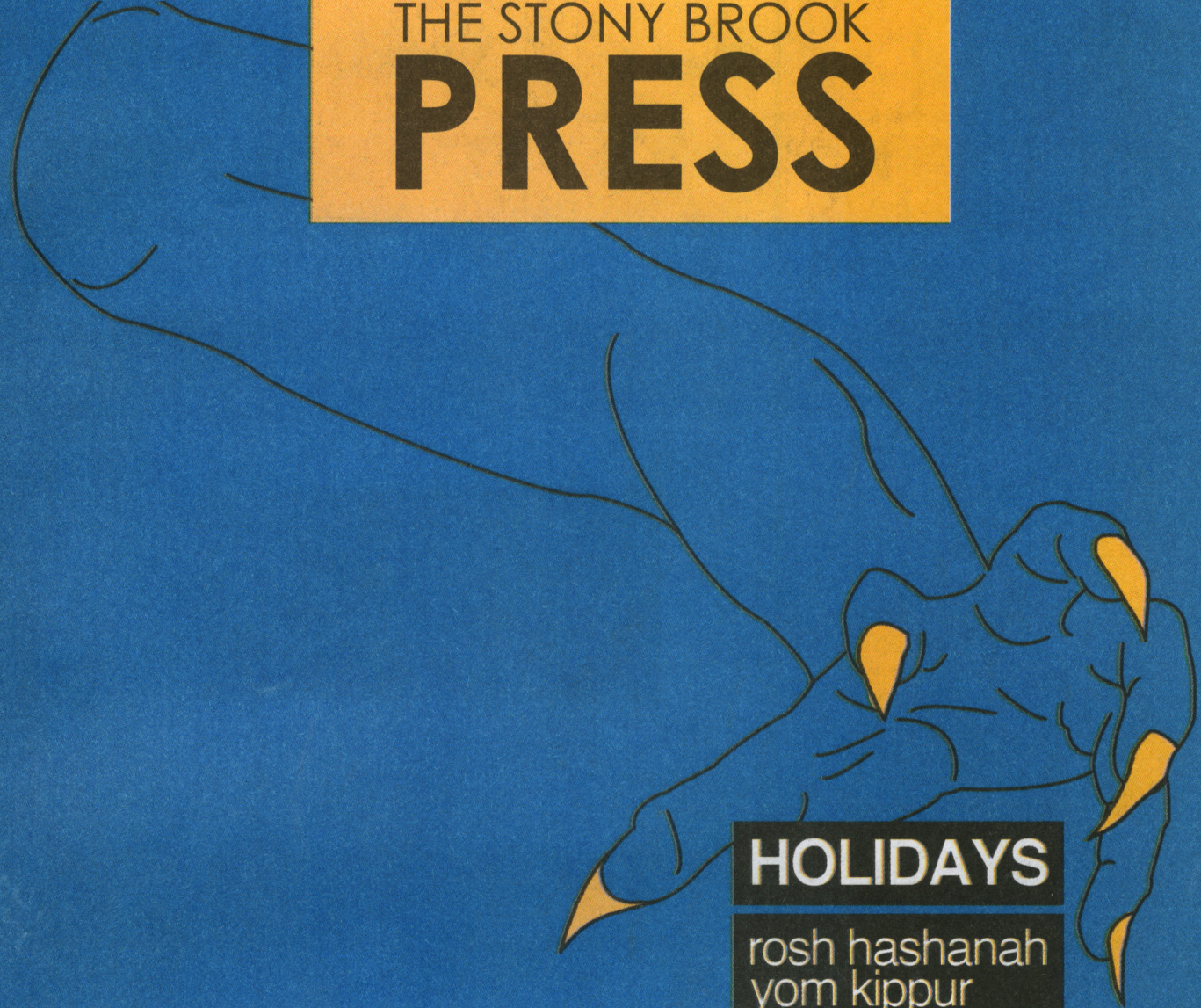


THE STONY BROOK
PRESS



HOLIDAYS

rosh hashanah
yom kippur
reading days

**WEEKEND
FINALS**

THE CALENDAR WARS

TUESDAY, FEB 21 2012

VOL. XXXIII, ISSUE 9

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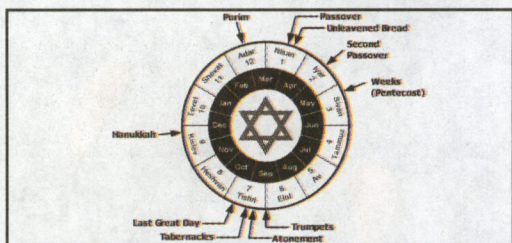
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Correction: Our last issue stated the USG failed to attend both a meeting and a Senate meeting in which they were to speak to the LGBTA. The two were not separate occurrences.

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CALENDAR WARS: ADMINISTRATION MISSTEPS AND USG COWARDICE

Stony Brook University has long been one of only three schools in the Association of American Universities to cancel classes for Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah, along with SUNY Buffalo and Brandeis University. Next year, that tradition is likely to end.

A committee of four administrators has adopted a new academic calendar with an assortment of significant changes that are meant to maximize instruction time, equally respect students of all religions and provide more consistency from year to year, according to Vice Provost Charles Robbins. The committee met over the last year and a half, and possibly earlier, to discuss the changes, but did so in complete isolation. Though the changes may be supported with well-founded reasoning on the part of the committee, the secretive process by which the committee

The University Senate did well in passing a resolution February 6 urging the administration to establish a "shared governance committee" that would include members of the University Senate and the Interfaith Center in drafting an academic calendar, as had been done for many years.

So long as professors are required to excuse students for religious holidays and arrange their syllabi so that major exams or assignments aren't scheduled those days, it seems disadvantageous to cancel classes on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. More concerning was the committee's plan to schedule finals on Saturday and Sunday. However, administrators in the Provost's office proved willing to negotiate on that matter after discussions with Undergraduate Student Government President Mark Maloof and Vice President of Academic Affairs Adil Hussein. Robbins said that the provost was likely to finalize a new calendar that added reading days before finals began and limited finals to weekdays, but classes will be held on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur without negotiation.

Though the administration has admitted no wrongdoing in the process by which it drafted the calendar and it hasn't indicated that it would attempt to gather sufficient input from the campus community before making changes in the future, the fact that it was willing to negotiate on some changes to the calendar is a sign that it does consider student and faculty input important.

However, the fact that the administration did not consider any outside input on its decision to hold classes on Jewish holidays is unacceptable. USG Senator David Adams drafted a resolution rejecting the process by which the new calendar was created and demanded that the changes not be implemented. Without the "appropriate or adequate input," the resolution says, the new calendar is illegitimate. But the USG Senate voted it down, and in doing so failed to send a message to the administration that it would not tolerate such a front on its right to represent the student body.

According to the minutes of the February 9 USG meeting, there was concern that such a demanding resolution would damage USG's ability to negotiate with the administration on issues in the future. So long as the governing body that is meant to represent the students panders to the administration rather than demanding a say on important issues, it is a far cry from effective. This most recent breach of trust sets a particularly sorry precedent of cowardly appeasement in place of legitimate representation.

"...the new calendar stripped students and faculty of their right to weigh in..."

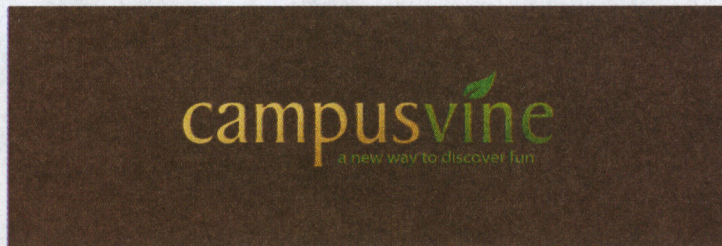
drafted the new calendar stripped students and faculty of their right to weigh in on such an important matter.

In the past, a committee that included representatives from the University Senate and the Interfaith Center met every five years to draft the academic calendar. It wasn't scheduled to meet again until 2015. By drafting a calendar with significant changes that overrode the previously adopted calendar, the administration abused its power and assumed authority without seeking proper input about the impact it would have on faculty and students.



FROM USG AND CAMPUSVINE, AN EARNEST EFFORT

Since the start of the spring semester,



clubs that don't hold events on campus will be stripped of their funding. When this happened to 15 clubs, the appropriate parties were contacted, a post was made on the USG website and the appeals process was clearly

the Undergraduate Student Government has been going out of its way to improve its strained relationship with campus clubs and organizations. It's a noticeable change for USG, and it's a welcome one.

President Mark Maloof started this trend by issuing an executive order the first week back from break. It called for a review and subsequent revisions to the financial bylaws, which were rewritten over the summer. Maloof said that his decision was based on a number of complaints from student clubs and organizations. The problems some clubs have faced are real and solutions are necessary.

Restrictive caps on how much clubs are able to spend on guest speakers have meant that "mid-sized events," as Maloof refers to them, have been next to impossible for anyone but the Student Activities Board to hold.

Treasurer Thomas Kirnbauer, who helped write the bylaws, has shown that he is receptive to change. He's also exhibited his dedication to improving the way USG handles the process in which it assigns budgets to each club by offering to shoulder more work than the previous treasurer did.

The town halls that President Maloof called for were an encouraging sign that USG is actively pursuing better communication with clubs and is genuinely interested in which regulations are causing clubs the most stress.

Unfortunately, the two meetings were sparsely attended, to say the least. At Thursday's meeting, a Press reporter was the only one to show up besides Treasurer Kirnbauer.

USG certainly could have better advertised the town halls. The dates and times were not posted on their website and if clubs were sent emails containing said information, The Press wasn't lucky enough to receive one.

Incredibly, USG didn't shy away after the experience. In a room packed full of club officers, Kirnbauer announced the date of yet another town hall in the hopes that students would show up to this one.

When it was literally a situation of life or death for a few clubs, Kirnbauer and the USG Senate were forgiving and quick to restore clubs' ability to function. A provision in the financial bylaws, that didn't exist last year, states that

explained.

The senate acted responsibly by realizing that the new bylaws were far from perfect and that newer provisions, like the one affecting these clubs, were not well known. They voted to restore line budget status to each of the clubs, without condition. Kirnbauer helped them apply for new budgets and the senate approved, only opting for a five percent cut to all the clubs they had to restore.

The best idea, proposed by Senator Ryann Williams, would have been a case-by-case examination of why each club was unable to spend money during the fall semester, followed by a determination of if they deserved their full budget back, or if they deserved less. Sadly, the rest of the senate wasn't interested.

The changes to the budget application process are even more promising, as they offer to systematically improve communication between clubs and the treasurer's office.

Until this year, USG would meet with clubs once to determine their budget. Clubs would attend a hearing in which they requested a certain amount of money from a committee, and wouldn't hear back until the final release of the budget for the next year.

Kirnbauer is changing that. His office will be sending clubs a draft budget before their hearings. The hearings wouldn't be the first time that the two parties would be communicating and it would be a time for them to work out their differences. That's fairer for clubs, even if it means more work for USG.

Then there's Campusvine. By replacing Allocate with a far more comprehensive budget management service, USG is setting clubs up for success. The new program is designed to make filling out a voucher like filling out an order form online, complete with drop down menus and all.

What's more, the program is designed like a social networking site. It has an in-site inbox synced to another inbox of the user's choice. Club members will be able to communicate more effectively with both each other and USG. They'll be able to track their vouchers through every step of the process. It's what clubs needed and now it's what they have.

CHANGES TO STONY BROOK'S ACADEMIC CALENDAR INEVITABLE

by John Fischer

Stony Brook University's academic calendar will undergo a number of changes next fall, including an end to the tradition of cancelling classes on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The new calendar, drafted by a committee of four administrators, also schedules finals for weekday classes on Saturday and Sunday, though that is likely to be amended after negotiations with the Undergraduate Student Government Senate, according to Vice Provost Charles Robbins.

The administration is implementing the changes to create a calendar "that is consistent and predictable from year to year with as much equal recognition and respect as possible for our diverse campus community that provides maximum instruction for students in the most efficient and effective manner," according to a presentation given by Robbins at the February 16 USG meeting.

The committee was concerned with maximizing class time for courses with labs, which are often hurt by class cancellations and make-up days. Under the new calendar, spring break will take place after the seventh week of class during the spring semester, which is more logical than tying it to Easter and Passover much later in the semester, according to Robbins.

"Our goal is to increase the level of respect for everybody," Robbins said. "We're trying to be inclusive, not exclusive."

Robbins said the committee of four administrators had been meeting for approximately the last year and a half to discuss the changes to the calendar. That differed from the traditional calendar-drafting process carried out by a committee of administrators, faculty and representatives of the Interfaith Center every five years. The committee was scheduled to meet next in 2015, when it was to consider altering the calendar in consideration of Muslim holidays.

On February 6, the University Senate passed a resolution urging the administration to create a "shared governance committee" that would include members of the Interfaith Center, the University Senate and students.

The administrators' changes to the calendar have angered the Jewish community on campus, who fear Jewish students will be unfairly penalized for missing class on Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah. Rabbi Joseph Tobeck of Stony Brook's Interfaith Center said the new calendar will force students to ask to be excused on religious holidays and faculty members may not comply.

"Students are going to have to go begging to their pro-

fessors, saying 'I will not be able to come to class,'" said Tobeck. "It creates an unlevelled playing field between students and faculty members."

"I think there will be a negative effect academically," said Tobeck. "Those will end up being empty days because a lot of students and faculty will not show up. It will damage Stony Brook's image in the community."

According to Robbins, the population of Jewish students on campus is approximately 8 percent, much lower than it had been decades ago. He said administrators found it difficult to justify cancelling classes for the religious holidays of only one religious group.

USG President Mark Maloof presented the new calendar to the Senate at its February 2 meeting. USG expressed anger at the administration for failing to include student and faculty input in the drafting process, especially when a five-year plan had already been agreed upon.

Maloof and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Adil Hussein, met with Robbins in the weeks following the presentation to discuss a new calendar that would include reading days before finals week and schedule finals only on weekdays. Hussein said he wasn't pleased with the lack of student input in the drafting process, but he was satisfied that the administration heard their concerns and will do things differently in the future.

USG Senator David Adams proposed a resolution that rejects the process by which the calendar was drafted and demands that the senate be granted "its constitutional right to represent the student body on matters of importance," and that the changes not be made. The resolution failed; on part due to fear that it would harm USG's ability to negotiate with the administration in the future, according to Adams.

Robbins said that the newly amended calendar, which has been presented to Provost Dennis Assanis, is likely to be approved. Media Relations officer Lauren Sheprow says the calendar will be released to the students and faculty once all decisions regarding it have been finalized. She also maintained that there will be an updated version next year.

"The 2012-13 academic calendar is still in process of being finalized," said Sheprow in an email. "A version of it has been presented to the USG Senate and feedback was received and [is] being taken into consideration. When the calendar is final it will be presented to the entire campus community."

Clubs applying for their budgets this semester will be introduced to draft budgets and Campusvine,

an upgraded version of Allocate, Undergraduate Student Government Treasurer Thomas Kirnbauer announced Saturday.

Because of the two changes, the budget allocation process will look significantly different this year than in years past.

Kirnbauer told a Student Activities Center auditorium half-full of club officers that the new processes would give them "more of an opportunity to have [their voices] heard."

First, Kirnbauer explained, clubs will submit a spreadsheet containing a detailed account of how much money they'll need for the next academic year and how they intend to spend it. They'll then receive a draft budget from the treasurer's office in mid-March.

That process used to take place at the budget hearings. This year, the hearings will be used as a forum to discuss the draft budgets.

"By no means is it going to be the final budget that you're going to be getting at the end of the year," Kirnbauer said of the draft budgets. He indicated USG would be open to hearing clubs' concerns and that clubs would be more aware of what their 2012-2013 budgets will be before they are announced.

"It's not going to be a surprise to anyone at the end of the year," he said.

He did, however, warn clubs that USG is "on a restrictive budget of three million dollars."

"That we gave you," quipped a student in the crowd.

But skepticism quickly turned to excitement when Allocate creator and

A NEW ALLOCATE AND A NEW BUDGET PROCESS

by Trevor Christian

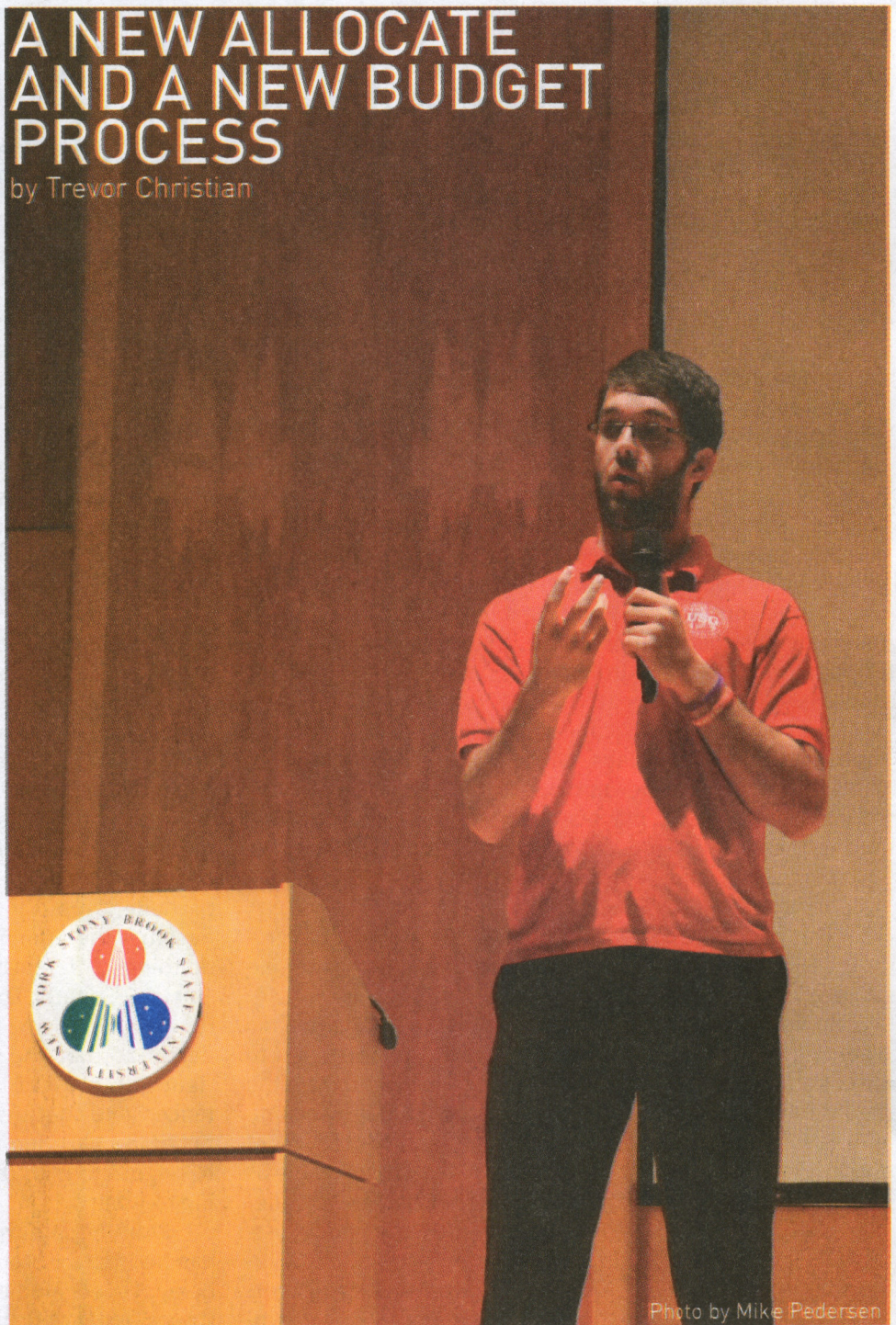


Photo by Mike Pedersen

Stony Brook alumnus Alex Dimitriyadi took the stage to introduce Campusvine, a drastic improvement on his original budget allocation software.

"Over the last year and a half now, we've been getting feedback anecdotally," said Dimitriyadi, acknowledging the complaints the software had inspired. He also launched a survey on Allocate to learn what club officers most wanted from the site.

The results were displayed in word cloud for the club officers before Dimitriyadi went on to explain how the features would be incorporated into Campusvine.

It became clear that the software would be different from Allocate as soon as Dimitriyadi logged into the demo.

Campusvine features a dashboard with regular updates on vouchers and other notifications visible on the home page. A messaging feature in which club members could contact each other through Campusvine is included, as well. Club officers will also have access to a list of approved vendors and will be able to choose which email address notifications are sent to.

Josh Graham, the president of the bowling club on campus, has been through budget allocations before and he had struggled with Allocate.

"The budget isn't there. They never update it, never tell you how much money they have left," he said.

With Campusvine, that will change. There is a new tool that will allow officers to see how much of their budget

has been spent and how much has been allocated and is awaiting USG approval.

"As you have more and more events, you can see how much money you have left and budget appropriately," said Dimitriyadi when introducing the feature.

"I like it, actually. I'll have see how it goes," said Graham of the tool. He described the meeting as yet another success for USG.

"Every year they seem to do something to help out clubs a little bit," he said.

The seminar went so well there was even a small miracle at the end.

"This is one of the most convincing USG events I've ever been to," said Krissy Agathos, a WUSB host and student activist known as a harsh critic to everything USG does. "They're finally doing stuff right," she said.

FORMER UN AMBASSADOR FOR WOMEN'S SOCIAL PROGRESS

by Bushra Mollick



Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury led Thursday's provost lecture at the Wang Center as he discussed United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace & Security, a plan that aims to implement the active participation of women in political decision-making internationally.

Born in Bangladesh, the University of Dhaka graduate began his diplomatic ventures in 1967. He served as

Bangladesh's Permanent Representative for the United Nations from 1996-2001, and is most noted for his work in 2000 that led to the eventual creation of Resolution 1325. Chowdhury has also formerly served as President of the Security Council, President of the United Nations Children's Fund Executive Board (UNICEF) and Vice President of the Economic and Social Council of the UN.

"Did you know that we take more than 21 thousand breaths a day? But most of us use only 50 percent of our lungs' capacity," he began, carefully annunciating each word, "The same is true about the world's seven billion people," he continued, making an analogy to our global use

of human resources. Although women have come a long way socially in the United States, the same certainly cannot be said for women worldwide. Unfortunately, many cultures still embrace the concept that women are subordinate to men, and their laws often mirror the same idea.

Resolution 1325 came into effect in March 2000 and "urges Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts." The agenda consists of three important principles: Protection, Prevention, and Participation. Protection is necessary because women are usual targets for mental, physical and sexual violence; "They are the worst victims of war," Chowdhury stated. It is a nation's internal duty to prevent violence towards women, and lastly it is a nation's active duty to incorporate women into community affairs.

While Chowdhury's Resolution continues to grow in popularity among western cultures, it has yet to be accepted elsewhere. Of the 193 United Nations members, only 34 have prepared plans to pursue the further social progression of women. Bangladesh, Chowdhury's nation of origin, has yet to create a course.

Perhaps the greatest issue at hand is education. "Education has emerged as one intervention women can do effectively," he remarked. Globally, women make up over 60 percent of those who are illiterate. In order for any social justice to be served, women must take—and have the opportunity to take—the most crucial step of education to achieve any equality at all.

The words “knitting” and “college student” do not often appear in the same sentence. Then again, neither do the words “charity” and “college student.” But all three of these come together in the form of a new club at Stony Brook called We Give a Yarn.

The group has only had two meetings so far. Interested students have come together to knit and crochet. Some are working on their own projects, and others use the abundant donated yarn to make charitable items.

“I think it’s pretty cool to be able to make something practical, while at the same time being creative about it,” club member Jon Hunt said.

Hunt has attended both of the meetings and has started learning basic crochet techniques from co-founders Emma Chylinski and Tatiana Pawelec, who welcome both experienced knitters and novices to the group.

“It was very frustrating at first, but it has gotten easier,” Hunt said. “I’m hoping to actually make something soon.”

Ravelry.com is a knitting forum that Chylinski spends a lot of time on. She said she posted the idea for her club there and received an enthusiastic response. That response has resulted in Chylinski’s closet being stuffed full of donated yarn.

One local woman donated a particularly large amount of yarn, asking that the group use it to make hats for her church, which will then donate them to cancer patients.

Chylinski said they are using squares made while teaching new members, as well as random squares from other knitters and crocheters, to make baby blankets to donate to the hospital. Other than that, Chylinski says



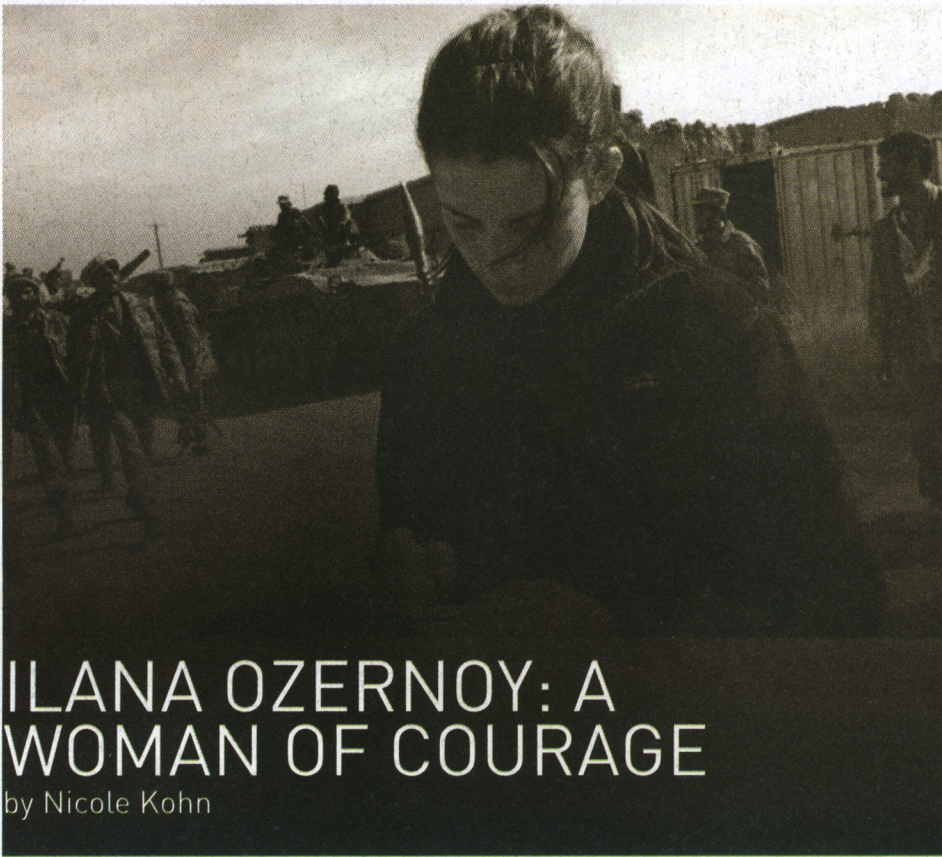
GIVING A YARN

by Jen Novotny

Photo by Andrey Dotsenko

the group is “open to suggestions” for other places to donate.

Currently, the group is meeting in the basement of Sanger College in Tabler Quad with the blessing of Residence Hall Director Michael Blackman. “As long as we don’t have more than like 20 people or break anything,” Chylinski said, the club should be allowed to stay.



ILANA OZERNOY: A WOMAN OF COURAGE

by Nicole Kohn

Ilana Ozerney, former foreign correspondent for U.S. News and World Report

Ilana Ozerney, former foreign correspondent for *U.S. News & World Report* said on February 14 in the SAC auditorium that she has come to teach at Stony Brook because "[she] didn't want to live a life based around other people's stories."

"I wanted to tell my story. I wanted to teach," Ozerney said. The 34-year-old accepted an offer from Dean of Journalism School, Howard Schneider, to teach at the university.

Ozerney explained that when she was eight-years-old she and her family fled from Russia as political refugees. Fifteen years later, she took up reporting, starting weeks after the 9/11 attacks.

"I went down to Ground Zero with this slightly legal press card," she said. From there she got on a plane to Moscow, flying back to the place she had left 15 years earlier. "I wanted to go home, I really wanted to go home."

She then traveled to Afghanistan to cover the battle against the Taliban. Writing for *U.S. News & World Report* and *The Boston Globe*, she followed the Northern Alliance while the rebel army pushed its way towards Kabul.

"I didn't think of myself as a war correspondent," Ozerney said, "I saw myself as a correspondent covering the war."

At 16-years-old, she got her first job at the Gap. Before she got the job, she would regularly shop there with her parents and she would always see the

door to the Employees Only lounge; she wondered what happened in side. When she got the job, it was the first place she went.

"The day I got to go into the employees lounge was the greatest day of my 16-year-old life," Ozerney said.

"That is what journalism is," having that urge to find out what was behind that employee door. "Afghanistan is one big, huge employees lounge," Ozerney added.

Krisald Bala, a senior biology major said, "Her story inspired me, and I believe it did so with much of the audience, adding, "The message I got was to believe what you do in life."

When Ozerney returned back to the U.S. she suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. She described the moments of joy she had just going to pick up her dry cleaning down the street, or taking a ride to Whole Foods.

"I kept asking myself, what is real? Is paying \$4 for a cup of coffee real, or [is] being shot at real?"

Brittany Stapelfeld, a freshman journalism major said, "While some of the stories she told were scary it also made me feel like my dream to be a journalist was achievable as long as I am willing to be as courageous as Ilana is. I left the event motivated to do whatever it takes to achieve my goals."

Dean Schneider said he is "looking forward to working with Ozerney in the future." Ozerney had actually turned an audience member's question regarding that same future to Dean Schneider.

"When I was asked where I was sending her next, I said "into the classroom," because I want her to inspire," he said.

Ozerney gave the audience great guidance explaining that, "Rejection is not personable." When the night was over the audience walked out of the auditorium with a whole new perspective of the job of a war correspondent.

"I wanted to test myself. I wanted to walk through fire and come out unscathed," Ozerney said. "My life is to be defined as the sum of my work."

STONY BROOK MOVEMENT OCCUPIED WITH FEES

by Olivia Burne

"Occupy everything!" cried of thousands of protestors around the United States and even the world at the end of 2011, as the 99 percent voiced their complaints against corporations, the government and big banks.

As the Occupy movement spread to campuses, a group of students picked up on the idea and decided to form a Stony Brook chapter of the movement, protesting against rising tuition fees and seemingly incongruous fees (the term "academic excellence" comes to mind).

Now, in semester two, you could be forgiven for thinking that the Occupy Stony Brook movement had been evicted from the agenda of on-campus activists, much the same way that the protestors were booted out of their inner-city

But according to the posters' creator, who asked to remain nameless, the posters were intended to focus on issues "that hit close to home," like the academic excellence fee that was announced at the end of last semester by the University.

The posters identified two items of great importance to the general student public—beer and money—and told readers to "protest the "bullshit" at the Occupy Stony Brook General Assembly meetings every Monday evening at 5:30.

"We had only a few new members," said the anonymous poster designer. "I think if we do more and redesign the posters with our audience in mind, it could be more successful."

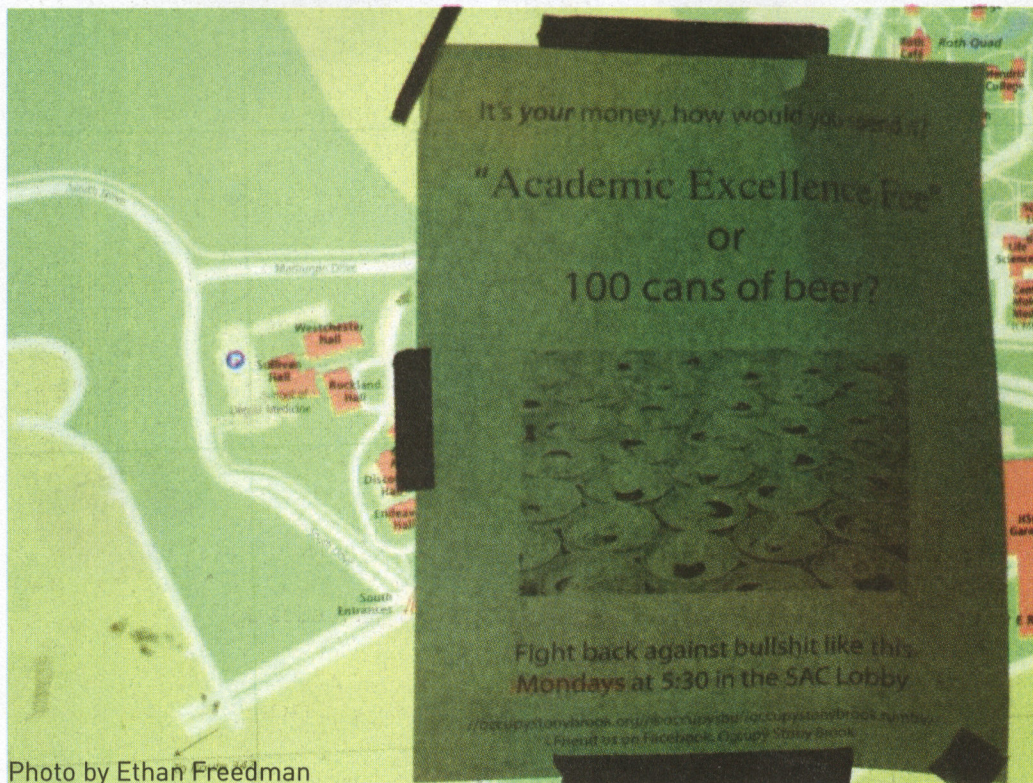


Photo by Ethan Freedman

encampments.

But last Monday, Occupy Stony Brook made a comeback in the form of somewhat abstract posters dotted throughout campus.

The most common poster showed a table of beer bottles and asked the viewer "Academic Excellence Fee or 100 cans of beer?" Confused? Some students were.

"I didn't really understand what they meant," said Leanne Skrabacz, a technological systems management major.

Fellow occupier, Roger Palomeque, a senior computer engineering major is not so sure.

"There's a disconnect in terms of communication," said Palomeque. "Occupy Stony Brook is non-hierarchical; there's no central authority."

The anonymous poster designer agreed, saying that "there is no leadership," but that there are advantages and disadvantages to the Occupy structure.

"The Occupy movement is a direct democracy, so all decisions and actions are much slower because you have to listen to everyone," the designer said. "But changing would defeat part of the movement."

The focus of this semester's Occupy movement is a renouncement of the SUNY 2020 bill—a bill that allows state schools in New York to

increase tuition fees by \$300 per year for the next five years.

By occupying areas like the SAC lobby and putting up posters that appeal to a student's sensibilities, Occupy Stony Brook is attempting to awaken a rebellion within the walls of Stony Brook and, according to our anonymous source, "get people interested in activism."

Perhaps the next logical strategy will be to offer free beer at the General Assembly, instead of pictures of it.



RECYCLEMANIA

by Amanda Douville

An empty plastic Aquafina bottle, a stack of old papers from last semester's classes and half of an uneaten burrito from Kelly Dining. What do all of these things have in common?

They are all materials that can easily be recycled as part of Stony Brook University's participation in the RecycleMania competition. The contest, which runs for eight weeks during the spring semester, is a way to get students more involved and engaged in positive recycling habits.

"It's a fair and friendly competition and we enjoy being a part of that because it's really just a wonderful opportunity when working with the contest," said Michael Youdelman, the Manager of Recycling and Resource Management, also the representative for Stony Brook. "It's a portal for us to do outreach and it's also an opportunity or a gateway to reinvigorate different areas around the campus like campus dining."

This year, over 600 colleges and universities from all over the United States and Canada are participating in the contest, which started on February 5 and will run until March 31. During those eight weeks, campus representatives from each school are responsible for weighing and recording the amount of traditional materials being recycled every day. Those materials include mixed papers, bottles, cans, wasted food and, a new category this year, electronics.

All materials that are placed in proper recycling units are loaded onto trucks which are then weighed on a large scale. After subtracting the weight of the truck, the amount of recycled materials are then recorded and taken to proper recycling facilities.

"We utilize our own university truck scale, that's certified so our numbers are real," said Youdelman referring to other schools that rely on outside vendors in order to obtain measurements that might not be entirely accurate. "It's a real advantage."

Outside of the recycling component of the competition, another major element is getting students active and aware of the importance of recycling. Campus Residences have a huge part in that effort as resident assistants were asked to assemble bulletin boards in the lobby of every

dorm building highlighting the importance of recycling and what students can do to help. The paper- and bottle-covered boards display signs informing students what can and cannot be recycled and giving further information about the competition. The boards were part of a competition among residence halls which was aimed at getting the student community involved as well.

"It's an interesting way to get students involved other than just the normal, day to day telling someone to recycle," said Casey Kurnath, an environmental studies major and student outreach coordinator at the university. "It's an alternative method that gets people's competitive side and their school spirit side going."

Campus Dining also has a hand in the contest, as they are responsible for measuring and recording the amount of food that is being wasted at each dining location every day. The first set of results will not come in for another week since the first two weeks are primarily a trial period. Along with food waste management, Campus Dining also offers reusable cups and mugs that reduce the number of cardboard cups each student uses a day.

"Let's say you were going twice a day, you get a cup, and you're throwing that cup away," said Youdelman. "Times that by 10,000 students who live on campus, [or the] 27,000 students attending. It adds up."

All this week, student outreach coordinators were busy making sure offices throughout the campus had recycling bins. They also made students and faculty members aware of the new addition of e-waste recycling, as well as office clean-outs for paper and other recyclable materials.

In 2011, the RecycleMania competition managed to increase the total recycling rate among all participating schools from 24.37 percent to 27.79 percent during the course of the contest. Stony Brook University alone saw an 11.59 percent increase at the end of last year's competition, a number organizers hope to beat this time around.

"We use RecycleMania as an opportunity to reinvigorate the recycling infrastructure," Youdelman said. "We're in the game, we're competing and our hope is that more and more students, faculty and staff will become aware."

THE RISE OF STONY BROOK MEMES



by Trevor Christian

Courage Wolf, move on over. Advice Dog, step aside. Wolfie, Stony Brook's mascot, is now by far the most popular canine-based meme on campus.

SBU Memes, a Facebook fan page that was launched on Wednesday, has become an instant Stony Brook phenomenon. By the time SBU Memes had been on Facebook for a day, it had already amassed 1,000 likes. A week later, the number was just shy of 3,500. The memes are typically shared by scores of students and seen by hundreds of their friends.

Jess Patrovic, the creator of SBU Memes, said she was inspired by Boston University's meme page.

"I honestly wasn't into memes before I made this page," she said, adding how shocked she was that it became so popular. "I didn't expect it to blow up that quickly at all."

This certainly isn't the first time that a collection of memes has become popular on the Internet. Image boards, curated and crowd-sourced alike, have long been favorite destinations for Internet users.

Tumblr, Reddit and 4chan are just some of the meme-filled sites that rank among the Internet's 1,000 most visited websites, according to Alexa, a website that monitors website traffic. Sites exclusively dedicated to memes, like Knowyourmeme and Meme Generator, aren't far behind.

It is, however, Stony Brook's most popular discussion forum to date. Stony Brook Things, a Tumblr blog featuring similar content, never took off quite the same way. It's picked up popularity in recent days, though many of the newer posts were originally featured on SBU Memes.

And unlike SBUChat, SBU Memes is embracing the mainstream. By using Facebook, the page has been able

to grow organically. The meme format and host site also means that trouble is less likely. The posts are not anonymous and the purpose of the page is to post humorously captioned pictures. A Wikileaks-style dumping of student information on this page seems unlikely.

At its best, the page has put the likes and dislikes, along with the lore of Stony Brook into writing. Their dislikes include the administration's policies, ("Raises tuition, builds hotel," read one chronologically-challenged meme) and geese.

Roosevelt and Kelly Quads were both stereotyped: Kelly as a haven for potheads and Roosevelt as "a shadowy place" and a "hood."

By far the most popular meme was one that poked fun at the Tabler steps while referencing a Jay-Z song. It had more than 1,100 likes and 100 shares on Thursday.

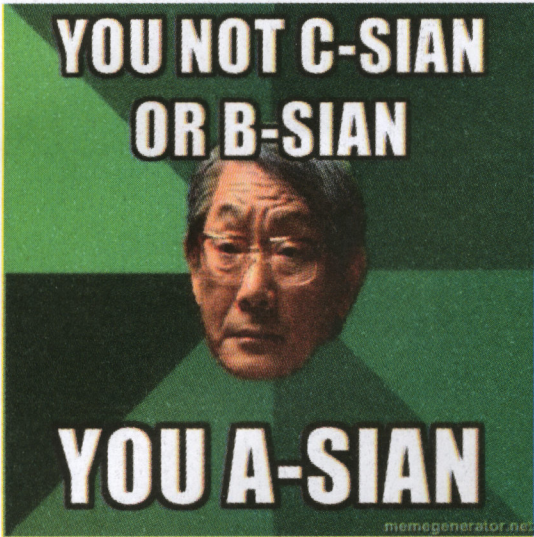
"I got 99 problems. 54 of them are the Tabler steps," reads the meme. The text was placed over a photo of the steps, covered in snow.

Sophomore Emma Tobias became the star of a meme after sharing a photo of herself on the Where in the World is Wolfie fan page. In it, she's holding a small stuffed Wolfie outside of a pagoda in Reading, Pennsylvania.

"1 Million USD and we'll return the wolf," read the meme that used her photo, suggesting that Tobias had kidnapped Wolfie and was holding him for ransom, possibly in China. Tobias wasn't a fan of the joke.

"It took me a minute to remember that it was all just part of a joke and I could laugh it off," she said.

Still, she enjoys the page and has shared a number of the memes posted on and by it.



High Expectations Asian Father, a meme character based on the stereotype of demanding Asian parents, was popular long before SBU Memes. Thanks to the meme became a mainstay on Stony Brook's page early in its existence.

"They're really funny as a whole," Tobias said of the memes, "and it gives us a way to just tell it like it is on campus."

Other students have been less emphatic about the memes' quality.

While sitting towards the back of the USG Senate meeting, Ken Myers, a member of the Student Activities Board, decided to show his two friends sitting next to him a few of the memes. At first they laughed quietly, as not to disrupt the senate. But a few memes in, the laughter stopped.

"This is so stupid," Myers said, closing the window. He later explained his thoughts on the page.

"Some of them are wrong. People are just putting text on a picture," he said. "But they're getting better." Myers pointed to some of the captioned pictures of Wolfie as a sign of the page's improving quality.

"I actually reposted one of them," he added.

Myers expressed concerns about memes that were insensitive towards Asian and Asian American students. High Expectations Asian Father showed up quite a few times, as did jokes specific to the behaviors of Asians on campus.

"Has to print one page. Asian in front of you is printing math textbook," read one meme. "Seawolf? Why not A-wolf?" read another.

"They're not really that offensive," said Asian American E-Zine's Vice President Brian Loo after looking at some of the memes targeting Asians. The publication's staff was looking at the memes as he spoke. He said he had seen some of the memes before SBU Memes shared them and that most of them weren't very funny.

The comments, however, were a different story. Adam Sue, the club's president, pointed to one on a photo of a sign that read "YOUR IN SEAWOLVES COUNTRY."

"Damn Asians!" wrote a student, complaining about the misused "your."

"Even people who were born here make that mistake all the time," said Sue, pointing out that some of the other

jokes on the site stereotyped Asians as being good at academics, something he didn't mind.

To the campus's credit, a few commenters, both Asian and not, jumped on the comment for being bigoted. Others blamed the grammatical error on science majors.

"I don't bother talking to those kinds of people," said Wilson Jiang, a staff writer. The group compared the commenters to the "trolls" that inhabit sites like YouTube and traditional image boards.

The page has certainly not been without its critics. Patrovic was more than willing to acknowledge them. "The memes are definitely hit or miss as a few students have commented. I didn't expect everyone to like all of them," she said.

She mentioned one commenter in particular who argued with a meme joking that "everyone" on campus is from Long Island.

"So many people are unable to grasp the concept of exaggeration and satire," Patrovic said. Obviously not everyone here is from Long Island but 48 percent is still a lot! A little hyperbole never hurt anyone. Except that kid, apparently."

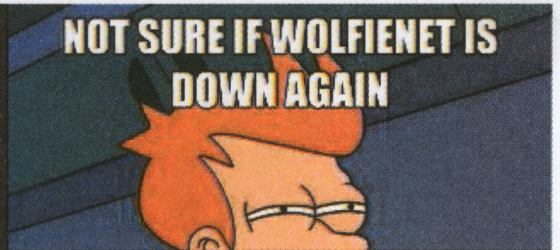
Patrovic's only fear was that she would portray Stony Brook in a negative light. She said a commenter asked if Stony Brook was a bad place to go to school and that she responded by saying she loved it here.

"I did it for laughs," said Patrovic. "My sole intent was to make people laugh, to provide an interactive place where students and alum could joke about Stony Brook while really giving everyone a sense of community."

Patrovic shared a quote from a friend that she thought put the intention of her site best.

"Wherever you go to school, you need to be able to laugh. Every school has its share of dumb administrative moves, professor and technology issues, and confused students. SBU is a great place, especially if you make it worth your while."

No, your eyes don't deceive you. This Futurama-based meme was intentionally left half blank to represent a broken link. WolfieNet creates them all the time. This isn't the only meme to poke fun at our wifi-service, but it's probably the best.





CLASSICAL MUSIC GIANTS IN OUR BACKYARD

by Sarah Evins

As one of the most distinguished string ensembles of our time, the Emerson String Quartet has found success in its longevity. Over the course of their 33 years together, the musicians of Emerson have become giants in the world of classical music with nine Grammy Awards, a never-ending succession of international concert tours and an illustrious body of recordings.

However, the quartet recently announced that their line-up will soon change. On February 14, cellist David Finckel stated on his website that the upcoming 2012-13 concert season would be his last. Finckel, at age 60, co-produces at a record label, runs a summer chamber music festival called Music@Menlo and is artistic director of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center with his wife, pianist Wu Han.

"It doesn't surprise anybody that he might feel the need to have a less hectic life," says Music Department Chair Judith Lochhead.

Stony Brook University has been profoundly affected by its association with the Emerson String Quartet. Through the efforts of piano professor Gilbert Kalish, former provost Robert McGrath and former president Shirley Strum-Kenny, the quartet was appointed as artists-in-residence in 2002. As part of their contract Emerson was hired to perform four

concerts a year and coach the university chamber music program, cited Lochhead. Since that time, the quartet's involvement on campus has grown dramatically.

Over the course of teaching at the university, members of the Emerson String Quartet have grown increasingly connected to the students of Stony Brook. "It became ap-

"Not only have they been a window into the professional chamber music world, but knowing them as people has inspired me."

parent early on that [Emerson violinist] Phil Setzer wanted to teach more than just chamber music," explained Lochhead. Setzer is now a full time tenured professor of violin and is soon to be joined by his colleague. Emerson violist Larry Dutton is expected to begin his full-time viola professorship next year.

The quartet not only expanded their teaching duties, but also generated new performance opportunities for university musicians. What began as a contract of four concerts a year has become three formal concerts showcasing recent recorded works and a week long spring chamber music festival highlighting the talents of Stony Brook's student musicians.

"The Emerson Festival is really exciting because you actually get to perform a chamber piece with a member of the Emerson Quartet," said student and violinist Natalie Kress.

These concerts are free and open to the public, a huge incentive that has drawn in many members of the community. In the process of seeing the world-class Emerson musicians in action, the community has gotten to know budding talents of student musicians. Furthermore, community involvement has been key to fundraising for the music department and Staller Center. "Of course, there has been evidence of increased fundraising because of the Emerson String Quartet," noted Lochhead.

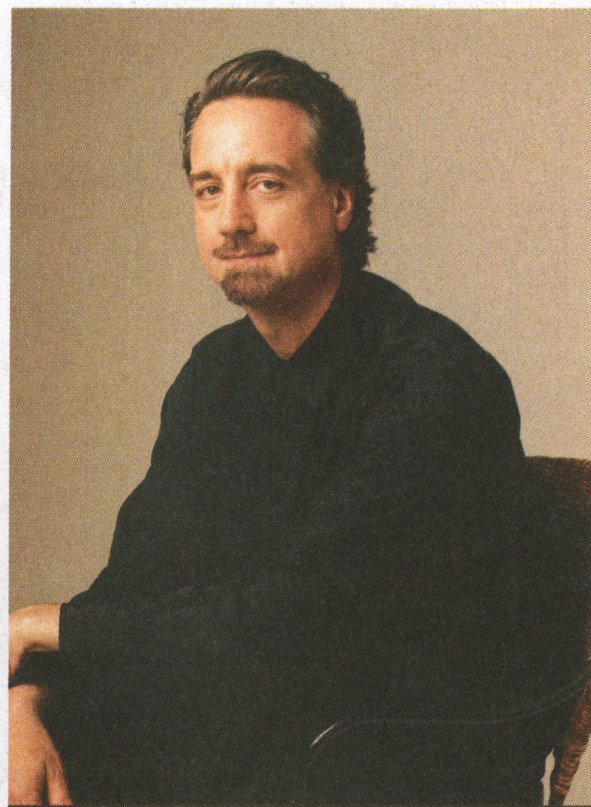
The consequences of these active roles on the Stony Brook campus have helped the music department grow in notoriety, by giving it a "higher profile," declared Lochhead. The already prestigious department has also seen an improvement in recruitment of talented musicians from all over the world.

Many students concur that Emerson's presence was a unique incentive to attend SBU. Violinist and student Jon Block has been coached and taught by members of the Emerson String Quartet. He cited that the opportunity to work with such esteemed musicians was extremely compelling. "Much of their advice is immensely intuitive," he says. Through their instruction, Block said he has reached a new level of musicianship.

Kress is also thankful for the time she has been able to spend with the quartet. "Not only have they been a window into the professional chamber music world, but knowing them as people has inspired me." These rewarding experiences often come with a huge price tag. However, having the group at Stony Brook has allowed Kress and her fellow musicians to get a conservatory experience at a state university.

The impending membership change of the Emerson Quartet might have students and community members fearing for the worst. Lochhead sees no such misfortune in sight. Finckel stated on his website that his withdrawal from Emerson will allow him "to pursue, with greater energy, [his] increasing number of performing, educational and presenting commitments." Lochhead says it is likely that Finckel will stay on the university faculty, but in a somewhat different capacity for at least the first year of his life independent of Emerson.

The Emerson Quartet has already lined up Finckel's successor. Lochhead clarifies that the cellist's departure from the group will not diminish its role on campus because of the arrival of new cellist Paul Watkins in the fall of 2013. Watkins, a celebrated solo cellist, conductor, and chamber musician from England will fulfill Finckel's former duties. "If changes need to happen, they will be resolved as they come up," said Lochhead.



Finckel, above, will be departing the Emerson String Quartet at the end of this concert season. Watkins, below, will replace him in the fall of 2013





STUDYING ART: THE PRICED PICTURE

by Alyssa Melillo

When Mindy Mosher changed her major from computer science to studio art with a minor in digital arts, she didn't expect to trade in the textbook expenses to which we are accustomed for costly, mandatory art supplies.

"It's definitely way more expensive to be an art major than a computer science major," she says.

The 30-year old senior spent \$220 on supplies for a photography class last semester. The cost mostly covered film, negative sheets and paper. To her convenience, she didn't have to buy a camera because she already had one. But for her digital arts class this semester, Mosher says her professor told her class to expect to spend about \$300 on paper and ink.

For Mosher, these expenses are not easy to cover.

"I'm not made of money," she says, adding that she's not the only one complaining. "I hear this from every art student I've come in contact with."

Most art courses at Stony Brook require students to purchase their own supplies in addition to paying a studio fee, which is supposed to go towards materials and equipment upkeep. From oil pastels to clay to photo paper, students

can spend anywhere from \$200 to \$500 on art supplies per class, and the costs add up with every course a student takes. The university does provide chemicals, though.

Martin Levine, a printmaking professor and the undergraduate director for the art department, says students have been paying for supplies for years. Due in part to budget cuts, he says there aren't enough funds to cover salaries and other expenses while also providing supplies for hundreds of students. There is not enough funding to offer scholarships, either. "It's never going to happen with low tuition," he says. "There's just not enough money."

There are also potential issues with providing every student with his or her own share of supplies, Levine says. Some students may use more paper or drawing materials than others, which would leave some with rations that last a whole semester and others empty-handed by midterms. There is also the possibility of students abusing the supplies by selling their surpluses.

Stony Brook is more than well-known for its focus on science and mathematics; it is a research university first and foremost. The faculty is layered with award-winning

scholars, and the university fosters its own hospital and a relationship with Brookhaven National Laboratory. Numerous grants, awards and donations—including the \$150 million Simons donation received last semester—have been dedicated to the advancements the students and faculty manage in mathematics, engineering, chemistry and biology. So much emphasis and priority is placed on these curricula that the smaller majors and minors studied at Stony Brook can easily be overlooked. Because of this reputation, and the fact that they have to buy their own supplies, many students like Mosher assume that art is underfunded compared to other majors.

According to last year's University Operating Budget, art was one of the lowest funded departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. It received \$2.1 million compared to \$3.9 million for music, \$2.4 million for English, \$3.1 million for history and \$2.9 million for political science, for example. Science departments, especially ones involving research, received anywhere from \$5.1 million (geosciences) to \$13.6 million (chemistry). For most departments, the majority of a budget is allocated for salaries, so the amount of faculty and staff is one factor that determines how much funding they receive. Some departments require several thousand dollars worth of equipment. Others, such as art, fund off-campus-affiliated facilities: the art department's budget funds the Pollack-Krasner House and the Study Center in East Hampton, which the Stony Brook Foundation operates. Many departments also receive grants that the Foundation handles as well.

Levine says the art department has requested additional funding in the past, but the university never granted the requests, and a university budget representative declined to comment. However, for this academic year, according to the University Operating Budget, the art department receives more funding by almost \$100,000. Salaries and wages make up for \$2 million of this year's \$2.2 million budget while \$197,000 cover supplies and expenses. Students' art fees total to roughly \$25,500; \$17,000 covering supplies and \$8,500 being put towards salaries and wages.

But allocation for equipment dropped significantly from last year to this year. Last year about \$16,000 went towards equipment – the majority of it came from a grant – and this year \$1,000 is allocated for that purpose.

Alexandra Iosub, a recent graduate who studied printmaking and lithography, says she is concerned with the management of the equipment she used while she attended Stony Brook. She says the presses students use to print lithographs are old and constantly in need of repair. "The lack of funding was most obvious in the litho studio," she says, comparing it to the digital arts studio next door which is filled with brand new Macs and secured by an alarmed glass door.

Along with paying her \$50-100 studio fee, Iosub had to purchase her own supplies as well: sponges, pencils, aprons and aluminum ball-grained plates. She says her pro-

fessor has rationed materials such as cheese cloth because there are not enough funds to replace them.

Art students are required to spend significant amounts of time outside of classes to work on their projects. Mosher works as a web designer and takes up sporadic contract jobs, not working as much as she would like because she needs time to complete her projects. After adding in the money she spends on supplies, she says she has to borrow money from her husband to relieve herself of these financial burdens. Iosub also worked while taking summer courses and she worked in the fall on top of a course load of five studio classes. Sometimes, if students cannot afford to buy supplies for a class, it can defer their graduation.

"If you're not working, how are you supposed to pay for supplies?"

"If you're not working, how are you supposed to pay for supplies?" Mosher says. "It's kind of like a huge Catch-22."

John Lutterbie, the art department chairperson, declined a request for an interview to discuss these issues.

Nader Nouraei, a senior and teaching assistant for the Photography I class, says many students confront him about their inability to afford supplies. One student, he says, told him she was poor and could not find the money to buy the suggested \$400 worth of materials. Nouraei says this affects students' performances in class because they are unable to produce decent prints.

However, he agrees with Levine that this is something the art department always required of students. He also agrees with the problems suggested by Levine that could arise if Stony Brook supplied students with their own rations of materials.

But the studio art and biology double major says he believes there is not much that can be done. "I think it's important to stay optimistic about it," Nouraei says. "But as of now, I don't really see it going anywhere."

A CULTURAL EXCHANGE

by Alyssa Melillo

It's around 3:15 on a rainy Thursday afternoon and Cheryl Chambers, in a black raincoat and toting an umbrella of the same shade, is running late.

She brings her appointment into her office, a spacious room with a window overlooking the back entrance of the Student Activities Center. One wall is covered in framed certificates and awards. Plaques etched with her name top a filing cabinet by the window. All of these recognitions and achievements highlight Chambers' success as an employee of higher education, particularly for her work as the Dean of Multicultural Affairs.

Five years ago this month, Chambers established the Office of Multicultural Affairs at Stony Brook. Since then she has worked to help students of all races and ethnicities spread their cultures throughout campus. Her job requires her to advise several clubs and organizations and attend countless meetings, especially when there are culture-related events to coordinate.

"All aspects of culture and diversity are right at our doorstep."

And for a school as diverse as Stony Brook, these events happen quite often.

"There's always stuff going on," Chambers says. "It's just really wonderful. I enjoy it."

Her schedule is packed: a meeting for Black History Month planning; another meeting to plan for next month's Multicultural Show and Food Tasting; various committee meetings. For Chambers, though, those meetings are just some of the many ingredients that help create the huge melting pot that is Stony Brook.

Before working at Stony Brook, Chambers worked in the Office of Minority Affairs at Syracuse University, where she got her Bachelor's degree in English. She eventually branched off into student activities and landed a job at Cornell University. Once she returned home to Long Island after a few years upstate, she began working at Stony Brook, another one of her alma maters (she earned her Master's degree in human resource management here), and held many different positions within the Dean of Students Office and student activities. That's when she saw opportunity.

"All aspects of culture and diversity are right at our doorstep," Chambers says. "This is a place where students can learn from each other and develop a sense of commu-

nity...and see how much they have in common."

The creation of the Office of Multicultural Affairs led to new traditions at Stony Brook, as well as the improvement of old ones. Chambers and her staff work with students and other advisors on planning events for Black History, Hispanic Heritage and Women's History Months, and they coordinate with the Interfaith Center for the Festival of Lights in December. And the Multicultural Show and Food Tasting has become a popular annual tradition with the office's help.

There are also many student-lead initiatives that Chambers and her staff oversee. The Multicultural Women's Alliance focuses on women's issues throughout different cultures, promoting awareness and coming up with potential solutions. The Student African American Brotherhood is a national organization that creates a peer community for African and Latino men and helps them excel as students and individuals. The UNITI Cultural Center, located in the Student Union, offers programs for campus community development and provides facilities for student use. Chambers uses these groups as examples of the many opportunities students have as outlets for cultural expression.

"We definitely have a lot, I think, to offer students here," she says. "There's a high degree of collaboration, support and acceptance."

Diversity is one of the foundations of any campus, Chambers says. At Stony Brook, a community compiled of numerous races, religions, sexualities, ages and ethnicities, diversity is literally everywhere, and Chambers encourages students to embrace it through programs and events while they're here.

But for Chambers, experiencing different cultures is not the only part of being a multicultural person. Part of being such a person, she says, "is taking some type of action." She uses the example of a hypothetical conversation where one individual might make an offending comment about homosexuality and suggests that students challenge it. "It doesn't mean you have to take up arms," she says with a laugh. "Just speak up and say, 'You know, I think that remark is very hurtful.'"

Incorporating culture into the lives of Stony Brook students is the sole mission of Chambers' career. Aside from involvement with her church and her position on the Alumni Association Board of Directors, she dedicates the majority of her time to promoting the importance of a multicultural life to the campus community.

"We're so interdependent...that it's essential that a person has some skill level...to understand people from diverse backgrounds," she says. "It's a fact of life. You're going to encounter people who are different."

Photo by Liz Kaempf



STALL WISDOM

by Liz Kaempf

The janitorial staff at Stony Brook University is embroiled in a constant battle with girls ages 17 to 25. More often than not bathroom stalls are repainted to cover a variety of graffiti etched across stale bread-colored plastic walls. Vandalism, the act of destroying or defacing public or private property, is most assuredly a crime, but shouldn't that law be amended to allow the spread of *Twilight* quotes across campus?

The short answer is no. Not because vandalism is right and just, but because I don't want to read about Team Edward while I'm taking a tinkle. All it does is remind me of a multi-million-dollar-earning mediocre book series that is the glorified diary of a painfully average 14-year-old girl.

But every now and then, one finds bathroom graffiti gold. Scribbled in shades of baby blue, hot pink, and classic black, gems of wisdom such as "and just when the caterpillar thought the world was over he turned into a butterfly," and "love won't feed you --> it will feed your soul" capture your attention. Sometimes you even get lucky enough to find an impromptu wall mural. Who doesn't want a little art with their toilet time, after all?

So while it pleases me to see quotes from brilliant films like *Inception* and *Finding Nemo*, and graffiti portraits of cuddly animals makes everyone else's bathroom vandalism inadequate in comparison, it's nearly becoming an epidemic. And the school's janitors cannot be thrilled.

One must imagine that the janitorial staff cleans these messes up more often than they would like to. Sometimes the graffiti is not even painted over, but halfheartedly scrubbed from the walls, leaving behind faint streaks of highlighter and permanent marker. Is it frustration from a tedious task, or the lack of desire to rid a girl's restroom of scrawled advice?

It is likely the former. The janitors don't care about your favorite song quotes. They simply care about getting their job done. But it's a repetitive cycle. It's Einstein's definition of insanity; doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Vandals are always going to be painted over and janitors' work is always going to be written on.

But if the graffiti is gone how am I going to determine the ratio between Edward and Jacob lovers? And how will I be reminded that all I need is love? When I'm feeling down-trodden I need the inspiring, recycled, clichés on the walls of restroom stalls to remind me that all life's dilemmas can be solved with the reading of romantic comedy movie quotes.

Hélène Volat, Head of Reference & Information Services at the Melville Library, is opposed to this particular form of expression, calling it an "indelible form of writing."

"When your poetry attains the quality and importance of Emily Dickinson or when your paintings rival those of Georgia O'Keefe, then we might reconsider. In the meantime you may want to practice on your own bathroom walls," she said in an email.

However, I fear that this barbaric method of communication will not die, even with the critique of library staff. It seems we must settle for the bizarre, fluctuating state of cleanliness the bathroom stalls face. So if the masses can forgive these forlorn souls for their indiscretions, than allow me to implore all the vandals of Stony Brook not to throw a hissy fit about their most beloved quotes getting the ax. Instead, be grateful for the renewed chance at plagiarizing someone else's creativity and inspiration. You can't draw a new picture on your Etch-A-Sketch without erasing the old one first, after all.



Motha Fuckin' Art (MFA) Exhibit

by Andi Liao



The Masters of Fine Arts thesis exhibition is always a great opportunity for art lovers to be treated to a showcase of the best up-and-coming talent that our art department has to offer.

There is always an overabundance of amazing artwork to look at so it's sufficed to say that this semester's exhibit, "Bound," is no different.

The gallery space itself isn't occupied by much in terms of artwork. The installations themselves are spread across the gallery floor and the amount of negative space is startling at first, but once you make your way around the gallery and get a good perspective and handle on the works, it makes sense.

Each artist's piece inhabits its own very unique space and despite the varying styles and media present, everything meshed together very well. The overarching theme became the driving force in understanding and interpreting the show and it managed to bring incredible cohesiveness to what would have otherwise been viewed as a disjointed exhibit with no discernable theme or message.

I suppose for those laypersons and philistines who just don't "get" art or simply like "pretty paintings," they obviously wouldn't get it. I remember speaking to several people who criticized the exhibition simply because they failed to grasp the ideas that permeated beneath the surface.

Their loss, I guess.

Immediately upon viewing Pancho Westendarp's piece, I was greeted by this sense of profound familiarity. There was just something that struck me and made me feel like I was in a warm, welcoming and comfortable space. It was like I was in my own living room.

The piece itself was just simply unflappable. The fact alone that he managed to arrange these seemingly unrelat-

ed objects together into a unified body of work is awesome. Adding to that, he was capable of creating a self-sustaining electronic space with a guitar that plays itself. It was remarkable and looking at it from a geeky point-of-view, the cool-factor is simply undeniable.

It was interesting the way he explored the way in which us humans interact with the world and the objects around us. The presence of humans, or the lack thereof, influences and shapes the environments that we inhabit. For me, his choice to use the guitar was a natural one because it really encapsulated the idea behind the human identity and the way in which he drew upon the interrelation between who we are and how we affect the world around us. The ambient sounds that emanated from the installation really put me in the right mood to contemplate the ideas that are being presented.

Another artist's work that stood out to me was Dan Hess' "Swallowed in the Sea" series. I was particularly drawn to these images because of how much it reminded me of some of my own printed works and unique feelings of comfort and curiosity mixed with this underlying sense of dread.

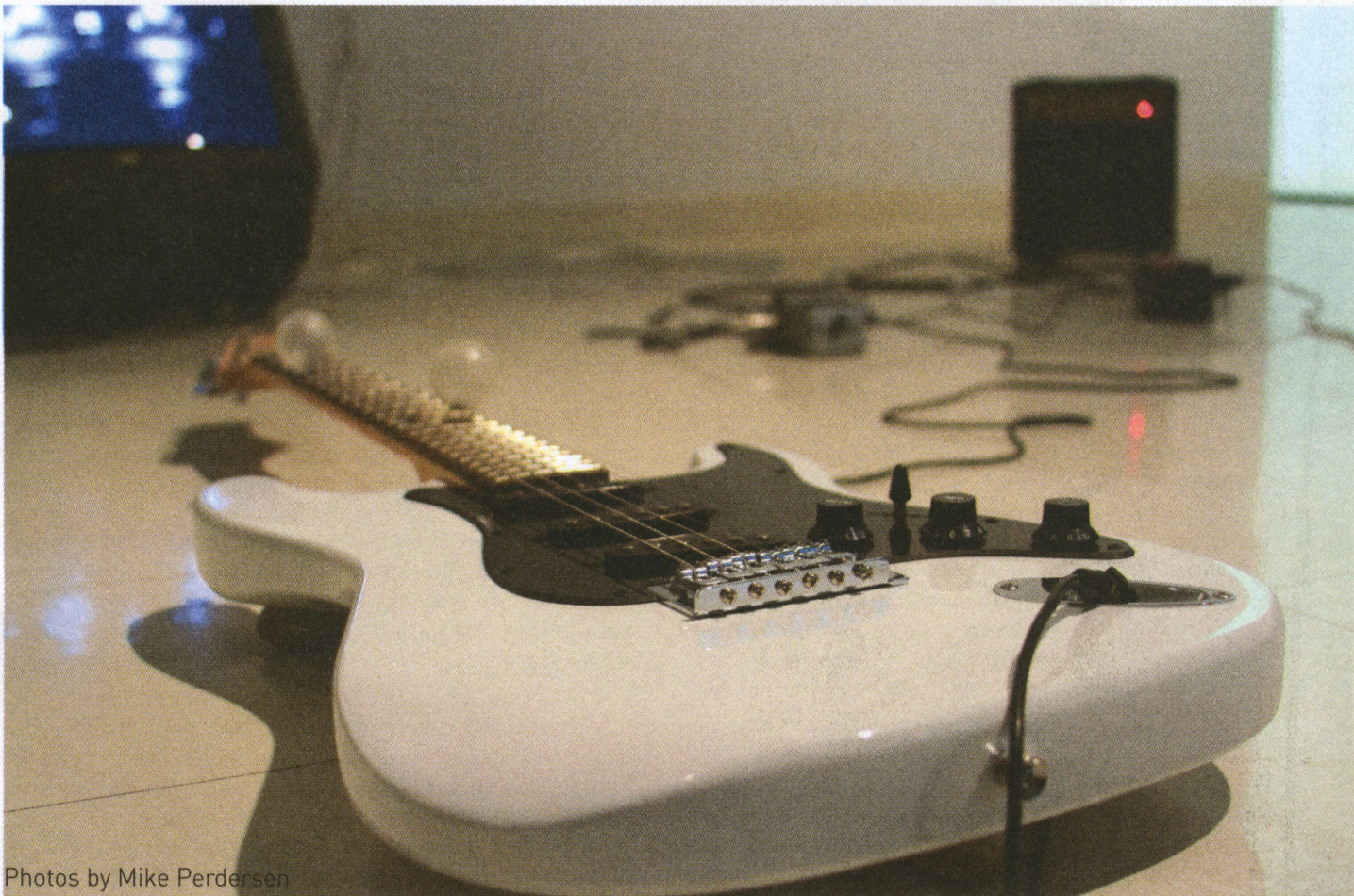
These images also evoked thoughts of H.P. Lovecraft's work, especially *At the Mountains of Madness*, which I personally think is his most triumphant work.

Throughout the book, the explorers venture forth into the dark, unforgiving Antarctic with a piqued curiosity coupled with a looming sense of danger. The feelings that pour forth from the book are echoed in Dan Hess' images. The most obvious parallels I noticed between the two were that Hess' swirl-like lines reminded me of the Old Gods of Lovecraftian lore, most evidently, in the tentacled behemoth Cthulu.

Hess even states that these works are his representation of the space that occupies the difference between realities. It makes sense. We still don't really have a full grasp on what we see as reality. Sure it may be a little farfetched to think that there are indeed alternate or parallel realities but thinking about it, we can't help but acknowledge that the human brain's capabilities have near-limitless potential and the way that Lovecraft's work, and through extension, Hess' work, plays on our innermost and untapped thoughts, dreams and nightmares is truly outstanding.

Thus by delving into the human subconscious, Hess successfully manages to hit the proverbial nail on the head. He set out to extract from his viewers their interpretations based on their own inner desires and fears, and he did it.

The exhibit is only open until February 29, so if you have not yet taken a look at it, you should check out "Bound" before it's too late.



Photos by Mike Perderson

THE HALCYON DAYS OF FINAL FANTASY

by Nick Statt



The first time I played a *Final Fantasy* game, I didn't quite 'get it.' I was eleven years old and I had my hands on a borrowed copy of the ninth installment in the series' core line of fantasy-based role playing games, terms that I was oblivious to in the 6th grade.

For one, my classmate said I could spend over 50 hours playing it. At the time, I could not fathom the idea of spending more time on a game than on *Pokémon Silver*, especially one where you had to sit idly in front of television screen instead of playing it nearly every second your parents made you leave the house. (Yep, I was that kid at the supermarket and doctor's office and mall and before and after school.) I also found myself dumbfounded that a game was capable of spanning four entire discs and incredulous to the claim of reviewers that it was one of the most graphically complex games of its time.

In the beginning hours of *Final Fantasy IX*, I became increasingly confused. Why did this game involve so much reading, dialogue and exposition? Why did it take hours upon hours of gameplay to discover what it was I was actually going to be doing in a game that my friend referred to as "like *Pokémon*, but way, way more complicated"? Why were all the male characters so androgynous?

As I plowed through *FF IX* and proceeded to devour the seventh and eighth installments as well, I began to see the series for what it truly was: immersive, book-like fantasy epics. (I have since played the first, third, fifth, tenth and twelfth installments.) They were the first video games that I found myself lost inside, spending hours exploring the world beyond Midgar in VII and coming to know the characters, like the tailed, extraterrestrial protagonist Zidane of IX, as intimately as one would any beloved book series of their childhood.

Sadly, the *Final Fantasy* series is now a hollow shell of the golden titles of the late '90's and early '00's that used to define the pre-HD console era. I currently have a

copy of the latest installment, *Final Fantasy XIII-2*, sitting in my Xbox 360, having already swallowed the stupidity underlying the release of a sequel to a game titled *Final Fantasy* after they did the very same thing with the tenth game.

I've hardly played it, and not necessarily because I don't have the time. I find myself turning instead to 1998's *Final Fantasy Tactics*, a title I unfortunately overlooked when I was younger due to me being uncharacteristically inept at tactical video games. I'm playing that, and increasingly so every day, because of how engrossing the mix of story and battle is, a trait that a traditional *Final Fantasy* pulls off with ease. I'm also enjoying it immensely because of how well it illustrates the stark shift in the series since its golden PSX era.

This evolution of the series has taken it from some of the strongest narratives video games have ever delivered to glossy, over-produced trash that relies on fan-boy dedication and the promise of a revamped battle system. The disappointment arises from stories that have, since the transition to the PlayStation 2 more than a decade ago, become increasingly muddled and forgettable. While *Final Fantasy X* did manage to pull off its delicate mixing of old and new, it showed signs of the series' teeter toward decline with a borderline-absurd time travel plot that has returned with a terrible, nonsensical vengeance in *XIII-2*.

This decline may have started with the tenth game, but it was *Final Fantasy XIII*, the basis for the shit-show of a sequel sitting freshly on store shelves, that sealed fans' opinions of the modern story capabilities of the series. XIII was criticized heavily for its linear storyline that basically held your hand from destination to destination and its storyline that fell flat on its face consistently before briskly wrapping up in one of the most disappointing endings I have ever endured. Both of these critiques were weighed against the game's only defense—its hyper-paced and

unique battle system. While this did make for some of the most tactically interesting moments in the series' history, it did little to alleviate the fact that the game brought out a level of emotional investment better suited to smartphone puzzle game.

This deviation from placing a priority on rich, well-written storylines has done irreversible damage to the series, one of the last remaining torch-carriers of the classic RPG. There was a time when *Final Fantasy VII* was considered by many to be the greatest game ever made for a number of reasons, the hallmark of which was the insistence that it was the first game to bring players to tears when one of its principal characters was killed.

Explaining that in the context of the modern *Final Fantasy* is almost laughable, and it pains me to play the current copy sitting in my Xbox knowing that its story will not only remain emotionally untouchable, but will in fact frustrate me with its lack of depth and its characters that manage to reach an offensive level of unlikable. I have played through a good portion of the game's opening chapters and have been consistently surprised at how terrible the dialogue and story exposition has been, especially considering how poor of a job Squar Enix did at veiling the ridiculous time travel-based, "we can change

the future" plot.

Maybe it's because now that blockbuster RPG series like *Mass Effect* and *Elder Scrolls*, which emphasize choice making and sport variations of the ever-popular morality-based game mechanics now dominating the genre, the RPG model of the late 20th century is dead and gone. It truly pains me to see these types of games making huge developmental leaps for the medium while the defining series of my video game childhood gets left in the dust, scraping up enough bullshit loose ends to release another *Kingdom Hearts* spinoff or failing miserably to capitalize on the already-over-crowded MMO market.

Currently, developer Square Enix's focus is on the remaining two thirds of its ambiguous *Fabula Nova Crystallissaga*, which contains an exclusive title for the new PlayStation Vita handheld that a small fraction of people will probably play and a game that would be far more exciting if the only thing we've seen of it in the last three years was the same rehashed CGI cut scenes. Who knows what will come of the series when it reaches its next unique installment, but I know now that the days of being lost in the narrative of a *Final Fantasy* are most likely stuck in the past, and no shitty, ill-contrived time travel storyline can bring them back.

THE VOW by Nicole Kohn

Based on true events, *The Vow* is a bittersweet love story of a newlywed couple and was released just in time for Valentine's Day. It begins with Paige (Rachel McAdams) unfastening her seatbelt in an attempt at a little foreplay with her husband Leo (Channing Tatum) on their way home from a movie on a snowy night. But before Paige can start anything the pair is hit from behind by a truck, sending Paige through the windshield and leaving her in a coma. A few weeks later she wakes with no memory of her husband, her marriage or her current life.

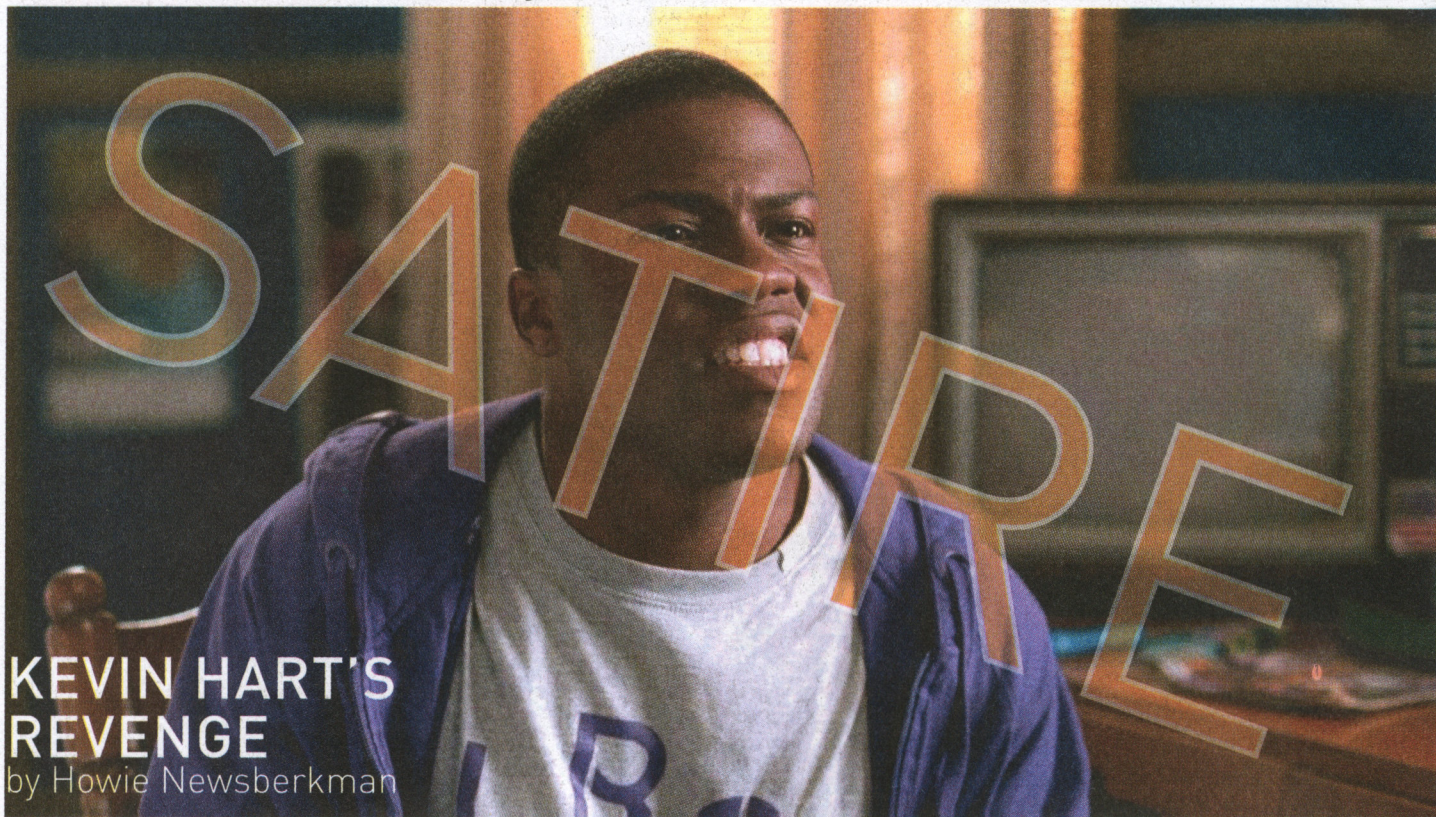
Instead of returning home with Leo, she reverts to her former life with her stuck up, upper-class parents, whose scandalous secret is long hidden from the audience, and are too caught up in getting her back from her husband. When Paige's ex-fiancé, whom she has no memory of splitting up with, enters her life again it leaves Leo asking one question: *How do you look at the girl you love and tell yourself it's time to walk away?*

Tatum's performance was not surprising, as he has played the heartbroken guy many times before, and he does so exceptionally well. But McAdams is the real enticement in this film. She is her same bubbly and free-spirited self on-screen and she uses that to draw in her audience. I kept cheering for Paige even when she was extremely frustrating in her withdrawal from Leo.

Paige and Leo get a second chance to experience

something that some people don't get to experience once in their life: falling in love. But there was something missing. There is a lack of emotion and little magic seemed to spark from the couple's interactions. You could see the affection and consideration they had for each other, but could not actually feel the love. It's obvious when people are truly in love; the way they look at each other, as if there is no one else around; touching each other like it's the last time their bodies will be near one another again. I didn't see that with Paige and Leo. Their love for each other didn't come across strongly enough and it made their struggle to stay together that much harder to watch. After the accident Leo is a stranger to Paige, but how can she fall in love with him again if she is a stranger to herself?

A downfall was that *The Vow* came off too much like earlier romantic dramas, *The Notebook* and *Dear John*. It could just be the actors that played the main characters of Paige and Leo that made the movies seem so similar. I'm not complaining about seeing Channing Tatum's body on the big screen though; if I woke up and he told me he was my husband, I wouldn't question it for a second. But when I heard Leo say, "Two weeks, that's all it took for her to fall in love with me," I had to take my ticket stub out of my pocket to make sure it said *The Vow* and not *Dear John*. If I'm paying to see a new movie the least the writers could do was have Tatum learn a new script.



KEVIN HART'S REVENGE

by Howie Newsberkman

After being defamed and humiliated by the *Stony Brook Press* two weeks ago, very short comedian Kevin Hart took revenge on the publication by beating the shit out of staff writer Daniel Cashmar at approximately 3 p.m. on Friday, February 17, university police said.

According to witnesses, Hart lunged at an unsuspecting Cashmar, the nearest person to the front door of the office, as he was biting into a slice of pizza. He proceeded to punch Cashmar in the face 482 times while forcing his victim to keep count. Hart stopped when his victim passed out. Cashmar sustained minor injuries, including, but not limited to, a loss of four teeth and severe damage to his nose and left eye that will most likely need to be corrected with cosmetic surgery.

"Why would you immature college students write something like that about me?" asked Hart of the rest of the losers who practically live in the *Press* office. "And what's the deal with the Chris Rock photo? That's really racist, man."

"We didn't mean it in a racist way," said staff writer Andi Liao, who is often referred to as "Asian Andi" around the office.

"I got this," said Web Editor Trevor Christian. "We were actually kind of mad that you would only give one interview and when we didn't get picked in the lottery to do it, we decided to have a little fun on the page. It's nothing personal what we wrote about you. We just did it because we don't like you."

"Why did you have to make me sound like such an ass-

hole though?" Hart asked.

"We thought if we made it sound ridiculous and vulgar enough, and even included a bit about how you didn't give us an interview inside the interview, that people would understand that it was satire and would enjoy it for what it was. We also used the picture of Chris Rock to be completely sure that readers would be suspicious as soon as they glanced at the page. The last thing we wanted to do was totally spoil the joke by spelling out that it was fake with a disclaimer," Christian explained.

"Well obviously it was fake! I mean, what idiot would honestly think I would respond to a question like, 'Would you rather have anal sex with a questionable hooker but she violently shits all over you after and pics of it leak on the internet or get the best blow jay ever but wake up on a deserted island with enough food to live out your life?'" Hart said. "That's just preposterous."

"Well, that's what we thought," said Executive Editor Nick Statt, who emerged out of *The Press* office's archives room upon realizing that Hart was exhausted and had taken most of his anger out on Cashmar.

"What upsets me is that people actually came to me questioning my moral character after thinking the interview was real," Hart said. "That means that it is obviously your duty as student journalists of an alternative publication known for its tendency to push boundaries to cave in to the stupidity of your readers and publish a disclaimer alongside your satire pieces."

"I can see the benefit of that argument," responded

Statt, "but we came to the conclusion that readers incapable of differentiating between satire and serious content aren't necessarily the readers we are trying to reach. It isn't our duty as the alternative publication to simply report the facts and nothing else. Instead, we like to incite debate and push the limits a bit for the sake of humor and to celebrate the fact that college journalism shouldn't be a dry and pathetic imitation of professional journalism, but a unique form of content characterized by different generations of students."

"Well, as a comedian, I can agree with that. After all, you're students. When you graduate, you'll never have the opportunity to have fun, play jokes and experiment. You'll just be slaves to the higher-ups and basically boot-lick your

way to having enough power to force younger generations to do the same," Hart said with a nod of his freakishly large head made that much more apparent by his short stature.

"Thanks for understanding," said Christian. Then, according to witnesses, he made the mistake of trying to get a real interview with Hart, who then collapsed back into a fit of fury and beat Christian over the head with a cardboard cut-out of Boba Fett.

Cashmar and Christian have decided not to press charges as Hart made amends with the staffers and offered to smooth out the sometimes-fragile relationship the news organization has with the Undergraduate Student Government. "They love me over there," Hart explained. "They'll do anything I ask."

ENCOUNTERING DATA

by Teena Nawabi

At first glance the SAC Art Gallery's latest exhibit "Encountering Data" looks like nothing more than a bunch of computers and televisions in a large white room. Against the wall is a creative little piece called "It gets better, Alan," consisting of a MacBook Pro and an old typewriter from the 1950s with a suicide note from an esteemed computer scientist in it. This may seem highly symbolic, but gallery visitors had typed their own words out onto the note. One phrase, printed boldly across the suicide note in black ink read, quite simply, "This is boring."

And that right there is the entire exhibit in a nutshell. There are those who will find it incredibly boring; a giant room filled with computers and data that could put one to sleep faster than a documentary marathon. But to others, the idea of data being given life—breathing air into something so admittedly beyond human senses—is inviting and innovative. Through visualization and sonification, Encountering Data shows the nerd in us all just what can be done with data in an age of creativity and scientific advances.

Take, for example, the innovative piece "Decot" by Shawn Greenlee; a wooden bench in front of a large TV screen with bulky headphones connected to it. Faded black and white figures glided across the screen, blurred and out of focus. A constant, loud ringing of several different pitches came from the headphones. It's not very obvious at first, but the screen is actually showing different parts of a human body. Two hands clapping are visible over time. It was such a universally disturbing piece that gallery visitors all had one word to define it: scary.

"First you see a hand, lips, nose...it's so creepy," said Michelle Liu, a digital arts student who opens and oversees the gallery. "The dark shadows are so eerie."

Some pieces touched others on an emotional level. "Kinesthetic 1.0" by Joseph Esser, an electronic media installation, seemed to resonate with gallery dwellers.

"I love this one, it's my favorite," said Helen Tseou, a sound design student who was conducting research for a class paper. "Every time you pass by a string it vibrates, and each one has a different sound so you can play around with it."

Other students had more abstract interpretations. "I think it means something in motion can be artistic," said Marley Solomon, who stood by "Kinesthetic 1.0" and played with it for a while. "It's all in the name Kin-aesthetic, meaning it can be pleasing to the eye."

The exhibit, however, is not without its flaws. Two of the exhibits weren't functioning properly: "Earth to Disk" by The Art of Failure and "Ephemeral Artifacts" by Timothy Vallier and Moira Williams. Liu assumed that problems arose because the gallery was set up later than originally planned.

"It was rushed," she said, "they had trouble setting it up because they had to get insurance first, so it was set up late."

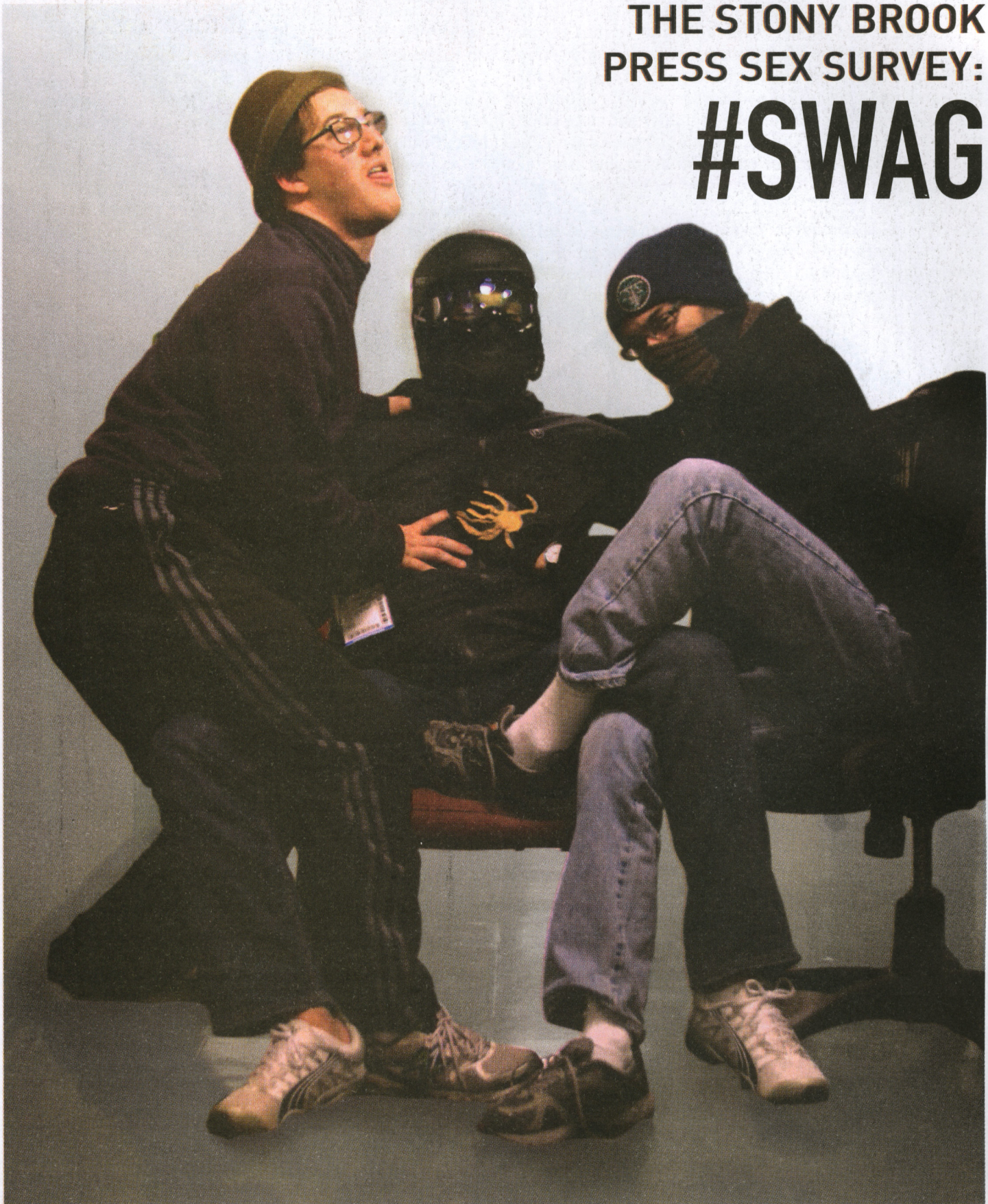
Liu said that her Digital Arts professor also noticed an error in the series "FFT/RMS #1" and "EEG" by Paul Prudence.

Still, one cannot deny the fascination drawn from other notable pieces in the exhibit: like a turntable booth, a giant map depicting statistics about U.S. oil, and a computer screen with rainbow and gray dots scrolling across it while a static beep chimes in the background.

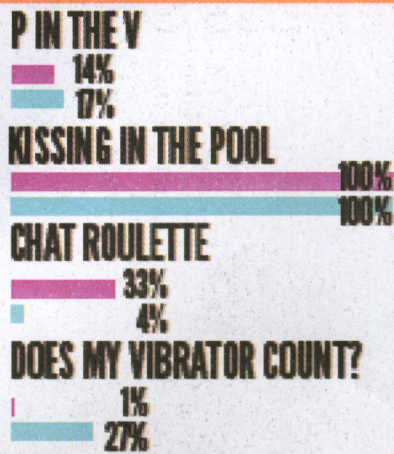
Though not everyone may appreciate data interpretation and analysis, a visit to the "Encountering Data" exhibit is highly recommended. Those with a curiosity for unexplored media of art and communication will appreciate the innovation behind each piece. It can be a rewarding experience for those who are willing to step out of their comfort zone.

THE STONY BROOK
PRESS SEX SURVEY:

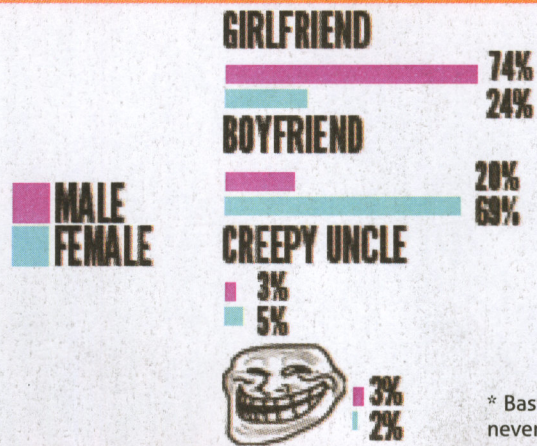
#SWAG



what do you consider sex?

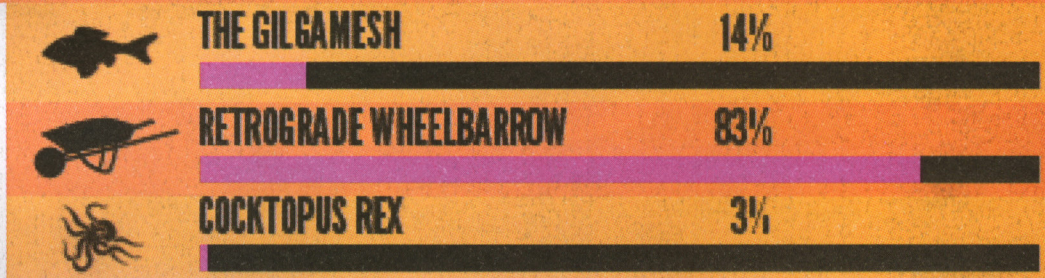


who was your first tongue kiss?

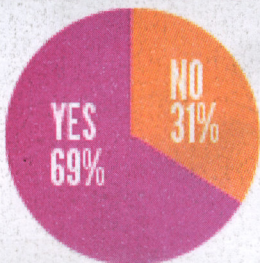


* Based on surveys that were never actually taken. There you go...

what is your favorite sex position?



HAVE YOU HAD SEX

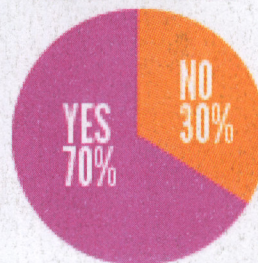


WITHOUT A CONDOM?

WASN'T IT WAY BETTER?



HAVE YOU EVER



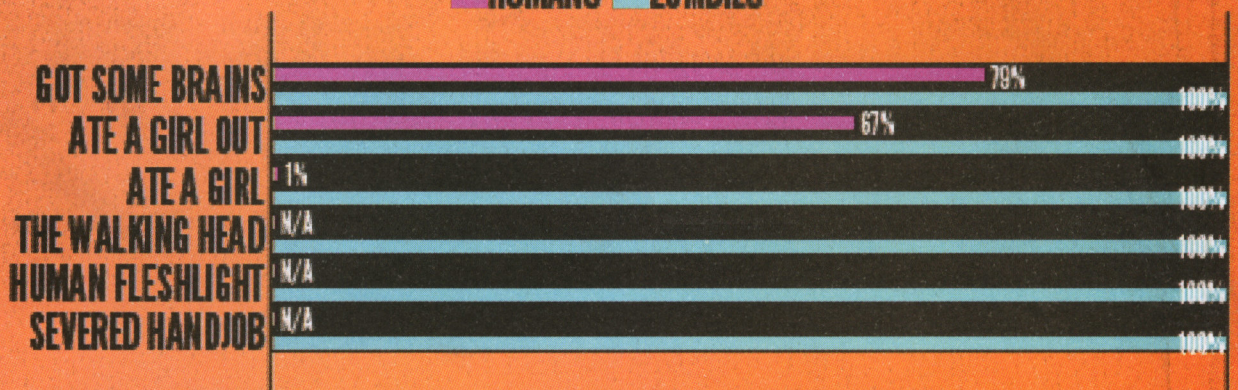
LEZZED OUT?

WAS IT FOR MONEY?



Humans vs. Zombies

HUMANS (pink bar) **ZOMBIES** (teal bar)



STAND UP 8

by Jen Novotny



While watching the free Stand Up 8 show for SBU students on February 13, I realized that I have a new direction in life: I want to be an aerialist.

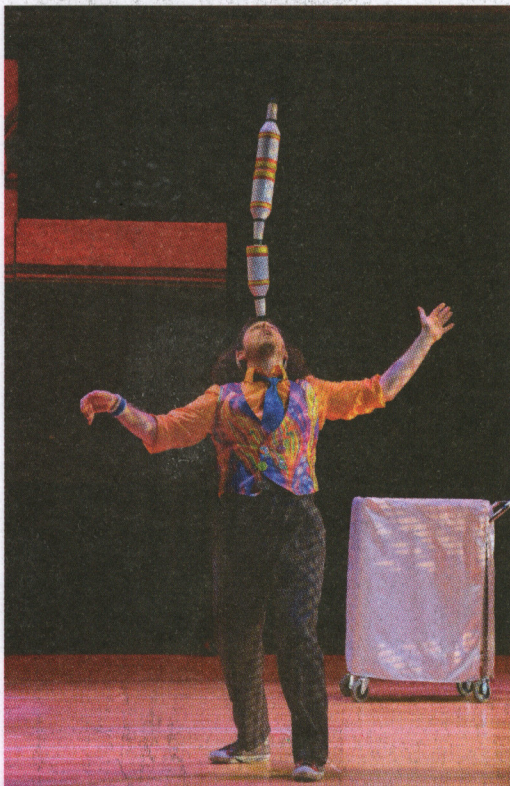
Ok, that's a dream that I won't actually pursue, but for the two hours or so that I sat in the Staller Center watching the former figure skater Kimberly Craig fly through the air swinging from a hoop and Stand Up 8 co-founder Zay Weaver twirl several yards up on a silk rope, I constantly thought, I want to do that.

Before the show even began, the performers stood on stage with no curtain hiding them, to warm up and talk to the audience. Weaver promised a free gift to the first person who could pull up a picture of a "seawolf" on their phone, so she could see what it was. Sam Brown, a clown, meandered through the rows talking and high-fiving.

The show was based heavily on interaction with the audience. Often performers envision a "fourth wall" separating them from the viewers; this troupe did exactly the opposite. Audience response was completely integral to the performance.

Humor mixed with deep feeling as the scenes and performers varied. Brown was chased off the stage by Brett Copes after slapping him in a very *Three Stooges*-style, which contrasted with another scene with Weaver appearing in a wedding dress and handcuffs to give an impassioned speech about why she is an aerialist before ripping the dress to shreds and demonstrating her aerial prowess.

Singer Sandy Swier seemed a bit incongruous from the rest of the cast, but she did have quite a voice. It was very amusing, and slightly annoying, when Christianne Sainz, a



gymnast, took the microphone from her and launched into a Justin Bieber song.

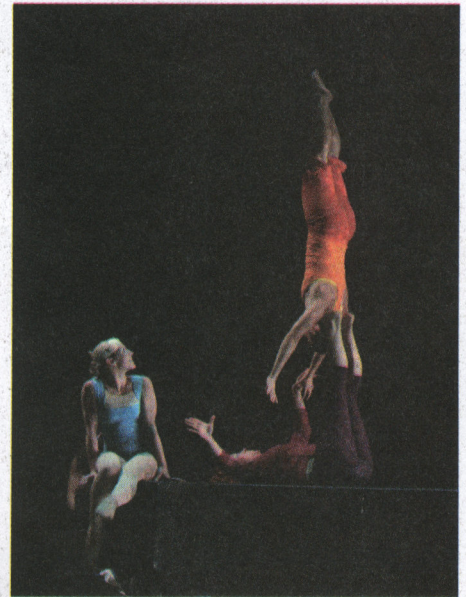
Stage performances generally hide the backstage area to keep the mystery of the show alive. Stand Up 8 doesn't believe in this concept. There were no curtains, and much of the wings were visible, including the "human sandbag" set up for the aerialists. A stagehand attached to the fly system climbed up and down a truss at the edge of the stage to lift or lower the performers. That unique aspect of the performance impressed me, even more than the awesome contortions and flying itself.

My one complaint about the show is the lack of flow. The acts seemed

very disparate and largely unrelated. At times, there seemed to be a theme explaining why the performers do what they do, but several of the acts didn't carry this through. It could be that the randomness reflected the chaos of a circus in a big top, but I didn't feel like the disconnect was intentional.

As for my dream of flying through the air without a harness, I feel that's the kind of thought Stand Up 8 is trying to inspire. The idea that one can be happy doing something out of the ordinary, something exhilarating, even if no one else understands.

Like the proverb from which the troupe gets its name says, "Fall down seven times, stand up eight."



Photos by Mike Pedersen

HILARITY ENSUES

by Lauren DuBois

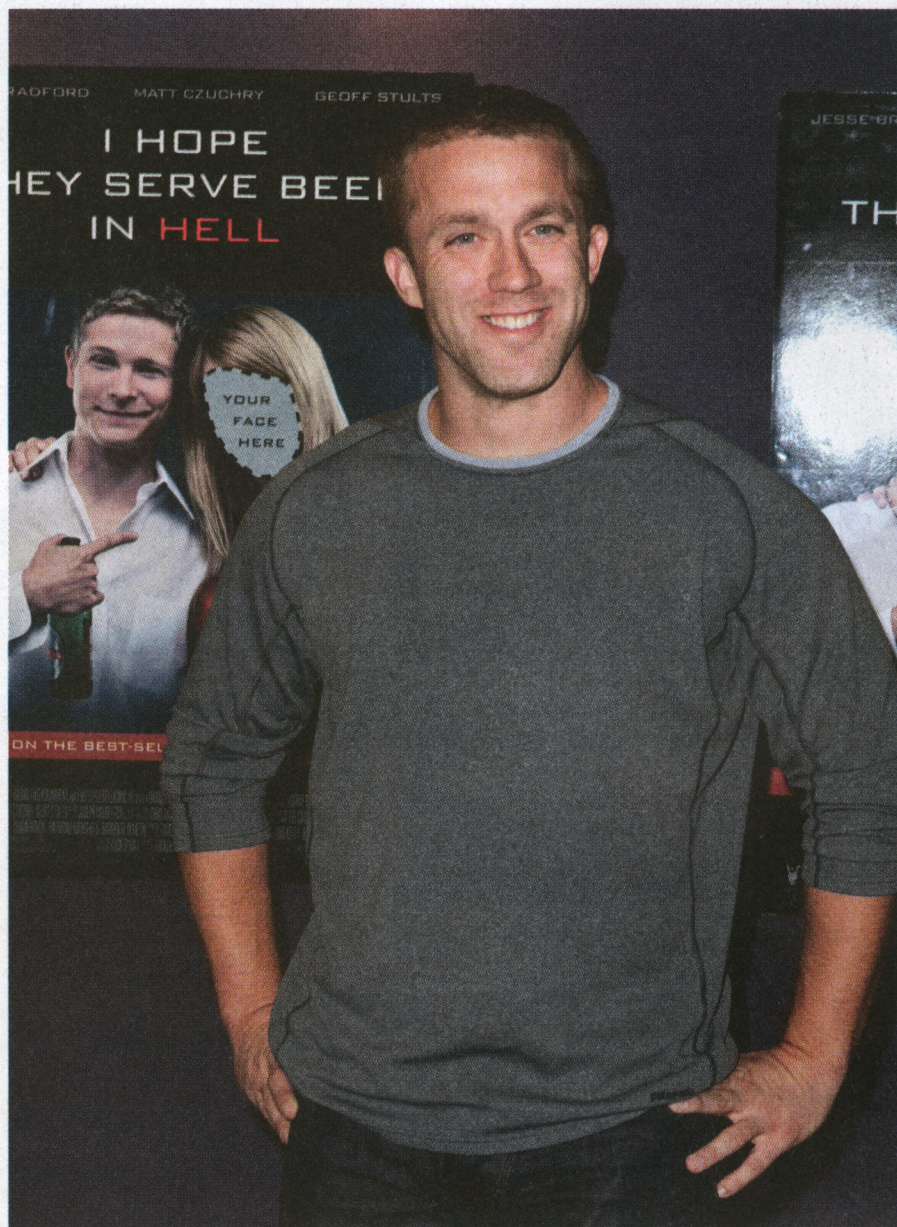
There is only one person in the world who can inspire both praise for his actions and writing and major criticism for his life choices, being referred to as a "vile, scummy, abrasive creature that barely qualifies as human." This comment is proudly displayed on the back cover of his newest book, *Hilarity Ensues*.

That person is none other than Tucker Max, who has made a name for himself over the past eight years. He began by launching his website tuckermax.com. Then Max marketed his most outrageous stories of drunken debauchery, quests for meaningless hook-ups, and just plain bad behavior in a 2006 memoir, *I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell*, a 2009 movie of the same name, a 2010 follow-up book, *Assholes Finish First*, and finally capped off his achievements with *Hilarity Ensues*.

Unfortunately for Max, either some of the stories in *Hilarity Ensues* just don't inspire much hilarity, or they've become a bit stale and played out over time. While his final chapters are still entertaining and showcase some witty writing, his stories this time around seem to lack some of the flavor and spice that made his first ones comedy classics and full of "did he really do that?!" moments.

The first story that really rates with the ones in Max's first books is "The TMZ Debacle." Max begins by telling the story of his antics at last year's SXSW, where he was thrown out of a party by three bouncers for throwing Popchips at a ceiling fan, but events quickly become much more entertaining from there. Max writes, "Then, the next day, TMZ emailed me asking for a comment about 'getting kicked out of a SXSW party and calling some girl a greasy Guido.' What? I couldn't believe it. After all the ridiculous shit I've done in my life, THIS is what TMZ wants to do a story on?"

Other stories worth reading include "The (Almost Banned, Now Complete) Miss Vermont Story," and "Tucker Max, Knee Abuser." Also laughter inducing are his various recounts of sexting conversations interspersed throughout the book and grouped into three categories of "absurd," "mean,"



and "a/s/location, location, location." However, the rest of the book just doesn't quite live up to the expectations faithful readers of his first two books might have had for it. The stories might still provide a chuckle or two, but there are no real moments of complete lose-control, jaw-dropping, tear-streaming, knee-slapping laughter.

The one part of *Hilarity Ensues* that truly does make it stand above its prior installments is Max's reflections and note to his fans about his retirement at the end of the book. Here, fans do get to see a different side of Max—one that shows that he's not just a womanizer or a self-described asshole, but also a real human being who does have a softer side he's just not as willing to show. It's a nice way to wrap up the book (which, at 443 pages of stories is actually a hefty read), and actually manages to reward readers for sticking through it all with him until the very end.

STONY BROOK OPERA: LA TRAGEDIE DE CARMEN

by Rebecca Tapio

The orchestra begins to swell as the arms of the conductor rise, and Gloria Park, Stony Brook Opera's own Carmen, steps on stage to tell a tale of jealousy, lust and freedom.

"Love is a gypsy child," the projector reads as Park's character romances Don Jose, played by guest artist John Bellemer. "It knows no law. If you don't love me, I love you."

Sung in its original French, with translations projected in English, David Lawton's production of *La Tragedie de Carmen* reduces Peter Brook's masterpiece to one act.

It retains the majesty of an age-old story, one of jealous lovers, murderous impulses and a young girl who tries to remain free from the men who wish to possess her and the society that wishes to tame her.

Conducted by Timothy Long, members of the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra performed admirably, providing as much a setting for the opera as the lighting and props. The setting consisted almost solely of one table that functioned at times as a bed, a stool and a washroom.

The simplicity of the stage allowed the actors and the music to tell the story, and reduced distractions from the plot to a minimum. This was essential to keep the audience's attention, especially when they had to focus back and forth between watching the stage and reading the translations of the words 50 feet above the stage.

The performances of Gloria Park, a mezzo-soprano earning her doctorate in music at Stony Brook, and guest tenor John Bellemer, who has appeared in leading opera houses across North America and Europe, were superb.

Their facial expressions and movements about the stage told the story as well as their voices did, drawing in the audience so thoroughly that not a single person left the auditorium during the performance.

Park's portrayal of Carmen was that of an experienced and vivid actress, transforming herself into the charming schemer that it is a pleasure to hate. Though she manipulates the characters around her, Carmen is not simply a heartless wench who seeks to ruin all she comes across.

Inside this seductive, young, gypsy girl is a wild heart, one that refuses to give in to anyone's demands but her own.

"Free she was born and free she will die," Park proclaims as Bellemer's Don Jose pleads with her to follow him to a new life. She does not love him anymore, and as such will not give in to his demands in the final duet of the performance.

Yet this wild-hearted girl draws tarot cards multiple times throughout the performance to predict her fate, seeing the card of Death every time.

"By entrusting her fate solely to destiny, she fails to see how she herself embodies the ultimate self-fulfilling prophecy," said Stage Director Joachim Schamberger in his program note. "Carmen believes she is free, but she is not. Embracing her power to co-create her own fate with destiny could lead to true freedom, but of that she is unaware."

Thus, he says, is the true tragedy of Carmen: the girl who longs to be free cannot truly be so until she releases herself from the fate she is resigned to.

David Smith, 75, of London, is a returning patron of the Stony Brook Opera, along with his friend Judy Wishnia, 73.

"I thought it was very, very interesting, the way that the Stony Brook version was completely changed around, and the singers of course were very good," he said. "It was a very good experience. I would certainly come again."

As part of a tradition of opera at Stony Brook, the singers participating in the program are primarily students of the doctorate music program, including Seung Hee Lee, a soprano whose character Micaela tries in vain to keep Don Jose from the seductress Carmen.

"Carmen believes she is free, but she is not. Embracing her power to co-create her own fate with destiny could lead to true freedom, but of that she is unaware."

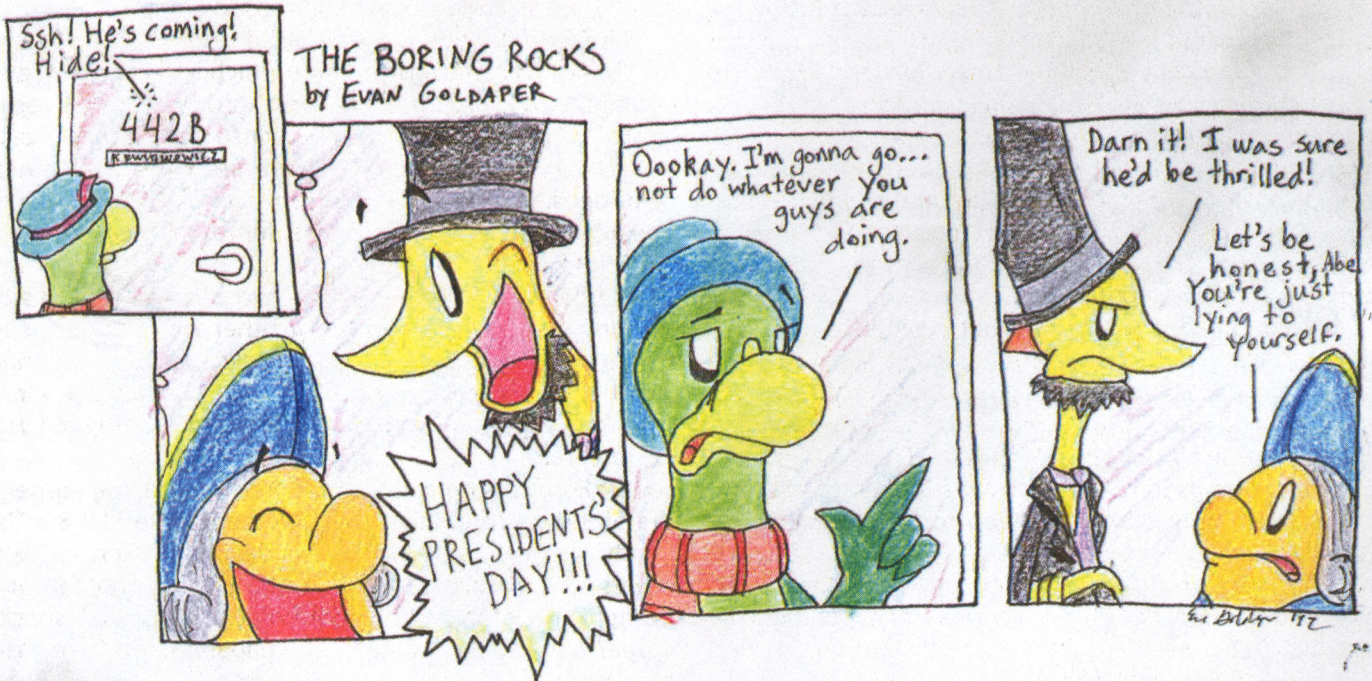
She performed with a genuine air of innocence, tinted with jealousy at Don Jose's affections for the gypsy girl.

"I'm thrilled that there's so much talent in this school that we didn't know about, and that they have a forum," said Andrew Breslin, a senior theatre and English major at Stony Brook.

Last year's performance was of Cavalli's *Eliogabalo*.

"I think it's a wonderful cast, and we were so lucky to have John, who was the guest singer, so it was a great work," said Park upon the close of the show.

Their next performance will be of Peter Winkler's *Fox Fables* and Sheila Silver's *The Wooden Sword* on March 25 and March 27 in the Staller Center for the Arts.





Sleigh Bells – *Reign of Terror*

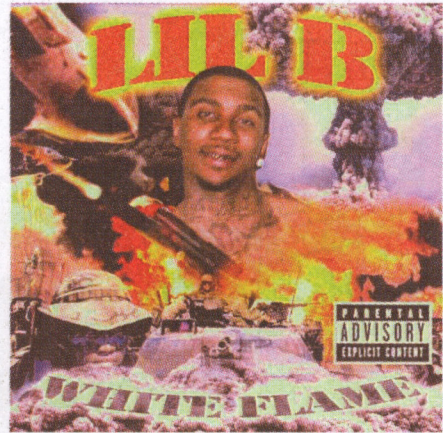
As electronics become increasingly prominent in indie pop, it's become hard to distinguish innovation from novelty. Crystal Castles, for instance, has proven to have surprisingly strong staying power with their second album, despite the fact that a crazy goth lady screaming over 80's-era video game bleep bloop noises sounds like a horrible idea on paper. Sleigh Bells, another duo composed of a dude controlling chaotic noise behind a female vocalist, is certainly a more reasonable choice to play Saturday Night Live or lease their song to a Honda Civic commercial. Their first album *Treats* had its moments of irresistible catchiness, and now their newest release *Reign of Terror* attempts to match the explosiveness of their breakthrough

While there is nothing specifically bad about this new full-length, there's nothing specifically good about it either. Their signature Ratatat-meets-punk rock sound is still in full force, but it lacks the catchy melodies that made *Treats* so listenable. Songs like "Road to Hell" or "You Lost Me" rely too heavily on singer Alexis Krauss's mediocre and repetitive vocals, making them completely inoffensive but undesirable to listen to on repeat.

Guitarist and producer Derek Miller's harsh atmospheres can occasionally make up for Krauss's lame vocal layering, such as in the snappy "Born to Lose." But when her incessant yelling and nursery rhyme verses overpower a promising instrumental track, like in "Crush," the results can be not only cringe-worthy but headache inducing. While a major point of their style is supposed to be the contrast of hardcore-influenced guitar layering with a girl's pretty, breathy voice, it too often sounds simply awkward.

But there are a few bright spots: "End of the Line," clearly an attempt to re-create *Treat's* fantastic "Rill Rill," is a relatively light and easy listen for upcoming spring days. Lead single "Comeback Kid" is kind of catchy, if not interesting, and a perfect summation of their sound. But as a whole, Sleigh Bell's sophomore effort sounds too much like *Treat's* less fun and less catchy brother. If they want to avoid the label of a one-trick pony in the future, they ought to branch out their sound to new territories.

-SAMUEL LIEBRAND



Lil B – *White Flame* Wow Rare Exclusive

Lil B's ethos is simple. His messages are clear: He owns swag; He wants to fuck your bitch; He's probably "the only goon nigga" grindin' in tiny pants.

Yet the persona of Lil B remains so enigmatic. In the video for "Violate That Bitch," Lil B's "Stairway to Heaven," he raps in front of a dumpster while wearing a shirt that's so small it's ready to explode right off him.

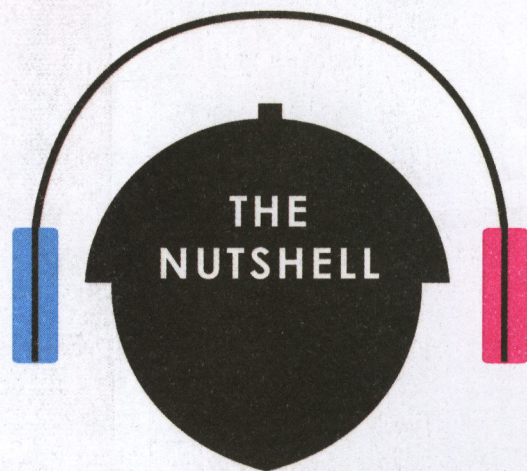
He pumps "rare," "exclusive" and "hot" videos like this into the tubes of cyberspace almost every day. You can find them on his twitter feed, where he also retweets hundreds of women begging Lil B to sleep with them, or conversely, men who are thanking Lil B for sleeping with their girlfriends.

"Bitch, suck my dick/I can't believe it's not butter/I'm Fabio/Ho, go push the line/I met Lil B and Based God at the same time," is the chorus of "I'm Fabio," the first single off his new mixtape, *White Flame*. It tells you everything you need to know about the Berkley-based artist.

Lil B goes by the moniker Based God. It's a reference to his "based freestyle" technique, which he coined. It can be defined by rapping whatever comes to one's mind, regardless of whether or not it makes sense. As a result, most of his songs are barely songs. There are no refrains, verses or bridges. Instead, Lil B just spouts mostly nonsense that doesn't rhyme, often out of time, for four minutes or so.

The charm of listening to Lil B is parsing through all of the garbage to find the one or two outrageous lines that couldn't possibly come from any other man's mouth. *White Flame* isn't any different. It's 21 tracks long; half are throw-aways, but there are a few Based God classics deep in the mix like "Straps on Deck," "Fed Time" and "Basedgod Fucked My Bitches."

Lil B has become one of the most polarizing rappers in the biz. Slate columnist Jonah Weiner labeled Lil B a "brilliantly warped, post-Lil Wayne deconstructionist," while others who comment on his Youtube video cannot fathom Lil B's debasing of music. The Game called Lil B the "whackest rapper out." Lil B responded in a paparazzi video by insulting The Game outside of a Cali nightclub right before hopping into a Mercedes and scooting away. -VINCENT BARONE



Usher- *Climax* (Single)

As Diplo continues to dip his feet into the pool of mainstream pop, he's expanding his reach to big-name collaborators. Fresh off the heels of producing Chris Brown's "Look At Me Now" last year, one of the weirdest and most badass rap beats in recent memory, he extends a hand to R&B veteran Usher. "Climax," while featuring Diplo's spacey and minimal production, simply doesn't have the tribal strangeness that he usually brings to the table. Luckily, Usher's emotionally affected and high-pitched vocals meld perfectly with the patient tapping instrumentals in the background, but this track ironically is missing a climax that could turn it from good into great. This is the sound of Diplo appeasing to the club crowd, which totally works, but could have been so much more.

Beach Fossils- *Shallow 7"*

Considering that I couldn't stop listening to this Brooklyn indie-pop act when the follow-up EP to their debut dropped last year, I'd be the first to tell you if this sophomore album preview proved to be a disappointment. The good news is that it's far from it. The fast-paced, punchy guitar opening of "Shallow," the A-side on their new 7" due out February 21, gives way to an astoundingly rich mix of tones, of which Payseur's airy vocals stand out the most. They are apparently at their most fleshed out and impressive stage of development. The B-side, "Lessons," is a slight throwback to their earliest tracks with its summery vibe, but still retains the songwriting maturity and heaviness picked up during their years spent loafing around the neighborhoods of Brooklyn.

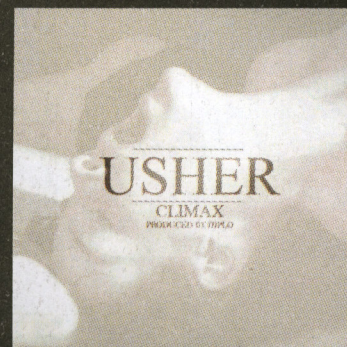
So it appears that Payseur and crew are lifting the songwriting bliss and beautifully woven guitar patchworks of the *What a Pleasure* EP of last February—the one that lodged them deep inside my head—but trading the melancholy (well, sort of) for a bit more punch. And it's sounding like it's working out quite well.

Cursive- *I Am Gemini*

Emo pioneers Cursive return with *I Am Gemini*, their first album in three years. After starting out as a (pretty good) band that launched a thousand shitty imitators, the boys in Cursive have taken a new theatrical turn. But maybe they should've stayed right where they were. The pseudo-retro pop rock on *I Am Gemini* is at best inoffensive and at worst full-on embarrassing. All of these songs might as well have been recorded by Panic! At The Disco or My Chemical Romance five years ago—a thought that makes me cringe. Occasionally, Cursive throws in shredding guitars that, if done better, could pass for the more technical side of post-hardcore, but that doesn't help their cause at all. And a quick note to the fans of this shit show: pull up your V-necks a little higher, guys. Nobody wants to see that.

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Islands- *A Sleep & A Forgetting*

A Sleep & A Forgetting shows a newfound subtlety from former Unicorns front man Nicholas Thorburn. On his fourth full-length with Islands, Thorburn brings out his softer side with an album that combines the best aspects of early Spoon and recent Death Cab For Cutie while leaving the Nikon-and-sundress attitude of those bands at the door. Moving on from the blatant freakiness of The Unicorns and past the gimmicky calypso-pop of earlier Islands records, *A Sleep & A Forgetting* brings some much-needed nuance to the current crop of garage rockers and DJs currently dominating the indie landscape. The piano-heavy opener "In A Dream It Seemed Real" introduces the record as a major leap forward with a bittersweet, shuffling feel that announces the complexity of the songs ahead. *A Sleep & A Forgetting* delivers on its promise with a careful selection of instrumentation—a few horns here and there, an accordion makes a guest appearance, and a banjo adds a touch of ragtime on the upbeat "Hallways"—as well as a lyrical maturity that puts most indie songwriters to shame. Put down *Narrow Stairs* and listen to this instead.

Earl Sweatshirt- *Home* (Single)

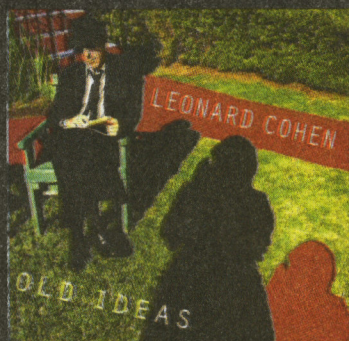
After over a year in boarding school in Somoa, where he was sent after he horrified his mother with his brutal instant-classic debut "EARL" in 2010, the unthinkable young Earl Sweatshirt is back. He offers a very short, low-key track to mark his apparent return to the U.S. Though his impeccable flow and effortless rhymes (which can reference anything from Parliament cigarettes to Javascript) are further proof of an undeniable talent that exponentially exceeds all other Odd Future members, the poor mixing quality and clusterfuck backing track (notably not produced by Tyler, the Creator) brings down the song as a whole. Nonetheless, Earl is still at the top of his rap game here, making the possibility of any future releases sound more promising than ever.

Leonard Cohen- *Old Ideas*

There's something almost depressing about listening to Leonard Cohen so late in his years, so depleted in voice. And yet, even though he sounds like crap, Cohen finds a way to sound good. *Old Ideas* is a relatively weak album for Cohen that takes enough advantage of his weaknesses to make it forgivable. It's filled with deeply spiritual lyrics, many of them dealing with age and death. The music is minimalist, slow and when there's a string solo, it's absolutely spine tingling. When a song needs texture, Cohen provides it with his voice or lyrics. It may not have aged nicely from a technical aspect, but it has developed a uniquely earnest tone that allows his words to hit even harder. He hasn't been able to maintain his more seductive tone quite as well, especially next to his much, much younger female backup singers. Fortunately, he only does this on two tracks.

Grimes- *Visions*

The third full-length studio effort from Montreal-based DJ and producer Claire Boucher marks another enchantingly successful reverberation of modern electronica, and a sure-fire sign of the 23-year-old's evolution over her short, yet impactful, career. Known for her unique version of indie-pop, mixed well with impossibly danceable undercurrents, Boucher manages to take a simple drum-machine loop and a trance-like, heavy bass pulse to an entirely new level with the help of her voice. She's capable of hitting remarkable highs and forcing out a variety of tones, from child-like to outright arena pop, proving yet again that she is one of the most dynamic and genuine vocal talents gracing the plane of pop and electronic music. Tracks to lookout for: "Oblivion" takes a jumpy synth beat and showers a cascading, smooth-as-glass vocal melody on top. "Genesis" pulls Grimes' typical song make-up through an effect-laden tunnel to a desirable, atmospheric result.





Knicks were losing pretty badly for a while—so badly that they were reduced to starting the Asian American team chemist from Harvard; like when you run out of all your preferred boxer briefs and are forced to wear your saggy real-cool-guy-they-used-to-be-red-but-now-are-kind-of-faded-maroonish boxers that ride up in your pants like you're in eighth grade. Crypt-keeper Amare Stoudemire was out with a broken hip, probably, and Carmelo Anthony had to fly out to Tibet to study the ancient art of passing (he still hasn't returned).

It turned out that the Knicks played well in their old boxers. Jeremy Lin provided more ball movement; he helped the team breathe. He knows the game like you know those boxers. His play is creative, even if the headlines aren't.

After the Knicks made a splash in the free agent market, we must ask: is JR Smith a boxer kind of guy? Now, I'm not a man of speculation, but I know the eyebrow threader who touched up the brows of the girl that served oatmeal at the continental breakfast in the hotel JR stayed at in Canada who is friends with the bellman who saw JR stroll through with shopping bags from Hugo Boss, a company that definitely sells briefs. The bellman didn't get a really

good look, but my friend said that he said they were either socks or briefs. Therefore, Smith wears briefs.

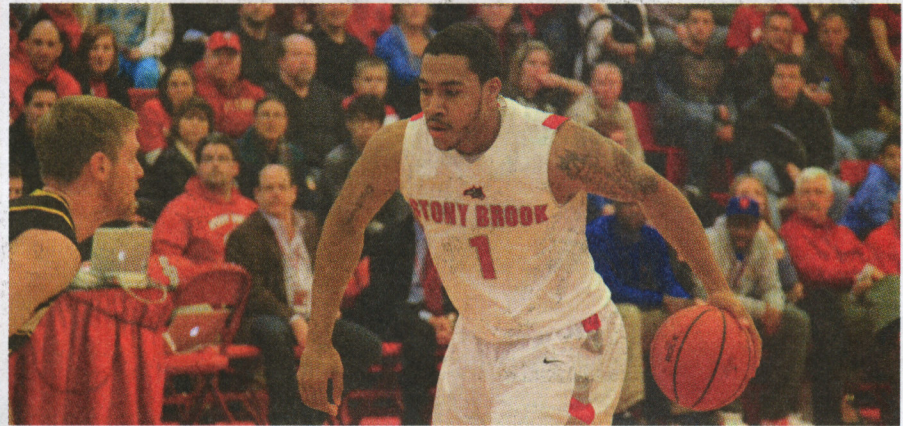
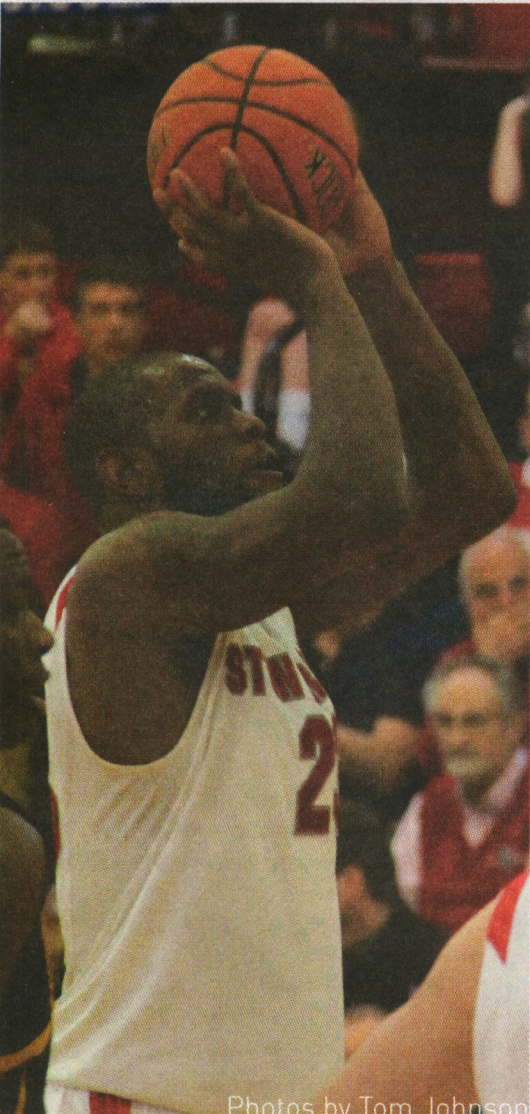
I will denounce this acquisition even after watching Smith come off the bench to drop 15 points in 30 minutes of play. He's a bad-tempered, selfish player who has a notoriously Terrell Owensian ego while sharing Carmelo's displeasure for sharing the rock. Also, this pick-up comes in the middle of a Lin gelling process. They had played like a bunch of portly, middle-aged dads from the YMCA for most of the season. Lin's energy and passing prowess had the Knicks playing like a real, live basketball team and Smith can be the real fly in the proverbial potato salad.

That being said, we could use the depth in the small forward position. Bill Walker is a lousy backup. The only thing that amazes me more than his poor play is his Boyz II Men hairstyle choices.

I shudder to think of the day when Melo, Amare and Smith are on the same floor together. There aren't enough basketballs in the world to run that offense. The trade is essentially undoing everything that Lin had brought together with his chemistry, math and book things. We could have had it all, rolling in the deep.

MEN'S BASKETBALL ROUND-UP

by Rebecca Tapio



Stony Brook's men's basketball team is heading directly for an American East Conference Championship and the NCAAs, if their current momentum is any indication.

Following a defeat by the University of Vermont on February 12, the Seawolves came right back to best Northeastern in a decisive 76-69 win on the Huskies' home turf.

Junior Tommy Brenton orchestrated the offense on Saturday, kicking the team's energy into high gear in the second half. He was one of three players to end the game with double digits, scoring 13 points and adding seven rebounds, seven assists, two blocks and two steals to the action.

Sophomore guard Dave Coley matched a career-high of 21 points,

previously set against Boston University in the early days of the season. Senior Dallis Joyner added a double-double of 10 points and 10 rebounds and remained a solid force inside the paint, making Northeastern look outside to their jump shooters.

The Seawolves, whose record from the free throw line was a satisfactory 13-19, relied on their inside game and speed to match the three-pointers of the Huskies, who went 10-17 from behind the arc.

Since their February 9 win against UMBC, the long shots have not been falling for Stony Brook. In their game against Vermont, the Seawolves went a startling 0-15 from the three-point line.

Photos by Tom Johnson

Black History Month Fun Fact

Recent zombie stories in pop culture:

- Left For Dead 1 & 2, Dead Rising, Dead Island
- Resident Evil, Resident Evil: Afterlife,
- Land of the Dead, Diary of the Dead, Survival of the Dead
- Shaun of the Dead, Zombieland
- 28 Days Later, 28 Weeks Later
- I am Legend, The Walking Dead
- World War Z, Pride & Prejudice & Zombies
- Approximately 400 Xbox Live Indie Games



Funky jams from a magic voodoo boombox bring the recently-deceased Bernie Lomax shuffling to life in 1993's Weekend at Bernie's 2.

Recent stories in pop culture set in the violent, nakedly racist US Occupation of Haiti, the dehumanizing popular literature around which originated American zombie mythology:



After severing his hands, US occupation forces prepare to execute a Haitian independence fighter in 1919.

Graphic by Matt Willemain

CRAZY PEOPLE PASS A CRAZY BILL by Liz Kaempf

Some backwoods states in the Midwest have managed to recently pass a little something called the Personhood Bill. It dictates that life and the rights that come with it begin at conception, when sperm fertilizes an egg. What this does is underhandedly outlaw abortion. It does not deem it illegal; it can't. The legalization of abortion is a federal law and cannot be overturned by state laws. However, if you're the Oklahoma or Missouri Senate, you find a way to systematically ban it without conflicting with the federal government.

By deciding that conception is the moment a life begins, and thus that the unborn baby has liberties and rights as declared by the Constitution, abortion would then become a form of murder. Not in the way Evangelical Christians see it as a murder, but the actual taking of another person's life against their will. This includes cases of abortion in which the woman becomes pregnant as the result of rape or incest.

Allow me to backtrack for a moment. Long ago, only

white males were permitted their civil rights. They got to eat all the cookies in the cookie jar. But then enough people took action and initiative that those white males finally had to share their cookies with the rest of us. Now that we are all "created equal," that means a woman has the right to make informed and appropriate decisions regarding her own body—a group of Bible-thumping men cannot do that for her.

It's absurd that if a woman has the unfortunate experience of being physically and sexually assaulted and becomes pregnant as a result that she has to live with that for the rest of her life. Sure, men can be sexually assaulted too, but they don't wind up carrying a small human inside of their belly for nine months if the person who raped them forgot the courtesy of a condom.

A mother may always love her child, but is it fair to force her to live with something that will always be a constant reminder of the day a man thought it would be fun to torment, maim and scar her? Then it turns into an episode

PETA PICKS UP WHERE LINCOLN LEFT OFF

GIVES FREE WILLY A WHOLE NEW MEANING

by Rebecca Tapio

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, more commonly known as PETA, named five SeaWorld orcas as plaintiffs in a lawsuit earlier this month, contending that animals have the same constitutional rights against slavery that humans have.

U.S. District Judge Jeffrey Miller in San Diego dismissed the case, writing, "the only reasonable interpretation of the Thirteenth Amendment's plain language is that it applies to persons, and not to non-persons such as orcas."

As someone who generally disagrees with the stances of PETA, I have to admit, in this case they have a point.

PETA's attorney, Jeffrey Kerr, told the *Huffington Post* that the lawsuit stemmed from the organization's belief that "slavery doesn't depend upon the species of the slave, any more than it depends upon the race, gender or ethnicity of the slave. SeaWorld's attempts to deny [orcas] the protection solely based on their species is the same kind of prejudice used to justify any enslavement."

By the reasoning of the honorable Judge Miller, our own species, *Homo sapiens*, are the only ones who cannot legally be enslaved or kept in conditions of slavery. While this logic is sound as long as we are at the top of the food chain, what will this mean for future lifeforms we encounter?

What of the Klingon, the Borg, the Vulcan? What of the Racnoss, the Ood, the Sontarans? (A *Star Wars* reference should go here, but seen the Episodes, I have not.)

With the advancements in interspace travel being

made in our time and those of times to come, how can one man decide that only one species in existence has the right to basic freedoms?

Do none of the advanced races I've mentioned above, with their complex cultures, economic systems and languages, deserve the same courtesy?

Have we the right to dismiss the happiness and well-being of other species for our own personal gain? We may soon have to face these questions directly, as Scientific American has reported on a planet that is not only close to our own solar system, but in the habitable zone of its parent star.

There could be life as close, according to the magazine, as "a mere 22 light years away from Earth," in the constellation Scorpius.

Twenty-two light years? The duration of a trip that distance is virtually no time in comparison with how long the universe has existed, according to our human estimations.

And so we must consider, if we deny basic rights to the mere creatures of our planet, down to the tiniest termite in its mound in Africa, how will we react when we find the giant scorpions living in Scorpius that will probably fly and have highly developed speech patterns, and who will obviously want to mate with us because our species is awesome?

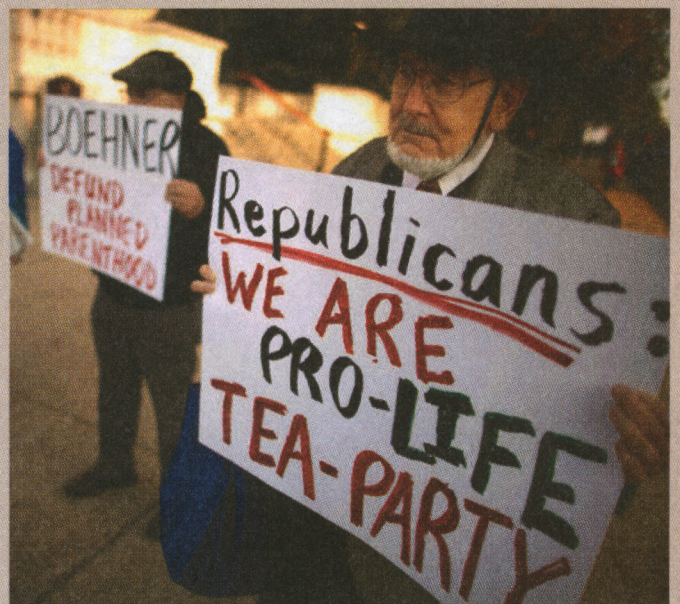
At the rate we're going, we'll probably just blow them up with a couple of nuclear weapons.

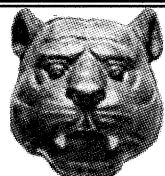
Kill it with fire.

of *Decisiones Extremas*, a Spanish telenovela, in which the mother calls her daughter a "child of sin" her whole life because she was born out of rape.

I'm a nice Christian girl with nice Christian beliefs, but at no point do I take it upon myself to impose them on others. You can use the Bible to defend most anything. It seems to condone slavery, no? And sodomy too? But it never determines the beginning of life. In the second creation story, humans aren't alive until life is breathed into them. You could say that means a baby is not considered living until it is breathing on its own outside of its mother's womb.

Long story short, the Personhood Bill is some kind of temporary insanity. Much like the interview with Katie Couric in which Sarah Palin said she wouldn't let her own daughter have an abortion even if she were raped; that kind of insanity. And I'll be damned if this comes to New York and by some happenstance I find myself in need of a botched Tijuana clothes hanger abortion. No bueno.





ASIAN AMERICAN E-ZINE

WWW.AA2SBU.ORG/AAEZINE

SUNY Korea

Grand Opening March 2012, Songdo, Incheon



Curriculum at SUNY K will follow SBU programs and students will receive SBU degrees, but SUNY K will be unique in offering students a combined American and Asian education, preparing them to work in an increasingly international oriented world.

Located in the Songdo Global UniverCity, a brand new hub in industry and technology, SUNY K will be the first US university in South Korea. It will offer valuable opportunities and highly qualified programs with extensive research available at CEWIT Korea.

SUNY Korea has all new dorms and faculty housing. Residence rooms will cost \$1,200-\$1,800 USD per semester, with living expenses about one third of NY.

SUNY K is fully equipped to foster an exceptional learning environment. Academic buildings even have 12 state-of-the-art labs for research and to help students gain real world experience.

With the completion of the multi-complex UniverCity in 2012, which will include other American and European universities, SUNY K will add a student center, sports complex, theater, library and more eating facilities, adding to the convenience and accessibility of campus living and working.

SUNY K opens with graduate programs from the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, including a free tuition with stipend Comp Sci PhD program, and a full undergraduate program beginning in the near future.

Special Series on SUNY K at www.aaezine.org/SUNYKorea

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This is an excerpt from www.aaezine.org in the Stony Brook Press, Feb 2012



ASIAN AMERICAN E-ZINE

WWW.AA2SBU.ORG/AAEZINE

SUNY Korea President Choonho Kim The SUNY Korea Philosophy

by Paul Huynh

In high school, I would arrive home to find my sister listening to Korean pop. To this day I can't understand why she likes it. It's in a foreign language she can barely understand. Then at SBU, I was amazed that my sister was not alone - even some of my non-Asian friends listen to K-pop bands like SNSD, SS501 and ShinEE.

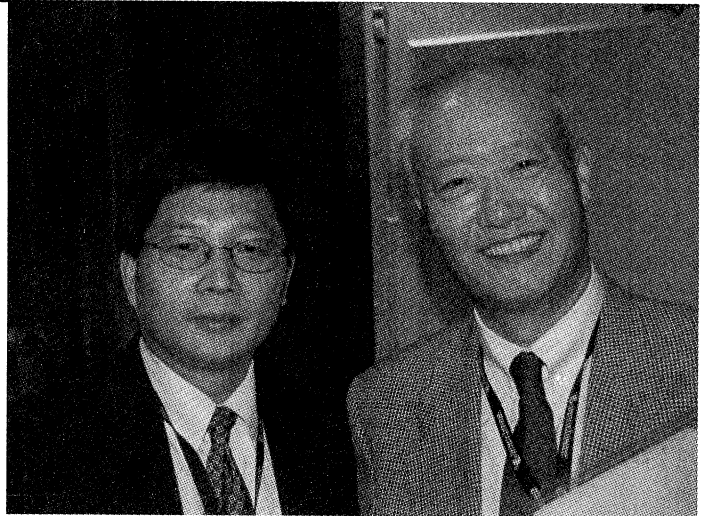
But what does K-pop have to do with SBU? Even President Stanley knows it. Coincidentally, two years ago Dr. Stanley had a photo of Girls Generation in his office which then future SUNY Korea President Joshua Choonho Kim quickly identified. It turns out one of Stanley's daughters is a huge K-pop fan. Luckily, Dr. Kim was friends with a Girls Generation producer and arranged a meeting between them. He even got Girls Generation to record a video, now on YouTube, congratulating SUNY Korea!

Korean influence is not just limited to music. South Korea is a leader in technological innovation. In 2009 Hyundai won North American Car of the Year and its head of R&D is SBU alumnus Dr. Hyun Soon Lee. Samsung and LG produce phones and appliances that are top brands in the US. But to build on its success, Korea needs to churn out skilled students from its universities. SUNY Korea will be one of them. It will also give SBU students a springboard not only into Korea but all Asia.

President Kim summed up SUNY Korea when he said "plus 1", its educational philosophy. He wants to merge Asian thinking with Western technology as a way of modernizing Korea's educational system. He plans to have a diverse incoming class to give students different perspectives on culture and modes of thinking. For Americans, it's Western education plus Asian. For Asians, it's Asian education plus Western. +1

But Dr. Kim doesn't stop there. His vision for SUNY Korea extends to business in Korea as well. He wants to combine the best of Korean management with Japanese and American styles to create a new, superb style of management to teach students. At the same time, he wants to instill in students good ethics and views business as a key agent of change for the 21st century.

As the past president of KETI, Korean Electronic Technology Institute, he knows that cutting-edge research, like the collaboration with POSTECH in a \$50 million USD, ten year grant they won together,



DR RONG ZHAO, DIRECTOR, SOFTWARE SYSTEMS, CEWIT and DR CHOONHO KIM, PRESIDENT, SUNY KOREA, AT CEWIT 2011

is crucial in achieving this goal. SBU has another sphere of influence here - CEWIT Korea. It will yield incredible research opportunities for students as well as faculty. The campus location, thirty miles west of Seoul, has a distinct related advantage. Songdo is a technological hub based on an initiative to promote green business development. Korea has an \$83 billion dollar stimulus package to promote green energy here, known as the Incheon Free Economic Zone (IFEZ). But it gets better:

- It has a modest price tag. Students from Asia will pay out-of-state tuition since it's still a SUNY public university, but living expenses are one third and transportation costs will be far less. That will make it less expensive for Asian students to go there rather than here for the same degree. For NYS students, it will be in-state tuition so it will cost the same as staying here, maybe less, since reduced living expenses will cover airfare. As part of SUNY, not a foreign university, US students are eligible for federal and state aid, loans and scholarships. For CS PhD students it's even all free for the next ten years thanks to the grant won with POSTECH.

- South Korea paid to build SUNY Korea and will pay the operating expenses for five years. SBU runs it and provides faculty. Meanwhile, SBU expands in a booming Asian economy, generating study abroad opportunities with cutting edge research.

I met Dr. Kim at CEWIT 2011. I was excited by how much I had learned and Dr. Kim emanated that same excitement about SUNY Korea. SBU will be the first US university in Korea and he wants to make it one of Korea's best. With all the resources Korea is giving, the plans to make it cutting edge, not just in research but teaching, when fully open, it should be a vibrant place to be. (Dare I say more exciting than here on the main campus?)

NO!

**NOT
MY**

HOLIDAYS!

AND NO FINALS ON WEEKENDS...

