

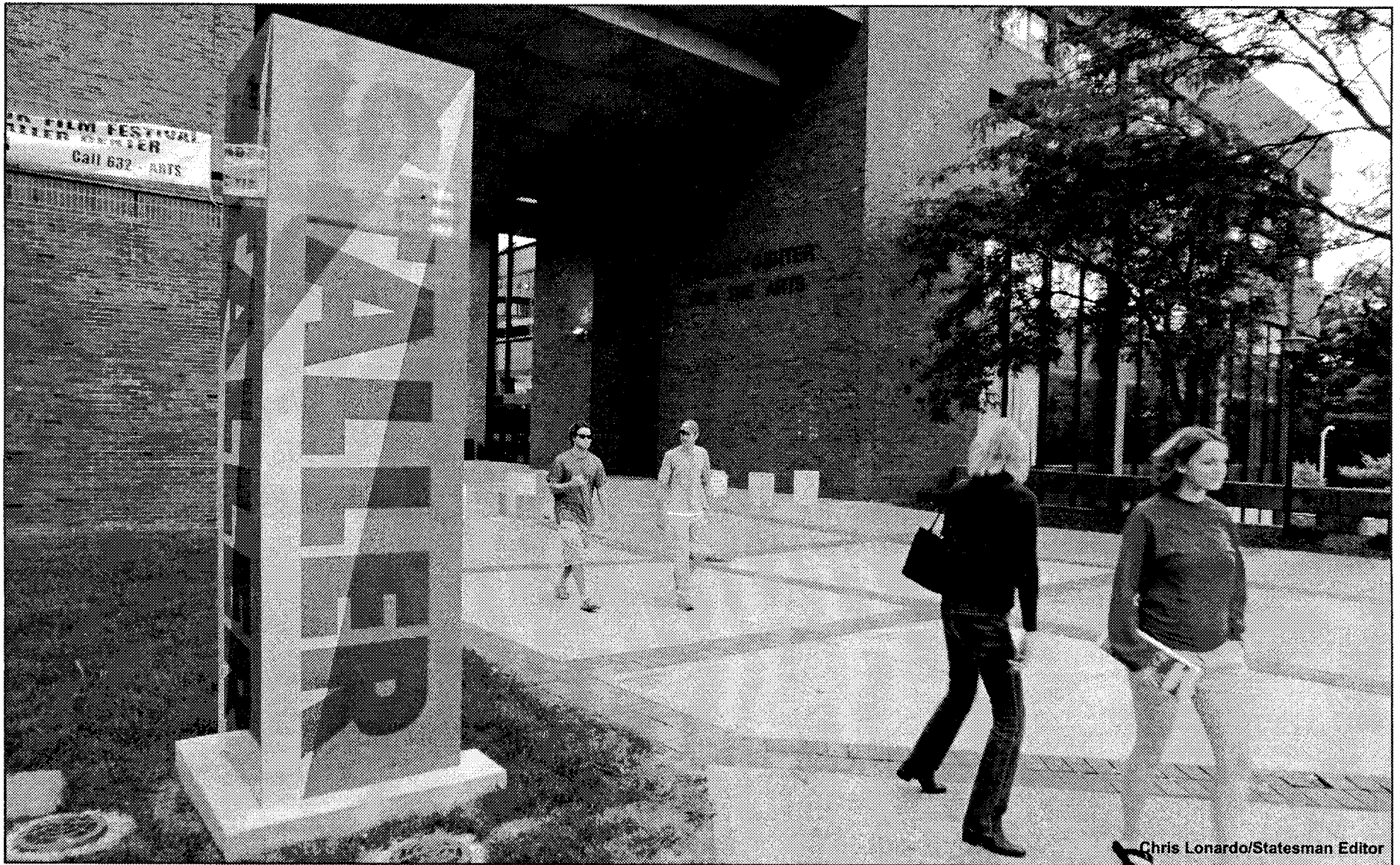
the stony brook Statesman

VOLUME XLVII, NUMBER 56

MONDAY, JULY 26, 2004

PUBLISHED TWICE WEEKLY

Film Festival Lands at Stony Brook



By EMY KURIAKOSE
Statesman Editor

The Stony Brook Film Festival celebrates its ninth year at The Staller Center for the Arts this July 21-31. The Festival, which showcases dozens of independent films, has grown rapidly with over 14,000 moviegoers attending in 2003.

"My staff and I have assembled an eclectic, diverse and enlightening series of feature and short films for the 9th Annual Stony Brook Film Festival," said Alan Inkles, festival director, in a press release. "From highly anticipated films about to be released to new Independent films seeking distribution, we are confident that this will truly be our most exciting summer to date!"

This year the festival included the Opening Night Premiere of *Swimming Upstream*, from Australia, starring Geoffrey Rush and Judy Davis, "An

Afternoon with Patricia Neal," which includes brunch followed by an exciting interview with Ms. Neal, as well as a host of independent, foreign and art films. A \$45 pass gets you into all screenings, and for a little more audience members can attend the Closing Night Awards Reception and the afternoon with Patricia Neal.

The festival will include 12 features and 16 short films "in competition," where both a film jury and the audience have a say about winning films to be announced at the Closing Night Awards Ceremony on July 31.

Feature Films in competition include: *The Rocket Post*, *Irish Eyes*, *The Far Side of the Moon*, *Easy*, *Saints and Soldiers*, *Her Majesty*, *Break A Leg*, *Sunday on the Rocks*, *Grimm*, *A Peck on the Cheek*, *Dandelion* and *Love Trap*. Many of these films will be World, U.S., East Coast or New York premiere screenings.

"The Festival will take you around the world with some of the finest work being done in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, The United Kingdom, France, Italy and Japan and will include three films from The Netherlands as part of a collaborative effort with Holland Film," Inkles said. "In all, a dozen countries will be represented this year with exciting stories, fresh concepts and terrific talent."

The Stony Brook Film Festival's sponsors include The University Café, The Curry Club, *Bliss* and The Velvet Lounge (all located just off-campus on the corner of 25A and Nicolls Rd/Rte. 97). Festival goers have a chance to mingle with filmmakers and guests before and after films until the early hours of the morning. The sponsoring restaurants will announce details, discounts and special events throughout the festival.

"To those who have not been here

before, this is truly the summer to see what you've been missing," Inkles said. "I promise everyone that this will be a festival not easily forgotten."

Compiled from sources on www.stonybrookfilmfestival.com

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Study Abroad to India Combats HIV/AIDS

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is a significant testament to the work that needs to be done to effectively combat HIV/AIDS in India.

Following these college-based presentations and classes, the program gave us enough free time to visit the many cultural sites of South India. We were also occupied doing what most college students do in America – shopping, clubbing, and watching movies. As typical as these activities may be, they still exposed us to Indian culture, and were important facets of our trip.

I truly can't say enough about this particular program. Our AIDS education program was made possible by Visions Worldwide, a club at Stony Brook that focuses on preventing the potentially catastrophic effects of HIV/AIDS. The club is still recruiting more students to continue our presentations next summer.

The trip itself was organized by Professors S.N. and Meena Sridhar. It

is the first of its kind, and the extent of the program's success was indeed a pleasant surprise.

As we left the street by our hostel, the residents were once again rebuilding the roofs that had been damaged by the monsoon rains. We had only touched upon a mere six weeks of their lives, and now we were returning to our comfortable air conditioned homes and carpeted halls.

Watching the receding buildings, I could only hope that our message of prevention would take root in the minds of the students and community members we had met. Perhaps they too would start similar programs and break the wall of silence in their community.

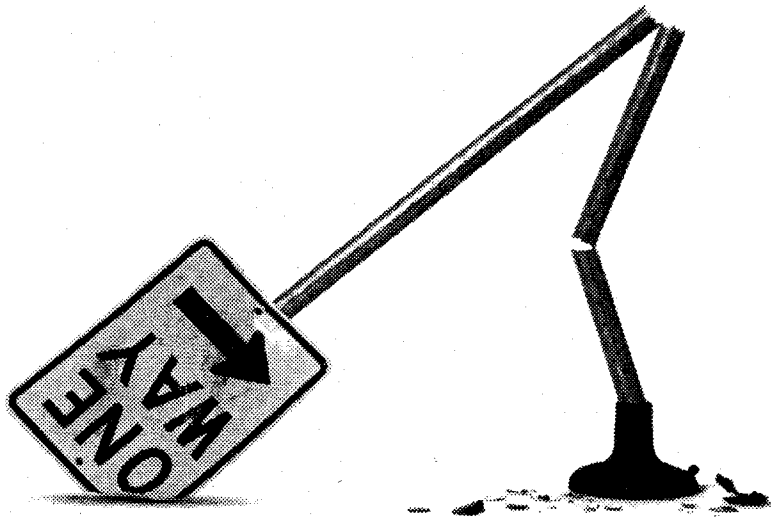
All college students should study abroad, not simply to augment their academic career, but to find a new appreciation for the condition of human life. The world is far removed from the lives to which most students have become accustomed, and it may take just six weeks for one student to change his or her perception of life.

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9/11 Commission Cites Failures, Issues Warning

By GREG MILLER
Los Angeles Times

The commission investigating the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks concluded Thursday that the U.S. government had been hobbled by "failures of imagination, policy, capabilities and management," and warned that sweeping reforms are needed to prevent another catastrophic terrorist strike.

In its devastating and detailed final report, the independent commission faulted the presidential administrations of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush for failing to understand the terrorist threat or to make it a top priority. It documented dozens of intelligence breakdowns and squandered opportunities to detect or disrupt the plot. It scolded Congress for inadequate oversight. And it laid out an exceedingly ambitious reform agenda that called for the overhaul of key elements of U.S. foreign policy as well as a complete restructuring of the nation's intelligence community.

After a 20-month investigation in which it interviewed the top officials of two administrations, the commission stopped short of saying whether the attacks were preventable.

"Since the plotters were flexible and resourceful, we cannot know whether any single step or series of steps would have defeated them," the report stated.

But the U.S. government's counterterrorism efforts before Sept. 11 were so inadequate, the report observed, that none of the measures the United States was pursuing "disturbed or even delayed the progress of the al-Qaida plot."

Above all, the report attributed the success of the hijackers to an inability by U.S. government leaders to envision a strike on the scale of Sept. 11, or even to give serious consideration to the possibility that terrorists might use airplanes as weapons, even though the scenario had been the subject of intelligence warnings for years.

"We did not grasp the magnitude of a threat that had been gathering over a considerable period of time," said commission chairman Thomas H. Kean, the former Republican governor of New Jersey. "This was a failure of policy, management, capability, and above all, a failure of imagination."

Because the United States has struck numerous blows against al-Qaida and shored up domestic defenses, the commission concluded that the danger of an attack on the scale of Sept. 11 has diminished but still exists.

"Every expert with whom we spoke told us an attack of even greater magnitude is now possible, and even probable," Kean said. "We do believe we are safer today than we were on 9/11. But we are not safe."

The 567-page report represents the culmination of an investigation by a bipartisan panel formally known as the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States. The 10-member panel reviewed 2.5 million pages of documents and interviewed more than 1,200 witnesses during the course of an investigation that frequently encountered resistance from the White House.

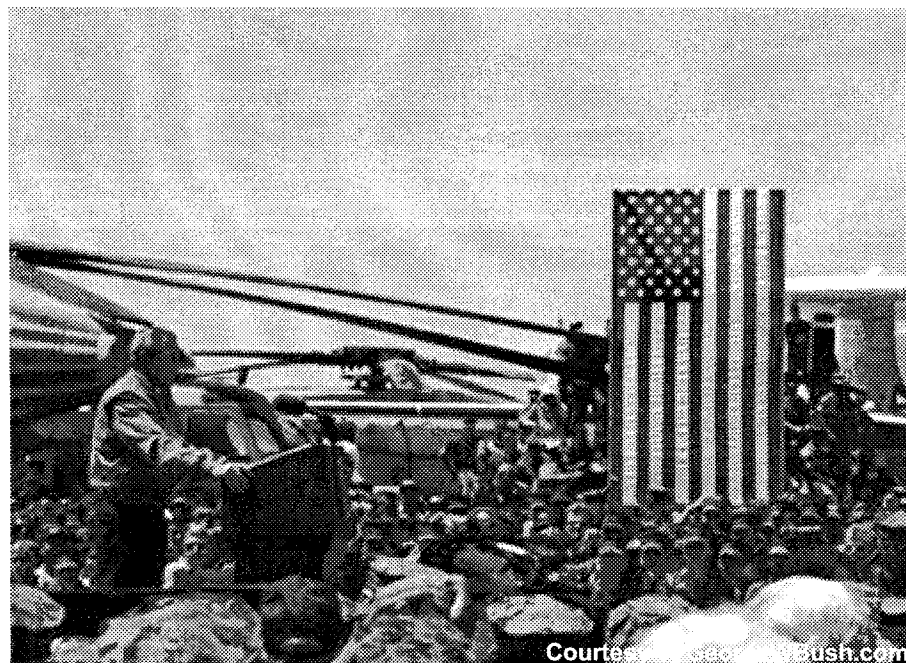
The release of the report is expected to intensify a debate over intelligence reform and the direction of the war on terrorism -- issues that could decide the upcoming presidential election.

The commission's conclusions and recommendations create a dilemma for the Bush administration, which has been lukewarm to some of the proposed reforms. Among them are the creation of a national intelligence czar who would outrank the CIA director and oversee all 15 U.S. intelligence agencies. Another proposal from the commission calls for the establishment of a national counterterrorism center that would replace a constellation of existing "fusion centers" at CIA and other agencies.

President Bush, who got a private briefing on the report from Kean and Vice Chairman Lee Hamilton in the Oval Office, described the recommendations as "constructive" but indicated that he was unlikely to take swift action to implement them.

"I look forward to studying their recommendations, and look forward to working with responsible parties within my administration to move forward on those recommendations," Bush told the commissioners during a brief Rose Garden appearance afterward.

National security adviser Condoleezza Rice noted that the administration has already taken steps in the direction of some



Courtesy of GeorgeWBush.com

of the commission's recommendations, adding that it would be unwise to rush into sweeping intelligence changes.

"This is a time when the country is making important and long-lasting changes to how we think about the collection of, management of intelligence and it only makes sense to take a little time and think this through," Rice said.

But members of the commission challenged the White House to embrace reforms or propose better alternatives. They also issued sober warnings that voters will not forgive policymakers who fail to fix the nation's intelligence and domestic security woes before any future attack.

Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kerry, a Democratic senator from Massachusetts, released a statement Thursday endorsing the commission's recommendations. However, lawmakers who welcomed the proposals nonetheless said implementing them would be difficult and time consuming, and probably could not be accomplished this year.

One of the main proposals -- the creation of an intelligence czar -- is an idea that has been endorsed by a number of blue-ribbon intelligence panels over the past decade. It was a top recommendation of the joint House-Senate committee that completed its investigation of the Sept. 11 attacks last year.

The independent commission said in its report Thursday that the creation of a national intelligence director, as well as a counterterrorism coordination center, are critical to eliminating the confusion and information-sharing problems that plagued the U.S. intelligence community leading up to Sept. 11.

Hamilton, a former Democratic congressman from Indiana, said that throughout the panel's investigation, government officials found it alarmingly difficult to answer the simple question of "Who is in charge?" of the nation's counterterrorism efforts. "Too often the answer is no one," Hamilton said.

But the proposals also have detractors. Critics of the idea of creating an intelligence czar say that it would add another layer of bureaucracy between the president and his primary provider of intelligence data -- the CIA. The reform measures also face major bureaucratic impediments because they

would require the Pentagon and the CIA to relinquish much of their power.

The commission decided against another reform idea that has been debated since Sept. 11, the creation of a domestic intelligence agency like Britain's MI5, which would strip that responsibility from the FBI.

"Adding a new domestic intelligence agency," the report said, "will not solve America's problems."

The commission also faulted U.S. foreign policy, saying that while the country has to remain focused on capturing or killing terrorists, it needs to do far more to address rising anti-American sentiment overseas.

"We need to join the battle of ideas within the Islamic world," Hamilton said, so that young Muslims "have peaceful and productive avenues for expression and hope."

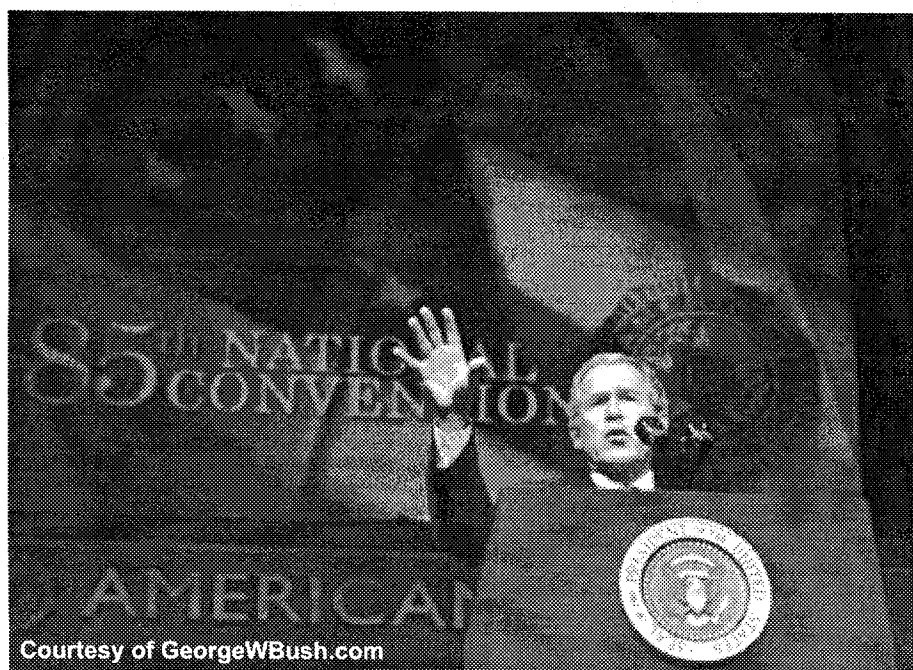
In particular, Hamilton said, the United States needs to transform its relationships with Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Afghanistan to foster stability and humanitarian reforms.

The commission also urged the adoption of new technologies to screen travelers by scanning fingerprints, retinas or other "biometric" signatures. It pushed for tougher standards for the issuance of birth certificates, driver's licenses and other identification documents. And it recommended that cities that have been al-Qaida targets -- particularly New York and Washington -- should get the lion's share of federal funding for emergency preparedness.

In sharp contrast to the bureaucratic language that characterizes many blue-ribbon studies, the commission's report is a lengthy narrative with sections that read like a nightmarish novel.

The report chronicles years of feckless efforts by the government to come to grips with the al-Qaida threat. It cites a Sept. 4, 2001 memo written by then-White House counterterrorism chief Richard Clarke, urging his superiors to envision a catastrophic strike and act before it is too late. The government, Clarke wrote, had for too long failed to confront a basic question: "Is al-Qaida a big deal?"

"A week later came the answer," the report said.



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Commentary

Rumors of Draft Worry Public; Administration Denies Myth

By EMY KURIAKOSE
Statesman Editor

There's a five letter word that is putting the nation's college students on edge. The government has denied rumors, websites have countered their complacency with speculation about post-election decisions, and the American people are left to watch, eyebrows raised in expectation.

Draft. This word inspired the first generation of Stony Brook students to take to the streets, some burning federal orders, others organizing protests and making plans for an exodus to Canada. This word also sent thousands of young men and women to a tropical Communist haven, in what came to be known as one of America's gravest mistakes, Vietnam. And finally, this word was put to rest in July 1973 in place of a voluntary system of recruitment. So why the recent uneasiness nibbling at the minds of politicians, mothers and students?

There are now 140,000 troops in Iraq, much more than the Pentagon had originally planned to deploy. This number represents 90 percent of our Army's active duty combat divisions. It is the first time since the Persian Gulf War that our army has been stretched to this capacity. The U.S. cannot afford to bring any of its soldiers home. In fact, it commissioned more than 6,000 soldiers who had already finished their tour of duty to return to service to fill its shortage.

On the one month anniversary of the independent free Republic of Iraq, stories from the battlefield have curiously disappeared from front-page news. Once power was handed over to a new Iraqi government, America's presence in Iraq seemed to be just that of any another country in which we routinely station our troops. But where's the "Welcome Home?" Why are more National Guard reservists still being deployed?

"We're taxing our part-time soldiers, our Guard and Reserves nearly to the breaking point," said Rep. Ike Skelton of Missouri, top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee to the Associated Press.

The presidential candidates' stance on providing additional support to the troops will play a major role in the outcome of the election. Republicans concede that there is a shortage, but insist that measures taken to temporarily remedy the problem are serving as solid patches. Still, the Defense Department has been under pressure for the lack of adequate military supplies, including armor and medical kits, which have been spread thinly over Afghanistan and Iraq.

Morale among the soldiers is also dangerously low, and skepticism about the administration's reasons for fighting has created concern for future recruitment efforts back at home. Since the war began, 23 U.S. servicemen committed suicide in Iraq and Kuwait. Fifty-two percent of the soldiers surveyed by a medical health team reported low morale, and 72 percent reported low unit morale.

Despite all these factors pressuring the administration to provide more aid and personnel for its deployed servicemen and women, Pentagon officials maintain that our dreaded five-letter word is still sitting in its cobwebs among the annals of U.S. history. Ostensibly, students will not have to worry about a draft anytime soon.

Military officials also argue that a draft is not a practical solution because the training involved in readying the more than one million young draftees would overwhelm our nation's training facilities, officers, and already-strapped equipment supplies.

So what will the Presidency do next year, when the population isn't protected by an election? "Temporary solutions," Mr. Bush, are just exactly that: temporary. International pressure is also mounting on the U.S. to aid and protect the war-torn refugees in Darfur, Sudan, where rape is a commonly used weapon of suppression. We like to flaunt our humanitarian ideals of democracy and freedom when we occupy countries and overthrow governments, but such a blanket promise of freedom comes with responsibilities as well. We are responsible, first and foremost, for our soldiers, who are now overworked and struggling to make ends meet without ample reinforcements. Secondly, we are responsible for our self proclaimed role as freedom fighters for oppressed peoples across the world.

The Bush administration, which took on these responsibilities when it declared war on Iraq, needs to carry its promises to the end. Officials scurrying to patch holes in the army won't be able to keep up their fleeting efforts. A desperate situation may lead to a desperate call to duty.

Presidential runners Sen. Kerry and President Bush have a tough road ahead, as the public is still waiting to hear a solid plan for the situation in Iraq. The hint of hope comes in Sen. Kerry's plans, which include a re-vamping of U.S. foreign policy altogether. He wants to add 40,000 troops (voluntary) to U.S. homeland security measures, which, over the past year, seems to have taken second place to the War in Iraq. He understands that the Bush administration has unwittingly severed ties with key allies across the world, and has single handedly mustered new levels of international distrust and contempt for America.

Sen. Kerry's experience in Vietnam, a war that he protested after returning from duty with several honors, has given him the wisdom and foresight to institute sensible laws and effective solutions for the ditch that we have dug for ourselves. In short, he will be the last of the candidates to even consider a draft.

Our country is edging upon a very dangerous and delicate course, one which is already shadowed with poor decisions, a pressured army and an unsafe home front. A draft would not only aggravate the situation, it would turn America's only true supporters, her citizens, away from her.

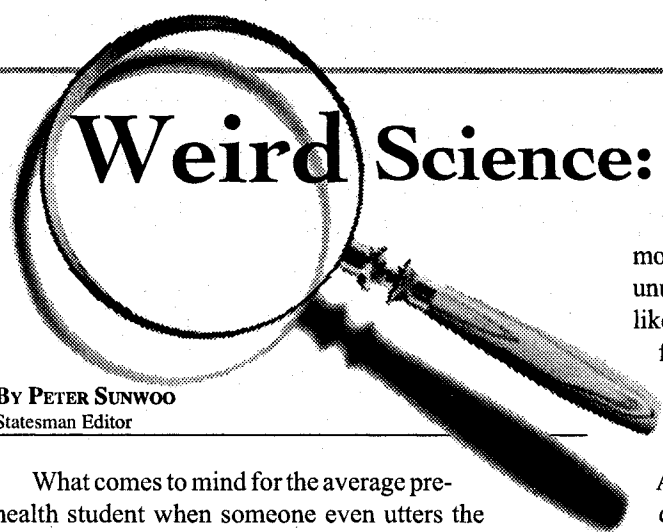
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Weird Science: **eBay** The Scientist's Candy Shop

By **PETER SUNWO**
Statesman Editor

What comes to mind for the average pre-health student when someone even utters the word chemistry? "Kill me now %&#@\$!\$. You and your Sn-1/Sn-2 reactions...; Burn in digital hell CAPA! My orgo ball and stick model kit is still in the package underneath my bed; 3-(5-oxohexyl)cyclohexanone?; Does this class fulfill my foreign language requirement?"

For the few and lonely individuals that love the challenging, yet amazingly interesting subject, it may be a bit more exciting if the reactions we all spent a third of our lives toiling over in 20-pound textbooks were actually put to use someday.

But where can the average premature scientist find reagents and solutions needed for creating chemical stuff? One option is to break into the chemistry building, snatch and grab things that may look chemistry related, and let your imagination do the rest. Or, if you're lazy and want to take the legal way out, you can simply purchase nearly every chemical solution and element on eBay! Yes, eBay.

If you think this Internet supermarket is used for buying shoes and antiques, your bubble is about to burst. The diversity of products being offered is astonishing, you can get anything from a wooden whistle, to magnesium ribbon for Grignard Reagents, to super-

model unfertilized eggs, to a human femur. Think of an unusual random legal thing to buy and you will most likely find it on this global Internet marketplace, often for pennies on the dollar.

Spend just five seconds typing, and one second clicking, and you'll find yourself browsing through hundreds of ads related to what you're looking for. And to all those psychos out there, who are already drooling, don't get your hopes up. The site also does a great job filtering most illegal products, especially dangerous material such as powerful explosives, plutonium, and certain fertilizers that can be used for destruction.

Theodore Gray, another weird scientist, routinely purchases chemicals and laboratory equipment from eBay as casually as if he were visiting the corner grocer.

"Need a fume hood so you can do your experiments more safely?" Gray said. "I just got a \$2,200 model for \$150. Slightly used, of course, but what do I care?"

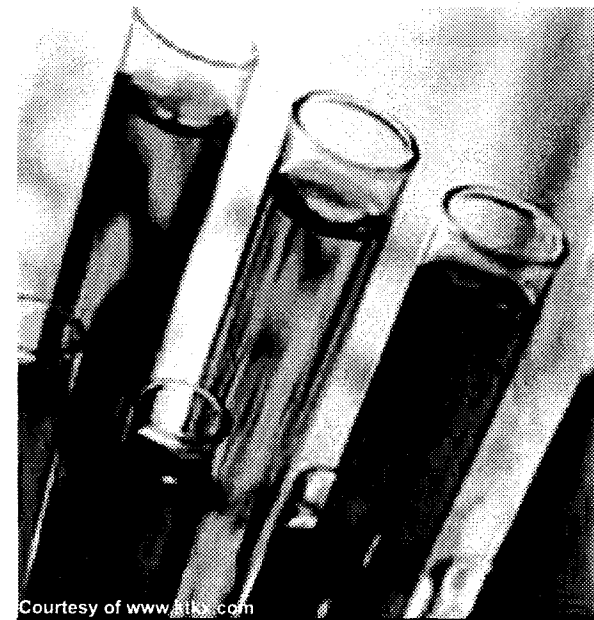
His hobby turned into an obsession. Gray has purchased an enormous amount of scientific supplies from eBay, including: an \$800 vacuum pump for experiments with vacuum vapor deposition, an artificial knee joint, titanium hip joints, titanium crystals, and almost every element on the periodic table that is solid at room temperature, with no questions asked.

"I have developed any number of good, long-term relationships with suppliers of exotic elements whom I met by bidding on, or asking a question about, an item they had on eBay," he said. "A woman in England who supplies me with samples of hafnium, for example: One day I get an e-mail saying she's found a great lump of it

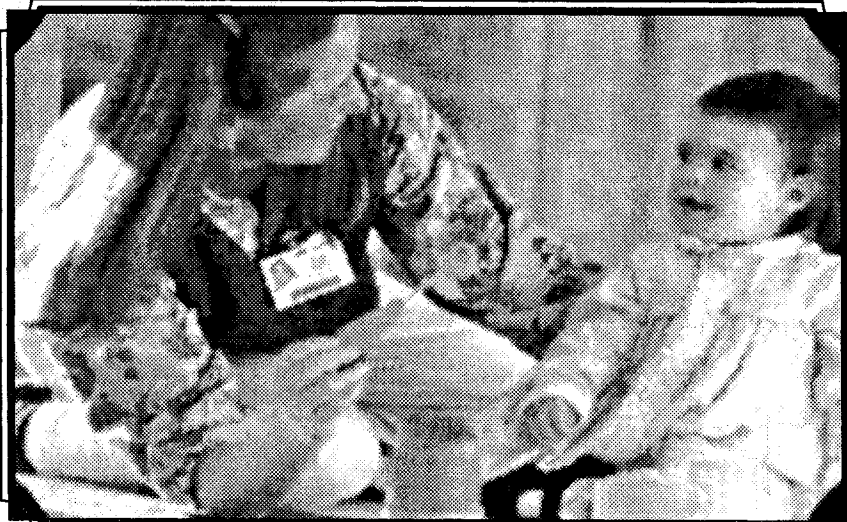
lying around the house."

Sounds a bit suspicious to me—someone harboring exotic elements around the house. So how and where do these sellers get their supply? Many universities, government labs and private companies dispose of surplus supplies and equipment by public auction, but going to them is inconvenient, unfamiliar to many people, and often a waste of time if you're looking for something specific. Fortunately there are a bunch of enterprising folks who go to those auctions, then immediately turn around and resell the stuff on eBay.

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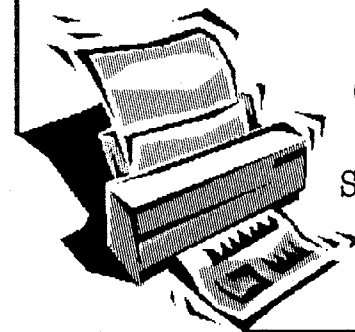
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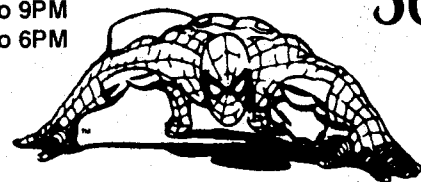
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"Anchorman": Reporting the News with a 70s Flair

By EUGENE KOZLOVSKY
Statesman Editor

If you are into really corny jokes, goofy scenes, extra long side burns, polyester suits and sex panther cologne, then this movie is perfect for you. For everyone else: you may be a little disappointed. "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy" is one big 1970's satire, and, although the idea had a lot of promise, the movie just didn't live up to they hype.

In the 1970's, most local networks had a similar style in which they did the news. It was simple—all reporters were men. This movie portrays these men as one fraternity bound together by male chauvinism and fear of diversity. At the head of the news "game" at the time was Ron Burgundy, god's gift to women and the most respected newscaster in San Diego.

Burgundy is the man among boys in all local news. But with all of Burgundy's fame comes an equal size ego, which sets off a barrage of fireworks. The rest of the Channel Four team (Paul Rudd as Brian Fantana, Steve Carell as Brick Tamland, and David Koechner as Champ Kind) follows the egoistic leader of the pack on their way to the number one newscast spot.

The station manager one day tells the fab four that there needs to be more diversity in the newscast, which makes way for Christina Applegate, the very beautiful and ambitious Veronica Comingsstone. This calls for an all out war between the yin and the yang. The men do everything in their power to keep her off the air. In the seventies, first thing's first, so each guy tries to get in her pants. All fail miserably except for Ron (Will Ferrell, who actually co-wrote the film.) Ron and Veronica wind up in a relationship, which shakes things



Courtesy of rottentomatoes.com

up even more.

The X-X chromosome combination blows a hole in the fab four's friendship, a hairy biker gets a burrito thrown in his face, and a little dog gets punted off a bridge. All this lead's to a monumental catastrophe for Burgundy: Veronica becomes the first anchorwoman in history, and she's amazing at it. San Diego loves her, and she is even made co-anchor with Ron. That's when the entire ruckus begins.

The only thing that made this movie funny is that it was set in the seventies. The audience is treated to a variety of fantastic wardrobes from tacky suits and ties to the outrageous hairdos, and the cast keeps to their

groovy attitudes. One of the best parts of this movie was a fighting scene with an impressive array of cameos including Ben Stiller, Jack Black, Tim Robbins, Chris Parnell, Luke Wilson, Fred Willard, Jerry Minor, and Fred Armisen, but this wasn't impressive enough to outweigh the flaws of "Anchorman".

After about 30 minutes, I felt like I was only sitting in the theatre because of the cast I grew to love. The movie was drawn out for about another 45 minutes. It could have been cut in half, and still been long enough to fit all the jokes and the quirky plot. The biggest problem with the movie is that most of those jokes were asinine. Half the time, they weren't even funny. I can't even imagine how horrible

the movie would have been if it didn't use a comedic all star cast. Most comedies are usually hit or miss, either you're hysterical throughout or it's just a flop. To my dismay, I found out that all the best jokes were in the trailers. The movie started out great. One of the lines of the voiceover was, "This story is based on actual events, just the people, places, and events have been changed," but it quickly fell into a downward spiral after that. It doesn't take much to make me laugh, but 20 minutes into the movie I was bored. If you still want to see this movie, make sure to stick around till the end for the outtakes, because along with the trailers, that's where you'll find most of the funny jokes.

When Robots Mix with *Men In Black*

By JAMES BOUKLAS
Statesman Editor

Will Smith's new action thriller, "I, Robot" offers a look into the future that would have Isaac Asimov rolling in his grave. The trailers for the movie boast the phrase, "Rules are meant to be broken," which is exactly the kind of distorted logic that is inconsistent with Asimov's original intentions in his novel, upon which the movie is based. Hollywood is known for distortion, and "I, Robot" is no exception. The movie isn't so much a typical Asimovian exercise in logic, but a shoot'em up, knock 'em down and don't-look-back conflagration of computer graphics.

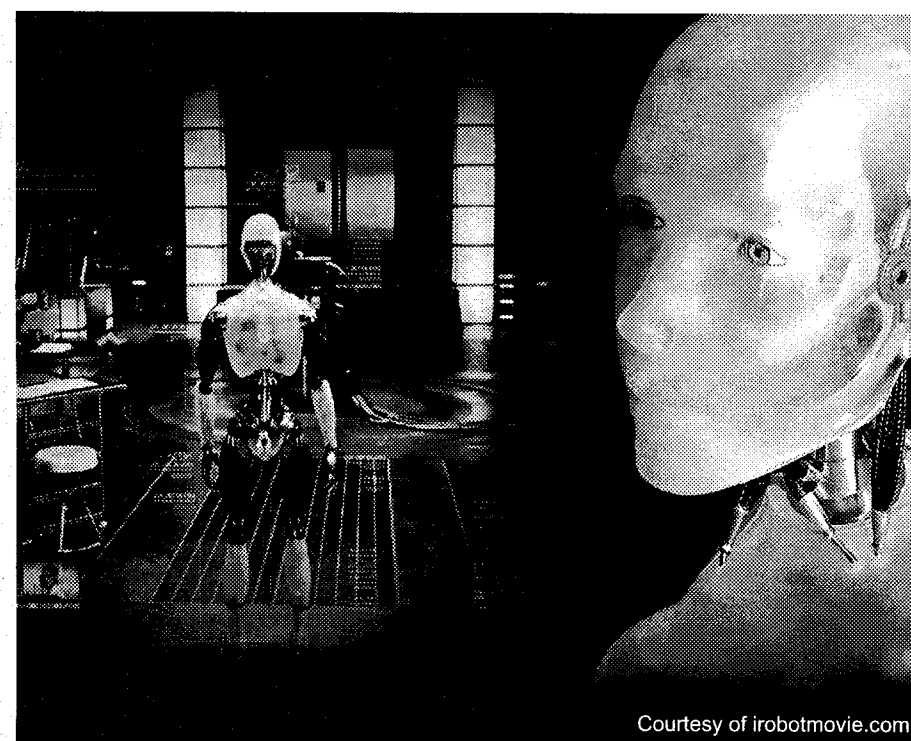
In the year 2035, robots are commonplace. United States Robotics (the monopoly known as USR) plans to replace all of their old models with the newer, sleeker, and more capable NS-5 model. On the verge of this deployment comes the death of the robot's famed creator, Dr. Alfred Lanning (James Cromwell). Most shirk it off as a suicide, with the exception of Detective Del Spooner (Will Smith). While most concede that the good doctor committed suicide, the arrogant Spooner

thinks there's a little more to the story. His racism against robots gets the better of him and he insists on investigating the actions of a robot close to Lanning, against the harsh objections of all around him.

Our pompous hero works with the beautiful Dr. Susan Calvin (Bridget Moynahan), a robo-psychiatrist for USR, to solve the mystery. In Asimov's novel, Calvin is a hard working, highly intelligent, and self-assured consultant who always uses logic to solve the problems that arise when dealing with artificial intelligence. Her movie counterpart is essentially faithful to the original, but for the fact that she turns to putty in the hands of Will Smith.

The dynamic duo resembles the *X-Files*' Scully and Mulder: the woman is driven by logic while the man is driven by a touch of paranoia. Their quest is entertaining and somewhat suspenseful: expect these areas to be on par with any typical Will Smith movie.

The visual effects are very believable in the movie and nothing seems to be quite out of place. The vast tower that USR operates from is what I would expect thirty years in the future for a wealthy corporation. The only thing that seems out of place is Will Smith, with his cool 2004 attitude and his vintage Converse All Star shoes of



Courtesy of irobotmovie.com

the same year.

To keep from alienating the audience, the writer made Will Smith one of us: a simple person who doesn't want to have anything to do with these new fangled gizmos. I prefer to not have my hand held by an annoying actor just to keep my

bearing throughout the illusion. A movie is supposed to create an effect, and the retro detective detracts greatly from it.

Despite its flaws, "I, Robot" is a smash hit at the box offices. Acting and storytelling aside, people want to simply be entertained, and entertaining this movie is.

Statesman Features

Fifteen Credits, Six Weeks, One Changed Life

By **ROHIT DAS**
Statesman Editor

We left our hostels each day to find a street lined with broken houses roughly patched with industrial blue tarp and cow dung floors. College students and businessmen passed these makeshift homes every day, traveling to their college classes and comfortable air conditioned offices. It is among these streets that their janitors, servants, kitchen staff and maids raise their families. It is among these cities that a silent epidemic slowly creeps, eluding their understanding and acknowledgement.

I had often heard administrators touting the benefits of complimenting a traditional four-year college with a Study Abroad experience, but rarely took them seriously. Stony Brook could give me an equally enriching experience, I told myself. But when I was in the streets of Bangalore, India this summer; tasting the food, experiencing an ancient culture, and educating the public about HIV/AIDS, I realized that no lecture hall in Long Island could ever compare.

This program did not merely enrich my education, it enriched my life.

There is a considerable amount of effort required in getting used to a totally new way of life. But could our group of sheltered students enjoy such a drastic transition? Would we embrace the radically new culture we had stumbled upon? Though I am of Indian heritage, Indian culture was still very new to me, and I can honestly say that I loved getting used to every bit of it during my stay in Bangalore.

Of course, there are parts of India that anyone

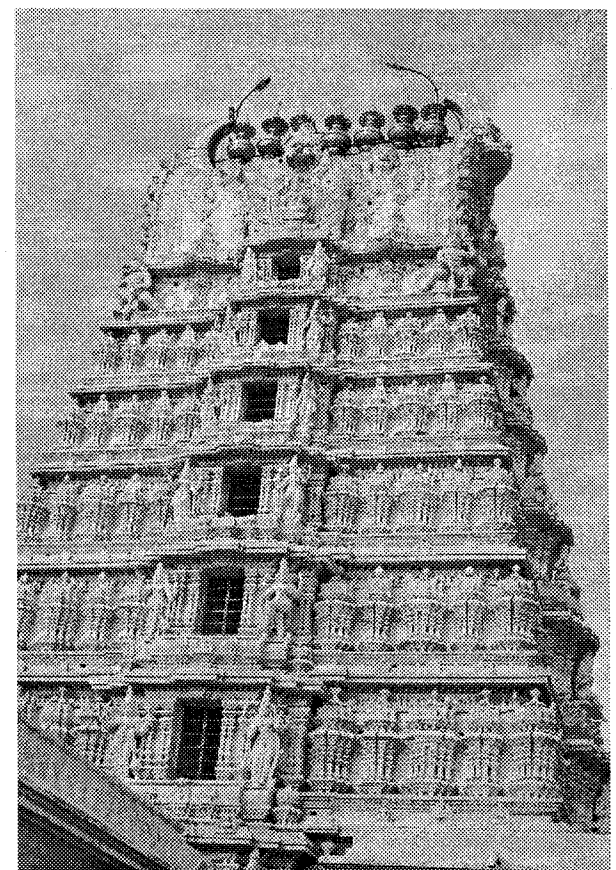
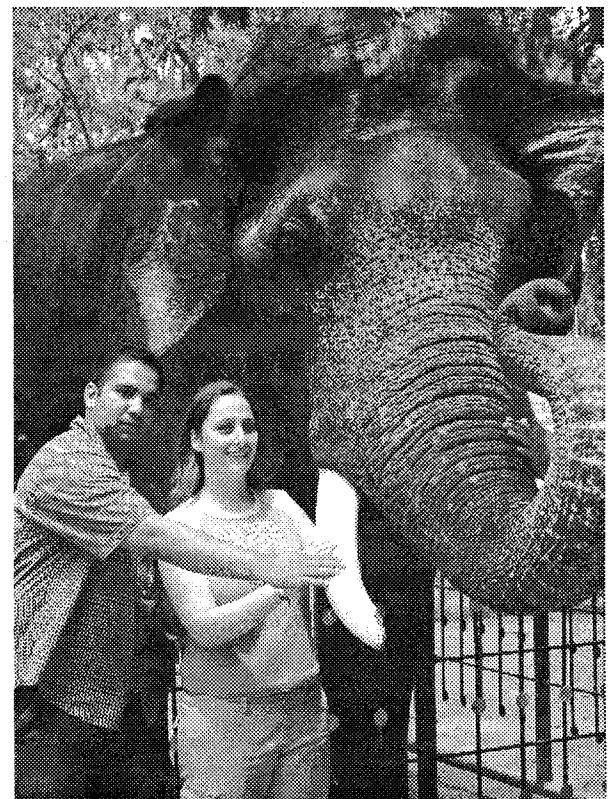
would enjoy, like the food, the absolutely beautiful temples, art, architecture, the gracious and welcoming nature of her people, and the unbelievably cheap prices for...basically everything. But then there are the massively huge and annoying mosquitoes, the frequent opportunities to get sick and the random power outages. But as I said, any culture requires a certain getting used to, and as painful or inconvenient as it may have been, it was worth every bug bite.

As part of the curriculum, several students opted to conduct independent projects in which our professors helped us find venues to conduct HIV/AIDS education in schools. We ventured into the streets not only as tourists and students, but also as anthropologists, studying the culture and the dynamics of social perceptions of HIV/AIDS. Our goal was to promote awareness and prevention in Bangalore, which has one of the highest incidents of AIDS in India. A local physician left us with a telling picture of its magnitude. "AIDS is a volcano that is patiently waiting to erupt on all of India," he said.

Our discussions and interviews revealed that the general public harbored a dangerous denial of the prevalence of the epidemic. They assumed that it was a disease that only affected people of the lower classes; that it could not transmit to those of upper classes. This naiveté led them to the conclusion that AIDS would only be a problem for future generations.

Much of this denial stems from the social taboos in traditional Indian society, where sex has no place

Continued on Page 2



Rohit Das/Statesman Editor:

Top - Students with an elephant

Above- Structure at the entrance to a temple in Mysore, a city in South India

Left- Sculpture of goddess Lakshmi and god Vishnu from a Shiva temple in Halebid

