

The
Stony
Brook

PRESS

Vol. XV, No. IV

The University Community's Feature Paper

October 26, 1993

The Off-White Issue

**Stephen Mazzola
Interviewed**

**Cardenal
Speaks**

**The Nightmare
Before Christmas**

Looking for a (Loop) Hole

By Catherine Krupski

The Loop, a treasure of convenience for almost every commuter student, located in the Engineering Loop, behind Central Hall was closed down on Monday, October 18th due to the construction of the new Student Activities Center.

According to Abe Collazo, the student supervisor, there was almost no warning of shutting down the Loop, which furnishes students with coffee, cigarettes, and candy, prior to Monday. "Everyone knew it was going to be taken down," he said. But exactly when didn't come until the Friday, October 15th when he talked to someone from the construction company and asked about it.

While there were meetings regarding the Loop, the food service manager never received a definite date as to when there was going to be a closing. There wasn't enough warning, but that was not only in the case of notifying FSA (Faculty Student Association), but also in that of notifying Fred Preston, who would have the responsibility of keeping FSA informed.

Collazo met with Fred Preston and Paul Chase to discuss keeping it open until the end of the semester. This would benefit those who use the Loop on a daily basis and the students who are employed there.

There are approximately 30 students who worked there, 15 of which worked solely at the Loop while the rest split their time between the Loop and Stony

Snacks, both of which are run by FSA. "Some will lose jobs, others will definitely be losing hours." He also added that some were transferred to the pool hall in the basement of the Union, but even that was limited.

A possible alternative is to have a cart similar to that in the Administration building, or even something more stable that is still mobile, such as a trailer, that could slowly be phased in as the Loop is phased out. The primary customers at the Loop are commuters.

Commuters from South P Lot are usually dropped off near the Loop. Therefore, replacement of the Loop would be wherever the commuters are rerouted to.

A contract for the construction of Central Hall required a specific distance around the building and the Loop "just happened to be there." There will be a fence surrounding the building put up soon. "Preston and Chase are trying to help us out; maybe [they can] lean on

the contractors more."

Trinidad Thomas, a student employee, initiated a petition which is not only posted at Stony Snacks, but is also floating around the dorms. Currently, over 900 people have signed it. One customer at Stony Snacks said, "people do not want to go [all the way] to [the] Union just to buy one thing. This supplies students with jobs, not just food."



Ownership

By John Schneider

Ownership is one of the strangest ideas in Western civilization. The idea revolves around not letting anyone else control a material object. Unfortunately, the only way of preventing someone from controlling your stuff is for you to have a certain amount of force on your side. This done, you can protect your stuff from other people by killing and or maiming them. But, doesn't this seem like an awful lot of work?

Since for people to keep things they own is a time consuming and tiring job, we like to let governments deal with it. One of its largest functions is to provide a structure that ensures that what's yours stays yours. After all, possession is nine tenths of the law. There are lots of laws telling people what they can't do with things other people own. These assure that the people get to keep their stuff and other people can't use or abuse it. Good examples are laws pertaining to theft, vandalism, trespassing, etc. Obviously, some folks aren't too clear on this ownership thing, but we hope that the government will incarcerate them soon at a modest fee.

Any logical society (i.e. non-western) would probably come to the conclusion that owning stuff isn't all that great, due to the fact that responsibility keeps rearing its ugly head. There are about as many laws about responsibility as laws that help you keep your stuff. If you own something and someone gets injured by it, that's negligence. You can't leave your stuff just anywhere, that's littering. You've got to have some place to store it. This is different from the stuff that's litter because it usually can't be moved like a house or garage. (Remember, you have to pick up your garbage, but for some reason you can leave your garage where it is.) If your house or garage is built on

someone else's land, you have to tear it down unless you've got away with it for seven years or so, then it's called adverse possession and then you own the land. Go figure. It's no wonder the Indians didn't put up with the idea of owning land. They probably couldn't imagine why anyone would want to be responsible for something that big, least of all the ground. It's just dirt anyway. You can imagine the legal suits from people just falling down or tripping on something.

In an odd way, we're returning to non-ownership. Most people now rely on credit cards to buy things, that is, ownership without actually sacrificing anything immediately. This is much more advanced than the immediate payments we're used to. Really big things are almost never owned by the

person who's buying. Houses are mortgaged, cars have loans on them or are leased. Slowly, our stuff is coming to be owned more and more by banks and companies who keep sending you annoying notes in the mail to remind you that you really don't own your stuff. Even though you think you do.

Credit cards are an interesting phenomenon in and of themselves. There are interesting stories of a small island in the South Pacific,

where each spring major credit cards are dropped by air to the inhabitants. (The same island also receives mismatched socks for some reason.) Oddly enough, there are no stores on this island that accept credit cards. Instead, the local tribes use them as payment as a form of hard currency, exchanging them in various religious and political ceremonies. Interest is paid in the form of sacrifices of burnt offerings to the gods who deliver them each year. What is most bizarre about this economy is that the value of the cards is

directly proportionate to the current interest rates charged by these cards and therefore change on a regular basis. Despite the fact that there is no form of communication to the island which could explain this correlation. Some have even questioned whether the inhabitants

in fact decide the interest rates for the free world and that, if this is true, we should try to talk to them and get them to change their minds about any future increases. This idea has been hampered by the fact that no one can locate the island, and credit card companies deny its existence.

Constantly linked with ownership is debt. In a round-about way, debt becomes a form of ownership also. If you can convince some-

one to lend you more money than you could conceivably pay back in several lifetimes, you can own quite a lot. Some examples of this are third-world countries such as Brazil, and overestimated entrepreneurs such as Donald Trump. In these cases, debt becomes so great that canceling a loan would mean the lending institution's losing all hope of ever seeing its money again. With this in mind, you can easily convince your creditors to lend you even more money to prevent you from defaulting on your loans. In response to this, lending institutions in the eighties found their own way of passing the buck and making debt pay off. By lending lots of money to unscrupulous people, they could then go to the government and receive money to replace investments gone sour that, alone, could be covered by banks, but, compounded, would threaten the savings of many individuals who would normally use their money to own things. So the banks have more money to give to wealthy bank executives so they can go to expensive parties with rich people who defaulted on loans for luxury cars.

Many people are worried that the Japanese will end up owning America. This is a minor misconception. The Japanese really are seeking to lease America, as the terms have become much more favorable, and still retain the option to buy. They now have tremendous opportunities to stretch their yen. Even if they do buy up all the real estate in the country, are they really going to come over here and stop us from using their land? Remember that ownership really boils down to physically preventing someone from taking or using what is yours, and we didn't blow our country's wad for nothing during the Cold War. In the world of materialism might doesn't just make right, it'll beat you till you're unconscious.



Priest and Poet of Revolution

Ernesto Cardenal reads from his new book *Cosmic Canticle*

By Rachel S. Wexelbaum

On October 21st the Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Cardenal came to Stony Brook to read passages from his new work, *Cosmic Canticle*. It is a 500-page poem about the whole cosmos and scientific inspiration, his attempt "to make poetry out of science". He relates this to God, man's inhumanity to man and how we might evolve in the future.

Ernesto Cardenal is not only a poet, but a Catholic priest who practices "Christian Marxism". From his appearance, you would not think of him as a revolutionary. He is a plump, white-haired bearded man, like Santa Claus with a black beret, smiling as kindly as someone's grandfather. However, he does belong to the Sandinista Liberation Movement and raises conservative American eyebrows. When Cardenal gave a lecture and reading at Stony Brook about ten years ago he was accompanied by gun-toting bodyguards, but this time he arrived alone.

Born in 1925 in Granada, Nicaragua, Cardenal began to write poetry in college. He studied at the University of Columbia from 1947-1949 and came under the influence of Ezra Pound and Thomas Merton. In 1950 he returned to Nicaragua and began his activist career against the totalitarian dictatorship of the Somoza regime. His first book, *Zero Hour* (1956), deals with his involvement in the Nicaraguan political struggle during the 1950's, and is a major Latin American revolutionary classic. To avoid arrest, he went into exile in the United States and experienced a spiritual crisis, which led him to renounce all forms of violence and enter a Trappist monastery in Gethsemani, Kentucky. Cardenal became a priest in 1965 and returned to Nicaragua a year later to establish Solentiname, an independent community that practices "primitive Christian living." Some works from this period are "Gethsemani, Kentucky" (1960), "Marilyn Monroe and Other Poems" (1965), "The Dubious Passage" (1966), "Homage to the American Indians" (1969)

and "Love" (1970). He realized that Latin American society was unlikely to be restructured without recourse to arms, and made his version of Christianity more militantly revolutionary. In 1972 Cardenal strengthened his ties with El Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional ("On the Sanctity of Revolution, 1972). After the Sandinista



Front overthrew the Somoza regime in 1979, Cardenal became Minister of Culture and used his influence to raise funds for Nicaragua ("Flights of Victory" 1985). Unfortunately, the Pope forced him to resign from Ministry of Culture in 1989, but he still kept his ties with the Sandinista movement.

Cosmic Canticle, published in 1989, contemplates the universe and asks us, "Why are we here?" Is there anyone else out there? Where did we come

from and what will come after us? Cardenal began with the Big Bang, then talked about extraterrestrials and the cosmos. He read from a passage called "Mystery of Space and Time," which recalled an anecdote of student life in New York City when he was in Woolworth's studying a beautiful woman. He asked himself who could predict what would happen if he went after that woman instead of leaving the store. "Our problem, Lord, is that one is never satisfied," he said wistfully. Cardenal calls the universe "the sexual cosmos", saying that the reason why the stars are so hot is because they are "orgasmic". The most interesting passage was the one about evolution. Cardenal believes that human evolution and the need for an absence of violence on our planet are interrelated. "Out of fear, the chimp regressed from man," he said with a smile. He thinks that the next stage of evolution will be artificial intelligence, and, as our ancient tree shrew ancestors scurried away from cold-blooded giants, so will our descendants flee from cyber-militants under control of a computerized bureaucracy.

Cardenal's last passage about the death of a young comrade was the most touching. "He was fascinated with Marxism, but never studied it, highly intelligent, but cursed with purity." This description fit Chris DeVecchio, our late campus revolutionary, and countless other youth who have given their lives for what they believed in. Would the GSEU, who sponsored Cardenal, do the same for their rights? Many campus groups try to compare their experiences with those of Cardenal, the Sandinistas, and other activists, but they just make themselves look self-centered and hypocritical. During the question-and-answer session, a young follower of Jesus asked Cardenal how could he call himself Christian and still practice violence. The old priest replied, "The defense of principles as well as of peoples is legitimate as self-defense. Christ also speaks against riches—not all followers of Christ can do that."

Self-Importance Theatre

By John Schneider

The Polity election results are in at last, after a delay due to problems with tabulating the results using the new computerized bubble sheets. A total of 719 votes were cast, 468 of which were counted. Corey Williams was reinstated once again as Treasurer, with 314 votes. Freshman representative was won by Nichole Possner who recieved a total of 66 votes against Tim Truc's 45. In the race for Senior representative, Nancy Belson received 47 votes, while opponents Larry Gallo and John Christian received 24, and 19 votes respectively. The referendums for Coca, the Blood Drive, College leg, Cultural and Advocacy Initiative, the SBVAC, Corey Williams proposed amendments regarding the budget and the 2.. 3 GPA all passed. The controversial, and newsworthy 2.3 GPA referendum 247 votes for the referendum, caputring the support of 55.5% of those who vetoed on it.

In the October 20th Polity meeting, the elimination of campus life time was discussed by Jerry Canada, who had sent Senators Adam Turner, and Vincent Bruzesse to the Campus Life Committee to address the concerns of Polity at a recent meeting. In talking briefly with Larry Witte of the committee, it appears that the suggestion was brought forth as one in a list of suggestions to the committee. The suggestion reflects the feelings of faculty members who wish to schedule classes during this time period. He mentioned that no actions were to be taken immediately regarding this issue.

Polity has taken a firm stance against any such actions to eliminate Campus life time, and plans to send representatives to the next meeting of the Campus life committee with petitions and use any other means to quickly stop any serious threats. The feelings of most senators were summed up by Canada, saying, "It is important to just kill this before it can get to the Senate."

In a coda to the resolution passed by the senate condemning the four executive members. Corey Williams made a statement which seemed to seek to vindicate himself of the charges despite the fact that his name was not formally mentioned in the original resolution. He mentioned his past record with Polity as evidence that he had not been negligent of students needs, and questioned whether the resolution was a "hasty" decision due to the lack of evidence at the time the resolution was passed. The original resolution, penned by Vincent Bruzesse and Adam Turner accused Crystal Plati, Tricia Stuart, Sandy Hui, and Kenneth Daube of trying, the day before the elections to veto a mandatory G.P.A. referendum for the executive board which Polity had passed. The resolution stated, "This was a planned attempt by several Council members and several senators to sabotage and 'gang up' on the Polity President, Jerry Canada.", labled the actions as a "conspiracy" and condemned the four mentioned, labling them "negligent" of duties as student leaders.

Jerry Canada, who called the executive council meeting to add a referendum for additional funding for the Stony Brook Volunteer Ambulance Corps, explained that the question of vetoing the GPA referendum was made

(by Tricia Stuart according to the minutes), and the issue was dropped after he explained this was not possible under the constitution. Canada mentioned that parts of the meeting were possibly misconstrued by the senate, and felt uncomfortable with the labling "conspiracy" as having a "negative connotation." Saying simply, "They were against the referendum, I was for it."

To return to Corey's statement at the October 20th meeting, he also decried the resolution for being an example of "political infighting", and raised the concern that the resolution was slanderous in nature. Similar objections to the resolution were made by Crystal Plati who said that the records show that she made no motion at the meeting to remove the referendum, saying there was, "no malicious intent" at the Executive Council meeting.

With Corey having said his peace, and many senators feeling they have made their point in the resolution that they will not tolerate any efforts to undermine their efforts in a "shady" or "underhanded" fashion, the issue seems to have been laid to rest and Polity can return now to a more productive role.

In other news, at the Oct 20th meeting, five of the ten Judiciary board members were appointed, with the remainder to be appointed at the next Polity Senate meeting. The board is to meet on Monday the twenty-sixth for the first time this year. The Homecoming committee announced final plans for this years homecoming and invited all to attend this years planned activities, and to help show Stony Brook spirit.

Disposable People

The poor and oppressed in this country are a continual reminder of the failings of our society. Though the hue and cry about the undeserving on welfare is reaching an annoying crescendo, government handouts are not much of a consolation to those whom circumstance has forced to rely upon them. Their neighborhoods are decaying and dangerous, their living conditions, squalid, and their prospects for improving their futures are dismal. Yet we as a society do little or nothing to help these people lift themselves out of their predicament. It is still the case in America that schools in poor districts are funded at about half the amount, per student, as their richer counterparts. There is a terrible lack of health services for these people, and crime (about the only paying job available) runs rampant through the streets.

How are we responding to this crisis, now that desparation and the abandonment of law and morality that it fosters have reached a fever pitch, threatening even those who live beyond the borders of the "bad neighborhoods?" Well, President Clinton and Attorney General Reno have announced that they are "considering" the deployment of National Guard units in war-torn Washington D.C. to quell its unruly populace. Pretty soon, we'll be fortifying rich areas and requiring border guards be posted on every block to check papers. By that time, we will have abandoned the poor entirely, and without the structures which the rich rely upon to protect their place in society, they will sink

further and further into ignorance and decay. Maybe they'll revolt for real, and take a few rich people down with them.

Is this what we want for our society, one that only 30 years ago declared a War on Poverty, that once held out a vision of prosperity for all of its citizens, that holds highest in its constellation of principles the equality of all? Should these principles fall victim to current economic stagnation? Are we to advocate the abandonment of our own people?

It's the education, stupid. If we are not willing to invest in the amount and kind of education that will bring the poor up to speed in this complicated world, and the rich to realize that the decay of part of their society spells certain doom for themselves as well, this problem will continue to grow and fester. If there is one thing worth increasing the national debt and "endangering our children's future," it is investment in education.

While most people are familiar to some extent with the current struggle to maintain or increase financial aid to college students, it is unlikely that you have heard of any initiative to truly overhaul and improve primary and secondary education, for the obvious reason that none exist at a high enough level to matter. College graduates have already made it in this society. Though jobs are, and will probably continue to be, scarce, it is they who will get them. But if nothing is done for those who cannot realistically expect to

benefit from higher education, conditions will become progressively worse for the poor of this country, and it will become progressively more prohibitively expensive to do anything about it.

Bill Clinton rides both sides of the fence on this issue. He has proposed, and will probably get, a National Service Plan, that will be run by the Army National Guard, giving youth money for their education in return for military-style service. However, the money that the program pays isn't really enough to cover the expense of even a public four-year school, nor will it do anything to help the educationally-disadvantaged to do well once they are in school. So, they will wind up in low-paying semi-skilled jobs, without the resources to make their children's education much better than theirs. Many of them will probably fill the ever-expanding ranks of police and prison guards that are our current response to the problem. The cycle continues.

Education is a privilege, not a right. It is a privilege that none of our citizens can afford to do without. Investing in it offers us next to nothing in the short term, and with school budgets formed on the local level, there is no real incentive for people to do so. Many people worry that, if the poor become educated, they will take jobs away from the middle-class and rich. That much is true, but a smarter population is a more productive population, and one that can better provide for all of its members.

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The Stony Brook Press is published bi-weekly during the academic year and twice during the summer intersession by The Stony Brook Press Inc., a student run and student funded non-profit corporation. The opinions expressed in letters and viewpoints do not necessarily reflect those of the staff.

Advertising policy does not necessarily reflect editorial policy. For more information on advertising and deadlines call (516) 632-6451.

Staff meetings are held Wednesdays promptly at 1:00 pm.

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A CAMPUS-WIDE LITERARY MAGAZINE!**

Along the Color Line: *Beyond Diversity*

By Manning Marable

For half a century, we have pursued the goal of "diversity" in higher education, with at best mixed and uneven results. In the 1950s, liberal educators would say with pride that they were committed to the goal of a "color blind" environment. I distinctly recall professors saying to me that they "could not remember" whether this or that student was "a Negro." They fully embraced the liberal perspective of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that individuals should be judged "not by the color of their skin, but the content of their character." It speaks volumes about the problems inherent in such a statement, when one realizes that black conservatives like Shelby Steele can simplistically advance the same words today, but for a reactionary purpose.

We should all agree that "color blindness" is our goal. As the great Reggae artist Bob Marley of Jamaica observed, "Until the color of a man's skin is of no greater consequence than the color of his eyes, there will be war."

But the question should be, how do we get there? How can we "deconstruct" race? We cannot get there by pretending that "race" and "color" no longer matter, that they have magically declined in significance since the sixties. In a racist society, color symbolizes the inequality of power relations, the ownership of property and resources, between various groups and classes. To end racial prejudice, we must restructure the power relations between people of color and upper-to-middle income whites. This means that we must pursue a "color-conscious" strategy to create the conditions where color is one day irrelevant to determining the

positions of power, educational access, health care and to other opportunities of daily life.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the ideal of color blindness gave way to what could be termed "symbolic representation." Liberal educators believed that the recipe for cultural diversity would be achieved by bringing representatives of a new spectrum of interests into the academy - women, racial minorities, physically disabled people, lesbians and gays, as well as others. Programs were established to create new academic courses in women's studies, Black Studies, Chicano Studies, gays and lesbian studies, and Asian-American Studies. Minorities and women were "symbolically represented" with their appointments as counselors and college recruiters. Multicultural student services centers were established to address perceived concerns of the students of color.

These reforms should have represented a beginning, rather than the end, of a process of education reconstruction on issues of social and cultural difference within the academy. Instead, somehow we have lost our way. And at many colleges and universities, we are actually moving backward.

One reason is that women and racial minorities were usually hired and subsequently located in bureaucratic margins of academic institutions, rather than within real centers of power. There were few deliberate programs which actually tries to identify scholars of color and/or female faculty with administrative abilities, to mentor and cultivate them, and to advance them forward. At some institutions, minority faculty occupied a revolving door position, usually at the designated ranks of instructor or assistant professor, never to be tenured or reappointed.

Transcending the old, restrictive boundaries of "diversity" means going beyond the old language of "minority groups" within our colleges and in society as a whole. We must settle for nothing less than the fundamental redefinition of the "mainstream," to be fully inclusive of the broadest range of cultural perspectives, religious and philosophical values, languages and social traditions which reflect all of America.

Going beyond diversity means fostering a cultural dialogue between the representatives of various ethnic groups on campuses which leads to exchange, sharing and cultural synthesis. Universities must go out of their way to create spaces for people of color and other oppressed groups to express themselves culturally, and to dialogue with others. As things now stand, too often we find students of various ethnic backgrounds relating to each other at a polite social distance, never really learning about other groups' experiences. We only begin to appreciate our own culture, when we take the time to learn what is valuable in someone else's culture.

Going beyond diversity in higher education will require a change in the power relations between people of color, women and the traditional elites which dominate our universities. By redefining the mission and core content of our education, we can begin to move from the margins to the center.

Dr. Manning Marable is Professor of History and Political Science, and Director of the African-American Studies Institute, Columbia University. "Along the Color Line" appears in over 250 publications and 75 radio stations throughout the U.S. and internationally.

The Fourth Reich

By Sensate Mass

Multiculturalism, increased unity, better communication. These are the salves being hawked to heal the wounds of division in our society. A friend visiting from Europe remarked, while watching the coverage of the Rodney King case, that America has a real intolerance problem, and that the divisions in our society seem to be much worse than those of Europe. I agreed with him at the time, imagining Europe to be much more tranquil and tolerant than the U.S. After he had gone home, the realization came that most countries in Europe have a high degree of racial and religious homogeneity, and that the divisions in their culture are more subtle, but every bit as pronounced.

In Europe, the political spectrum is much wider, and the gap between the far left and right is enormous. The fight of ideology, say between the French Socialists and the National Front, is heated and hateful, the former advocating the nationalization of industry, and the latter, the creation of a fascist state in France. Antisemitism runs rampant in most of Europe and the former Soviet Union, going largely unnoticed because it is traditional. And who can forget the firebombing of asylum-seekers and resident Turks in Germany (whom the Germans had invited there in the first place)? The former Yugoslavia is but one example of the hatred between people of different countries and backgrounds; the population of every country in Europe has memories, some hundreds of years old, of injustices done them by other countries, that will require only a slight provocation to burst into armed conflict. Historically speaking, Europe has a record of intolerance far worse than the U.S.; warfare in that continent is the rule rather than the exception.

In Africa, it is much the same story. Needless to say, different ethnicities are continually at odds, but there is

also an enormous amount of tribal conflict, which, in many cases, stems from petty feuds or territorial disputes, and leaves thousands dead every year. Of course, there are also the battles fought in the name of political dominance, which are spread far and wide throughout Asia and Latin America as well. Everywhere in the world, in rich and poor countries alike, one finds people of differing stripes, and strife between them.

To speak of the racial problem in this country as

We should mark them one and all, and implement *our* "final solution." We can begin by beating the living hell out of anyone who says anything intolerant, and leave that person bleeding on the street.

something attributable to the peculiar sequence of our colonial history is ludicrous. Intolerance and divisiveness are as much a part of human nature as is its sociability. It would not be surprising to learn that the reason that we cannot find any traces of certain of our evolutionary ancestors is that the members of Homo Sapiens took it upon themselves to exterminate and incinerate them—the true beginnings of "ethnic cleansing."

However, within any population, there will be found trouble-makers who fan the flames of division, those who haven't the time or inclination to do so, and those who can be swayed either way. It is unjust to hold the human race in its entirety responsible for the actions of

its more simple-minded components. Intolerance is an easy and uncomplicated way to view the world, presenting a black-and-white picture in which one's place is easily determined, that presents opportunities to "justifiably" vent one's frustrations, and solidify the ties with one's own group through the manufactured contrast with the Other. We can see this in America of the nineties, in which, despite the powerful historical condemnation of the actions of our old enemies, the Nazis, people are now wearing swastikas proudly in quickly increasing numbers.

I say we take a leaf from our intolerant enemies in our explanation of them. They are the impurity in our world, and must be exterminated if we are ever to reach our historically destined utopia. We should root out this undermining influence in our societies, and lay bare the racist/bigoted/sexist conspiracies that control our governments and corporations. We should mark them one and all, and implement *our* "final solution." We can begin by beating the living hell out of anyone who says anything intolerant, and leave them bleeding on the street. Of course, this plan is open to misinterpretation and use by really intolerant people, much as communism came to be run by power-mad elitists, and much of the Christian religion has been taken over by materialistic sinners who desire secular power. We'll have to work on that part of it, and make sure that we ourselves do not fall prey to the fascination and allure of hate, and do not enjoy what we have to do. We should, rather, take a businesslike approach to our task, and take great pains not to ingest our enemy's poisons.

If this plan can be carried out, we can get down to the business of ensuring our survival and happiness on this planet, and put behind us the conflict and corruption that has retarded our development throughout history. We have to take control of our evolution before it takes control of us.

An Interview with Steven Mazzola

By John Schneider

I recently got a chance to interview Steven Scott Mazzola, a graduate of Vassar, whose play, *Facts and Figures*, deals with the AIDS crisis, and the reactions which people have to it. It will be appearing at the Fanny Brice Theatre November 5 and 6 at 8:30 pm. While Steven is currently involved with directing *Facts and Figures*, he is continuing to develop ideas for future plays. He enjoys painting and other artistic media, but expresses a preference for theatre, which he feels is better suited to the purpose of conveying a message because of the actors' interaction with the audience. He is aware that theatre is not merely produced dialogue, but a complex combination of elements inside and outside of the playwright's control. This mixture makes theatre a unique form which Mazzola would like to exploit in unconventional ways, like rotating cast members in different roles throughout a play's run. He questions whether the identity of a play resides in the script or in the performance of the actors. I caught up with him the other day, and asked him about the play and the goals he has for his work.

Press: What interests you about the theatre as opposed to other mediums?

Mazzola: I think with theatre, through the course of directing, or acting, or performing, you can capture a moment on stage. If it's done well, you slip and you forget, and you think that you are in that time period, that place with [the characters], or [that] they really are who they [play]. The ability to bring in a large number of people like that, and bring them into a point of understanding or revelation; it's just fascinating. And then to do it night

after night and have it be completely different moments but the same foundation, the same script.

Press: You feel that theatre never repeats itself exactly the same?

Mazzola: It just can't, because it relies on so many people. With film, you have one film; it's two hours. You can see the same film a number of times. But with such a live emotional medium as theatre, you can't see the same show twice. You just can't. This will be my fifth time seeing *Facts and Figures*, and I know it will be different each night. It's the same words - it should be the same thing - but it can't be.

Press: Do you have any horror stories, to good ones, where the audience really understood the message you were conveying?

Mazzola: With *Facts and Figures*, when we did it at Vassar, it ran from Friday to Sunday. The Friday and Sunday performances, the audience applauded; they definitely appreciated the work. Saturday, when the audience left, they applauded, but they were very quiet as they were leaving the theatre and I knew that what they had seen, they were thinking about. That was a great moment, but then there were times that the audience just kind of sat there. You could tell that it wasn't a lasting thing at all. It was just an evening, a "nice play." I don't ever want to do "nice plays." If a play is funny, great, but it's got to impact. If it doesn't impact, what's the point? Why not just watch CNN, or Larry King? Why attempt that live medium if it's not for an impact?

Press: You've talked a bit about writing, but theatre also obviously involves motion as well. How do you visualize what is happening on the stage as you're writing?

Mazzola: When I'm writing, I see the motion. I see the picture and I hear them talk. Getting that into words, and saying, "Okay, move downstage left, turn three quarters clockwise, upstage right at this point." I hate that. I just want to say, "Well, where do the words take you?" But the actors need that structure and it's hard for me to get a structure in keeping with what I saw and in keeping with what they can and want to do. The motion is very important. I have to help the dialogue, and the dialogue has to help it. Two people standing on a stage, no matter what they're saying, would be incredibly boring after the first 15 minutes. Nor many people are that engrossing on sight. It's work. Work that I love doing, and that I think I'm supposed to be doing, but I hate it sometimes.

Press: Does it worry you that other people will be taking what you wrote, and you won't be able to have that control of the production?

Mazzola: Yeah, I guess it worries me, but it worries me more to give it to eight actors whom I have to work with. It's that I'm seeing that they're taking something out of my hands. Granted, I'm the director in this case, but you won't see me on the stage Friday and

Saturday - they'll see eight other people. People won't see me sitting down writing at a computer, they'll see the eight actors. Hopefully, they will say, "That was a great script," but they'll see the actors' performances. That's harder (for me) because I'd like some of the attention. I wouldn't mind it, but it's all part of the process. I often feel that my own voice isn't strong enough for what I believe in so I have to give it to eight other people who don't know the words, but have the courage to say things they believe in. It's a weird co-dependent thing. They can't do without me and I can't do without them. Those are the roles we play with each other.

Press: You mentioned before that the roles weren't gender-specific. Is this different from what you've done in the past?

Mazzola: Yeah, it was really kind of surprising. I kept having to say to myself, "What's going on here?" What it really started with was [that] I had been thinking about AIDS, wanting to do something. AIDS is very important in all of our lives. Whether we choose to accept that reality or not. The things you hear about AIDS, the enormous facts, enormous numbers. I remember I was working at a catering house and a couple of guys were sitting around talking and one of them had read an article on the numbers involved. One of them said, "It's not a big deal, just wear something. Don't let it ruin your sex life." There I was, knowing people who had died of AIDS. There were all these voices, and I just wanted to bridge them. What I found in the writing process was that I didn't need to classify them. I didn't need to give them a gender and a story. The words themselves [are] in my opinion—granted it's [a] bias of the author—just basic to humans. They don't need a male or female box. The structure formed itself, really. I remember thinking, at the end of it, if this is done well, this is a powerful thing. I haven't felt that strongly about a piece in a while.

Press: This subject matter is very personal also. Is it a product of your perspective?

Mazzola: I try to keep myself out of it, but I can't. This is definitely what I view of the normalization process of the AIDS crisis. I'm trying not to do a piece which has contempt for the audience, like, "Do you realize how stupid you are and how unaware you are?" I just wanted to get people to listen to themselves. I tried to reflect the voices that I was hearing. To give it back to people, like holding up a mirror and saying, "Do you see what you look like? Is this what you want to look like?" But it's got to have a personal tone. It's a very personal topic for me. I can't deny that.

Press: You think that the media depersonalizes this issue?

Mazzola: Yeah, they take it away from people and make it into words. The origins of [AIDS] were a perfect foreshadowing of [the media's coverage]. This was thought of as a disease which affects gay men. People think, "It's not important, they're not real people." The country should be stopping now, and remembering, and fighting and spending money. We're not. I think we put it in a box like Pandora's Box. We'll just leave it over here and nothing will happen to us.

Press: Do you think that what you're doing in a way is opening Pandora's Box?

Mazzola: Yeah, I wanted to give us a peek inside. So that we really know what to do with the box. I feel that what we need to do is not to put the box away, but to talk about what's in it. Are we in the box? Are we soon going to be in the box? Let's look inside and see what's really going on. It's not an easy piece; I don't pretend that it is. It's a very thought-provoking piece; there's a lot of pain, a lot of anger, a lot of hope, but there isn't a lot of joy.

Press: What is the one point that you want to get across to anyone who sees *Facts and Figures*?

Mazzola: I'm hoping we'll be able to pull it off. When you get close to performance date, you get nervous as hell. I hope people listen to everything that's going on and really hear the stories. It's not a request that they go home and examine their knowledge of AIDS, it's more that they heard, and I think [their] hearing it makes things that much better.

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Armed and Dangerous

Federal Prison System Involved in Arms Production

By Raymond Luc Levasseur, political prisoner
Marion Prison

When I was transferred to the U.S. penitentiary in Marion, Illinois in December, 1989, Panama was being invaded by U.S. forces. Amidst the wholesale destruction, mass graves, and lies by U.S. politicians and military leaders was an awesome display of American firepower designed to impose its will on yet another Central American nation. Weapons systems from land, sea, and air were utilized, along with the basic M16 to kill whoever stood in the line of fire. Whether technologically advanced or as simple as a grenade, this war material is made in the U.S.A. - some of it by federal prisoners.

The Federal Prison Industries, Inc. (UNICOR) is one of the manufacturers that supplies military equipment to the bloated U.S. war machine. UNICOR has served this function since 1934 under contract to the War Department, now known euphemistically as the Department of Defense. The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BoP) boasts that the slave labor of prisoners, under hazardous conditions, and at an entry level wage of 23¢ an hour has and continues to make significant contributions towards supplying the military's needs. It also boasts of using UNICOR to control prisoners within its vastly overcrowded system.

UNICOR's military production ranges from TOW and other missile cables, munitions components, communications equipment, bomb parts, engine overhauls, uniform sewing, etc. In its brochures, the BoP proudly displays photographs of prisoners working hard producing this material. A Vietnam veteran, I was particularly struck by a photo of Federal prisoners producing equipment destined for Vietnam Am. Unlike most prisoners, I got to see with my own eyes the lethal effects of the end product.

It is the priority of UNICOR to provide for the military's needs, whether it was during the Korean War when 80% of UNICOR sales went to the military, or the Gulf War when prisoners were processed into overtime. In fact, the military has its own representative on UNICOR's Board of Directors to advise on how to better harness prison labor for military purposes.

Being contracted to the War Department means supplying more than just U.S. forces. It means that this military equipment is rerouted by the U.S. to its client states—from Israel to Indonesia—and into the hands of the world's most degenerate and bloodthirsty regimes. In cases like El Salvador, the supplies were used to kill their own people.

USP-Marion is a control unit prison where abuse of prisoners is well documented by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Congressional Committee hearings and other sources. In the never ending lockdown there is little to engage the intellect, an abysmal lack of stimulation and recreation, and no work with which to labor. With one exception. The prison administration has designed a scheme whereby prisoners deemed suitable must enter a period of involuntary service in the "pre-transfer" unit before approval is granted for transfer to a less brutal prison. It is a scheme the administration exploits to the hilt because they understand that Marion prisoners are desperate to leave its punishment cells, isolation, and tomb-like conditions.

While all federal prisoners are required to work, they are not required to work UNICOR, though 26% do so. Most prisoners opt to work in other areas such as food service or maintenance, or pursue the very limited educational or vocational programs available. USP-Marion is the single exception in the federal prison system because it mandates that prisoners work UNICOR as a condition of transfer. The only work at Marion's UNICOR is military production.

The Bureau of Prisons has parried Freedom of Information Act requests to disclose detailed information about war production at Marion. However, this much is known: UNICOR Marion produces electronics commu-

tion cables which it sells to the War Department. These cables are used in various ground vehicles, such as tanks and Armored Personnel Carriers, and production line supervisors have bragged that the cables are used in helicopters. During the Gulf War, the prisoners working UNICOR Marion were compelled to do overtime production. Whatever its finite specifics, the military application of the electronics cables is essential to many weapons systems and platforms.

Marion's operation is an extension of a larger corporation at the federal prison in Lexington, Kentucky, so its production and property figures are not individually computed. In a typical year, Lexington fills 800-1200 orders for the military, totaling \$12 million.

In modern warfare, the term "Military hardware" encompasses advanced weapons systems in which electronics often provide a more destructive function than the soldier's rifle. During the U.S. war on Iraq, for example, bombardment by electronically-enhanced munitions on water treatment plants spreads a bacteriological assault on all those people whose lives depend on that water. According to the New England Journal of Medicine, 46,900 Iraqi children died in the first seven months of 1991 as a result of U.S. attacks on the country's infrastructure. Besides pilots and gunners who never see their victims, what's used to coordinate and propel mass destruction are the essential components of war, right down to the vital electronics and communication cables. War where the primary victims are civilian.

Military equipment is not produced in a vacuum. Those prisoners who produced material during the Vietnam War certainly knew there was a war raging. U.S. military conquests, past and present, are well-documented. Perhaps less well-known, though equally significant and well-documented, is the Government's diversion of weapons and military equipment to serial killers disguised as heads of state. UNICOR's military production is part of an extensive pipeline that feeds the world's largest weapon exporter.

The U.S. has made much of China's use of prison labor for textile and other exports to the U.S. market. This is said to be a human rights abuse (i.e., that it cuts into the profits of U.S. corporations). The latest controversy revolved around Christmas tree ornaments manufactured by Chinese prisoners and exported to the U.S. To my knowledge no one has ever been killed by an attack from a Christmas tree ornament, yet tons of military equipment for which U.S. prisoners have provided essential components are exported to bomb, blast, and terrorize their ultimate recipients.

For me, being a revolutionary is the best way to live. Capture and imprisonment involve adjustments, but have not made me repentant for a life time of antiimperialism and struggle for justice. I was sent to Marion because of my political beliefs and associations and will likely remain here unless I repudiate them, which I will not do. For me to engage in the production of military equipment as a condition for a transfer would be a repudiation of my political beliefs and principles. I will not do it.

Refusing to be an accomplice to U.S. militarism is an act rooted deep in conscience and solidarity with those fighting U.S. imperialism, and trying to survive its onslaught. It is largely a symbolic act, yet necessary in confronting the collaborative nature of the system. During the recent attack against Lebanon by U.S. supplied Israeli forces, every newspaper, magazine, and newsreel image of the subsequent atrocities—hundreds killed and wounded; hundreds of thousands made refugees—shows a steady movement of U.S. manufactured weapons and equipment.

For the political prisoner, putting principles into practice may be largely symbolic, but demonstrating who we are and what we stand for is better than accommodating the government's agenda. It's important to remember that however small the resistance, someone always steps forward. The magnitude of crimes perpetuated by the U.S. must be opposed, and this cannot be done without risk and

sacrifice. The lack of an organized and wider resistance, though lamented, does not negate individual and small group action. History is replete with their examples and corpses: from the White Rose activists who opposed fascism to the first and few guerrillas of the Sandinista Front for National Liberation; from John Brown to the Industrial Workers of the World who were sent to prison in droves; to Malcolm X and the indomitable George Jackson. For each of them there are the countless unnamed. The only reward short of victory is the sustenance obtained from the spirit of resistance.

It is not a decision made without consequences. The government and Bureau of Prison's iron fist gives no quarter to revolutionaries, rebels, and dissenters. It's part of Marion's mission to destroy an individual's identity and community ties. One warden stated that "The purpose of Marion is to control revolutionary attitudes in the prison system and society at large." Rather overstated personified in a social experiment. Any outward indication that a prisoner does not conform to Marion's dictates that he is condemned to incessant isolation. For the transgressor there will be no relief—no step closer to personal freedom; no embrace of family and loved ones, no access to expanded work, education, or recreational opportunities; no shot at parole. Added to the burden is the public's indifference and the response of the liberal left, who view prisoners with contempt and political prisoners with hostility.

Yet, through all the years and for all its evil ways, Marion has not destroyed me. All that can destroy me are guards, medical neglect, or a prisoner that doesn't have his head screwed on right. There's an axiom here which declares that all who enter these walls will eat much shit before leaving. It's inherent in Marion's mission. But eating shit is qualitatively different than producing war material that's used to put someone else in their grave. Someone else who also experiences a steady diet of oppression, someone who does me no harm.

It's been twenty-six years since I moved as a soldier among the Vietnamese people, with rifle in hand, desecrating their land and seeing the ill, the infirm, wounded and dying of those I was assigned to enlighten—or light up—about the virtues of U.S. imperialism. After my discharge, I joined Vietnam Am Veterans Against the War, a group of conscience-ridden and war-weary vets who rejuvenated a lethargic anti-war movement when the U.S. bombing of Vietnam was at its extreme. Overlapping with Vietnam was the war in America's streets, fought in places like Newark, Detroit, Pine Ridge, Attica, Humbolt Park, East L.A.. Within this war were internecine battles provoked by police spies and provocateurs and the rapid proliferation of snitches in a drug saturated, me first society. And beyond SE Asia, U.S. wars of intervention left its bloody footprints in Chile, Argentina, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Angola, South Africa, Cuba and Puerto Rico, to name but a few. As in Vietnam, the victims are mostly civilians.

Always at war, as the world's policeman, this omnipotent and ubiquitous United States military is charged with enforcing capitalism's code of conduct. Troops were mobilized during the rebellion in Los Angeles. Troops are deployed in Somalia where they now stand accused of human rights violations by the humanitarian relief agencies and the Somali people themselves.

Vietnam changed my view of liberation to mean a constant and protracted struggle against those forces that impose their will on others for power and profit. Freedom is the ultimate expression and condition of a people who control their own destiny. Once before, the government put me in uniform and used me for military purposes. Being young and naive was no excuse for my complicity. They'll not do it again.

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Arcane Answers

(an advice column of diabolic origin)

Dear Azazel,

What's up man! Yo, what is with these girls on campus dude? Everyone told me it would be easy to get some up here, but the only things easy up here are the social rejects and girls too fat to fit in my dorm room. What's the deal? Several people besides me have this problem. What happened to the good old seventies when you could just ask a girl her sign, then get her in the sack. Have they become smarter? Has feminism won? Has alcohol lost its effects on their sexual drive? Tell me man.

- No Fat Chicks

No Fat;

If women were easy, there would be one less reason behind the opposable thumb. This notion aside, I would like to point out that there are somewhere in the neighborhood of seven thousand female undergrads; gyno-grads, if you will, currently enrolled here at S.U.N.Y. Stony Brook, and just because you're not rolling in the hay doesn't mean they're all writhing in unrequited passion.

The average dorm room is approximately thirty-two hundred cubic feet in volume, which should be more than ample enough for up to two or three of them and any activities in which you might wish to engage. As far as a preponderance of "social rejects," I would say that your data sample is probably biased with respect to the social context in which you find people



like yourself. By way of example, you stated that you know "several people" who share your dilemma. These people wouldn't happen to be your friends, would they?

What happened to the seventies? Well, we burned them on a big pile of polyester leisure suits, bad sitcoms, and Andy Gibb albums. Anyone who uses the phrase,

"Hey baby, what's your sign?" should be dressed as an American stereotype and exiled with the rest of the Village People.

Feminism hasn't won, but that's another issue altogether. Have they become smarter? Probably not. In fact, humans in general seem to have been cognitively stagnant for the last few eons. On the other hand, a woman's forte has historically been cunning manipulation rather than cerebral conquest.

You already know that you have no hope of understanding women; no one does. I have been around for millennia and seem to know less than ever. Your problem, however, appears to be that you have no idea of the role you are to play in their fiendish mockery. Your hormones are the domain of your X chromosome and in this all males are hopelessly imprisoned.

I would like to close by paraphrasing Beaumont and Fletcher: There is no better purgatory than Woman.

-Azazel

P.S.

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Theoretical Baseball

By Sensate Mass

As I was watching the World Series and reading Stephen J. Hawking's new book *Black Holes, Baby Universes, and Other Essays*, an inspirational thought struck: Baseball is a perfect analogue of the matter-energy continuum both in terms of theoretical physics and contemporary life. This was a concept that needed to gestate, to float serenely in the warm, nutritional amniotic fluid of Mind, before seeing the light of the world. The great American pastime as unwittingly reflective of the Great Truths of Nature—too much! (Especially considering the spittle-covered tractor boys and ego-victims who played it out before my eyes.)

First of all, the universe, like the game, is composed of an event-series—in the universe, interactions of energies and particles, in baseball, the series of pitches. The event-series can either add energy (hits), dissipate energy (outs), or do neither (foul balls). If the smallest requisite quanta of energy is added during the event (a base hit), the series manifests a certain type of energy (infrared? Physics people, help me out) is created. If more energy is added, the phenomena is kicked up to the next level (second base), and, if there is a critical amount of energy left over (the second runner makes it to first), both types of energy are manifested simultaneously. The same holds true on a higher level for third base.

Energy is intrinsically unstable—if it is not maintained, it will dissipate, and within a fairly limited, but

not determinate, span of time. It can be perpetuated indefinitely (a series of foul balls), or be gone in an instant (pop out, double play, etc.).

If a really large amount of energy is added (either through a home run, or through a sequence of hits), matter is the result. Unlike the energy, matter has a kind of permanence; alterations in the event series do not remove it in the short term. And, just as in life, the amount of matter that you possess determines your worth. Also like life, having matter is meaningless if you don't have more of it than anyone else, or at least the nearest person.

Manifesting energy and creating matter is a messy business, though; there is always something left over. In the universe, this extra stuff is dark matter, random incoherent energy, and pinpoint black holes. In baseball, it is the force that drives people to buy White Sox paraphernalia, buy baseball cards, subsidize multi-million dollar TV contracts, pay \$25 per ticket, and kill themselves trying to catch foul balls (in which they believe energy is trapped forever.)

Even matter doesn't last forever; while it does persist for a long time in terms of the event-series, all matter breaks down into energy over the long term. In baseball, this phenomenon is known as the off-season, during which all matter is reduced to a flurry of trades and training, recriminations and congratulations, that spills over into the newspapers and public, even though no games are going on.

American Rebel:

Flashbacks of Abbie Hoffman

By Robert V. Gilheany

Abbie Hoffman, a spirited radical activist whose spark and personality became a symbol of 1960s activism, is the subject of a recently published biography. Author Marty Jezer, a veteran of the peace movement in the United States and a writer for WIN magazine, has written a definitive book on Abbie Hoffman.

Jezer takes us through Hoffman's life from his childhood days in Worcester Massachusetts, his pool hall hustling, Brandeis University his radical intellectual grounding, his graduate studies at Berkeley, the fight against the House un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), his organizing in the Civil Rights Movement and the Anti-Vietnam war protest, Chicago, Jerry Rubin, underground life, organizing the St. Lawrence, and his final battles.

Jezer's is a somewhat critical but gentle account of Abbie Hoffman's life. In describing the activist battles Hoffman was in, Marty Jezer puts the struggle in historical perspective by giving historical background to the issues that Abbie Hoffman was organizing for. Vietnam was a particularly good example.

The perspective of Marty Jezer on the tactics and politics of the left created a certain bias in his book concerning various aspects of the movement and Abbie Hoffman's relationship to particular tactics and ideological beliefs. One striking example of this was Jezer's account of Hoffman's ideological growth at Brandeis.

In "Soon to Be a Major Motion Picture," the autobiography of Abbie Hoffman, Abbie talks about the impressive faculty at Brandeis. Jezer does this too, but Abbie made it crystal clear that he held Abraham Maslow and Herbert Marcuse in equal esteem. He said that the new left movement of the 1960s was a synthesis of these two thinkers. Abraham Maslow was the father of humanist psychology. The followers of this school see people's path to self-actualization as people's striving to satisfy their needs for survival, followed by safety, and, finally, the need to be productive and creative. Abbie Hoffman saw the goals of the freedom and liberation movements as compatible with humanist psychology and saw activism as a path to self-actualization. Hoffman said that Maslow was positive—you're not an activist because you want to kill your father and sleep with your mother. (Abbie's father was a Republican-conservative businessman.) Marcuse, a German Marxist from the Frankfurt school, represented the radical leftist activist intelligencia whose goal was to create a revolutionary movement against Imperialist repression. Abbie saw the synthesis between revolutionary thought and humanist psychology as the best way to build a mass movement. In his book, Jezer

talks a lot about Maslow, but doesn't mention Marcuse at all. This is an anti-communist bias which runs through the book. This is not to say that Abbie Hoffman was a dogmatic Marxist ideologue, because he wasn't.

You see a similar slant when Jezer deals with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). During Abbie's involvement in the civil rights movement, the Black Power forces grew and white organizers had to find a new venue in the freedom struggle. Abbie saw the need for blacks to control the organizing and leadership of the civil rights movement. Hoffman like Jezer felt bad for white organizers who felt pushed out, but Jezer didn't mention Abbie's love and admiration for Stokely Carmichael, who Abbie Hoffman called "the best speaker he had ever heard."

Moving to Lower East Side of New York City was like being called up to the big leagues, Abbie would say. He moved into a studio apartment with his first wife Anita. They organized Street people, Beatniks, and young run-away hippies into the anti-Vietnam war movement.

Abbie stressed a youth-cultural edge to organizing a mass movement, inspired by the Diggers in San Francisco. So he put together be-ins in parks in Manhattan along with the beatniks. As a part of this movement, he had Alan Ginsberg read his poetry at the be-ins. Guerrilla theater was one thing that Abbie had a knack for. A great example was the burning of money on Wall Street. Abbie and his friends showed up for a tour of the Stock Exchange that was set up for tourists. While the tour was up on a balcony over the Stock Exchange, they started throwing dollar bills and monopoly money down on the floor of the exchange. The brokers

started scrambling and fighting over the loose free money, while up on the balcony Abbie and his friends were burning money in their clinched fists. The Stock Exchange closed down because of the disruption. (There is a glass barrier over the Exchange now. They should call it the Abbie Hoffman Memorial Ceiling.)

Chicago is what Abbie was best known for. Jezer takes us on an exciting and richly detailed account of the organizing of the "festival of life" in Chicago to synchronize with the Democratic Convention that would nominate Hubert Humphrey for president.

Marty Jezer gives us a look at the various factions in the anti-war movement, and the bureaucratic stalling of the City of Chicago was giving Abbie Hoffman, the Youth International Party (YIPPIES), over permits to use the parks. Jezer shows us the tactics Abbie Hoffman and Mayor Richard Daley used, either to promote or discourage the festival as Abbie and Daley did, respectively.

The festival itself was well-chronicled. The tension

between the demonstrators and the police became famous. The cops systematically harassed the people in the park and started a riot, and the organizers of the Chicago Demonstrations were charged with conspiracy to incite a riot.

After the convention and the trial, Abbie was involved in politicking for Woodstock, and authored "Woodstock Nation." Then he had to return to Chicago for the trial.

Conspiracy charges were brought against Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, David Dillinger, Rennie Davis, and others, including Bobby Seale, the chairman of the Black Panthers. They became known as the Chicago 8. Bobby Seale was dropped from the case, and they became the Chicago 7. Marty Jezer took us through that trial, "A Trial of Organizers," in Hoffman's words. The judge, Julius Hoffman, was hostile to the defendants. The defendants went on to use the trial as theater. All the convictions were overturned.

Abbie Hoffman's organizing ability was unique. He was street-smart and knew how to size people up. When he was a teenager, he was a pool hall hustler in Worcester, Massachusetts. As an organizer, he was able to bring bikers into the anti-war movement. He was tight with the Motherfuckers, a group of bikers on the Lower East Side. Bikers, Young Hippies, Jewish leftist intellectuals, civil rights activists—Abbie was able to bring many kinds of people together. He was able to move in and out of each group. He always had humor in his work.

Jezer captured Abbie's humor pretty well, but not as well as Abbie's own autobiography "Soon to be a Major Motion Picture." It got more into the personality of the leftist activist. Abbie let us know how he hated Tom Hayden. Both books describe Abbie's struggle with non-violence that a large part of the left, like Dillinger, insisted upon. Abbie said non-violence didn't sit well with his Middle American upbringing.

Abbie was involved in more activities than could possibly be covered in this article. There was the drug bust. His years underground were very tough on Abbie; he had to become an invisible person, which was completely against his nature. He had to move around a lot and disguise himself. In the late 70's, he was living on the Saint Lawrence River. The Army Corp of Engineers was planning on developing the area for shipping. He was living under the alias Barry Freed with his second wife "and running mate," Joanna Lewenson. He did a fantastic job organizing. He received the praise of Governor Hugh Carey and Senator Danny Pat Moynahan.

After that, he came up from underground and spent a year in jail. He then went back to being a full-time activist working against Contra aid and helping to build a student movement in the United States. He worked with students opposed to the CIA on campus. He also worked with Amy Carter and Jimmy Kid. Students worked with him to put together a National Conference at Rutgers in 1988. The Northeast Student Action Network and Progressive Student Network grew out of that.

Marty Jezer's book is very well-written, and a good read. It puts all the struggles and issues into a solid historical perspective through Jezer's meticulous construction of the backgrounds that surrounded the events. Steal a copy today.

Abbie Hoffman American Rebel
Marty Jezer
Rutgers University Press
109 Church St
New Brunswick, N.J. 08901



Candy-Coated Nightmare

By David Yaseen and Catherine Krupski

The long-awaited premiere of Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas* was Friday, October 22nd, and just about the whole staff of the paper, evil and ghoulish wretches that we are, piled into the Press Yugo and bopped on down to Capitalism R Us to catch it. As expected, the animation, characters, and settings were first-rate and devilishly clever. As expected, it deftly combined many elements of Halloween and Christmas. Not as expected, it was a *musical*. Yep, you heard right, a musical. It was a bit odd to hear Jack, the Pumpkin King, telling us how sick he was of being the Halloween Emcee to a perversion of some old Sinatra tune.

Another thing you might not expect is the near-complete lack of sickness in the picture. Though most of it is set (beautifully) in the perverted world of Halloweentown, the movie might as well be some other animated Disney flick if not for the gimmicky weirdnesses and overall dark, Burtonesque-gothic feel to the whole thing. This is not to say that the movie fails to deliver on its premise, that is, a wonderfully warped and weird perversion of all that Christmas stands for—that it does to perfection. But you have to wonder if it really turned out as Burton wanted it to; its overriding theme (which sort of invalidated the whole Halloweentown concept) is “all you need is love to be really happy,” and there is no genuine cruelty or wickedness except for the goofily-named Oogie Boogie, the original boogymen, who tries to incinerate Santa Claus (gasp!) and the heroine, Sally.

The movie begins with Jack lamenting his fate as the Pumpkin King, doomed to endlessly repeat his Halloween performance. His angst drives him beyond the Halloweentown city limits, to a strange forest. In the middle of the trees he finds a circular clearing bordered by a number of larger trees, each bearing the insignia of a holiday. He is fascinated in particular by the Christmas “tree,” and opens the door framed by the tree on the bark. He peers into the darkness and a strange wind blows him inside.

The next thing Jack knows, he finds himself in jolly, cheery Christmastown, with elves skating, merrily decorating their happy little homes, and building toys. The sheer difference of the place fascinates him, but he doesn't get the

point. So he returns to Halloweentown, reads everything he can get his hands on about Christmas, does experiments with some of the things he brought back with him, and works up a mathematical equation that “= xmas,” all to no avail. Jack is not deterred, however; he

Santa suit for Jack. The plans work their way to completion, and all is set. Jack runs his skeletal set of reindeer, complete with coffin sleigh, up a ramp and into the sky, but not before Sally, trying to stop him, uses “fog juice” to cloud the sky. Jack, stumped for a solution, realizes that his dog's red nose, oh so bright, would guide his sleigh that night. This was obvious in the beginning of the movie and nauseating when it finally happened.

Right at the beginning, it is apparent that Jack's plan won't work out quite the way he wanted it to. At the first house he visits, a child hears the (quite unprofessional) thud-ud-ud-dud-dud of Jack's sleigh pounding into the roof of his house, and wakes up, hoping to see Santa. Upon seeing Jack, the wide-eyed boy just stares, slack-jawed and stricken, at the ghastly and unexpectedly thin Father Christmas that appears. Soon after Jack leaves, his parents descend the stairs and, full of the spirit of Christmas, sweetly ask their child, “What did Santa bring you for Christmas?” The boy pulls out a severed, partially decomposed head out of the box, and his parents scream.

After a few scenes of Jack, more and more haphazardly delivering his precious cargo, the film cuts to sequences of homicidal animate toys attacking their recipients, a police dispatcher taking calls from terrified parents, and a newswoman reporting the strange incidents of Christmas Eve. America characteristically responds, guns ablazing. In a scene reminiscent of Pink Floyd's *The Wall*, monolithic artillery pieces raise themselves against the night and fire at the sepulchral sleigh. Jack, still full of his faulty conception of the spirit of Christmas, thinks they are lighting his way. When they take out the flying coffin, he finally gets the point—nobody appreciated his good intentions.

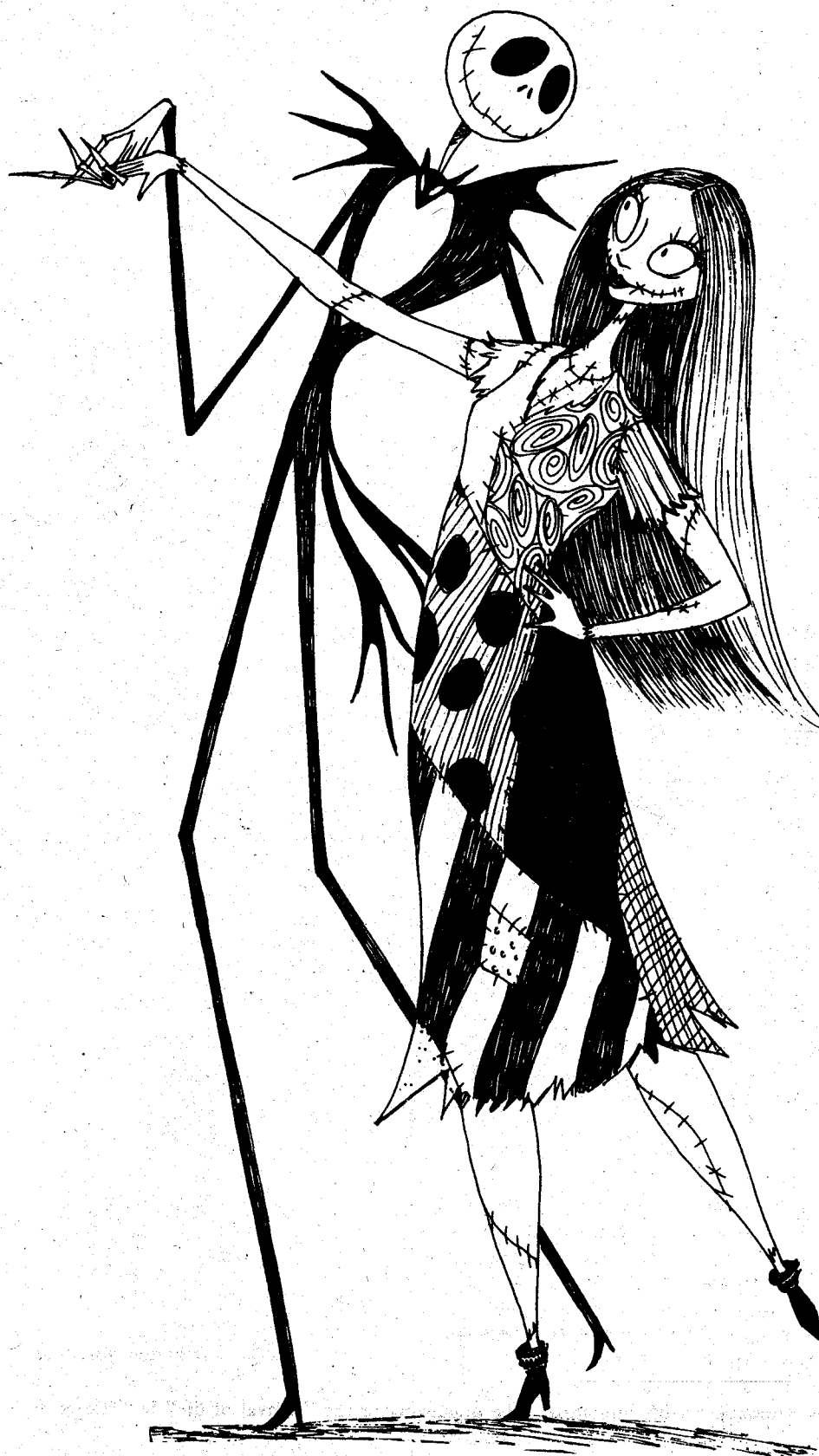
Then he realizes that he is THE Pumpkin King and that is what he is good at. Before the happy ending, he must set things right, which means that he must

resolve to be Santa for Christmas, and dispatches three goony little kids to kidnap Mr. Claus to avoid redundancy.

A town meeting is called, and the denizens of Halloweentown are all assigned tasks to help prepare for the big takeover. Toys are commissioned: among them a duck with bloody bullet wounds and a man-eating snake, music is written, and even Sally gets a job sewing a skinny

battle the spooky Oogie Boogie. This was cool because once Oogie disrobes, his insides are only bugs, and they appeared as a disgustingly detailed, writhing mass of yuck. This was the most colorful part of Halloweentown.

We all enjoyed the movie, but agreed that it could have been more twisted, and that \$7.50 was a bit steep. It is definitely worth a matinee, though.



Dysfunctional Fables

THE IVY AND THE PHONE

By Rachel S. Wexelbaum

fo Ivan Ivanovich Ivanov and Tanya, who continually fondle each other

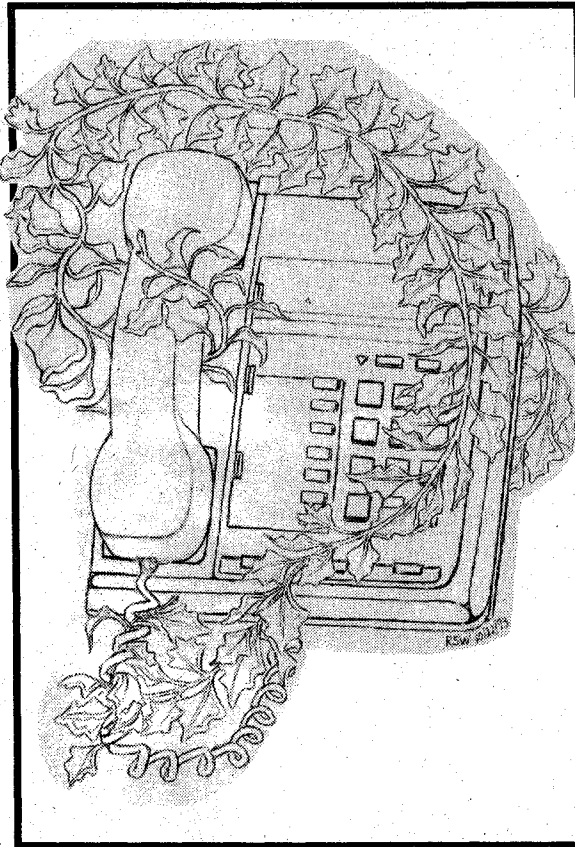
On the first floor of a student dormitory lived an ivy. He sat on the windowsill, content to look outside and watch the world turn. Quite often, the ivy would compose an ode to celebrate the beauty of the changing seasons. His favorite poet was Pushkin.

Like his idol, the ivy had a romantic soul longing for the ultimate experience. Aside from his owner, who sung to him, watered him often and kindly tended his leaves, no one paid any attention to him. No other plants lived in the room either, so he had no one to talk to. Lonely, he sighed whenever he spotted a couple walking past the window, sharing a laugh and a secret glance. He wished he could hold hands with someone and walk outside, although for an ivy the latter is quite difficult.

BUT—never say never.

After two weeks the ivy had trained himself to wriggle out of his pot and wander around while his owner and her roommate were in class. He had grown quite good at it, and while the weather was still warm he grew bold and climbed out the window to wander the campus. Fresh air, music and bright colors overwhelmed his senses as he made his way to the academic mall in search of major babes (oops, voluptuous goddesses with delicate feet).

Unfortunately, he hadn't the experience that he



expected. Everyone stared at him as if he were a fungus, a slime mold—hadn't they seen a houseplant before? Some primate cretins even tried to chase him down and beat him with sticks. Dejected and disillu-

sioned the ivy crawled back home, whimpering sadly.

He longed for another. He could make a long list of beautiful people to whom he wished to send roses. How he wished he could tell someone, maybe write an ad in one of those kinky personals columns and try his luck: young single green ivy wishes to wrap his tendrils around you; enjoys music, poetry, sunsets and fine Knox gelatin...

Then, one day, the ivy's tendrils grew long enough to touch—another. He averted his gaze from the window and saw a cream-complexioned ROLM phone right next to him, also looking outside and sighing at the changing autumn foliage. His heart beat wildly; he knew that she was the one he had been looking for all this time, and she was only inches away.

"And she has sooo many secrets," he thought as his owner's room-mate came in to hear the messages. "A silent, mysterious woman...voluptuous, and with small feet."

MORAL: Sometimes the best things are not found and appreciated until we have grown.

MORE IMPORTANTLY: Silent plants have feelings, too. Steer them away from suicide by keeping them close to others and giving them plenty to do, not just read.

DOGS VS. MEN

By Catherine Krupski
For Jessi

Why are dogs better than men:

1. They don't talk back.
2. Dogs will at least try to hide their messes.
3. They will always eat their dinner and not complain.
4. They wait for you to come home.
5. All you have to do is feed them.

Why men are better than dogs:

1. Generally, they don't get car sick.
2. They don't drink out of the toilet.
3. They can't lick themselves.
4. They can occasionally earn money.

What a dilemma. Sure people have joked that dogs are better than men. Unfortunately, the punch lines are usually mean, and at times, even derogatory.

Well, I am here to inform you that it is true, and for four years, I have had the same dog. She never tried to run away, nor did I ever want to get rid of her. How many people can say they had a four-year relationship? Besides, most of these end due to sex-related arguments/incidents.

First of all, most men, with the exception of one, are slob (I don't mean people should be anal-retentive/immaculate, they just shouldn't leave the mashed potatoes-with-gravy-and-chicken-bones on the table).

You can tell a man a million times and it will never sink in. Train a dog once, and it will never commit the sin again, or hide under the table, face stricken with shame. Imagine if this worked with guys and toilet seats!

Dogs are so much more obedient. You call the dog once and it is at your feet in a second. You scream a guy's name a dozen times and he *might* give you that "Did you say something?" glance.

Ironically for some unexplained reason, canines can

pick up on Homo sapiens feelings much better than a male Homo sapiens. If I'm sad, my dog is at my side. If I'm angry, my dog knows it. When was the last time a guy has done that? It is more likely that they will walk blindfolded right into a time bomb in a relationship because they did not see the warning signs.

My dog waits for me to come home and then gives me the warmest greeting. Most women are happy if their boyfriend yells, "Is that you?" from the bathroom.

The best part is when you have given them all your undivided attention and affection, you just tell them, "OK, no more..." And that is it! ¡No Más!

But of course, there is that not-so-discrete difference between *male* dogs and *female* dogs. My example here has been Jessi—short for Jessika. The male/female difference is prevalent no matter what the species. However, regardless of gender, make no mistake that dogs, unfortunately labeled "man's best friend," shouldn't be confused with men, and there is no reason women can't reap the same benefits of companionship men have for so long in having devoted pets.

After this was written, a book that mentioned some of these same points has been published. *Why Dogs Are Better Than Men*, by Jennifer Berman, will be released next month from Pocket Books, a division of Simon and Schuster. Berman also illustrated the book herself and captured many of the emotions expressed by a dog that a

dog owner can relate to and appreciate - I liked those the most. I think the price (\$8.00) is a little steep for approximately 40 pages of one-liners accompanied with illustrations. However, some of Berman's reasons are funny ("The Worst Social Disease You Can Get From Dogs Is Fleas - OK, the really worst disease you can get from them is rabies, but there's a vaccine for it, and you get to kill the one who gives it to you") and original ("Dogs aren't threatened by a woman with short hair"), and corny ("dogs understand if some of their friends cannot come inside [the house]") and sappy ("dogs obsess about you as much as you obsess about them"). Even her introduction is funny, "This book is for any woman who has steadfastly resisted the frequent urge to feloniously resolve her relationship with our hormonally challenged counterparts."

Of the 40 pages, 9 of which make up a chapter called, *Why Men and Dogs are Equivalent*, and 5 pages were dedicated to the qualities which give men the upper hand. I felt that some

of these were pushing the limit—as if she didn't want it to seem as if there were no redeeming qualities in men.... OK, as Berman put it in her book, "men don't eat cat turds on the sly" and I agreed with her in that "neither knows how to talk on the telephone." I read this book and "ooohed" and "aaahed" over many examples which reminded me of my dog (and also many men I have "known").

