

9-28-1978

## The Spark, Volume 2 Issue 2

Connecticut College

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The views expressed in this paper are solely those of the author.

# THE SPARK

## Disability Benefits: Why Not the Pregnant

Sept 28  
78

Bob Landau

On December 7, 1976, the United States Supreme Court ruled that private employers may legally exclude women disabled by childbirth or a complication of pregnancy from company disability benefit programs. The case, Gilbert v. General Electric, would set a discriminatory precedent for employers' pregnancy disability benefits. The weight of pregnancy discrimination in our society is not a recognized problem, but its implications are of the gravest consequence to the American working women.

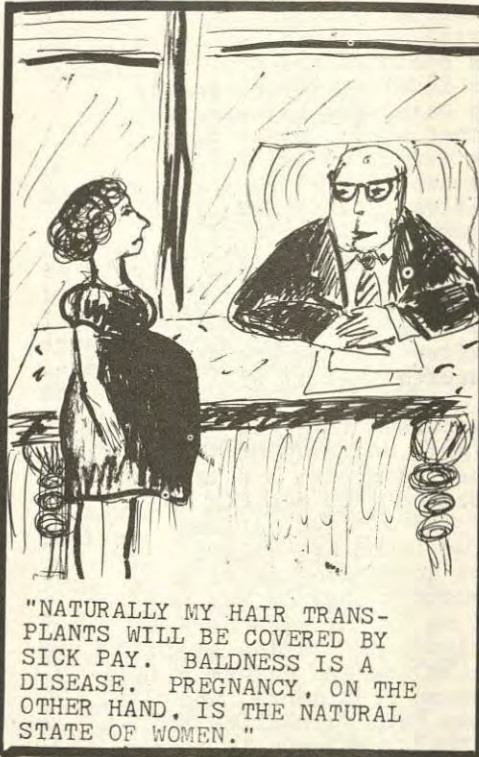
### GILBERT

The facts of the Gilbert case were as follows: Martha Gilbert lost her job because she became pregnant. She was separated from her husband and was raising a two-year-old child. She applied for welfare but did not receive a check in time to pay to pay her bills. During November and December, she and her child lived without heat, electricity, or hot water in rural Virginia. They were unable to maintain the nutritive diet to which they were accustomed. The General Electric Company, like most American companies, provides disability benefits to its employees for all conditions except one. General Electric pays benefits to employees disabled by vasectomies, cosmetic surgery, prostatectomies and hair transplants, but denies any benefits to pregnant women.

The Court ruling repudiated the pregnancy guidelines of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as well as decisions by 18 Federal District Courts, and 6 Federal Court of Appeals which had uniformly required that pregnancy related disabilities be treated the same as other temporary disabilities.

### PREGNANT WOMEN UNPROTECTED

The statistics show that as of 1975 the American work force was composed of 2/5 women. Most of these women are of the most fertile child-bearing years. While 40% of the U.S. work force enjoy some type of fringe



benefit protection against disability, only 40% of these benefit plans include protection against disability coverage. The figures thus show that of the 12.5 million working women who are covered by sick and accident disability insurance, less than 5 million of them are protected in any way from wage loss or provided medical compensation for pregnancy disability.

Women of childbearing age face many different types of employer rules and practices which affect their employment. An employer may lawfully discharge an employee as soon as she becomes pregnant. He may take away

her seniority, place her on unpaid mandatory leave or otherwise deprive her of employment status or opportunities. It is common to find women who are perfectly healthy and want to work but find their jobs terminated. Women who become physically incapacitated because of pregnancy do not even receive the same sick leave and disability benefits as other workers who become disabled.

A common misconception in our society today is that once a woman becomes pregnant and has her child she will not return to her job. The average time leave, however, in a normal childbirth is six weeks and statistics show that women do return to work with impressive regularity. There are two factors which perpetrate this stigma. First, many employers require a woman to leave work months before she is disabled. Second, many employers impose an arbitrary date for return to work based on the stereotypical notion that women are unable to continue working or do not desire to return to work. Where is the logic behind an employer firing a pregnant woman because he believes that she is unable to work, and once the women really cannot work telling her that it is not a disability and she is not entitled to benefits? These discriminatory practices were widespread in American industry prior to the EEOC Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Pregnancy. However following the Gilbert decision, which nullified these guide lines employers have resumed these discriminatory practices.

### THE AMERICAN WORKING WOMEN

Most women like most men, work because they need income. 70% of all women employed are either the sole wage earner or married to men who make less than \$7000 a year. Their income is essential to support themselves and their families. The Supreme Court's decision permits employers to deny women income when they need it the most; when they not only cannot work but have additional medical expenses.

Continued on page 11

# Student rights

Just about every upper-classman on this campus knows the story behind the room-entering policy and the phone company's questionable entry of two years ago. And most everyone knows that the inconsistency between the wordings of the policy has been corrected this year by the statement that both College personnel and authorized representatives from any utility may enter students rooms as required without prior permission from the occupant. THE SPARK first became interested in this issue last year, though no suitable answers have been found on the legality of this clause. With the new wording even further complicating the problem, and allowing for even more persons to enter rooms without consent, we decided to consult several legal agencies, including the ACLU and the Legal Aid's Civil Rights division in New London.

The Legal Aid here has taken an interest in this problem, and has offered us much information concerning the possibilities of inconsistency between the clause and the law. One of two cases exists. If the student and the College enjoy a normal tenant-leasee relationship, then the school is acting in direct violation of both the Constitution's Fourth Amendment and several Connecticut General Statutes. This is probably not the case, as no lease is signed and the catalogue acts as our room agreement by virtue of our choice of living on campus. However, even in this case, two civil rights statutes are probably still being violated. One of these involves the necessity of a student to agree on all of the catalogue because he needs to agree on part of it- in other words, since most of find it necessary to live in the dorms, we are forced to agree on all the catalogue. The other involves the fact that each student is not specifically informed of this clause before agreeing to live on campus. In both of these cases, we find the present policy highly unethical and certainly inconsistent with basic Civil Rights. Our attorneys tell us, unfortunately, that it would take a test case by a student injured by this policy to bring this to court. We must wait till after what we are trying to prevent happens before we are assured that it will not happen again.

The SGA's meeting last week discussed this new wording and Dean Johnson, Treasurer Knight, and student Mike Adamowicz were invited to answer questions (see the letter from Mr. Adamowicz). THE SPARK attended this meeting and was appalled by the general conduct and attitude of Dean Johnson and some House Presidents (we found Mr. Knight very polite and accomodating, if not somewhat evasive as to the legality of the clause; we suspect that he was not sure of the answer either), as well as by the misunderstandings of the implications the clause has to the students. Dean Johnson became very belittling and rather rude to Mr. Adamowicz, as were several House Presidents, who all questioned his intent. What they fail to realize is that now there exists no guarantee that unreasonable search and seizure of the rooms cannot take place. Neither administrative intent nor other schools' policies have any thing to do with this. Every student on this campus is being denied that right guaranteed by the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution, and the legality of the situation is all that matters. One House President asked what the students had to hide; he must be too naive to recognize the presence of drugs on this campus. What THE SPARK has trouble understanding is why the administration will not simply change the wording in the catalogue to comply with basic civil rights- what situation are they afraid of? Instead they resort to questioning the integrity of any student who persists in questioning this policy. In closing, we demand an apology by Dean Johnson to Mr. Adomowicz for her harassment of him at this meeting, and also by SGA president Janice Mayer for her allowing the ugly situation of that meeting to continue one-sidedly against Mr. Adamowicz, their invited guest. (It should also be noted that the minutes of that meeting did not acknowledge that Mr. Adamowicz was invited there to answer questions; he was not attempting to, as Dean Johnson suggested, bring up a dead issue). As Vice-President Vuyo Ntshona attempted to express, though virtually ignored, intentions do not count here, it is what is legal that is important.

## THE SPARK

Volume II/ Issue 2

Thursday, September 28, 1978

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THE SPARK is a non profit organization with offices in the Chapel basement, Ext.270.

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All editorials are written by THE SPARK's editorial staff.

# LETTERS

Dear Sir;

I would like to clear up an incident that occurred at the Wednesday, September 20 meeting of the Student Government Assembly. I was asked to attend the meeting by SGA President Janice Mayer to speak on the room entering policy issue. I have done some research on the legality of the present policy and went to the meeting to express my point of view.

At the meeting, I read through four Connecticut state laws that I felt were being violated by the room entering policy. After I finished, Dean Alice Johnson and several house presidents questioned my intentions. I was referred to sarcastically as a "Philadelphia lawyer", bringing up "dead issues" in order to bring discord between the administration and the students. Throughout the forty-five minute discussion, my arguments were ignored and instead my integrity was placed under scrutiny. I never received an answer to whether the new policy was legal or not, but that did not seem to interest much of the Student Government Assembly. In fact, at the end of the session I raised my hand to add a point that I felt was being overlooked, and President Janice Mayer shook her head and denied me the right to speak. This effectively gagged anything I wished to say.

It is not so much that I mind being personally attacked for presenting an opinion that contrasted with the administration's; that has happened before. What does bother me is that it occurred during a student government meeting. While I was House President of Hamilton, anyone bringing discussion before the assembly was treated with respect and discussion was limited to the pertinent facts of the argument. Apparently, what was once a forum for student discussion and action has turned into an unorganized body which listens to the Administration unquestioningly and doubts the credibility of fellow students.

I would just like to point out that I never questioned the motives or intentions of the Deans or the

College staff. I was attempting to avoid a future situation in which abuses of this new policy might occur and create real disturbances between the students and Administration. If the College's stance is indeed within the law, then I withdraw all objections. However, I have still not received a definitive answer to this question from the Administration. I did learn that several members of the College community feel that I am not capable of reading coherently from state laws, and further that my motivations are highly suspect, according to my learned colleagues. Again, I deny any such charges and hope that future discussion in the Student Government Assembly will be more objective and discuss matters in an intelligent and scholarly manner.

Sincerely,  
Michael Adamowicz  
Class of 1979

Dear Sir;

We, as members of the college community, would like to address ourselves to an issue we find disturbing. It has become increasingly apparent that there is a lack of consideration being shown for the basic rights and values held by a large portion of the community. Specifically we are distressed by certain individuals' lack of respect for the women's feelings on this campus.

The article entitled "The JAP Factories", appearing in a previous issue of The Spark, is indicative of this insensitivity. Although the story may have been meant in jest, such stereotypes in a college publication only help to perpetuate harmful attitudes. Women on campus, particularly the Jewish women, do not deserve this treatment.

The T-shirts printed last week, celebrating the 10th anniversary of co-education at Conn. College, are another example of this trend of thoughtlessness. We appreciate the importance of this anniversary, of course. We cannot, however, accept the slogan "10 years of Men on Top" as an appropriate expression for the occasion.

Though the actions stated above may not have been intended to offend, we hope that more consideration for people's feelings will

be given in the future. The level of consciousness on this campus is higher than these events would indicate. For this reason we find it necessary to respond.

Sincerely,  
The Women's Group

To: The College Council  
From: The Faculty Steering and Conference Committee  
Re: The Situation In Crozier Williams Dining Facility

Resolved: that in September 1977 the faculty instructed the Faculty Steering and Conference to request that a faculty dining room be provided; that the Faculty Steering and Conference Committee did not request that students be excluded from the Crozier-Williams dining facility; that the Faculty Steering and Conference Committee feels that the solution proposed is not in the best interests of the entire College; that the Faculty Steering and Conference Committee hopes that the College Council will collectively recommend a solution which is satisfactory to all parties.

Dear Sir;

We are very inspired by your front page article "Equality Before the Law: More Time" by Bob Landau. The article is an excellent summary of the legal justifications and political necessity for the Equal Rights Amendment and E.R.A. extension. Bob Landau's documentation of the extension is extremely thorough.

We are members of the Connecticut College Women's Group and it has initiated a program for the active support of issues like the E.R.A. Anyone interested in working with this program, please contact Pam Peirce, Box 1002, 447-2096.

The Women's Group also has many other projects including establishing a permanent Women's Center on this campus, organizing consciousness-raising groups, and providing a forum for the informal discussion of issues relevant to women. Anyone interested in any of these projects, or has additional contributions please contact Mindy McGovern, Box 952, 442-1314.

Thank you for providing information in THE SPARK which is so vital for the community's understanding of on and off campus issues.

In Equality,  
Allie Lyons  
Pam Peirce

# In a ceilingless cave

E.D. ETHERINGTON JR.

The beach was rocky. There was very little sand. It didn't attract people. You went there to be alone. If you were able to you tried to ignore the things that lived there.

There were big jagged rocks, and hundreds of small water-rounded rocks, which were what you walked on in between sparse patches of sand. The sun reflected off the flat, angular sides of the big rocks. Countless mica particles glistened like tiny drops of water. These rocks were sculptured by the sea and her moods. Thousands of snails clung to the small rocks that were dried and warm now that the tide had receded. Many of the snails would still be alive when the tide rose again, especially if they were in the shade of the big rocks. It was late summer and the season had lost its freshness and there was little comfort in the heat, especially for snails. The water was very cold after you had been walking on the rocks, crushing the snails under your feet as you tried to keep your balance. The water looked crisp with flashes of sunlight reflected off the nervous waves. You could smell dried seaweed, the sand and the water. There was a fishy smell, too, that rose from decaying carcasses of crabs and fish trapped in tidal pools where the water had evaporated. Most of these tidal pools still had water in them, and as you stood over one, making a shadow between the sun and the water with your back, you could see groups of minnows darting underneath, searching for some passageway back to the sea. But there was none, and as they groped in their natural prison you could toss pebbles at them and watch them disappear in clouds of sand the pebbles made when they splashed in the water.

If you got bored with the tidal pools you faced the light wind against your face—a sea breeze that was salty. Squinting your eyes against the glare the sun made on the water, you could see fishing boats off-shore,

and if the wind was right you could hear the people on board talking. Sometimes you could smell the gasoline from the motors of the boats, distinct from the mingled odors of the beach and water.

The sea breeze was refreshing in the heat, but if you wanted to escape the smells and the sounds it brought in from the water where there were people, you walked to a place where big rocks and a jetty formed a ceilingless cave. The rocks which framed it were bigger than those of the beach. They looked as if they had been forced up through the ground by an awesome burst of energy from within the earth, that had left them exposed to the

legs, and you would itch. They were tiny and silent and flourished in the ceilingless cave where there was no wind to drive them away. You watched them cover your legs stretched out over the sand and imagined that they thought your flesh was dead and beginning to decay in the sun and they were the first ones to arrive for the feast. You would not be alone then. All the creatures hidden under rocks and in tidal pools and in shells that look like rocks would stretch out their claws, and after long hours of stillness, would move towards your body, lifting themselves over rocks and scurrying through cracks and crevices and dried seaweed in a si-

“...you walked to a place where big rocks and a jetty formed a ceilingless cave”

elements— heavy, awkward and still. Thrown blindly together, they formed a jagged wall that disappeared into the sea, stretching on and on beneath the cool, murky green water.

It is hotter in the ceilingless cave than on the beach. The sun's rays are trapped inside and the huge rocks grow warm and become natural radiators, transferring their heat to everything they touch, or that touches them. It is a pervasive heat that hovers above the walls of the cave just out of the wind's reach.

If you sat down in this place, leaning against the base of one of the big rocks and stretching your legs out in the sand in the sun, you could close your eyes and feel hidden and alone. The heat would not be so oppressive if you sat still and didn't think about it. It would make you drowsy and comfortable and dreamy. Perhaps you would sleep.

Then on your legs you would begin to feel tiny bugs like mosquitos. You could hardly feel their bite. They would crawl, brushing against the hair on your

lent and determined effort to get to the ceilingless cave. There would be no birds. At first they would observe the death inspired pilgrimage from the air, and then they would glide down in the heavy, salty sea wind, landing gently on the rocks, waiting. Claws would explore the wounds left by the birds under clouds of mosquitos, and the process would be quickened. There would be flies. Big, black flies which buzzed loudly, with fat bodies that wandered into the wounds left by others. Groups of them would form shifting black patches as they nervously crawled over each other, gnawing deeper. If a bird landed suddenly they would rise in a dark, humming swarm, but only for a moment.

The sun would set. The horizon would be dark orange and red like hot embers in an old fire, casting a tired glow over the deserted beach. The fishing boats would be winding in their nets, and seagulls would circle over head, enviously eyeing the days catch, occasionally swooping down and plucking one of the shivering silver fish from the nets. In the

# The last ride home

twilight, nighttime creatures would emerge from the edge of the water and the bases of rocks and holes in the sand, and creep towards the cave. They would no doubt be through before dawn, because they are the last to arrive.

But there were only mosquitos now that were surprised when the dead flesh shook them off, got up, and walked out of the ceilingless cave back into the wind where they could not pursue.



"If I can't be your lover babe I sure won't be your dog."

## OCEAN'S PIZZA PALACE

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L.C.S.

It is the last day of camp. I am sitting here on the bus, waiting for all of the campers who are on my bus to arrive. I have been working at Camp Mohawk, a day camp for over 1,000 kids, most of them from New York City....It has been a long summer. Some good times. Some bad times. But what can you expect? Six year old boys-- the age group I worked with-- have a lot of energy, and they've tired me out every day... At night I've gone home and done very little, even though I set out to read lots of books at the beginning of the summer..."So why the hell did you work at a day camp?" people have asked me all summer. The pay is lousy. The little kids will drive you up the wall. You'll hate it. Just think about it for a minute. All those little brats, thousands of them, in their Camp Mohawk uniforms and hats, pouring out of those buses every morning like ants. For eight weeks. How will you be able to take it?... For the most part I've enjoyed getting to know six year old kids, their whims, their hang ups. Yes. They have a lot of hang ups, it seems.

Here they come. They're boarding the bus. They're eager to get home. I start to take attendance. They're especially rowdy today. Its the last day, and they're hyped up. A few of the other counselors tell them to shut up. They don't listen. "We hate boys," shout a group of six year old girls who have inhabited the last three seats on the bus all summer long. The little boys give them the finger.

Everyone has checked in. We're ready to go. Then Doug, adorable little Doug, wearing his feather, the one he earned today for being a so-called "brave" warrior, walks up the aisle to my seat at the front of the bus. Somehow he doesn't look like a four year old. "Hi, Doug," I say. At once I realize that something is wrong. He's usually the loudest kid on the bus. He isn't saying a thing today. He looks like he's going to

cry any minute. "What's the matter, Doug?" I say. "I went to the bathroom in my pants," he replies.... Disaster has struck. What I've been dreading all summer has finally happened. Why me? So I take him by the hand, and we walk back up a big hill. I take him into a bathroom, and I help him change. All the way up he kept saying, "It could've happened to anybody." I kept telling him not to worry.

After I bring Doug back to the bus we are ready to leave. The other kids on the bus tease Doug, but the other counselors on the bus tell them to shut up... Or else... On the highway we pass a bus from the rival camp, and everyone gives it the finger, even little Margaret, who is only four.... Little Margaret, the cute girl whom everyone adores, is giving the other bus the finger. "Margaret," shouts one of the counselors, "your Mommy wouldn't like it too much if she saw you doing that." Then Margaret smiles and gives the counselor the finger as well. I don't know what to do, so I pretend that nothing happened....

"Hey, Bobby's stones," shouts David, a precocious eight year old brat. Poor little Bobby. He's sat in the same seat for eight weeks and hasn't said a word. The kids have picked on him, especially David, who has always claimed that Bobby, age five, has been smoking dope before he got on the bus "Shut up David," I yell. But it's no use. All the kids start laughing anyway.... At the beginning of the summer I visited Bobby's parents in their apartment. It was the policy of the camp for counselors to meet their campers before the season began. "He's a very quiet child," they kept telling me, "but we think camp will be very good for him. We hope that he'll make some friends."

The poor kid. I wonder what will become of him, how he will turn out.... Before I know it the bus has reached my stop. I get off, and while I'm walking home I realize that I miss my campers.

# Parking on campus

Considering all the questions that every one has concerning the problems of parking their cars on campus, these facts have been compiled in an attempt to answer most of these questions.

by Dawn Jalet

The Parking Appeals Committee, composed of three students, three faculty members, ex-officio member Joseph Bianchi, the new director of Campus Safety, is chaired by Tony Sheridan. Mr. Sheridan is the Director of Personnel and Administrative Services. The committee exists for the purpose of providing a method of appeals for students, faculty, administration and staff who wish to argue their parking violations. The committee receives a large volume of requests; some are legitimate, while a great many are not.

Last year, the committee members included Fred H. West, Peter Clifford, and Larry Walters as student representatives, and Sheryl Yeary, Benjamin Greene, and Walter Brady as faculty members. The balance of student and faculty guarantees an even representation, with Mr. Sheridan voting only in the event of a tie. Students are elected by Student Assembly and the faculty by their peers also. According to one student member, the faculty representatives have in the past tended to be rather conservative in their judgment of appeals and choose to follow the regulations of the campus parking code as severely as possible. Unfortunately, this attitude on the part of certain faculty members defeats the entire intention of this committee. There is also an overall poor attendance record for students on faculty-student committees, and the Parking Appeals Committee is no exception to the rule.

Presently, faculty, administration, and staff at Conn are not required to pay for their parking decals, whereas the student parking fees are incorporated into the overall (general) student fees.

Upperclassmen may obtain parking decals for upper and central campus, on a first come, first served basis. Underclassmen must park in the South Lot located beyond Cummings Art Center. At this time, there are 257 student parking spaces, 282 faculty spaces (a reduction of 15 from last semester), 40 Physical Plant spaces, and 31 slots reserved for "Special Parking." These spaces extend from the complex down to, but not including, the South Lot. In April of last year, the committee submitted to President Ames a proposal suggesting that only seniors and faculty etc. be allowed to park in the designated upper campus spaces. All underclassmen would be banished to South Lot. How this proposal was submitted is a mystery, as it was never voted upon by the committee. It was rightfully vetoed by President Ames.

According to statistics compiled by the Office of Campus Safety and the Parking Appeals Committee, there are approximately five to six hundred student cars on campus at one time. Concurrently, there are about 1200 cars registered under the category of faculty, staff, and administration. This overabundance of potentially cumulative cars with parking decals fuels the possibility of severe overcrowding on campus.

Many students feel outraged at the prospect of having to park their cars in South Lot for various reasons. Most complain about the distance between their dorms and South Lot. It really is annoying to have to travel back and forth. Another problem that they have to face is the lack of lighting provided in that area. In the past, cars parked in South Lot have been quite vulnerable to vandalism and theft. Therefore, reluctance to park there for these reasons is certainly justified. Fred West, Student Coordinator of Campus Safety, plans to have a student patrolling the area from dark until 3:00 a.m. This

should eliminate some of the vandalism, as the student on patrol can alert security to any unusual activity in the area. Another reason that many students resent being compelled to park there is that they feel that a parking sticker guarantees them a space anywhere on campus. When someone receives a ticket for a parking violation, it is because they have parked in a space designated for someone else. If one cannot find a parking space in any of the indicated slots on central or upper campus, the only alternative is to park in South Lot.

One of the issues that is concerning the Parking Appeals Committee, as well as some of the student body, is that the non-student cars with decals are less of a ticketing target than student cars. Both student and administrative cars amass a similar number of parking violations yet there are fewer appeals by faculty, administration, and staff. Information on the ratio of tickets to offenses is difficult to obtain, although it has been allowed that the majority of violations by faculty are for parking on the yellow lines.

Another issue at this time is that students are now required to provide proof of insurance before they are granted the right to park or drive on campus. The reasoning behind this policy is that besides the fact that driving without insurance is illegal, the College is wary of involvement in situations in which Conn students without insurance are concerned. Although the College is not directly responsible for Conn drivers involved in accidents, they wish to emphasize that such precautions as insurance be taken. Presently, students having no proof of insurance may be granted temporary parking decals but are expected to obtain that proof within a reasonable amount of time. The committee also wishes to impress upon the student body that because a student may not have

proof at this time he or she will not be prohibited from procuring a decal at another time. In any case, proof must be shown.

This year, students, as well as faculty, staff, and administration may expect parking regulations to be more strictly enforced than ever before. The fee for a parking violation has been raised from \$3 to \$5, and cars may be towed with no prior warning. Because of the dangerous visibility of the area of Harkness Chapel and Palmer Library, fifteen faculty spaces have been eliminated. People will be expected to park in South Lot if all other designated spaces have been taken. Joe Bianchi, the new Director of Campus Safety, has been supportive of the students' demands and pleas in the past in his position of ex-officio member of the Parking Appeals Committee, and hopes that many of the parking problems eradicated through cooperation with the rules. Each person who is granted the right to park is also given a pamphlet which states all the rules and regulations concerning parking on the Connecticut College campus. It explains any changes that have recently occurred in these regulations, as well as a map indicating all the designated parking areas. Anyone who wishes to appeal a parking violation with the plea, "I didn't know about that regulation" will find little sympathy this year; ignorance will not be tolerated, legitimate petitions will.



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# THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF THE DEAF



America's most remarkable theater company, The National Theatre of the Deaf, begins its 22nd nationwide tour this fall with its newest major production.

The company's adaptation of the immortal play Volpone by Stephen Sweig after the original play by Ben Jonson, and Quite Early One Morning and other works by Dylan Thomas will be presented at Connecticut College's Palmer Auditorium at 8 pm. on September 28 and 29.

In presenting these two short comedies, the National Theatre of the Deaf draws on the work of two of the world's best known writers. In world dramatic literature, Ben Jonson stands second only to Shakespeare and Dylan Thomas is one of the most widely read and highly acclaimed poets of the 20th century.

Woven into the full-bodied visual stage language of the deaf are spoken words and song provided by three hearing actors, who not only speak and perform their own roles but speak also for their deaf colleagues.

Members of the company are Phyllis Frelich, Linda Bove, Rita Corey, Candace Broecker, Patrick Graybill, Carol Aqualine, Edmund Waterstreet, Dosa Skorobogatov, Sam Edwards, Tim Johnson, Ben Strout, Shanny Mow, and David Fitzsimmons.

For tickets to see the National Theatre of the Deaf at Connecticut College September 28 and 29, call the Palmer Auditorium Box Office at 442-9131 weekdays between noon and 6 pm.

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# Punk rock: an attitude

DAN NUGENT

You have heard of punk rock. You have probably heard some of it and may even have liked it. You think, though, that it is something of a joke. And it is. One of the most important and serious jokes in popular culture. You should know more about it. So pay attention.

Punk is more than music; it's an attitude. No movement as intrinsically decadent and anti-social has arisen in the civilized world since the beatniks of the 1940's and '50's. The punks and the beats have much in common: both groups surfaced in societies and times bloated with self-satisfaction and immersed in boredom. The beatniks of the '50's rebelled against the trap of a hypocritical middle-class morality and lifestyle and existed on the fringes of this society, listening to "bop" music and somehow managing to survive for a time, if indeed a short time. The punks have set themselves against a system and people which won't admit its own decadence and have exaggerated that decadence to huge extremes. Punks are not hypocrites; perhaps that's why they are so scorned.

Creative energy is another important link between the punks and the beats and sets them apart from the counter-culture of the 1960's. The hippies of the last decade were leaches on society without an important unique thought, drifting through their hazy, drugged minds. No art of any worth has survived the hippies. There were love beads and amulets and incantations and meditations, all borrowed from other peoples, other religions, but nothing original. Bop music and punk are new forms of music, albeit based on the blues, but modified to the demands of two different eras. Acid rock began not as a social statement, but as a music for drug users, in the same way early rock 'n' roll, seemingly rebellious, showed its reactionary appeal when adopted wholeheartedly by the people. The hippies were passive types with no creative powers or intellects to speak of. The beats were and the punks are now in the forefront of vital intellectual thought.

My definition of "intellectual" for the purposes of this discussion is someone who looks at himself and the world objectively, with clarity of thought—nothing more. Yet even this is rare when the common escape in our society is through drugs and/or sex. We are caught in a downward spiral. The punks see this and revel in the decadence. Theirs is the only philosophy today facing the world and making a choice concerning their course. The beats had the same perspective and were hated and feared in the same way. The hippies never did much of anything; there was no choice to their self-destruction. Punk rock is a musical expression of the nihilism of the punks and in its very existence shows the life of the movement and the decay of

**"Theirs is the only philosophy today facing the world..."**

society. In some way, even the most brutal, drug-crazed punk rocker is an intellectual, for he is making a statement about society, just by choosing the path he has taken. You will find no self-consciousness in any of the myriad of heavy metal sludge groups such as Aerosmith or Kiss. They could never be punks because they don't have the imagination to look past the music as an end in itself and look instead at the effect their music can have on people. Punks can be quite rudimentary musically, but most will admit their incompetence with the recognition that musical expertise is not the point of punk rock. The point of punk lies in its absurdity mirrored in society's own.

It's the music that people say they detest, when, if they would face themselves honestly, they would realize it is the message which frightens them. Punk threatens the established societal frame, if not in political reality then as a reminder to the self-satisfied that not everyone is so complacent with the world. Punk serves as a delightful irritant. The idea of music as a disruptive

force is perhaps strange for people to accept. And, yet, if music was allowed to drift to the mindless noise of muzak, as it has been drifting, soon it might just as well be obsolete or confined to elevators and hospital waiting rooms. There is no purpose for music as background except maybe during seduction and any soft sounds are fine for that. Music must be in some ways an irritant, a challenge to think and react.

The punks are fully aware of the hatred their music arouses; in fact in England this hatred is made obvious in the gang fights between the punks and non-punks. In America violence is certainly not unknown to punk groups, but here the audiences and bands are not torn with the almost insane anger that characterizes the British shows. English punks are heavily involved in political statements, whereas American groups usually stay apolitical. Bands in both societies are striking out against the mundane materialism and boredom in their countries, but the British have much more to protest. England is a political power in decline; America in a few years or decades. Punk in England is a true battleground between the authorities who see the music as a disruptive force and the punks and their audiences. American punks are treated as an oddity, but British groups like the Sex Pistols were for a time feared and censored by the government media. A secure society would accept punk rock as a fad and never think of censoring such a passing trend. The punks in Britain, though first by commenting on the decadence of their society and then by becoming the most blatant examples of sick society, have created or at least nourished the revolt burning in England. Nothing similar is occurring in the United States on the punk scene. Here punks are without a driving impetus to create change and hence the general non-acceptance of punk in America. Things just aren't bad enough in America, yet. The music people listen to directly reflects their attitudes toward their lives and the music of the moment

is innocuous, lulling beats, and voices programmed to provide the most inane sounds to the public. You can find no anger, no dynamics in our country, and no passion in its music. The music of the punks is reviled not by the officials but by the people, who cannot understand the frustration and anger of the bands. This hatred is the saving grace of punk rock in America; without some kind of societal reaction, it would die an ignoble death. Any kind of reaction feeds the punks and since no political or social revolt seems possible in America in the near future, the movement needs some reason to go on; serving as an irritant, and knowing you serve in that way, is a major factor in the punks' continued existence. They can't stop now, once all society is against them.

I have spoke of punks in philosophical and theoretical ways, but this attitude is strictly anti-punk. Any real punk would consider this article trash, or at least would say he thought it trash. He might think differently, but the image of the punks would necessarily treat analysis of this kind with scorn. Intellectuals have a tendency to be the most vehement in their distrust of intellectualism, at least if they

have any self-consciousness and are not too enthralled by their own egos. Punks, as I have said, are intellectuals, but intellectuals eager to deny their minds and bathe in physicality. The agressions of punks are pent-up aggressions finally coming loose in music of gang fights related to the music in some way. In a way, it's a healthy release and it can be an incredible release of energy for the punks. If I've drawn a very one-sided picture of the Punk in England and America, I'll dispel that picture here. Punks are not kind-hearted, bookish thinkers. They can be very savage, to the point of inhumanity at times. In England, especially, many of the fans and some of the bands are hoodlums with none of the perceptions on society I have described as being part of the punk philosophy. Granted, though, that some of the punks, probably a large number actually, are violent hangers-on to a movement caught up with violent behavior, the leaders of the punks, the ones with a message to convey, are much more

cogent thinkers than many would believe or want to believe. And it is about them that I write this article; an idealistic diatribe on a thinly-veiled idealistic movement in music.

Any discussion of the various hundreds of punk bands would get bogged down by the enormity of the numbers and the complexity of the way they interact. Everyone has heard of the Sex Pistols, The Ramones, Elvis Costello, and the Talking Heads. These four groups are the most popular and accessible of the punkers to an audience interested in punk mainly as an oddity, a freak show. Briefly the Sex Pistols represent the anger of the British punks; the Ramones stand for the almost diletantish stance of the American punks; Elvis Costello bridges punk senti-

ments and angers to commercial sounds; and the Talking Heads graft the Art Statement rather sloppily into punk. Every punk band can be classified in some way with the preceding groups; the central theme in them all is alienation born of frustration and anger and ending in sounds jarring to the listener. It is a metallic music, a music conveying images of the modern machine society. You'll not be lulled to sleep by punk rock; it is the most vibrant, exciting and disorienting music to be heard today, and it thrives on the negative or (perhaps) positive reactions of the people who hear it. I'm making it sound mystical, but it is anything but that. It's a very real, confrontational sound.

Punk is not dead and it is hardly dying. Reports that it's finished are simply the ravings of the enemies of punk wishing what they know isn't true. Punk feeds from fiction and the friction both in England and America is increasing, if anything. The bands forming now all over both countries are by large measure punk bands or bands influenced by punk. Musicians cannot ignore the power of the music, though they may hate the notoriety of the movement. One can hardly defend bad musicianship, but when it is outweighed by an intellectual statement, so rare in popular music, you must at least try to understand and incorporate the music somehow. Anyone who decides to hate the music only on account of its reputation and not because the

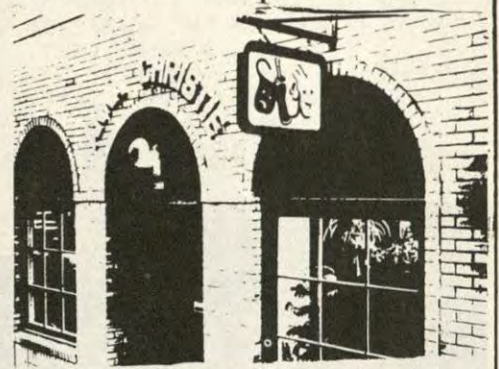
music, once heard offends him, is a fool. The person who condemns out of ignorance is quite pitiful, actually, for he has no imagination, no intellect, for one needs an open mind if one is to learn.

Enough polemics. The issue is dead unless people listen to punk. Listen to it and decide. No other music is of any importance.

Punk rock can be heard every Friday and Saturday night from 1 to 5 A.M. on WCNI 91.5 FM.

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comming:

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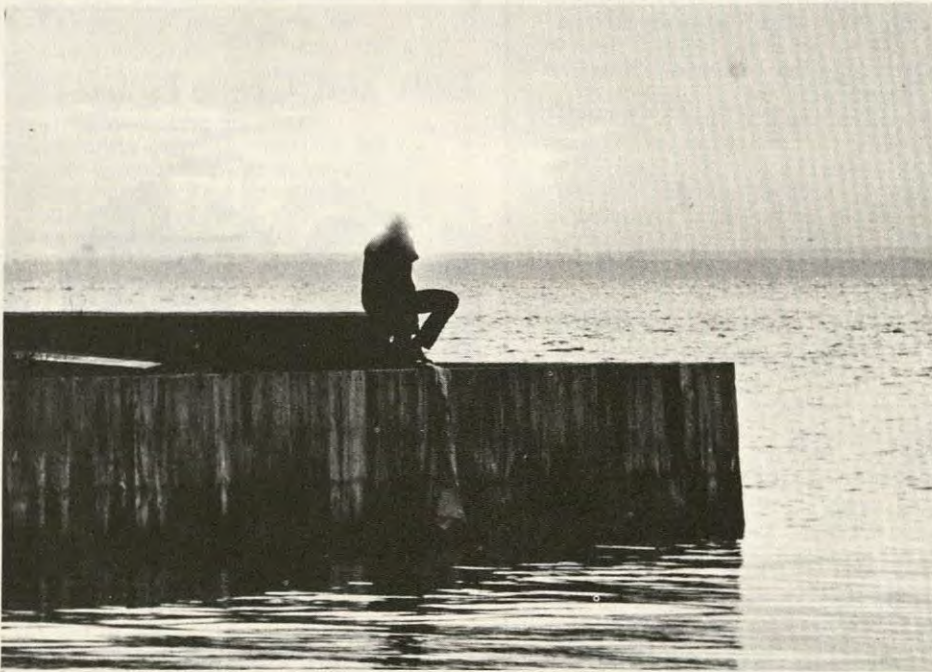
# Mr. Brennan

JAKE GREEN

Behind the salt box, the cape dory that was stripped down to the wood, lay upside down on saw horses. Empty 16 ounce Schlitz beer cans were lined up along the keel. Greg had bought the boat at a garage sale. The boat was a beauty, that had been collecting cobwebs in a North Marshfield bay loft for fifty years. The thin deep hull was perfect for lobstering and mossaing in the rough water off Bluefish cove. We sat in the kitchen drinking beer at the round pine table, our faces covered with yellow paint dust, our palms blistering from using electric sanders.

We were sharing a can of pears and a steak knife. I felt good, a little beer in the system, a job finished and talking to a friend I had not seen in two years. Greg went into the shower to wash off the paint dust that was beginning to itch. I had a cigarette, an empty Schlitz can for an ashtray, but no matches. I ransacked the kitchen. In the cabinets, on the table, under the cushions of the rocking chair and the broken sofa. No matches. In the dining room there were no matches in the highboy or on the shelf displaying the blue Christmas plates. I opened the door of the living room. The room smelled fusty. The curtains

were pulled. I felt the wall for a light switch. Greg's grandfather, an old Irish politician from Boston who once used to take us fishing and to Fenway Park was lying in the middle of the room on a rented hospital bed, a urine bottle clamped to the chrome railing, vials of medication, a bed-pan and an untouched bowl of soup on the table beside the bed. He was sleeping lightly, mumbling, his body twisting on the bed that was raised at the head so he would not choke on his phlegm. His bones trying to push through the saggy skin. Terminal cancer. I don't remember but I must have left right afterwards.■



# The world is flat

Jennifer Johnston

When I was little  
I was always thankful  
Our house stood directly  
In front of the sun,  
I felt sorry for my neighbors.  
They were a little off-center.■

# Silent night

Jennifer Johnston

And the most tired rest  
in the home's easy chairs  
slow joints of the old folk  
finished carolling, another Christmas  
quickly gone.

The children on the bus  
who carolled with them laugh  
and the jokes turn to contest.  
The best have the bus driver smiling.  
But a girl stares out away from the bus.  
Her grandmother had cried at the end of the songs  
and thanked her, and thanked her.■

# Winter river in early spring

E.D.E. Jr.

The river was confused with ice. Some of it still clung to the shore, but was wrinkled with cracks and had patches of black river water in it. Ducks were there. You could see them, erect like little statues as the sun went down behind the woods. Chunks of ice drifted and rubbed against each other and broke into transparent slivers that looked like cheap glass in the water. The ice was moving as the water swelled beneath it. If the night was cold the ice would freeze in awkward angles where the river had forced it together, cracking and bending it like paper. The river was frightening. The ducks were still.■

## PREGNANCY CONT'D

The loss of a mother's salary has a critical effect on the family unit, as proper health and nutritional care for their children become jeopardized. Without this income welfare becomes a painful reality for the disabled women. For others, especially low-income women, the loss of income would discourage the pregnant mother from carrying her pregnancy to term.

### THE SOLUTION

While laws in the District of Columbia and 33 states require employers to treat pregnant workers the same as other workers, there is a vital need for federal legislation. After extensive debate this summer, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 6075, amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include pregnant workers, expanding the statutory definition of sex discrimination. The bill, however, retains the Beard anti-abortion amendment allowing employers to withhold payment for abortion under their medical or temporary disability insurance plans. Employers may also deny use of accrued sick leave. The primary intent of this legislation is merely to require that pregnant women are to be treated the same as other employees on the basis of their ability to work. It does not require an employer to offer a minimum or maximum of benefits. It simply requires that the benefits offered, be offered equally to both sexes. The House must go to conference with the Senate, since their bill, S. 995 contains no anti-abortion language.

What is the cost of H.R. 6075? The Department of Labor cost impact analysis indicates that the expansion of fringe benefit coverage to include pregnancy disability would not result in significant cost increases to the employer. According to the Social Security Administration, one-third of all health plans are contributed to solely or in part by the employees.

In the wake of the cruel and harsh Gilbert decision, Congress has taken the proper step to assure equity for employed women. Although

pregnancy continues to pose employment obstacles to the working women, it has been laws of man, not of nature, that propagate the most critical plight which the working women must face.

## The dorm conservationist

DAVID ROSENBERG

"Are you going downstairs to dinner?"

"No, I'm eating out."

"Why?"

"The food down there sucks."

"You're just spoiled, it's better than most schools. Anyway, it's nutritionally balanced."

"I don't care, that stuff tastes and looks like decaying elephant carcasses."

"You're wasting your money. It's been paid for already."

"I don't care. Leave me alone! Go back to where you came from."

Every dorm has one. The dorm conservationist. They mean well, but you want to see them dead. For eighteen years we've all been lectured by our mothers on eating the peas and carrots. Then the realizations of our dreams are fulfilled when we get to school. We don't have to answer to anyone. We can eat our dessert before our main course. We can have pizza five days a week. We can stay up all night. We can drink lots of beer and burp loudly. But just when we're beginning to enjoy all of these new found freedoms some nerd in our dorm makes us feel guilty. Everything that he says to us is fact. We can't deny what he says, but still we want to kill him. We can't recognize him by his physical appearance, but only by his actions. He's the guy who turns off the bathroom light at nine o'clock, so that when we stumble into the bathroom, slightly drunk, groping for the toilet, at midnight we slam into the sink or slip on a stray bar of soap. These people are so self-righteous that they don't realize that through their actions to conserve the school's resources they have become public nuisances.

In the back of our minds is the constant burning desire to trip up the dorm conservationist at his own game. Maybe we'll find out that he owns a

pre-catalytic converter Grand Safari Stationwagon, or that he likes to take long, lingering hot baths. Last year my moment came; I caught my dorm conservationist wasting energy. I found

his room and knocked on the door.

"Uh, who...who is it," he said hesitantly.

"I live in your dorm. I wanted to talk to you in regard to your petition."

"Uh...which one?"

"The one about National Quiet Hour Week."

"Oh yes, just a second." I heard rustling behind the closed door. Eventually he opened the door, a huge curtain hid everything in the room. He acted non-chalant, "Can I help you?"

"Hey, what's behind that curtain?"

"Nothing... nothing at all, just my room."

"Let me see what's back there." I reached for the curtain. He blocked my path. "Hey, what's in there?"

"None of your business. It's my room and it's private."

"You must have something pretty interesting back there." Quickly, I darted by him and pushed the curtain open. He didn't try to stop me, he just smiled and blushed. This was the room of a modern man- every convenience imaginable: a room air-conditioner, a refrigerator-freezer, a stereo, a television, a toaster-oven, a desk lamp, a floor lamp, a wall lamp, a bedside lamp, a table lamp, and a ceiling lamp. All were on at full power, and all were draining energy. There was nothing that he could say or do. I haven't seen him since. Rumor has it that he transferred to a school far away from here.

## GOOD TIMES

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# WCNI SCHEDULE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MIKE HETSKO 7 - 10 am	MAX LANGSTAFF 7 - 10 am	GLEN STEINMAN 7 - 10 am	RON EISENBERG 7 - 10 am	MARK OLIVA 7 - 10 am	ANDREW SANDERS 7 - 10 am	DAWN JALET 7 - 10 am
JOSE DE LA ROCHA 10 - 2 pm	MARY CONKLIN 10 - 1	JOHN WEYRAUCH 10 - 1	PATTY MCGOWAN 10 - 1	10 - 1	CHRIS GOTTLIEB 10 - 2	VINCENT DAVIS 10 - 1
FACULTY PROGRAMS 2 - 6	JEFF FISHMAN 1 - 4	BLAKE TAYLOR 1 - 4	THOMAS PEABODY 1 - 4	HENRY HAUSER 1 - 4	BOB BROAD 2 - 6	LOIS MENDEZ 1 - 4
WCNI RADIO THEATRE 6 - 6:30	CHRIS WRIGHT 4 - 6	LISA SCHUMACHER 4 - 6	MIKE HETSKO 4 - 6	PATTY MCGOWAN 4 - 6		RAYMOND NEGRON 4 - 6
ROYCE 6:30-10 6:30-10	LEX RICHARDSON 6-10	DEBE COHEN 6-10	MEAGHAN 6-10	TIM DEMPSEY 6-10	JIM BOLAN 6-10	(Rotation) 6-10
PETER ENGLE ENGLE 10-2	JON GOLDEN 10-2	LARRY SIMON 10-2	VIKI FITZGERALD 10-2	MIKE LITCHMAN 10-2	MARK LONGSWORTH 10-1	(Rotation) 10-1
				MARK HAMBLETT 2-6am	DAN NUGENT 1-5am	DAN NUGENT 1-5am



## 91.5 F.M.

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