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We're Y2K Ready!

December 8, 1999

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The Minority Planning Board Under Fire?

By Jennifer Hobin

The Minority Planning Board (MPB) recently held a meeting to address concerns about the Board's functioning and the need for its continued existence. The Minority Planning Board was formed over 15 years ago in reaction to the under-representation of minority students in the student government. Today, however, "as the racial/ethnic demographics on this campus have changed, the relevance or importance of our programming board has come under question," according to a memo sent to the leaders of student clubs and organizations by Dafina Roberts, the Executive Chair of the MPB.

Today, the Minority Planning Board serves as an umbrella organization intended to address the needs of minority students and minority student organizations. Despite its intended mission to provide minority organizations with guidance and support, student organizations are apparently not taking advantage of the MPB, as demonstrated by their failure to send representatives to the Board's meetings. This has raised the prospect that the MPB may no longer be needed on a campus already brimming with organizations that cater to the needs of Stony Brook's ethnically diverse student body.

In addressing the apparent lack of student participation in the MPB, Andrez Carberry, the Polity President said, in his opening remarks at the December 1 meeting, "there's no reason to have a student group on campus that students don't want."

While most of the meeting was spent addressing the general concerns of the student body, including the much-maligned meal plan, there was an attempt to foster discussion about the efficacy of the MPB and what could be done to make it a more useful organization in the future.

Ms. Roberts came to the meeting prepared with four ideas for changing the structure of the MPB. The first plan, and the one currently mandated by the Board's constitution, is to have the MPB serve as an umbrella organization with "positive repercussions" for those organizations that are represented at its meetings. While the nature of these repercussions was not addressed in detail, Ms. Roberts indicated that one benefit that stu-

dents on campus would derive from attending the meetings is the opportunity to interact with other students with similar interests and backgrounds.

An alternative to the current system, and the one that seemed to have the most support from the students in attendance, would be to retain the function of the MPB, but penalize organizations that are affiliated with the Board for failing to send representatives to the meetings. These "negative repercussions" might take the form of freezing the budgets of organizations failing to participate.

The downfall of this second proposed solution is that it does not get to what might very well be the heart of the issue: Student leaders may not be sending representatives to the MPB meetings because they do not see the need to. Forcing students to participate in an organization that they have not seen any need for, simply to validate the organization's existence, may only result in fueling the ire of students already busy trying to run their own organizations.

A third solution offered by Ms. Roberts was to restructure the Board completely, creating an organization to help students make the transition to university life. The Board would also serve as an advocacy organization, focused on addressing issues both on and off campus that minority students are concerned with. It was suggested that the Board might hold discussions on issues such as homophobia and the plight of Afghan women under the oppressive Taliban regime.

Dissolving the MPB was a fourth alternative suggested by Ms. Roberts. This was clearly not the favored option of the students at the meeting, who were eager to offer solutions to foster greater participation in the activities of the MPB. Consequently, it looks as if the organization will remain an umbrella organization directed at serving the needs of the many minority organizations on campus, including the LGBTA and the Center for Womyn's Concerns.

Despite the intended mission of the MPB, which its name clearly indicates, most of the discussion at the recent meeting did not address the concerns of minority students *per se*, but rather, the concerns of students in general.

Not surprisingly, a major issue was student dissatisfaction with the meal plan. In response to the failure of Polity to make any headway in changing the meal plan options, Andrez Carberry announced to the group that a protest against the meal plan will be taking place on December 8 during campus lifetime.

Mr. Carberry also cited the possibility that the Uniti Cultural Center was going to be moved from its current location in Roth Quad, where students have control over its hours of operation among other things, to the Union. If moved to the Union, students would lose the control they currently have over the Center, in addition to the artwork and other personal touches that make it student-friendly. "We're losing everything we own as students," said Mr. Carberry, "and we just sit back."

Another issue addressed, this one taking students by surprise, was the possibility that administrators may institute a policy of starting classes at 8:00 a.m. rather than 8:20 a.m., and may start giving the first final of the day during finals week at 7:30 a.m. instead of the current 8:30 a.m. starting time. To top it all off, Carberry announced that there may even be a plan to have finals on Saturday. It seems, according to the Polity President, that some administrators think students will be receptive to these changes.

These announcements led students at the meeting to question whether Administration was really in touch with students. Indeed, some students were questioning whether the representation of student views was present at all in administrative policy making.

Ms. Roberts, Mr. Carberry and most of the students at the meeting seemed intent on attempting to remedy the problems facing students even if these were not issues faced solely by minorities.

When questioned about whether a "Minority Planning Board," a forum which might alienate those students who are not considered "minorities," should be the forum to address general student issues, Ms. Roberts reasserted the importance of the Board's presence on campus. She stated that even though the Board might sometimes deal with issues of concern to the larger campus community, a forum to address the special concerns of minority students was definitely needed.

Rudy Strikes Out at Homeless Plate

By Angelos K. Hannides

"The aid, care and support of the needy are public concerns and shall be provided by the state and by such of its subdivisions..."

—Article XVII, New York State Constitution

"The homeless had to sue the current Administration to get emergency housing, as bad as it is. A Giuliani Administration won't need a court-order to respond to the suffering of New Yorkers."

—R. Giuliani, Campaign '89

Based on the Constitution of the State, a court decided that the government is responsible for providing homeless men with shelter. That was in 1981, in the case of *Callahan v. Carey*. Two subsequent cases (*Eldredge v. Koch*, 1983 and *McCain v. Koch*, 1986) extended what became to be known as "the right to shelter" to women and families with children. In addition, in 1989 the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court ruled that children cannot be separated from their families and placed in foster care because of lack of housing (*Consentino v. Perales*). Within a month, New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani ordered the arrest of all homeless people sleeping on the streets and refusing to go to shelters. He also forced those in shelters to go on workfare or be evicted from shelters and end up back on the streets. His administration has founded this last one on State regulations issued by Pataki at the request of Giuliani back in 1995. Last year, the Appellate

Division ratified them, but prohibited the separation and placement under foster care of children of ejected families. Giuliani insisted and included this in his ingenious plan of social eugenics.

His administration reached this decision while completely ignoring the circumstances which lead these individuals and families to homelessness. He also ignored how these decisions will affect people's decisions to seek protection at a shelter. Poverty, social dysfunction and mental illnesses, low wages, lack of affordable housing and housing assistance programs, domestic violence in poor households, and many other reasons are intricately involved in leading these persons out to the streets, and keeping them there. What mother or father would willingly go to a shelter knowing that there is a possibility of not only being sent back out but also of having their child taken from them?

Giuliani doesn't cease to provide ample evidence for the theory which states that he sucks not only as a political figure but also as a human being. I personally do not endorse this belief, since I strongly doubt that he is either of these at all. He has used the underlying conviction of the well-settled, fattened bourgeois: the existence of the homeless threatens

their lives every moment because they are "crazy" (see *The Daily News*, Friday, November 19th: "Get the Violent Crazy's Off Our Streets") to justify harassing, manipulating and exploiting them.

Later on the 19th, in his weekly radio show, Giuliani proved that he is not only insensitive and irresponsible but also too inept to realize that the average mental capability of those who listen to him is well above his own. Please draw your own conclusions, by reading what he said: "Streets do not exist in civilized societies for the purpose of people sleeping there. Bedrooms are for sleeping. [The right to sleep on the streets] doesn't exist anywhere. The founding fathers never put that in the Constitution." Unfortunately, with the winter still ahead of us, this man's power and actions may lead directly to loss of human lives and the compromise of many others. And if it does, it would be simply another ring in the long chain of cases of his abuse of authority, and another argument for his removal from office and prosecution in a court of law.

Protests and other actions are in the making as you are reading this article. For information on homelessness and on how to help, please look at the web pages of the Coalition for the Homeless at <http://www.right2shelter.org> and the National Coalition for the Homeless at <http://nch.ari.net>.



Erica, 19, dumpster-diving

State Legislator Suckles At Tobacco's Teat

Do Free Gifts Make Him Phillip Morris' Bitch?

By Jill Baron

A local state senator is facing criticism by government watchdog groups following a state lobbying commission finding that he repeatedly violated ethics laws by accepting expensive gifts from lobbyists seeking to sway his votes.

James Lack (R-East Northport), who represents areas immediately outside the campus, has been cited as having violated state ethics guidelines at least five times since 1996 by accepting meals worth \$75 or more from lobbyists representing cigarette company Philip Morris. Evidence of the violations surfaced a few weeks ago when Philip Morris admitted it had repeatedly filed false lobbying reports. The company was fined \$75,000, the largest fine ever levied against a lobbying group in state history.

In addition, news of the connection between the tobacco giant and dozens of state legislators worries some good government groups, such as the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), who are concerned that the gifts will influence how the legislature votes on a bill currently facing the state senate. The bill, called the Tort Reform Bill, would limit the amount of money victims of corporate negligence could receive through court actions. If enacted, the bill could help cigarette makers such as Philip Morris save millions of dollars in damages in any cases brought against them in state court.

But while the lobbying commission fined Philip Morris for the illegal reports, it has not addressed the conduct of the lawmakers. That falls under the aegis of the Legislative Ethics Committee, of which Sen. Lack is a member. So far, the committee has not charged any of the lawmakers listed in the Philip Morris documents with violations of state ethics rules, even though the law clearly states legislators cannot receive gifts worth more than \$75. Approximately 60 of the 211 state lawmakers are listed as having received meal gifts in excess of the \$75 limit. Not a single lawmaker has been sanctioned by the committee since the ethics laws were enacted ten years ago.

Lack's Chief of Staff, Phillip Ingerman, said the Senator was out of town last week and declined to comment on the allegations that Lack violated the lobbying laws, but said that "There has to be a tie between the lobbying and the \$75. It's not that someone can not accept a meal for \$100, it's that the \$75 has to do with—is this a lobbying session or a friendly meeting?" Lack has been quoted in the *New York Times* and *Newsday* as saying he didn't see anything wrong in accepting such meals, and claimed that such meals were, in fact, common practice. *The Press* was unable to obtain Lack's previous voting records on tobacco-related legislation. Phillip Morris also did not respond to repeated requests by *The Press* for comment.

While it is common practice for Philip Morris and other corporations to lobby lawmakers to convince them to vote in their companies' interests, it is also common practice for them to take legislators out to dinner and give them gifts, such as sporting event tickets, as a part of this lobbying. While this is legal under New York State Lobbying laws, there is a \$75 dollar limit to the cost of meals that legislators can accept from lobbying groups.

Most states have tougher lobbying restrictions than New York. This is also true at the Federal level: the U.S. House of Representatives has an outright ban on lawmakers accepting gifts from lobbyists. This raises the concern that lobbyists like Phillip

Morris are seeking to influence the votes of these legislators when they take them to such dinners.

That's why groups like NYPIRG are worried that the Tort Reform Bill, a version of which was defeated by the legislature last year, is gaining supporters in the state legislature. According to NYPIRG, it is being pushed by "a large and powerful coalition of manufacturers, HMO's, pharmaceutical companies, chemical corporations and others who want to escape responsibility if their misdeeds results in human injury." Under the bill, a product manufacturer would be free from liability ten years after its product was first sold. Another part to the bill would cap compensation that victims could receive at \$250,000 dollars for any case, regardless of how severe or long-lasting the injury.

Gina Kim, NYPIRG's New York City coordinator of the Access to Justice Campaign, which seeks to have the bill voted down, said "essentially, the bill would slam the court room doors in the face of people made sick through faulty products or reckless behaviors." Dave Rodgers, who runs the Access to Justice Campaign at Stony Brook, also pointed out that this bill is of no benefit to individuals whatsoever, and just serves to protect the interest of powerful corporations.

Todd Stebbins, general project coordinator for NYPIRG at Stony Brook said, "The bill was brought up to the legislature last year, and it was defeated. But lobby groups are resilient, and they come back and relentlessly try to get what they want through using money. If this bill does pass, it's going to hamper people's ability to get what's justly theirs." Stebbins said the bill may come up during the Senate's special session this month, or might be held until the new session in January.

The practice of lobbyists taking legislators to dinner is not a new one; in fact, it's one most state legislators engage in. Assemblyman Steve Englebright (D-Setauket) was not one of the legislators cited for accepting meals from Phillip Morris, but does go out to dinner with public interest groups. Steve Fiore-Rosenfeld, his Chief of Staff, said, "I'm aware that he's gone to dinner with organizations like the American Lung Association, the Red Cross, and the ASPCA." He said that as long as the meals didn't violate ethics rules, the real question was, "Who is the legislator going with? Is it someone they would normally be in tune with? Is this meeting or dinner against the interests of their own constituency?" He made the distinction between groups that lobby for the public interest, such as NYPIRG, and those that lobby for private corporate interests, like Phillip Morris. He also said that a long time ago, Englebright was cited as attending a large dinner event paid for by Phillip Morris, but that Englebright was not aware at the time that Phillip Morris was picking up the tab and, if he had been, he wouldn't have attended.

The Trouble With Lobbying Laws

Many groups feel it is undeniable that powerful corporations take legislators out to dinner in order to influence their vote. "Why would Philip Morris do this if they didn't think they would get anything out of it?" said Gina Kim. NYPIRG is one of several advocacy groups that have filed complaints with the Legislative Ethics Committee, urging it to investigate the lawmakers cited by Phillip Morris as having accepted the meals exceeding the \$75 limit.

"We have a majority of our legislators feeding

off of Phillip Morris' trough," said Erik Joerss, Director of Lobbying for Common Cause New York, another government watchdog group. He felt that accepting very expensive gifts raises appearances of impropriety. "Our elected officials are in the pockets of a wealthy few. The Albany culture is dominated by special interests," said Joerss. Common Cause believes the practice of accepting gifts from lobbyists should be banned altogether, as in the U.S. House of Representatives. Joerss also pointed out that "our legislators already receive a \$110 per day stipend for expenses while in Albany on state business. "They [the legislators] double dip," said Joerss, referring to the fact that the stipend doesn't have to be returned to state coffers if the legislators' meals are paid for by lobbyists.

Common Cause and other groups are dissatisfied with the current lobby laws, which expire at the end of the year, and are concerned that the Legislature might not revise them. The Integrity in Government Act, sponsored by Senator Nancy Hoffman (R-Syracuse) and Assemblymember Pete Grannis (D-Manhattan), is a bill that will be brought to the legislature that would "overhaul and strengthen New York State lobbyist registration laws." The bill seeks to strengthen the Lobby Commission, which is charged with enforcing the state's lobby laws. It would grant the Commission the power to randomly audit the activities of lobbyists and their clients, to suspend or revoke the registrations of lobbyists, and to impose fines up to \$25,000.

The bill also seeks to ban lobbyists campaign contributions to legislators during the legislative session, and stipulates that during the rest of the year, lobbyists should be limited to giving no more than \$250 per election cycle to any candidate. The bill will be voted on by the legislature when the current lobbying laws expire at the end of this year.

Fiore-Rosenfeld felt that the laws are not adequate in terms of disclosure, because citizens can't go on the internet or make a phone call to find out who's accepting gifts from whom. "This information has to be accessible to people who are voting," he said.



James Lack

"We have a majority of our legislators feeding off of Phillip Morris' trough."

Where does this leave us?

It is impossible to determine for sure whether or not allowing lobby groups to wine and dine legislators will cause the lawmakers to vote in their interests. We, the constituents, can only hope that when James Lack and other legislators sit down vote on the Tort Reform bill, they do not think of how lovely the dinners they had with Phillip Morris were, but instead of how damaging the bill will be to the citizens of New York. Whether or not our elected representatives are capable of keeping the interests of their constituents above the agendas of private interests like Phillip Morris in spite of receiving special gifts from them remains to be seen.

To get involved with NYPIRG's Access to Justice Campaign, contact Dave Rodgers at 632-6457.

Common Cause can be reached at 212-564-4365

Senator Lack can be reached at 467-2523.

WE LIKE FREEDOM OF SPEECH

We are running a potentially controversial ad in this issue entitled "Holocaust Studies: Appointment with Hate?" The ad was sent to us by Bradley Smith. Smith discusses society's treatment of individuals who question the validity of certain facts about the Holocaust. The ad itself questions the validity of eyewitness testimony about the atrocities committed during the Holocaust. The editorial board of the *Stony Brook Press* does not condone or condemn his views; we just support his right to express them in an open forum.

Smith mailed us the ad along with a copy of an editorial that had run in the *Chronicle*, a student newspaper at Hofstra University. The *Chronicle* had run the ad, which was met with a lot of controversy on their campus. In response, they ran an angry editorial defending their right to run the ad. This was all reported in the *New York Times*. The editorial in the *Chronicle* stated that everyone has a right to have his or her views expressed, and that they did not regret or apologize for running the ad.

When we received the request to run the ad, the executive board decided that while we didn't necessarily agree with what this guy has to say, we would give him an opportunity to say it. When the matter was brought up with our media advisor, he pointed out that we are not obligated to run every advertisement that we are approached with, and that newspa-

pers are allowed to selectively choose which advertisements they run. This is certainly the case. However, we didn't find the contents of Mr. Smith's ad horribly offensive, and we thought that it might be a good opportunity to hammer home our favorite tenet: freedom of speech.

The *Stony Brook Press* exists to give the campus community an alternative source of information. It also exists to serve as a forum for people to express their views. Anyone is welcome to express his or her viewpoints, no matter how incendiary. We cannot say definitively where we draw the line; these things must be decided on a case-by-case basis. Needless to say, we wouldn't print something that advocated blatant hatred. If the ad was advocating the Holocaust and the killing of Jews, we certainly would not consider printing it. Rather, the ad is questioning, not making claims or advocating any particular behavior. The first paragraph of the ad points out that "one ideal of the university is to promote intellectual freedom..." This is something we believe in wholeheartedly. The purpose of academia is to question and try to find answers, and to provide a forum for intellectual pursuits, regardless of what they might be. We are proud of the fact that we are not afraid to allow people to express their potentially controversial views. This is, after all, the job of the alternative media.

"There are a lot of ways to practice the art of journalism and one of them is to use your art like a hammer to destroy the right people - who are almost always your enemies for one reason or another, and who usually deserve to be crippled because they are wrong."

-Hunter S. Thompson

This is our last issue of the millennium. The editors of the *Stony*

Brook Press would like to wish everyone a fun-filled intersession.

Our next issue will come to you on January 26, 2000.

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"MADE IN INDONESIA"

The Politics Behind the Label

By Joanna Wegielnik

A pair of women's Nike Air running shoes retails for \$79.99 at the local Foot Locker in Smith Haven Mall. The tag inside the sneaker identifies its country of origin, Indonesia. Upon further investigation of all the Nikes in the store, we find that every single one was made in either Indonesia or China.

So what's the big deal? What does this all mean? This particular pair of Nikes, along with the majority of the shoes on display in the store, was made in a Third World sweatshop. For those of us who pay little attention to such trivialities, a "Made in Indonesia" or "Made in Macao" or "Made in China" label means the garment or shoe was probably made in a sweatshop by an overworked, underpaid worker.

The U.S. General Accounting Office defines a sweatshop as "an employer that violates more than one federal or state labor, industrial home-work, occupational safety and health, workers' compensation, or industry registration law." A less formal definition is exactly what the name implies; a workplace where conditions are deplorable, benefits are non-existent, wages are below subsistence level, and the workers are harassed and abused on a regular basis.

Although a large number of sweatshops exist in the US—4,500 in New York City alone according to the General Accounting Office estimates—most are located in the Third World. The majority of Third World countries are extremely poor, and therefore very eager for contracts multinational corporations offer. It's a simple matter of "how low will you go." The country offering the cheapest labor supply is usually awarded the contract. The majority of people employed by sweat-

shops are young women, many of them single mothers. They are easy to exploit and intimidate—perfect material for the sweatshop operation.

Working conditions faced by workers in sweatshops have gained a considerable amount of publicity in the past couple of years, in large part due to the work and organizing efforts of the National Labor Committee, an independent labor rights group based in New York City.

"What we're asking corporations like Nike, Disney, and the Gap to do is to pay their workers a subsistence wage," said Charles

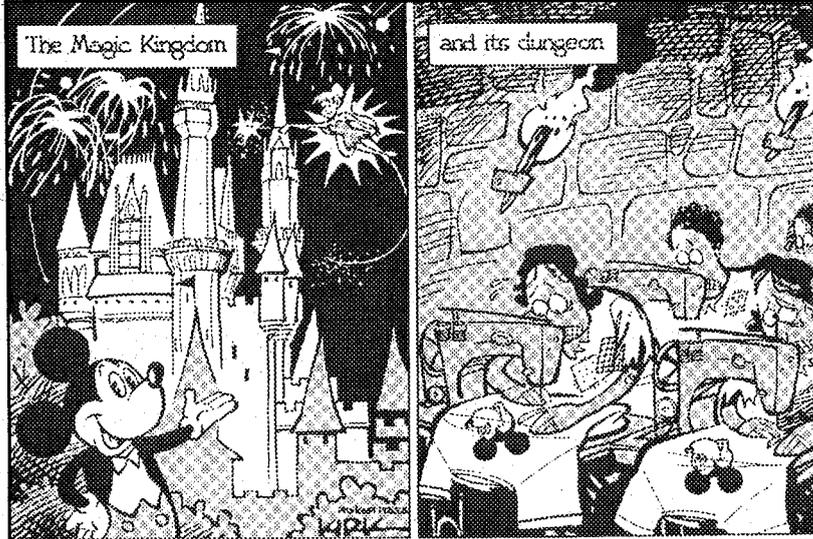
"Sixty cents an hour is not a livable wage, not even in a developing country."

The NLC, along with other labor rights groups such as UNITE and Global Exchange, pursues a three-pronged strategy against corporations sub-contracting to sweatshops abroad. First, they demand public disclosure of the names and locations of companies' factories. Second, they demand respect for human and worker rights and a fair wage. Third, they call for independent inspections of factories by local, respected human rights and religious organizations.

"We are calling for the companies to disclose the names and addresses of their factories," Kernaghan said. "The companies hide their production. Americans have no way of determining where the apparel was made." Kernaghan added that corporations' use of sub-contractors to produce goods allows the multinationals to maintain "plausible deniability" in terms of responsibility for what goes on in the sweatshop.

In order to publicize this issue further and galvanize public support, the NLC, along with the New York Public Interest Research Group and the People of Faith Network, is sponsoring the third annual "March Against Sweatshops", on Thursday, December 9th in New York City. "We're going to start at Nike Town on 57th," Kernaghan said. "Then, we'll march down 5th Avenue to the Disney store and then to Rockefeller Center."

"It'll be very beautiful and impressive. It's quite a sight to see 2000 to 3000 people marching in the night, holding candles, chanting, singing in the dark," Kernaghan said. "And students are at the center of this thing. I would say the majority of students involved in this issue are in high school and college."



Cartoon Courtesy of Pioneer Press

Kernaghan, executive director of the NLC, during a recent interview. "This would allow people to climb out of complete misery into poverty." Kernaghan says that even a modest increase in pay (for example, from \$.60 per hour to \$1.20 per hour for workers working in a maquiladora factory in El Salvador) would allow for workers' basic survival without affecting the bottom line of the company.

"There's nothing standing in the way of paying these people a livable wage except vicious and extreme corporate greed," Kernaghan said.

**Starvation Wages,
Excessive Hours,
Locked Fire
Exists, Unsafe
Conditions,
Pregnancy
Testing, No
Unions, Armed
Guards, No
Worker's Rights,
Verbal Abuse,
Sexual
Harassment,
Forced Labor,
Unpaid Overtime,
No Breaks,
Physical Abuse,
Constant
Surveillance,
Child Labor,
Overnight Shifts,
Withheld Wages.**

**THESE ARE
JUST SOME OF
THE CONDI-
TIONS FACED
BY WORKERS IN
HUNDREDS OF
THOUSANDS OF
SWEATSHOPS
BOTH IN THE
UNITED STATES
AND ABROAD.**

The National Labor Committee, NYPIRG, and the People of Faith Network Invite You to the
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"MARCH AGAINST SWEATSHOPS"

Demonstration in New York City, Thursday, December 9th, 5 p.m. at NikeTown on 5th Ave. & 57th St.

PROTEST NIKE'S AND DISNEY'S USE OF SWEATSHOPS!

DEMAND:

- Public Disclosure of the names and locations of their factories
- Respect for Human and Worker Rights and a Fair Wage
- Independent inspection of their factories by local, respected human rights and religious organizations

Train Leaves Stony Brook @ 2:49 p.m. For
more information, contact the NYPIRG office
at 632-6457.



The Battle of Seattle: Welcome to the 21st Century

By Jovian Radheshwar

Many critics of industrialization came to argue that its effects would essentially widen the gap in income between classes, while at the same time suggesting a cosmetic increase in the standard of living experienced by most people. The truth of the matter, and certainly verifiable in statistical data from various legitimate international sources, suggests that on the average, middle class people worldwide are working longer hours and taking up secondary employment to maintain the humble middle class existence. At the same time, those who are fabulously wealthy are working less and less, and those who are dimly poor are working more, but are restricted in seeking secondary employment as needs of sustenance take a priority in working class households worldwide. Why are any of these commonly known, highly negative facts in need of restating?

The ferment of capitalism has manifested a heady, intoxicating mix, and the world's leaders are all quite ready to become drunk on the potion of neo-Liberalism. The brew, of course, is the World Trade Organization, and this week has been a landmark of that particular organization's history and development. Similarly, the implications of the Big Showdown in Little Seattle will set the global policy agenda into a debate between neo-Liberal economic policy and neo-Protectionism. The arguments are strong, and impassioned. The potential harm of a misstep by the globe's elite will have broad ramifications on not only economics, but on international security, individual rights, and conceptions thereof, and the progress of civilization in general.

The tale of the Battle of Seattle is not yet determined, and can result in two possible recollections of the event. The news media has been covering it, but has largely played it down. While reading the New York Times, The Economist, the Wall Street Journal and my personal daily favorite, the BBC news web page, I was astounded by the manner of the coverage. The slant of the world's neo-Liberal elite and their comprador compatriots in the third world has had a pronounced effect, as the message of the various demonstrating groups was disfigured and slandered as "divided, immature, violent". Certainly, there exists a basis for these delineations, however there also exists a hidden rationale in these actions. One protester was quoted as having responded to the accusation of violence by saying that "Capitalism is violence twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Making people starve for the further wealth of a small elite is violence." Now, as those of you who have laboriously trodded through my jabber are busy suggesting that I am just another Marxist loon, I must at least attempt to defend myself by suggesting that my position is not to entirely believe the protester's contentious remarks. Rather, I shall simply suggest to those who find themselves swayed by the Reaganites and Thatcherites, and those among us who are policy-nerds and government-geeks, ought to complete a more thorough analysis of neo-Liberalist policies.

The structure of the global economy and the foundations of the World Trade Organization are located temporally at the inception of the post-war economic system in the Bretton Woods sys-

tem. This gave birth to the more famous International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. These two organizations dominated the financial realm of the global economy during the cold war, taking on the pivotal role of broker of power of an informal global structure of core and periphery states. The extractive roles discussed so widely in neo-Marxist scholarly literature, effectively implicating the west in a neo-Colonialist plot, of these institutions is well documented. Leftist theory, in the context of a global economy dominated by core-periphery relations, lends itself logically to a

*"Capitalism
is violence
twenty-four hours
a day, seven
days a week."*

similar castigation of the new, infantile, trading regime. The Bretton Woods system becomes relevant here again, as the agreements which gave birth to that system are similar to those that gave rise to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), an organization whose purpose was to facilitate coordination of economic policy and tariff regimes. This purpose, while determinedly directed in a diluted manner at the growth of market economics, should not be misconstrued as a capitalist bastion of wealth accumulation. The GATT was indeed partially formulated by everyone's most lovable Marshal of Marshals, Joseph Stalin. The conference which sparked the Bretton Woods system was indeed similar to the Yalta conference or the Tehran conference, and thus included the Soviet Union in the mediations of the creation of post-war balance of power.

Then the query of the analyst should focus on why the GATT, in its transformation to the WTO, has been transformed into the corporate goliath it now represents. The WTO is not a member-state only organization, you see, as it has corporate representation included in the discussions. Can this be indicative of the ushering in of the post-nation state, corporate world order? Microsoft States of America, William Gates III President for Life? These may sound utterly off the wall, but how complex is it to really arrive at these conclusions? The WTO does not seem to be prepared structurally to grapple with problems concerning international labor wages, the environmental implications of industrial production and the process of technological diffusion in general, and the effects of this on the various regions of the world that are the endpoints of that spread. The most important consideration of the week's events in Seattle ought to focus on the activity of labor unions protest-

ing the potential export of their jobs under the WTO program of trade liberalization. With regard to labor movements, there is a de facto global consensus that neo-Liberal economics is not only detrimental to the livelihood of workers in the western world, but that it reinforces the core-periphery dependency already present in the global system of world politics. The issues that concern the overwhelming majority of humanity, the poor in the third world, those issues most widely perceived as the major flaws in the Bretton Woods

capitalist system are the debt crisis and the recurring famines occurring in third world states when forced to enact fiscal austerity measures as a requirement for the extension of good credit and loans. The debt crisis, and its factors and effects, which include political cronyism as well as chronic economic catastrophe; is an area of particular interest here. The debt crisis has been largely a result of high inflation, so-called fast development programs, the shifts required from this developmental paradigm when crisis occurs (famine, coup de-etat, etc.), and the inability of economies producing raw materials to compete with finished goods exporting economies. For these reasons, and others that can be arrived at by extrapolation, the debt crisis will not pass for some time without considerable debt relief from the lending institutions. As it is, the neo-Liberal investment policies now being enacted in many third world countries will import only low wage, foreigner controlled employment, often locking the home state into a cycle of economic dependency. In the context of political cronyism, the investment becomes a government's drug, feeding its enemies into pacification and its allies into compliance. Without aid and investment, the state loses its effective control. Insidious, yes? Workers can never truly move beyond dependency in the developing world, laborers in the north and south, east and west, are adversely effected.

The Soviets provided a counterbalance to the interests of the multi-national corporations. In its absence, the WTO can now exist relatively uncontested, and the west can remove support from the feisty Yeltsin and his aid-addicted cronies. China and other proponents, formerly of a closed economy, have been successfully co-opted. The formerly closed economic structure of Nehru-style development in India has been liberalized by the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister. That move was not anticipated even by the media, as the BJP was more often than not depicted as isolationist, chauvinistic, nationalists. Essentially, the whole of the armada is on the same level, the leaders of states, but the dissidents are not members of the political elite and are in a state of uproar globally. Certainly, these groups are fragmented along many lines, but that failed to prevent the demonstrators from preventing the occurrence of the opening ceremonies of the talks in Seattle on Monday this week. President Clinton's half-assed efforts at pre-empting the protesters in post-haste was short-sighted,

*...the world's leaders
are quite ready to
become drunk on
the potion of
neo-Liberalism*

at the least, and might perhaps feed the alienation complex that so many Marxists, environmentalists and third world nationalists already feel. The media's efforts to draw attention away from the issue has been very successful, and I am personally

at a loss to see the lack of awareness of these issues and others in Stonybrook. I have yet, to this day, to have a truly intelligent conversation on globalization in general or on the WTO conference specifically, at this school. As relatively elite members of society ourselves, shouldn't we examine the roots of our wealth: the neck's of those whose blood we've feasted on our entire lives? Most people want to live in a posh paradise and not think about these issues. A weak world we live in, indeed.

Seattle '99: The Anti-Corporate WWW

By Angelos K. Hannides

Over the past few days, we have been reminded yet again of the ability of the direct action of people to bring about change equal to that during the civil rights movement. Reaction has been building for years against the institutions founded after the Second World War to control global economy. This reaction was focused and targeted on the ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle. Labor, environmental and human rights activists united in a massive, peaceful demonstration against such establishments, with music, theater, street performance, dance and other colorful activities.

This did not sit well with the organizers, who pulled out old medicine books with tested treatments for this "problem." The police and national guard of Seattle and the State of Washington (mere agents of the corporations who run the WTO) provoked a group of protesters by the tactic of trapping them, gassing them and letting them go to repeat the pattern again down the street. This is a well-known technique for authorities to provide the media with ample photo-ops and consequently give the false impression of the manipulated groups as being "extremists" and (why not?) the rulers doing a good job in containing them. The rest of the protesters were showered with rubber bullets (people, they do not bounce back!) and actual tear gas canisters. This led to the creation of makeshift clinics to treat the injuries caused by law and order.

The major media, willing accomplices that they are, assist in the attempt to skew the apathetic public opinion against those concerned about the ethics of the organization and its real motives. And they do so by finding and broadcasting the words and images which serve their owners best.

The extent of the failure of the meeting cannot be overstressed, because it is immense. Bill Clinton failed to veil his government's real intentions, with an absurd end result. Repeating the drama at Kyoto, Europe and Japan appear to have a more human face than the US, Canada, and Australia, and "dare," for example, to demand the classification of farms as protected environmental resources and not as trade commodities. It is worth noting that the leaders of Japan and the European Union declined to attend the meeting. In actuality, the governments of the English-speaking world (especially that of the US) stand alone once more in pursuing the agenda of world domi-

nation. Apart from a projected resumption of negotiations at Geneva early next year, the WTO appears to be severely weakened (the same, unfortunately cannot be said of the corporations who run it).

The meeting failed partly because of the disagreement between major partners. It also failed partly because of reaction by delegates within the meeting, mainly from smaller countries, who were outraged about job loss, manipulation of farmers and laborers by corporations, environmental degradation, etc. But mainly, the meeting failed because of the brave presence, intervention, action and perseverance of the individuals who filled the streets of Seattle during the week of the meeting.

Because of the control the corporations have on the major media, the story would be one-sided if it were not for the web. An information tool which outgrew the expectations of the watchdogs of the corporate monopoly, it allows for the voices of disagreement to be heard, for the images of the real events to be seen, for the perpetrators of crimes against human dignity to be unmasked. Below, you will find a list of web sites which have been instrumental in providing us with the other (which also appears to be the real) side of the story.

Generally on the WTO:

The Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy (www.iatp.org). Founded in 1986, this non-profit organization promotes sustainable agricultural development of small communities by research, education, technical advising and international networking. They established a special web page for observing the WTO at www.wtowatch.org. Rich with frequent news broadcasts from Seattle which you can listen on-line, and other multimedia and document resources for researchers and all interested parties.

The WTO Page (www.globalexchange.org/economy/rulemakers/wto.html) of the Global Exchange, a nonprofit out of San Francisco aiming at creating awareness among the US public of international issues and assisting in the formation of global networks, ties and partnerships.

The Public Citizen - Global Trade Watch page (www.tradewatch.org). The crux of the matter. Straight to the point, concise, and essential. Global Trade Watch is a division of Public Citizen, created by Ralph Nader in 1971.

On Seattle '99:

New Seattle WTO-Mobilization Against Corporate Globalization (www.seattle99.org). The most

comprehensive web page on the organizations that participated in the actions at Seattle and their positions.

Seattle WTO (www.seattlewto.org), a Cyber-Information clearance center created by the Online Network for the Environment - Northwest (www.onenw.org)

The Direct Action Network's page (www.agit-prop.org/artandrevolution/wto) straight out of Seattle. The guys who organized the street theater, dances and performances (hence the "art and revolution"). Includes

local contacts.

Globalize This (www.globalizethis.org). Photos, reports and internet actions for those of us away from Seattle.

The World Trade Observer (www.world-tradeobserver.org) an on-line paper created just for the Seattle meeting.

Alternative Media good for all times and issues:

The Emperor's Clothes (www.emperors-clothes.com). Must visit!

AlterNet's special coverage of the ministerial meeting (www.alternet.org/wto.html).

Environmental Media Services (www.ems.org).

The Nation (www.the.nation.org).

The Mojo Wire (www.motherjones.com)



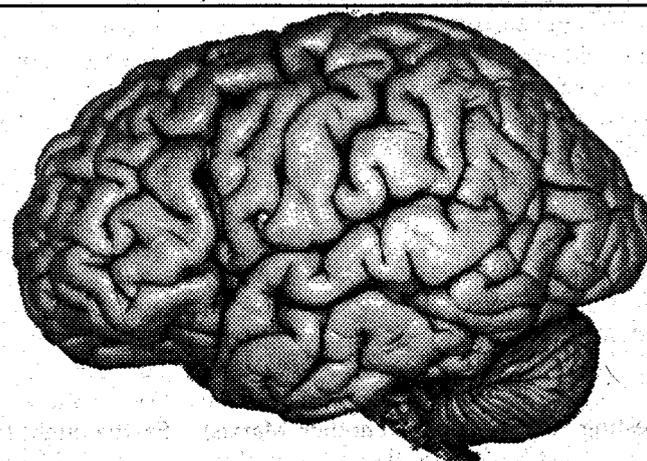
Police fire point blank at sitting, non-confrontational protesters

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Nasser Ahmed Freed From Jail After Almost Four Years Of Incarceration Under "Secret Evidence"

By Arif Rafiq

On November 29th, a man was released from almost four years of incarceration based on evidence that was concealed from him and his lawyers. This occurred not in China or Israel, where these sorts of arrests are common, but in the United States. The 1996 Anti Terrorism Act permitted the incarceration of Mr. Nasser Ahmed, an Egyptian immigrant. Many experts regard the act to be unconstitutional as the Alien and Sedition Acts of the 18th Century.

Mr. Ahmed served as a court-appointed paralegal and translator for Shaykh Omar Abdel Rahman, who was convicted of being part of a conspiracy to blow up buildings and tunnels in New York City. The "charges" against Mr. Ahmed were that he:

- Was a member of "Al Gam'aa Al Islamiyya" (the Islamic Group), a group which the State Department has listed as a terrorist organization, but according to certain defense witnesses is an "umbrella group", consisting mostly of groups that provide social services. Regardless, Nasser Ahmed denies any involvement in this group.

- Tried to obtain a bomb manual to send abroad. Mr. Ahmed denies these charges and states that as a paralegal for Shaykh Abdel Rahman in the World Trade Center trial, he came upon more than one bomb manual which were part of the "evidence". There would be no reason to have to obtain a manual, since one was already accessible to him. But he also states that there would be no motive for him to do so, because he does not support violence.

- Relayed a threat from the imprisoned Shaykh Abdel Rahman that resulted in a Cairo bomb attack. Mr. Ahmed denies this and the bombing is reported to have been a response to the Israeli attack on Lebanon, called "Operation Grapes of Wrath", which included the bombing of a United Nations refugee camp in Qana that killed over a hundred innocent people.

- Threatened the Imam (clerical leader) of the Abu Bakr Mosque in Brooklyn, in which he was the Director. Mr. Ahmed denies these charges, and states that at the man's claims were deemed not credible. The Imam's green card had long expired, which the court had taken issue with, and somehow after he made these charges, the INS extended his VISA period.

I was able to interview Mr. Ahmed on December 5th, after a celebration for his release at the Al Noor School in Brooklyn. The text of the interview is below:

Q1. Mr. Nasser, I would like to congratulate you on your release, after three years of imprisonment under "secret evidence". My first question is how does it feel to be a free man?

A1. I feel great joy and happiness. It was a big decision, a really great thing....

Q2. I imagine this would have a great impact upon your family, could you describe what this means to them?

A2. They are happy for the end of this hard-

ship. It was very hard for my kids to live without a father for three years. I have one child, she is eight years old, and two sons, my youngest son - he would always ask me, "Daddy, when are you coming home?" There came a point in time where he stopped asking. I asked him why he stopped asking me, and he said, "Because you never have an answer for me."

It was very hard for these kids, but now they are very happy - they are having a good time. And when I ask them why they are having such a good time, they are like, "Oh because mommy doesn't have to take us to the park, you will." And my other child was like, "And we don't have to take the trash out, you will." My other child is waiting for me to teach him how to

ride a bike- he has a bike, but he never rode it. I mean they are so happy, they're holding my hands all the time, jumping on my back.

Q3. You were put in solitary confinement that lasted three years. How did it feel? What sort of thoughts were running through your head- what in general did you think about most?

A3. The whole period of my incarceration was 45 months, and out of 45 months, I was in solitary confinement for 37 months. You feel the uncertainty, the hardship of that. You're not like any other prisoner, everyone else had a decision made, and I never had one. Everyone else has a right to know the accusations, I was stripped of that right and I was stripped of even getting a defense team that was able to defend me; they were paralyzed in the beginning. When you're cut communication with your family, friends, community, and (being prevented) from fighting your case...just sitting down in a place, in a room that's probably just 6 X 8, then you put the bed, the table, it's a small place - it becomes about 2 X 4, when you can only sit and pray.

Q4. You served as a court appointed paralegal and translator for Shaykh Omar Abdel Rahman, who was convicted of involvement in a conspiracy to commit terrorist acts in New York City- what role did this play in your imprisonment and why?

A4. Well the motive for my arrest was that, I was working for the Shaykh as his lawyer and the case against him was very shaky. The government needed some help because I knew the Shaykh and I was asked in plain English to cooperate, but I refused. I had attorney-client-privileged information that no one has a right to

know. They threatened me with deportation, but I was released on \$50,000 bond. They took their case more seriously one year later when I was jailed for 45 months. It's all basically because I knew the Shaykh.

Q5. Could you comment on your relationship with the Shaykh- also, you said you believed he was innocent, why do you believe that?

A5. My relationship with the Shaykh was like with my relationship with any other scholar. He was the Imam at the Abu Bakr as-Siddique Mosque.

The community was (intent on) seeking Islamic knowledge and education, so we found a scholar. I never heard of or knew the Shaykh back home in Egypt. He was a good scholar, very consistent. You could ask him a question with more than one angle, and he would still respond with the same answer. So in this he was very good, the people liked him, they loved him.

The Shaykh was framed by the lead informant by the name of Emad Salem. The Shaykh told him three times not to do anything wrong. Emad Salem asked him if he could bomb the United Nations and the Shaykh told him three times, "No, no, no." Based on my relationship with him as a well-known scholar and through the trial, I see him as very innocent and a victim of an Egyptian and American conspiracy (because he is opposed to the injustice in Egypt).

Q6. One of the charges put against you is that you are a member of Gama'a Al Islamiya. What is your role in this group and what do you have to say to the labels of it being a "radical, extremist, and violent" Egyptian group?

A6. I have no membership in this group. I don't know anyone in Gama'a Al Islamiya and I have no communication with anyone in it. And regarding terrorist acts, I don't believe in violence. I don't believe that change can come through violence. Change can only come through inviting people, (through) demand(ing) your rights, and (by) stand(ing) firm in this cause. The violent acts do not lead to anything constructive.

Q7. The government recently released some of the "secret evidence" against you. The judge who was handling your case, Judge Livingston, said in the *New York Times* that much of the evidence was difficult to evaluate because it was double or triple hearsay. He also questioned the reliability of some government sources and cited the description of one source as a "friendly foreign intelligence service". Could you one, tell us which nation you think that "friendly foreign intelligence service" belonged to? And two, what was the nature of the evidence against you?

A7. There is no doubt that the foreign nation was Egypt. Egypt is my homeland. The only evidence that came was from a witness that had a very solid relationship with the Egyptian government. Actually he worked with them, he also mentioned specifically that it was planned in the Egyptian government's interest to silence Shaykh Omar Abdel Rahman and they wanted to silence the Shaykh through-silencing those who support him.

In regards to the nature of the evidence against me, there are four charges against me based on the fact that the Imam I hired (at Abu Bakr Mosque) claimed that I threatened him and that I said I would get my friends to take care of him and I was able to prove him not credible. His testimony was removed by the judge who said he had no valid green card and he continued living here in the US. Yet the

"It was very hard for my kids to live without a father for three years."

"I have one child... he would always ask me, 'Daddy, when are you coming home?'"

cont'd on page 11

My First Conk

By Chris Sorochin

A gasbag by the name of Lee Nichols vehemently objected to my rage against the Catholic machine, "Right Wing Yuppie Catholic Lawyers from Hell," of October 13. I spent the better part of the next week composing a typically acerbic reply, only to be told that the *Press* doesn't publish replies to letters, using a word I loathe: "policy." Well, it's a policy that should be trashed. How the hell are we supposed to carry on enlightened dialogue with the readership if we can't respond to their mindless, uninformed rantings?

Nichols then sent in his own little satire of the *Press*' Top Ten lists, making pregnant insinuations about various staff members, including myself. He said I would become a priest and then a bishop, and convert my flock to atheism. Well, Nichols should know that inside every disgruntled ex-Catholic is a formerly devout Catholic who's been severely disillusioned. As a matter of fact, at one point in my life (prepubescent, to be exact), I aspired to the priesthood—don't laugh—and I was fully supported in this aspiration by my devout German Catholic grandmother, a silver-haired little lady who prayed the rosary daily and slept with a bag of holy medals pinned to her nightgown. I'm still warped from the time she caught my brother and I playing "show me" with the neighborhood tomboy.

It was Grandma who first introduced me to drugs. I had been given the traditional beer sips and cigarette drags by my father, just so he could delight in my resulting look of incomprehension that anyone could enjoy shit that tasted that evil.

Grandma abhorred the use of alcohol, but she knew what she was doing when she hooked me on her particular crutch, caffeine. When I visited her, she'd attempt to raise ethnic consciousness with her version of the Teutonic mid-afternoon ritual of Kaffe und Kuchen. I'd get a big cup of java, its acridness cut with heavy dollops of milk and sugar, and the amphetamine-like libation was accompanied by a Kolner Dom of impossibly sugary cookies. In a short time, I was a full-fledged junkie, and she actually wondered why I couldn't sit still.

Nowadays, of course, I mainline the stuff straight and black, but I never would have developed the habit had it not been snuck in, smothered in sucrose.

In due time, I reached the age when I could begin my pre-seminary training by being an altar boy! I seized the opportunity to parade around in a little robe and play with the candles and incense (a precursor to my later drug days). And the wine! Let me tell you, being supporters of New York State agriculture, the good fathers of St. Bonaventure Parish ordered an unearthly Finger Lakes Catawba for their sacramental needs. It was thick and golden and very

sweet, but not to the tooth-rotting point of Manishewitz. They kept it in a dark, unlabeled wine bottle which had a bar-style pourer that read, "Smooth as Silk—KESSLER," which I think is an undistinguished bourbon.

Anyway, there was always some left at the end of the Mass, and none of us good little Catholic boys hesitated to guzzle down the holy ambrosia before rinsing the cruets. It was always a drag if you had to serve with Fr. Vincent, who was rumored to be an alcoholic. The aardvark would suck down most of it and leave you with nary a drop.

If you were really lucky, there'd be another Mass after yours and you'd get to use the pretext of refilling the cruets for another slug. For a while, I noticed no appreciable effect, just a little warmth; I mainly drank for the sweetness (that's right, for the taste!).

Then one day—I must have been in seventh grade or so—I was offered the chance to serve a funeral in the middle of the school day. I readily accepted, as I'd not only get out of "jail" for several hours, but also make a little pocket money.

Now, a Catholic funeral normally employed five later boys: two standard ones, and three extras to carry the cross, censer, and other papist paraphernalia.

We'd process in, with due pomp and ceremony, and then during the Mass, the extras would hang out in the vestry until the end, for the exit procession. Being tall, I always got the cross, so I was an "extra."

On this particular day, my vestry mates were Dave "Granny" Grandusky, a hulking eighth-grader who'd been left back several times and made it his business to oppress geeks like myself, and his sidekick Tim Margueson, another hulking type who had no use for me. As both lads had recently begun to sail the churning seas of puberty and discovered girls, they pretty much settled for a disdainful refusal to acknowledge my existence, which was fine with me.

These guys were hellraisers from large unruly tribal families, and they indulged in various scandalous behaviors. I once saw Granny steal an entire box of votive candles (gasp!), no doubt for his fabled black-lit clubhouse, where he and his cronies did things that the rest of us could only imagine. So on this day, instead of politely waiting for the end of the service to guzzle the dregs of the wine, these stalwarts went straight to the supply cupboard and got out...the gallon jug! They began taking pulls from it slung over their shoulders, hill-billy style. Being far enough along into preadolescence myself to care about what they thought of me, I accepted their offer and was soon taking mammoth slugs from

the Dionysian cask. And I naturally had to be a show off and go on to show what a little rebel I was.

The Satanic debauch escalated as the other two felt the need for some ecclesiastical finger food and began munching from the huge bag of communion hosts. Now I knew that since these hadn't been consecrated it wasn't a proper sacrilege, but I drew the line at partaking anyway.

I lost all track of time and soon another altar boy poked his tousled head in and motioned that it was show time. As we filed out into the solemnity of the church, I became aware of a most peculiar sensation, a sort of dizzy disorientation. Everything seemed to be on a slant, like in the villains' lairs on *Batman* and a strange fogginess clouded my mind. My limbs seemed to be out of control as I wove down the aisle, almost missing a turn. Then it dawned on me: I was drunk!

But this bore no resemblance to what I had imagined inebriation would be like. It wasn't like on TV, where luses would break into spasms of giddy laughter and stagger amusingly. It didn't feel all that great at all, the first of many disappointments about much-touted adult pleasures that I was to experience in the coming years. And I'd done this in church, during a funeral, with the acolytes of hell, to boot. Was this, I wondered, how Fr. Vincent got started?

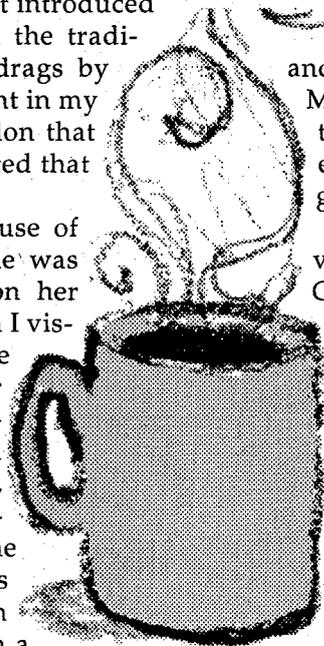
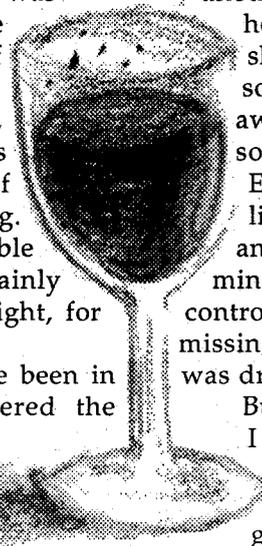
I got through the procession and we repaired to the dressing room, where at one point, and for no particular reason, I hid in the closet where the cassocks were kept. We got back to school in time for lunch break and I managed to wander around the playground until I got enough air to sober up for the afternoon. I don't recall sharing my experiences with anyone.

Several years down the road, I had a more conventional "initiation" experience, involving warm Old Milwaukee consumed in a parking lot, drunk in sufficient speed and quantity to puke it out through my nose. And as such activities were popular, I became socialized into finding the communal disorientation pleasurable and it was all downhill from there.

Millennial Madness Update:

Speaking of beverages, I recently heard a fascinating bit of scuttlebutt. The Coca Cola Corporation, not satisfied with its megabillion dollar profits and domination of the planetary soft-drink market, has been doing research into the possibility of outfitting its vending machines with little computerized thermometer devices. When the external temperature exceeds a certain degree, and people naturally are more likely to be seeking something cold and wet, the machine will automatically raise the price!

Anyone who still doubts that capitalism is greedy, rapacious, and downright evil should look no further.



Predictions For The

By F.L. Livingston

The online possibility will attract older adults seeking a college education. It will also beckon to those young people who wish or need to work full-time while pursuing a degree. Frequently, it will be "the answer" for students, married or not, who have children at home. And it will expand possibilities for remediation in those university systems where such programs have been cut down or discontinued. Many college students who choose to live at home, for whatever reason, will welcome the computer option.

This will lower the commuter population on campus, but it will not entirely destroy it. Some students will still lack easy access to a computer, and so they will make the trek to campus every day. Others will come for the dynamics of the classroom.

That "classroom" is likely to be a rather different place than today, however. By the end of the 21st century, large, old-fashioned lecture halls will be transformed into mega-computer centers.

Books will be read via computer, though students will be able to download them (instantly) for further study. And, of course, this option will be available to at-home students, as well. (Traditional books will become valuable collectors items. They will also become a crucial aspect of programs in Classical education.) True, some colleges will focus on smaller classes and student interaction, instead. But online students will be able to participate in these discussions to some degree, as well.

I do not see this trend seriously reducing the number of "live-away" students, at all. Rather, I predict that the "on-campus experience" will come to appear more distinct and "special" to numerous youths, and, therefore, more attractive. General enrollment may decrease, but the number of your descendants who choose to live at school may actually increase.

Regardless, the resident student body will be more cohesive educationally. (Ethnic diversity will continue, but the students will feel more united in their overall college experience.) This new sense of unity will lead to the birth of school spirit where it never existed and its revival where it had been dormant. Its expression will be carefully regulated due to the tragic accident at Texas A&M "back in" 1999, but its significance will increase. It may tend to take on more modern forms, such as students representing their school in growing numbers of Internet contests. But no matter — my prophecy is that it will be "huge."

A Spot for Pot

In the US, marijuana will be legalized, state by state, over the coming century, first for medicinal purposes, and then, recreational. There will be occasional backlash movements by groups such as "Citizens Against Getting Stoned" (CAGS), but once permitted, the right to smoke weed will not be easily taken away.

The pot business will be strictly regulated by zoning laws, etc. Its sale will be allowed only in designated stores, restaurants, and clubs. Not privately. And not by street vendors. (The law will permit individuals to grow it and sell it to the appropriate businesses, but not to the general public.) It will be heavily taxed. Those who violate these restrictions by trying to buy or sell untaxed weed on the sly will be subject to fine and/or imprisonment. (And you thought legalizing pot would simplify our lives!)

There will also be arguments about how to

handle the product. States will disagree over whether the acceptable age-of-purchase should be 18 (as with cigarettes) or 21 (as with alcohol). People will battle, too, over the extent to which advertising should be allowed or restricted.

I can imagine those ads now — and the brand names. Companies will urge us to "Puff The Magic Dragon" and invite us to "Grin from ear to ear with a joint called 'Cheshire.'" And so on.

Life Expectancy

Chances are strong that the human lifespan will continue to grow. This is especially likely if we find a cure or a vaccine for such deadly diseases as cancer and AIDS. My older daughter disagrees, that people often damage their bodies, even in the absence of such diseases, and thus that life expectancy will remain where it is. She has a point. But then again, there have always been some people who were careless with their well-being, and still longevity has increased for the rest of us. So let me amend, but not retract,

my original statement: The human lifespan will continue to grow for those who take reasonably good care of their health and safety.

That being said, scores of you are liable to live until your hundredth birthday or beyond. The passing of a century will lose much of its sense of awe, as it will be equal to little more than the average lifetime. I'm not saying that the turn of the next century will pass unnoticed. But I am guessing that your descendants in the Class of 2100 may greet that year with only a little more fanfare than they will the change of a decade.

Meanwhile, back in the earlier part of the century, as my own Baby Boom generation moves into old age, even more effort will be made to improve the quality of life and health for the elderly. So you young people will "have it made" by the time you get up there. I foresee a whole Senior Citizen Culture developing, similar to the specter of Youth Culture. That exists to some extent, even now, but I predict that it will become even more expansive, complete with its own set of values, styles, etc. (No longer will young people even think of expecting their elders to try to copy the "latest" fashions.) The "Golden Years" we talk about today will have finally turned into reality. People will be tripping over themselves to get into the glorious "old age home" or "retirement community."

Well, perhaps not everyone. For those who wish to continue in the "mainstream," there will be a chance to begin a second career — maybe to explore those interests that they did not have time for in their youth. Or that their parents would not let them pursue, claiming, "You won't earn a living that way."

As people live longer, healthier lives, the euthanasia debate will continue, but probably with a new twist. Yes, there will still be those who wish to terminate their existence because of illness. But there will also be those who argue that in this new, healthy-but-endless situation, people over a certain age should be allowed to "opt out." Arguments pro and con will fly across the hospitals, the courtrooms, and the media waves. I, myself, tend to favor the side of "life" in such a case, but I cannot begin to predict which side will win that battle.

Love and Marriage

As the lifespan increases, the ability of the average person to remain with one spouse will, no doubt, decrease. And because of our liberalized divorce laws, even fewer people than today will feel that they "should" stay in an unsatisfactory union. A series of marriages and divorces will become an accepted fact of life. Not to say that these break-ups won't still cause some pain for both adults and children alike. But most people will assume that it is almost impossible for romantic relationships to last, and they will bring their children up with this understanding.

In an odd twist of fate, more parents may return to the old concept of postponing divorce "until the kids are grown." Why? Because they will have so many years ahead in which to find new love and happiness. Possibly, several couples will even opt for "tapering off" of the relationship for the sake of the children. Such a gradual severing of marriage ties may become the norm.

Given the human need for structure, though, a pattern may well emerge. Perhaps one youthful coupling in which to explore the depth and breadth of a "relationship," to find out what one needs from such a union and how much one is able to give. Then a more family-oriented pairing, in which to have and raise children. And later, romance in one's maturity, a companion to share the senior years unencumbered by past resentments. It would be a flexible pattern though, with plenty of room for single parents, childless couples, and "20th Century types" who will still look forward to such "old-fashioned" customs as "Golden Anniversary" celebrations.

On the other hand, growing numbers of people will simply put marriage off even longer than they do now. After all, a person will be able to marry at, say 50, and still expect to spend up to half a century with a spouse!

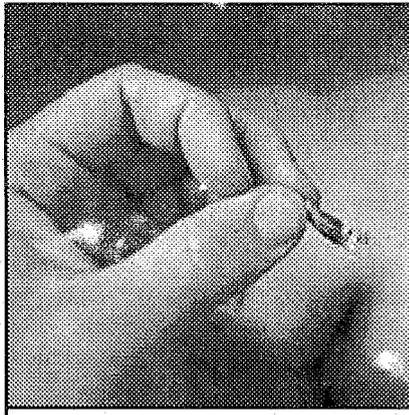
In fact, legal marriage will most likely become a relic of the past. Especially since non-marital relationships and unwed pregnancies are no longer so severely frowned upon.

Strangely enough, though, I imagine that many people will sense a "void" that they will rush to fill. "Commitment ceremonies" will flourish in place of the traditional wedding, but with many of its trappings, including long gowns, public vows, etc. (Some

modern gay couples hold such ceremonies, even now, since they cannot marry legally in most states. But the idea is already spreading to heterosexual pairs who eschew formal marriage. I'm guessing it will become even more common among those couples who feel that they

just cannot fit into the conventional mold.) And written contracts will be fashioned to protect those rights that marriage once secured. They will be similar to the prenuptial agreements often drawn up for later marriages even now. (Those who don't wish to be as formal will opt for more lavish celebrations of special "anniversary" dates: one year together, ten years together, and so forth.) The major differences will be that a couple will not need a license from the state and will not need to meet specific requirements to divorce. In fact, they will not be expected to observe any of these customs, at all. It will be a choice.

Very traditional groups within our society will still cling to their old marriage customs. But by 2100, for the majority of people the marriage "knot" will have relaxed totally.



Will they legalize it?

In the US, marijuana will be legalized, state by state, over the coming century...

New Millennium

As a result, attitudes about romance will change. More women will be able to enjoy a deep relationship without feeling the need for it to culminate in a wedding. More men will be able to give themselves to a relationship without fearing that they will be pressured into a legal union.

The long-term-but-non-marital relationship will gain greater respect. Even more often than now will we hear someone say, "She just came out of a five-year relationship." But less frequently will someone add with indignation, "And he wouldn't marry her!"

The Class of 2100, I predict, will gasp in amazement to learn that anyone ever entered a romance solely in the pursuit of marriage — or gave up a love simply because it was not headed toward the altar. For them, these will be fascinating facts from the past!

Family Ties

While the institution of marriage may all but disappear, the bonds of family are apt to strengthen. The shape that "family" takes may change as it always has over the eons. (Remember polygamy? Extended families in one household?) But it will not soon die out.

The majority of unions are likely to encompass two careers. But already more couples have begun to weigh the value of high income versus quality time with family. So I foresee both genders looking for more ways to spend time with their kids. Increasingly, they will seek flextime programs at work, plan child-centered vacations, etc. More couples will choose to remain childless longer — even forever — but they too will try to carve out more time away from work — for each other, for worthy causes, and even for personal hobbies.

The number of non-traditional families is on the rise, as well, and I predict that they will continue in that vein. The number of blended families will increase the most, with single parent households running a close second. Interfaith couples will become even more common than they are now. In fact, those representing two sects of one religion (such as Methodist and Presbyterian or Conservative and Reform Jewish) may actually become "the norm." Interracial unions will increase, too, though more slowly. And even more gay couples than now will "come out of the closet" and more of them will choose to raise children. Some of these household types will encounter greater opposition than others. (For example, mixed race families will face more obstacles than those of mixed religion.) But these trends will go on (as they have in the past despite such forces as "white backlash," "black separatism," homophobia, etc.). The graduates of 2100 will have a less rigid concept of "family" than many people do today.

Their view of how families grow will have expanded, too. Not only will both childbirth and adoption be considered as "average" ways of having children, but test tube babies will be an integral part of our society, as well. In fact, by the end of the coming century, young people will not even blink an eye at families with an assortment of children — adoptees, foster kids, and biological (both "natural-born" and test tube), of varying ethnic groups, American-born and foreign. Our image of "family" is shifting and will continue to do so. But it will not disintegrate.

Friends Forever

Many people today view their friends as an extension or even a central part of their family. The romantic dream of love "till death do us part," broken by the increase in divorce, seems to have been replaced with an ideal of everlasting friendship. Besides, in these rapidly changing times, peers often can, as my younger daughter explains, relate to one's problems with more understanding than one's parents or other older people. They are also more likely than well-meaning relatives to offer the direct, honest advice that one might crave.

Not all friendships endure for a lifetime, though, and the ones that do often change along the way. And long before the end of this century, the myth of "perfect friendship" will have exploded just like that of "perfect love." The Class of 2100 will harbor no fantasies about either love or friendship but will have grown up with a deep appreciation of how both can enrich their lives.

In recent years, opposite-sex friendships have increased in number, strength, and significance to a point almost unheard of a generation ago. As we move through the next century, they will achieve a new status in our society. By 2100, youth will consider the concepts of "Best Man" and "Maid" or "Matron of Honor", for example, to be hopelessly outdated — and exceedingly funny. "Can you imagine," they will ask, "choosing honor attendants by their sex?" When planning a wedding, "commitment ceremony," or whatever, the celebrants will select their attendants solely on the basis of importance in their lives.

As people invest more of themselves in their friendships, the con-

ventional reasons for coupling will be called into question. I predict that the trend will diverge along two paths. Some people will connect with a partner totally for sexual pleasures. Others, ironically, will return to some "old-fashioned" values, searching for someone to "build a life with" and, if they want, to "raise kids with." Picturing someone as "the mother/father of [one's] children" will once again become a significant matter, albeit for different reasons than in the past.

The Stony Brook Press

Throughout the coming century, this publication will grapple with many of the same issues as always, as well as logging onto several new ones. Like whether or not it is wise to vote for the female presidential candidate just because she is a female. Or whether or not a university has the right to censor online classroom discussions. Or perhaps even the quality of the energy pills that the meal plan will then offer for those who prefer them to traditional food. (Well, maybe that's just a new twist on an old concern.)

Hopefully, it will also preserve antique issues of the paper, even if only on a disc or microfilm. Then the students of 2100 can look back on these predictions and gasp with amazement, "Oh my God, she got that sooo right!" — or howl with laughter, "Oh my God, that 20th Century chick was sooo offline!" Either way, the *Press* will continue to plug its readers into the most meaningful ideas and information of their times. And they will still have fun doing it.

But enough speculation...the future awaits.

The Class of 2100 will harbor no fantasies about either love or friendship...

"Nasser Ahmed" Continued From Page 8

INS gave him a green card after he testified, which means he has put his future in the hands of the INS.

The other thing they claimed was that I took a letter from the Shaykh and gave it to the international press concerning the Shaykh and his condition in prison and after the letter was released, eighteen tourists were killed in Egypt. An FBI agent testified and said this terrorist act occurred as a result of the letter and the first hearing, and at the second hearing he testified again and retracted his previous statements.

The next allegation was that I tried to obtain a bomb-making manual, but I had access to bomb-making manuals in the Shaykh's case, in which I was a paralegal. So there is no point in me trying to go and get another one. Their sources were based on rumors.

Q8. After the government's case against you started to fall apart, their reason for holding you became that your "prominence in the community will increase" after your release and that "people would be more inclined to listen" to you — what do they have to fear from you?

A8. Well the government does not want to be embarrassed and to be proven wrong. For three and a half years I was separated from my children and my wife. And they have happened to work very hard to destroy my reputation in the community... There are a lot of rumors made by (certain) characters and people finally realized that this man has been in jail for three and a half years, these rumors are made by the FBI. They have nothing else to fear but an embarrassment.

Q9. After all this, would you rather live in the United States or Egypt? And what are your feelings towards the US now?

A9. They cannot even remove me from here — they have forced me to live in the United States. I wanted to go to a neutral country (not Egypt or the United States), but the government did not let that happen. Initially they had agreed to meet my request to be moved to neutral country, I had won that immigration case — but following that I was prevented from doing so by the government. But even so, I immigrated here, I have family here, I have my community here, I have everything here — my career. It's not the proper timing to go back to Egypt.

In regards to my feelings about the United States, what's good about it is that you can fight for your dignity here unlike many other places they can put you in jail for life without giving you a chance, and they tried to do that here. But finally the Judge spoke out and I'm glad that he did.

Q10. What do you see your role in the community here as being?

A10. My role in the community is to expose any suffering of people, whether it's nationally or internationally, and get people to work together to react to that suffering part, and work to elevate ourselves and end that suffering, and so we can hope for a (content) nation.

Thank you.

Top Ten Stupid Places To Be When The Ball Drops This New Years' Eve

- 10) Drinking champagne from Shirley Strum Kenny's patent leather stiletto pumps
- 9) Debtor's prison
- 8) The *Stony Brook Press* office. God, there is no escape.
- 7) Anywhere near John Tesh
- 6) Anywhere in John Tesh
- 5) In a salt mine in Colorado, sucking down canned food
- 4) At a T.K.E. "Ho's for da Millennium" party
- 3) In a Will Smith video
- 2) The party in my pants
- 1) Under it

Cell phone Chaos in the Classroom

By Walter Boot

BIC 208: Javits Lecture Hall, Room 102

In the middle of a lecture on the differences between the right and left hemispheres of the brain, a strange and shrieking melody is heard coming from a student's bag. This student fumbles with his bag, pulls out a cell phone, and runs to the back of the lecture hall. He then proceeds to talk but does not leave the room.

PHI 247: Light Engineering Building, Room 102

A constant beeping noise is heard but cannot be pinpointed. It goes on for more than 10 minutes. Students exchange annoyed glances. The professor stops to look around, gives up his efforts to determine the source of the disturbance, and plows through the rest of the lecture.

ARH 102, Staller Center, Room 3320

A cell phone rings. The student with the offensive device is asked by the T.A. if it she who is disturbing the class. She grabs her bag and in a mad rush to evacuate the classroom stumbles on the way out and nearly falls flat on her ass.

The Melville Library, Second Floor Study Area

Almost directly under a sign designating a "Quiet Study Area", a student talks excitedly to his girlfriend about their relationship problems. His girlfriend is no doubt in a lecture, impeding another group of hard working students from learning. Several students shoot him icy looks that he does not notice.

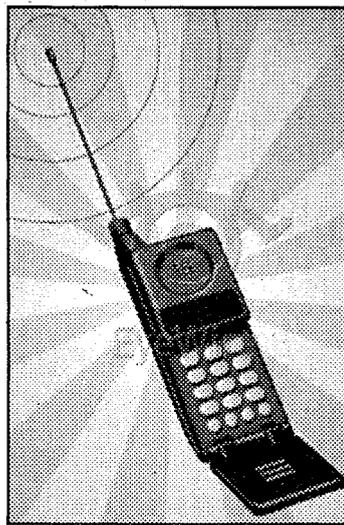
I hope that I'm not the only one that has noticed that this campus has been overrun with inconsiderate cell phone users. There has not been a class that I've taken this semester that has not been interrupted by one of these "miracles" of modern technology. This has become a serious problem at Stony Brook University and it is a problem that needs to be addressed. This article is directed toward those students who bring cell phones to class and are either too embarrassed to answer them when they ring, answer them and talk during class, or run out of the lecture hall like George Clooney being called to the E.R. This insanity must stop.

To begin with, cell phone user, you are not so important that you cannot be out of touch with your friends and family for 55 minutes at a time. Let me put things in perspective for you. No, you are not the President. You are not a doctor. You are a student at Stony Brook University on Long Island, New York. There are really very few legitimate reasons for you to interrupt my education with your shrieking phone and your inane chitchat. There is no reason that a whole room of students should have to suffer because of the rude and thoughtless actions of one self-absorbed individual.

Secondly, your fellow students do not wish to hear your personal and sometimes very intimate conversations. There is a time and a place for everything, and the quiet study area of the

library with students who are studying for final exams sitting around you is neither the time nor the place to be discussing personal issues. These issues can wait until you get home. It is my wish not to be exposed to the personal life of every stranger that passes by with a cell phone in hand. This situation is even worse when it interrupts a class and the professor has to compete with you for the attention of the students. It's hard enough to pay attention in certain classes. Your fellow students don't need your conversation to make it even more difficult.

Now that I have addressed the problem, I will propose a solution. The solution is simple. These students can either stop bringing their phones to class or turn them off in places where the ringing might disturb others. If you want to carry a cell phone, please be considerate. It is understood that in an emergency your cell phone can be a life-saving device. If you get lost or your car breaks down or if you are walking alone late at night, carrying a cell phone can protect you from a dangerous situation. Fortunately, these dangerous situations rarely occur during the day in a lecture hall containing 100 students. As we approach the end of this semester and the beginning of a new one, I hope that this article will make some cell phone users more conscious of their actions. If you bring a cell phone to class, turn it off. Your professors and fellow students will appreciate it.



ADVERTISEMENT

Holocaust Studies Appointment with Hate?*

Let's agree that one ideal of the university is to promote intellectual freedom, and one ideal of the professorial class is to teach students to honor it. Yet this is not true in Holocaust Studies. There, if students express doubt about "eyewitness" testimony, for example, even if it is demonstrably false, dishonorable or both, they understand they run the danger of being accused of being "hateful."

Consider eyewitness testimony given by Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel.

Elie Wiesel as an "eyewitness" authority

EW claims he was "liberated" from Dachau (*Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, 11 April 1985), "liberated" from Buchenwald (*NYT*, 2 Nov. 1985), and "liberated" from Auschwitz (*NY Post*, 23 Oct. 1986, and *NYT*, 4 Jan. 1987). One of these claims may be true. The others are false. Do the professors believe it matters?

EW claims in *All Rivers Run to the Sea* (NY, 1995): "I read [Immanuel Kant's] *The Critique of Pure Reason* in Yiddish." Kant's *Critique* has not been translated into Yiddish. Here again, EW did not tell the truth. Does it matter?

EW claims that after Jews were executed at Babi Yar in the Ukraine, "geysers of blood" spouted from their grave for "months" afterward (See *Paroles d'etranger*, 1982, p. 86). Impossible? Yes, it is. Do the professors believe it matters?

When Holocaust Studies professors are too fearful to condemn such claims, and those who make them, what are their students to do?

Elie Wiesel as an authority on "hate"

Elie Wiesel has won the hearts and minds of Holocaust Studies professors with his counsel on how to perpetuate a loathing for Germans:

Every Jew, somewhere in his being, should set apart a zone of hate—healthy virile hate—for what the German personifies and for what persists in the German.

(Legends of Our Time, "Appointment with Hate," NY, Avon, 1968, pp. 177-178).

Students understand the implications of this statement when brought to their attention, while their professors appear not to. Perhaps if we change one word in Elie Wiesel's sage advice, it will focus their attention: "Every Palestinian, somewhere in his being, should set apart a zone of hate—healthy virile hate—for what the Jew personifies and for what persists in the Jew." Does this help?

How is EW perceived in Holocaust Studies? He is esteemed as a moral authority. Chairs are created in his honor. Students are taught to emulate him.

Holocaust Studies and the exploitation of hate

In Holocaust Studies, hate is all the rage. To merely note that Stephen Spielberg based his "factual" movie *Schindler's List* on a cheap novel—is hate. To suggest that the "Diary" of Anne Frank is not an authentic personal diary (and should not be taught as such), but a "literary production" crafted by Anne, and after the war by others, from a cache of miscellaneous writings and inventions—that's hate. Exposing false eyewitness testimony is hate. Exposing forged Nuremberg documents is hate. Exposing faked photographs and the use of torture by the Allies to produce confessions by Germans is hate. Asking for proof that one (one!) Jew was gassed in any German camp as part of a program of "genocide" is hate. Asking what "crimes against humanity" National Socialists committed during WWII that Republicans and Democrats did not commit is hate. To note that the story is immensely profitable for those who administer it is hate. Arguing for intellectual freedom regarding any of this—that's hate too. That is, commenting on the record is hate. Telling the truth about the record is hate. Having an open mind is hate.

The unspoken ethical and intellectual scandal in Holocaust Studies is that key materials used in these programs are soaked through with fraud and falsehood—led by the use of false and ignoble eyewitness testimony. Here we have highlighted the hapless Elie Wiesel, but the literature is full of "eyewitnesses" who gave false testimony about gas chambers and a great many other matters.

For more information on Elie Wiesel and other problematic eyewitnesses—such as Simon Wiesenthal, Dr. Hadassah Bimko (Kazenshaft), Filip Mueller, Rudolf Vrba, Kurt Gerstein, Mel Mermelstein, go to our site on the Web and follow "revisionism." For background on myself, follow my name.

112189
Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust (CODOH)
Bradley R. Smith, Director

Students and others are encouraged to respond to any questions or statements contained in this ad by contacting Bradley Smith at:

www.codoh.com

Battling with Barbie

By BrianKate

People say that toys help define our childhood. I'd say that's true. I spent a good part of my childhood battling with Barbie. I fought both the stereotypes for girls she represented and the part of me that wanted to be just like her.

I started out as a science-fiction kid. I saw my first movie, the original "Alien," at age two. I went from watching 1950s B-movies to playing with toys like Darth Vader and the Ovions (green four-armed bug-villains from Battlestar Galactica).

Even then I'd started having issues with gender. As young as age four I started knowing that I didn't feel like the "typical boy." While I played with Darth Vader, I fell in love with the color of his lightsaber, magenta, still my favorite color. I knew I was expected, as a boy, not to like colors like pink and magenta. I knew that the people around me had this sense of themselves as boys or girls. I never understood that, and I still really don't, since I've never really had this sense of "I'm a boy." I saw that boys were expected to like certain things, like cars and sports, and that girls were expected to like certain other things, like dolls and dressing up. Most people I say things like, "When I was a little boy," or "When I was a little girl." I can't say that. When I "was a little boy," I didn't feel like one, and I sure wasn't raised to know how to be a little girl; I've never known exactly what it means to feel like either. And I knew all this even at the age of four while playing with Darth Vader's magenta weapons.

Then I discovered the neighbor girls, at about age five or six. They were self-described "tomboys" who could beat me at any sport and climb higher than I ever could, and then whipped out their entire Barbie collection as soon as they came down from the trees.

I've had a love-hate relationship with Barbie from the moment I first saw her. I hated her because I saw her as such a stereotypical role model for girls. I saw Barbie as a little airhead who cared only about dressing up, who only cared about hair and clothes and makeup. I couldn't stand that! But I also wanted to be like Barbie. I wanted to have perfect hair like her. I wanted to have nice outfits and pretty dresses like her. I wanted to be pretty just like her.

I knew this wasn't what was expected of me as a boy. I thought that I couldn't be anything but what was expected of me as a boy, that I couldn't be anything like a girl. I didn't think I could tell anyone, even myself, about this when I was a kid. So I did the easiest thing I could. I took that part of me that wanted to be like Barbie and I declared war on it along with Barbie. I took my Ovions and all their fellow aliens and androids, along with, of course, G.I. Joe and my Transformers robots (gee, there sure was "more than meets the eye" going on here!), and I waged war on that part of myself I couldn't deal with and the neighbor girls' Barbies. I blew up the Dream House. I bombed and death-rayed half the Barbies. The other half, I imprisoned, tortured and enslaved. I look back on this and feel I was doing the same thing to that part of myself I just couldn't deal with.

I went through a lot of "Battling with Barbie," battling with myself and my questions about my gender identity, until about halfway through my teenage years. I decided to accept myself as I am and to accept that I don't quite identify myself entirely as a guy or a girl. I definitely still love getting "all dolled up" in pretty dresses and makeup when I feel like it, but I'm no longer fighting myself, or Barbie, over that. I no longer have a problem on either count. I think playing with Barbie is all right as long as you know that there's more to life than just clothes. When I'm bored and don't feel like reading or listening to Robyn Hitchcock or Siouxsie and the Banshees, I actually enjoy playing with Barbie. Why not—dressing her up is almost as much fun as dressing myself up. And that's only when I'm not too busy fighting the "Barbie and Ken" stereotypes of what boys and girls, men and women, males and females, have to be which made me fight myself for all those years.



"Welcome to Kate's World" can be found at

<http://www.angelfire.com/ny/BrianKate/> or <http://go.to/TheDarkKate> or email DarkKate@yahoo.com



Keep the letters coming!
 As usual, bring or mail your questions to the Student Union, Room 060, or email us at: sbpress@ic.sunysb.edu

THIS ISSUE:
"IS THIS REAL?"

Is Pre-Ejaculate a Problem?

Cool how you answered "Confused." But how about that guy who asked you about premature ejaculation and how to stop it? That was in one of your regular letter columns.

Who the hell says it's "premature," anyway? How would chicks like it if we guys said they were just "late"? Who the fuck gets to decide when its okay to cum?

Okay, I'm pretty fast the first time I'm with a chick, because it's extra exciting. So maybe it's not so good for chicks their first time with me.

If she's cool about it, then I keep hanging with her. Our bodies get more in sync and soon it's all good. But if she bitches about it, I'm outta there! Know what I'm saying?

I'm pretty good once we get in sync. And I'm sure most guys are okay once everything's in sync, too. So hang in there, chicas, and don't bitch!

—Sex Machine

Sex Column Compulsion

Dear Jack & Hil

Perhaps you can help me, as I have a unique problem. I have a very unusual fetish, in that I am immensely turned on by writing letters to sex advice columnists. Maybe it is that advice columns create an atmosphere wherein detailed discussions of lurid subject matter are perfectly tolerated and even encouraged. Perhaps it is that sex advice columnists accept you no matter how perverted or outlandish your problems may be. Whatever the reason, it has become something of an obsession, and my girlfriend has started to worry.

Why, just the act of writing this is making me blush. I know how strange this must sound, but I realize that it is compulsive behavior and I write things like this with such alarming frequency that Dan Savage has stopped responding.

I have been AVIDLY reading your column for a while now and your responses seem heartfelt and genuine. Moreover, your title graphic is just titillating enough to be subtly arousing every time I pick up an issue. Any help you can offer would be appreciated.

With love,
 Compulsive at the Keyboard

JACK:

Dear S&M,

I try to be sensitive to those who submit to this column, but you sir, are an ass. No one is that dumb, and if you are, you have no business having sex, because mankind can't run the risk of you reproducing.

Sex is not a race to the finish. It should be about spending quality naked time with one another that ends with both partners feeling satisfied. Premature ejaculation is (almost exclusively) a male problem which can be defined as orgasm that occurs before the partner has achieved sexual arousal. Women are physiologically and psychologically different from men.

A good chef slow-roasts a meat until all the flavors have combined and the meat is tender before eating it. You, sonny, are a moron who tosses a slab of meat on a grill and eats it before it's done because he's hungry. Unless you reevaluate your sexual attitudes, you will be destined to live a life of unfulfilled sexual partners. The downside: if you do find someone with whom you want to have sex for hours, they will probably "lose" your number before you get an encore.

Dear Compulsive,

You are a fucking freak, but the kind of fucking freak we love. We need your letters, so write on. As far as I can know, everyone who reads sex advice columns is titillated by what they read in them. Don't fret sugar, you're normal.

But you really need to work on your content. No offense, but as far as I can tell, your only problem is the whiny bitch-ass girlfriend who is threatened by your little fetish. Running the risk of sounding like a broken record, communicate, communicate, COMMUNICATE. Ask the little lady why she is threatened. Can you limit your letter-writing to maybe one or two a week? If she is unwilling to compromise, fuck the bitch. If you repress a part of your sexuality that gives you pleasure, and harms no-one, you will be miserable and may grow to resent the girl. There are plenty of ladies out there who would be more amused and less tight-assed.

HIL:

Dear Sex Machine,

I think it was pretty corny to write us such a bullshit letter. I hope that you brag to everyone out there about your letter being published in the *Stony Brook Press* so that they all know what a loser you are. You say not so matter-of-factly that if a girl is dissatisfied with your sexual performance, you will leave her. Well, I guess you must have a lot of one-night stands. I refuse to believe that any girl would stay with someone who ignores their request for better communication and more time in bed. Furthermore, I don't know any intelligent women who would want to cohabit with someone who is just as much of a selfish prick as you are. You're most likely humiliated by your inability to last longer and therefore must take it out on everyone else.

For those of you who really want to learn how to avoid pre-ejaculating, practice by yourself. Jerk yourself off until you feel ready to cum. Then change your movement or stop touching yourself all together for a few minutes. When the urge to cum occurs once more, switch your motions again. Continue to do this until you can't take any more. When you have mastered this, try it with your partner.

Dear Compulsive at the Keyboard,

Thank-you for your devoted readership. We really love to receive letters like this. As stated in the last issue, there is nothing wrong with a fetish as long as it does not interfere with your daily functioning.

Tell your girlfriend that you have a right to get off in whatever way you want—it's not like you're physically cheating on her. If she lets you fulfill your fantasies, tell her you'll be more than welcome to fulfill hers. Ask her, in all seriousness, if she'd like to try reading columns such as this one with you. Who knows? Maybe they'll make her hot and horny as well. Then the two of you can think up steamy questions together.

If this does occur, please send these erotic inquiries our way. If you are not so lucky, and your girlfriend absolutely refuses to engage in this type of behavior (or at the very least, accept that you do), then maybe its time to find someone more open-minded to spend your time with. If she's that opposed to your sexual desires, how good can she be in bed? Boy, stop rationalizing and come down to the *Press* where fetishes are more than welcome!

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

What's Up with That

Relationships

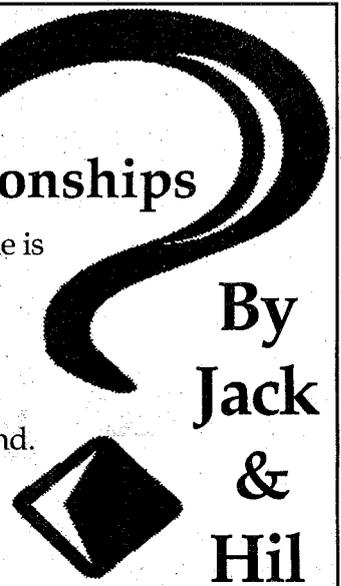
Dear Jack/Hil,

I have a complicated problem. I have been with my boyfriend for about 10 months. I love him, but he is not a very affectionate person by nature. Often, I feel like our relationship is based more on his needs than ours.

Recently, I got drunk and slept with another guy. This guy wants to date me, but I am torn because I love my boyfriend.

Now I'm suffering an enormous amount of guilt because of this secret I'm keeping from my boyfriend. However, I'm afraid that if I'm honest with him, he'll never speak to me again. Please give me advice!

Sincerely,
Torn Up Inside



By
Jack
&
Hil

JACK:

My dear, your problem is not so complicated, so allow me to make it so. If you needed to get drunk and fuck a stranger (?) to receive that human touching I was talking about in my last article, you need to think about why you chose this frigid asshole.

Cheating happens all the time. Honest is often the best policy, but this may be the exception. Every man has problems with another man dipping his sticks in "his" girlfriend. I will encourage communication. If you don't share with this man how you are feeling (how he makes you feel), you will wake up in ten years and realize you are married to an uncaring asshole. As a bonus, you might have several kids who call this prick Daddy, and think the world of him.

Speaking of daddy, what is yours like? Is he an aloof, unaffectionate prick? My guess is that he is, and like many misguided youth, you are working out past issues in your present relationships. We all do it some of the time, but if after ten months, you haven't addressed these issues, you are setting yourself up for a fall.

You must confront the situation. Prepare yourself to ditch this bitch if he can't be more affectionate, at least in private. Men are just as confused as women. They often don't know how to show affection because their daddies were frigid unaffectionate confused little boys. Maybe this guy doesn't even realize that there is a problem. Remember, behind that cold, unaffectionate exterior is a scared lonely little boy praying that no-one ever finds out how big a sissy-boy he really is. (There is nothing wrong with him being a little sissy-boy.)

Remember, you deserve to be loved. You may love him, but you don't need to suffer in your relationship. Very few cheap rolls in the hay evolve into dating. Maybe this trick of yours could develop into the loving relationship you are looking for. But maybe you are looking for an asshole to spend the rest of your life with.

I hope that you write us with an update when you find love.

HIL:

So, you cheated on your boyfriend, but you still want to be with him. Something tells me that this is something that you aren't going to be able to hide.

But first things first. Are you positive that you want to be with him? If you guys are having so much trouble, then maybe you shouldn't be dating at all.

If you are genuinely hoping to stay with him, you need to tell him the truth. I know you're afraid of his reaction, but that's the risk you have to take when admitting an act of betrayal.

Although you say you were drunk when you slept with this guy, you say that your boyfriend "is not a very affectionate person by nature" and that you think that your relationship focuses on "his needs rather than ours." I'm pretty sure that these two things affect your relationship on a day-to-day basis.

Once you tell him, tell him why you did it. No one wants to hear a drunkenness excuse. Tell him the truth. However, make sure you phrase it in such a way that you are not blaming him for your actions. You want him to focus on the fact that your relationship is a two person effort, so rather than pointing out all his faults, say something like, "I think one of our problems is that we don't show each other how much we mean to each other lately," or "I feel we need to focus more on what we need from each other." This way, you aren't lashing out at him; rather, you're stating what needs to be fixed in the relationship.

The most important thing is to make sure he understands that you really want to work things out with him. Obviously, you both have issues that need to be worked out before you guys can function as a unit.

Jack Speaks Out Against Pussy Boys

Overheard phone conversation:

"Well if you wanted to be with me, why did you sleep with her?"

"You didn't sleep with her but you let her suck your dick?"

"Are you saying she raped you?"

This pussy boy tried to convince my friend that he really wanted to be with her. He whined about how he didn't want to fool around with X, but that she forced him. Forced him to let her suck his dick.

I don't know the context but it would appear to me that pussy boy found somewhere warm to stick his peter, and then lived to regret it when the "true" object of his affection found out. Then he defamed woman X, in order to save face. Man, what a weak bitch.

He pretends to be a player. A true player would have said, "Yeah she blew me, you want next?" But, the player turned out to be a pussy boy. I'm tired of all these poseurs. What the fuck is wrong with them? A player is proud. A pussy boy backpedals.

Women can force themselves on men, but to cry rape

when a shameful blow job becomes public knowledge is weak.

The irony of it all is that my friend found this guy attractive, that is until, he turned out to be a pussy boy.

What the fuck is up with that? Why do women love assholes? There are good men out there, but most of them are at home jerking off because they can't get a date. But, when the assholes destroy the women's lives, the nice guys pick up the pieces.

The standard answer is that women like a challenge. They don't want sensitive, caring men; they want assholes. They are under the delusion that they could change the men even if the men don't want them to.

This is one of the facets of heterosexual interaction that sent me running to the gay community. Women are always complaining that all the good men are gay. Well, there may be a reason for that.

This is by no means an invitation to plunder the gay male ranks in search of Mr. Right. It is merely an observation.

Breeders need to spend more time thinking about their sexual and relationship choices and the consequences of those choices.

From Russell with Love

This Issue's Target: A One-Legged Pigeon

By Russell Heller

I went home for Thanksgiving weekend. Home for me is in the vicious woods of Staten Island. Requisite for such a journey is traveling through Manhattan and taking the Ferry. Most of you are probably unfamiliar with the Staten Island Ferry, but you're probably better off for it. Although it provides one of the best views one can see of the Statue of Liberty, the Ferry itself is disgusting—the place to go if for some reason you want to see humanity at its most wretched.

I usually write this letter as a means of venting my hostility toward whomever has incurred my wrath during the last week. On this particular weekend, the object of my malignity is one particular pigeon, which I noticed while I was waiting for the Ferry. There is no shortage of pigeons at the Ferry terminals. These urban parasites are all over, fighting for

garbage, trying to get laid, roosting in various nooks and crannies, and generally littering the area with their excrement. The pigeon in question happens to have lost most of one foot somehow. As a result, this pigeon limps around, clearly in pain as it tries to compete with the healthier birds for food and females.

As I watched this unfold I couldn't squelch an overwhelming feeling of hatred directed at this pathetic creature. Now don't get me wrong, I have no more love for healthy pigeons than I do for a collection of sewer rats. They are vermin, flying disease-bags. But this one pigeon brought out the venom in me. I hated this pigeon because its presence demanded pity.

There is no way anyone could look at this pigeon without feeling sorry for it as it struggles to cling to life. It has become thin and mangy, its feathers matted together with dirt and street grease. It

brought to my mind the image of Jethro Tull's "aqualung", a song about a homeless man so pitiful that he is loathsome.

This pigeon will not live long. It will probably die within a few months, from some combination of disease and starvation. It will die a terrible death, which almost makes one wish that whatever accident or attempt at predation that left the pigeon crippled had killed it and spared it the suffering. But that was not the case, this pigeon survived and its foolish instincts make it fight to continue living.

I am very troubled by the fact that my column is degrading into something so damned artistic, what with me writing letters to animals now. But the damned thing pissed me off. Maybe next semester I'll write to some inanimate objects. I know a roll of scotch tape that I feel like berating. Anyway, with my apologies, here's my letter to a one-legged pigeon:

Dear Pigeon With Only One Foot,

Why do you live? Are you stupid? Every time you succeed in wresting a dirty McDonald's french fry away from one of the other birds, you make the grim spectacle of your gradual starvation last that much longer.

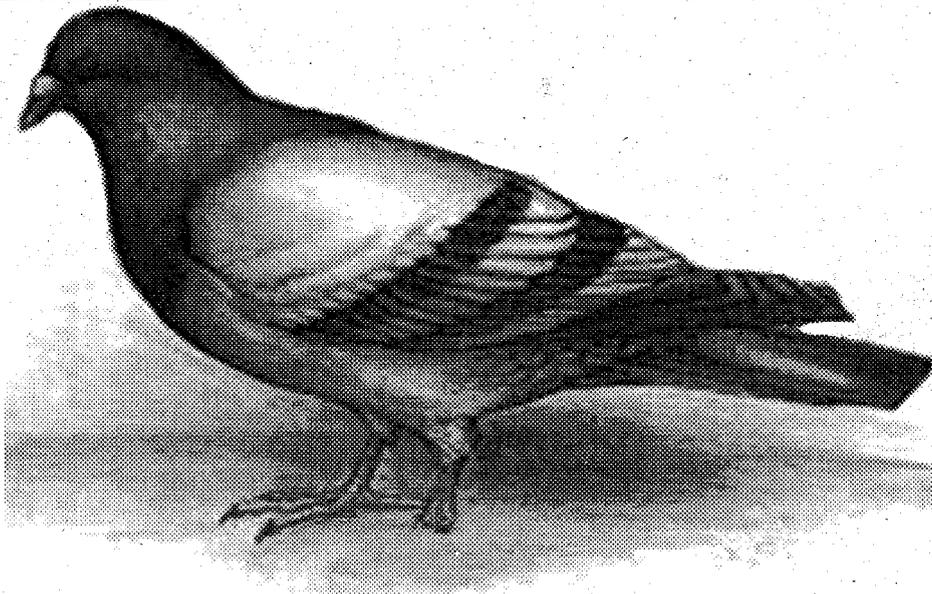
I find it unfortunate that a wild animal such as yourself does not have the option of being euthanized. At least a human, if crippled so badly so as to guarantee his impending starvation, could opt to speed up the process in a painless manner of their choice. But without the autonomy of humanity, you are unfortunately running on autopilot, and it certainly isn't pretty.

Pigeons are common enough in the city that for the most part, people just ignore them and accept that they are part of an urban landscape. Like cockroaches. But it is difficult to maintain that self-absorbed apathy of the New Yorker when a pigeon is in such sorry shape as you.

You turn my stomach, you vile little urchin. I resent that my attention has been diverted to pitying the parasites which eat my garbage. You sucked up my whole commute with your miserable existence. I could have been enjoying a good book, but instead, I had to notice you dragging your emaciated frame around. No one likes to see an animal suffer, particularly when there is nothing they can do to help and particularly when the animal in question is such a filthy vermin to begin with.

My request to you is that you be dead before I come through the Ferry terminal again. Remove your sad situation from my sphere of consciousness. It sucks that you lost a foot, but some pigeons are lucky and some pigeons ain't. There is nothing admirable about this survival instinct. It is tragic.

The healthier birds show you no sympathy either, since you are in competition with them. There is nothing pleasant about watching one pigeon peck another nearly to death over a dirty onion ring. C'mon pigeon, survival of the fittest, right? Survival of the most likely to reproduce. Well that sure as hell isn't you. You couldn't even catch a female, let alone climb aboard. You are useless to humans by your very nature, and you are useless to other pigeons due to unfortunate circumstance. Why don't you go limp in front of a bus?



Sincerely,
Russell Heller

The Press Would Like to Wish Everyone a Happy New Year! (Even Filthy Gutter Birds)