the stony brook
Statesman

VOLUME XLVIII, ISSUE 23 ◆ THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2004 ◆ PUBLISHED TWICE WEEKLY

The vote of Latino students at SBU

By Todd Thomas
Statesman Contributor

This November was their first time. For many young New York City Latino voters, the 2004 presidential race was their debut election.

Currently, about 40 percent of Latinos are eligible to vote. By 2025, that number is expected to increase to 50 percent. It's expected that the Hispanic vote will have a large impact on the outcome of future elections.

According to the 2000 Census, Latinos made up 27 percent of New York City's population, the equivalent of 2,160,554 people. On a national level, the Latino population surpassed non-Hispanic blacks in 2000, making Latinos the largest minority group. Their numbers on a national level amounted to more than 35 million people, about 12.5 percent of the national population.

A *New York Times* poll conducted in 2003 found that over 61 percent of New York Latinos had an unfavorable view of the Republican Party. "Nationally and in the city, most Hispanics have a generally favorable view of the Democratic Party," the *Times* wrote. However, the Democratic political engine in New York City wasn't enough to put Kerry in the Oval Office.

"I'm extremely bitter," said Ana Marte, a Dominican American who attends Stony Brook. "I think my vote didn't count. I feel Conservative White Anglo-Saxon Protestants controlled the outcome."

Christian Torres, a 21-year-old of Dominican and Spanish heritage, who attends Stony Brook, said he felt his vote didn't count either. "Although most populated states have minorities, I felt like we had no effect," he said. Torres implied that minorities weren't able to affect the vote over the majority Anglo-Saxon Protestant population. "Those cities don't have an effect of Middle America. It all comes down to what the WASPs decide," Torres said.

America's three largest cities, New York, Los Angeles and

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Controversial 9/11 play evokes discussion

Radeyah Hack/Statesman

By Radeyah Hack
Statesman Senior Staff

"Omnium Gatherum, a collection of peculiar souls: " a fitting title for a play that captures the issues that plague society in a post 9/11 world and brings to the forefront the ills of human nature that contribute to war and corruption. The Long Island Play Project, in collaboration with the Dept. of Theater Arts at Stony Brook, sponsored a showing of the theatrical production and a panelist discussion after the event last Thursday for viewers to voice their opinions and qualms about the play.

With its simple set and colorful cast, issues ranging from feminism to terrorism were hashed out over an elegant dinner setting with an extravagant, multiple course meal prepared by the materialistic, flighty hostess, Suzie, played by Katelyn Gleason. A vibrant array of personalities constituted the dinner party, from a dead firefighter to a hotheaded terrorist.

"Food is used as a social tool to encapsulate culture," said Carol S. Lindguist, a sociologist and one of the panelists. "[Meals] are a method of interaction where all types of social phenomena are observed." The dinner guests used food to develop philosophical debates about the nature of war and peace, the existence of faith and racism, the benefits of capitalism and the purpose of being a vegan, while portraying western stereotypes of liberals, conservatives, feminists, Muslims and even terrorists.

Reminiscent of Jean Paul Sartre's "No Exit," the characters pondered over the reality of death and the state of an afterlife. "Since it was based on a meal, it was kind of like the last supper," Lindguist said.

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Uniting cultures on Thanksgiving

By Widaad Zaman and Radeyah Hack
Statesman Staff and Senior Staff

Protestants, Catholics, Baptists, Jews and Muslims: an unlikely combination of faiths sitting amicably together sharing a meal. Yet at Stony Brook University, this scene has become a tradition, particularly around Thanksgiving when the Interfaith Center sponsors its annual Thanksgiving Prayer Service and Dinner. Last Wednesday night, representatives of the different faiths on campus dined together at the Roth Kosher Cafeteria to uphold the spirit of Thanksgiving in light of the present disunity and discord among the world's religions.

"The good thing about Thanksgiving is that it is universal," said Rabbi Joseph Topek, chairman of the Interfaith Center on campus, and director of the Hillel Foundation for Jewish Life. "It does not belong to any one religion."

The evening's activities commenced with a reading of the pilgrim's thanksgiving to remind us of the events that led to the first autumn harvest feast between the Native Americans and Pilgrims at Plymouth in 1621. "We must remind ourselves about the Native Americans and that there are lots of people with little or nothing to eat," said Reverend Clark Berge, chaplain of the Protestant Campus Ministry, in view of the circumstances under which the two groups managed to place their differences aside and appreciate each other's values.

Likewise, the dinner was a forum for "the different religions to come together and celebrate together," said junior Szeman Mak of the Chinese Christian Fellowship. "We may have different values, but it is good that we can forget them and come together."

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Controversial 9/11 play

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The social standing of the characters contributed to the elaborate ambiance and satirical nature of the play, since the guests were portrayed as upper class, privileged individuals. "The playwright wrote this in response to 9/11 after attending dinner parties on the upper-east side with superficial conversations about salads," said Valeri Lantz-Gefroh, director of the play. "[The socialites] were not addressing the issues in the world." "Omnium Gatherum" was written with hopes of creating dialogue and debate about post 9/11 issues.

All of the panelists expressed reservations about the play. Samuel Butler, representative of the Social Justice Alliance, claimed that the play did not adequately represent the middle and working class, since the character of the firefighter remained silent throughout most of the play.

Lindguist said the whole concept of the dinner is strange since in reality, it is atypical for individuals to have heated debates of this caliber over dinner.

"The portrayal of the two types of Muslims [in the play] was stereotypical," said Widaad Zaman, representative of the Muslim Students Association and panelist. "The rational, level- headed Muslim, Khalid, was engaging in non-Islamic acts like drinking alcohol, while the Muslim terrorist was the one following the religious teachings." Zaman was concerned that this dichotomous image encouraged a negative view of practicing Muslims as irrational extremists. "I found myself agreeing with Khalid's views," she continued, "but I follow the guidelines of my religion, which according to the depiction of Mohammed [the terrorist] in the play, would put me in the category of extremists."

The character Khalid, played by David Blondell, was a Middle Eastern scholar whose rational, and intelligent opinions guided the dinner party. The character was intended to be modeled after the famed Palestinian philosopher Edward Said, a Christian.

Zaman was also concerned that the choice of name for the terrorist, Mohammed, was blasphemous and offensive to the final prophet of Islam, whose name was also Mohammed, since he was a noble and revered individual within the religion." An audience member stated that since the major hijacker of 9/11 was named Mohammed, the name was actually fitting. "With the name of our Prophet being used, I don't see how people can even imagine something to be fitting, when this play is not a reflection of 9/11 but the world we are living in," said a representative of the MSA in response.

"The point of theater is to piss you off and encourage you to think outside of the parameters," said Lantz-Gefroh. "Ominum Gatherum" was a play that accomplished just that. It was evident in the panel discussion as disagreements between various audience members and panelists erupted over the reasons and implications of 9/11.

"For something like this to happen, it has to be created by a buildup of hatred," Blondell said. "The country needs to figure out where this hatred came from. Instead, after 9/11, the country resorted to putting a face to the enemy."

Radeyah Hack/Statesman

Interfaith Thanksgiving dinner

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The prayer service consisted of various selections from Psalm 104 and Leviticus 19, all read by students of the different faiths on campus. In addition, guest singers led a rendition of various hymns, including "The Cry of the Poor" and "For the Beauty of the Earth," to remind us of the message behind the holiday.

"[This was] an opportunity for the different faiths to come together and show appreciation for the gifts that God has given to all of us," said Sister Margaret Ann Landry, chaplain of the Catholic Campus Ministry.

"We are very fortunate that we have food [and] we have clothes," said Rabbi Topek. "But some people don't have those things."

Before the dinner, the chaplains of the five religious groups in the Interfaith Center blessed the meal with prayers from their respective faiths, each adapted from their holy scriptures, and each geared towards praising God for the bounties of Thanksgiving. "[This event] will allow us to learn about each other because we have the opportunity to directly interact and listen to each other's prayers," said Stony Brook senior Jaime Moldovan, treasurer of the Hillel Foundation.

The highlight of the evening was the meal that defines American Thanksgiving: turkey and pumpkin pie. The main course consisted of a variety of Thanksgiving staples: sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, roasted potatoes, steamed vegetables, stuffing, corn bread and the famous, delectable turkey. Dessert was a scrumptious selection of pies, including apple crumb, cranberry, and the traditional Thanksgiving pumpkin pie.

The annual Thanksgiving dinner has been a tradition at Stony Brook for 17 years, and reflects the need to involve students. "The reason we started this is because on campus, Thanksgiving becomes a lost holiday when everyone leaves," said Rabbi Topek. "We always do it before the real Thanksgiving so that students can celebrate with us."

It is one of the few events that truly seeks to unite the various faiths on campus and to foster an understanding between students, as well as ministers and chaplains. "It is beautiful looking forward to this every year," said Sister Sanaa Nadim, chaplain of the Muslim Students Association. "It is a way to unite students by sitting together and eating together, as all the prophets and all the messengers who broke bread together; as Americans and people of different backgrounds rejoicing together."

Over-the-counter birth control a possibility

By Ashley Macomb
Statesman Staff

Emergency contraception could become easier to access in the future. Presently for a woman to receive emergency contraception in New York, it has to be prescribed. However, this may soon change since the House of Representatives recently passed a bill that authorizes the FDA to allow any contraceptive that has been proven safe to be available over-the-counter. Since the Senate has not approved it, the bill, however, is not yet law.

The bill has struck controversy and debate in America since many conservatives claim that it would increase promiscuity in young girls. Among the Stony Brook population, however, students feel that it's beneficial for women to have access to contraceptives without a prescription.

"As a Stony Brook organizer, I feel that there is nothing more important than making emergency contraception (EC) known on campus," said Suzanne Staub, a Grassroots Organizer from the Hudson Peconic chapter of Planned Parenthood. "Even if it is not over the counter, students still need to know it exists and that it is available to them."

There are, however, some local authorities that do not believe in the value of emergency contraception, such as Sister Margaret Ann Landry, chaplain of the Catholic Campus Ministry. "As a person who is pro-life, I do not approve of this bill becoming law," she said. This view is one held by the Catholic faith, which condemns birth control and abortion.

This controversial form of contraception, also known as the morning after pill or Plan B, is commonly mistaken for RU-486, the abortion pill. Plan B is the only emergency contraceptive product being marketed right now, according to Planned Parenthood. The difference between Plan B and RU-486 is that Plan B prevents implantation of already fertilized eggs, while RU-486 is a pill, which causes abortion. Since emergency contraception such as Plan B does not actually abort a fetus, many pro-lifers support Plan B as a way to prevent abortion.

"Though I am in opposition to abortions in principle and believe they should be illegal, the Federal Constitution, as articulated by the Supreme Court, says that I am wrong, and that the choice to get an abortion or not is a right protected under the Constitution," said Robert J. Romano, treasurer of the SBU College Republicans. "Contraception prevents pregnancy in the first place, which in fact if it were used more frequently, would help to reduce the need for abortions. If the emergency contraception in question is safe by FDA standards, then I see no reason why it should not be made available over-the-counter. "

The FDA has said that Barr Laboratories Inc., the producer of Plan B, has not proven the pill safe for girls under 16. According to Dr. Rachel Bergeson, M.D., director of Student Health Services, Plan B is not harmful because it uses the hormone progesterone, which is usually present in birth control pills. Dr. Bergeson, who belongs to both the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Society of Adolescent Medicine, believes the pill is safe. "I'm strongly in favor of it going over-the-counter," she said.

Progesterone does not affect an already pregnant woman and has no effect on the fetus. "There haven't been any birth defects associated with progesterone," Dr. Bergeson said.

"I think the morning after pill should definitely be over-the-counter," said Cheryl Lynch, a pro-choice, Environmental Science major. "I had to take the

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SGT, a musical smash on Long Island

By Inur Mamoor
Statesman Staff

Amidst the consistent barrage of midterms and research papers that plague college students every week, it's often difficult to truly engage in something other than school. Throw in a part-time job, a few extracurricular activities and the mandated Thursday night of partying, and it becomes impossible. But there are those who do amazing things outside of Stony Brook, like one-half of the Long Island-based music group, SGT.

With the release of their new extended play (EP) record, "Two Hearts," SGT has been making a name for itself throughout the Island. SGT consists of Chris Gabriel on vocals and guitar, Paulie DeVincenzo on bass, Brian Zaharatos on lead guitar and Mike Romeo on drums.

The four were in the band since they were 19, and have come very far. They have gained quite a bit of popularity as a local band, and recently opened for Maroon 5 and Nine Days. SGT has played at legendary venues like the CBGB's in New York City.

All four members juggle the band and college. Paulie and Brian attend Stony Brook, while Chris and Mike go to Suffolk County Community College, where Mike recently received an 88 on his humanities exam – a feat he was quite happy about.

SGT recently won a battle of the bands-esq competition at the downtown bar Rock Fight. Among the prizes was a slot at the New York date of this summer's Warped Tour. This is just one of the many band competitions SGT has won, proving to the public they are serious about their music.

In a recent interview, SGT allowed the *Statesman* to enter their realm of musical production – their studio. Mike, a definite character, flashed a smile as he showed off his tee shirt. The hand made shirt read, "I Heart Hecuba."

"Hecuba is my cat," he said.

The conversation naturally drifted to music, an area of expertise for the band members. "We are our own favorite band," Brian chimed in, "and it's really good." But after their band, the guys enjoy Phantom Planet. But despite their avid musical tastes, Chris explained that SGT doesn't let the bands they admire influence the way they sound.

"Two Hearts is the best representation of our music right now," he said, referring to the new EP. "We are constantly trying to outdo ourselves."

"We are always growing musically," Brian added. They explained how they have outgrown their older music.

"We became a new band with Mike," Chris said, mentioning that Mike joined the band last May.

Asked to describe their music, the members of SGT reluctantly liken it to alternative rock, explaining that they don't like being labeled. "Our live show is very different from the CD, we are more versatile live," Brian said. "The energy is different and we can have more fun."

It wasn't all talk at the studio, however. SGT played a six-song set, including a brand new, untitled song, yet to be played live. The set included "Keep You Here", a song inspired by Catcher in the Rye.

The performance revealed the band's ability to be spontaneous and flexible. SGT has mastered the art of multi-tasking. They are able to perform live shows, attend and do well in school, and create their new CD. Their next show is Wednesday, Nov. 24 at Vegas in Port Jefferson. To hear SGT's music, or to learn more about them, visit their website at www.sgtmusic.com.

Inur Mamoor/Statesman

The band members of SGT, two of whom go to Stony Brook, during practice.

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The Stony Brook Statesman, which serves SUNY Stony Brook and its surrounding community, is a nonprofit literary publication produced twice weekly during the academic year and bi-monthly during the summer. For advertising information, call us at (631) 632-6480 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Editorials represent the majority opinion of the Editorial board and are written by one of its members. The Stony Brook Statesman welcomes letters, opinions and information about events and issues on or around campus.

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What now? A Democrat's Point of View

By Krystyna M. Baumgartner
Statesman Contributor

First let me offer my condolences to the College Republicans, who failed to help any of their candidates in New York, despite the massive Get Out the Vote campaign they launched under the cover of an invisibility cloak. It was a valiant effort, really. That said, I'd like to address some issues in a recent article by Robert Romano, "What Now? A Republican Point of View."

Mr. Romano talks about a "sweeping mandate" that was won by the Bush campaign. When a president wins re-election by a simple majority, does this show overwhelming support for the leader of the free world, as a mandate would imply? Not by a long shot. Bush won by less than the population of New York City. That's hardly an impressive margin.

What the election really showed is the stark division within our country. Mr. Romano suggests at the end of his commentary that the division can be healed through measures such as social security reform and making the tax cuts permanent. How are these measures going to bring the country together, Mr. Romano? These are two of the most divisive issues facing our country.

Social Security is the sole source of income and sustenance for many senior citizens. If it is privatized, there will be less money going into the system and, in turn, their checks will be written for lesser and lesser amounts, and eventually will disappear. This means that there will be more and more senior citizens that are unable to survive in an economy full of rising costs. Forget the fact that these senior citizens that you are refusing to help are the ones that helped take care of you when you were young and needed help surviving in the world, and who fought in America's wars to secure the freedoms that you take for granted. Forget the fact that one day, it will be this generation that reaches retirement, probably somewhere in their early 70's, if at all. It will then be this generation that looks for help from future generations. But don't get upset if they fail to help you. They are simply following the example set by their forefathers.

The tax cuts that Mr. Romano hopes will be made permanent provide another interesting matter to look at. It is no surprise that these tax cuts favor the wealthy. This would be okay if the principle of trickle-down economy actually worked in America. But through the tax cuts that have already been given, it has been proven that a trickle-down economy does not work in this country because the key element is missing—the money doesn't trickle down. Tell me, how does this help the economy? It doesn't. In fact, it made the economy worse. More people lost jobs, more children are without proper healthcare, and more Americans are living below the poverty line since Bush was originally elected president.

Mr. Romano spent a great majority of his commentary speaking about national security and the war in Iraq, so I will not neglect to comment on this aspect as well. Let's talk about Mr. Romano's assertion that two terrorist states are gone and we have two new allies. The only reason that the new governments in Iraq and Afghanistan appear to be our allies is because the leaders were handpicked by the Bush administration to lead their respective countries and because the American Armed Forces maintain them in power. But these are still terrorist states. For what are the insurgents but terrorists? And there are still insurgents in both countries. Until these people are gone for good, these countries should still be considered terrorist states.

In the same paragraph, Mr. Romano talked about the fact that 75 percent of Al Qaeda's leadership is gone. But what about the most important part of the Al Qaeda leadership, Osama bin Laden, who was conveniently left out of Mr. Romano's commentary? Bin Laden is the one who orchestrated the attacks of Sept. 11 and who wants to use nuclear weapons against the United States. Does it not scare you that he is still out there and still threatening Americans? Does that make you feel more secure?

I share Mr. Romano's hope that our country can pull together in the time before the next federal election cycle. But the Democratic Party will not go into hibernation, much to the chagrin of the Republicans. We will not be discouraged by the fact that the Republicans control every branch of our government. It doesn't dampen our spirits. Rest assured, Mr. Romano, the Democrats do not intend to remain the minority party for "some time to come," as you state hopefully in your commentary. We don't give up as easily as an elephant does when it sees a mouse. Come 2006, you just might be wishing you hadn't underestimated the Democratic Party. Oh, and by the way, the Assault Weapons Ban called. It said that it could use some backing from the Republican Party because it needs something. What was it again? Oh, yeah. A renewal.

Quote of the Week:

Only kings, presidents, editors, and people with tapeworms have right to use the editorial "we."

-Mark Twain

Dredging the realities of a not-so-super life

Pixar's "Incredibles" a philosophical circus

By Michael Zannettis
Statesman Staff

Courtesy of Buena Vista Pictures

Ever since Superman died, comic books, and their animated motion picture cousins, have struggled with the very idea of being incredible. In an age when the flawed superhero of Marvel Comics—i.e., the poor, socially awkward Spiderman; the crippled Professor Xavier; the incontinent Cyclops; the blind Daredevil; the unrestrained Hulk—dominate the silver screen, Pixar's "The Incredibles" offers a perfect amalgam with DC's exiled invincibles: immortal Wonder Woman; cerebral Batman; cosmic Green Lantern.

"Incredibles" protagonist, Mr. Incredible, perfectly walks that line between strength and nuance: a chiseled Golden-Aged hero, forced into the abject suburban mediocrity of "keeping with the Joneses." At the center of "Incredibles'" plot is the Nietzchien question: should we as citizens of a fair society strive to be super? The movie first, ambitiously answers no, outlawing super powers in society. But heroes are heroes for a reason, and so the Incredible family storms back into action righteously triumphant in the nobility of being super.

After the U.S. Government outlaws the use of superpowers as a response to a class-action lawsuit filed by ordinary citizens, the Incredible family is moved into a hero witness protection program, where their super lives are hidden to protect their identities. Forced into a suburban tedium where no one and nothing is special, our heroes fray at the edges. Mr. Incredible becomes an insurance agent, too colossal for either his boxy cubicle or mid-sized sedan. His son, Dash, blessed with superhuman speed, uses his talents to enact pranks on his elementary school teacher, but cannot join any sports teams for fear of his talents becoming public. His daughter, Violet, uses her invisibility powers as both a defense mechanism of avoiding family strife and as a teenage reflection of her isolation; the boy she likes doesn't even know she exists. His wife, Elastigirl, subverts her stretching powers from the sexual innuendo of their courtship to the routine chores of housewifery.

"The Incredibles'" sophistication deepens when ordinary life plies itself over with heavy metaphor: there's Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s "Harrison Berengue" motif of Orwellian homogeneity; the sanitized routine of turn of the millennium "American Beauty;" the inhuman hive life of "Office Space". These are bold themes for an animated picture to take on, but that's where form follows content. "Incredibles" is itself a movie forced into the ordinary, but forever striving for greatness. Reflective of the post-Matrix era, it's mainstream, but deep.

Ultimately, however, a movie is a movie for a reason, and our heroes are dragged back into a formulaic adventure plot of saving the world from evildoers.

"The Incredibles" succeeds greatly at being a story, before being a hero story. It further builds on the success of Marvel's movies—"Spiderman," "Spiderman 2," "X-Men," "X-Men 2"- at legitimizing the struggles of comic book character indeed being the narratives of the human universals.

If only, though, the "Incredibles" decided to take its commentary one step further – to art imitating our own flawed lives. That really would have been super.

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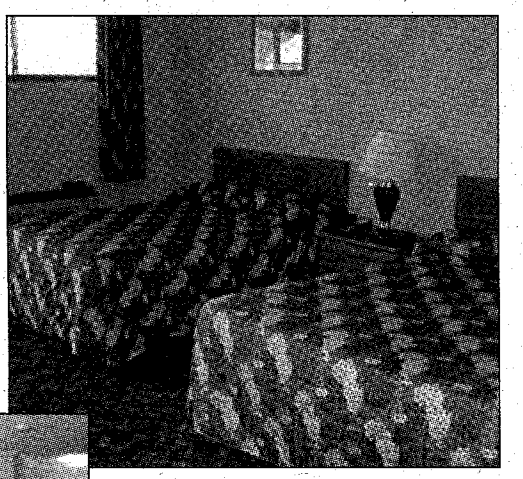

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Virsky at Staller: A Colorful Composition

Dancers from the Virsky Ukrainian National Dance Company perform at the Staller Center.

Photos Courtesy of Dmitri Gnatenko

The Stony Brook Statesman Thursday, November 18, 2004

By Mansoor Khan
Statesman Editor

The young mens' baggy pant-legs billowed in the air as they sailed down from their atmospheric exhibitions. Tinged in a multitude of fluorescent hues, the women were no less impressive. Their muscular legs kicked in every which direction as they spun like tops, their suitors watching and dancing in synchronized patterns around the stage. Sailors graced the platform with their patriotic presence and embroideresses strung elegant patterns of ever-increasing complexity with the turn of their hips.

No, the circus did not come to Stony Brook; the Virsky Ukrainian National Dance Company did, this past Saturday night at Staller. Strapping young Ukrainian men soared high in the air in splits, careering around Staller's main stage in gravity-defying jumps and spinning like mischievous rugrats do when seeking their altered state of mind for the day. Beautiful Ukrainian women, donned in lavishly graceful costumes spanning the colors of the rainbow, danced synchronized across stage and sang tunes of patriotism.

But this is no ordinary folk dance. Pavlo Virky started the company in Kiev in 1937. It is made up of professional dancers with a tremendous amount of ballet training, and any die-hard dance lover would appreciate the incredible skill and technique required to pull off what the enthusiastic Ukrainians pulled off on the Staller stage.

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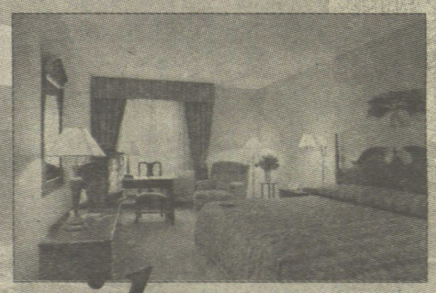

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Over-the-counter birth control

Continued from Page 2

morning after pill [and] I was so nervous. I had to go to Planned Parenthood [but] it would have been so much easier to go to the drugstore; much less embarrassing."

Saima Anjam, president of Students for Choice, also believes it should be made over-the-counter. Anjam believes schools need to make access to emergency contraception easier. "Some say that making EC available over the counter will only encourage sex, and promiscuity, but the reality is that people are having sex at a younger and younger age," Anjam said. "EC ensures us that these young women will have a chance to live and learn from their mistakes." Anjam also stated that comprehensive sex education should be emphasized since EC does not protect against sexually transmitted infections.

Emergency contraception is available at Planned Parenthood. The hotline is 1-800-230-plan. Students for Choice also gives out information about the pill. Their meetings take place during campus lifetime on Wednesdays in room 223 of the Student Union.

"I don't think that [EC] promotes having sex," said Shannon Reardon, a freshman in the pre-nursing program. "They'll do it if they have the pill or not."

Latino voters

Continued from Page 1

Chicago, went to Kerry. All three cities have large Latino populations.

Although Latinos in New York primarily support the Democratic Party, that isn't the case around the country as a whole. According to the Associated Press, Latinos who were born-again Christians helped re-elect Bush because of his stands on morality.

According to a Fox News Poll, Cuban-Americans, who historically had large numbers supporting the Republican Party, can shift either way in an election. Support for Bush was down compared to the election in 2000. Travel restrictions between Cubans in America and the island could have been a cause of the shift.

The Florida vote went to George Bush. According to the Miami-Dade County government's website, Miami-Dade County went to Kerry with fifty-two percent of the vote. Miami has traditionally been a Cuban enclave of influence. This further shows the fluctuation among Latino voters.

Although there was less support for Bush by Cuban-Americans than he garnered in 2000, many Latinos said that politicians overlook the differences within the Latino community. Something that is important to a Puerto-Rican in the Northeast may be irrelevant to a Cuban-American in the Southeast.

"I think sometimes Politicians think that Latinos will vote Democratic," Argenis Sanchez, a Dominican-American, who attends Stony Brook, said. "Bush helped them in Florida with the hurricanes. No matter what color you were, he helped everybody down there. They didn't forget that."

Another concern was the Electoral College. Many people suggest that the Founding Father's solution for compromise is outdated.

The Electoral College guarantees that each state gets two electoral votes automatically to represent its two Senate seats. A state is given more seats depending on its population. Of course this represents the seats in the House of Representatives, the section of Congress, which allows representation by population. California, for example has 55 electoral votes.

Carlos Ramos, a 20-year-old Dominican American, who attends Stony Brook, said the Electoral College should be done away with. "I never thought my vote counted, if at all. All that matters is the Electoral College," he said.

Diana Flores, a 19-year-old of Puerto Rican descent who attends St. Johns, said, "I felt my vote would have counted more if they did away with the Electoral College."

Although some felt their vote didn't matter, Andrew Figueroa, an 18 year old Puerto Rican who attends New York City College of Technology felt differently. "Yeah, my vote counted," he said, "Kerry rocked New York."

Virsky performs at the Staller Center

Continued from Page 6

The show, however, wasn't just about the show. Within the acrobatics and dance sequences lied a more telling story about the history and life of Ukraine, which, technically, only dates back to 1991. But the *real* history spans back to the 9th Century A.D., when one of the largest and most powerful states of medieval Europe was founded under the name of Kyivska Rus.

The dancers presented theatrical snapshots of the artistry of the country. The beautiful embroideresses used the Russian tradition of needlework to portray the beauty of Russian women. Wearing common clothes (yet still elegantly stitched like all of the costumes in the show), they weaved across the stage with huge lengths of rope, impressing their audience with the skill and care used to tangle and untangle the ropes.

The Dance of the Cossacks, while demonstrating the agility of the dancers, evoked feelings of audacity, courage and abandon as intended by the creator of the company. The Kozachok dance told the audience of the history and traditions of Ukraine with colorful costumes, symphonic music and meticulous choreography. Performed only by women, the spins and jumps were intended to underline the women's beauty.

Perhaps the best part of the production, however, was "Oi, Pid Vishneiu," "Oh, Under a Cherry Tree." The dancers acted out an old, humorous Ukrainian song about an old man who makes advances on a young beauty. The girl, impulsive and hesitant, rejects the old man's gifts. But he will not give her a moment's peace until the girl's young boyfriend comes and saves the day. The story is narrated through a characteristic Russian dance, intermixed with a pseudo-puppet show in which the dancers are the puppets.

Virsky's epic production has lasted the years, and remained a delight for audiences everywhere, including the Staller audience that took the opportunity to clap rhythmically at every chance. Most of all, the colors make it the show that it is. But perhaps, with a little more focused direction, it could have been even more of an entertaining affair than it was. Regardless, however, the Virsky Dance Company is a formidable team of professionals that lit Staller's stage on fire.

Fashion tips for the holidays

By Sergei Fyodorov
Statesman Contributor

With the holiday season rapidly approaching, why not treat yourself to some brand new clothing? Embrace the newest styles of fall and winter 2004. Head to Smith Haven Mall and check out the latest styles and fashions. After all, a brand new wool coat might just be the relief you need from the tedious Stony Brook finals period.

For the conservative/neo preppy look, one can visit Banana Republic or Express. While express tends to be a little cheaper, Banana's fabrics and texture are superior. For men at Banana carries Merino wool tattersall v-neck sweaters. At Under $70, these are great fitting wool sweaters that go great over either solid or striped dress shirts. Just remember to pop the collar out. Also check out the various Dawson chinos, all under $50.

Women should check out the Wool/angora button-neck cable sweaters, $79, for a unique sexy retro look. Think Jackie Kennedy meets Molly Sims. For accessories, check out the various 40's-50's inspired jewelry, like the blue flower brooch, $58 dollars, or the turquoise flower drop earrings, only $28 dollars.

At Express for the guys, wool zip jackets at $98, provide protection against the cold weather ahead, while still being slim fitting. Also, check out the textured pattern Express shirts, $60-68 dollars, available in solid, checkered and striped, in almost any color you can think of. For women, short puffer jackets, $168, add a classy casual look while keeping you safe from the cold. Add regular fit low rise Slimmer Flare Leg Sarula jeans, perfect for turning heads in school, as well as in clubs.

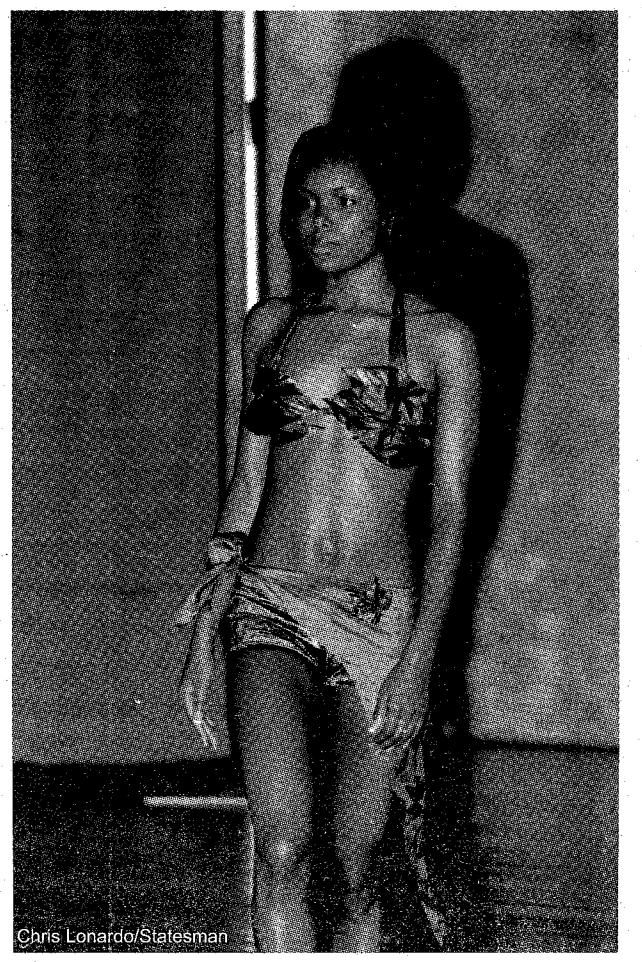
For a more casual less pricey look, check out Abercrombie and Fitch and American Eagle. The Diesel section at Macy's might also be worth a look. For men, Abercrombie has a line of casual luxury McLenathan Bay, A&F and Henley long sleeve knits providing a nice relaxed fit, perfect at any casual outing. Pair the knit up with a vintage track jacket, $79.50, for a perfect stylish defense against the cold. For women

Abercrombie has Athena track jackets, only $49.50. Pair it with Maria Active pants, $44.50, to create a relaxed yet sporty look.

At American Eagle, there are new AE hoodies, only $29.50, and the AE Lodge striped sweaters, both for men. Match that with their Bootcut jeans, $29.50, to provide a rugged athletic look. Abercrombie also has AE hoodies for women. AE Summit denim mini skirts, $34.50 paired up with the Eagle V-neck sweaters, $39.50 create a great punky look.

To finalize the look, check out Macy's Diesel section or Journey's for an assortment of Diesel shoes, $50-100, available in any color you can think of, from ruby red to emerald green, adding to your perfect attire for a night of clubbing.

No matter what you decide to get, there are so many choices and sales this holiday season that the opportunities to diversify your wardrobe are plentiful. In the words of one retail store veteran, "The time to shop is now, people."



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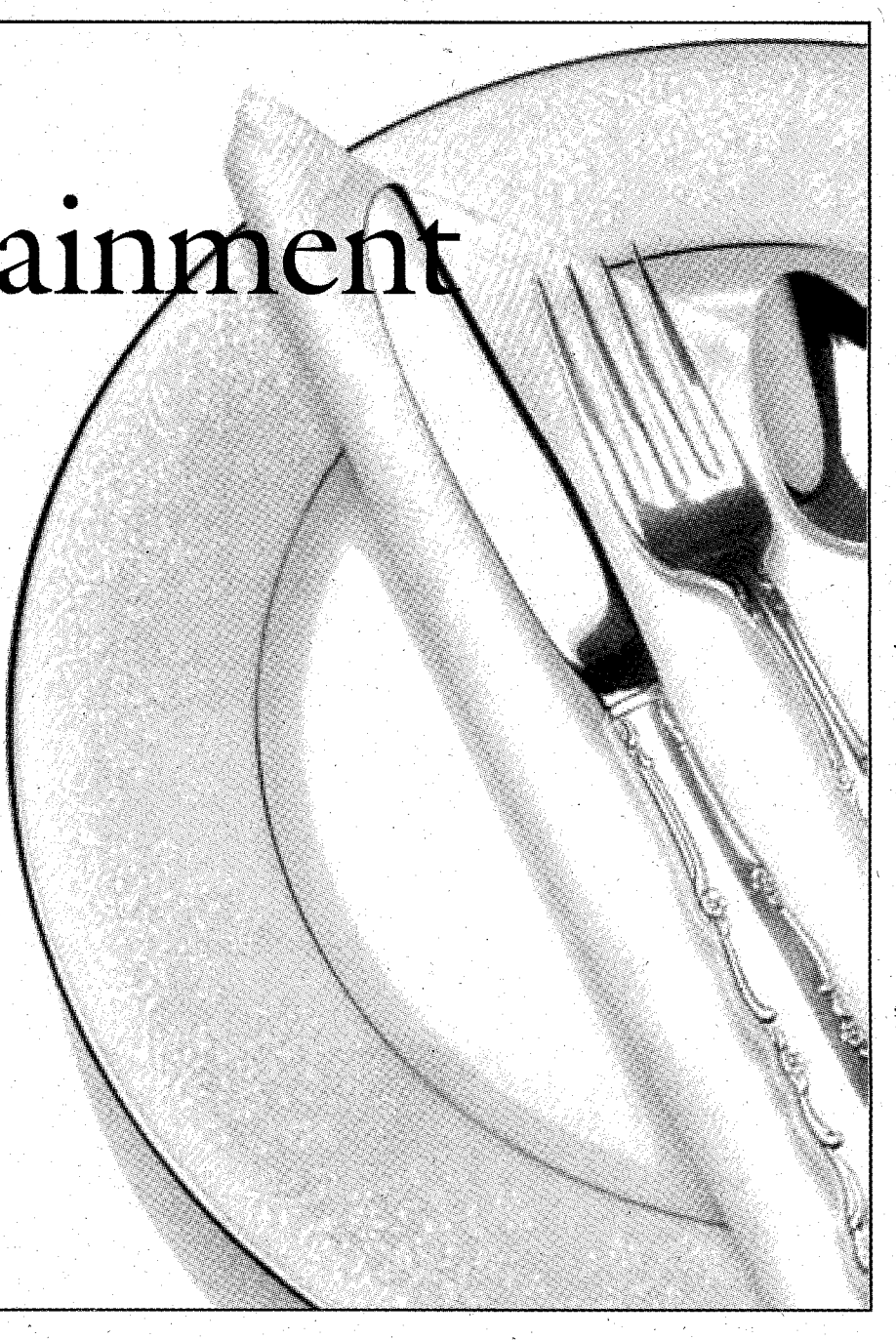
FALL 2004

Dining & Entertainment Guide



The holiday season is approaching. We at the Statesman are creating a special pull-out section of our regular publication to appear on **December 6, 2004.** The "Dining Guide" will feature restaurants in Stony Brook & the surrounding Three Village Area.

For information regarding advertising in this issue, please contact the Statesman Business Office at 631-632-6480.

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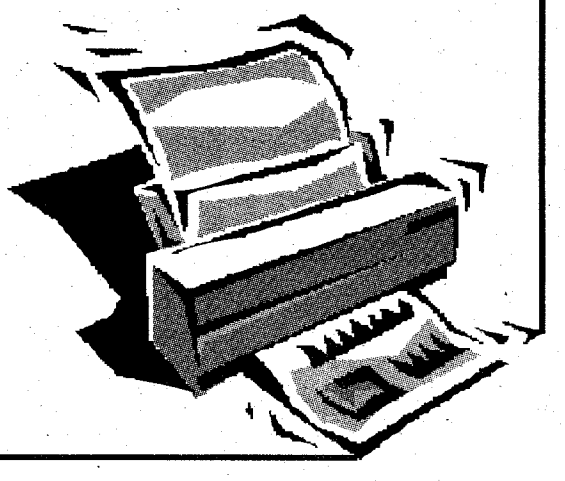

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Ready, Set, Fight!

Pacers/Pistons game ends in chaos

By Rohit Das
Statesman Editor

If you tuned into Friday night's showdown against the Pistons and Pacers in Detroit late in the fourth quarter, you were most likely expecting to see the end of a great game between two of the best teams in the Eastern Conference. Instead, to the shock of fans and NBA officials alike, what you ultimately saw was pure, uncontrollable chaos. A physical altercation between Ben Wallace and Ron Artest, with 45.9 seconds left, evolved into an absolute brawl, which included players, coaches, security and fans. The result is an ongoing police investigation, the indefinite suspension of four NBA players and undoubtedly, a multitude of lawsuits.

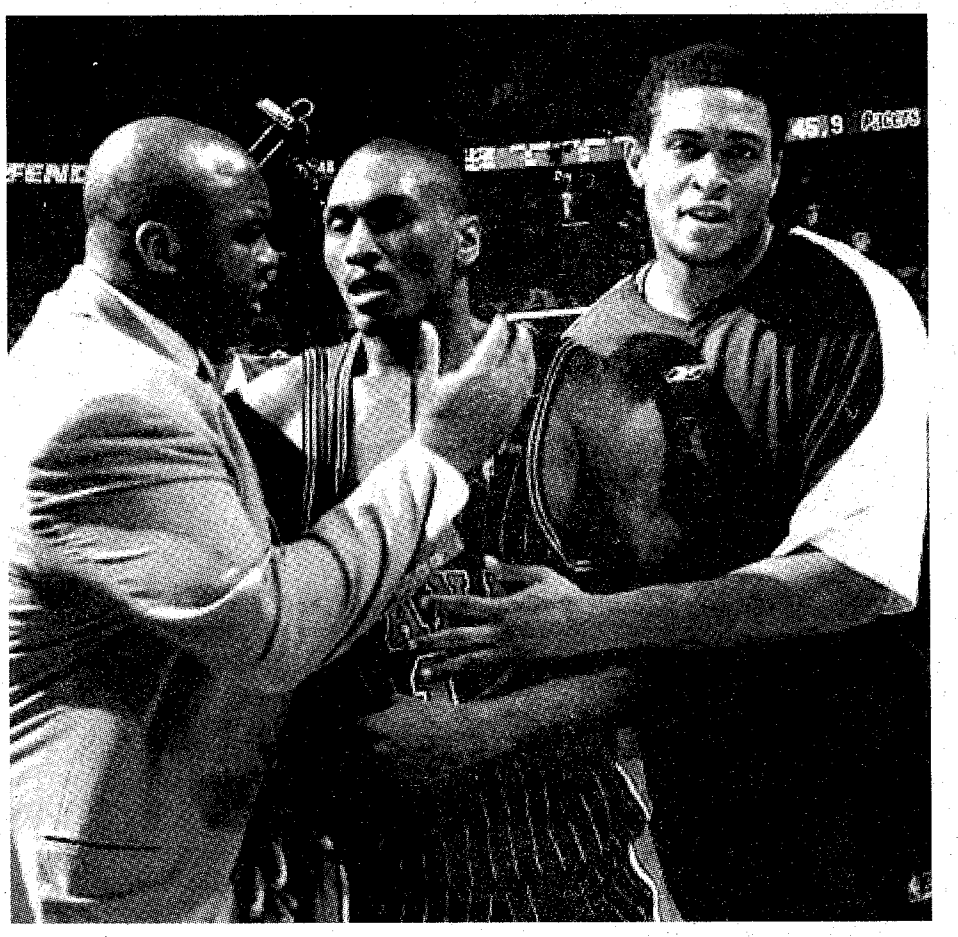
Many people around the league feel that this event was a travesty, a moment in U.S. sports history that should be completely forgotten; but obviously one which never will be. NBA Commissioner David Stern released a statement describing the event as "shocking, repulsive and inexcusable – a humiliation for everyone associated with the NBA." Some even blame the fans for the altercation, like Tim Legler, a former player and current ESPN NBA columnist, who wrote, "What was surprising and a complete overreaction was the fan's reaction to the situation. Usually the players, coaches and referees are able to sort out and deal with the situation. Tonight was different because the fans crossed the line."

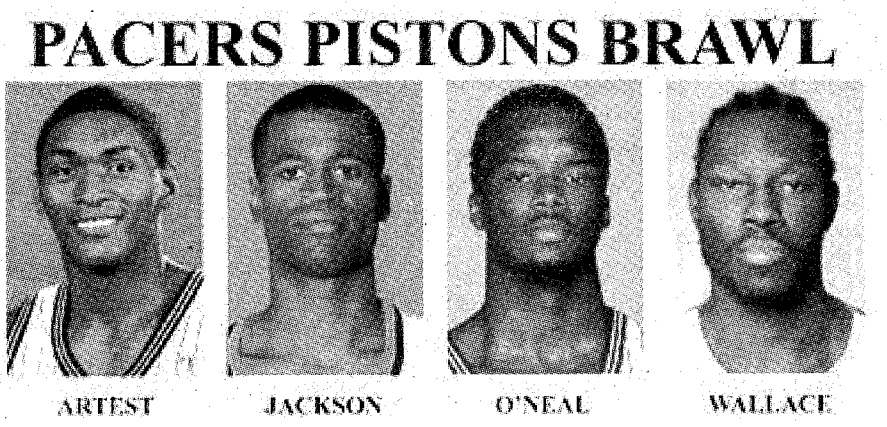
Interestingly, after watching the incident, I didn't adopt the standpoints described above or play the blame game with those involved. Instead, I sat there and enjoyed what American sports has consistently lacked, especially in the regular season – raw, competitive passion.

Seriously, as dedicated as fans may be to their particular team, especially championship teams, how often do you get to see them actually interact with the players in a competitive atmosphere? Never. Furthermore, as unethical, unprofessional and unruly as this brawl may have been, it will ultimately serve to increase the hatred Piston fans have for the Pacers, spark a rivalry that has long remained dormant, and most importantly, in the eyes of NBA administrators, inevitably increase profits. You have to know that deep down inside, NBA executives had to love what they saw Friday night.

In this light, I think it's extremely unwise for the NBA to indefinitely suspend players like Ben Wallace and Ron Artest. Sure, they deserve some type of suspension, but not one that could potentially compromise their season and perhaps even their post-season. For the NBA overall, it is pertinent that they take advantage of the intense rivalry that now exists between the Pacers and Pistons. Placing such heavy suspensions on star players, however, is obviously not conducive to this goal.

I am not expounding physical altercation in professional sports as "rights" by any means. There's a good side to everything, and all I'm saying is that people don't always appreciate the beneficial value of these types of incidents as much as they should. In all the major sports rivalries that exist in professional sports, there has always been some type of physical altercation to either spark or reinforce it. Take the Red Sox and Yankees rivalry for instance. The NBA needs to stop whining and exploit what should be one of the most intense Eastern Conference contests in recent years.





Courtesy of foxsports.com

Students Wanted for Alumni Event

Stony Brook Alumni are holding another Mid-Winter Reception this coming January 27, 2005 at Club 101, at 101 Park Avenue in Manhattan. The Alumni need 15 students who are interested in dressing up and acting as hippies and 1970's disco people while roving and mingling with alumni guests. Out of the 15, 5 students should be able to do a few karaoke songs. Theater students and singers are encouraged to join in, but acting and singing experience aren't necessary. This is a great opportunity to mingle with Stony Brook's best, including Rob Roth, '77, Chief Financial Officer of Home Box Office, Inc., among other notable alumni. President Kenny will be there as well. Students will get paid $100 each, receive free dinner and costumes.

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A THOUGHT FROM RABBI ADAM

B"H

THOUGHTS ON BEING JEWISH

Did you ever notice how great it feels to be Jewish? I mean, like, really great. It's not like the great feeling of being a Yankee fan in Yankee stadium at the last game that won the World Series. For sure that must have been a great feeling. But being Jewish...I dunno...there's something else to it. I mean, a World Series Yankee game is exciting...but being Jewish is like...like a warmth in one's heart- you know? Maybe it's a kind of pride. Like "proud to be Italian" or something. But then again, it's a lot more than just national "pride". It's hard to explain. It's like this "feeling". An emotional feeling that every Jew experiences at one time or another. Sometimes a person experiences it when they are away. When they're traveling abroad somewhere and bump into other tourists and suddenly there is an immediately connection with one of the other tourists. It's a shared warmth. Though you hardly know them, the conversation just flows and you feel connected. Then it comes up in conversation that they're Jewish too. And suddenly all the Jewish conversations start. First it's Jewish geography, "Oh! You're from city xyz? Do you know so-and-so?" Then it's off to the other Jewishly flavored subjects. Now all this may seem like normal conversation between two people who found something in common. But deep down inside, it feels different. There's an inner something. An inner connection. And that's what's so great about the Chabad House. It's a place where Jewish students can make that "inner connection".

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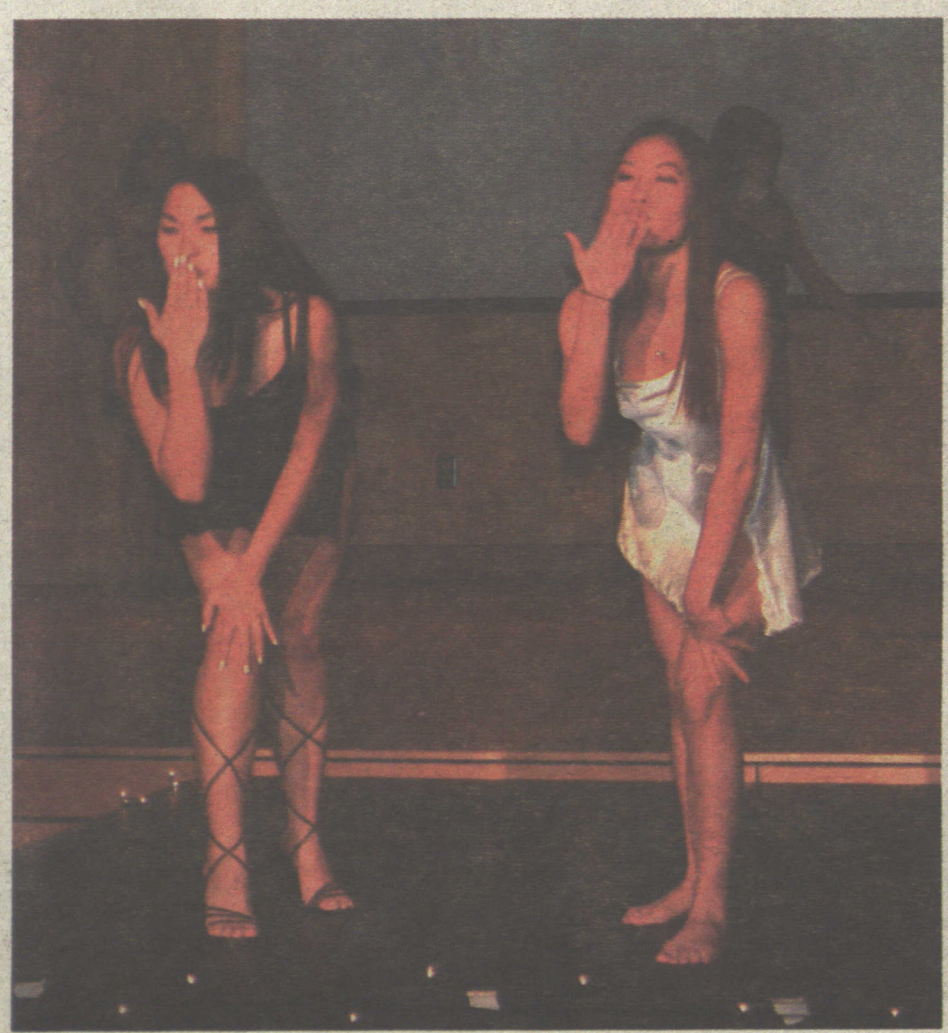
Statesman
Features

Asian Night 2004

Crowds of spectators filed into the Student Activities Center Friday night to see the 2004 Asian Night show here in Stony Brook. Asian Night is a cultural event put on by the Asian Student Alliance, and it features singing, dancing, skits, and much more. This year's show packed a sold out crowd of over four hundred students. It featured Eliot Chang, a stand up comedian from NYC, and Asian rap artist FlowSik, as well as performers of the student body. Asian night is the first of two Asian cultural events held in Stony Brook during the year. *Caption and Photos by Evan Hsieh*