

The City University of New York Graduate Student Advocate

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Cultural Studies at CUNY

By Barbara Martinsons

Cultural Studies is not, as recently suggested in the Times Magazine Section, the move that followed deconstruction in the literary — or any other — academic fashion game (1/23/94, p. 25, attributed to Roger Kimball). But the fact that this characterization appeared in the Times is (once again) proof that its often easier to be glib and shallow than to try to understand what's happening. Cultural Studies springs from intellectual roots that developed as modernism [the Enlightenment, Matthew Arnold, the Bauhaus, Impressionism, Realism — or make your own list] seemed to lose its political and intellectual power.

It includes the work of Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart, Bakhtin and Derrida, Heidegger and Dilthey, Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, Gayatri Spivak, Fredric Jameson and Donna Haraway.

Cultural Studies in an interdisciplinary practice that is currently developing in various forms on campuses around the country and the world. At the Graduate School, The Center for Cultural Studies addresses the complex concept of culture, including the boundaries and distribution of power both within and beyond the university. Among the areas of inquiry are cultural communities, marginalized discourses, new forms of knowledge and new knowledges, and emerging cultural practices. The developing Cultural Studies curriculum examines the ethnographic, epistemological, technological and textual dimensions of intellectual work and of everyday

life, grounded in both history and theory.

Every year the Center for Cultural Studies puts out a call for Graduate Fellows. Each year's group of fellows (who have in past years been drawn from English, Psychology, Art History, Comp. Lit., Anthropology, Political Science, Sociology and Philosophy) helps to determine the focus of the Center's activities for the following academic year. Over the past few years the Center has considered a variety of topics from the identity of the postmodern self to The New Immigration. This year the emphasis is on technoscience. Each area on which the Center works is connected to a project, a conference, or both.

The CAMEO Project, for example, which tries to practice a reformulated ethnography, explored the intersection of identity, community memory and culture in three Latino neighborhoods in New York City. The Project considered ways in which culture organizes both personal and political identity. One of the outcomes, carried out in collaboration with The New Museum of Contemporary Art and several neighborhood groups, is an installation called *Testimonio*, which ran for four months at The New Museum at 583 Broadway. It is now in the process of being moved to each of the neighborhoods where the ethnographers first met and the members of the communities they would study.

Through the InterAmerican Cultural Studies Network, the Center continues to create an international bridge with other cultural studies group, first in Canada, the US and Latin America, at a conference in Mexico City last spring, and later this spring at a conference in Bellagio, Italy. It is important to the Center to do work in Cultural Studies as a participat-

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The Whole World is Talking

By Kevin Cooke and Dan Lehrer

Halfway around the world, Wam Kat files daily reports on life in Zagreb, Croatia. "I just stood about half an hour in the supermarket downstairs watching a firmly built man....He was shouting at everybody in the shop," he wrote on May 24. "From what I could understand, he said that when Croatia was under the Serbs (in former Yugoslavia), the price of bread was at least half of what it is now. Just a few days ago I heard somebody say that under the communists we had our problems, but now under the capitalists we have our problems too. What is the difference if you work for the

Kat's bulletins, which he posts on his bulletin board, don't appear in Yugoslav papers or on television. They exist in cyberspace. Kat types them on his own computer in Zagreb and sends them by modem to an electronic bulletin board in Germany. From there, his stories are relayed to computers around the world via the global mega-information stream called the Internet.

"Electronic mail is the only link between me and the outside world," says Kat, writing by e-mail. The Croatian government owns all the major media in the country and is prosecuting a group of journalists for treason.

Kat is only one of the millions of people participating in this community without walls. During other recent cataclysms, the Internet provided an instant, unfiltered link to the world.

"In Russia, during the coup attempt, people were providing live reports on Russian Internet about what was really going on. They were widely circulated on the Net," says Mitchell Kapor, founder of Lotus Development Corporation and now chairman of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a group advocating "electronic civil liberties," primarily freedom of speech

and privacy. "During Tiananmen Square, students were getting the news out and were fundraising through Internet," adds Tom Mandel, a futurist with SRI International, a Silicon Valley-based consulting firm. "There were a bunch of us hungrily reading newsgroups, stuff we weren't getting from reporters." (Newsgroups are open discussion groups where people can post their views.)

But the Net is changing more than just the flow of information; it's changing the way we relate to one another. The advent of global networking is fragmenting and resorting society into what one author calls "virtual communities." Instead of being bound by location, groups of people can now meet in cyberspace, the noncorporeal world existing between two linked computers. There they can look for colleagues, friends, romance or sex. John Hoag, communications coordinator for BARNet, the Bay Area Network, who began computer networking in 1986, says, "I met more people online inside a month than I met in the past ten years."

Have modem, will travel. The Internet is the most powerful computer network on the planet simply because it's the biggest. It encompasses 1.3 million computers with Internet addresses that are used by up to 30 million people in more than forty countries. The number of computers linked to the Internet has doubled every year between 1988 and 1992; this year the rate of increase slowed slightly to 80 percent. To reach it, one needs only a computer, modem, and password. Dan Van Belleghem, who helps connect organizations to the Internet for the National Science Foundation, says, "Nobody has ever dropped off the network."

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Editor's Note

Welcome back to a new semester, and a new incarnation of the **CUNY Graduate Advocate**. Our February issue introduces several features, to help offset the blues this nasty, short, cold and brutish month. In time for Valentine's Day, we celebrate whatever erotic heat we can generate with the help of our epistolary goddess of love, *Ask Aphrodite*. Send your tempests to her teapot for March, care of the **Advocate**, and see what she can brew for you. Another innovation we kick off this month is a series of regular columns, featuring first-person singular takes on what Winona & Co. might describe as "Reality Bites." For *Valkyrie in Valhalla* and *Unemployed Man in the Free World*, it might be fair to say that reality merely nibbles.

Our Artist's Portfolio this month introduces the work of a 29-year-old painter, Curtis James, whose powerful portraiture has already landed one of his works, *The Hands of Labor*, on the walls of the White House. If our portfolio piques your interest, you can see several of his works at St. John the Divine during the month of February, or at the Harlem Street Gallery.

Finally, we feel lucky to feature the work of novelist Charles Naylor for our *City Sites* column. A native New Yorker who has studied English literature at CUNY Grad Center, Charles Naylor inaugurates what will be an open forum for reflection and thoughts about the City which is—for better or worse—our campus and our home. What distinguishes our graduate experience from that of our peers at more sheltering, insular institutions is the challenge of taking the City on its own terms, with all that it entails for our daily lives. We teach throughout the five boroughs; our students are remarkable for the diversity of their origins, viewpoints, and for the challenges they face. The City University of New York is still a place of hope and opportunity. It

Learning while we teach, we struggle against the austerities of an administration which believes the humanities are a luxury in public education. The **Advocate** '94 hopes to be a collage of voices, catching us *in medias res*, as it were, of our individual and collective odyssey through the CUNY doctoral epic.

The Advocate welcomes letters. Please include your telephone number for verification.

All letters are subject to editing in the interest of clarity and to meet space requirements.

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The opinions expressed in The Graduate Student Advocate are those of the individual contributors and in no way reflect the opinions of the Doctoral Students' Council, its officials or its representatives.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In one of the editorials in the December, 1993, issue of *The Advocate* you referred to me and G. Ganter, albeit anonymously, as "pompous twits". The editorial went on to imply that we attempted to censor the newspaper, and called for a paper that is independent of the DSC.

To respond first to the name-calling, you certainly damage your credibility by using the student newspaper to insult fellow students who might even be "pompous twits", whatever this means.

Still, I think that this insult demonstrates more than pique and points to the heart of *The Advocate's* recent, and, perhaps, future politics. When I called the former editor, Christina Pretto, prior to publication, I expressed concern that the student newspaper was unnecessarily hurting a single student. I felt it was wrong-headed for the student newspaper to criticize a single student, no matter what his "faults" are in this particular case, when the fact is that the GSUC administration; whether represented by Economics EO Michael Grossman, Vice President Floyd Moreland, or President Horowitz, has been variously arrogant, abusive and incommunicative. This seems more newsworthy when we are part of an undemocratic institution where an individual student, or even the DSC, has almost no power or recourse to redress wrongs. I told Christina she could do whatever she wanted and that the DSC could not and would not interfere with publication. I added that the article would upset people and that she would be criticized. Unfortunately, the editorial offers an all too familiar conflation of criticism and censorship.

The idea of an independent or "objective" newspaper is problematic, especially if one is dependent upon advertising revenue. What if *The Advocate* accepted ads from The Dining Commons (on the 18th floor) — which they do not — wouldn't they feel compromised when students wanted coverage of

poor food service? As for objectivity, this position presupposes that some are purer than others, especially impure DSC members, and that readers are unable to differentiate and interpret the politics behind a given article.

I agree that *The Advocate* needs overhaul, or more specifically a redefined purpose. This newspaper is the only vehicle GSUC students, and their government, the DSC, have to force this institution, and CUNY in general, to treat everybody fairly and according to due process, and to fulfill this public university's mission. *The Advocate* should tirelessly pursue pro-student news stories and encourage all students (even DSC Steering Committee members) to write and get involved with the student government.

Anything short of this is an acute betrayal of trust.

Andrew Long,
DSC Co-Chair,
Student Affairs

Ed. We do take dining hall ads. Sorry, Andrew. If you want to take out an ad, we'll be happy to take that also.

Dear Editor,

As one of the student leaders described as "a pompous twit" for suggesting the title of the Michael Yomi cover story be changed, I would like to explain my reason. I felt the article should be called "Yomi Refuses to Take Exam" rather than "Organized Support for Yomi Falters" because the article doesn't say much about how student support for Michael Yomi has faltered. Rather, the article details the controversy around Michael's refusal to take the exam. And as the December 14th rally showed, student support for Yomi is still strong.

The editors allege that they were being "censored" because student government members were critical of the article as it stood in draft. The bylaws of *The Advocate* clearly give the editors total fiscal

and supervisory control—even the Media Board, which is responsible for hiring the editor, is excluded from editorial power.

It worries me that reporters Christina Pretto and Michael Weinstein still don't understand the key issues in the Yomi case. They don't understand how much control an Executive Officer holds in a department, both formally and informally, nor have they looked into the allegations of racism in the Economics department. However, I fully support the editors' right to publish what they see fit.

G. Ganter,
DSC Steering Committee
and Media Board member

Student government at the graduate level—A popularity contest, social events, stepping stones to the good old boy network? This was my impression of the Doctoral Students Council for most of my years at the Graduate Center. That was until recently, when faced with dismissal from the Educational Psychology Program after ten years and at the proposal stage of my dissertation. *At the advice of a friend, I con-* tacted Andrew Long, President of the Doctoral Student Council, and explained my plight to him. With great speed and concern, Mr. Long responded to my situation, and pursued it in an aggressive manner. He provided me with valuable counsel which enabled me to formulate an effective defense of my position, and contacted administrative officials on my behalf. His help made me feel like there was someone on my side, at a time when I felt most alone.

In October of 1993, Associate Provost Ms. Pamela Reid ordered my reinstatement to the Educational Psychology Program. At this time, I would like to publicly express my deepest appreciation to Mr. Long and Ms. McGann for their help in this matter. Mr. Long has remained in contact with me and shown great concern. I would also like to thank Dr. Reid for her most professional and humane attitude in her treatment of me, and for how these proceedings were conducted. If any other student at the Graduate Center is experiencing similar difficulties, I would strongly urge that you contact Mr. Long. He and the DSC are there for us.

Jack Weinstein

Ask ♥ Aphrodite

Letters to the goddess may be dropped in the Advocate mailbox in the DSC Office

☺Dear Aphrodite:

I came to graduate school to improve my mind. Ever since the term began, however, I've been improving it by having really intense conversations with this guy after class. But just when he's in the middle of making some important point, I start thinking about the color of his eyes. I can't believe I'm doing this. I came to graduate school for intellectual stimulation. I feel so shallow.

—Anxious in Anthro.

Dear Anxious:

Obviously you haven't been in graduate school long. Graduate students don't have time to cultivate meaningful relationships outside of school. Several of my girlfriends haven't had a date for years. In the academic environment, think of these conversations as an equivalent of dinner and a movie in the real world. So don't feel so shallow, he's probably thinking about your eyes too.

—Aphrodite

☺Dear Aphrodite:

I always thought New York was a wild place. One of the reasons I chose to go to the Graduate Center was because I hoped I would meet interesting people and do exciting things with them. Then I went to a DSC party. My high school prom was more exciting. Some people were dancing but that came to an end when this drunken student leader launched into a long speech denouncing someone named Reynolds. The girl I was talking to started chanting: "no justice, no peace." Everyone joined in except me. She looked at me like I was a worm and muttered something about going back to 80th Street where I belonged. What's with these people anyway?

—Disillusioned in Doctoral Studies

Dear Dis:

When will you people learn? Remember those students in high school that you wouldn't be caught dead talking to? The ones in student government? Well what do you think happened to them after they went off to college? Sure, some of them made

their careers defending Robert Chambers, Jr. and Lorena Bobbitt, but most went to graduate school and majored in politically correct fields of study. In fact an informal survey of student government members taken at the last DSC party discovered that the average age at which student leaders lost their virginity was 18. Need I say more? Remember this: student leaders never die. They just move on to the next school and give more bad parties.

—Aphrodite



☺Dear Aphrodite:

As any graduate student does, I spend a lot of time in the library. One evening, intent on my studies, I lost track of the time and stayed later than usual. Looking up, I noticed that I was alone in the main reading room except for this woman—I'll call her "Darlene." Sure she's beautiful, but she's also smart and in several of my classes. As the library was about to close, I asked her if she'd like to go out for a drink. She told me that she made it a policy not

to date fellow students. I'm outraged. I didn't ask her to sleep with me. I'm not even sure I asked her for a date. I just wanted to get to know her better. Is this what p.c. has brought us to?

—Frustrated in French

Dear Frustrated:

Stop being so pretentious. It's obvious you were hitting on "Darlene." Otherwise you would have written me about an encounter with a "fellow student" and have given her a non-gender specific pseudonym.

—Aphrodite

☺Dear Aphrodite:

Some students in my department seem to be everywhere. They're on every committee, at every party, and are on a first name basis with all of their professors. Compared to them, I feel totally inadequate. Is their ease around the department a sign of their genius? Should I hate them or decide that I don't care?

—Insecure in English

Dear Insecure:

You're obviously a first year student. Take it from me, these people you see around the department are even more insecure than you are. After all, they're several years closer to not getting jobs than you are. The only difference is that they've been doing this for so long that they can worry and be on a first name basis with their professors at the same time. Besides, in a year or two they'll be holed up in a garret somewhere wrestling with the ghost of Emily Dickinson and you'll be on all the committees.

—Aphrodite



* Valkyrie in Valhalla *

By Valerie Walker

1992 was an amazing, action-packed, emotionally charged and inspiring year for me. The job I had for the first seven months of that year was largely responsible for the series of events that have since shaped my life professionally and personally. Something else played an important role in my life that year: pay telephones. My favorites were at Henri Bendel, the department store on Fifth Avenue at 56th street.

First, let me tell you about the job. I was hired as an editorial assistant in fashion features at *Glamour* magazine in October of 1991. *Glamour* is a Condé Nast magazine, the same company that owns the titles *Vogue*, *Mademoiselle*, *GQ*, *Self*, *Vanity Fair* and *Condé Nast Traveler*, among others. I liked my job for the same reasons other lowly editorial assistants at Condé Nast do: you get numerous perks, from your own petty cash fund for free lunches and business-related taxirides to all the freebies ("payola," my *Glamour* boss termed it; a later boss called it graft) that magazines receive from companies eager for publicity. Sure enough, I liked other things about my job. I interviewed celebrities and fashion designers about, say, their morning exercise-dress-cosmetic rituals. I got to write a fashion news column. I attended lavish openings orchestrated by public relations companies as diverse as bars (that I would never again frequent) and new jewelry collections at Cartier (that I could never dream of buying).

None of these things, however, were what had the largest impact on me from day-to-day. A job is only as pleasant and interesting as your employer makes it. My employer was renowned on staff as the toughest person to work for—a bully. A friend, hearing my tales of daily woe, nicknamed her the porcupine. Still, I respected her no-nonsense approach. She shunned pretention and she could turn around a piece of mediocre writing so quickly that computer keyboards were barely fast enough for her fingers. What I hated and feared was her temper. Once, her computer was malfunctioning and I

couldn't figure out the problem. She called the computer help number, only to get a busy signal. She swore, threw the phone receiver on her desk and turned back to finish shoveling her salad down in big, angry bites. Another time, I dallied on the way back to her desk with her morning cup of hot water. When I got back I showed her the kind of tea I had bought—her usual hadn't been available. "That's not

...this man definitely meant major complications in my life.

the right kind," she snapped at me and grabbed the cup full of steaming water to throw it in the trash. Generally, when things were moving at a high velocity, I'd ~~creep away for a couple of minutes~~ to fight the sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach.

The second pivotal event that year was that I met someone who worked for *Vanity Fair*. I thought he was adorable, fun, brilliant. As excited as I was to meet him, this man definitely meant major complications in my life. I had a boyfriend of a couple years and we were long past the point where dating others casually was acceptable. Although I knew that this could *really* get me into hot water (an additional quirk was that both men had the same first name), I pursued this new relationship covertly and with a lot of passion.

It's here that the Bendel's pay phones re-enter the story. Henri Bendel opened its new store (the original one was on 57th street) in the Coty Building in April 1991. If you've never been there, I would recommend a visit for the phones and bathrooms alone. One set of telephones is in the downstairs. Once you get there, make a quick left. Two phones await you. They have glass doors and comfortable seats, so you can chat in privacy and comfort. The other set of pay phones is on the 4th floor. Each phone booth has a frosted glass door, so you feel quite isolated. No one can see

you in there, perched on a cushion and gabbing away; no one can shoot you impatient glances. The bathrooms on this floor are also superior to the ones in the bottom level. The toilet is in a huge private stall equipped with a big beautiful sink and polished brass fixtures.

Bendel's is only about a dozen blocks away from Condé Nast. Over the course of the year, between battling with my boss and arranging secret trysts with my delicious one, those private, comfy pay phones came in handy. One time, through a tortuous series of events, my boss found a way to dump a lot of blame on me and suggest that I might be fired for what happened. It was at the end of the day but a lot of people were still milling around the office. I panicked, left the office and went walking around. Almost without realizing it, I found myself ensconced in Bendel's downstairs phone booth talking to my legitimate boyfriend about my newest crisis. Somehow, the clean, brightly lighted and plush environment comforted me. *This is free*, I thought to myself happily. When I'm done on the phone I'll go splash around in the big bathroom.

Meanwhile, my secret love generally worked one or two hours later than me any given day. How could I stay in the Condé Nast neighborhood, be in touch, and

"Hello, sweetness? Are you finished soon? Where am I? Oh, in the phone booth at Bendel's..."

easily meet him for a drink? You guessed it. I would ring him up from my newly-found little lap of luxury. "Hello, sweetness? Are you finished soon? Where am I? Oh, in the phone booth at Bendel's..." It sounded so glam, as if I darted around from fancy establishment to elegant watering hole all day long, although he knew much better than to think that.

I also mentioned at the begin-

ning of this tale of tempers and tangled webs that 1992 shaped my life in many significant ways. I left *Glamour* in the summer and accepted another job, but my dissatisfaction with the job and real-life journalism eventually compelled me to enter graduate school in art history. I also left my boyfriend and started seeing the delicious one fair and square.

I don't get by Bendel's much anymore. It's not because pay phones don't still play a large role in my life—they most certainly do. (You can often find me using the one on the mezzanine level of the grad center.) I still feel irrationally gleeful when I find a nice pay phone tucked into some unexpected spot. But my life is undoubtedly different than it was two years ago, and I'm not worried about eavesdroppers and suspicious bosses anymore. If, however, I find myself at Fifth and 56th, the chances of me dropping in for a chat and a shot at the pot are extraordinarily good.

V.

V.

The Marxist Working Group is proud to present a Revolutionary Communist evening on the question of: **Trotskyism: Revolutionary Marxism Today?** Featuring: **ROY ROLLIN of THE INTERNATIONAL TROTSKYIST OPPOSITION** Date: March 3, 1994 Time: 8:30 PM Place: CUNY Graduate Center, 33 West 42 street, Rm. BM-10 For Further Info: leave message at 212-642-2851 Free food and refreshments will be served

Free Gratis for Nothing

Unemployed Man In the Free World

By Stefan Smagula

A few weeks before the end, I went to the unemployment office. I signed vouchers for my last two checks, and asked about an extension. The lady on the employed side of the counter looked at me and said: "You understand? This is it. After this there's nothing."

The happy days were over. It was time for me to do the only responsible thing: become a total miser."

All past cheapness became a mere prelude to my new, improved austerity. The spring break I spent stranded at school with only 8 bucks, was just an appetizer. Even the summer when I was 15 and on my own in Hawaii, when I lunched daily at the local Safeway's bulk food section (yogurt covered walnuts were filling, but left the mouth dry), was just an apprenticeship to my new vocation.

That summer in Hawaii I dined on Top Ramen (15 cents a bowl) with slices of hot dog for protein. The restaurant provided me with sugar, salt, pepper, ketchup and napkins. For dessert I ate mangos raided from someone's yard. Such, such were the joys of my youth.

Living cheaply has a certain artistic and literary aura—at least that's my silent mantra at restaurants when my friends are chowing down, and I'm drinking lots of ice-water. Plenty of great writers and artists have exchanged parsimony and frugality for art and fame (though I deeply suspect they all had hidden trust funds).

Enough musing—as I write this I'm burning lots of K-cals which will have to be paid for eventually, not to mention the ink, paper and electricity.

What follows is a highly selective listing of things to do in the free world.

(Almost) Free Museums

The following museums are always pay-what-you-wish. I never wish to pay more than the smallest denomination coin I have in my pocket.

❖Metropolitan Museum

(82nd street and Fifth Avenue)

❖Brooklyn Museum (take the 2 or 3, get off at Grand Army Plaza, walk down Eastern Parkway 3 blocks)

❖American Museum of Natural History (79th Street and Central Park West)

❖Museum of the City (103rd St. at 5th Ave.)

❖American Museum of Folk Art (Columbus Ave. at 65th St.)

❖The Cloisters (A train to 190 St. and walk through Fort. Tryon Park) Like a free trip to medieval Bruges, only without the Bruges.

Weekly Free Things

❖Mondays: A day of rest for the frugal—many museums are closed.

❖Tuesdays: Free Beer! Zip City (19th Street near 6th Avenue) brews their own beer, and on Tuesdays women drink for free from 8 to 10 pm. If you're not a woman, put on a mini and some lipstick. I know this is going to test the mettle of some cheap men, but think about it—we're not talking about free beer, we're talking about *really good* free beer.

❖Wednesdays: At 1:00 pm on the first Wednesday of each month, the Liberty Science Center becomes pay-what-you-wish (normally it's about 9 bucks). The cheapest way to get there is to hitchhike through the Holland tunnel and walk to the center, about a mile south of the tunnel. That's what Kérouac would do. Or you can splurge and take the ferry from Battery Park

City directly to the science center. The Damage: about 5 bucks round-trip. Check out the virtual-basketball game, and the exhibit on 'talkies'. If you're into the artifacts of technological culture, bring an object which some budding Beavis or Butthead could dissect, or use in her or his next homemade bomb, and swap it for another object of equal value in the center's Swap Shop.

Free film deal—on Wednesday morning, buy *The Voice* (eat generic macaroni and cheese for dinner to make up for this expense) and look for the full-page film ad which offers a special screening for *Voice* readers. It will direct you to bring the ad to the *Voice* offices to pick up a voucher good for 2 seats at a pre-release screening. For some films, 100 or more cheap people will show up at 9:00 am on Wednesday to get one of the 200 vouchers. 9:00 am is pretty early, but remember, living in the Free World isn't easy.

ZOO! When it gets a little warmer you can take the IRT subway to the Bronx Zoo (or whatever it is called now). On Wednesdays from 10 am to 4 pm you can pay-what-you-wish. Attach yourself to a friendly family from out of town, and maybe they'll treat you to a ride with them on the Wild Asia tramway.

❖Thursdays: Thursday is the free-est day. So is Friday. Thursday and Friday are free movie days at the Museum of Modern Art—and if the movie sucks, (it rarely sucks), you can wander around the museum and practice your eavesdropping skills in 7 languages. In February MoMA is showing a century of French film, or at least whole lot of French films, all made by Gaumont studios. To see a

film: get to MoMA (at 55 West 53rd Street) after 5:30 pm (the movie starts at 6:00) on a Thursday or Friday night and pay-what-you-wish. MoMA also screens videos which often start at 6:00 pm.

❖Fridays: Free Film at MoMA—See Thursday. The National Academy of Design (5th Ave. at 87th St.) is free on Fridays from 5-8 pm. Don't forget about the library—it's not only a summons to scholarship, it's the foundation of the Free World! Free books, free magazines, free videos, CDs, LPs, cassettes, and if your library has open stacks, you may even be able to find free love. I've never found it there myself, but once I overheard some free love in the stacks—that counts for something, right?

❖Saturdays: If you wear black, look beautiful and don't mind using words like "plasticity" and phrases like "negative space", the world of art gallery openings is yours. On any Saturday there are probably a dozen openings, each with free cheese, crackers and wine in little plastic glasses. All you have to do is call a few SOHO galleries, put on your best patron-of-the-arts accent, and say: "Hello. I'm calling because I heard that Pilovic is having an opening soon...No? Oh that's right—he's with Castelli now...well, when is your next opening?" That should do the trick nicely.

❖Sundays: If you like classical music, the Frick (Central Park East near 62nd) will give you free tickets if you send them a letter and self-addressed envelope three Monday's before the Sunday concert. This deal is only for those who are organized. Check with the museum for the schedule of concerts, and for exact details. If you are not organized, there are always a few unclaimed seats, and you may be able to persuade an usher to let you in if you are in the right place at the right time.

A final suggestion: If you're a critical wit, and there's a play, book, CD, or movie which you're yearning to see for free, contact the

Four Classics from the Master
at 6:30 in room 1502 Grace

Bunuel Film Festival
Presented by the Center for Cultural Studies

Viridiana, March 3
Los Olvidados, April 7

The Exterminating Angel March 17
The Criminal Life of Archibaldo do la Cruz, April 21

Continued from Page 1—COOKE AND LEHRER

Once they get on they get hooked. It's like selling drugs."

While Internet experts deride the term "information superhighway" as an empty soundbite, the concept works as an analogy to understand how the Internet functions. Think of it as a massive road system, complete with freeways, feeders and local routes. At every intersection sits a computer, which has to be passed through to get to the next computer until you've reached your destination. Any computer on the Internet system can connect with any other computer through the road system. And if the route to your destination is closed, you will automatically take a detour to get there.

The difference between the Internet and the Interstate is that you can go to Finland as quickly as you can go down the block. Once there, you can remotely manipulate the computer to do anything your own can do. You can retrieve a file from it in the blink of an eye.

Today, users can talk to one another, send e-mail back and forth, join arcane discussion groups, tap into libraries in universities from Berkeley to Bern and exchange almost any sort of data, including pictures, sound and text. Recently, a cult movie called *Wax* was broadcast to Internet sites all around the country. While it was black and white and only two frames per second, it was an important first step toward the computer equivalent of cable broadcasting. Also, a radio program is already broadcast weekly on the Net, complete with technology news and a "Geek of the Week" segment.

But it's not all smooth sailing on the sea of information. On most computers, the Internet is hard to use. The arcane commands that run it make little sense to many average users, who can find themselves lost in cyberspace without a map. "The Internet today is still for computer weenies," says Kapor. "But the problem will take care of itself," he adds, because easier to use software tools will appear as the Net grows.

To make matters more confusing, because the Internet is a network of networks, no one group or person is in charge. Kapor describes it as "anarchy." Mandel says, "It's all very ad hoc." And R. U. Sirius, editor in chief of the cyberpunk magazine *Mondo 2000*, says, "It's definitely out of control."

Ironically, the anarchy began in the bowels of the Defense Department. Back in 1969, the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency created ARPANET, a computer networking project, to transmit packets of military data securely and efficiently around the world. In 1984, the National Science Foundation began building five supercomputers around the country for conducting scientific research. When Defense Department researchers wanted access to the supercomputers as well, the N.S.F. lined them up with ARPANET. The popularity of computer access, especially to collaborate on-line, has steadily expanded ever since.

"It was just a bunch of computer

scientists talking to one another," says Van Belleghem. "Then educators and people involved in research or administration all wanted to talk to one another, get files, get to libraries on the network. It's been opening up and getting more open every year." Over the past decade, tens of thousands of nonmilitary networks have been connected to the Internet's electronic web, including the Library of Congress, most U. S. universities and libraries, and private companies from General Electric to the Bank of Bermuda.

Of course, not all the sites are publicly accessible. Most private sites require special passwords for entry, which only registered users and an occasional hacker can get. However, the amount of information available to the on-line public is staggering. "Getting information off the Internet is like taking a drink from a fire hydrant," says Kapor. Everything from the complete works of Shakespeare to the number of sodas in a Coke machine at Carnegie-Mellon University is accessible.

The primary use of the Net is for communication, however. "Half the traffic on the Internet is e-mail at this point," says Mandel. The number of topics on the newsgroups can be daunting. There are more than 2,500 different subjects, ranging from one for fans of *The Simpsons*, to classified and personal ads, to Bay Area politics.

There are also, naturally, many groups dedicated to different computer systems and languages, and computer scientists and hackers are still the main users of the Internet. Some people are using newsgroups to disseminate information from a different perspective. Harel Barzilai, a Cornell student in math, has created a group for progressive activists, and he claims that 23,000 people read his postings regularly. His group ("misc.activism.progressive" in Internetspeak) posts articles from leftist magazines and alternative campus publications, as well as action bulletins on issues of concern. "You're not going to find anything to the left of the Democratic Party on TV or in newspaper," he says. "And for those of us who have access to the Internet, it's free to use it and post information. This is our chance to be heard."

Like many Netheads, Barzilai thinks of the Internet as a new communication model, allowing for unfiltered, many-to-many publishing, rather than the traditional hierarchical one-to-many approach. "This is a situation where money, or capital, does not have a monopoly on access," he says.

R.U. Sirius agrees. "The role of capital as an editor is being removed," he says. Sirius, like many, feels a sense of liberation on the Net. "The metaphor of the highway fits," he says. "Like Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, from a tight little community out onto the wide open road. Everybody's out there; it's not a small elite system."



This excerpt is reprinted with the kind permission of the authors and the Nation magazine (July 12, 1993).

Computer Center Workshops

Each month the Graduate School Computer Center puts on various workshops concerning issues of academic computing. Here are some of the month's highlights:

- **Introduction to SAS-PC - Thursday 17, 2 p.m.**, Room 309. Learn how to use a semi-user friendly statistical package which is the standard in the sociology field.
- **Introduction to SPSS-PC - Friday 18, 11 a.m.**, Room 309. SPSS is a crucial statistical package for students into serious number crunching.
- **Using the PC Scanner - Wednesday 23, 9:00 a.m.**, room 301. Learn how to incorporate illustrations, photos, and text into the PC.
- **Introduction to Vax Electronic Mail - Friday 25, 11 a.m.**, Room 301. Forget the post office, welcome to the modern age of communications. Learn how to send mail electronically (and receive it!).
- **Buying a PC - Monday 28, 12:00 p.m.**, Room 301.
- **Buying a Mac, Monday, 28, 2PM**, Room 307. All you need to know about the plunge into the world of high tech computing. —Michael Weinstein-Mohammed

Continued from page 1—Martinsons

ing member of the larger international community.

Schooling and the learning process are also ongoing interests of the Center. A project on the demographics of New York City high schools with high drop out rates was completed last summer. The de facto segregation that occurs in some of the City's neighborhood high schools became glaringly clear as a result of this work. Another project that addresses additional questions about teaching and learning is centered on innovative interdisciplinary curricula, currently underway in collaboration with the Institute for the Arts and Technology of Middle College High School.

A few years ago the annual conference held dealt with student work in Cultural Studies, both in and beyond CUNY; during other years the conference has been held in conjunction with CUNY departments, or has been managed jointly by the Center and other, non-CUNY institutions. This year the Conference, to be held at the GSUC from May 12-14th is called *Technoscience and Power: Implications and Strategies*. There will be panels on *Cyberknowledge and Technoculture; Individuals, Genes and Other Dicey Particles*; and *SciFi/Cyberpunk and Narration*. Participants will include Arthur Kroker, Andrew Ross, Samuel Delany, Judy Gregory and Fred Jameson, among many others. There will be a conference-related musical performance on Friday evening. An ongoing reading group has been meeting bi-weekly on Technoscience and Power, and welcomes any interested participants. Reading and study groups, including both faculty and students, continue to be an important part of the Center's activities.

The Center holds several colloquia, discussions and presentations of Student Works in Progress each semester. Recently these have included a slide/lecture presentation called *Marilyn Monroe Reading Ulysses*, by John Rocco of the English Program; a film in progress called *Beyond Survival Sex: Conversations with Male Prostitutes*, by Brian Bergen

Continued on page 12

Artist's Portfolio:

Curtis James

By Pamela Renner

The Dougherty High Trojans' loss may very well be the art world's gain. Curtis James might never have produced his powerful and deeply humane portraits, had his parents allowed him to play football in school. But his older brother Ralph had hurt himself on the playing field before Curtis ever got to his first try-outs, and the verdict from the parental quarter was absolute: no risking of life and limb for their youngest. Frustrated, Curtis gravitated towards the pursuits of his artistic brother, Bobby. "He would sit me down and do portraits of me. It always fascinated me," Curtis says, "My interest grew stronger, especially after I couldn't play. I did the next best thing."

Growing up on a small, independent farm in Albany, Georgia— owned by his father and mother, Ruthie Mae and Willie James— Curtis had plenty to keep him busy, even before art came into his life. He's written of his childhood: "I was about five before I realized that the playtime I had in the mornings and afternoons was really my chore time. Everyone had chores and everyone knew which had to be done early in the morning and which had to be done later in the afternoon. My chores consisted of helping to feed the farm animals at five o'clock each morning (I later found out

parents. "I wanted my parents to see themselves, when they came to the opening of my thesis show— just to see nothing but them on the wall... Although my family is somewhat close-knit, they had no idea that I'd be doing this series."

The impetus for the show came from a professor who was not, initially, in sympathy with Curtis' classical style, or his Old Masterly eye. As an undergraduate, Curtis had a hard time finding acceptance at Pratt, in spite of the



many laurels he'd already gathered for his work of me.

(among them, the Silver Plate Award from the U.S. House of Representatives, leading to the display of a painting in the White House). "I suffered a lot; they wanted to change me. I was ridiculed for being a portrait artist, they wanted me to be an Abstract Expressionist. It was really tough bringing my work to class. The class that I hated most was a seminar with one particular professor."

Though this professor criticized Curtis' work savagely, he changed his tune when he saw a preliminary study for *Rock-a-bye Grandma*, in which Curtis' mother is holding her baby grandson and rocking him to sleep. "He said, 'When it comes to your family, your work is less stiff, more moving, more personal. Do something that involves your family.'"

At the professor's behest, Curtis returned home for spring break armed with a camera and an idea: "The best models were in my own home." He took pictures of his father and mother doing chores, everyday things, from unusual angles and perspectives. Later, these photos would spark a series of breakthrough paintings, depicting Mr. and Mrs. James engaged in the hard poetry of daily life: fetching water for the

animals, hugging each other, threading a needle, thinking about their nine children, or considering the next season's crop.

"I felt so good when I came back to school; I had so much material. I was elated. To get moving...I had these three powerful teachers. They pushed me to the edge. Each of them would comment on my progress; they all had something different to say. I was determined to satisfy all of them."

Curtis had one other important pair of critics to satisfy— his mother and father. "I wanted them to be blown away. They drove all the way up from Georgia. It was their first time coming to New York.

"When they came to see the opening they couldn't believe it. Tears came to their eyes."

His work is both personal testament and historical archive. It is an elegy for a way of life, and a celebration of strength. In the personal statement which accompanied *Freedom Triumphs*, Curtis James wrote: "My parents did not complete their formal education but they are very intelligent people. They have an abundance of 'mother wit.' 'Mother wit' is plain old common sense; it is learning about life from life; it is knowing things that teachers don't teach and textbooks don't provide; it is drawing strength from adversity. Even today...I rely on my parents for their guidance, good judgment and inspiration. Their natural instincts and life experiences have become a part

"In the presence of my parents, I am confident and at peace with myself. They proved to be excellent subjects upon which to expound. Most of my work depicts my wise, honest and patient mother. She, like most black mothers, is the backbone of our family. My parents are the most supportive people that I know. I hope that I have 'done them proud' and given them thanks. It is because of their com-



that city kids were still asleep), helping my mother out in the house while my brothers and sisters were at school, and helping put the animals in for the night. We didn't have much money but we were able to live off the land because we raised our own livestock and grew our own vegetables."

His work grows directly out of his early experience in this courageous family. *Freedom Triumphs*, the exhibition Curtis James prepared in order to earn his MFA from the Pratt Institute, has a particularly intimate focus: his



Bicoastal Emptiness: Raymond Carver and John Guare

By Elizabeth Powers

A phrase kept going around in my head when I came out of *Short Cuts*, Robert Altman's 3-hour-plus extravaganza based on short stories by Raymond Carver: "an accident waiting to happen." It's a movie that intercuts three days in the lives of nine sets of southern Californians who are vaguely connected by geography or chance or family ties. They are out of control in countless ways (they commit adultery, they scream at their wives and children, they lie), and as you watch you think: *any second something awful is going to happen*, and it does. In the same way, everything goes back to "normal," from one moment to the next, except that nothing is normal about these people's lives. The next disruption, like the earthquake at the end of the movie, will come out of the blue and cause them to lose it again. There is no grace for them, no moment of revelation or transformation, for the center is missing.

Even the decent ones have an empty space between their knowledge of the world and their moral sense, which leads to a kind of abdication. For instance, Doreen Piggot (Lily Tomlin) who has hit a boy with her car but allows him to walk off alone because he, in obvious shock, tells her his parents won't let him talk to strangers. Meanwhile his mother, Ann Finnigan (Andie MacDowell), lets him go to sleep when he's obviously suffering a brain injury. Or take the three guys on a fishing trip who find a dead woman before they even get bait on their hooks. During a weekend of eating, drinking booze, trout fishing, and taking pictures of the corpse, they debate just where their responsibility lies. Is this what the banality of evil is about?

The heart of Carver's stories is not so much in the words on the paper, which are as direct and undressed-up as those on the back of a cereal box, but in the interstices between the words.



Doreen Piggot (Lily Tomlin) and Earl Piggot (Tom Waits) in Robert Altman's *Short Cuts*

Altman has captured this existential aspect of Carver's world, especially the volatile relations between the sexes. The screen crackles when Lily Tomlin interacts with Tom Waits. Jennifer Jason Leigh, diapering her baby while doing phone sex for a living, makes a very spooky couple with Chris Penn.

At the movie's end, a TV reporter announces only a single fatality from the earthquake. The announcement ironizes everything that has gone before—one fatality after another. This irony and Altman's seamless montage suggest a viewpoint which is absent in Carver. In Carver, God is dead, but in Altman, He may be awakening from a long nap.

If the author's words get little attention in *Short Cuts*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, directed by Fred Schepisi, is all about words. Based on the play by John Guare, this movie is as witty and as fast and furious as a Howard Hawks' movie. In an age when the value of educated speech is not high on most people's shopping lists, it's interesting that language is perceived as a means of getting on the fast track.

During the looting that went on in LA last year I couldn't get into the mode of thought that saw the looters as acting out of a sense of rage. That seemed too

sentimental an explanation, too much of a story. Indulgence has become so rampant in our society, so why should some poor sucker not grab the chance to steal a stereo or at least a bundle of Pampers?

Six Degrees is about the rich indulgent, the kind of people apostrophized in William Norwich's columns or in Vanity Fair. The Kittredges, Flann (Donald Sutherland) and Ouisa (Stockard Channing), inhabit a Fifth Avenue apartment with a view of Central Park and their apartment is full of paintings by modernist masters, including a double-sided Kandinsky (chaos on one side, control on the other). They are, however, within one dollar of living on the street unless they can sweet talk their very rich South African friend (Ian McClellan) out of \$2 million to buy a Cézanne that they will turn around and sell for \$10 million.

Into their lives walks a young hustler, Paul (Will Smith), who can talk as good as they and who wants nothing more than to be like them. He claims, among other things, to be a classmate of their kids at Harvard. What makes the story intriguing is that the young man is black (he also claims to be the son of Sidney Poitier) and can parrot all the intellectual buzzwords as adeptly as they, discourse on J.D. Salinger, explain

social malaise ("facing ourselves — that's the hard thing — to make the act of self-examination bearable"), without rage. These rich guys, guilty like most liberals about their wealth, are impressed.

In one scene, we see Paul before his Pygmalion-like transformation. He looks and talks like any number of hostile young males wandering around Times Square, but otherwise we don't know where he comes from or who he is, and at the end he remains a phantom. This fantasy of identity-creation, with no one at the center, is very postmodernist (we're

all clothes without an emperor inside) and is mirrored in the way the movie unfolds, a series of nested stories told by Flann and Ouisa and their friends who have also experienced Paul's hustle. They re-create their encounters, but at the end they are no nearer the truth of who Paul is.

Now, anyone who has ever seen a lot of movies knows that rich people have very shallow dreams. In an earlier era, the smart young guy from the other side of the tracks would have been burned by rich phoniness and followed a real dream. I bring this up because at the end Paul doesn't experience such a revelation. Instead, we're left with the ambiguity about his identity, a notion that fits the postmodernist subtext; that is, does Paul really exist for Ouisa and Flann except as an anecdote? In terms of movie viewer expectations. However, this ambiguity is unsatisfying: Paul is a kid we feel for, and we want to know that he is "saved," even if that means success à la Kittredge. Being rich and unhappy may not be all it's cracked up to be, but it does have more appeal than being poor and unhappy.

Gotta Be Bad to Be Good

By Jeannette Radredensek

Around the turn of the century in the United States, the prevalent theory of civilization held that women, though weak of flesh, were more spiritually robust than men, and so were better suited to be the vessels of cultural transmission. On the ride up the big escalator of twentieth-century progress, men would do the hard work and women would stick around to do,

well, proper vessel-like things such as having children, raising them, making tea, and generally keeping things dainty — kind of promistresses for the happy household theater. The theorists never meant to suggest that women might actually *do* something culturally momentous, but rather that they should play more of a symbolic, decorative role.

It would be nice to say, "Gee, haven't things changed," but I'm

probably not the only one who thinks that, with a few tweaks to the hard work part, the old theory still holds true today. This is certainly the premise around which *Bad Girls*, the two-part winter exhibition at The New Museum of Contemporary Art, is organized: A good girl is dainty and decorative, a bad girl is anyone who isn't. Good girls are oppressed and boring; bad girls are liberated and interesting. The Museum, with its ear ever to the ground, the better to hear the hoof beats of artistic advance, has uncovered a loose cadre of artists who might be called neo-feminist. These are artists — mostly female — whose relationship to matters social, sexual, and political lies somewhere between resistance and counter-spy collusion. Instead of the complex, equivocal wit of artists such as Carolee Schneemann and Hannah Wilke, who began dealing with feminist issues during the late 1960s, the artists in *Bad Girls* engage consumer culture in a dialogue.

The exhibition is big. In New York, some 55 artists' works are shown in two parts, the first show running from 14 January through 27 February 1994, and the second from 5 March through 10 April 1994. *Bad Girls West*, a concurrent exhibition of 40 artists, is on view at UCLA's Wight Art Gallery from 25 January through 20 March 1994. In addition, The Knitting Factory in New York is running a Wednesday night series of music by Bad Girls through April 6.

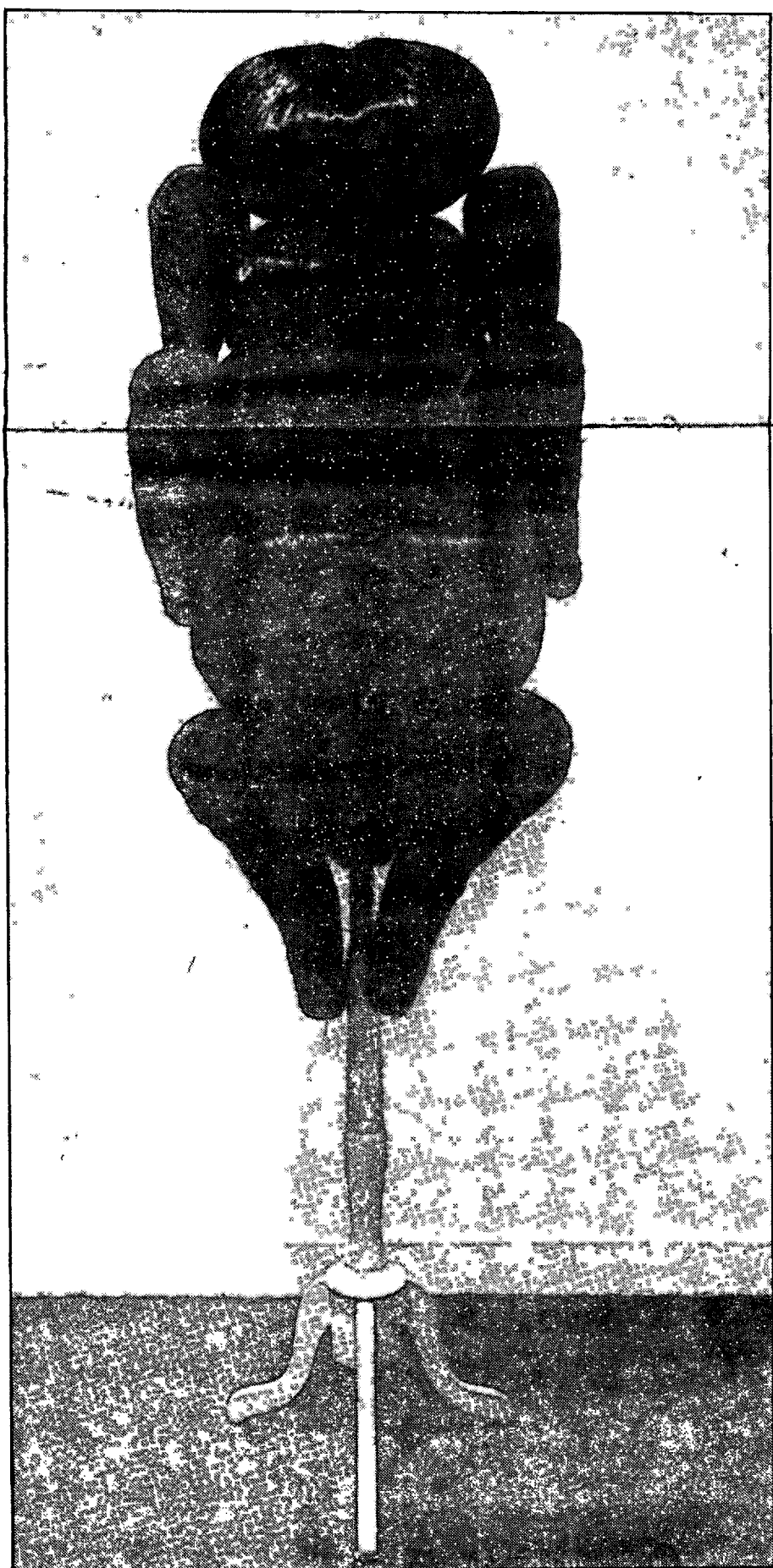
The exhibition's organizers are at pains to set the proper tone of amusement. An episode of *The Simpsons* — the one where Marge goes joy riding with Ruth Powers — is playing on a monitor at the gallery entrance. Nearby wall text by curator Marcia Tucker enjoins the visitor to lighten up and have fun. A similar message is communicated by the exuberant language of the 'zine — itself a stylish emulation of the funky, underground publications circulated among artists and musicians — that serves as an exhibition brochure.

The curatorial frame sets the audience up to view the art as a series of jokes, one-liners. Many of the works do operate at that level, albeit in really clever ways. Erika Rothenberg's posters, flyers, and over-sized lapel pins urge support for men, America's largest oppressed minority. Emulating the

layout of social service advertisements, and the presentation of a street-corner petition drive, Rothenberg cites the statistics of men's murder and homelessness, their vulnerability to stress-related disease, as well as their limited fashion choices (they can't wear skirts) as evidence of their persecution. Amy Hill has fabricated a shelf full of questionable comestibles like Ted Bundy salad dressing and Pope (the Catholic kind) gefilte fish. The baneful glibness of the one-liner is Sue Williams' modus operandi. She is represented in *Bad Girls* by a crudely painted caricature of a woman's head with penises crammed into every orifice. It's entitled, "Try to be more accommodating."

The byways of appropriation can produce an application to craft that is truly daunting. A case in point: Ann Agee's *Lake Michigan Bathroom*, a tour de force installation of porcelain tiles and plumbing fixtures offering a conflation of art historical references, information about the Lake Michigan watershed, and diagrams of the human alimentary cycle. It is horrifying (I hope the artist will know that's a compliment), and if it survives a couple hundred years, it might find a place in the history books alongside the old European estate grottoes with their water pranks. Elizabeth Berdann has captured perfectly the surface qualities and fragmentation of magazine advertising in her series of delicate paintings with engraved brass titles, *10 of My Best Facial Features*. Cindy Smith's *Turn Back the Old Clock* is a skillful and astute reworking of the covers of Nancy Drew mysteries.

With so many art works in such a small space, group shows tend to force all the pieces to resonate within a rather narrow range of intention. In the case of *Bad Girls*, the emphasis on imitation and wordplay almost squeezes the life out of works that make their meaning across a broader plain, especially those works not using an aesthetic strategy of appropriating commercial images. I say *almost* squeezes the life, because on sustained viewing works like Renee Cox's imposing, thickly framed photograph, *Mother and Child*, and Elaine Tin Nyo's pictures of anatomically alliterative vegetables completely hold their own. Similarly, Beverly Semmes' *Haze*, a ceiling to floor drape of dichroic velvet, and Janet Henry's



Mistress, 1993 by Millie Wilson, Courtesy Ruth Bloom Gallery, Santa Monica. On exhibit at The New Museum of Contemporary Art.

enigmatic *Black Goddess*, a coat rack slung with strings of beads and brief passages of texts pressed in vinyl, begin to overshadow the more obviously humorous pieces in their vicinity.

Two of the strongest works in the show manage to banish the distance between the poetic and the absurd. Millie Wilson's *Mistress* is an especially contained and claustrophobic piece.

By binding together thick coils and braids of black hair into a torso-like form, Wilson has created a work that looks like a disciplinarian for Hans Bellmer's licentious *La Poupée*. *Mistress* dominates the gallery like a Geisha wig pumped up on steroids.

In the opposite corner, Portia Munson has driven appropriation off the game board with her *Pink Project*. On a large table, the artist has arranged an astounding collection of artifacts, cultural detritus really — and all of it pink: dark pink, light pink, hot pink, faded and chipped pink, hideous pink. The objects are arranged by form and function, from round to oblong: fake flowers, bottles, brushes, barrettes, combs, weapons and

weapon-like objects (a sword, a miniature guitar, dildoes, a pink M16).

Both Wilson's and Munson's works invoke a vertiginous reaction of levity, horror, pity, and recognition in the viewer. They transcend the exhibition's jokey tone and overwhelm the Manichean curatorial premise of good girls vs. the bad, proving that once again, artists are way ahead of even the most progressive institutions.



Newsbriefs

DSC Co-Chair Steps Down

Michael Yomi, DSC co-chair for business resigned his post at the February DSC meeting. According to his resignation letter, Yomi resigned because he was "terminated" as a student at the Graduate Center. This formally makes him ineligible to serve as a student leader.

Robert Hollander, a P.h.D. student in the Linguistics Program, was voted in by the DSC general body as Yomi's replacement. Hollander will serve until June, when new elections for the post will be held.

—Michael Weinstein-Mohammed

Free Copy Machine for Graduate Center Students !

Earlier this month the DSC purchased a \$7,500 OCE copy machine for free student use. This copier will be located in the DSC office in the basement Mezzanine. The copier can be used anytime during the DSC's regular office hours. A five minute limit will be enforced when other students are waiting to use the machine.

Graduate Center administrators originally refused to allow the DSC to enter into contractual obligations with various vendors claiming that they did not have the authority to enter into any contracts. From this standpoint, the DSC was obligated to purchase a machine outright, which is allowed by current Graduate Center by-laws.

According to G. Ganter, the key DSC person handling purchase, the copy machine itself cost \$7,500. An additional \$3,500 annual service contract was obtained. It is further estimated that the paper will cost between \$3,000 and \$6000 during the first year of operation.

—Michael Weinstein-Mohammed

Petition Drive to Increase DSC's Pay

This month the Graduate Center administration has moved one step closer towards resolving the issue of DSC stipends. The Board of Trustees (BOT) has agreed to consider amending stipend regulations if a referendum of GSUC students supports the idea.

The stipend issue arose two years ago, when the GSUC administration announced that the \$5000 stipend previously paid to DSC co-chairs violated Board bylaws, which cap stipends at \$2882. Then in July 1993, three newly-elected leaders of the DSC were told that they would not receive stipends for the 1993-4 school year because of Board by-laws.

The DSC Steering Committee, President Horowitz and Vice-President Moreland met with the Board's Student Services Committee in January. The Student Services Committee agreed to consider several changes to, or waivers from, the Bylaws if a student referendum passes.

Ten percent of the student body — approximately 410 students — must agree to hold a referendum by signing a petition, and the DSC has begun collecting signatures. Petitions are being mailed to DSC reps in all departments. By signing the petition, a student agrees to the desirability of holding a referendum; it does not necessarily imply support of the referendum's issues.

Four issues appear on the petition:

A. Raising term limits from 2 years to 4 years (2 years max on steering committee and two years max as a co-chair).

B. Raising the cap on stipends to be equal to a Graduate Assistantship (\$6,912).

C. To define the editor of the newspaper as an "employee" and not a "student leader," in view of the fact that the editor is hired by the Media Board.

D. Making item A and C retroactive to Fall 1993, to allow current co-chairs to receive their stipends.

President Horowitz supports the changes, with the exception of the term limits. She has personally appealed to the Student Services Committee to make the requested changes.

—Margaret Groarke

Between Classes...

Welcome Back to the Spring 1994 Semester !

The Dining Commons
is open 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Monday - Friday

The Dining Commons Bar
is open 12:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

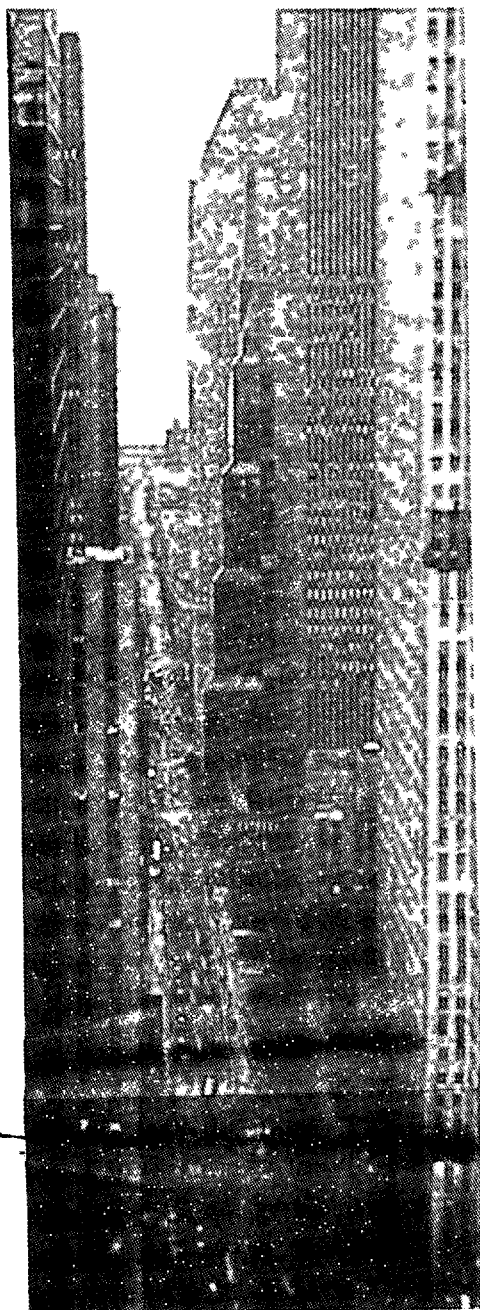
Catering also available. Call
Steven Katz or Mary Burke
at 642-2013.

Personal Advertisement— We are an infertile couple who are looking for a young, healthy Caucasian woman between the ages of 21 and 35 who would be willing to donate eggs. You will be compensated \$2,000.00 for your time and effort, and will get a free comprehensive physical examination.

Please send resume/ letter and photo to: P.O. Box 802/ Grand Central Station/ New York, N.Y. 10163

CITY SITES

Charles Naylor



The homeless don't get individual attention. They're a nonmarket. They don't buy papers, watch the six o'clock news. We who live in private heated spaces and carry a key have lost any residual empathy, prefer not to learn the names of the neighborhood regulars. To reach into one's pocket is to contract a chronic condition, adopt an adult child who forgets your birthday and stays out all night. Each time you walk past it's another dollar for the ice-cream truck.

There's a black woman who bullies regularly for "her" position as doorperson in "my" ATM center, where she relates in a loud voice the worries of caring for a sick child with neither job nor man. She's aggressive, articulate, dresses plausibly, and a lousy method actress. But you never can tell. The sixtyish white man who spends one half the day in front of the First Presbyterian looking penitent, the other half waiting fretfully outside the OTB, may be authentically needy at meal and bedtime. I waste money, why shouldn't he? And if, after working the weekend crowd, the fat lady with glasses and funny bowl-cut hair should rematerialize behind a pile of ribs at the next table, who am I to judge? Still, does she tip? And there's that suburban-looking man—gray squall jacket, good shoes—who stands on corners with a sign telling his latest age and how hard it is to get by on Social Security—he and I both have accounts at the same bank. I don't mind that. It's the whining that I mind.

They see themselves as needy. So do I. So do you, maybe. I know a successful self-help book writer who has recently been putting together a project for and about those who earn more than three hundred thousand a year and can't afford the hidden costs of the concomitant life-style. She's a careful researcher and her case histories are drawn from life. But who really needs Issey Miyake's steamed-in wrinkle look? Shrinks and shrink limos? The bad single-star outdoor cafes where indolent privilege goes on display?

One block down from here a woman lives over a laundry room exhaust fan. That's her home. Six years ago, in a moment of weakness, I picked up a ham and cheese sandwich for her at the corner deli and a half-pint of milk. It seemed nourishing (I had trouble deciding whether it should be milk or coffee). At any rate, I knelt down and handed them to her before continuing. When I passed by fifteen minutes later I was puzzled to notice that, although the sandwich was gone, she had poured the milk over her head and seemed to be washing her hair with it.

There are no comparisons, but thirty years ago I had to live in the street—only two months and it was summer. No big deal. I was a kid and had fifty-five dollars from my last paycheck. The rent was almost due. Budgeting less than a dollar a day, and with the bulk of my stuff in a friend's closet, I began my homeless life. Weekdays I dressed in a business suit for job interviews; otherwise jeans and a pullover. There were lockers then in the Port Authority Building that made a quick change possible. Most nights I slept on the roof of a tenement building on East 77th, swatting mosquitoes. When it rained the water tower kept me dry or I slumped through the night as the Staten Island Ferry churned back and forth. Nobody ever gave me the nudge. And when the weather was balmy, sometimes it made sense to get off the ferry and walk to a grassy hillside tucked behind St. George where, in the morning, I awoke shivering to a harbor dawn almost worth the deprivation and discomfort.

I never begged for change. Nobody within a block of the Bowery begged in those days, whether fearing the police or (most probably) out of pride. A coin's glint in the street often enough rewarded me. Today my trained eye detects pennies—the homeless throw them away—and I take them for luck.

Mistakes: The garbage barges moored off 35th on the East River made a good place to drink a beer on soft nights—but not sleep. Rats came. Near where the Graduate

Center stands there was a five and dime that sold cheap hotdogs at the lunch counter. I ate there every day, free dinner at the First Moravian, and wound up in Bellevue's Emergency Room. Loneliness was bad. You don't have friends when you're homeless. Crab lice, panic—had I failed? Had civilization?

From the hillside on Staten Island at dawn, with all of St. George asleep below, I'd look out at a group of islands that formed an archipelago. Far from the traffic roar, I'd pretend the boxy Merchant Marine base was gone from Governor's Island, the Statue of Liberty steamed from Bedloe's like a postage stamp. I'd strip the ghostly Hoffman Island (out in the Atlantic) of its abandoned training school for seamen; Roosevelt, upriver, its grim hospital accretions, and its modern apartment blocks. Hart Island, just east of crowded City Island, has a long history of unpleasantness: it accommodates not only a narcotics reform center but also a vast burial ground for all the city's unmentionable mistakes—the miscarried babies and amputated limbs, the paupers, the unidentified. Downstream, Riker's Island means men's prison; North Brother's Island has an infectious diseases hospital, Ward's Island a hospital for the poor. You wouldn't be tempted to pack a picnic hamper to visit any of these, and there are hundreds—many with names, most too small to support a single human life. Then there's Manhattan, slender, glittering in the middle. Thirty years ago you could imagine a way over and up, view the classic skyline and recall the myth.

Recently I was standing with a friend outside the Graduate Center at dusk. One of us spoke of the man who opened fire on a commuter car full of rush hour workers in December and of the public's horror and indignation. How could he, and why? they asked. And yet the continuum was clear to us—and at the end the man's anger, anomie, and action.

Continued from Page 6—MARTINSONS

and Jennifer Milici, both in the Sociology Program; and an informal talk and discussion on South Africa by Larry Shore, a faculty member in Communications at Hunter; and a colloquia with Manuel DeLanda on *Virtual Environments and the Emergence of Synthetic Reason*. The Center held a one day conference, (in Spanish) on Psychoanalysis and Narrative. The Center also co-sponsors events with other departments. This spring the Center is co-sponsoring a talk with the Comp. Lit. Department by Sylvia Molloy on the autobiographical tradition in Latin American gay and lesbian writing.

Last spring semester the Center's film series was on Film Noir. It was fun for those of us who can't stay up for late night AMC showings but who think that these movies are an important and terrific part of American culture. This spring the Center, with support from the Comparative Literature Program, is holding a series of screenings and discussions of the films of Luis Buñuel, in Spanish subtitles. Speakers will introduce each film and lead the following discussion.

Found Object, the student-run journal of the Center, is about to send the completed third issue to the printer. How best to describe a journal, completely run by an editorial collective of students, that has, through the first three issues, published in-depth interviews with Slavoj Žižek, Penny Arcade, bell hooks, Annie Sprinkle and Jürgen Habermas?

Looking toward the future, the Center for Cultural Studies is one of six constituencies at CUNY collaborating on a pilot program to establish a Doctoral Program in Intercultural Studies at the Graduate School. With faculty and student representatives of Women's Studies, Black Studies, Latino Studies, Gay and Lesbian Studies and Asian Studies, members of the Center are forging a proposed new program; although it still has much ground to cover, those of us who are interested in Cultural Studies would like to see the GSUC take this innovative step. We believe that Cultural Studies is not an intellectual fad, but a serious approach to new knowledge possibilities. Finally, is this not what a university is about?

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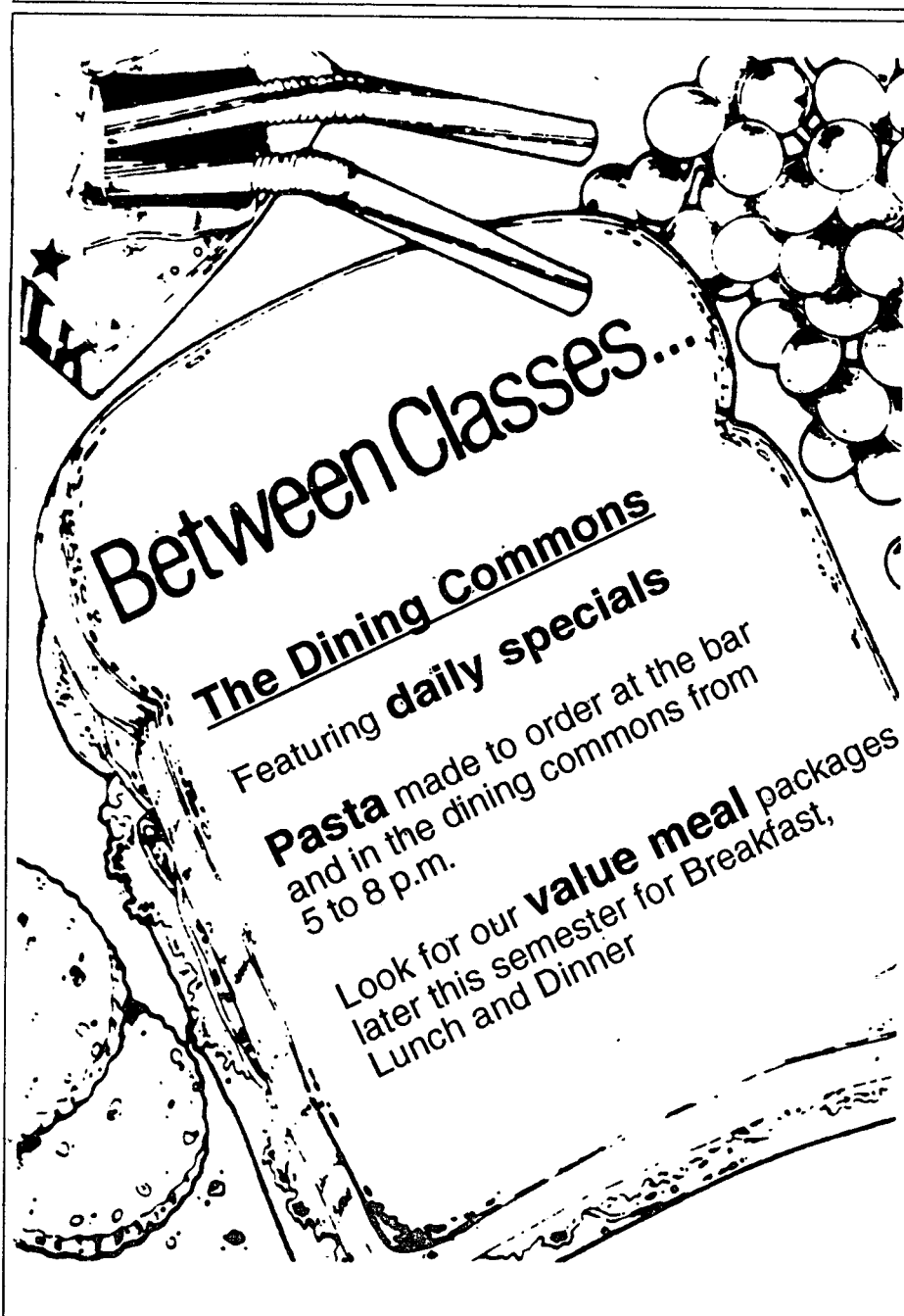
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ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Stefan Smagula has a trust fund of 3.7 million in a Swiss Bank.
Jeannette Radredensek never fantasized about owning a hot-pink guitar.
Elizabeth Powers has murder and mayhem in her past.
Valerie Walker is the only editor in this rag's history to wear black leather hot-pants to the office.
Charles Naylor may have been Tasso in a past life.
Curtis James moonlights with the New York Giants.
Pam Renner fantasized for many years about owning a hot-pink guitar.
Kevin Cooke has a hot tub and seven Internet addresses.
Jack Weinstein is a pseudonym for Andrew Long's mother.
The G. in G. Ganter is short for Geronimo.
Ask Aphrodite is already waiting for your March letters, and plans to share them with the American Psychoanalytic society.
Michael Weinstein-Mohammed can do unimaginable tricks with a T-square and rubber cement.
Barbara Martinsons is reading Heidegger and waiting for her degree.



Advocate