

# THE STONY BROOK PRESS

VOL XXXII ISSUE 8

SEX!

FEBRUARY 15, 2011



**CHRISTIAN  
FINNEGAN**

\$10,000



**BEST COAST**

\$5,000

**IMMORTAL  
TECHNIQUE**

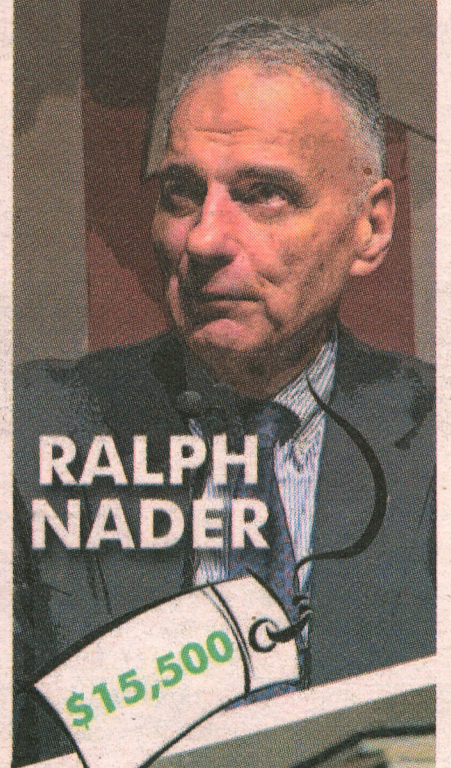


\$9,500

**AZIZ  
ANSARI**

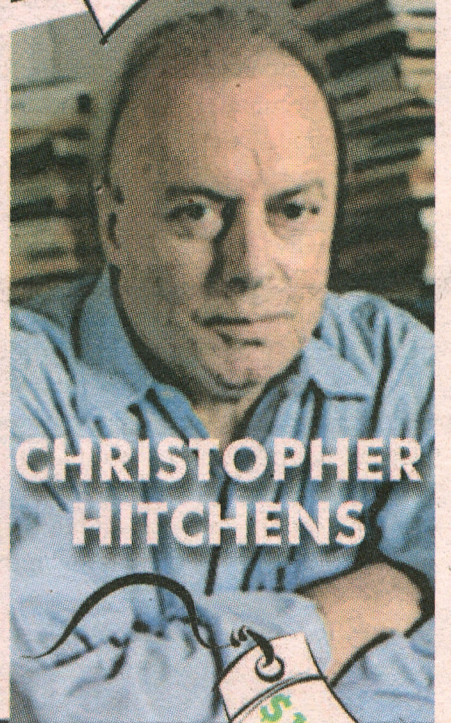


\$51,000



**RALPH  
NADER**

\$15,500



**CHRISTOPHER  
HITCHENS**

\$17,500

**AND A \$100,000+  
END-OF-THE-YEAR CONCERT**



# What the Snow!?

By Siobhan Cassidy

The current accumulation of snow this winter in Stony Brook is 54 inches. With parking problems, safety hazards and less money to cover snow removal, students and faculty said the colossal amount of snow has made life at Stony Brook difficult, to say the least.

On January 31, 10,000 students were scheduled to move back to campus to begin the spring semester. With no *Welcome Wagon* or resident assistants to help students move back into their dorm rooms, students and families hauled their luggage over snow banks. "They did a really horrible job," said Caryne Litcher, AMS and biology major. Although major pathways within the quads were clear of snow and ice, many students were unaware of that, and instead hauled their supplies via the most direct route anyway.

Campus Residences Operations and Campus Operations and Maintenance are responsible for clearing the snow, with the help of an outside contract with Terranova Landscaping. Campus Residences is responsible for clearing the quads and parking lots, while Campus Operations is responsible for the roadways and the academic mall.

Normally, major roadways and pathways are first to be cleared. But after the January 28 storm, three days before move-in day, the main priorities were clearing the parking lots and major walkways. "Every main route was plowed," John Sparano, the director of Campus Residences Operations, said. "No one should have had to lug their luggage over snow or be walking in the street."

Rewind four weeks to intersession when hundreds of students were taking classes and living on campus: during that time, New York was hit with six snowstorms. Campus Residences Operations and Campus Operations and Maintenance both failed to clear fire hydrants and blue light systems of snow on the active campus.

"The university should set an example in this fire district to more commercial needs," said Paul Degen, Brookhaven task force and fire commissioner. Degen said the Stony Brook Fire Department has had issues with the university not clearing fire hydrants in the past, but would not give further in-



Siobhan Cassidy/The Stony Brook Press

sight.

Business and residence owners with fire hydrants located on their property are advised to clear it of snow within 48 hours. The campus priority of clearing snow is as follows: main road and pathways, building exits, pathways in quads and parking lots, fire hydrants, blue lights, curb cuts and bus stops.

"It makes things complicated," Degen said. "When we make a call, and there is snow covering the fire hydrants, we have maps of the locations, but we are only guessing where they are exactly. We would like them to work on this."

Sparano said he believed the fire hydrants and blue light systems were cleared of snow after every storm during winter session. Pictures and student accounts are proof the snow was not cleared from fire hydrants and blue light systems during intersession. Terence Harrigan, executive director of Campus Operations and Maintenance, had no explanation for the snow not being cleared on January 31. Oddly enough, the day after Campus Operations and Maintenance were called for comment on this issue, the fire hydrants and blue lights were cleared of snow.

Chief William Lenihan of University Police Department said, "Incidents when students use the blue light system when it is an actual emergency are virtually non-existent." Students are more likely to use cell phones during an actual emergency, he explained.

Fast forward to February, there was

icy galore that crystallized the campus—sheets of ice covered quad pathways and thin black ice covered the Tabler Steps and academic mall. Snow and ice tumbled down the roofs of dorm buildings and the SAC. The students were told to walk around areas that were blocked off or look up before they had stepped outside a doorway to avoid falling ice.

Students have even taken the snow obstacle into their own hands. When a huge snow mound was piled in front of Tabler Quad, which was blocking the sidewalk, students were walking in the street. One student dug a ten-foot-long tunnel through the mound, which was about 10 to 15 feet high. Harrigan said he was unaware of the situation near Tabler Quad. In Mendelsohn Quad, students erected a snow castle with nearby trees whose branches broke apart under the weight of the snow.

"It is absolutely unacceptable," said Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, an H Quad resident who fell on the ice and hit her head. Although Fitzpatrick did not report the incident or seek medical attention, she ended up with bruises and scrapes on her face. According to University Police Department, there have been six reported incidents related to the snow or ice since January 2. "It's worth having students pay a little extra in tuition for plowing," said Fitzpatrick. "They should be out plowing right away when it snows."

But the problem with the plowing

on campus is not neglect or the budget. It is simply Mother Nature.

It snows; pathways are cleared. The sun shines the next day; the snow melts. At night, the temperature drops and puddles freeze. The next day students are sliding their way to class. "It is a little bit of a battle," Sparano said. "We have to salt and shovel and keep going back."

Campus Operations and Campus Residences track snowstorms, predicting when they will hit. During intersession, some administration officials, such as Edward Byrne, assistant director for campus residences, stayed overnight to prepare for snow removal.

For the 2010-2011 operating budget, the university has \$50,000 in an interchange account to spend on snow removal. An interchange account is a sum of money that can be accessed if the University needs extra funding for snow removal. "It's hard to say how much we are going to spend on snow removal," Harrigan said.

Since the 54 inches blanketed the campus, a 40 percent increase from the 33 inches Stony Brook experienced last year, administration officials are still adding up numbers for the amount of money spent.

Harrigan recommended that students stay in populated areas. If students see areas that have not been cleared or are icy, they should report it to UPD, RSP or Campus Operations at 631-632-6400.



# These Dog Days Ain't Over

By Carol Moran

What little praise Governor Cuomo received for keeping SUNY tuition as-is in his recent budget proposal was trumped by criticism of the proposed elimination of all direct state support, \$55 million, to the Stony Brook University Medical Center. That loss, plus a slash of \$12 million in direct state funding to the University, adds up to a potential loss of 30% in Stony Brook's state allocation.

While it's true that Cuomo is attempting to alleviate a \$10 billion dollar deficit, Assemblyman Englebright called the cuts "a complete turning away from the promise and the premise of the university and the hospital."

So what happens if the budget passes, and those cuts—or eliminations rather, become a reality?

The two prospective sources of revenue that are receiving the most attention are tuition increases and public/private partnerships. However, it is not likely that tuition will rise this year, and public/private partnerships take a significant amount of time to develop before they generate revenue, according to Assemblyman Steve Englebright. This could mean the elimination of hospital services, lay-offs,

program cuts to both the university and the hospital and a reduction in the amount of accepted students.

While stable tuition is desirable for current students, Englebright said in a phone interview that it's "for better or



for worse." If incremental tuition increases don't occur during a longer period of time and state support continues to dwindle, future students could face a sudden skyrocket in tuition rates. Though either way, they would pay.

"...Without some form of revenue relief in the form of increased tuition,

we cannot hope to maintain the same level of educational quality," President Stanley wrote in his message to the campus community.

In a recent testimony, SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher called for the cre-

in a statement on the Assembly's website.

Gondar also wrote that SUNY students think it unwise that Cuomo didn't include a tuition increase plan in his proposal. However, the assembly website claims that all representatives are elected by their student peers, which is not true in the case of Stony Brook. And if our representatives are not elected, they do not fairly represent the opinions of the student body.

"These people work very closely with administrators and lawmakers, enjoying access to a political elite that eventually yields lines on a resume and letters of recommendation for the students and the ability to claim the "voice of the students" for the administrators and lawmakers," said Mike Carley, a founding member of the Radical Student Union, or RSU, a group on campus that works to secure student rights, in an email.

In an effort to take direct action against Governor Cuomo's proposed cuts to higher education, the RSU has planned a rally to take place March 2 in the SAC plaza.

"The only way for students to have their voices heard is to pressure the government collectively," Carley wrote. "Individual students acting alone are powerless."

ation of a five-year tuition increase plan, one that is supported by the SUNY Student Assembly.

"We feel keeping tuition at the current level is simply not sustainable, and does not support access and affordability in the long-term," said SUNY Student Assembly President Julie Gondar

# Tunnel of Tabler Love

By Evan Goldaper & Sarah Evins

Sometimes, men do great things not for good reasons, but just because they can. Why climb the tallest mountains, dive to the bottom of the ocean or jump to the moon? Why? Because they're there, that's why. For sophomore physics and philosophy double major Thomas Mittiga, this mentality has led to great things, specifically the construction of a ten-foot long, igloo-esque tunnel in a mound of snow piled up by snowplows near the steps to Tabler Quad.

"It's something I did as a kid, when there was piles of snow, and, you know, once or twice, I carved it out and there was an igloo," he said. "But that wasn't the reason. I saw that we got a lot

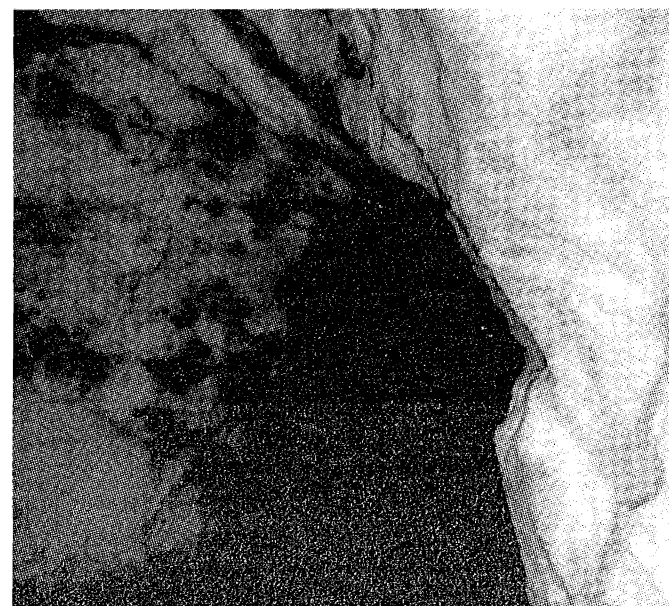
of snow, and I wanted to play in it as long as I wasn't working."

That day came on February 2, when a delay allowed Mittiga to fulfill his dreams of being a modern-day John Henry and tunnel where machines could not. He worried at first that the plows and police cars driving by would take issue with his efforts, but initial reactions proved to be positive. "A couple of people went by, and they were really interested. And in the end, everyone seemed to appreciate it."

Even though aiding the student body wasn't his original intention, many people chose to use the igloo route rather than walk on the street. It made sense; the mound had originally covered the sidewalk completely. But in the end, the tunnel was destroyed by a snowplow. Mittiga, however, was not bothered. "My plan was to make a path for people to go through."

He was planning on tearing it down himself and creating a normal walkway when time was available again, but the plow beat him to it. "The only thing I was annoyed about was the poor plowing job," he said, claiming he felt the main reason the plow tore down the igloo was just to destroy it, not to provide a path.

Still, with the sidewalk now cleanly-plowed and temperatures rising, it seems unlikely that Mittiga will be able to dig another igloo. When asked for advice by other people who might want to undertake a



similar public works project, Mittiga simply noted, "Make sure that your shovels are good enough for it." When asked to give more general advice, he remained stoic. "No punchy quotes for you."



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The *Stony Brook Press* is published fortnightly during the academic year and twice during summer session by *The Stony Brook Press*, a student run non-profit organization funded by the Student Activity Fee. The opinions expressed in letters, articles and viewpoints do not necessarily reflect those of *The Stony Brook Press* as a whole. Advertising policy does not necessarily reflect editorial policy. For more information on advertising and deadlines call (631)632-6451. Staff meetings are held Wednesdays at 1:00 pm. First copy free. For additional copies contact the Business Manager.

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## editorials

## Almost There...

The Student Activities Board's accomplishment in bringing Aziz Ansari and Immortal Technique to Stony Brook in the same week highlights what can now be called a successful transition from the old SAB to the current one.

As the one-year-anniversary of the drastic reformation of SAB approaches, it's clear that what the current members of the Undergraduate Student Government and SAB are doing is benefiting the campus as a whole.

From last semester's events that included comedian Christian Finnegan and indie band Best Coast, to last week's performances by Aziz Ansari and Immortal Technique, Stony Brook has thus far hosted artists in events that could very easily rival those held at other universities, except for SUNY Purchase (those kids are mad cultured).

But the semester is far from over and so are the events. Christopher Hitchens, a prominent and well-respected author and journalist will be coming to campus on March 8. Former presidential candidate and life-long consumer advocate Ralph Nader will also be coming in mid-March as part of SAB's speaker series.

And before the close of the semester, SAB plans to bring a television-comedian and stand-up legend valued at \$40,000 to campus. This would take place just a month before an end-of-the-year concert that is slated to host artists who performed in the 2011 Grammy Award Show. The price of this concert is valued at more than \$100,000 and the show will be part of a national tour.

Contracts for the two events are still pending, and The Press was asked to hold

off publishing the prospective artists for contractual reasons.

"I guess one thing is you can use the word artists plurally," said David Mazza, USG Vice President of Communications. "That's an improvement."

The attendance records of last year's end-of-the-year concert have already been surpassed in much smaller and less funded events, such as the Aziz show that attracted more than 1,000 students and the Immortal Technique concert, which attracted 800 people, 700 of whom were students.

"It's the small events that bring simi-

So far, there hasn't been too much of a complaint about which artists SAB brought—they all seem to be high profile, which advertises itself, diverse, both in genre and style, and generally favored.

But current members of SAB and USG are setting a precedent of exclusivity in the decision making process that brings artists to campus.

"I think that it's open in the sense that all of our meetings are open," said Mazza. "It operates in a very similar way to the senate. Does anyone really ever show up? No not really, unless there's a particular issue."

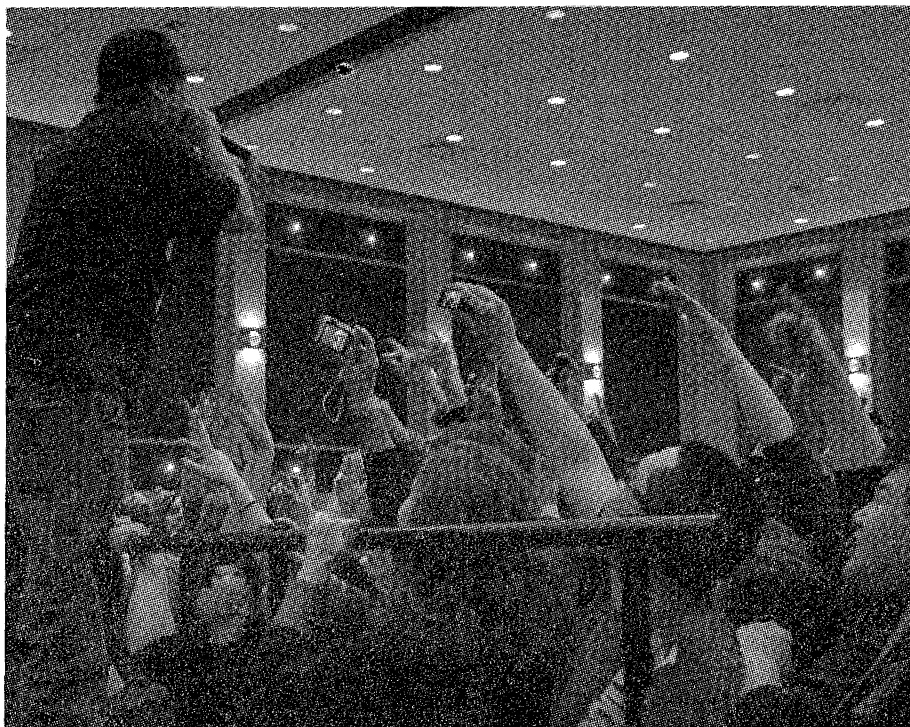
And that mentality, which appears to be in the back of everyone's minds at USG and SAB as they go forth in planning this semester, is extremely dissatisfying and disconcerting. The idea that \$404,000 of the student activity fee being handled by just a few students should concern all of us who are looking for accountability and for great artists to bring on campus.

At some point, this issue needs to be addressed, albeit in the form of a town-hall meeting or some

student-input structure included in SAB. Having a concert team of roughly 15 students and additional volunteers is not enough to accurately represent the entire student body.

If nothing is done, the very recent success of the large-upscale and well-attended events that strive to build a larger and more vibrant campus community would be all for naught. You can't have a community of more than 15,000 with less than 1 percent making all the decisions.

Sure it looks like it's working now, but at some point, to be truly successful, that has to change.



larity between the people who attend, but that's not what the student government ought to be doing," says Moiz Khan, Student Programming Agency Director. "They should be working towards creating events that bring everyone together. In some way you have to do events that force people in the same room together that are different," said Khan. This, he thinks, builds community.

What doesn't build community however, is a small, selective group of students, near 15 or so out of more than 15,000 students who are to represent and choose which artists to bring to campus.

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Hate what you see? E-mail your letters to [editors@sbpress.com](mailto:editors@sbpress.com)

## Something to be Hopeful For

During an Executive Council Meeting held in early February, Undergraduate Student Government President Matt Graham did something unheard of. He voted against the Faculty-Senate and their support of a resolution that would increase tuition as a means to of generating revenue for SUNY and Stony Brook University as they face another string of proposed budget cuts.

This marks one of the rare times that USG has taken a stance in clear opposition of both President Samuel Stanley, a staunch supporter of raising student tuition and increasing the privatization of the university through public-private land-leases, as well as the administration as a whole.

"It is a very touchy issue," Graham said about his vote. "I really think my stance should reflect a thorough discussion not only with senate executive council but with the undergraduate students."

While Graham has yet to publicly announce his personal support for tuition hikes, he feels that students should be given the opportunity to voice their concern on the issue.

"I don't know if gallivanting, blowing your horn saying we need tuition hikes is what students want to do," he said.

Roughly 30 percent of SUNY's operating budget has been cut in the past few years. Last year alone, SUNY faced \$442 million in cuts and unfunded mandatory costs. With Governor Andrew Cuomo's recent proposal to cut SUNY funding by another 10 percent, the future of state-support for Stony Brook doesn't look too bright.

But the student representation does. Despite the fact that the SUNY Student Assembly, a collection of student representatives elected by their peers to represent the SUNY student body, has repeatedly voiced its support of tuition increases and public private partnerships, both Graham and the Graduate Student Organization voted in opposition.

"We decided to vote against the resolution mainly because we did not think that asking for a tuition increase reflected the opinion of most of the students we should represent," said Froylán Encisco, president of the GSO. A survey conducted in the fall showed that 65 percent of grad students were opposed to tuition hikes.

As for USG, which in the past has made decisions without consulting the student body, such as President Graham's decision to support President Stanley in the large closure of Southampton University last year, this

is a great change. The members of USG should be able to clearly see what's best for its student body.

Students should let their voices be heard in opposition of this ridiculous idea that tuition hikes are the solution for higher education, let alone the notion that the privatization of the University's land, which takes years to set-up before reaping any sort of revenue stream, would be good for the students.

You don't support a state-institution that benefits New York in the long-run with an educated and highly-skilled workforce by stripping its money away and then, have your university president, professors and university administration repeatedly lobby to have their students pay a higher tuition, adding insult to injury.

The recent vote by both the USG and GSO is just one of many hundreds of steps that need to be taken to preserve students' interests. It's clear that President Stanley and the Faculty-Senate have completely disregarded what's best for the student body. Now is the time for students to voice their opinion in order to prevent USG and GSO from making the same mistakes.

## Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening...



A comic by  
Vincent Barone



# Women's Mag Ain't No Online Rag

By Alyssa Melillo

On February 1, a new online magazine called Her Campus Stony Brook (HCSB) joined the populous list of student-run publications at Stony Brook. The magazine, geared towards women, features news, blogs, photos and information on upcoming campus events, all written by Stony Brook students.

Founded by three female Harvard students and launched in September 2009, Her Campus is a national online magazine that includes content on style, beauty, love, life and careers written by female college journalists. Women can create branches for their own schools that feature content related to their institution. According to the magazine, more than one hundred schools have Her Campus branches.

"Her Campus is a magazine for smart, empowered and globally conscious college women," said sophomore Rhoda Feng, HCSB's creator and Campus Coordinator. "The purpose of the Stony Brook branch, and other college branches, is to supplement the national content with school-specific content."

Feng, who heard about Her Campus from a friend at another school, thought that having a branch at Stony Brook would "provide an important outlet for women on campus to express themselves."

As Campus Coordinator, Feng oversees the activities of the business team, edits the articles, updates the site at least once a week, communicates with the writers and solicits contributions.



She also adds content of her own, she said. The business team includes Events Coordinator Stephanie McCourt; the Social Media Directors Lillian Hua and Julieana Magriz; and Publicity Director Alicia K. Ryan. Because the magazine is still new, Feng said it is working on building up an editorial team this semester and finding staff, feature and contributing writers. The magazine welcomes all types of writers. "I strive for diversity," Feng said. "Even those who have no journalism experience can contribute to HC SB ... Essentially, I want to include as many different views as possible on the site."

To get ready for the launch and to publicize the magazine, Ryan and the rest of the business team used flyers, mass emails and a fan page on Face-

book. "We've had so much positive feedback, and [I've] even had people pull me aside at school to tell me how much they love the site," said Ryan. "I am contacting clubs and organizations to collaborate, and networking with fraternities and sororities to bring in an even bigger constituency. We really want our readers to be involved, and [we] plan to hold contests and other fun interactive programs."

Besides establishing a strong fan base, the magazine hopes to inspire readers with its articles and content. "We really just hope to allow college students to progressively become motivated through informative articles, which will ultimately lead to a more successful lifestyle and dedication to hard work," Ryan said.

In addition to its regular content, HCSB also features two categories called "Campus Cuties" and "Campus Celebrities" where readers can nominate someone they feel "personifies" Stony Brook, or they think is a "great catch," to be featured on the site. Right now they are being picked by Ryan.

"I have a pretty big network on campus, so I know a lot of the student leaders and can interview them easily," said Ryan. "We hope once the site gets more popular that readers will start nominating their own choices." She and Feng predict that these will be the magazine's most popular features. Ryan added that although the magazine is targeted towards women, men can find it interesting too.

"This magazine, though marketed to women, isn't just for women," she said. "There are also great features for men to enjoy, like our upcoming events tab. It's always valuable to know what's going on around campus."

Feng and Ryan are both confident that HC SB will be very successful and gain many readers throughout the semester.

"I think HC SB will be a great success on campus because it's totally unique," Ryan said. "It's like reading *Cosmo*, but with stories that relate personally to our students. How can it get any better than that? It can't!"

For anyone who is interested in contributing to Her Campus Stony Brook, Feng can be reached at [rhodafeng@hercampus.com](mailto:rhodafeng@hercampus.com).

# Your Classes May Shorten!!!

By Alyssa Melillo

It's not a \$35 million savior to Stony Brook's budget issues, but it's one way to offer students the opportunity to take more classes.

At a faculty-senate meeting on Feb. 7, University Provost Eric Kaler suggested the option of shortening some classes by five minutes, which would potentially open up a new time slot so more classes would be available. 55 and 80-minute classes would be shortened.

Jon Freeman, a sophomore, is opti-

mistic about this possibility, as paying attention in the longer 80-minute classes for the whole time can be difficult.

"Listening to a lecture for such a long time period at once, even with a great professor, can get tiresome, and it is easy to lose concentration," he said. "The added flexibility the extra time slot would create would definitely be beneficial."

Some professors do not see a problem with this suggestion. Ned Landsman, a history professor, said that while he remembers a time when SB classes were shorter, cutting down classes by

five minutes really wouldn't make a difference because by the end of a class, the attention span of a student has most likely diminished.

"Whether the five minutes will make a difference, probably not," he said. "I'm more concerned about the lengths of the semester[s]."

Math professor Ljudmila Kamenova said that there are pros and cons to shortening classes: the pro being that professors and students would get more time to travel across campus to their next classes if they're back-to-back, and the con being that courses with "intensive" curricula that meet twice a week

would lose as much as 150 minutes of in-class time each semester.

Junior Krystal Calvano, on the other hand, said she would prefer more earlier classes than shorter ones.

"Instead of shortening classes by five minutes, just add an early morning class," she said. "I wouldn't mind being here from 6 am to 12 pm and having the rest of my day to myself."

If Provost Kaler's suggestion becomes a reality, and a new time slot is added, students may have more of an opportunity to take the classes they need every semester in order to graduate on time.



# Seatbelts, Everyone!



Ginny Mulé

I sat in the SAC Atrium, waiting. A group of people moved about clumsily on a small ice rink that sounded and looked suspiciously un-ice-like.

But that was not why I was there. No, I was there for something bigger, better, and more exciting. I was about to embark on a wondrous journey, one that threatened to shake the very foundations of everything I thought and felt about Stony Brook University Transit. I was about to go for a ride on one of the new buses.

Since my return from winter break, these red-and-white behemoths had taken up a troubling residence in the back of my mind. I found myself not paying attention as my professors introduced themselves and their curricula, my mind instead wandering on to more pressing questions such as “Are the seats more comfortable?”, “Do they run on biodiesel?”, “How do the bus drivers feel about this?”, and, most importantly, “Can I shrink it down and hide it in a cheese doodle to explore the human digestive tract?” I knew I’d never be able to get my homework done until I got some answers, so I joined *The Stony Brook Press* as a way of getting unrestricted access to these magnificent machines.

Not wanting to look suspicious, I casually moved out to the bus stop benches. Pop music was blasting through the speakers in the SAC Plaza, and I wondered how people could be worried about such trivial things as airplanes in the night sky when an even more critical transportation incident was unfolding right before our eyes here at Stony Brook. There were new buses! They could be magical! If I could have had a wish right then, it would be for a bus to arrive so that I could begin my path to enlightenment.

Then, possibly because an airplane had flown by and granted my wish, I heard the chug of a diesel engine and the familiar hiss of the air brakes releasing. The sign on the front glowed with orange letters- “Mall Route,” and the snowy white sides provided a sharp contrast to the red block lettering, “Go Seawolves!” As two students stepped off of the bus, I timidly peeked in at the driver and began my ascent up the stairs. The bus driver was quick to cor-

rect me. “This is not a mall run,” he said, “It’s just a drop-off.” Seizing the opportunity, I smoothly replied, “I’m writing an article for a newspaper about the new buses; do you mind answering a few questions?”

“Fine,” he replied, “Just come up and sit down; I have to take the bus back to the lot.”

I sat down in the first row of shiny gray plastic seats. Black seatbelts lay strewn across the rows of four, of which I counted nine. “Thirty-six people,” I calculated in my head, “That seems fairly economical.” But I was getting distracted, missing my chance to get the real scoop, the big story on these buses! I pulled myself back into reality and started searching for answers from the bus driver.

I found out that his name is Roberto, and that he had been working for Stony Brook Transit for about 6 months now. “Perfect,” I thought, “He’s been here long enough to have experience *both* types of buses.” He drives the bus part-time on Friday nights, Saturdays, and Sundays, as well as acting as a case manager for the health clinic on campus full-time. He enjoys driving the buses and told me, “The people are great,” and the “Students are very polite.” This seemed a little fishy to me, given that my experience with college students in general had taught me that somewhere between half and all college students were obnoxious, entitled, and overall, an extreme displeasure to be around. I asked him if students were ever rude to him.

“You gotta be patient sometimes, take your time to explain certain things to them.” As I digested these words of wisdom, I realized that we were getting closer to our destination, South P Lot.

“How about these new buses,” I asked, “How do the bus drivers like them?”

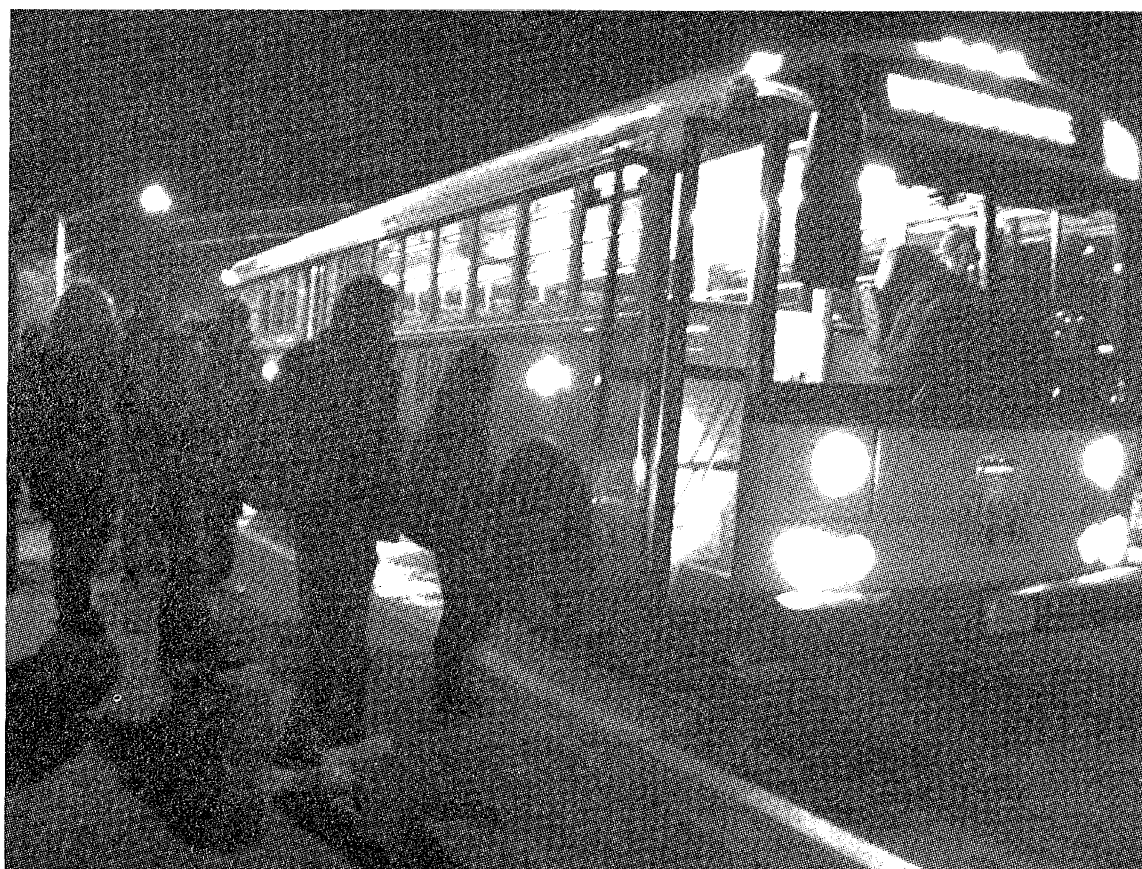
He explained that they were a lot nicer to drive than the old buses, and al-

though there was some anxiety over driving this new and expensive equipment, he was getting used to them and preferred them to the old buses. When I wondered aloud whether or not any other truth-seeking students, such as myself, had made inquiries about the buses, he replied, “I’ve had two people comment on them, exactly two.” I wondered who these mystery students were. Could they be rival reporters from *The Statesman*, or another publication on campus?

When confronted with the more technological aspects of the fleet, he was apologetic about not knowing whether the buses ran on BioDiesel. He said that as far as he could tell, the gas mileage seemed to be about the same as the old

entire fleet was revamped to run on this blend of vegetable oil (presumably waste from the Wendy’s in Roth) and traditional diesel gas. From the Powerpoint file of a Town Hall Meeting that took place last March, I deduced that these buses actually seat 40 people, and thus my row-counting abilities are rather rusty. All in all, it turns out that besides the shiny novelty of the new buses, which will invariably fade as the salt and snow continue to wreak havoc on automobile paint across the Northeast, they really aren’t all that different from the fleet they are replacing, at least from a student’s perspective.

But what really struck me about my experience with Roberto, perhaps the most important lesson I drew from



fleet. He estimated that there were between 5 and 6 new buses and was unsure about whether Stony Brook planned on replacing all of the buses with the new model in the near future.

When we finally arrived at South P, he offered to bring me back to the SAC at 2:15, when the next mall run would be leaving. Seizing the balmy 40-degree weather, I politely declined, thanked him for his time, and instead walked back to Toscanini, taking the time to contemplate the previous few minutes.

Through further research, I discovered that the buses do indeed run on BioDiesel, which has been a hallmark of Stony Brook buses since 2005, when the

those 5 fateful minutes, was the idea that maybe it wasn’t about the buses themselves. Sure they were shinier on the outside, and the uncomfortable plastic seats were cleaner and newer, but the experience of riding the new bus was actually sort of anticlimactic. We didn’t turn it into a submarine to discover how undersea volcanoes work or blast off into outer space to learn about the stars. What made the bus ride magical was not a zany elementary school teacher and her pet lizard, but Roberto, one of the many unsung heroes of SBU Transit, whose chipper attitude and patient nature outshines even the shiny new hubcaps on our new bus fleet.



# features

The last place Stony Brook commuter Mathew Christoforou would think he'd be on a Friday night is back on campus. He usually at home or at a party, both far away from the Academic Mall, he says.

Only this Friday evening, he is standing outside the SAC waiting inline with more than 700 people, eagerly anticipating the night's main attraction: a free Immortal Technique concert. This is a change for Christoforou, a junior mechanical engineering major, who says events on campus are non-existent.

"Some schools have a lot of concerts during the year. Students at those schools say it's awesome," says Christoforou, before addressing the stark contrast with his Alma matter to be. "I've come to expect it to not have many events. It's Stony Brook."

But last week that perception changed for Christoforou and for many students at Stony Brook, when, courtesy of the Undergraduate Student Government and the programming of the Student Activities Board, Stony Brook students were given the opportunity to see prime-time comedian Aziz Ansari and rapper Immortal Technique live in concert—both free of charge.

And it's only the beginning of a semester packed with SAB planned events that include other prominent figures like Christopher Hitchens, Ralph Nader, a \$40,000-dollar-comedian and an end of the year concert to be priced at more than \$100,000, both soon to be signed.

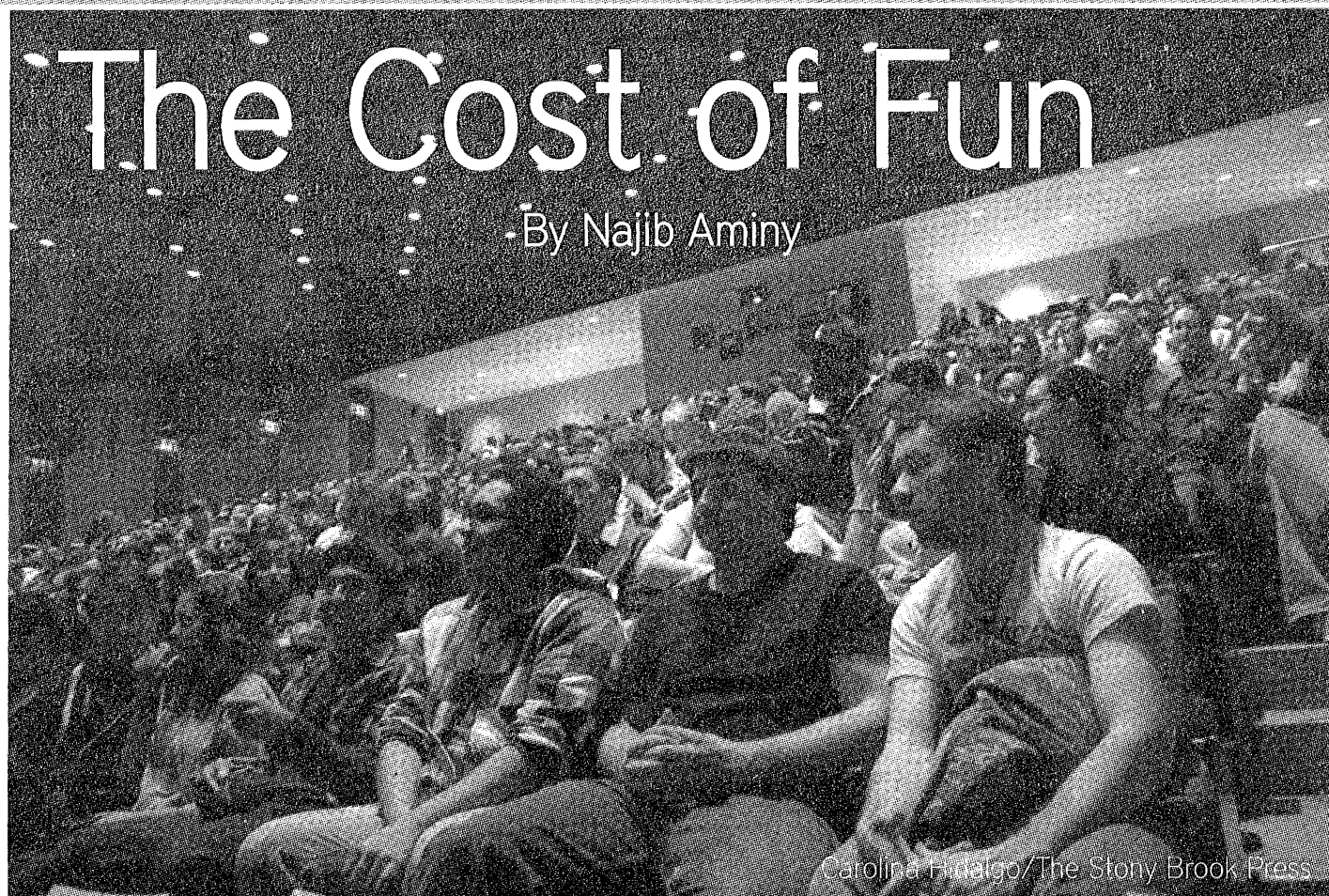
It's what the current administration of SAB and USG has been planning for months as it approaches the one-year anniversary of its tumultuous transformation from "old SAB" to "new SAB."

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The 2010 spring semester marked a rapidly growing rift between the members of the old SAB the previous members of USG. At the time, SAB was criticized for largely consisting of members from African-American and Latino Fraternities and Sororities, which in part led to a lack of diversity and outreach in events, critics would say.

The breaking point between the then independently-operated old SAB structure and USG occurred at the end of the last spring semester when there was no clear artist planned for the annual end-of-the-year concert called Brookfest. It was then, through a series of bills and legislation, that USG, specifically through the office of the Vice President of Student Life, coordinated Brookfest.

The old members of SAB felt their voices, opinions and input was not



being heard by USG, and thus removed themselves from the planning of the concert. They instead focused their activities on the carnival aspect of Brookfest.

Towards the very end of the spring 2010 semester, USG disbanded the old SAB and centralized the current structure that exists today. The current structure operates with an executive board that includes representation from the Residence Hall Association and Commuter Student Association, as well as a student nominated director, who is in charge of planning events.

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For the past few years, the SAB received a budget of roughly \$200,000, plus \$70,000 budgeted for an end-of-the-year concert, the amount that Moiz Khan allocated for the organization as the USG Treasurer. Khan then resigned and was appointed by USG President Matt Graham as the Student Programming Agency Director. It is currently Khan's job to plan and coordinate events with the \$270,000 allocated from funds paid through the student activity fee.

Since Khan resigned, SAB has received an additional \$144,000 in its budget, which comes from the closure of ALIRRT, a \$20,000 program that would provide students discounted LIRR tickets, and \$80,000 from the streamlining of the USG accounting office budget. An additional \$30,000 came from an additional readjustment of USG operations.

In another attempt to raise the SAB budget late last semester, students voted

117-101 to raise the student activity fee from \$94.25 to \$100. The USG Supreme Court ruled against the raise, citing a claim that the vote was not heavily publicized, resulting in a lack of votes and factual errors in the document.

Khan saw this potential increase in activity fees to equate to an extra \$163,000 for USG to allocate, money he sought to use for SAB. "Pragmatically, it's only \$5.75. It will legitimately benefit students, either if it's SAB, which essentially means large events for this semester, or if it's put in the general fund," says Khan, who has criticized the vote void, arguing that it sets a questionable precedent.

But thus far, the SAB budget has paid for many of last fall's events that include the bi-weekly RockYoFaceCase concerts held in the University Café, the student-run Modern Art by Modern Artists show, a mentalist known as Banachek, the Upright Citizens Brigade Touring Company, as well as the \$10,000 bill to bring comedian Christian Finnegan and the \$5,000 tab to have Indie band Best Coast perform.

But only a quarter of the \$404,000 reserved for SAB has been spent, leaving more than \$300,000 left for upcoming performers and artists. That's the plan, at least.

"It's still incredibly difficult to plan a semester of large events with \$300,000," says Khan.

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By dishing out \$51,000 for Aziz Ansari, SAB has cemented its philosophy that hosting large, high profile events will foster a unifying, commu-

nity atmosphere that's been ever-so-lacking at Stony Brook.

"We're working so hard this year to build community and pride," says Graham. "We've taken a completely different philosophy. We want to put on these big events that the entire campus talks about, get them hyped."

Thus far, the events held both in the fall and spring have attracted near capacity crowds, including Christian Finnegan, Best Coast and Banachek.

This coming March, the likes of scientists, political figures and commentators are scheduled to appear at Stony Brook, breaking the short-term tradition of attracting only entertainment. Speakers that include Nader, Hitchens and a slew of New York City based scientists are meant to diversify the events.

But there's still planning and funding for that too. SAB is pursuing a television-actor and prominent stand-up comic valued at more than \$40,000.

The large end-of-the-year concert, which will bill to more than \$150,000 including security and booking the athletic complex, will not be named "Brookfest," breaking a short-term tradition.

Instead, it is likely that it will take the name of the national tour of the prospective artists that SAB is currently pursuing, artists who performed at the Grammys. Due to contractual issues, The Press was asked to withhold the names of these artists.

"I honestly think it's for the better because we are having these big events that Stony Brook hasn't had in a long time," says Graham.





Vincent Barone/The Stony Brook Press

But the access to such events is quite limited. For example, only 1,500 students got tickets to see Ansari perform, leaving more than 14,000 students without a seat or a laugh. Of the 800 people who showed up at the Immortal Technique concert, roughly 100 people, including some Stony Brook students, were turned away after the room reached capacity.

It's an increasing problem with little growing space, and it's also one of many.

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The largest venue on campus aside from the athletic complex, is the Staller Center, which seats near 1,050. However, Staller is often booked for live performances and events planned months in advance. And even when a show is not taking place, there is often stage construction and preparation for upcoming events, which makes it more difficult to book the venue.

Even areas like the SAC Auditorium, which seats roughly 600 people, are booked many weeks in advance by other clubs and their respective events.

An even bigger curveball to program planning is the administrative paperwork required, from security checks to guests lists and contracts.

"There are not enough events... The main reason is that planning any scale of event is difficult on this campus," says Khan. "We have lost artists, lost plans, we have paid more money constantly because there are not many venues on this campus, [and] it's incredibly difficult to lock one artist when there is this whole security check policy

that takes too long. It hasn't been welcoming to anyone."

One of the biggest delays, and often the reason that USG fails to book a certain artist, is the security check process in which a performer must provide three college events they have previously performed in. The University Police Department confirms with the police departments of each respective university or college and either approves or denies an artist. Recent arrests or charges lessen the chances that an artist will be booked.

This process has stifled SAB operations.

"If you wait 6 to 24 hours on a security check, a particular artist could already be booked by a competing offer," says Adam Taylor, an employee of Concert Ideas that is contracted to work with USG in coordinating events. "It's been one of the biggest hurdles at Stony Brook."

Amy Wallin, who is in charge of security checks from the Student Activities Office, could not be reached for comment.

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As SAB approaches its one-year anniversary of its radical transformation under the 2010 Establishment of Student Life Act, the contrast between old SAB and new SAB has been stark, based on the attendance of events.

To put it into perspective, the Immortal Technique concert, was priced at \$9,500 for a DJ and three performers, which included the headliner. This event proved to be as successful as last year's Brookfest concert, which cost

\$60,000 to bring Wale and Matt&Kim. Roughly 800 people showed up to the Immortal Technique concert, mostly students, compared to the 540 students who bought Brookfest tickets last spring semester.

But the same criticism that was raised with the old SAB has been raised with the current one—it is too exclusive.

"It's not fair. It's a small amount of people who are planning the events," says senior biology major Nadine Peart. "There is no type of communication between the student government and the students regarding events," she says. Since she was a freshman, Peart was involved in the old SAB as a general body member until it was disbanded. She is now part of the Senior Committee, which plans events for senior students. At the time, Peart says, she was optimistic in the transition, waiting to see how things would pan out.

But after a fall semester of few events, and a denial of Peart's request for funding of an \$8,000 senior formal, Peart founded the Students for Change, a group of discontented students organized to protest against the leadership of USG and SAB at the time. Following the denial of Peart's formal request, the senior committee's budget was rescinded for claims made by Khan that its services were repetitive and the committee was not diverse enough.

"I think they are doing a great job planning. It could've been more effective if done from the beginning," says Peart, who says she is pleased with the types of events that have been held but

is taken aback by the lack of student involvement in the planning process. "When too much power is in very few hands, that's almost like a dictatorship."

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In old SAB, each meeting was set up similar to a town hall, where gallery members, around 20 to 30, would vote for each proposed event. In new SAB, there is a small concert committee comprised of less than 15 members, who work on coordinating and planning events with SPA Director Khan.

USG President Graham would agree that the openness has been an issue that hasn't been heavily addressed. "It's been a lot a lot of work. We just really wanted to get it done," said Graham about planning for this semester. "So we haven't really had the ability to focus in on having a lot committees, input and event planners."

For junior Kristin Agathos, the change has been for the better. Agathos was involved in the marketing of old SAB and now helps run the new SAB funded RockYoFaceCase showcases.

"The events coming out of this new structure are significantly better than what came out of the old," said Agathos, who has some reservations as to how the transformation between old and new SAB took place. "SAB was taken down and reconstructed by Moiz Khan and a few USG senators. Now Moiz Khan is in charge of all that money. I don't know, does that seem corrupt to you? I don't know."

"It's not I'm just sitting here picking every artist I like," says an agitated Khan days before Aziz Ansari is set to perform on campus. "It's legitimately a team process. There are some people who understand how to work part of a team and some people who don't," he says, dismissing the criticism.

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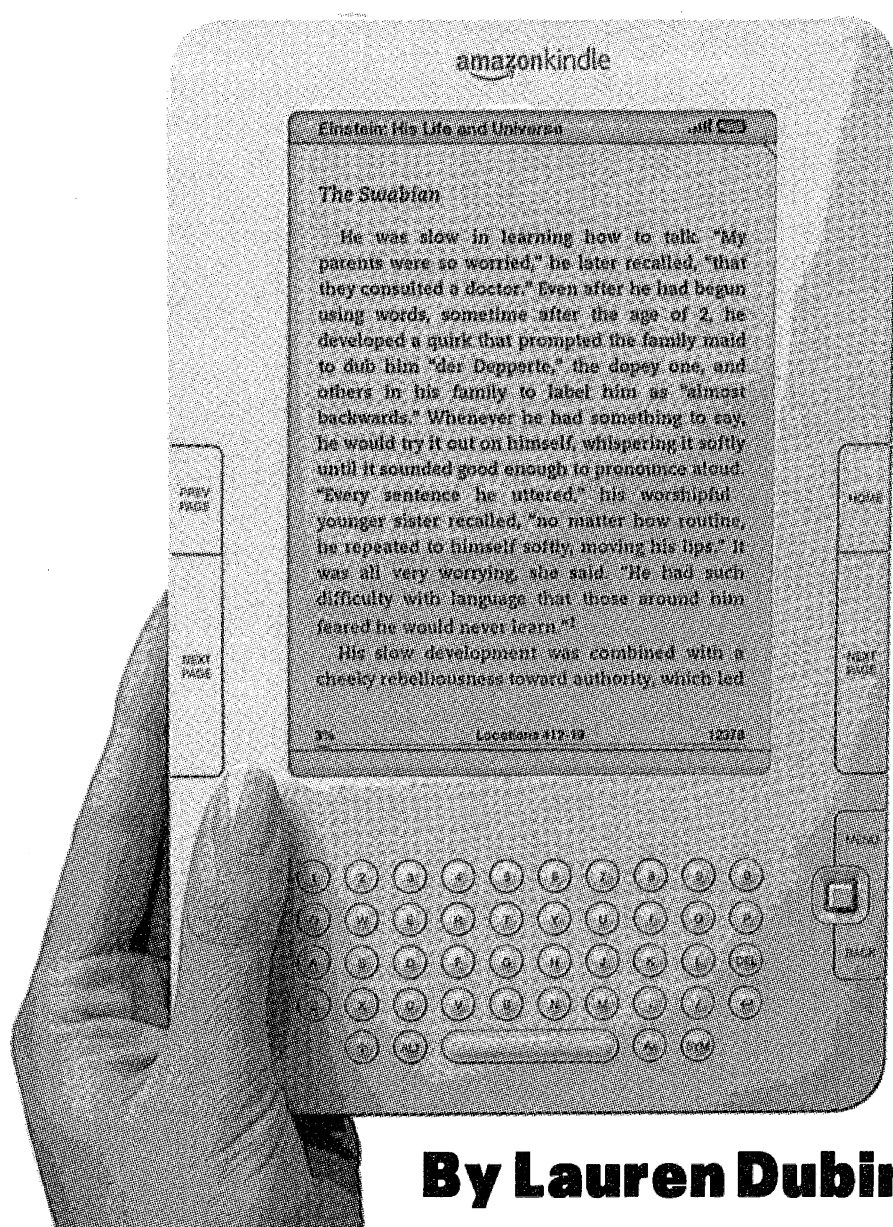
Standing next to Christoforou in line is computer science major Imran Brown. The Brooklyn native who lives on campus has attended just a few USG funded events in his three years at Stony Brook, but already feels that this semester is different.

"It's been better this year. Definitely. It seems they're pushing forward for us to have more fun," he says.

But Brown still believes in the Stony Brook stereotype that it's difficult to have fun on this campus. But this Friday night, that stereotype was proved half wrong.

"I mean the stereotype is half true, but it's not as bad as it sounds," he says. Asked why, he replies: "Because I have Immortal Technique and it's free."





# Getting Nookie With E-Books

**By Lauren Dubinsky**

The long line to buy books at the beginning of each semester at Stony Brook, let alone many universities, is shortening because students are buying more and more e-books.

As Stony Brook University students walk into the University Bookstore at the bottom level of the Melville Library, they are immediately confronted with bright green signs saying, "Your Choice: New, Used, Rental, E-textbooks," scattered all around the store.

The e-textbook option was introduced to the university about five years ago and has become popular after roughly 300 were sold last fall semester. Students are beginning to ditch the print textbooks that are stacked on the bookshelves for the digital textbooks on their laptops and e-readers.

And the bookstore has taken notice. The e-textbook titles available in the university bookstore rose from 112 in Fall 2009 to 430 in Fall 2010.

"Students have become increasingly interested in digital content this fall and the university bookstore has embraced that," said Boon Teo, the university bookstore manager. Prior to this fall semester, very few e-textbooks were sold but last fall semester, the sales rose to

about 300 titles being sold.

E-readers, such as the Amazon Kindle, Nook and Sony E-book Reader, are changing the way college students view their textbooks. Instead of students flipping open a textbook to begin studying for their exams, they are tapping into their Nooks to scroll through the pages of their digital textbooks. It provides students with unique and modern multimedia tools that have never before been possible in paper formats and instant access to all of their course materials and notes in one place. With a click of a mouse they can look up definitions and formulas.

A study by the educational software developer Xplana predicts that the digital textbook market will surpass 18 percent of combined new textbook sales for the Higher Education and Career Education markets in the United States by 2014. The study also said that overall digital textbook sales increased by 100 percent in 2010 and continue to grow at rates of 150 percent and 120 percent in 2011 and 2012.

Even some of the larger bookstore chains are positioning themselves for this largely growing trend. Barnes and Noble released a free downloadable ap-

plication last year called NOOKstudy to Stony Brook University and other college campuses that allows students to read and study their e-textbooks on their Macs and PCs.

"Barnes and Noble has been selling e-textbooks since 2003 and sales were extraordinarily low until they recently experienced a huge increase in sales this fall," said Jade Roth, the vice president of books and digital strategy at Barnes and Noble. There are a growing number of textbooks that are now available in digital format and the NOOKstudy application allows students to download the e-textbooks and use new features and functions.

"Every one of our stores including Stony Brook has seen an increase this fall and we expect that increase to continue in January simply because students are looking for something less expensive," said Roth. The e-textbooks are cheaper because the publishing costs are significantly lower than the cost of publishing print textbooks.

Ioan Alin Tomescu Nicolescu sits in the Student Activity Center Lounge as he studies his e-textbooks on his black laptop. Nicolescu, like many other Stony Brook students, has switched from print

textbooks to digital textbooks because of the lower cost, convenience and multimedia features. As he moves his finger across his mouse pad, he can highlight his text in yellow. With a click of a button he can add a red textbox on the side of his e-textbook for comments.

And what caught Nicolescu's attention about the e-textbooks was the price. Digital textbooks can be 40 percent cheaper than the print versions. "I like the print texts, but sometimes they are more expensive," said Nicolescu. "Sometimes I can't afford to buy them." He said that he saved around 400 dollars by only purchasing e-textbooks this semester.

Aside from saving money, the e-textbooks provide a new level of interactivity and convenience. Students can read multiple textbooks at the same time with the use of different tabs that the application offers. By typing a word into the search box, students can find that term in any of their books, notes, tags or links. "It gets you to the words and scrolls it down for you," said Nicolescu. "You don't have to look with your eyes, you use the program to find the words." The application also lets



you highlight the text and add notes directly in your digital textbook.

"We think the technology is catching up to how people wish to use it," said Roth. "Its an entrance to a whole new world of content." Barnes and Noble does research at Stony Brook University and other college campuses by sending out surveys to general NOOKstudy users to get feedback. "Every time they get feedback, they look at it as something that they should be building into the product," said Roth.

Carrying around a 500-page Algebra textbook can take a toll on a college student. E-textbooks have an advantage because they weigh next to nothing—the only thing that a student would have to carry around is their e-reader or laptop. Nicolescu says that carrying around his physics and chemistry textbooks in his backpack is very heavy but carrying his laptop is substantially less weight.

In the past year, the world has changed because of the introduction of e-readers and downloadable applications to view e-textbooks. An International Digital Publishing Forum report said that e-book sales in the United States have increased from seven million in 2006 to about 56 million in 2009.

CourseSmart is the world's largest provider of digital course material. Its collection includes over 90 percent of the main textbooks that are used in North American Higher Education as e-textbooks. There was a 400 percent revenue growth last year at CourseS-

mart. "The growth CourseSmart has experienced is a clear indicator that the digital model is being embraced by students and faculty and will continue in the future," said Jessica Nelson, the account executive at Kwittken & Company. Kwittken & Company is a marketing and public relations agency that CourseSmart called on to position its e-textbooks to college students. A



growing number of publishers are partnering with companies such as CourseSmart to give students a number of options for how they consume their assigned course materials.

An Xplana study said that the iPad and upcoming Android tablets will

cause e-textbook sales to grow more. CourseSmart and other e-textbook companies project that by 2014 the iPad will become the preferred personal computing device for students. "We believe Apple's iPad tablet will further boost demand for digital textbooks as it will capture the imagination of the next group of students who haven't yet tried e-textbooks," said Nelson. She said that

dollars in 2014 as a result of factors within the publishing and educational market and technology trends. They also predict that digital textbooks will make up more than 50 percent of the entire market by the end of the decade.

Although digital textbook sales have increased and will continue to increase in the future, many people believe that print textbooks will not become extinct. "The printed textbook will probably not be eliminated by the digital textbook in the foreseeable future," said Teo. The digital textbooks will become another option for students alongside new and used books, custom materials, loose-leaf texts and course packs.

E-textbook signs will not replace the bright green signs in the university bookstore in the foreseeable future. Instead, e-textbooks and print textbooks will coexist as competitors. More and more publishers are partnering with companies that provide digital course material to give students more options on how to consume their assigned course material. But the companies said that they are well aware that although digital content is becoming more popular, print content will still survive.

"I think there always will be some things that are just better in print but I also think digital is a great opportunity to start creating a different learning experience," said Roth.

the browser-based interface that the iPad provides will be able to run some of the best existing interactive learning products for computers.

The Xplana study predicts that digital textbook revenue will raise from 54 million dollars in 2010 to 1.1 billion

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# More Than Just a Rock Jock

By Natalie Crnosija

Stony Brook University's diverse profile in geology extends beyond the university's grounds and into the community, largely due to the efforts of Professor Gilbert Hanson.

Apart from his research and teaching efforts, the energetic Hanson, 74, has headed the Long Island Geologists and revamped the Master's of Arts in Teaching Earth Science education program. He also led a proposal for a program for secondary school students, funded by the National Science Foundation's Directorate for Geosciences, to increase diversity in geosciences. The commonality among these projects and others produced over his 44 years at the university is Hanson's passion for geology and getting people involved in it.

"I think he's done so much for the university," said Marcia Lane, an Accomsett Middle School teacher and Hanson's student, at a Geology Open Night. This monthly event created by Hanson, affords Stony Brook geology professors the opportunity to present their research to the public, after it was suggested that the Geology department have an Open Night like the Astronomy and Planetary Sciences department.

Naturally, this push for education is strong within the classroom as well.

"[Professor Hanson] challenges you. As a student, he pushes you," said Erin O'Sullivan, one of Hanson's Master's of Arts in Teaching students. Hanson taught her in undergraduate and graduate courses, and O'Sullivan said he has high expectations at both levels. O'Sullivan is following the Master of Arts in Teaching curriculum as revolutionized by Hanson.

Hanson increased the program's focus on math and its hands-on, scientific aspects, making sure students don't just learn about geologic processes from books, said Professor Troy Rasbury, Hanson's colleague and former Ph.D. student.

"[He's] an idea factory," said Rasbury. "He's delightful."

The bearded and bespectacled distinguished service professor, who studies geochronology and isotope and trace element geology, has taught at Stony Brook since 1966—Hanson's tenure predates some of the university's buildings, including the Earth and Space Sciences building, wherein his office is housed.

"When I first came here, there were about 3,000 students," said Hanson, his voice low with a slight Minnesotan lilt, as he sat at his desk. Photos and topographic maps hang on the walls behind the desk. A red quilted hanging of Minnesota State hangs across from the desk.

Hanson grew up in Minnesota and attended the University of Minnesota for both his undergraduate and graduate degrees. Hanson didn't go into college knowing he would study geology, the study of Earth's materials and processes. He had interests in science, history and the outdoors and had taken aptitude tests to decide what he should pursue. It wasn't until an undergraduate advisor suggested the science to the young Hanson that he began to look into the Earth's make up.

"And she said, 'You sound like you should be a geologist.'" Hanson said. "And that's when I took geology."

Over 50 years later, Hanson promotes the Earth Science Research Project, a program that offers prospective and practicing secondary school teachers opportunities to engage in geological research projects.

"I think that you don't really understand a subject unless you do research in it," Hanson said. He emphasized that doing research in a subject really allows a teacher to know the subject well and, therefore, teach students well.

"Would you hire a music teacher who couldn't play an instrument, doesn't sing, has gone to a concert or two, who has read a lot or taken a lot of classes about music?" Hanson asked. "No. But do we hire...that way for [science] teaching? Yea."

As a faculty member of a state university, Hanson said he felt obligated to look into the local geology of Long Island. This belief in the importance of studying local geology, which was commonplace when Hanson was studying in Minnesota, spurred Hanson to form the Long Island Geologists, a group which holds an annual conference and visits Long Island's places of geological interest.

Another permutation of Hanson's local focus has been his investigation into Long Island's groundwater, specifically its nitrate levels. The water Long Islanders drink is pumped from the ground, where it collects between sediments. When chemicals like fertilizers are applied to the ground, they can infiltrate and contaminate the water destined for drinking.



Caitlin Young, a graduate student who is studying nitrogen contamination, is advised by Hanson. She said Hanson is a very hands-on advisor but allowed her to take charge of her own project.

"My research focuses on nitrogen contamination in groundwater and natural nitrogen attenuation mechanisms," Young explained via email. She said she hopes the work will lead to a better understanding of nitrogen attenuation, or loss, and what can be done to manage the nitrogenous pollution of Long Island's coastal regions, which can result in the overgrowth of algae and the depletion of marine oxygen.

Among the many things she has learned from Hanson, said Young, is the importance of communicating science.

"One crucial thing I've learned is how to frame science as a story," Young said. "Professor Hanson stresses the importance of effectively communicating science to a wider audience. He does this in many ways: simplifying the objectives of the study, only presenting useful graphs and creating illustrative models to describe our work."

Hanson has not always focused on local geology. He studied geology in

South Africa, Australia, Brazil, Greenland, India, the United States, Canada, Switzerland and Germany.

Looking forward, Hanson said there is a need for young geologists. In 2009, the Hanson-led proposal for a program to increase diversity in geosciences was funded \$1.5 million for five years by the National Science Foundation's Directorate for Geosciences.

"So that's an important part of my life," said Hanson. The GeoPREP Track 2: Expanding the Geoscience Pathway program includes a residential summer camp at Stony Brook University for high school students who do research projects. Hanson personally worked with teachers from high-needs schools to help them develop curricula.

Hanson said he will continue to teach as long as he is highly functional and able to perform his duties as an instructor and a researcher. "If you're only functional, you can walk into the door and that's about it."

Though 44 years may only be a blink of geological time, Hanson's tenure has and continues to be exceptionally rich for and supportive of geology education.



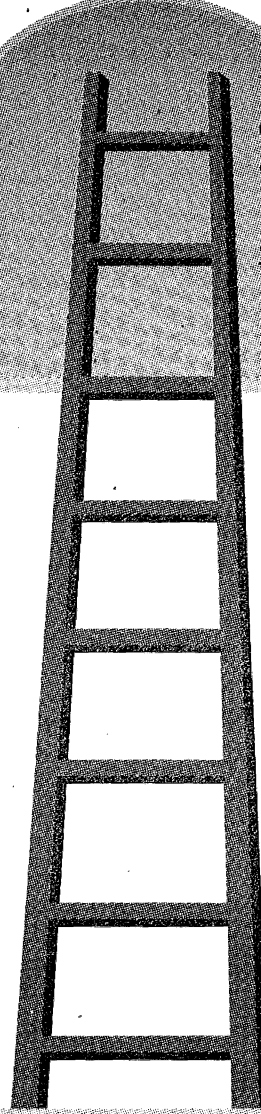


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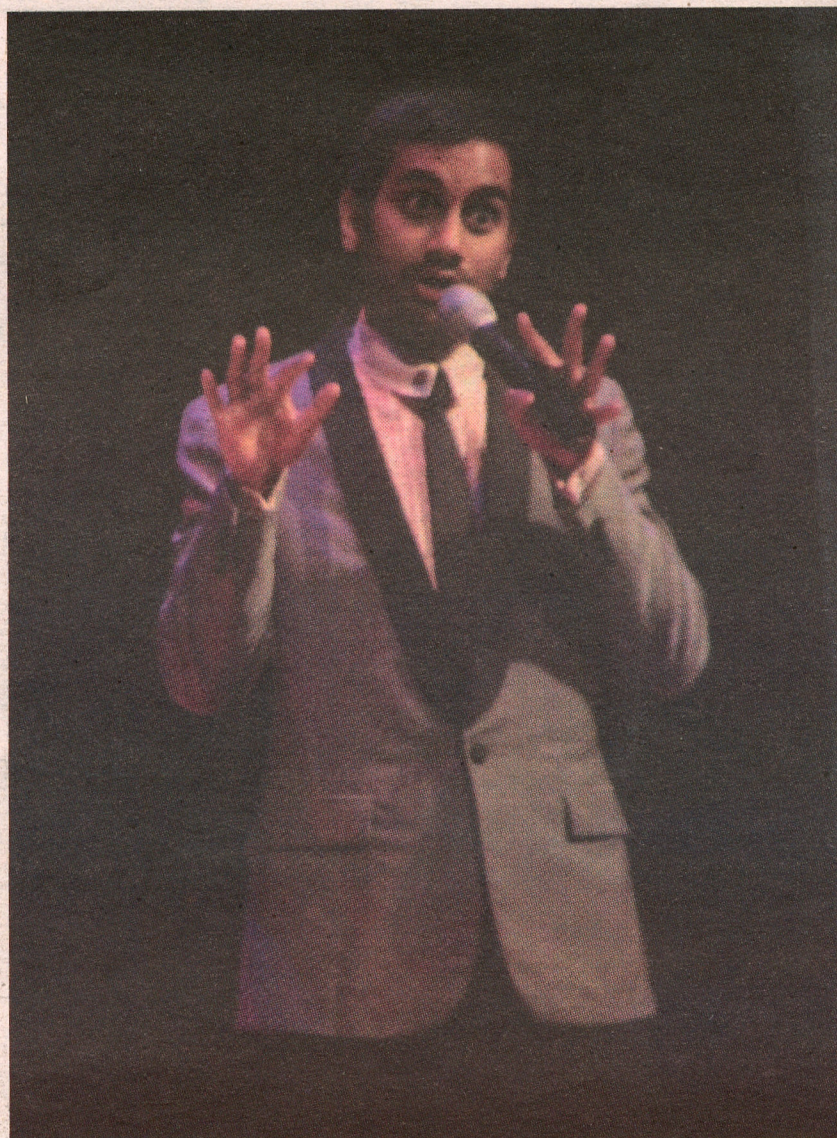
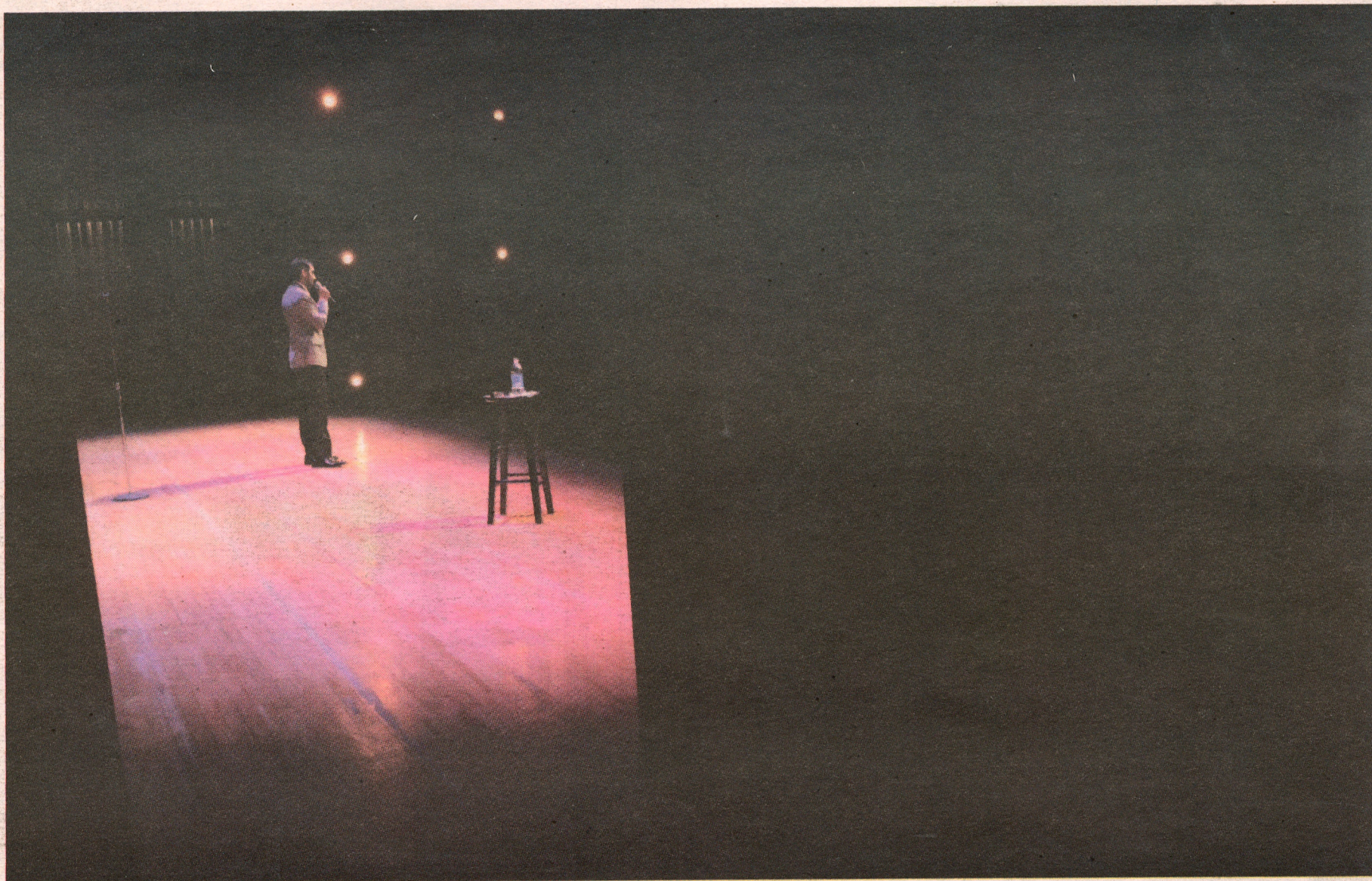
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**Campus Lifetime**

*(Editor's Note: there will be no pepperoni)*



Aziz Ansari at Stony Brook (Carolina Hidalgo); Stony Brook Defeats Maine in OT in ESPN BracketBuster (Vincent Barone)





RA Union protest delivers Valentines to President Samuel Stanley on Valentine's Day (Carol Moran);  
Immortal Technique performs at Stony Brook (Vincent Barone)





## arts&amp;entertainment

**Jokes In A Flash**

By Nick Statt

Clad in what looked like a multi-thousand dollar grey and black suit, comedian Aziz Ansari strolled onto the Staller stage Wednesday night to an explosive crowd. Even Aziz himself didn't quite know how to receive the fervor, spouting coy and sarcastic stabs like, "Believe me, I'm only here for the money." Unfortunately, Aziz's demeanor throughout the remainder of the show, which granted was absolutely hilarious, made it pretty clear that that statement may have actually been somewhat true.

Aziz Ansari, known best for his lead role on NBC comedy *Parks and Recreations* and the outrageous, in-your-face comic Randy in Judd Apatow's *Funny People*, was given a \$51,000 check that night for only one hour of stand-up. He was originally contracted for an even 50, but asked for an additional thousand for additional travel expenses after the show was pushed back a week due to the weather. Aziz even requested to be flown onto campus via helicopter (the helicopter landing required clearing out the entire South P lot, which would have been impossible at that point).

This level of sensitivity about his performance, arrival and paycheck gave Aziz a heightened image of being high maintenance, and a bit of an asshole, to those clued in to the pre-show arrangements. But none of the crowd members who eagerly lined up outside Staller in the biting cold were aware of these facts. They had beat the absurd rush during the first few days back on campus, and that meant they were claiming their auditorium seat without reservation.

Aziz's pre-show press interview was a clear foreshadowing of his attitude towards college-level performances and a discomfiting amount of insight into the real Aziz Ansari. Like he would at the beginning of his performance on the Staller stage, Aziz repeated his line about just being here for the money after campus media reporters thanked him for coming through. When asked questions, whether tongue-and-cheek ones about upcoming Valentine's Day or serious inquiries about whether or not he takes his ethnicity into account when writing jokes, Aziz gave straight-forward two or three line answers while infusing little to no wit at all.

He really didn't seem like he wanted



Carolina Hidalgo/The Stony Brook Press

to be there. But then again, it was the pre-show interview and Aziz, an infamous foodie whose frequent tweets about restaurants and homemade dishes decorate his Twitter account, didn't have his food yet.

All things considered, the performance was amazing. All of his jokes were fresh and delivered in Aziz's trademark style, which involves a variety of outlandish voices and loud and ridiculous deliveries. Sure, there was a lot of dick jokes, maybe too many if you eavesdropped on a few of the conversations drifting outside Staller at the end of the show. But that's what makes Aziz a modern, and highly popular, comedian - reviving something as seemingly profane and childish as dick jokes and spinning them into a hilarious reoccurring theme in your stand-up is both difficult and ironic (I highly doubt any crowd member would say yes if asked before the show if they would laugh at a joke revolving around hippopotamus ejaculation). The beauty is that these trademark Aziz jokes are both absurd on the surface and self-critical on a deeper level of the comedian and of comedy in general.

The shining moment of the performance was Aziz's now-famous family update on his cousin Harris. Whether or not he is that ridiculous in real life (he does exist, as well as his almost-as-funny older brother Darwish, whom a friend of mine actually met at Northwestern University), Harris is painted as a nerdy disillusioned Amer-

ican teenager with a love of bagel bites and B-list sitcoms. Aziz was kind enough to read his college essay draft and the revision he offered Harris, making for easily the most enjoyable string of jokes that night.

One of the sour moments of the show, and apparently of Aziz's sensitivity, trickled in at three separate moments. Prior to starting his performance, Aziz gave a small speech about hating flash bulbs in his crowds while he tries to meander around his act with a little improvisation here and there. It's understandable, and the crowd didn't seem to mind, especially considering the fact that Aziz posed for the camera as if he were telling jokes (even one that made it look like he was arguing violently with a crowd member).

It was a funny and smooth way of getting a pet peeve out in the open, but it unfortunately came back to haunt the remainder of the show when rude crowd members didn't heed his warning. Twice throughout the first 50 minutes of the hour-long act, Aziz had to stop practically mid-punch line to remind people to stop taking pictures. The first was with a little jest, and everyone was able to shrug it off and continue laughing. The second reminder was a shouted outburst of, "Please stop taking pictures!" that startled a great many attendees.

With ten minutes left in his stand-up, Aziz cut himself off, said a thank you and walked off stage with mic in

hand. The whole crowd fell silent for a few seconds, and then the murmuring began. No one could tell if it were an encore situation, which honestly makes no sense with a comedian, but no one seemed to want to believe that Stony Brook students actually pissed him off enough to make him walk off stage. Turns out we did.

Aziz came back on and explained that yet another person had emitted a camera flash and that was apparently enough to disrupt his flow. He delivered a few more rushed jokes, but not before resuming his stand-up with a disgruntled, "So what else do you guys want to talk about?"

Aziz was absolutely justified to despise the rudeness of the crowd considering how many times he had to explain his hatred of cameras, but it felt like a bit of an overreaction. For \$51,000, it doesn't seem unreasonable that you bend to your audience. After all, as a performer, and one now as fast growing and popular as Aziz Ansari, you have an obligation to suck it up and at least pretend like you want to be there, despite the pitfalls and annoyances. It's an age-old illusion, but at the same time a word-less contract that entertainers and their audiences sign up for. Aziz may be able to make any dick joke in the world the funniest stand-up bit you've ever heard, but a look at his personality is about as disenchanting as a stereotypical Hollywood face can get.



# Hip-Hop Ain't Dead

By Najib Aminy

The commercialization of hip-hop, its overabundance in mainstream airwaves and the overall declining quality in its music has led me to believe that hip hop is dead, or at least it should be. There is that broad yet very disappointing stereotype that hip-hop, rap and everything in between is a reflection of catchy rhythms and socially lyrical flaunting.

Cars, hoes, sex, money and jewels—the lyrics are new but the topics are not. Whether it's Lil B, the latest artist or Wiz Khalifa who as of recent sits near the top of the Billboard, hip-hop music has been saturated with what sells and what is catchy.

That's why it was so refreshing and entertaining to listen last Friday to underground hip-hop legend Immortal Technique and the acts that preceded his, including local Long Island performer Diabolic.

Whereas artists like Khalifa, who in his single "Say Yeah" samples the popular 1999 techno song, "Better Off Alone," and Lil B, who in his song "Exhibit Based," attempts to establish his dominance over the rap game while addressing his life story, there is both a lyrical and social appreciation when it comes to listening to Immortal Technique.

For example, his song, "Point of No Return" covers everything from the slave rebellion of Nat Turner, to the Holocaust and 9/11, providing historical insights that rhythmically flow and would make any liberal arts major appreciate each individual lyric. You could call comparing underground hip-hop like Technique's to the mainstream music that is heavily played and prostituted for mass consumption like the comparison between apples and oranges—or good music and bad music. But what's unique about Technique is the where the root of his message comes from.

In this industry where icons and influential figures like Eminem and Sean Combs remind audiences of their stature by appearing on Super Bowl commercials, Immortal Technique, whose name is Felipe Andres Coronel, and many like him choose to be strictly

independent and fairly less publicized. "What the industry offers I think, to people, which seems lucrative, is the idea of working with very accomplished producers who are very professional. I'm gonna say that much for them," says Technique after his Friday evening performance at Stony Brook.

"I think there are factors that are overlooked in the greater scheme of what I do. I have to be a good rapper; I have to be in tune with what I have. People have to trust what I say. You know, I've never taken corporate bribes for stuff. People respect my opinion because they know I'm honest at least, even if they don't agree with every as-

pects of what I say." goes beyond the simple ecstasy enjoyed by a catchy-club song or a popular bass-driven beat. It makes you stop, think, and analyze, which is very rare for most other musical genres.

"I don't think everyone's gonna get every single thing that I say, but I think there are so many references within the music to things that aren't just part of pop-culture, that they'll say 'You know what? That's interesting. What does that mean? I wanna discover it for myself,'" Technique says. "At some point, you make music for people in different instances. There's music for people when they go to the club, there's music for people when they're in their car and

cized. Many of his songs will question the conventional idea of history and will even go as far to as make reference to specific presidential administrations and foreign governments.

Much of that message comes from his heavy involvement in various charities, political activism and advocacy. The 32-year-old Peruvian native has even gone as far as to purchase acres of land in his native country in order to correct an on-going problem regarding agricultural business. He advocates for locals to sell crops locally rather than as exports. Technique has also been a staunch advocate of Palestinian rights and has heavily criticized the Bush Administration for its occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the Patriot Act. Technique partnered with Omeid International, a non-profit human rights organization that works with orphans in Afghanistan, to fund the construction of an orphanage.

"I feel that if I weren't doing this rapping, I'd be doing what I'm doing in some other fashion. It's just who I am. I don't feel comfortable walking past someone who's suffering knowing that I don't really need to do much to help that person," says Technique, without a hint of boastfulness. "There are other people who don't give a shit, who think that doesn't affect them. I don't believe in the way people define Karma, per se, the way that it's like 'Oh if you do something good, then something good's coming back to you.' This isn't pay it forward homie, it's not like that," he adds.

And from listening to Technique perform and listening to him talk, there is no doubt that he is as truthful and honest as they come, a straight no-bullshit type of guy who's ego appears unaffected by his success.

"I think if I've learned anything through all my travels, I've learned that humanity is so similar, and strives to be so different from one another, and so superior. And that is where it's truly flawed."

If there is anything to take away from Immortal Technique, let alone the various talented independent rappers, it's that hip-hop isn't dead. It's just underground, untouched and left pristine.



Vincent Barone/The Stony Brook Press

pect of what I say."

The beauty of independent hip-hop, fully evident during the performances of Diabolic and Technique, is the rich intensity and poetic verse that fuses the beat of an individual song to that specific message. So while you might have themes that may overlap with some mainstream rap about the social confidence of one's particular dominance over the industry, it's done respectfully, even though it's doused with profanity and insults. Often absent in the music younger artists, Technique's music has diction that is full of passion with each verse uttered, clearly crafted through years of experience and performances, which binds the audience to each song.

Listening to Technique and most other underground rappers, the music

they wanna be in a mood where maybe they're a little more pensive about what's going on in their life. I can make music that's reflective. I can make music that's very, very hard edge but at the same time I can't expect everybody to sit there and grasp every single aspect of what I say, and that's a process that comes with time."

At many points during the concert, Technique's crew of performers would provide anecdotal advice to everyday life, from challenging authority, successful leadership qualities. They quite often expressed their support of marijuana. But as juvenile and simplistic as that might seem, there is a plethora of substantially thought-provoking material in much of the music played that night. Often is the case that much of Technique's material is heavily politi-



# In Which Lemuria Grows Up

By Zach Knowlton

Ever since the news broke that pop-rock trio Lemuria signed to Bridge Nine Records, fans have been moderately concerned over how their new album would sound. Bridge Nine is known for its roster of hardcore acts such as Have Heart and Agnostic Front. Lemuria was an odd fit at the very least. Luckily, their latest, *Pebble*, released January 11, doesn't sound like they have changed their name to xXLemuriaXX.

This album is a reflection of getting older. The songs address the issues of long-term relationships and being a professional, but not very well-paid, musician. The wild naiveté and raw sexuality they previously built their sound around isn't there anymore. They have gotten older, and so have their songs. And it's always interesting to see where this maturation takes a band's music. Lemuria has accepted it and turned it into some of their most interesting and honest material yet.

*Pebble* does mark quite an evolution in Lemuria's sound. Album opener "Gravity" is an incredibly sluggish, subdued song with just enough drums and guitar to give the song cohesion. Over its two-and-a-half minutes it builds in intensity a number of times, only to fall back to where it began, never breaking. It was a bold move to make it the first track, but it really does set the tone for the rest of the album. *Pebble* is refined and polished in a way that is a stark contrast to the barely constrained energy of previous efforts. Whereas those first releases were like Superchunk on speed at times, their latest effort really shows how this band has not just matured as musicians and songwriters, but as people.



"Gravity" gives away that this album is going to be slower and more thoughtful. For the first time in their history, Lemuria's songs actually feel long. Before, they plowed through with such intensity that even a three minute track would feel like it was over in 30 seconds, but the songs on *Pebble* have room to breathe, they take their time, and it really allows them to sink in. Even if the song isn't slow tempo-wise, the instrumentation just feels slower and more thought-out. The sluggish guitars that make "Gravity" stand out are really a feature on the whole album. "Irregular," one of the faster tracks, still feels slower because of the thick fuzz and strumming patterns of Sheena Ozzella. Because she is the sole guitarist and there is typically only one guitar track on the songs, she has a lot of space to fill, and it's done quite well.

One downside to this new, slower approach is the lack of more complex drumbeats. Drummer/vocalist Alex Kerns has demonstrated in the past that he is extremely talented in coming up with interesting beats that don't take focus away from the rest of the song, but on *Pebble* he

seems to have dialed it back a bit too much. His patterns are at times too mundane and predictable. Fortunately, there are a few highlights. His work on "Durian" really elevates what is otherwise a rather mediocre song, and "Bloomer" is reminiscent of material off their first EPs, but otherwise, it really does match up to previous efforts.

Lyrical, the songs on *Pebble* are just as raw in their frank honesty as ones of their first full length, *Get Better*, and their earlier EPs and splits, but they more so acknowledge the hardships of becoming a real adult. The dual vocals from Kerns and Ozzella work together much as they have in the past, providing a familiarity through which these more emotionally difficult lyrics are conveyed. "Different Girls" and "Yellowstone Lady" examine the hardships of being in a relationship and in a constantly touring band. In "Different Girls," Kerns sings "Every night on tour, I sleep with different girls/And we laugh about you/While you are at home/I am the worst/It's in your imagination, of course." It acknowledges the hardships and arguments that arise from a relatively unorthodox career. "Pleaser" only contains the refrains, "I am hinting hard/I am a hard hinter/I am a pleaser," and "I never feel understood/and I understand why." The simple honesty of shortcomings is one of the reasons

"Pleaser" is easily the best song on *Pebble*; it says in 21 words what other bands dedicate entire albums to. It really is brilliant.

For those not ready to listen to a slower, more mature Lemuria, a couple of the songs sound like they could have been on *Get Better*, and will hopefully become live staples. "Bloomer," as mentioned earlier, is fast and lyrically very similar to earlier material, reminiscing on the awkwardness of adolescence. Ozzella's sole lyrical contribution, "The One," is similar to her other songs, which are on average simpler than Kerns, more focused on raw emotion than storytelling or metaphor. And then there is "Pleaser," fast-paced and incredibly basic, but also very similar sounding to frequent set closer, "Mechanical," off of *Get Better*. "Pleaser" offers more in terms of song structure, it builds and breaks in waves of emotion. Yes, that's cheesy, but Lemuria often deals in these visceral, raw reactions. "Pleaser" may be the best song they've released to date.

*Pebble* refines the fast-paced, emotional honesty Lemuria has become known for. Some may not instantly take to this more mature sound, but this is an album that definitely grows on you, and is a worthwhile investment for any fan of the band, or of good indie-tinged pop rock.





# The Decemberists Get Folked Up

By Nick Post

Released in January by Capitol Records, *The King Is Dead* marks a departure for The Decemberists, a band long associated with erudite lyrics and lofty melodies. Brimming with catchy choruses and rousing harmonica solos, frontman and principle songwriter, Colin Meloy, swoons on songs celebrating the simple pleasures of country life and the changing seasons, weaving war cries ("This is Why We Fight") and sorrowful reflection ("January Hymn") into a rich soundscape. Featuring Gillian Welch and REM guitarist, Peter Buck, the album shows steps in a new direction for the group.

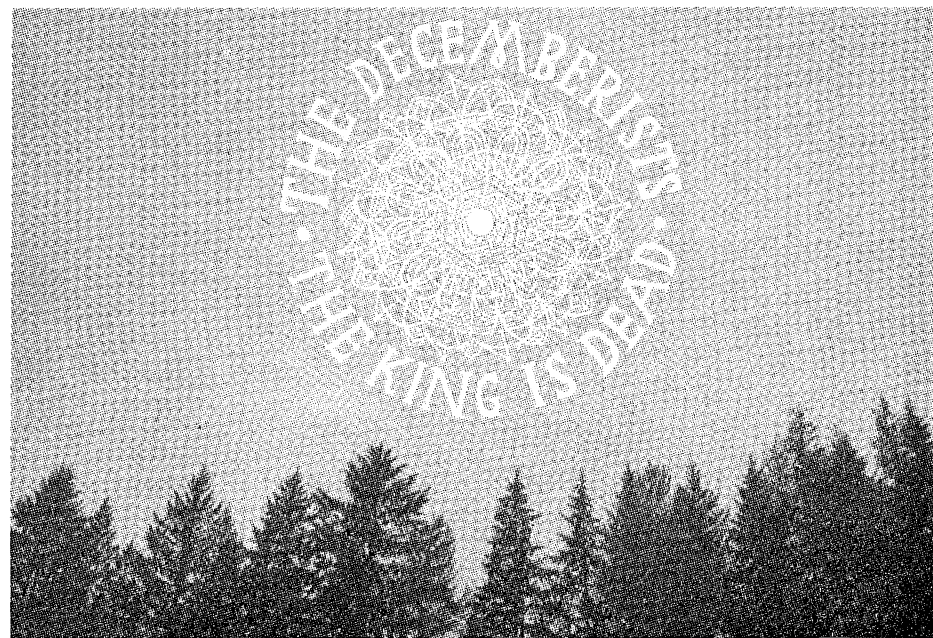
Meloy sounds as though he has loosened up since 2009's *The Hazards of Love*, an intricate narrative focusing on Margaret and William, the archetypal star-crossed lovers in folk and their fantastical tale of love and loss. Drawing less from the British folk revival and exploring the musical themes of his native North America, he strips the new album's story to its bare essentials and condenses his vision to a mere forty minutes while retaining the scope and beauty that fans expect.

Perhaps this and the album's accessibility are what made it to the number

one selling album upon release, a first for The Decemberists and a rarity for folk pop artists. But at 94,000 units sold, it comes nowhere near the record for opening week sales, currently held by Taylor Swift's *Speak to Me*, which cracked one million days after issue. Considering 2010's list of top albums was dominated by rap and pure pop records, it raises the question – who bought it?

According to Mark Mulligan of Forrester Research, an organization which analyzes consumer habits, last year's declining iPod sales and the rapid cultural permeation of smartphones denote a shift in the demographics of Internet music downloaders. Because consumers are increasingly using their cell phones as mp3 players and because of the relatively higher cost of these devices, older and more affluent people are becoming a larger percentage of the downloading community. What this means is that with CDs still popular among listeners thirteen and under and downloads dominated by working adults, the college age crowd, to whom The Decemberists largely appeal, is caught in the middle. And yet, the folky group with indie roots reached number one.

But with indie music garnering a lot of attention over the last few years, perhaps this feat should not be a surprise.



The commercial success of bands like MGMT and Arcade Fire created many new fans, and its use in many popular films of the past decade certainly reinforces that notion. A genre dominated by college kids and Pitchfork-reading twenty somethings now finds itself accommodating a multitude of listeners ranging in age and social standing. The facts of the matter, coupled with consideration for the methods people choose in acquiring music, pose another question. In an age where illegal file sharing undercuts the financial success of many artists, is *The King Is Dead's* sales ranking even accurate or

relevant? Does it actually reflect the popularity of the album?

Well, if three sold-out shows at NYC's Beacon Theatre in late January are my indication, then the answer would be yes. And with the growing popularity of other indie folk acts, notably Seattle's Fleet Foxes and Portland's experimental sextet, Blitzen Trapper, it could be that the zeitgeist is placing folk in its crosshairs. If pop and rap are king, then the king certainly is not dead. But only time will tell if folk is fit for the throne.

# Even Brooklyn Decker Can't Save This

By Nicole Kohn

Lets just start with the obvious, and point out that Adam Sandler hasn't made a good movie in years, and *Just Go with It*, to be fair, is not his worst but still very sloppy to say the least.

In the film- a loose remake of the Walter Matthau/Goldie Hawn comedy Cactus Flower - Sandler, who plays Danny, a sleazy plastic surgeon, who discovers that, though single, he can attract women by wearing a wedding ring. Minutes after meeting a young busty blonde (Brooklyn Decker), Danny (Sandler) takes her on a moonlit stroll on the beach, and they quickly hit it off, till she discovers a wedding ring in his pocket. Rather than tell her the truth, he invents a wife, Katherine (Jennifer Aniston), who is his longtime assistant, and who he is supposedly

soon to divorce. Having a fake wife wasn't enough, and the lies kept coming when he invents having two kids, who are actually Katherine's. What follows is a series of ruthless situations including a trip to Hawaii, in which everyone tries to pull off multiple lies at the same time. If you guessed the experience causes Danny and Katherine to look at each other in a different light...well, you've obviously seen a romantic comedy before.

Surprisingly Sandler and Aniston have good chemistry, and Sandler brings out the best in Aniston, who is more relaxed and vivacious than we've seen her on the big screen in a very long time. Besides Aniston's shockingly enjoyable performance, the problem with *Just Go with It* is everything else. The kids played by, Griffin Gluck, and Bailee Madison, were tremendously annoying, especially the girl who kept doing a fake



British accent, though it wasn't as annoying as Danny's sidekick cousin (Nick Swardson) who shows up uninvited to join the group to Hawaii playing Katherine's supposed new boyfriend, "Dolph Lundgren."

Swardson doing many utterly irritating German accents, and making up his job working as a sheep seller was just a pathetic way to make a comedy. What I mean is that instead of trusting the performances and the characters that were created, the material was loaded

with all the same jokes you find in a typical Adam Sandler comedy: poop jokes, gay jokes etc. This stuff doesn't belong, and it prevented the movie from ever making an emotional connection with its audience, like it had the potential of doing. Sandler relies on punchlines nearly identical to those found in his other films, especially since the director is again Dennis Dugan, who also directed *Happy Gilmore*, *Big Daddy*, *I Pronounce You Chuck and Larry*, and *Grown Ups*. Another thing that doesn't belong is the fact that Sandler again surrounds himself with his less than humorous pals (Peter Dante, Allen Covert and Kevin Nealon). Granted, Sandler has made a lot of hits with his group of comrades, like *50 First Dates*, but the movies now are starting to seem irritatingly similar. Let's just say if they were showing this on an airplane, I'd ask for a parachute.



# Oscars 2011 Preview

For movie geeks, the Oscars are like Christmas in February. They are the most well-known awards ceremony in the industry and the telecast is set to air on February 27, so get your DVRs ready. Though this year's race seems rather predictable, there could be a few upsets.

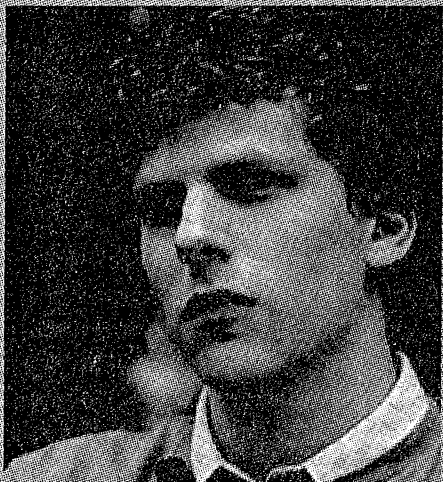
Keeping this in mind, I thought it would be fun to provide my predictions for who will win big this year and who is going to go home in tears. I also thought it would be fun to say who I think deserves to win, but might go home empty-handed. I'm not going to go in depth for every category because that would make this article never-ending. That or it would constitute an entire issue of *The Press* all by itself.

By the way, if my predictions are all dead wrong, then I am the worst movie geek on the planet. Without further delay, drum roll please!

## Performance by an actor in a leading role:

**The nominees are:** Javier Bardem, *Biutiful*; Jeff Bridges, *True Grit*; Jesse Eisenberg, *The Social Network*; Colin Firth, *The King's Speech*; James Franco, *127 Hours*.

**The winner is:** Colin Firth. He does a phenomenal job portraying King George VI, who suffered with an embarrassing stutter for years before hiring Lionel Logue, a speech therapist, to help him. The performance is truly moving and certainly worth the recognition. He has also been the major frontrunner the entire awards season, snagging Golden Globe, BAFTA, Critics Choice, and Screen Actors Guild nominations, and winning in all those races except the BAFTAs (which will take place on Sunday, February 13<sup>th</sup>). The only other nominees that have the potential to steal it from him are Jesse Eisenberg and James Franco, both of



whom have been recognized with four nominations prior to Oscar.

**Who I think should win:** I'm okay with Firth winning. I actually like him as an actor, so I wouldn't be



disappointed with that as an end result. My other choice is Eisenberg, because I absolutely loved *The Social Network*, and if the awards decisions were up to me, I would give them all to that movie, because it was seriously that good. If you haven't seen it yet, you should go rent it immediately.

## Performance by an actor in a supporting role:

**The nominees are:** Christian Bale, *The Fighter*; John Hawkes, *Winter's Bone*; Jeremy Renner, *The Town*; Mark Ruffalo, *The Kids Are All Right*; Geoffrey Rush, *The King's Speech*.

**The winner is:** Christian Bale. Also the frontrunner in his category, he has garnered the most nominations and wins. No one can come close to touching him.

**Who I think should win:** My heart kind of wants Mark Ruffalo to win it, but Bale's performance was pretty damn good. And like I said, no one could come close to matching his performance, so what's the point in hoping someone else will come out of nowhere and steal the biggest prize of all?

**Who is missing from this list:** Andrew Garfield, Arnie Hammer, and Justin Timberlake, all from *The Social Network*. Timberlake and Hammer were both completely overlooked this awards season, which was a major shock after they did such amazing jobs portraying Sean Parker and Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss. Garfield got a Golden Globe nomination, as did everyone else nominated in this category, except for Hawkes, whose only other nomination was from the Screen Actors Guild. Granted, I didn't see *Winter's Bone*, so I don't know his performance, and as previously stated, I am a little biased towards *The Social Network*. But I still think it's a shame that Garfield wasn't at least given a chance.

## Performance by an actress in a leading role:

**The nominees are:** Annette Bening, *The Kids Are All Right*; Nicole Kidman, *Rabbit Hole*; Jennifer Lawrence, *Winter's Bone*; Natalie Portman, *Black Swan*; Michelle Williams, *Blue Valentine*.

**The winner is:** Natalie Portman. Hands down, a performance worth every nomination and award it receives.

**Who I think should win:** Portman. The movie itself is one of those rare ones that appeal to both the art-house and mainstream crowds, and Portman seriously gives it her all. She deserves it.

Possible upset alert: While Portman is the frontrunner, she does have some viable competition with Annette Bening. The two were in different categories when the Golden Globes came around, Bening for best actress in a comedy or musical, Portman for drama. And while Portman has consistently won every other race in which the two faced off, Bening is a veteran who has had three previous nominations in 1990's *The Grifters*, 1999's *American Beauty* and 2004's *Being Julia*, but hasn't won yet. Portman has only been previously nominated for Best Supporting Actress in 2004's *Closer*. It doesn't always happen, but depending on who exactly makes up the voting body this year, they may just decide to throw Bening a bone and give Portman more chances to prove herself worthy in the future.

## Performance by an actress in a supporting role:

**The nominees are:** Amy Adams, *The Fighter*; Helena Bonham Carter, *The King's Speech*; Melissa Leo, *The Fighter*; Hailee Steinfeld, *True Grit*; Jacki Weaver, *Animal Kingdom*.

**The Winner is:** Melissa Leo. Like Christian Bale and Colin Firth, she has won every single award in this category, facing almost the exact same competition every time. The only new edition to this crowd is the 14-year-old Steinfeld, who doesn't really fit as a supporting actress anyway.

**Who I think should win:** It's going to either Leo or Adams. No one else stands a chance when two actresses from the same movie are nominated in the same category. One of them will win it. If I felt she belonged in this category, I would love to see Steinfeld win it. For a 14-year-old whose only previous role consisted of a Kmart commercial, I thought she was phenomenal. However, she is in virtually every scene of *True Grit*, so why she only got a supporting actress nod baffles me.

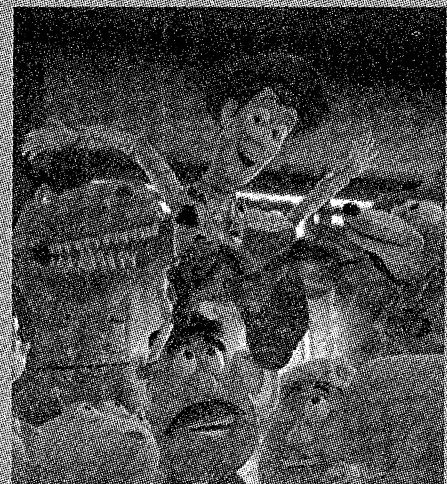


## Best animated feature film of the year:

**The nominees are:** Paramount's *How to Train Your Dragon*; Sony Pictures Classics' *The Illusionist*; Disney's *Toy Story 3*.

**The Winner Is:** Do we really need to guess this one? *Toy Story 3*.

**Who I think should win:** Anyone who disagrees with me about *Toy Story 3* being an amazing movie and worth every second of the eleven year wait for its release last June should go crawl back into the hole in the ground they came out of. It was the perfect way to end the franchise, and the fact that they waited so many years to release it was actually smart, as their original fan base



grew up just like the characters in the movie did. It made it even better to see.

**Possible Upset (but not very likely) alert:** *Dragon* swept *Toy Story* at the Annie Awards this year, which means it has a chance at beating it for the Oscar, but a weak one, because *Toy Story* won the Producers Guild Award, which is generally a good indicator of who will win.

## Achievement in directing:

**The nominees are:** Darren Aronofsky, *Black Swan*; David O. Russell, *The Fighter*; Tom Hooper, *The King's Speech*; David Fincher, *The Social Network*; Joel and Ethan Coen, *True Grit*.

**The Winner Is:** David Fincher

**Who I think should win:** Fincher. In case I haven't mentioned it already, I



# Oscars 2011 Preview

loved loved LOVED *The Social Network*, and Fincher is one half of the genius formula behind the actors that made the movie so amazing.

**Possible Upset:** Tom Hooper won the Directors Guild Award, which is almost always a direct line to the Oscar.

## Best motion picture of the year:

**The Nominees Are:** Fox Searchlight's *Black Swan*; Paramount's *The Fighter*; Warner Bros. *Inception*; Focus Features' *The Kids Are All Right*; The Weinstein Company's *The King's Speech*; Fox Searchlight's *127 Hours*; Sony Pictures Releasing's *The Social Network*; Walt Disney's *Toy Story 3*; Paramount's *True Grit*; Roadside Attractions' *Winter's Bone*

**Who Will Win:** Good question. This one is actually a toss-up between *The King's Speech* and *The Social Network*. For the longest time, *The Social Network* had it in the bag, winning more critical prizes than it knew what to do with, and it pulverized *King's Speech* in every category at the Golden Globes except for Best Actor. BUT *King's Speech* did just win the Screen Actors Guild Award, which suddenly gives it more game, and chances are high it will beat *Social Network* at the BAFTA's, mostly because the BAFTA's are the British Oscars and



Sorkin, *The Social Network*; Michael Arndt, Story by John Lasseter, Andrew Stanton and Lee Unkrich, *Toy Story 3*; Joel and Ethan Coen, *True Grit*; Debra Granik and Anne Rosellini, *Winter's Bone*

**Who will win:** Aaron Sorkin. His script, based on Ben Mezrich's book, was the other half of the genius behind the film.

**Who I think should win:** Place your bets now.

## Original Screenplay:

**The Nominees Are:** Mike Leigh, *Another Year*; Screenplay by Scott Silver and Paul Tamasy and Eric Johnson, Story by Keith Dorington and Paul Tamasy and Eric Johnson, *The Fighter*; Christopher Nolan, *Inception*; Lisa Cholodenko and Stuart Blumberg, *The Kids Are All Right*; David Seidler, *The King's Speech*

**Who will win:** Christopher Nolan. He won the Writer's Guild Award, which is the precursor to the Oscar in this category.

**Who I think should win:** Nolan.

## Every other category:

### Achievement in art direction:

Nominees: *Alice in Wonderland*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1*, *Inception*, *The King's Speech*, *True Grit*; Winner: *Inception*, Production Design by Guy Hendrix Dyas and Set Decoration by Larry Dias and Doug Mowat

Nominees: *Black Swan*, *Inception*, *The King's Speech*, *The Social Network*, *True Grit*; Winner: *Inception*, Wally Pfister

### Achievement in costume design:

Nominees: *Alice in Wonderland*, *I Am Love*, *The King's Speech*, *The Tempest*, *True Grit*; Winner: *Alice in Wonderland*, Colleen Atwood

### Best Documentary Feature:

Nominees: *Exit Through the Gift Shop*, *Gasland*, *Inside Job*, *Restrepo*, *Waste*

*Land*; Winner: *Inside Job*, A Representational Pictures Production, Charles Ferguson and Audrey Marrs.

### Best Documentary short subject:

Nominees: *Killing in the Name*, *Poster Girl*, *Strangers No More*, *Sun Come Up*, *The Warriors of Quigang*; Winner: *The Warriors of Quigang*, A Thomas Lennon Films Productions, Ruby Yang and Thomas Lennon

### Achievement in film editing:

Nominees: *Black Swan*, *The Fighter*, *The King's Speech*, *127 Hours*, *The Social Network*; Winner: *Black Swan*, Andrew Weisblum

### Best Foreign Language Film of the Year:

Nominees: *Beautiful*, *Dogtooth*, *In a Better World*, *Incendies*, *Outside the Law (Hors-la-loi)*; Winner: *Beautiful*, a Menage Artoz, Mod Productions and Itazu Films Production, Mexico

### Achievement in makeup:

Nominees: *Barney's Version*, *The Way Back*, *The Wolfman*; Winner: *The Wolfman*, Rick Baker and Dave Elsey

### Achievement in music written for motion pictures (original score):

Nominees: *How to Train Your Dragon*, *Inception*, *The King's Speech*, *127 Hours*, *The Social Network*; Winner: *The Social Network*, Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross

### Achievement in music written for motion pictures (original song):

Nominees: "Coming Home" from *Country Strong*, "I See the Light" from *Tangled*, "If I Rise" from *127 Hours*, "We Belong Together" from *Toy Story 3*; Winner: "If I Rise" from *127 Hours*, music by A.R. Rahman, lyrics by Dido and Rollo Armstrong

### Best animated short film:

Nominees: *Day & Night*, *The Gruffalo*, *Let's Pollute*, *The Lost Thing*, *Madagascar, carnet de voyage (Madagascar, a Journey Diary)*; Winner: *Day & Night*, Walt Disney

### Best live action short film:

Nominees: *The Confession*, *The Crush*, *God of Love*, *Na Wewe*, *Wish 143*; Winner: *Na Wewe*

### Achievement in sound editing:

Nominees: *Inception*, *Toy Story 3*, *Trom*, *Legacy*, *True Grit*, *Unstoppable*; Winner: *Inception*, Richard King



### Achievement in sound mixing:

Nominees: *Inception*, *The King's Speech*, *Salt*, *The Social Network*, *True Grit*; Winner: *Inception*, Lora Hirschberg, Gary A. Rizzo and Ed Novick

### Achievement in visual effects:

Nominees: *Alice in Wonderland*, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*



*Part 1*, Hereafter, *Inception*, *Iron Man 2*; Winner: *Inception*, Paul Franklin, Chris Corbould, Andrew Lockley and Peter Bebb

So there we have it, the entire breakdown for the 2011 Oscars. If by some chance I'm right on 50 percent of these, I vote that I get my own Oscar. Just a thought.

The 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Academy Awards will air live on ABC February 27.

By

Lauren  
Dubois



# THE COMICS SECTION



THE BORING ROCKS by Evan "15" Goldaper (with help from Sarah Evins)





# THE COMICS SECTION

# TATER TUES

By Vincent Barone





# Moms Aren't Supposed to Play Games Anyway

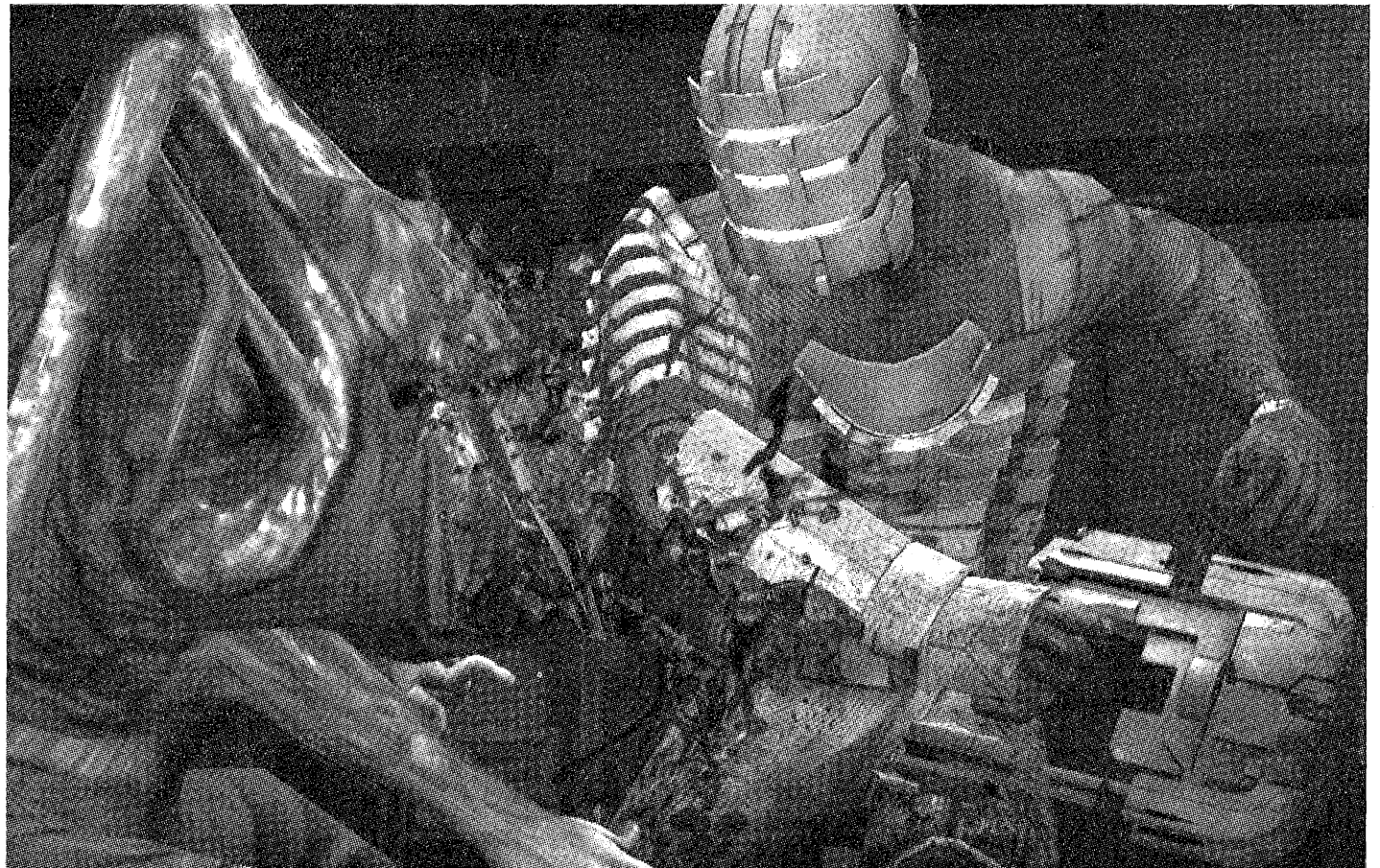
By Kenny Mahoney

EA and Visceral Games want you to know that your mother *hates Dead Space 2*. Seriously, she's pretty fucking freaked out. It'd be strange if she *didn't* turn away in disgust as you take Isaac Clarke on his second romp through his alien-infested survival-horror shooter. "Now you're playing with other people?! This orgy of death and dismemberment can only end in tears, shame and hours of family counseling!" she screams as you tear into the brand new multiplayer mode. And whatever you do, don't tell her you've already beaten it and are playing through the story mode *again* using New Game Plus; I don't think she could handle it.

If you don't remember the name I threw out last paragraph or don't feel like looking up, Isaac Clarke returns as the main character from his mind-altering experiences aboard the USG Ishimura in the original *Dead Space*. Previously, Isaac went onboard the Ishimura when their communications system suddenly went out, and instead of fixing a phone line or replacing some fuses, had to shoot the limbs extraneous limbs off of the infected crew. Basically, *Dead Space* is what happens when the Maytag Man goes on a repair call and is ambushed by a pack of bloodthirsty monsters instead of lonely housewives with nowhere to be at 1:30 on a Monday.

*Dead Space 2* continues shortly after the original, with the ramifications of Isaac's ordeal wearing his nerves thin. And, despite popular belief, being forced to survive on a desolate spaceship overrun with monsters will turn you into a basket case much faster than it will turn you into a badass. Throughout the game, the player watches Isaac attempt to overcome the effects of the first game, with disturbing hallucinations and dialogues with his "dead" girlfriend. These are some of the most interesting, disturbing and truly frightening moments of the game, as the surprisingly deep story and background slowly piece themselves together.

Now you might be saying to yourself, "I think it's really cool that my mom doesn't like the games I play because I'm such a rebel, but what's so great about *Dead Space 2*, anyway? I've already played other survival-horror games; why is this one different?" First of all,



I told you not to touch my Oreos!

shut the hell up. Second, I'll tell you. The *Dead Space* franchise takes survival-horror beyond the creepy atmosphere and the shortage of bullets by asking you to block out the side of your brain that says "holy crap, that monster is scary" and "I better pump it full of laser-death" and think things through. You won't get anywhere in *Dead Space 2* if you go into Rambo mode, because you'll turn Isaac into a pile of steaming meat faster than you can say "Mom, can you clean the fear-induced shit out of my pants?" By focusing and taking some time to aim, you'll discover that you need to shoot, stomp and punch off any and all arms, legs, tentacles and other appendages in order to stop the necromorph epidemic.

"But that sounds scary. I don't think I'm quite smart enough to handle that or to ignore my self-diagnosed ADHD and the trigger-happy state it puts me in," you say. Well, fear not young pants-shitter, as *Dead Space 2* affords you plenty of opportunities to slow things down. Using your special powers of "stasis", you can temporarily "freeze" monsters and other objects in a super slowed-down state. This not only allows you to carefully pick off limbs, but also allows you to step out of the way of charging monsters and pass through other hazards. Or you can use your telekinesis to pick up rods, broom-

sticks and other sharp objects and nail necromorphs to the wall – they tend to stop moving after that.

Other than your special abilities, the game also offers you a slew of weapons to choose from when battling the extraterrestrial undead. You'll find space-ified versions of more traditional weapons like the plasma cutter, line gun, and pulse rifle that double as your standard pistol, shotgun, and sub-machine gun, respectively. However, the game does add in its share of unique killing tools, my favorite being the ripper – a gun that shoots floating saw blades. Unfortunately, most of the weapons are far too impractical and specialized to be kept in your limited inventory slots, or are just so terrible that you never want to use them. Combine that with the fact that most of the weapons are recycled from the first game and you'll be even less impressed.

These weapons, as well as your suit and stasis modules, can be upgraded and purchased at one of the games many workbenches and stores. I'm not sure what's more ridiculous, the apparent use of typewriters in a modern setting seen in the old *Resident Evil* games or the weapons-dealing vending machines in *Dead Space 2*. You think the US has problems with gun control? Imagine trying to buy yourself a can of Coke only to have the machine spit out

a revolver and a pack of ammo. I'm not saying it could happen, but if it does, just try not to mistake which one to put in your mouth.

Workbenches allow you to spend hard-to-find power nodes to upgrade your gear in a variety of different parameters, including damage and ammo capacity. What I really liked was the fact that I could re-do the power nodes on a weapon for a small fee if I wanted to try something different or screwed up – a much needed improvement over the "you're fucked" permanency in the original game.

But what *Dead Space 2* does change, far more than anything else, is the setting. What seems like a somewhat obvious point to make becomes a serious point of discussion for a survival-horror game. The first game had Isaac almost entirely alone and devoid of any contact with anyone on (mostly) one spaceship. The game frequently had you doubling back through areas of the ship, pushing a sense of isolation and loneliness that change drastically in *Dead Space 2*. The massive space station you awake to in *Dead Space 2* is breathtaking in its scope, but robs you of the feeling of total isolation in a contained environment. Also, the amount of interaction you have with other characters has increased dramatically, losing that sense of loneliness even further.



## Dead Space 2 Review cont.

I'm not saying that *Dead Space 2* is no longer scary, but it's scarier in significantly different ways from the first.

As a way to extend the experience, *Dead Space 2* offers a brand-new multiplayer mode, as well as New Game Plus, which lets you carry over all of the suits, weapons and upgrades from your previous game into a new one. This is great if you want to breeze through what was previously more of a challenge, or tackle harder difficulties with an updated arsenal. And, completing the game will give you access to Hardcore Mode. In this mode, your ammo

and health supplies are at their minimum, the monsters are at their toughest, and you can only save the game three times. And, if you die, you return back to your last save. You should probably ask Mom to stock up on some adult diapers, as trying to complete a nine hour game in such strict parameters affords little to no bathroom time.

I was fairly unimpressed with the multiplayer, though I never expected it to blow me away. The game type varies by each map, with different objectives indicating different game types. For the most part, it's your standard 'king of the

hill' or 'capture the flag' game with the human team vs. the necromorph team. There's also an obligatory "level-up" feature to the multiplayer, now present in nearly every online shooter, as an attempt to keep you hooked. The multiplayer works, to say the least, but it's certainly not the main draw of the game by any stretch, and I doubt the player base will last beyond curious first-time players.

Despite an ad campaign so laughably ridiculous that it's almost embarrassing to say I bought it, I don't regret picking up *Dead Space 2*. It should

come as no surprise when I say if you enjoyed the original *Dead Space* or survival horror games, you'll probably enjoy this one too. The subtle changes they've made have been mostly for the better, and have reached a near perfect balance between keeping things the same and changing them up. You may not stay for the multiplayer or have time for New Game Plus, but this unique twist on survival horror as well as the harrowing tale of Isaac Clarke should be more than enough.

opinion

## The New York State Budget: SUNY, Student Assembly, and Stony Brook



Moiz Khan

I write this letter as a student with an informed opinion and not as a representative of the Undergraduate Student Government or any other entity. My words are entirely my

own, and not necessarily representative of the rest of the student government. I just simply cannot sit back and allow for the only student opinion on the New York State Budget be that of the fantastically inarticulate, incredibly out-of-touch, and obviously corrupt opinion of the SUNY Student Assembly.

In the recent discussion of the New York State budget, the leadership of SUNY is suffering from an inability to comprehend complex issues, the leadership of Stony Brook is suffering from an inability to articulate an agenda, and the SUNY Student Assembly is a sick joke. For this editorial, I will focus primarily on the SUNY SA, as it infuriates me the most.

I have attended two SUNY SA Conferences, and I quite vividly remember its criminal incompetence, and its total disregard for the students they supposedly represent. What is at all times clear is that the overwhelming majority of students who attend SUNY SA are there to further their career goals and not the agenda of the students of SUNY. They talk more about internal issues such as



elections or their own rules than the very harsh realities of budget cuts that face the students of SUNY.

The SUNY SA has recently taken the stance that they favor tuition hikes (so as long as they are planned). What kind of lobbying is that? They argue that the Governors budget is irresponsible because it does not include tuition hikes. Well, the SUNY SA is far worse than irresponsible for lobbying for tuition hikes; it is out of touch with the students they supposedly represent.

Any responsible and representative student organization should lobby for

the return of tuition to the campuses that pays it. They should lobby for the state to responsibly fund SUNY and not use SUNY as a source of revenue that balances its budget. Further, they imply that students actually want to pay more money. Who have they been talking to? Certainly it cannot be students who actually pay tuition.

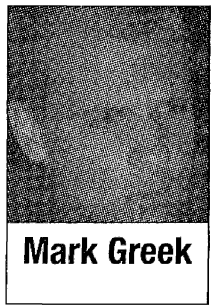
I suppose it is not a coincidence that the President of SUNY SA aligns herself with the Chancellor at every opportunity, and I suppose it would not be a coincidence when the Chancellor writes her recommendation letter for graduate school or hires her. If the

SUNY SA President wants so desperately to pay more tuition, she can donate her undeserved stipend from SUNY SA to her University.

The SUNY Student Assembly is simply not representative of any undergraduate student that I have ever met. This is because they are a puppet organization that was established by the administration of SUNY to reaffirm the administration of SUNY's agenda with the illusion of student representation. If the State Assembly wants to know what the students actually want, they would ask the students, not the sick joke that is SUNY Student Assembly.



# The Power of the Interweb



Mark Greek

Knowledge is power. It's not just an aphorism to be hung on the wall of an elementary school library. We find examples of its validity every day. Our own nation finds itself at

an interesting impasse; the technology we covet serves its own interests, bringing us a frightening preview of the future. That an organization like Wiki-leaks can shake the foundations of our ethical makeup, make us question our rights as citizens of a country that clearly has work meant to be done in the dark with a simple disbursement of diplomatic wires and communications, stands as proof that something as ineffectual as text documents can threaten the integrity of the strongest nation the world has ever seen.

It's hard to overstate the power of something as widespread and universally accessed as a network that connects almost every computer in the world, offering trillions of trillions of bytes of information. The Internet has been growing intermittently since ARPAnet in 1969 into the dominant technological force of the last 50 years. It has consumed and regurgitated everything, from entertainment and information, to communication and commerce, and there's no end in sight. Dial-up gave way to high speed, and now wireless Internet is literally permeating us at all times. Wi-Fi is as common as oxygen and almost as cheap at this point. Social networking is a term that used to apply only to meet-and-greets and business cards; now it's the primary form of procrastination for al-

most every American youth.

It has made the world smaller, but at the same time, created an entirely digital reality where an unfortunate number of humans spend an equally unfortunate amount of time. As clichéd as it sounds, the net is basically a continent all it's own. Populated by Warlocks, Second-Lifers, Rangers and Op. Forces, with their own laws and ruling bodies, frighteningly separate from the jurisdiction of world powers. Governmental sanctions and security have barely made an embassy in the ubiquitous shell of a

mask that it wears over its pornography and exploitation.

Companies like Google and Facebook have a massive amount of pull on a global scale. The multi-billion dollar dynamo that is Google can easily write off the Peoples Republic of China as potential customers. Literally a billion prospective clients became instantly expendable because of friction between the Chinese government and the company, due to their mandatory restrictions of content they deem detrimental to their control over the populace. The

in Egypt, the Internet played a major role in escalating the conflict in the first place, and the eventual success in the unseating of Dictator Hosni Mubarak. An anti-Mubarak Facebook page started by a Google Inc. marketing manager in the Middle East was credited with helping embolden millions of Egyptians to take to the streets to demand that Mubarak step down after three decades of authoritarian rule. Engineers from Twitter and Google developed a "Speak-to-Tweet" service (verbally calling in FB statuses and Tweets) after the Egyptian government cut its people off from the Internet, intentionally undermining the wishes of the regime in the name of free speech. The simple Facebook group that lay at the heart of the uprising still sits comfortably at 90,000 members. A massive weapon that fired on the real world, lying dormant, as unassuming as it was powerful.

This isn't meant to demonize the Internet or its massive influence far from it. It must be appreciated, but feared at the same time. The idea that an online company, completely of its own volition, can aid and abet members of a foreign country that it perceives as being oppressed is something to be admired and viewed with



country without borders, an epic monster that answers to no one.

If recent cyber attacks on online institutions like eBay and Amazon are any indication, there is potential for massive resistance and unrest in a future that can only become more reliant on the Internet. Stalwarts like those .com's can be taken out easily by a moderately angry group of hackers, a frightening prospect for a society whose lives and livelihoods are entirely conducted on the web. Even worse than the seedy underbelly of the Internet however, is its public side: the

power of an entity that can choose to do business that way is a force to be reckoned with and one that faces little to no sanctions of its own. Though it is based in America, Google sits comfortably in the aforementioned land without borders, and has no limit on its own jurisdiction, save for the whims of its employees. Social networking services like Facebook and Twitter too, were being used to incite rebellion against regimes in countries like Tunisia and Syria.

At the center of the recent uprising

skepticism. A similar situation could arise in the future and could put America in hot water diplomatically, receiving all of the blame of inciting rebellion without any of the influence. Google and Facebook are viewed as being inherently American; therefore their trespasses become a problem for the U.S. to deal with. Whether Egypt is better off now in the twilight of its old regime is impossible to tell. One thing is certain however, the U.S. doesn't need any more problems.

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## Stony Brook's Lacrosse Boss: The First Round Pick

By Vincent Barone

Back home, way out near the western coast of Canada, in New Westminster, B.C., Kevin Crowley was fiddling with some cables, connecting his laptop to his television. His family was over. They were about to watch the 2011 Major League Lacrosse Draft on ESPN3.

Crowley had an inkling as to where he would place in the draft. Rick Sowell, his head coach at Stony Brook, told him that the Hamilton Nationals, who had the first pick, were interested. As extraordinary as the news was, Crowley kept taciturn about draft projections.

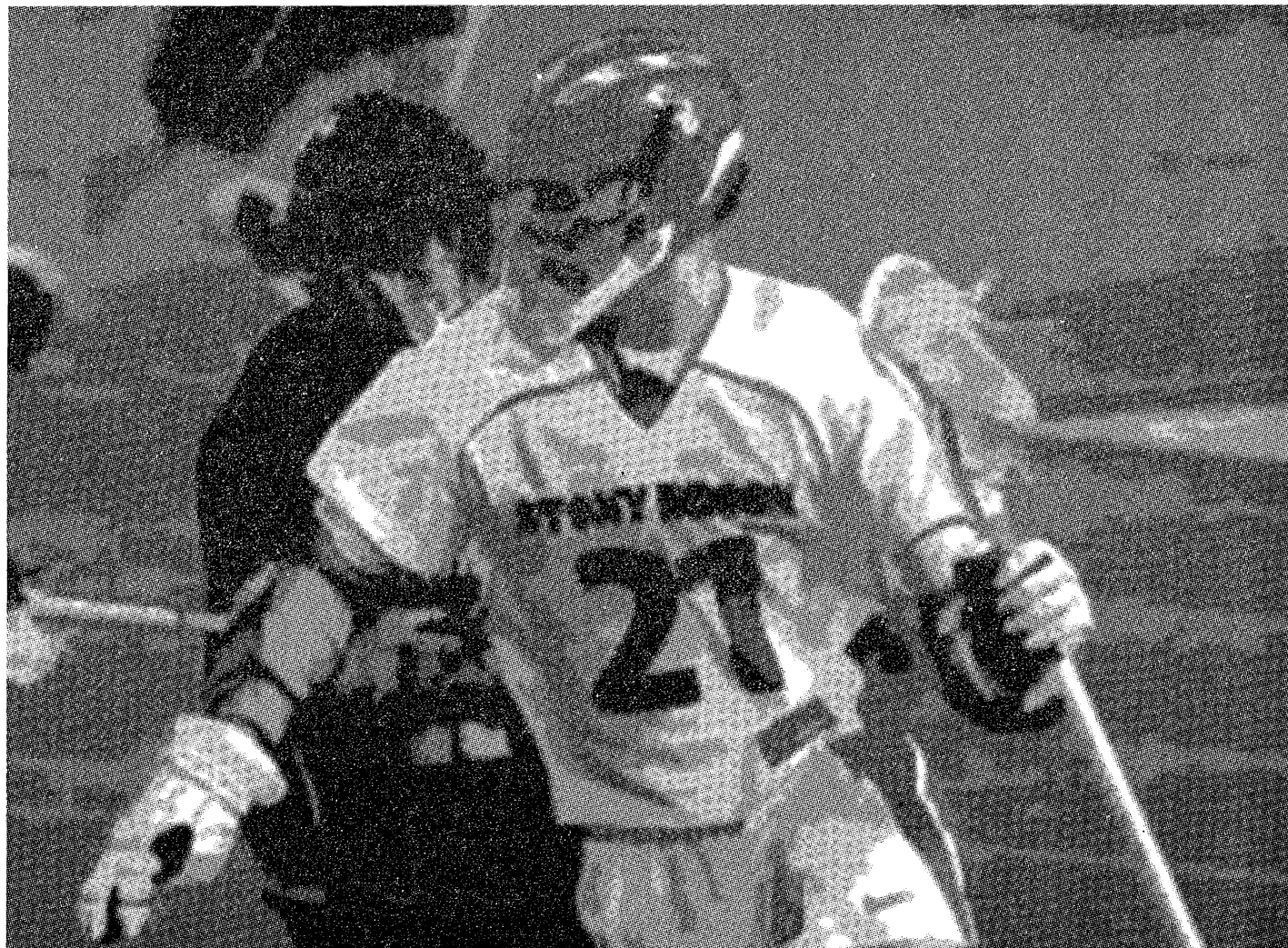
"I didn't want to sound like, 'oh, here's where I think I'm going to go' when people ask, right?" Crowley said. "Because if that didn't happen, it would be pretty embarrassing."

For premiere athletes, draft day is the culmination of years of dedication to a sport, and Crowley's case is no different. Growing up in Canada, his family is steeped in lacrosse, the national sport. "My grandpa played lacrosse. My uncle played lacrosse. It's just something you do when you grow up in New Westminster," he said.

However, Crowley appears to do it a little better than most. During his junior year at Stony Brook, as a first team All-American, Crowley notched one of the best seasons in the history of the school's lacrosse program, nabbing 51 goals and 26 assists during the 17-game season. He was just the fourth junior since 1995 to be awarded the 2010 USILA Enners Award, which given to the nation's most outstanding Division I player.

This year, to add to his already cluttered mantle, Crowley was named a preseason All-American and given the Division I Preseason Player of the Year award by *Lacrosse Magazine*. He is just 26 points away from breaking the Seawolves' career scoring record. And perhaps more importantly to Crowley, who despite all the personal accolades, remains team-conscious, as he was designated a team captain for his upcoming senior season.

Crowley is surrounded by talent at Stony Brook. Teammates Tom Compitello, Adam Rand, and Jordan McBride were all selected in the first round of the MLL draft. The 2011 Seawolves are ranked 8th nationally. In this



year's preseason coaches' poll, Stony Brook was unanimously picked to win the America East Conference.

Along with the esteem, Stony Brook was featured in the February edition of *Lacrosse Magazine*, with Crowley, Coach Sowell and McBride on the cover, donning Seawolves red.

"That was cool. They had a professional photographer come in. It was my first time doing something like that,"

"I didn't want to sound like, 'oh, here's where I think I'm going to go'..."

Crowley said. "Any time you get put on the cover of a magazine it's awesome. It was great that we got the recognition and that they wanted to put us on the front like they did."

Out in the blogosphere, Crowley has been regarded as a "lanky," "do-it-

all" midfielder. And at 6'4, 200 pounds, he is certainly a tall glass of water. But with the plaudits, Crowley keeps a genuine smile and is careful to stay grounded and focused on the upcoming season.

"We want to win the conference," Crowley said. "We're confident, but we're not overconfident; and that's important. Given the success we've had and the media exposure, I feel like some teams will let that go to their heads; but we're a focused group, and we know what we want to achieve."

Crowley also praises his coach, saying that "[Coach Sowell] is great for keeping us levelheaded. He always reminds us that we have a target on our back this year because teams saw the success we had last year, and now Stony Brook is the team that they want to beat. And that's good for us because people are going to get up to play us, and that should hopefully lift our game to the next level."

Crowley and the Seawolves are in the final leg of prepping for their opener on February 26 against top-ranked Virginia. He practices six days per week, but during his downtime, Crowley dabbles in the other kind of gaming with his housemates.

"We have the *Call Of Duty: Black Ops* going on right now. Pretty much everyone has a system in the house," Crowley said. "I live with four other Canadians [Jordan McBride, Kyle Belton, Robbie Campbell, Greg Miceli] and one guy from Long Island, John Bella. It's just a big gaming house."

Even as the number one pick in the draft, the sport alone usually does not provide enough financial support for players. Lacrosse is a labor of love for Crowley—playing and teaching it—and he hopes he can make it his career.

"I want to play both indoor and outdoor for the pro league. Hopefully I'll get endorsed," Crowley said. "Not many people can make a living on lacrosse, but it would be a dream of mine. I love doing camps and teaching kids how to play. If I could keep on doing that, it would be ideal."

On January 21, come the hour of the draft, surrounded by family, Crowley realized that his Internet provider didn't supply ESPN3. In lieu of watching the broadcast on TV, they had to rely on a live blog of the draft to break the news that the Hamilton Nationals did indeed select him first overall. It was a little less romantic, but a neat way to end winter break, nonetheless.



THE STONY BROOK

# PRESS presents THE REAL SEX SURVEY

1. Do you kiss?

2. Have you ever kissed in the pool?

3. What do you consider sex?

a. hugging  
b. holding hands

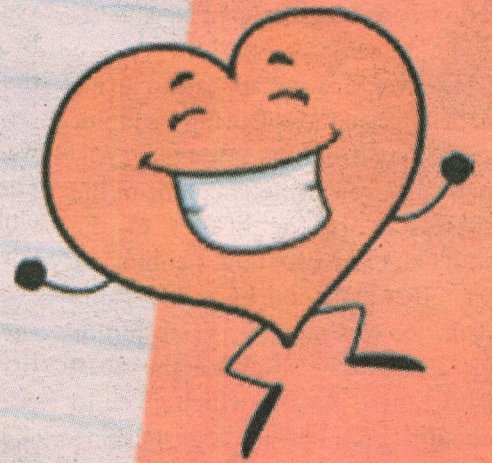
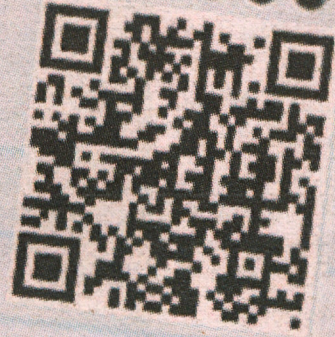
c. eyecontact  
d. dinner with the parents

4. Have you ever had to "pump the brakes?"

5. Hot Dogs...ketchup or mustard?

6. How often do you courtesy tap?

7. When you have sex on issues of The Statesman, how often have they ripped?



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