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THE STONY BROOK **PRESS**

Vol. XXI No. 6

Shit, Piss, and Corruption

November 24, 1999

THE TROUBLE WITH TAMPONS : Conflicting Research Leaves Women Hanging By a Thread

Page 3

TAMPAX[®]
TAMPONS

Now Better Than Ever!

Flushable Applicator

Not-so-Super?

Super Absorbancy

Also in This Issue...

Sounding Off On ATM Fees... pages 4 & 5

U.N. Foul-up?...page 7

Jack and Hil tackle...relationships !?...pages 18 and 19

And If That Ain't Enough...

The National Disclaimer Insert!

What's New at SBU

Memorandum

To: The Campus Community
 From: George J. Meyer, Assistant Vice President for
 Presidential Initiatives
 Subject: Chancellor's/President's Awards and
 Distinguished Professor Titles

As the Thanksgiving recess approaches, this comes as a reminder that the deadline for some of the Chancellor's/Presidents Awards, as well as the Distinguished Professor titles, is the day we return from the the Thanksgiving break: Monday, November 29th. The relevant awards and professorships are:

Distinguished Service Professorships
 Distinguished Teaching Professorships
 Chancellor's/President's Awards for Excellence in
 Professional Service

Due in the Provost's Office by Nov. 29, 1999

Chancellor's/President's Awards for Excellence in
 Librarianship

Chancellor's/President's Awards for Excellence in
 Teaching

Due in the University Senate Office by Nov. 29, 1999

President's Awards for Excellence in Classified Service
 Due to Vice President's Area Nominating Committee Chair
 by Nov. 29, 1999

Call 632-7272 if you need a nomination booklet, or pick one up at the President's Office.

Participate in Stony Brook Day on Tuesday, February 8, 2000, at the New York State Legislative Office Building in Albany, New York

Stony Brook Day is an opportunity for you to work with other USB students, faculty, and staff to promote our University to our New York State Legislators who shape the decisions that are made about the future of our campus in a number of areas, including financial aid. During this day-long event, you will travel with President Kenny, Provost McGrath, our deans, and others to Albany to tell our representatives what Stony Brook is all about!

The Stony Brook Day Planning Committee will teach you how to effectively lobby, and will provide breakfast, a festive reception, and a free trip to Albany for **Stony Brook Day**. This is a time when you can make a real difference in the future of our campus. Buses depart from campus at 6 a.m. and leave Albany at 5 p.m. We expect to return to campus by 9 p.m. If necessary, we will contact your professor to request your participation in this important effort.

You can obtain a copy of the **Stony Brook Day** application in Suite 219, in the SAC. Return it to the Department of Student Union and Activities no later than December 6, 1999.

Winter Festival of Chamber Music begins December 6th at the Staller Center for the Arts

Enjoy outstanding performances by Music Department students, featuring Chamber Music from Baroque to Contemporary. The Music Department at the University at Stony Brook is pleased to present four concerts in the Winter Festival Of Chamber Music: **Monday, Dec. 6th; Wednesday, Dec. 8; Monday, Dec. 13th; and Wednesday, Dec. 15th.** All concerts will be performed at 8:00 p.m. in the Recital Hall at the Staller Center for the Arts.

Stony Brook Chorale Performs Haydn's The Creation with the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra

Sunday, December 5, at Staller Center
 On Sunday, Dec. 5th at 3:00 p.m., the Stony Brook Chorale and the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra will welcome guest chorus, the Choral Society of the Hamptons, in a gala performance of Haydn's *The Creation*. This concert on Dec. 5th will be the first time that the two choruses have performed together. Join us for the free pre-concert lecture given by Mark Lederway at 2:00p.m. in the Recital Hall. Tickets for the concert are available at the Staller Center Box Office, 632-ARTS. (\$12; Students & seniors: \$6).

For additional info, contact Robin Pouler-McGrath at 632-7330

Loren Madsen's 6,000,000,000 Monkeys

University Art Gallery
 Staller Center for the Arts, SUNY Stony Brook
 November 9 – December 11, 1999
 Gallery Hours: 12 noon- 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday
 6 - 8 p.m. Saturday
 (closed Sunday, Monday, and holidays)
 For information, call 632-7240.

A Community of Fiber Artists

In celebration of the Year of the Community, the SUNY Stony Brook Union Art Gallery will present an exhibit of Fiber Art from November 22 to December 10, 1999.

The scope of the exhibit will be diverse and will contain numerous styles of fiber art which vary in subject matter. Each fiber artist will show works which combine their own unique styles and themes. Hanging pieces, clothing, sculpture, paper works, baketry, quilts and dolls will be highlighted.

The Art Gallery is located in the Stony Brook Union, 2nd Floor, SUNY at Stony Brook. Gallery Hours are 12 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. For additional information, call 632-6820

Absorbing the Truth About Tampons:

Discovering the Dangers of Dioxin

By Hilary Vidair

"Have you heard that tampon makers include asbestos in tampons?...asbestos makes you bleed more...if you bleed more, you're going to need to use more," claimed a recent chain letter circling the Internet. This statement is an absolute myth. "Asbestos is not an ingredient or even a trace contaminant in any brand of tampons manufactured in the U.S.," reported the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in a statement made in February. "FDA has received no evidence of asbestos in tampons or any reports regarding increased menstrual bleeding following tampon use." The Center for Devices and Radiological Health echoes similar sentiments. So it's safe to assume that this was merely junkmail and that tampons are safe, right? Wrong.

Tampons sold in the United States contain rayon, made out of cellulose fibers elicited from wood pulp. Bleach is used to purify the wood pulp used to make rayon for tampons.

The next part of the email described how dioxin, a chemical contaminant deemed carcinogenic to humans by organizations including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the World Health Organization and the Agency for Research for Cancer is a by-product of the bleaching process, in brands including Playtex, Tampax, O.B. and Kotex. It cited many sources of information. After researching the asbestos allegations, *the Press* wondered if these charges were just as bogus. There may, however, be a legitimate concern.

Dioxin compounds are seemingly dangerous chemicals which "are the direct result of chlorine-using industries," the "U.S. EPA Dioxin Reassessment: Next, Let Us Halt Chlorine Use and Incineration" reported. "Dioxin compounds cause several types of cancer, disrupt the orderly growth of organs in embryos, reduce fertility...suppress the immune system...increase risk of diabetes and increase endometriosis in women." In addition, "Some of dioxin's powerful effects are observable in humans at dioxin exposure levels already occurring in the U.S. population," the EPA's May 7, 1990 draft of "Chapter 9. Risk Characterization and Related Compounds" read. "Some of the effects of dioxin and related compounds have been observed in laboratory animals and humans at or near levels to which people in the general population are exposed."

In fact, EPA studies show that people in the United States obtain 90% of their dioxin contamination from certain foods such as dairy products, including some milk, chicken, beef and pork. These products become contaminated "primarily by dioxin compounds that settle out of the air from incineration of chlorinated materials." According to the Pesticide Action Network North America Updates Service (PANUPS), there is a large debate over "exactly how much dioxin causes exactly which types of damage by exactly which mechanisms."

Congress has found that "while bleaching processes that do not produce dioxin in any amount are available, most pulp and paper manufacturers, which produce the raw materials used in tampons, currently use either elemental-chlorine or chlorine-dioxide bleaching processes. Both of these processes use chlorine and therefore produce dioxin."

Groups such as the Women's International Network and The International Endometriosis Association say that tampon corporations bleach tampons because women see white tampons as clean and pure. Large tampon companies, such as Playtex, disagree, stating on their web page, "...the cotton and the rayon used in tampons must be thoroughly cleaned and purified. The bleaching process removes any impurities and completely cleans the raw material." Playtex could not be reached for comment. The FDA claims that although chlorine bleaching producing dioxin by-product materials were utilized to make tampons in the past, these sani-

tary products are now created with "elemental bleach processes that contain no dioxin."

Tampon companies agree, backing themselves up with the FDA's approval. "The methods we use to analyze for dioxin are the most advanced government-approved testing methods available, and can detect even minute amounts of dioxin, if present," Tampax stated on their website. They could not be reached for comment. The FDA claims that in the past, tampons were bleached with chlorine, which produced dioxin by-products. Currently, however, they say that sanitary products are created with "elemental bleach processes that contain no dioxin."



Yet based on a 1992 staff report from a subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives, Congress found, "Internal documents of the Food and Drug Administration suggest the agency has not adequately investigated the dangers of dioxin in tampons." This statement was made because unpublished memos from the FDA were found that stated a high risk of dioxin in tampons. It suggested that dioxin is dangerous in any amount, that it is carcinogenic and harmful to the immune system, and that tampons should "contain no dioxin." The FDA, in its final report on dioxin, deleted the conclusion that "the most significant risks may occur in tampon products," as according to "Pulling the Plug on the Sanitary Protection Industry," an article that ran in the *Village Voice* in 1995. Melvin Stratmeyer, chief of FDA health sciences, claimed to be sure that tampons are not detrimental to a woman's health. Yet his confidence came from data given to the FDA by the tampon industry. It became obvious that the FDA's reports were based on tampon companies' data alone.

In September of 1994, the EPA began doing more research on dioxin. Karen Houppert, author of the *Village Voice* article, wrote that the EPA's report "suggests the threshold level for dioxin damage may be considerably lower than previously believed." She also wrote that the EPA admits that determining an "acceptable exposure level" is not necessary because "the real danger comes from repeated contact."

This statement was echoed in an article in the May 13, 1998 article in the *Press-Tribune*. They spoke with Mike De Vito, a toxicologist at the EPA, who found that a Playtex tampon contains .6 to .7 picograms of dioxin. "Assuming that all the dioxin came off the tampon and was absorbed, and assuming an average woman used eight tampons per day for five days a month, DeVito said that 3.5 percent of a woman's total daily exposure to dioxin [would come] from the tampons she used."

So how long will it take for research on the effects of dioxin to be adequately completed? Well, it took 60,000 women who died of Toxic Shock Syndrome to get the FDA to enforce regulation of tampons in the first place. In 1980, the Center for Disease Control discovered that 55 Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS) related deaths and 1066 cases of people who survived TSS were mainly in young women who were menstruating. Saleswomen were urged by their bosses to deny any link between tampons and TSS. It was not until 1990 that the FDA required standardized grams of absorbency to be labelled on tampon boxes. For example, a "super" sized tampon must only be able to hold between nine and twelve grams of

menstrual blood. However, the FDA will not force tampon companies to list their ingredients on the boxes. Furthermore, the FDA doesn't even mandate that new products be tested unless they drastically vary from the ones already on the market.

"What will make dioxin more difficult to monitor is that its effects are less immediately apparent than toxic shock," wrote Houppert. "It may be years before a woman develops any of the symptoms of dioxin poisoning, and because of the level of dioxin in the environment, it would be difficult to pinpoint tampons as a major contributing factor."

Right now, not only are there doubts concerning the risks of using tampons, but many don't even know that there's something to question. "Although the Food and Drug Administration currently requires tampon manufacturers to monitor dioxin levels in their finished products, the information is not readily available to the public," reported

Congress. Karen Dybus, a physician's assistant within the Women's Health Center here at SUNY Stony Brook, did not know anything about dioxin and its potential harms. Even people within the medical field are not being informed.

Due to these uncertainties, Representative of the State of New York Carol Mahoney and her colleagues introduced a bill to the House entitled the "Tampon Safety and Research Act of 1999 (H. R. 890)." The purpose of the bill, as stated in its introduction, is "to provide for research to determine the extent to which the presence of dioxin, synthetic fibers and other additives in tampons and similar products used by woman with respect to menstruation pose any risks to the health of women, including risks relating to cervical cancer, endometriosis, infertility, ovarian cancer, breast cancer, immune system deficiencies, pelvic inflammatory disease, and toxic shock syndrome, and for other purposes." If this bill is passed, it would also require that the FDA do research to confirm the data compiled by tampon manufacturers and that these results be made to the public.

In the meantime, there are tampon alternatives. A whole industry of tampons made of 100 percent organic cotton has developed. These products are created without any man-made chemicals. This eliminates the possibility of incorporating into the tampons any synthetic fibers, defoliants, herbicides or pesticides. All organic cotton sanitary products are tested by the Independent Certified Government Agencies in both the United States and Australia. Brands such as Eco Yarn, Terra Femme, and Organic Essentials can be found in several health stores. Sample sizes and prices vary, but the best bargain the *Press* found was at Organic Essentials. A sample box costs \$21.95 and includes one box of regular non-applicator tampons, one box super size non-applicator tampons, one bag of organic cotton balls (100 count), one tube organic cotton rounds (80 count) and one cotton swabs travel pack. To purchase this sample, either email your request to OrganicEssentials@juno.com, visit their website [get it] or send mail to: Organic Essentials, Inc., Route 1, Box 120, O'Donnell, Texas, 79351.

In addition, *The Press* urges you to contact your local representatives and tell them to pass the "Tampon Safety and Research Act of 1999 (H. R. 890)." There are too many contradictory findings and not enough money to fund research right now. In addition, the public has the right to know of any harms using certain products might cause them. The addresses of Michael Forbes (R-Quogue), Gary Ackerman (D-Queens/Nassau) and other representatives can be obtained at <http://thomas.loc.gov>.

BOYCOTT COSTLY CAMPUS ATMS

The New York City Council is in the process of drafting legislation to prohibit automated teller machine (ATM) surcharges, continuing a trend that started in other areas of the country. ATM surcharges can range from as little as twenty-five cents to as much as five dollars and possibly more. Even on the Stony Brook campus, ATM surcharges present a teeth-gritting experience for most students. Many commuter students do not have accounts on campus and therefore cannot avoid the charges. Residents have a problem with limited mobility: there are few ATMs within walking distance that don't charge extraneous fees. Since the ATM legislation looks like it may be a long time in coming, if it even is coming at all, the students on this campus need to take immediate action. Rather than waiting for government intervention, or endorsing it, Stony Brook students need to begin sending a message to the banking industry and to Administration that they will not tolerate ATM fees on campus and elsewhere.

In some places (like airports), banks may have ATM patrons by the balls, but on campus there is really no reason for students to encourage these charges with their continued patronage. First, students, faculty and staff should boycott those ATMs on campus with surcharges. This includes the ATMs in the SAC that charge a dollar, and the one outside the Union that charges a quarter. Rather, students should make their way over to the Administration building and pay--nothing! Yes, the Teachers Federal Credit Union machine there is FREE. If it is not possible to use the ATM in Administration, the machine in the Union should be the default. If students on campus stop using the machines in the SAC en masse, it will no longer be profitable for the bank to operate its ATM at that price, and perhaps they will lower it.

In addition to rallying around a boycott, students need to write letters to their own banks and the bank on campus to tell them that they are not happy with their practice. Let them know why you refuse to

use their ATMs. If you are unhappy that Administration has given these banks permission to set up shop on campus, when they could have provided more of the free TFCU ATMs, then petition administration to renegotiate their contract with the SAC ATM provider, if possible.

Further, talk to your LEGs, your clubs, and your neighbors, and give the evil eye to anyone who tries to use the ATM in the SAC. It costs mere pennies to perform the automated transaction of distributing money; a dollar charge is simply ridiculous. Don't hit the SAC for money any more!

It is also important that word of this boycott gets spread around campus. Opposite this editorial is a poster to advertise this boycott. Readers of the Press need to stick these posters in their halls, in the commuter lounges, and near ATM machines. Everyone has to tell their friends and their organizations. While most students probably do not think twice about "accepting the fee," this blind acceptance of the fee is bound to keep the system in place. And really, it is not that much of an inconvenience to use the free ATM or the cheaper ones. It's a little more walking here and there, but then, that little bit of walking can save everyone about \$40 a semester. In fact many people could avoid using the ATMs entirely if they planned ahead and took enough money out of their banks in the traditional cost-effective manner (remember living breathing tellers?) to cover their daily needs.

It is unrealistic to expect the government to step in and save the consumer every time businesses hike up their rates. Rather than waiting for government intervention, consumers must take action into their own hands. We all lose money the longer we wait for legislation. Individuals have to take action against this kind of exploitation by boycotting fee-charging ATMs so that the industry will feel the difference in their pockets, a high-sensitivity area for them.

To The Editor

Shirley Disrespects the Dead?

Perhaps it is a question of etiquette: A respected, beloved professor is nominated for and chosen to receive a prestigious teaching award—the most prestigious, in fact, that the University offers. Alas, the professor dies before the awards ceremony has taken place. What to do?

How about calling his widow and inviting her to the banquet at which the teaching prizes are to be presented? What better way to publicly honor her deceased husband and mark his passing! Perhaps then one of the professors colleagues, a close friend, might be called up to make appropriate remarks.

Apparently, this is not the Stony Brook way. English and Comparative Literature Professor Michael Sprinker died in August, shortly after having been chosen as a recipient of the Chancellor's and President's Award for Excellence in Teaching. The awards ceremonies—the public University Convocation and the by-invitation-only banquet, were held on October 7. His widow was not invited. No one else was invited to come as Sprinker's representative. In fact, his widow, who knew about the event, requested that either one of Sprinker's colleagues or one of the graduate students be allowed to represent him at the ceremony, but her request was denied.

This probably has everything to do with politics. Prestigious though the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching is, Sprinker planned to turn it down. Sprinker had already written a letter he intended to read at the banquet: while thanking those responsible for selecting him for the award, the letter explained why he could not in good conscience accept an award so closely associated with President Kenny. Such an award, he wrote, would associate him with behavior he considered unprofession-

al and unethical. He went on to explain his reasons.

Sprinker, a 14-year veteran of Stony Brook and an internationally recognized scholar, had already taken unpaid leave from his tenured Stony Brook professorship to protest the University Administration's handling of the recently-imposed freeze on hiring in the English Department. He had threatened to resign.

The sudden hiring freeze followed the resignation of Dr. Lee Edelman from the English Department chairship last spring. The English Department currently has anywhere from seven to twelve vacancies, depending on which source one consults, and the interrupted search aimed to fill five of these empty positions. President Shirley Strum Kenny imposed the freeze without consulting the English Department. She also rescinded an offer that had already been extended by the English Department to Dr. Modhumita Roy of Tufts University. Dr. Roy is also Sprinker's widow.

What happened on October 7 was this: ironically enough, at the University Convocation President Kenny herself, the person Sprinker himself considered primarily responsible for the problems that led him to leave Stony Brook at least temporarily, read bits of Micael Sprinker's obituary; she announced that Sprinker had been awarded the prize. Though Sprinker was mentioned at the banquet, no one was there to represent him. Needless to say, the fact that he planned to decline the award, and his reasons for doing so, were thus safely suppressed.

Whew! Good thing he died right? What a mess, politics intruding on such a warm and fuzzy occasion as an awards banquet! But seriously, is this how we honor the dead?

Cristina Mathews
Comparative Literature

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Dueling Over ATM Charges

By Shari Goldsmith

Legislation intended to ban automated teller machine (ATM) surcharges is on its way to New York under the authority of the City Council. Peter F. Vallone, head of the City Council, said the bill would be drafted within the month and could be passed before the end of the year, according to the *New York Times'* David M. Herszenhorn.

The consumer rights issue is winning political attention, as cities throughout the United States are formulating legislation to crack down on banks' "double dipping" ATM fee policy. San Francisco and Santa Monica, California are among the most recent cities embroiled in conflict with local banks.

Consumer advocates contend that ATM users are often charged with two fees. One fee is imposed by a consumer's own bank that enables them to use another bank's (or non-bank ATM owner's) ATM. The second fee is a surcharge assessed by the ATM owner and deducted from the consumer's account at the time of the transaction. This allows the ATM owner to collect two fees, because the first charge is routed to a network that distributes a portion to the ATM owner. This is collected in addition to the surcharge for one ATM transaction, as described by the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPiRG).

On average, banks across the country are known to impose ATM charges ranging from \$1 to \$3. A survey of SUNY Stony Brook's three ATMs found that one machine charged \$1, another machine charged \$0.25, and one machine did not impose a charge, according to NYPiRG.

New York's bill is roughly modeled after those imposed in California, preventing banks from imposing surcharges for use of their automated teller machines by

other banks' customers. Supporters of the ban justify such legislation by saying that banks already are reimbursed by one another for electronic transactions when a customer of one bank uses an ATM of another.

Bank authorities have been appealing to the judicial system, insisting that they are under the jurisdiction of the federal government, and refuting the local government's legal right to impose and enforce such a ban. Federal Judge Vaughn Walker granted the banks' request for a preliminary injunction on Nov. 15, prohibiting San Francisco from enforcing the ban, according to Sam Zuckerman of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The judge said the banks had made a convincing case, ruling that "the ordinances are likely to be invalidated as pre-empted by federal law."

California legislation provoked banks to lash back by refusing ATM access to non-customers. The

courts have temporarily reinstated the banks' right to impose surcharges, but has ordered that those collections be relegated to an account for the duration of the trial, to enable later reimbursement if the ban is legally upheld.

"Banking officials said Vallone's proposed ban is misguided and probably would provoke lawsuits similar to those underway in San Francisco, where banks have charged the city has no power to impose pricing restrictions on federally regulated financial institutions," according to Frank Lombardi of the *Daily News*.

Currently, similar legislation also exists in Connecticut and Iowa. Other cities, including Los Angeles, San Diego, Oakland, Sacramento,

and Berkeley, California, are considering the implementation of similar measures. In addition, the Pentagon said it would consider a ban on ATM fees at U.S. military bases, according to Paul Hoversten of *USA Today*.

The issue of the ATM fee policy erupted in 1996, when the major ATM networks dropped their prohibition on surcharges. Disgruntled consumers have been in uproar ever since, over what they believe to be an unjustified policy that takes advantage of a position of power. Banks defend their charges, saying they're necessary to pay for computer software, equipment, networking services, and other expenses.

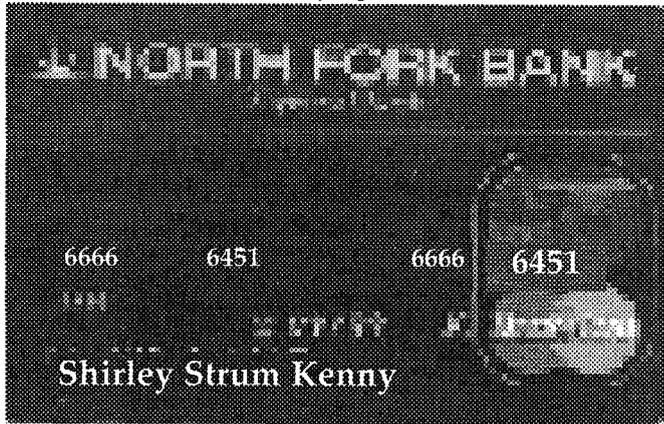
Janet Eissenstat, spokeswoman for the American Bankers Association in Washington, D.C., says, "The fact is, consumers like ATMs, and if there's not an incentive for banks to put them in the community, they won't do that," according to *USA Today*.

One of the top federal banking regulators, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, is supporting the bank industry, saying that banks should be solely under the authority of federal legislation, according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

Supporters of the surcharge ban describe the actions taken by banks to cut off ATM service to noncustomers as an intimidation ploy. Surcharge opponent Michael Feinstein, a Santa Monica Councilman says, "The banks' strategy here is to scare off the dozens of other cities around the country that are thinking of doing this," according to *USA Today*.

Council Speaker Vallone justifies the ban on surcharges as an extension of legislation passed in 1992 that set strict security requirements for ATMs, according to the *New York Times*. Banks originally opposed this legislation, but never proceeded to challenge it in court. "We think it's outrageous that the banks are apparently double-dipping and charging twice for the same transaction," said Vallone.

These statewide bans appear to be the initiative that will pave the way for a drawn out national battle.



**Hey kids!
Cut this
flyer out
of as
many
Presses as
humanly
possible
and stick
'em in
places
where
even the
Philistines
who don't
read our
fine publi-
cation will
read them.**



**If you visit
the ATM just
once a week
for the entire
semester,
you will have
lost yourself
a dollar a week
and four dollars
a month
and about \$20
a semester
and about \$60
a year. There's
no need for
this. Make
this highway
robbery stop.**

*Please Note:
If you are already
a member of North
Fork or Summit
Banks, these fees
do not apply.*

Boycott The SAC ATM

**AND AVOID THE ONE
AT THE UNION, TOO!!!**

*take a stroll ———→
to administration ———→
and save yourself
a quarter to a ———→
dollar in fees!!!!*

**USE OF THE TEACHER'S
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
ATM IS FREE
FREE FREE!!!**

*If banks figure
out a service
for which they
can charge,
then what's
really going
to stop them?
The consumer
is the only thing
that really CAN
stop them. We
all lose money
the longer we
wait for
legislation.
Individuals have
to take action
right now.*

STOP ATM SURCHARGE FEES ON CAMPUS



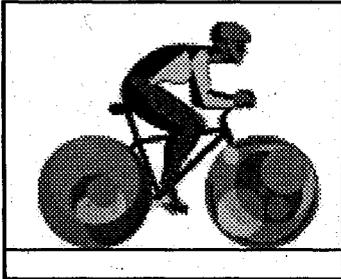
-Designed by Debbie Sticher

CYCLING FOR CANCER RESEARCH

By Jennifer A. Hobin

Tal Azoulay has a mission: To raise 25,000 dollars for the American Cancer Society by June. His strategy: Biking around the entire perimeter of Long Island, a journey of about 400 miles. But that's not all. At the end of each day Tal plans on picking up his bike and running and walking with it for the last five miles. This Stony Brook sophomore expects that this feat will take anywhere from five to seven days.

Tal hopes that his bike ride, which he will be undertaking alone, will encourage people to donate money to the American Cancer Society. To encourage donations he said, "I needed to



find an event to do that would be crazy, impossible, unbelievable and worthy of peoples' donations." At the very least, Tal hopes that people will be able to "draw inspiration from [his ride] and decide that something that they do is worthwhile."

This is the second year that Tal has been involved in a single-handed effort to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Last year he ran for 24 hours straight around Kennedy High School in Bellmore. And despite being, as he says, "naive about the fundraising process," he raised a total of \$4,000 dollars.

Around the time of last year's run, Tal, who had been on his high school track and cross country teams, had been training for the Long Island marathon. His decision to raise money for the American Cancer Society came after watching a television program about cancer research. Afterward when he went running, he thought, "Since I'm going to run for twenty-

four hours, I might as well do it for a worthy cause." Thus began his crusade.

"All of my blood, all of my being is a runner," he said. However, despite his passion, Tal is biking this year, because as a consequence of last year's run he severely bruised his heel bones. Had he run for a couple more hours he said, "I would have cracked my heels in half."

Tal praised the efforts of the American Cancer Society, emphasizing the importance, not just of their research efforts, but also of their advertising efforts aimed at educating people about cancer and what they can do to protect themselves. "If you can educate women to give themselves self breast exams you can help a lot—it's a good deal," he said.

The American Cancer Society is an organization dedicated to helping everyone who faces cancer through research, patient services, early detection, treatment, and education. During the past year public support for the Society's programs, including efforts like Tal's, increased to \$556.2 million, a 13.9% increase in public support over the past year.

In preparation for his bike ride, Tal has been exercising six days a week. His regimen includes running two days a week for approximately eight miles each day, and he has been biking about 10 to 25 miles a day. To prepare for the last five miles of each day of his upcoming ride, when he'll be carrying his bike, Tal has been going through his daily routine (including attending classes) carrying sand bags on his shoulders.

Tal's preparations include more than exercise, however. Though more savvy in his fundraising efforts now than he was last year, he is still working hard to

reach the \$25,000 goal he has set for himself. While he expects the bulk of the money he raises to come from personal donations his also counting on corporate sponsors. To this end he plans to sell ad space on the jersey he will be wearing on the day of the ride.

However, getting companies to buy ad space on his shirt is not as easy as it might seem. To do this he has to be able to assure possible donors that people will see the advertisement. Clearly this is not as easy for Tal, engaged in a one man effort, as it would be for individuals riding in a large, well known event such as the annual Walk America, a fundraising effort sponsored by the March of Dimes, an organization dedicated to improving the health of babies.

Nonetheless he is persistent. Tal plans on calling on the local news media, as well as news organizations such as The New York Times to help him out. He hopes that if he can get these media organizations to guarantee him a spot in their paper or on their news program, he will be able to encourage possible corporate sponsors to buy ad space on his shirt.

Tal's says that his bike ride allows him to make a statement that he cares about something. He

encourages others to help out by donating their money and their time to the American Cancer Society or to an organization that they feel strongly about. As for himself he says, "I'm not happy unless I'm doing something close to the edge or over the edge."

To help Tal Azoulay help the American Cancer Society, donations can be sent to Tal Azoulay at 1795 Alice St. Merrick, NY 11566. Please make checks and money orders payable to "The American Cancer Society."



The New Politics of Global Warming and The Global Economy

By Jovian Radheshwar

In the post cold war era, the shape and structure of the international system has been disfigured, and nowadays, even the matter-of-fact approach of most environmentalists has been commercialized to suit the global economy. If politics indeed follow a trend, the multinational conglomerates that are slowly replacing governments will soon be able to trade the "right" to defile the planet for a systematically produced "market price."

In 1997, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published their report, incorporating the arguments of many notable academics in atmospheric sciences, and found the current stage of economic development transpiring in rising giants such as China and India to be catastrophic to the prospects not only of environmental conservation, but to human existence as well.

You see, the climate change variable has a pronounced effect on a wide range of human sustenance activities, ranging from agricultural production patterns to industrial outputs. The context of this debate is also scripted by the international politics of oil, and the perceived "finite" nature of global oil supplies. The horrors, if global warming scenarios are indeed true, will be massive: crop failure, oil market shocks, ineptitude of public health institutions, and potential resource conflict between states. Remember Thomas Malthus? This is his prediction, updated for the context of hyper-industrialization.

The first of two major points I find important to discuss here is the theoretical inevitability of a world wide oil crisis. Certainly, the economies of the West and of Japan are heavily dependent upon fossil fuels, or

essentially, crude oil. Despite some major oil producers in the West, such as the United States, and the United Kingdom, these states do not export oil and can only preserve their domestic economies dependency on the Persian Gulf states and other members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The specific circumstances of major oil dependency vary between these states, producing a conflict of interests between them. Now that the major states in the system have all stopped denying that oil supplies will eventually expire, states like Japan and Germany, with none or negligible amounts of domestic oil production capacity, will remain extremely dependent compared to the United States. The United States, the world's third largest oil producer, remains very dependent on foreign oil to meet the demand that domestic production has never met. Thus, the ability to cooperate on the issue has been largely characteristic of Japan and Germany, where environmentalism already has taken root.

The entire debate over the Kyoto international convention on climate change, the major advocacy of the IPCC report from 1997, is not about the environment of earth per se. Instead the debate has shifted into the realm of globalist discourse, and represents the nearest step to concrete international environmental cooperation since the inception of a United Nations framework to implement any such designs.

The convention will place a system of emissions trading in carbon dioxide, to allow those firms which meet their quota of allowable emissions to sell the remaining permits to other firms. This system is far from perfect, and there is certainly a credible argument to be made for the philosophical stance of Heideggerians and Luddites everywhere, that quantifying nature is destroying its essence. But all arguments these miss the simple reality of human economic behavior: that a forced change in production methods can be

more quickly achieved with incentives than with regulation. Under a tradable permits scheme, firms have an incentive not to pollute, since they can then sell their permits at a higher price to those firms unable to compete in emissions reduction. Additionally, firms which are simply too large for their own good will have an incentive to switch to cleaner energy supplies and to abandon the dirty fossil fuel methods of production. Certainly, the automobile industry would be an excellent target for these types of permit schemes, as would factory industries and other transport industries. The incentive to reduce emissions and research renewable energy technology would serve the economy well as a whole, as it is essentially the only way to avoid oil crises in the next 50-75 years, according to the IPCC report.

But international cooperation, as always, is a difficult task. Third world states on the rise, such as China and India, consider the Kyoto treaty a ploy to impede their access to the same strategies for development that the West utilized in their development.

The United States is mired in debate in the Senate, renowned worldwide for incompetence, xenophobia, and isolationist backlashes being led by Senators all too poorly versed in international affairs. While the run-of-the-mill environmentalist may detest any attempt to quantify the environment, radical rhetoric will not win this argument for humanity; rather, simple economic cost benefit analysis will. By focusing on what are essentially economic points, the IPCC report goes quite some length to qualify the damage potential of rapid climate change, in terms of loss of life, systemic chaos and resource conflicts. It also contributes to the general feeling of gravity concerning the fate of the earth. This treaty, as a first step of a capitalist market-based approach, has some distance to go, and will not solve the problem of acid rain, extreme weather, or public health degradation in the short term. This issue is generally taboo in government circles, and it would be quite refreshing to see our bankrupt politics in the USA address something worthwhile for a change.

The horrors, if global warming scenarios are indeed true, will be massive...

K O F I ' S C O N F E S S I O N

By Stephen Preston

"...My counter-revolutionary confederates, and I at their head, endeavored to murder Lenin's cause, which is being carried on with such tremendous success by Stalin. The logic of this struggle led us step by step into the blackest quagmire. And it has once more been proved that departure from the position of Bolshevism means siding with political counter-revolutionary banditry. Counter-revolutionary banditry has now been smashed, we have been smashed, and we repent our frightful crimes."

—Nikolai Bukharin, confession to the Soviet Supreme Court, 1938.

Last Monday, Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, released a report on the massacre at Srebrenica in 1995, during the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the report, the Secretary confesses that the United Nations should have sided earlier with the Bosnian Muslims and supported bombing the Bosnian Serbs. The UN's attempt to remain impartial during the war exacerbated the situation at Srebrenica. By "appeasing" the Serbs, the UN abetted their atrocity.

The full text of the report is available at <http://www.un.org/News/oss/srebrenica.htm>. The 150-page report contains a balanced narrative history of the events surrounding the massacre, along with a set of conclusions by the Secretary General.

The Secretary's "lessons for the future" include the primary conclusion: that negotiation was the wrong tactic for the UN in Bosnia, and that force instead was necessary. More generally, he concludes that the UN has been wrong to try to be neutral and nonviolent in the realm of conflict, and should more readily support military action for the aims it decides are moral.

This is precisely the stand that the United States has long held, in opposition to most other UN members (and until now, the Secretary General as well). Annan clearly knows which way the wind is blowing. He has renounced the United Nation's raison d'être, the prevention of war. What now remains for the United Nations? At best, it will become a marginally independent mouthpiece for America; at worst, it will follow Bukharin to the firing squad.

History of the Srebrenica Massacre

In 1992, Bosnia-Herzegovina declared its independence from the Yugoslav Federation. The country had three groups, which each viewed itself as quite distinct from the others: the Muslims, the Croats, and the Serbs. The Bosnian President, Alija Izetbegovic, was a Muslim. The Serbs were led to believe by local leaders that they would be subservient to the Muslims, and the three groups went to war with each other

(though the Croats and Muslims quickly made peace). The Bosnian Serbs declared their own republic, and wished to join Serbia.

The United Nations instituted an arms embargo on all sides in the conflict. Yugoslavia sent arms to the Serbs, but stopped after international pressure had mounted. The Muslim-Croat Federation continued to fight the Bosnian Serbs, though the latter were better armed and a good deal more successful. Both sides resorted to terrorizing the civilian populations, but the Serbs' attacks were more frequent.

Members of the UN Security Council were eager to protect Bosnian Muslims from the atrocities

they'd heard Serbs were committing. To accomplish this, the Security Council set up "safe areas": cities in which the population was to be protected by an armed UN peacekeeping force. One of these safe areas was Srebrenica (pronounced sre-bre-NEET-sa).

The Srebrenica safe area was established in mid-1993. Although several thousand soldiers from the Bosnian Federation Army were inside the city, most of the population were civilian noncombatants. The Bosnian Serbs wanted control of the city, because they already controlled the surrounding territory. The Bosnians and Serbs fought sporadically, with Bosnian Federation soldiers occasionally leaving the safety of the city to attack Serbs outside, and Serbs occasionally bombarding the city. Nonetheless, compared with other parts of Bosnia, Srebrenica remained relatively peaceful under the presence of lightly armed Dutch peacekeeping troops.

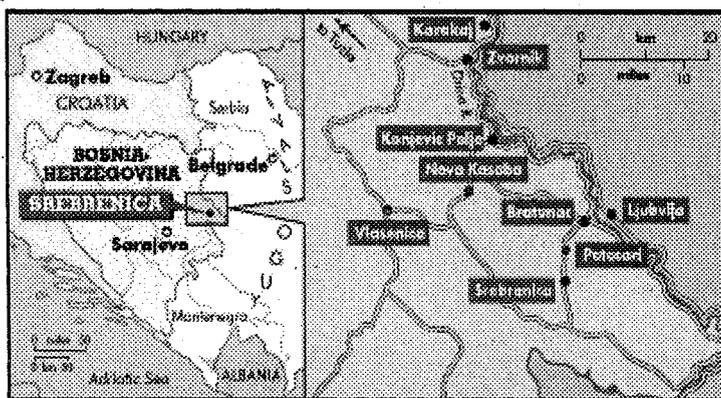
This all collapsed in June, 1995. Bosnian Serb forces, claiming to have had several people killed by attacks from within the city, invaded it. The Dutch were outnumbered, and the Serbs were heavily armed. Though the Dutch requested air support from NATO, through some miscommunication they did not receive it in time. Dutch soldiers were taken hostage, but most were released. Bosnian army troops fled the city and traveled toward Bosnian-held territory, fighting Serb troops on the way.

The Bosnian Serbs then divided the residents of the town by age and gender; the women, children, and elderly were sent out to walk to Bosnian-controlled territory. The men of "fighting age" (roughly 15-70) were taken prisoner. It is not known how many men there were left, or what happened to all of them. However, it is certain that at least several hundred were blindfolded, their hands tied behind their backs, and executed. Their bodies were found in mass graves around the city in 1996, after the Dayton peace settlement.

The massacre at Srebrenica, and at nearby towns such as Zepa, where similar events unfolded, was undoubtedly the most horrible crime committed during the Bosnian civil war. For their roles in it, Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic were indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia. (They remain at large in the Bosnian Serb republic.)

Kofi Annan's Conclusions

Yet there are difficulties in assessing the



causes of the massacre, and especially in determining actions which could have prevented it. Clearly the main problem was that the city had been declared a "safe area," when in fact the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was not actually capable of defending the city from an attack.

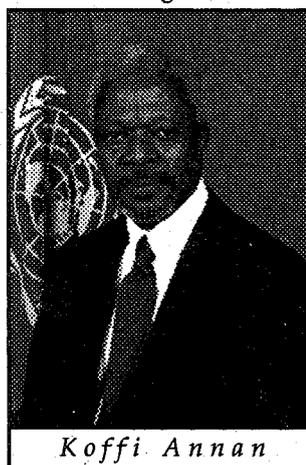
Annan's conclusion is that UNPROFOR should have been a full military force, and that NATO should have attacked the Serbs outside the city earlier. The UN should have explicitly committed itself to the defense of the Bosnian Muslims, rather than try to maintain "an institutional ideology of impartiality even when confronted with attempted genocide."

This is the first problem: the Srebrenica massacre was not genocide. The Bosnian Serbs had no intention of killing the women, children, or elderly. The intention was to relocate the population of the city, but not to destroy it entirely.

This ethnic cleansing is still a horrible crime, but it is not genocide. When Srebrenica was first declared a "safe area," UNPROFOR, fearing the area wasn't actually safe, attempted to evacuate the civilian population to a safer area. However, this attempt was short-lived: the UN and the Bosnian government did not want to be seen as supporting ethnic cleansing. So only a few thousand escaped. Had the civilian population actually been evacuated, more lives might have been saved.

This brings us to the second point: why did Izetbegovic demand that Bosnian civilians remain in the city? Although one can understand his desire not to exacerbate the ethnic cleansing at the time, even he has since admitted that the civilians should have been allowed to escape.

But there is more to this. Izetbegovic wanted NATO air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs from the beginning. Lt. Gen. Sir Michael Rose, UNPROFOR Commander in Bosnia until 1995,



Kofi Annan

wrote in *Fighting for Peace*, "the underlying strategy of the government army was simple: (1) attack on all fronts, (2) retreat amid signs of appalling suffering, (3) call on the UN and NATO to bomb the Serbs."

There is thus a suspicion that Izetbegovic wanted a massacre, which would justify bombing the Serbs. According to the UN report, "Some surviving members of the Srebrenica delegation have stated that President Izetbegovic also told them he had learned that a NATO intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina was possible, but could only occur if the Serbs were to break into Srebrenica, killing at least 5,000 of its people. President Izetbegovic has flatly denied making such a statement." Did the Bosnian government set the conditions for the Srebrenica tragedy?

This argument is meant not to divert blame from where it belongs, with the Bosnian Serb army, but rather to illustrate the problems with choosing sides. There was always more to the Bosnian war than "Serb villains" and "Muslim victims." This is not to equivocate between the sides: the Serb side clearly, especially in Srebrenica, committed the more atrocious crimes. Yet the Bosnians were guilty of war crimes as well: they had their own camps, their own terrorism of civilians, and their own military campaign.

Also, the Croats at almost the same time had begun "Operation Storm," a drive to eliminate all the Serb inhabitants of Croatia. This ethnic cleansing operation, the most successful of all the Yugoslav wars, was supported by the United States, and is whitewashed in Kofi Annan's report. To condemn Serb aggression but praise Croat aggression and ignore Bosnian aggression, is to forsake the respect of the international community.

The Secretary General says Bosnia was a moral cause, one in which the UN could not remain neutral. This is false: taking sides requires a far greater compromise of integrity, because one inevitably ignores the crimes of one's friend and condemns the crimes of one's enemy. The moral high ground would have been to condemn all aggression, and continue to seek a negotiated settlement.

The United Nations cannot expect to solve every conflict. It should exist as a truly neutral mediator: one which respects international sovereignty, keeps the peace when the parties cease fire, and concentrates on providing humanitarian aid. It was always intended to prevent or mitigate war, not to engage in war. For it to renounce negotiation (even if only in certain cases) and to advocate military aggression is disgraceful. It means we are no further ahead than we were 50 years ago.

Buchanan The Reformer?

By Rob Pesin

In a fiery speech on Monday, October 25, Pat Buchanan announced that he would quit the Republican Party and join the Reform Party in order to vie for and receive its nomination for the Presidency. Buchanan blamed various villains for giving up what is best for our nation to a "godless world order." Denouncing the dominant two-party system in the United States, he claimed, "Our two parties have become nothing but two wings on the same bird of prey." In speaking about the two controlling parties, the Democrats and Republicans, he also stated that both are addicted to soft money, and that "neither fights with conviction and courage to rescue God's country from the cultural and moral pit into which she has fallen."

The idiocy of his comments is striking even for a man who has claimed that we rushed in too fast to fight Adolf Hitler, and that Ivy League colleges need affirmative action for people of Irish descent. If Pat Buchanan really thought that the Republican Party was so morally corrupted and godless as to be on the same level with the Democrats, why did he wait until extremely poor showings in the Iowa straw poll and various opinion polls of likely Republican voters to leave the party? Buchanan also ran for President in 1992, and has worked under various Republican presidential administrations, but until being virtually laughed out of the Republican presidential race this year, has never even whispered about changing his party. Also, despite being staunchly pro-life and pro-religion, he has joined a party whose high-profile de facto leader is Jesse "The Body" Ventura. Ventura has called organized religion a "sham" and a "crutch for weak-minded people," and is extremely libertarian on social issues, including a woman's right to choose.

The answer as to why Buchanan would join such a party, instead of the Right To Life Party or Constitution Party—which are actually aligned with his views in many ways—tells a lot about the man in itself. The simple and indisputable answer is that Buchanan has joined the party because it can offer him substantial federal matching funds if he can secure the nomination. Even as he alleges that the two major parties chase after soft money and sacrifice their principles in order to maintain their power, Buchanan is willing to join a party whose platform bears absolutely no similarity to his ideology or closely-held beliefs because it can offer him *money* and a better chance to win the presidential race than other parties, thereby increasing his *power*.

While Buchanan states that the major

parties have sacrificed America's interests for a "godless world order," in his recent book *A Republic, Not An Empire*, he attacked President Franklin Roosevelt for entering World War II too quickly. If any idea ever reeked of sacrificing American national sovereignty, it is this mind-boggling idea, presented 50 years later by Buchanan, that we should not fight a war when we are attacked, which we obviously were at Pearl Harbor. He tried to deny this in the weeks of public outcry that followed the controversial book's publication, but it clearly fits into Mr. Buchanan's worldview. In fact, as a commentator on the television show "Crossfire," he once refused to answer the question of whether or not we should have entered World War II at all.

Buchanan frequently blasts the UN, and has threatened to remove it from its Manhattan office if removed us from the General Assembly for not paying our dues. The UN, as is well known, is a virtually powerless organization that relies on the dues from superpowers like the US to stay in business. Therefore, we exert great control over this organization, which is why no one would really take seriously UN threats to expel us.

While Buchanan frets over what to do about the UN, he depicted Hitler as a non-threat to US interests in his book, and even claimed in it that Hitler did not really want to take over the world (despite massive historical evidence to the contrary). Buchanan is not a hypocrite for fretting over the UN while dismissing the great threat that the Axis power represented to the United States, though. Rather, it just proves that he is, as rival Reform Party candidate Donald Trump has suggested, a "Hitler lover." This is why he claims we should not have gotten involved in a war after we were attacked, yet has the chutzpah to accuse the major two parties in the United States of selling out U.S. interests.

It also raises the critical and worrisome thought that Buchanan might not wage war as President if the United States were attacked by an evil alliance like the Axis that he had a personal fetish for, especially if the mastermind of that alliance had a grand plan was to exterminate

the Jewish race. In fact, given Buchanan's history of Hitler-loving and anti-semitism, it is somewhat surprising that he doesn't support paying our long-outstanding dues to the United Nations, given the strong anti-Israel tone and voting record that the body has possessed since its formation.

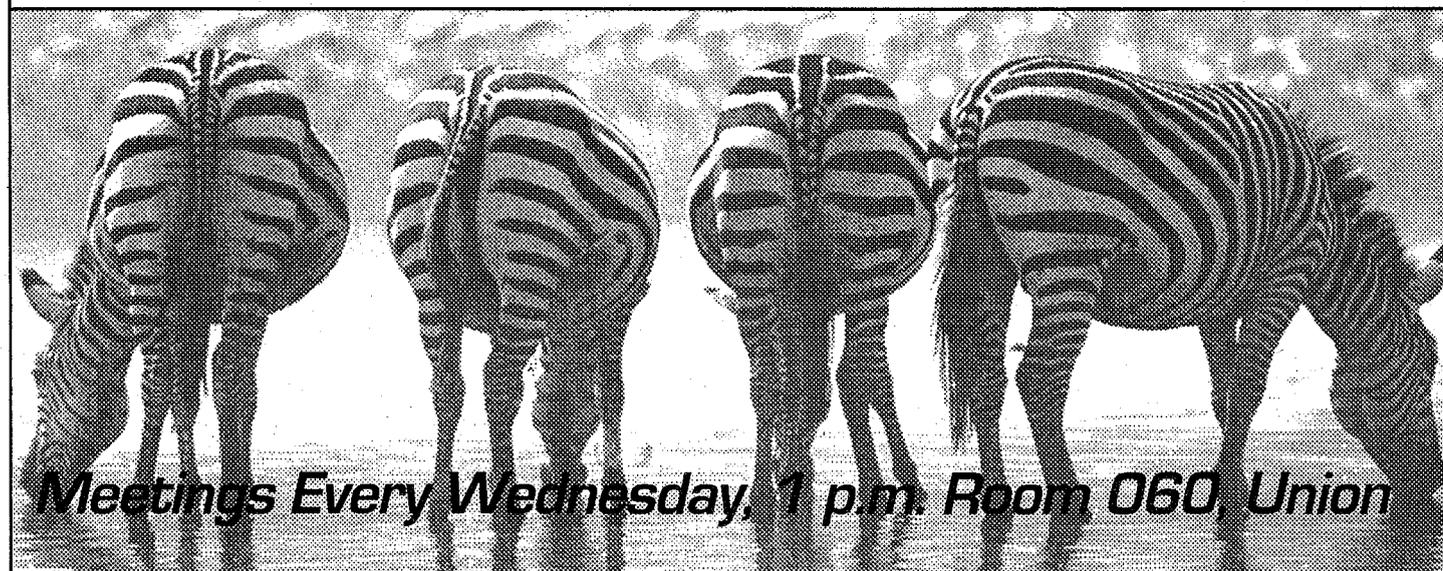
Finally, since Buchanan claims that both parties are equally sinister and devoid of morality, one must wonder if he was hiding under a rock throughout all of 1998 and much of 1999, when the Republican party fought an uphill battle to convince the American people that President Clinton's disgrace of his office, his perjury, and obstruction of justice warranted his removal from office. Despite massive opposition from the American public, Republican Congressmen bravely risked votes and public support, and even "soft money" which Buchanan says determines both parties' every move, and continued to support the impeachment of Clinton until the end of the trial, when they were ultimately defeated by Democrats, who didn't want to risk those precious votes and corporate donations.

Corporations and citizens believed that the economy was great during this period, and that there was no reason to rock the boat and impeach Clinton, in spite of his flouting of the law and sickening behavior in our precious grail of democracy, the White House. Despite this, Republicans firmly held the moral high ground

until the bitter end, and many Republican House impeachment managers, like James Rogan who represents a moderate California district, are considered likely to be ousted from office in the next election.

And on an issue that has clearly been near and dear to Mr. Buchanan's heart throughout his career, abortion, Republicans stood up for the sacredness of human life in an impassioned debate on the brutal procedure euphemistically called "partial-birth abortion" in the Senate this month. Where was Buchanan for this debate and for the vote in which Republicans voted in great numbers to ban this procedure, and also voted in great numbers not to support the Roe v. Wade decision of 1973? He was taking shelter at his fancy home in Maryland, waiting until Monday to make his precious party-switch "announcement"—that was obvious weeks before he even announced it—and dodging these important issues. Some courage and conviction.

The idiocy of his comments is striking...



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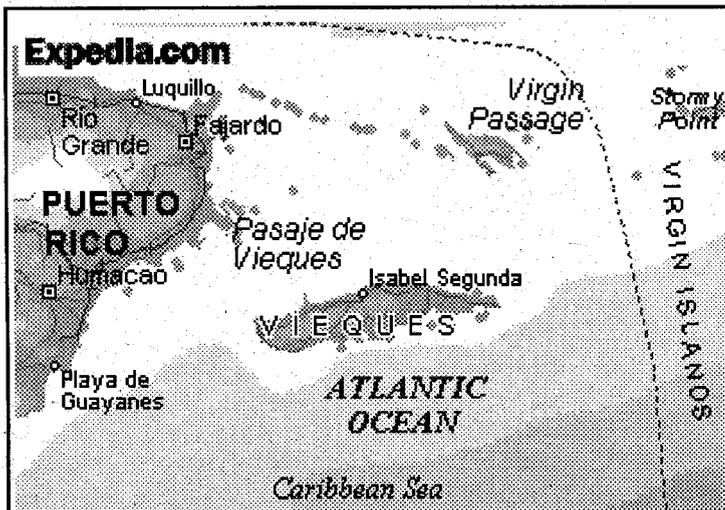
Free Vieques: US Navy's Reign of Terror

By Angelos K. Hannides

Vieques, an island-municipality of Puerto Rico, is 30 kilometers long and has 9,400 inhabitants. Puerto Rico, including Vieques, came under the possession of the US as a consequence of the Spanish-American war of 1898. The inhabitants were granted citizenship for the first time in 1917, and in 1948 elected their governor for the first time, after almost 50 years of direct and indirect military rule by the US. Since then, it has "enjoyed" the status of a US colony.

In 1938, the US Navy started exercises at the eastern end of the island. In 1941, it launched a campaign of territory expropriation, which resulted in the whole population of the island being clustered in an area in the middle of the island. 75% of the land (including the most fertile and arable territory) came under the ownership of the Navy and was used for war maneuvers and missile storage. This impacted directly and detrimentally the healthy and sustainable agricultural activity on the island, raised unemployment to at least 50%, and turned people towards fishing. It is intuitively clear that fishing in waters where naval war is practiced is not exactly the safest of activities. The most common incident (documented by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture) over the years has been the destruction, by the propellers of US Navy vessels entering the fishing grounds, of buoys marking fishing nets and traps. Gear can't be located but is still effective, and thus impacts both the fishermen and the marine ecosystem adversely.

Unfortunately, the detrimental effects of the Navy's presence and activity did not stop there. The US Environmental Protection Agency in a study in the 1970s determined that the air of Vieques exhibits unhealthy levels of particulate matter. This is the most visible result of missile impact and explosion. The invisible effects include chemicals from the explosives and metals used for shells, which are "naturally" not collected after missile detonation. All these accumulated factors explain a rate of cancer cases 25% higher than that in Puerto Rico. Very rare diseases, such as lupus, scleroderma and thyroid ailments, are common phenomena. Even asthma, which is rare in coastal areas where air is rich with iodine from the sea breeze, is now common among children. And the cherry on top: this past spring, the US Navy admitted to "mistakenly" firing 267(!) rounds of bombs shelled with depleted uranium (a relatively moderate radioactive byproduct of nuclear fission with a density two and a half times that of steel), thus violating federal law! Quiz: was anyone called to answer for it? No; since they were probably practicing what they would do over Yugoslavia, the "mistake" was made an issue of National Security (80% of the U.S. ships and jets participating in Kosovo trained in Vieques).



One could say that organized reaction to the situation at Vieques first surfaced during a NATO exercise in February of 1978. As a reaction to a warning by the US Admiral who had the general command of the exercise stating that fishing would not be allowed for three weeks, forty fishing vessels entered the waters where target practice with live ammunition was supposed to take place. Not only did the fishermen prevent it from taking place but also rallied the support of the people of Puerto Rico as a whole on the issue for the first time. This support has ripened through the years and climaxed the current year, after an incident in April. Two F-18 airplanes far outside their target area dropped two 500-pound bombs. They killed a civilian, David Sanes Rodriguez, and injured four others, including a soldier.

The reaction was immediate. Several camps were set up within the federally controlled area resulting in the cease of any bombing exercises. The governor of Puerto Rico Pedro Rossello sent a letter to Bill Clinton, stating that "there must exist a viable alternative to the shelling, bombing and strafing of populated areas" (this phrasing is shocking and indicative of the current state of affairs in the area and the "humanitarianism" of the people in Washington).

According to Puerto-Ricans themselves, the struggle for freedom at Vieques has brought about an unprecedented unity among politicians from left and right and religious leaders of Puerto Rico. The New Progressive Party, the Popular Democratic Party, the Puerto Rican Independence Party, the Catholic, United Methodist, Episcopal, and Disciples of Christ churches have rallied to the cause behind the local and directly interested organizations: the Comite Pro Rescate y Desarrollo de Vieques (CPRDV - Committee for the Rescue and Development

of Vieques), the Vieques Women's Alliance, the Coordinating Committee-All Puerto Rico with Vieques (Todo Puerto Rico con Vieques), and the Vieques Conservation Trust. An illustration of the determination and unity of these people is the ultimatum they signed in July demanding the immediate departure of the Navy and the return of all lands to the municipality of Vieques. The outcome is one of the most widely supported cases of civil disobedience in recent years.

What is so special about Vieques that the Navy won't let go? According to the Navy's officials themselves: "The Vieques facility is the only place [we] can train East

Coast-based forces in simultaneous air, sea and land exercises. The island has waters deep enough to accommodate aircraft carriers and has little commercial air traffic, which allows pilots to hold war games [sic] in the air." The author believes that no more comments are necessary.

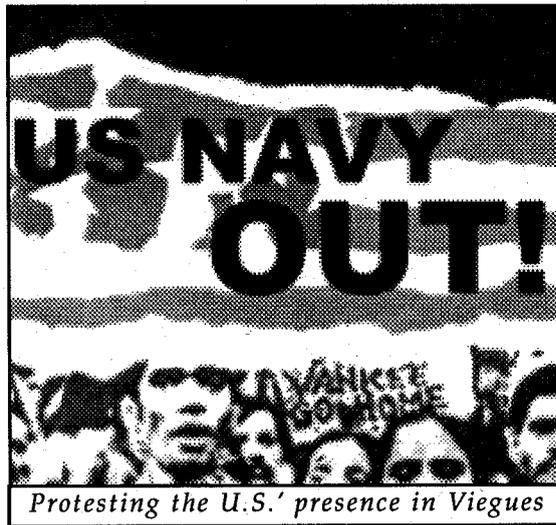
The US government has reacted to the situation thusly: President Clinton, in response to the governor's April 1999 letter, ordered Secretary of Defense Cohen in June to establish a panel to explore "alternative sites or methods that would meet the Department's needs." Gutierrez, Velasquez, Serrano and other members of the US Congress carried out initiatives and meetings with White House officials throughout the summer to urge the government to take action (in vain). Nine

New York City Council members participated in activities on the island this October and supported morally and financially the protesters living at the camps. The local organizations started planning the sustainable use of the 26,000 acres the Navy currently occupies, so that it will not fall victim of the economic oppression, which already condemned a large part of coastal Puerto Rico. They take the ousting of the Navy for granted.

Not so fast, said the Panel. In late October, they "recommended" that the Navy leave after a five-year period, leaving the ultimate decision to the Navy itself. Friday, November 19th, was declared a day of urgent action, with demonstrations in eighteen cities in the US and Puerto Rico. The same day, the *New York Times* (yes, that sentinel of democracy and human rights) publicized a poll sponsored by the Puerto-Rican newspaper *El Nuevo Dia*, which the *Times* said indicated that "there is lukewarm public support for a Navy withdrawal." A majority, 56%, indicated that they want the Navy out, and only 2% "favored unrestricted resumption of the bombing."

Nothing less could be expected from Clinton, Cohen and their agents of propaganda. Two people who did not hesitate to order and supervise the bombing of four sovereign countries in a period of 10 months, and who had the audacity to suggest to a fifth one not to practice the same "method of fighting terrorism" in one of the country's regions, were expected to give in at their own back yard? The author refrains from commenting on the comments by G.W. Bush, H.R. Clinton and R. Giuliani on such issues. It would be a pointless illustration of the obvious: the vacuum in these individuals' cerebral hemispheres and absolute lack of political responsibility--characteristics evident in the persons who occupy the seats at stake. These politicians (including the governing ones) are struggling to force the simultaneous occurrence of two incompatible situations: the bombing of Vieques during Navy exercises, and the well being, prosperity, health and happiness of its inhabitants. The solution to the issue is transparent even to the last political ignoramus.

For more information: www.viequeslibre.org



Missionaries of Democracy

By Stephen Preston

If religion is the opium of the masses, is democracy their heroin?

The missionaries who once traveled the world in great numbers to bring Christianity to the heathens were generally doing it altruistically, and with the best of intentions. However, they often inadvertently abetted the Empires of the day in their subjugation of colonized peoples. Because of this, missionaries who meant no harm have been remembered scornfully, and blamed as agents of imperialism.

Today, "Christianizing the heathens" is no longer fashionable. Greater tolerance for religious diversity around the world has reduced the numbers of missionaries, and forced those remaining missionaries to rely on private charity alone. Nonetheless, the needs of empire remain.

So the Christianizing mission has, in part, been replaced by the democratizing mission. Third World countries now

see people sent from the wealthier countries to ensure "free and fair" elections and construct institutions with a "rule of law," with the purpose of building more or less democratic political systems, on the Western model. But the democratizers, with the best of intentions, have at times served the purposes of economic imperialism, in much the same way the Christian missionaries once did.

Before continuing, it's necessary to emphasize one thing. I do not wish to contribute to the literature which claims certain groups are "not ready for democracy," and which thereby justifies authoritarian governments around the world. It is my intention to critique the particular system of representative democracy, not to criticize the general notion of democracy as opposed to authoritarianism. Similarly, my criticisms of missionaries are criticisms of the particular church institutions, and should not be interpreted as criticisms of religious belief generally.

This article will compare two systems of economic imperialism: the 19th century empires, dominated by Britain militarily, and by the "Christian civilizing mission" ideologically; and the modern informal empires, dominated by America militarily, and by the "capitalist democracy" model ideologically. The first is fairly well-understood, and can thus help us better analyze the second. It's ironically far easier to understand what happened a century ago than what is happening now.

The Missionary's Position in the British Empire

There were a variety of motives which drove people from Britain and other Western countries to travel the world and spread the Christian gospel. Johannes Van Den Berg has suggested (quoted in Max Warren, *The Missionary Movement from Britain in Modern History*) that among the motives were the utilitarian (to explicitly aid the Empire) and the humanitarian (to give aid to the poor in Jesus' name).

So for example, among utilitarian arguments, Claudius Buchanan advocated in 1812 inculcating the Christian religion, since "it attaches the governed to their governors." In 1817, John Williams expressed a similar sentiment: "Everyone, who is concerned to promote the commercial welfare of his country, is bound to exert himself on behalf of the Missionary Society." These arguments were not intended to persuade the missionaries to go—they were motivated more by the humanitarian impulse—but rather to persuade the government to support the missionaries.

Such were the missionaries' benefactors at home. The missionaries, though often more enlightened than domestic politicians, still brought such attitudes to the colonies. Implicit in any missionary's mind—and though this is clear to us, it never occurred to most of

them—was the principle that the native religion, and by extension most native customs, were inferior and needed to be unlearned. This was obviously traumatic for most of the colonial peoples, and contributed to some subsequent rebellions against the missions, including particularly the Boxer rebellion in China. But more importantly, it helped to create an impression still prevalent in many Third World countries: that the Westerners were superior to the old primitive ways, and therefore that colonialism (in some form) was justified and rational.

There was a more subtle effect of Christian conversion in the colonies. And this is a general feature of Christianity and of many other popular religions: the emphasis on sacrifice in life for a greater reward after death. Those of the colonial population who argued for nationalism and independence sometimes found it hard to persuade the converted, who were not concerned about improving their situations in the material world, instead looking primarily to the spiritual.

But this was not the fault of the missionaries; rather it is implicit in most popular religions. The missionaries sometimes were more directly responsible for complacency among the suffering populace. They were the representatives of the church in the colonies, and therefore the representatives of God to the believers. As such, their endorsement of the puppet rulers that Britain was fond of installing in the colonies—the British eventually realized that the people are less likely to complain if they are nominally ruled by "one of their own"—was obviously irresponsible and perhaps even immoral. This is a problem caused by any church which officially endorses or is endorsed by a government.

Democrats and American Neo-Colonialism

Representative democracy, especially as practiced in the "Western democracies," involved a periodic choice of a set of dictators (called "representatives") who decide policy and create laws among themselves. Even before we get into the problems resulting in the implementation of democracy, we find problems with the concept even abstractly.

The main problem is that by delegating the responsibility for major decisions to representatives, the people have forfeited any direct control over government. The representatives are not compelled to act in the interests of their constituents once they are elected, except through the implicit and often illusory threat of being voted out. Thus they are led to vote in their own personal interests, and corruption is absolutely inevitable.

The most profound instance of this, which now occurs on a regular basis, is the declaration of war. Immanuel Kant once explained that if given a choice, people would rarely choose to fight a war; but in a dictatorship, the dictator loses nothing from declaring war. Kant was right here; but the problem is that no modern democracy actually asks the people for their consent in going to war. In fact, the Ludlow Amendment of the 1930s, which proposed to hold referenda on the question of declaring non-defensive war, was ridiculed by many of the liberals at the time. In representative government, the representatives do not sacrifice anything by declaring war, and so they readily go to war. America itself has been at war many times this century, demonstrating the fallacy of the "peaceful democracy."

So representative democracy is inherently inferior, in this aspect, to more direct forms of democracy, including referenda. But even supposing representative

democracy was the only practical form of democracy and thus the ideal, its implementation in non-Western countries has often been flawed. A good implementation of representative democracy requires "free and fair" elections and a genuine choice of candidates. Implementations supported by the United States, however, have sometimes deliberately fallen short of these conditions.

The phrase "free and fair" implies a choice that is made free of coercion. Our government, however, often explicitly tries to coerce people in other countries to vote the way it wants. Most notoriously, the US, after having imposed a blockade and economic sanctions on Nicaragua for 12 years, declared that sanctions would be lifted only if the Nicaraguans voted for the American-endorsed candidate. The US is now using the same tactic in Serbia, to coerce Serbs into opposing Milosevic in the next elections by starving them with sanctions.

The issue of a genuine choice between candidates is a problem not only in the fledgling democracies, but here as well: the official candidates all agree on most issues. In South Korea's recent election, for example, the IMF demanded that all Presidential candidates support IMF proposals; this was a serious restriction, since most of the population did not.

So when election observers and international advocates of democracy declare that leaders chosen in these ways are "democratic," they are doing as great a disservice to the people as the missionaries who endorsed the puppet colonial governments. It is now as hard to question the legitimacy of a ruler whose rule is supposedly based on the "will of the people" as it once was to question a ruler whose rule was based on "divine right."

In fact, representative democracy can have the effect of destroying the political consciousness of the people in a country. For example, when the serious demands of people, for economic independence or social welfare, get diverted into demands for democracy, the actual will of the people can be subverted. By relegating all politics to a single cold day every four or six years, the people are prevented from influencing political decisions: "You've chosen your leaders, now sit back and do what they say."

To make this argument more concrete, note that the same thing happens, for example, on University committees. Students complain about some policy, and nearly unanimously agree on the problems. The Administration appoints several people from the student government to a committee (which will often either ignore the students or co-opt them), and the student body then has no recourse to dispute the committee. And the same problems remain.

The socialist's argument against mere "political democracy" was always that it was virtually meaningless without social democracy and especially economic democracy. An elevation of the process of political democracy, to the exclusion of economic democracy or even economic freedom, is effectively support of neocolonial policies. If the people have a choice between two candidates, both of whom will give away the country's resources and labor to the United States cheaply, what have they gained?

Ultimately, people who advocate representative democracy and work to implement it must be aware that simply holding an election does not necessarily improve the situation of the people. Many humanitarian groups have gotten diverted from providing real aid to simply providing for elections. When the elections themselves are corrupted by outside powers, such promotion of democracy can actually do more harm than good. And thus, the practitioners of democracy may end up, like the missionaries a century ago, as well-intentioned travelers on the road to imperialism.

But the democratizers...have at times served the purposes of economic imperialism..

In fact, representative democracy can have the effect of destroying the political consciousness of the people in a country.

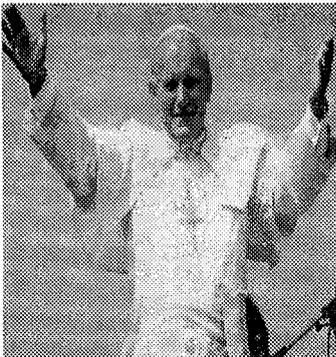
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○Pope to Church:

"Let's just be friends."

Witnesses report: "He's been seeing other messiahs on the side."



By G. Avery Kerbs VATICAN CITY --

Pope John Paul II announced his decision to stop seeing the Church on a monogamous basis.

"I feel that me and the Church, well, we've just grown apart lately. In the beginning it was great--all passion and love-making. But I sort of always knew this day would come. We...we just can't talk anymore." Said John Paul II, "I hope the Church is taking this better than I am. I never meant to hurt the Church."

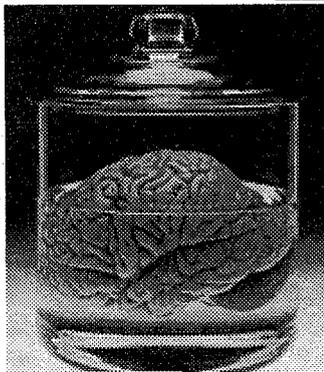
Church officials have reported that the Church is staying with its mother. They issued this statement on the Church's behalf.

"I am sorry. I'm sorry for anything that I might have done to drive you away. But maybe this is for the best. I will be at my mother's house, but do not try and call me, John. We have grown distant, and I don't know if it was you or me that noticed it first, but perhaps we can go on with our lives. I love you."

Sherry Savino, personal friend of the Church added, "The Church feels hurt and betrayed. The Church feels that the person the Church was most intimate with has torn its very heart out. And betrayed the Church. I never liked him in the first place. I hope he rots in hell. YOU cont. page 2

○Hitler's frozen brain

issues "Sorry, my bad" statement, Steven Spielberg demands more.



By G. Avery Kerbs In a historic event last Thursday, Hitler's frozen brain, which had until recently been sitting in the corner of the Zurich Institute of Cryogenics, thinking about what it had done, issued this statement in front of a special assembly of the United Nations.

"Dear brothers and sisters of the world. Having thought over my actions through the last 50 years, I feel that I may have done you all some injustice. So, in order to mend wounds and repair the gap

between myself and those I persecuted, as well as their descendants, I'd like to say, 'Sorry, my bad.'"

The stunned council surrounding Hitler's frozen brain was brought to tears. Hitler's frozen brain later said, "I too would have shed tears for this momentous occasion, but my eyes are frozen shut and cannot cry. But rest assured that I am crying on the inside."

UN Speaker Kofi Annan remarked favorably upon the day's events.

"Hitler's frozen brain was a brave man today. His words inspired and touched each and every one of us here at the UN just as he must have back in Berlin, when he was ordering his Gestapo to round up undesirables and herd them into furnaces. He cont. page 2

○Flying Purple People-Eater flies, eats people.

By Jovian Radheshwar Cedar Rapids, Iowa-- These vast prairie lands have not known a recurring boon such as this for quite some time now, at least not since the era of the venerable Jesse James and his scary Negro gang.

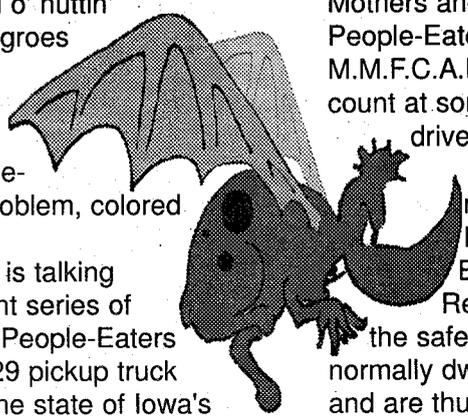
"We ain't been scared o' nuttin' like this since them there Negroes was robbin' us daily," confirmed Cedar Rapids resident Bucky James Bob Hatfield, "Them purple people-eaters come been a dang problem, colored boy, a dang problem."

What this good fellow is talking about, of course, is the recent series of attacks by the Flying Purple People-Eaters that have cost the lives of 129 pickup truck drivers, at the last count of the state of Iowa's

emergency services team. But both the reader of this broadsheet and I, the writer, know that the government always lies, especially the government of the state of Iowa.

An independent census, compiled by the Mothers and Married First Cousins against Purple People-Eaters Flying and Eating People (or M.M.F.C.A.P.P.E.F.E.P. for short), puts the death count at somewhere approaching 439 pickup truck drivers and some 700 crystal meth whores.

This has been a major issue in the reelection campaign of the governor, Republican "Handsome" Jebediah Barker. The Democrats accuse the Republican administration of shortchanging the safety of the local crank ho population, who normally dwell in cardboard boxes in trailer parks and are thus particularly vulnerable to cont. page 3



G. Avery Kerbs



The National Disclaimers Editor Maximus, G. Avery Kerbs has spent the last twenty years as her Majesty's Royal High Duke Anthropologist esq.

Ruby Dice-teeth



Managing Editor for The National Disclaimers, rose from pimping on the mean streets on Staten Island for his rent.

Jovian Radheshwar



Staff writer and war correspondent for the Disclaimers, Jovian earned his laurels by breaking the presidential Skat Controversy wide open in '94.

Geetch T. Toner Ph.D.



Professional Assasin and High Embezzler of Funds for the Disclaimers, Geetch has had won the heart of many a North Korean lass.

My Grandparents



My grandparents love me.

Pope from pg1 BASTARD! YOU BROKE THE CHURCH'S HEART!"

Ms. Savino then broke down into tears and had to take a moment for herself.

"I don't know why Sherry would say that," the Pope said. "She's always been a good friend of the Church and me, and she more than anyone knows that the last thing I ever wanted to do was bring the Church pain."

John Paul II was spotted later that day in a local pub carousing with his friends.

"Yeah, I saw the Pope down at Francesco's Bar and Grill. He was way too drunk and was shouting out stories of his...most intimate moments with the Church." Said area barfly, Giovanni Santoni, "It was really tacky, certainly not what I would expect from the Pope. It's probably a good thing that they broke up."

Other patrons corroborated Mr. Santoni's story, adding, "He was hanging out with this big fat guy in robes or something and I think this guy named Krishna too. I think they were a little...fruity, ya know? Oh, the fat guy was, uh, Buddy, or Buddha, or something like that."

When confronted with these allegations, Church officials stated, "The Pope is a f**king whore, screw him. His f**kin' brain must be sucking his own damn d**k. I hope he's happy with the choice he made. That whore, that f**king whore."

John Paul responded, "I just hope we can still be friends."

Hitler from pg1 is a brilliant speaker because he speaks from the heart. More people should hear his words. There is even talk of Nobel Peace Prize nomination."

If Hitler's frozen brain were to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, it would be the first time in history that the vaunted award was bestowed on a frozen head.

"All this talk of Peace Prizes and college tours is too much. All that matters to me is that the healing process can begin," said Hitler's frozen brain in a post-announcement press conference.

Not all of the goings-on of the day were as positive as Hitler's message though. Rumors abounded as to the validity of recent allegations made against Hitler's frozen brain concerning his Bionic Monkey experiments in San Miguel, Bolivia.

"My Bionic Monkey experiments are of a peaceful nature. Although I cannot release much information of them now, the rumors of these 'Super' or 'Cyber-Apes,' as the media refers to them, committing genocide on the local monkey populace, are pure flim-flam. I've said it before and I'll say it again: my ape warriors are for the benefit of the earth's people."

Some say that Hitler's frozen brain is up to his old tricks again, but UN officials discount this as "standard liberal nonsense."

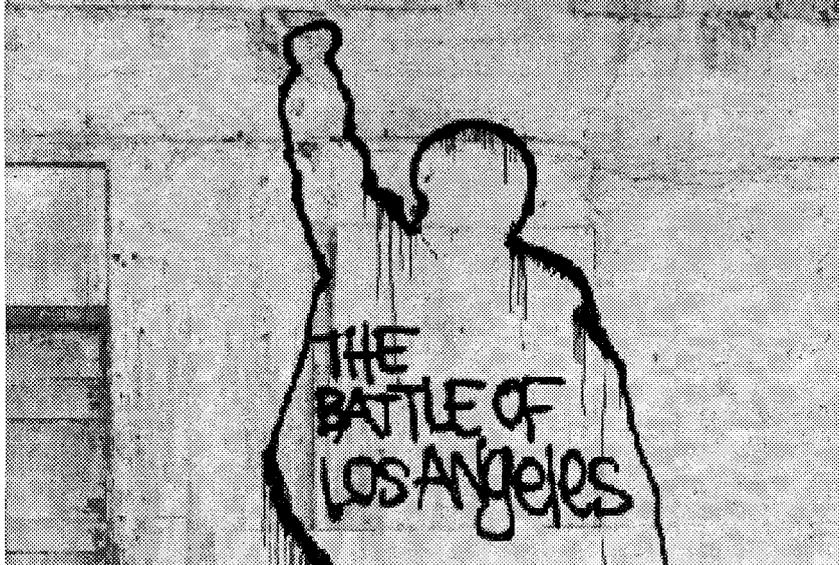
On the home front, anti-Hitler's frozen brain groups have begun rallying support in the local media, even enlisting the help of prominent Hollywood figures to spread their message. Foremost among the Hollywood elite working to stop Hitler's frozen brain's message of peace is director Steven Spielberg.

"Hitler's frozen brain is a liar. If he really means what he says and truly hopes for the forgiveness he is requesting, then he has got a long road ahead of him. I mean what has Hitler's frozen brain done for us lately? Adolf had better get on the ball."

Mr. Spielberg called for Hitler's frozen brain to put his money where his mouth is.

"With the stolen gold and art Hitler has stashed away in the Vatican, he could be doing more for the people he slighted. I would even be willing to work with him towards this goal. He could provide funding for 'Saving Private Ryan II.' Actions like that would help Hitler's frozen brain reclaim the credibility that he once held."

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE



New Rage Against the Machine release fails to inspire action

By G. Avery

Kerbs

Hard-core left-wing activist band Rage Against the Machine released their much awaited third album, *The Battle of Los Angeles*, last week. While it was full of heavy-handed beats and political commentary that had proven to inspire revolutionary action in the past, no action has been taken as a result of this, possibly their most hard-rocking release.

Calls to arms and action woven into the phat rhymes of front man Zach de la Rocha seemed to fall on deaf ears.

"I'm quite frankly surprised, and not a little disappointed in our fans," said Rage guitarist and socialist visionary Tom Morrello.

"I never could have imagined that our fans would allow themselves to stoop to this level of political inaction."

With Rage's previous albums, *Evil Empire* and the self-titled *Rage Against the Machine*, action was quick to follow each record's release.

"Even when we put that track on the *Godzilla* soundtrack, our fans responded with an immediate overthrow of the capitalist tyrannies that held our brothers in check," replied de la Rocha upon hearing the latest news of non-revolution.

Although Rage started off strong, some music columnists believe that they may have bitten off more than they could chew.

"When Rage played the Tibetan Freedom Concert with the Beastie Boys, and China immediately withdrew all military presence from Tibet, I thought, this is it; this is as high as they go,"



says MTV News anchor Kurt Loder. "And sure enough, once they had reversed the racist attitudes of white America with the pulse pounding fury of 'People of the Sun' (from *Evil Empire*), 'The Man' stepped in."

"There is nothing on *The Battle of Los Angeles* that shouldn't inspire me to righteous, liberal revolution," reports long time Rage fan John Jiffy. "But somehow, when I hear those words, 'An army of pigs try to silence my style/Off em all out that box, it's my radio dial/ Lights out Guerrilla Radio! Turn that shit up!' on KROCK, I can't help but just sit back and say, 'Ah, maybe later.'"

Jiffy then asked this reporter to "pass me that bong."

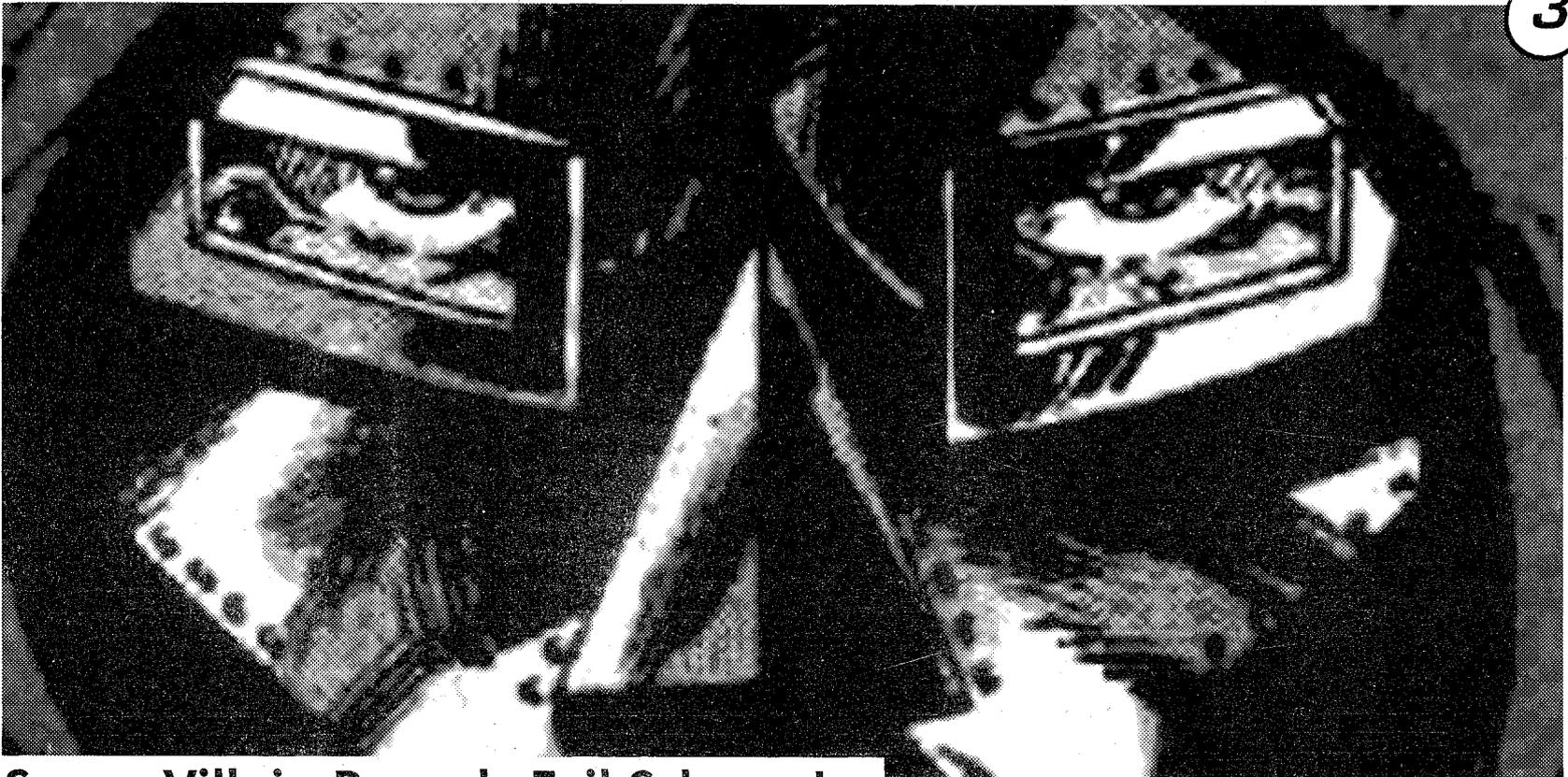
When asked if he would light up said "bong" with a fire that symbolizes the anger in the souls of the underclass citizens of this despotic empire known as the USA, Jiffy simply responded with, "Sure dude, whatever."

Signs of Rage Against the Machine's blossoming ineffectiveness as agents of social change resonate throughout their latest release. The inspiring words found in songs like the track advocating freedom for death row inmate Mumia Abu Jamal, "Voice of the Voiceless," even when performed to sell-out crowds and routinely broadcast on MTV, have seemingly failed to bring even one fan to political activism.

At a jam-packed live set for *The Late show with David Letterman*, thousands of eager young teens threw their fists up in support of Rage's music and message. When one attendee was asked what he thought of Rage's controversial anti-capitalism stance he replied.

"RAGE ROCKS! FUCK THA [sic] MAN! STOMPIN' [sic] QUEERS!"

This fan then proceeded to return to his suburban home to "get ready to stomp those queers from Central High! Fuckin' queers! The Lions are gonna stomp ya!"



Super-Villain Reveals Evil Scheme!

By Geetch T.
Toner, PhD

Maniacal laughter was all that could be heard from the laboratories of Doctor 'Q' (name withheld to protect the innocent), as he formulated his new plan for world domination. Of course, we all remember his previous schemes. Who can forget when he took over Hollywood and put subliminal messages in the movies that made us constantly want to watch Bruce Willis movies? Or when he combined snow DNA and human DNA to create an army of intelligent snowmen? (Unfortunately he failed to remember that snow melts in the spring.) He assures us that his new plan is not weather-dependent and will be unstoppable (unless it is stopped).

Dr. Q has spent the last few months plotting against those he wishes to wreak revenge upon. With the plan complete, "All I had to get was the funding. First I went to the National Bank of Evil, but they refused my loan application," said the Doctor. "So I decided to try my luck on 'Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?' with Regis Philbin, the only man more twisted than myself."

Dr. Q lost at the \$500,000 level with the question, "Which of these is not a Pokemon: Wigglytuff, Kangaskhan, President Kenny, Vaporeon?" He 'phoned a friend,' Rosie O'Donnell, who told him the wrong answer. But she gave him the money anyway, by having all the proceeds from K-Mart's new Furby rip-off, the Digibi (a digital Furby in a watch that learns only to curse), donated to the "Help Doctor 'Q' Take Over the World" fund.

With his newfound wealth, the Doctor bought all the needed equipment for his latest plan to take effect. His scheme, as he explained it to us, is to use a system of highly

sophisticated satellites to bring an unending series of asteroids to pummel the major cities of the globe. As always, Dr. Q has agreed to stop the obliteration of the planet once the world leaders elect him "Supreme Presidential Dictator of the World for Life."

"They'll cave in once they see I ain't bluffing," remarked the Doctor.

The first cities to go, according to the plan, are New York City, London, Washington D.C., Berlin, and Bismarck.

When questioned as to why Bismarck was selected, he simply stated, "I hate all those people who ask, 'What's the capital of North Dakota?'"

The list continued on to include such famous places as Sesame Street, Mr. Rogers Neighborhood, and wherever the Teletubbies live. When we explained that the Teletubbies live on their own planet, he said, "I'll have to get that planet too then, won't I?"

When asked where his inspiration for this bold new plan came from, he replied, "I'd been watching a lot of Bruce Willis movies for some reason, and the idea came to me during Armageddon. I thought to myself, 'Hey, I can do that, and there is no way anyone can stop me!'"

When questioned as to why he was watching Bruce Willis movies, he offered no answer.

Top scientists have been notified and said they'll be on the lookout for the stone giants headed for us in about 50 years. That is how long they calculate it will take for the first wave to arrive, seeing as the satellites haven't even been placed yet.

Although unable to be reached for comment on this new turn of events, we suspect the notorious Dr. Q will just shout, "Damn, foiled again!" and blast off in his rocket-powered fortress.

Purple People
eaters from pg1

Flying Purple People-Eater attacks. The Democrats, seen as the defenders of Midwestern culture and as a bulwark against the encroachment of the 20th century and the removal of farm subsidies to promote free trade, connect the safety of crank ho's to the preservation of the traditional economic arrangement between truckers, crystal meth dealers, and crank ho's.

"By logical thought, this preservation extends to the safeguarding of the unique culture of our young people in Iowa," says local Democrat Boss "Shakes" Little. "We need to show our children and their children and our married first cousins that Iowa and its crank ho's are beautiful, too," he jabbered on.

A major political issue, and certain to be drawn upon by one of the parties to gain political capital come November. The Reform party boss, an ally of Perot and an enemy of Ventura, stated that "them purple flying boys be goin' away, we just need to kill or expel all o' 'dem dark-skinned folk. They bad luck, I tells' ya." Fascinating, yes?

The most recent attack, in downtown Cedar Rapids, occurred during the busy shopping hour, when the local GPC cigarette trucks come through town. While due to the circumstances

of the busy shopping rush, some 50 people were eaten in the dive attack, the trucks of the GPC firm made a clean getaway, as they have been outfitted with anti-Flying Purple People-Eater artillery. The company itself denied comment on this violent approach, and as usual, those animal rights activists are at it again, this time in downtown Cedar Rapids, on the steps of the place where welfare recipients pick up their government-provided firearms.

The situation is slowly turning into a war zone, and the federal government is reportedly considering sending Chow Yun Fat and a supermodel cyborg taught in the arts of Hong Kong action to tackle the situation. But as we all know, this would be a last resort type of thing, as attacking the Flying Purple People-Eaters with such awesome Hollywood force would not only preclude saving any for lab study, but would also endanger many civilians. (The contract of Mr. Chow stipulates a specific number of human casualties per appearance, and he might get a little frustrated killing only Flying Purple People-Eaters.) This writer personally is praying that no such extreme measures will need to be taken, and that the manners of the Iowan people might return soon to its more domestic ways of simplicity.



God Doubts Existence of Man

"I just need to see some real proof," says God

By Ruby
Dice-teeth

Many a choir of angels looked on in awe Sunday, as the Lord Almighty, in His characteristically resonant voice, told all within earshot that He just doesn't buy the whole "Creation" thing.

"Sure, there are those who feel spiritually enriched knowing that there is a lower being watching under them," said God, "but I have my doubts."

He became rather agitated at this point and began to shout.

"Oh, ye of too much faith," His Greatness went on to say, "it is a great release to finally be rid of all this belabored arguing over the dubious existence of Man. I just need to see some real

proof. Until such time, I will tolerate no debate on the subject. Man is but a figment."

Sources close to Jehovah have said that it is perhaps a heavy conscience that has led to His discounting Mankind.

"Apparently He had heard quite enough of that 'Why do bad things happen to good people?' bunk directed at Him and He put His foot down." Said an Archangel who requested anonymity. "By taking Mankind with a grain of salt, He has absolved himself of responsibility."

The statement of divine skepticism came as a shock to those current inhabitants of Heaven who, until now, had no reason to question the plausibility of a beforelife. Recently deceased Heaven-dweller Randall Phelps was blown away by Yahweh's declaration.

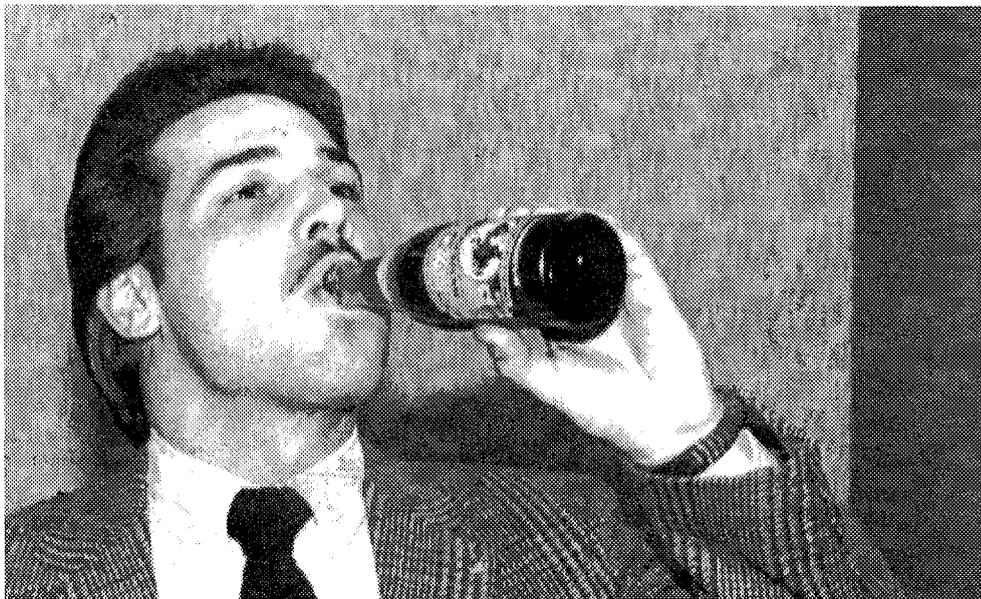
"Holy shit, dude," said Phelps. "Now don't get me wrong, God is a great Guy and all, but He really knows how to screw with you existentially. I mean, if Man doesn't exist, then what the hell have I been doing for the last 68 years?"

Although the Great One's disbelief has its opponents, God usually gets final say in matters like this. It is ill-advised to put in a word edgewise while the Big Guy is within reach of the 'Smite' button, if you know what I mean. Jesus H. Christ, Son and Earthly Incarnation of the Lord Emeritus, was rather perturbed by his Father's actions.

"He could have decided that Man doesn't exist before He had me go down there to die for their sins. He always does stuff like this, man," said Christ, who has locked himself in his room, playing Nintendo, sulking and punching the wall all day,

"It's like that time He busted in on me and this fly chick, smoking a doobie in my room. He walks up to her and says He knows a better way to expand her mind. So He gives her a taste of omniscience, running all of infinity through her eyes in like three seconds. Then He just chuckles maniacally and walks away. She was like, totally zoned out. It really killed the mood, man. Dad can be a real asshole sometimes. Damn, that girl was hot."

The more pious members of God's heavenly cabinet apparently found His lack of faith "disturbing."



A short time ago a brilliant man (Jonathan Swift) attempted to solve Ireland's problems of famine and class separation. His essay, entitled "A Modest Proposal," suggested that the poor should sell their babies to the upper class so that the rich could eat, and so they themselves would have money with which to purchase food and generally improve their life. Needless to say, this was one of the most revolutionary concepts of social engineering ever. He has inspired us to write as well. So we, the editors, present Modest Proposals, a collection of letters and short essays from our readers and staff on ways to fix our own desperate plight.

From Mr. G. Avery Kerbs

Baby Tax! Think about it. How many children are born each and every day? How many of them go hungry? How many welfare mothers rape our system for their own twisted gain? It's so simple: we tax the birth of children. Instead of giving tax breaks, and welfare benefits to those with children, we take money for their pro-life agenda. This innovative program would kill two birds with one stone.

On one hand, the taxation of babies would bolster the American economy. And if we funneled the Baby Tax money into

Modest Proposals

programs like Social Security and Urban Renewal agendas, we can insure the future of those rightfully born as American citizens. Additionally we can cut back on the cancerous growth of the world's population, thereby reducing the environmental stress we place on sweet Mother Earth's bountiful bosom.

My concept of Baby Tax would single handedly save the Chinese from self-destruction, stop the Pro-Life argument in its tracks, and ensure a prosperous future for the USA.

From D. B. Sticher

Drink more! We have too many homeless, right? And their lives are miserable because of the white man's tyranny, correct? Well this could simply be solved by drinking more. Give homeless people money. Now I know what you're saying, "They're just gonna take my handout and improve their lives," but don't worry, they're just gonna take the dough and drown their sorrows in Thunderbird.

Listen, alcohol is proven to do three things. First, to make you forget your troubles; thus solving a homeless man's self-inflicted pain. Second, to prevent you from making any positive change in your life; thereby stopping the homeless from rising up and improving their lives. And third, poisoning your body. That's the key: if we give the homeless enough money, or hell, just go around distributing 40's of Magnum, they'll all drink themselves into a pauper's mass grave.

So what do we have? A bunch of dead homeless people whose final days were positively unproductive and thoroughly blissful. Problem solved.

Editorials by the Editors!

5
This Just In!

Where are my Socks?!?

O.K., the joke's over guys. Where the hell are my socks? I'm serious now, guys: I need my socks. I mean how the hell am I supposed to go out today? It's cold and my feet are sensitive to the bitter chill of Old Man Winter.



By G. Avery Kerbs

You probably think this is all really funny, don't you? Well, how would you like it if I stole and hid your socks!? You wouldn't like that much, would you? I didn't think so. I know that I played a lot of tricks on you all when I was young, but that was in the past, guys! I have a big date tonight. How am I supposed to get laid if I look like some homeless kook without socks?!?

YOU GUYS DON'T LOVE ME! REAL FRIENDS DON'T TREAT EACH OTHER LIKE THIS! Look, damn it, now you've made me cry. Are you happy now? Are you!? You win, all right? Is that what you wanted to hear? YOU WIN!

Fine, keep the damn socks. See if I care. I don't care; you could take all my damn socks for Christ's sake, and it wouldn't make a wit of difference, because I don't care. I don't care about your sock stealing, or when you had sex with my sister, or when you kicked my ass and shat on my chest last winter. I don't care about any of it, because I don't care about you.

You know it figures that you would do something shitty like this! OOOHHH BIG SURPRISE! YOU'VE STOLEN MY SOCKS! YOU'RE SOOOOO CLEVER! Give me back my damn socks! And my Van Halen III CD. No, now. I mean it. What? Look, I'm sorry I said those things, I'm just a little mad, and... a little confused right now. Just... please, give me my socks back, please. Please, just give me my socks back for the love of God Almighty in heaven above, please.

Dude, this totally isn't slander!

Listen yo, this is NOT slander. Just because I said she was publicly whoring herself to anyone with a bag of crack and a winning smile. Just because I said she'd had a long running porno career back in Cali and she was The Anal Sex Queen of the San Bernadino Valley for nine years running, does not make it slander!

That trick went so far as to kill three news reporters with her bare hands and then suck *all* the blood from their bodies so local authorities would think some kinky vampire sex cult did it. Her bloodlust not yet sated, she kidnapped a nun and slowly killed her with a potato peeler. What? No, dude this so isn't slander.

And when she went door to door soliciting money under the false pretense of charitable donation when in fact she spent it all on Olde English and hirsute latino massage escorts. Her bacchanalian self-indulgence was rivaled only by her eccentricity, it was no secret that she would regularly start the day by sipping down a champagne flute full of her morning's urine. Listen wiseguy, just because I'm lying out my ass does not make this slander.

There was also that time she landed a job as an elementary school bus driver just so she could derive some erotic glee from hearing the pre-pubescent squeals of the little boys when she made sexual advances on them. I mean dude, that was pretty fucking despicable, whether it happened or not.

Oh what's the matter? Are you upset because I have spread lies and half-truths about her in a public forum? Have I maligned her character? Has all of my evil libelous speech rendered her a social outcast? Do the elderly spit at her in the park whilst she walks by? And why the Hell do you give a flying hoot whether or not I have deliberately, and permanently slighted her reputation?

Your WIFE, eh? Um... Listen chief, calm down, we can talk about this...



By Ruby Dice-teeth

Republicans May Be Evil

In recent poll data released by the Gallup corporation, it has been revealed that some seventy percent of Americans of voting age think that Republicans strike them as "evil, capricious, darwinistic and deeply religiou." This has fueled the already existent controversy concerning the view that common Americans hold on the subject of Republicans. When considering that all the party's major demagogues are either Nazis or incredibly fat, this view has proliferated quickly. It will not only hamper the national party in the next general election, but is having a catalyzing effect on the recent mob movement to repeal the Constitution and bestow upon current President Bill Clinton the status of Generalissimo. One outspoken respondent is quoted as saying, "Fat people shouldn't be in politics. They're fat, period."

4/3 of American School Age Children Are Struggling with Basic Fractions

The state of the nation's fourth and fifth grade classes, the prime years of a child fraction programming, has been reportedly deteriorating at an alarming rate. Due to difficulties concerning funding and the lack of trained teachers, the current issue of *Education Journal for Pointy-Headed Academics* states, "the learning of fractions has become a remarkably slow-and exasperating process." Local conservative politicians in Arkansas District 9 have rebutted the journal's report, claiming it is part of the "large, vast, all-encompassing left-wing conspiracy" and as "more liberal hoo-ha." Mayor Giuliani of New York City has also been on the front lines in the battle against common sense and good investigative spirit. He was quoted yesterday as saying, "The reason kids don't know fractions is not because their teachers, who have sham degrees ordered from 1-800 numbers, are bad teachers. Rather, especially in New York, it's because they're mostly Black and Hispanic." The controversy promised to rage on...

College Newspapers Fail to Affect Local Politics

The most alarming trend in the late 1990's in the land of America has been the decidedly minor effect of college newspapers on the scripting of the local political scene. The major news media often manages to script public policy by playing down to the lowest common denomonator. College newspapers are often run by high brow philosophy, artsy-fartsy types, and therefore are cursed by God Himself to be misunderstood forever and ever. In the early part of 1999, there was some change in this rather gloomy trend, when writers at a Michigan State University newspaper urged their fellowstudents to riot following the inception of a dry-campus policy. "BEER!" hollered one rather sullen looking fraternity brother. "I WANT BEER, NOW!" he bellowed as he robbed the home of a lovely young suburban family, the Johanssens. The father was quoted as saying that he didn't favor the dry-campus policy. "I am scared for my life. My wife, she couldn't do anything but obsessively clean up their vomit and rowdy aftermath, my daughter tried to fuck one of them while he was escaping the scene before the cops came, and my son, my son has become enamored of the idea that drinking is wonderful and is the key to being more popular." Neighbors later discounted Mr. Johanssen's account, saying that he "performed coitus with his daughter every day," adding that "...[he] threw china and vomited to distract his obsessive-compulsive wife from the incestuous lust she would never know or comprehend." This seemed to confirm that Ms. Johanssen and indeed most American wives rarely know what is going on, and don't have orgasms.

Liberals Set to Bitch about the State of Society, Again

With the headlining band at this year's liberal get-together in Detroit set to be Ani DiFranco, the bitching is primed to be set at volume level 10, and the stars are lining up to join this arch-radical feminist and her wily companions in five days of fun, complaining, tears and celibacy. This year, the liberal get-together has opted to ban any sex from their events and after-parties as radical feminists have come to argue that all intercourse is rape and should therefore be banned. Other issues to be bitched about will include the lack of a totally sensitive society, the existence of the male penis, the existence of white males, the heroic exploits of our current Commander-in-Chief, and the need to be motivated to actually work. Many people feel it will be something more akin to the drab, puritanical gathering that is the Labour party conference in Britain, since the election of Christian machine Tony Blair. "The whole thing is not about respect anymore man, it's all about the man now, dude, and about not having sex 'cause my penis is a weapon of pain, not love," stated one liberal near Joe Louis Arena while trying to score a twenty bag of heroin. The other surprise this year is the presence of an agent from the global Tri-Lateral Commission, apparently to make sure that its liberal foot soldiers make concrete steps to advance worldwide corporatist governance and economic domination. The Commission issued the following statement: "The Tri-Lateral Commission is pleased to announce the further partnership between us and the globalist radical liberals here in Detroit. We hope that our many efforts to colonize the human race will someday be a chieved."

6) **Articles we hope we never see**

View/Points



By
My Grandparents

Listen up, young'ns. We're G. Avery Kerb's grandparents and we're sick and tired of all this hoopla and flim-flam in today's news media. We want it to stop. Is this the legacy that I (grandpa) fought so hard for in WWII? Well? Do you have anything to say for yourselves? I didn't think so. I raise hunting dogs and fear God like any good American citizen. This country belongs to me, not to 20-something hoodlums like you! So shape up or ship out.

We just want to let you know what you'd better **not** be printing in the near future. Now hand me the castor oil.

George Bush wins Presidential Election!

We don't care if it's George W. or George frickin' H. No More. You may never have come to visit in the eighties, but we were alive and a Bush-ocracy is one of the few things we still remember. His name makes our cold bones tremble more. Coke-snorting whipper-snappers shouldn't control my Medicaid, dagnabit!

Cyber-Anything

First Elvis and then those punks from Beverly Hills 90218761. . . whatever, you kids and your crazy hair! Get a job, hippie!

Bob Dole's Couragous Erectile Dysfunction Memoirs

Bob Dole saved me from a Kraut hand grenade in Dresden. That was courage. Popping dope-pills and getting hepped-up on goofballs so Bobby can *schtup* like when we were clean-shaven marine punks is something that America can do without.

Generation X (or Generation Y for that matter) stands for. . .

All you ragamuffins do is bring your elders pain. The more we read about you pipsqueaks and your information age, the more I wish we had legalized abortion! It's all your fault! You all should be ashamed of yourselves. Why don't you visit us for Christ's sake? Are you frightened by living reminders of your own mortality? Get used to it!

We're shaking the cold hand of death himself, and if you slackers don't visit, we'll make sure to put in a bad word or forty. You know how much I can talk!

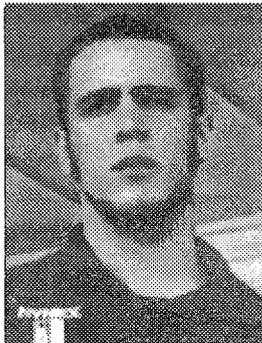
Voting age reduced to 55!

You wouldn't know what to do with the right to vote! Ya'll think you're *cool* like that Johnny kid from *Grease*. Well if you wanna vote, work for it Pony-Boy! I (grandma) shelled clams in a clamery for 20 hours a day for my right to vote and gramps felled trees with only his two mighty hands every day for 40 years! Start mowing our lawn!

John Wayne dies

John Wayne is a god among men! His death would break four of the seven seals protecting us from Armageddon. If John Wayne were to die, all this nation's men would lose their moral direction and the USA would turn into a bunch of sissy beret-wearing poetry-reading nancy-boys! Like the French! It'll be a cold day in Heck before we let this nation's men become interior-designing fruit-cakes.

"Comic Books are for Losers"



By Lance Tadwater

You must be kidding me, man. Comic books? Those things are stupid, yo. That's like some kinda dumb spandex-man type shit. I'm sorry but comic books are for straight-up losers.

That's like the kind of stuff my little sister would be into, if she were DUMB. Maybe it's time for the comic book reading, role-playing, no-girlfriend-having, Mr. Spock-ear-wearing, convention-going, same-underpants-for-a-week-wearing, Batman-could-never-beat-up-Superman-saying, body-odor-smelling, mother-had-to-tie-a-steak-to-his-face-so-the-dog-would-play-with-him, loser to get a friggin' life already.

But seriously who reads comics? What sane human being would read a montly magazine devoted to how Clark Kent can save the planet without breaking a sweat, but can't stick it to his girlfriend of 60 years. These aren't the role models that real people should be looking up to.

Now don't get me wrong, a

child and his comic book are precious, but if

this behavior continues past the age of eighteen, someone needs to get hit. Like, I'm at this Halloween party a few weeks ago, and these dudes walk in dressed up like Batman villains. So I'm like, "Dude! What the hell is wrong with these people?" So we have no choice but to strangle them with their own utility belts. One of the belts opens up and a couple of these homemade smoke pellets fall out. When the air clears, I look at this guy, who failed to escape in the confusion and I'm like, "Dude, I wish Mr. T was here, so he could PITY your fool ass."

The guy started crying and it was really pathetic. These are adults, for Christ's sake. Isn't peer-group ridicule and societal pressure supposed to have molded these miscreants into a life of conformity and harsh reality? So eventually I just told the guy he was terminally lame and that he had maybe sixty long years left to suffer through. What a loser.

Real men play football, and real women stand on the sidelines cheering us on. We may touch each other's asses every once in a while, but we ain't fruits like the Aqua-man. I mean flying around in tights and a cape, wearing your underpants on the outside: comics are for losers!

Semper Fil!

"Comic Books are Awesome!"



By a 42 year-old living in his mother's basement

Comic books have meant so much to me. An educational tool, an imagination stimulant, a friend, a lover, even a parent, instilling values in me that I would not otherwise have.

Imagine if you will, if I had never read a "Spiderman" comic. Never learned Peter Parker's great lesson: "With great power comes great responsibility"? I might very well have become a villain, using my superior intellect to mastermind crimes of a sociopathic nature. Fortunately for the world, Uncle Ben's sacrifice taught me a lot.

Another great benefit that comic books have had on the world has been exposing me to regular images of the idealized female form, with her ripe, ample bosoms and her supple, pert ass. This has kept me behind closed doors where my repressed, frustrated sexual energies

can harm no one but my Costco-sized

box of Kleenex. Exhausted and indoors, I am not likely to find a female with a dexterity rating high enough to give me the loving that I so richly deserve. Comic books are keeping me out of the gene pool.

Comic books present a world that I can escape into. This ability to transport myself into an alternate universe has allowed me to completely ignore my own personal shortcomings and totally divorce myself from interpersonal relationships. In short, comic books have made me the surly, tactless, uninteresting stalker I am today.

Comic books exist as both an escape from reality and a companionship substitute, that is as much a vital part of my shattered psyche as any of father's funny touches. Who needs real people when the X-Men can move objects with their mind?

I am a Superman of social stigmata, a Shadow King to the ladies, and a Sandman in intelligent conversation. My own mom says that I'm her very own special Captain America. That's all the love I'll ever need or even want.

Excelsior!

We, the editors here at the *Disclaimer*, enjoy nothing more than a rousing game of skill and wit. Late into the night, you can hear the chess peices clacking away and the monopoly dice

Fun And Games

rolling through our office.

But the game we most enjoy is the delightful children's distraction known as "Where's Waldo?" So as an *homage* to our beloved game, we play. . .

7

Where's the War Criminal!?!



Well everybody, did you find the war criminal? Oh, you didn't? Well, take a closer look at the picture above. If your observant enough, you'll find the hidden image of one of the world's worst war criminals. He's a despicable tyrant with no remorse, so be

sure to search for those beady eyes. Need another clue? Well, he has grown fat off the labor of the underclass and the suffering of those who oppose him. So go on and seek out his gluttonous form. You can do it!

8) New scientific study shows that babies are cute, but basically stupid.

By Shub-Niggorath, The Black Goat Of The Woods With a Thousand Young

In a surprising press conference, professors from Harvard University released the results of a ten year study which shows that infants, although cute, have little else going for them. This conflicts with a recent trend in popular theory that babies are "smarter than we think." Apparently, babies are just plain stupid.



According to the study, babies showed alarmingly poor performance in almost every field of academia, with average combined math/verbal SAT scores for infants falling in the 400- 410 range. Babies showed little capacity for abstract thought, and demonstrated poor coordination and motor skills.

"One of our subjects was merely asked to write an informal reaction piece to the recent abundance of eastern European nations shifting to a free-market economy." Dr. Johannes Bristolthwaite, chief researcher on the study remarked, "The child's response was less than encouraging, consisting of a slowly expanding puddle of drool on the test booklet."

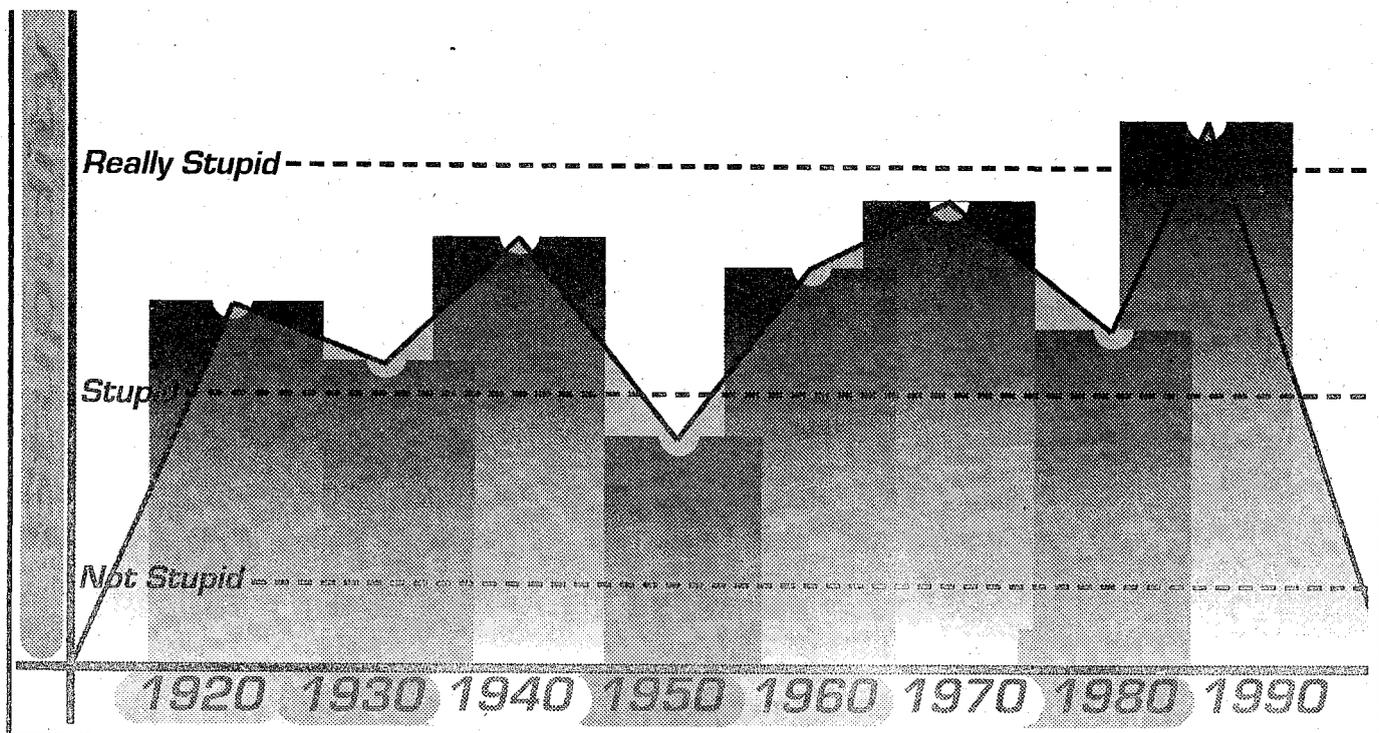
"We had such high hopes for these giggling fountains of joy. Instead of next years atomic physicists however, we have a smelly room full of irrepressibly darling little dim-bulbs, one of whom has just spat up on my loafer. Furthermore, beyond standardized forms of intellectual revue, babies showed apallingly little by way of natural instinct."

"Yes, yes... they're fucking adorable, I know" Dr. Bristolthwaite went on, picking up a nearby infant by the ankle and vigorously shaking it about like a wet towel, "but as you can see here, this precious little angel is as dumb as a stump." He then cast the cabbageheaded parcel of unparalleled cuteness aside like so much hamburger meat, and sucked his teeth in disappointment.

"If I had performed a similar action on a young kitten (also rather cute) it would have gracefully twisted its body so as to land softly on its feet. In the case of the baby I have just hurled across the room... well let's just say that an overripe cantaloupe melon would have hit the ground with a considerably less sickening thud.

Babies do have some inate ability though, and were shown to have exceptional abilities with regard to sucking, squeezing, and making full-grown females utter the phrase "Awww! Woodja wooza woo-oo?"

It is apparently this ability that caused people to initially suspect babies of being more cunning than they are. "Just think, if I could have harnessed the babies' talent for turning women into blithering idiots, my social life would skyrocket!"



You may not have known, but pregnancy in women is one of the leading sexually transmitted diseases.



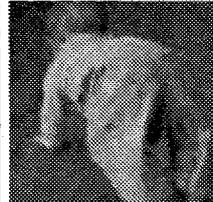
Babies, unlike piñatas, will not burst open into a festival of candy and prizes when bludgeoned with a stick.



In the unlikely event of a water landing, your baby may be used as a flotation device.



Contrary to popular belief, babies abandoned in the forest will not be raised by wolves. They will be messily devoured.



You may not have known this, but ALL of the children in America are tragically born with a 100% mortality rate. So don't get too attached.

READY OR NOT, IT'S TIME FOR "MEDIA JEOPARDY!"

By Norman Solomon

Welcome to an all-new episode of "Media Jeopardy!" This is a game that never ends, whether you like it or not. A reminder of the rules: First, read the answer carefully. Then, try to come up with the correct question.

Today's main category is: "Overseas and Under-reported."

When President Clinton visited this far-off nation of 64 million people in mid-November, a *New York Times* article reported that he "gently nudged the country to strengthen its adherence to human rights." That was a newspeak reference to ongoing patterns of torture and murder by police and security forces.

What is Turkey?

The director of the American Kurdish Information Network, Kani Xulam, recently said that this powerful country is "an enthusiastic ally of a Turkish government that has waged a war on Kurds which has killed over 37,000 people, destroyed over 3,400 Kurdish villages, and displaced over 3 million Kurds from their rightful homes." This same ally delivered more than \$5 billion worth of weapons to Turkey since 1993, even though the Turkish human-rights situation has worsened.

What is the United States?

The commander of Israeli forces in Beirut after Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, he intentionally allowed notorious Phalangist troops to move into the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, where they massacred Palestinian and Lebanese civilians. Estimates of the death toll range from 700 to 2,000. But Israel's prime minister has just named him director-general of the Israeli Ministry of

Defense — an appointment that has not raised media eyebrows in the United States

Who is Gen. Amos Yaron?

In Kosovo, since last summer, "ethnic cleansing" has killed hundreds of people and has caused the exodus of many thousands of others. But the White House and the American press corps don't seem very concerned about these victims.

Who are Serbs?

This is terribly lacking in U.S. media coverage of foreign affairs.

What is a single standard of human rights?

Our next category is: "Vanishing History."

Reporters and pundits often express admiration because he endured several torturous years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. But media accounts rarely provide any details as to what he'd been doing when his plane went down. One might think that he was engaged in some humanitarian mission. Actually, he was participating in an air war that took the lives of many Vietnamese civilians on a daily basis.

Who is Senator John McCain?

Now it's on to: "Quips Beyond the Screen."

Thirty-five years ago, he wrote: "All media exist to invest our lives with artificial perceptions and arbitrary values."

Who was Marshall McLuhan?

This wisecracker observed in 1955:

"Television is a medium, so called because it is neither rare nor well done."

Who was Ernie Kovacs?

This writer posed a question and then answered it: "Where is Hollywood located? Chiefly between the ears. In that part of the American brain lately vacated by God."

Who is Erica Jong?

This famous economist wrote in his memoirs: "Television newsmen are breathless on how the game is being played, largely silent on what the game is all about."

Who is John Kenneth Galbraith?

This renowned woman, publisher of *The Washington Post* for many years, remarked: "The power is to set the agenda. What we print and what we don't print matter a lot."

Who is Katharine Graham?

Now we're on to: "Final Media Jeopardy!"

On Nov. 17, three corporate giants announced a "strategic alliance" that will "share news material and technological and promotional resources." Microsoft, General Electric and the Washington Post Co. made a new deal to consolidate their media leverage. The MSNBC website will soon become Newsweek.MSNBC.com. And we'll be seeing intensive cross-promotion. The president of NBC News, Andrew Lack, said: "We are pleased to be teamed with the *Washington Post* and *Newsweek* in our effort to deliver news across all available media platforms." But some media consumers won't be so pleased, since it all adds up to another step along the road toward a widely feared result.

What is media monopoly?

"The Importance of Class in 'Race, Class, and Gender'"

A talk by Stanley Aronowitz,
Distinguished Professor
of Sociology at CUNY
Graduate Center

Wed.
12/8 at 4:30 p.m.
SAC 303

Part of the Provost's Lecture Series
Sponsored by The Group For the Study
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Open every
Wed. thru Sat.
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Located on the second floor of
the Fannie Brice Building
Roosevelt Quad

How Guys Get Stiffed:

By F.L. Livingston

I confess that I was astonished when "Jim" asked me to pay my half on our dates. But I understood that it was the "latest thing." It was 1971, "Women's Liberation" was in its heyday, and campus feminists were urging girls to prove their independence and equality by, among other things paying their own way, even if it only meant the price of a burger. A senior med student, Jim also explained that he had been financing his own medical education and did not have a lot of money left over for fun. "If we want to go out nicely," he said, "you'll have to pay half."

I knew even then that this was more than a simple matter of "traditional" versus "modern" or "liberated." It was actually a matter of two long-standing conventions at war with each other. First, there was the surface custom of the man picking up the tab. Second, there was the tradition-behind-the-tradition: the belief that the man should be "in charge." Until that era, the two standards had worked together, one supporting the other. Now, suddenly, they were at odds. How to react? I could arch my back and insist, as some girls did, "I'm a traditional girl. I expect you to pay for me!" If so, I would uphold the overt custom of having the guy pay, but, at the same time defy the covert "man-in-charge" custom. Or I could demurely agree, sustaining the idea that the guy "calls the shots," but breaking the tradition of the man footing the bill.

Because I had grown up in a mostly male-dominated household—and because of Jim's alleged financial predicament—I chose the latter option. Besides, I reasoned, what if all guys began to expect this? I had better get used to it, I thought.

And you care about this because...?

Because the ramifications of this time period are still wielding their effects, according to feminist author, Susan Faludi. In her new book, *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man*, Faludi suggests that several aspects of the '70s, as well as the '50s and the '60s, have combined to rob the American man of the rewards once promised to him for the mere fact of being male. They have

also stripped him of the incentives offered for adhering to the model of "masculinity" that our society promoted for so long. Yet nothing of sufficient value (for him) has been created to replace the loss. The ways in which young men and women respond to the issues raised by Faludi will likely impact gender relations for years to come.

So anyway, on our first date, a movie, I came fully prepared to spring for my own ticket, as well as half the cost of popcorn. As we approached the ticket booth, I cheerfully ordered my ticket and handed the teller its price (about \$2.50 then). She accepted the money and gave me my ticket without comment.

Jim turned beet red. Asking his date to pay for her ticket was one matter. Having the ticket teller see her do it was another. He was trying to do the "liberated thing" but was embarrassed to be caught at it.

Why? Because he feared it made him look "cheap," even though he was merely asking me to take equal responsibility for our evening? Because he felt that it made him appear "less manly" in

some way?

As Faludi explains, such men grew up believing that they were "expected to dominate." Suddenly, they were being told not to. These men wanted to live up to society's ideals, but they'd "lost their compass" and weren't sure which way to turn.

I was sure that I had the solution. I suggested that, in the future, I should give him my money beforehand. That way I would still be covering my share, but he could look as if he were paying for both of us. No, of course, I didn't say that to him. What I said was, "I think that will be easier and faster, don't you?"

He readily agreed.

So on our second date (also a movie—Jim loved the movies), I handed him my money in the car before we took off for the theater. I admit to feeling rather smug at having surmounted my first liberated hurdle with such ease.

Jim turned beet red. Apparently, he was still embarrassed by the actual fact of this, even though we were alone. As Faludi explains, many men came to resent the fact that women no longer seemed to need or want "to be protected." One of the men that she interviewed complained that as women became more independent, men began to feel less important and "belittled, shrunk to nothing." Another uses the dread word "emasculated" to describe how he felt as his wife began to assume more of the financial burden of their lives. He began to question his "purpose" in the marriage, he tells us, and couldn't find an answer. "The underlying message" of our culture is clear, Faludi informs us: "Men cannot be men, only eunuchs, if they are not in control."

I doubt that Jim's concerns on this second date were quite that serious. But I think that he

was experiencing for the moment the same thing these other men had. Regardless, I had no idea as to what to do at that point. Like many women who came of age during the '60s, I had been counseled not to criticize or question a man too closely, especially at the beginning of a relationship. And

I had often been rewarded for my silence. (As in, "I think it's so cool that you didn't say anything when...") So there was no way that I was going to say anything about this problem to Jim, not even, "Well, do you want me to pay or not?"

But why didn't he speak up? Why didn't he confess that this was more difficult for him than he thought?

Possibly he didn't want me to think of him as "old-fashioned" or chauvinistic. It may also have been because he was wary of "violating sanctioned masculine codes by expressing pain and neediness," as the evangelical Promise Keepers quoted in Faludi's book would suggest. She disagrees, but I believe that they have a point. True, I hate to agree on anything with the Promise Keepers since their founder, Bill McCartney, has supported a number of right-wing causes, such as the anti-abortion movement. And because one of the stated aims of the group is to persuade wives to "submit" to their husbands. But I contend that they are correct on this subject of male verbalization. In fact, I think it is a particular struggle for

most men to admit to confusion about gender issues. Speak out about racial or religious injustice? Sure. Stand up for Gay or Women's Lib? Maybe. But tell the world about male insecurities? No way!

Yes, understanding women may—sometimes—be able to coax them into expressing their feelings on other topics, but this is a tough one. Opening up about such deeply personal fears and frustrations does not fit into the conventional image of manhood in America.

If you don't mind my borrowing from a totally '90s phrase, Jim and I were a classic case of "can't ask, can't tell."

Anyway, on our third date, Jim arrived early, swept into my room, slammed the door behind him and announced, "This time I'm paying for the whole date!"

"Announced"? Did I say "announced"? "Shouted" would be more accurate. As if I had been the one who insisted on sharing the expenses! As if I were to blame for his discomfort! As if he had to defend his embattled ego against me! What was up with that?

Ms. Faludi would not be surprised. In researching male attitudes, she discerned that many modern men felt like social "cast-offs." Such men, she discovered, often try to reassert their sense of control via aggressive behavior. Just as often, they direct this behavior at women.

Luckily, in Jim's case, it was just a matter of yelling. This tendency, Faludi maintains, is frequently the force behind male violence against women. As one former wife-beater admitted, hitting his wife made him feel "like a man again." But only for the duration of the beating. Before and after he felt powerless, "like no man at all." And so the problem perpetuates itself.

It is conceivable that men of my generation, the "Baby Boomers" born in the wake of WWII, might respond to modern life in this way. These guys cut their teeth on "home-team spirit, John Wayne westerns, and tributes to the selfless service of the American GI." They grew up believing that men were charged with the task of running the world—and suddenly all that changed! However, this situation has resolved itself in the younger generation, has it not?

Not according to Faludi. Not only do we hear of girlfriend-abuse, etc., among the young, but also, she tells us, this need to recapture a sense of "manliness" translates into a great deal of youthful "machismo." This includes the ritual belching and farting that is so closely associated with young manhood today. Even the least violent young man can act aggressive by deliberately emitting obnoxious noises! No longer able to assert their masculinity through leadership in the home or the workplace, it seems that most men will find other ways to do so. This appears to be true even for some of the most easy-going of their ilk. And it seems to be so for both generations.

This also gets back to the male difficulty in expressing vulnerability. Anger is one of the few emotions that the American male is "allowed" to vent. It is easier, I maintain, for most American men to lash out aggressively than to own up to inner pain and terror.

Faludi would argue with me on that point because so many men spilled out their feelings for her publication. But as I read the book, I could see that she is an amazingly empathetic listener. And let's not forget that these guys knew that if they answered her honestly, they would be immortalized in print. So I am not surprised that she found "many eloquent men who were willing to speak" to her, and who had "the candor and

He was trying to do the "liberated thing" but was embarrassed to be caught at it.

A Discussion of Modern Gender Relations

courage to put their individual struggles into words."

Still, I am intrigued with Faludi's take on the situation. She submits that men have a hard time speaking up about their problem because they do not have a "clearly defined enemy," the way that feminists had. Women could easily rail at men, for it was men who controlled the power structure. Men cannot rage so compellingly at women as a group, because women do not have total command of our society. Nor can they thrust their anger at the Establishment, since that very Establishment is still perceived as under the control of men. How do you rebel against yourself?

So Jim and I went out a third time. And he paid for "the whole date." \$1.50 to be exact. He took me to the 75 cent movie reruns frequently shown by our university. Usually, they were movies you had never seen or heard of. And, trust me, there was a reason for that.

But I didn't mind. Despite the money problem, I was really "into" Jim and was just happy to be with him.

He, on the other hand, was obviously uncomfortable from the moment he paid for the tickets through out the evening. No, he did not turn beet red. But his discomfort was palpable. I guess he worried that I might secretly resent the inexpensive date. Or that maybe I wanted him to be more liberated, after all.

Did it cross my mind at the time that perhaps Jim needed me to take a stand of my own on this issue? Yes. Could be he was waiting for me to say something like, "I expect the man to pay even if it means that we can't do anything fancy!" Or, "Listen, buster, I'm a modern independent woman, and I'm going to pay for myself!" But that wasn't "me" then, so I didn't. I could adjust my habits here and there, but I could not imagine reworking my whole personality.

Now I think what was missing was a conversation. The kind of in-depth discussion where each one expresses his/her own attitudes and tries to understand the other person's as well. Just the kind of thing that guys like Jim have trouble with—and girls like I was then hardly know how to achieve. Neither of us had a clue as to where or how to start.

If only I'd had Faludi's book then. It represents a wealth of research, including various readings, videos, and interviews with men from a vast diversity of groups, such as the Citadel, the Black Heritage Committee, the infamous Spur Posse (who had sex with girls for points), etc. What's more, she spent about a year attending meetings of both the Promise Keepers and the domestic-abusers group known as Alternative to Violence. Through it all, Ms. Faludi proved to be sensitive, perceptive, and remarkably able to keep an open mind.

I am impressed, too, with her broad-based analysis of the male crisis. Her diagnosis is indeed "revolutionary," as the cover flap of my copy exclaims. Changes in gender roles alone, she hypothesizes, have not damaged the male sense of identity. Rather, that has happened as a culmination of many developments in the last half century. These include disillusionment with the purpose of war, the perceived emptiness of the space race, and the wide breadth of the generation gap in the '60s. She pieces together a picture of a gender led on with "glittering" promises that were broken, one by one.

I do have a couple of quibbles with the book. One is Faludi's refusal to consider emotive impairment as a problem for American men. The other is her almost self-conscious (it seems to me)

attempt to avoid placing too much blame on feminists for this masculine identity crisis. (Perhaps because she is a women's liberationist herself, even though a very fair and open-minded one?)

In fact, I would say that these two factors have worked together to silence the American male to a great degree. Although, I applaud several of the achievements of Women's Lib, I was never a full-fledged feminist, and so, perhaps, can view the feminist role in this dilemma more objectively.

The way I remember it is that the growing number of young "women's libbers" in the '70s tended to focus on their own cause. This is understandable, given that it was new (for them) and geared toward such significant and laudable goals as equal pay and opportunity for women. Some of them gave lip service to the idea that their movement would liberate men, as well, and a few

really seemed to care about that. (I am reminded of "Glenda," who was fond of saying, "I'm not a feminist. I'm a human rightist.") But most of the college feminists that I knew were impatient with the mumblings or grumblings of men. If a guy tried to express his concerns, they would laugh his efforts off with the slogan, "That's his problem!" This did not exactly encourage men to speak their minds!

This "gung-ho" attitude calmed down in time, but men have still had a difficult time finding a female audience. When a few men tentatively raised their voices again in the '80s, several women in the "movement" admonished them to "stop whining." Faludi, herself, admits, that a lot of feminists, even today, insist that men hold "the reins of power" and just "don't want to give [them] up," despite the fact that so many men profess to have felt that power "slip away" years ago.

And—tell the truth, girls—how often has a guy bared his soul to you, only to have you attack him with stinging commentary simply because he did not reveal the thoughts or feelings you were hoping to hear? We can hardly expect men to confide their deepest emotions in us if we lash out at them every time they do!

My fifteen-year-old daughter saw this saying on a T-shirt: "If a man speaks out in the woods, and there is no woman there to hear him, is he still wrong?" There you are.

It seems that most women (even me) have learned to verbalize the doubts and demands that we once suppressed. But in so doing have often prevented men from putting forth their own.

Few of us can offer guys immortality in book form the way that Faludi can. But we can make an effort to display the kind of empathy that she does. Maybe then we'll find out what men "really want."

With the growth of friendship between men and women today, maybe that situation has improved, but there is still work to be done. Why am I driving this particular point home so hard? Read on.

Faludi contends that she has a solution to the problem. It is a return to the idea of liberating men, as well as women. She proposes that men work to wrest themselves from the demands of traditional "masculinity" just as feminist have fought to free themselves from the conventional

mold of "femininity." Modern men face, she suggests, "a historic opportunity: to learn to wage battle against no enemy, to own a frontier of human liberty, to act in the service of a brotherhood that includes us all."

Difficult task. Utopian objective.

Possible plan? I have my doubts. Partly because I've heard it before. Society did not accept it then, and I'm not sure it will now. The parents who were willing to buy a truck for their daughter would not necessarily purchase a doll for their son. The adults who urged little girls to "be tough" would not always encourage little boys to cry.

Been there. Seen that.

If the idea does take hold, it is likely to spawn several varied reactions, just as the feminist movement did. There will be some who embrace it wholeheartedly. Others will accept a few of the changes but not all. Still others will reject it totally and cry out even

louder for a return to tradition.

Chances are the lines will be drawn largely along the borders of the different segments of society ("hard-hats," college students, business people, etc.). If we can all respect each others' opinions, fine. If not, such a movement may lead to more divisiveness between the genders and the several groups within our culture.

Still, I concur that we cannot go back. Witness the fact that, while the "Million Youth March" was repeated, the "Million Man March" of a few years ago was not. Or the fact that, according to Faludi, the Promise Keepers seem to have lost direction—and members. One can't just pick up images from the past, superimpose them on people's lives, and make them work.

Yet, trying to move forward from here will be hard, no matter how we do it. And it will take dialogue. Sorry guys, but you'll have to talk. And girls, you'll have to listen—really listen. (Now you know why I stressed the point before.) Sure, some men will say things that exasperate us (and vice versa, I'm certain). And sometimes we will "lose it" (and they will, too). But we'll make up and try again. Regardless of what the future holds, both genders need to be receptive to each other if we are going to work out these problems at all.

What happened to Jim and me? We wrestled for a while with the payment question and similar ones. (Jim was at war with himself about who should call and who should plan, and so on). Then the relationship began to taper off, and we just sort of drifted apart. No other guy ever asked me to pay half. (The concept didn't catch on that quickly, after all.) But I understand that it is fairly common practice now—not that that many people go on official "dates" these days, anyhow. As the 20th Century opened, women were already fighting for their equal rights (the right to vote, for example). As we stand on the threshold of the 21st Century, perhaps men will begin to seek whatever they have been denied. I say "we," but, of course, it will mostly be up to you, the young, to decide what course men, women, and their relationships will take. Good luck to you.

Source: Faludi, Susan, *Stuffed: the Betrayal of the American Man*. New York. William Morrow and Co. Inc. 1999.

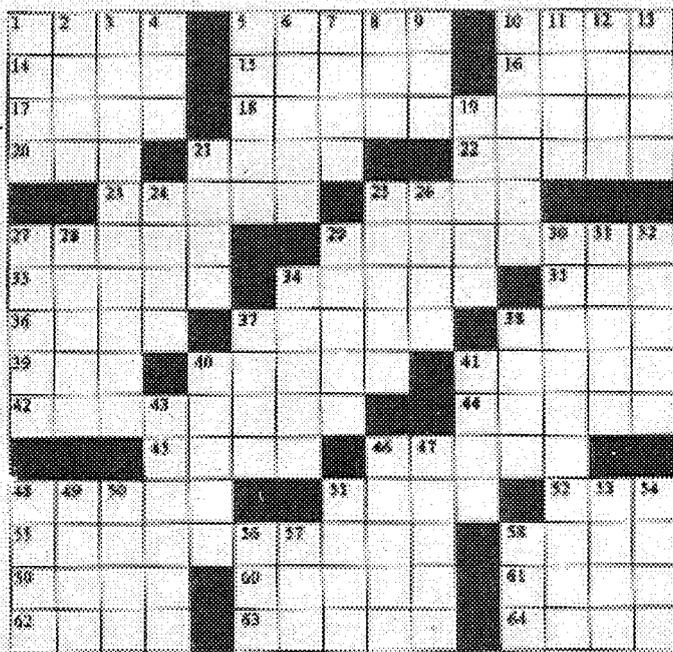
"Listen, buster, I'm a modern independent woman, and I'm going to pay for myself!"

Crossword 101

"Scholastic Aptitude"

By Ed Canty

- ACROSS**
- 1 Pacific island country
 - 5 Taxing time
 - 10 Army specialty
 - 14 Adjoin
 - 15 Amazing quality
 - 16 Songwriter Porter
 - 17 Roosters' chicks
 - 18 Level 3
 - 20 M minus XID
 - 21 Docile
 - 22 Aahed partner
 - 23 Excessively fat
 - 25 Spruce up the room
 - 27 Be concerned
 - 29 Hit-or-miss
 - 33 Log leftover
 - 34 Philharmonic needs
 - 36 Tennis term
 - 38 Greek letters
 - 37 Author Goodwin
 - 38 ___ Strauss, jeans maker
 - 39 Not sm. nor lg.
 - 40 Ate
 - 41 Circus lion's partner
 - 42 Butt endlers
 - 44 Theological statements
 - 45 Barnyard Dads
 - 46 See thru wrap
 - 48 Broadway org.
 - 51 C.S.A. soldiers
 - 52 Restaurant bill
 - 55 Level 4
 - 58 Speleologists' concern
 - 59 ___ Gallery
 - 60 Graham & Prelinger
 - 61 Topic
 - 62 Gannan car
 - 63 Wonder years ?
 - 64 Polar explorer



- DOWN**
- 1 Saudi Arabia king
 - 2 Wild goat
 - 3 Level 2
 - 4 Belonging to a thing

- 5 Turkish rulers
- 6 TV special time
- 7 Fury
- 8 "___ bin aln Berliner"
- 9 Mary Ford's partner
- 10 Structure for education
- 11 Robin's friend
- 12 Medicinal herb
- 13 Display cards in Pinocchio
- 19 Secret messages
- 21 Kennedy and Roosevelt
- 24 Quilling parties
- 25 Overzealous
- 26 Time periods
- 27 "It's a Wonderful Life" director
- 28 Nincompoops
- 29 Remedies
- 30 Level 1
- 31 Lucky roll
- 32 Agitates
- 34 Broadway awards
- 37 2 x r
- 38 Buddhist monk
- 40 Window treatment
- 41 Pitches
- 43 Comes before agent or alarm
- 46 Comes before Hall
- 47 Chasm
- 48 Motor vehicle
- 49 Center a football
- 50 Quote
- 51 Religious ceremony
- 53 Affirm
- 54 Jewelry
- 56 Decay
- 57 Joan of Arc title
- 58 Hack

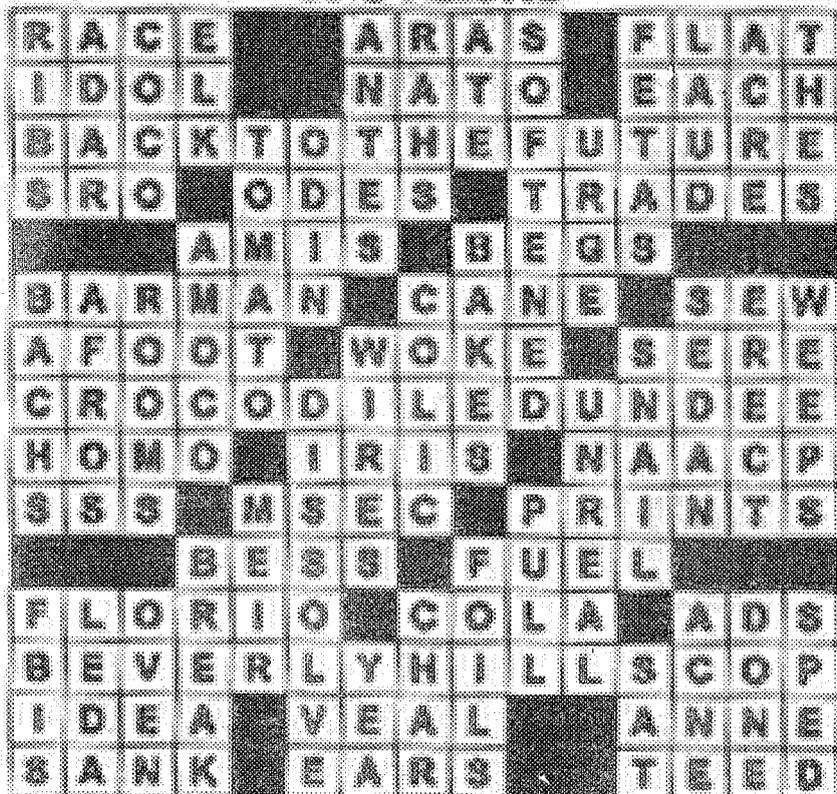
Quotable Quote

"In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: It goes on."
... Robert Frost

By GFR Associates E-Mail: EDC9432@aol.com
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Answers From Last Issue

80'S FLICKS



Top Ten Things To Be Thankful For This Thanksgiving

10. That it's not your body cavity that's been stuffed and eaten

9. Maxi-pads

8. Our ill-gotten land

7. Free Porn

6. Tryptophan

5. The "creamy" corn shits

4. Gluttony

3. The pre-dinner toke

2. That your family doesn't have to have Thanksgiving dinner at White Castle

1. The Stony Brook Press

A Night Against Hate On Long Island:

A Screening of the "Brandon Teena Story"

By BrianKate

Hello there! I am BrianKate, also known as Brian, also known as Kate, also known as The Dark Kate. I am a person who lives out multiple interpretations of my identity. I guess you could call me a "chameleonic life form." You can't pin me down to just one way of being—and I won't let you! This is especially true when it comes to gender and gender identity. I don't identify as a man or a woman. I am a bit of each, but I don't feel I am, or ever really was, 100% one or the other.

Not having a particular gender is fun and exciting, but it also presents problems with relating to people. Most of the people I've met so far have had a sense of being a man or a woman, but I've never had this. Could be like the old 7-Up jingle, "Never had it, never will." I love being myself and not having a definite gender, but a lot of people I meet have one hell of a time relating to me, because they are used to relating to men and women. I am not a man, and I am not a woman. I have to find ways of relating to people as a not-man/not-woman.

As a Stony Brook student, I am still dealing with this need to relate to people who have never known someone like me. I feel comfortable commenting on issues and events relevant to both transgendered people and people who don't identify as such. I want to make people aware that people like me do exist, do live on Long Island, and do go to schools just like this one. I want to make it clear that we are all people whether we're men, women, or anything else. I would like some ideas on how to relate to you, and to find out just where you're coming from as well.

On Saturday, October 9th, the Long Island Gay and Lesbian Film Festival in Huntington provided the setting for a powerful stand against hate crimes, crimes against

gay, lesbian, bisexual and especially transgendered people on Long Island.

The festival itself, held at the Cinema Arts Center in Huntington, had already been running for two days, but this night proved to be its most powerful and moving. This was the night the documentary "The Brandon Teena Story" was shown.

Although the big-screen version of this movie, "Boys Don't Cry," has drawn a lot of attention, many people remain unfamiliar with the Brandon Teena case. Brandon Teena was a transgendered individual, a person who didn't exactly fit the categories of "boy or girl," and was considered to have been a female-to-male transsexual. Teena, born Teena Brandon, was "born a girl," anatomically a female, but lived as a man and had relations with many young women. When two acquaintances, John Lotter and Tom Nissen, found out "he" was a "she," they beat and raped her. After Sheriff Laux of Falls City, Nebraska, refused to investigate, they followed Teena to Humboldt, Nebraska, and shot and killed her and her two friends. The case has only been resolved over the past year, with Nissen receiving life imprisonment and Lotter receiving the death penalty.

The movie was both powerful and painfully difficult to watch, especially since, as a documentary, it used the actual people involved. Joann Brandon, Brandon Teena's mother, as well as Teena's sister, appeared several times to talk about Teena and the killing. A parade of ex-girlfriends came forth to talk about their relationships, including how they reacted when they found out the man of their dreams was a woman. Friends and relatives of friends talked about knowing Teena. Both of the killers were interviewed; both were unrepentant for their parts in the murder. Actual audiotapes and transcripts of the rape complaint filed by Teena Brandon before Sheriff Laux were played, in which we actually hear Laux saying to Teena, "You're a girl and you run around with other girls who think you're a boy," and asking her, "Did you work it up for him before he put it in you?" as he refused to act on her rape complaint. All of this makes the movie, and Brandon Teena's brutal murder, more than just something read in the headlines or seen on TV. The movie makes this a powerfully personal and affecting story. Whether or not you've faced violence over your

gender identity, over your sense of yourself as a man, a woman, or someone else entirely, you can at least understand that violence because the movie puts human faces on its victims.

After the movie played to a packed theater, a panel discussion on bias crimes and violence against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people began in the same theater. The panel included J.C. Cherubini, a transgendered Long Island artist; representatives of BiasHELP, a group dedicated to raising awareness of hate crime on Long Island; a representative of the Empire State Pride Agenda, a political activist group; representatives of CommUNITY House, a group in the middle of setting up a Long Island gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgendered community center; and Detective James Mosby, from the Suffolk County Bias Crimes Unit.

While they made up the panel, the audience made the discussion. People of all genders, sexualities and identities spoke up about their experiences with discrimination and violence. The panel gave out information on how to document and report acts of bias crime, but the real importance of that night was that people got up before the whole theater to speak out on their experiences with hatred and violence, without letting fear stop them from doing so. That's what bias crimes are about: instilling fear so people won't speak up and be themselves. As a transgendered person who doesn't identify as a man or a woman, and having had my own narrow escapes from violence on Long Island, I feel this night was a truly empowering experience: to see that so many people are willing to make a stand against hatred.

Welcome to Kate's World can be found at:

<http://go.to/TheDarkKate>

or at:

<http://www.angelfire.com/ny/BrianKate/>

and you can e-mail me at:

DarkKate@yahoo.com.

W o r t h T a l k i n g A b o u t

By Brian Hampton

Sometimes it's better to just shush and be quiet, let the moment stand on its own and not waste time with idle conversation. But since we're interesting people here at Stony Brook, most of the time it's more fun to exchange ideas and just TALK...

So what is that makes intelligent—well, relatively intelligent—students like John sit on the floor and eagerly anticipate people crossing his path? What makes him sit Indian-style with wide eyes and hands ready to grab the unsuspecting legs of passer-bys with no intention of letting go? Furthermore, what makes Julia so consumed with joy that she loses all sensibility and laughs with uncontrollable passion for great lengths of time? The answers to these questions as well as others will be addressed in the article. Hopefully these insights into this *something*, this source of joy, whim, and courage will allow you to live a long and healthy life.

This *something* is what helps many of us harness life and go with every whim. It helps us grab on to every second with a death-defying grip. Helps us look at the world with our own eyes, not the eyes we've been given by "Family Matters" and "The Cosby Show." Gives us the freedom to bellow out a scream of lust for life. "Ahhh!"

This *something* is what makes me take off my clothes and climb into the fabulous shower of my employer during work (and I mean fabulous, with four rows of jets that hit your body at different levels as a stream of H₂O falls upon your head). My boss, with her feeble mind, didn't appreciate this slice of life, even though she caught a glimpse of my naked bod. "I want you out of my house in five minutes!" Maybe she needs that *something*. I suppose if she had it, she would have joined me in the shower and laughed madly as

her husband knocked on the door. "Honey, are you in there? Who's with you?"

Wally latches on to the passing time by throwing the norm out the window and eating what the hell he wants. He tucks his napkin in his shirt collar and dines on a choice array of rocks and dried maple leaves. Wally says, "They were only isolated incidents," but he doesn't have to justify himself, does he? D.J. would not ask him to explain himself—he prefers his sister's live goldfish when he's in proper form.

Tom is harnessing life and letting no one screw him over. He uses this *something* to get the courage needed to stand on his own two feet. After he gets pick-pocketed in Rome (Italy) he chases down the "Son-of-a-Bitch," puts him in a headlock, brushes off a cop and reclaims his wallet. Go Tom! Ahhh! DOWN WITH THE SONS-OF-BITCHES!

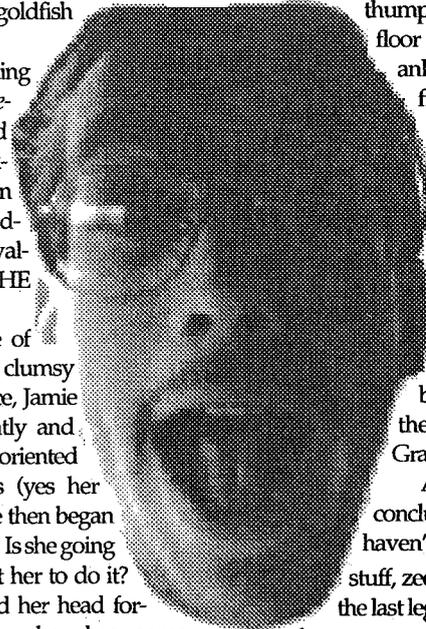
Unfortunately the downside of this *something* is the disorienting and clumsy effect it almost always has. For instance, Jamie was sitting in a crowded room recently and stood up, looked at the ceiling in a disoriented manner and pulled down her pants (yes her panties too). Hello! To my surprise, she then began to squat. Holy shit! Is she going to do it? Is she going to let her insides come out? Do I want her to do it? Just as she arched her back and leaned her head forward, the kid next to her stopped what may have been something really great! This jerk stood as a barrier between a lot of people and a great memory. Not only would it have been a great memory, but it would have been an anecdote that would have undoubtedly lived on for generations and gen-

erations. Where is Tom when you need him? DOWN WITH THE SONS-OF-BITCHES!

This same clumsiness is what makes it so very hard for Nelson to stand his glass back up after knocking it down on a table. "I tried to stand it up and failed, tried again and failed. On the third try, I managed to fall on the glass and cause the entire table to collapse." His sister recalls that his clumsiness followed him into the bathroom: "I heard a loud thump! and found Nelson on the bathroom floor with his pants (and underwear) at his ankles, toilet paper in his hand and plaster from the wall in his hair." Yet another a failed attempt, but this time he was trying to wipe his black eye.

And countless people have asked themselves the same question due to this *something*, "Where am I and how did I get here?" John had to ask himself, "How did I end up in front of my bathroom door? Better yet, how did I get home?" He then looked up a bit more and was forced to ask himself the big question: "Why is my Grandmother staring at me like that?"

As astute readers, I'm sure that you've concluded what this *something* is. But if you haven't: it's CH₃CH₂OH (ethanol), the good stuff, zee tasty beverage, the prohibited drink, the last legal drug in America, the reason my professors are so happy, the heart of Saturday night, the reason your girl looks so good, the reason for the season, the reason for living, the spice of life, the relaxer at the end of the day, the blood of Christ, and most of all *your best friend*.



COMICS

Manicdotes by the artist formally known as Deborah Sticher

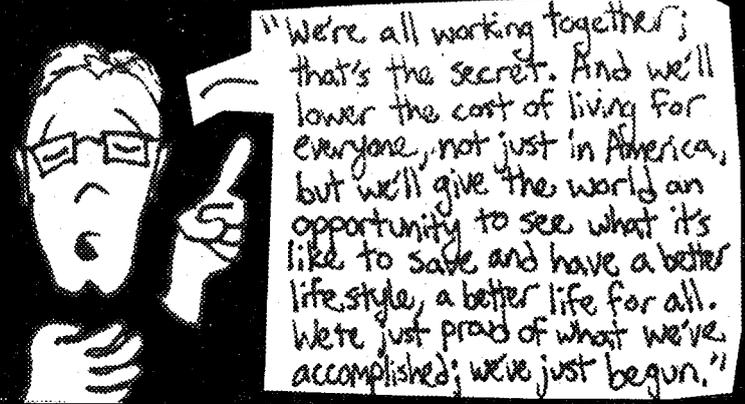
1962, SAM WALTON, A SMALL-TIME GENERAL STORE OPERATOR FROM THE MIDWEST, CONCEIVED OF AN ENTITY-

DUBBED WALMART, HIS VISION OF LOW PRICES AND LOW QUALITY AT A LARGE SCALE HAS SINCE SPREAD ACROSS AMERICA.



NOT ONLY DID WALMART PUT THOUSANDS OF INDEPENDANTS OUT OF BUSINESS, WITH ITS CANCEROUS GROWTH, BUT WALMART HAD A MALIGNANTLY SANCTIMONIOUS "PHILOSOPHY," TOO...

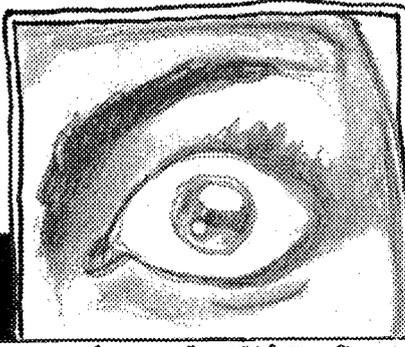
MEANWHILE, IN BANGLADESH...



WALMART PURCHASES FROM BEXIMCO FACTORY IN SAYAR, THE DHAKA EXPORT PROCESSING ZONE. THE WORKERS ARE MOSTLY YOUNG WOMEN WHO WORK FROM 7:30AM TO 8:00PM FOR 40-70% BELOW THE LEGAL WAGE. AT 9-20 cents AN HOUR, THIS ISN'T EVEN A LIVING WAGE. SO SOME OF THE POOREST PEOPLE IN WORLD ARE WORKING 80 HOURS A WEEK...

...AND STILL NOT EVEN MEETING BASIC SUBSISTENCE COSTS. IN ADDITION TO THESE INDIGNITIES, THESE WORKERS MUST ENDURE DANGEROUS AND UNINSPECTED WORKING CONDITIONS, RESTRICTIVE

BATHROOM BREAKS, MAL-TREATMENT BY MANAGERS, POOR OR NONEXISTANT HEALTH CARE, AND NO RIGHT TO ORGANIZE...



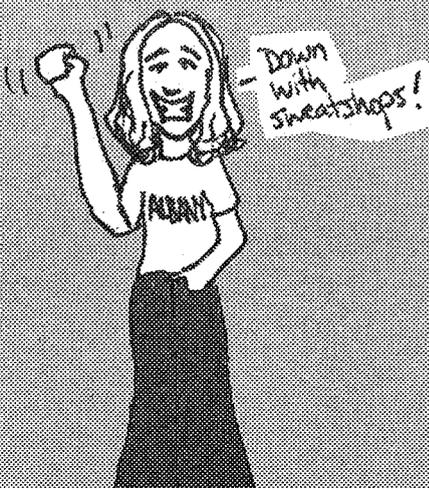
BACK IN THE STATES, WALMART COVERS ITS ASS PRETTY WELL.. WALMART ADVERTISES A "BUY AMERICAN POLICY, WITH "AN UNPRECEDENTED COMMITMENT TO PURCHASE AMERICAN GOODS" THAT IS, UNTIL THE FINE PRINT-

SO THE AMERICAN PUBLIC REMAINS FAR REMOVED AND OBLIVIOUS OF SUCH EXHAUSTIVE CONDITIONS.

"...whenever pricing is comparable to goods made offshore."



THAT'S WHERE I COME IN.

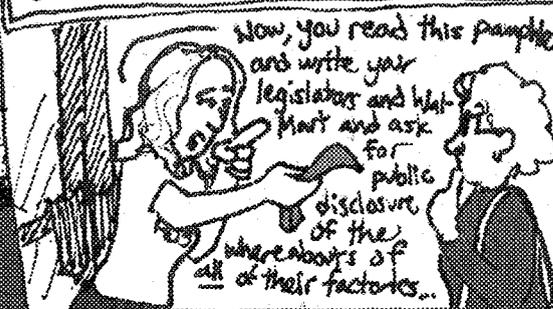


ACTUALLY, THAT'S WHERE THE CREW AT NYPIRG COMES IN...

yee-ha!



LAST SATURDAY, WE ALL TOOK THE DAY OUT TO INFORM LOCAL WALMART SHOPPERS THAT THE CLOTHING THEY BUY AT EVERYONE'S FAVORITE STORE MIGHT HAVE BEEN MADE IN A SWEATSHOP...



WE DROVE AROUND THE PARKING LOT WITH SIGNS STRAPPED TO OUR CARS AND HANDED OUT PAMPHLETS AND OTHER RELATED INFORMATION. IT WAS A QUIET SPECTACLE. UNTIL...

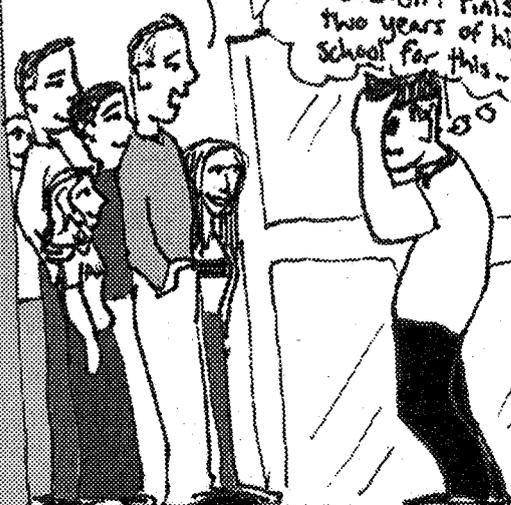
yo - you guys gotta get outta here...

Or were calling the cops on you guys...



Okay!

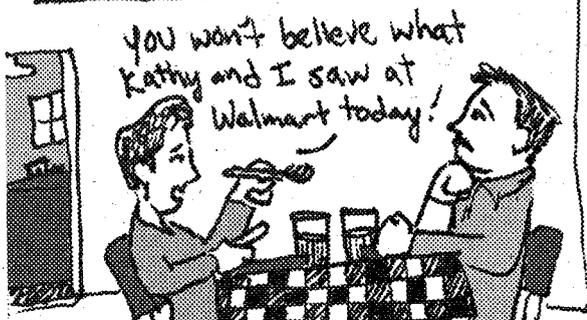
I didn't finish two years of high school for this...



WHEN THE COP CAME, HE SAID HE DIDN'T REALLY CARE WHAT WE DID, JUST SO LONG AS WE DIDN'T BLOCK THE ENTRANCES. WE DROVE AROUND WITH OUR PROTEST CARAVAN FOR THE REMAINDER OF OUR TIME.



ONE COUPLE WENT BACK INTO WALMART TO RETURN THEIR PURCHASES. MANY OTHER PEOPLE LISTENED INTENTLY WHEN I SPOKE TO THEM. I EVEN COUNTED A WIDENING OF THE EYES AS A VICTORY THAT DAY.

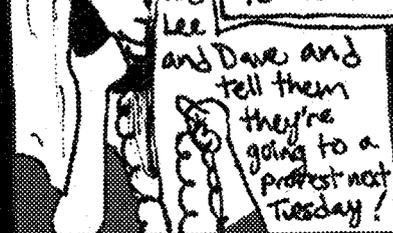


IT WAS A VERY SMALL PROTEST, BUT RESULTS WERE EVIDENT. THE NEXT WILL BE HUGE ONE. ALL IT TAKES IS ONE MORE PERSON.



Hey Clarence! Call up Dana and Joe and Martha and Hilary and Brian and Brian and Jon and Lee and Dave and tell them they're going to a protest next Tuesday!

AND THEIR 40 FRIENDS



THERE IS, OF COURSE, A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAKING SOMEONE AWARE AND MAKING SOME ONE CARE. ALL I CAN DO IS MAKE OTHERS AWARE - FOR THE LATTER, I CAN ONLY RECOMMEND A PHILOSOPHY...

IF I DON'T SINGLEHANDEDLY SAVE THE WORLD - WHO WILL??!

I MEAN, I CAN'T FATHOM WHY ANYONE SHOULD WORK THAT MANY HOURS AT SUCH A HORRIBLE JOB. NOT ONLY CAN'T I ENDORSE IT - I HAVE TO FIGHT IT.

WALMART IS A BIG COMPANY WITH TWO FACES - A START. IF WE CAN GET FULL PUBLIC DISCLOSURE, WE CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SWEATSHOPS - AND WORK TO ELIMINATE THEM. OR CHANGE THEM. AND IT IS WORK. IT'S EASY TO GET DISCOURAGED.

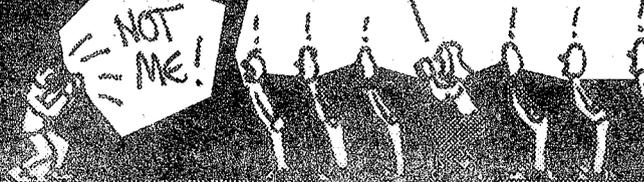
CONSUMERISM SHOULDN'T ENFLICT ON ONE'S PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. SHOP AT A THRIFT STORE - RIGHT NOW IT'S HARD TO AVOID SWEATSHOPS WHEN BUYING NEW CLOTHES. YOU KNOW YOU HAVE ENOUGH CLOTHES ALREADY. USE YOUR HEAD - EVERY ACTION HAS A CONSEQUENCE. IF YOU BUY WALMART, YOU ARE A PART OF THE PROBLEM. C. DISTONER

IF I DON'T SINGLEHANDEDLY SAVE THE WORLD - WHO WILL??!



NOT ME!

okay... then just don't get in our way??!





On the next page, Jack & Hil make their "What's Up with That?" debut!
As usual, bring or mail your questions to the Student Union, Room 060, or email us at: sbpress@ic.sunysb.edu

THIS ISSUE:
"MY BLANKY"

Mr. Blanky vs. The Girlfriend

Dear Jack/Hil,



First, let me thank you for having the guts to write a column about sex. It's too bad that most of us students have not yet had the guts to send in our questions. Believe me, we have lots of them! I'm sure the questions will start rolling in soon. (I'm going to try today.)

I know there are a lot of uptight "Candace de Russy clones" that won't be down with this column; they'll probably think it's "porno," but that's because they are out of touch with the concerns of young people today.

Sex is a big issue on campus today. Every day

we are confronted with difficult questions, like whether or not to have a threesome to please a boyfriend (my roommate had to deal with that recently and had no knowledgeable person to advise her). If this is "porno," then college life is porno, and a student newspaper is supposed to speak to college life!

This is stuff our parents didn't cover. My mom would be shocked to know that we are even thinking about some of these things. My dad would be saying, "Just say no," but it isn't always that simple. That's why we need you guys!

So now I'm going to take a deep breath and ask my question. Here goes: My boyfriend has what they call a fetish. He has to have a soft blanket next to us when we have sex so he can stroke it. He touches me with one hand and the blanket with the other. He thinks

it's because he held onto his "security blanket" as a kid until he was 7 or 8. It weirds me out.

My best friend says I should be cool with it, though, because it's not like he's cheating on me or abusing me, or anything like that. She says there are far worse things to worry about than that a guy likes to stroke a blanket.

But my sister thinks it's really sick. She feels like I should be enough for him. She says I should just say, "Lose the blanket or lose me!" But I love him and don't want to give him up. My friend says my sister's being a prude.

What do you think?

Sincerely,
Confused

JACK:

Dear Confused,

Thanks for your kind letter. I like to think we have the support of students, but it's always nice to get love-mail to reassure me. We've had a bit of hate mail from our number one fan: Lee Nichols. Considering that he is so unamused and offended by our paper, he appears to read it quite religiously. But, he must have found a day job because he hasn't written us this issue. Lee, we miss you honey. You don't call, you don't write. I thought we were building a relationship. Don't you hate us any more? (I strongly dislike the use of the word hate but your submission of a top-ten list in issue 5 was as hateful as it was inaccurate and out of touch with reality.)

Now on to your letter, Confused. Sexual expression is often fetish-based. Many people have little fetishes. But fetishes are still closeted. I believe that the way many people have sex today is a cultural remnant of puritan sexually monogamous ideals. After Greek love declined with that empire, a new sexual norm had to be defined. Christianity competed with Islam for the souls of the masses. In the West, Christianity won and a culture was created. Sexual norms were a part of these religious/cultural traditions imposed by conqueror on conquered. My point: normal is relative. Normal for us was created by the church over 1500 years of indoctrination. Free your mind, and your ass will follow (En Vogue).

Your friend has the right idea. What's the big deal? But, I need a little more info. Have you been having sex a long time? Are you in love? Does "the blanket" really bother you, or is it just different from what you imagine? And, finally, what are your little fetishes?

If your boyfriend wants "the blanket" to be a central and integral part of each sexual episode, he is an immature and selfish bitch and you should drop him and his pussy ass blanket. But, if he is willing to work with you, and "the blanket" doesn't skeeve you too much, start communicating.

Are you willing to share those sexy thoughts that float through your head when you are alone fantasizing? He is sharing the thing that tweaks sex for him with you. You should too. Create new fantasies together and act them out. Try to minimize the role of "the blanket" in these episodes. And if he's worth keeping, he should be willing to satisfy your needs.

You should learn to satisfy his fantasies as well. Try to like "the blanket." Ask him if you can massage/tickle him with "the blanket." See if he wants you to play with "the blanket." Communicate, communicate, COMMUNICATE! How the hell else will you know how "right" this man is for you if you aren't communicating honestly about your sexual (and other) needs?

If the communication doesn't work out, neither will the relationship. But, don't forget, if he ain't willing to serve you, he ain't worth keepin' around.

HIL:

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM IV), universally used by psychologists, would describe your boyfriend as someone who suffers from fetishism, or a sexual attraction to non-living objects. Fetishism is classified as a type of paraphilia, "the relatively new term for sexual deviation [that] describes a series of disorders in which sexual arousal occurs in a relatively exclusive manner in the context of inappropriate objects or individuals (Abnormal Psychology, Durand and Barlow, 1997).

There is nothing wrong with having a fetish, but it can become a problem if a person can only become aroused when the desired object is present.

Many paraphiliacs are not aware of the reasons for their abnormal arousal patterns. For example, a man might have an obsession with rings and later realize that it is not the ring itself that he is attracted to, but the sight of a woman's fingers.

It seems, however, that your boyfriend realizes exactly where his obsession stems from. The question is whether or not he is insecure with your relationship. If he is, the blanket may be very reassuring.

Yet if he claims that it is not a problem in your relationship, he may have unresolved issues from the past that he needs to deal with before he can let go of his safety net. Often, these issues do stem from early experience, especially ones obtained in the home.

If any of this is the case, there are treatment programs available. Durand and Barlow's book states that "most individuals with paraphilic arousal patterns need a great deal of attention to their family functioning or the interpersonal systems in which they operate."

One other suggestion posed by Durand and Barlow is to undergo orgasmic reconditioning, which aids in strengthening "more appropriate, desirable patterns of arousal." Patients are taught to masturbate to their fetish (in your boyfriend's case, the blanket). Then, just before ejaculating, the thought of the fetish should be replaced with another desire (in this case, you). After repeating this technique several times, the person should be able to think about the latter desire earlier on and still maintain arousal.

If however, the blanket merely serves an added bonus, then I advise you not to worry about it. Keep in mind that staying open to your boyfriend's fantasies should give you the opportunity to indulge in your own. As long as "the blanket" does not compromise your sexual pleasure, then you may as well indulge your boyfriend. If you do this, I'm sure that your boyfriend will be more than happy to please you in any way you want.

Picture on this page, and bottom of next page are from the book "Sex For One: The Joy of Self-Loving" by Betty Dodson, Ph.D.

What's Up with That

Illustrations by
Debbie Sticher

We here at Jack and Hil would like to try something new. It's called, "What's up with that?" In order to aid our understanding of campus sex and sex in general, we would like to explore specific scenarios that we have witnessed, and open them up to campus discussion/dissection. We will present the first observations, but we hope y'all won't be shy about observations of your own. Now, we don't want this to degenerate into a tawdry gossip column, so we will not publish names. Some minor details may be changed to protect the innocent (but really, there are no innocents). Here goes.

By
Jack
&
Hil

JACK:

An openly gay male and a heterosexual woman live together on a co-ed dorm floor. They see each other several times a day, every day, and every time I see them, they are all over each other. I mean cuddling and wrestling, and sucking skin. As far as I know, they aren't in a "relationship" and if you saw them, you'd agree that they don't go together.

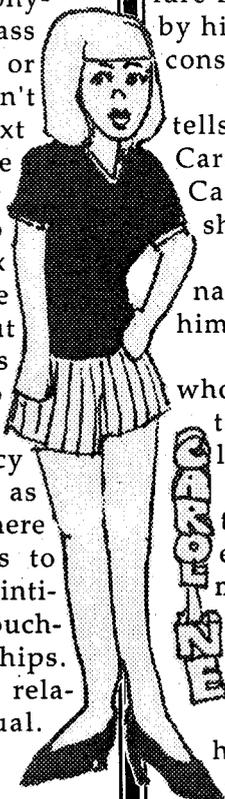
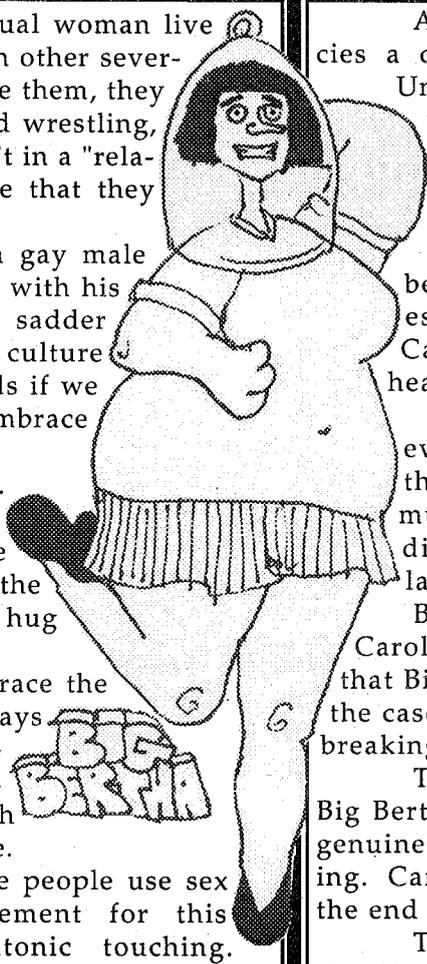
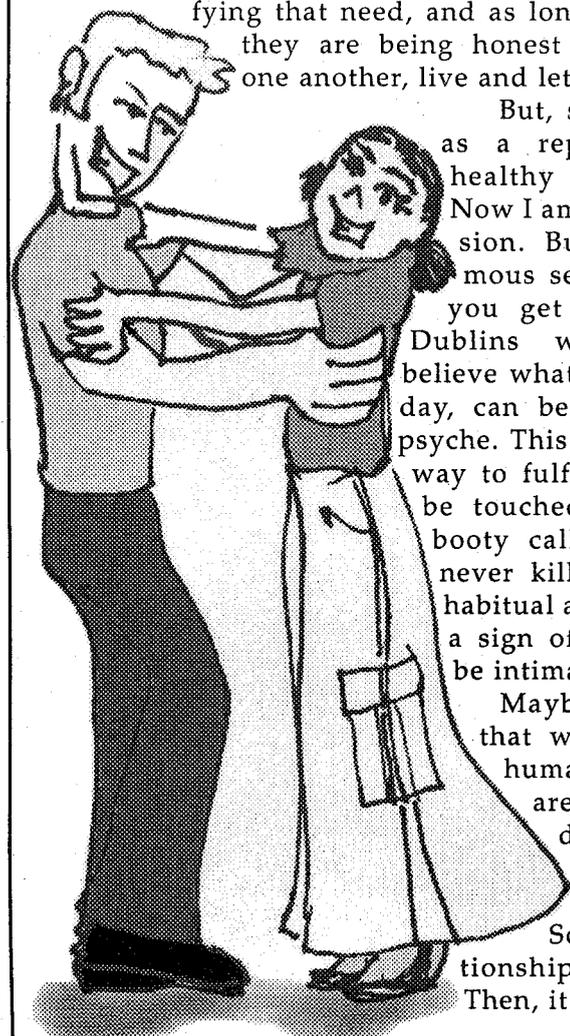
At first I thought it was a case of a gay male playing with girls in public to avoid dealing with his sexuality, but I think there is a deeper and sadder reality behind the observation. American culture teaches us to avoid touching. We shake hands if we have to, slap skin, kiss cheeks, but rarely embrace except before and after extended absences.

Human beings need to be touched. Premature and unhealthy babies have had higher survival rates if they are held for some time each day. I think that as adults we have the same needs. Think about how good it feels to hug a loved one.

But, since we don't as a culture embrace the embrace, we are forced to find less healthy ways to fulfill that need. I think my friend is satisfying that need, and as long as they are being honest with one another, live and let live.

But, some people use sex as a replacement for this healthy platonic touching. Now I am all about sexual expression. But, regular, anonymous sex, the kind of ass you get at the Bench or Dublins where you can't believe what you did the next day, can be harmful to the psyche. This is not a healthy way to fulfill ones need to be touched. One safe-sex booty call once or twice never killed anybody, but habitual anonymous sex is a sign of an inability to be intimate.

Maybe it is intimacy that we seek as well as human touch, but there are healthier ways to develop platonic intimate healthy touching relationships. Sometimes these relationships become sexual. Then, it's all good.



HIL:

A homely girl possessing no identity (Big Bertha) fancies a classic, buff and beautiful man (Blake). Unfortunately this man is obsessed with winning the heart of a more attractive and sophisticated woman (Caroline). The plot thickens due to Caroline's desire for a rugged man she can not have (Hunter).

Big Bertha envies Caroline for being the focus of Blake's love. She wishes she were pretty and confident like Caroline. What can she do to win Blake's heart? She has to come up with a plan.

One night, after a long Thursday evening, Big Bertha and Caroline find that they're the last ones standing. Big Bertha must think quickly. She's got it! She'll get dirt on Caroline and use it to cleverly manipulate her way into Blake's heart.

But how will she get Caroline talking? Maybe Caroline will disclose information if she thinks that Big Bertha trusts her! Hoping that this will be the case, Big Bertha begins to harp about her heart-breaking ex-boyfriend.

Thinking she can relate, Caroline reveals to Big Bertha her intense feelings for Hunter. Pretending to be genuinely interested, Bertha encourages Caroline to keep talking. Caroline also admits to having no feelings for Blake. By the end of the night, Big Bertha's got what she needs.

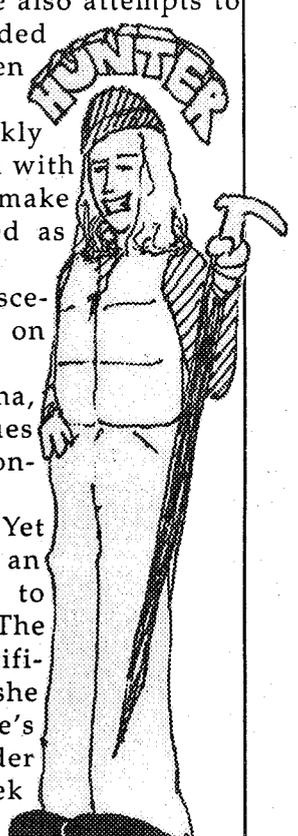
The next day, Big Bertha tries to convince Blake that Caroline's heart lays with another man. She also attempts to lure Blake into love. Blake, however, is blinded by his devotion to Caroline and will not even consider being with Bertha.

Absolutely fuming, Big Bertha quickly tells Hunter the details of her conversation with Caroline, even twisting the information to make Caroline look as desperate and deranged as she is.

Thanks to Hunter's intelligence, this scenario does not have much of an impact on him.

The only one who suffers is Big Bertha, whose deception is discovered. She continues to lead a miserable life, filled with loneliness and insecurities.

What Big Bertha needs is acceptance. Yet to befriend her is intolerable. She has an extremely low self-concept and tries to make others as miserable as she is. The negative way she is perceived is justifiable due to her actions. Maybe if she stopped worrying about everyone else's business, she'd have more time to ponder her own psychoses (and hopefully seek therapy).



Read This Before You Register

Every semester, the editors and staff of the *Stony Brook Press* provide students with an insider's view into some classes that will be offered the following semester. Here's the sampling for Spring 2000:

ANT 102
Introduction to
Cultural Anthropology
Professor Arens

An interesting class taught by a learned man. But be warned: his tests are HARD. Class averages are usually in the low sixties. Some say Professor Arens is pompous, some say he's brilliant; some say he's a sleazy womanizer. Whatever the case, you will learn cool stuff in this class, even though your GPA may suffer afterwards. And wearing tight shirts to class won't hurt, either.

ARH 102
Art in Culture-Present
Professor Leslie

Do you like memorization? If so, ARH 102 (a DEC D) is the class for you! For your first midterm, you will be responsible for knowing approximately 100 works of art visually as well as knowing their title, time period, medium and artist. The fun just doesn't stop—that is, of course, if your definition of fun is rote rehearsal. This class is not recommended.

PSY 220
Developmental Psychology
Professor Kaplan

How would you like to be in a huge lecture class in which everyone gets a chance to participate in healthy debate? Kaplan makes the physical, cognitive and social changes in humans as they develop both understandable and intriguing. His lectures are full of energy and jam-packed with anecdotes and time for discussion. He can make over 250 people feel like they are being taught on an individual basis. And it gets better—he only counts three out of four test grades. Then there is an optional final, which will benefit your grade if it demonstrates significant improvement, or be thrown away if it does not. It is a three hour class, but the time goes by quickly and there is a 20 minute break. This class promises many laughs, tears, and epiphanies.

SOC 355
Human and Animal Worlds
Professor Chase

The premise of this class seems interesting enough: a comparison of the social worlds of humans and animals, looking at such things as dominance hierarchies, division of labor, etc. But once the class began, it just seemed to be a far-fetched attempt to bridge biology with sociology. As a student of sociology, (which studies PEOPLE), I wasn't particularly interested in reading in-depth descriptions of the mating habits of ants. Perhaps the class is more beneficial to bio majors who want a different take on animal behavior.

EGL 243
Shakespeare: Major works
Professor Elkin

A word of caution concerning this class. The professor may utilize a teaching format that would more closely represent a performance workshop than an English class. This was the case this semester, when the majority of class time was spent on performing Shakespeare rather than studying the literary material of his plays.

EGL 378
Contemporary Native
American Fiction
Professor Sheehan

An extremely interesting course that delves into the beliefs and culture of contemporary Native Americans: in particular, their struggle to retain or recreate an identity in light of traditional beliefs, dealing with themes such as isolationism, discrimination, and displacement. A great opportunity to learn about a very unique culture that has survived (and evolved from) the often brutal colonization of America.

THR 167
Jazz Technique and History I
Allison Arbuster Russell

Even if you've never danced before, Ms. Russell's jazz class is fun and invigorating. You will learn classic jazz stretches, barre work and combinations from various periods in history. In addition, you

will view and discuss videos of professional companies and their dances. For your final project, you will be put in a group and required to choreograph your own dance. Who knows? Maybe you'll be the next Fosse.

Psychology 301
Advanced Statistics
Dr. David Cross

David Cross' advanced statistics class has its costs and benefits. If it is taught next semester the way it has been taught in the past, getting a good grade will not be that hard. One's grade in the class depends on eight small projects and a final. In fact, if you get a perfect score on all of the projects you can skip the final and still get an "A." The projects, though sometimes tedious, are easy; they require that students run some statistical tests using Minitab software, on a data set provided for them. Generally all one has to do is follow the directions he gives in class, which are usually pretty clear (if one pays attention and bothers to read the hand-outs), and then interpret the output. However, while getting good grades is not hard, the biggest complaint that students seem to have is that they do not feel that they are learning how to do statistics. It is easy to plug the correct numbers into the final draft of your homework assignment, but knowing what those numbers mean is a different story. Student's bafflement could come as a result of Cross' teaching style as much as from students' failing to read the text before coming to class. The bottom line: Take the class if you want to boost your GPA and impress grad schools with your having taken an extra stats class. If you are not simply a grade grubber and you actually want to learn statistics, be prepared to read the text and ask a lot of questions in class—duh!

PSY 103
Intro to Psychology
Professor Franklin

This was the single most enjoyable class I have taken here. Although the class has a reputation for being difficult, I loved it. I read the assigned readings and wound up with an 'A' in the class. For what felt like little effort on my part, I learned a lot. Nancy Franklin has a contagious energy and a love for what she does which makes the class a breeze.