

# NEWS & VIEWS

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## In The Pursuit of Campus Safety

By Anne Mayer

Safety on any campus is always of major concern to its community, and Stony Brook is not alone in this. And, in light of recent events, it might seem that safety issues are somewhat on the backburner. The all-encompassing campus destruction (what one otherwise might call construction) seems to be ubiquitous, and wrecking havoc in its path. This coupled with the changes in the president's office, with the term of one ending and the term of another just starting, appear to have made the timing perfect for problems with safety to arise on this campus.

Last June a young woman was attacked while coming out of the Nicholls Road Underpass, the "Tunnel", on her way to the Life Sciences Building. This by itself is horrifying, and shook up the entire campus community. However, the events leading up to it are even more horrifying. Campus construction was responsible for the fact that the lights in the surrounding area were off. This made the area unsafe, and it was only after the incident that the lights were turned back on, or, as I should say, the construction company was made to turn them back on.

Shortly after the assault, I was invited to participate in a night walk through of the campus organized by the Women's Safety Committee. What we saw was horrifying. The lighting system on campus is wholly inadequate. Areas on campus were (and, today, still continue to be) in need of better lighting. Simply, the majority of the campus was/is just too dark. Further compounding this, there was the problem with light outages, be it due to blown bulbs, broken fixtures or campus construction. Additionally, the blue light phone system is inadequate because there are not enough phones for a campus of this size. More importantly, the existence of these phones is not well-known to the campus community. They are not clearly marked; some do not have the blue lights working. They are not clear in their purposes -- there is nothing on them to tell an individual that these are emergency phones. The safety of the campus has been further impaired by the construction. Lights were disabled, yet not repaired quickly. The construction companies were reluctant to take responsibility for

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## Open Enrollment Period for New GA, TA, and RA Health Benefits to End on October 14, 1994

Graduate students which serve as university GA's, TA's and RA's qualify for a comprehensive health insurance policy sponsored by SUNY (GSEU) and the research Foundation. SUNY and the Research Foundation pay for 90% of the cost of individual coverage and 75% of the additional cost for dependent coverage.

F1 visa GA's and TA's are required to enroll in the GSEU plan unless they can show proof they have adequate insurance under another policy.

J visa holders must enroll in the International Students and Scholars plan, however, SUNY and the Research Foundation will contribute toward the plan for all eligible students and dependents.

A final health benefits orientation will be held on Tuesday, September 27th for GA's and TA's at 9am and RA's at 2pm. Both sessions will be conducted in Room 105 of the Jacob Javits Lecture Center. Qualifying graduate students which are not able to make this final orientation/sign-up session should contact the Human Resources Office prior to October 14, 1994. The office is located in the Administration Bldg. Rm 390 and can be reached at 2-6164 or 2-6165 or 2-6150.

## HSC Students Gain Unexpected Parking Woes

By Mike Fagan

In an attempt to end overcrowding in the Health Science Center (HSC) parking garage, the Department of Parking and Transportation Services voided the parking passes, or "cards", of all HSC students while they were on summer break.

Up until last year, HSC students (composed of approximately 1900 graduate and undergraduate students from the schools of Medicine, Nursing, Allied Health Professions, and Social Welfare) were permitted to purchase monthly passes to park in the HSC garage. The passes, which cost \$16.28 a month, allowed the students to park in a large, well-lit, 2800 car garage which is conveniently located to HSC classes. The students were also permitted to park in a small lot, with approximately 240 spaces, on the grounds of the HSC.

Because the garage is now closed to students, only the small lot remains open to HSC students. Needless to say, the vehicles of the approximately 1900 HSC students do not fit in this small lot. HSC students must now park in the far away South "P" lot and take a campus bus to the hospital.

Melody Thomas, Assistant to the Director of the USB Department of Parking and Transportation (DP&T), explains that the cards were invalidated in order to prevent overcrowding in the HSC parking garage.

Prior to the 1993-1994 school year, the DP&T set a limit, or "cap", on the number of garage passes which had been sold in order to prevent overcrowding in the garage. Then, beginning with

the 1993-1994 school year, DP&T lifted the cap and allowed an unlimited number of HSC students to purchase parking cards.

According to Thomas, the parking garage was frequently filled last year as a result of lifting the cap. In turn, HSC students and hospital employees who had purchased a monthly pass frequently found their pass to be "effectively worthless" upon arriving at the garage because it was full. Thomas stated this situation resulted in many pass holders becoming justifiably angry at DP&T and a revamping of the HSC parking policy.

Following meetings between the four HSC schools and University Hospital administration, the DP&T voided all student cards in order to give hospital employees first priority. The four HSC schools were then given a total of 630 spaces to be awarded to students which worked at the hospital or the HSC. These 630 spaces, combined with the 240 spots in the small lot, still force over half of the HSC students to now park in South "P" lot.

Thomas stated that affected HSC students would probably be forced to park in South "P" lot indefinitely as a result of giving hospital employees priority and the effects of the Clean Air Act of 1990.

The act mandates a reduction in the use of motor vehicles to get to and from campus, and, thus, effectively prohibits DP&T from upgrading or building new parking facilities anywhere on campus.

*News & Views* conducted a quick, and admittedly unscientific, survey of HSC students now forced to park

"PARKING" CONTINUED PAGE 4

## Editorials

Errors in *Survival Guide* Create Controversy

By Chuck Wright

The publication of the *Graduate Student Survival Guide* by the GSO at the beginning of each new academic year has, in the past, been greeted for the most part with silence from USB administration. This year, however, a few concerned administrators took the time to read what had been written in the *Guide* about their offices. They were not invariably pleased by what they found. Factual errors and what was perceived to be an unnecessarily confrontational tone were thought to have marred what otherwise was a useful and informative publication.

The *Survival Guide's* lead article, "Navigating the Administration", contains a lengthy discussion of the problems and procedures associated with the infamous Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). Unfortunately, two important errors made their way into the section titled, "Misery on TAP". Norma Murphy, the Director of the Office of Student Accounts, acted quickly to notify me of these potentially troublesome mistakes.

(I) I wrote that a student with a full tuition waiver who had not yet applied for TAP at the beginning of an academic year would be billed \$562.50 (the maximum possible TAP award) when she tried to register for the Fall Semester, and that "she won't be allowed to register until either the entire outstanding balance is paid, or proof is offered that she has applied for TAP."

Ms. Murphy pointed out that for fall registration, this simply is not the case. According to her, the fall registration procedure in Student Accounts is to accept a student's word

regarding the status of her application for TAP, and to require only that the usual student fees be paid. The \$562.50 charge will only be assigned to the student's account later during the course of the Fall semester, if Student Accounts receives no notification of an award from the Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC), the NYS government agency that administers the program.

It is only when a student seeks to register for the coming Spring Semester that - if she has not yet applied for TAP - she will be faced with the choice of either paying the charge, or hustling to get the application out by certified mail.

(II) In this section I stated also that charges resulting from delays in the TAP application process could prevent a student from obtaining official University transcripts. If a student's TAP application has not been processed, and a charge of \$562.50 has been assessed, a financial hold will be placed on that student's account. In turn, the Office of the Registrar will refuse to release transcripts as a result of the financial hold. The article argued that since problems with TAP often are beyond a student's control, this refusal is unwarranted in these cases. The section concluded as follows: "This is one instance where unfortunate and needless bureaucratic inflexibility can result in a genuine injustice - an injustice, moreover, that hurts the University as well as the student kept from applying for outside funding."

According to Ms. Murphy, the Office of Student Accounts routinely overrides financial holds placed on students' accounts so that they will still be able to apply for fellowships or scholarships. If a student has a financial block on his account, but needs a transcript for scholarship or fellowship applications, Ms. Murphy explained that he must first bring the completed transcript request form to the Office of Student Accounts to explain that the transcript is needed for scholarship or fellowship applications. Student Accounts will then be prepared to override the financial block, and he will be able to obtain his transcript from the Office of the Registrar. (None of this applies, it should be noted, to transcript requests for job applications and for applications to other colleges and universities.)

Ms. Murphy protested the allegation of bureaucratic inflexibility, stating that "we are neither inflexible nor unjust and seek to continually upgrade our services to the student population".

This allegation, as it happens, was prompted as a result of the experiences last year of at least three graduate students (a) whose accounts carried charges as a result of delays

in the processing of their TAP applications, and (b) who were unable to obtain University transcripts in order to apply for fellowships as a result of a financial hold. They apparently were not informed during their efforts to obtain the release of their transcripts that financial holds could be overridden in cases such as theirs. While it can be seen now that the injustice done in their particular cases is not the result of procedural inflexibility, it suggests nonetheless that a failure of communication took place somewhere in the University administration.

Objections have also been lodged against what was written concerning the Office of Financial Aid and Student Employment. Anna Maria Torres, Director of the Office, contacted the GSO to correct two inaccuracies that appeared there. She wanted to point out, first, that Financial Aid no longer employs work study students to staff the front window, a practice discontinued about a year and a half ago. Secondly, the Financial Aid Office does not administer the stipend advance program. (As a matter of fact, there seems no longer to be anything like a stipend advance program. According to Kathy Greisbeck, the Assistant Director of Payroll, it is only under very unusual circumstances that a graduate student will be given an advance on a paycheck.)

In addition to providing these corrections, however, she also conveyed her amazement, as well as the distress of the office staff, at the hostility that "permeated" the article about the Office of Financial Aid. Citing a number of passages, she concluded that the GSO had wasted this space in order to attack the office and its staff, rather than using it to provide substantive information about financial aid programs, services and procedures.

Dr. Torres' dismay is certainly understandable, since no administrative officer takes pleasure in thinking that their department is the object of student hostility. Yet the idea that, by speaking critically, the GSO missed an opportunity to provide information about programs and services mistakes the purpose of the *Graduate Student Survival Guide*.

The *Guide* is written by graduate students, for graduate students, and articulates the student's eye perspective on the operations of the University. The purpose of the *Guide* is not necessarily to reiterate information concerning University programs and services found in other institutional publications. It seeks, rather, to inform students of what they are unlikely to learn elsewhere.

This goal includes providing inexperienced students with the perspective, and the information, that

prepares them for graduate student life at Stony Brook. The opinion among graduate students involved in compiling the *Guide*, now and in the past, has been by and large that this preparation is best achieved by informing them of the difficulties that they should expect to meet and of viable strategies for getting around them - difficulties not just with the University administration, but also those encountered as apprentice teachers and researchers, as residents of Long Island, as consumers of health care, and so on.

Dr. Torres is correct, however, in pointing out that the section describing the Office of Financial Aid contains little substantive information - other than to say, "This office is trouble". It is unfortunate that this assertion accurately accesses the collective perceptions of graduate students. Additionally unfortunate is the fact that student hostility in the face of perceived administrative indifference only adds to the problem. Even as University administrators have shown little interest in the *Guide* in past years, so graduate students have thought it not worth their while to confer with the directors of the offices about which they wrote. Failures of communication and mutual misunderstanding have resulted.

The failure by this author and the editors of the *Survival Guide* to verify even those few substantive claims contained in the article is consistent with, and only contributes to, this climate of distrust. Much the same needs to be said concerning the discussion of Student Accounts procedures in the article on "Navigating the Administration". The errors found there would have been avoided, had I simply conferred with the Director of that Office, as I have in the past for other articles. Such consultation would also have ensured both that the allegations of injustice would have been more clearly formulated and that they would have been directed more accurately at responsible parties.

My experience as the Graduate Student Advocate last year has shown me that many administrative officers care deeply about the quality of the service they provide to the students of the University. Yet, somehow, this caring is not yet evident to many of the students who wait in lines, fill out forms, and learn what they know about each administrative office only on the basis of their experiences at the counters. Let us hope that continued efforts by all parties concerned may eventually change this situation.

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# News

## The Research Foundation Graduate Student Employee Health Plan

by Monica McTigue

In 1990, the statewide directors of SUNY, SUNY Central, issued a policy change in support of funding for graduate student health insurance statewide. The policy change was announced in a report titled *Student Health Services: An Overview of Issues with Recommendations* published by the Division of Student Affairs and Special Programs on September 27, 1990. According to the report, the policy change was approved "in recognition of the magnitude of increases in health insurance premiums and the need for greater assistance to those students providing a service to the University..."

Sony Brook Research Assistants (RA's) played a valuable part in the statewide lobbying effort to secure low cost, comprehensive group health insurance, which pre-empted this policy change. RA's lobbied faculty, moved the issue through the University Senate Research Committee, and then to the Research Foundation's Sponsored Program Advisory Council (SPAC).

On May 18, 1994 the SUNY Research Foundation Board of Directors enacted a policy change which mandated that all SUNY campus'

provide a health insurance benefit for full-time SUNY Graduate RA's.

USB RAs are now eligible for coverage under the statewide "Research Foundation Graduate Student Employee Health Plan"; along with worker's compensation and New York State Disability insurance.

The health insurance initiative was supported over the years by student government leaders, the GSO, and over 100 Stony Brook Research Faculty. Additional support came from local members of the Research Foundation's SPAC, including Drs. Linwood Lee of Physics, Arthur Grollman of Pharmacology and Clinton Rubin of Orthopaedic Surgery. Members of the Research Foundation administration, including Dr. Mary Braunagel-Brown in Albany; Mr Eugene K. Schuler and Dr. Craig Malbon (VP for Research) at Stony Brook were particularly helpful.

Finally, Stony Brook's outgoing Provost Dr. Tilden Edelstein and President, Dr John H. Marburger, together with the Research Foundation Board of Directors, should be recognized for their appreciation of the health care needs of SUNY Graduate Research Assistants.

## Where are you currently living?

By Susan Kratina

Out of a total graduate student enrollment of approximately 5,500, approximately 1,300 graduate students live on-campus. USB has two housing offices to assist students in locating diverse living arrangements. The offices of the Division of Campus Residences and Off-Campus Housing Office work to accommodate the preferences of graduate students (singles, couples, and families).

Applicants for on-campus housing receive their applications materials from the Division of Campus Residences upon their acceptance by the USB Graduate School. All on-campus housing assignments are made on a first-come, first-serve basis upon the receipt of a housing deposit of \$200.00. According to the Division of Campus Residences, there is adequate space to accommodate all single graduate students and most graduate students with families.

However, the Residential Operations Revitalization Project (RORP) has placed a strain on the Division of Campus Residences because it has forced many undergraduate resident halls to close. The RORP is an investment by the university of several million dollars in order to provide quality housing at an affordable price.

Three types of housing are available to graduate students. The first is the "Schomburg Apartments" which houses approximately 230 graduate students, significant others, and their families. The second is the "Chapin Apartment Complex" which houses approximately 800 graduate students and families. The last segment of on-campus available to graduate students is the undergraduate student residence halls, where approximately 250 students reside.

On-campus rents range from \$215 for a single "B" room in Chapin, to \$325 in Schomburg to \$415 in the undergraduate residence halls. The cost of utilities are included in all on-campus rents.

The Schomburg Apartment Complex is located in Roosevelt Quad. The Complex is the newest of the three housing options and was opened in 1991. Single occupancy rooms, cable television services, a large community center, a well-equipped laundry room, secure building entrances, and a "graduate students only" policy make the Schomburg Complex the most attractive on-campus graduate housing option. Unfortunately, the waiting list to get in to Schomburg is approximately 12-18 months long.

The Chapin Apartment Complex is located on the East Campus, oppo-

site the University Hospital and the Health Sciences Center. Chapin was constructed during the 1970's and has a total of 12 buildings. The buildings, furniture and grounds are not as nice or as well maintained as those of Schomburg.

However, graduate students are often able to secure housing in Chapin without being placed on a waiting list first. Most of the apartments consist of three, double occupancy rooms. As a result, living in a Chapin Apartments often means sharing a room with another person, and a living room and kitchen with five other students. Privacy, and adequate living space are sacrificed. Chapin, however, is the least expensive of all on-campus housing options.

A few graduate students find themselves living in On-Campus Residence Halls, known as "Colleges" at USB. The dormitories are similar to that of most colleges: Long hallways connect shared, small rooms. RA's are assigned to each floor in order to provide counseling, conflict resolution, and enforce university policies. Cooking is not available in most dorms, in others it is available in a kitchen shared with the rest of the students living on the floor. A "cooking fee" is charged to students who forgo a meal plan and wish to utilize a dorm with a kitchen.

The Faculty Student Association (FSA) runs a Off-Campus Housing Office for those who do not wish to live on-campus. The office, located near room 104 in the Administration Building, maintains a data-base of a variety of available off-campus housing options including: single room in houses, single rooms in apartments, entire houses and entire apartments.

Students can receive printouts of specific living requests that include information about furnishing, smoke-free environments and ranges of rent. The data base includes housing which costs from as low as \$250 for a room in a house, to as high as \$1400 for an entire house. Students living in Off-Campus housing are often responsible for paying for their own electricity, heat, and water. The quality of off-campus housing varies. Approximately 40% of the students served by the office are graduate students.

Living on-campus has numerous advantages, including, proximity to academic, library, and dining facilities. However, a large fraction of graduate students forsake these benefits in their desire to have living accommodations which are often quieter, more comfortable, better ventilated and cleaner.

## Do You Write Well and Need Extra \$?

### News & Views is looking for an Investigative Reporter.

As an Investigate Reporter you would work with the Editor of the *News & Views* to cover campus issues that affect graduate student life. The position requires a willingness to dig out information from administrative sources, and sort through labyrinthine documents on policies, budgets, etc.

Two stories, approximately 1000-1500 words each, would be required each issue/month. Salary is \$2,000 per year, or \$200 per issue. Interested? Contact Ida Fuchs, Office Manager of the Graduate Student Organization at 632-6492, Room 2105 Computer Science Bldg.

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## NEWS CONTINUED...

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in "P" lot which revealed anger toward the new policy.

Some HSC students were annoyed the "South Local" campus bus which runs to the Hospital from South "P" lot, comes only every 15 minutes and no shelter or bench is provided to students while they wait. Students going to main campus, on the other hand, are provided a bus every 5 minutes along with a shelter and benches while they wait.

Other students were angry because they were led to believe (via flyers published by DP&T) that if they kept their cards valid over the summer they would continue to be able to buy a pass during the current 1994-1995 school year. Given this information by DP&T, the students then paid for three months of summer parking (at a cost of \$48.74) which they had no use for other than to secure a fall permit only to be denied one.

In response, Thomas stated she'd look into the possibility of providing benches and/or building a shelter, however, the chances of DP&T being able to improve bus service were slim due to lack of money. According to Thomas, the bus system currently operates on the same size budget allotment as it did in 1990, while providing greater service. Cost savings have been achieved via a greater use of student labor, which is less expensive than full time employees.

Thomas also stated, that students who paid for summer parking passes they did not use are entitled to obtain a full refund. Affected students can receive refunds by contacting her at 632-6448 or by visiting the DP&T office at 146 Suffolk Hall.

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outages due to their work and, in many cases, had to be coerced into fixing them. Pedestrian paths have been disrupted and there has been no real attempt to let the affected parties know about this. No signs exist to inform a pedestrian that the path s/he is about to use is closed. One only learns of it when one happens upon it.

After the walkthrough, on separate occasions, I met with Public Safety (Rich Young, Director, and Doug Little, of Community Relations) and Dr. Snoreck to discuss the safety problems on campus. They listened to my concerns and discussed with me ways to combat the existing problems on campus. For me, these meetings were informative. It was there that I learned of the extensive efforts at education by Public Safety. In addition to holding classes on safety and self defense, they also prepare educational pamphlets in English, Chinese and Korean. Additionally, Public Safety has instituted several safety programs, including the Escort Service and the bike Patrol. These are good programs, and ones which serve to enhance campus safety. Also, in an attempt to combat the light outages, all fixtures will be numbered so that the reporting of disabled fixtures will be easier and that the light can be repaired. Additionally, Public Safety is looking into installing a radio emergency system on campus, similar to the blue light phone system, but cheaper. (Yes, budgetary problems affect campus safety too.) Dr. Snoreck is in the process of looking into changing the blue lights on the emergency phones to strobe lights, making them more visible.

Recently I addressed the University Senate on safety. I was joined by Sidonie Morrison and Larry Wittie (Campus Environment committee), Rich Young (Public Safety), and Dr. Snoreck (Vice President for Campus Services). The discussion lasted for more than an hour. I outlined my concerns about lighting, the blue light phones and the construction. Drs. Morrison and Wittie gave several suggestions for improving safety. They included: the possible creation of a safety czar, an individual who would address safety issues on cam-

pus, and that would be his only job; the addition to construction budgets flexible monies so that problems which inevitably arise can be attended to in a timely fashion; and the creation of an electronic mail safety hotline--addresses: allin1: SAFETY; other systems: safety@ccmail. Dr. Snoreck, in response, stated that when there is \$200 million in construction going on, problems will arise and that he is taking steps to ensure better communication and rapid response. He also said that as with any campus service, money (or the lack of it) plays a significant role in what can be done, and that while he appreciates and welcomes our input, finances affect what can ultimately be done.

After all the parties spoke, discussion was turned over to the Senate. A number of interesting and worthwhile comments were made, including making safety education a compulsory part of the orientation process, similar to that of Sexual Harassment education, so that all the members of the campus learn what they have available to them and what to do to better protect themselves.

Finally, the GSO executive committee itself has taken on the issue of safety, and in our meetings with administrators, this is always on the agenda. And, it will continue to be. At our first Senate meeting, campus safety will be discussed. Much has been done to improve the conditions on campus, yet the University cannot stop there. Safety is of utmost importance to this campus, and it is an issue which will be vehemently pursued.

Welcome Back to



The Graduate Student Lounge

Now Open:

Thursday - Saturday  
6pm - 12 am.

Located in Roosevelt  
Quad on the second  
floor of the Fannie  
Brice Building.

Beer, Food, Espresso,  
Pool, Darts, Music.

Bring in this ad  
and receive a 10%  
discount on food  
or drink.

## Graduate Student Lounge Renovated Over Summer Break

Last February the GSO opened the doors to its new Graduate Student Lounge "The Spot", located above the Fanny Brice Theatre in the Old Roosevelt Quad Cafeteria.

This summer the lounge underwent significant renovations, including constructing a new entrance and painting. A bar, pooltable, darts and a jukebox were also added.

According to Anne Mayer, GSO President, the goal of the improvements is to provide, "an atmosphere where people can meet, talk, relax and enjoy music."

The lounge offers bottled, imported beer as well as beer on tap, espresso, wine, soft drinks and light foods/munchies.

**Hey Graduate Student! News and Views wants to publish  
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**If so, call the GSO  
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us at 632-8965.**

**HOUSING cont. from page 3**

The university administration should probably consider revitalizing and refurbishing the current available graduate housing, while creating more housing facilities for graduate students, so as to be able to provide single bedroom privacy to every resident who desires it. In addition, expanded social sites on-campus such as clubs, cafes, and pubs will provide an added attraction. The university must seek to provide its graduate students not merely shelter but "living and housing quarters" at reasonable and affordable rents.

## More Views...

# A Telling Tale of Thing Called TAP

by Chuck Wright

Felicity trudged through the biting wind of early February to the local Post Office. In the overheated building, she waited in line, warming to the point of perspiration. Reaching the counter at last, she posted her letter by certified mail. It contained an application to the New York Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) for a Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) award. She left the Post Office with mixed feelings: relief that she'd finally sent the blasted thing off mingled with a dull resentment toward the University (or the SUNY System, or the State of New York, or whoever on earth it was that required her to jump through these ridiculous and incomprehensible bureaucratic hoops).

When she had moved to New York, she thought that she would earn her degree in psychology by attending classes, conducting research, and writing reports. Now she wondered if she'd been mistaken about how the learning process was to take place; it seemed as if she were being turned into one of her experimental rats, running a series of ever more complex bureaucratic mazes. First she'd had to establish residency, and had as a consequence had the pleasure of negotiating the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. Then she was told to apply for TAP. Why? she had asked. She was receiving a full tuition waiver. What was the point? She didn't need any tuition assistance. Isn't that what a tuition waiver was for? Just do it, she was told.

So, she was doing it. Never before had she completed her federal income tax forms so early - just so she could complete the FAFSA and TAP applications early in the Spring, as her graduate program director had insisted. She'd already heard horror stories about people who'd waited too long. None of that for her, thank you.

Shivering in the wind as she left, chilled by the moisture that had accumulated on her skin in the public building, she comforted herself with the thought that now she could just forget about the business. She'd dealt with it - as per instructions.

But no. Five weeks later, in mid-March, she received a letter from HESC notifying her that her application had been filled out incorrectly, that she would have to submit a change of information form, that her award could not be processed until the corrected information had been received, etc., etc.. Another hour spent poring over instructions written in barely intelligible bureaucratese. Another trip to the post office. This time, though, she didn't send the letter certified mail. Nor did she keep photocopies of the forms.

She heard nothing more from

HESC. She assumed that silence from this most impersonal and unreachable of the institutions wielding power over her graduate career meant that matters were straightened out. Therein lay her critical mistake.

When she received a statement of account from the Office of Student Accounts during the summer preceding her second academic year, she discovered to her dismay that she was being billed an additional \$562.50, for something she knew not what. When she went to Student Accounts, she was informed that she had not applied for TAP! Of course she had, she protested, and she had documentation to prove it. Our records, came the reply, indicate that we have received no notification of award from HESC. Out of the protracted and - alas! - at times strained discussion that then ensued, during which the Associate Director of the Office was called in and further during which a telephone call was placed to HESC, she learned that HESC had no record of having ever received the change of information form.

To make matters worse, the application deadline for TAP was the previous May 1, and here it was July. If she had been in contact with HESC during the Spring, then things might have been set straight. When HESC sends a notice that an application cannot be processed without additional or corrected information, the student is given 45 days to respond. During that period the student's file is kept on 'active' status. If HESC doesn't hear from the student during that period, then the file goes to 'inactive' status. If the May 1 deadline is reached while the student's file is inactive, then - barring genuine extenuating circumstances - the student's application will not be processed. If the file is kept active, however - that is, as long as some kind of regular correspondence is taking place between HESC and the student - then it is much more likely that an application (that was mailed on time) will be processed after the May 1 deadline.

But because she hadn't followed up on her change of information form, Felicity's file was inactive when the May 1 deadline rolled around. She owed Student Accounts an additional \$562.50, and there was no getting around it. The situation was even more enraging because, since she hadn't been a resident of the State of New York for at least 12 months, she technically wasn't even eligible for TAP.

(At this point it would be a good idea to see the Graduate Student Advocate. There may still be a way out.)

Unfortunately, it just isn't enough to fill out the forms and send

them off in a timely fashion. The only way to avoid dead end situations like Felicity's, when dealing with any state bureaucracy, is to follow up on your correspondence. You have to make sure that it arrives, and you have to make sure that it doesn't get lost somewhere in the maze. Just because you put documents in the mail doesn't mean they will arrive. Just because they landed in the hands of an employee in HESC doesn't mean they will be processed. Mail gets lost. Documents get misplaced. It doesn't happen often, but it happens. And when it happens - if you don't catch it in time - you will be the one to suffer. That is an unfortunate fact of life for those at the bottom of the power hierarchy.

The Department of Neurological Surgery at the Health Science Center is looking for "Office" Help:

Duties include: filing, xeroxing, running errands throughout Health Sciences Center and University Medical Center, and typing.

20 Hours a week maximum.  
\$6.00 per hour.

Contact: Susan Isca, Project Staff Assistant, Department of Neurosurgery. 444-8101

## Attention GSO Senators!

The following committees are still in need of members for the 1994-1995 year:

University Senate (6)  
Arts and Sciences Senate (6)

### University Senate Committees:

Research Committee  
CED Council  
Graduate Council  
Undergraduate Council  
Administrative Review  
Campus Environment and Student Life  
Committee on Resource Allocation and Budget (CRAB)  
Undergraduate Admissions  
Long Range Planning  
Library  
Computing and Communications  
University Affairs  
Distinguished Teaching Professor  
Distinguished Service Professor  
Excellence in Service for Professionals  
Priorities

### GSO Committees:

Lounge  
Housing  
Budget  
Elections  
Rules and Constitution  
Board of Appeals  
Women's Safety  
Committee

### Other Committees:

Child Care  
FSA Board  
SFS Retreat

### Other Positions:

News & Views  
Reporter  
GSO Speaker of the Senate

## Viewpoint

Are we all *Natural Born Killers* ?

It is no secret that we live in a society plagued by violence. We, as consumers of mass media, are subjected daily to statistics and news stories which focus on both the amount and effects of violence on our society. Occasionally, we even experience the violence first hand.

In addition to presenting the amount of violence, the media also examines the cause(s) of violence. The media often attributes societal violence to one, or more of the following factors: 1. Personality defects; mental illness. 2. Economic oppression; poverty, unemployment. 3. Cultural oppression; racism. 4. Negative role models. 5. The failure of the educational system. 6. The break-up the family. 7. Violence in the media. 8. Drug trade/use/addiction. 9. Prior sexual and/or physical victimization. 10. Some other, unknown reason(s). 11. Random, without reason.

The perceived importance of each factor changes in response to the public's tastes. Number 7, "violence in the media", seems to be currently the most in vogue cause of societal violence.

The depiction and prevalence of violence in the media (be it in

the form of the nightly news, *Beavis and Butthead*, *Terminator II*, *Sega's Mortal Combat*, or some other form) is widely believed to cause people to act out violently. As result, TV news programs and magazine articles have examined and discussed the effects of violence in the media for quite some time.

Oliver Stone's current film, *Natural Born Killers*, continues this trend.

The film begins with a graphic depiction of the life of a teenage girl who is sexually abused by her father while her mother watches.

Following the examples of violence she witnesses in the media, the girl and her boyfriend kill her father and mother in revenge.

The couple then begins a gruesome, cross-country, random killing spree in which over fifty people are slaughtered. Throughout the spree, the couple watches violent television and experiences flashbacks to their own abusive childhoods. As the killing spree continues, media coverage creates heroes out of the couple's violence, rage and ability to avoid arrest.

Once the couple is finally arrested, a reporter asks them why they became killers. The boy-

friend replies that his entire family is violent and he believes it was fate that he too became a "natural born killer". As the film ends, the couple is portrayed as clearly believing fate has led them become killers, while the audience is led to believe that without the influence of mass media, the couple might not have become violent murderers.

Clearly violence in the media is not solely responsible for societal violence, and the film does depict it as such. Indeed, history is full of violence (murder, rape, war, racism, etc.) which predate the existence of mass media.

Violence is a complex phenomena in which all eleven of the above mentioned factors play a part. Perhaps violence in the media plays an especially large part; perhaps it does not. As a social worker, I've worked with some of the most violent people in society: murderers, rapists, robbers, batterers and child abusers/molesters.

While many factors have led them to violence, I find the predominant factor is a lack of skills in the offender to express feelings of anger/rage in a non-violent way. The offenders, often because they were never taught

(but at times also because they never learned and/or were unable to learn) how to express their anger in words, react in the only way in which they know how: Violence.

Although it is disturbing to admit, I believe every human being will resort to violence as a "default" when no other option is perceived. Even children who have been exposed to very little violence in the media and have grown up in healthy, supportive families will act violently when upset or agitated because they have not yet learned how to deal with their emotions (notably anger) in socially acceptable ways. In this manner, the adults mentioned above are similar to the children.

Stopping violent behavior at the individual and societal level is a complex task. While it is important to alleviate/mitigate the eleven factors mentioned above, it is perhaps more important and feasible, in the short run, to focus on teaching individuals non-violent alternative means to express feelings of anger and rage.

- M. Fagan

## Ever Wonder who's on the GSO Executive Council and how you can get in touch with them?

### The GSO Executive Council:

President, Anne Mayer  
Vice President, Josh Billig  
Secretary, Wilbur Farley  
Treasurer, Susan Kratrina

### Their Office Hours:

Tuesday/Thursday 10am - 11 am  
Monday/Wednesday 10am - 11 am  
Tuesday 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm  
Friday 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

All of the above office hours take place in the GSO Office, located in the Computer Science Building, Room 2105. The GSO Office is open Monday-Friday, 10:00 am - 5 pm. Phone: 632-6492. Fax: 632-8965.

This semester, the GSO Senate will meet in the Graduate Student Lounge on October 19, November 16, and December 8. All meetings begin at 6:30 pm.

## Upcoming Events

*A selected listing of events on campus that may be of particular interest to graduate students*

### Tuesday, September 20

Today is the final day to register for the Marine Science Research Center's "Long Island Environmental Writers Festival". The two day, October 1-2, festival will feature discussions, film screenings, and hands-on workshops with leading authors and photographers. Attendance limited to first 120 who register. Admission is \$50 per person and includes a continental breakfast, lunch, reception and clam bake dinner. For details and registration call the MSRC at 632-8701.

### Thursday, September 22

Richard Cloward, Professor at the Columbia University School of Social Work, will speak on "Gender War and the Welfare State" as part of the School of Social Welfare's Distinguished

Lecturer Seminar Series. Health Science Center, Level 3, Lecture Hall #6. 12:45-1:45 pm. Admission is free.

### September 23-24

*From My Family's Album*, a humorous and moving portrayal of life in an unconventional family, will be presented by its creator, guest artist Julie Portman. Portman explores the overlap of theater, dance, music, and story in this original work. Admission is free, thanks to the generosity of the Friends of the Staller Center. Because of limited seating, tickets must be obtained in advance at the box office, 632-7230. Performed at the Staller Center on Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m.

### Saturday, September 25

The USB Music Department begins this season's **Baroque Sundays at Three** at 3:00 pm in the Recital Hall at the Staller Center. Long Island harpsichord-

ist and conductor Eric Milnes will present the **St. John's Chorale and Orchestra** in the American premiere of CPE Bach's *Cantata for the Feast of St. Michael*. This is the first performance of this piece since 1786. Vocal and instrumental Baroque Chamber Music of Caccini, Montclair, Handel and Rameau will round out this event. Donations accepted at the door.

### September 26-October 22

An acrylic sculpture, "**Reflections and Refractions**", by Norman Mercer will be on display at the Union Art Gallery. Mr. Mercer's sculptures are transparent, and they bend, reflect and refract light and color. His work is generally geometric, with repeated images of cubes, octagonal columns and interlocking rings. On the opening day, the artist will present an informal talk about his work at 3 p.m. and he will be on hand from 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. to meet with

visitors. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday, noon to 4 p.m. Admission is free.

### Wednesday, September 28

**First University Convocation.** Shirley Strum Kenny, USB's new president, will make her first presentation to the entire university in this colorful ceremony. 12:40 p.m. - 2:10 p.m. in the Staller Center.

### Thursday, September 29

Kim Hopper, President of the Coalition for the Homeless and Research Scientist for the Nathan Kline Institute, will speak on "**Trouble on the Streets - Unresolved Issues**" as part of the School of Social Welfare's Distinguished Lecturer Seminar Series. Health Science Center, Level 3, Lecture Hall #6. 12:45-1:45 pm. Admission is free.

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*The new in place to be is in Port Jefferson*

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## calendar of events

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**Saturday, October 1**

The Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra will Perform its first concert of the year at 8:00 p.m. at the Staller Center. Join Maestro Lubman and Mark Lederway from WUSB radio for a pre-concert lecture at 7:00 p.m. in the Recital Hall. Saturday's Program will feature Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 15 in A Major*, op. 141; Copland's *Music for the Theater*; and J. Strauss' *Die Fledermaus Overture*. Tickets are \$10 adults, \$8 for senior citizens and students and can be obtained from the Staller Center box office (516) 632-7230.

**October 1-2**

The "Long Island Environmental Writer's Festival". Please see announcement under September 20 for details.

**Tuesday, October 4**

The Marine Sciences Research Center kicks off a four part "Coastal Desserts" evening discussion series. The series will explore environmental issues that affect Long Islanders. The first topic will be, "Environmental Health and Human Health: How Closely Are They Connected?" Each session will be led by an expert on the topic under discussion and held from 7:30-9:30 p.m. in Room 120 Endeavour Hall. Admission is \$10 per person or \$15 for two people, and includes coffee, tea and an array of desserts. To pre-register, or for more information, call 632-8700.

**October 6-9**

"The Tales of the Lost Formicans", a comic travel guide to Middle America conducted by extraterrestrials presents a rare portrait of American life through alien eyes. Sunday performance held at 2 p.m. All other performances are at 8 p.m. Additional performances October 13-16. Tickets are \$8, \$6 for students, senior citizens and Stony Brook staff. For tickets call the box office at 632-7230.

**Thursday, October 6**

Joseph Vigilante, Professor at Adelphi University, will speak on "Health and Social Services for Profit" as part of the School of Social Welfare's Distinguished Lecturer Seminar Series. Health Science Center, Level 3, Lecture Hall #6. 12:45-1:45 pm. Admission is free.

**Saturday, October 8**

The Turtle Island String Quartet will perform its unique mix of jazz, blues, bluegrass. The program will feature arrangements of jazz standards and original compositions. Tickets are \$20 and available by calling 632-7230.

**Monday, October 10**

Suzy Bogguss, talented country music singer, will perform her latest hits at the Staller Center at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$26 and available by calling 632-7230.

**Thursday, October 13**

Nilsa Gutierrez, Director of the AIDS Institute, NYS Department of Health will speak on "The Policy on HIV Mandatory Testing of Newborns in NYS" as part of the School of Social Welfare's Distinguished Lecturer Seminar Series. Health Science Center, Level 3, Lecture Hall #6. 12:45-1:45 pm. Admission is free.

Rita Moreno, the only female to have won a Tony, an Oscar, a Grammy and two Emmy Awards, will perform an evening of hit show music at the Staller Center at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$26 and available by calling 632-7230.

**October 13-16**

**Homecoming.** USB salutes its alumni in this three-day event highlighted by a homecoming parade, several class reunion parties, a football game and the Sixth Annual 5k Run for Scholarships. Additional information available in the Union.

**Saturday, October 15**

**Marine Sciences Open House.** Visitors can touch marine creatures, visit a salt marsh, tour a boat house made from blocks of incinerator ash, view satellite and sonar demonstrations and more at the Marine Sciences Research Center from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Food and drink available throughout day. Parking and admittance is free of charge.

**Tuesday, October 18**

The Marine Science Research Center will hold its second "Coastal Desserts" evening discussion series. The topic will be, "Environmental Journalism: Are They Giving You the Information You Need?" Please see announcement above under October 4 for time, place, admission and additional details.

**Thursday, October 20**

Mimi Abramovitz, Professor of Social Work at Hunter College, will speak on "From the Tenement Class to the Dangerous Class to the Underclass: Blaming Women for Social Problems" as part of the School of Social Welfare's Distinguished Lecturer Seminar Series. Health Science Center, Level 3, Lecture Hall #6. 12:45-1:45 pm. Admission is free.

**Friday, October 21**

The "Expo Tech" festival will highlight Long Island companies engaged in high-tech industries of the future. The festival will feature

industry giants such as Computer Associates, Symbol Technologies, Dayton T. Brown, Olympus Corporation, and Lilco. The festival will be held Friday afternoon and all day Saturday in the Indoor Sport's Complex. Admission and other information can be obtained by calling Carole Volkman at 632-9117.

**Saturday, October 22**

**The Gin Game**, starring Kim Hunter and Vincent Dowling, will perform at the Staller Center at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$23 and available by calling 632-7230

**Sunday, October 23**

"Computer Music at Stony Brook IV". This concert incorporates the latest in sonic technology, with computers serenading musicians and musicians interacting with audio environments. 7 p.m., Staller Center. Admission is free.

**Thursday, October 27**

Gary Rosenberg, Professor of Community Medicine and Senior Vice President of Mt. Sinai Medical Center, will speak on "Managed Care, Who Benefits, Who Loses?" as part of the School of Social Welfare's Distinguished Lecturer Seminar Series. Health Science Center, Level 3, Lecture Hall #6. 12:45-1:45 pm. Admission is free.

**Friday, October 28**

The Center for Italian Studies will host its tenth annual symposium on the Italian American experience. This year's conference will focus on "Italian American Studies Programs and Organizations: Interface with the Community". The conference will be held in the Alliance Room of the Frank Melville, Jr. Memorial Library from 2-6 p.m. and October 29 from 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is free.

**Sunday, October 30**

**Special Olympics.** USB will host the Special Olympics in the Union and Indoor Sports Complex from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Additional information available from David Woods, Special Olympics Press Representative, at 751-6460.

**Thursday, November 3**

Judy Bloch, Executive Director of Variety Pre-Schoolers Workshop, will speak on "Troubled Pre-Schoolers, Make Trouble Later" as part of the School of Social Welfare's Distinguished Lecturer Seminar Series. Health Science Center, Level 3, Lecture Hall #6. 12:45-1:45 pm. Admission is free.