are sheep and don't do the research into things themselves (partly because that's the way society is structured: you need to work to survive, and so you have no free time to find out the truth and you stay ignorant and submissive). Mr. Reaganomics also questions "...why three World Trade Center buildings on one day collapsed into their own footprints at free fall speed, an event outside the laws of physics except under conditions of controlled demolition?" Now I'm not going to give you any numerical or factual evidence because I did that in the last article, but if you can't get access to the archives because the secret service is in there, just visit www.REOPEN911.org and order a free 3 hour long DVD full of evidence. I'm glad that the nice people at the Social Justice Alliance have agreed to screen the film, and the young nice lady at SBU-TV has agreed to show it daily starting in a week or two. Unfortunately, last semester the Press was not nice enough.

The Press put an almost unprecedented disclaimer in front of my article, which they usually only use for racist, sexist, or homophobic pieces. The disclaimer totally destroyed my credibility. It claimed that the writers in the press don't agree with my article, and that "Next Week We Will Be Covering How the Government Engineered Hurricane Katrina!" I went in and asked them who was writing the Katrina article, only to be told it was a joke the editor inserted to make fun of my article. Although I felt like also writing the Katrina article, I didn't find time in my schedule to research it at the time. Yes, the government can control the weather! I guess you've never heard of the HAARP project since Moore never made a film about it?

HAARP stands for High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP) and was started in 1993 as an investigation project to "understand, simulate and control ionospheric processes that might alter the performance of communication and surveillance systems." Bernard Eastlund, a physicist who helped develop HAARP in the 1980s proposed using high-frequency radio waves to beam large amounts of power into the ionosphere, energizing its electrons and ions in order to disable incoming missiles, knock out enemy satellite communications, change weather patterns (specifically but not limited to use in war), and to disrupt human mental processes. The US military became interested in the idea as an alternative to the laser-based Strategic Defense Initiative, and this program currently operates from the wilderness of Alaska. Yet the only thing leftists talk about involving Alaska is how to save a wilderness that no one lives near anyway.

Continued on next page

By Matthew Rammelkamp

Continued from previous page

Note to the person who edited my article last semester (which I claimed to be "John Stern") – you are a fucking douchebag scumbag. I don't know who you are, but if you know who I am, have the guts to tell me it was you and that now you feel like an asshole. To just about every single other frequent Press writer – this paper is one of the most uneducational publications on the East Coast. Maybe if you take a word from our buddy Socrates you'll feel less inclined to write about your first orgasm experience and you'll actually do some muckraking and write a decent piece of information: "Wisdom is knowing how little we actually know."

"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State." — Joseph Goebbels, German Minister of Propaganda, 1933-1945

"Those who cast the votes decide nothing. Those who count the votes decide everything." —Josef Stalin

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed people can change the world: indeed it's the only thing that ever has!" - Margaret Meade

~www.INFOWARS.com

~www.REOPEN911.org

Circus of the Stupid Continued...

By Vincent Michael Festa

Continued from page 8

of pointless garbage about dollars, pop-icons, Hollywood-style gossip, and plain Jane clothing outfits? Someone out there to make me think...

I just hope that maybe some of you who are also sick and tired of being mistreated also feel that something needs to be done, anything to no longer deal with the world stopping for an answer. Whether it's finding the right people, the right interests, and maybe the right mindset, attitude, or environment, no more where people feel they must pay for other people's mistakes or deal with mediocrity.

I may have come across as sounding very bitter, impatient, or even arrogant. But with the rampant amount of people that drive me up the wall in the way they act or think, I have a valid reason to be. And for those who are who I'm talking about, just get away...just get the hell away from me.

By Alison Schwartz

Continued from page 14

characters could be spawned of their namesake.

The point is, an inanimate object should not dominate thought, time, or limit social relations. It should not replace real life, face-to-face interaction, and become a mitigating agent for loneliness. It should not serve as a surrogate parent when mothers and fathers do not know how to shut up their children. There should be more to discuss with our peers and coworkers than a fictional representation of life's experiences or an idealized depiction of romanticism, something more substantial and less fleeting. Does the acknowledgement that you all mutually gaze into the same "televisionary" abyss instill you with sensations of soulful intimacy? Doubtful.

I'm fine with television serving as the occasional medium of entertainment. We all need to zone out after a week of midterms. What irks me predominantly is when an individual's social calendar pivots around the TV Guide. Or when I overhear

someone speaking of a character like he or she is a breathing, tangible entity in the land of the living. Some honestly worship the television box, bowing before it nightly and allowing it to shape beliefs and influence moods like an all-knowing god. These are all telltale signs that television has reduced you to a mentally pirated drone.

Is the television then being watched, or is it watching us?

To avoid accusations of hypocrisy, I will admit that I tend to indulge in television's triviality from time to time. I am selective of what I watch and I am always consciously agitated when a conversation revolves around output of the infernal box. Everything in life must be done in moderation. Of course I wonder how Jack Bauer will save the world again, what the answers are to the unending slew of questions that arise on *Lost* and whether McDreamy will choose the intern or the wife. But, such existential conundrums do not keep me awake at night.

Hopeless in the Hamptons: Why We Love

Lapham

By Rebecca Kleinhaut

It's difficult to remember a time when the East End was something other than the pristine picture of expendable wealth. As part-time or full-time Long Island residents, most of us have experienced the frustration of Old Montauk Highway's fifteen mile per hour speed limit, as well as the stretches of empty beach that cannot be accessed without an expensive pass. It's become just as difficult to track down year-round residents as it has to find a sandwich under six dollars. Through *Lapham Rising*, Roger Rosenblatt, full-time resident of the East End, feels Long Island's pain as it groans under the weight of bulky cars and large homes.

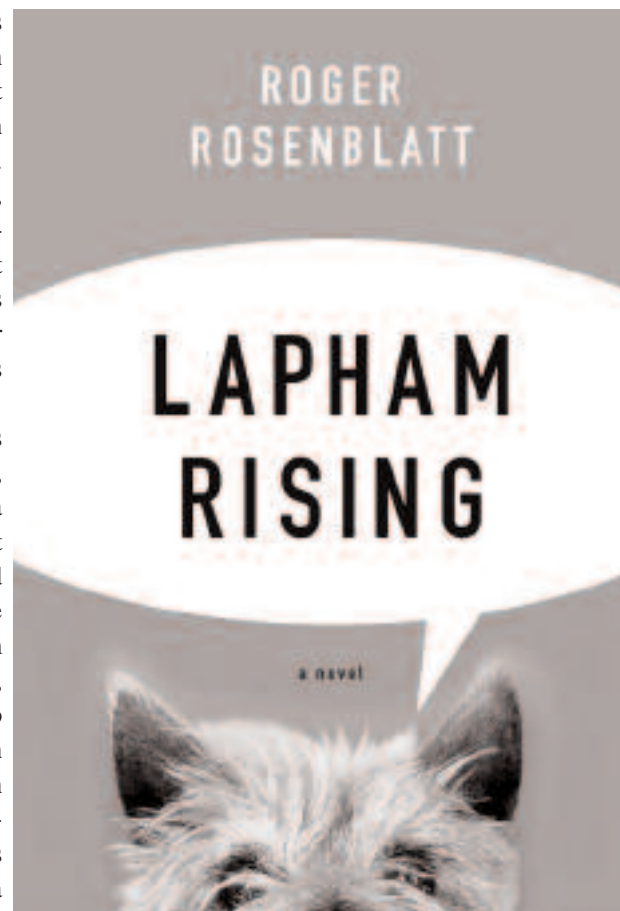
Harry March is an embittered ex-writer, divorcée, and owner of a talking evangelical West Highland Terrier. Tired of the change in the Hampton's lifestyle from farmers to freeloaders, March exiles himself to his small cottage in Quogue, which has been in his family for generations. However, chaos ensues when Lapham, a billionaire socialite and budding New York Senator, decides to build a 36,000 square foot mansion next door, complete with an entire room for asparagus tongs and a ceiling mural of Adam breathing the gift of life into a pollywog. Rather than standing back and allowing this erection to continue its upward trend, Harry

decides to take matters into his own less-than-capable hands, standing up for the little bit of small town pride left on his overrun island.

Struggling students love to see socialites look like idiots, particularly those students that were forced to vacate Long Island University's Southampton campus last year. Roger Rosenblatt,

the author of *Lapham Rising*, is a former professor of creative writing at the college and will be joining Stony Brook's staff in the fall. Ex-Southamptonites will take delight in the mention of the local college being run down to make room for mansions, and that the Blowhard, an earsplitting air conditioner on Lapham's property, was manufactured by the Tilles Corporation (with real-life Roger Tilles being a member of Long Island University's Board of Trustees). For those of you who haven't been relocated, have no fear; if you have seen your community cast into the shadows of so-called bigger and better homes, you have a little Harry March inside of you. Even if his

quixotic and isolated behavior does not sit well, Rosenblatt's novel will make any middle class resident chuckle and nod their heads in agreement. For anyone who has ever wished to one day purchase a house in any part of the Hamptons, this book will succinctly and swiftly change your mind.





Alex GEISSBUHLER

Obscure Figures From
U.S History



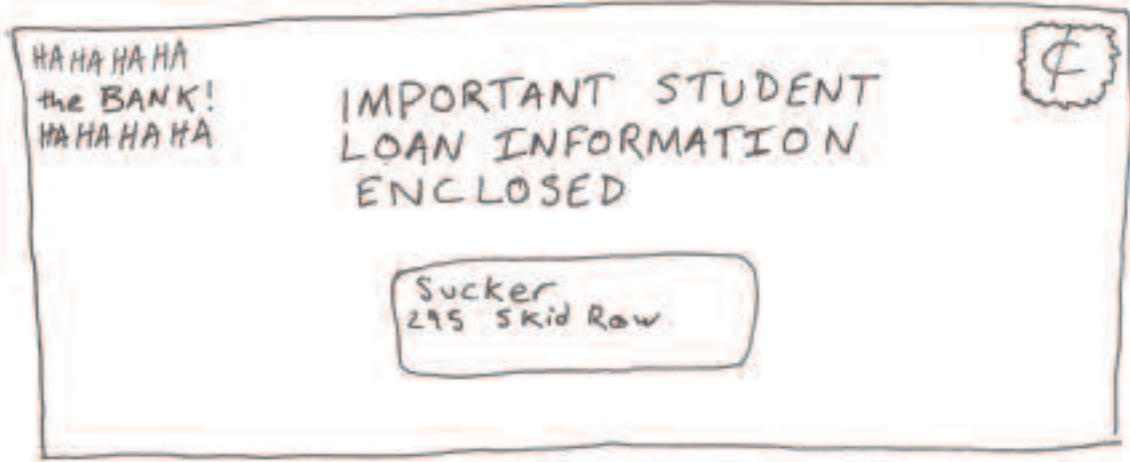
This was supposed to be a memorial cartoon about Don Knotts, but when I tried to draw him, I just made this horrifying thing. It's 4 AM and it's creeping me out. But the point is to celebrate the career of Don Knotts. So go rent *The Ghost and Mr. Chicken* or creepy cartoon Don Knotts will haunt your dreams.



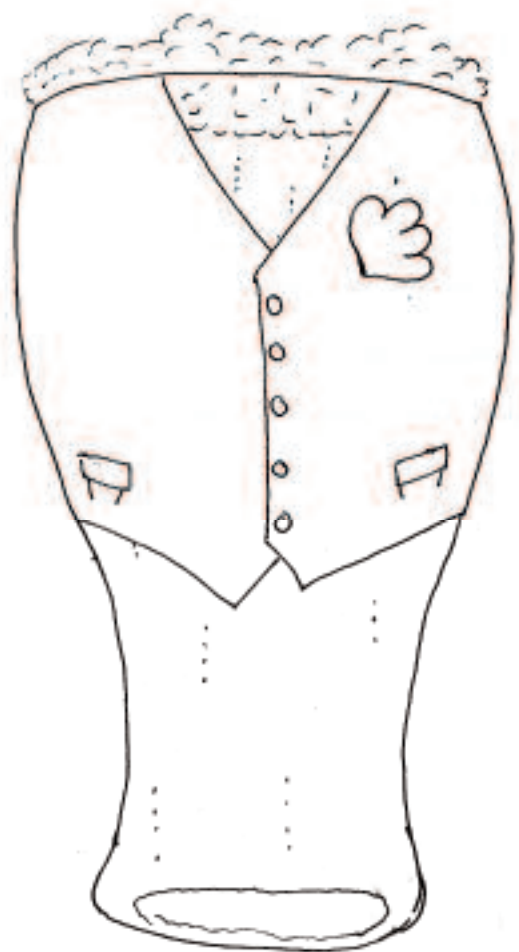
Hey, kids!
It's 26th
Secretary
of State,
Hamilton
Fish!
Rejoice
and Make
Merry.



How do you
Spend your
unemployment
cheCque?

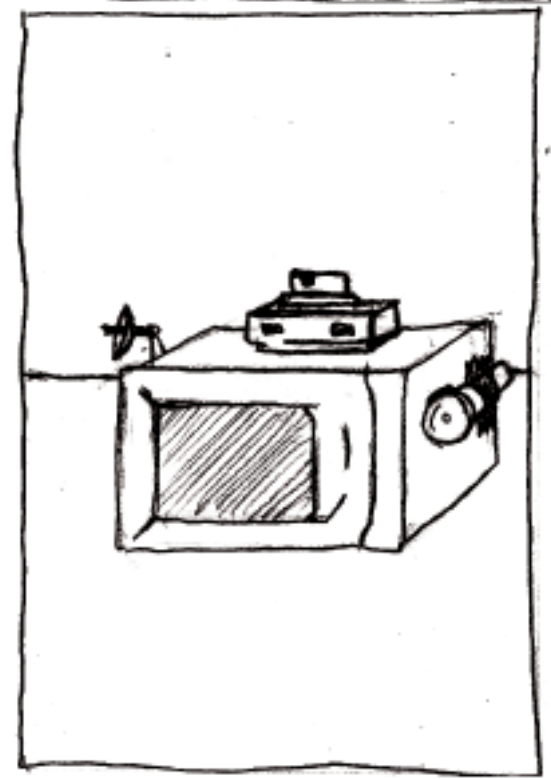
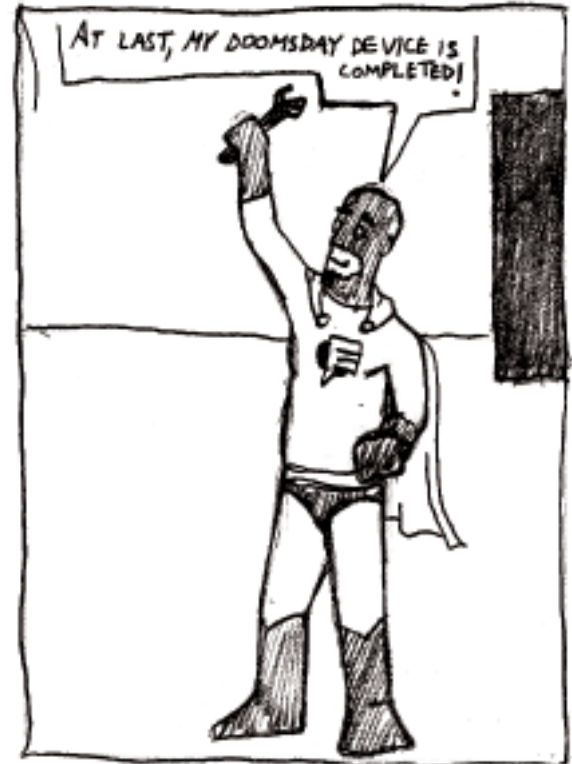


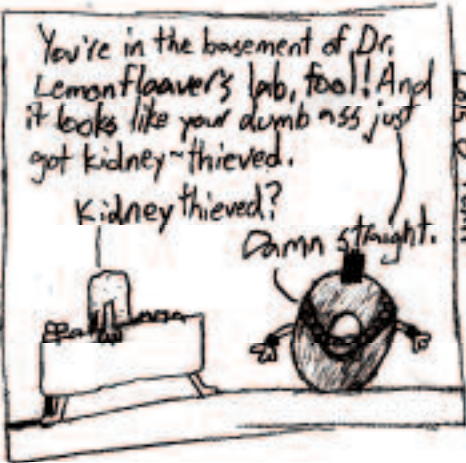
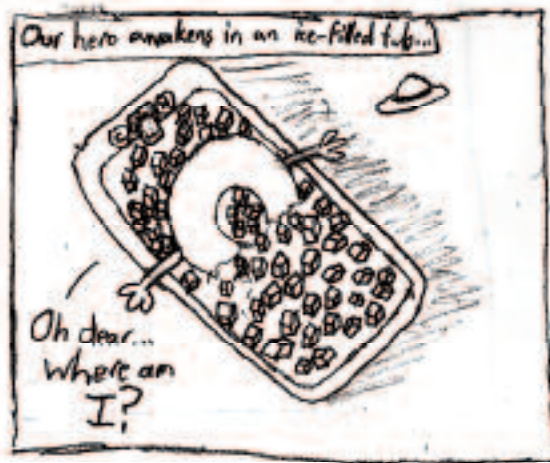
Obscure Figures From
U S History



Watch out!
It's turn-
of-the-
Century
Indiana
Senator
Albert
Beveridge!
Festoon
with laurels.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE
DASTARDLY DYNAMO
BY JAMES MESSINA

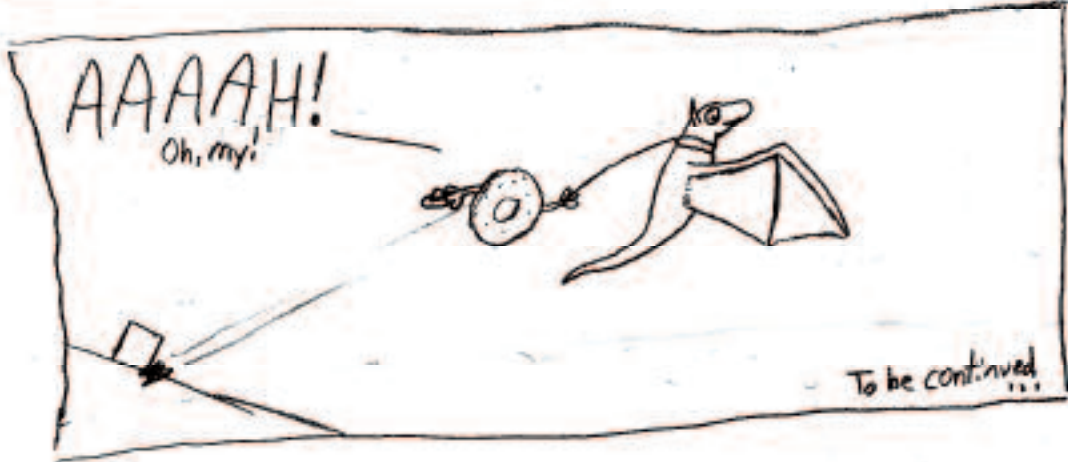
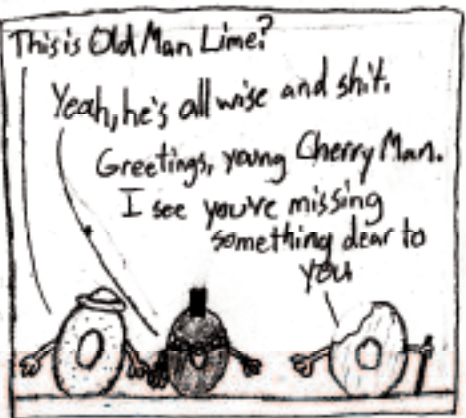




The Secret Origin of Cherry Cherry Frost Loops - Part Two -

by Alex Wabsh

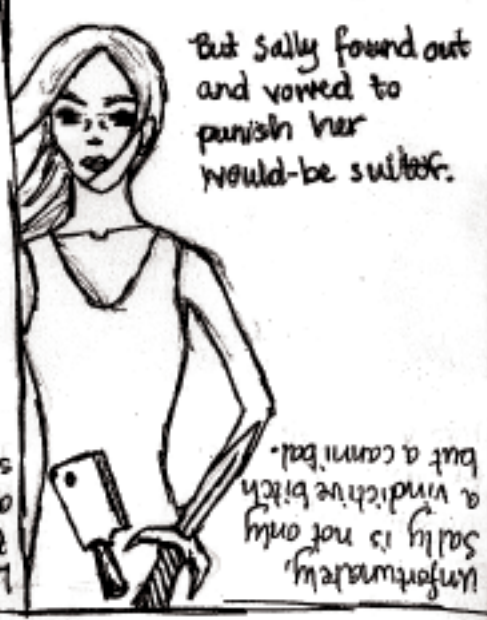
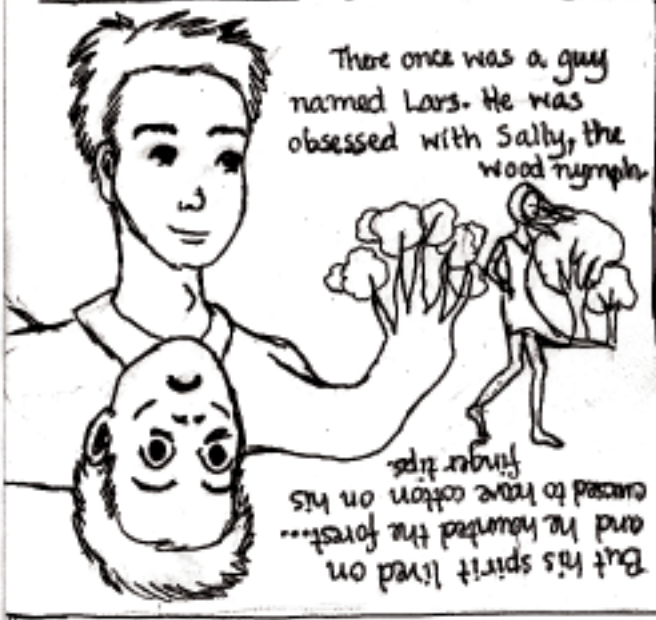
Last Issue: Our previously unnamed protagonist, Nigel Cherrystarthing was drugged and kidney-thieved by the mad scientist, Doctor Lemonflower, who bears a striking, but totally inadvertent resemblance to Hitler.



Next issue... it might end, I don't know. Check back to find out, kiddies.

-AW

Poor Lars: READ IT ONE WAY AND TURN IT UPSIDE DOWN TO CONTINUE THE TALE (Dame Dorey rip-off) - S. Hayes



Ask Nelson Mandela Anything

By Nelson Mandela

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Dear Mr. Mandela,

Some white bullies have been hassling me at school. They take my lunch money and if I don't give it to them they beat me up. My mom only gives me enough for lunch because she doesn't make much money. I've been eating chips and twenty-five cent chocolate milk. I've got to make them stop but I can't fight them because there are too many. Please help me Mr. Mandela, you're my only hope.

Sincerely,

Harry from High School

Dear Harry,

First you should figure out what they buy with your lunch money. Then you've got to make it better and have it ready each morning. Pack in brown paper bags, they'll get the hint soon enough. Favorites for school are pizza bagels and peanut butter & jelly sandwiches. The sandwiches should be made with whole wheat bread, it's good for you, promotes digestion. The only thing to remember about pizza bagels is that you should use plain bagels, you never know what bagel types people might prefer.

Dear Mr. Mandela,

Wha was being in jail like? I's got me a cousin who's doing ten twenny for armed robbery. I hear' you spent quite a bit o' time in the pen. I's wunnerin' if you got any words for keepin' yo' keister kosher.

Sincerely,

Butch in Buxton

Dear Butch,

You're cousin is out of luck with Kosher meals. There was no kosher food in the prison I was in. What you can do is make some kosher meals for him. Remember some key things, no meat *with* cheese, no ham, no seafood that isn't fish. Some ingredients need to be gotten from Rabbis that prepare them. You can't make everything yourself but you can use eggs, vegetables, fruits, grains, beef, or chicken. Soy is good protein substitute. What I like the most is plain porridge with fresh milk and fresh fruit.



Dear Mr. Mandela,

The advice you give is priceless. I fed my brother doing time in Sing-Sing and I stopped the bullies from bothering me between third and fourth period. I need to know what knife you recommend for cutting fle - er, Ham. I need to know what knife you use to cut ...ham. Also, what brand strainer do you use for spaghetti?

Sincerely,

Wits End in Washington

Dear Wits,

First off, I'm not a fan of ham. I like fresh sheep traditionally prepared. I use a stainless steel meat cleaver to get the right chops. It's 6.25 inches long and it's weighted in the handle so it rests nicely in your hand. After that, I carve up the pieces I cut off with a Chef Cutlery Executive Series Granton Slicer, it's 8 inches long and it's beautiful. When I can't prepare the meat in the traditional way I like to sauté the chops with onions and tomatoes. A little parsley for color and some mashed potatoes really brings the palate full circle.

Listen Up Mandela,

You think you can hand out advice like this? I have a TV show and it's my main source of income, damnit! Go back to prison Mandela, you weren't a pain in my ass when you were behind bars. I'll take that Granton slicer and snap it over my knee. Mine's a ten incher and it'll be the least of your problems if you don't put an end to this little piss-ant column.

Fuck you and die,

Martha in Maine

Dear Martha,

If you think my cooking is hurting your livelihood then you should see how well I crochet. I can also recommend a great recipe for humble pie - you're going to need it. Start off by preheating the oven to 300 degrees. In a medium bowl mix 3 eggs, a melted stick of butter, a cup and a half of sugar, 2 tablespoons of flour, 2 tablespoons of vinegar and 1 tablespoon of vanilla. Pour into a pie shell and bake for 45 minutes. Eat *that*.

Dude, not really *by* Nelson Mandela, ok?

The Only **TOP TEN**

Times it's Inappropriate to say
"FUCK YOU!"

- | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|
| 10 | "Do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife?" | 5 | "Honey, you forgot your lunch." |
| 9 | "Excuse me Sir, your table is ready." | 4 | "Is it a boy or a girl?" |
| 8 | "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?" | 3 | "Would you like fries with that?" |
| 7 | "Trick or Treat!" | 2 | "What sound does a doggy make?" |
| 6 | "And the Academy Award goes to..." | 1 | "Where, on the doll, did they touch you?" |

You too can contribute to the Top Ten by visitng the Stony Brook Press website and registering an account!

Visit www.thestonybrookpress.com now, bitches

Love travels at illegal speeds - Graham Coxon

Graham Coxon's 6th solo album *Love Travels at Illegal Speeds* drops on March 13th ... but only in the UK 🇬🇧. Not that I got it when it was leaked to the internet last month but I'm *guessing* it's pretty awesome. Most tracks carry on the American audience friendly power pop ~~etc~~ which is cool but the highlight is the sad, slow "Just a State of Mind" which caters best to Coxon's endearing shy person voice. It's my favorite song by Graham right now - or... uh... it *might* be my favorite when I get to listen to it for the first time on a legitimate CD...

SBU TV

Applications are available for the following Executive Board Positions at SBU-TV for 2006/2007:

- Program Director**
- Production Manager**
- Chief Editor**
- Technical Manager**

Forms can be picked up at the SBU-TV Office, Room 073, Student Union.

Application Deadline is April 6th.

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| Incense | Dancewear/Fetishwear |
| Candles | Flower Child Tanks & Tees |
| Aromatherapy | Lingerie |
| Posters/Tapestries | Rock Tees |
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Origins and Destinies: Immigration and Transmigration

By Adina Silverbush

Courtesy of Steve Marsh



A story of immigration given entirely through dance left an audience moved and entertained. True unity and imagination took place on Feb. 23rd as I sat in Staller Theater One to view this original work. "Origins and Destinies: Immigration and Transmigration" was comprised of fifteen undergraduate students under the direction of Amy Yopp Sullivan. They showed total devotion and seriousness to this important topic.

"Origins and Destinies" was the story of immigrants leaving their homelands and arriving in new countries. It showed the struggle, abuse and excitement of this life-changing move. It showed physical abuse and rape, it used fabrics as almost another character, and it showed the discovery of

new foods (bananas in this case). This show was minimal but not in the least bit lacking. Simple props were gracefully moved by the cast on and off and were just as significant to the show as the performers. The show showcased all of the performers, all of whom, I felt, were extremely talented. Although they performed as an ensemble, they brought individuality to the stage. Each one represented a different culture, which was essential to this piece.

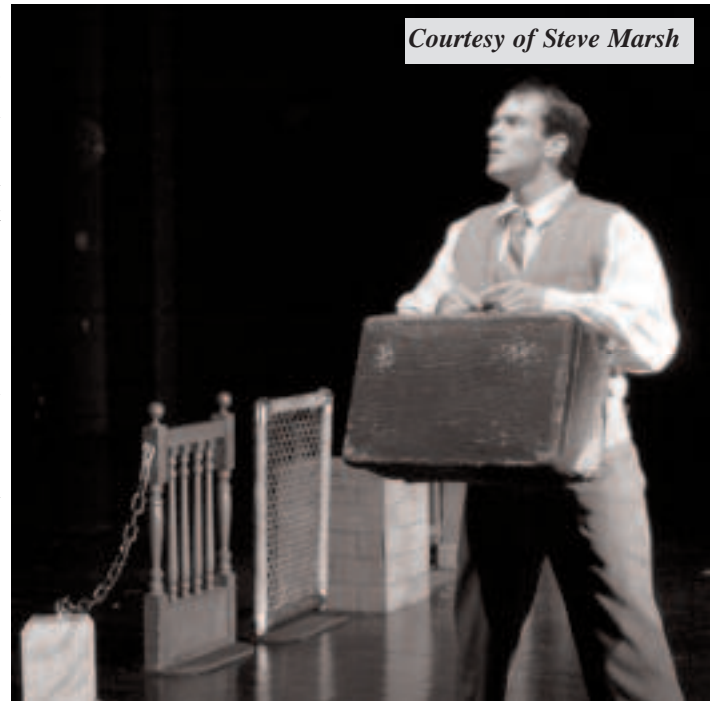
The style of the piece was of poetic expressionism, meaning not a realistic piece but meant to evoke emotion in its audience. The plot was not sequential, as it was broken up into different song numbers and there was no dialogue. Apparently there was supposed to be a media addition to the show which would have been slides at the back of the stage, but these were apparently removed and could have been the missing link that might have made the numbers less confusing. Deborah Mayo acted as narrator reading several poems, including "Journey of the Magi" by T.S. Eliot and several others by W.S. Merwin. The poems were especially powerful, woven into music that represented different cultures, which was also often filled with chanting.

The reaction to the piece seemed mixed. When using such an unfamiliar genre, I suspect it's normal to have disapproval. I, however, felt moved by the work of my fellow students who obviously put their full focus into their performance. The movement was natural and beautiful, and the piece was flaw-

less to my eyes.

I brought my suitemate to the performance who, unlike me, had the experience of undergoing immigration. She felt especially connected to the show, especially to one poem in the play describing the struggle of having to give up one's past knowledge in order to assimilate to one's new home country. This dilemma of deciding what to do, and the betrayal of abandoning one's past is the human struggle that comes with immigration. We must not abandon our immigrants but embrace and acknowledge what these people had to go through in order to be Americans. This show helped open my eyes.

Courtesy of Steve Marsh



A Movie I Think You Should See

Herman: You said you wanted to put an end to all this.

Max: Oh, yeah. I, uh, was gonna try and have that tree over there fall on you.

Herman: That big one?

Max: Yup.

Herman: It would have flattened me like a pancake. What stopped you?

Max: I don't know. What's the point? She loves you.

Herman: She's my Rushmore, Max.

Max: Yeah, I know. She was mine too.

I'm a firm believer in the principle that the most wonderful things in life are beyond description. This is a concept that I think rings true for Wes Anderson's 1998 enigmatic, coming-of-age tale, *Rushmore*. Set in a high-class preparatory school, *Rushmore* is the story of an overachieving ne'er-do-well named Max Fischer. The sophomore Max, while being the founder and president of numerous clubs (and the director of a many "hit plays"), is an academic disaster. After meeting Max in a scene of improbable fantasy, the audience is introduced to the film's second principle character, Mr. Herman Blume. Blume (the wealthy father of Max's twin classmates) gains Max's immediate respect when he suggests taking "dead aim on the rich boys." Many would say the friendship between the characters is based in their mutual disappointment with life or some sort of childish

ennui. Both are the manifestations of what each longs for in his own life: for Blume, an intelligent and ambitious son, and for Max, a wealthy, successful father. However, their relationship seems more founded in their need for reciprocated admi-

"Maybe I'm spending too much of my time starting up clubs...and putting on plays...I should probably be trying harder to score chicks."

ration. Both need someone to envy and someone to envy them.

The conflict of the picture is embodied in a gentle 1st grade teacher with an English brogue named Ms. Cross. In events so pathetic as to be humorous, both Max and Blume fall completely in love with her. Consequently, Max gets expelled, Blume gets divorced, and a massive war ensues. Between releasing bees into Blume's hotel suite and running over Max's bike, cutting the brakes on Blume's Bentley and getting Max arrested, Max has an epiphany. Heartbroken but realistic, he sees the futility of pursuing Ms. Cross and instead devotes his energies toward helping Blume win her over.

It sounds cute, right? Well, it is. And if

cuteness does not appeal to you, how about a few well-illustrated justifications?

1. The Acting: In the words of my buddy Napoleon, it's "flippin' sweet!" Jason Schwartzman epitomizes the confused yet charming teenage nerd. It takes a special kind of man to pull off a green velour tuxedo while bike riding, and it takes one hardcore geek to look cool doing it. Following suit with his other films, the cast includes many of Wes Anderson's buddies, like Luke Wilson (Owen Wilson was the co-author) and Bill Murray as Herman Blume. If anyone told me that in ten years Dr. Venkman would be cast as a sensitive, drunken, millionaire businessman I'd have said, "pssh, whatever, homeslice," but his performance is flawless. Not bad for a middle-aged Ghostbuster.

2. Quotability: Every five seconds Max spouts a new morsel of his indie teenaged wisdom. Perfect for inside jokes, text messages, and little blurbs on your Facebook or MySpace. Now everyone will think you are smart and funny...or that you are just a hapless loser who is trying way too hard.

3. The Music: The soundtrack is amazing and couldn't be better suited to the film. Made up of mainly Brit invasion tunes from the likes of The Who and Cat Stevens, it is cheerful and pleasant, but still pensive, with substance. All the original

Continued on next page

Electric Chair Theatre Presents, Or, an Album I May or may Not Be Obsessed With

By Madeline Scheckter

Stiffs, Inc. is one of the greatest bands you've never heard of. They released their second and last album in 1997, played their last show in 1998 and bid us adieu. From then on, Stiffs, Inc.'s music became increasingly difficult to find, which is precisely what is meant when people use the phrase "damn shame". Nearly 10 years after they left music fans wondering why they never called us back when, really, we thought we'd been perfectly charming, their music continues to resonate, it continues to be visionary, and it continues to be stunning. Described occasionally and as accurately as is possible as "Victorian punk", Stiffs, Inc. created a sound that inspires the most adoring and perhaps cultish fans. I'll be honest; writing a review on Stiffs, Inc. is a complete farce. This isn't a review; it's a sermon.

Neither I nor my imaginary crack team of statisticians, scientists, small children, smaller dogs, sociologists and music critics has been able to figure out why interest in Stiffs, Inc. seems to have picked up in the past year, but we can certainly tell you it has. Perhaps it is this that has led Stiffs, Inc. to officially resurface (myspace.com/stiffsync). Perhaps this increased interest prompted the re-release of *Electric Chair Theatre Presents* in January. Nearly ten years after it was released, the climate is finally right for *ECT*. This may have to do with global warming, but it needs more study. Nevertheless, but in fact all the more, it is thus my moral obligation, my civic duty, and my extreme pleasure to tell you to go buy *ECT*. From beginning to end, this album is clever without being obnoxious, intelligent without being pretentious, and incredibly weird without being annoying or trite. Musically, the general consensus is that they paved the way for bands like Franz Ferdinand, The Decembrists, The Stokes, et cetera.

There are a million reasons for a person to buy this album. I have neither the time, nor the patience, nor the print space to list all of them. First, the songs are full of interesting references both literary and cinematic. These references provide not only hours of fun when one tries to figure them out, but also an enjoyable sense of futility, uselessness, and cultural ignorance. Second, *ECT* syncs up with the Kino, International release of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* far better than Pink Floyd ever did with *The Wizard of Oz*. The songs' subjects somehow reflect what is happening in the

film, characters move to the music. It is truly the most brilliant of coincidences. Third, the songs are so layered, one is tempted to bandy about words like "genius", but one realizes that is socially irresponsible. The entire album is wonderful; it



Stiffs, Inc.
Courtesy of Marti Wilkerson

inspires feelings of wonder and dread. According to my O.E.D., that means *Electric Chair Theatre Presents* is truly freakin' awesome.

It is standard in reviews to point to stand-out tracks. It seems frivolous to do that with an album I think is better than cheesecake, but what the hell, I'll talk about three songs that offer more pleasure in their company than most people do. "Gold Diggers of 1996" is delightfully satisfying in lyrical complexity. Musically, it has enough layers to seduce but not so many that it becomes confusing. Also, it has some lyrics in Pig Latin, which is charming. As the first full-length track, it draws the listener in; building and building and coming to a sudden stop. After this track, one cannot help wanting to hear the rest of the album (multiple times, if possible). "Caligari Wonders" sounds like its namesake. There is a fine line between who is mad and who is not, and the fantastic instrumental work truly gives the impression of that grey line as the music mimics a loss of control. Finally, "Richard" closes out the album. It makes references to *Richard III*, and Shakespeare is, in fact, pretty damn cool thankyouverymuch. This song has always given me a knot in my stomach, and a song with the power to do that is certainly worth listening to.

One may hear songs at Stiffs, Inc.'s MySpace site, and one can purchase the album at <http://cdbaby.com/cd/stiffsync>. As of this time, Stiffs, Inc. insist that they are still broken up, but perhaps one day they'll call us music fans back. We *have* been perfectly charming, after all.

Effi - *Sovereign Soul*

By Lukasz Chelminski

This release would actually be decent if Effi wasn't on it. Unfortunately, it is her band. I don't think I've heard much worse lyrics this side of power metal. At least those bands kind of do it on purpose. I think Effi's prose is meant to be serious and 'deep'. My suspicions are supported by our friend Effi inside what looks to be a Starbucks on the back insert of the disc case.



Sounds like it looks
Courtesy of Effi

The bass lines are kind of interesting at times, in an x-rated movie soundtrack kind of way. The disc booklet tells me that some dude named Kevin Connelly is responsible for them. Of course that is offset and thus ruined by the Effi's painful high notes, which could be likened to thrusting a rusty serrated knife into and out of your ear repeatedly (and I'm only on track two!).

Did I mention how terrible the lyrics are? Ok, you've said 'soul lovers' a dozen times in a row. You're supposed to be deep and introspective. I guess making my ears bleed is kind of deep, if not introspective. I'm certainly thinking about the effect this is having on me. Hemorrhaging? You could also say that my anger is hemorrhaging right now for being subjected to this (how's that for deep?). I'm kind of having fun with it though. I've always thought that I have some masochistic tendencies. Thanks for the opportunity, Effi.

Masochism isn't always fun though. Track five does this annoying thing where her shrieking voice went from the right to the left of the sound field and threw my balance off in an un-fun kind of way. Sometimes being off balance can be fun, like when you're drunk, or at a good show, or drunk at a good show. I can't think of many more situations. Oh, being on a trampoline or in a ball pit is fun too!

"Visions they look like you, you put them into me". A failed attempt at being profound takes a turn for the creepy – oh shit, someone just started rocking out. Just the kind of crap I hate. It's like Alanis Morissette doing math metal (or math-core, if you are really cool).

I might be able to ignore the lyrics if the composition didn't force them into the foreground. The delivery sounds self-important and pretentious throughout. If what she was singing matched her actual emotions I might be able to take the lyrics more seriously, or they would at least blend into the composition better.

I can't end this review without mentioning that one of these songs has a whole section in Greek. In fact, the lyrics in the booklet are also written in the Greek alphabet. I don't know why, but that makes me *angry*. It seems just a bit pretentious and unnecessary.

Some of the songs on this release really suck. The vast majority of the lyrical content is terrible, and Effi's voice makes me want to put a gun to my head, but some people might enjoy that. I'm talking about her voice. The backing band usually has something interesting going on. This is ironic because it seems like *Sovereign Soul* is supposed to display Effi's talent and her Greek roots, or something. If you like female fronted bands that use their singer's first name as their band name, you'll love *Sovereign Soul*.

Rushmore

By Caroline Ann D'Agati

Continued from last page

music is composed by Mark Mothersbaugh, formerly of eighties techno group Devo. Mothersbaugh also composed the music for *Rugrats* on Nickelodeon as well. You can be the judge of whether that is a pro or con...I still haven't made up my mind on that one.

4. **The Ending:** All right, I won't spoil

anything, as impossible as it is not to do so. But I will say this: the last scene is one of those perfect things that you cannot express. There is something about it that is so joyful, even if it isn't happy. Your mind collapses and stops searching for meaning because your eyes and ears are too elated to wonder why. Two smiles, slow motion, and a felicitously tragic melody. I can't say what it means, but whatever it is, it's simply enchanting.

Writer/Artist- Will Eisner

A disgraced security guard recalls an amazing childhood ability of his, and decides to show to the world that he can fly. The hero discovers that his enemies have fled to the sewers, and formed an underground city. A toy machine gun wishes it was real. A war hero returns home to limited fanfare, and snaps, killing his wife. A detective is hired by the love of his life to prove that her husband is innocent of murder. These are five of the 22 seven-page stories reprinted in *The Best of the Spirit*. While they hold up to the best stories published today in any medium, they were ahead of their time when Will Eisner created them in the 1940s.

In 1940, the *Tribune* newspaper syndicate was looking to compete with the growing comic book form and hired a successful young cartoonist named Will Eisner to write and draw a comic book insert, included in newspapers nationwide. Eisner enjoyed the opportunity to entertain a more discriminating audience, which is why his stories are far more sophisticated, intelligent, inventive, and simply better than the other comic books of the Golden Age. Eisner was drafted into the military for a few years, and his book languished in lesser hands. When Eisner returned, he was better than ever and determined to use his entertaining little supplement to show just what could be accomplished in the medium. It's no coincidence that the vast majority of the stories in the trade paperback are from the post-war era.

The first of the prewar tales in the collection, "The Origin of the Spirit", relates to how criminologist Denny Colt fakes his death, gains a cemetery hideout, and decides to fight criminals who are out of the reach of ordinary cops. It's notable for predating the Spirit's mask, Eisner's response to the demands that the Spirit wear a costume. "Silk Satin" (the only other pre-war tale in the volume) is an entertaining caper, which introduces his greatest romantic interest, European thief Silk Satin, and demonstrates Eisner's growing artistic skill, from the opening page with a portrait of the Spirit watching three European crooks to Silk Satin removing a bullet that got caught in her arm in her first page to the fight between the Spirit & Satin (which ends in a kiss, of course.)

The Spirit is a great detective with a weird sense of humor. For every time he has the perfect solution to a problem, there's a time he's outsmarted, or when enemies just beat the crap out of him. Despite it all, he somehow manages to attract enough bad girls to impress James Bond. Sometimes he's the main character, sometimes he barely plays a role in a story, and other times he serves to haunt a guilty protagonist. The other recurring characters include obligatory cantankerous police contact Commissioner Dolan, his daughter Ellen (who is, of course, in love with the Spirit), wisecracking sidekick Sammy, and racial stereotype Ebony White. That last part is a long story to which I have nothing to add. If you're interested, google the term "Ebony White" and click on the links that don't involve interracial porn, or just look it up on Wikipedia.

The stories in the volume maintain a high level of quality, which exemplifies what Eisner was able to accomplish with *The Spirit*. It includes the tales such as "The Visitor", which was used in his how-to guides for the comics medium *Comics*

& *Sequential Art* and *Graphic Storytelling* (essential for anyone interested in working in the medium). It also includes the experimental stories that make the best of lists, such as "The Killer," and the tales that influenced other creators, most prominently Frank Miller, who admits basing Elektra on Silk Satin. Eisner's personal favorite Spirit tale, "The Story of Gerard Shnobble", was adapted into the award-winning 1994 Brazilian short movie *Geraldo Voador* ("Flying Gerhard") and included many elements similar to "The Man Who Could Fly," the first Marvel story involving mutants. The best stories of enemies P'gell, Satin, Sand Saref, crime boss The Octopus, and the homicidal Fox were reprinted alongside the best editions of recurring series, such as The Christmas Spirit.



There is a tremendous variety in the stories. "The Story of Rat-Tat the Toy Machine Gun" is told through the point of view of Rat-Tat, a toy machine gun who wants to be a real gun. I'm still surprised at how perfect Rat-Tat's facial expressions are and am convinced that Eisner could have made it into a very successful children's book. "The Last Hand," in which a murderer on the run finds himself the target of a twisted old woman, could have worked just as well as an EC horror title. "The Christmas Spirit of 1948" is an excellent combination of crime fiction and Christmas miracle.

Eisner was a master of the comic form, so the artwork is exceptional. He's great at the basics, such as good character design, and storytelling (he's written a well-regarded book on it), and he may be unsurpassed when it comes to facial expressions. In "The Visitor," take a look at the Spirit's face when he calls from a witness's house while kids climb all over him, or his bewilderment when an alien reveals she wants to stay on Earth. The book is filled with unforgettable visuals, such as Gerard Shnobble flying, scraps of paper forming the word "Spirit" in the air, and femme fatale P'gell lying on a couch, cigarette in her mouth,

explaining that her story is not for little boys.

The series was known for great experimental sequences, and the collection doesn't disappoint. "Ten Minutes" portrayed the last ten minutes of a young man's life, complete with the murder of a close friend in real-time. "The Killer" features scenes from the point of view of the murderer. "The Visitor" ends with an excellent sequence in which a seemingly ordinary man does something extraordinary while maintaining his sense of normalcy. "Two Lives" features parallels between a prisoner and his doppelganger, a man trapped in a loveless marriage, which just wouldn't work as well in any other medium, even after film and television implemented the split-screen technique.

After his groundbreaking work on *The Spirit*, Will Eisner left the comics industry for decades, returning in the late 70s with the groundbreaking *A Contract With God*, widely considered the first graphic novel and still one of the best. His later graphic novels varied from autobiographical work to a history of the Protocols of Zion. In addition to reprinting Eisner's Spirit work, Kitchen Sink Press produced new Spirit stories by creators such as Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman, Kurt Busiek, and Dave Gibbons. Eisner continued to do great work for the industry, the last of which was a six-page crossover between the Spirit and the Escapist (the superhero Michael Chabon created for his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Klay*). It was appropriate because of the influence the Spirit has had on Eisner's reputation and the influence Eisner's work on the Spirit had on a book about innovative Golden Age comics creators. Any supposedly inventive plot Kavalier & Klay came up with for their Escapist stories was based on Eisner's Spirit work. Eisner's death was front-page news in *The New York Times*.

Lou Fine & Jack Cole, the artists who took over for Eisner during his military absence, went on to become legends in the industry. Eisner's favorite assistant, Jules Feiffer, went on to become a renowned playwright and Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist. *The Best of the Spirit* has a cover price of fifteen dollars and can be found for nine dollars on the Discount Comic Book Service site (probably the best online comics retailer). Since the trade can only include a fraction of the great Spirit stories, more comprehensive reprints are available in DC's Spirit archives with a cover price of fifty dollars each (it should be noted that volumes five through nine feature the work produced while Eisner was serving in the military). If you're not interested in paying that much, the Kitchen Sink reprints can still be found in dollar bins. DC is currently planning a new Spirit monthly series, launching in June, with writer/artist Darwyn Cooke. He has a hell of a reputation to live up to.

Editorial Note: Comics is the shit. I think The Spirit is the first dude, I can recollect, who wore such a minimal disguise. Guess he didn't have too many people to protect. Lonely life of a superhero I guess. You know, I can't think of a superhero who didn't have to something to lose and didn't wear a mask.

Ask Amberly Jane

I need to whip myself with a claw-tipped, wire-barbed brush. Call myself naughty names, and SNAP! Dig in hard.

Maybe the sweet pain will goose and vamoose my ass into high gear. Hello pain, you are my catalyst. Snap! Pierce any dulled gray matter, spark some goddamned motivation.

Self-inflicted pain as an incentive. I need to unhinge daily habits – stop masturbating, stop sucking drugs, stop perusing all 260 million porn sites, stop playing FreeCell, wipe up the tits and whiskey, and partake instead in a little worthwhile behavior. Start papers, study for mid-terms, be a productive, proactive member of school and society!

Bah. Fuck that. I'll just keep boozing, and smoking, and fiddling with my piece, and in the end I'll still have the 3.9 that my parents are so proud of...and far fewer back scars. Snap!

Sorry I'm cranky. The weather has gotten to me. I'm drained and in need of hibernation. And I hate dressing like Jabba the Hutt every time I step outside.

Know what combats the winter doldrums? Mushrooms! Had a hearty mug of steaming fungi tea last week. When it turns blue, it's activated. Generous amount of honey. Stir. Gulp. Trip.

My friends ingested far more than I and ended up in a cuddle puddle on the bed, while my companion and I embarked on a quest for the bamboo forest. The yellow tree munchkins tried to make us turn back, but I bitch-slapped the loudest one. Upon closer inspection, I think I hit the obnoxious Hummer always parked at Roosevelt. I swear, at the time, those little fuckers wouldn't shut up.

Funny thing about life, I know people who get off on pain. Anything from a spank to a speculum up the ass, flaming nipple clamps and mutilation (ever seen a flayed penis? You don't want to).

My friend, a fantastic manifestation of the female form, is a dominatrix in her spare time. She gets hundreds of dollars an hour to step on guys' balls. Let me repeat that. Male clients pay her obscene amounts of money to grind a vinyl high-heel into their ball sack. Squirreled away in some dark dungeon in the city, she is never nude while she whips them, makes them lick her boots, binds various appendages, and generally degrades and humiliates them.

I know. Where can I sign up?! Not that I want to torture anyone, but it's just such a sweet gig. And let's face it, I've dated a lot of bastards in my day. (They'd get their money's worth).

I was once with a cantankerous Russian (is there any other kind) who had hardly any feeling in his rod. He wanted me to practically tear the damn thing off, thrash his meat wildly. I want to love the penis. Cherish it. Rub my face in it. It's such a great little toy. Being rough was difficult – but his cock was so desensitized, I could have driven rebar with it.

When I attended the Sex Ball in Florida, people were lining up to be locked in stocks and whipped by nuns in vinyl habits, and anxiously crowded the stage, hoping to be picked for Dracula's hot wax-play.

Another guy I know, arguably insane, once

bet our friend that in daily conversation, he could not use the letter 'B'. It was an arbitrary letter; he said it was to test his willpower. For a couple weeks, every time he slipped, he would slice his arm, just below the shoulder, with a razor blade. Negative reinforcement. He still has the scars, now 5 years later.

I never understood how people could harm themselves. Sometimes I'm just overwhelmed by the magnitude of crazy. (I won't reiterate the 'subjective' clause, Dre). But damn, people are nuts.

Girls addicted to drama, inventing, like witches of old gathered around cauldrons, or harpies around crystal balls, they hover around the computer, aiming to divine true intentions off Facebook and My Space.

High-maintenance girls who never quit annoying their boyfriends – one who drove him from his bed, before work, while he's sick, because she can't operate the gravity bong herself. "You don't understand. She never stops," he sighs, deprived of backbone, and downtrodden under her endless whip. Snap!

Not surprising they say no matter how good she looks, some other guy is sick and tired of putting up with her crap.

It works both ways of course. But the truth is: Women are from earth. Men are from earth. Deal with it.

Crazy knows no gender. The Rational Choice Theory is ridiculous.

People don't calculate all available information before making choices in their lives. Most of the time, they are content to have someone else make decisions for them.

I wish I could snap my fingers and stop the tourist world of culture tools. Fools scrambling, wallets eager to trade in hours for the illusion of choice. I hate this consumerist America. Those are the REAL crazies – lemmings who listen to the pretty colored box of mass distraction, and faithfully put in their 9 to 5 because they're married to the State. Not some person who likes to have his balls stepped on. Although it's probably the same guy.

My friend described her fancy with pain. "First of all – the endorphins. Definitely. But even more so – if you can't feel pain, how do you know you're alive? Pain is about keeping the nerve endings alive and working. About stimulating every inch of flesh, bone and brain, and it is about power; the power to inflict pain and the power to accept it as an expression of love."

Sure. I'll bite. Why not. I have friends who tell me their fantasies are to be shot and then fucked, or raped by policemen, so what's a heel to the sack, or a little hot wax between friends?

In any case, a little off-topic, but in keeping with the theme this week, I have to tell you something that you may not like. This is my last semester at Stony Brook, meaning this is the last semester for Ask Amberly Jane. It's been a good run. More than three orgasmic years. But I'm off to Paris next semester (fingers crossed), an important place in the annuals of anarchy, to live the good life I've been hearing so much of.

So, I don't want to piss in your cereal, but please, if you've at all enjoyed this column, or even if you haven't, send me some e-mail. Let me know what's up. Tell me about sordid tales of bull-necked guys in Saturday night suits, fully-cocked, hog-tied and hackneyed, with red lips and detachable plastic tails, wailing in their fog-horn voice for just...one...more...strike.

Stir in your mistress' loneliness till I say SNAP!

Next issue:

New fantasies from 'Daddy' - "Spank! Spank! Spank it!" and "Ultraviolet: Dirty Adventures in Tanning"

In the meantime, e-mail:

AskAmberlyJane@hotmail.com



This is How a Heart Breaks

Charlie had been pretty busy this semester. He was starring in a play being put on in Staller, and rehearsals pretty much consumed his life. On top of that, he was still taking 15 credits, and on top of that things with Janey hadn't been going very well. They were still fucking, but they were growing on each other's nerves more than ever now.

"You have to have more invested in this character. I don't believe you," Bob, the director of Charlie's play, was saying to one of the actors.

"He's so full of shit," said Gabi. She was one of Charlie's co-stars. They were sitting in the audience while one of the scenes was being run through.

"Yeah, I'm not really a big fan of his directing style," Charlie said.

"So are you ready for our big scene?" she asked. She was referring to the scene in which the two of them make out hard core on top of a wooden desk.

"I guess so. I've kissed people on stage before," he replied.

"Good, I had to kiss this guy once and he freaked out and took it all seriously and shit, it was ridiculous," she said.

"That's so stupid," he said.

"So have you ever gone dumpster diving?" she asked him.

"Yes! We used to go all the time at home," he said.

"I might be going later with a friend of mine if you wanted to tag along. We're going right after rehearsal," she said.

"Yeah, that'd be cool," he said.

After that the rehearsal flew by. Charlie and Gabi were walking towards her car when her friend called her.

"Hello?" she said, answering the phone. Her friend couldn't make it on account of a paper she had forgotten was due.

"Looks like it's just us, if you still wanted to go," Gabi said.

"Yeah I do, more stuff for us."

About an hour in, Charlie was the one receiving a phone call.

"Hello?"

"Where are you?" It was Janey on the other end.

"I'm out with a friend," he said.

"Where?"

"Just driving around, dumpster diving."

"Who're you with?"

"My friend Gabi from the play."

"When're you coming back?"

"Later, I'm not sure," he said.

"All right," she said before hanging up.

"Girlfriend?" Gabi asked.

"No, just a friend," Charlie said.

They finished about a half an hour later and Charlie went back to his room. Janey wasn't there and he didn't bother to go look for her.

The next day I was hanging out with Tucker. We headed to Roth for some Burger King and then parked outside his dorm. He pulled out his bowl and started to pack it. That was one of the good things about hanging out with Tucker; he always smoked me up. Everything was going fine until he said something that kind of got me confused: well, not confused, just...I don't really know what the feeling was.

"I need to have sex soon," he said. I didn't know how to respond to that.

"Well, I'm not promising anything, but if you wanna hang out sometime..." I tried to play it off like I could be serious or I could be joking. That way, I wasn't completely vulnerable.

"Oh, no, no sex on campus, it's a rule," he replied. Now this is what got me confused: he lets me go down on him, yet "no sex on campus". Of course, we had hooked up in his house and that technically wasn't campus, but still, that seems kind of silly. "It's embarrassing how much time it's been since I've had sex."

"I bet I could beat you," I said, being very natural.

"Probably not. There's this one guy I'm talking to online that I totally wanna bang," he said. I wasn't sure where this was all going to go.

"It's hard for me to find good guy friends. That's why it's so cool that I met you. Finally, someone who I can talk to about anything and actually understands me." Now I knew where this was going: absolutely nowhere.

A week later, John and I were hanging out in his suite. Ed had gone out with one of his friends and Charlie had gone to a party at one of his co-star's houses. We were extremely bored.

"What can we do?" I asked

"There's nothing to do," John said.

"I wish we could go to the city," I said.

"Why don't we?" John asked.

"It's one in the morning."

"So, there's a train station on campus. Let's hop on the next train."

We checked the schedules online and got ready for the 2:49 train. The train ride was uneventful. We got to Penn and then started out. We both decided that we'd like to go to a strip club. We went walking down the street and everything was going fine until a man approached us.

"Yo guys, any girl you want," said the man.

"Sixteen to Twenty-five, Asian, Caucasian, Black, anything. \$100 for an hour."

"Actually, we were looking for a strip club," I said.

"Oh, y'all here for the show! Well, open bar and live girls for a half hour, \$75," he replied. "But for an extra \$50, you get an hour to do anything with the girls, just don't hurt the bitches!"

After a couple minutes we parted ways with the crackhead, empty handed.

While we were in the city, Charlie and Gabi were returning to the dorm. Gabi had gotten ridiculously wasted and was sobering up while lying down in Charlie's bed. It had been a costume party, and she was sprawled out in a prom dress. Charlie was at his desk taking out his contacts. That's about the time that Janey busted through his door.

"Char- WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON?" she screamed. She stormed out and left Charlie standing there. Seconds later she returned with Cindy and her friend Sarah.

"Look at this!" Janey yelled. "He's in here with this fucking slut!"

"Calm down, nothing's

happening!" Charlie replied.

"What's happening?" Gabi said groggily as she got up.

"Shut up, bitch!" Janey yelled. "Fucking whore."

"Calm down, you're acting crazy. You're drunk," Charlie said.

"I'm not a whore," Gabi said, still waking up.

"You're so fucked up!" Janey yelled as she stormed out. Charlie followed her into his bathroom.

"Calm down, nothing was happening," Charlie said, trying to reason with her.

"You're a fucking liar!" Janey yelled.

That's when Charlie lost it. "Bitch, listen—" but before he could get the rest out, Janey raised her hand and attempted to smack him across the face. Fortunately for Charlie, she was drunk and her reactions were slow, so he easily caught her hand. She wrestled her arm away and turned around, leaving Charlie standing there alone.

"Charlie?" Sarah said, walking into the bathroom.

"What?" Charlie asked.

"Can I use your microwave?"

Back in the city, John and I, unknowing of anything happening back in Stony Brook, found ourselves lost in the gay Village.

"Look Rudy, it's full of your people," John said.

"Oh God, so many rainbows! I'm going blind!" I said jokingly. We were laughing and joking when we passed a short Hispanic woman. Judging by the muscles and body hair, we each came to the conclusion that it was not a woman. As we walked a little further, we realized that the drag queen had turned around and was now walking behind us. We sped up, and so did it. We crossed the street and kept turning down streets until eventually, it gave up.

We walked around a little more and hopped onto a train back to Stony Brook around sunrise. I got back and Ed was already asleep. I saw an IM on my computer from Tucker: it said, "I finally got some tonight!" I went to sleep, horny and jealous.

When John got back, he noticed that Charlie wasn't in his bed but didn't think anything of it - he usually got up for rugby practice.

Janey lay awake that night with a box of tissues with her mind racing.

None of us knew the shit storm that was about to hit our humble group of friends.



Filmmaker Christine Choy Premieres *Agent Yellow*

By Maria Ng

On Thursday, February 23rd, at 7 PM in the Wang Center, there was a premiere showing of Christine Choy's new film, *Agent Yellow*. In her introduction, Choy revealed that her most recent film was a product of "pure passion." There was no profit associated with *Agent Yellow*. The production was paid for personally by Choy, a professor at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, and her co-producer, real estate developer Spring Wang. Its purpose was to document an important area of Chinese American history that had previously been ignored.



Christine Choy

Choy is the Academy Award nominated filmmaker of *Who Killed Vincent Chin* (1988). This film featured the 1982 beating of an innocent Chinese American in Detroit by unemployed auto workers. The workers had called him a 'Jap' and blamed him for the US car industry's decline. In their drunken state they killed an innocent man. This was a seminal event in Asian American history because the killers were tried by a predominantly white jury who only sentenced them to probation. The outrage at this injustice brought together Americans of all Asian ethnicities to form the first national 'Asian American' coalition.

Choy's new film, *Agent Yellow*, deals with the continued mistrust of the American government towards immigrants. This film focuses on the injustice of the government towards Chinese American scientists who have ironically worked to improve the defense of the US. Their contributions are wide spread. These scientists have worked in national labs and universities. Some of them form the basis of the US's success in the Manhattan project and rocketry. In particular, this film focuses on the lives of two scientists, Tsien Hsue-Shen and Wen Ho Lee.

Both of these men made significant contributions to American defense research and were repaid with mistrust and imprisonment. America's actions fostered anger and resentment from the accused men and their families and friends. These injustices made America appear racist in the eyes of Asian Americans and other countries.

Tsien Hsue-Shen belonged to the time of McCarthyism. He was wrongfully accused of being a spy and providing China with US secrets. This caused Tsien to lose his positions as Goddard Professor and

Director of NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab at Cal Tech. Unable to do anything in his field, Tsien decided to return to China. In his frustration, he fulfilled the US's accusations. He provided China with the necessary knowledge to build its own rockets. In the Tsien Hsue-Shen case, America became its own worst enemy by proliferating weapons of mass destruction.

Wen Ho Lee obtained vindication for the injustices done to him in a different way. The federal judge at his trial apologized for the government's "abuse of power." The New York Times apologized for its articles based on false information from government sources. But the damage was done. Lee is no longer a scientist at Los Alamos National Lab and another generation of Chinese Americans was made to feel like they would never be accepted as real Americans.

Agent Yellow was careful to showcase individual interviews with people who had known Tsien Hsue-Shen and Wen Ho Lee personally. These discussions added a touch of humanity and reality to the film. It made Tsien Hsue-Shen and Wen Ho Lee seem like ordinary men whom one could identify with. These two individuals were not extraordinary beings who stood out on the United States' government's radar. Rather, they were victims of the government's need to satisfy its paranoia of spies within the US.

After the showing of this film, Christine Choy, Spring Wang, and Barry McCoy, Distinguished Professor of Physics at SBU, took part in a question and answer session moderated by the Wang Center's Sunita Mukhi. They revealed their strong feelings about the film. For example, Professor McCoy, a Heineman Award winner and political activist, spoke passionately about how important it is for everyone to be politically involved. He believes this will help to ensure future injustices are less likely to happen.

Choy said that if she could touch just one person with her work, it would have been worth it. But in reality, she touched the entire audience. Clearly, the film had done its job. It sparked the intellectual controversy and indignant responses that it was meant to provoke.

The session caused many of the audience members to raise their hands and comment. A general discussion ensued about the themes found in *Agent Yellow* - from racial profiling to the perpetual foreigner stereo-



Prof. Barry McCoy

Invocation to Nature

By Vanessa Gopez

A memorial was held in the Wang Center in remembrance of both those who suffered as victims of the disasters and those who sacrificed their time and energy in order to help them. The Zodiac Lobby was filled with people of different ethnicities and religions who were uniting to encourage and love one another after such tragic moments in history.

During the entire memorial, images of moments from the disasters flashed on the wall of the Zodiac Lobby. It ensured that no one there would forget the reason they were attending this memorial. During the afternoon, many people shared their gifts in such a way as to leave Sunita Mukhi, Director of Asian American programs in the Wang Center, "breathless and touched".

Heartfelt songs were sung with immense passion. Instruments were played with their sorrowful sounds leaving images of pain imprinted in one's mind. Moving dances were gracefully done to bless and touch those around. Honest poems were read with great emotion and meticulousness. Testimonies were given with all exuberance.

Each expressed the pain of the difficulties that were faced by far too many. One Japanese poem read and translated by a Stony Brook student described one of the events as "too hard to be remembered".

However, in the midst of so much destruction and heartache, we were reminded that there was always hope and the love of your fellow man. The gratefulness for the help was expressed with just as much spirit and many times more joyfulness.

The performances were followed by

type. The session continued for an hour and ended with a barrage of questions from the audience still unanswered.

The session caused many of the audience members to raise their hands and comment. A general discussion about how the themes found within *Agent Yellow*, racial profiling and foreigner stereotyping, ensued. The session continued for an hour and ended with a barrage of questions from the audience still unanswered.

Agent Yellow is a play-off of the term "Agent Orange" from the Vietnam War. Although Choy never completely explained the significance of the similarity, one may guess. Agent Orange was the name of a powerful herbicide and defoliant used during the Vietnam War. It caused cancer and permanent harm to the health of those who

prayers and supplications from a great variety of religions. A prayer of thankfulness and hopefulness was given by a reverend. Next, a Christian woman followed with the song, "How Great Thou Art." Afterwards, she prayed thanking God for not only those who helped immediately after the disasters but also those who were continuing to help despite the fact that these issues have disappeared from the front pages of our newspapers.

A representation from MSA, the Muslim Student Association, also said a prayer and followed it with a poem called "Resiliency after the Storm". It expressed the strength with which people stood despite the devastating natural disasters.

Invocations were ended with words from a group of Thai monks. Their chant truly left the entire room silent.

The scene within the Zodiac Lobby was extremely powerful. It expressed the love and support given between people of completely different backgrounds and cultures. Despite their differences, they chose to stand together and help one another. It was a wonderful symbol of the unified presence of the room.

Sunita Mukhi ended with a short but powerful conclusion. She claimed that this event should make us realize that love always involves action, and it was something that we should allow to both challenge and empower us. She expressed a hope that this event created a desire in those attending to not just go back to their daily lives the same as they were but to be compelled to help the people around them when they need it.

The memorial undoubtedly stirred many hearts.

were exposed to it. When Choy plays off of this term, it is possible that she is trying to invoke the same kind of feeling from her audience that was generated when others heard about *Agent Orange* and its effects.

Christine Choy was trying to appeal to the audience's sense of injustice. It is possible that Choy wanted people to perceive America as *Agent Yellow*. She wanted to show a different side of America. *Agent Yellow* is a monster that is destroying the lives of innocent people. So from title to content, Choy has infused her film with the idea of wrongs done to good and innocent people.

Photos from the event and links to the participants and scientists in the film can be found at www.aa2sbu.org/aaezine/articles/vol13/13N5ChoyAndMcCoy.shtml

Wanted! Writers, photographers, and all students interested in media.

Weekly meetings Fridays at 2 PM at our office in Student Union 071.

The Reformation in Central Kentucky Scintillates

By James Messina

I'm going to launch into this one. I've noticed in most of my introductions I tend to criticize myself or ramble. Both because I've no need to put myself any lower, and because deadline's in a few hours and I only just now got an idea, I'll skip that. This article shall focus on a particular cipher called the ROT13. It's no more than a Caesar cipher, and its actual importance with regards to informational security is nil, but it is still an interesting bit.

The ROT13 cipher is interesting in that its roots lie with the origin of many a good thing – nerds conglomerating and goofing around. In the 80's, there was something called USENET (though technically, I shouldn't use past tense – it's still around). People used it for discussions and whatever it was people used the Internet for back before the days of broadband porn. Some of these discussions were tellings of dirty jokes, which the administrators didn't like. In order to circumvent these restrictions, the ROT13 was created. Again, it should be noted that I write "created", but I should write "adapted", because the cipher already existed.

ROT13 just means "ROTate by 13". Using a twenty-six letter alphabet like English means that the encryption and decryption algorithms are the same, and that the plaintext is the ciphertext's inverse. Thusly, by performing the ROT13 twice on a piece of plaintext, you arrive back at the plaintext. In terms of real security, ROT13 is laughable, and is indeed used as a pointed joke with regards to many esoteric cryptographic events. But for its intended purpose, it is more than adequate. Dirty jokes could be told, but in order to get the punch

line, you'd have to consciously perform the decryption. Jokes were encrypted, but the cipher is also widely used for any information which could be considered unfit for certain audiences, i.e. book or movie spoilers, or game hints, etc.

Another interesting thing about this cipher is its use in word/letter games. Many words will result in other words when encrypted with ROT13, or more exotic phenomena. Examples of this include ENVY —> RAIL, BALK —> ONYX, and CLERK —> PYREX – The longest examples known are ABJURER and NOWHERE. RAVINE when encrypted will result in ENIVAR, its spelling backwards. GNAT and TANG work too, and are actually palindromes. Lastly, the word VEX will result in IRK when encrypted with ROT13, irk being a synonym of vex. I'm honestly unsure of how people have come across these coincidences, though I'm guessing someone with a knowledge of programming and a computerized dictionary made himself a timewaster.

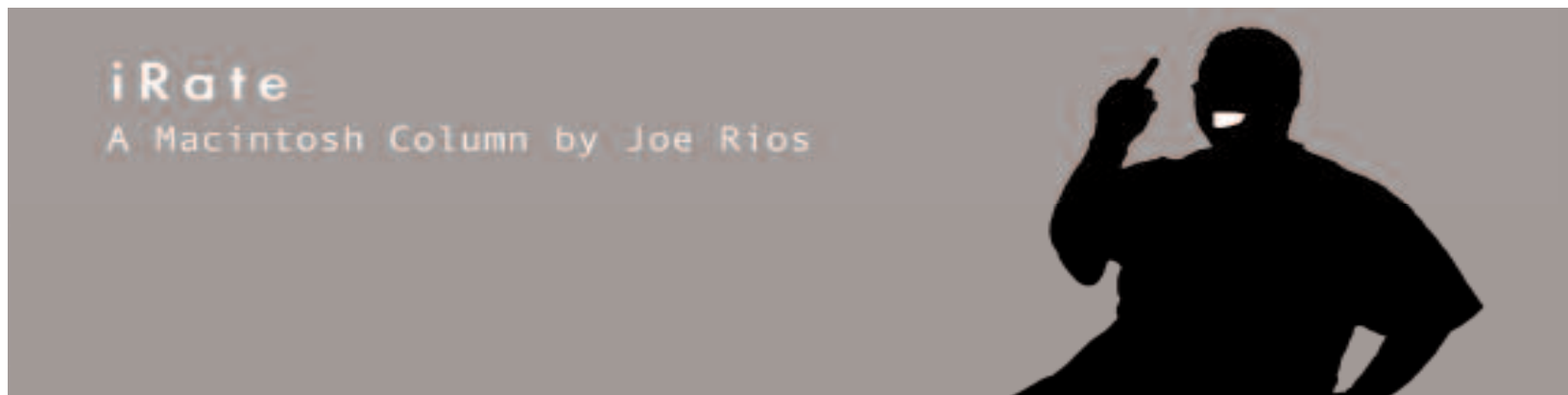
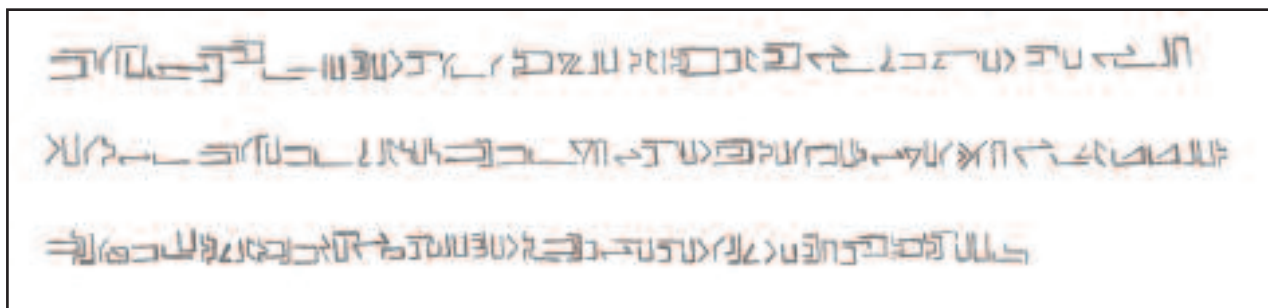
Thus concludes this issue's cipher. I figure it's better to be brief and interesting, rather than long-winded and obtuse. In maintaining this trend

for concise yet brilliant writing, I bring you the solution to last issue's puzzle, and this one's, too.

PUZZLE THE 9TH:

What? You didn't figure it out? You should be ashamed of yourselves. Provided I didn't mess up, and I included only errors in the correct spots, then it was simple as cake. Simply searching out the missing letters and writing down what was missing would result in the message "The Jabberwock is come." Tada. This trick is hardly one of my own invention; it's been used for centuries. Despite its long history, the only instances of it in use I can relate are in popular modern media. In the movie *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events*, the children's Aunt Josephine writes such an obfuscated message under the guise of a suicide note in order to alert the children as to her real location. Also, in the TV series *Firefly*, the character River writes to her brother with misspellings and grammatical errors in order to make him aware of the conditions she has lived in (won't spoil it with details, though I'm happy to spoil the above example). Lastly, in the book *Green Rider* by Kristen Britain, one of the Riders uses such a message at an integral point in order to alert the Riders to an approaching threat. There are more examples, but laden as I am with pop culture, I can't provide any of real note.

PUZZLE THE 10TH:



Welcome back to iRate, the column for Mac lovers, by a Mac lover! First off we have a few new additions to the Apple lineup. Brand new to the "MacTel" line is the Mac Mini, now featuring your choice of Intel Core Solo or Intel Core Duo. The Intel Core Duo is the processor being used in the MacBook Pro, and the Intel iMac. It also seems that Apple is no longer offering a PowerPC version of the Mac Mini, but if you go to any retailer, they should still have them in stock. This demonstrates the drastic shift that is being made from PowerPC processors to the Intel Core Duo processors.

Also, Apple has released some new audio hardware. They are calling it iPod Hi-Fi. The device is powered by AC, or it can use D batteries when you want to take it with you. The Hi-Fi has a universal dock, which attaches to your iPod. Apple claims that the Hi-Fi delivers room-filling sound, without the massive speakers (17.0" x 6.6" x 6.9").

The Hi-Fi will cost you, though, to the tune of about \$350, not including the iPod.

Now as hard as it may seem to some of my readers, I actually went out and bought an Apple product for once, so I can review it properly! Up for review today is the Apple Mighty Mouse. Now while the name may be related to a fictional super mouse, this mouse is the real deal.

At first glance it looks like a standard one button Apple mouse with a gray dot on it, but looks can be deceiving. Under the one piece outer shell is two-button technology. That's right, an Apple mouse that can right click! The dot in the center is also full of surprises... The dot is a 360-degree scroll ball, that when pressed, acts like a 3rd button. This is useful for web-browsing, editing videos and pictures, and whatever else you could use a scroll mouse for. On the side of the Mighty Mouse are two buttons that look like they do nothing, but they

have a purpose, squeeze one of them, and they will perform a task of your assigning. By default, it opens Exposé, the function that displays all open windows at once for your choosing.

While the Mighty Mouse is compatible with any PC or Mac with a USB port, it shines brightest when combined with OS X Tiger.

The Mighty Mouse is available at the Apple Store, Apple.com, and CompUSA for a price of \$50 (slightly less at the Apple Store with Student ID).

I would like to now take a moment to speak to the Mac Users and Haters of the world. I want your feedback. Send me an e-mail and tell me why you like (or HATE) Macs. If there's a program or piece of hardware that you think should be reviewed, or want to review yourself, let me know. If you just want to send me e-mails saying that Mac sucks, you're welcome to, but I'll probably not answer them; but if you have a reasonable argument, it might find its way into the next column, so send me some e-mail!

Send all e-mail and hate mail to:
iRate.SBU@gmail.com

Drunk Driving Kills Dreams



This would be the last time Adina would walk with her mom because just days after this picture was taken, Lenore was killed by a drunk driver. Drunk driving doesn't just affect drunk drivers!

Public Service Announcements

Alert Citizens!

The Stony Brook Press advises you be on the lookout in your vicinity for the **seditions criminal** responsible for the **property destruction** on display in this grim photograph.

If you have any information, the editorial board **urges you** to promptly approach university administrators with what you know.

And, whatever you do, for heaven's sake, *have a quiet day.*



death egg zone