

The Graduate Student Advocate

City University of New York

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slandorous inferences

Environmental Psychology Faculty Defends Decision To Terminate Student

September 18, 1990
To the Editor:

The faculty of the Environmental Psychology sub program is acutely aware of the unique difficulties facing international students who come to study at the Graduate School. While we make no claims to having found solutions to these difficulties, we can honestly say that for many years we have worked to develop, within our sub program and with the administration of the Graduate School, options and procedures which could begin to address issues of concern to international students.

We therefore were both shocked and dismayed upon

reading the statements and accusations contained in the September, 1990 editorial regarding one of our international students, Endah Soebroto and the Environmental Psychology sub program ("From En-Route to Terminal"). Some of the statements made in that editorial present a distorted view of the policies of the Environmental Psychology sub program. Others can be characterized only as totally incorrect. While we doubt that the material contained in this reply to your editorial can undo the harm that you have inflicted on the faculty and students of the Environmental Psychology sub program we feel compelled to reply to your characterization of our faculty as having "...disgraced their discipline and the Graduate School."

Both the editorial and Ms. Mehta's article regarding Endah Soebroto ("International Student Struggles With Cancer — Terminated by the Environmental Psychology sub program") concern a student in our sub program. Because we are bound to confidentiality in discussions of any student, our comments regarding Ms. Soebroto must be confined to those aspects of this unfortunate episode which have appeared in print and have thus become part of the public domain.

In her article, Ms. Mehta asks, among other things, whether Endah Soebroto was terminated from our sub program at the Master's degree level because she had cancer. Midway through the anonymous editorial, the same question is posed. By the end of

the editorial, however, the anonymous editorial writer obviously concludes that this was the case since he or she then condemns the faculty for being a "disgrace."

Rather than making such slanderous inferences (based on a lack of information), Ms. Mehta or the editorial writer could have discussed this issue with the sub program chairs, Professors Chapin and Saegert. Had they done so, they would have learned that Ms. Soebroto was accepted into the program *only as a Master's level student* in 1984. The Fulbright scholarship men-

tioned in the paper was given to Ms. Soebroto on condition that she *only pursue a Master's degree*. Ms. Soebroto knew this to be the condition when she came here. We had to guarantee this to the Fulbright group and did so. And, because there is no terminal MA degree in our sub program, we arranged for Ms. Soebroto to complete an en-route Master's degree instead.

Ms. Soebroto was admitted to the sub program in 1984. She continued to matriculate in the sub program for *four years prior to her diagnosis of cancer in 1988* to complete what should have been a *two year* course of study for the Master's degree. If, as implied in both the editorial and Ms. Mehta's article, the "disgraceful" faculty wished to terminate Ms. Soebroto because of her cancer, then they might have asked why we did not do so *two years ago*? After all, Ms. Soebroto had, by that time, already spent four years in the sub program and still had not completed her Master's degree.

It is also implied that Ms. Soebroto was terminated because the faculty wished to deny Ms. Soebroto medical benefits associated with her employment at the Hunter College Library. Ms. Mehta quotes Ms. Soebroto as claiming that "They (referring to the sub program faculty) thought that I was using the sub program to get the insurance." We cannot vouch for the accuracy of the alleged quote by Ms. Soebroto. Assuming it is correct, however, and assuming that we wished to deny Ms. Soebroto treatment for her cancer because of our concern

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Rallying Against U.S. Aggression In the Middle East

By Mohamed Aly and Kim Ives

Although the U.S. media has done its utmost to whip up passions and xenophobia in the American public to support the Bush administration's massive troop deployment in the Middle East, there is a vast and growing reservoir of opposition to the U.S. government's war moves among the American people. On September 13th at Cooper Square, more than 2,500 people testified to this fact by rallying around calls for "no Vietnam war in the Middle East!" and "Bring the troops home now!"

This was the first major U.S. protest rally to take place since the Mideast crisis erupted on Aug. 2nd, though smaller demonstrations and meetings have taken place in many cities. The Coalition to Stop US Intervention in the Middle East, a broad grouping

of over 75 organizations and individuals, sponsored the event at Cooper Square. The Cooper Union Great Hall was filled to capacity by 1,000 people, while more than 1,500 protesters listened to the proceedings broadcast by loudspeakers installed outside the building. The evening featured 17 speakers representing a broad array of organizations and nationalities.

Despite the large turn-out, the event was boycotted by the major networks and the bulk of the U.S. press. Although *Newsday*, the *Times*, the *Daily News* and CNN provided brief mention of the event, the importance, vehemence and size of the protest was downplayed. Local TV and radio stations refused to attend even though they were apprised of the size of the overflow crowd. "The media is trying to convince us that

everyone is excited about this war, everyone thinks it's a just cause, everyone is excited about sending their son off to die," explained David Cline of the group Vietnam Veterans Against the War. "But I'm not so sad about the media not being here, because I stopped watching them on Aug. 2, when they started putting out all the lies, and I became so disgusted. We have freedom of the press, but no free press," Mr. Cline added.

Co-chaired by Gavrielle Gemma, a leading member of the Coalition, and Deborah Jackson, a representative from the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the event began with the reading of a letter from Ron Kovic, a highly decorated, disabled Vietnam veteran and author of *Born on the 4th of July*, a book about his war

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Where Have All The Books Gone? Faculty Abuse of Library Borrowing Privileges

By Andrew Long

"Borrowing of material is limited to the doctoral faculty, to students registered at the Graduate School, to members of the Office of Research and University Programs, to those affiliated with Graduate School and University Center research centers, institutes, and groups, to officers of the University, to master's degree alumni of the Graduate School, and to Ph.D alumni of the City University of New York."

These are the borrowing privileges as stipulated in the 1990-1991 Mina Rees Library Handbook. Library staff report, however, that some faculty members do not return books which are overdue or needed for the "reserve" stacks, despite both formal and informal notification.

The handbook explains that

all borrowers may check out circulating books for eight weeks and renew them for an additional four weeks, "unless another request for the book has been received. If a book is overdue, it may not be renewed until the fine is paid. Students owing the library any fines or overdue books may neither renew nor borrow any other books." The fine for overdue books is 10 cents "for each day that the library is open," with a \$20.00 maximum charge for each item per annum.

The faculty is not required to pay library fines, and there is no formal punitive process for retrieving material from faculty even when this material is requested by another library user or is needed for reserve reading lists. One library staff member noted that although in 1974 the Graduate Council authorized the library to suspend borrowing privileges for faculty members with long overdue books, the library has yet to take this action. This failure to retrieve overdue books may be due to the library's slow record-keeping system, as well as to a desire on the part of the librarians not to "ruffle faculty feathers."

Associate Provost Geoffrey Marshall recently described the

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Around & About The Center

Where Have All The Books Gone?

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three steps taken by the library to retrieve overdue material from faculty members: a letter of notification, a telephone call, and then a letter from the Office of the Associate Provost. Provost Marshall stated that these measures have been effective, except in a few cases, when it was necessary for the Executive Officer of the recalcitrant faculty member's department to intervene. "We are dealing with fewer than six people," Provost Marshall said, "and further restrictions seem unnecessary."

Nonetheless, library records show that seventy-eight books have been charged out to twenty-two faculty members from 1981 to 1989. Although these professors have received at least two letters and a bill from the library, they have not yet responded. In the past, individual faculty members who have retired or moved to another university have kept as many as twenty-five books, and have not paid fines totalling as much as \$300. Some of these books are single volumes of a multiple volume series and can-

not be purchased separately; the library is unable to replace the whole series due to reductions in the book acquisition budget. The Library Committee, a sub-committee of the Graduate Council, has previously considered the problem of faculty abuse of borrowing privileges but has not yet taken formal steps to amend the situation.

The Graduate School library's borrowing policies do not conform with the policies of other City University libraries. At the John Jay College and Hunter College libraries, for example, faculty members are fined when they neglect to return overdue books. When the Mina Rees Library is fully automated (possibly as early as next Spring), faculty members who have not returned overdue material to one CUNY library will be refused borrowing privileges at the other CUNY libraries. Although the Graduate School faculty will not be required to pay library fines, the revocation of their borrowing privileges will be a matter of the automated procedure. *A*

Proposed Destruction of Cree and Inuit Homelands

By Julia Scalcione

Sept. 30, 1990 — Representatives from the Cree and Inuit tribes spoke about their struggle with Hydro Quebec to continue their traditional modes of subsistence. This benefit took place at Wetlands, an ecologically-minded club below Canal Street.

Last summer, representatives of the Cree Indians and Inuit Eskimos journeyed by canoe from Northern Quebec to New York City to dramatize their call for local attention and help in their plight to save their homelands, the northern forest and tundra. The James Bay region is home not only to large and extensive populations of wildfowl, polar bears, seals and caribou, but is also the home of the Inuit and 10,000 Cree. A proposed Hydro Quebec project would dam almost every river discharging into the James Bay, flooding a forested area equal to the size of Lake Ontario, displacing people and destroying thousands of animals. The New York Power Authority has signed a contract with Hydro-Quebec for 1000 mega-watts; New York State is therefore a prime contributor to this proposed environmental destruction. This surplus

electricity is primarily targeted for the New York City area.

We already have enough electricity, if we would only use the currently available conservation technologies to their most cost-effective potential. The Hydro Quebec-New York Power Authority contract, however, totally undermines the full development of our available energy conservation technology that we should be pursuing as a priority for its maximum environmental potential. There is absolutely no justification for destroying the James Bay territory, its people and animals for electricity that we don't even need!

Any CUNY student, New York citizen or not, has a stake and a responsibility in the Power Authority's venture. We all pay for electricity directly and indirectly. The Cree and Inuit urge all students to write letters to their New York State Senators protest the destruction of the James Bay Region of Northern Quebec and Ontario, the largest wilderness left in Eastern North America. Students are urged to help contribute to the cause of saving a valuable and priceless wilderness area which, once destroyed, can never be replaced. *A*

Julia Scalcione is a student of Philosophy.

Corrections: September 1990

Due to a production error, the date of Robert Gilleece's death was incorrectly printed. Mr. Gilleece passed away June 30, 1990. We extend our apologies to his family and friends.

The *Advocate* neglected to attribute two photographs. The photograph of Robert Gilleece (page 2) was taken by Foster Henry; the photograph of the CUNY terminals in the Mina Rees Library (page 3) was taken by Wayne Geist.

Due to an editorial error, a sentence in the first paragraph of Karlton Hester's article, "Mo' Better Reviews," was incorrect. The sentence should have read: "Many of the articles on the Persian Gulf crisis I have come across seem to have been written by jingoistic and self-righteous pep squads on the one hand; on the other hand, a surprisingly large number of other writers don't appear to be buying into this deceptive nonsense at all."

Part-Timers United New Adjunct Group Forming

By Thomas Smith

The official bargaining unit for CUNY faculty, the Professional Staff Congress, is once again negotiating a contract with CUNY for the next three years. The PSC officially (if not practically) is entrusted with representing part-time faculty, or adjunct lecturers, as well as full-time professors and tenured lecturers.

Many students at the Graduate School need to work as adjuncts in order to survive. With the multi-million dollar budget crisis passed on to CUNY by the New York City and State governments, the PSC will probably be asked to make some serious concessions at the bargaining table. Given the PSC's notoriously poor performance in the past when bargaining for adjunct wages and benefits, adjuncts are worried that the PSC may make a deal that will demand major sacrifices from them.

During the last contract negotiation three years ago, a group called the CUNY Part-time Instructional and Research Staff Union (PTU), of which I was a Steering Committee member, put pressure on the PSC by organizing a separate bargaining unit that would represent only part-timers and would deal directly with CUNY. Our efforts failed—largely due to CUNY's failure to provide us with the organizing information they were legally required to provide us. Nevertheless, the pressure forced the PSC and CUNY to come up with some important concessions. The amount of classroom hours required to obtain health

insurance benefits was lowered to six hours during two consecutive semesters at any one CUNY college. Combined with the scandalously low 5% increase in wages, this might not seem like much. There are quite a few adjuncts who do not work even two consecutive semesters at the same CUNY college. Indeed, the benefits "won" three years ago offers as much evidence of the PSC's incredible insensitivity to the adjuncts' condition as it demonstrates the potential adjuncts have when they organize. Given the current budget crisis, even these paltry victories may be lost this year.

More recently, a new group of adjuncts has been meeting at City College to consider strategies for keeping the PSC honest during the present contract negotiations. Calling themselves the Part-Timers United, they are seeking to build a grass-roots organizational structure that will enable adjuncts to discuss their grievances and to present them effectively to PSC representatives. This structure may also prove useful in electing reform candidates to the PSC leadership.

The Part-Timers United will hold a general meeting at the Graduate School on October 19th, in Student Center 10 in the basement mezzanine, from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. All adjunct lecturers past, present and future are encouraged to attend. *A*

Thomas Smith, a contributing editor to the Advocate, studies political science.

Doctoral Students' Council Report

By Michael Glassman

The Doctoral Students' Council (DSC) met for the first time this year on September 18th. While attendance by the representatives was good, it was not what it should be. The meeting time was partly at fault for this though: a number of people wrote or called to say that they could not make it at the time scheduled. We have decided to put the meetings on a rotating basis so that most of the representatives can make at least some of the meetings. Next month's meeting will be on Wednesday, October 17th at 5:30 P.M. in SC 10. If a representative cannot make it, it is important that s/he find a proxy to come to the meeting. I would also encourage any other students who wish to attend the meeting to come. If you have a specific problem, contact the DSC office and we will try to put it on the agenda. Or maybe you just want to come and listen to what's going on at the Graduate Center.

The meeting was a mixture of old business and new ideas. Gordon Crandell, the Co-Chair for Business Affairs, told everybody about the impending deadline for chartered organizations. Any organization that wishes to remain chartered must submit a list with twenty signatures from three different departments along with a new constitution within a month's time. And of course everybody was concerned with money. Every program receives an allocation each semester for student-sponsored events. The allocation is at least \$150, and it may be more if your program is large. The only person who can collect this

money is the program representative, so if anybody out there hasn't seen this money for a few semesters, you know who to contact. As a last vestige of her old self Megan McCormick, Co-Chair for Business Affairs 1989-1990 proposed the new budget for a second vote by the DSC. It was passed, so at least we're doing better than the big guys up in Washington (although we don't have a Bushatross hanging around our necks).

There were a number of other issues discussed. The idea of naming the new Student Center after Robert Gilleece was put before the body of the DSC and passed. We will write a letter to President Proshansky to see how we can get this process started. For those of you who are new to this institution, Robert Gilleece, who passed away last summer, was Assistant Vice President for Student Services and Director of Financial Aid. In all my time in higher education I have never known a greater advocate for students in an administrative position. He will be sorely missed. We want to make sure that a man who cared so deeply about students will not be forgotten.

We also discussed how we can get some of the services that are offered to students publicized. Did you know, for instance, that you get free admission to the Museum of Modern Art when you show your CUNY I.D.? And did you know that Graduate Center students have special privileges at the main branch of the New York City Library, like discounts for photocopy-

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Around & About The Center

Rallying Against U.S. Aggression

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experiences and their aftermath. "We must learn the lessons of the Vietnam war and never allow what happened there to happen again," Mr. Kovic said in his letter. "The President is lying to you when he tells you that we are there to stop aggression. They have sent our young men and women to that faraway place, not to fight for freedom and democracy, but to protect rich corporate oil interests, for greed and profits. They don't care if our kids are killed or maimed as long as those interests are protected."

This theme was reinforced throughout the evening by other veterans who voiced their opposition to the deafening applause of the audience. "War, after all the politics are done, after all the speeches are made, after all the parades are over, is just people getting killed," said John Jones, a African-American Vietnam veteran. "I ask you all to join me in demanding: no blood for oil!" Mr. Jones, who works with a housing coalition, noted that there are over 3 million homeless people in America, whose number is growing due to the cutbacks Bush is making of social programs. "At the same time, it only took Bush about 72 hours to authorize Operation Desert Shield, which has a cost of \$46 million a day," Mr. Jones declared. "This is an oil executive's war."

Marine Lance Corporal Erik Larsen explained that he had naively entered the service to defend what he believed was the American Dream. "My eyes were opened to the history of U.S.-sponsored exploitative policies motivated by corporate and personal greed," Larsen explained. "You could say I had a conversion experience. How can you not be converted when over 70,000 Salvadoreans have been killed over the last 10 years as a result of U.S. policy, when fragmentation grenades maim civilians in Angola, when the people of the Philippines are fed bullets and starved of nourishment?" Larsen also characterized the current media campaign as a "racist feeding frenzy" and admitted that "chemical and nuclear weapons scare the hell out of me."

Among the other speakers at the event was Ella Horne, the mother of a reservist from New York City, who explained that "Bush cannot defend freedom and democracy in the Middle East, because he doesn't even defend freedom and democracy here in the U.S." Esmerelda Brown of the Women's Workshop on Latin America is a Panamanian activist who emphasized the hypocrisy of the U.S. and the United Nations, which have made an issue of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait while ignoring the U.S. invasion and continuing occupation of Panama. Bishop Paul Moore, the former Episcopal

Bishop of New York, decried the extreme arrogance of U.S. actions in the Middle East, saying that U.S. aggression "presents a great danger to our bodies and our souls" that "could bring the very destruction of our nation, not its salvation." Anan Ameri, president of the Palestine Aid Society, also noted the hypocrisy of U.S. policy which has supported 23 years of Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the invasion and occupation of Lebanon. "It is ironic when President Bush said that he sent the troops to preserve the American way of life," Ameri said. "Washington is filled with homeless and poor, and it is sure this war will preserve this way of life."

Seung Un of the Young Koreans United made a striking analysis of how the U.N. provides a cover for U.S. aggression by using the example of the Korean War in the early 1950s and U.N. actions and inaction since that time. "Since the beginning of the Gulf Crisis," Seung Un said, "the Western countries and their press have been celebrating the U.N.'s efficiency in condemning Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, but the Korean people, who have been suffering for 45 years from the division of Korea induced by the U.N., cannot help but question the role of the U.N. again. The U.N. intervened in the Korean civil war in 1950 as a belligerent, not as a mediator, and the massacre of more than 2 million civilians was committed in the name of the U.N. 45 years after the war, more than 43,000 US troops and 10,000 U.S. nuclear weapons are still maintained on South Korean soil under the U.N. command." Seung Un also questioned why the U.N. has never protested the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the U.S. invasions of Grenada and Panama. "Why doesn't the U.N. take sanctions against the heavy U.S. military buildup in the Persian Gulf, which endangers world peace far more than Iraq's invasion of Kuwait," Seung asked.

The next speaker, Mathowin, had just returned from the Mohawk battle lines on the borders of Quebec and Ontario. Ms. Mathowin asked why there were no military deployments or sanctions against Canada for their invasion of the still-sovereign Mohawk Nation. U.S. civil rights lawyer, William Kunstler, reported that he is defending two protesters of the Mideast Intervention who burned a flag at an Army Recruiting Station. They have been jailed for "arson" until they can post \$100,000 bail.

Other speakers included Mudar Alhadib of the Committee for a Democratic Palestine; Wilhelm Joseph of the National Conference of Black Lawyers; David Schilling of the Fellowship of Reconciliation;

Mitchell Payne of the African Student Youth at Baruch College CUNY; and Ali Ruzba of the Iran/Iraq Anti-war Committee. Speaker after speaker reiterated how the war would be fought by recruits from the poor and the working class, yet would create worse conditions for their families as energy costs rise in the winter months ahead.

Co-chair Gavrielle Gemma gave a brief sketch of the present situation of the Iraq-Kuwait conflict, "which is a matter for the Arab world to deal with, not the US." She noted that oil is particularly important to the developing world, which "is suffering the most from these arrogant U.S. sanctions from India to Africa. It is not really the U.S. that needs the Iraqi or Kuwaiti oil in itself," Ms. Gemma said. "The real issue is who will wind up controlling the fabulous oil profits—the cash." Ms. Gemma also quoted the *New York Times* report, that "900 billion in petrodollars ... is deposited mainly in the U.S., Britain, W. Germany, and Japan." Another factor pushing the U.S. into war is "a looming economic crisis to which they are reacting like a wounded animal."

The most awaited appearance of the evening was that of former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who began by recalling that this evening marked the 19th anniversary of the invasion of Attica. "We've employed police force and prison bars as the means for 'saving America,'" Mr. Clark said. "To protect ourselves internationally, we've engaged in the creation of the most devastating capacity for destruction in history." This power is now wielded by George Bush, who has less restraints on him "than on any military dictator who ever lived." Noting that "the United States is the scofflaw of the international community," Clark catalogued how Congress and the media, which are supposed to rein in the Executive, have only acquiesced or encouraged him. "All our institutions are failing to resist the American machine" whose "expedition in Arabia is a classical form of colonialism as defined in the dictionary. There is only one reason we are there and we know it. Oil." Clark then called on Americans to take to the streets to protest and to stop U.S. expansionism, and if the September 13th meeting at Cooper Union was any indication, his call will be heeded.

The Coalition has called for a major demonstration on October 20th starting from Columbus Circle to demand the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Middle East. For further information, call the Coalition at (212) 254-2295. ♀

Mohammed Aly is a political science student hailing from Egypt. Kim Ives works with Haitian immigrants.

DSC Report

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ing? We wonder what other privileges are floating around out there that nobody has bothered to mention to us. If any of you out there know of any, please contact us at the DSC office. We want to put together a pamphlet listing these benefits.

Another issue discussed was what students can do if they feel they are victims of sexual harassment or racial prejudice. We need to determine if there is a system in place for students to voice complaints without having to worry about repercussions. Other schools, even within City Unive

sity, have such a system, so there must be one for the Graduate Center. If there is such a system we need to publicize it so that students who find themselves in difficult situations will not feel alone and helpless.

Finally the discussion turned to the student newspaper. As you might or might not know, we were originally planning to have a Media Board election at the September meeting. Then we found out we had to vote on the Media Board proposal one more time. To make a long story short, the Media Board election was postponed until the October meeting. The Media Board is extremely important as it is the only gov-

erning board for the newspaper. If people have complaints or ideas about the newspaper, Media Board is the group to address. The two new media board members must be registered students but they may not be DSC representatives. If you or anyone you know wants to run for the Media Board, we will be taking nominations in the DSC office until the October 17th meeting.

Well that about wraps it up. Remember, there is no Doctoral Students' Council without doctoral students. Your participation is essential to the DSC. ♀ *Michael Glassman is the DSC Co-Chair for Communications.*

DEAR
MS.
UPDATE

Dear Ms. Update:

I have been using Nota Bene for a while, but my knowledge is limited to entering the program, saving, printing and exiting. A few days ago, I had to make some tables for one of my documents. After making those tables I switched off my computer. Later, I booted it up again to start a completely new document and I noticed that the print type had become teeny tiny. Now all my documents print out in this small typeface. Since I had not changed the default, I don't know why the print is so small. Please help!

Panic Stricken

Dear PS:

You may have accidentally hit the Function Key 1 (F1) and changed the default pitch. The F1 key gives you the Print Menu, which gives you a printer table and "print type" or "pitch" options. The default for the print type or pitch is set at 10, i.e. 10 characters per inch. This may have changed your pitch to something smaller than 10 (either 5 or 6 pitch), hence the smaller size of the print. To return to the default pitch, place the cursor at the top of your document, press F9, then type PT (print type)10. Then press F10.

By the way, you can change the pitch at anytime in a single document by inserting the PT command.

Ms. Update welcomes questions. Write her at the Computer Center.

Office of
International
Students
Walk-In Hours
Fall 1990

9.30 a.m. - Noon

2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Closed Fridays

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The China Institute welcomes visitors to join their Friday Evening Programs which will begin October 5, 1990.

The Friday night programs include English classes, ballroom dancing, films etc. Admission is FREE.

Editorials

Who Speaks For Students?

Cultural exclusion? Psychological torture? Repressive evaluation procedures? These are the conclusions we drew in last month's editorial after reading the policy statement concerning the Environmental Psychology sub-program's "open advancement procedures" and the letters denying the right to register that co-chairs Chapin and Saegert sent to Endah Soebroto, who has been suffering from cancer since 1988. The letters of protest we recently received from the subprogram's faculty and students [see pages 1 and 4] appear to contradict some, but not all, of our conclusions.

Regarding our accusation of cultural exclusion, we misinterpreted the subprogram's policy statement. As the letter from the subprogram faculty explains emphatically, "The procedure was specifically designed to protect international students who might feel that their performance would be compromised by having to appear before a large audience." We applaud the Environmental Psychology faculty's decision and encourage them to include this rationale in their policy statement, so that international students will not feel marginalized.

Nevertheless, the faculty letter does not persuade us that the subprogram's evaluation procedures are designed for the benefit of the students. Although the letter states that "early intervention and remediation efforts in problem situations are much more likely to ensure that our students complete their degrees," we wonder if the evaluation letters serve this purpose. In the four letters sent from June 1989 to March 1990 to Endah Soebroto there are no "remediation efforts" to be found. Indeed, the letter dated June 6, 1989 denies her the right to register; in the September 19, 1989 letter, co-chairs Chapin and Saegert warned: "if we do not hear from you by October 1st, either in terms of applying for a medical leave or withdrawing from the program (in good standing), we will have no alternative but to drop you from the program." As reported in the article last month, "Endah was in no position to take a leave of absence, nor could she withdraw. As an international student, she needed to be matriculated in order to keep her job at Hunter College, her sole source of income and medical benefits." The faculty had to know of Endah's no-win situation, because in the letter of October 18, 1989, Endah was informed that "the faculty as a whole has decided to extend your date of termination from the subprogram to January 8, 1990."

In the last letter Endah received, dated March 1, 1990, co-chairs Chapin and Saegert stated, "We both agree that your work has improved a great deal in this writing and we are willing to accept it as satisfying your Second Year Paper requirement." This must not be construed as a positive reflection on Endah's work; the letter continues: "However, it is still not up to the standards we would expect from someone who would continue onto the Ph.D. nor has your general performance been at that level." Co-chairs Chapin and Saegert then repeat their conclusion ad nauseam: "As we have discussed with you earlier, the faculty have decided that you should be terminated from the program at the end of this semester.... Since this will be your last semester as a registered student, with no further extensions, we urge you to apply for an en-route Master's Degree in Psychology. You must be registered in order to get that degree and you will not be able to do that after May. Also, as you are aware, you should make arrangements about your visa because you will not be a registered student after this semester."

Within the space of two short paragraphs, Endah was informed four times that she would be "terminated" from the subprogram. Although the phrase "to terminate matriculation" is a common administrative expression, the Environmental Psychology co-chairs' use of the words "terminate" and "termination" in letters sent to a student suffering from cancer was so completely insensitive that the words "psychological torture" seemed appropriate to describe their actions.

We agree with the students when they say that the Advocate should "address the larger issues of the power relationships between students and faculty at the Graduate School." What is most disturbing, however, is the fact that students who criticized aspects of the subprogram in Ms. Mehta's article, such as the need for visibility in research groups, felt compelled to play both sides and signed the collective letter in which the opposite opinion is stated.

Clearly, students have a small voice. Endah's experience is perhaps the worst case scenario of the abuse students may suffer at the hands of insensitive administrators. Interpreting vague regulations for program convenience is unjustifiable. The Advocate is more than willing to clarify inaccurate details in order to expose accounts of student mistreatment at the Graduate School.

slanderous inferences

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for protecting the CUNY health insurance program, once more we ask why did we continue to allow Ms. Soebroto to be a matriculated student in our sub program for two years after learning of the diagnosis in 1988? We did so because we wished to provide Ms. Soebroto with an opportunity to complete the requirements for the Master's degree as we had agreed to do when she entered our sub program in 1984. We did not enforce rigid time standards for Ms. Soebroto because we attempted to be sympathetic to Ms. Soebroto's experiences while attempting to complete the requirements for her degree. At the same time, we had a responsibility to apprise Ms. Soebroto of her academic progress in the sub program and did so in the form of evaluation letters.

A number of these letters were quoted out of context in Ms. Mehta's article. Due to confidentiality requirements we cannot reproduce them as a whole. Were it possible to do so, the reader might have reached conclusions other than those implied by Ms. Mehta. Nonetheless, the anonymous editorial writer used the evaluation letters as a basis for an assault on general policies in the Environmental Psychology sub program.

One of the claims is that these policies discriminate against foreign students and "...That despite their lofty pluralistic rhetoric, the Environmental Psychology sub program practices a policy of cultural exclusion (our emphasis)." Aim is taken principally at our open advancement procedures. As we shall explain below, this statement can only be characterized as patently false.

Initially, our Executive Committee (comprised of both faculty and students) advocated a process in which "...the 2nd Doctoral Exam proposal, the 2nd Doctoral Exam, the Dissertation Proposal and the Dissertation Defense all be conducted in a more public manner, open especially to all members of the sub program." We also expected all students to participate in this process. However, one of our students (not, by the way, a member of the Executive Committee), for whom English is a second language, acting as a representative for other non-native speakers of English, argued before the Executive Committee that the "open advancement procedures" might be particularly difficult and anxiety arousing for students who spoke English as a second language. In response to his arguments on behalf of other foreign students, the Executive Committee amended the open advancement procedures so that "...For those candidates whose first language is not English, and who do not intend to continue their professional career in an English speaking country, the chair may not encourage this attendance." Having quoted this statement correctly, the anonymous editorial writer goes on to say that "...the Environmental Psychology sub program may exclude international students from dissertation defenses, even though these defenses are only pro-forma debates, without substance." The conclusion regarding the alleged exclusion of international students could have been corrected if this person had simply taken the time to contact either Professor Chapin or Saegert.

The statement regarding attendance at open advancement procedures has been and continues to be open to all members of the sub program. When we say that the chair of the committees "may not encourage open attendance" we mean that if a non-native speaker of English feels that open attendance would compromise his or her performance either during the Second Doctoral Examination or the Dissertation we, as faculty members, will not insist that the procedures be open to anyone but the relevant

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Letters

irresponsible, immature and unprofessional

September 20, 1990

To the Editors:

Students in the Environmental Psychology Sub-program held a well-attended meeting to discuss a recent article ("International Student Struggles With Cancer.—Terminated by the Environmental Psychology Subprogram") and editorial ("From En-Route to Terminal") that appeared in the September Graduate Student Advocate. Students at this meeting represented all levels of the sub-program from the 1st year through advanced students finishing dissertations as well as international students.

There was concern expressed in this meeting about misrepresentations of our sub-program and inflammatory allegations about faculty members. While we feel that the article was not totally inaccurate, the editorial was an irresponsible, immature, and unprofessional attack upon both individuals within our sub-program and the Environmental Psychology Sub-program as a whole. Hence, we decided to respond collectively to The Graduate Student Advocate.

Before we respond to specific issues, our respect for each individual student in our sub-program does not allow us to say much about Endah Soebroto's experience in the sub-program. Some of us know her as a classmate and as a friend. In this role we would like to say we have and do care about her and that what we are about to say is not meant to reflect upon her or upon any of the feelings that she may have expressed to the author of the article.

We can, however, speak about our sub-program and our faculty.

It has not been in our experience that our faculty discriminates against any group of students. No member of our faculty perpetrates or participates in "psychological torture" as alleged in the editorial. We do not perceive that any student has a more difficult time in our sub-program by not being part of a research group. Being part of a research group is not a condition to earn the trust and respect of the faculty.

The Environmental Psychology Sub-program provides a forum for students' voices to be heard. While there are often healthy disagreements over specific issues, there is consensus over process and procedure. All sub-program committees (e.g., Executive Committee, Curriculum Committee, Admissions Committee) are composed of equal numbers of faculty and students (except where University regulations prohibit involvement, e.g. discussions about individual students or voting on tenure of faculty). Representation on these committees is available to all students.

The editor's interpretation of the Environmental Psychology Open Advancement Procedures is incorrect. We are not aware of any attempt on the part of the editors to explore and to understand the context in which these procedures were developed and are applied. The passage quoted in the editorial ("In general, the chair will encourage other

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Letters

**Irresponsible, Immature
and Unprofessional**
Continued from page 4.

Program members to attend these [dissertation] defenses. For those whose first language is not English, and who do not intend to continue their professional career in an English-speaking country, the chair may not encourage this attendance." was advocated by students and was intended to protect international students, not to exclude them. We feel that we have a lot of input into the decision making process in our sub-program. These procedures are the result of a democratic and interactive process between faculty and all students.

As students at the Graduate Center, we all know of situations in which our colleagues have been unfairly treated as a result of university and other programs' policies and culture. We feel that neither the original article, the editorial nor this letter begins to address the larger issues of the power relationships between students and faculty at the Graduate School. This should be a focus of *The Graduate Student Advocate*.

Harouna Ba; Joanna Bak; Barry Berg; Herng-Dar Bih; Kim Blakely; Brigita Boveland; William Burton; Danny Chorki; Helene Clark; Michael Conn; Susan Cooper; Laurie Dien; Alan Foster; Sanford Gaster; Marie Gee; Eric Graig; Sandra Griffin; Eric K. Glunt; Doris Hunt; Selim Ilus; Lisa Johnson; Matt Kaplan; Ann Kelly; Stephan Klein; Anil Khullar; Shaogang Li; Roberto Maldonado; Lynne Manzo; Hune Margulies; Claudia Mausner; Marianne McCauley; Lynn Milan; Julio Montalvo-Del Valle; Nwachukwu Nnoka; Ruth Rae; William Roane; Dale Schneider; Margaret Serrato; David Silodor; Richard Smith; Lena Sorensen; Peter Walker; Vicki Wilde; Via Wynroth; William Yeaple [Forty-five out of sixty-five students in the sub-program were available to comment and sign this letter. The remaining students were unavailable for comment.]

Express Yourself!

The Advocate welcomes letters and commentary. Please include your telephone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing in the interest of clarity and to meet space requirements.

Procedures & Policy

Ph.D. Program in Psychology
September 12, 1990
To the Editor:

I read your article on Endah Soebroto with considerable surprise. In the first place, I was surprised because I have never been informed by Ms. Soebroto or anyone else that she any complaint or problem. Of course, one feels great sympathy for Ms. Soebroto because of the terrible medical problems that she has been facing.

Beyond her particular tragedy, however, it is important for students and faculty to be aware of the policy and procedures the Graduate School in such matters. A problem between faculty and students, which cannot be resolved at that level, may be brought to the attention of the relevant Executive Officer and/or the Dean of Student Affairs (Dr. Floyd Moreland). This is the first step in a procedure designed to protect student and faculty rights, and promote fairness. Access to the Dean of Student Affairs includes his staff; they are available to be consulted about procedures either formally or informally.

It is unfortunate that Ms. Soebroto appears to have been unaware of this opportunity, if indeed she needed to avail herself of it. It is also regrettable that the author of the article, Binita Mehta, did not take the opportunity to talk the faculty involved or the Executive Officer before writing the article.

The purpose of my letter is not simply to correct the record, but more importantly, to inform all students of their right to contact and consult with their Executive Officer if any problems involving fairness, discrimination, due process, etc. cannot be resolved among the individuals involved.

Sincerely yours,
Herbert D. Saltzstein
Executive Officer

unfounded accusations

September 12, 1990
Dear Editor:

I was appalled and resentful after reading Binita Mehta's article and the Editor's commentary regarding Endah Soebroto. Your explicit and unfounded accusations of inhumanity and psychological torture on the part of the Environmental Psychology Sub-program is far from the truth. Your paper is guilty of one-sided, sensationalist journalism which embarrasses me as a student of CUNY and infuriates me as an Environmental Psychology Program member.

First I will address Mehta's article: Mehta seems confused

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Reflections & Commentary

The Reproduction of Michael Levin

By Adam Vinueza

Free speech has fallen on hard times. Once, the First Amendment was favorite among the politically correct; now, however, even the ACLU (!) is getting in on the nationwide attack against it. It is now fashionable to say things like, "No free speech for racists!"—so fashionable that dissenting voices are being dismissed as the ramblings of tired old cranks. Well, call me a curmudgeon, but I like free speech, and don't like to see it trashed as so much historical garbage. So when I read Andrew Long's incoherent tirade against the free speech defense of Professor Michael Levin, I decided to stop ranting against irresponsible journalism in private and to let Long have it with both argumentative barrels, right here in the *Advocate*. Since Long's article is almost wholly empty of relevant arguments, it might not be a bad idea to actually address the issue of Levin's views and their implications—that is, why, not look at the reasons for and against asking for Levin's invitation to teach here revoked? But as it's unfair to simply assert that Long simply missed the boat, I will spend the next part discussing why this is so. Then, I will address The Levin Issue directly (in the next issue).

Why Long's Article is Bad

Truthfully, the first part of his article wasn't really all that bad at all; it gave an interesting description of the events surrounding the controversies at City College about Levin's views, and at Long Island University, where Levin gave a talk attempting to justify white fear of black crime. If he had stopped with that, nothing would have been seriously wrong. Unfortunately, Long also attempted to show that there has been a strategy to "shift from the substance and social significance of Professor Levin's positions on the issues of race and gender to the protection of his political subjectivity. In other words, at the level of his defense, the Levin controversy concerns academic freedom and the freedom of speech." Now there's some trouble.

In order not to waste valuable column inches on each one of the numerous complaints I have about the substance and style of Long's attempt, I will only point out its chief defect and three other important flaws. First, its chief defect: when someone says something other people don't like, and those other people start crying for his head, you shouldn't be surprised when it's pointed out that that someone has the right of free speech. You don't need to talk about some kind of subtle "strat-

egy"—it's the simplest and most obvious defense of offensive speech. It's not as if we only had to concentrate on how awful Levin's beliefs are in order to magically keep anyone from mentioning Levin's right of free speech. ("Maybe no one'll notice!") To talk of a "strategy" to protect "his political subjectivity"—whatever that is—is simply to assume that all this free-speech talk is a screen to protect the horrible ogre from the virtuous hero; and I'm afraid it's against the rules to assume one of the things you're trying to prove. If you want to show there is a strategy to protect Levin from those crying for his head, one of the things you have to show is that the free-speech issue is a screen: either it's illegitimate in itself, or those who use the issue as a defense do so dishonestly. Nowhere in his article does Long attempt to justify this claim in either way, though I'd guess he thinks free speech is one of those "ahistorical abstractions" which are mysteriously illegitimate. (More on this cute move later.) Apparently, the fact that the increasingly conservative *New York Times* and two white establishment figures (Provost Cahn and Professor Collins) have referred to the issues of free speech and academic freedom in defense of Levin is reason enough to posit a postmodish conspiracy theory. Never mind that they might be right—they're too stuffy to be anything but *petits capitalistes* slyly protecting one of their commodities.

Another big problem with Long's article is his steadfast refusal to *listen* to Cahn and Collins. Long is far more interested in fitting their arguments into a vast historical pattern that's been the stalking horse for postmodernist philosophers since Nietzsche. I guess it's fun to pretend you're engaging in deconstruction or archeology or whatever you, when you've got an audience that knows the lingo; but this is hardly a time for dilettantism. In the real world, it's respectful to listen to people's arguments when they make them. Instead, Cahn and Collins are dismissed as "Levinist"—shame on you for inventing that vile term, Long—for using "ahistorical abstractions."

To begin with, what's wrong with ahistorical abstractions? Some of them, like numbers, seem to be fairly innocent and highly useful. Others, like justice, seem to be downright noble. As a matter of fact, if it weren't for good old-fashioned ahistorical justice, Martin Luther King wouldn't have had much of an argument against his fellow clergy who disapproved of civil disobedience.

Should he instead have lectured them on narratives of oppression, deconstructed the just/unjust opposition? (That's a rhetorical question.) Not that I want to get into a lengthy theoretical debate over the merits and/or defects of moral realism—on the contrary, in this context it would be offensive. All I mean to show is that it's not *obvious* that arguments relying upon ahistorical abstractions are suspect in any way whatsoever. In any case, Long offers no reasons we should think so, he just throws out arguments using them when it's convenient for him to do so. Other ahistorical abstractions, such as the notions of social significance and political subjectivity, seem to be perfectly all right, but then, he'd like to be able use *those* notions when he makes his own arguments.

I also want to comment on Long's continual use of below-the-belt rhetorical tricks in order to make his own "argument" appear stronger than it really is. It's dirty pool to characterize an argument as "Levinist"—especially since for all intents and purposes the term is meaningless except as an insult. Being intelligent readers, most of you would think that a Levinist argument is an argument relevantly like the arguments made by Professor Levin. Perhaps, but you won't find any of Levin's arguments in Long's article for comparison (you'll find a fragment of an example which is used in making an argument which Long fails to discuss); and what's worse, one of the relevant qualities is—you guessed it—the use of ahistorical abstractions. The other relevant quality is the levelling of all difference among human rights; what on earth could it mean? Surely no one's arguing that all human rights are the same—the right to free speech is not the right to assembly, and neither one is the right to vote—so it could only mean that Cahn and Collins (the great levellers) are arguing that all people have an *equal* right to free speech: Cahn and Collins are "implicitly equating the physical horror of lynching or McCarthyite persecution with the protest against Levin's presence at the Graduate School." (Since the right not to be lynched isn't the right of free speech, my analogy is spoiled, but as I have no idea why Long brought it up in the first place, I'll ignore it.) Long is right: they are equating McCarthyite persecution with the anti-Levin protest. But *implicitly*? That's not only false, it's misleading: for it suggests that Cahn and Collins are somehow duplicitous. Anyone with an ounce of intelligence can see a parallel between McCarthy's at-

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slanderous inferences

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vant faculty. So if there is exclusion under these circumstances, it applies to *all* students regardless of their proficiency in English. The procedure was specifically designed to *protect international students who might feel that their performance would be compromised by having to appear before a large audience.* What is more, this decision was reached by *both students and faculty who are members of the Executive Committee in response to what we considered a legitimate request by our international students.*

Not content with this false accusation of discrimination against foreign students, the editorial writer then goes on to attack our student evaluation procedures by claiming that "...the sub program has an evaluation procedure that smacks of repression." The writer describes the evaluation process as contained in one of the letters that was sent to Ms. Soebroto. We quote both from the letter and the conclusion reached by the editorial writer.

From the letter we have: "At the end of the academic year, the faculty evaluates each student's progress. The evaluation is the result of both ongoing discussions of individual students throughout the year, *particularly when there is an apparent problem* (the editorial writer's emphasis), as well as a summary discussion which is the basis for our preparation of this letter. The

evaluation process is taken very seriously by the faculty and this letter becomes part of your record in the sub program." The editorial writer then goes on to say that "In other words, students who dutifully perform the tasks assigned to them by their professors are not subject to the 'ongoing discussions' comprising the negative evaluations received by other students, whose financial, health or other problems affect their work." Once again, this statement is a total misrepresentation.

In the first place, the editorial writer does not know what transpires in faculty discussions of students in our sub program. None of us ever recalls having seen a member of the *Advocate* staff at one of our faculty meetings. Nor did the writer talk to *any* sub program faculty member about these policies. Nonetheless, guided by a total *absence* of any information whatever from the sub program chairs, Professors Chapin and Saegert, the anonymous writer does not hesitate to provide *Advocate* readers with the details of our faculty procedures for student evaluations.

We will be quite direct about our procedures. We adopt an active stance with regard to monitoring the progress of students in our sub program. *Every* student receives an evaluation letter *every* year. We are concerned with the *full range* of performance and discuss both positive growth and problems that might interfere with a student's progress. Based on past experience, we have learned that early interven-

tions and remediation efforts in problem situations are much more likely to ensure that our students complete their degrees. *If problems are identified, we do not simply point these out but attempt to work actively with the students to resolve them.* As a consequence, we spend considerable amounts of time discussing student issues and work with students actively as they progress through our sub program. Letters to students summarize the evaluations (*both* positive and negative where warranted) of all faculty members familiar with the student's work.

We will not pursue some of the other "facts" raised in these two articles even though it would be possible to do so. We are astounded to have learned that the editorial staff of a newspaper published by, and presumably for, doctoral students would publish material which demonstrates such a total disregard for even a bare minimum of accuracy.

It is clear that there have been some efforts on the part of the university to deal with some of the difficulties facing international students. The English language courses represented one step in that direction; another was the provision of the International Student Employment Program monies which, until a few years ago, was non-existent (and which, beginning the 1989-1990 academic year became the Student Employment Program). Yet, we believe that a more concerted effort on the part of the University as a whole is required.

Alternative sources of financial support is one obvious need since much Federal money is not available to non-U.S. citizens. Other needs include reasonably priced housing and medical leaves which do not put visas in jeopardy. The creation of a joint student-faculty-administration task force to address these issues and others, in a serious fashion, might be the next step. We would be happy to work with others in this endeavor.

We believe that a diverse university community is the basis for the development of any field if its theories and methods are to contribute to a true understanding of its issues. International students, as one aspect of that diversity, have contributed to our shared understanding of our field and we have learned a great deal as a result of their participation in our sub program. We want them to continue to be a part of our sub program and of the university community as a whole. We will support any university-wide policies in that direction in addition to continuing the effort we have made in our own sub program to ensure a rewarding and successful academic experience for *all* our students. We trust that this is the intention of the *Graduate Student Advocate* as well. —Susan Saegert, Subprogram Co-Chair; David Chapin, Subprogram Co-Chair; Dr. Kathleen Christensen; Dr. Roger Hart; Dr. Cindi Katz; Judith Kubran, Program Administrator; Dr. Setha Low; Dr. Leanne Rivlin; Dr. Gary Winkel; Dr. Maxine Wolfe

unfounded accusations

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about the six year period where Endah was not told that she was not living up to the program's standards. Well what could have happened? I'll tell you what happened: the faculty gave Endah the benefit of the doubt for six years. I know Endah, I know her work. I know some of her difficulties, and no one is to blame for her language and financial stresses (except the University, State and Federal Government for not funding their students adequately) which Endah struggled with. The Environmental Psychology Program has many foreign students and if anything, faculty give more leeway (if needed) to these students. So the standards for completing Endah's master's degree, which is what she came here from Indonesia to complete (supported only for a masters degree from Fulbright), were stretched to accommodate many of Endah's difficulties, including her cancer.

While there are many points I would like to address from Mehta's article, the comments are primarily based in student quotes; I can only hope that Mehta did not decontextualize their comments to change

the intention of their ideas.

The editor's commentary is flagrant sensationalized journalism, which is not even well-written. Firstly, the editor's reference to perceived psychological torture trivializes the experience of those who are currently and have been tortured. The editor has obviously very little experience of the actual nature of psychological torture and has glibly used this term to make a reference to psychology (the study of the human psyche) because the program in question is in the psychology dept., therefore the editor tries to make a point of contradiction or irony and maybe wit. Well you (the editor) are not witty, you are offensive. Furthermore, your understanding of the evaluation process is wrong and misleading. While other departments and programs' faculty barely know the names of their students, our faculty (Environmental Psychology) spends many hours of their time, keeping informed about the students. Of course much of the information they know is based in what the students choose to tell them. There are not EP Police or Social Workers stalking around. The on-going discussions of students who have difficul-

ties in the program or personal lives allows the faculty to be informed and take into consideration strategies for helping students throughout the academic year.

It is my experience, having gone through the death of both my parents (1987-1989) while a student, that Maxine Wolfe, who is my advisor, was very attentive and helpful as an advisor and friend. I too was rendered paralyzed by the circumstances of my life. My year-end evaluations reflected both an acknowledgement of my personal difficulties and encouragement to continue. I have never been "someone's" researcher and have never felt neglected or a victim of double standards.

What happened to Endah is not an anomaly in the EP Program; it is a misrepresented story which is unfounded in facts from both sides and therefore does not lead me to raise questions of discrimination but rather leads me to question the validity of all other articles I read in the *Advocate*.

Rachel Pfeffer, Doctoral Student
Environmental Psychology Program

Ms. Mehta responds:

I applaud Ms. Pfeffer's loyalty and

open the details of her tragedy. Ms. Mehta, this is not the way we show respect and care for our friends.

There are several issues that both Ms. Mehta's article and the Editorial have misrepresented or omitted. And this I think is an inexcusable mistake for journalists.

First, each international student has to comply with the immigration law. It is not the function of the Environmental Psychology program to grant students the right to remain in the United States. It is up to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Second, it is not true that Endah's "sole source of medical benefits" came from her work at Hunter College. Endah was sponsored by the Institute of International Education. The IIE generally secures health insurance for its students.

support for the Environmental Psychology subprogram. I'm glad that she has had nothing but positive experiences in the subprogram, and that during a time of personal difficulty she was encouraged to continue her studies by her advisor. Endah, however, was not so fortunate. She was discouraged from continuing her studies in Environmental Psychology; acknowledgement of her illness was expressed as an afterthought in the letters she received from the subprogram co-chairs.

Ms. Pfeffer states in her letter, "I know Endah, I know her work." What gives Ms. Pfeffer the right to make such a statement? Did she read Endah's papers or grade her examinations? Ms. Pfeffer's arrogance simply astounds me.

Also, Endah did not enroll in the Environmental Psychology subprogram to "complete" her Master's degree, as Ms. Pfeffer says in her letter. As I reported in my article, Endah had earned the equivalent of a Master of Philosophy degree and had taught social psychology and methodology courses at the University of Indonesia for four years before coming to the Graduate School.

Third, after talking to Endah's colleagues, I never had any indication that she was dissatisfied or in any way mistreated during the course of her study in the program.

Now, for the misinformation you have propagated about our program. I have been an international student in the Environmental Psychology program for four years, enough time to get to know and experience the program thoroughly. I have worked closely with most of the faculty and there has not been any discrimination whatsoever against my person, nor have I heard about such a possibility from any other international student.

From my first day in the Graduate School, Professor (Professor Chapin's cre-

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common sense

To the Editors:

Your two articles about Endah Soebroto and the Environmental Psychology program require extensive response and correction. You have done a great disservice to Endah personally and to our program as a whole.

First, have you thought about how Endah would respond to your articles? A lot of people now know not only the story of Endah's relation to our program, but also details about her life that are normally not communicated to strangers. Common sense would call for respect for the individual, not to mention that a medical history is one's private property. Furthermore, Indo-

nesian culture (like many others) emphasize respect for a person's privacy.

I have known Endah since 1986 when we worked together on a project. I found her to be a quiet and private person, and this is why I cannot believe that she would want you to trumpet her intimate story along with her picture on the front page of the *Advocate*. I, and every other woman I have spoken to, would feel exposed, like a subject for common gossip, were we to be publicized this way.

Endah is now back home. She is very ill. I think that our task should be to show her support by positive action, not by invading her privacy and throwing into the

World

Europe Without Borders: Some Thoughts On German Reunification

By Elliot Jünger

It seemed inevitable. Now it is final. Wednesday October 3, 1990 is the date chosen by East German Premier Lothar de Maizière and West Germany's Chancellor Kohl as the official "Day of German Unity" between the two states. Decried by its opponents as a pure instance of West German arm-twisting, hailed by others as perhaps the most significant single event in postwar European history, October 3, 1990 will hopefully give pause for serious, critical reflection rather than merely occasion for bacchanalian revelry as did the "fall" of the Berlin Wall last summer.

To say that this concluding act of state between both nations, a merging between East and West, cutting the ribbon on that fearfully anticipated maiden voyage into the unknown, arouses a degree of concern, would be a pathetic understatement. Indeed, ever since the mad rush toward unity this past year, emotion (over reasoned argument) either wholeheartedly advocating or obdurately opposing German unity has continued to hold sway. For

many there has been no middle ground!

The first united elections in postwar Germany, originally scheduled for this Fall, have been postponed until December 2. East Germany is struggling to gain an economic foothold within a free market society, although competition with such powerful entities as the U.S., the Federal Republic and Great Britain is still next to impossible. West German journalists with whom I talked have begun asking whether perhaps excessive financial aid to the East Germans might not threaten to plunge their own nation into bankruptcy, resulting in a severe depression.

Among the myriad problems posed by German reunification is the issue of what precisely is now meant by "Germany." Will the Kohl/de Maizière cabinet remain content with the present borders to the East (Poland) and to the West (France)? Will German unity once again threaten the stability of Europe as a result of its now considerable economic presence? Will the forced withdrawal of Soviet troops from the former GDR create tension between the Soviet Union and the West?

These as yet unresolved ques-

tions will continue to plague a united Germany (along with its cautious neighbors) and hinder the prospects for a truly "European" common market in the 1990s as well as into the next century. Seen abstractly, the peaceful revolution by thousands of young people, taking matters of personal conscience into their own hands without resulting in either loss of life or serious injury, is at once remarkable and praiseworthy. Surely no one will deny that laughter and celebration in the streets is preferable to bloodshed and the mourning of violence brought on by continued oppression, or that the unbridled joy at liberation following imprisonment is any less than justified. Yet, it seems that once again, tire as we may of hearing a familiar song, history must bear witness to the course of contemporary events.

In order for us to understand the enormity of German reunification, not abstractly but in terms of its concrete impact upon the immediate future, we must concentrate on the question asked earlier. What is meant by a united "Germany"? The West German government has made it quite clear that the "Einigungs vertrag" (Uni-

fication Treaty) will guarantee the sanctity of the postwar borders of Pomerania, Silesia and East Prussia. It might not be a question for the Kohl administration, but it most certainly will be for the average European over the age of forty-five as to exactly what does a reunited Germany intend to reunite! Although the Federal Republic has proven itself a responsible and democratic partner over the last forty years, it will soon have the added weight (or burden) of five extra provinces comprising the historic regions of Mecklenburg, Brandenburg (Berlin), Sachsen, Sachsen Anhalt and Thüringen. This, along with an increased population of several hundred thousand citizens from the "former" East Germany will only exacerbate internal problems of unemployment and housing shortage in the Federal Republic.

A reunited Germany, a Europe without borders. Only thoughtless idealism could revel at such a prospect. Moreover, the recent decision of the Kohl/de Maizière government together with members of the former occupation forces, the British, the Americans and the Soviets, to relinquish military control of Berlin (the so-called "tri-partate agreement") is just one step closer to the autonomy for which East and West have been striving. There has even been talk that Berlin should again become the capital of a united Germany. Indeed Bonn,

the present capital of West Germany, has always been looked on as strictly provisional, pending the eventual reunification of the two German states. But now that a reunited Germany is at hand, Germany's neighbors may well have second thoughts about the former Imperial city which ushered in the likes of Bismarck, Kaiser Wilhelm II and (in disturbingly recent memory) Hitler being renamed the capital of a non-imperial Western social democracy.

Perhaps most telling is the remark concerning reunification made by an elderly West German, a retired official with the local parliament in the province of Lower Saxony. When asked whether continued American military presence in a united Germany was desirable, he responded affirmatively. The German people, he said, dislike the presence of allied troops in their country. Yet, he continued, they somehow feel safe in the belief that what once happened on German soil cannot and will not happen again. Does he trust the Germans after almost half a century? The Germans, he then concluded, are newer at democracy than France, Great Britain or the United States. Someday they might wear comfortably the mantle of tolerance and acceptance without assistance from anyone. That day, however, has not yet arrived.

Elliot Jünger studies German literature.

By Muhammad Muhaisen

In his article "Democracy & Brotherhood in the Middle East" (*Advocate*, Sept. 1990), Yefim Katz vigorously attacked Kamel Abu-Jaber for not using sound scientific analysis in his Op-Ed piece in the *New York Times*. Mr. Katz called for an article built on facts and logically documented materials rather than on emotions. To my great disappointment, Mr. Katz fell short of the standards he himself proposed, and presented a deeply confused, one-sided and marginal perspective on what is actually happening in the Middle East, and on the development of the Israeli-Palestinian tragedy of this century. Mr. Katz's article offers an ample supply of non-factual statements, euphemisms and clear attempts to launder Israel's image. It should be clear that I am not denying Yefim Katz the right to take sides or to direct his article to the benefit of a given group. What I am stating is that he should not be allowed to break the standards that he himself advanced in order to judge the work of others.

In the following paragraphs, I will examine Mr. Katz's article using his own rules. Although Mr. Katz's article offered numerous clichés and ready-to-consume jargon, I will limit myself to two

statements that he presented as "facts."

1. a. "Israel is a democracy, while many of the Arab countries are not."

b. "Violation of human rights in many 'Arab' countries."

c. "peace in the Middle East will only come about through democratic change in the Arab World."

2. "the fact is that Arab countries have received billions of dollars from the West in addition to 'soaring incomes' from their oil (Egypt received \$2.3 billion from the US last year)."

Let us begin with the first statement. Mr. Katz claims that Israel is a democracy. I consulted the *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* in order to provide a simple and straight forward definition of 'democracy,' defined as the "acceptance and practice of the principle of equality of rights, opportunity, and treatment." In the *Webster's Thesaurus*, democracy is also called a "way of life providing extensive personal rights. Syn. justice, the greatest good for the greatest number, equality before the law, social security, equalitarianism, egalitarianism, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free education,

Reflections on Yefim Katz's "Democracy and Brotherhood in the Middle East"

political equality, emancipation, etc." It should be obvious that these are the very basic tenets that a democratic state should enforce, practice and nurture. It is not enough for a state to proclaim loudly that it is a democracy, it must offer proof of it!

Amnesty International, a reputed international body provides an excellent starting point to check the international pursuit of democracy and respect for human rights. Amnesty International's reports and files show very disturbing facts about the nature of the Israeli state and its horrifying record of human rights violations, discrimination, and excessive killings in the occupied Palestine. [See Table 1] On December 17, 1987 and again in January 1988, Amnesty International issued two public statements citing Israeli violations of International Human Rights Standards. These violations included:

1. Killings, beatings, and excessive use of force on unarmed civilian population.

2. Arbitrary arrest and detention of large numbers Palestinians (men, women and children).

3. Incommunicado detention

with no access to family, lawyer, and medical treatment.

4. Unfair military trials.

5. Deportation of Palestinians from the Palestinian occupied lands.

The Amnesty International reports state the following: "A.I. believes Israeli forces detain people who peacefully exercised their rights to freedom and association. ... An alarming high number of instances those shot dead do not appear to have been involved in life threatening or violent activities. ... Israeli forces have withheld or otherwise hampered emergency medical care for the casualties." Amnesty International also cited the "wide use of tear-gas on unarmed civilian population, and the deliberate misuse of tear-gas," as well as "the imprisonment and detention of journalists without trial."

Amnesty International reports goes on and on citing an endless list of atrocities committed by the Israeli killing machine against unarmed men, women and children of all ages. In one instance, Amnesty reports the case of professor of botany who was imprisoned by the Israelis for

"encouraging villagers to become less dependent by helping them plant their own vegetable gardens." Such practices are in clear violation of the basic rights guaranteed to populations under military occupation by the United Nations charter.

Judging from the data and facts supplied by Amnesty International, we can conclude that Israel has not only failed the test of democracy, but also failed the test of International law by deliberately dismantling a society under its occupation. It is an insult to the international community and to democratic nations to accept the claim that a country with little or no respect for the fundamental human rights and freedoms protected by international law and the U.N. charter could so arrogantly call itself a democracy, while its highly-trained professional killing squads are on the rampage against helpless, unarmed Palestinian civilians. History past and present clearly demonstrates that a country based on the supremacy of a given race and religion will never ever be a democracy.

If Mr. Katz had strived for
Continued on page 9.

assets, and not liabilities

September 23, 1990

Dear Editor:

It was not just painful but also quite scary to read the article "International Student ... Cancer" in the September issue of the Advocate. Painful to think of Endah Soebroto's continuing battle with cancer and scary trying to imagine how it must feel being constantly challenged by a life-threatening disease, having to work outside the University to be able to pay the rent, being faced with enormous medical bills and at the same time dealing with the increased pressures and deadlines of your program (that's being anything but supportive) and all this in a foreign land where you have no one else to turn to, the last straw being asked to leave after six years in the Ph.D. program.

Despite having known Endah for almost two years as a fellow office bearer of the International Students Association, I did not have the slightest inkling about her cancer (and who would have guessed with her genial nature) until a few months back. If it were not for your article, Endah would

have become just another student who withdrew for "personal reasons."

Every international student at City University knows that even without a debilitating condition, it is extremely difficult just to make ends meet here. An international student pays about three times the tuition fee of a New York resident. International students must take twelve or more credits every semester to maintain legal status and are not allowed to work outside the University. They pay taxes like anyone else, but if they have grievances, they are told, "Sorry, you don't count because you don't have any voting rights in this country."

The high quality of higher education in this country is to a large extent owed to the varied backgrounds and knowledge of international students. It is time that they be treated right for being what they are—assets, and not liabilities.

Sincerely,
Prateek Patnaik
ISA/Ph.D. Program in Biochemistry

Domsey Strike

By Jenn Parker

Over 200 garment factory workers have been on strike since January 30, 1990 against Domsey Trading Corporation in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. The workers decided to strike after their attempts to join the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) resulted in the dismissal of three workers. This action is considered an unfair labor practice by the ILGWU and charges have been filed against Domsey with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

The immigrant work force at Domsey, composed primarily of Haitian women who perform tasks such as the cleaning, sorting, repairing and packaging of used clothing, has been working under what many describe as "sweat shop" conditions.

The company is known as a "rag trade," says Jeff Hermanson, Director of Organizing for the ILGWU. "They're selling used clothing to Third World countries and exploiting Third World workers in the process. This clothing is donated by the Salvation Army and Good Will industries. People think they're giving the clothing to somebody who's going to give it to poor people. It's a multi-million dollar operation, with over thirty million dollars a year in sales."

According to Domsey workers, they earn only \$3.65 per hour and work ten hour days with no overtime pay, no paid holidays and no health benefits. Some workers had to pay an initiation fee of \$100 or more just to get a job. Workers say that Domsey has dehumanized them by assigning them numbered tags rather than their names. Workers who come to work without the tag are fined and/or sent home. Workers also feel that they have been stripped of any sense of personal dignity. For example, they report that they are forced to ask permission to use the bathroom. They must punch in and out so the bosses can record the amount of time they spend. If they are caught going over the five minute limit, they are issued a warning. A couple of warnings results in dismissal.

The women workers also charge that they are commonly subject to sexual harassment by the male bosses, who have been known to threaten women workers with job termination or transfer for not complying with sexual demands. Charges of racism have also been levelled by the workers, who report that the bosses call them "monkeys," "niggers" and "AIDS carriers."

Domsey has already been charged with numerous unfair labor practices. One such charge stems from its involvement in a racket union, a so-called "sweetheart union" called local 1718, which has signed a contract with the Williamsburg Trade Association (consisting of 150 garment shops in Williamsburg including Domsey) in order to protect the employers from legitimate unions. Workers were coerced into paying \$14 per month to this union with the promise of wage and insurance benefits. According to Tara McGann, a member of the Student/Worker Solidarity Committee (SWSC) and a student at the Graduate School, workers have yet to receive the promised benefits. In October 1989, the NLRB ruled the union illegal and ordered it to return to the workers union dues totalling more than \$100,000.

In its fight to prosecute the company for its many violations and unfair labor practices, the union faces a long battle with a legal bureaucracy compounded by the lack of government interest in enforcing existing labor codes. The strikers also face declining worker morale due to increased financial hardship. "For example," says Matt Noyes of SWSC, "know of at least one striker already who has been evicted

from his home." "There are Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) violations; there are Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) violations. These things are not being prosecuted," says Hermanson. "I mean we put as much pressure as we can on these agencies and they just say, 'we are investigating, we are investigating. But what they are really doing I don't know.'" "In the meantime," Marty Goodman of the Haitian Workers Support Committee stated, "Domsey has gotten away with gross illegalities such as the hiring of prisoner scabs on work/release programs when they used up to 63 prisoners as strike breakers for several months before the city finally put a stop to it." A New York City code stipulates against prisoners being sent to businesses where there are labor disputes in progress.

In July, 1990, the focus of the struggle shifted and the ILGWU asked Domsey to take the workers back. According to Noyes, "The primary emphasis has moved away from the production process to that of curtailing distribution of the product both locally and in Africa where Domsey exports most of its product." An ILGWU official

I am proud to be in the Environmental Psychology Program. This program has given me an opportunity to work independ-

from his home."

added, "We have already made gains with the local distributor for Good Will industries." More than thirty workers have been taken back by the company since July, according to another ILGWU official, although, according to Noyes, "a few were fired right away and one woman worker was followed home after work and beat up by a scab."

The Domsey workers still picketing outside company headquarters are not alone. Community groups, student groups, those supporting the popular movement in Haiti, and other striking New York City workers have shown their support at the picket line.

When asked about the future, Yolande Heurtelou, a striker replied, "We need solidarity so that we can all stand together to defend our rights, because we are the union. There's no one here who does not know what we are struggling for, and as long as we are not divided we will be strong."

Striker Jean Bonny added, "We have to really continue the struggle even though our situation is very hard. But we want to fight until we win."

The Student/Worker Solidarity Committee (SWSC) promotes practical support activities in worker struggles among students, the community and workers. The committee was formed in March 1990 and has members from New School for Social Research, NYU, Columbia, CUNY Graduate Center, Hunter College, Borough of Manhattan Community College and City College. Organizing meetings are held twice a month and any interested party should call (212) 942-6392 or write to SWSC, P.O. Box 561, New York, NY 10009.

Jenn Parker is a student in the Ph.D. Program in Sociology.

common sense

Continued from page 6.

ently (not necessarily within a research group), a *right* to vote about the courses and a *choice*, thanks to the "Open Advancement Procedures."

For the Advocate to devote so much space to attacking a superior program, when there are many other truly serious problems that need to be addressed, makes it less than a worthy advocate for the graduate student body.

J. Asia Bak

Ms. Mehta responds:

Regardless of what Ms. Bak claims in her letter, Endah wanted to tell the story of her cancer. She had come to terms with her illness and was not embarrassed to discuss it. In fact, she felt more uncomfortable when some of her friends were hesitant to broach the subject.

Ms. Bak's argument that it is the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the United States that grants students the right to remain in the United States is at best a feeble one. The Immigration and Naturalization Service gives visa extensions to international students based on letters showing financial support from the Executive Officer of their respective programs.

Ms. Bak also says that since Endah was sponsored by the Institute of International Education (IIE), she was able to receive health insurance. What Ms. Bak neglects to mention, however, is that Endah's sponsorship ended in 1986, and that therefore she was dependent on her job at Hunter College to provide her with health insurance.

The Graduate Student Advocate

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Table 5
U.S. Government Grants and Credits (1946-1988) in millions of dollars

Country	'46-'55	'56-'65	'66-'75	'76-85	'84	'85	'86	'87	Total
Israel	390	480	3,760	25,417	3,094	3,804	4,030	3,111	44,089
Jordan	26	495	618	1,320	-12	-1	7	109	2,575
Egypt	—	—	—	—	1,926	2,231	2,729	1,614	8,505
Saudi Arabia	12	35	23	-20	-2	-2	-1	—	45

Source: Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 1990
U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Table 1
Killings and Human Rights Violations
By Israeli Occupational Forces
In the Palestinian Occupied Territories:
December 1987—January 1990

1. 600 Civilian Unarmed Palestinians (men, women, children and infants)
 - a. 130 aged 16 or younger
 - b. 35 younger than 12
 - c. 15 beaten to death
 - d. 70 killed in tear-gas related incidents, including infants
 - e. 8 tortured to death
 - f. 128 killed by plastic bullets
2. 25,000 Palestinians arrested and detained under Israeli Administrative Detention
3. 4,000 Palestinians detained without charges or trial for periods exceeding 6 months
4. 200 homes demolished or sealed. Access denied to independent observers.

Source: Amnesty International publications and reports:
"Killings by Israeli Forces" and "Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories"

Table 2
U.S. Foreign Military Aid
From 1984—1988 in millions of dollars

Country	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	Total
Israel	1,700	1,400	1,723	1,800	1,800	8,423
Jordan	117	92	83	42	28	362
Egypt	1,367	1,177	1,246	1,302	1,302	6,394
Saudi Arabia	—	—	—	—	—	—

Source: Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 1990
U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Table 3
U.S. Foreign Aid Commitment For Economic Assistance
From 1984—1988 in millions of dollars

Country	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	Total
Israel	910	1,950	1,898	1,200	1,200	7,158
Jordan	20	100	95	111	29	355
Egypt	853	1,065	1,069	820	718	4,525
Saudi Arabia	—	—	—	—	—	—

Source: Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 1990
U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Table 4
U.S. Investment Abroad in millions of dollars

Country	1980	1984	1985	1986	1987	Total
Israel	379	733	717	427	653	2,909
Jordan	384	981	792	840	703	3,700
Egypt	1,038	1,538	1,926	1,807	1,680	7,989
Saudi Arabia	1,037	2,352	2,442	2,460	2,140	10,431

Source: Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 1990
U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

Reflections on the Middle East

Continued from page 7.

truth and accuracy he would have written his sentences as follows:

a. Israel is not a democracy, just as many of the Arab countries are not.

b. Violation of human rights in Israel, and in many 'Arab' countries.

c. Peace in the Middle East will only come about through democratic change in the Arab World as well as in Israel.

Let us now consider Mr. Katz's second statement: "the fact is that Arab countries have received billions of dollars from the West in addition to 'soaring incomes' from their oil (Egypt received \$2.3 billion from the U.S. last year)." One need only look at the "Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 1990" to determine where the money of the American tax payers has been going, in other words, to trace which countries are present a liability to the U. S., and which countries are seen as viable trade partners. As I am dealing with the Arab-Israeli issue, I will present only the countries of that region that have qualified for multiple aid packages from the U.S. government: Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Saudia Arabia, beginning with Table 5, which shows the U.S. government grants and credits to these four countries from 1946 up to 1988.

The data in Table 5 tells us that Israel received 44,089 million dollars. Jordan received 5.84% of what Israel was paid. Egypt received 19.3% (note that no payment to Egypt prior to Camp David accord). Finally, the Saudis received 0.1% of what was issued as grants and credits to the Israelis. In total the Israelis received four times the amount of grants and credits given to three Arab countries that are considered "western satellites" in the region.

Table 2 addresses the U.S. military aid to these four countries from 1984 until

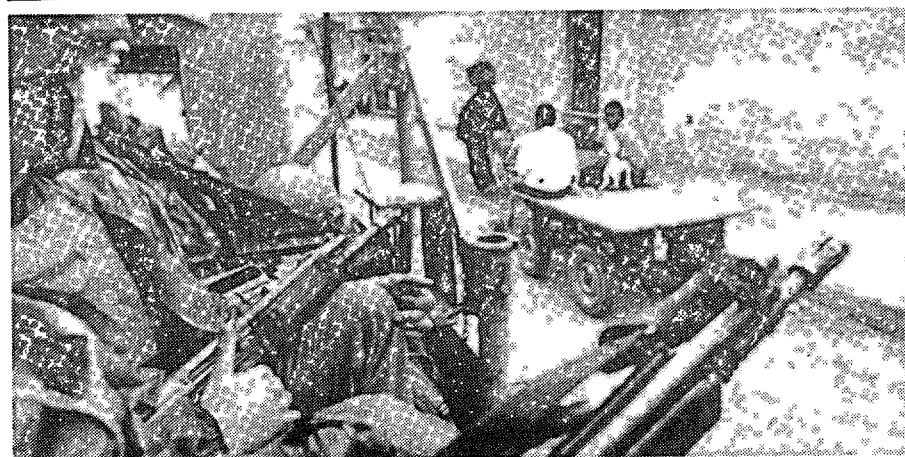
1988. Again, Israel dominates, receiving a total of 8,423 million 1983 U.S. dollars. Jordan military aid totals 362 million or 4.29% of what Israel received. Egypt military aid stands at 6,394 million or 75%. No military aid was given to the Saudis.

Table 3 shows the U.S. foreign economic aid to these countries with Israel again receiving the lion's share—7,158 million dollars. Jordan received a mere 355 million dollars or about 4.95% of what Israel received. Egypt received 4,525 million dollars or about 63.2%. Again, Saudia Arabia received zero economic aid.

Finally, Table 4 shows the U.S. investment in Israel, U.A.E., Egypt, and Saudia Arabia. From this table we can see that the U.S. investment in Israel is 78.6% of its investment in the U.A.E., 36.4% of the U.S. investment in Egypt, and 27.88% of its investment in Saudia Arabia. In total, American investment in these three Arab countries is worth about eight times (22.1 billion dollars) of the US investment in Israel (2.9 billions).

Clearly these figures show how much Israel is a liability for American taxpayers, who paid 59,670 million dollars to finance its ventures in the Middle East. Arab countries received 22,716 million dollars, of which 19,524 million were given to Egypt as a result of its peace agreement with Israel, bringing the total cost of financing Israel and Israeli related affairs to the American taxpayers to some 79,000 million dollars. These figures speak for themselves. Peace in the Middle East can only come to light through democracy both in Israel and in the Arab world, of which there are few signs on the horizon. *Q*

Muhammad Muhaisen is the Advocate's travelling Jordanian correspondent.



Israeli Troops Patrol Jabaliya Refugee Camp c. Associated Press 7-12-88



Israeli Soldiers Beat Palestinian in Ramallah, West Bank.

c. Associated Press 2-3-88

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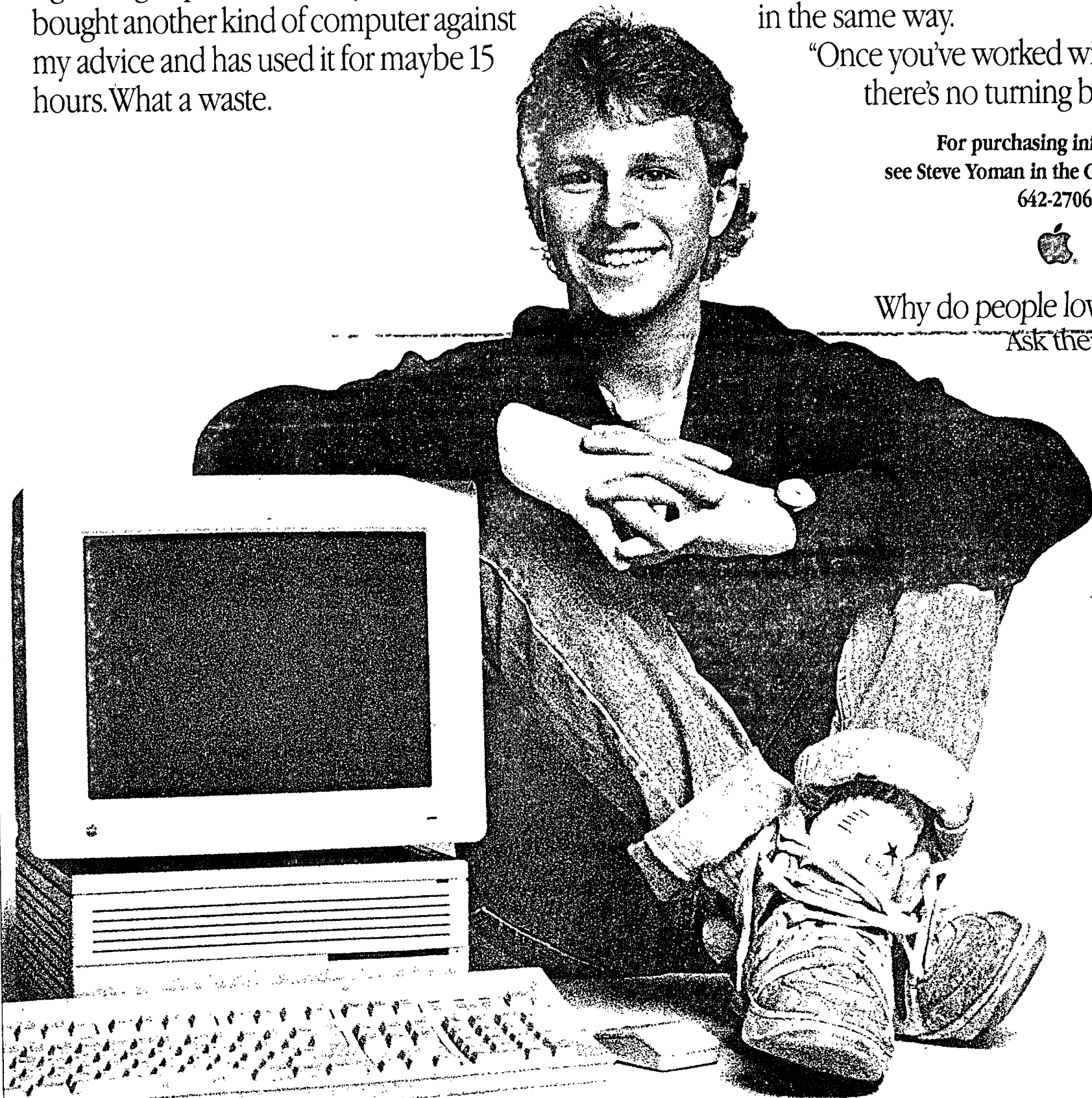
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Arts & Events

Writing Moscow: Derrida On Vacation

By Gary Paul Gilbert

On Tuesday, September 25, 1990, in Room 1700 of the Graduate School, I had the pleasure of listening to a talk by French philosopher Jacques Derrida, entitled, "Back from Moscow, in the USSR: Preface to a Travel Account." What was striking about the talk is that it had nothing to do with the referent Moscow but rather with travel accounts of Moscow by "writer-intellectuals" such as André Gide, Étiemble and Walter Benjamin.

Rather than telling anecdotes about his trip to Moscow this year (February 26 to March 6), Derrida explored a "literary genre" going back to October 1917 and best exemplified by Gide's *Back from the USSR* (1936). Ultimately, Derrida's talk concerned his hesitation to tell anecdotes about his trip to Moscow. He explained that travel narratives, "récits raisonnés" ("raisonné" meaning both ordered and rationalized), such as those written by "writer-intellectuals" from 1917 on, can no longer be written without the author running the risk of eliciting laughter or scorn now that Moscow no longer seems like the New Jerusalem. Derrida traced the birth and death of a whole "literary genre" which purported to speak both about Moscow and about the future of international socialism through the mediation of the author's personal experiences, it being taken for granted that the personal experiences of the authors were necessarily political.

I could go further than this and substitute "discursive practice" (a Foucauldian term I am sure Derrida would not use) for "literary genre," because Foucault's term stresses how discourse produces both the object of which it purports to speak and the position of enunciation in which the speaker finds himself/herself. Derrida said that these writers were "...part of a whole series of other works." (He leaves it up to others, however, to study more obscure authors who were part of this discourse in order to focus on the most illustrious writers.)

Simply put, this talk was not about what the "real" Moscow was or is but rather about how Moscow was talked about, about how it was constituted through discourse as the site where the promise for utopia would be delivered, the place where, as Derrida put it, "utopia (no place) would take place." Thus, Derrida did close readings of Gide, Étiemble and Benjamin, showing how they took up their positions in this discourse of "back from the USSR."

Derrida prepared his audience for this maneuver by giving his talk a title referring implicitly to the "back to the USSR" texts by Gide, Benjamin and even the Beatles! The term "preface" implied that the travel account would not be delivered. Even though one could easily parody the procedure by calling it "the impossibility of" school of philosophy and literary criticism, in the same way that Renato Rosaldo has called a lot of Foucauldian work the "invention of" writing, I think that the talk was much more than that. To echo Derrida's lecture of last year, this was the "destabilizing jetty" of deconstructions in the plural and not at all the predictable "stabilizing jetty" of "deconstructionism." The lecture even demonstrated how Derrida has begun to address explicitly (perhaps in response to certain Marxist critics) the question of "real history" and textuality.

In the space that remains, I will sum-

marize some of the highpoints of the talk, at the risk of oversimplifying a subtle argument and raising the difficult question of what gets translated in a translation or paraphrase. I have eliminated plays on words such as the French "travail" [work] and the English "travail" [labor or childbirth] from my summary, not because I consider them trivial, but because I would be running the risk (which I still run anyway) of appearing to mimic Derrida's discourse. Any scholarly treatment of Derrida's talk, however, would need to present these "jeux de mots," especially since Derrida's philosophy undermines the certainty with which scholars separate content from form. I have also eliminated his numerous references to psychoanalytic theory. I think it significant that Derrida used "fort-da" to refer to a there/here dichotomy, but do not have the time to discuss what I read here [da] as an encounter between Derrida and psychoanalysis going back at least to his book *The Postcard*.

In the beginning (if I may permit myself to evoke Derrida's performance) of the talk, Derrida dealt with what he called: "Oedipus and the Jewish Question" by presenting three assumptions of the "back to the USSR" discourse. First, Moscow would present itself in a kind of "phenomenology" or appearance which would reveal its essence or truth. Second, this "supposed phenomenology is accessible to the traveler." Third, the traveler need not speak Russian in order that the "essence" be communicated to him/her.

This was the situation until the Moscow Trials, when antisemitism became a major discourse. Étiemble, the self-labeled "founding father of comparative literature in France," writes in his *Le Meurtre du Petit-Père (The Murder of the Little Father)* (1990) that he was struck by the legitimacy that antisemitism had acquired. According to Derrida, intellectuals like Étiemble were caught up in a whole series of disavowals/avowals as they began to contemplate the murders of the father (Stalin) and Hitler, the other father who served as alibi for supporting Stalin. The upshot of all this is that Gide and Étiemble, emblematic of other intellectuals who found themselves in the same predicament vis-à-vis Moscow, began to question the errors of Moscow and tried to come to grips with how Moscow in its particularity had become horrific and yet Moscow in its universality was supposed to usher in the era of international socialism.

In the middle of his talk, Derrida showed how all these "back to the USSR" narratives were really "back in the USSR" narratives: whereas they purported to be about leaving home, they really were narratives about what home would look like in the future. Therefore, their narrators were not alienated because they were always already at home, even in Moscow! Here Derrida spoke convincingly of an "ahistoric messianism," according to which something new was being born or under construction in the USSR. Thus Moscow represented hope for a better future, to say the

least. Derrida read the Gidean text as performing the same sort of process of being-in-construction and the performance of a promise that would not be delivered.

The last part of the lecture was by far the most interesting because in it Derrida did an close reading of Benjamin in which he showed how Benjamin's belief in a language beyond mediation influenced the way he wrote about Moscow in his "diary." He also showed how Benjamin's relationship with his mistress, Asja Lacis, also informed his writings about Moscow. (It is important to note that Derrida considered biographical questions, which may satisfy even the most traditional of literary critics.) Apparently, Benjamin thought that Moscow could write itself or communicate itself directly to him. In other words, Benjamin felt he could arrive at a kind of language which would be beyond mediation and ideology. Derrida explained Benjamin's belief as a kind of authentic language, beyond mere communication in everyday language. (Since the Fall from Grace, humanity has been condemned to the language of communication.)

Although Benjamin's hope that Moscow would be able to write itself and his belief in a so-called authentic language recall the phenomenological project, Derrida did a good job distinguishing between phenomenology à la Husserl and the kind of "phenomenological marxism" practiced by Benjamin in 1927. For Benjamin, a discourse which was beyond mediation would still be theoretical.

Benjamin believed that Moscow could deliver its "phenomenology" and ultimately its essence or truth because of the singular position Moscow occupied in History. Derrida reads this as another version of the marxist phrase: "economic in the last instance." The "economy" was the ground of possibility for Moscow's mode of revelation. Thus Benjamin was able to oscillate between phenomenology and marxism.

I found Derrida's reading of Benjamin particularly illuminating because it forced me to confront how Benjamin's understanding of language was quite "mystical." This is not at all the Benjamin now widely read as a precursor of deconstruction and

poststructuralism. Derrida's talk made me go back and reread the 1916 essay "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man," in which I interpret Benjamin as arguing that meaning is communicated in language rather than being produced by language. Meaning exists, at least before the Fall, as outside of mediation. What I find especially troubling in this conception of language is that it is anthropomorphic, which Benjamin was quick to deny. Benjamin wrote: "To whom does the lamp communicate itself? The mountains? The fox? But here the answer is: to man. This is not anthropomorphism." Also, Benjamin presented an essentialist view of language according to which naming is the essence of language!

The more I read the more I realize that I had repressed and misread this other "mystical" Benjamin. Derrida's lecture encouraged me to rethink how I was reading only a part of Benjamin, the part that privileges fragments and seems to be continuing the project, begun by the surrealists, of trying to marry Freud and Marx. (The problem is that even when Benjamin is celebrating fragments, such as in "The Task of the Translator," he does not rule out the possibility of totality, even though, of course, he pushes back totality or wholeness to some mythical past.)

Here I must confess my own ignorance, which I think is symptomatic of how Benjamin is generally read today as a precursor of both deconstruction and poststructuralism. As usual, Derrida is a good teacher of close reading. I now realize that Benjamin had not learned that presence is an illusion, on the order of the imaginary, to use French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's term.

Rather than describe how at the end of the lecture the audience asked Derrida about what he saw and experienced in Moscow, thus seeming to have missed the point that such talk, at least in a book, is no longer possible and that ultimately it was always already impossible, I prefer to close with a quotation from Lacan's essay, "The Direction of the Treatment" in *Écrits*:

"One will recall that with the sureness of touch that was his in this field, Freud, seeking the model of the repetition compulsion, stopped at the crossroads formed by a game of occultation and an alternate scansion of two phonemes, whose conjugation in a child made a striking impression on him."

Gary Paul Gilbert, a student of French literature at NYU, is a frequent visitor to the Graduate School.

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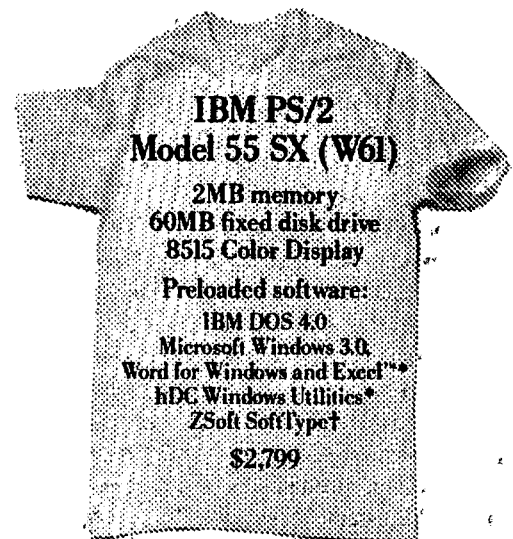
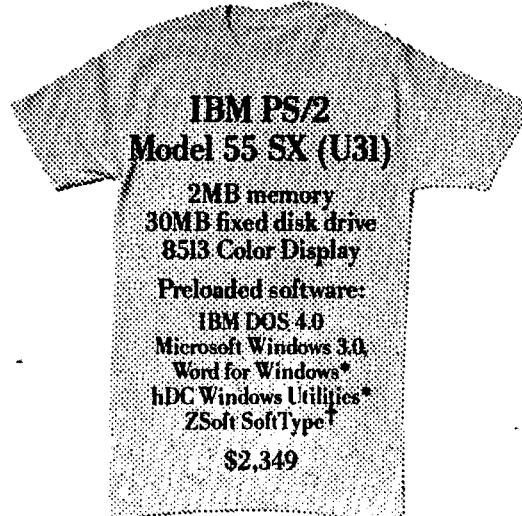
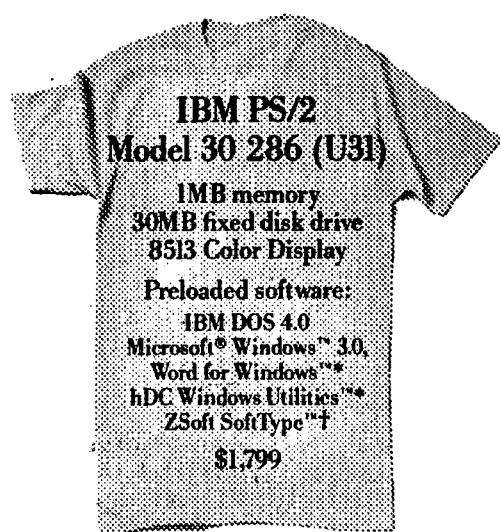
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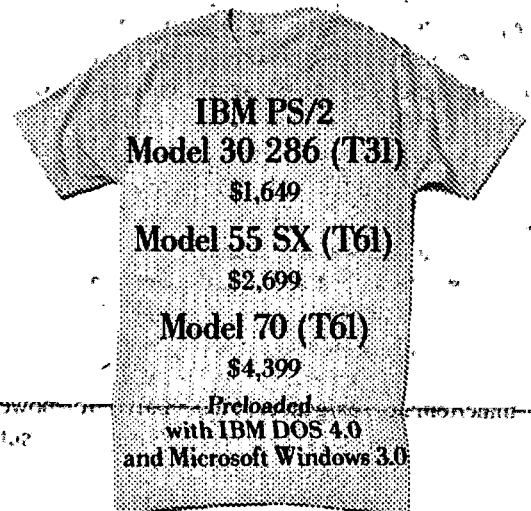
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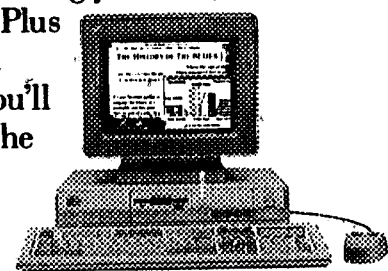


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In the last three decades, much energy has been expended by biologists in the study of monkeys and apes. During the same period, feminists in various disciplines have tried to define and redefine "gender relations." Many feminists have called for a "paradigm shift" in their respective fields, demanding that subjectivity be written into the scientific enterprise. The biologists, on the other hand, operate within the "objectivist paradigm"—a science that claims neutral grounds having no ideological underpinnings. In *Primate Visions*, Donna Haraway—a historian of science at University of California, Santa Cruz, offers us a feminist lens to view the world of natural science and tells us a marvelous story of primates. Yes! It is a story about primates, about those who study primates, about those who make such studies possible, and about how, why and where they study primates. Haraway invites us to look beneath the surface of the biologists' narrative that maintains a very realist position and demonstrates how such a narrative is a social construction after all.

Haraway's vision of primates is located within a broad episteme. She points out that the study of primates is not only determined by and connected to various social, political, economic and historical forces, but also influenced by the personal and professional lives of scientists who undertake such studies. Thus one begins to understand the *Zeitgeist* at different historical moments.

The main task that Haraway undertakes is to question the Western epistemological traditions that are built upon socially enforced dualisms. Haraway demonstrates that the dichotomy between nature/culture, mind/body, male/female, sex/gender, fact/fiction, science/art and so on is a false one. The story she tells us is not about Nature or Culture, but about the traffic between the two. After reading this book, one's impression is that the "natural" world is not so "natural" after all, for much of human endeavor seems to naturalize the human world and humanize the natural world simultaneously. Haraway argues that the Western world's fascination with primates not only arises from a search for origins, but also constitutes the "other" and justifies its position in the post-colonial era. For Haraway, science and politics are inextricably woven together. She says, "... the themes of race, sexuality, gender, nation, family, class have been written into the body of nature in Western life sciences since the eighteenth century." However, while much of social science treats sex, race, class, etc., as analytical categories, Haraway points out that these conceptual categories are woven into the very fabric of our social and intellectual life, and therefore it is problematic to treat them as variables.

The book is divided into three parts: the first part provides a history of Primatology, and the second part deals with how conceptual categories for studying primates are framed in the post-colonial era, and how multinational politics plays itself out in this process, and the third part offers a feminist critique of primatology.

In Part I, Haraway lays out the theoretical framework within which she has undertaken this project that lasted almost a decade. Western primatology, she argues is "simian orientalism" in which the self is constructed from the raw material of the "other." The producer of knowledge must define terms like, "animal, nature, body, primitive, female" and by representing these concepts, the self is defined in contra-

Primate Visions:

Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science.

By Donna Haraway. New York: Routledge, 1989, 486 pp., \$35.

distinction to the other. According to Haraway, primatology is "about an order, a taxonomic and therefore political order that works by the negotiation of boundaries achieved through ordering differences." Building knowledge on these binarisms, Haraway argues, has direct implications for the social order. It maintains the existing hierarchical structure and yet denies it in the name of objectivity and neutrality.

Westerners typically, receive their first exposure to primate life in museums and zoos, Haraway says. The visitor, however, does not merely gain knowledge about primates, but rather gets a taste of primate life as embedded in layers of social institutions. Written into these layers are the stratifying factors, like race, class, gender, etc., in our society. Haraway argues that museums, universities, or for that matter any social institution, do not merely impart pure knowledge but rather allow its members to participate knowingly or unknowingly in multiple knowledge systems. It is this *heteroglossia* that she points out repeatedly throughout the book.

In Chapter 3, aptly entitled "Teddy Bear Patriarchy," Haraway performs some very interesting semiotic analyses: she notes that walking through the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial can be both aesthetically appealing and yet politically manipulative, for power relations are established through very subtle semiotic material. She says, "... the visitor must pass by a James Earle Fraser equestrian statue of Teddy majestically mounted as a father and protector between two 'primitive' men, an American Indian and an African, both standing, dressed as 'savages.'" Covering a wide range of topics, this chapter is representative of the whole book; from the gorilla dioramas in Carl Akeley's (expert in taxidermy) African Hall in the New York Museum of Natural History to Carl Akeley's life and career, it is about the process by which the "natural world" becomes institutionalized.

In Part II, Haraway discusses primatology in the post-colonial era. During this period, primate field research attracted a number of women scientists, some of whom gained prominence in this field, like Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey. Haraway points out that adding women into the field does not necessarily change the terms of discourse because "the code is about 'women's science' but not about 'feminist science.'" The woman scientist, like any other writer of a scientific discourse, has to keep in mind the audience that she is addressing and that entails her to adopt specific rhetorical devices. Scientific discourse, regardless of who is producing it, is produced within the patriarchal structure; as Haraway points out, women scientists are "put into the service of culturally reproducing Woman as Man's channel." Haraway points out that "female" attributes are important to "male" science, which both needs and fears such attributes. She observes that the anthropologist Louis Leakey felt that women would make good observers in the field as they are patient, and yet feared that they can get emotionally involved with the apes, thus easily threatening "rational" sci-

ence.

Haraway's style of story-telling is very compelling and thought provoking. It is the micro-politics of gender and race that is evidenced in her narrative. Intertwined in scientific discourse is the (re)presentation of race, as colored people are blatantly relegated to the category of animals. For instance, Diane Fossey is introduced as a woman who lived alone in the jungle amidst the wild even as she was surrounded by African men and women. Haraway points out that scientific discourse reflects the prevailing ideology at a given historical moment. Scientific questions are not framed in a vacuum. They mean something to people; some gain from it and some lose. Haraway observes that the psychologist Harry Harlow was not merely conducting experiments on attachment, but was also narrating important stories about the concerns and conflicts of his culture at that historical moment. His work gained prominence at a time when the women's movement was in full swing and number of women were entering the public arena. As a result, concepts like mothering, surrogacy, love, etc., had to be redefined and Harlow's experiments with monkeys mediated such a process. The "truth" about human nature has a certain birth process and it is this process that Haraway constantly draws our attention to.

Haraway's complex project is to deconstruct the scientific discourse and to expose the power structure embedded

within it, and here one sees the post-structuralist in action. She constantly draws attention to the structural position of the investigator and the investigated and changing nature of such a relationship. Yet, it would be a mistake to treat this book as being anti-scientific. It is quite the contrary. In reviewing *Primate Visions*, Robin Dunbar (*New York Times*, 7 January 1990), felt that the less knowledgeable would be enthusiastic about this book, whereas the experts would find it frustrating. I take the opposite viewpoint. The reflective scientist will find the book to be both challenging and exciting as it constantly invites interpretation from the reader. One cannot help entering into a dialogic relationship with the ideas presented in this book.

At a personal level, reading *Primate Visions* was an Intellectual exercise. I had to question my own research questions, to enter into an endless dialogue with myself, and with Haraway about the scientific enterprise, feminism, racism, about being a post-colonial feminist, a graduate student and many more. Nevertheless, it is an important exercise for critical inquiry. Yes, it is about critical inquiry, for feminism is not about women's ways of knowing, but about critical ways of knowing. Therefore, Haraway invites us to take a closer look at the scholarship that falls under the rubric of feminism, since not all women are feminists and not all feminists are women. It is not ideological purity that Haraway seeks, but ideological complexity that she points out. *Primate Visions* is not about primatology or feminism as separate units but about knowledge systems in dynamic interaction. As a result, it is trans-disciplinary, offering a significant contribution to feminist scholarship. Δ

Lakshmi Bandlamudi is a student of Developmental Psychology.

TOP 8 of the New York Streets

Here is the kick-off of the indoor music season. Certain authorities had renamed the month "Rocktober" in previous years due to the sudden concentration of major performances. Other genres claim that the name no longer obtains. For example:

- #1 Blues '90 Festival. 10/12-21. Details: dial 284-BLUE. Par example: 10/16 John Lee Hooker Tribute@Madison Sq Garden, 7:30, \$20+J.Cocker, R.Cooder, J.Cotton, B.Diddley, C.Musselwhite, J.Winter, L.Feat, M.Fleetwood, Willie Dixon, & the man himself.
- 10/5 @Abilene Cafe, 73 8th Av (13-14th), 255-7373. Grand Re-opening w. Magic Slim, John Hammond, Hubert Sumlin, et al.
- #2 Blues '90 @ The Atrium, Park Av & 42nd, High Noon, Free!
- 10/12 John Campell, Texas guitar, 10/15 Cephas & Wiggins, 10/16 John Jackson, 10/17 Roscoe Gordon & Killing Floor piano blues, 10/18 Larry Johnson, 10/19 Zora Young & Chicago Blues Posse.
- #3 Unofficial Park Lincoln Student Housing Festival @Beacon Theater, 74th & B'way, 8pm. Student ID will get you nowhere.
- 10/13 Ry Cooder & David Lindley, Albert Collins, Elvin Bishop. Benefit \$25+.
- 10/14 Booker T. & the MG's, Bo Diddley. Homeless benefit \$25+.
- 10/19 Irma Thomas, Etta James. \$20+.
- 10/12 Djavan. The son of Brazilian folk & pop.
- 10/15 Dylan. The godfather of Midwestern folk & pop.
- #4 West Hall's Backyard @Town Hall, 123 W 43rd.
- 10/17, 8pm. Marianne Faithfull. The singer of Weill & Jagger
- 10/12 Michael Brecker w. Andy Summers of the X-Police.
- #5 Sonic Youth 10/11 @Rock Academy 234 W 43rd The band who made noise beautiful host a benefit for free speech with Eric Bogosian.
- #6 The Two Joes
- Joe Bidewell 10/3 @Ludlow St.Cafe, 10/4 @Back Fence, 155 Bleecker, 475-9221
- Joe Jackson's Workshop. 10/18-19 @Marquee, 547 W 21st. 10/20 @Bottom Line, W.4th, 228-7880, \$17.50.
- #7 Acoustic Guitar Virtuosi
- Leo Kottke 11/3 @Bottom Line, 15 W4th, 228-7880, \$15.
- Bert Jansch & John Renbourn 10/29 @Bottom Line, \$15. W. Maddy Prior's "siste June Tabor.
- #8 Bill Bradley's Benefit @Meadowlands, NJ, 8pm, tax deductible.
- 10/20 After exploring African rhythm Paul Simon discovers Brazil (still following David Byrne after all these years). Law student Max Weinberg leads the "E" Street Band w/o Springsteen. Southside Johnny dedicates "Little Calcutta" to Port Authority. Hooters sing for "All You Zombies."

The Reproduction of Michael Levin

Continued from page 5.

tempt to suppress unpopular speech and those protesting Levin's presence—if what irks the protesters is that Levin is *speaking*, their protest at least appears to be an attempt to suppress his speech. How explicit can you get? Long's problem is that for him the very parallel is disgusting, but disgusting or not, it's fairly obvious. (Maybe there's no legitimate parallel, but of course that has to be shown.) So Levinism appears to be the belief in ahistorical arguments that maintain that rights belong to everyone equally. And Levinism is supposed to be *bad*? If so, *that has to be shown*.

This brings us to Long's ungenerous reading of Levin's paper, where he maintains that since Levin uses an example about light bulbs to illustrate his epistemological claim that white people are justified in fearing blacks will commit crimes against them, somehow Levin must be trying to say that people are just like light bulbs. This insensitivity is supposed to show that Levin is making disgusting parallels, but Levin was simply making an epistemological point about justification in general, and that in particular it applies to judgements about other people. Long can think that Levin's paper stinks if he likes; he can even think it's racist. But he should give up this pretentious nonsense about light bulbs. If we aren't allowed to make analogies between people and inanimate objects, we might as well not talk at all. It's a stupid arbitrary restriction.

Long tries to analyze Levin's paper in order to show that there's a relevant parallel between the way Levin argues and the way Cahn and Collins argue. His analogy is faulty (Levin's comparison between light bulbs and people is analogous to Cahn and Collins's comparison between McCarthyite persecution and the anti-Levin protest), but also it's *irrelevant*. Even if the analogy were legitimate, it wouldn't prove anything except that there's an analogy. Who cares? There are other irrelevancies, namely Long's attempt to show that there's no way to distinguish between Levin's personal life and his professional cre-

dentials. So what if there's no way to distinguish between them? It's another nonissue. The real issue, of course, is that Levin in fact has credentials, and does his behavior justify action against him insofar as his credentials have earned him a place in the university? There might be no clear way of knowing how to distinguish between his beliefs and his credentials, and we'd still have to answer that question. (Long might charge that it's never just your *credentials* that earn you a place in a university, but I'd even grant that. He'd still have to answer the question of whether his behavior justifies action taken against him insofar as he has a place in the university in any capacity at all.) The same charge of irrelevancy holds

for Long's Nazi-analogy (a pox on Nazi-analogists!), another dirty-pool tactic, by the way. Of course, a Nazi biologist isn't just a biologist: he's also a Nazi (if you couldn't guess). And Levin's course in Epistemology isn't just a "neutral professional activity," either, but the challenge is to figure out why any of this should matter at all. Suppose no one's course in anything were ever simply a neutral professional activity. Now what?

We can now see the fruits of Long's attempt to show the existence of a sinister strategy to protect Levin. For all I know, there may be one yet: but Long certainly didn't prove it. In the process, he managed to insult professors and provosts and (probably

quite a few) readers, while obscuring all the important issues he so promisingly began to raise. After reading the entire article, the only argument I can glean from Long's paper against Levin is, "Act against Levin because he's a bad man." Naturally, Long isn't so crude as to actually *say* this; being subtle, he *presupposes* it, and pretends it's for Cahn and Collins to prove to *him* that there *shouldn't* be any action against Levin. Not only that, they aren't allowed to refer to things like free speech and equal rights, since those are sinister notions that mask the politics of the people who use them. Given this, I find it encouraging that Cahn and Collins didn't take Long into an alley and beat him up out of sheer

frustration; for Long's restrictions are like telling a sprinter that he can't use his legs to run in the Olympics—how else is he to run, if not with his legs? It's hardly surprising that a healthy environment for dialogue doesn't yet exist.

That's just about all there is to say about Long's article; to say more would be to say more of the same. What irks me most is that no one should have to point these things out. This is a serious issue that affects at least one person's life and career, so it's not an occasion for intellectual showmanship. If you're going to act, act responsibly; and if your act is to express your thoughts on an important issue, you must think re-

Concluded on following page.

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By John Condon

The opening scene of "GoodFellas," Martin Scorsese's latest film finds gangsters Henry Hill (Ray Liotta), Jimmy the Gent Conway (Robert DeNiro) and Tommy DeVito (Joe Pesci) driving up a dark country road when a loud knocking comes from the back of the car. Suspecting a flat tire, the crew stops and discovers the trouble is the not quite dead body in the trunk, which disrespectfully refuses to die quietly. Tommy dispatches the body with several jabs of a butcher knife, and Jimmy fires four or five shots into the bloody bundle for good measure. "I always wanted to be a gangster," Henry Hill recalls without a trace of sarcasm, as the scene then fades back to his childhood.

From beginning to end, "GoodFellas" crashes against the contradictions of life in a mafia family, laying bare the oxymoronic nature of the term "organized crime." Unfortunately Scorsese also crashes against the limits of filmmaking in trying to convey the full scope of Nicholas Pileggi's novel, "Wiseguy," the true story of mob soldier Henry Hill, the half-Irish, half-Sicilian Brooklynite turned federal witness, who exposed all the lurid details of his life of crime.

Scorsese, who co-wrote the screenplay with Pileggi, still manages to cram an astounding amount of material into two hours and fifteen minutes of film, but there is still not enough space to detail the context in which all of the characters operate, and as a result the events and names may whirl past too quickly for viewers not previously exposed to Pileggi's novel.

"GoodFellas" is a film of enormous scope, a sociological and psychological study of gangsters spanning 30 years of crime and friendships. The film poses a formidable task in striking a balance between narration, dialogue and action. "GoodFellas" is probably the most violent of all Scorsese's films, but unlike his other masterpieces, the violence is not as well balanced with humor and psychological detail.

Part of Scorsese's purpose is undoubt-

edly to show the senselessness of these thugs. Young Henry memories of his youthful dreams of being a gangster correspond to the narrowness of his world and intellect. His vision only extended across the street, where the local boss's brother Tutti ran a cab stand, the equivalent of an artist's cafe for East New York's gangsters. His heroes were the men who could double park their cars anywhere they wanted and play cards all night long. Henry realizes he is a success when he commands respect in the neighborhood, when he no longer has to wait on line for bread at the bakery, when local kids carry his mother's groceries home.

Henry's wife Karen (Lorraine Bracco) falls for Henry for the same reasons, not having to wait on line at the Copa, and the assurance that anyone who gave her the slightest bit of trouble would have to pay with blood. Marriage, through Henry's childish eyes, has nothing to do with responsibility, for Henry cannot conceive of the concept. His marriage deteriorates as Henry continues his brazen philandering and refuses to break with his destructive infantile friends, with whom he drinks and plays cards all night.

Henry is a paragon of maturity compared to his boyhood pal, Tommy DeVito, who wags his gun for no reason and shoots on the slightest provocation. Tommy's wild ways soon put him in disfavor with his friends and associates. When Tommy kills one of his acquaintances because he doesn't bring him a drink fast enough, even the ruthless Jimmy the Gent protests, refusing to help him bury the body.

Joe Pesci gives another outstanding performance, portraying Tommy as a cross between Al Capone and Lou Costello; his high pitched voice oblivious to the meaning of calm, and unable to speak a sentence without uttering a profanity.

Robert DeNiro is billed as the star for his portrayal of Jimmy the Gent Conway, yet his character is upstaged by Pesci and Paul Sorvino, who is excellent as mob boss Paul Cicero. In his sixth collaboration with director Scorsese, DeNiro gives the least electrifying of his performances.

there has been a strategy to 'shift from the substance and social significance of Professor Levin's positions on issues of race and gender to the *protection* [my italics] of his political subjectivity.'" This phrase, "the protection of his political subjectivity" is central to Vinuesa's argument, for when he explains the "chief defect" of my article, he writes, "To talk of a 'strategy' to protect 'his political subjectivity'—whatever that is—is simply to assume that all this free-speech talk is a screen to protect the horrible ogre from the virtuous hero; and I'm afraid it's against the rules to assume one of the things you're trying to prove."

At the conclusion of the same paragraph quoted by Vinuesa I wrote that the purpose of my article was to "document as well as examine the politics of the events and activities which comprise and mediate the defense of Michael Levin—the *production* of his political subjectivity." Nowhere in Vinuesa's response does he address the concept of "production." Instead, Vinuesa bases his argument on the word "protection" and consequently fails to address my argument. The implications of this move are apparent if we consider the definitions of these two words, "production" and "protection." "Production," according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is "the action of bringing forth, making or causing,"

There is no depth to his character, and no humor either. In one scene, all Jimmy can do to express his rage is to ask over and over again, "Are you crazy? Are you crazy?"

Jimmy is well-suited to DeNiro's physical style of acting; he is constantly grimacing, coyly arching his eyebrows or smiling, as only DeNiro can. As Henry's mentor, Jimmy relates the two rules of gangster life to Henry: "Never rat on your friends and always keep your mouth shut." But these two laws are in fact one, and Jimmy and Henry intuitively knew the second rule of gangster life is "never play by the rules."

Another fine gangster movie is Phil Joanou's "State of Grace," starring Sean Penn, Gary Oldman and Ed Harris. "State of Grace" focuses on the Irish gangsters of Hell's Kitchen, now known as Clinton. Like GoodFellas, "State of Grace" uses the talent of some of today's finest actors. Gary Oldman and Ed Harris are superb as the Flannery brothers, Jackie and Frankie, working class gangsters, who still find the violence and killing the most enjoyable part of their job. Sean Penn, one of the very few actors who can be compared to DeNiro, gives an uncharacteristically mellow performance as Terry Noonan, an undercover police officer who has infiltrated his former gang.

Loosely based on the true story of the Westie's gang, "State of Grace" follows the work of the Flannery brothers as they aim to preserve their gang in the face of a gentrifying environment, by linking up with the Italians gangsters downtown. Again, the vision of these thugs does not extend beyond their neighborhood. "Does anybody know how to get to Mulberry Street?" Jackie asks as he heads off to fight an all-out gang war.

Like "Goodfellas," "State of Grace" domesticizes mob violence. Neither friendship nor brotherhood will deter a hitman

from his appointed rounds. Jackie's friend Tommy has his throat slashed for spilling a drink on a mobster's favorite sweater. "The cleaner can't get the stain out, he can only fade it," the Italian boss sadly explains of Tommy's fatal error.

While often shocking, "State of Grace" is at times too unbelievable. Despite all the killing, there are no police officers in the film. Jackie can drink himself to oblivion, beat up or kill people in bars, stagger out to his double parked car and drive away without incident. He can walk into an unlocked church, smoke and drink in the pews, and trample all over the altars without anyone caring.

His sister, Kate (played by Robin Wright) is romantically linked to Terry Noonan and provides a convenient love triangle, which only adds an incongruous melodrama to the film's realistic atmosphere. Noonan and Kate fall into bed after their first date and in almost every subsequent scene she is clad in either a robe or a towel, having just emerged from bed or the shower.

The screenplay by Dennis McIntyre in collaboration with David Rabe provides both black comedy and riveting drama, but Joanou's penchant for overstylization at times detracts from maintaining this atmosphere. On the strength of its characters "State of Grace" succeeds until the final scene, which is the weakest and most unbelievable part of the movie. Joanou appropriates the climatic scene of Scorsese's "Taxi Driver," lengthening it and interspersing contrasting scenes of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, but this scene fails both as tribute and as drama.

If one can stand the ending, "State of Grace" is a very good film, and overall both a tribute and a compliment to the work of Martin Scorsese. A

John Condon studies Political Science.

Levin

Concluded from page 14.

sponsibly about that issue. The saddest thing about Long's article is that there are legitimate concerns that people have about Levin, and they're buried under the worst kind of academese. This newspaper is supposed to be a forum for such concerns, and it's too bad we didn't have an opportunity to hear them. A

Adam Vinuesa is a Ph.D. student of Philosophy.

Andrew Long responds:

Adam Vinuesa's response to my article in the September issue of the *Advocate*, "The Production of Michael Levin," begins with an adolescent gun metaphor, which is also an oxymoron, an instrument of violence contradicting the concept of an argument, and quickly resorts to ad hominem and inferences. Such tactics would be regrettable if Vinuesa's response actually made a tenable argument against my article, yet it turns upon a passage where the language is that of Michael Levin's defense, not my own, and thereby ignores my argument and skews my conclusions.

The passage I referred to appears in paragraph 2, where Vinuesa states and excerpts from the article as follows: "Unfortunately, Long also attempted to show that

while "protection" is defined as "the action of protecting; the fact or condition of being protected." Apart from their very different definitions, the first distinction I want to make between these two words is a temporal one. To protect Michael Levin's political subjectivity is to posit his right to freedom of speech *a priori*, as if it were tangible, even though, as we all know, freedom of speech exists only as a constitutional principle. The freedom of speech, like all other human and civil rights is in the last instance a matter of social relations, not simply constitutional principles. As a matter of social relations the freedom of speech must be constantly produced, brought forth, either in direct negotiation with another party, or in a court of law. However, to protect a right ("the protection of his political subjectivity") is to suggest that it exists in fact. To the contrary, the human and civil rights struggle of African-American people provides a particularly brutal and on-going testimony that rights must be constantly *produced*. We must always consider whose rights are produced and by whom.

With this in mind, the production of Michael Levin's political subjectivity, the invocation of his right to speak by individuals such as Provost Cahn and Professor Collins, is a remarkable and important

topic because this right is so regularly abridged as part of the daily business of education. After all, we are students who must confront an administration that was not democratically elected. Within this undemocratic environment the abridgement of our freedom of speech might involve the sudden revocation or "adjustment" of a fellowship or teaching assignment because of something we said (about undemocratic procedures) or even the politics of our academic projects (for example, "deconstruction" in the philosophy department). Indeed, it is a controversial and unusual occasion when a victim effectively insists upon the right to speak.

That Michael Levin's right to speak is upheld where that of others is not is a function of the politics of education. This was obviously the subject and purpose of my article, which one could easily glean from the title; clearly, Vinuesa paid no attention to this. At no point in my article did I "trash" the freedom of speech and in fact my specific remarks about Provost Cahn's use of terms such as "good teacher" and "professional standards" was a comment on the undemocratic character of the Graduate School. It is sad that a fellow student can so completely misunderstand an article which advocates his right to speak and participate in the decision-making process.

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Pick up an application at:

Psychological Counseling and Adult Development Center

CUNY GRADUATE CENTER

33 West 42nd St. - RM. 1516

Call us at (212) 642-2131. Leave a message including your name, telephone numbers, the group for which you are applying, as well as day and time preferences for the group. We will contact you upon receipt of your application or message in order to arrange a brief appointment.

Application deadline: October 10, 1990 - for groups beginning in late October or early November. While all scheduling preferences cannot be accommodated, we will make every effort to offer groups at time which are convenient to the greatest number of people.

**Doctoral Students' Council
General Meetings 1990-91**

Wednesday, October 17, 1990 at 5.30 p.m.

Thursday, November 15, 1990 at 5.30 p.m.

Monday, December 10, 1990 at 5.30 p.m.

NO MEETING IN JANUARY

Tuesday, February 19, 1991 at 5.30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 20, 1991 at 5.30 p.m.

Thursday, April 18, 1991 at 5.30 p.m.

Monday, May 13, 1991 at 5.30 p.m.

ALL MEETINGS WILL BE HELD IN THE STUDENT CENTER ROOM 10.

DSC COFFEE HOURS AND PUB PARTIES: FALL 1990

Coffee Hour: Tuesday, October 9, 1990 at 4.30 p.m.

Pub Party: Friday, October 19, 1990 at 4.30 p.m.

Coffee Hour: Monday, November 12, 1990 at 4.30 p.m.

Pub Party: Tuesday, November 30, 1990 at 4.30 p.m.

Coffee Hour: Monday, December 10, 1990 at 3 p.m.

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL STUDENT CENTER

**International
Students Association**

Friday Socials: Fall 1990

Friday, October 26, 4.30 p.m.

George Orwell's *Animal Farm*
and a short film by Karl Sagan

Friday, November 30, 4.30 p.m. (Joint DSC/ISA Event)

Friday, December 14, 4.30 p.m. (X'mas Party)

STUDENT CENTER

FREE Food & Drinks

Meet new people (or old friends)

ALL WELCOME

New ISA Office Bearers for 1990-91

President:

Prateek Patnaik - Biochemistry- (212) 497-3519

Treasurer:

Paolo Emilio Barbano - Mathematics (212) 675-2915

Secretaries:

Binita Mehta - French (212) 764-7060

Alcira Forero - Anthropology (212) 942-4229

The Dining Commons**1. New Discounted Student Meal Plan**

Can be purchased for the Day, Week or the Month

2. Menu Additions

Hamburgers, Grilled Cheese, Club Sandwiches, etc.,

3. Daily Breakfast & Dinner All inclusive specials**At the Bar****1. An ever changing 1/2 Bottle Wine list.****2. Monday Night** from 5:00 to 8:00 is **Ladies Night.**

All Bar Entrée Items are \$3.00 each.

3. Tuesday Night from 5:00 to 8:00 is **Men's Night**

Same Deal!

4. Theme Days (Halloween, Thanksgiving, etc.)**Raffles & Drawings & Much More!**

Having a Party? We have extended and revised our Banquet menus to include such items as 6' foot heros and Rack of Lamb. For gatherings and social events.

Please remember to **PHYSICALLY PRESENT** your CUNY I.D. to the Cashier in order to receive your 10% Discount.

Hours:

Dining Commons 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.

Bar 12:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.

For telephone inquiries, compliments and suggestions, please call **Peter Pegda** or **Awilda Alvarez** at 642-2013.