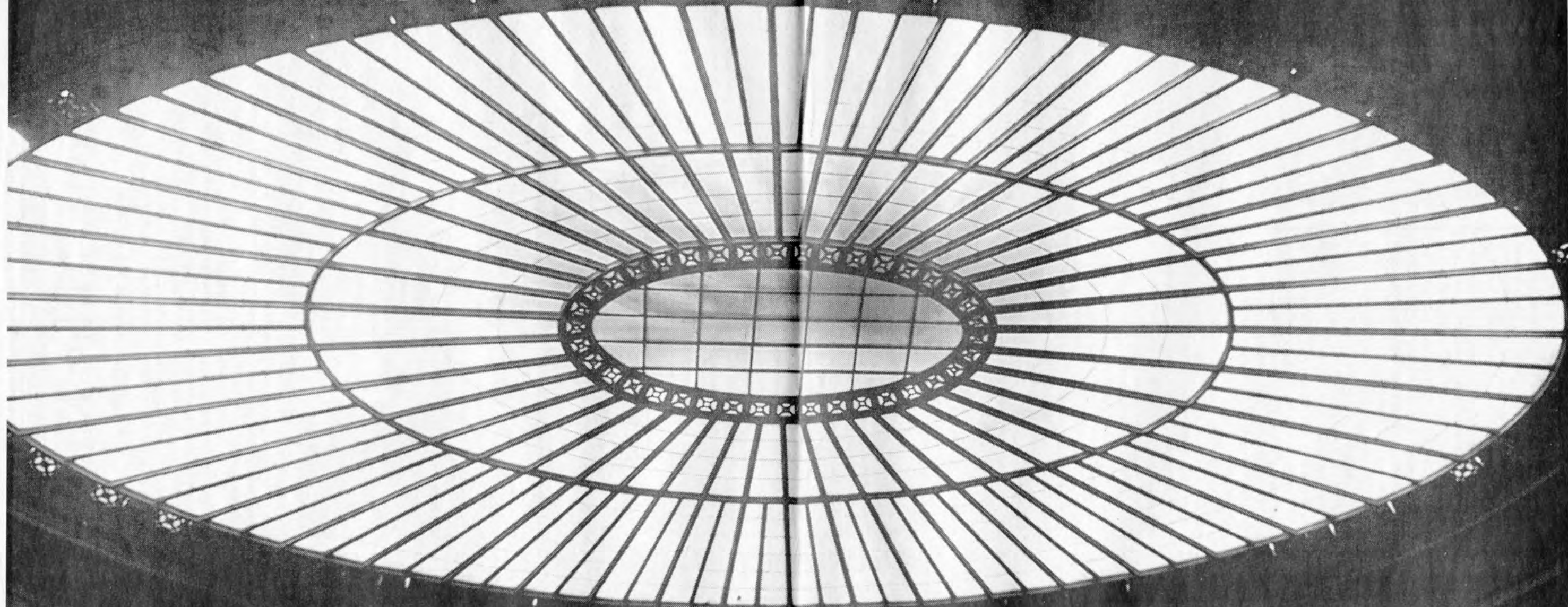


# Observer

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22 April, 2002



# The Marvelous Critter Known as the Degu

•• by Jacqueline LaDuke ••

ONE AFTERNOON, while I was waiting for the shuttle, I decided to go to the pet store in Red Hook. I looked around a bit... there were lots of cute little critters: rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, mice, rats (not so cute), and the usual reptiles: geckos, lizards, frogs, etc. I walked over to a cage with something that looked like a combination of a mouse and a guinea pig and read the sign. It said "baby degu." So I asked the lady working there what they were. She really couldn't explain much other than the fact that they are related to chinchillas and they take dust baths. So I did a little research on my own.

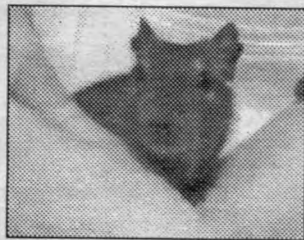
Degus are thought of as rodents, although they may not be rodents at all. They are related to chinchillas and rabbits, although lots of people say they look like squirrels without the bushy tails. They originally came to the U.S. and Europe from Chile to be used to research diabetes. Degus can easily develop diabetes if they are fed sugary foods, so beware if you have one as a pet.

Most mice and rats can be picked up by their tails without pain, but degus are special and unique in that when they are picked up by their tails, they can easily fall off.

If you couldn't have guessed, I decided to get one of these furry friends as a pet. My degu's name is Molo and I've had him for about a week now. He is the cutest thing ever. He is so smart too. I have never seen a smarter small animal. When I was growing up I had a lot of little guys like hamsters and guinea pigs, but never any one as smart as Molo. He

knows his name and will follow me down the hall when he's in his ball (one of those little balls like you put a hamster in). He knows where my friends' (his aunts' and uncles') rooms are and sometimes knocks on their doors with his ball. He is also very aware of who is com-

ing in and out of the room. When someone knocks on my door, Molo whistles (it's more like a screech but whistle sounds nicer) and I am guessing he means "come in!" When someone is about to leave (including myself) he cries again, this time meaning "please don't leave!" Molo recognizes people too. The first day I got him, he was so scared and wouldn't let anyone touch him. After a few hours, he got used to his new home and let me pet him and he would come out on my hand. After meeting and getting adjusted to some of his aunts and uncles, now he crawls out onto their hands. In general he is a pretty friendly guy.



Molo

tail, it can easily fall off and leave a bloody stump. It's very painful for them and since the tail doesn't grow back, it can affect their balance.

Unlike hamsters and most other rodents, degus actually sleep at night. Molo cries a lot, especially when I won't let him out of his cage, but when the lights go out, he knows it's bedtime. He's a cutie and made a little bed out of a plastic drink container filled with shavings and sticks. He sleeps on his side just like a human.

In conclusion, degus are great pets. They love you just like cats do. The only problem with them is that they are a bit hungry for attention. If you don't let them out enough they will cry and cry and cry. If you aren't prepared to be a loving mom or dad, don't get a degu!

## ANWR Rhetoric Overlooks Economics

*Bush's economic figures come under a critical eye.*

by Zubin Pastikia

A KEY ISSUE yet to be decided in the U.S. Senate's energy bill is whether or not the government should open up part of the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska for oil-drilling. The 19 million-acre wildlife refuge which is often referred to as 'America's Serengeti', is home to polar bears, rare musk oxen, grizzlies, 130 species of birds, and serves as the birthing and nursing grounds for the 130,000 strong Porcupine Caribou herd, which is one of the hemisphere's largest herds. However, President Bush (backed by most Republican senators) believes that the refuge is "by far the largest untapped source of domestic petroleum potential" and claims that drilling there is an important step in ending the country's dependence on OPEC oil. However, environmental concerns aside, we must look realistically at how much oil is really economically recoverable from ANWR, and how long will it take to get this oil to gas-pumps in the country?

The U.S. consumes 7.1 billion barrels of oil per year. That is a whopping 25% of all the world's produced oil. The United States Geological Survey (USGS) estimated that the amount of oil recoverable from ANWR would be between 4 to 12 billion barrels of oil, with the lower number having a 95 percent probability of recovery and the higher only a 5 percent probability. Thus looking at it extremely optimistically, drilling in ANWR will only produce about a year's worth of oil to the United States. From an energy security perspective, the basic situation would be unchanged - the nation would still depend heavily on foreign oil.

Further, USGS pointed out that it would only be economical to recover this oil if world oil prices hover around \$24 per barrel. If oil prices fall below \$16 a barrel, the costs of finding, developing, producing, and transporting oil from ANWR would outweigh the revenue generated by selling the oil. Also, turning the crude oil buried in ANWR to gas at the pump will take about 10 years. The entire recovery of all oil available in ANWR will take about 50 years.

It doesn't take a genius to realize that anything between 4 to 12 billion barrels of oil spread out over an extraction period of about 50 years is not a very good investment, especially when the nation consumes 7.1 billion barrels of oil each year! This is neither a smart nor pragmatic nor economical policy to rid the nation of its dependency of 'big-bad' OPEC oil.

And oh, did I mention the potential harm to the environment that drilling and development poses? Sure, pro-drilling advocates are correct to point out that newer technology has led to more environmentally friendly drilling techniques that will greatly reduce the 'ecological footprint' that extraction imposes on the environment. However, no matter how much we improve all of these techniques, oil exploration inevitably results in spills. Sierra Club reports that even today, the neighboring Prudhoe Bay development averages more than one spill a day of petroleum and other hazardous waste. Given the wealth of wildlife in the arctic refuge, are we willing to risk the potential (and inevitable) environmental damage that drilling may impose on the

reserve?

The Bush administration claims that "surface acreage covered by production and support facilities" of the drilling would not exceed 2000 acres. However, this figure is extremely deceptive, as it only measures the actual surface area of roads, pipelines, drilling platforms, airstrips, and processing plants; and does not include the immediate area that these constructions will be affecting. It is the equivalent of measuring the extent of coverage of a fisherman's net by merely including the area of the string on his net, and disregarding the area between the strings! Oil and gas exploration would forever destroy the wilderness character of the refuge by introducing a year-round human presence, and the infrastructure to support it.

A closer look at the Bush administration's optimistic statistics and flawed arguments supporting their desire to drill in ANWR reveal deceptive advertising in an effort to sell the nation on its 'drill-and-burn' energy policy. The U.S. must decide whether it wants a sound and balanced energy plan that will sustain it, as opposed to a strategy that perpetuates the failed energy policy of the past. Digging up and drilling the country's cherished wild lands will never lead to 'energy independence'.

What the country needs is an innovative and foresighted leader (unlike the current head-honcho, who is extremely influenced by big-oil and big-business), to come up with a policy that will help to reduce the nation's dependence of oil the prime source of energy in the first place. The U.S. will never be immune to oil shocks until it embraces strategies to decrease consumption of oil (such as increasing gas mileage in vehicles) and researches and promotes use of other sources of energy, including solar and wind power.

**NEWS UPDATE:** On Thursday, April 18, the Senate voted 54-46 against drilling in ANWR.

## The Historic Annandale Road: A Cause for Concern

by M. Zubair Hossain

The curves and bends of the historic Annandale Road that passes through Bard College have been a cause for concern for quite sometime now. The change in the traffic patterns brought about by the newly constructed buildings is one of the major causes of the heavy traffic through Annandale Rd.

Dean of Students, Erin Cannan, in a conversation with this correspondent, said, "A group of concerned citizens, led by Tara Sullivan of Admissions and her husband, organized a meeting to discuss the potential dangers of the road." Explaining further about the meeting she said that it was decided at the meeting that the speed limit on Annandale Road should be reduced even further. The current speed limit on the road is 30 miles an hour. In response to a question asked by this correspondent as to what steps Bard has taken to curb the danger that the road poses to Bard students, Dean Cannan added, "We have tried pursuing the local government to allow us to build speed bunks, but since the road being of historic significance, they would not allow us to build them. It took us quite a long time to get even the permission of getting that blinking yellow light." She also said that to regulate traffic Bard had been planning to put up checkpoints around the campus on Annandale Rd. The county local government would not approve of it.

Explaining the barriers that were put on the road recently, Dean Cannan said that they have long been in the process of being put. Ken Cooper has placed orders for some more, and some kiosks for the road. To ensure that people follow the traffic laws, and abide by the speed limit the county police have been patrolling the road more frequently now. They even set up a few speed traps about the road at times. However, she expressed concern about the fact that most people, instead of using the path, use the road to bike around the campus. This too could be a major cause of accidents along the road especially because of its blind curves and bends. For now, let us just hope nobody gets hit by a car.



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## What's All This Fighting About?

### History of the Land of Israel/Palestine

In 1918, the British take over what we know now as Israel, Palestine, and Jordan from the Turkish Empire. Britain promises both Palestinians and Jews a state in the land of Israel/Palestine<sup>1</sup>. For the next 30 years, there are significant migrations of both Jews and Arabs into the region and there are many violent clashes between them as well examples of peaceful co-existence.

The Jewish migrations are mainly from European Zionists, people who believe that Jews should have a Jewish state. Zionists eagerly called for Jews to immigrate to Israel, "a land without a people, for a people without a land." However, even though Zionists claimed there were no people in Israel, in 1948, there were 1,300,000 Arabs/Palestinians<sup>2</sup>. Like the pre-'48 Jews, Palestinians have never had a state.

In 1948, Britain pulls out. The UN devises a Partition plan that divides what we now know as Israel into two states: a Jewish state and a Palestinian state, Jerusalem is an international city. Immediately, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon attack, arguing that Israel has no right to exist. At the end of the war, Israel controls 77% of the land of Israel/Palestine, Jordan and Egypt control the rest. 1 million Palestinian refugees spread throughout the Middle East<sup>3</sup> and 120,000-150,000 Palestinian Arabs remain in Israel<sup>1</sup>.

In 1956, Egypt nationalizes the Suez Canal. Israel, France, and Britain attack. The UN, with US support, calls for a ceasefire and sends in peaceforces.

In 1967, after high tensions between Israel and its neighbors, Israel attacks Egypt. Syria and Jordan ally themselves with Egypt in what is referred to as the Six Day War. Israel has a resounding victory and takes over the Golan Heights from Syria in the North, the West Bank from Jordan in the East, and the Gaza Strip from Egypt in the South. Right wing Israelis take over land in the Occupied Territory, in what is known as settlements or colonies, with Israel's economic and military support.

In 1970, Jordan attacks Palestinians in an effort to quell anti-Jordanian as well as anti-Israeli resistance.

In 1973, Egypt and Syria attack Israel on Yom Kippur, the Jewish High Holiday. After significant Egyptian and Syrian gains, Israel fights back and restores pre-73 borders. US Aid to Israel is increased. Arab nations in OPEC implement a refusal to sell oil to the US resulting in an oil crisis.

In 1979, the political leaders of Egypt, Israel, and the US meet at Camp David. Egypt and Israel sign a peace plan. Israel pulls out of the Sinai and makes vague promises of Palestinian "autonomy."

In 1982, Israel invades Lebanon. During the initial occupation of Southern Lebanon, the Southern Lebanon Army massacres 1,000 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camp. An official Israeli governmental committee found Sharon "indirectly responsible" and called for Israeli compensation of victims. Before and after the massacre, Israel continued to support the army who carried out the massacre. During the 3 month invasion, 15,000-20,000 Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrians die along with 500 Israeli soldiers<sup>1</sup>. After the invasion, Lebanese and Palestinian Guerrilla groups form including Hezbollah, which targets Israeli soldiers serving in Lebanon. After 700 Israeli soldiers serving in Lebanon are killed, Israel pulls out in the 90's.

1987, Israel and Jordan begin peace process, finalized in 1993.

1987: The first Intifada  
Intifada, meaning "shaking off," is the name of the Palestinian uprising which was the explosion of years of struggle. From '77-'82 there were over 3,000 protests per year<sup>4</sup>. In 1987, after reports of four Palestinians killed by a Jewish settler, there were massive uprisings which marked the beginning of the first intifada<sup>5</sup>. During this intifada alternative schools were started, victory gardens were planted, the women's movement grew and direct actions were publicized by communiques pasted around Palestinian cities. Thousands of people withheld taxes and boycotted Israeli products while shops closed early every day so people could take to the street in protest<sup>6</sup>. The uprising leads to the second Camp David accord. Here, Arafat - a Palestinian living in the diaspora and leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization - condemns terrorism and agrees that Israel has a right to exist<sup>5</sup>. Israel acknowledges the "refugee problem," the Israeli government's term for Palestinians.

Oslo Peace Accords  
In 1993, Israel agrees to withdraw from almost all of the Gaza Strip, parts of the West Bank, and to hold Palestinian elections<sup>5</sup>. Israel does not follow through. From 1993-1999, settlements increased by 60%<sup>7</sup>, Israeli troops did not decrease<sup>7</sup>, Israel deports democratically elected mayors and dissolved city councils and Jewish terrorists kill other elected officials<sup>4</sup>.

This period also begins a new political structure in the Occupied Territories. Israel sets up and arms the Palestinian Authority (PA). Arafat is "democratically elected" - although many argue that the election was a sham - to head the PA. Many Palestinians say the Israeli government is their biggest enemy and the PA is their second. The West Bank is divided into Areas A, B, and C. Area A is controlled by the PA, although Israel often invades these parts. Area B is under joint Palestinian and Israeli control, and Area C is controlled by Israel.

## The Current Factors Behind Israel's War

by Kierin Moscovitz

### SETTLEMENTS

Settlements and settler roads carve out huge parts of the West Bank and Gaza making the Palestinian areas discontinuous, forcing Palestinians out of their homes, and placing a right-wing para-military presence directly adjacent to Palestinians. Settlers attack Palestinians, burn down businesses and crops, and continually expand into Palestinian areas<sup>8</sup>. In a private interview David Wilder, the spokesperson for the Avraham Avino settlement in downtown Hebron, told me that attempts for Palestinians and Jews to live in peace are "naïve." He says, "They [Arabs] are a different species. They won't think twice about killing you." The Israeli governments supports settlements by providing military and economic support.

### HOUSE DEMOLITIONS

Since 1967, 7000 Palestinian homes have been destroyed on the West Bank and Arab East Jerusalem, leaving 30,000 people homeless. Homes are generally destroyed under the official guise of "building without a permit" although it is nearly impossible for Palestinians to get building permits. Others time homes are demolished with the false justification that no one lives in them. Generally, residents are given 1 hour notice before their homes are destroyed. There is an active and growing resistance against house demolitions, but the protection of a home can never be guaranteed and potential demolition hangs over the roofs of many Palestinians<sup>9</sup>.

### FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Without a permit, Palestinians are not allowed into Israel, yet even within Palestine travel is restricted. Checkpoints and roadblocks litter the West Bank. Huge piles of dirt and cement around exit roads make driving out of a village very difficult. Sometimes, driving vehicles outside one's village is made outright illegal. In what's known as a breathing seige, one exit road is opened with a military checkpoint.

At the checkpoints, commuters are pulled out of buses and cars and made to wait for hours. Oftentimes, military forces confiscate people's identity cards making legal travel impossible. Many Palestinians have been murdered while trying to get through checkpoints. Dozens of women have given birth or had still births because the military would not let them through on the way to the hospital.

The supposive rationale for these checkpoints is that they will be able to prevent terrorist attacks. However, if someone puts their mind to it, they can get around a checkpoint without being searched. One can do this by getting out of their car or taxi well before the checkpoint and then taking a long walk around the military post.

Regardless of the legal or illegal route, everyone must suffer long traveling time as well as the potential, or actualized, wrath of the Israeli military. A trip that used to take 15 minutes now takes 1-4 hours.

Palestinians need a permit to leave the Gaza Strip which is 28 miles long and 4-8 miles wide. "Because of the difficulties involved in securing permission to travel, many young Palestinians born since 1967 have never left the [Gaza] Strip."<sup>10</sup> There are also settler by-pass roads that are often used as checkpoints and blockades, cutting and isolating the Strip into as many as 4 parts.

### MILITARY SEIGE

The poverty imposed on Palestinians comes in a context of an occupation. Shootings, tear gas, beatings, arrest, harassment, and humiliation are part of the regular life in Palestine. When the military moves in, they often take over

people's homes, kicking them out or forcing them to stay in a single room of their house. Entire neighborhoods are put under 24-hour curfews for as long 9 months. In these cases, people are only let out of their homes for a few hours each week.

### ECONOMICS

Poverty is a mainstay of living in the Occupied Territories. Israel has destroyed thousands of trees that the Palestinians use for income and food. Israel restricts Palestinian businesses that compete with Israeli companies. Work permits are difficult to get. Checkpoints, road blocks, and cerfews make going to work difficult. When one is lucky enough to get work, Palestinians have to face the typical problems of the underclass: few benefits, a low salary, and sometimes it's a struggle to even get paid. Moreover, in the last ten years Israel has begun to import thousands of foreign workers to replace Palestinians<sup>11</sup>.

At this point we should take a step back and look at what's happening. Israel is destroying sustainable and independent living. Crops are uprooted; businesses are banned and destroyed. Self-employed Palestinians are forced to go into an exploitative wage labor system that Israel controls. And as you read this, Israel is constructing cheap labor "industrial parks." These are situated outside Arab towns so that Palestinian labor can be used without the risk of Jewish-Palestinian interaction. When the Palestinian workers become too expensive to employ, Israel can turn to exploiting foreign workers from Eastern Europe and Asia.

Chinese construction workers pay \$2,800 - \$10,000 to manpower agencies who promise the workers they will be able to pay it off in a year. The workers borrow money from friends and mortgage everything they own. Once they get to Israel, their employers confiscate their passports and rarely honor the contract the workers signed. Like the Palestinians, they are left destitute - a mere tool of the industrialists. Pick your word - globalization, capitalism, imperialism - this is fucked up.

Given these conditions, it should come as no surprise that 50% of Palestinians are unemployed and 70% live under \$2/day<sup>7</sup>. Conditions are the worst in the Gaza Strip, the most populated place on Earth. 1,200,000 Palestinians and 4,000 Jewish settlers live in the Strip, yet the settlers control 25% of the land with Israeli security forces controlling an additional 15%<sup>5, 12</sup>.

### WHAT ABOUT THAT PEACE TREATY?

In 2000, Ehud Barak of Israel, Arafat of the PA, and Bill Clinton of the US sat down for peace talks that were never resolved. The PA, with wide support from Palestinians, has been calling for an autonomous Palestinian state. Mainstream Israelis and Israel supporters - including the dominant US media - claim Barak gave Palestinians everything they wanted, yet this is far from the truth. The treaty gave Palestinians 22% of the 1948 borders<sup>13</sup>. This included 69 Israeli settlements and by-pass roads that cut the Palestinian area into several pieces<sup>7, 13</sup>. 10% of the 22% also remained in "Temporary Israel Control" with no conditions or timeline for it to be handed over. Israel also remained in control of all the borders. Many critics argue that this plan did not offer an autonomous state but set up the conditions for a continuation of the Occupation.

### THE SECOND INTIFADA.

On September 20, 2000, in what many people see as a purposefully provoking act, Ariel Sharon entered the West Bank with an entourage of military and security personnel and visited the Jewish holy site, The Temple Mount. This is also the location of the Muslim Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. A riot broke out with several

Palestinians killed. Riots continued for months and there was a sharp rise in Palestinian bombings and, recently, shootings. The Israeli Government has responded with attacks on Palestinians at large. In addition to the increasing of settlements, a surge in home demolitions, and an intensification of closures has occurred.

There are many forms of resistance in Israel and Palestine. In addition to the rock throwing, shootings, and bombs seen on the mainstream media, there is a small and growing non-violent direct action movement. There is also a *continued on page 5...*

1. One Land, Two Peoples; Gerner
2. Question of Palestine, 14-15
3. Nasser Ibrahim and Dr. Mag'ed Nasser, "Theses on Globalisation and the Palestinian Resistance." News from Within vol xix, No. 8, January 2002
4. Intifada, 108-109
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11. "Newsletters: 1990-2000" Kav La'Oved
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# Notes from Kathmandu

*Is Nepal really in trouble?*

by **Farihah Zaman**

My family is posted in Kathmandu, Nepal. To most people, I suppose this translates into: my family is posted in a civil-war-torn hell. Admittedly, fate has recently not been too kind to the land that had previously enjoyed such an unusually long period of peace and stability. It all started with the assassination of most of the well-loved royal family, leaving behind a rabid supporter of old-school imperialism as king and a thuggish youth associated with a local gang and already suspiciously acquitted of murder charges as prince. Word on the South Asian street is that the massacre of the royal family fulfilled a prophecy in which the previous line of kings would cease to reign because one of their uppity ancestors snubbed the offering of a Hindu ascetic. So this leaves the people of Nepal with an unpopular monarch, horrible grief, and, thanks to the curse, feeling more than a little creeped out. Enter the Maoists, poised to fill what is virtually a power vacuum in terms of national leadership.

For some reason, Bard has been all over Nepal when it comes to their in-house media. I just wanted to add my experiences to the mix. Of course they're very different from that of a Nepali citizen or even someone doing a study abroad program. I may not be from Kathmandu, but it has still become one of my many hometowns. People there are, of course, devastated by their present political situation and struck by the changes they've faced. More importantly, though - and what a lot of people don't realize - is that life there is largely the same. The beat goes on. Middle class families gather 'round the heater come nighttime with an army of cooks, maids, drivers, and guards (domestic help is extremely common there). In a fairly modern city, I still wake up to the sound of my neighbor's rooster and street vendors selling fruit, nuts, snakes, napkins, cutlery, musical instruments, popcorn, and so on until I run out of breath. Maybe this is because my Nepali is extremely limited, but what exactly they are saying is completely indiscernible to me. Bazaars are a colorful blur of Tibetan refugees, European tourists, Chinese imported goods, not to mention an aggressive assault on my ears. Nepali folk songs from one set of speakers battle with Britney Spears from the set across the street and a little Hindi pop from further down the road. Temples squat in the middle of the city, right next to some of the most unholy bill-

boards I've ever seen. Most incredibly - and I know that it's inappropriate to make generalizations about people, but this is a compliment, so maybe it's okay - I see a people with the perfect blend of a low-key sense of fun and a high-class sense of dignity. They are not frozen into being the victims of a tragedy and nothing more.

Essentially I've noticed that the political situation is never as bad as it looks on the news. In Nepal, for example, despite the political instability there usually aren't people constantly scurrying around, avoiding bomb blasts with scowling faces and fearing for their lives. Everyone is living. My parents are busy being parental and my little sister is enjoying the highs and lows of teenage ex-pat life just like I did a very, very short time ago. Well, she does have the small addition of a nationally suggested curfew and a surprising shooting in a downtown area where many of



Shops line most downtown streets. The shopowners usually live in the apartments upstairs.

her classmates go to hang out on a Saturday night. Sometimes reminders are inescapable. It's important to remember that this is one very thin slice of the pie. First of all, I'm talking about the one place in Nepal that I really know. I'm guessing that life in the many villages and remote rural areas is even more stable, but I know that this assumption certainly cannot be true of the East, where Maoist activity is concentrated. Second of all, I was part of what can basically be considered the diplomatic community, and so I represent a very small and specific group. I just want people to see that up to a certain point, the everyday life you know continues. Look at America: our politics are intensely global and a little bit wild, but we try to get on with it. Except, of course, for those rare occasions where politics and routine life cross paths and force us to rethink our route. Hopefully the route you travel is interesting enough as it is.

## **SPECIAL REPORT** Sand in Tewks Being Tested by Chemist

THE MYSTERY of what is coming out of the Tewksbury showers appears to be close to being solved. However, that depends on which person you ask. Jean Butin, ServiceMaster director, reported that the substance "came from a filtration grid that exploded a couple of weeks ago, and that it would take some time before the sand does not appear any longer." Fred Barnes, ye of ResLife auspices, said that the black stuff had been sent to a Bard professor of chemistry and was not harmful. In fact, it was Barnes who said that the mystery substance was sand from concrete surrounding the 8,000-gallon hot water tank.

I was unable to catch up with the elusive Dave Walsh, who is B&G's plumbing supervisor, and he had not returned my calls from the last article. Fortunately, I ran into Chuck Simmons, the man in charge of B&G, who one time followed me all the way to Bev-way and waited until I came out with my purchase to ask me about having just driven across the field in front of Robbins. He said that samples of the black stuff were sent to Hilton Weiss, who had not gotten back to him yet, though he did say that he thought Weiss had "put acid on it and it dissolved." Simmons was "not sure if it's concrete," and when asked if he had any idea what it was said that "it's still a mystery." Despite the baffling nature of this substance, he claimed it was not a health hazard. Indeed, it appears not to be, and Barnes and I were even joking about the potential benefits of the sand exfoliating the skin of Tewks residents.

As for the source of the harmless mystery sand, Simmons said that the plant operator took 25-liter samples from different days and the problem appears isolated to the hot water tank. Simmons added that he had thought it was from the large storage, but it's not in the cold water. Additionally, the problem appears not to be an issue in the Toasters. He said it had "bypassed the water softener, so it's not that," and he hoped that Weiss could tell him a little more about the problem.

Barnes also said that there would be some difficulties in fixing the hot water heater at present. Mostly, this is due to the sheer size of the thing, and the time it would take to dig it up, put in a new one and then wait a couple days for it to reheat those 8,000 gallons. Tewksbury and the toasters would supposedly be without hot water for two weeks. Since the sand posed no real threat, he considered it better for everyone that the kids in Tewks and the Toasters be able to continue showering, and that the college could "limp through" the remaining sweaty days of school, and the tank could be fixed in the summer.

- Jacob Cottingham

# B.R.A.V.E. Takes a Dip into the Issue of Date Rape Drugs

by **Lydia Willoughby**

B.R.A.V.E. has received cases this semester in which Date Rape Drug usage was suspected. I am writing this article as a member of B.R.A.V.E., Bard's Response to Rape and Associated Violence Education, in order to raise awareness and understanding of the use of Date Rape Drugs, and the specific ways in which people that have been slipped these drugs can be affected. In each case, the survivor had trouble remembering specific events of the night before the incident, but did remember not drinking heavily.

There are precautions one can take to avoid Date Rape Drugs. Watch your beverages: unattended drinks are an easy way for someone to put something in it without you even knowing it. Date Rape Drugs leave a residue in the body for up to 72 hours, so if you or someone you know has ingested Date Rape Drugs, take a urine sample—and seal and date it. This sample is best kept in a jar container with a lid (a simple mayonnaise jar would work); and if refrigerated should be good up to 4 weeks.

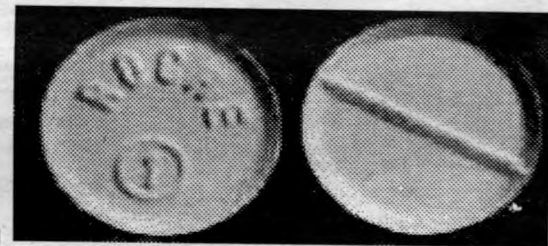
So-called 'Date Rape Drugs' are most commonly used in spiked drinks in order to impair the judgment and motor skills of an intended victim. Although this is the most common use, and the one discussed in this article, 'Date Rape Drugs' are also used to diminish the come-down effects of crack and cocaine, or to extend the high of heroine.

'Date Rape Drugs' include Gamma Hydroxybutyrate (GHB), flunitrazepam (Rohypnol), Scopolamine, Burundanga, and Ketamine (Special K). GHB's street names include Liquid Ecstasy, or Liquid X, Grievous Bodily Harm, and Easy Lay. Rohypnol is also known as Roofies, Roachies, La Roche and The Forget Pill. Rohypnol is prescribed for severe and debilitating sleep disorders, and is also legally used as a pre-anesthetic used before surgery. It is manufactured in Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America by a Swiss pharmaceutical company named F. Hoffman-La Roche, Ltd. This company has never sought Food and Drug Administration approval in the United States, and consequently, it is not legally marketed or sold in this country.

All Rohypnol in the US is illegally smuggled in from Mexico and South America. In 1996, the US Customs Service banned Rohypnol importation, but this only increased the usage of GHB. Rohypnol's effects begin 20-30 minutes after ingestion, and alcohol enhances its potency. Within 1-2 hours after ingestion, Rohypnol's strongest effects occur, and the drug can last up to 8 hours after a usual 2 milligram dose. A high dosage of Rohypnol mixed with alcohol is fatal. In 1997, Hoffman-La Roche reformed Rohypnol so that when it is dissolved in liquid, a blue dye is released, and sometimes the pill itself floats to the top of the glass. But this reformed version of Rohypnol is only available in countries where it is legally sold and marketed (unlike in the US). The dye is also very hard to see in the dark.

GHB is a Central Nervous System depressant, and is a chemical naturally found in the brain in very small quantities. It is legal in Europe, and used for anesthesia. In the 1980s, GHB was readily available in health food stores. Then, it was used by body builders, similar to the way steroids are used today, as a drug that was thought to increase body mass. In 1990, the FDA labeled GHB a "dangerous drug," but it did not make it a controlled substance subject to regulation under the Controlled Substance Act. It is illegal to make or sell GHB in the US, but not to possess for personal use. GHB's potency varies because there is no standard recipe, and it is usually manufactured in 'basement laboratories.' As with Rohypnol, GHB's strength increases when ingested with alcohol, and if too much GHB is consumed, the result may lead

to coma or death. Myths related to GHB, other than that it promotes muscle development, are that it is an aphrodisiac and that it enhances sexual performance. The only legal usage for GHB in the United States is as a treatment for narcolepsy.



Rohypnol and GHB have very similar bodily effects when ingested, and both are almost always consumed (unwittingly) with alcohol. Impaired judgment, dis-inhibition, dizziness, and confusion are only the preliminary symptoms. After that, follows an inability to stay awake, or lack of consciousness, sudden drowsiness or lack of motor coordination. It is easy to notice if someone has imbibed GHB or Rohypnol if they become extremely 'intoxicated' after consuming only one drink, or one non-alcoholic beverage.

One of the most important aspects of these drugs is that they impair memory, so the person who is drugged may not be able to recall what happened or remember who the perpetrator is at all. As with all emotional effects of incidents related to sexual violence and assault, the survivor must deal with the issue of loss of control, but with 'Date Rape Drugs' the loss of control issue can be even harder to deal with simply because of they do not remember losing it. Prosecution is often very difficult because of the survivor's memory impairment.

In 84% of rapes the victim knows the perpetrator, so only taking drinks from people you know may not prevent being drugged or victimized. A huge precaution then, is to only accept drinks from a bartender, waitress or waiter. If the person who hands you the drink does anything that makes you feel uncomfortable or suspicious of their behavior with the drink, don't accept it. Don't leave drinks unattended. Also, watch out for your friends; if someone seems really drunk after just one drink, they may have been drugged.

In October of 1996, Congress passed the Drug-Induced Rape Prevention and Punishment Act, as an amendment to the Controlled Substance Act. This federal act makes specific reference to Rohypnol, and through it, users of 'Date Rape Drugs' for malicious purposes can be imprisoned for up to 20 years, with fines. People who knowingly distribute Rohypnol and GHB in amounts of 1 gram or more can be sentenced for 20 years, while for 30 milligrams or more, the sentence is 5 years.

GHB and Rohypnol can only be tested within 72 hours of ingestion in the body. If you think 'Date Rape Drugs' were ingested by someone you care about, then take or suggest a urine sample. The sample can be kept up to 4 weeks if refrigerated. If you suspect drugging or sexual assault, you can call B.R.A.V.E. through Security (x7460), or their emergency line at x7777, who will then connect you to the B.R.A.V.E. beeper. A local resource is Dutchess County Crime Victims hotline, at 845-452-1110. The Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) is another 24-hour toll-free resource, and their number is 1-800-656-HOPE. Much of the technical information in this article was found on the excellent resource, the District of Columbia Rape Crisis Center's homepage, at [www.dcrcc.org](http://www.dcrcc.org). Be safe.

# SILK: A Few Answers to Your Questions

by Janaya Kizzie

**WHAT IS SILK?**

SILK stands for Sexual Identities Lifestyles Knowledge. The club has movie showings, speakers on all sorts of juicy topics, parties, dinners, game nights, workshops, a library, demonstrations and discussions. SILK is here to support the sexual lifestyles of everyone on campus kinky and vanilla alike. SILK is governed by the requests and ideas of those in the club. SILK meets Thursdays 9pm in the Campus Center Red Room. SILK IS NOT: Exclusive. A figment of your imagination. A weekly orgy. A dating service. A sex cult. A place for naughty boys and girls. Just here to scare your parents. Just here to make you squirm. Out to get you.

**WHAT IS CARNAL EMBRACE?** On April 20th SILK threw a party in the Old Gym called Carnal Embrace. There was music and desserts upstairs and body painting, liquid latex and a kink room in the Red Room. The party started at 9 and the dress was fetish formal.

**WHAT IS "FETISH FORMAL"?** Fetish Formal is what you make it. It can be a vinyl cat suit and a whip, but it can also be the clothing of the opposite sex, or a Star Trek uniform, or just something nice. Fetish formal is whatever you find sexy. No, you won't get kicked out/attacked if you're wearing jeans and t-shirt. Remember: there will be body painting (with paints and liquid latex) at the event!

**WHAT IS A KINK ROOM?** It's a place for Bard Students to take a look at the various instruments of kink (paddles, rope, Whartonberg Wheel) and see what they do, how to use them and how they feel. They might just figure out that kink isn't so scary after all.

# Bard Bands Rock da Old Gym

*Well really the chapel and MPR but...*

by Jacqueline LaDuke

Do you love to walk by the Old Gym and hear banging and screaming? If so, now you'll be able to simply slide a CD into your player and hear it any time you want! The new Bard bands CD, "Songs from the Old Gym 2" has just come out. This year's CD features 19 artists with a whole lot of variety. The CD costs only 5 dollars and can be ordered through campus mail by sending cash and your name to Toni Fortini. The CDs will also be sold in the campus center and at Spring Fling. The profits go to the senior class to fund nice events such as the tent party and the senior class gift.

So how did this CD come about? This tradition was started two years ago as a fundraiser for the senior class. The first CD was entitled "Songs from the Old Gym" and can be purchased for a limited time only along with the new CD for 7 dollars. There was no Bard bands CD last year, perhaps because the seniors were lazy, but this year, senior Toni Fortini wanted to bring back the tradition (although I don't really know if you can call it that since

there was only 1 CD in the past!). She got together and organized auditions. About 40 performers showed up but there was only enough room for about 20 tracks. Each band chosen was allowed to play one track on the CD. Bands were chosen on the basis of variety (they didn't want all the songs on the CD to sound alike!) and seniors were given priority since this is their last chance to participate in this. After the bands were chosen, their songs were recorded by the soundcrew either in the chapel or the Multi Purpose Room. Some ambitious musicians recorded their tracks themselves.

So if you're a fan of any of the following bands, get your CD today! The bands are: Alphabet Soup of Thugs, Aziatics, the Broken Bottles, Brownian Motion, CAIN, the Jordan Caress Band, Kevin Carrico, the Dirty Hearts, Flowers of Disgust, Formosa, Ghost Expanding Tube, Jackson Barry Stole My Trumpet, Hilary Konrad, Miso, Monica and Charlie's Fried Chicken Special, Mother Ming, Popsicle Riot, The Secret Life of Statues, and Skullcrusher.

**Your Chance to be on Television! Really!**

We are doing research for a documentary television series for the Burly Bear Network, which airs nationwide on the TBS Superstation and in college campuses. We are looking to profile students who live in highly unusual and unique dwellings, such as tree houses, caves, boats, or self-constructed abodes. If you or someone you know fits these qualifications, please send an email to [dwellings101@hotmail.com](mailto:dwellings101@hotmail.com).

Advertisement

# Bard Space Program Update

by Michael Marlin, Jr.

Jamie O'Shea, founder of the Bard Space Program, hobbled out of his converted VW Scirocco/space shuttle Saturday night after locking himself into the vehicle for 72 hours straight. The pre-launch "habituation tests" were designed to measure Jamie's ability to live inside the craft and endure similar conditions that he will encounter in an eventual full mission into outer space.

Jamie, who has been working around the clock to prepare similar tests and launches, stressed that the vehicle was nowhere near completion. On the other hand, he stated before the test, "The interior is mostly complete, so we're going to test how well I can live within it using the available air, atmosphere purification and filtration, toilet facilities, food and water onboard - all designed to be used in a turbulent or zero-gravity atmosphere."

With the help of his crew and the applause of many Bardian spectators, Jamie entered the spacecraft on Wednesday night at 8:40 PM. Raised on rusty wheel stands, the transformed car pointed into the sky as it sat outside of the new toasters. Live audio and video from inside the ship broadcast all of Jamie's movements on a TV inside his Leonard dorm window. Walkie-talkie communication was also available every night at 8 to those who wished to speak to O'Shea.

Bard Space admitted to taking many precautions for the test. Before Jamie was locked inside, a medical specialist probed him for any signs of disease, measured his temperature and took a blood sample.

When asked if he had any worries, Jamie stated, "I think I'm going to get really sore. I'm also going to get tired of raw biscuits and chocolate syrup." "Easy-cheese" and other squeeze-packet foods were also available on-board. In addition, an installed airlock toilet was "well prepared" for any of Jamie's bodily functions.

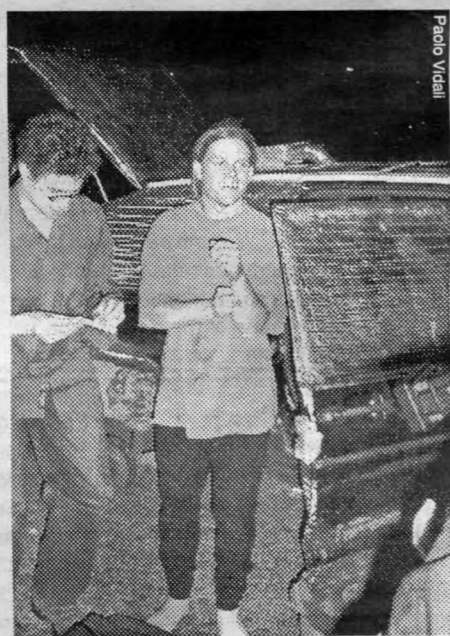
Bard Space initially planned for a full launch beyond the Earth's orbit in May, but recently stated that more test launches would be needed in order to test the ship's ballistics. Unfortunately, O'Shea admitted that an orbit attempt wouldn't occur until "the distant future." A full-scale launch is still scheduled for May 10 behind Manor, but the ship will use only small amounts of fuel to hopefully propel it to 10 thousand feet. It will then eject parachutes enabling it to land at an "unspecified location."

*Israel/Palestine cont'd. from pg. 3*

very strong Non-Government Organization (NGO) network. Israeli soldiers refusing to serve in the Occupied Territories have made a big stir in the Israeli and International press. In Palestine, there is a strong presence of internationals doing checkpoint watch, direct actions, and media work.

The conflict can go in three directions. Occupation can continue which will encourage terrorism and anti-Israeli sentiment, Israel and Arafat can sign a peace plan, or Israel can unilaterally pull out of the West Bank and Gaza.

To get involved and work for one of the latter two directions, contact [kierin@riseup.net](mailto:kierin@riseup.net)



Jamie tests his health before utter entrapment.



The Bard Observer

# New Work at CCS Reviewed

by Joanna Fivelsdac

AS I WALKED ACROSS THE LAWN in front of

Bard's Center for Curatorial Studies, my mind was fixed on escaping the oppressive heat that had made my body drag all day from class to class. When I stepped through the doors into the open space of the center's lobby and looked through the glass doors leading to the new exhibit, my mind became distracted by gigantic photographs contrasted by tiny squares, which I later discovered were prints, displayed on opposing walls. I was glad that as I looked through the doors, I saw colors and shapes and textures that led somewhere. As I opened the oversized glass doors and stepped into the museum, I felt as if I had entered another dimension; one where the anxieties and realities of the day no longer existed, but, rather, only color, shape, design, and exploration were allowed to occupy time.

I must admit that when I began to walk around the museum, the memories of past exhibits at the museum ran through my mind. Having grown up in Red Hook and having come to the museum since I was in kindergarten, I couldn't help but wonder if this exhibit would be one that I could relate to. I remember coming to an exhibit and leaving confused and feeling as if the entire experience was pretty much unfulfilling. However, as I entered this new exhibit, having read nothing about what I was about to see, I decided to experience the installations and observe the artwork while ignoring the titles and the artists. I didn't want to feel as if I had to see something in particular when I stared up at Seong Chun's crocheted artwork, or that I had to be overwhelmed by a particular emotion as I stood between video images of a gutted and empty building in Berlin projected onto two walls. Rather, I wanted appreciate *Present Tense*, *Hard to Read*, and *Liminal Spaces* for what they really were to me, not some preconceived idea of how I should react to them. This is how I experienced the new exhibit at the Center for Curatorial Studies, and this is why I can say truthfully that this exhibit proved to be one of the best I have seen at the center.

The very first thing that caught my eye as I walked into the museum was Anton Olshvang's enlarged photographs of personal snapshots that had been abandoned in his studio. These larger than life photographs depict "people as they are," plain, unglamorous, and sometimes in odd positions. His idea is to expose the altered daily life and living spaces of a socially and politically changing Moscow. Having looked at the pictures without knowing what the artist's intentions were, I felt as if I were spying on someone and almost as if I were invading someone's innermost thoughts. In the comments on Anton Olshvang's work, I later noted that he purposed for the

exhibit to be "a kind of intimate and unintentional collective portrait of the society's unconscious."

The photographs were interesting but, as I entered into one of the side rooms of the museum, I realized how movement can really affect the way in which you perceive and experience things. What I had walked into was Nina Fischer & Maroan el Sani's *Palast der Republik*. This piece impressed me because it not only presented an idea or concept, but it brought me into the idea through a creative use of space and movement. Through the projection of two seven-minute videos filmed in a condemned building on opposing walls, I was able to enter into an empty room and look down a hallway and out a clouded window in Berlin. As the video played, the projections on both walls simulated an experience much like a panoramic movie, which feels as if you are actually in a different place. In the case of this installation, I found myself experiencing emptiness, meant to portray the complex upheavals experienced by Berlin's urban spaces and its inhabitants.

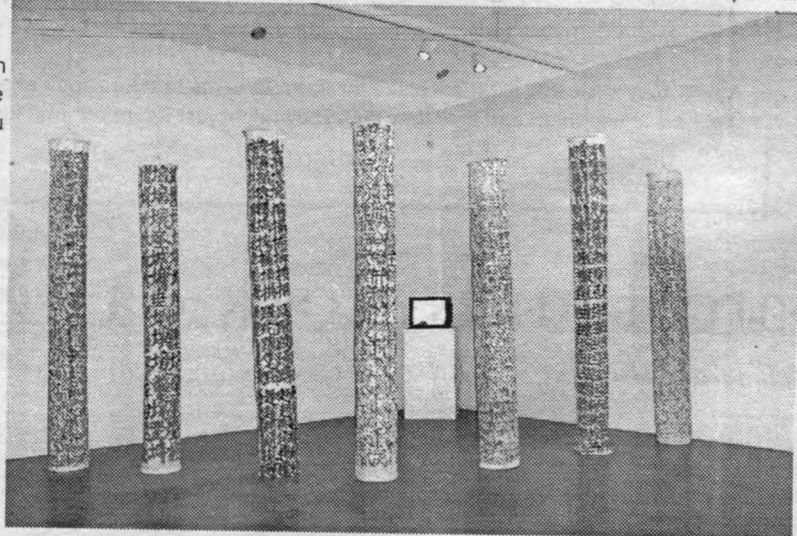
After peering out a window at Berlin for about 5 minutes, I finally proceeded to explore the rest of the exhibit. With a more relaxed mental state and attitude than when I had first entered the exhibit, I entered a room with beautifully suspended crocheted paper, computers, and calligraphy word art. The feel of this part of the exhibit was very different than what I had just experienced. On the wall to my right I saw delicate writing, [Quotations from Mao Tse-Tung], and to my left, weavings of tiny type. I couldn't read the writing of either, although the weaved type was in English. Instead of worrying about what the writing of the pieces actually said, I decided to enjoy the form and beauty of the creations of which they were a part. By doing this, I was unconsciously reacting in the way the artist had intended. The title of the exhibit is *Hard to Read*. All four artists involved with this part of the exhibit are from East Asia and came to New York City at different times in their lives. Leaving behind their own language, they adopted the language of their new home and they share this experience with others through *Hard to Read*.

As I was attracted to each piece by its intricacy and aesthetic qualities, there was one installation which caught my eye for a different reason. Among elaborately weaved paper and white cloths with layered ink writing, sat a computer and a desk. It seemed as if it was out of place, to say the least. I wondered if a curator had put it in as a joke. However, as I stepped closer and looked at the screen prompting a user to type something to be drawn

and printed, I became a little more curious. The guard, seeing that I was a little puzzled, explained to me that I could type in anything and it would be translated from English into English. However, the word that had been typed would now be drawn!

Xu Bing's Square Word Calligraphy is a hybrid language with Chinese appearance and English meaning. So, when I typed in my name, I saw how well Xu Bing's work fit amongst the art of the others when my name was made to appear as if it were Chinese calligraphy.

Once I had printed out my name, something that I had written so many times but had never appeared the way it looked in front of me now, I moved on to the last part of



the exhibit. I walked into *Liminal Spaces*. Again, the artwork of this part of the exhibit contrasted greatly with what I had already encountered. Here, I experienced light and perception skewed. As I tried to observe what was in front of my eyes, I couldn't concretely describe what it was I was looking at. This sounds strange, but as the artists of these works explored the ambiguous boundaries between what is visual and what is material, the observer finds himself questioning what is real and what is not. To understand what this means, one must experience it for himself.

Overall, I am glad that I decided to find refuge from the blistering heat by walking into the Center for imagination and intellectual design. If you find yourself walking past the Center for Curatorial Studies and all you notice is how the huge sculpture on the front lawn is spinning in the wind, make a point of discovering what is going on inside. You might be surprised by what you find.

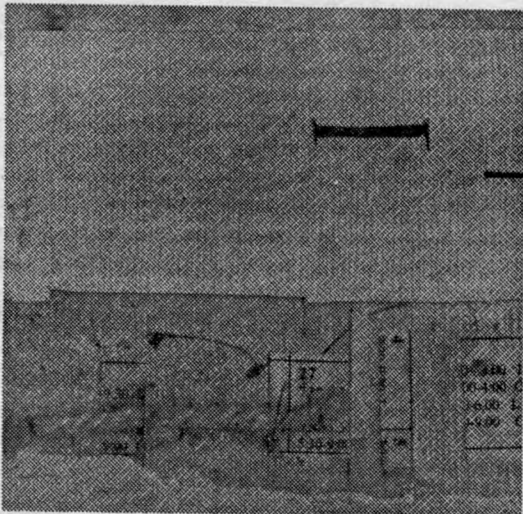
The current exhibit, *Present Tense*, curated by Jill Winder; *Hard to Read*, curated by Liu Feng, *Liminal Spaces*, curated by Cassandra Coblenz, will be up until April 28th. Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

## Songs From the Old Gym 2: More Songs About Depression and Anarchy

by danny gibson

Consider: Music Scene at Illustrious Bard College. Recently released has been a 22-track "taster" of what this campus has to offer. There are hipsters, doomsters, punksters, weirdos, losers, electro-poppers, cyberthrashers, jocks, nerds, thugs, and freak-ass bitches on this compilation. Not to mention some songs. My impression of this disc is extremely favorable. In writing this review, I considered critiquing the album track-by-track, but I have decided to forego that method and instead list, in the order that they occur, my favorite moments on the CD.

- The fact that an artist named Skullcrusher does not perform brutal thrash-metal.
- The entirety of Matt Dineen's vocal performance on *Not Just Another Day*
- Quinton Gardner's enthusiastic, "You better fucking believe it" at the end of *Anarchy Enthroned*.
- The doctor's political rap about at the end of *The Great Depression* which manages to rip off



- The way Drew Gray mumbles, "I gotta get a move on, baby" in *Dancin' with the Boys*.
- The fact that Ghost Expanding Tube's *Fish and Whiskey Aren't Friends*, which sounds more or less like stereo equipment malfunctioning, appears sandwiched between two extremely accessible pop songs.
- The last 2 seconds of *I'll Be Square* by Popsicle Riot
- Maxwell McDonald's sweet-ass

- Sir Mix-a-Lot once and The Smartest People at Bard twice.
- The fact that all of the noisiest and most obnoxious tracks are all just lumped together, buried at the end of the CD.

The standout performance of the album comes, unsurprisingly, from Bard's own diamonds in the

rough, *CHRIST ABORTED IN NATIVITY*. Their skull-crushing track, *Anarchy Enthroned*, is a sneak peak into the sickness that will be their upcoming album. According to the band, the new material will elevate the pervasion to new levels of fierce brutality and extremity. Combining their outstanding ability to create magnificent melodies with the primal forces and elements of absolutely violent death metal, the new opus will stir the muddy waters of the worldwide extreme metal scene. You have been warned.

Lastly, I must note that there is an arsenal of fabulous Bard bands who do not appear on this collection. This reporter is of the firm opinion that an annual compilation of this nature ought to be a two-disc set. Let us speculate, then, as to the stunning lineup that would have been offered by Disc Two of the Bard CD:

- Dubôk, Cemetery Womb, Red Box/Black Box, No Sweat, SPB, Placebo King, OX, Kinma, The Dry Spells, Life During Wartime, What Castle, Cobra City, FunCat, Chartreuse, That Chick's Pants, World War XII, Purrrfect, Attrape la Mouche, Cathy, Mike Morini and the Prog-Licious EmoMammias, The Ginger Ninjas, Bad Lover, etc.

An auspicious assortment indeed!



here are some ads for upcoming events related to A&E

TOYSTORE ON TOP OF A MOUNTAIN

CHRIS GLOVER (ex-SPB, ex-Crooked Teeth, ex-New Champions)



BIRD OF PREY (with Ramon, ex-SPB, ex-Leaver's Dikrip)

JORDAN GRESS (ex-Du-bee De-bee Du-bee Du) BROKEN BOTTLES (ex-Buhaba-buh)

SATURDAY APRIL 27th OLD GYM at 9:00 P.M. BA!

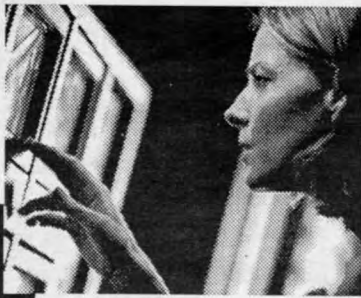
Yo. Panic about Panic Room at the movies

by michael morini

THIS NEW THRILLER CALLED PANIC ROOM wasn't all it was hyped to be. I rarely see a film that I didn't enjoy, don't get me wrong I did enjoy this movie to a certain extent, but this film was pretty bad. It starred Jody Foster as a recently divorced and now extremely rich woman who just moved into this huge house in the upper east side of Manhattan with her daughter. By the way, this is sort of mean to admit, but I couldn't tell if it was a boy or a girl, the character was perhaps around 12, until about a half an hour into the film. The kick, or plot line, of this film is that the previous owners' son, played by the apparent heartthrob Jared Leto, organizes a robbery of a small fortune hidden in the house's panic room, a small room adjacent to the master bedroom where the family can hide safely in case of an emergency. Unbeknownst to Leto's character, the new owners moved in early and now instead of the easy ride with an empty house they had planned on, the burglars come into some trouble.

The film had a lot of interesting camera decisions such as some great long pans that travelled throughout the 4 floor house. They did, however, get a bit redundant after a while and a bit too unrealistic when the camera began to go through walls and floors. This I found to be a bit annoying. Another thing that became a tad annoying was the setting. Mostly all of the movie takes place in a few rooms in the house. The only movies where this has successfully been pulled off were the original 12 Angry Men and Hitchcock's Rope. This film was nothing compared to those great films. Perhaps if Forest Whitaker wasn't in the film it might have been ok, but alas, he was there.

Overall, if you are easily rilled up by suspenseful movies and you really don't care that David Fincher directed it, director of Fight Club, The Game, and Se7en three amazing films, and it is probably his worst movie ever, go see it. It's not the worst movie you will see this year but it is a disappointment from Fincher. I guess that's it. Hey everyone, take care.



E.T. and Monsoon Wedding are reviewed

by jeff eastman

I WENT TO SEE TWO MOVIES in the theaters over Spring Break. The first was E.T., which was re-released this year for its 20th anniversary. Like other films that are re-released, this one is billed as the director's cut, which usually means that it is a few minutes longer, but no one can tell where exactly the few minutes were added on. Sometimes there is an extra scene, as there was in this director's cut, which involves E.T. taking a bath. Other than that I wonder if even the most diehard of E.T. fans will be able to tell which shots are a couple of seconds longer; the people I went with claimed to be pretty big fans, and the bathtub scene was the only one that they picked out. There was no way that I would have been able to tell the difference between the original release and the recent one. The only time I saw it was at my uncle's house once when I was very little, and the only thing I remember about that night is my brother throwing up on the stairs, but nothing from the film. So I considered this my first time. The only reason I know that it is different at all is because there was a pretty thorough article praising it in the New Yorker. I really feel like I don't have to review it; if Nicole Woods had said, "I have seen the movie E.T." on the first day of L&T, I would have been the only one left on my side of the room.

The other film was Mira Nair's Monsoon Wedding. There was something I didn't like about the film, but I couldn't put my finger on it. It has something in it that should have made it interesting-- a wedding and the extended family relations of another culture. And it was interesting that even though it was an arranged marriage it was presented in such a way that it actually put up an argument for this practice which in America people might consider antithetical to true love. It was the kind of movie you tell your friends to go see, which is what Roger Ebert said about it. I wasn't sure what I didn't like about until I read my sentiment expressed perfectly by Michael Atkinson of the Village Voice. He called it "an air conditioned bus tour of a Punjabi wedding." It was aimed directly at American audiences with only a hint of real Indian culture. Bombay produces more movies every year than Hollywood, very few of which make it over here. Monsoon Wedding was mostly in English, which is spoken widely in India, with some Hindi and Punjabi. The story is fairly simple, and it is wracked with thin subplots which all wrap up nicely at the end. If these things wouldn't bother you, then go see the film. I'll concede that the colors were really beautiful, and there were some very comic moments. Anthony Lane of the New Yorker said that it was a "feel good spree, but it's better than that-- a barely stable compound of the wounding, the confusing, and the appealing." This is the same writer who loved E.T. so much. E.T. fans would like Monsoon Wedding.

I don't think either of these films are still playing in the area, so forget it.

I don't remember what the Film Committee is showing in the next couple of weeks, but they are doing a pretty good job, aren't they?

Album review

Grüvis Malt - "...With the spirit of a traffic jam"

by Patrick Rodgers GRÜVIS MALT IS NICE BUNCH of people from the state of Rhode Island. Actually, I don't know if they're nice, but they are from the third most forgotten state in the United States, that's probably why you haven't heard them. They've been touring since 1996, and their first album to be released on a label "With the spirit of a traffic jam" came out in stores April 9th on Lakeshore Records.

Their press release touts them as 'Futurock,' which is a funky soup of rock, jazz, hip hop, electronic, and weird. That's fine. Although I question their futurity. They are talented musicians, using quick transitions of harmony, rhythm, and genre, but the first few tracks, sort of jazzy hardcore, sound like tracks Mr. Bungle has been making since the early nineties, but lacking the genius and intensity of Mike Patton.

A few of the later tracks, are really solid, including "Mobile," "Then Silence," and "Stop and Go all ye Faithful." When they succeed musically, they really do something interesting, blending electronic beats with live drums, swinging quick changes from rock into a casio-beat-fueled easy jazz breakdown, into an ambient space out, back to rock, and then into some turntable and hand drum jamboree.

The album really does have it all, but when is all too much. . . What makes things like Mr. Bungle work is (a) Mike Patton's a genius and (b) the vocals are a blend of funny and weird, delivered with full on intensity. Grüvis Malt is lacking in vocal power and intensity, opting for a more too cool to be crazy, but don't you hate traffic, style of pop-existential lyrics that really takes away from the over all quality of the music. Now it's not fair to expect them to stand up against something like Mr. Bungle, but sometimes, one has to say that's enough musical styles for one song, and why aren't the vocals better. Although Gruvis Malt demonstrates excellent musical understanding some of the tracks cross the line from eclectic into 'was that necessary,' leaving the listener somewhere like 'I wish all the tracks were as good as the good ones, because that would be a lot better.'

Despite all that, definitely keep an eye out for these guys as they tour this spring and summer, they've played with some good bands, and are probably a lot of fun live. The album is ok, but not as good as their press release in which they claim to have fans in 41 out of the 52 states.

play review

blue moon: (true)

by tubby

BACK THE FUCK OFF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS... there's a new Southern playwright in town and his name is Steve Marion. Steve's play "blue moon: (true)," which opened on Monday, was a great success. Now, I may not be any sort of

theatre critic, but I know what I hate... and I don't hate this! It was an excellent play that would've had me jumping up and down in my seat hooting with applause if I didn't have any social grace. It is the sad story of a depressed couple trying to cope with the loss of their son, and with their regretful relationship with him and his lifestyle while he was alive.

"blue moon: (true)" was (at risk of my sounding like a huge wuss) an extremely heart wrenching story that had me in tears. It never got pretentious with any trite sentimental dialogue or Sally Field like melodramatic outbursts. The four member cast of Lisa Clair, Alexis Gambis, Victor Kauffold and Andrew Lush did an excellent job in each of their roles, carrying the sorrowful atmosphere of the story. Through the characters' interactions with each other all revolving around this deceased son's personal effect on them, they all convey a story about their shattered lives. And guess what folks? Unlike most of the plays I've seen at Bard, it's a REAL play. It has an ACTUAL narrative plot to it, and not a bunch of people waving banners, chanting mantra, and throwing baby dolls at the audience then telling you that if you didn't understand their mindless gibberish it means you're ignorant and not artistically enlightened [motions jack-off gesture].

Well, anyhoo, to avoid going beyond my length confines, I will sum it up by saying Steve Marion's "blue moon: (true)" was an amazing play that definitely has the Tubby seal of approval.



Alexis Gambis, Lisa Clair, Victor Kauffold and Andrew Lush

## Bard Freshman To Have Book of Poetry Published

By Sean Sullivan

YESTERDAY, I WENT TO GO interview freshman Alex Regala, of Tewksbury in the Campus Center. We talked over the phone and agreed to meet at 9:30 PM. However, on the way over to the interview, I realized I had never met her before, therefore didn't know who she was or what she looked like. Jackie was with me and didn't know either. I walked in and looked all over for a while, and eventually was led in the right direction. She was with some friends and we went off to find a good place to do the interview. She suggested we go outside so she could smoke and we sat on the lawn.

Okay. Alright, I guess I'll start with, you're Alex right?

AR: Alexandra, but everybody calls me Alex. I prefer if you put Alex if you mention me.

SS: Okay, I think I'm gonna mention you. Alex, okay, you're a freshmen now?

AR: Yeah, I'm a youngin.

SS: You wrote a book of poetry?

AR: It still has not been completed, so it's in the process. Yeah, there's a lot of pressure. It's in the process. The name of the books is gonna be 'Grape Child'.

SS: Grape Child.

AR: Grape Child.

SS: How long has it been in the making?

AR: Um, for a year.

SS: Oh okay. You uh entered some contest?

AR: Um, this was the way, I was, I was nominated for International Poet of the Year for 2001. I was also nominated for an International Poet of Merit Award, which I both won. So that was really good, and to get that award I had to go to this convention in Orlando, Florida. And, how I got there, was actually, I came across this site, cause I was, I don't know if you want the whole story, but I was just gonna tell you anyway....

SS: Go ahead, go ahead.

AR: I was living in Venezuela at the time and I was a senior in high school, and I was looking for a love poem, cause it was Valentine's Day and so obviously the domain name that I typed in was 'Poetry.com' just to see if I could find anything, and so I got to this site. It basically said, if you want to post your poetry in this site, go ahead, and so I clicked the icon for that and I posted my poetry and they got back to me, once I had come to Bard. Two weeks after I had come to Bard, they mailed me at this address saying that my poem was published in a book of, in an anthology of poems and called 'Under the Quicksilver Moon.' It came out in December of this year. They also wrote to me and offered for like an audio for me to do like an audio c.d. thing, but I haven't gotten back to them, so that's probably not going to happen. But, along with this, this whole award ceremony thing that I

went to in Orlando, I also got to meet W. D. Snawgrass (unclear of spelling). I got to meet, I got to meet the mother of the Brady Bunch, which was really cool. She was the host.

SS: Caroline something, or?

AR: I can't remember. I can't remember. But, basically the society is, the International Poet Society and W. D. Snawgrass is the president, or is a really amazing sponsor of it. Do you have a favorite poet?

AR: Do I have a favorite poet? Um, no. Amazingly enough, I don't read a lot of poetry and I've never taken a poetry class either. Uh, so I don't know, I just, I just always done it since I was little, and I just kept on doing it and it paid off. Even in high school, in my English class when we had to write commentary on poems I hated doing it. It hated overanalyzing this beautiful piece of work cause then it just gets ruined. You know what I'm saying? In my eyes, because I have to, I can't appreciate it as it is in front of me when I first read it. So the first impression, subsides subsides subsides, and fades and eventually just like fades away and I'm just like 'Okay I don't wanna deal with this poem anymore and of course I end up hating it. You know what I'm saying?'

SS: Yeah, yeah.

AR: Over the past year I've really gotten into slam poetry.

SS: So, I guess uh Literature or poetry's not gonna be your major here?

AR: Well, I'm transferring next year to the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico. I'm gonna be a dance major. That's my plan in life.

SS: How long have you been dancing?

AR: Since I was three. Long long time.

SS: Wow. Any specific style?

AR: Not really, I dance all of 'em.

SS: All of 'em?

AR: Pretty much, well I dance the basic your ballet, your modern dance. It's not like I dance all the techniques, but I know a lot of them. I dance Meringue. I dance a lot of Salsa. And also I got my first c.d. out in New Mexico actually of my own piano composition a year ago and it's only being sold in New Mexico, so that's out and that's really cool.

SS: Do you have a style of music....oh there's the lightning...do you have a style of music like more?

AR: It's Jazz slash like really intense soundtrack music (laughs) In terms of like Gladiator or Braveheart it's that kind of 'duh-duh-duh-duh-duh' but it's mixed in with like that's the bass and then like at the end it's like tall this jazz. It's kinda cool, it's really cool.

SS: I just, off of MP3's I just downloaded the Scarface soundtrack, which is really cool.

AR: I've never actually heard it.

SS: It's really cool. Actually, I first, I first

heard the songs from uh playing Grand Theft Auto so much.

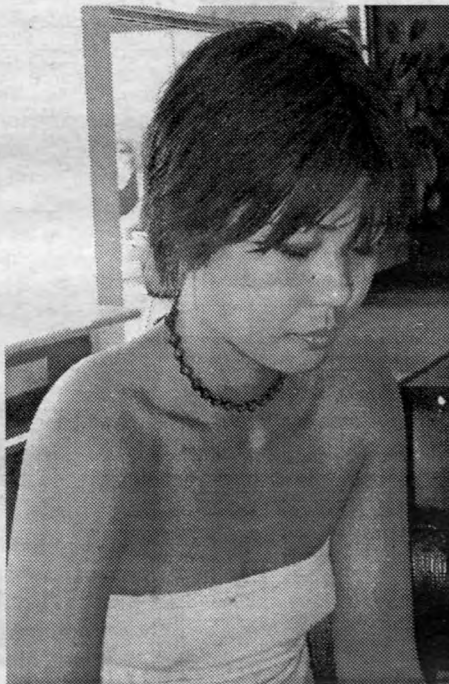
AR: (laughs)

SS: Me and my friends just like play that so much and they use a lot of songs from Scarface, so we just got into it and found the soundtrack. So you don't like Bard too much or?

AR: I just, I'm very much a city girl and I thought that I wasn't when I was in the city because I was always trying to get out of the city.

SS: So, you live in, you live in the city, New York or?

AR: No, actually I don't. I grew up in Tanzania in East Africa and I went to high school in Venezuela. This is the first time I've ever lived in the States, the last eight months or so. It's been the first time I've ever lived in the States.



SS: What made you choose Bard?

AR: I heard it was a really good school for the arts, which is what I totally would do, but in terms of writing poetry, I'm such a, I'm, I have to be in a chaotic environment to be able to get inspiration. I can't look at a tree and tell myself I'm gonna write a poem about the beauty of this tree, like it just doesn't work that way.

SS: Okay, so you get your inspiration from Chaos. What is your life ambition?

AR: My life ambition is to be a dancer in a professional dance company and teach on the side. What I really want to do is travel and teach at international schools around the world, basically is what I wanted to, so the dancing professionally is sort of a part time job that I can you know do for a while then take a break but have a spot for me when I get back.

SS: So you found out about this contest over the internet, for the poetry book?

AR: Well, what it was, in this convention in Orlando, 20 of the people who were

invited to attend were chosen after the readings of this contest. They were either given cash awards or they were given audio, they were allowed to, and it's all for free, they pay for it, audio or uh a chance to publish your own book was basically what it was and I got awarded one of the twenty awards for a chance to publish my own book.

SS: Okay, other than being a great dancer, are you athletic at all?

AR: I've been playing tennis since I was six years old. I'm Asian, so I have to live up to my Asian reputation so I play really good Ping-Pong (laughs).

SS: Yeah, I was never too good at that. Do you like any uh Bard teams?

AR: No, because they all kinda suck.

SS: Oh yeah, well that's kinda like the uh...

AR: The most entertaining Bard team is the Bard Rugby team.

SS: In writing, do you write anything else other than poetry?

AR: I have short stories, but I don't share 'em with anyone because they become very personal to me. Sometimes I share them, sometimes I don't.

SS: Is there anything about the book you want to mention?

AR: It's very political. It's very social. There are a lot of social statements, social statements that you can get from it. It's basically touches on every aspect having to deal with freedom, the government, sexuality, everything that everybody has constrictions on, boundaries for, bla bla bla bla.

SS: So you think people will be able to relate to it, when they read it?

AR: I think so.

SS: Who's the publisher, and did they publish your last book?

AR: Yes and it's the International Poet Society.

SS: And if someone wanted to go get it, where would they go get it?

AR: That would be online. They'd have to go to the site, Poetry.com.

SS: I was gonna ask you if you thought Queens was part of Long Island, but I guess that's not really important.

AR: (laughs) No that's not really important.

SS: Cause there's always been a big debate about that question. So you're reading at the Poetry Slam tonight?

AR: Yeah, I'm first. I wrote this poem kinda recently. I gotta go now.

SS: Thanks, good luck.

I chilled at the Slam and saw Alex recite her poem. It was called 'I'm told that I'm not allowed.' I remember she said the word yellow in it and she hates that color apparently. I found the poem to be about oppression. I think she got pretty high scores too, like 8 or 9. I visited Marist College on Thursday.

This Toilet Interview

... "I feel like my balls are so full of sperm because I have this big load that I didn't get to shoot."

A big guy in a T-shirt and boxers, clutching at his crotch stumbles towards us out of a bus.

But what the hell are we talking about? This was last Friday night when a few friends decided to go check out the free Gwar show at SUNY-Purchase. Unfortunately Gwar did not play. However, after waiting around for a couple of hours we got to interview a few members of the band and their crew.

Coat-Hangers for Christ's productions presents:

### CAIN'S GWAR Interview

CAIN: Which Member of Gwar are you?

Beefcake: I'm the guy the godly frame, Beefcake the Mighty (laughter all around).

CAIN: We were in Rhino Records the other day and we saw a 9 year-old kid picking up a Ragnarock CD. Does GWAR like children?

BCTM: Well, yes GWAR loves children, mainly roasted on the grill, I am quite partial to squash and onions myself, medium rare of course. (After some considera-

tion) Possibly even some garlic mashed potatoes.

CAIN: Who are your influences musically?

BCTM: No bands, they all suck and they're all beneath us. GWAR is mainly influenced by a need to bring the most disgusting meld of Metal and Punk to the people and to wreak death and destruction to all. GWAR is also influenced by Alcohol, Drugs and drunken nubile wenches (gesturing to the drunken nubile wenches by the bus).

CAIN: Why are you my mom?

BCTM: Because I fucked your dad.

This brings us back to where we started. The big fellow with the booming voice staggering towards us menacingly from the bus (Let's not forget, holding his crotch).

CAIN: What's your name man?

Oderus Urungus: I'm Oderus The lead singer - (Yelling) Think about Marcel DuChamp or Salvador Dali. Did someone say 'Oh Marcel you are crazy, that would never work,' or 'Salvador, that painting is just too wacky, throw it away.

I'm so pissed we didn't get to play. It would have been a big opportunity to play a really cool show, and the kids got screwed. We didn't cancel, I want you to put that in the paper, we got cancelled. The guy who they were renting the PA from packed up his shit and took the show inside and we couldn't go through another five to eight hour set up/take-down process'. It hasn't rained since then all day and that was like six to eight hours ago.

You know I've been in GWAR for 16 years. It was the joke that became a job, the job that became a career, but more than anything, it was a responsibility. Think about Dr

Frankenstein: he created the monster and then just let it go, Eurgh! Eurgh! (Mimes a zombie). He let his creation go wreaking terror on the village and we can't do that. We have to stick with this and really make it work.

Well I better go man I gotta keep it in line, I gotta shackle the monster. You guys take care.

CAIN: One more question before you go man.

Oderus: What's that man?

CAIN: Why are you my mom?

Oderus: (Singing at the top of his lungs and bouncing up and down) "WHY ARE YOU MY MOM!"

(Speaking) I'll give you a quick breakdown of the story behind the song "Fish Fuck". We sitting down by the river, tripping on acid, feeding Oreos to the river carp. "Why are you my mom?" I don't know just fit.





# An Eye for an Eye Leaves Everybody Blind

*A response to the unfortunately titled article "If You Don't Like America, Then Get the Fuck Out"*

by **Adam Howard**

I had never in my life been so troubled by a newspaper article until I read Mr. Banner's (*Observer*, March 28, 2002) a little over a week ago, and I have felt compelled to write a response ever since. At first I thought I should just let it stand as the mis-

formed rant that it was. However, I could not let that stand as the final word in what is contrary to how Mr. Banner sees it: an ongoing debate with no certain answer. Mr. Rok's article ("America's New War," *Observer*, March 15, 2002), which Mr. Banner so harshly criticized as "insane" and a "piece of crap," made valid points that can not and should not be so easily and blankly dismissed. If anything, Mr. Banner's article represents everything that has disgusted me with American reaction to the September 11th tragedy rolled into one page. It was completely reactionary and negative, feeding into our fears and prejudices instead of our common sense or sense of decency.

In his article Mr. Banner seems to fancy himself as some kind of expert on foreign policy. He personally attacks Mr. Rok for referring to The World Trade Center "incorrectly," and accuses him of being insensitive to the tragedy because he must not be from New York and is most likely spoiled and wealthy. First of all, whether or not Mr. Rok calls The World Trade Center by its proper nickname or not isn't really the issue and it doesn't matter if he's from New York either. The tragedy of September 11th affected Americans all over the country, including myself, a citizen of New Jersey. If only people from New York were to write about the situation you would get a very narrow point of view which is exactly what you get in the Banner article. I don't know Mr. Rok and I don't know if Mr. Banner does either. Yet I know this: Mr. Banner's article is full of outrageous claims and stereotypes and contains hardly a bit of wisdom or truth. It is as if history was completely overlooked when the article was written and the American government and military had been absolved of any injustices it had ever done. All the people of Afghanistan were portrayed as our ungrateful enemies who should be slaughtered indiscriminately. In reality we only know for sure that Osama Bin Laden and his followers are directly involved and they can't be found so it seems as though Mr. Banner feels it's completely justified to bomb and attack these innocent people as a substitute. Some American citizens are Neo Nazis. What if a country decided to bomb us because of them? If we use the Banner system of logic we all must be Nazis and we all deserve to die.

In one of the many ludicrous comments Mr. Banner makes in the article, he claims to be a "democrat, who hates Bush." However, his staunchly pro-military, anti foreigner attitude is more reactionary than anything else. It would be deemed even too conservative for Bush and embraced by the likes of Pat Buchanan. Mr. Banner's view of the

world is that of a seemingly disorderly collection of nations that are all corrupt and that all lie. This was actually used at one point in Mr. Banner's article as a defense of President Bush and his possible unsound handling of the crisis. However, since when do we as a nation judge ourselves by what other nations do? If something wrong happens everywhere, does that make it any less wrong? There was a

**If we use the Banner system of logic, we must all be Nazis and we all deserve to die.**

time when slavery existed all over the world but I'm sure Mr. Banner would agree that it was still nevertheless wrong and not

something that should be celebrated. President Bush has merely done what any leader in his position would do. He has called for unity, patriotism and has called on military might. He will coast on the coat tails of this tragic event and hope that it can shield him from being held responsible for all the other problems this country is facing. He has done nothing of

have been "destroying their pain" as he claims they were. Sure our nation may be wealthier and have more military power. But just because we're "bad asses" as Mr. Banner likes to call us, does this mean we have to obliterate any nation that stands in our way?

"Everytime the U.S. helps some Third World country (economically or militarily), wait a couple of years or so and those bastards are burning my flag. They are self-centered pricks that don't deserve help from anyone."

This is just one the reprehensible comments from within the Banner article. One must wonder how the person who wrote it ever was accepted at a school as highly respected as Bard. The statement is completely ignorant and was supported with absolutely no reasonable facts or explanations. Where is the evidence that this kind of thing happens everytime? How did we ever really help Afganistan economically or militarily? Aren't we really just serving our own interests and not exactly helping them? If helping a nation is installing our own cruel, corrupt leaders there because we want to ward off communism, then perhaps we are true champions of foreign aid. However, I would suggest that in many cases nations that burn our flag never asked for our help and if they did they certainly didn't get the kind of help they wanted or needed.

**Mr. Banner's article is full of outrageous claims and stereotypes and contains hardly a bit of wisdom or truth...It was completely reactionary and negative, feeding into our fears and prejudices instead of our common sense or sense of decency.**

substance to make the situation better; however, he has the support of millions of Americans like Mr. Banner.

According to Mr. Banner, if Mr. Rok were a New Yorker he would be looking for revenge against whoever caused the crashes of September 11th. Since when have we as a nation embraced revenge as a foreign policy technique? This isn't some Schwarzenager film.

**Negative qualities in our country can be spoken out against, and that is one of the qualities that makes our country great.**

Perhaps Mr. Banner truly is looking "for blood to bathe in" as he says, but I don't think he can and does speak for all New Yorkers. If we stormed out revenge style against our enemies with all our military might we're looking at inevitable nuclear holocaust in our future. Mr. Banner seems to see peace negotiations as pointless and he has little or no remorse for the plight of nations that feel victimized by us. He fails to see that having so much hatred towards America has to be for some reason and that America must not

Mr. Banner, at one point in his article, said he hated when "uneducated individuals act like they have all the answers of the world" but he went and did exactly what he hated. His article was not delivered as a simple opposing viewpoint; it was delivered like a supreme analysis delivered by a God. It ended with "Zeus has spoken" and I suppose that meant that there was nothing else to be said but unfortunately for this so-called Zeus there is. I am not a spoiled person, or lazy; I certainly was not spoon-fed success as Mr. Banner claims a lot of the people who question our government's actions are. Yet I am someone who does believe our military is vastly over-funded and over-celebrated. I also feel that this nation is ripe for criticism. Of course there are a number of aspects of this country that I cherish and respect but nevertheless crimes have been and are still being committed by our country and I don't think we should just accept it and "get over it" as Mr. Banner encourages us to do. Some Americans have respect for human life; some of us think we aren't perfect as witnessed by undeniable mistakes like the Vietnam War (a tragedy that, based on Mr. Banner's views, I can

only assume he supported). Some of us don't think that war is the answer always. But Mr. Banner stated, quite stubbornly, that he believed "war is the best way to handle conflicts." I don't understand how anyone can make a statement so deeply wrong. War means death and destruction and inevitably people who don't deserve to die and suffer will die and suffer. Maybe Mr. Banner is fine with that reality, but I am not.

There are a number of Americans who would love to bury their heads in the sand like ostriches and claim that our country can do no wrong when it comes to terrorism and think that any one who says otherwise should "burn in hell." There are those who would extend that feeling about American policy towards other issues such as poverty and racism. For me, as a young black man who was blessed enough to be born outside of segregation, I can't champion a nation who institutionalized slavery or forced Japanese Americans into internment camps, for example. These events are of the past but are still very relevant. Negative qualities in our country can be spoken out against, and that is one of the qualities that makes our country great. We can speak out when our government does wrong and try to reform it. What Mr. Banner seems to suggest with his statements is that we ought to ban free speech when it questions our government and our military. He really should realize that if

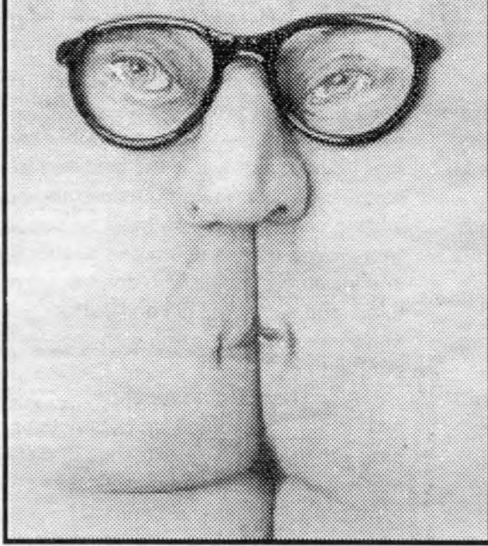
our government were never challenged he and I would not be allowed to drink from the same water fountains as our white classmates or even be at Bard for that matter. The

Civil Rights Movement, The Women's Rights Movements, all would be wiped from the history books.

In his article Mr. Banner said, "I'd rather know the truth than live in denial." But he is living in denial, denial of the fact that the world is not just black and white, good and evil with America as the bad-ass heroes. There is no doubt that the events of September 11th were a tragedy; however, there is no completely innocent nation involved and instead of denying our military's role in injustice like Mr. Banner has, I'd rather be more informed and not rush to celebrate bombings and small victories overseas. We can attack people and bomb them, but as evidenced by the attacks, their will is strong and many aren't afraid to die. When your adversaries aren't afraid to die, it only make them hard to defeat; it shows that they are very dedicated to their cause. If there is ever to be a solution to our nation's problems with terrorism, we must admit we've done wrong and think about reparations in one form or another. Combating violence with great violence does not work and never will.

The opinions and ideas expressed in the *Observer* do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Observer* staff. Each writer is a member of the Bard Community who publishes his/her views at his/her own discretion. If you would like to express your opinion in the *Observer*, send it via email to [observer@bard.edu](mailto:observer@bard.edu), by campus mail to *Observer*, or drop it off at the office in the basement of Tewksbury.

**ALMOST INTELLECTUALISM**  
by Michael "Indie" Marlin, Jr.



A kid in Kline Wednesday suddenly shouted, "What am I supposed to do with 100 babies with chopped-off heads rolling around my room?" And although such a comment did not surprise me the least bit as it came from the mouth of a random Bardian, and though I did not bother to analyze the question or put forth an answer, it did remind me of an important, sorrowful fact: After today, only one more "Almost Intellectualism" ever. Next issue is the grand finale! Be sure to mark your calendars. Hello everyone and welcome back to our righteous forum of intellectual discussion and debate. Let's do the news.

**-Freaky Frogs.** UC Berkeley scientists have recently discovered that small amounts of Atrazine, the most commonly used weed killer in North America, can cause male frogs to develop multiple sex organs and also additional female parts. The substance reportedly increases aromatase enzymes in the frogs, which cause testosterone to turn into estrogen. Two words: Atari Frogger. A great game.

**-Supreme Porn.** The US Supreme Court revoked the 6-year old law on Wednesday that prohibited computer-generated "virtual" child

porn. Arguing that the law had violated the First Amendment, the Free Speech Coalition convinced the court that such artificial images have been produced in art and literature for centuries, and that restricting them would oppose freedom of speech. I've often wondered: What if I pasted a picture of my face from 10 years ago on a picture of my naked body now? No doubt, it would be pretty damn sick. But child porn? Nah.

**-The Land of Ozzy.** Ozzy Osbourne, rock legend turned TV Dad, is now requesting a "high seven-figure" salary in his contract for a second season of "The Osbournes" on MTV. The reality TV show that monitors his family's everyday life has become a huge success for MTV, beating every other broadcast and cable network last Tuesday with 6 million viewers. While the show can be very disturbing at times, it is also extremely hilarious. If you can laugh at a once-great musician who has become a pathetic burnt-out workhorse at the command of his wife's/manager's reins, then this is the show for you!

**-Cyber Bullies.** 1 in 4 children currently suffers from bullying or harassing text messages sent via email or chatroom, claimed the Nation Children's Home in London on Wednesday. I received such a bullying email the other day that said, "You little bastard, where's my money!" I was at the point of crying into my pillows until I realized it was from my mom. Silly mom.

**-I'm Hot!** Weather temperatures across the US broke records this week as thermometers soared into the 90s. NYC temperatures surpassed a 106 year-old record of 88 on Tuesday as pedestrians basked in the 91-degree heat. Bard students showed their appreciation with frisbees and hookas in the lawn outside the campus center. One Bard

intellectual claimed, "It's like a portal into a new world, man...like where man and the sun can live in harmony and do things together like go bowling and play four square."

We're running out of space, folks; let's go to the letterbag.

Dear Indie,  
I'm dying! Save me! Help!  
Sincerely,  
Almost Dead

Dear Dead,  
Well, I have to say that you chose the wrong person to tell about your death, because by the time I read your letter, you were probably already dead. And that's too bad. Why did you just have to go and die like that? Now that I think about it, you really are an ass. How do you expect this forum to be anything other than one-sided if you're dead! Yeah well, I'm glad you're dead! Anyway, thanks for writing!  
-Indie

Dear Indie,  
I think my professor has fallen in love with me. He seriously emails me all the time, and the other night he left a message on my machine at 1am. I'm getting a bit freaked out. What should I do?  
Sincerely,  
Student

Dear Student,  
My serious answer: perhaps tell him to leave you alone. Call BRAVE or DOSO and ask them. My not-so-serious answer: Just let it flow, man. Anything for the A, right? It will make a nice story for the grandchildren one day. If you absolutely can't do that, then just tell him you got rabies from Sasquatch or something. That usually works for me. Thanks for writing!  
-Indie

That's it for today. Keep them letters coming: mm374@bard.edu / Michael 'Indie' Marlin, Jr. Until next time, I'm a bastard. Goodnight.

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Spring 2002

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This is a shout to the R-O-B Lee  
For those that can rhyme, that which come easily  
H-Town Gangster homey He please  
Hit the Cuz-Cuz, he gets down wid the busy  
South Park Mexican, sidewalk pedestrian  
South-Side hustler, big Texas anthem  
Biek and Robert, MCs in tandem  
Make you disappear like you wuz a phantom  
WXBC in Hong Kongnese  
Finger on the trigger, all you have to do is squeeze  
From Space City to the WTC  
Spoken word Korean rap smooth like XTC  
D-U-C, O-D-B,  
MP3s of big label properties  
540AM is about the same time ya'll caught sleepin'  
Sow beats with Richmond and see what you be reapin'  
Only when yer drunk you take inappropriate risks  
Listen to AZN Thug in the joint spinnin' disk

Houston, Texas dial into AZN Nation...  
-MC DUC

**The Guy@**

**KILLIN' IT**

What is your favorite spring-time activity?



Filling up empty bottles w/ tap water and soaking my friends.



Frolicking.



Getting sunburned.



Pestering the elderly.



Being naked at night on the grass.



I like to sit and feel the Vibe...with a capital V.

# Keep Punching // with Sean Sullivan

## DANNY GOT HIS DRIVER'S LICENSE!!!

On a Wednesday, let's say about a week ago, or maybe more I'm not sure, Danny Castillo and I went up north to Albany for Danny's driving test. This was his second attempt, as he failed the first time four weeks prior, getting 70 points. He is a good driver, none the less. He just failed on the little technicalities that you only do for the test and never when you really drive around. The instructor, the first time around, was a little harsh too, though he didn't seem to mind that I had a video camera on the whole time, while I was in the backseat. The biggest deal was the parallel parking. Danny reversed a little too fast and jumped the curb a bit. The instructor said that was a dangerous action, as dangerous as driving through a red light, prompting an automatic failure, thus ruining our day. The second time around, the instructor was much nicer, however, surprisingly just like the first one, this instructor also had a mustache. I wondered if that was a bad sign. To keep Danny calm and relaxed I brought my hand drum (that thing Mr. Miyagi used to help Daniel-son kick Chosen's ass in Karate Kid II). I'd say it worked during the test, but on the way up Danny was quite nervous, which is perfectly natural of course. Our first accomplishment of the day was actually getting to the DMV without the directions, which Jackie typed for us, though I forgot to bring along. Upon arrival, after stops at Dunkin' Donuts and McDonalds, we were told that because of the massive construction on the roads going on (Roads? Where we're going, we don't need...roads), the testing area was on the other side of town. We eventually made it, and the instructor was ready to go. There was a hesitant moment when the instructor showed a little agitation. As I was rearranging the stuff lying in the backseat, of which was Dave Steeves' car, by the way, the instructor snapped, "I thought I said, behind the driver's seat!" I finally got all the garbage into one pile so I had enough room to sit, and we were off. The first time around, we used Walker's car. Danny was very relaxed driving and did everything almost perfectly, even the stuff you don't do when there is no driving instructor in the car. He had Danny do the parallel parking very early in the test, but this time Danny did it slow and methodical, and without a hitch. He made a few more left and right turns and then was issued his temporary license certificate, which came in the form of a receipt. Driving back home, with a huge smile on his face, Danny screamed with joy and his fists raised up in the air, "I GOT MY DRIVER'S LICENSE!!!"

THEN on the way home, we had an amazing astounding experience. We were on the New York Thruway heading back South and on a whim I said, "Hey Danny, wanna go to the Catskills?" He said Sure and we went. The town was very scenic and cool, a very calm rustic area. We stopped for gas, and Danny knew how to do it this time. The first trip, I had to show him the ropes, so to speak. Oh yeah, the reason we went was to scout out Iron Mike Tyson's old home and gym. He moved to live there in 1979, after being taken out of Tryon (a juvenile delinquent center) under the care of Cus D'amato and Camille Ewald, who later became his surrogate parents. Cus D'amato, who passed away in 1985, was a legendary boxing trainer, who worked with former champions Floyd Patterson (heavyweight) and Jose Torres (light heavyweight). The moment after meeting Tyson, who was 13 at the time, Cus prophetically claimed that Tyson would one day become the Heavyweight Champion of the world. We drove around the streets asking ran-

dom people, "Excuse me, um we were wondering where Mike Tyson used to live. Would you know where that is?" Eventually, we came across a policeman and he gave us the correct directions. He lived on Thorp Street, if anyone is interested. The house, which was very big and used to house many fighters other than Tyson, was just how I saw it in many Tyson documentaries. It was amazing seeing it in person. It has a nice view of the Hudson to the right of it. By now, you probably know how much I am a fan of Tyson. If you don't, either you don't know me or don't read this column, but that's okay. Danny first spotted Tyson's name on the mailbox down the block. It still says "M. Tyson" right on it.

After this, I said "Danny, let's go find his gym," which is on top of the Catskill police station. Tyson's old trainer, Kevin Rooney, still trains fighters there, to this day. Ironically, the gym/police station is right next to Village Pizza II, the greatest pizza chain on earth. I am sure Mike Tyson enjoyed Village Pizza as much as we all do. Danny and I actually ate at Village Pizza III on the way home, and after seeing a dude angrily try to start a chainsaw outside Xtra-Mart.

Unfortunately, Rooney was not there that day, but we ran into a very nice lady who has worked there for thirty years, and actually knew Mike when he was younger. She had nothing but nice things to say about him saying he was a very generous and cordial person. She said that Mike would always sign autographs and take pictures with anyone who wanted one. Also, whenever he did train at this gym, massive amounts of people would come from all over just to watch this teenage prodigy at work. She said she had never seen anyone fight with as much speed and ferocity as he did. One time, she saw that Mike was to spar with this very tall muscular guy, and asked him if he was okay with fighting a man so much bigger than he was. He replied, "I like to swing up." Watch out Lennox!! The man came downstairs after the sparring session was over and said, "You can tell them you won't be getting a call back from me again." Most of the time, because of his power, sparring partners would only spar once with him, coming out of it bruised and black and blue. She really wasn't supposed to let us in to see the gym, since Rooney runs it, so that was very cool of her. We told her we were doing a film project for Bard College.

As soon as the doors to the gym opened, I was again in awe. This was where a legend was born, that of Iron Mike. It was very basic and simplistic, nothing fancy about it. There were pictures and news clippings of Tyson all over the walls, as well as other fighters. Towards the back of the gym, painted onto the wall were the words, "DON'T QUIT." There were punching bags of all kinds around the gym and a weight training area as well. The ring was very rugged, with the ring ropes sagging a little, and the floor mat with the stains of blood and sweat. Marvin Hagler, the great former middleweight champion, once said, "It's hard to wake up at 4 o'clock in the morning wearing silk pajamas." Basically, to train hard it's best to live hard and follow discipline. Tyson, who is in training for his upcoming fight against Heavyweight Champ Lennox Lewis on June 8th, recently hired a new trainer, the formidable Ronnie Shields. For a while, Tyson had no serious trainer, except for those he usually kept second in command, after having to cut back in expenses and let go his old trainer, Tommy Brooks. Ronnie Shields has worked with many former champions and great fighters, including Evander Holyfield, Pernell Whitaker, Michael Moorer, and David Tua, proving his credibility at the top of the sport. Most recently, he worked in the corner

of Vernon Forrest, who pulled off a major upset in defeating the superstar Sugar Shane Mosley. Assessing the task in front of him, Shields said, "It's a very winnable fight for Mike. He can punch with both hands. Lennox is not a guy that takes the best punch in the world. He's proven that over and over during the years." Tyson's former trainer, Tommy Brooks had this to say, "Mike will come out on top. He is a

slugger and has the firepower to beat Lennox." \*\*Godot is coming!!!\*\* \*\*\*Also, coming soon is a boxing match scheduled for 8 rounds here at Bard possibly on the rugby field, between Asher, of Keen, and Lenny, of Tewks. Be there\*\*\*

### You Know You're a SENIOR when....



MIDWAY - SOMETIME IN FEBRUARY



REALITY - SOMETIME IN APRIL (OR MAY)

### You Know You're a freshman when....



### You Know You're a BARD LIBERAL when....



## RUGBY TIMES

by Guinness Moskowitz and Willy Mctito



The Bard Observer

Apostrophe by Braden Lamb



## Horoscopes

By  
Contributing Psychic  
Astrologer Madame  
Babzakovsky-Smith

"Even psychic astrologers forget to make a left at Albuquerque sometimes"

**Aries:** Like your sign, the ram, you may feel as though you've been bumping heads a lot this week. Take a step back and realize the problems that have caused the conflicts are none too important. With a bit of perspective, you'll be bumping nasties instead of beating yourself up, and life will be wonderful.

**Taurus:** Your overbearing ways could get you into trouble during the hot weather, especially in the certain of your rockier relationships. Try not to follow your impulses as much for the next week. Make yourself a little more flexible/forgiving unless you are looking for strife, in which case proceed full steam ahead.

**Gemini:** April 19, 1872, the first elephant was brought to the United States by Bailey of Barnum and Bailey fame. This week you should try something big and unprecedented. It may seem like an enormous task but the rewards will be well worth it. Also, remember to get enough calcium, it's good for your bones and chompers.

**Cancer:** If you're of the male persuasion you will meet a voluptuous (I mean really freakin' watermelon voluptuous) blond and you will

ride off into the sunset and live happily ever after. If you are not male, a female perhaps, than something equally exciting will happen to you. Seriously, it's a good week to be a Cancer.

**Leo:** You may have been forced into being an emotional rock even though you feel a bit unsteady yourself. Don't forget you're not an island, but a peninsula, and can roll to a new location. Although it seems like things just get piled onto you, don't let it accumulate or you'll be buried. There's someone out there that will help bear your load.

**Virgo:** Do you read fortune cookies? Why? Am I not good enough? You go trusting advice from an unsatisfying vaguely lemon-flavored dessert, instead of a psychic astrologer. Fine. Just see how you get through this week without me. Why don't you go ask your new friend fortune cookie how things are going to turn out? I predict you will one day inherit a small piece of land. Is that really the sort of thing you wanna hear? That's so fucked up...after all we've been through together...

**Libra:** Life right now for you seems like a cheap carnival game; probably rigged, with prizes that don't seem as neat as they did before you sank your last \$10 in them. Now some meth addict without all his teeth is asking you if you want to be a winner. Well, you should think long and hard about how happy it would make you to just come in second.

**Scorpio:** Sometimes the nighttime is not the right time, but you'll never make that mistake again. Don't be so hard on yourself over this last screw up, and things will work out by the end of the semester. Find someone you

aren't great friends with and go spend some enjoyable time together in the sun.

**Sagittarius:** You've really started to come into your own in the last couple weeks. You are finally able to realize that vision you've always had of yourself but now you're wavering. They say trust yourself, and that includes your shortcomings.

**Capricorn:** It's time you learned a little about your own sign, Capricorn. Take a moment to look up something on the Internet, and know where the constellation is in the sky. It will help you in the near future with a member of the opposite sex.

**Aquarius:** Did that rainbow you saw recently make you wish you could tap your ruby slippers and get the fuck out of Oz? (The metaphorical crazy world around you, not the shiv and ass-raping filled show on HBO.) Don't despair, though your friends may seem like oddballs, they have their redeeming qualities and will help you in ways you didn't expect. I'm not saying this will make anything easier, especially before the end of the month, but at least you've got some entertaining folks around you who also don't have magical slippers.

**Pisces:** You've been felling a little feisty these past couple days, and its time to act on those feelings. Tossing a couple back with old friends is no longer gonna cut it, you gotta live. Get a kazoo some tiki torches and some ass shaking soul music and hit the town. Just not on Thursday, or any day with a "t" in it.

The Observer really, really needs some people interested in being A&E editor next year.

And as usual, we are welcoming any type of submission. Like cover photos.

email observ-  
er@bard.edu  
or call x7131

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### • NEWS & FEATURES •

*The Marvelous Critter Known as the Degu*  
by Jaqueline LaDuke, p. 2  
You may not know what it is, but they sell them in Red Hook.

*The Current Factors Behind Israel's War,*  
by Kierin Moscovitz, p. 3  
Uses his experience in Palestine and some book learnin' to explain.

*Special Report: Sand in Tewks Being Tested by Chemist*  
by Jacob Cottingham, p. 4  
The Chemistry department lends a hand to B&G's bafflement

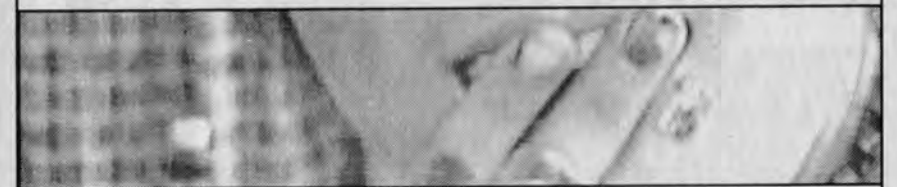


### • ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT •

*Songs From the Old Gym 2: more songs about depression and anarchy*  
by Danny Gibson, p. 6

*E.t. and Monsoon Wedding and Panic Room are reviewed*  
by Jeff Eastman and Mike Morini, p. 7

*CAIN interviews GWAR*  
by CAIN, p. 8



### • OPINIONS/EDITORIAL • SPORTS! •

*The Guy at Kline, p. 10*  
See your fellow students respond on the spot to a random question.  
Courtesy Michael Marlin, Jr.

*An Eye for an Eye Leaves Everyody Blind, p. 9*  
by Adam Howard  
A response to Jame's Banner's response to Kiernan Rok's op/ed

*Sports! business with your host, Dave Tramonte, p. 11*  
Keep Punching with Sean Sullivan, and a rugby comic...

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