

The
Stony
Brook

PRESS

Vol. XIX No. 2

Coincidentally, We're the Country's Second Best Newspaper

September 17, 1997

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**STONY
BROOK**

Our students
are the
second most
unhappy in
the country!

page 3

ADMINISTRATION

and Louella!

US AND THEM

By Chris Sorochin

*"...Thanks for Prohibition and the War Against Drugs
Thanks for a country where nobody's allowed to
mind his own business
Thanks for a nation of finks
Yes, thanks for all the memories...
You always were a headache and you always were a
bore..."*

*William S. Burroughs
from his Thanksgiving Prayer (1986)*

I promised Boring Vacation Slides and had a nifty little yawn-a-thon all planned out, but as usual another story just sort of found me (just like Brenda Starr!). Fortunately, it's not a totally unrelated matter, so I've managed, through some deft splicing, to patch together a melange of images in the most banal Filmmaking 101 surrealist-wannabe style. Just for laughs, I've thrown in vignettes from previous trips as well as a harrowing flashback from my own twisted past. Pleasant dreams.

Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam: As I step out of the arrival gate to seek out my connecting flight, I behold a welcome sight: a designated smoking area wreathed in its own cloud of noxious fumes. I don't want a cigarette after six hours in a sealed metal tube, but I feel like kissing the tile and exalting, "Civilization!" For the next twelve days, I'm free of the American Morality State with its omnipresent "We Card" signs and entire buildings where smoking is forbidden because someone somewhere has decreed the world will come to a sudden and bitter end if anyone smokes in even a broom closet. The Netherlands has legalized drugs, but there aren't any hash houses at the airport, so I settle for a couple insidiously potent Dutch beers and stand there NOT hearing, "Let's see some ID."

Greenville, South Carolina: Downtown Greenville has the same upscale accoutrements as every other aspiring city center in North America: ethnic restaurants, artsy shops, espresso bars and microbreweries. There's a big outdoor festival with live music and non-microbrewed beer is served. Hot Dog. To drink one must wear a fluorescent green wristband. "Why am I tagged like a malarlard?" I demand of my brother-in-law. "There are underage people here and you might give them beer." Heaven forbid. The plaza in which this is taking place is plastered with signs listing Rules of Conduct. There are also police lounging against a wall just in case anyone gets too out of control before the shut-off time of 7pm. Nobody does.

Milan, Italy: It's sunset and I'm in the huge Piazza Duomo, sucking on a beer and ruminating on life's contradictions. So are lots of others. The beer isn't in the ridiculous brown bag we're accustomed to here, and the not-too-noticeable *cara-binieri* don't seem to care. I've also noticed you can walk down the street with a naked beer bottle and no one will give you a second glance. Italian bars don't have bouncers and there's no drinking age.

Port Jefferson: The Suffolk County Health Services Department, apparently inspired by Bill Clinton's year-old crusade against teen smoking, conducts what they call "sting" operations in several local businesses, issuing summonses for selling to minors. Last year, after signing legislation to destroy social welfare protections for poor children — about 20% of children in the US live in poverty — the Commander in Chief Who Didn't Inhale proclaimed that underage smoking was the greatest scourge to today's youth. Overnight, stupid little

signs appeared everywhere letting all know what they already know—that it's illegal for those under 18 to buy tobacco, only now we're going to get tough. They might as well say "Big Brother is Watching." One of my pet convoluted theories is that all these Clean Living initiatives, which tend to favor "just say no" puritanism and enforcement rather than any sort of rational discussion, are geared toward fostering a generation used to restrictions and producing identification on demand. They also give a handy excuse for increased policing of young people. Maybe it's because this generation will have less than their parents did and may not sit still for it.

I've noticed, in talking to and reading the views of those who lead this clean-up effort locally, that there is little or no regard for what the adolescents themselves have to say. This again is great training for an adult existence in which decisions are made without consultation from those who are required to follow them.

Somewhere between Pisa and Piombino: I'm taking advantage of Europe's "backwardness" and light up on the train. Long-distance trains have smoking cars and those who don't care for smoke sit in the non-smoking cars. This silly arrangement has been done away with in the Land of Enforced Wholesomeness. Hmm.

We're the only industrialized country with no national health care system, but we appear to have the most rules about personal behavior. One Spanish student I know calls the US "the Land of Rules," which is a far cry from the image most Americans have of it being freer than anywhere else.

Port Jefferson: I call William Stojek of Suffolk County Health Services for more data on what my legal advisor says sounds like "a textbook case of entrapment." Several people I've spoken to say that the 15-year-old girl used as the cigarette-soliciting "decoy" was dressed up in a way that no teenager would be. An immigrant from India who was stung in Nassau County says his decoy sported a full beard (this gentleman was accosted by four agents and fingerprinted—maybe his immigrant status accorded him special treatment). Mr. Stojek tells me that decoys are instructed not to dress up.

Where are these decoys recruited from? The one in question, I'm told, is someone caught smoking in school and whose punishment is to be part of this noble undertaking. "She's learning a lesson the hard way," Stojek says.

Allegany, NY: I'm 16 and my friend Greg and I are doing what is not unusual for us; hanging out at this house and watching TV with a couple of beers to ease the ennui brought about by six months of upstate winter. I've purchased the beverages right down the street at Club 17, a college hangout. The phone rings. It's Officer Pezzimenti, the town cop. He wants me to come outside to his patrol car. What can I do but comply? "Get in", he says, and when I do he points to his rear view mirror, "Know what this is?" Must be a trick question, I think, but I hazard that it's a rear-view mirror. "Right", he crows, "and I just saw you walk out of 17 with a six-pack." I began to shit bricks. If he takes me home and tells the folks, I'll be the object of some serious domestic violence. "I won't if you cooperate. That longhair behind the bar sell it to you?" He then takes me to Club 17 and makes me point to the guy who'd been obliging enough to vend me a six of scuzzy canned domestic. I waited in the squad car with his snarling German shepherd while he reamed the guy out. Then he took me back to Greg's, but not without first giving me a lecture on the evils of drinking and how bad it

would be for my athletic career, as if I cared. Then he asked me if I'd bought alcohol anywhere else in town. He was especially keen on knowing whether I'd been supplied by old man Lippert. Maybe he was looking to settle some personal grudge.

I can't say that this traumatic episode did much to instill respect for the law and its representatives in me. Quite the contrary. Many school campuses in Suffolk County are designated as non-smoking, which means that teachers and other employees can also be fined and theoretically fired if they're caught puffing on school property. An acquaintance who teaches at one such school informs me that this rule is widely disobeyed by individuals of all ages. It seems to me that the lesson being taught is that government exists to enact small-minded and overbearing laws that beg to be violated. Aren't laws supposed to make sense to those who are supposed to follow them?

Nor is there any open defiance of these stupid laws. Do the so-called adults at these schools (and everyone else who works in places where you have to leave the building to smoke) really enjoy being treated as if they were not-very-bright children, unable to act responsibly on their own?

East Germany: By the end of the Communist regime, one citizen in five was either an agent of the state or an informer, giving the ironically-named German Democratic Republic the world's record.

Port Jefferson: On a much more prosaic level, smoking fines are a tremendous cash cow for the county. The businesses "stung" will be coughing up (no pun intended) from \$300-\$500. It's \$100 just for not having an annoying sign — another welcome absence abroad. Mr. Stojek claims to have "hit" well over 100 businesses this year. Do the math and you'll see that the Morality Police generate a healthy bit of revenue, just like a small-town speed trap, or on a more sophisticated level, the DEA, which seizes people's homes, cars and other assets. Erich Goode, of the Sociology Department, speaks of "moral entrepreneurs," folks who carve their own niche in the law-enforcement business by originating a crusade against something hitherto unpunished. The most famous example of this is the "reefer madness" campaign of the 1930's, which inspired scores of new laws and punishments, as well as loads of new search and seizure powers for police.

I wonder how many essential public health programs might go begging while the Youth of America is saved from tobacco. Whether anyone is being saved is another question — any sympathetic individual 18 or over can buy butts for someone younger, or vendors can deal only with minors they know personally. And I wouldn't be too surprised if some enterprising 18-year-old is already running a nice little Junior Achievement black market, like the bootleggers during Prohibition. Prohibition was also used as a handy pretext for raids directed at immigrants, minorities and the working class. The Ku Klux Klan, very active on Long Island, eagerly participated.

I asked Stojek if he could foresee Health Department infiltration of schoolyards (I used those exact words) and he replied that there were no such plans as of yet and it would depend on the state. Moral niceties that some might raise regarding using kids in such a manner don't appear to enter into the discussion.

A high-school principal told me that these tobacco and alcohol decoys were paid volunteers. It would be interesting to see how recruitment is done. Do they go into the main office and request a list of known

please see "Us and Them," page 6

We're Number Two!

By David M. Ewalt

A comprehensive ranking of 311 universities around the United States has ranked SUNY Stony Brook as one of the most miserable campuses in the country.

The ranking, conducted annually by The Princeton Review, surveys thousands of currently enrolled college students about their schools and their attitudes towards them. Stony Brook ranked highly on several lists, including "Unhappy Students," "Dorms Like Dungeons," and "Professors Suck All Life from Materials."

Following on the heels of several positive survey rankings, which largely measured only academic concerns, the Princeton review survey shows a shocking level of displeasure amongst students with the university itself, as a place to live and work.

THE SURVEY

The survey was conducted by The Princeton Review, one of the nation's largest educational services companies. They are well known for their test preparation courses and books, aimed at prospective college students.

Every year, the Review releases an edition of "The Student Access Guide to The Best Colleges," an extensive survey and analysis of the American collegiate system. For this year's survey, the Review asked 56,000 college students what they thought about their school, obtaining ratings on academic, social, financial, and athletic concerns.

In past years, Stony Brook had fared better in the survey, only getting bad marks in one or two categories; the school has appeared in "Teaching Assistants Teach Too Many Upper-Level Courses" and "Dorms Like Dungeons" for several years now.

In the 1997 survey, however, Stony Brook sank to new lows. USB appeared on five of the "negative" lists, and none of the "positive."

THE RESULTS

The Princeton Review divides their survey results into sub-categories based on the question asked of the students. It then ranks the schools according to the numerical rating assigned to that category by students.

The following categories are ranked out of 311 of the nation's colleges and universities. If Stony Brook is ranked second in "Dirty Sidewalks," for instance, then that means we have the second dirtiest sidewalks in the country.

Dorms Like Dungeons

7. State University of New York at Stony Brook

Stony Brook's appearance in this category indicates a high level of dissatisfaction with Campus Residences. Our dormitories fared only slightly better than those of the U.S. Military Academy (Number 5).

In other words, Stony Brook dormitories are only slightly better than army barracks.

Teaching Assistants Teach Too Many Upper-

Level Courses

10. State University of New York at Stony Brook

For this question, the Princeton Review asked students, "How many upper-level classes are taught by teaching assistants?" The answer was apparently, "too many."

"TAs run an ungodly amount of interference for their advisors," says the survey. The University advertises its world-class faculty and touts its Nobel and Pulitzer winners, but apparently students rarely see them.

Long Lines and Red Tape

10. State University of New York at Stony Brook

When the review asked students, "Overall, how smoothly is your school run?" they gave a big thumbs down. Administrative performance and efficiency received poor rankings from students.

According to one senior quoted in the survey, "administration is one very long line of frustrated students seeking answers from people who know nothing."

This survey result is particularly damning when considered along with the recent "Ninth Survey of Faculty and Professional Staff regarding Stony Brook Administrators and Services." In this survey, faculty and staff of the University universally gave administration poor marks on performance and policy. (These survey results are available on the internet at <http://sbnews.sunysb.edu/susb/survey.html>).

Professors Suck All Life from Materials

5. State University of New York at Stony Brook

"Are your instructors good teachers?" asked the Review. Students answered by ranking them as the fifth worst in the country.

These results may seem curious when considered in concert with administrative propaganda and other survey results, but they do make sense. There's no arguing that Stony Brook faculty are all highly qualified and knowledgeable, but according to the survey, many of them lack the basic skills necessary to communicate that knowledge.

The quality of Stony Brook's Professors is spotty at best, with the finest faculty scattered amongst disparate departments, and often lacking tenure. The review quotes an Anthropology/English major as saying, "My anthro profs are like watching stand-up comedians or the Discovery channel. You can't turn away. The English profs, on the other hand, wouldn't know Oscar Wilde if he pinched them on the butt."

Unhappy Students

2. State University of New York at Stony Brook

In this, Stony Brook's worst ranking, USB students named themselves the second most unhappy students in the country, second only to the University of Missouri at Columbia.

The review asked students, "Overall, how happy are you?" The school's ranking tells you their reaction.

Students cited a lack of weekend activity, "uncomfortable living situations and a distinct distaste for the campus food" as some of their main complaints.

The Review quotes a USB rugby player as saying, "You have to find your own fun here, it won't come to you."

THE RATINGS

As part of the survey, The Review graded schools numerically based on the survey results. Grades were given on a scale of 1 to 100 in both "Academics," and "Quality of Life."

Stony Brook scored a 64 in both categories. In most classes, that would earn you an "F."

WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT

The review also provides a list of what's good or popular (Hot) and what's bad or unpopular (Not) for each school surveyed.

What's Hot at Stony Brook

ethnic diversity on campus
drugs
left-wing politics
college radio
Greeks

What's Not

students are unhappy
campus difficult to get around
administration
dorms
unattractive campus

THE SIGNIFICANCE

The 1997 Princeton Review survey is the worst thing to happen to Stony Brook in years.

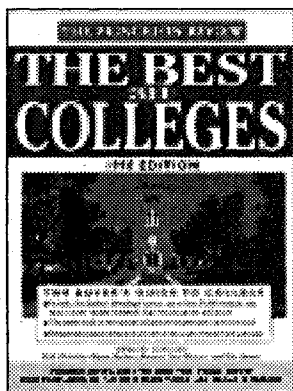
Every college-bound high school student in America knows what the Princeton Review is.

Most of them have at least seen the Review's school rankings. Many study them. In today's competitive educational market, rankings and surveys help students to decide on a school. Stony Brook's recent performance may help many to decide against it.

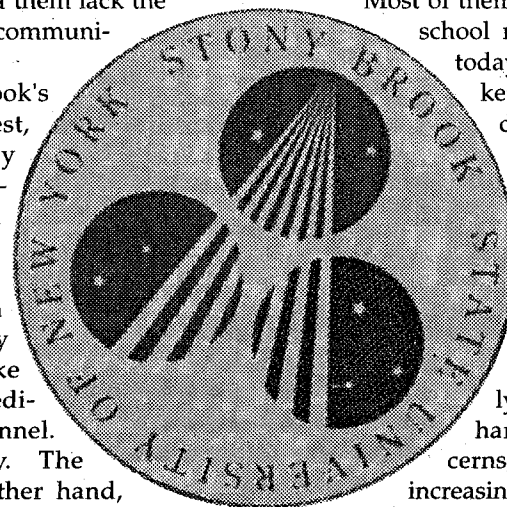
Beyond the repercussions for University Admissions, this survey shows an incredible level of dissatisfaction amongst the students of Stony Brook. As the school consistently ranks highly for esoteric and hard to measure academic concerns, the students themselves are increasingly unhappy.

THE DATA

The 1997 "Princeton Review's Best Colleges" is available on the world wide web at <http://www.review.com/college/find/rank/>. The results are also printed in "The Student Advantage Guide to The Best 311 Colleges," published by the Princeton Review.



The Princeton Review's "Best Colleges" of 1997



HOUSING IN CRISIS

As you read this, there are approximately 400 students on a waiting list for on-campus housing. The housing shortage is the result of administrative mismanagement and should not really come as a surprise given the blatant ineptitude Shirley Kenny and her money obsessed minions have displayed when it comes to accommodating student needs.

The administration was aware of the fact that a housing crisis would be created as a result of their aggressive recruiting strategies this past summer, but decided to step back and allow the scenario to unfold anyway. There are currently students living in lounges that have been temporarily outfitted to house them. More students are commuting from as far as the Bronx and Manhattan while others crash in friends' rooms or the Holiday Inn.

The Student Polity Association has now asked the University administration to reopen Tabler Quad in an effort to expediently end this crisis. As students we find ourselves in a lose-lose situation. If Administration meets Polity demands,

renovations scheduled for this year will be pushed back by ten months or more. If Admin does not meet Polity demands, students will be forced into an expensive and time-consuming commute. This is the best case scenario. The more dismal view pushes back renovations indefinitely, or has students withdrawing for the semester because they have no place to live.

Either way, the students suffer.

What we are currently hearing is that Administration never had any intentions of granting housing to the people on the wait list anyway. It seems that they were hoping that those students would just give up and seek out their own housing.

This episode provides us with some insight into the Administrative ideology. Ignore student needs and maybe they will go away.

Please take this as public notice: WE ARE NOT GOING ANYWHERE. We need housing; provide us with it or be ready to have your workplace as disrupted as ours is.

THE STONY BROOK PRESS

Rules For Writers

- 1) Submissions are due by 12 midnight on production Saturdays.
- 2) All submissions must be typed or submitted on disk.
We have the capability to read both Macintosh and Windows disks.
- 3) Authors are asked to submit articles with the proper word count:
1 page: 1600 words
1/2 page: 800 words

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1997 CAMPUS ALTERNATIVE
JOURNALISM AWARDS

• RUNNER-UP:

**BEST ALTERNATIVE
PUBLICATION**

• BEST SENSE OF HUMOR
(SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR)

• HONORABLE MENTION:
REPORTING

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

Too late: Only now, after the event, do I realize the significance of Hillel's recent ceremony for Israelis killed by Palestinians. Being unable to disrupt it, I can only write impotently about it. But perhaps some thoughtful sympathizer or member of Hillel will be moved by my words, belated as they are.

The Great Conquering Races of the world have shed many tears for Their Own. Always, as their leaders invaded other lands, killing or exiling the natives with many a regret, their official historians followed, chronicling the virtues of the victors. Always a desperate minority unwisely rebelled against the invaders. None have ever been mourned so emotionally as those of the Conquering Race, who fell to the invaded rebels. "What right," sobs the spokesman of the superior, "have they to murder us, when all we wanted was all they had?" Yet who weeps for the conquered?

How many Native Americans, crippled and humiliated by the white immigrants, stumbled docilely westward to appease the invaders? These we remember as "peaceful Indians." Far fewer fought hopelessly for their land and their lives, and killed some of the immigrants before they died. These we remember as "warlike." Our Founding Fathers, of course, took ample revenge. Still, hundreds of years later the victorious still wept for their own and despised the defeated people for the actions of a few. Yet who wept for the conquered then, when it might have mattered?

Years ago, when rich whites exploited poor blacks even more openly than they now do, slave rebellions were rare. Even more rare, one of the masters was killed by his servants. What sorrow accompanied his death! Hundreds of years later, the Ku Klux Klan was still sobbing.

The swiftest retributions were available for those who dared to fight their subservience. But who wept for the conquered in the South?

These are only the most notorious incidents in American history; our ancestors repeated such travesties again and again, inside and outside the country, to every group weaker and poorer than us who had some resource to be stolen. The current spokesmen for the superior claim that such invasions are no more, yet the war in Israel is only one example of the current atrocities America is committing. American funds the Israeli military, the greed of American leaders fuels the greed of Israeli leaders, American audacity sets the example for Israel's audacity.

Many supporters of Israel's policies vigorously point out that there can be no "Land for Peace" deal in Israel. This is true; the Jewish leaders of Israel will offer neither to the conquered Palestinians. So far, a small minority of Palestinians have rebelled. The vast majority accepts their subservience, accepts the fact that they cannot be citizens in their own country, accepts that legalized discrimination against them, accepts the brutal Israeli military on their streets.

Death is always tragic. Nevertheless, I would not take the view that because both Israelis and Palestinians have died both are equally guilty. Every battle has winners and losers. Israel has more wealth, more military strength, more powerful allies, and far fewer victims. Its leaders have taken land which, by almost universal agreement, does not legally belong to them. They have conquered the Palestinians as brutally as America's leaders conquered their own minorities. They exiled and murdered the Native Americans. They have denied Palestinians legal rights as callously as our ancestors denied them to African slaves. IN the

current struggle, Israel is clearly the conqueror; what remains of the Palestinians are the conquered. But who here weeps for them?

I would never say the Israelis who were killed by Palestinians deserved such a death, the only people who deserve such punishment are the leaders of Israel and the ruthless American leaders who pay their bills. The actions of many American Jews in denouncing all Palestinians as terrorists and supporting Israel's government in its every scheme to steal more will do nothing to stop the violence.

It is too late to prevent the slaughter of the Native Americans. It is too late to prevent the enslavement of Africans. However, perhaps the Palestinians can be saved from the same fate. This cannot happen unless Jews in this country take a more critical view of Israel's government. Murders should certainly be denounced, but you must be willing to denounce every murder that occurs: every Palestinian with a rock in his hand who gets shot by Israeli soldiers, every Palestinian tortured to death for his political views, and every Palestinian civilian killed during Israel's "retaliation bombings" in Palestine or southern Lebanon. If you weep only with the Conquerors, you share their guilt!

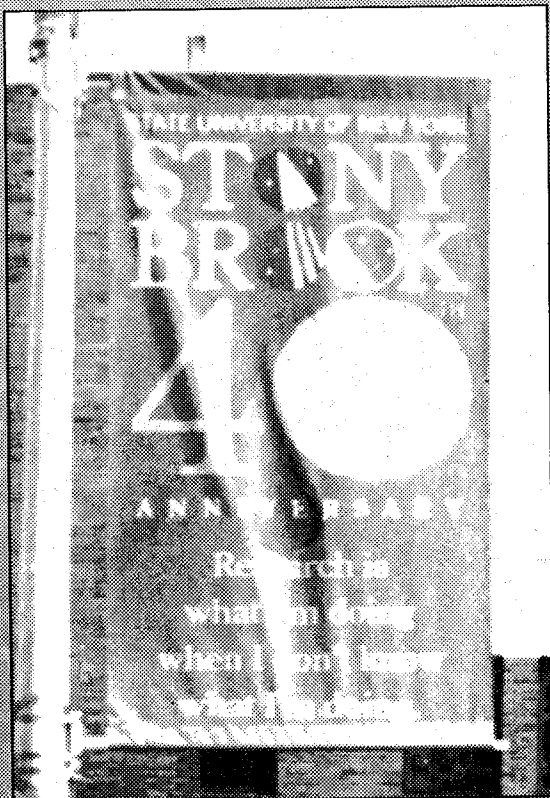
I invite responses and arguments, but I will try to diffuse the ones which will surely be the most common: that I am anti-Semitic. Half of my family is Jewish, and I have no hatred for Jews. I do not hold Israel's actions against Jews in general, only those who actively support its government and suppress criticism of it. I implore anyone who seeks to justify Israel's actions to at least try to understand history before dooming thousands of Palestinians to repeat it.

-Stephen Preston

Graduate student, Mathematics Department

We changed the motto on the banner in front of Admin for our cover, but the real motto was pretty funny, too.

In case you can't make it out, the banner says:
"Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing."



An interesting message for a school that prides itself on research, isn't it?

Tell the administration how you feel about the housing crisis! Copy this letter and sign it. Deliver the completed letter either to President Kenny's office, or to the Student Polity offices on the second floor of the SAC.

Today's Date _____

To: President Kenny & Dr. Preston

My name is (_____) and I am a (freshman/transfer/international student, etc), currently living in (_____) (or commuting from _____). As an ally to students in need of housing, I agree that Tabler Quad should be re-opened to accommodate people in need of housing. In doing so, I understand that the renovations of the campus will have to be extended for another year. However, under the circumstances I think that this is the logical choice.

As the President and Vice President of the University, I trust that you will do what is best for the students.

In Student Unity,

(your name)

I.D. # _____



SAC DEDICATION

By Al ne Ruggiero

Picture it: Shirley Strum Kenny, Fred Preston, and Carmen Vazquez together in the same room with a microphone and an audience. It's either a psychology project in the unfortunate effects of a prolonged god complex, or the room is filled with the unmistakable sound of puckering lips as the Three Amigos do what they do best—kiss the asses of the financially endowed and legislatively empowered.

Such was the scene at the dedication of the new Student Activities Center last Wednesday as Kenny and company sponsored an elaborate reception in the Center's lobby. Camera crews and journalists mingled with swarms of administrators and alumni, as the odd student or two wandered through the building, possibly drawn in by the balloons, strategically positioned jazz bands, and the promise of free cake. Even with these elaborately displayed incentives, the student population at the ceremony was minimal, and the festivities were geared more towards the administration's public relations officers than to the student body.

The overpowering theme of the speeches was the Activities Center's position as the "focus" of the campus community. In fact, "focus" was the keyword of the addresses given by Dr. Preston and Union Advisory Board Chairperson Thomas Liao.

President Kenny emphatically stated that the SAC was a reflection of the university as a whole, and that it was fitting that a building constructed for the students was located physically and functionally at the center of the campus since the students were the purpose of the university's existence, a point reiterated by Preston and Vazquez. "...The reason for us today, the reason for this university, are the students", proclaimed Kenny, smiling proudly for the cameras as she and Dr. Liao unveiled the dedication plaque. And she has every reason to smile—after all, she has done it again, successfully schmoozing the television-watching public into believing that the university's infallible golden girl has added another attractive improve-

ment to the once-faltering institution. The image of Shirley single-handedly transforming the concrete debacle that was Stony Brook join the sleek, new, donation-friendly college all for the sake of her adoring little students lives on.

Roy Roberts, speaking on behalf of the Graduate Student Organization, publicized the opportunities for student and administrative integration which the SAC provided, and proposed a cafe scenario for the two to intermix. (Brilliant idea—I know that my life wouldn't be complete without having had coffee with Fred Preston.) Roberts declared his hope that the new Center would become the axis of the community and would lead to greater student participation and activism, but for some reason, I doubt that this "student focus", which all of the speakers so adamantly declared, is the sincere purpose for the 13.7 million dollar building. If it is the core reason, then the administrators are way out of touch with the wants and needs of this campus.

I submit, for your perusal, a list of what the Student Activities Center provides for us, the students (remember, the ones for whom this university exists, blah, blah, blah).

A full-service bank, a gourmet dining hall, post office, commuter lounge, the Polity print shop, a large, state-of-the-art auditorium, a wellness center, and the ultra-comfy offices of the Dean and Polity. What the SAC does not provide is a dining hall which the students can conveniently eat in, a commuter lounge which students can relax in and it doesn't solve the problems of decrepit dormitories or the parking crisis on campus. Polity Vice President Diana Lopez was the only speaker at Wednesday's ceremonies who addressed the fact that the new building was not a cure-all for the university's woes, acknowledging the problems with the dorms and academic troubles which students face, but she did state her hopes that the construction of the Student Activities Center would be the beginning of the student-centric university that administrators spoke so adamantly for in front of

the local media.

However, the reality in this brave, new Stony Brook is a school where the students can't use the student meal plan in the Student Activities Center, where the commuters have to park a half mile from the center of campus, and where the residential cafeterias no longer open for breakfast. But whenever News 12 sends a camera crew over, there are jazz bands, silver fountain punch bowls, balloons, and declarations of love and respect for the student community. Personally, I would rather Kenny forget about the cake and give-away prizes and fix things that are relevant to student life. The money spent on the dedication ceremony alone would have bought a few more books for the library. Instead of a "wellness center," I would have preferred a more efficient system at the Bursar's Office, or tenured professors. Rather than building a luxury like the Student Activities Center, why couldn't we have something that would really make student life more convenient, such as a commuter parking garage?

Dr. Liao stated in his speech that brainstorming for the SAC began among administrators ten years ago, six years before the original ground breaking took place. If the mass student community was polled at all about the SAC, how recent was it? How much student involvement really went into the Student Activities Center? Whatever the student input, the administration sure is getting comfy there. Look around at lunch hour. Our gourmet food hall which the Long Island Voice so highly praised is filled with more suits than students. I wonder if Shirley and Fred will sing the same tune about the central role of the students when Newsday isn't watching. I guess what it boils down to is that we have T.A.'s instead of professors, obscenely long lines at the Registrar's counter, and the second most unhappiest students in the country, but at least we have multi-million dollar building to do our bitching in.

"Us and Them," continued from page 2

stool pigeons? Do they put up signs in the lunchroom: "Earn extra money! Be a narc!?" "Squeal Like A Pig"?!!

A further question might be where the fine money goes. Is it used for real health concerns, like AIDS, prenatal care and the abnormally high rate of breast cancer? Or does it go towards the \$1,000 reward for whoever helps catch the vandals who graffiti'd Gaffney's Rock, now being touted as "a 450-million-year-old relic of Long Island's Ice Age," our own little Stonehenge, over the summer?

Some studies indicate that teen smoking has actually gone up since the inauguration of the Crusade. Duh. Anyone with the most basic grasp of adolescent psychology knows the most effective way to get teens to do something is to forbid them for doing it. This rudimentary principle seems to escape the authorities. Or perhaps it doesn't. The crime-and-punishment business, now the largest growth industry in the country, will require new "outlaws" to justify itself, just as the older military-industrial complex required an unceasing parade of foreign "threats."

Elba: The island of Napoleon's exile is now packed with German tourists. I have an informative chat with a guy from Wiesbaden about the economic situation, where workers are now being told they can take a 20% pay cut or hit the road. He also told the story of a doctor who was arrested for

growing his own pot; his neighbors, and people around the country, went to bat for him, telling the court that he wasn't bothering anybody. You are allowed a small amount of marijuana for personal use in tight-assed Germany, as you are in most of Europe (we smoked a joint on the street in front of my hotel — don't worry, I didn't inhale).

I counter Fritz' anecdote with accounts of DEA helicopters and SWAT teams in laid-back California busting into homes in the middle of the night. I also relate how Clinton has threatened to prosecute any doctor prescribing marijuana.

"But you can still get a gun easily," Fritz yelps, and I admit that, yes, guns are always readily available. I explain that we Americans, due in part to our Puritan heritage, have a problem with things that give pleasure, but we've developed a deep affection for things that cause pain.

Ireland: A TV profile of a soccer player mentions how he "likes his pint" and radio commentary on a traditional music festival adds that attendees "enjoy the drink." Such comments would be unthinkable here, where it's taboo to officially acknowledge that drinking is enjoyable. I suspect that the failure of programs like SADD and DARE (which they want to expand) is that they preach mind alteration as unambiguously evil and teach that only those with problems practice it. Students

soon learn that this diverges from reality, including the reality in their own homes, and they tune out the entire message.

Huntington: Someone obviously under 18 offers me a quarter for one of my cigarettes. I tell him no, he can have one free, and even let him use my lighter. I wonder how long it will be before such a scene is punctuated by a Suffolk County Health Department official springing from the bushes and issuing me an expensive summons. I wonder when I can next afford a temporary escape from this ever-less-free society I live in.

Note to Jim Reagan:

Of all my inflammatory babble you can find nothing more damning than my use of profanity? You're going to make some piss-poor (sorry!) lawyer, hot shot.

And by the way, my beloved just finished three long years of overpriced mind-warping (a.k.a. law school). I've seen the opaque, impenetrable legalese gobbledygook they give her to read. Lemme tell ya, anyone who goes to school to be able to generate 50 pages of that drivel and call it a "brief", is in no position to criticize anyone else's writing.

Write back when your argumentative skills have been sharpened and then maybe, just maybe, I'll condescend to engage you in debate.

ALONG THE COLOR LINE

KILLER COPS OUT OF CONTROL: PART ONE OF A TWO PART SERIES

Dr. Manning Marable

Black Americans were horrified last month with the brutal torture of a young black man in Brooklyn by New York City police officers. Abner Louima, a 30 year old Haitian immigrant employed as a security guard, was arrested after an altercation with police. Once he had arrived at the precinct, Louima was viciously assaulted. Louima was raped with the wooden handle of a toilet plunger up his rectum, and then in his mouth, breaking his teeth.

The police officers screamed racist epithets as they worked on Louima. One attacker even shouted, "This is Giuliani time, not Dinkins time," a reference to Republican Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's predecessor, black liberal Democrat David Dinkins. Released in critical condition, the same cop threatened Louima that he would kill him and his family if the incident became known.

However, the public outcry over this case was so overwhelming and immediate, that Giuliani had no alternative except to distance himself from pals in the NYPD. Several police officers were arrested, while their supervisors were both transferred and suspended. One week later, thousands of people demonstrated in Flatbush, Brooklyn to denounce the racist violence of the police.

As sickening as the Louima case is, it is not unusual. Throughout metropolitan New York and across the country, there are similar incidents of police brutality and murder. This pervasive pattern of police violence has also led to hundreds of black and Latino public demonstrations and protests, calling for justice.

For example, in New York City on June 28, 1996, ten thousand people marched down Fifth Avenue from 59th Street to the United Nations, in a

demonstration protesting "the burning of Black churches and police brutality." Singing "We Shall Overcome" and "Ain't Gonna Let nobody Turn Us Around," the marchers represented a range of religious, labor and civil rights organizations. In the Bronx, protesters outraged at the shootings of two Hispanic young men by the police staged a "boisterous sit-in" in October, 1995, outside the Bronx District Attorney's office.

On June 13, 1996, in Brooklyn, Aswan Keshawn Watson, an unarmed 21-year-old black male, was killed by two white plainclothes officers who fired 18 bullets into him. Activists in central Brooklyn held a mass forum on August 5, 1996, charging Watson's death "as evidence of blatant police contempt." On May 2, 1997, a Brooklyn grand jury found that the officers "were justified in believing themselves to be in danger" when they mistakenly judged Watson's car steering-wheel lock for a gun.

In Patterson, New Jersey, in February 1995, teenagers led a demonstration outside that city's police headquarters to protest the killing of a sixteen year old boy by a rookie police officer. In Staten Island on May 1, 1994, hundreds of school children, parents and working people marched in the Clifton section of the borough to protest the death of Ernest Savon, who allegedly was fatally beaten by police. To publicize the scores of police shootings of Black and Latino young men in metro New York since 1993, several mothers' groups and community activists have organized annual protests on the theme, "Racial Justice Day." The April, 1997 rally brought 300 protesters to City Hall Park. As the demonstration moved uptown toward Washington Square Park, chanting "The people united will never be defeated," hundreds of onlookers joined the march, growing the estimated number of protesters to one thousand.

In other major American cities, the same situation exists. In Chicago, on July 30, 1995, Joseph Gould, an unarmed homeless black man, was killed by an off-duty white police officer. The policeman was first charged only with "official misconduct," but after a series of public demonstrations the Illinois state attorney increased the charge to "armed violence." On October 3, 1995, Honduran immigrant Jorge Guillen died in police custody from suffocation. The state attorney refused to prosecute, claiming "lack of evidence of any criminal conduct." These and other incidents prompted some Chicago activists to organize a demonstration marking a "National Day of Protest Against Police Brutality, Repression and Criminalization of a Generation," on October 22, 1996.

In San Francisco in June 1995, militant protesters packed a meeting of the city's police commission to denounce the killing of a black man by officers. In July, 1994, a crowd of demonstrators protested at a police district station in Baltimore, denouncing the death of a black man, Jesse Chapman, while in custody. In nearby Prince George's County that same year, Archie Elliott III, a black man, was shot 14 times by two county police officers. Dorothy Copp Elliott, the deceased's mother, began speaking out at community events and neighborhood churches "to protest her son's death."

To stop police violence requires more than lawsuits. We must not be silent. We must protest to defend the lives of our brothers, sons, and husbands.

Dr. Manning Marable is a Professor of History and Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University, New York City. "Along the Color Line" is distributed free of charge and regularly appears in over 325 black and progressive publications worldwide.

Announcing the Fall 1997 Stony Brook Press...

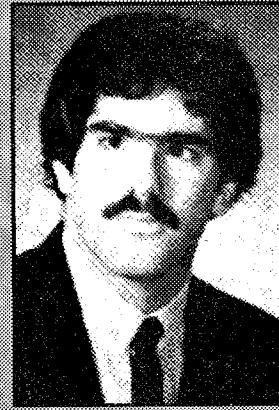
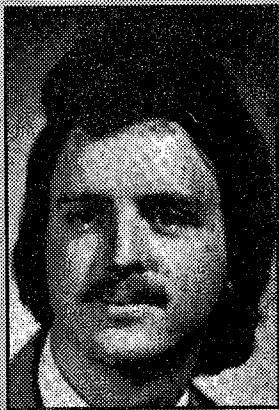
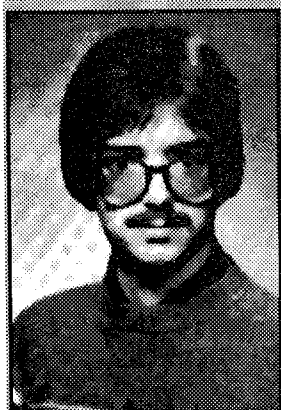
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THE GRAD TA'S BURDEN

By Alexis Rosoff

You know the university sales pitch. Sales is all about highlighting your best points, shining a bright light upon them to rid the image of all contrast. Stony Brook is no exception. We all got the pitch before we came here. Top-ranked academics programs, top-caliber faculty, top-notch facilities, the best of everything. Then we get here, and reality hits. If you're an undergraduate at Stony Brook, you're at the bottom of the university food chain. Instead of those illustrious professors they've bragged about, you may have a graduate student teaching your class.

I have two classes this term being taught by graduate students—a 300-level English class and 200-level Spanish class. According to a Princeton Review Stony Brook ranks 10th in the nation in the number of upper-level undergraduate classes taught by graduate students. Now, although the quality of teaching that's provided by grads may be excellent, the question remains: Why does this happen, what are the long term implications, and is it an acceptable situation?

One answer goes like this: Yes it is. By choosing to come to a big public university, you knew the trade-off you were making. The professors bring in more money by doing research than you pay in tuition. Furthermore, you pay only \$10,000 to go to Stony Brook, instead of the \$30,000 you'd pay at some private universities, so you have no right to complain. The teaching's the same anyway, so what's the difference?

I was actually given this argument by an

acquaintance of mine, who happens to be a graduate student here. Although I completely disagree with this line of reasoning, it hits closer to the heart of the argument. The reason we're taught by graduate students has nothing to do with academic quality. It's economics. A graduate student teaching a class receives a tuition waiver plus a stipend worth approximately \$9,500 annually. A professor, even one at the low end of the pay scale, will receive about \$30,000 a year, plus benefits. Even I, who flunked calculus outright the first time I took it, can do the math on that one. Why pay professors when grads can

"...at the beginning of the decade, the English department had had 42 members; it now has 21."

do the same work for less money? A professor of mine told our class last year that at the beginning of the decade, the English department had had 42 members; it now has 21. Ironically,

the students may ultimately be working themselves out of a job. Someday, in the not too distant future, they'll leave, and another crop of graduate students will appear to do their work, enabling universities to continue limiting the hiring of new faculty.

Secondly, that argument makes the assumption that because we are SUNY students, who pay 1/3 as much for our education, we are not entitled to the same level of education. We do make a trade-off by picking Stony Brook. We know that we'll have big lectures instead of more intimate discussion classes, that the bureaucracy will be inefficient and impersonal, and that our contact with profes-

sors and other students will be markedly different than if Stony Brook had only 2,000 undergraduates. In return, we expect a wider variety of opportunities than we might get at a smaller school. What we don't expect, or deserve, is being treated as second-class students.

Stony Brook proudly proclaims itself to be a 'research university'. Unfortunately, this seems as if it's becoming an oxymoron lately. However, it doesn't have to be. Having a strong and well-known research program and high-quality undergraduate education can complement each other. However, this does not happen when professors succumb to the 'publish or perish' mentality and leave the job of actually dealing with undergraduates to the graduate students. Universities are, in theory, here to educate and enlighten students—all of them. If the priority of this institution is mainly to engage in research, why bother with undergrads at all? We're just a drain on money and resources that could be better spent elsewhere.

I do not believe that graduate students should not teach at all; they're an integral part of teaching, and I don't think that any large university would be able to survive without them. On a more personal note, I've enjoyed the varied perspectives that graduate students can bring to a lecture, as well as the enthusiasm they often have. However, I don't believe that simply because graduate students can do the job means that professors should be absolved of the duty of dealing with students. We deserve to benefit from the experience and expertise of the faculty.

After all, some of the undergraduates here today will become the graduate students of tomorrow. What will the consequences be then?

EUROTRASH REALITIES

By Heather Rosenow

One of the many things that I learned from being in Europe for the last year was that Americans have a horrible reputation. This reputation includes an assumption that our culture consists of nothing more than MacDonalds, action films, ignorance of other cultures, and a compulsive desire to let everyone else know how superior we think our nation is. You can hardly blame them when you examine the movies released abroad. 'Independence Day', 'Air Force One', and 'Red Dawn' are good examples. Most Americans, I am sorry to say, can be identified by the condescending way in which they think everything in "the Old World" is cute, and amazingly modern. This may sound like an exaggeration on my part but I assure you I wish this wasn't true. Speaking to Europeans in general reveals a minimal desire to get to know the culture they see as superficial, plastic, and created by a people who think they are the best.

One concept jumped upon in debates abroad was our collective self image. I, and all my other American counterparts, were accused of loving our country to the point of blind complacency. In short, I was informed that we loved our country so much because we were too ignorant and blind to see its faults.

This last accusation, while in many cases being true, should not and does not describe the majority of the American public who are brought up more and more to question authority.

In fairness, American children and young adults

are taught more about European history than their contemporaries in Europe are taught about American history. For example, if you were to ask any given Irish student I know or went to college with about the American civil war, you would generally get a blank stare and a vague comment about the wrongs of slavery. The criticisms our country receives for intervening in foreign affairs are numerous as well. However the European media is very quick to switch sides of the fence when it suits them. If the United States government does not intervene in a situation that would benefit the European Union and its member states if the U.S. military or government agencies were to get involved, an almighty uproar ensues. So although the European Community chooses only to see our hypocrisy, they are selective about noticing their own. These things are inevitable of course in any international situation where cultures and systems of law differ. However the European media and the people they cater to have decided that they would rather concentrate on our inadequacies than their own.

The biggest hurdle to cross in order to bridge this problem of cultural ignorances between Europe and the United States is, believe it or not, television. It sounds like a small insignificant idea when thrown into the realm of international relations but look at it like this; Remember when you were told not to believe everything you see on T.V.? Well the majority of people I spoke to in Europe cited our television as an example of our cultural depravity. 'Beverly Hills 90210', 'Baywatch', 'Saved by the Bell'...ect. For God's sake, I'd wonder about a cul-

ture's maturity and level of education if all I saw was bad acting and materialism. This does lead to the inevitable question; why is Baywatch the most popular show in the world? The fact is, Europeans believe everything and anything they see on television. Euro-TV is the all omnipotent source of information from the world outside of their tiny little decadent dictatorships. Unfortunately, the poor, backward Europeans are at least three years behind the U.S. in programming, and some of the more remote cultural deserts are just finding out about Gidget. If we start now, however, we can within a decade begin to influence the minds of these poor misguided people around the globe. By the end of the century the whole planet will be happily waving the banners of truth, justice, and American television programming. "I've had it up to HERE with communism, and I'm NOT gonna take it anymore!"

Think about it. The English have problems with speaking clearly because their flag has been shoved so far up their proverbial ass by all their ex-colonial territories, the Irish word for fun is crack (craic), the French have issues with everyone (especially the fresh smelling nations), the Italians harassed two of our staff members to the point of tears every time they see a thick gold chain and curly chest hair, and the problems with Germany, Poland, and Switzerland are far too numerous to mention. The solution is screw the rest of the world!! Isolationism is completely underrated. We don't need frogs, pasties, and bog-sucking leprechauns!! GO AMERICA!!!

Research Rift

By Jenn Frigger

In the recent Princeton Review study it has been shown that Stony Brook ranks highest for the amount of graduate students teaching classes. As I stated in an article entitled "Trickling Sludge: How Graduate Policies can Affect the Quality of Undergraduate Education" in our November 26, 1996 issue of the Press, the quality of life for graduate students has been threatened. By proposing a raise in stipends for graduate students teaching the hard sciences the Humanities and Art departments are at risk. One possible result which was discussed and later rejected was the moneys could have been taken from the Arts and Humanities departments. Fortunately this was not the case. Instead offers were changed around to accommodate hard science TA's by paying them additional money over the summer. Instead of the \$9,572.00 they were receiving, their yearly income would rise to somewhere between \$12-\$15,000.00. This, however, would be working year round as opposed to the two semester periods in which many now work. The only problem is that the hard sciences are not the only departments who asked for a raise. This particular decision shows clear favoritism toward the sciences, and clear ignorance toward all other departments.

By ignoring the needs in the Graduate departments of any field outside of the hard sciences the system is ultimately creating less opportunities and therefore positions. Very few people will take an unattractive offer. This will undoubtedly cause an unwanted shift in the nature of our undergraduate education here at Stony Brook. Outside of the Administration building hangs a sign which effectively states that research is what one does when one is not quite sure what one wants to do. It seems to me that this is the first indication of dangerous propaganda designed to change the students' view on a research and development education as

opposed to a situation where professors solely teach. By employing professors who teach we will be radically changing our learning environment. Without graduate students we would be taught by less people. This comes into a situation where many larger classes already number as high as 500 in enrollment. Furthermore, the resources to which Stony Brook had access would also decrease greatly. It is through those professors who partake in research that we come by much of our newest and most important information. It is not always strictly learning materials which teach us, it is also the very things which constitute the daily discoveries in a field which contribute actively to the way in which we learn. I appreciate it when a professor brings in his home slide library to point out important breakthroughs in archeology or art history. I like knowing that my professors have worked with the people who have translated some of our source materials, or maybe even translated them themselves. This creates a bond between us and the material, leaving less room for cracks through which information can fall or be yanked out by some political agenda.

In addition, if we are placed once removed from a research environment, it creates a rift between us, the students, and the opportunities which we will be looking for later in our academic careers. If I am studying Philosophy, (which I am), I want to work with both professors and graduate students and researchers in my field. Especially, since I as a student might have the intention of going on to graduate school, maybe even professorship, shouldn't I actively partake in that arena now as a preparation?! Building a wall between undergraduates and graduates would be highly detrimental to our educational objectives.

With the obvious hostility which Stony Brook has thrown at all Arts and Humanities department it would suffice to say that there isn't exactly a welcome mat or a homefire burning for those graduate

student TA's. Eventually the sludge will make it down to the undergraduate level just as it always has, and once again we'll be eating it. Open wide!!

It is obvious that the general trend of the quality of education here at Stony Brook is going to be downward if it continues as it has. While our pre-medical and biology departments continue to be very good, the well-roundedness of even these majors will suffer. My friend who is majoring in electrical engineering informed me today that the upper division writing requirement is three paragraphs for her major. I find this convenient since, according to her, a language barrier seems to be stopping many people in that field from creating complete English sentences. Furthermore, many other departments which seem to be approaching mediocrity, have buried within them brilliant minds who have contributed very much in the past. The current trend is to stifle these people and seriously lower the quality of our education.

I had in my aforementioned article expressed concern and offense at a comment made by DeRussy (Pataki's appointed Trustee) that high accessibility and high quality of education are mutually exclusive. I have in part changed my opinion on this issue. I feel to a degree that this statement is true. However, the criteria for the exclusivity of education is in my opinion wrong. By cutting such programs as TAP, money becomes the only criteria for accessibility to education. In fact the criteria should be diligence, dedication, intelligence and workmanship. When I examine my own life I can't help but support capitalism, unfortunately, however, my idealistic goals could not become a reality in such a monetarily charged environment. And DeRussy, if you want to help our education so goddamn much, don't you dare use perfectly good arguments to disguise the fact that you're taking our money and screwing us over.

NINETY YEARS LATER, "THE JUNGLE" STILL ECHOES

By Norman Solomon

This summer, we've seen the biggest recall of beef in American history -- nine decades after a famous book led the federal government to start inspecting meat. If the author were still alive, he wouldn't be surprised that serious problems remain.

Upton Sinclair's novel, "The Jungle," included sickening descriptions of Chicago meat-packing plants. Published in 1907, it jarred the nation and lifted hopes of major reform. But not for long.

Later that year, "the lobbyists of the packers had their way in Washington," Sinclair observed. "The meat inspection bill was deprived of all its sharpest teeth, and in that form [President Theodore] Roosevelt accepted it."

Sinclair warned that the government's failure to rigorously inspect meat was likely to continue. Most of all, he blamed the news media.

From the outset, the press gave "The Jungle" a rough reception. "Can it be possible that anyone is deceived by this insane rant and drivel?" one widely syndicated newspaper column scoffed. The meat industry mailed out a million copies of that article.

"Because of the kindness of American editorial writers to the interests which contribute full-page advertisements to newspapers," Sinclair wrote a dozen years after the 1907 law went into effect, "the American people still have their meat prepared in filth."

The Associated Press was one of Sinclair's most powerful adversaries. "Throughout my entire cam-

paign against the Beef Trust," he remembered, the national AP editors "never sent out a single line injurious to the interests of the packers, save for a few lines dealing with the congressional hearings, which they could not entirely suppress."

To Sinclair, the situation was chronic. "American newspapers as a whole represent private interests and not public interests," he declared. Journalism operated as "a class institution, serving the rich and spurning the poor."

He despaired at the attitudes that held sway: "My main concern had been for the fate of the workers, and I realized with bitterness that I had been made into a 'celebrity,' not because the public cared anything about the sufferings of these workers, but simply because the public did not want to eat tubercular beef."

In 1920, Sinclair finished a book of press criticism -- "The Brass Check" -- and published it himself. Sales were brisk, totaling 100,000 copies in less than a year. The book was a scathing attack on the media establishment.

According to "The Brass Check," the press lords regularly prevented a free flow of information: "Journalism is one of the devices whereby industrial autocracy keeps its control over political democracy."

Such opinions, expressed by a tireless and renowned author, did not exactly endear Sinclair to newspaper executives around the country. When he moved to Southern California and gave a

speech to the Friday Morning Club of Los Angeles, the L.A. Times printed an editorial under a terse headline: "Upton Sinclair's Ravings."

The editorial lamented that the club's podium was used "for such ungodly purposes" by "an effeminate young man with a fatuous smile, a weak chin and a sloping forehead, talking in a false treble" and uttering "weak, pernicious, vile doctrines."

In 1934, Sinclair ran for governor on a campaign platform named EPIC -- "End Poverty In California." When he won the Democratic primary, business leaders panicked and took the unprecedented step of hiring an ad agency to smear Sinclair with huge quantities of negative publicity.

Despite an intense media battering that included constant denunciations by California's largest newspapers, Sinclair placed second in a three-way race with 38 percent of the vote.

Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture lacks the legal authority to order tainted meat off the market. And no big media outlet is really calling for an end to poverty in America.

The next time you wonder about the beef on your plate, you might think of Upton Sinclair -- and ask yourself why it's still such a media jungle out there.

Norman Solomon is a syndicated columnist. His book "Wizards of Media Oz: Behind the Curtain of Mainstream News" (co-authored with Jeff Cohen) has just been published by Common Courage Press.

The View From Inside The Psychology Department

By James Polichak

Psychology is the most popular undergraduate major at Stony Brook. Approximately 900 psych majors are roaming around out there. You may now be one of them, or may become one in the future. In fact, since psychology is the most common (or modal) major, if you are currently undecided as to a major, your best bet is that you will choose psychology. At some time, most other students will come into contact with the field of psychology, either by taking classes or interacting with psych-major friends.

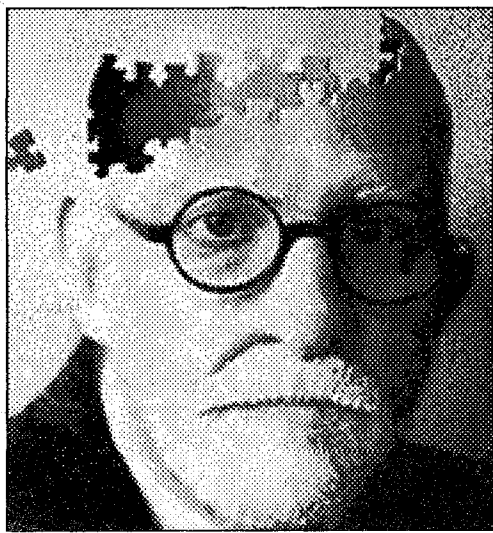
Here are a few things you should know about psychology in general, and at Stony Brook in particular. This information will be of the greatest use to those of you who are psychology majors and who are considering graduate school in psychology. From my experience, that will include many of the psychology majors or potential psychology majors out there.

First off, the psychology department is located in two adjoining buildings roughly smack-dab in the middle of campus (which makes it roughly rather far from any parking). These buildings are known, sensibly enough, as Psychology A and Psychology B. Psych A is the one closer to the library, Psych B closer to the Javits center. The Psych buildings are where your professor's and teaching assistant's offices and laboratories are (with a few exceptions). This is also where you will have to go to dive into the Subject Pool and sign up for any required research for your classes. The Psych buildings are not, with few exceptions, where your psychology classes will meet. Psychology classes tend to meet in large rooms in Javits, Engineering, and Harriman Hall. This is because, if you haven't guessed this from the popularity of the major, psychology classes are mostly large classes, especially the introductory classes. A helpful tip is this: people who sit toward the front of class tend to get higher grades. This may be because smarter people selectively sit in the front, but why not try it anyway. As you may learn while taking a psych class, a good way to become something is to act as if you are that thing. If you force yourself to smile while waiting on any of the long lines you might find yourself on around here, you will be happier.

Your first psychology class will be Introduction to Psychology. This will likely consist of a few hundred of your fellow students in a very large lecture hall. You should take advantage of this class, as its name suggests, to introduce you to the various areas of psychological study, to see what interests you that you might want to study more of. Intro to Psychology should dispel the most common misconception of about psychology held by the general public, and maybe by you. This misconception is that psychology consists entirely of therapy and study of mental disorders. While these are interesting and thriving areas of psychology, the field consists of much more. Psychologists study human behavior of all kinds: learning, language,

memory, personal relationships, decision-making, the internal workings of the brain, human development, belief-formation, and perception are just some of the phenomena examined by psychologists (and research in many of these areas is performed by faculty at Stony Brook). Forming your opinion about psychology from the mushroom-like proliferation of 'self-help' books and 'relationship experts' that has occurred in recent years is about as accurate as forming your opinion of physics from looking at those cute little hologram pendants available at the mall. If nothing interests you in Intro to Psych, you are quite odd, and should not consider psychology as your major.

The first class you should take after Intro is Statistics. Statistics is more than just a requirement for the psych major. Statistics is a set of mathematical techniques (no, you should not become a psychology major because you don't like math) developed by a number of eminent biologists and social scientists in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (they don't



call it Pearson's product-moment correlation for nothing) that form the basis for nearly all psychological research today. You cannot get a degree in psychology without passing Statistics, you cannot get into graduate school in psychology without excelling in Statistics, you cannot succeed, for the most part, as a psychologist without an in-depth knowledge of statistics. Even if you intend to be a therapist of some sort, the first two conditions hold. If you want to do any kind of academic research in psychology, including in the clinical area, you must be good at statistics. If you experience fear and loathing of math, you will have to get over this and learn to love statistics. If you can't, you should seriously consider another major (but don't pick sociology, political science, economics, or evolutionary biology, all of whom's love of statistics rivals, if not exceeds that of psychology's).

After you have experienced the many joys of statistics, you should move on to Research Methods. Again, this is a necessary class, for the same reasons as Statistics is. Psychologists do research, and they use statistics to analyze this research. All of the information that will be presented to you in any other psychology course is the product of research and statistical analysis. Take these classes as soon as possible and devote your full attention to them. They will aid you considerably in comprehending the material presented to you in any other psychology course. Good performance in these classes and an excellent working knowledge of these techniques are necessary for admittance to a graduate program and for success as a psychologist. If anything, a good knowledge of research methodology is more important than a good knowledge of statistics. Computers can do much of your statistical work for you. However, when the day comes that machines can ask interesting research questions, formu-

late a logical approach to their study, and interpret their results, it won't be long until the robots rise up against their fleshy overlords and we'll all be out of a job. To further achieve these goals, you should consider taking Advanced Statistics and some of the advanced laboratory-research classes that are offered in the various areas of psychology. Graduate schools will look far more favorably upon a student who has taken these than one who has successfully passed Intro to Every-Area-That-an-Intro-Course-is-Offered-For, and some require them.

If large classes and lack of contact with faculty have you bit dismayed, you should take advantage of Stony Brook's numerous opportunities to work as a research assistant (an RA). This is an area where Stony Brook excels; something (for once) that would not have been better had you attended some small liberal arts college. As a research assistant, you will get to work with faculty and graduate students on actual psychological research as it is being performed. You will gain hands-on experience and be able to participate in the process that has produced all of the exciting results from your content-oriented courses. You will also gain valuable access to faculty and graduate students, so you can see what they really do and if you are really interested in becoming one of them.

Being an RA will also allow you to obtain another necessity for being admitted to graduate school, the Letter of Recommendation. In order to get into graduate school, you will need at least three good letters of recommendation; preferably at least some of these will come from someone in the area you are interested in going to grad school for. The only way a faculty member can get to know you well enough to write a good letter for you is through close contact in a research setting. Also, letters from graduate students carry far less weight to admissions committees, so try your best to get your letters from real professors.

Stony Brook's psychology department is quite varied and is quite good in all of its areas, giving you lots of opportunities for research in something that interests you. Fliers are posted all over the Psych buildings with information about how to become an RA. You can also learn more by asking the people in the Undergraduate Advising Office, who maintain a database of researchers who want RAs and what kinds of RAs they want. Unsurprisingly, most researchers (like most graduate schools) want intelligent, motivated, students with a genuine interest in the research being performed in the particular lab. So keep your grades up and don't just try to be an RA in any lab. This will be the most valuable approach for both you and the researchers you will be working with.

In sum, Stony Brook's psychology department offers you the opportunity for a good start toward becoming a successful psychologist, if that's your desire; or to just gain a good working knowledge of psychology. This will not occur without some effort on your part; you must take challenging courses and engage in research. And remember, it's best to take more math classes when you have some free space in your schedule, and try some computer science while you're at it.

MYTHS OF STONY BROOK

By Michael Yeh

Although there are no absolute rules for making choices in one's academic career, there are many misconceptions that students pass on to new people on campus. The best way to avoid them is to speak to as many people as possible before making decisions. The following comments are my personal pet peeves, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the students, faculty, administrators, or victims of the University at Stony Brook.

The telephone registration system is the best way to take care of administrative affairs.

The administration touts this system as the most convenient way to register for class, pay your bills, and to run other errands that would normally require a trip to the Administration building. But it is not perfect, and often one would have to clear things up in person.

The telephone system is handy for pre-registration when one is off-campus or just too lazy to walk across campus. But the system does not allow students to register for more than 17 credits. It can also be slow or even inoperable at the beginning of the semester when too many people try to use it.

Sometimes, the computer can make errors and mess up one's schedule in bizarre ways. It is often difficult to sort out these mistakes, which require one to shuffle through many offices.

It can be easier to register in person and to confirm everything early than to fix errors after the semester has begun. Of course, this strategy involves some waiting on lines, it's no less painful than listening to the silly inhuman voice on the phone.

Honors classes are always "harder" than regular classes.

It is often difficult to judge a class by its name, and many students assume an "honors" course must be harder to pass than a regular course at the same level. This is not necessarily true, for the each instructor may have different expectations.

In certain introductory lecture courses, professors are rarely able to know the students well. This is especially true for large science classes such as Chemistry 131. Although the Honors Chemistry (CHE 141) class is also large, students have more opportunities to interact with the faculty.

Exams can be quite stressful in CHE 131, since the faculty use a multiple-choice format to accommodate the large class. A typical exam contains approximately ten questions that often involve lengthy calculations. Even if you understand the concepts thoroughly, a simple arithmetic error can screw you up for the semester. No partial credit is accepted, and each incorrect answer can drop an exam grade by ten points.

Students in Honors Chemistry are encouraged to understand the material instead of merely memorizing formulae and constants. Each student is allowed to bring a hand-written index card containing any relevant information to the exams. Since each problem has to be written out

step by step, the professors give partial credit for small errors as long as the major concepts are correct. Although more work may have been required in the honors class, it offered more forgiving grading policies and treated students like human beings instead of numbers on a roster.

Check with a faculty advisor in your department to find the course that suits you. Also try to speak to students who have taken the course to find out what the professor expects from students.

All upper-division classes are "harder" than introductory classes.

As I mentioned above, introductory courses can be huge and impersonal. Some people suggest that certain science classes are designed to weed-out prospective majors and to trim the number of "pre-meds". The bottom line is, DON'T take a class unless you're really interested in the subject and are willing to work your ass off for it! There are plenty of former phony "pre-meds" who suffered in introductory chemistry and biology because they were pressured to take these courses by practical-minded parents or relatives despite the students' lack of interest.

Professors are often strict and uncompromising in these classes because of the large class size. Be prepared to study every day, for the competition can be fierce. It's unfortunate that students have to scramble for grades, but that's what it frequently comes down to.

Upper-division courses cover more specialized topics, and often require a good grasp of the introductory material. But if you sign up for an upper-division class, chances are that you truly care for the subject. Going to class won't be as much of a chore anymore, and except for large science classes, professors are often more approachable. Upper-division courses can offer a more meaningful learning experience than introductory courses.

Advisors are the most reliable sources of information.

It takes a lot of experience to become an effective academic advisor. Different advisors may offer different suggestions, so one has to be prepared to make difficult decisions. Try to speak to peer advisors, teaching assistants, professors, and other students as well. These people can often give you the straight dope on academic issues from their own experiences.

Pre-professional advisors probably have the worst reputations. Many universities like to boast of high acceptance rates to medical and law schools. (Stony Brook reports that 90% of students with a GPA above 3.5 are accepted to medical school.) But rumor has it that pre-medical advisors are told to persuade average stu-

dents that their chances for acceptance are horrible, and that they shouldn't bother applying. So, the only students that apply are outstanding ones who would get in easily.

Remember that the decision to pursue your goals is yours alone, so take your advisor's words with a grain of salt. Never allow others to prevent you from doing something you truly love.

Summer session courses are easier than those offered during the school year.

I have never taken summer courses at Stony Brook, so I can't say for certain that they are worse than courses in the regular school year.

Since many courses are taught by adjunct faculty, some students mistakenly think that the grading policies would be more lenient. But one semester's worth of material is crammed into six weeks during the summer, so a lot of work is required.

Occasionally, students take summer classes after learning the same material elsewhere. I was once in an organic chemistry

class at Columbia University that was full of disgusting pre-meds who learned the material from Kaplan and who had already taken the MCAT. Naturally, they knew the material well and they pushed the grading curve up so high that one required an exam average of 95 or above to get an "A".

Unless you are really desperate to satisfy a requirement, don't bother to torture yourself with summer school. If you insist on attending summer session, try to take DEC requirements or other "fun" courses instead of hard-core sciences. Your brain probably deserves a rest, anyway.

Research is only for exceptional students

Although the administration loves to boast that we're a "major research university", many students are hesitant to find research projects. There is also a banner in front of the Administration building that reads, "Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing." In reality, experience is not mandatory, although it can be helpful. Students do not usually need extensive knowledge about any particular subject to begin. The most important factor is the willingness to devote a lot of time and effort to learning the methods for the research.

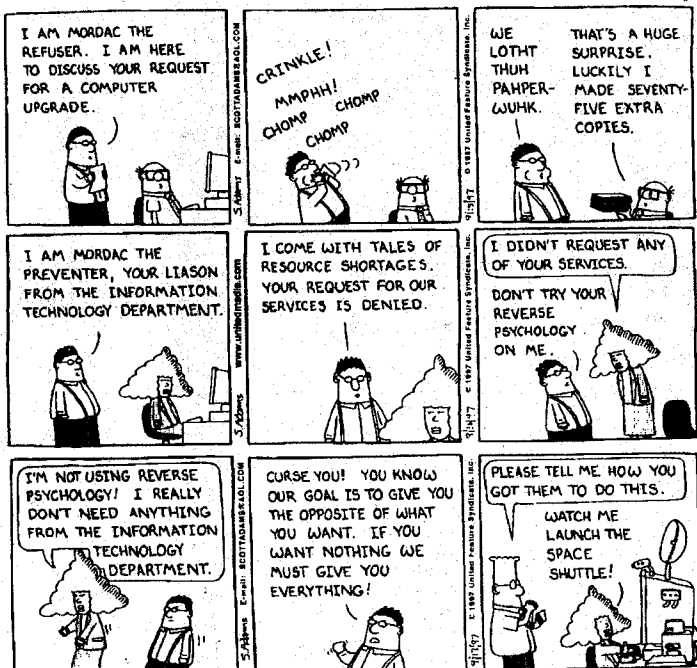
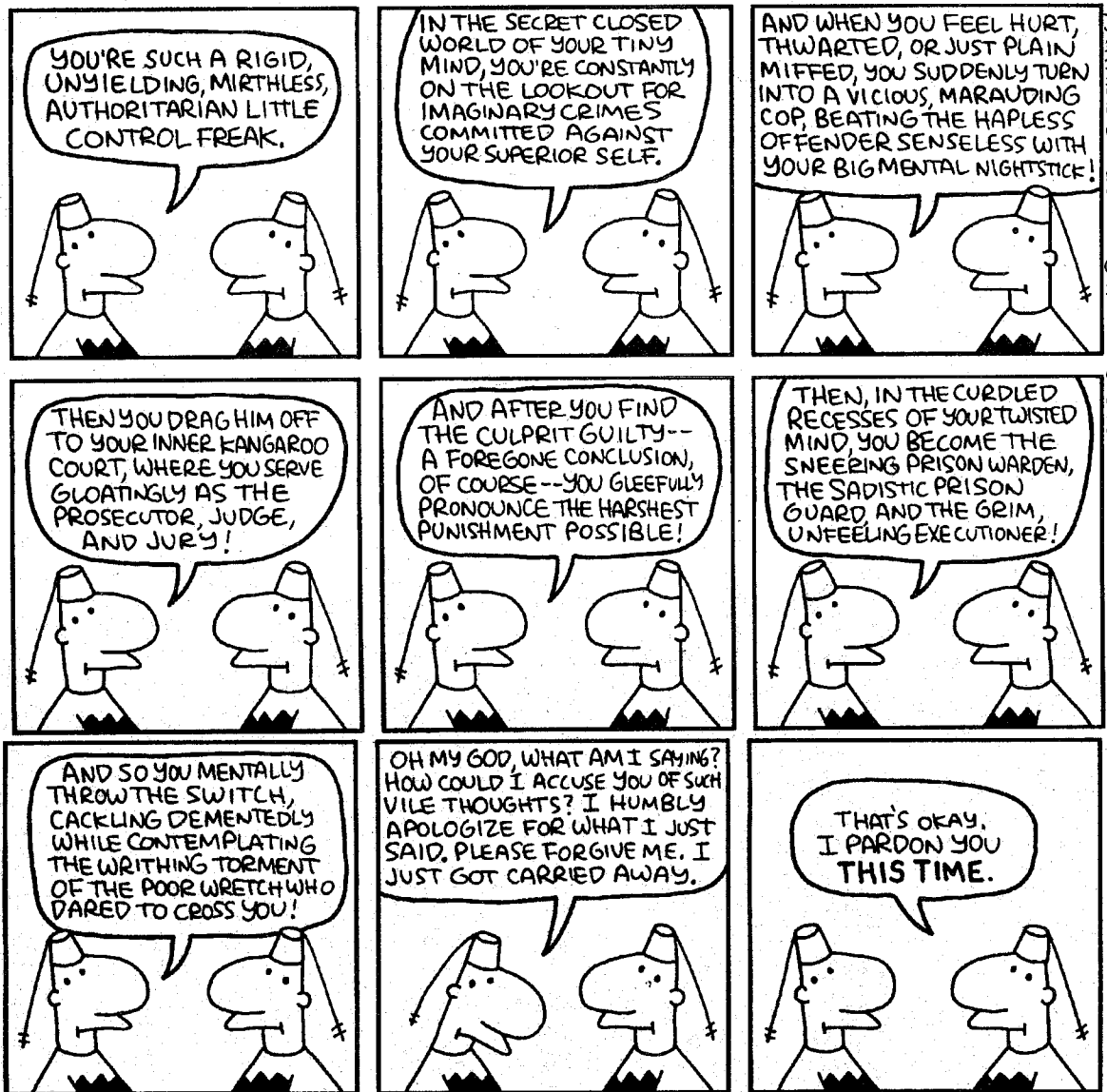
The easiest way to find a faculty mentor is to obtain a list of professors from the department in which you are interested. After you narrow down your choices, find a couple of journal articles or other publications written by these professors. Then, meet these professors in person, explain why you'd love to work with them, and hope for the best!



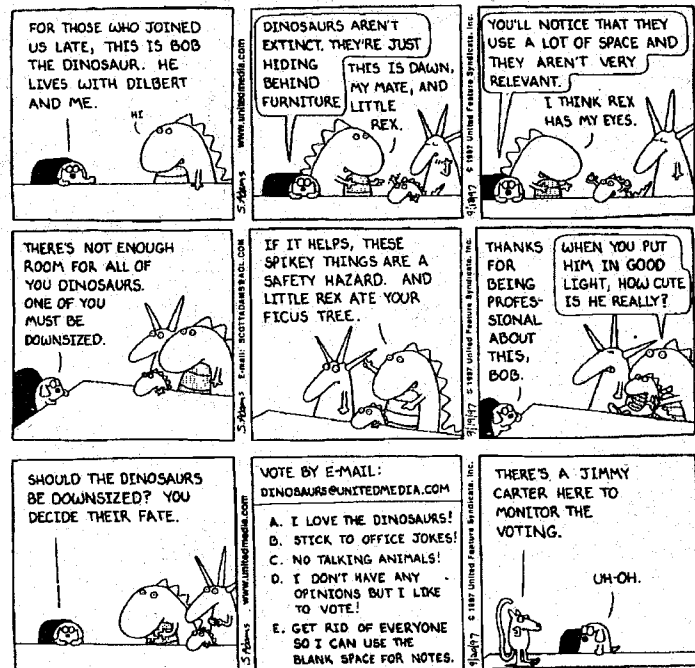
COMICS

LIFE IN HELL

©1997 BY MATT GROENING



Dilbert ® by Scott Adams



Top Ten Things That Are Sort of Funny

- 10) A monkey wearing pants.
- 9) An old lady slipping in a rain puddle.
- 8) Leprosy.
- 7) Cigar smoking.
- 6) Farting babies in supermarkets.
- 5) Canadian rock bands.
- 4) Hemmorhoids.
- 3) Bill Gates having sex.
- 2) Goths.
- 1) The Wankle rotary engine.

Ad Unrepeatable Offer

Your life sucks.

It often seems that no matter what you do, you just can't win. What to do?

In similar situations, many people turn to unpleasant avenues, cheating and stealing to get ahead. Others take even more drastic measures. Dr. Faustus sold his soul to the devil to get ahead. Fortunately, you don't have to take such risk.

Sell your soul to us.

We're not satanists or even really evil in any measureable way... we're just your average college students with a taste for the metaphysical.

All you have to do is come down to our office and sign a simple contract, giving us, the editorial board of the Stony Brook Press, your eternal soul.

In return, we will become your benefactors, helping you to achieve your goals and turn your pitiful life around. We'll also give you some free space in our next issue to do with as you wish.



The Stony Brook Press reserves the right to reject souls on the basis of moral, personal or metaphysical problems.

...hey, that fat kid's a serial killer!

By James Polichak

"A fifty-something woman in New York experiences a sudden flash of heat that jerks her up from her deep sleep. At that very moment, three thousand miles away, her husband spontaneously combusts after a night of drinking grain alcohol and carousing with crack-whores."

We've all heard similar stories from our friends, parents, the TV (our best friend of all and surrogate parent) about such amazing coincidences. They are marketed as true examples of the unexplainable bonds between loved ones, flashes of extrasensory perception, reasons why you should buy cool-looking black books with pyramids on the covers and lots of prettily-illustrated mysteries inside. Supposedly, they are beyond the ability of science to explain and the only way you can really know what's going on about these bonds that transcend time and space is to send Time-Life Books \$19.95 plus shipping and handling (I know this Time-Life example is fairly old, but it is the most prominent organization I can think of who has cashed in on this idiocy, with the possible exception of Scientology, but that's a whole other lawsuit-happy sack of ferrets that I chose not to open here).

What many will find surprising, due to the strident and numerous efforts of psychic-mystery-book promoters, is that Science (with help from its friend and ours, Math) can readily explain these coincidences.

(A brief aside about spontaneous combustion before we go on. According to a Learning Channel documentary, just about every instance of spontaneous combustion has involved overweight people falling asleep with lit cigarettes on highly flammable pieces of furniture, near a heat source like a stove or heater. The fat person smolders and melts like a candle. The only mystery here is how writers can so easily get away with leaving out the information that would explain the mystery.)

Essentially, what makes these coincidences seem so mysterious is that we notice them. The hypothetical woman above happened to notice that she had a heat flash at about the time her husband spontaneously combusted. Others have dreamed of their sons in car accidents the night before they happen, and so on. We'll ignore the extremely strong possibility that these people are incorrectly recalling the sequences of events or making things up. This happens much more often than people think and is the subject of much psychological inquiry, particularly with regard to eyewitness testimony in the legal system.

We notice these coincidences when they occur and tell others about them. What we do not consider, as anyone who has taken a statistics class should know, are the times when we think about something bad happening to someone that we know and nothing happens and the times when something bad happens as a complete surprise. These occasions are likely to be much more common. We quickly forget about these occasions and do not recall them when an astounding coincidence occurs; we certainly don't make a point of telling our neighbors and friends about our many failed premonitions.

We also tend to think of coincidences in ways that make them seem more special than they are. Luis Alvarez (a prominent physicist and one of the original developers of the theory that it was an asteroid or comet impact that killed off the dinosaurs) offered an interesting example and analysis (1965, *Science*, 148, p.1541). Alvarez was reading a newspaper article that led him to recall a person he had-

n't thought of in about 30 years, only to turn a page mere minutes later and discover that person's obituary. Alvarez, being quite mathematically minded, produced a set of calculations, the details of which are unimportant here, showing that, with reasonable assumptions, astounding coincidences like the one above should happen at a rate of about ten a day in the U.S. This figure would be higher now, given a larger and more dense population, causing more people to know more other people than in the past. Coincidences involving loved ones should occur even more often since people think and worry about them more than they think about the fat kid in third grade whose pants fell down on field day, for example.

The problem is that when a coincidence occurs

we try to do some brief mental calculations concerning how probable that particular event was: how likely is it that we were thinking of that fat kid from third grade at that exact moment that he appeared on

the TV news as a serial killer, how likely is it that on our vacation to London we meet the prostitute we lost our virginity to, and so on. Our mental calculations pretty quickly, and fairly accurately tell us that the likelihood of this event

occurring is incredibly small. In mathematical terms, what we are doing is calculating the probability of an intersection of the specific features of an event. This is obtained by multiplying together the probabilities of each part of the coincidence (that we saw that person at that time in that place while wearing those shoes, etc.) This results in one of those extremely small numbers you get when you multiply fractions together and makes us feel that what has just occurred is indeed special. Unfortunately, these mental calculations are not the ones we should be making; we are wrong and we are also not special.

What we should be doing is (as Alvarez did with his calculations) wondering how likely it is that we will see anyone we know at an unexpected time or place or on TV or as our new cellmate. This is the union of events, and is calculated by adding up the probabilities of the individual features of an event. This is quite difficult to accurately calculate, but it's not like anyone was really multiplying together specific numbers in the above discussion. We just intuitively know that it's got to be real small. Thinking about coincidences in terms of how likely any surprising event is to occur, rather than the specific one we are faced with, should make us feel that the likelihood of experiencing a mysterious coincidence is rather high.

Some of you out there may be now asking, "why should we care if a few people engage in some sloppy thinking that prompts them to maybe send twenty bucks to Time-Life? What effect will this have on me with my superior logical abilities?" Well, the vote of a sloppy thinker is equal to that of the logical thinker in this nation, and these people are responsible for teaching children, testifying in courts, and so on. And, more depressingly, belief in this kind of phenomena is found in places we should prefer it not be found: in those responsible for creating and enforcing laws that affect all of us.

The cover page of the *New York Times* Metro Section on July 21 featured a large photo of an normal-looking New Jersey woman surrounded

by assorted police department memorabilia. She obtain these momentos by, as the headline stated, being the "psychic friend" of the NYPD and other area police departments. Psychics thrive upon the gullibility of people and people's willingness to accept lucky guesses and coincidence as insight. Happily, the *Times* article gives us a detailed example of the kind of service this soi-disant 'psychic' performs for the police, so we can assess the ability of our law-enforcement personnel to utilize information and evaluate it. They fair rather poorly.

The 'psychic', one Dorothy Allison, was asked(!) by the NYPD to help find the missing wife of a transit police officer. She gave them a list of items, supposedly clues. This list included six different names. So much for precision.

But, the way these things work, if any of these names had been helpful or even close (none were), this would have counted as accurate. Among the few 'accurate' clues Ms. Allison gave the investigators were: 'a beige or light-colored car', 'a serious accident in the

area', 'abandoned building', 'old junk cars', 'some type of explosion in the area', and 'golf course'. Given that the police were searching a vacant lot near the East River in Brooklyn, one would be surprised if all of these things (with the except of the golf course) failed to turn up. Note that specifying 'light-colored car' effectively included half of all cars in the world. Who couldn't make such a prediction? The odd 'accurate' clue given, the golf course, was not even truly accurate: the *Times* decided that the police finding some old golf balls was close enough. If you look at the list in detail, you will notice that the number of 'clues' that were not even close greatly outnumber the number that were, and these were the more precise and specific items (like the six names given. Apparently psychics get graded on a scale that gives them credit for trying, but does not assess penalties for wrong answers). The sheer folly of all of this is completed by examining the results of the investigation that Ms Allison's 'clues' prompted. While a number of her 'clues' were somewhat, though trivially, accurate, in describing the surroundings and contents of the vacant lot searched, they did not lead to the missing person. All that was found in the lot, aside from some golf balls, were two dead dogs. While Ms Allison continues to insist that "parts of the list were right on the money," I'm sure that the Transit Officer feels that a pair of dead dogs are hardly an adequate substitute for his missing wife.

Psychics and other promoters of mystical phenomena depend on our failure to think critically about what we experience and what they tell us. We are all too willing to accept that something is special and exciting without considering more complete and accurate explanations. While this may be kinda cute when teenage girls dress-up in black and dabble in witchcraft, it is much less so when it is our police officers, law-makers, and teachers who are doing so.

(Lots more interesting information about why we believe in something when we should know better can be found in: *Believing in Magic*, by Stuart Vyse (1997) and *How We Know What Isn't So*, by Thomas Gilovich (1991). Both of these are available in the main library.)

"...why should we care if a few people engage in some sloppy thinking that prompts them to maybe send twenty bucks to Time-Life; what effect will this have on me with my superior logical abilities?"

REFLECTIONS IN LIMBOLAND

By Jennifer Choy

Me? I was clingy for most of my life. For my first couple years of school I cried every morning, just as my mom had gotten me into school and was ready to leave. I was hysterical. She couldn't leave me! It was scary, not only because I was clingy and always wanted her to be around, but also because I was so damned paranoid as well; I always knew that there was a chance that if she left, she wouldn't come back. I don't know, too much media exposure? Maybe I kept up to date with the news.

In the past 2 years, however, I have unburdened myself of a great deal of that parental, as well as peer, attachment. Now, it is my mommy's turn to cry. Heh. Of course, I'm not particularly glad about being able to make my mom cry. Her response and regard to my departure has been quite amusing though. When it was final that I would be going away for college, my mom's initial, panic-induced response was, "But how will I be able to talk to her?" My dad, with his ever-present blunt realism, "I think they have phones there." After more, not necessarily clear, thought, my mom finally proposed the following analogy: sending me away to live at college is just like giving me to marriage.

Oh, but could college perhaps be more pleasant?? Or could these two instances be more comparable than I thought? After waiting until the end of August (much like waiting to get married after being engaged for a whole year) before getting my, hmm, so-called, "Welcome Packet," I found out that I was to be initially placed in a temporary room. Ah, so there I was, still in the limbo of being in between places, unsure and set, just plain engaged and happily (you add your own quotation marks) married.

Then, during check-in day, I got introduced to a room that appears to have taken some beatings; either that, or I was entering prison. And when my roommate moved in, I noticed that she had only brought one piece of luggage, compared to my filled left-side of the room. Excess emotional baggage on my part; ignorance of the impending situation and lack of experience on my roommate's!

Next, the things that I was afraid of in the first place and hoped to be able to avoid became almost torturous realities. For one thing, my roommate

had a large propensity towards helplessness, and apparently felt that naturally, others would be glad and willing to help her, not just for the sake of pitying her, but also so she wouldn't have to bother learning whatever it was she wanted others to do. There were also things that she complained about even though I offered her warnings regarding them in the first place. I told her that I have a tendency to wake up really early in the morning. She said OK, and then when I actually did, she asked me to not turn on the lights, or if I had to, to only turn on the outside lights, and make sure to close the door as well. I also told her beforehand that I get really late phone calls sometimes (the range is wide open). She said OK, and then when the first late phone call came, asked me to lower my voice, as I was already speaking with a whisper under two layers of my blanket.

All of this was making me grit my teeth while under respectful tolerance already. Especially because I had realized at that point that I was bowing down to her and either taking her orders or doing things to benefit her, while I haven't even requested the barest modicum of her services yet. Hell, the most I told her to do was to not do certain things, such as not pushing aside the part of one of the window blinds that I used to protect my computer and stereo from the sun. And, of course, like many marriages continue to sour as the couple begins to realize their incompatibility and the magic of their dreams begin to ebb, my life with my roommate kept on sauntering down.

The next thing my roommate wished for was that my stereo be turned off between the hours of 12 AM and 8 AM, because she claimed that she needed at least 8 hours of sleep and if she didn't get at least 8 hours of sleep, she would experience a bad headache. Apparently, after telling me, in her dreamy stupor, to turn off my radio, she told me that she was already having a headache, even though the volume was almost negligent (hey, it registered at 0.2). Yeah, so here is where the argument begins, as the partner who has been so pathetically passive suddenly flares up and eradicates the other's sense of superiority, or at least, notion of power. But I felt that to be too much of a hateful and impressionable approach, so, with straightforwardness and determination, I told her

that, OK, I would be willing to keep my radio off between 12 AM and 8 AM, but then anymore requests for favors would no longer be welcomed (I know, I suck.). Naturally, like any sponge, my roommate proceeded to say, with painstaking innocence and hinted, puppy-dog sorrow, that she has never really asked for anything from me. That this was her only one request.

Yet, my roommate was just part of my rocky task of adjusting to this pet-named "home away from home." While my introverted, hermitic self was desperately trying to keep on more than tolerable grounds with the roommate I was married, er, servant to, I felt as if the vegan, health-nut, used to my own cooking parts of me that completed my reclusive self were being torn from me. Hey, I know, there have been enough people that have complained about the taste, and probably appearance, of the food, but for me, the first and foremost issues are the origins of the food (not the store the food came from, OK) and with what the food was prepared. Some places make it easier for me to discern the taboo from the praised, as they list the nutrient analyzes, and I am able to look for cholesterol content, which can only be obtained from those products taken from animals. Heh, most people check cholesterol content for the sakes of their hearts and blood vessels, I do it for the sake of my vegan lifestyle. But what has really been bothering me is the process of the food's preparation. Stony Brook seems to gloriously tout this new Chinese stir-fry option it has available in the new Student Activities Center, that can serve vegetarian dishes to order, but I can't see what is so vegetarian about a dish of veggies that has just been stir-fried on the same surface that pieces of meat have been pushed around on as well.

Of course, you can tell me that the problems are just in my head, you can tell me that I am an extremist (you can be the thousandth), but I bet your health hasn't improved or stayed as well as it was since you've got here. Yeah, I know, some of you are happy with the food, and a lot more are happy with their marriages (I'm happier in my new one), but don't rely on your friendly college to look out for you when you have yourself to do that.

The Three Dead Tree Revival



AN OPEN JAM SESSION ALL MUSICIANS WELCOME!!!

Thursday September 18th at 7.30pm
between Dewey and Baruch in Kelly Quad.

No structure, no rules, no nos - just music

Welcome to the Dungeon

By Terry McLaren

When my friend first told me to meet her at the Dungeon, I thought she was joking. We were going to the Sports Complex to work out together and I hadn't been there for a while. She explained that the weight room had been moved from the first floor to the bowels of the Complex. The old weight room had air conditioning and lots of big windows that provided natural light. All in all, it was a pretty good place to work out. I figured the Dungeon had just been tagged that because of its basement location.

Boy was I surprised when I saw this replacement weight room. It's in the basement past the hallway that overlooks the racquetball courts. The room is downright ugly and remains constantly dark despite the hideous fluorescent lighting. AND IT'S HOT!! The basement has absolutely no ventilation whatsoever and with the summer heat, it's a sauna. It really wasn't too hot outside this summer, but the temperature doubled in the Dungeon. The place is screaming for some fresh air. The room is huge and the exercisers are thoughtfully provided with a whole two fans for the entire area, one in the front of the room and one in the back. If everyone happens to be concentrated in the same space, like my favorite hangout- the exercise bikes, the one fan within 100 ft. can at least be turned to face you as you sweat from the effort of trying to breathe in this sweatbox. God forbid someone disagree with your choice of fan placement, though. It's been proven that aggression increases in hotter environments and fistfights have damn near broken out over the fan being scooted over an inch. Not to mention the dirty looks being given... There is also no water fountain nearby, so if you don't bring a water bottle

with you, you're screwed. The nearest one I've found is across the basement and up the stairs.

Besides humid air, a wonderful breeding ground for germs, the Dungeon equipment is dirty. People's sweat and God knows what else get all over the machines every day, and I haven't seen any evidence of cleaning. Every other gym I've worked out in has had paper towel dispensers on the wall so you can thoughtfully wipe down anything you've soaked with sweat, but not this little slice of hell. Of course, if you've thought ahead and brought a towel, you can use that. But chances are, your face and body have met that towel many times before the machine does, thus defeating the cleaning purpose somewhat. I've also seen staff members spraying and cleaning all surfaces at the end of the day in other gym facilities of campus. I have yet to even see a staff person in the Dungeon. Can't say I blame them either. Who'd want to work there? I found this grossness to be mildly upsetting at worst until I scraped the inside of my leg on the bike one day. Half an hour later the spot I'd mildly scraped was completely red and swollen. I was thankful I'd had my shots so my chances of gangrene were slim.

Thinking I might have been overreacting a bit, I decided to see if I was the only unhappy sweaty person in the Dungeon. The people I talked to only echoed my feelings. I was told by someone that he avoided working out there because of the conditions. A friend of mine said, "I go there to feel better about myself and end up feeling worse." Literally. In other campus gyms I can easily do 30 minutes at a fast pace on an exercise bike without straining myself. In the Dungeon, not only did I have a slower average speed and burn fewer calories, but many times had to stop myself ten min-

utes early because I felt really sick.

All summer as I muddled through my Dungeon workouts, sweat splashing every which way (pity the people who were sitting next to me) I kept thinking "This has to be temporary." It became a sort of mantra for my workout friend and I. As the fall semester approached, there were signs of life from the weight room's previous location. But when the renovations were completed, a new academic center and a couple of offices were where people once exercised in airconditioned semi-comfort. My worst fears were confirmed when I made a few phone calls yesterday and was informed that the empowered of the Sports Complex had no intention of moving the Dungeon. I said the first thing that occurred to me after that. "Really? Uhh, you mean it?"

Apparently they're "working on" getting an air conditioner or something for the torture room that people tax their bodies in daily. Having been a Stony Brook student for a while, I'm not expecting anything anytime soon. Those of us who've been here more than a week, and I'm sure some of the new students as well, know just how fast the wheels of progress turn in this hallowed institution. I believe a sloth on barbiturates moves faster.

As for me and my quest for a healthy workout environment, when the SAC's Wellness Center reopens on Monday the 15th I'll be overjoyed. It's been a long 3 weeks. The Wellness Center is clean and air conditioned, with a friendly, supportive staff and modern equipment. When I was a Stony Brook resident, I also enjoyed these qualities in the Mount Fitness Center, but now that I'm reduced to commuter status, when the Wellness Center closed I got a sickening taste of Dungeon life.

Coming to the Press next issue

Question the Answers

Why is the sky blue?

The column that handles the *tough* questions
Mysteries solved!

Legends punctured!

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Do you have a question of philosophical, metaphysical, paranormal or universal significance?

Send it to:

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060 Student Union
Stony Brook, NY 11794

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How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?

Have It No Way

one chick's rant on Burger King

By Marlo Allison Del Toro

Troubled Childhood Memories

My earliest memory of Burger King happened when I was about seven years old. Daddy and I had been out shopping. On our way home to have dinner we decided to stop at the Stony Brook Burger King to get a strawberry shake for me and a chocolate shake for my mom. Daddy ordered at the drive-through and pulled the car up to the window (this was back in the day when there was only one window to pay and get your food). We waited fifteen minutes. Daddy and I could see that there were no customers inside (and no one else at drive-through). There were, however, a man in a tie (manager?) and three giggling and chatting employees/bimbettes. After fifteen minutes the drive-through bimchette told us that it would only be a minute more before we would get our two item order. Five minutes later, as she was walking up with our shakes, Daddy drove away. I drank apple juice with dinner that night.

When we got home that night Daddy yelled something fierce. He said that he was never going to Burger King again. And he didn't.

And I didn't think about our unofficial boycott of Burger King until...

Anti-Family Values

Senior year of high school I lived in Texas with my sisters. That year I met my first love, and lost him to Brandi, the bitch from Burger King.

One day my boyfriend told me that the girl at the drive-through at Burger King had given her phone number to his father to give to him. She'd seen them there together once. He'd decided to call her, just to be friendly.

I called him the day after Valentine's Day, and she answered. I talked to her briefly, so she knew he and I were together. She started seeing him anyway.

I once again vowed never to go to Burger King, the land of moral-less vixens. And I didn't, until I became a desperate, poor, starving college student.

Woman Can Not Live On Bagels And Chinese Food Alone

And that's all there is to eat by my job. So, since I don't drive, I am at the mercy of my co-workers in getting anything other than the aforementioned.

I admit it, I broke down. I'm weak. I need calories. So one day when T.B. said he was only going to Burger King, I had him get me a chicken sandwich, which ended up not tasting quite right (see cooking habits, below).

My co-workers, for their part, don't listen when I say we need to boycott the King. Even so they complain of long waits when there are no lines, and not-as-good-as-they-used-to-be food.

They don't listen even when I go into my safety hazards speech.

Bicyclists And Pedestrians Beware

One day early last summer I had to bike past Stony Brook Burger King on Nesconset Highway. The following is the story of BK's killer flags.

Background info: In front of the Hess gas station, a few stores down from the King, are several flags. These flags are two feet in from the public (as in taxpayer funded, belongs to the people) sidewalk/bicycle path. The flags are firmly situated and fly about seven feet above the ground.

In contrast, Burger King, all new and shiny after reconstruction (through which they were open: imagine the construction debris that flew into the food then), has put up their own flags. The poles of the flimsy things are on the edge of the sidewalk/bike path, and the flags fly three feet off the ground.

I'm biking past, having stupidly forgotten my helmet, when a flag either falls on me or gets caught on my handle bars, causing me to fall. Through pants, my knee got all scraped up and my hands as well, with little bits of pavement in the bloody abrasions. The gears on my bike also got messed up (a \$20-30 tune-up could fix that, if I had the money).

I picked myself up, grabbed the offending flag, and limped into Burger King (actually, I limped for two weeks and the skin on my knee is still discolored). I walked up to a man in a tie (manager?) threw down the flag, showed him my bloody hands and told him what was the matter. He said, "Is there anything I can do for you?" And I thought, what is he going to do, offer me a Band-Aid to keep the bits of gravel in my hand or some free food coupons? I yelled, "No, I don't even eat here," and stormed out. (If I'd have hit my head, I would have sued.)

Five minutes later, said man in tie went out to put the flag back up.

Just so that you don't think this was a lone incident: L.C. told me that twice when he biked past the King he almost fell when flags threatened to grab hold of his handlebars.

Oh, and as a post script, the flags are slowly disappearing. Disgruntled bicyclists, people with walkers, or the act of a higher being?

Cooking Habits And The Hudson Foods Scare

One day last month, while telling a new co-work-

er about my plan to start a boycott against Burger King (okay, so I get a little ambitious and vindictive when I get peeved) he told me about when he used to work at the King. M.M. told me about BK's flame broiled beef patties. To flame broil the meat, the patties are put on a conveyer belt style cooker. When they go through once, the outside of the burger is cooked, but the inside is "raw and bloody." The patties are supposed to be put through a second time, but after the second broiling the burger is burnt (i.e. char broiled). This may explain why although they may smell good, the King's burgers taste bad.

M.M. then told me that during a rush, some of the employees will take the patties off of the broiler after only one time through, so the burgers aren't fully cooked. This is kind of scary when you remember that Burger King was the biggest customer of Hudson (E. coli scare of the summer) Foods Co.'s Nebraska plant's raw frozen beef patties. To their credit, Burger King not only pulled the patties when the recall was announced; they also stopped buying from Hudson.

Hopefully, their employees have stopped 'quickie' cooking the meat.

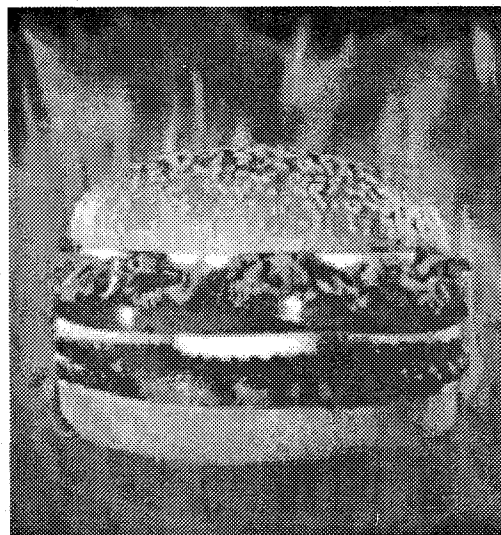
Onion Rings: A Meal In Review

Since I knew I was going to be writing about Burger King, I thought I should visit USB's Roth Food Court BK. As I stepped up to the counter to

order, I became too afraid to order any meat, so I just got a medium drink and onion rings. The drink was fine, soda is safe anywhere, but the onion rings were small and dry. Onion rings, I remember from my youth, were the one thing I loved at Burger King, but White Castles are much better (larger, juicier). And you know if White Castle has better food there's something wrong with the King. So, if you want to "Get your burgers worth," eat somewhere else.

Endnote: A Fast Breaking News Story

Burger King is so proud of its "flame-broiled Whopper" that they put the darn thing in every ad and commercial they make. It's even the entrance to their web site (click on the almighty Whopper to enter the official Burger King site at www.burgerking.com). But if the Whopper is so fab, why is BK planning to release a new burger, a Big Mac rip-off: "The Big King."



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M O V I E S

Fall Movie Preview By Chris Cartusciello

Now that the studios have emptied their vaults of all the big budget, high action, testosterone-laced summer films, we can settle down for a few months. This is the time of year when Oscar hopefuls come out of the woodwork, all jockeying to impress the Academy members for those crucial votes. Well, at least that's the way it's supposed to go. This year, the fall movie season is packed with so many high profile films it'll seem as if the summer never ended. Many avoided the summer race, in the hopes of not getting lost amongst the wolf pack. Some just couldn't make it in time for the party and took a raincheck on theater space. Others held themselves back because of troubled schedules and disappointing screenings. The following is a list of what we can look forward to in the months to come. As always happens with this type of thing, release dates are subject to change.

The Game : Michael Douglas and Sean Penn star in this first-rate thriller by David Fincher, the director of *Seven*. The story concerns a fully interactive game given to a millionaire on his birthday. Only problem is that when people are really shooting at you, where does the fun stop and the terror begin? (Sept. 12)

L.A. Confidential : Kevin Spacey leads an A-list cast in this tale of murder set against a 1950's Hollywood backdrop. Joining the Oscar winner are Danny DeVito, Kim Basinger, Russell Crowe, and James Cromwell. An intriguing story and top-notch talent should push this past the rest, but with a story as confusing as they come, it'll take a lot to keep track of the plot. Should satisfy anyone looking for a little cerebral stimulation with their action. (Sept. 19)

The Peacemaker : The first film to come out of the Dreamworks SKG stable looks to be a winner. George Clooney (you remember him, the guy who destroyed the *Batman* franchise) plays an army intelligence officer on the trail of a stolen nuclear warhead. Nicole Kidman is a government expert on atomic weapons. The script is by Michael Schiffer, the man who penned *Crimson Tide*. So far, so good. The problem may be in the director. This is a big undertaking for a first timer, and we hope that Mimi Leder is up to the challenge. With only a \$50 million budget, this action/adventure yarn will turn a tidy profit, but will it make SKG the powerhouse studio everyone thinks it can be? (Sept. 26)

The Edge : If you were trapped in the wilderness with the person you hated most in the world, and could get rid of him without anyone knowing, but needed him to survive yourself, what would you do? That's the question that is posed as Anthony Hopkins is stranded in the frozen tundra with Alec

Baldwin, whom he suspects of having an affair with his wife (Elle Macpherson). On top of all this, they are being stalked by a huge grizzly bear. This is a winner for sure. (Sept. 26)

The Gingerbread Man : This story, from John Grisham's very first screenplay, has been kicked around Hollywood for some time. Now that it's finished, it's being kicked around some more. The executives at Polygram took the film away from director Robert Altman because they were unhappy with the finished product. They then hired their own editor to re-cut it, but when that produced results no better than the original, the film was handed back to Altman to be released in its original version. Got that? That story's probably better than the movie. Oh yeah, the film's about some lawyer (what a surprise). (Oct. 3)



Rainman meets Barbarino

U-Turn : Listen up. Oscar material here. Sean Penn is a shoe-in for a best actor nomination, if not for this than for the just released *She's So Lovely*. Oliver Stone directs a dream cast of Penn, Nick Nolte, Billy Bob Thornton, Jennifer Lopez, Jon Voight, Claire Danes, and Powers Booth in this tale of a drifter (Penn) nobody can quite figure out. (Oct. 3)

Seven Years in Tibet : Brad Pitt as mountaineer Heinrich Harrer who comes across the young Dalai Lama seems like a bit of a stretch. Pitt is a fine actor, and this film has gotten a lot of good buzz, but I don't see it coming off. I think American audiences can only take so much spirituality. Also, the recently revealed fact that Harrer may have been a part of the Nazi party doesn't bode well for the box office. Look for a strong opening from Pitt's fan base, but it's not capable of going the distance. (Oct. 8)

Playing God : David Duchovny heads to the big screen, before his *X-Files* movie does, to play a doctor who's lost his license and goes underground to treat the underworld. Timothy Hutton is the mobster (huh?) who acquires his services. So far, Duchovny looks bored through the entire picture, as audiences will be too.

Nevertheless, fans of his show will make this a sure-fire hit. (Oct. 17)

Devil's Advocate : Cross *The Firm* with *Angel Heart* and you get this thriller starring Al Pacino and Keanu Reeves. Pacino is the head of a New York law firm who happens to also be Satan. Not too far off from a real lawyer, I guess. Reeves is the young, idealistic law school grad (is there any other kind?) who gets seduced by the power of, shall we say, the dark side. We've seen it before in various incarnations, and since Reeves shows less emotion on screen than Larry "Bud" Melman, this one should go down in flames. (Oct. 19)

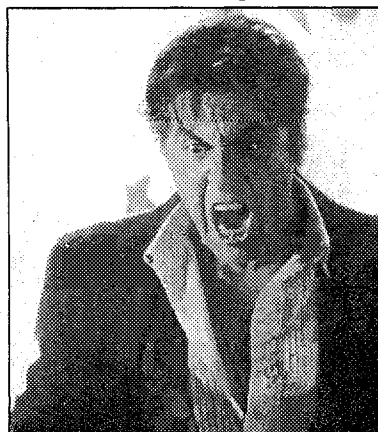
Gattaca : With all the talk of cloning these days, this sci-fi treat seems to fit right in. It takes place in a time when your position in life is determined by

the superiority of your DNA. When one "natural birth" man (Ethan Hawke) tries to buck the system typical carnage ensues. More than just a futuristic morality play, *Gattaca* tries to make you think about where we could be headed in the not too distant future. (Oct. 24)

Mad City : Dustin Hoffman plays a reporter who goes too far for his story (a sad commentary in the light of recent events). After a museum security guard (John Travolta) is fired, he loses control and takes some co-workers hostage. When he wants to give up the reporter won't let him, in the hopes of getting a bigger story. We've seen Travolta in this part before, in *White Man's Burden*, and it didn't work then. Hopefully the story is better this time around. (Nov. 7)

Starship Troopers : This is the one! This much anticipated, and long-overdue, sci-fi actioner is what movie-goers have been clamoring for all year. Ever since the previews began well before the summer season, fans have been waiting for Paul Verhoeven's voyage back into space. This is the man who gave us *Total Recall*, but was also responsible for *Showgirls*. I doubt we'll see any of these gigantic bugs lapdance. This is all action, all the time. (Nov. 7)

Bean : One of the funniest men alive, Rowan Atkinson, brings one of the funniest characters around, Mr. Bean, from the television to the big screen. Those who've seen the show are hooked, and can expect more of the same here. Now, the



Al goes apeshit in *Devil's Advocate*

not so good hearted, usually silent Bean has to care for some priceless art. This has already been released overseas and is packing the theaters. (Nov. 7)

The Rainmaker : John Grisham, again. A young, idealistic lawyer, again. Boring, again. (Nov. 14)

The Jackal : Bruce Willis, Richard Gere, and Sidney Poitier star in this almost remake of

1973's *The Day of the Jackal*. Willis is the bad guy here, playing head games with F.B.I. agent Poitier. Enter Gere, an imprisoned I.R.A. terrorist who knows the Jackal's moves. The action should stack up, along with the body count, but this also promises an intriguing story. Should do well, if only on sheer star power. (Nov. 14)

The Truman Show : If every aspect of your life was being filmed and shown to a television audience, live, 24 hours a day, what would you do? That's exactly what happens to Jim Carrey in this comedy/drama from director Peter Weir. Don't expect the typical pratfalls and rubber faces from Carrey this time out. He tries to go the serious route here. An interesting idea, but it's been done before (Albert Brooks' *Real Life*), and will the funnyman's fans want to see him like this? (Nov. 14)

Alien : Resurrection : Sigourney's back, even though Ripley died in the last installment. Thanks to the wonderful world of cloning we get her back in full glory, with a full head of hair. This time she's joined by Winona Ryder as the artificial life-form. This one assures us that it will try to erase the memory of *Alien 3*, with high action and a new alien with powers beyond those of mortal men. (Sorry, that's Superman. But, you get the point.)

please see "Fall Movies," on page 20



A Stony Brook student enters his dormitory bathroom

Return to the Dark Tower

By Lowell Yaeger

Even most non-nerds have some kind of entertaining, slightly-obsessive focus. For every nerd who can name the executive producer of every Star Trek episode ever created, there are at least three normal people who love baseball cards, can cook any sort of soufflé without the aid of a recipe, and/or find The Learning Channel to be thought-provoking and informative.

My thing is Stephen King. Ever since I read *The Tommyknockers* in seventh grade, I've been an unrepentant fan. Weak storylines? Maybe. Characters difficult to sympathize with? Sometimes. Unadulterated enjoyment? Always.

In recent years, the man seemed to have lost some of his touch. He was obsessed with spousal abuse for a few years (*Gerald's Game*, *Dolores Claiborne*, *Rose Madder*), and his other books were either short story collections or, frankly, too long for their own good. The only bright spot in an otherwise dismal array of literature was The Dark Tower series.

A decades-long work-in-progress, The Dark Tower series concerns the adventures of Roland the gunslinger and his friends Jake, Susannah, and Eddie, on their quest to find The Dark Tower, a metaphysical nexus point of all realities and times. Not surprisingly, the series itself is a Dark Tower to most of King's work: characters that have appeared in many of his other books turn up here, and some of them play quite significant roles (not the least of which is Flagg, the half-man half-demon that tried to conquer the world in *The Stand* and a medieval kingdom in *The Eyes Of The Dragon*). In fact, one of King's least inspired works, *Insomnia*, was saved from utter trash because in the course of its central plot, it gave the reader details about the Tower and the characters searching for it.

The Dark Tower series itself is a fabulously written conglomeration of unlike elements (forgive me for sounding pedantic). Roland's world is a blasted landscape of deserted villages, empty roads, and broken-down machinery that seems out of place in the land surrounding it (i.e. the occasional electric oven, a deserted car, etc.). Somehow connected to our world through various "doors," the occasional facet of earthly existence turns up here and there; drunken barflies sing "Hey Jude" and

oil tankers with the word "CITGO" on them are jarring reminders that there is somehow a very crucial link between our world and Roland's.

Anyway, the series reached a head at the end of Book 3, where Stephen King deposited his adventurers on a super-sonic monorail that wanted to kill itself... and the passengers unfortunately on board. The only way that his passengers could win their lives back would be to riddle the monorail. If they managed to stump it, it would let them off before striking its terminating point at over 800 miles per hour. If they failed to stump it, well, in the words of the train, "don't forget to write."

Stephen King, who probably lost more readers with this stunt than he gained, left those poor bastards on board that train for over half a decade. And to add insult to injury, much of his work in between Dark Tower books has dealt slightly with the ordeal of the gunslingers; the main character of *Rose Madder* travels to Roland's world briefly while *Insomnia* chronicles the efforts of two senior citizens seeking to save a boy who often dreams of the gunslinger, and their encounters with a supernatural creature known as the Crimson King are mirrored in King's newest release, *The Dark Tower IV: Wizard & Glass*.

The book has been a long time coming, and keeping in tradition with the previous Dark Tower novels, will only be released in a pricy hardcover edition until Nov. 4, when the regular copy hits the stands. Which means that in addition to making fans of the series (some of whom have written King threatening to shoot their dog if he doesn't send the next volume out pronto) wait even longer, they have to wait while the answers to many of their questions sits in a \$45 package on the shelf at their local Borders Books & Music.

Unable to wait the remaining months, I went and picked up this expensive 800-page nugget of goodness only to find that my disappointment in King's recent progress was to be magnified even further.

Don't get me wrong. The book is well written. The characters are believable, the reader worries for them and at times, you just can't put the fucking thing down. And for the first 100 pages, there's not a single flaw. They defeat the train (as we knew they would) and reach their next stop on their quest for the Tower, only to be waylaid by a 500+

page flashback to Roland's life as a teenager.

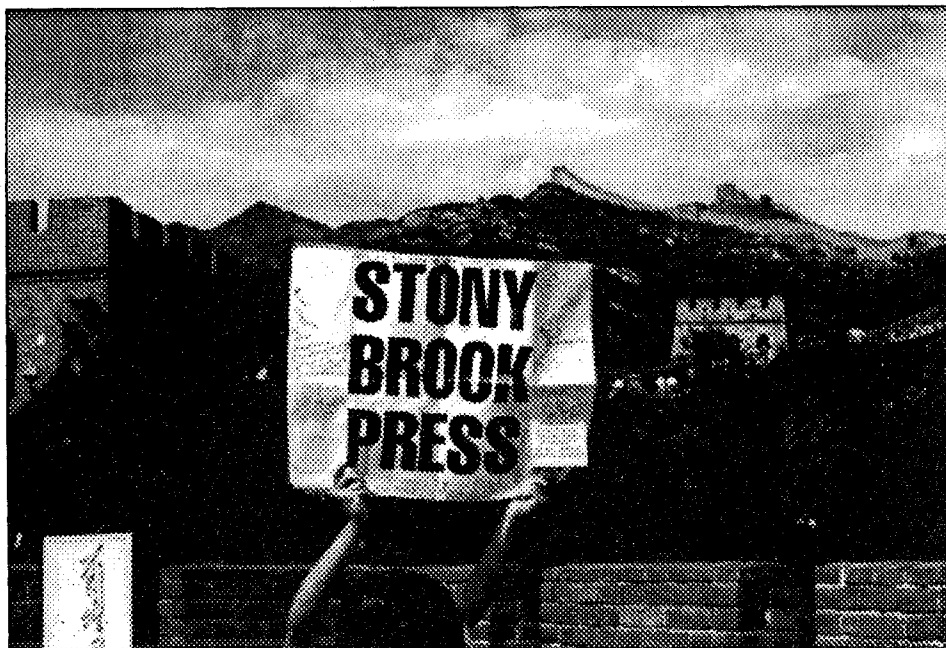
The momentum crashes to a sudden halt and the reader is left with an entirely new story, one with new characters, new objectives, and new meanings. This facet of Roland's past (for only a few months of time are described) drastically changes the basic theme of the series. Instead of travelling through a surreal wasteland of buffalo hunters, deserted windmills, and blasted urban moonscapes, the reader finds himself in a sleepy seaside village; instead of confronting obstacles and trouble, the reader is forced to deal with page after page of mindless drivel detailing the love story between Roland and the already-spoken-for Susan. (The tender sexuality of the love scenes is tempered by the fact that both Roland and Susan are 14; I just can't imagine 14-year-olds going at it and think "how wonderful.")

Sent to the village of Hambry as a means of keeping Roland out of trouble (shortly after he bests his master, Cort, in a rite-of-passage hand-to-hand fight), Roland and his friends soon find that the villagers are in cahoots with John Farson, a violent revolutionary who has been mentioned in previous Dark Tower novels. Along the way, the story covers Susan's fights with her aunt/guardian and the tale of a magical glass that can see events in real-time -- but the catch (and in Stephen King Land, there always is one) is that it only shows horrible, shameful things, and the woman who keeps the ball, a ragged witch named Rhea, likes that just fine.

It takes a while for the actual story of Roland's past to get into full swing, and when it does, it reveals little about his quest for the Tower or the things that he encountered in later years. Once again, King drops fascinating tidbits about the gunslinger's world, like the cult of the manni (who can dance between realities with relative ease), without giving us any further information, or any promise that such information is forthcoming. And when the gunslingers finally do return to the present day, little is revealed, the climax of the book is relatively uninteresting, and the resulting denouement is confusing and unexplained.

And now we have to wait for Book 5, which, at King's usual pace, won't arrive until the very end of the decade (if we're lucky).

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Sometime in late 1996.

Previously known locations:
San Francisco
The Forbidden Palace
A bathroom somewhere in Asia

Help bring our sign home!
If you have any information regarding the kidnapping and subsequent world travels of our sign, please contact our office.

FEATURES

"Fall Movies," continued from page 16

Look for long lines at the box office opening weekend. (Nov. 26)

Flubber : Robin Williams returns to his wacky ways in this remake of Disney's *The Absent Minded Professor*. When inventor Williams creates the title concoction he has the ability to fly, and to make people laugh. This should put him back on track after *Father's Day*. (Nov. 26)

Scram 2 : Terror maven Wes Craven is back, along with the majority of the original cast, for this sequel to the surprisingly popular comedy/horror film. Expect more of the same, great looking people getting slashed and chased. This will do fine business from those looking for nothing. But wasn't the original supposed to be a spoof of all these psycho killer films? Too much of a not so good thing here. (Dec. 12)

Sphere : One of Michael Crichton's better novels, and a film many have been looking forward to. Dustin Hoffman and Sharon Stone head a cast that includes Samuel L. Jackson (is he in everything?) and Queen Latifah. Barry Levinson directs this story of a space ship found at the bottom of the ocean and the effects it has on the crew sent to investigate. Hopefully audiences won't associate this one with the recent disaster *Event Horizon*, which touched upon a similar subject. (Dec. 12)

Amistad : Steven Spielberg once again goes the serious route for this true tale of a slave revolt. Matthew McConaughey plays the lawyer looking to defend the over 50 slaves, while Anthony Hopkins signs on as John Quincy Adams. Coming right on the heels of *The Lost World*, this could be another run at Oscar respectability for Spielberg. He did release *Schindler's List* soon after *Jurassic Park*. Maybe that's his new trend; one history tale

for every dinosaur movie. (Dec. 19)

Titanic : James Cameron spent nearly \$200 million on this story of the ill-fated luxury liner, making it the most expensive movie in history. (Didn't anyone learn anything from *Waterworld*?) Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet portray fictional lovers headed for their destiny. Bill Paxton is an oceanographer studying the wreckage and we see the story unfold in a series of flashbacks for each artifact he finds. The story of this ship was dramatic enough without the addition of people who were never there. Word is that it'll be big. I think it will too, if for hype only. (But so was *Waterworld*. Hello? Is anybody listening). Glub, glub. (Dec. 25)

Tomorrow Never Dies : Pierce Brosnan is back for his second go-around as the suave super spy. This time a media mogul (Jonathan Pryce) is out to start World War III. Teri Hatcher joins the fun as the latest Bond girl. A tough opening date makes this one fight for the prize, but look for James to come out fine in the end. (Dec. 25)

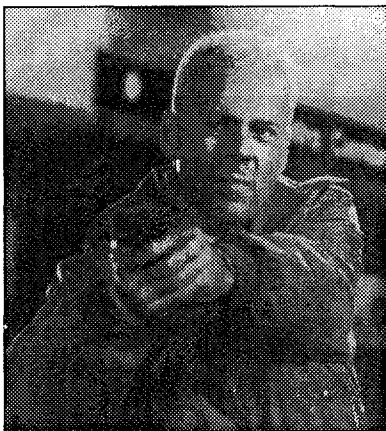
The Postman : We've always been told that if the world ever ended, the mail would still get through. Well, this film tries to prove that theory. Kevin Costner (yawn) is a stranger in the post-apocalyptic world who tries to lift people's spirits by delivering the mail. "Oh boy, the new J.C. Whitney cat-

alogue is here!" A big canceled stamp should go across this one. A landlocked *Waterworld*. (Dec. 25)

Mr. Magoo : The National Federation of the Blind are already protesting this one. They claim that the near-sighted fellow makes fun of them. Let me get this straight: This is a "cartoon character" who always comes out fine in the end, usually becoming the hero of the whole situation. Oh yeah, I get it now. Boy, what an awful thing for Disney to perpetrate, those homosexual loving, bigoted bastards. Give me a break, people. If you don't want to see it, don't. When did any protest like this do anything but make a film more popular? Here's the scoop. Leslie Nielsen is the bumbling Magoo, and it's funny. (Dec. 25)

Jackie Brown : Many people are heavily anticipating this Quentin Tarantino film, based on the Elmore Leonard novel "Rum Punch." An A-list cast, including Robert DeNiro, Samuel L. Jackson and Bridget Fonda, could do a lot to give this an air of respectability. But, if Tarantino goes back to his bloody ways, look for people to get tired of him real fast. I know I already am. (Dec. 25)

Great Expectations : This updated version of the Dicken's novel stars Robert DeNiro, Ethan Hawke, Gwyneth Paltrow and Anne Bancroft. The setting is New York City, modern day, and all but the basics of the story have been changed. The film makers are trying to capitalize on the success of last year's *Romeo and Juliet* (which wasn't that good anyway) but don't look for it to even come close. *Great Expectations* becomes an oddly ironic title. (Dec. 31)



Bruce prepares to kill his barber

QUAKE

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I'M BATTY, FROOTY-LOOPY, COME PLAY WITH MY HOOPTY! HE HE HE HA HA HA HA HA HA, TOO MUCH
HORSE TRANQUILIZER, HE HA HE I NEED AN EQUALIZER HE HA HE HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
MICHAEL YEH WHERE ARE YOU????? HE HA HE HA HE HA HE HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
GREEK MY MOTHER IS FROM SICILY MY FATHER IS FROM MOROCCO. DO YOU WANT TO DANCE??? HEY BOYD, IF
YOU WERE A GIRL, YOUR NAME WOULD BE GIRLD. BOYS DON'T CRY YOU BIG PUSSY.
KICK OUT THE STYLE BRING BACK THE JAM JOIN THE PRESS!!!!!!

Goon in the Mist

By Guy Cleveland, Amateur Anthropologist

As fascinating as it may be, the study of modern anthropology is discouraging to many people. It involves hours of hard work in what are usually climactic extremes; it sometimes involves camping out in nature for weeks on end, and it can be dangerous. What's more, it takes a lot of money, time, and energy to go on an expedition, and sometimes you don't turn up a thing. Why bother? Crack open a beer and turn on the tube. What's on? It doesn't matter.

But all that need not be so. I have discovered that anthropology can be done locally, for little to no money – and you can do it from the comfort of your bedroom. The trick is to tell the animals and nomadic desert tribes to go fuck themselves, and focus on a person who lives nearby.

Now, I know what you're saying. You're saying, "Guy, the people who live on my hall are average. Besides, they don't want me sneaking around and studying their private lives." Au contraire mon motherfucking frere! Heck, you can't swing a dead cat on campus without hitting some kind of freak. I'm convinced a good quarter of this society walks the tightrope of borderline insanity, and that makes for some good spectating. As for the privacy issue, this is a moral qualm we need not busy ourselves with. Does "Nova" ask the Arctic penguins if they might send a camera crew along with this year's seasonal spawn? Of course not. Privacy is a thin sheet of gauze against the mighty onslaught of scientific good.

Now that we've got that out of the way, we can begin. Choose someone you tend to see on campus a lot and begin to study them. What's so strange about them? Why is it so? Perhaps you can tell from their actions. It is important to obey certain rules:

- Never come into contact with your subject of study. If circumstances force you to meet the person, discontinue all studying immediately. Regardless of the jocularity inherent in observing some poor sub-cultural freak, this is an experiment that must be done intelligently and without bias. Additionally, interference in the subject's life may change his lifestyle patterns, giving you inaccurate observations. (Fossey refused to interrupt the daily patterns of her gorillas for similar reasons.)

- Never ask questions of direct friends and/or relations of the subject. In fact, it would be best if you didn't even know them. If you know them well, give up now (see above). If you know them as acquaintances, subtly break contact for the time being. Asking them questions will evoke biased responses and potentially get back to the actual subject.

- You can follow the poor fuck around all day and sit near him at lunch, but do yourself a favor and don't be a freak, okay? No breaking into his or her room, no peering in his window to watch his or her sleeping habits. If you see something "private," you can report on it, but don't go looking for it; if your subject engages in his or her mating rituals in the hallway, you can study them, but no running into his or her room during a night of passionate sex. And if you find yourself keenly observing the manner in which he or she plucks food out from between his or her (God, you equality nuts have made writing clumsy) teeth, it's time to check yourself in somewhere. This is anthropology, not a late night Shannon Tweed Showtime exclusive.

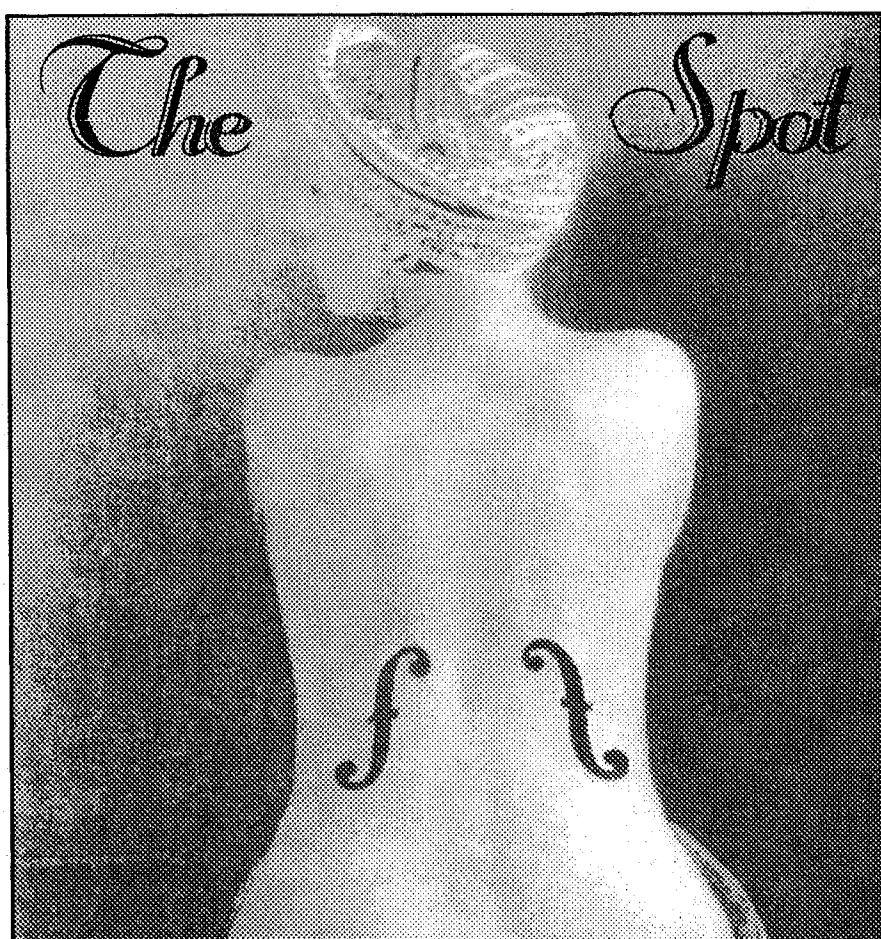
I have chosen as my subject a person I will only refer to as the Goon. Between 6.5' and 7' in height, the Goon also weighs enough to be considered "obese." He has a thick black beard that extends from sideburn

to sideburn; the beard extends roughly 4 to 5 inches away from his face and ends in an unruly mess whose consistency resembles pubic hair. His dark brown hair is shorn close to his unremarkable skull; the only feature on his face that makes an impact is the mouth, whose upper lip is permanently lifted to reveal two large, yellowed teeth. Attire typically runs to casual themes: t-shirts, sweats, the occasional jeans. These t-shirts rarely bear a slogan. Of note are the sweatpants, whose elastic band frequently circumscribes a spot just below the subject's waist, revealing the upper quarter of his excretory valley.

The subject's voice is high-pitched, querulous, and sometimes slightly out of breath – certainly out of place with his physical structure. I have not yet spent enough time observing him to discuss his way with syntax and dialect.

Perhaps the biggest mystery of the subject is his smell. While up close, he has little more than average body odor, yet his lair emits a dreadful stink after a period of occupancy approximately one week in length. Last year, the smell began one week into his occupancy and did not cease until the Winter break, when he left the premises for the vacation. The smell is almost indescribable; a mixture of nicotine, body odor, and unwashed clothing that together becomes something more than the sum of its parts. I will try to analyze the nature of this smell as my studies progress. Question: is the smell related to the 1-3 degree temperature increase in the ambient environment around his lair? Must investigate.

Anyway, that's my subject. I plan to begin studying him in the next issue, in a manner not unlike the diaries of previous ground-breaking anthropologists. I wish you great success in your studies. Until next time, good watching, and God bless.



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UP FROM THE BELLY

By Ted Swedalla

It's odd, but Tanya Donnelly and I have a couple of things in common. One, both of us have moved three times. Of course, her moves are much more publicized, from Throwing Muses to The Breeders to Belly and, now, on her own. Two, we both know people who have spit on The Press' Executive Editor Dave Ewalt, intentionally or not. The final thing we have in common is that Dave worships us both. Naturally he's very quiet about that.

Lovesongs For Underdogs is Tanya's first real solo effort. I have followed and adored her ever since I saw her waifish form in Throwing Muses' "Dizzy" video all those years ago. In all that time, from Throwing Muses' stunning angst-ridden debut in 1986, through The Breeders' hole-punched sonic wall Pod album, to Belly's *King* release in 1995, she hasn't made one wrong move. She's sort of like Neil Young that way; lots of different looks, not much suck. Considering how many different things he's done, it wouldn't be hard to play Six Degrees of Neil Young and be able to link most bands to the Godfather of Grunge.

Even the guest appearances she's done are fabulous. With Julianna Hatfield, she turns the theme to *Josie & The Pussycats*, from Saturday Morning Cartoons, into one ass-kickin' slab o' retro rock. You can almost picture the luscious Tanya in that

skimpy Pussycat outfit, with the tight tiger-spotted body suit and tails. God, those tails....

Lovesongs finds her right where you'd think a solo album by her would be, some kind of combination of everything she's done: the hell bent experimentation with 4/4 time in the Muses, the sparse but sonic stint with the Breeders and the Jackson Pollock-ish singing/writing that made up the bones of Belly.

It's driven by guitars, but her voice, which goes from a hungry growl ("Breathe Around You") to lilting impishly ("Acrobat"), is what really carries the album. "Pretty Deep," the album's first track is a perfect example of this. What you initially take as a series of do-do-dos is actually Tanya singing the chorus. "The Bright Light," "Clipped," and "Swoon" are all pure Tanya. If she could have a sound it would probably be close to "give me a guitar and try to figure out what the fuck I'm saying."

On the semi-suck side, "Mysteries Of The Unexplained" is her required poke at the music industry and it just doesn't fly. With the opening lines of "I heard a song/ I heard the saddest song on WSUK/ they play it every other hour of every other day/ cause the greaser sent them T's and toys for regular airplay/ all your heroes are whores." Come on, Tanya, you've been

around enough obtuse lyrics in the past, this is too cliché for you. What happened to the days of "Feed The Tree" with lyrics like 'this little squirrel I used to be/ slammed her bike down the stairs?' She does make up for it by getting us to sing along later in the album. I never thought I'd be singing 'I am a goat girl' from "Goat Girl."

The other real disappointment was that there was nary a good image of her inside the liner notes. Nothing gets ol' Rumpleskins extended like Tanya in a sundress.

She must have gone back through an old phone book she had when she was at 4AD, because the album is stocked with alum. David Lovering (Pixies) and David Narcizo (Throwing Muses) both play drums, producer uber alles Gary Smith (Come On Pilgrim) does a few tracks, and, of course, it was recorded at Fort Apache.

Being around all these familiar people lends itself to the music. "Landspeed Song" sounds like an old Muses song, "Lantern" would fit anywhere on Pod, and "Bum" she stole off an old Pixies record it.

Lovesongs For Underdogs is a good album in that it doesn't suck, but it doesn't lend itself to greatness or legendary status, as have some of the other albums she's recorded. It's solid, but each song is indivisible from the others, like her Belly albums. But it's worth more listens that her weak stuff with the Muses.

Maybe it's only time until she breaks through to the big time. Maybe she is our generation's Neil Young, except with breasts and nicer eyes. Maybe she will be around for along time. Maybe she will finally tell us how to feed the tree.



Tanya Donnelly. Ahhhhhhh.

Pimpin' Ain't Easy

By Debra Luna

Once upon a time, there were two obviously different bands, Buggy and Pimpcore (one punky, one funky), but they played together, show after show, until one day the kids started listening. Buggy's following began growing. They were asked to play a show at DeJa1, in Mineola, with several other local Ska/Punk bands. But Pimpcore were playing at Dr. Shays, in Lindenhurst, where Buggy and Pimpcore have played together several times before. The only difference this night (Sept. 12th) was Buggy was a full county away.

I trekked to Mineola with Jay, the guitarist of Pimpcore, knowing Jay had to be back at Dr. Shays by 10pm.

Arriving at DeJa1, my eyes were bombarded with the sight of young Rudeboys and Rudegirls. "All Ages Show" really means no one over 16 years old. Channel 59, a local ska band, was on the stage. They began with the "Star Wars" theme and went straight into their set, which sent the audience straight into skanking. Skank, skip, skank. Skank, jump, skank. I was watching a cult of teenagers giving themselves to this music. Their arms were flailing, and their legs were dancing. The Rudechildren were having the time of their lives. Channel 59 were fun and energetic, but the horns got tiring. Soon every song began to sound the same.

Next up for the Rudechildren was some quick, fun punk-rock (with that skaish tinge). Buggy began their energetic set with a cover of Gun's 'n' Roses "Sweet Child of Mine," with lead vocalist

Patric channeling Axel Rose's spirit. Buggy was piped and ready to kick some ass. With a small stage to work with, Buggy's jumping surface area was limited, but they made due with what was given to them. Jay, from Step Lively, joined the band on stage and played saxophone for "Another Song About a Girl." This song is one of their many songs where the music is a cross between ska, punk, and pure rock. Throughout the show the happily schizophrenic crowd continuously jumped back and forth, from skanking to moshing. Soon five or six punks jumped onto the stage to sing along to "The Other Day." Dave, the bassist, later asked for a sing along, "like we're in kindergarten. You're really in kindergarten, anyway, aren't you?" Insulting the audience isn't the best way of making new fans, but the kids at DeJa1 didn't care. They sang along to the terribly deep song called "Asshole." After a crunching drum solo, Buggy continued with their last song, "Walking on Sunshine," in their punk like way, and tagged on a bit of "No Sleep 'Til Brooklyn," but finished off with a singalong. "I'm walking on sunshine, and don't it feel good!" Perfect song to end an almost perfect show. The fans were so loyal, giving Buggy the fuel to put on the best show they could. Buggy got off the stage at 10:20pm and Jay and I had to get back to Dr. Shays.

We got to Dr. Shays at approximately 10:55pm. It was darker, and smokier. Nitefish, who sounded like an old heavy metal band, were just starting. The vocalist had a style close to Maynard James Keenans of Tool, which didn't suit the band that well. The singer seemed uneasy on stage and the

songs were quite repetitive. Pimpcore adorned the stage next. Jay began by dedicating the show to Buggy, "...the greatest band Long Island's ever seen." Beginning with "Sheneneh," the bassist, Jake, sings "Martin, Hee, Haw!" over and over, as the saxophonist makes horse sounds with his sax. They continued funkng out on their instruments for over 20 minutes. Pimpcore songs are like epics. And this song has been turned into many different riffs, and solos. But they kept the synergy between the band the entire time, ending with an orgasmic ending, where all the members are going as fast and hard as they can naturally go, and boom! It's all over. Pimpcore premiered an angry new song called "Princess Di is Dead," with death-metal crunching riffs, and Jay's deep, death-metal like voice. Next was the softer, sadder "JonBenet Ramsey is Dead." "There was a time, when you were alive, and you looked so good..." Jay sang, going on to sing some not-so-nice things about little Ms. Ramsey. Later they covered Buggy's "My Big Helmet." And Buggy soon showed up at Dr. Shays, to support Pimpcore. Patric from Buggy came on stage to sing the chorus to "Another Song About a Girl," but in that funky Pimpcore way. To end an amazing show, Pimpcore covered "Rocky Raccoon," by the Beatles. Jay sang this (once again, in his Pimpcore like way) like he was a schizophrenic, tourette ridden, mentally unstable Paul McCartney, twitching and cursing at himself. It was brilliant!

My night was over, the lights went out, I went to sleep, worn out from my trek across counties, for the perfect music.

Obscure Sub-Cultures: Vol. 8

By John Giuffo

Belligerent Shit-Talkers

You didn't ask for it, you didn't want it, but baby, you got trouble. All you wanted was to take a nice class in Eastern Philosophy or Foundations of Education, and what you got was a forum for the stupid to air their views.

The Belligerent Shit-Talkers aren't instantly recognizable: they don't have a specific look that sets them apart from the education-interested portion of the class. They can be the girl in the bob-cut next to you, or the forty-something Vietnam vet who wants to expand on the education he received in the 'Nam. What is recognizable—in most cases painfully so—is their love of their own voice.

Belligerent Shit-Talkers love to hear their own voice. No, but I mean they LOVE to hear it. Roll call? The Belligerent Shit-Talker will inevitably call out "PRESENT," ten decibels louder than everyone else. Breaking up into groups? Guess who will dominate the entire conversation.

Ostensibly attending college to "broaden" themselves, the Belligerent Shit-Talker is instead concerned with making themselves feel important by subjecting everyone to opinions that were extruded earlier in the day from somewhere in their cavernous asses. If it's obvious, banal or completely unintelligible, the Belligerent Shit-Talker will be the one to point it out.



It's difficult and problematic to analyze the dressing habits of the Belligerent Shit-Talker. They have no particular style of dress, but instead represent all races, creeds, nationalities and income levels. They all have one thing in common however: a lack of that mental screen that says to us all, "Better not say that out loud, I might sound like a self obsessed asshole, or even worse, a Belligerent Shit-Talker."

Anytime an obvious, dumb, borderline racist, sexist, homophobic or ultra patriotic comment is heard in class, chances are, it's the Belligerent Shit-Talker pretending to be a smart person.

The following are a select few actual quotes overheard recently in a number of classes on campus:

"Can you substantiate these facts? 'Cause I just don't believe them."

"Where'd you get your facts from?"

"Is this class gonna be all about America-bashing? 'Cause I fuckin' LOVE America, man!"

"If you can't afford to live in an affluent area and pay their taxes, then you don't deserve their educational opportunities."

"If they don't like this country, then they should just leave."

"The metaphysical implications of the epistemology of life are sometimes beyond the realm of what is believable or even what is not believable in a believable sense, do you know what I mean? I mean, I don't know how to put it, but you know what I mean."

"We were talking about this in one of my other classes, and we were told that the opposite is true, isn't it?"

"Will this be on the final?"

"This is kinda off the subject, but..."

"I was under the impression that the actuality of the situation is something other than what you say it is, or was, in a real sense of the world, or terms, depending on how you look at things."

A MAN FULL OF HATE

By Keith R. Filaski

Sometimes I have to wonder whether or not bands know that they are releasing a crappy album. I don't mean to say that they know it from the beginning, or go into the studio with the intent of recording shit, but, there has to be some albums that half way through one guy turns to the next and says, "This is fucking awful. Oh, well, someone will buy it. After all, they liked our last album."

Pig Face's new album, *A New High in Low* (Invisible) must have been an album destined to sound like shit from early on. I only wish they had scrapped it and given up. The band, which was originally billed as an "industrial super-group" (yeah, right), is led by Martin Atkins, and has progressively been losing members, energy, and talent. This progression has increased at an alarming rate between its album and the last.

Members such as Ogre (Shinny Puppy), Lesley Ranhine (Ruby), and En Esch (KMFDM) are all absent from *High in Low*. With them, they have taken everything that made Pig Face's past albums listenable. Aside from Genesis P-Orridge (Throbbing Gristle/ Psychic T.V.) and a brief appearance by Mark Spybey (Dead Voices on Air/Download), there is no mentionable talent left. Instead, Atkins has assembled a group full of members who are either from meager bands or are from god-knows-where.

And now, a song-by-song rundown of the album:

1. **Radio Bagpipe**. At the opening we have this beatless little intro, complete with a three minute session of bagpipe-like notes, groaning and moan-

ing and some guy saying something about "disillusion in the here and now." If you think that this will be a good album, boy will you be disillusioned right "here and now".

2. **Kiss King (High, High, High)**. A distorted sitar makes for an interesting and new sound, but wait. Where have I heard that drum beat before? It's the same beat from the track "Asphole" off of the last album. Why is Atkins repeating himself? Has he run out of ideas? Unfortunately, "Kiss King" lacks Ogre's vocals which made "Asphole" into a club hit. This track just doesn't compare. Perhaps if it stood on it's own it might make for a half way decent song. Oh well.

3. **Burundi**. The only annoying singer who Atkins neglected to recruit for this album was Alannis Morissette. Vocals here by Amy Larson and Dana Cochrane range from grunting to whining, and make the song pretty damn near unlistenable. Oh, look. Another track with an "Asphole" beat.

4. **Bring Unto Me**. The first of two attempts at spoken word. This fails miserably. Vocals by Alew Welz are irritating and who knows what she is talking about. "Bring unto me the stink of piss and vomit." (??)

5. **More**. More distorted sitar, and the repeated line, "Just a little bit more". I'm afraid that it will not be enough.

6. **Nutopia**. Okay. So this is a good track. Everything comes together on this track, probably by chance, however. This is the second spoken track, this time by Meg Lee Chin. Simple keyboards, hard-hitting beat, heavy on the effects, and it holds your interest. This is the only track that Pig

Face put their hearts into.

7. **Methylated**. In the track listing, this song is broken up into four parts for absolutely no reason. How industrial. And the beat is too chaotic for its own good.

8. **Aboriginal**. Crap, except for a twenty second long sample bit at the end which is interesting the first time you listen to it.

9. **Metal Tangerine**. Promising at the beginning, but this track dies from drowning of vocals, except those by Mark Spybey. Had Atkins dropped the rest of the vocals here, he would have had a decent dance track.

10. **First Taken, Third Found**. Pig Face goes jungle with an entertainment level rivaling that of *George of the Jungle*.

11. **Warzone**. A simple little sample song.

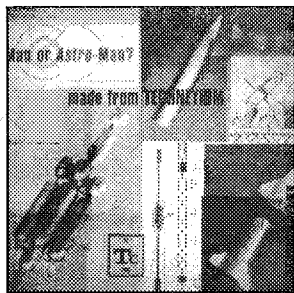
12. **You Know, You Know, You Know**. You know something is wrong when the final track of the album continuously repeats, "And you know there's nothing we can do to make it better." Is this an apology? Was this all some private joke which Atkins didn't tell us about in the liner notes?

This is just a mediocre album at best. But, just when you thought it was over, did I mention that there is a second disc? Over seventy minutes worth of two spoken word pieces by Genesis P-Orridge where he talks about pretty much nothing, and an instrumental which, although good, is just too long. Alone, this would be a decent purchase, but being that it is attached to the first piece of shit, skip it.

A New High in Low is mostly low. Low in everything.

Chin Slinky

By Lowell Yaeger



Man Or Astro-Man?
Made From Technetium
Touch & Go

Man Or Astro-Man? is one of those bands that put out the same album again and again. Nobody really minds, because the music is so damn good and the idea (techno-ized surfabilly) is so damn original. As a token reward for long-time fans, Man Or Astro-Man's increased popularity has given them more and more resources with which to record, so their sound gets sharper and more nuanced with each successive release.

Their newest album, *Made From Technetium*, is no exception. The songs are crisp, clean, and spotlessly performed; the album opens with the usual announcement and/or speaker test. The only real feature that marks this album as a departure from their previous work is the increased usage of vocals, something that Man Or Astro-Man? should perhaps stay away from. Their talent lies in their ability to play fast and good, and more often than not their nerdy vocals about junk satellites detract from the sound.



Squirrel Nut Zippers
Sold Out!
Mammoth

The first band to say "let's play 1920s hot jazz" and gather together enough interested and talented parties to do so, the Squirrel Nut Zippers have been zapping back to Prohibition land for two years now, gaining quite a name for themselves in the process.

Sold Out!, a holdover for fans while the band is between LPs, shows a level of stylistic progress that I hadn't even expected from the Zippers. The 7-piece seems to be working their way up the river of hot jazz in the space of a few albums, acting soft and patient on "St. Louis Cemetery Blues" and then busting their chops on the ever-so-slightly-punk "Bedlam Ballroom". Some of the tracks here are filler, but that's forgivable in light of the spiced-up live version of "La Grippe", the Zippers' ode to influenza, and the archaeological unearthing of the original Squirrel Nut Zippers' radio commercial (the band named themselves after a candy). Last but not least is the hidden track, "Santa Claus Smokes Reefer", which finds the Zippers returning to the tongue-in-cheek lyricism that made them stars with "Hell".

If not an excellent addition to their already strong line-up of albums, *Sold Out!* is at least a hint of

good things to come. It's been released in a limited edition, so 23-skidoo and snag a copy.



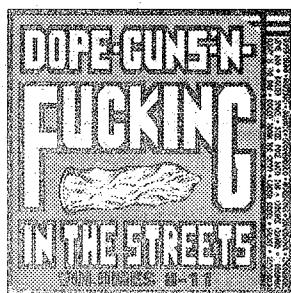
Plug
Drum 'N' Bass For Papa
nothing/Interscope

Let's face it, techno has hit a rut. The things that sound revolutionary fail to stimulate interest, and the promise of "Firestarter" and "Setting Sun" hasn't quite unfolded into the sales juggernaut that the industry had hoped for.

Plug is a perfect example of this. For months, industry rags have been screaming about Luke Vibert, Wagonchrist, and Plug, all of whom are the same thing. I don't know if the style changes from incarnation to incarnation, but I know Aphex Twin found it impressive enough to invite Vibert on tour with him in a headlining "battle of the bands" kind of affair. And Trent Reznor, who until now has only signed industrial acts to his label (with the exception of Meat Beat Manifesto), saw fit to release a double CD by the artist. So there's certainly a lot of hype.

Wasted hype. *Drum 'N' Bass* rarely gets going. A series of jungle songs with semi-intriguing samples (some culled from what can only be blaxploitation flicks), Plug lacks the near little hook that all other techno artists seem to employ: a hard rock edge (Prodigy), a song-like consistency (Underworld), or a hip-hop sensibility (Tricky). Not that the idea of abandoning such affectations isn't exciting. Not at all. The thing is, Plug does nothing to fill those spots, leaving the listener with an empty pocket and the itch to put a different CD on.

Of much more interest is the bonus CD that comes with *Drum 'N' Bass*, which compiles Plug's first three EPs. It begins with a harsh, basic beat, samples of computerized screaming, and a quartet of songs named by number only. "7.44" stays close enough to the song at its core to keep one captivated throughout, while "Military Jazz" is the first example of techno R&B I've ever heard. Thankfully, the double CD has been specially priced, so you don't have to get a bite on the ass just to appreciate some of Plug's earlier work.



Artists
Dope-Guns-'N-Fucking
In The Streets (Volumes 8-11)
Amphetamine Reptile

Besides being the best named series on the market, Amphetamine Reptile's *Dope-Guns-'N-Fucking*

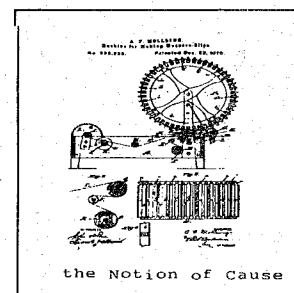
In The Streets has served as a veritable who's-who of pigfuck for the last nine years, releasing 7" singles of one off songs by bands that walked the realm between Experimental world and the Kingdom of the Unbearable. In the past, the series has had funny monkeys like Halo Of Flies, The Cows, Tad, Unsane, Helmet, The Jesus Lizard, and Melvins over for dinner, and what they left behind makes for some interesting listening indeed.

Every once in a while, they get around to compiling a few of the latest singles onto CD, creating a neat little mix tape of "unavailable-elsewhere" (that eternal indie sales pitch) tracks that serve as both an introduction to and review of the world of Red Hot + Infected. Volumes 8-11 is no exception - despite a move into more indie poppish terrain with the likes of Superchunk, Jawbox, and Brainiac.

High points include Superchunk's "Basement Life", an aggro song by Guzzard that would do Tom Hazelmeyer proud, a truly bizarre freakout courtesy of Brainiac (who I had foolishly written off after an exciting performance opening for The Jesus Lizard), and solid work from Supernova, Steelpolebathtub, and Servotron.

Not everything is peaches and cream, though: a couple of songs, like the I-go-nowhere-and-neither-does-this-song angst of Love 666's "You Sold Me Out #2" and the been-there-done-that noise of the Boredoms, scream to be skipped over by the first note... and yet, coming back to them, they sound better and better with repeated listenings.

Satisfying and stimulating, *Dope-Guns-'N-Fucking In The Streets* is the one thing all sampler CDs should be: consistent.



The Notion Of Cause
The Notion Of Cause
(no label)

I usually don't review demos, but this one warrants an exception. The Notion Of Cause, a new band from Oceanside, NY, have come out of nowhere with a triptych of demo songs that can be described with a word I don't often use to describe demos: "promising".

The only accurate word to describe them would be "aggro", although that doesn't quite make the cut. The Notion Of Cause pay a lot more attention to rhythm and groove than most other bands in the same category; the guitarist, who can clearly play steady riffs with the best of them, spends a lot of time providing pace and only a little injecting melody -- unless he's doing both at the same time, as on the standout track "Makeshift." Even the vocal samples, tossed into "Know" at various intervals, match the tempo of the song, as if they were chosen for that very purpose.

Of course it's not perfect. The music is a little repetitive at times and the vocals, while powerful and heartfelt, are sometimes played so low in the mix that they sound like an afterthought. But hey, it's a demo. Keep an eye on the record bins at your local indie shop in case a single or (better yet) an album turns up sometime soon.