



ETHNIC STUDIES DEPARTMENTS CLOSED A CCNY TRIPTYCH (PAGE 10)
OPERATION UPGRADE? CUNY'S WAR ON REMEDIAL STUDENTS (PAGE 7)
CUNY ADJUNCTS ORGANIZE, FRENCH STUDENTS STRIKE (PAGE 8)

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ADVOCATE

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK GRADUATE SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY CENTER

BOO-HOO BOO-HOO!

BOO-HOO



**HOROWITZ'S
HANDKERCHIEF
THE POLITICS OF THE BUDGET
PAGE 3**

REGISTERED: TARIYU
W H A D
CUNY'S PROJECT

SLAMMIN' THE GUTS



CUNY STUDENTS TAKE TO THE STREETS (PAGE 2)

EDITORIALS

SWINGING IN THE BREEZE

THE SITUATION AT THE GRAD CENTER couldn't be more serious. As *The Advocate* goes to press, the university community has just been informed that as of May, ten floors at 33 West 42nd will be vacated into so-called swing space, our temporary housing until the B. Altman building is available in 1998. At a meeting with Vice President for Student Affairs Sue Zalk on March 27, students were told that nothing is decided, that the Student Center and many classroom floors will be moved into whereabouts currently unknown.

What is known is that the conditions are guaranteed to be cramped and unpleasant, and the departments remaining here will be forced to work and study in potentially hazardous conditions as the building undergoes renovation for the impending arrival of the SUNY College of Optometry. With students' resources and opportunities threatened by this move, the imperative of the financial bottom line for administrators and politicians couldn't be clearer: New York State will be saving a bundle on the SUNY College of Optometry's expensive downtown rent (see p.4). "The situation reflects a lack of concern about our well-being," lamented Zalk, "but we'll have to squeeze and bear it." I wouldn't count on it.

Doctoral Student Council Chair Yvonne Lassalle declared at the March 27 meeting that the move is "a veiled form of retrenchment." She's right. Earlier in the week, *The New York Times* announced Chancellor Ann Reynolds' declaration, for the second year running, of a state of financial exigency, with plans to lay off over 1,300 employees including tenured faculty. President Frances Horowitz at the GSUC readily followed up this announcement with her own assurances that the GSUC would certainly toe the CUNY Central line (see p.3).

Students may have noticed another development in recent months: a slow deterioration of services provided by the DSC (see p.11). Due to budgetary shortfall in the DSC's coffers, this academic year has seen the loss of subsidized photocopying at the NY Public Library, and now the introduction of vendacards for our copy machines in the Student Center. More disturbing is the current review of the Nurse Practitioner and possible ways to streamline her efficiency (see "Letters"). With Horowitz so eager to retrench, students should not be helping her out by suggesting places to cut. The DSC has done an admirable job over the years of providing much-needed services to students. They should not back down from this mission now but rather should demand Horowitz cough up more money to close the gap and provide necessities like health care. With all this money we're saving the state as we're left hanging, for two years, why not pay for the nurse, among other things?

Not to be outdone, CCNY President Yolanda Moses beat Reynolds to the punch by announcing the downgrading of all the ethnic studies departments to programs (see p.10), while longtime-activist CCNY student David Suker has been suspended for a year on bogus charges for his role in last year's protests (see p.11).

Students need to follow up on the stage set by SLAM's demonstration against the cuts on March 21 that drew about 1,000 people (see this page), and that of University Student Senate (USS), who led a protest of several hundred people on March 26. The most exciting recent event is the sit-in by about 20 students from the Sociology Department at Horowitz's office on March 22, demanding a student lounge in the swing space. Their action paid off: they have been guaranteed more space than allocated.

All students need to get involved to stop the deterioration of the quality of life at the Grad Center. With the precarious state of CUNY and the budget at the moment, if we don't act now, we could be left swinging forever. —LEE WENGRAF

MISTAKES WERE MADE

THE EDITORS REGRET A MAJOR ERROR in the last issue of *The Advocate*. The lead article on the 32B-32J strike by Andrea Zimmerman ran without her byline. Our sincerest apologies. ■

ADVOCATE

The Graduate Student Advocate

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WITH THE SPRING comes a new State budget and a renewed student movement. As we approach another major student mobilization, let's reflect a bit on the status of student organizing in New York City and what the next several months may hold.

We all know the budget sucks, but what can be done about it? Energy at the Graduate Center is pretty low this year, in part because the budget cuts primarily affect only the poorest undergraduate students. State financial aid for students receiving Federal Pell grants is being reduced by \$1,000. Pell recipients meet the strictest Federal need standards and many will be unable to continue their education. The result of this year's unusual budget dynamics is that organizing on the college campuses is much more vigorous than it is at the Grad. Center, while city-wide organizing is proceeding at a fast pace.

The group most involved in campus organizing has named itself SLAM! which stands for the little-used name Student Liberation Action Movement. In a big advance over last year, SLAM! has adopted a representative structure in which all public colleges and high schools have 4 votes and all private colleges and high schools have two votes. This has done a lot to encourage participation by more schools and reduce the potential for the group to become dominated by those who are willing to do the most shouting.

What has emerged after 2 months of weekly meetings is that SLAM! activists are not interested in making major compromises in the interests of a broad coalition with watered-down politics. Instead, they have decided to try and create an independent student movement that can articulate a vision of social change both for CUNY and for students and young people more broadly. Along these lines, they have made a greater effort to create stable campus based organizing collectives and they have done considerable outreach to high school students.

This strategy has resulted in difficulties in reaching agreements with institutionalized political actors. Despite early attempts at coordination with the University Student Senate (USS) and the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), negotiation broke down when the USS and PSC decided that they could not participate in an event in which elected officials were not allowed to be on the stage speaking to the crowd. As a result, faculty and the CUNY-wide student government have told the student movement that it will have to go its own way without their support.

Ironically, the attempt by last year's Coalition of Concerned Faculty to take institutional control of the PSC may have reduced the amount of faculty support for an independent student movement. They have decided to try and push the politics of the PSC towards accepting more non-electoral strategies but are unwilling to openly challenge them with an alternative political stance. Students may therefore be left without the help of those faculty that share their basic political strategy.

So where does that leave things? Right now, SLAM! is the only game in town. They have organized a major demonstration on March 21st and are working with the police to make it a safe, non-confrontational event. The plan is to be out in the streets letting people know that students are the future of this city. If you can agree with that, then you're encouraged to get involved. Weekly SLAM! meetings are held every Thursday at 6:30pm at Hunter College and Robert Hollander is coordinating outreach here at the Graduate Center. If you're an adjunct, talk to your classes and reschedule any of them that occur on the 21st so students can attend the event. I look forward to seeing you out there. —ALEX VITALE ■

LETTERS

HONORABLE MENTION

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR COLLEAGUE and friend Charles Price-Reavis on his election to the Board of Directors of the Society for Urban Anthropology. Charles is the first student councillor to win a board seat. —THE EDITORS

NURSE'S AID

The following is a letter to the Doctoral Students' Council (DSC) concerning the health clinic at the Graduate Center:

THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO THE SIGNS posted around the building which call for a meeting this week [February 14] to discuss the elimination of the health clinic at the Graduate Center.

Firstly, if you are sincerely interested in discussion on this issue there needs to be either a series of meetings to maximize input, or more timely notification. This is an extremely important issue which deserves serious attention. Students voted for funds to be allocated to health services, and should there be a decision to remove these funds, it should also be through a student referendum.

Secondly, while it makes sense that any allocation of funds should be accountable and analyzed for effectiveness, if the allocation is eliminated without serious thought to correcting current problems we run the risk of losing what is and should be an important support for students, many of whom (80%) have no health insurance. Examine and correct the problems. We will never again get the opportunity to have a medical office on our campus if these funds are eliminated now.

We look forward to further debate and discussion on this issue.

Melanie Bush, Tammy McJanet, Raymond Codrington, Suzanne Scheld, Mary Allacri, Beverly Cooper, Marilyn Diggs Thompson, Tracy L. Fisher, Elsa Davidson, Dan Malloy Pruitt, Kelly McKinney, Dana Davis, Wendy Darby, Selmo Norte, Hitomi Murata, Michelle Hay.

FUNERAL PARLOR

I RECENTLY ATTENDED A MEETING organized by the DSC with Prof. Susan Zalk, the Acting Vice President for Student Affairs, to discuss the imminent Graduate Center move out of our current building and into various "swing spaces". The heated discussion was exasperating, for Zalk was not only rude and contentious from the outset, but very poorly informed and ill-prepared to share information and meet our concerns. Moreover, this meeting showed me, yet again, that our administration and many of the Graduate Council faculty are completely out of touch with the reality of external political pressures as well as the needs and feelings of the student body. After all, what was the administration and the EO-dominated Graduate Council thinking when they approved this hare-brained move to "swing space" and a new building which financially hinges on the good-will of known scoundrels such as Governor Pataki, Senator Bruno, and Chancellor Ann Reynolds (nevermind our lame board of trustees)? Students, old and new, will suffer great losses in the next two years and possibly beyond as the intellectual and social life of the school is strangled in the crush for space. Where will we hold colloquia or "town meetings" when all departments and groups will be vying for use of the auditorium and the third floor studio? How will the GSUC (G-SUCK!!) attract good students and faculty? What will be the consequences of "making do with less"—more retrenchment, more faculty layoffs and department closures? What will students receive for their tuition dollars, especially the level three group who pay \$540 for seriously diminished services, and who are trapped by the circumstances and cannot transfer out of the school?

I am left with the graveyard irony that the 15th floor, where most of the administration have their offices, will

be used as a morgue for the SUNY College of Optometry, and that "swing" has (colloquial) connotations of a hanging. For the next two years it is imperative that students organize advocacy groups such as the defunct Students for Educational Rights, and that we ensure that our student government officers earn their keep and meet their responsibilities by representing our best interests. Lastly, let's keep the high quality and fearless disposition of *The Advocate* right where it is. We cannot risk a student newspaper which neglects its responsibility to advocate for students and student rights. The editors and their staff should be supported and rehired by the new DSC and Media Board.

Andrew Long
Comparative Literature

MENDICANT MENTALITY

THAT OLD BAMBOOZLER, MARX, is back to his old voodoo-boohoo spellbinding tricks, mystifying the likes of Rob Wallace and his commissars who are too eager to don the Marxian dialectic glasses and squeeze everything into a manichean exploiter-exploited perspective.

Their favorite slogan ought to read: "Freeloaders of the world, Unite!"

Rob et al's response (January's *Advocate*) illustrates perfectly the above. Mainly, it is peppered with fallacies and blatant empirical errors that match predictably and procrustean-like their Marxian prejudices. Let me explain:

a) Fallacy of generalization (or is it infantile simplification?): just because there are a few mergers and acquisitions out there does not mean that the whole economy is in the throes of demonic mergers. Furthermore, these M&A are not necessarily fiendish. Their drive for efficiency does generally profit the public at large (better and cheaper products), and shareholders (little guys and big ones who demand better returns on their investment: is that so undemocratic?).

Also, just because there are some exploiting big businesses doesn't mean all of them are. AT&T, for instance, gave rather generous severance benefits to their clerical workers, some of whom received up to \$130,000: is that one of the exploiting mega-companies Rob is talking about?

b) Fallacy of authority: just because a historically important figure such as Marx said something right for his time, it must forever be right for Rob et al. Reality doesn't work that way, and it is much more complex and evolutionary than the easy clichés our soundbite commissars would like to package it in.

c) Playing the devil's advocate, as per the philosophical gadfly Socratic tradition, doesn't mean I sympathize wholesale with the devil or that I must suck up to business as the devil incarnate. I am simply too much of an idiosyncratic maverick to feel much comfortable in a corporate culture, or any collective one for that matter. I could not sympathize with the regimented lifestyles of business people or their mediocre, philistine suburban lives, or for that matter with the Socialist losers *The Advocate* represents, given my somewhat congenial mistrust of herdish groupthink (as is the case with our commissars) and the subliminal or overtly coercive peer pressure that goes with it and which often mocks honest, independent thinking that doesn't jive with people's prejudices. People are too often cowardly and suckers for social approval and the rewards that go with that to stand up for their own ideas.

But again, I cannot sit still when certain practices that I believe are right, such as the drive for efficiency, is getting a bad rap from people who consistently seem to favor a mendicant, sponging, free-rider mentality.

d) Telecommuting, contrary to what Rob et al declare, does not uproot people from their community or their affective milieu, since it means that people can nibble nomadically from different business pastures while ensconced in the comfort of their homes.

e) Finally, when companies restructure to remain competitive due to technological innovations or consumer fickleness, or due to economic cycles (recession, so on), some workers are let go. This can be temporary, if the workers choose to re-tool their skills. But if they want to lollygag and whine and depend on Rob et al for blank support, if basically they get the wrong message that they are systematically exploited and thus revert their energies to implementing the evangelical Marxian equalizing revolution, no matter their merit, their efforts, their skills, their ambition, their productivity, or their legitimate needs, then they will get their rightful comeuppance, compliments of Rob et al who choose to legitimize and support free-riders and parasites adept at sponging off hard-working taxpayers so they can keep to their lollygagging ways.

Jacques Saleh
Philosophy

ROB WALLACE RESPONDS: To dispatch the most egregious errors:

- *Maverick* skill Saleh lauds AT&T's generous severance packages. But they can never replace real jobs. They're a red carpet to the gutter. (He, like President Clinton and Labor Secretary Robert Reich, champions "re-tooling" for jobs that aren't there.) Contrary to his baroque self-portrait, Saleh appears to boast an unshakable faith in the corporate Good Fathers' benevolence and generosity. But seemingly pedestrian girders of the worker-boss relationship—the minimum wage, the 8-hour day, benefits, child labor laws, worker and consumer safety, and severance packages themselves—were wrenched out of the profit-fixated Easy Streeters by social movements that rejected plutocratic infallibility.
- I never argued against meritocracy. But what hap-

Frances' House of Horrors

BONE-BREAKING CUTS IN STORE FOR THE GSUC BY LEE WENCRAF

ON MARCH 25, Chancellor Ann Reynolds announced a state of financial exigency, entailing over 1,300 layoffs and 5,000 class sections slated for closure, as well

as cuts in student services and financial aid. On the heels of Pataki's election last winter, Reynolds declared exigency in the spring of 1995 also, and GSUC's President Frances Horowitz followed suit, producing elaborate retrenchment scenarios and beseeching the university to tighten their belts. True to form, on March 21 of this year, Horowitz issued a memo stating the likely need for more firings here—47 positions, that is, 14% of full-time jobs could be lost.

The President presents herself as a fighter in the budget battle and her assistant, Steve Gorelick, decries the "horrors of the retrenchment process." Horowitz visited Albany legislators on March 18 to discuss the budget situation where she,

according to a memo from her office, "communicated ... concern about the effects that the Governor's lump sum reduction of \$57.6 million will have on CUNY." She targeted politicians to whom she credits a solid record on CUNY, namely Speaker Sheldon Silver and Assemblymember Edward Sullivan, characterizing them as "in the forefront of the fight for significant restorations." Yet such an endorsement contradicts the public record of both politicians who, along with the entire state legislature, voted for Pataki's budget in May, 1995.

With less faculty and staff to teach and provide needed services, it's clear that these cuts will have a devastating effect on the quality of education. It's still an open question exactly how the cuts will be implemented. Last year at this time, the President convened an Ad Hoc Committee on retrenchment composed of faculty, staff and students. As of this writing, no specific plans are on the books for reconvening the Committee, although it is unlikely that the Administration will deviate from the path taken last year.

From department to department, the specifics of the cuts are still unknown. Pat Matthews, Director of Personnel at the GSUC, told *The Advocate*, "We don't know yet where [the cuts] will fall. We assume the President will proceed the same as last year, when an Ad Hoc Committee was formed, and we'll have to wait to take our direction from the President's office."

Reginald Lucas, Director of the Mailroom, who is represented by the Professional Staff Congress along with the faculty, expressed a similar sense of uncertainty. "We've had no news yet," he told *The Advocate*. "Anybody could get laid off. No one in the school feels their job is absolutely 100% safe. But because of the swing space situation, the

mailroom might be more valuable. How could we have less people to deal if we're all over New York? I'm trying to be optimistic."

Bruce Kohan, Vice President for Finance and Administration, was more concrete about the ramifications of the cuts. Although he reiterated that speculations are "premature," he also told *The Advocate* that the move to swing space would reduce the need for custodial staff as 10 and a half floors will be vacated. Staff contracts have a provision for reduction of personnel due to incomplete occupancy of floors, he stated.

The administration portrays downsizing as a boon to the university as Kohan claimed that the decreased costs for staff would benefit the university. However, historically staff firings inevitably accompany diminished resources and funds for students, most recently seen in last year's massive tuition

hike of \$750 paired with lay-offs throughout CUNY, including the GSUC. "We'll have to wait until [the cuts] come," concluded Kohan. "We don't know how many bones we'll have to break yet."

The President's office is responding to this situation through letter-writing and phone-calling campaigns, headed up by Gorelick. Last year he spear-headed phone-banking and student lobbying. However, given Silver and Sullivan's track record, that is, their votes in favor of a budget that drove thousands from CUNY, the merits of such a strategy is highly questionable.

Gorelick explained the President's rationale behind the retrenchment committee, saying that "the President's concern is that the cuts need to be made in a way that will have no bearing on the outcome of the retrenchment process. Nonetheless, he cautioned, "we'll have to reconsider issues about departments." Yet, he rushed in to reassure, "the President is doing everything she can...to press for restorations." As yet, no promising ideas seem to be emerging from the President's office.

Students have presented a much more viable alternative. It is a blatant lie for Horowitz to deem Silver and Sullivan the front line torch-bearers in the fight against CUNY. That honor belongs to the students, faculty and staff who have taken a stand against the cuts over the years.

Five years ago, the newly-hired president told *The Advocate* of her "skill" and "vision", her desire to "look for consensus." Sadly, her track record at the Graduate Center is a mockery of this proclaimed vision. Last year, the retrenchment committee merely rubber-stamped an already agreed-upon agenda of austerity. When Horowitz rushes to cut before a budget has even been passed in Albany, she clearly shows that her office is no ally to the recipients of retrenchment at CUNY.



pens when that supposed drive for efficiency is defined in terms of shuttling profit into stockholders' pockets even if it means jackhammering billions of people? Those who live paycheck to paycheck and don't have the excess capital to invest are deemed expedient. The question of merit must be redirected from welfare mothers, who have never had their hands on the levers, onto those that ran the economy into the ground. Stop passing the buck! American management has gained a world-wide reputation for waste and incompetence.

● "Telecommuting"? Less than 3% of Americans, never mind the world, are online. Most people have to migrate for greener pastures. That is, for Jacques Jetson stuck here in his futurist's technophilia, they must pack up, say goodbye to their communities, and move.

● That Saleh calls his fellow CUNY students—most of whom aren't even "little guy" shareholders—"free-riders and parasites" speaks for itself.

CRYPTO-CAPITALISTS

LEFTO-FASCIST ARE SO INSIPID. *The Advocate* keeps them on—staff to demonstrate the grotesque results of discursive inbreeding. Suggest anything that falls outside the limited range of their black/white minds, and they vomit streams of snideness. (See the letters column in recent issues.)

I dunno, kids. I'm disgusted by *The Advocate's* pairing a pose of representing an academic community with

rabid attacks on anything that might represent balanced and reasoned discourse. Someone copyedits/proofreads part of an issue and you bitch that the whole thing wasn't copyedited ("Unaeditor")—what, are you proud of sloppy journalistic standards? Or are you just unaware that the proofreading's supposed to be done before you print? And this is news, a funny joke, and something to pat yourselves on the back for under a weird head saying "mistakes were made"? Do you ever hear voices from outside your heads?

Someone writes that you're conveying an image of Grad Center students as whining, incapable, self-victimizing children, and first you whine at that person and then you devote the center of the same issue to a whining, incapable, self-victimizing child who repeatedly asserts that she's been discriminated against, but never mentions a single actual experience of discrimination? I don't know if Lovele Clark was ever discriminated against or not, but I know that calling yourself a victim and demonstrating victimization are two different things, and no attempt at the latter was made in her article. Not receiving financial aid for not working on your degree is not discrimination, I'm afraid. Of course, unsupported assertion is the currency of this year's *Advocate*, so who'da thunk ta ask 'er fer examples, anyway?

It's always possible that Jacques Saleh was talking about Rhino Records, Anchor Steam Beer, and Death cigarettes, not Sire, Red Dog, and Moonlight, you know? Back when I was a tyke, Pizza Hut was a shack

on the Wichita State University campus rumm by tow guys while another ran around raising money to keep the place open. Now they're huge, and the name is owned by Pepsico, though various entities hold the franchises—that's what happens to successful businesses, I'm afraid. We could fault the company's originators for not being inefficient enough to stumble along from year to year barely making enough to survive, let alone expand, but it sounds like what's being faulted is a lack of love for misery. No doubt you'll argue that all psychology is capitalist brainwashing, but I'm firm in the stand that seeking to prolong and deepen one's personal sense of misery and despair by assuring failure is bad mental hygiene.

I don't consider myself a conservative, but since I don't agree with the idea of the Grad Center newspaper being a party organ for any party, no doubt I rank right next to Donald Trump as an ideological demon for *The Advocate* staff. I fully expect to be taunted, and I'm sooooo scared! This letter is appropriately juvenile for its subject matter, but maybe it'll push out senseless drivel like "Sodomizing Hegel," anyway.

Thane Doss
English

LOVELLE CLARK RESPONDS: *Being a person whose time is, as is many peoples, valuable, and also being a person of high moral character, one who sees life clearly with myself and others, I have chosen to not agonize over a response and also to take the high road in responding to the letter in question by not stooping to personal slander, name-calling, or sniping. Also, I discovered a perfectly-worded, appropriate response in Iyanla Vanzant's Acts of Faith: Daily Meditations for People of Color (1993). It is found under the March 7th heading, and reads as follows:*

*You must live within your sacred truth.
—Hausa proverb*

So much of our time, energy and attention is wasted trying to convince other people how wrong they are about us. We want them to know we are not ignorant, lazy heathens. We want them to retract the untruth that has been told. We try to convince them that we have a valid history, a rich culture and that our ancestors have made valuable contributions to the development of the world. We spend so much time trying to show them who we are not, we lose sight of who we really are. It is not our responsibility to prove to people who we are. Our job and responsibility is to "be." What you do is proof of who you are; manifestation is realization. People have a right to think whatever they choose to think. Just because they think it does not make it right.

—I Am who I Am. — (Emphasis is mine)

NO JOKE

THAT ROB WALLACE CAN WRITE BEAUTIFULLY and forcefully gains proof by demonstration in his feature piece on Binghamton. However, he does a disservice to *The Advocate* and undermines the tone of debate at the Graduate Center in his response to Jacques Saleh in the December issue. To liken a fellow student to a trained dog in one sentence and to a gorilla in the next simply because he holds a different opinion hardly suits the seriousness with which Mr. Wallace intends his own analysis to be taken. The immaturity of the attack is matched, however, by a comparable immaturity in the analysis. Mr. Wallace implies repeatedly throughout his comments in this year's issues of *The Advocate*, that redistribution of wealth would solve all our economic woes. An analysis which is fundamentally based on resentment of the rich can hardly delve deeply into the underlying causes of current economic failings. It is true that the wealthy are (mis)guiding our public policy. Regaining control over policy (by whatever means) and developing a policy of production more equitable to all members of society, will do more for improving the socio-economic situation than simply pointing to the "bloated bellies" of the rich, with the suggestion that were they less full, somehow ours would be the more. Redistribution of billions of dollars will matter little to the billions of masses. Frankly, it's all the same to me if the rich remain rich. The problem is figuring out how to empower the rest of us in a socio-economic scheme that doesn't have room for it.

Also unfair, though less rebarbative in rhetorical tone, is Andrew Long's misrepresentation of Saleh. Andrew deplores Saleh's name-calling as a skirting of the issues while he blithely ignores the bulk of Saleh's letter which in fact does address the issues directly.

This heaping of invective upon alternative views, however naive or repugnant those views may be, mars the integrity of a newspaper. *The Advocate* is entitled to promote an editorial perspective of its own even if those views are not shared by each and every graduate student. When that entitlement is construed as a license to trample with glee all opposition, the paper and the Graduate Center are the losers.

Rob Hollander
Linguistics

ROB WALLACE RESPONDS: *At the risk of mimicking a conference's worth of psychologists, wherein the good doctors undermine each other's argument by diagnosing its proponent as crazy, I think Doss argues himself asunder. He is guiltier of the sins with which he waylays the accused.*

First, Doss mistakes "Unaeditor" as a hatchet job.

ANNALS OF ADMINISTRATION

SWING-ON-A-STRING SPACE

WHILE NO ONE REALLY KNOWS when the Altman building will actually be ready to take us in, we do know that we have to be out of here fast. So fast there's no time to find where to go. 20,000 square feet of swing space—office space in nearby buildings—has yet to be obtained. Turns out the state didn't provide very well for the move. The item in the capital budget for it was scarcely adequate to begin with, and certainly not large enough to allow the President to keep the search for space close to the current midtown location. In any case, the space isn't there and if it's not there, we can't move into it. That means we will be using the space we've managed to get and moving everyone on top of each other into it. Sounds cozy, but not comfortable.

This should come as no surprise to anyone, least of all the administration. They know that this Altman deal was not made by Albany in the interest of the Graduate Center or of education. It was made to save Albany money on an expensive lease they were holding for the SUNY School of Optometry. Albany broke that lease by passing legislation to defund the account that paid for the lease. They then passed more legislation to get the GSUC into Altman's, giving the Graduate Center building to the SUNY School of Optometry. But the Altman's building won't be ready for us until January of 1998 at the very soonest, and SUNY starts classes here in the fall.

To spell it out, we got a bum deal. Luring us with the prospect of going to a newer, larger space, we jumped at an opportunity offered by forces interested in other priorities than ours. Those other priorities are focussed around money saving. The Graduate Center's future for the next two years was bought off for the sake of saving the state some big bucks. If we can't find adequate swing space, why should they care? Get real—they're not likely to be willing to spend on swing space when the original motivation for moving SUNY out so fast was just to save money.

GRADUATE COUNCIL

THE GRADUATE COUNCIL, in its routinely authoritarian fashion, has decided that faculty members on the governing bodies of each program should be appointed by the Executive Officer, not elected by their peers. Quite aside from the additional power this places in the hands of EOs, it means that campus-based faculty will be more marginalized than they already are.

Let's be clear about the seriousness of the prob-

lem. The overarching quandary and originary source of failure for our campus (aside from lack of funding) is the dispersal of our faculty over eighteen distant schools on all five boroughs. Every student has a story to tell about the lack of commitment from campus-based faculty, or their inaccessibility. Mentoring is only one aspect of the graduate experience that suffers under this diaspora arrangement. Too often excellent and exciting new faculty at the campuses are less available to students than some dead-beat central lines who haven't done a lick of research in twenty years or shown much genuine interest in helping students through their degrees. Not all central lines are dead-beats. Most aren't. But our current system of centralization protects the worst (and most expensive—central lines are the lion's share of the GSUC budget) while disenfranchising some of the best new academics CUNY has to offer.

BEEN 'ROUND SO LONG THEY CAN'T DRAG ME 'WAY

YOU MIGHT WONDER how the the Graduate Council came to give a power to the EOs that is delegated to the faculty in the Graduate Center by laws which clearly state that faculty must be elected to the "governing bodies of the program," as these committees are termed. The Structure Committee certainly thought that the by-laws were clear on this. It was Stephan Baumrin, the faculty chair of the Structure Committee, who refused to allow his committee to enforce the bylaws mandating elections. Instead he brought the matter to the Graduate Council where the controlling votes of EOs ensured the defeat of elections.

Stephan Baumrin has been chair of the Structure Committee for more years than the graduate student who has taken longest to graduate, and it's anyone's guess how long that is. He takes his longevity as an excuse to play fast and loose with the rules. No longer caring what the majority of his committee decides, if he thinks the majority wrong, that's all that matters. Items voted down in his committee nevertheless repeatedly appear on Graduate Council agenda. The minutes he writes of his meetings have to be regularly changed, so divorced is his bias from the reality of what transpires at meetings. He has a record of allowing meetings to be scheduled to exclude students while invariably including all faculty. He describes some committee members—faculty and students alike—as "loonies." Seems to me things are getting a little out of control. What ever happened to respect for process? —ROBERT HOLLANDER

Not at all. The Advocate accepted in good faith pointed criticism regarding the quality of the copy editing, but, amused, noted the obsessive nature of the critique—an entire copy of The Advocate marked up, literally a whole day's worth of grading. (Recall too that the Unaeditor was actually quite complimentary, so The Advocate's gibes were in fact brotherly ribbing.) Now Doss adds to the developing legacy of the CUNY grad student-as-embryonic white collar drone. With Doss' view of proofreading's sublimity The Bell Curve becomes a good book because it contains few typographical errors.

Revealing as well is Doss' seeming lack of humor. "Unaeditor" and "Sodomizing Hegel" are fun and funny. And Advocate reader surveys have told us so. Sourpuss harangues against The Advocate's supposed "personal sense of misery and despair" ring a bit hollow. Given his tract on The Advocate's mental hygiene, Doss needs to floss between his own cerebral folds.

In his condescending January letter—and one need not be a Linguistics major to see it richly deserved its acrimonious response—Saleh made the bald-face assertion that American capitalism consists of independent entrepreneurs. Following Popperian logic I needed only to present a few of many contravening examples to refute this absurdity. As for "capitalist brainwashing," Doss joins Saleh in accepting as natural the premises of an economic system that coddles rich companies and destroys many-fold more small businesses and livelihoods. Since I reject these premises, a nostalgic history of one labor-busting corporation doesn't move me. (All the virulent corporations started small. How does that temper their legalized criminality?)

Capitalism also—by the way—makes millions of humans miserable. In actuality then I refuse misery in favor of an economics that yields the greatest good for the most people, that provides an ameliorated quality of life people on this planet deserve.

Hollander forgets my harangue wasn't a litany of insults. I addressed Saleh point for point. Uncharacteristically too, Hollander appears confused. He somehow refuses the clear connections between CUNY's current condition, poor peoples' plights, surging corporate profits and tax abatements for those who don't need them. The poor are dirt poor because the rich are filthy rich and became so by way of the public largesse. Unless—though I doubt this—he accepts the canard that the poor are just lazy.

Hollander recognizes the rich's prominent role in our current crises, but asks us to ignore the man behind the curtain. He proposes instead what every pundit and

politician this side of Farrakhan and Gingrich has pimped a pull-ourselves-up-by-our-boot-straps nostrum to "empower" ourselves in an admitted "scheme that doesn't have room for it." On the other hand, my proposed solution's not superficial derision. A massive and perpetual redistribution of wealth, by definition, implies a fundamental realignment in social relations. That's the only way it'd work.

Finally, how does a student newspaper retain "integrity"? By aimably reprinting a conflux of student government press releases and plenary minutes as The Advocate had done under previous editorships?

Now there, there, that wasn't so scary, was it? Our gutter donnybrook in the Letters section only emulates the academy's tradition of vitriol. Yet The Advocate's open brand of scuffling is quite unlike the academy's cloak-and-dagger backstabbing. (Anyone victimized by departmental politics knows the bite and burn of a tenured nest of vipers.) So, Advocate readers, join in on the street brawl—kapow!—and send in more letters.

BULLETIN BOARD

**The Campaign to
END THE DEATH PENALTY**
will have a forum on Wednesday,
April 24, featuring co-founder of the
Black Panthers Bobby Seale, a
written statement by death row
prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal and
Manning Marable, author of *Beyond
Black and White*. The forum will be
held at Tischman Auditorium at
NYU Law School, at 7:30.

The first person was African. Therefore any Black History must be World History.

February, the shortest and coldest month of the year, is designated Black History Month in the United States. This designation has its roots in 1926 with the launching of "Negro History Week," an endeavor of Dr. Carter Woodson to address the absence of African Americans in the historical record of the nation.

Today, Black History Month is a popular cultural event. Kente clad McDonalds workers now pervade our collective consciousness. Is this Black History? What is "Black" History? How is it made? What is its function? What has it taught us? Is this a fitting ode to those millions who perished in that abomination called the slave trade? Will this heal the scars of their scattered sons and daughters?

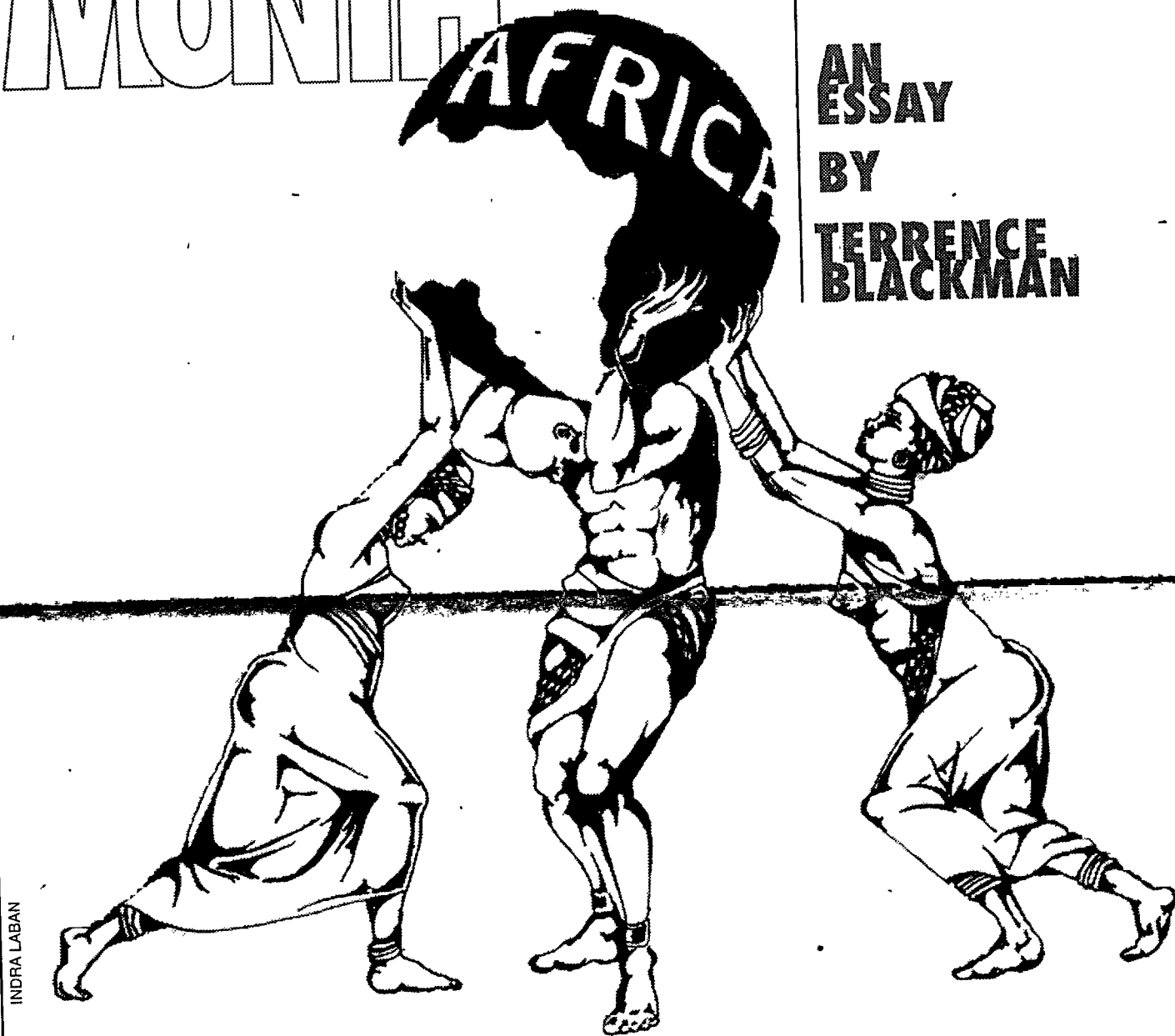
History, it seems to me, is a global dynamic mirror. It is the mirror in which we visualize our past, and imagine our future. I say global because the domain of history is the totality of the interactions of the peoples of the world. It's clearly a dynamic entity since it always acts in relation to the present and as we change so does our reflection in the mirror. Thus, in reality, there cannot be a "White History," separate from a "Black History." A cultural history cannot exist without a socioeconomic and political history. A liberal history cannot exist without a conservative history. A history of democracy cannot exist apart from the history of all other forms of governance. Thus, while important, the mere fact that Africans came to the "New World" before Columbus, or that the magnificent kingdoms of Nubia and Kush existed even before the Egyptian dynasties, or as recent excavations in lower Manhattan indicate that Africans

formed an integral part of pre-English colonial New York, or the roll call of "great" men and sometimes women who are paraded on PBS courtesy of GE this alone cannot in and of itself constitute history. An authentic history must speak to the milieu from which these events emerge. It more important to know what our "great" men and women fought for.

Today, our historians have forced upon us an interpretation of history as static "worthy" ancestral worship. The guiding principle here is that the mirror functions, like that of the wicked witch who always asked "mirror, mirror, on the wall who is the fairest of the all"? We see ourselves as our "worthy" ancestors. This imbues one with a sense of psychic belonging. This "sense" is very crucial for survival, for bound up with it is our sense of self. Thus, millions of dollars are spent on tracing one's ancestral roots in the search for "worthy" ancestors. In the absence of individual roots one then seeks group roots, that is, geographic, ethnic, and racial roots. Historians write books, and biographies that purport to tell us who we are. It is a sad fact but these works have distorted the mirror in which we see ourselves. Thus today in the United States, white people only see white people in the historical mirror, and people of color see only white people in the historical mirror. A visit to a history class in any public school in New York City will confirm this observation. The attendant implication of this fact was the driving force behind the need for a Black History Month.

The realization of Black History Month suffers from the same disease of history as "worthy" ancestor worship. It has thus become a period in which African Americans, with the tacit, and almost paternal complicity of the rest of the society, seek to find their faces in the mirror. This notion of Black History as the small picture within a larger and more substantive white picture has created a Black History ghetto. Hence NatWest Bank finds it appropriate to place ads promoting home mortgages in black newspapers celebrating "black history in the making". It would be an instructive exercise to try to locate a NatWest branch in any of the predomi-

BLACK HISTORY MONTH



INDRA LABAN

nantly African American communities in, say, Brooklyn. Or better yet to find out what percentage of NatWest's home mortgages were offered to African Americans during the month of February '96; it is to this task that history must direct us. John Wooman, Benjamin Banneker, Jupiter Hammon, Jean Baptiste Pont Dusable, Lena Horne, Mae Jemison.... There is no dearth of "worthy" ancestors. What there is a shortage of is the lack of a consistent effort on our part to effect a global emulation of the qualities in them that we deem worthy.

History should also offer us all an opportunity to heal. I have often wondered as to the mental health of the descendants and beneficiaries of those who plundered the African, and other continents. How does one deal with that fact that one's "worthy" ancestors have perpetrated crimes against humanity? How does one reconcile the fact that one's current status of privilege is a function of such actions? How can Africans in the West, and on the continent of Africa, reconcile the complicity of some of their ancestors in these catastrophic events?

Imagine for a moment the sheer terror of slavery. Imagine a brutal separation from home. Imagine that you are then taken in chains to the dark hold of a ship in which you are immobilized. Imagine

sleeping, waking, dreaming, amidst the scent of fear, the stench of death and decay, and the screams of terror, of your mothers, and sisters, your fathers and brothers. Imagine arriving in America in the brutal cold of February, naked, stripped of all dignity, and being told that from now on your name is "John" or "Joan." Imagine the skin torn from the back of your father as he labors in cotton field, or on a sugar plantation. Such events must cause massive societal denial for all. For the pain of such memories is a pain that lasts a lifetime, it is a pain that is transmitted through generations, it is a pain whose mark scars all of our faces. It must be the function of history to extract from this the soothing balm that will heal our scars.

Imagine for a moment our collective future: the rivers of Rwanda and Burundi red with the blood of the Hutus and Tutsis, the streets of Los Angeles red with the blood of African Americans, Mexicans, Whites, and Asians, the streets of Jerusalem overflowing with the blood of Palestinians and Jews, the hills of the former Yugoslavia red with the blood of Serbs, Croats, and Muslims; this future is a direct result of the distortion of our historical mirror. It must be the challenge of history, "Black" or otherwise, to provide a mirror in which we see the totality of ourselves.

I come from the nigger yard of
yesterday,
Leaping from the oppressors hate,
and the scorn of my self,
From the agony of the dark hut
in the shadow and the hurt of things
From the long days of cruelty
and the long nights of pain
down to the wide streets of
tomorrow, of the next day
Leaping I come, who cannot see
will hear

AN
ESSAY
BY
TERRENCE
BLACKMAN

I come from the nigger yard of
yesterday
leaping from the oppressor's hate
and the scorn of myself
I come to the world with scars
upon my soul
wounds upon my body,
fury in my hands
I turn to the histories of men and
the lives of the peoples
I examine the shower of sparks
the wealth of dreams
I am pleased with the glories and sad
with the sorrows
rich with the riches; and poor
with the loss
From the nigger yard of yesterday
I come with my burden
To the world of tomorrow I turn
with my strength.

Martin Carter

Revolutionizing The Body

French Writer Monique Wittig Honored by CLAGS

BY DEIRDRE MAHONEY

The French writer and theoretician Monique Wittig was chosen as the recipient of the fourth annual David R. Kessler Award by the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies (CLAGS), based at the Graduate Center. The event, which took place on Friday, December 1, 1995, was similar in format to those of previous years: a greeting and general introduction from Martin Duberman, the founding director of CLAGS and a professor of History at the Graduate Center, followed by three speakers familiar with the awardee's work and contribution to the field of Lesbian and Gay studies, who "introduced" the person honored. The awardees of the past three years, Joan Nestle, Edmund White and Barbara Smith, each lectured on a subject of their choice, but this event was different in several ways. CLAGS's 1995 award honored not only an exceptional Lesbian or Gay scholar, but one whose mother tongue and primary working language is not English. In addition, the event was announced as a "reading of texts," rather than a lecture.

Monique Wittig, a professor of French at the Univ. of Arizona, has written several experimental, specifically lesbian novels: *L'Opopanax*, *Les Guerilleres*, *Le Corps lesbien* and, recently, *Virgile, non*. She has also published an elemental lesbian dictionary, co-authored with Sande Zeig, *Brouillon pour un dictionnaire des amantes*, and an English-lan-

guage anthology of her theoretical texts, *The Straight Mind*, as well as many essays, short stories and translations.

The three women chosen to "introduce" Wittig were Judith Butler, Erika Ostrovsky and Namascar Shaktini. Butler was unable to attend and her paper was read by Ann Pellegrini; her text reflected a sense of indebtedness to a lesbian foremother. The presentations by Ostrovsky and Shaktini were those of contemporary and friend; both have written and continue to write extensively on Wittig. Shaktini's position was a truly privileged one, as she had been a student in Paris during May 1968 and later attended the first Paris meeting of what was to become the MLF, the Mouvement de liberation des femmes (the Women's Liberation Movement)—which, she pointed out, was held exactly 25 years previous, on December 1, 1970—where she met Wittig.

The presenters went to great lengths detailing the linguistic and conceptual literary innovations achieved by Wittig, from her insistence on using all-female or neuter pronouns ("elles" and "on") to her later use of a divided female subject, ("j/e"). One of Wittig's most famous proclamations, "A lesbian is not a woman," was discussed and several of her political actions described, such as the demonstration at the Arc de Triomphe honoring the anonymous wife of the unknown soldier buried there.

Finally, it was Wittig's turn to speak and she announced that she would be reading from her recent novel *Virgile, non* in the original French, while Barbara Page would be reading from



Wittig waiting her turn at the podium in the Proshansky

the English translation by David Le Vay with Margaret Crossland, entitled *Across the Acheron* (London: Peter Owen).

Wittig explained that the novel, set in San Francisco, was a Dantesque journey into the "desert of hell," by the main character, known simply as "Wittig," accompanied by the woman who is her guide, the enigmatic Manastabal. The bilingual reading began with Wittig's reading of the first chapter of the book, entitled "The Overture," then "The Dialogue," "The Eagle," and "The Laundromat," each followed by Barbara Page's reading of the English translation.

For those, like myself, who could savor Wittig's original French and appreciate its nuances, this reading was delightful and very entertaining. Wittig is surprisingly witty both in her use of language and in her delivery. Unfortunately, much of the wit was lost in translation, although the unique premise of the book and its author's sin-

gular vision were striking nonetheless.

But why is Monique Wittig so important? The linguistic and political ramifications of Wittig's work are often mentioned. Patriarchal structure, for example, the touchstone of the majority of Western literature, is circumvented in her novels. Although Wittig's vision of lesbian self-determination and self-rule might be judged as utopian by some critics, it is crucial to view Wittig and her socio-political stance in the context of the 1960's and 1970's, when the depiction of a group of lesbians as warriors, for example, was new and radical—and deeply unsettling for many readers. Even feminism, during its period as an active movement to create social change, was having a rocky time on both sides of the Atlantic. And Wittig's project was even more far-reaching.

Monique Wittig burst on the French literary scene over 30 years ago with her feet firmly planted in the avant-garde "tradition" of the nouveau roman (new novel). But unlike a Robbe-Grillet, Duras or Sarraute, Wittig brought with her the controversial issue of lesbian sexuality, a radical position she has continued to affirm. Wittig's sexuality and activism are integral parts of her baggage as a writer. Perhaps they are even her inspiration.

The depth of Wittig's revolutionary scheme and commitment is clear. In her most recent novel *Virgile, non*, the heroine "Wittig" encounters a crowd of hysterically homophobic women at a laundromat. She tries to prove to them that she, although a lesbian, is built exactly as they are, and disrobes—always a radical act for a woman in a public place. This act has the effect of heightening their fear and making their insults even more visceral. "Wittig" is frustrated; her desire for the group to view her as a sister and friend has failed although she has given her "all"—her body—to win them over. She is "rescued" by Manastabal and thus released from a heterosexual "catch 22."

This sequence could be interpreted in a variety of ways: 1) Heterosexuals and homosexuals are destined to misunderstand each other; 2) New techniques must be devised to combat homophobia; 3) Encounters between homosexuals and heterosexuals must occur on common ground, so that neither side will feel "invaded;" 4) Until heterosexuals learn to accept sexual and gender difference, they are better avoided; etc.

This example illustrates what I believe to be a key aspect of Wittig's project: to provoke the reader to reflect on subjects—of a literary or social nature—that are often uncomfortable; that the reader might otherwise prefer to avoid. It is with issues like the confrontation and working through of homophobia—whether present in others or internalized within ourselves—that Wittig hits her mark.

In addition to her considerable stylistic and conceptual innovations, Monique Wittig brings social and political issues into her fiction and essays for the benefit and/or discomfort of all of her readers, thus enriching and expanding the domain of Lesbian and Gay literature.

Deirdre Mahoney, currently on a extended hiatus from the Ph.D. Program in Comparative Literature, is a member and supporter of CLAGS.

Searching for a Mentor

Academia's Perils and Pitfalls

BY TERENCE BLACKMAN

PERHAPS THE MOST important aspect of graduate study is the mentoring of students by faculty members. In this article I wish to sketch a model for this process that I hope will provide some guidance on this issue to all students and faculty members in all disciplines here at the Graduate Center.

For most professors the guiding ethic is the maxim: "Publish or Perish." Hence they work long hours to ensure the continuing production of grants and papers. This situation is pushed to the extreme at the Graduate Center. Thus students routinely find themselves in their fourth year of graduate study without having had any the substantive collaborations with the members of faculty in their department which might lead to a doctoral thesis.

It seems to me that at the core of this problem is the lack of efficacy of traditional modes of communication between students and faculty, and a lack of real commitment on the part of the institution to the development of its student scholars. The effects of this lack of communication and institutional commitment are particularly evident among the community of minority scholars at the Graduate Center. Quite frequently, one hears stories of students dropping out or complaining about the lack of advisors. In an era in which GSUC publicly states its commitment to the recruitment and retention of minority students the lack of a mentoring policy belies the seriousness of this assertion.

The most important issue for improving communication has to do with students and faculty members making contact on a "one on one basis." I think

no one will question that the personal interest on the part of a particular faculty member in the work of a particular student creates conditions conducive for the intellectual development of both parties. In a diverse and multi-cultural environment there needs to be formal strategies designed to effect such a coming together. Such a strategy should incorporate the following components:

1. The institution should set aside a portion of its budget specifically designated for mentoring. Funding is crucial in order to demonstrate the institutions' commitment to the idea of mentoring as an important facet of graduate education.

2. Concomitant with the disbursement of such funds to departments, the institution must review and approve plans for developing "one on one" contact submitted by the different departments.

On the departmental level the following items should be contained in any "one on one" document:

1. Each student at the beginning of their sojourn at the institution should be assigned to a member of faculty whose task it should be to shepherd that student through the graduate study process. Such a mentor should render advice on filling in academic gaps, the scheduling of comprehensive exams, financial aid opportunities, etc.

2. Each faculty member should ensure that he or she speaks with every student in his or her class on an individual basis for at least a minimum of one hour per semester, in an effort to advise on areas of possible thesis material. The scheduling of class lunches is also key in this regard. (Funding for these events is very critical; presently at the Graduate Center, implicit in an invitation to lunch is a responsibility to pay. For the student who is forced to say no to such an invitation due to financial duress, the promise of equal opportunity is unfulfilled.)

3. A semesterly departmental luncheon in which all faculty and students interact is also required.

4. It should be the policy of each department to make available to all of its students copies of past comprehensive exams. They should also provide a comprehensive exam tutorial as a part of the curriculum. (It has been my experience that access to old exam papers constitutes gaining access to a network whose complexity is akin to the enigma code.)

While we wait for the implementation of these recommendations let me advise students in search of mentors to adopt the following strategies:

1. Try to initiate as much "one on one" contact with faculty as possible (Please avoid excessive obeisance, do not be deterred by the locked doors, and turned backs most professors like to talk).

2. It would be helpful to attempt to read papers published by prospective mentors. (Such a list can always be garnered in the library).

3. Try to accept as many invitations to lunch as is financially possible.

4. Investigate, by way of speaking with other students, the effectiveness of a particular faculty member as a mentor. (This might be the most important thing that you do at the Graduate Center. Student organizations are also another source for such information.)

Finally, let me offer the following thoughts. It is unthinkable to me that an institution such as ours should have no clearly defined policy on such a crucial aspect of the academic endeavor. While the absence of a model might have well served a homogeneous community, the need for a new model is vital in a diverse environment such as exists today. It is with this in mind that I strongly urge those who read this to consider seriously methods for actualizing such a structural change.

How can the reduction of remedial courses CUNY offers to entering and enrolled college undergraduates result in higher academic standards and improved scholastic performance? In December of 1995 *The New York Times* reported that, "This fall's class of entering freshmen at the City University of New York, the first group subject to tougher high school standards, is academically the best prepared in two decades, according to their school transcripts and the results of entrance examinations. As a result, 2,300 fewer students are taking remedial courses this fall - 26 percent of the freshman class, down from 36 percent last year - according to university officials."

One would think that the lack of remedial programs originally devised to help ill prepared and under achieving students adapt to the rigors of college course work would lead to decreased retention rates. This has not been the case, and in fact the opposite appears to be true.

According to *The Times* article, the surprising trend is largely due to a newly inaugurated plan between CUNY and the city public schools system called the College

Preparatory Initiative (CPI), in which high school students must take mandatory Regents level English, Math, and Science.

What is the College Preparatory Initiative and what factors contributed to its implementation three years ago? To understand the dynamics of the CPI program one has to examine the transformations experienced by CUNY during the past 25 years. In 1970 CUNY established its beneficent "open admissions" policy, as a marketing device to counteract declining enrollments, which guaranteed admission to every New York City high school graduate. Simultaneously, CUNY formulated the most extensive remedial programs in the history of the university. With the mid-1970s financial crunch CUNY eliminated open admissions in 1976, but the university retained its elaborate remediation services. Open admissions exist today only in CUNY's 6 community colleges. Participation in the remedial courses that CUNY offered in the 1970s and 1980s swelled so much that the university became renowned for its remedial teaching, a somewhat dubious distinction.

Since the early 1990s CUNY has tried to rectify the educational short-comings of the New York City public high schools' curricula by pressuring them and the state to elevate academic standards. In 1991 CUNY launched a visionary collaborative effort with the Board of Education, culminating in the College Preparatory Initiative, to encourage students to take tougher courses in high school before they enter college. Two years later Schools Chancellor Ramon C. Cortines announced in 1993 that he was requiring all students to take Regents level English, Math, and Science. Last Fall the NYS Education Commissioner, Richard P. Mills, and the Board of Regents ruled that they would require all students to take Regents level classes and voted to eliminate the minimum competency tests instituted in the 1970s. Moreover, under a proposal formulated by Governor George Pataki, college students would automatically lose their financial aid if their GPAs fall below a 2.0 or C.

Approximately seventy percent of the city's 25,000 public high school graduates apply to CUNY annually. In the four years since CUNY launched CPI, the number of freshmen from NYC public schools with a year or more of college preparatory Math rose by 29%. Those with more than one year of Science increased by 19%. Students with four years of college preparatory English courses rose to over fifty percent. However, only 72% of community college freshmen had taken CPI courses in English, Math or Science.

The figures are more impressive for students enrolled in the 10 senior colleges. In order to be admitted, students need an overall GPA of B, or a 3.0,

CUNY REMEDIATION SERVICES in Jeopardy

EXTINCTION



RON WINLEY

which is an admission standard that CUNY implemented fifteen years ago. Last year CUNY raised the admissions requirements for entry into the senior colleges to a B plus (3.3 GPA). Not surprisingly, 90% of freshmen at the senior colleges had taken a year or more of CPI courses, particularly Math. Sixty-five percent of students had completed a year of Science and 65% had completed four years of CPI English.

The positive results of the College Preparatory Initiative were most evident, in this year's freshman class at CUNY. In Math, 79% of students passed their exams, an eight percent increase from the preceding year. In an interview with *The Times*, Jay Herschenson, Vice Chancellor for University Relations, remarked that, "When we administer skills tests in Math and Writing, we find that students who are pursuing Bachelor's degrees are the best prepared since such tests were first introduced in the late 1970s." By the year 2,000, public high school students will have taken at least one Regents level course in Fine Arts; two years of Science; three years of Math; and four years of English and Social Studies, before entering CUNY.

We are very encouraged by the various indicators of the important academic preparation of high school graduates who are now enrolling at the City University of New York. We expected that the College Preparatory Initiative would result in increasing numbers of better prepared students and we will continue to work closely with the public school system to monitor and support future progress.

This is what CUNY Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds said to *The New York Times* last December.

Unfortunately, however, the seeming past successes of the CPI program will

quite possibly bring much hardship and sacrifice to prospective CUNY undergraduates in the future. As David M. Yaffee (a GSUC Ph.D. student in the English Department who teaches at Baruch College) correctly demonstrated in his excellent article that appeared in January of 1996 in *The Village Voice*, "CUNY's commitment to remediation may have produced mixed results, but the need for remediation is a result of the high schools' deficiencies, not CUNY's." Next year, as a cost-cutting measure, CUNY aims to make significant reductions in its remediation services at both the senior and community colleges. Furthermore, negotiations are in progress to administer CPI Written Assessment Tests to students in their junior year with the stipulation that, if juniors do not satisfactorily pass the WAT, they may be ineligible to graduate in their senior year.

If CUNY inflates its academic standards too much, such as to the point of exclusive selectivity, the university runs the risk of not only alienating potential students, resulting in lost tuition revenue, but also tarnishing its own shining example a first rate equal opportunity educational institution. The administration must be cognizant of the possibility that indigent public high school students with promising academic records may opt to apply to other schools rather than CUNY.

While part of the improvements registered by last fall's freshmen is obviously owing to higher academic standards both in the public schools and CUNY's admissions criteria, another attributable cause for the increases in academic performance is due to the enormous financial pressures needy students must endure because of last year's tuition hike

and the dreaded 10% impending cut in financial aid. In addition, CUNY had expected enrollments to increase from 203,000 to 215,000. Instead, enrollments fell to 206,500. According to February 9, 1996, piece in *Newsday*, CUNY administration predicts that as many as 11,000 students may drop out of school next year. Moreover, thanks to Governor Pataki, with another projected tuition increase in the amount of \$250.00 per semester in the pipeline, the eleven thousand student drop out figure cited above may be a very conservative estimate.

CUNY's installation of the novel CPI Program raises the ethical question of whether or not a public university is required to offer remedial courses at all. Invariably, the answer to this contentious query is an emphatic yes. First, were it not for the presence of CUNY's huge student body, the university would be non-existent because CUNY is vitally dependent upon federal, state, and city funding, as well as students' hard earned tuition dollars, for its general operating budget. Second, for CUNY to eliminate completely its outstanding remedial programs in the future—the administration's ultimate objective—not only represents a flagrant reversal of the university's own mission statement but would also be construed as a symbolic rejection of thousands of inner-city students who may depend on remediation services to succeed academically. Finally, a strong remedial program is a powerful intellectual incentive that gives CUNY a competitive edge over other institutions in the city. Thus, CUNY has a vested interest to ensure that its disadvantaged student population achieves scholastically. To extinguish remedial programs at the community and senior colleges would be a shameful scar in the relatively unblemished history of the City University of New York.

8 LAUNCHING A PSC UNION DRIVE AT THE GSUC

BY ERIC MARSHALL

IT IS NO LONGER news that the protracted national attack on higher education has sunk so low as to question even the purpose, validity, and (pardon the expression) the return-on-investment of post-secondary education. Nor is it news that the state and local governments of New York have proposed additional draconian budget cuts for 1996-97 on top of the already debilitating cuts of 1995-96. And again, it is not news that among the hardest hit by these cuts is the CUNY grad student/adjunct. What may be news to some of you, however—good news, it is hoped—is that there is now an activist organization at the GSUC openly advocating on behalf of this unorganized, disenfranchised, shamefully exploited segment of the CUNY labor force.

In January, after a year and a half of operation, The Adjunct Organizing Project (AOP) of the DSC—to be known hereafter as the CUNY Adjunct Project (CAP)—hired Vinny Tirelli as Project Director. Since its inception, this organization has been compiling an active database of CUNY adjuncts in an effort to ascertain who and where we are, and what our professional lives are like—the typical CUNY adjunct, for instance, has been teaching in the system for 5.5 years, at 6 credits per semester, has an average class size of 30 students, and indicates only moderate degree of influence in determining what classes s/he will teach.

More importantly, however, the CAP was created to disseminate relevant professional information to the nearly 9000 adjuncts throughout the CUNY system. For example, did you know that, currently full-time CUNY graduate students who work on a part-time basis at any City University unit are exempt from coverage under the Social Security Act and should not have Social Security Tax withheld from their paychecks (1993-95 GSUC Bulletin, p.44)?

Unfortunately it is the case that few, if any, payroll departments at the campuses check to see if an adjunct is a current GSUC student, and therefore rarely, if ever, do they offer this option, which will save the typical adjunct \$350-\$750 per year. So go check those old W2 forms. If you have had Social Security Tax withheld from your CUNY adjunct income, and would like to reclaim that money, pick up and file the simple 1040X "Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return" form (available at

STUDENT

STRUGGLES...

RON WINLEY



Building the Union: the Campus Adjunct Project at work

the CAP office, BM11). Included with your request should be a copy of the relevant W2 forms, and a letter from the Registrar's office stating that you were a full-time student at the GSUC during the year in question. The statute of limitations for adjusting back tax returns is three years.

Of course, our union, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), should be informing us of rights and privileges such as this. But they don't. In fact, over the past several years the present PSC leadership (known as CUUC), has not only acquiesced to a great extent to governmental budget cuts, and succumbed to pedagogically indefensible edicts from 80th Street, but has also made clear their disinterest in CUNY's adjunct labor force. Where the union maintains an agency shop for full-timers (they all must pay either union dues and receive full mem-

bership, or the equivalent agency fee and receive no membership) they do not maintain such a system for part-timers. As a result, the overwhelming majority of full-timers are PSC members, and the overwhelming majority of part-timers are not. Far from surprising, however, this tactic is consistent with the way that labor unions have shot themselves in their collective foot over the past thirty years. Their strategy of catering to the upper levels of the bargaining unit at the expense of the lower, and their attempt to enforce the divisive two-tier system which diminishes internal resistance even while it erodes the overall strength of the union, is typical of what has caused the decline of labor in America. We join, this stops.

If the present activities at Yale University have taught us anything, it is that the interests of full and part-time faculties are inseparably linked. Attempts to divorce the two faculty constituencies will have disastrous effects.

The Shame of New Haven served only to highlight the precarious balance in which full and part-time faculties co-exist, and the devastating schism that can open up between them if allowed.

A situation such as this could probably not occur at CUNY—the adjunct labor

force is far too big, and far too heavily relied upon, and, unlike the Yale TA, the CUNY adjunct is fully respon-

sible for the teaching and grading of his or her students. Also the CUNY adjunct has a recognized labor union—this is, after all, what the Yale TA was fighting for—which could not afford to let such a fiasco occur. Our problem is not no union but a union that abuses, and condones the exploitation of us. We have to join and change the union before we can have any real power to reverse the administration's (and the PSC's) policy of sacrificing full-time jobs to part-time ones—a practice which ultimately destroys the educational foundation of the university, as it overtakes the undercompensated powerless workforce. A valuable lesson must be learned from our colleagues at Yale. We must take proactive measures to strengthen the part-timer position within both CUNY and

the PSC.

The CAP is currently engaged in a massive campaign of information distribution, particularly as it pertains to the PSC and the upcoming contract vote. We encourage all adjuncts to join the PSC immediately, and let your voice be heard. Vote on the contract. Next year the union leadership comes up for election. We can no longer afford the old fashioned, ineffective service model of labor unionism. Vote for a new activist union that will openly, faithfully, and energetically defend your rights, your job, your college and your university. Vote for a new union characterized by communication, discussion, and interaction; one committed to a coalition between full and part-time faculties and the disparate factions around CUNY; one which centralizes part-timer concerns and involving part-timers in the decision-making processes; and one dedicated to progressive, activist thinking, and to the protection of the affordable, quality CUNY education.

Join the PSC. Make our numbers count.

THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS (PSC) labor contract, under which all CUNY adjuncts work, expired on January 31, 1996. Negotiations are in progress for the new three-year contract which will be voted on by all union members later this spring. The CAP was requested to provide the New Caucus with a list of part-timer demands to be considered for inclusion in this new labor agreement.

The following is a slightly revised draft of that list—feel free to send comments to the CAP.

✓ PSC must enforce article 4.2 of the most recent contract, the maintenance of an agency shop, and check-off option, for all members of the collective bargaining unit, including all part-timers. This would come in conjunction with a reduction in part-timer dues from the current \$133.20/year to a more reasonable rate, perhaps

around \$40 or \$50/year.

✓ Part-timers must receive wages pro-rated to the relevant full-timer salary scale, based on the appropriate step on the contractual salary charts and the number of courses taught. This rate should not be less than one-ninth of the full-time annual salary per course taught.

✓ Part-timers must be vested in the health insurance program immediately upon commencement of employment.

✓ PSC must guarantee a one year participation continuation option for health coverage to all part-timers after the cessation of teaching duties.

✓ Graduate Assistants A, B, and C and all GTF's should follow the adjunct lecturer eligibility requirement guidelines for participation in

the health insurance program.

✓ Part-timers must receive one-year appointments, except when engaged for the express purpose of filling a one-semester sabbatical-leave slot.

✓ Teaching limitations, in terms of number of courses and/or credits taught, must be removed or established on par with the full-timers.

✓ Part-timers must be guaranteed equal access (in policy and practice) to travel and research funds at the campuses.

✓ Part-timers must be fairly compensated for all administrative responsibilities.

✓ Part-timers must receive consideration for release/reassigned time.

✓ PSC must engage in active efforts

to protect the professoriate, such as the insistence that money designated for full-time lines not be used to hire additional part-timers.

✓ PSC must maintain an active part-time faculty list at all times.

✓ Current part-timers must have employment priority over retirees who opt to assume part-time duties, as is their prerogative.

✓ Part-timers must be guaranteed office space sufficient to store course materials, make phone calls, and meet privately with students. Furthermore, minimally acceptable standards must be established and codified for the sharing of office space.

✓ Non-reappointment schedule guidelines, as stipulated by article 10.1.a.3 of the most recent contract, must be strictly enforced.—E.M.

MILLIONS IN FRANCE MARCH AGAINST CUTS

BY MAUREEN OWENS

Last spring in response to Pataki's proposals for raising CUNY tuition and cutting jobs and services, CUNY students responded in protest. Students organized CUNY Coalition meetings, publicizing how damaging to the University system the cuts would be. Some of the cuts went through, but they were perhaps not as severe as they could have been. Students at CUNY have been paying tuition for two decades and the memory of free public education seems for some, perhaps, a relic of the past.

That is not the case in France. For French students during the strikes and protests last fall, it was never a question of raising tuition. They pay no tuition. There is a \$300 student fee paid annually which provides all students not only their education but with health care as well. Students do not have to get jobs to pay higher fees because the government gives all qualifying students with a modest monthly stipend. It is understood that the quality of learning would be sacrificed if students were forced to work while going to school full time. The teacher's union has stated that, "Higher education is a public service and must have the necessary means to make it work effectively." They have consistently demanded that higher education be made available to everyone without any barriers to matriculation and at the same time that it remain of high quality.

One might wonder what all the strikes were about. For students, the most pressing problem is the severe overcrowding at all the universities. Recently it was decided that the baccalaureate exam, which is the only requirement for entrance into college, be scaled so that only 80% of all high school students would be eligible to continue their education if they so desired. In addition, France has been suffering for a long time from a very high rate of unemployment which averages 12%. To exacerbate the problem, there is no system of guidance counselors or advisors, so oftentimes students sign up haphazardly for their courses. Nanterre University, one of universities in the Paris system, is a good example of the dire need that exists for change in the educational system. Built in 1968 (indeed it was there that the student uprising of 1968 began) for 12,000 students, it currently enrolls 36,000 students.

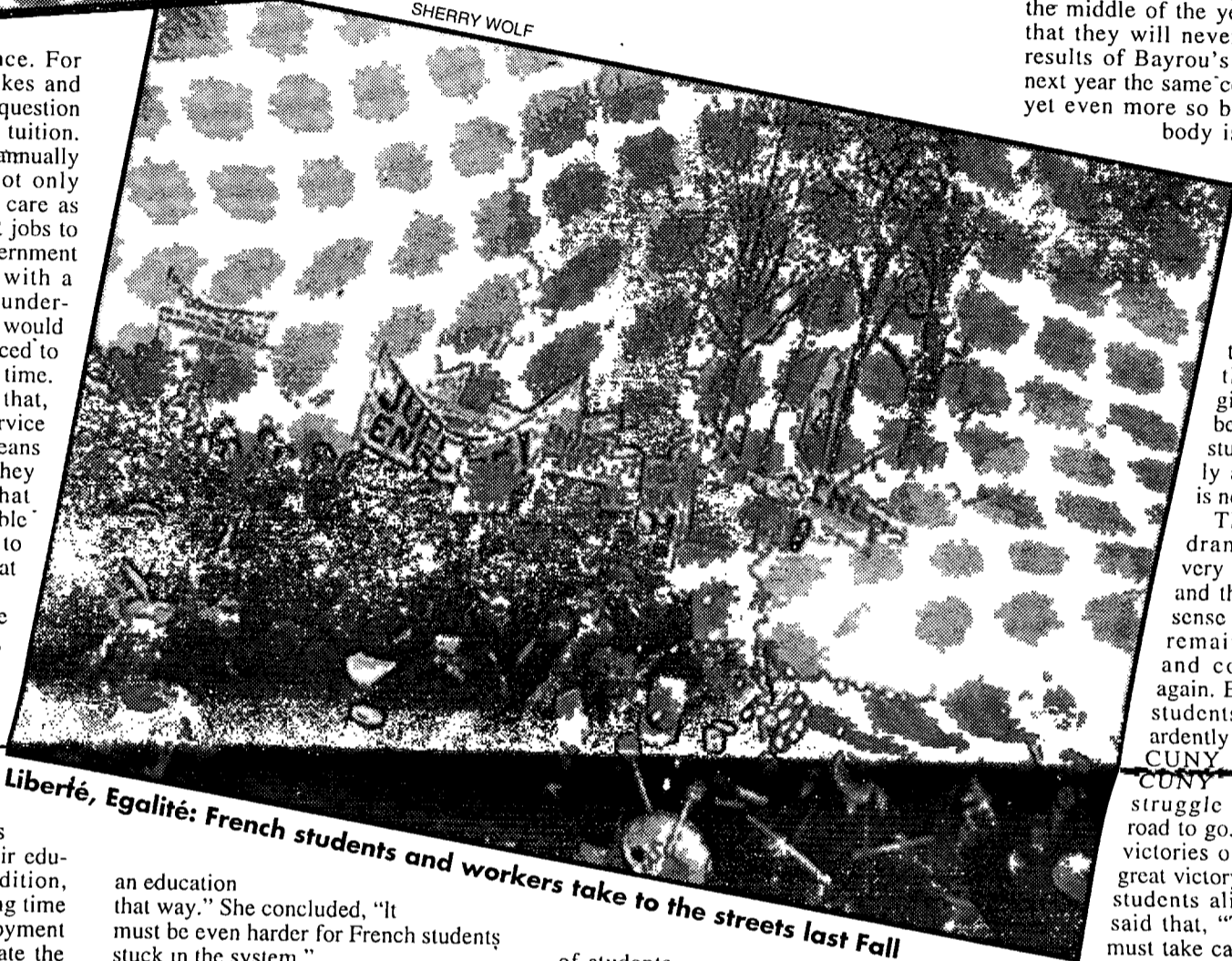
Clearly, there isn't enough space. Classrooms that were built to hold 20 or 30 students now regularly hold 50 students. There is a severe shortage of the most basic things. Teachers are supposed to bring their own markers to write on the boards. Minimal use of photocopying is frowned upon and becomes impossible, as one photocopying machine after another fails into disrepair and is never fixed. Everyone is affected by the scarcity of chairs. (Desks are considered to be an unnecessary extra.) During the strike, this problem was illustrated when the students locked all the chairs in one classroom. It doesn't seem possible that all the chairs in an academic building serving hundreds of students everyday should be able to fit in one room but not only was it possible but there was room to spare!

Prof. Blancol an English professor at Lehman College is doing a year exchange teaching at the University of St. Denis. He has remarked that his entire teaching style is impeded. He is accustomed to roaming the classroom to animate his students. Due to the extreme overcrowding at St. Denis he is pinned up against the door and forced into the corner every time a late student arrives.

Lisa Donegan, a Lehman student on the CUNY Paris Exchange, said, "I dropped some classes because they were too crowded. 60 students is too many to learn properly and often there was so much noise I couldn't even hear the professor. It is very frustrating trying to get

GLOBAL LESSONS

SHERRY WOLF



Liberté, Égalité: French students and workers take to the streets last Fall

an education that way." She concluded, "It must be even harder for French students stuck in the system."

After just a few classes held under these arduous conditions there is no longer any doubt as to what provoked the students to go on strike. Yet there are still two more factors that pushed the students to protest.

First, as a result of the bomb scares that plagued Paris for many months, several of the university exits were sealed off in an attempt to check bags and control who came into the building. So, for example, the main academic building at Nanterre that normally has 5 central exits then only had 2. Thus, the overcrowding that made learning nearly impossible now also created an enormous safety risk as well.

Secondly, next to Nanterre University is the Leonardo DiVinci University just opened this year. The university was built with public funds but charges a tuition fee of \$6,000. The idea of paying tuition is unacceptable to most French students because the cornerstone of their education system is that it should be open to all. Later, it was discovered that Nanterre with 36,000 students had received 500 million francs while a new luxurious university was funded with 400 million francs for only 158 students! An outraged student exclaimed, "Our universities are overflowing while the private university is deserted!" Also, knowing how much money was spent on the very controversial and unpopular nuclear tests added insult to injury for many students. There are other services that any CUNY student would consider to be essential like the need for a decent library, better sports facilities and available computers, which weren't really addressed because these issues were considered to be secondary.

At this point, most students felt that their only option was to strike. Approximately one-eighth of the students continued to go to class but overall there was an overwhelming sense of solidarity. Many believed the vast numbers

of students could indeed force the Monsieur Bayrou, National Minister of Education to allot more money to the universities. Thousands of students protested throughout the country and in Paris in front of the Sorbonne, considered to be the center of student life, and in front of the National Assembly to obtain meetings with the Minister of Education.

Significantly, because of the economic conditions faced by most French people, the general public sympathized with the strike. There was an overall feeling of optimism that although small scale student strikes had occurred in the past with little or no success, that this time they were united and their demands would be met. What added to the momentum and power of the strike was that a few weeks after the students went out on strike they were joined by the railroad workers protesting Juppe's new retirement plan and then by all subway workers and even by many postal workers and telephone operators. Therefore instead of just a few thousand students scattered throughout the country, a virtual general strike took place in all the major cities and attended by hundreds of thousands of strikers demanding reform of the entire system.

Public support remained high with over 80% of the public supporting the strikers even if they were inconvenienced by the railroad workers' strike. There was no longer any talk about what the students wanted because everything revolved around Juppe's reform plan. The Minister of Education, Bayrou, has promised more money to universities and especially to those that are suffering the most. Jacques Pasqua has admitted that it was a "mistake to use public funds for a private university." Yet as the second semester begins nothing has changed except that now the students are forced to work even harder in the same dangerous, disorganized,

overcrowded conditions in an attempt to make up the work that was missed during the strike. Particularly hurt by the strikes are the students preparing to take national exams (students preparing to be teachers, for example) because the Minister of Education has refused to postpone the dates of the exams scheduled for mid-March.

A student at Nanterre named Alexandre De Albarque laments, "Sure the government has promised money but in my opinion the students will never see the color of it." The students seem to understand that new buildings couldn't possibly be built immediately and that new teachers aren't going to be hired in the middle of the year, but they worry that they will never see any concrete results of Bayrou's promises and that next year the same conditions will exist, yet even more so because the student body is constantly growing.

Farid Baglenane concludes, "The student strikes aren't over. Demands haven't been met. The situation remains the same even if the students have given up the strikes because they want to study." He ominously adds, "Revolution is near."

That might seem dramatic but in fact very little has changed and there is the overall sense that the situation remains very volatile and could soon erupt again. Even if the French students protested more ardently than last spring's CUNY students, their struggle still has a long road to go. Nonetheless, the victories of last fall were a great victory for workers and students alike. One student said that, "The Government must take care of the students because they are the future of the country." Yet this is no longer a reality in France today, anymore than it is in the United States.

Maureen Owens is a student in the French Department studying and working in Paris this year.

Columbia University

Starving For Diversity

On April 9 22 Columbia University students were arrested by NYPD officers after staging an overnight sit-in to demand Asian-American and Latino Studies programs, followed the next day by a rally of 500. The event follows two months of meetings and protests involving hundreds, including a three-hour sit-in at the dean's office last month. Students have demanded the establishment of fully-funded Latino and Asian-American Studies programs. The administration has promised to meet these demands for more than a year but has yet to provide any satisfactory, concrete plans. Out of frustration students have begun to organize, forming the Ad Hoc Committee for Ethnic Studies.

Recently Columbia University administrators proposed to put Latino and Asian-American Studies in the newly-built up American Studies Department, a severely-compromised offer as such a move would deny the concentrations formal departmental status. Some students have complained that the Ad Hoc Committee has restricted its activities too much to closed-door meetings with administrators, although the recent protest and a hunger strike planned for this month seem to mark a return to building a broader movement that seemed to be emerging in February.

-LEE WENGRAT

CCNY I: ETHNIC STUDIES DEPARTMENTS CLOSED

CITY COLLEGE PRESIDENT Yolanda Moses announced plans last month to close the Black Studies, Latino-Caribbean Studies, Asian Studies and Jewish Studies Departments. The department cutbacks came on top of massive cuts already pushed through at CCNY. Moses wants the departments downgraded to "programs." This would mean that students could no longer major in specific ethnic studies subjects and would only be able to take a limited number of classes during the year.

A CCNY faculty member told *The New York Times* that the move to dump the departments was designed to silence Leonard Jeffries, the controversial former head of the Black Studies Department. Moses was also motivated by "financial concern," the faculty member said. These are both hollow explanations. First of all, Jeffries—the subject of controversy because of his Afrocentric views—was demoted as head of the department last spring and has said he would not seek reappointment.

Secondly, while administrators have consistently used budget constraints as an excuse to close departments and raise tuition, it is clear that funds are available if the administration wants something. For instance, an iron-clad fence was built around the CCNY campus last summer at a cost of more than \$100,000. And CUNY's Board of Trustees recently came up with \$22 million to pay for an armed security team to patrol campuses in the CUNY system.

Moses says that no tenured faculty will be laid off, but she is planning lay-offs of non-tenured faculty and staff. These job cuts would come on top of layoffs implemented a year ago when CCNY got rid of five departments, including the School of Nursing, which had a three-year waiting list for admission. The elimination of departments along with a \$750 tuition hike has forced CCNY students out of school. Since August 2, 2,500 students have been forced to drop out, according to records from the school's admissions office. Students have begun to organize now to include the fight for ethnic studies departments as part of the struggle against cuts. —KEEANGA TAYLOR

CCNY II: THE COLLABORATOR

AT A SPECIAL EDITION of her monthly press conference, City College president Yolanda T. Moses entertained approximately forty angry students with a psalm to the upside of downsizing.

In her opening statement, Moses expounded on the amenities in closing four ethnic studies departments:

Black Studies, Latino-Caribbean Studies, Jewish Studies, and Asian Studies. Instead, she chimed, interdisciplinary ethnic and area studies programs would be offered. The "cost-effective" programs would now provide students with more "choices." "Programmatic status," read the Office of the President's press release, "will enable each of the ethnic and area studies programs to draw upon the talent and expertise of faculty across disciplines at the College."

Secondly, she stated, no faculty would be cut. There would be no retrenchment. The gutted departments' full-time faculty would be moved to still existing departments. The departments receiving the shipwrecked professors would expand their curricula to incorporate ethnic courses.

When the floor was opened to questions, students,



Yolanda Moses: defensible attacks?

this reporter included, challenged the underpinnings of her decision.

● A hard fought struggle was undertaken over many years to found these departments. Surely, Moses, trained as an anthropologist, would understand the necessity for minorities to be able to represent their histories on their terms? One student put the eliminations in a national perspective. If City College, of all places, cuts its Black Studies department what will other universities do to theirs?

● The claim that no faculty would be cut was inaccurate at best, manipulative at worst. No full-time faculty would be fired. But an unspecified number of adjuncts would be let go. To the claim that Moses only implemented last year's cuts as recommended by a campus-wide retrenchment committee, a pissed-off and now-suspended Graduate Student Council president David Suker pointed out that Moses herself convened

and sat on that retrenchment committee, that she implemented those cuts

● "Cost-effectiveness" isn't intrinsically good. The most "cost-effective" structuring would be a faculty of one. Let the poor prof teach every single course at City College. Cost-effective indeed, but education-ineffective. Education—faculty and staff salaries, supplies, tutoring, etc.—costs money. There's no getting around that.

Less profs, regardless of what "restructuring" is implemented, means a higher student to teacher ratio. Unless the university is banking on a continuation of the exodus of students from the university's rolls, a situation blasphemous for a university that sports "Excellence and Access" pennants across its campus.

One student pointed out the impropriety of spending \$100,000 on new gates while trashing whole departments. Moses pointed out that the money was already allocated for the gates years ago from the CUNY-wide Construction Fund. Hers was a wonk's counterargument. The thrust of the student's argument is refuted because he doesn't know the details. But the absurd bungling of priorities remains: City College has put up shining gates around a disappearing university.

Moses conceded there were problems with these reductions and launched into a Democratic diatribe about Pataki's budgets and the effectiveness of last year's letter-writing campaign, as if the \$15 million cut from City's 1995-6 budget was a victory. Students admonished her for not taking a more vocal stand against assaults on CUNY, and specifically for not combating the lie of austerity. There is certainly enough money out there: One needed only to walk down Madison Avenue near Hunter College to see that. If we as a society conclude that more funding is necessary for public education, it's there to be obtained.

In response, Moses stated that the "reality" of the financial situation foreclosed anything less than implementing the cuts. In economics, it's often noted, behavior is "real" or "rational" if it is designed to maximize monetary returns. If one accepts the premise that those economic returns are earmarked for investors' pockets, then it follows that during down times rational behavior dictates that those who aren't to receive those returns are the ones who are socked with austerity.

She made her arguments unfalsifiable—and embarrassingly dismissive—by claiming students "didn't know what she did" and so presumably could not criticize her actions or lack thereof. Another student sympathized with Moses's position, given all the federal cuts. But that allows Moses off the hook, I responded. Moses is part of a hierarchy currently intent on gutting public education. CUNY college presidents are the Governor's austerity shock troops micromanaging budget-cut

Food for Thought

What's up with the Dining Commons?

BY ALEX VITALE

IN JANUARY students returned to find a number of changes in the 18th floor dining commons. Starting January 2nd, a number of price changes were instituted and some new items were added to the culinary repertoire. Students reported confusion about the status of the "student lunch" and the student discount, so here is a brief synopsis of what's happening on 18.

The "student lunch" has been retained, but the price has been increased from \$2.65 to \$2.95, and the 10% student discount has been eliminated. On the flip side, certain items such as the "chef special" and the salad bar have been reduced in price. According to Restaurant Associates Manager Fernando Baeze, an average reduction in prices of 10% has been made.

Baeze also pointed out that for the last two years, Restaurant Associates has been losing money at the Graduate Center. The increase in the price of the student lunch (the first in 5 years) and some other increases will hopefully make up for this loss. The price change was essential, he said, "In order to keep up the quality; there was no way to avoid a price increase." They have also placed several signs on the Mall advertising the presence of the dining commons to the general public. As of February 1st they have also reduced the operating hours. They are now open from 9:30 am to 6:30pm. Baeze said that the dining commons was typically



Hand in my pocket: feeling the pinch of high prices

empty after these hours.

Restaurant Associates has also made an effort to improve their offerings. They now offer more low-fat items and an expanded salad bar. In a bid for gastronomic multiculturalism, they have added various "rice bowl" dishes (\$4.95) featuring ginger beef and vegetables, chicken, shrimp and occasionally scallops and a new "Mexican action station" (\$5.25), where people can construct their own meals from a selection of meats, rice and beans, from what this Texan feels is a quite adequate collection of toppings and extras including a guacamole with plenty of cilantro. Pre-packaged Kosher meals are also available for both daily meals and catered events.

One nice addition has been the addition of Happy Hour at the bar. The prices at the bar have always been prohibitive for most students and has serviced mostly faculty and visitors. Now, from 4-6pm after the first drink, the rest are half price and free food is available, though the quality is variable. On Friday nights there is now inexpensive draught beer, food and sometimes live music. This has brought much larger crowds up to 18 and given the Grad Center the closest thing to a real student pub.

While prices may be down on average, and the selection of food increased, the new price policy does seem to affect students disproportionately. For many students, the "student lunch" has been

their mainstay. At \$2.65 it was a good deal and competed with bringing a lunch. The options of the "chef special" or the new Mexican action station aren't affordable even at a reduced price. While faculty and outside diners may be enticed by these new offerings and reduced prices, the student standards have become more expensive and their across-the-board discounts on items like soup or sandwiches have been eliminated.

The fact remains that Restaurant Associates is not currently making money, and the problem may get worse. This summer, entire academic programs will begin moving into swing space in anticipation of the move to the B. Altman Building. As a result, Restaurant Associates will lose potentially half of its built-in customer base. Therefore, according to Baeze, "one possibility is that the dining commons may close." This will leave us with only high-priced delis, or hot dogs and pizza.

According to vice-president Bruce Kohan, nothing is decided about what Restaurant Associates is going to do during the interim period. He is satisfied with their presence at the Grad Center and hopes they will stay on during the transition. But this begs a further question: what will happen when we get to 34th Street? Kohan says that dining and catering facilities have been included in the plans but that the specifics concerning a vendor have not been worked out yet. Meetings between Kohan and Restaurant Associates are on-going and you can look here for future updates. ■



implementation.

"Yes, I am a part of it! Yes, I am a part of it!" she admitted. Finally, something accurate. And that's the problem. —ROBERT WALLACE

CCNY III: DISSIDENT DUMPED

A DISCIPLINARY PANEL at City College has suspended the president of the City College graduate student government (Graduate Student Council) for leading protests on campus against last year's budget cuts to higher education. The student, David Suker, was subject to surveillance and harassment from campus police last spring when his name appeared on a university administration 'black list' of student activists who had been arrested at various protest events.

Harassment included: verbal threats from campus police; an on-campus arrest by CUNY 'Peace' Officers for attempting to board a bus to Albany for student lobbying; David Suker attempts to bar his entry to CUNY campuses.

Suker's activism was directed towards saving the university from crippling budget cuts. He became a special target after embarrassing the university and college administration with accusations that CCNY president Yolanda Moses, and CUNY chancellor W. Ann Reynolds, had invited cuts in CCNY's budget by setting up retrenchment committees to recommend firing faculty and eliminating programs. "The university wants to make an example of the most prominent student leaders so the Chancellor can avoid the embarrassment of unruly student protests that expose the public to what's really happening here at City College," said Steven



CARLOS TORRES

Gottlieb, a recent graduate of the masters program in mathematics. The Nursing School, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Theatre and Dance, Classical Languages and Hebrew Departments, the School of Education, and the SEEK program (an Equal Opportunity Program) were all retrenched last year. This year the Black Studies Department was demoted to a program, losing seniority for its faculty.

Suker is highly regarded among students and faculty as a tireless student advocate and organizer in the defense of the City University system and known on all campuses, public and private, throughout New York City as a dedicated and effective student leader. "In my opinion, the CUNY-wide student movement, he's the best organizer we've got. This is a calculated move on the part of the administration to undermine the voice of student dissent." CCNY faculty chair of the Psychology Department William Crain, describing the disciplinary proceedings as "totally inappropriate and disgraceful," called the two semester suspension "excessive."

On the night of the decision to suspend, his roommate was inundated with calls for Mr. Suker. His many activist friends will be organizing protests around his suspension in the days and weeks to come. —ROBERT HOLLANDER

PATAKI THE JOKE MAN

IN APPLAUDING Governor Pataki's proposed cuts in CUNY and SUNY student financial aid, radio troglodyte Howard Stern asked, "SUNY? Isn't she going out with Woody Allen?"

Ha, ha. But many CUNY students are in all likelihood as unaware of their state school brethren's plight as WXRK's talking hemorrhoid. Tracking SUNY's downsizing could, however, aid in understanding and anticipating the nature of new cuts in CUNY. Last year, SUNY's 393,000 students saw their tuition increase by \$750 to \$3,400 a year at four-year colleges and \$3,200 at the two-year colleges to offset a \$186 million cut. The tuition increase forced 10,000 students to drop out.

This year Pataki's budget calls for a \$72 million cut to SUNY's \$1.5 billion operating budget. Pataki called this 4.5% decrease reflective of his commitment to "protect[ing]...the state's investment in higher education." Ha, ha. The cuts, according to Pataki, would likely force another tuition increase of \$250.

His proposal also reduces the Tuition Assistance Program by \$99 million. Moreover, it calls for denying aid to students who don't maintain at least a C average. Reduced aid could force poorer students to find work to pay for their education. More time working means less time studying means lower grades means less or no

aid—a Kafkaesque vortex.

To supposedly counter the impact of the annual onslaught of cuts, the SUNY Board of Trustees recently developed a "Rethinking SUNY" report for submittal to the state legislature. It includes ideas like attaching tuition to cost-of-living indexes, getting a \$10 million transfer in funds that would allow high school seniors to take classes at SUNY, and allowing two university hospitals to become nonprofit corporations. Another proposal seeks a "strategic alliance" of five upstate technical colleges and the Institute of Technology at Utica/Rome. The colleges would consolidate resources, eliminate duplicated programs, and work with corporations to develop course work.



ROB WALLACE

The plan also calls for re-implementing differential tuition. Tuition at the more highly-regarded SUNY University Centers at Binghamton, Buffalo, Albany and Stony Brook would be raised. By how much remains unstated. Though the University Center presidents support differential tuition only if the Centers recovered the additional funds raised, the tuition policy would remain discriminatory. Higher tuition. Decreased access for economically poorer students. A polarized education system. Students unable to afford the university centers would be ghettoized to the cheaper colleges if not forced out of higher education altogether.

As revealed in last month's Clipboard, Queens College president Allen Lee Sessoms advocates a similar arrangement for CUNY; a three-tier system of senior colleges with graduate programs, senior colleges without graduate programs, and community colleges. The top-tier schools would eliminate remedial programs. Sessoms is, in essence, proposing to operationalize at the campus level the recommendations made in CUNY Central's Consolidation Proposal. Fa-la-lunk. —ROBERT WALLACE

DSC

AT THE LAST DSC PLENARY the main item on the agenda was the matter of student participation in the Graduate Council governance and administrative committees. The DSC resolved to fight the current tradition that allows program Executive Officers to appoint faculty members to those committees. To read more on the Graduate Council see Robert Hollander's "annals of administration."

Recently there has been a serious curtailment of student use of the free copy machines at the Graduate Center. This situation has resulted in increased expenditure on the part of students to fulfill their photocopying needs. According to the DSC the shutdown is a function of delays in the processing of Venda-Cards for students. However members of the DSC have been using the machines. This situation reeks of hypocrisy. Given the vital importance of photocopying to the graduate community it is incumbent upon the DSC to implement an interim policy that allows for broader student usage of the machines.

The absence of money for conferences is also an issue of serious concern to the graduate community. The DSC must remember that its primary charge is to conduct the business of the graduate student community and as such it must direct its resources to this end.

The DSC by its actions seems to have bought into the ideology of austerity. As the "Deficit Demons" of Broadway, the DSC would like us to believe that balancing the student government budget is the most important item on the agenda of graduate students. The undermining of quality graduate study at CUNY is an issue of secondary importance. —TYERRENCE BLACKMAN

DINING COMMONS

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BY NOAH ARCENEAUX

ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL MYTHS taught to every American child is the myth of the freedom of the press. According to the First Amendment, the press in the United States is free to print anything it wants without prior government approval. This logic has been extended to radio and television, technologies that were not envisioned by the founding fathers.

But is the American press really free? If I wanted to nit-pick, I could easily write an article about the countless exceptions to the First Amendment; libel and slander laws, national security issues, threats to politicians, etc. My point is not to argue over such technicalities. I believe the American theory of the freedom of the press is fundamentally flawed.

The American press is free in the sense that news reports are not routinely subject to government censorship. The real problem lies with the economic foundation which supports the American press, private-ownership of media outlets with revenue derived from advertising. Audience members represent nothing more than potential customers for advertisers. The information the audience receives is thus determined not by their own needs or interests, but by the advertisers.

This critique of the media is not a new argument. Noam Chomsky, Ben Bagdikian, and Herbert Schiller have all written extensively about the media, and all of these scholars have come to much

the same conclusion. While I readily admit that I have read many of their works, it was not until I studied the history of radio that I firmly understood this critique of the American media.

A 1912 communications law gave official authority over radio to the Secretary of Commerce. This was a year in which radio was used as a substitute for the telegraph—as a means of transmitting messages over long distances. The United Fruit Company, for example, used radio to communicate with ships en route to South America.

In 1920, Frank Conrad started radio station KDKA in Pittsburgh. This station used radio not as means of point-to-point transmission, but as means of disseminating one message to many listeners. Within a few years, hundreds of radio stations started broadcasting and the Secretary of Commerce assigned wavelengths and frequencies without any official policy.

In his study of radio, Robert McChesney cites a 1926 survey of broadcasting. According to this study, 50% of all radio stations operated to supply publicity for the owner's primary business. A car dealership, for example, would have a radio station to promote the car dealership. Of the remaining stations, fully 30% were operated by non-profit groups.

Some of these stations included WCFL, owned by the Chicago branch of the American Federation of Labor. This station featured daily news reports from the labor point of view. WCFL had a powerful transmitter and reached millions of listeners across the country. Another powerful non-profit station was



LEE WENGRAF

WLWL. Run by a Catholic group, the Paulist Fathers, the station presented a wide range of programming. Religious talks, political discussions, and interviews with authors all filled WLWL's airtime.

According to this same study, only 4.3% of all radio stations were "purely commercial." This is to say only 4.3% of all broadcasters in 1926 made their money solely from advertising. The modern method of broadcasting, with money derived from advertising, was not yet common.

In 1926, many radio stations were broadcasting on identical frequencies and powerful transmitters drowned out signals from small radio stations. The situation was so confusing that in 1927 radio stations and listeners alike demanded a resolution to the airwave

chaos. In response, the government passed the Federal Radio Act of 1927 and created a new agency—the Federal Radio Commission.

This new "impartial" agency had the authority to issue broadcast licenses and assign wavelengths. In reality, the commission was hardly impartial and was comprised of former executives from the two fledgling radio networks, NBC and CBS. Network-affiliated radio stations were given the majority of the radio spectrum, forcing the remaining stations to share airtime.

WLWL, for example, was forced to share its wavelength with another station and was barred from transmitting in the evening. It became difficult for WLWL to raise funds from the local community with such restricted airtime. This scenario was repeated across the country. According to another study cited by McChesney, of the more than 200 non-profit radio stations operating in 1927, only 65 remained in 1934. In seven years, the actions of the Federal Radio Commission radically altered the shape of American broadcasting. Non-profit stations were denied access to radio wavelengths and many were effectively destroyed.

NBC and CBS flourished under the Federal Radio Commission and added more radio stations to their growing networks. As the landscape of the radio industry changed, so did the content of American radio programming. Political debates were not as common on network stations, much less religious talks or "news from the labor point of view." The dominance of NBC and CBS meant the dominance of entertainment programming, paid for by advertisers.

Radio stations of the late 20's could broadcast anything they wanted, but only if a sponsor was willing to pay for the time. If no one wanted to sponsor a one-hour talk on different methods of birth control, then the radio audience would never hear this information. In fact, any discussion at all of women's reproductive systems was taboo in the late 20's. WLWL got into legal trouble with the FRC when they attempted such programming. According to government logic, Eddie Cantor songs or Al Jolson routines were suitable radio programming—discussions of birth control were not.

Others may not share my particular fascination with old radio stations, but this episode from broadcast history clearly illustrates a fundamental flaw with the American theory of media freedom. The Federal Radio Commission, through the purely legal process of regulation, effectively silenced many non-profit stations and gave the commercial networks the freedom to dominate the industry.

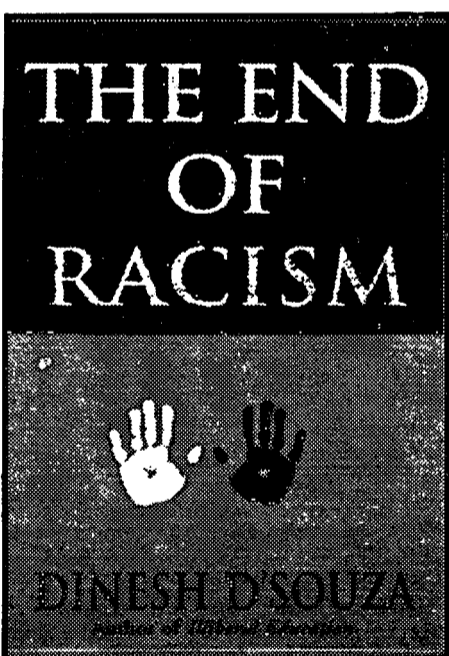
A truly free democratic country would have defended WCFL, WLWL and the other non-profit radio stations. A democracy is based on a free marketplace of ideas, diverse opinions that are freely expressed and easily disseminated. While the American media remains free in an economic sense, how can we claim to have a truly free press if only the views of the privileged are reported?

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The End of Justice

D'Souza's Racist Tract Propounds "Rational Discrimination"

BY LOVELLE CLARK



The End of Racism: Principles for a Multiracial Society. By Dinesh D'Souza. New York: The Free Press. 1995.

IN *THE END OF RACISM*, Dinesh D'Souza has managed to offend African Americans in particular and persons of black African heritage worldwide in practically every paragraph—certainly in every chapter! I can only assume that, because D'Souza himself is not a black person and because he seems to have identified himself so thoroughly with Caucasian Americans—specifically those who hired him and with whom he keeps company at the ultraconservative American Enterprise Institute where he is a Research Fellow—he is able to make the outrageously offensive pronouncements that he does throughout this text with such aplomb. D'Souza identifies so completely with

his adopted central United States culture—i.e., with white Americans—that, for all intents and purposes, we might as well say that a white man wrote this book!

Therein lies the cunning artifice behind the publication and public acceptance of *The End of Racism*. Just as members of the dominating culture have done countless times in the past, they have once again set up a "front man" to espouse their fundamentally racist, Caucasian American-vindicating and glorifying, African American-bashing and -vilifying dogma. And, as also in the past, he wears other than a Caucasian face; in fact, he wears the face of a person of color—technically speaking. However, D'Souza is but one of the latest in a long line of "front men." He carries on the (dis)honorable tradition of such other "esteemed" front men as Clarence Thomas, George Bush's answer to black America's charges regarding continuing discrimination in employment/career opportunities, and; Shelby Steele, the author of *The Content of Our Character*, a piece wherein he questions the continuing efficacy of affirmative action, a policy responsible for his having attained the higher education and professional positions that he has! D'Souza, as someone who also wears the facade of a person of color, yet who is actually a most vocal mouthpiece for the white, far right establishment, falls right in line with such men.

I suspect that D'Souza is so steeped in the identity and mindset of the ultraright, white supremacist, racist segment of this society that he can't even recognize the obviously racist nature of most of what he has written here. How else can one explain such incensing chapter titles as: "An American Dilemma: Was Slavery a Racist Institution?"; "The Invention of Prejudice: The Rise of Liberal Antiracism"; "Is America a Racist Society? The Problem of Rational Discrimination"; "Is Eurocentrism a Racist Concept? The Search for an African Shakespeare" and; "Uncle Tom's Dilemma: Pathologies of Black Culture." I mean, how can anyone with

an iota of sense dare question that slavery—as practiced in earlier centuries by the United States—was anything but a racist institution? (The fact that virtually all the slaves were black Africans and all the slave holders were white Euroamericans is an immediate indicator of the racist nature of the institution of slavery, regardless of any analyses of it as being an economic, "strictly business" proposition for the United States.) And why speak of pathologies of black culture? Isn't white culture rife with its own particular pathologies, chief among them being the psychoemotional anomaly called racism? The only rational response to the question "Is America a racist society?" is a counterquery: "Is the Pope Catholic?" And to imply that prejudice was invented, was something that was made up by somebody, as opposed to its being the expression of the racially biased thought and feeling that it is insults the intelligence of his readers. To give extensive print space to the idea that there has existed a search for "an African Shakespeare" is in and of itself demeaning, and lends credence to the belief of white racial superiority that the highest attainments of human civilizations have been made exclusively by Caucasian people. Why not posit a search for a Caucasian Soyinka, or a Walcott, a Walker, or a Morrison?

D'Souza, in using the term "liberal antiracism," does what ultrarightists have long done, which is to phrase their causes in language that obscures the exact nature of their opposition's philosophical stance, while simultaneously ennobling their own position on an issue. One other such example of this is the choice of the term "pro-life" (rather than "anti-abortionist," which is essentially what they are); this naturally makes one think that their opponents are "anti-life," when in fact they are "pro-choice" (i.e., "pro" the option to choose for the individual most immediately and seriously affected by a pregnancy—the pregnant woman

D'SOUZA CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

GOING ON, KEEPING STRONG: THE 32 B-32J SETTLEMENT

Pure and simple, here and now, unionism would at best produce organizations to perform ambulance service on the industrial battlefield and at worse become caricatures of capitalism controlled by corrupted bureaucrats with a vested interest in thwarting every intelligent effort of the working class for emancipation. The trade union leaders will let you bore from within only enough to throw you out through the hole you bore.—Daniel DeLeon

Although Daniel DeLeon (1852-1914)—the Columbia Law School graduate, radical journalist and editor, political theorist, and leader of the Socialist Labor Party from 1890 until his death—was aiming his invective pen at the American Federation of Labor and its leader Samuel Gompers, DeLeon may as well have been criticizing Gus Bevena, the bungling President of the Service Employees International Union Local 32B-32J, and the other union bureaucrats.

On February 4, 1996, the month-long strike of 35,000 commercial building maintenance workers ended when a contract was ratified between the Local and the Realty Advisory Board (RAB). While touted as a "victory" for the workers by the city's press, management, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, and the union's President, some of 32B-32J's rank-and-file find the contract agreement specious. The ratification, based largely upon compromises at the expense of the union, may lead to a dilution of worker solidarity, weakening of union power, and management's imposition of arbitrary pay scales with diminished or no benefits, and further lay-offs in the future.

The new contract is a pathetic shadow of its former self and does not bode too well for the present rank-and-file and prospective hires. What the strike did accomplish is to heighten public awareness of the plight of New York City's working classes while placing pressure on the RAB to retract its proposed forty percent wage cut for newly hired workers. The present contract as ratified by the union gives maintenance workers a 7% pay raise over the next three years in addition to better health and pension benefits. However, new workers will receive twenty-five percent less than old-timers with no benefits for the next two and half years.

Nonetheless, on February 9th, there was much cause for celebration at the Graduate Center. A party, sponsored by the DSC, the International Socialist Organization, and *The Advocate*, was held in the Student Center in recognition of the maintenance workers who keep the campus sparkling clean. In the festive atmosphere of Salsa music, munchies, and the omni-present keg of beer, maintenance workers and students co-mingled; they ate, drank, danced, and debated the merits and flaws of the new contract.

Chery, an employee of Triangle Company and the Shop Steward at the Graduate Center, said that he would have preferred to continue working during contract negotiations, but that nevertheless he was delighted with the support he and others received from the campus community.

He told *The Advocate*, "I wished they'd let us keep working while they talked. But if we kept working we wouldn't have accomplished what we did, especially for new workers. People walking by really encouraged us, people we didn't even know were admiring us. It gave us courage. Yelling and screaming, it made our day. And when you came out, that was really something."

As Chery knows, had the maintenance employees continued to work in order to draw paychecks while negotiation talks were still in progress, they would have undermined the purpose of the strike itself and jeopardized the bargaining position of the union. Even in this age of rampant anti-unionism, withholding labor and services is still the most effective weapon to cripple management demands and paralyze production.

Although the union's strike is over, 32B-32J's labor management problems are not. The union-busting tactics of the RAB have ricocheted to other places and other workers. Ongoing strikes and lay-

SCRIPPS WINNER: A CUNY PLUS



Mohammad Bazzi

CUNY B.A. STUDENT Mohammad Bazzi was honored last fall as the recipient of the prestigious Scripps Howard Foundation Lighthouse Scholarship. The award is based on academic achievement and is given to students who have demonstrated a commitment to the field of journalism. About 130 scholarships were awarded, with Bazzi chosen for the highest award from among 700 applicants. \$15,000 given over two years.

Bazzi's career in journalism began at the age of 14 when he began working as a free-lance writer for Queens dailies, including the Queens edition of *Newsday*, where he continues to work today. Over the years he has expanded his work to city and national publications.

The award money is intended to cover educational expenses, namely tuition, books and fees. The CUNY B.A. program of which Bazzi is a participant is a kind of honors program for CUNY undergraduates that allows students to take courses on all of the campuses in the system. His home campus is at Hunter College.

After the award was announced last September, several publications ran announcements of the event, including trade publications such as *Editor and Publisher* and weeklys in Bazzi's native Queens. The CUNY Public Relations Office also took the opportunity to publicize the honor bestowed upon one of their students. "It was publicized well," Bazzi commented to *The Advocate*. Many people have called him up but no job offers in the offing—yet. The award has raised questions for him about graduate school and which direction he would like to take his career. He says he probably wouldn't go to graduate school for journalism because he has much of the training already. Instead, he is considering pursuing graduate work in political science or sociology, seeing academic disciplines as better preparation for a full-time career in journalism, his ultimate goal.

Now that *Newsday* is based in Queens, Bazzi has had the chance to do bigger stories for the paper while also working as a staff writer for *New Youth Connections*. Mainly his articles cover political topics. Recently he did a cover story on City Comptroller Alan Hevesi concerning the record amount of money he has spent to settle lawsuits while in office. According to Bazzi's article, a report issued by Hevesi's office documented \$275 million spent on claims, over 90% of which were personal injury cases.

He also did an in-depth article on the Mayor's plan to privatize the city hospitals. The main focus of that article was the negotiations surrounding the sale of the two public hospitals in Queens, Elmhurst Hospital and Queens County. According to Bazzi, the Mayor is aggressively pushing the Queens hospitals because the City sees these particular hospitals as prime merchandise due to their relatively high evaluations. Elmhurst Hospital, for example, recently underwent extensive renovations, allowing the City to significantly boost their asking price.

offs continue in New York City and on Long Island. First, S.E.I.U. Local 2 window cleaners are still out on strike fighting similar management demands as those posed by RAB. Second, commercial building owners not associated with RAB have announced plans to systematically replace organized security guards with non-union personnel at fifty percent less. Third, a forty percent wage cut with no health and annuity compensation was presented to 80 security guards, members of Local 32B-32J, working at two different shopping centers on the Island.

Fourth, about 250 maintenance workers—primarily janitors—at Port Authority Bus Terminal, who are members of Local 32B-32J, have been effectively "locked out" of the union's main contract with the RAB because they have been replaced by a different contractor. Under a National Labor Relations Board ruling (Taft-Hartley Act of 1947), the new contractor does not legally have to hire RAB's former unionized workers and intends to hire unorganized workers at half the pay and without benefits. Finally, Port Authority has also

announced that it will lay-off approximately 400 security guards and replace them with cheaper non-union labor. Instead of getting \$10.50 per hour plus health insurance, the new guards will only receive \$7.00 in hourly wages.

And what has President Gus Bevena and his Local 32B-32J union leadership done to stem the tide of its workers' lay-offs and the Port Authority lock-out? Not much. The union did, however, invoke the assistance of the NLRB, Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, and file a lawsuit against the bus terminal's new contractor and the Port Authority, arguing that the Service Employees International Union is a legally-viable umbrella organization entitled to represent janitors and security guards, regardless of their occupational affiliation.

Insofar as 32B-32J's master contract with the RAB is concerned, the new agreement leaves much to be desired. The new contract instituted the very "two-tier wage system" which the union fought to overthrow and for which the maintenance workers went out on strike. While striking workers were standing

Among his fellow students, however, Bazzi is perhaps best known as the journalist who, along with Edna Negron, broke the story in *Newsday* about the activities of the University's SAFE team a year ago. In a now-notorious affair, hundreds of pages of documents revealed the surveillance of student activists at the behest of top University administrators during student protests against the budget cuts last year. Bazzi and Negron's article was based on copies of these documents and memos obtained through CUNY students' lawyer Ron McGuire.

His most recent project is an article he's writing for *City Limits* on the CUNY cuts. He has been attending weekly meetings of the CUNY Coalition Against the Cuts, now known as the Student Liberation Action Movement (SLAM)—Coalition for Public Education, which meets every Thursday at Hunter at 6:30. In thinking about this piece, he has been weighing the issues of tactics. Which is the best way forward, he is considering, lobbying or direct action?

Bazzi has also turned his attention to national issues. In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombings last spring, he published an article in *The Progressive* on anti-Arab images in the media entitled "The Arab Menace." Part of the article details his own personal experiences as an Arab now living in the United States and difficulties he and his family have had being hassled by authorities at the airport. This kind of harassment, he discusses, is all too common, highlighted by events such as Oklahoma City and the World Trade Center bombing.

Overall, he much prefers to cover political issues. "Luckily I haven't had to cover too many fires and shootings," he says. "There's too much time spent in local journalism chasing ambulances." That creates a problem, he believes, for the emphasis given in the news analysis. "News is often defined as what officials say and do," he told *The Advocate*.

His focus on the impact and biases of these officials, as well as on the action students and others have taken in response, has made a much-needed contribution to local journalism that too often merely delivers fawning platitudes and hype. His award is well-deserved, and undoubtedly CUNY students will continue to benefit from his sharp-eyed reporting.—LEE WENGRAF

SECONDARY TEXTURES

REEVE GARLIC DASHED from his office, silk tie flapping, brief case a-swinging. He had an appointment with a student newspaper reporter on whom he had to lay some sweet come talk. You know, tripe about the administration's concern for "working class" students and the "neediest". She'll eat it up, he mused. Certainly she wouldn't remember his role in producing an anti-protest newspaper during the budget cut takeovers in 1991. And his schmoozing with Assembly Speaker Shellschlock Gold and other politicians rubberstamping the university to bits.

In the hall on the way to the elevator he sang goodbye to Donna the secretary, mmm. Besides, he continued, you just need to glad-hand grad students. Smile up a storm. Give them voter registration projects. Just enough to block the perception that we weren't on the level. At the elevator he pushed the down button and whistled the theme from *Baywatch*.

But Terrorwitz, damn! The president always cowered in her office. That made her seem unapproachable and insecure. And another set of budget cuts to implement. Maybe they'll all be punch-drunk from the last cuts. Maybe they'll just wallow in their cubicles studying ideas that have nothing to do with their life conditions.

Would Terrorwitz weep? Would she cringe? No matter, the obligatory "Town Hall" meeting would soon pass; a few tough questions here, a few platitudinous answers there. It's the whole ritualized song and dance in gutting public education. The Town Hall meeting and then the summer when we can do whatever we want, the students gone until the fall.

His old drinking buddy Lloyd Boreman was wrong. He shouldn't have left. This was a great job. Screwing the students was par for the course. Any qualms soon passed once one remembered who signed your check.

The elevator arrived. Garlic checked his watch. I'll be right on time, he thought. She'll love it.—ANONYMOUS

out in the January bitter cold and snow, union bureaucrats only once called a rally in an effort to boost morale.

Moreover, when delegates from the union finally did show up at the picket lines, the rank-and-file were never informed about the status of contract negotiations, perhaps because President Bevena and other union leaders did not want to reveal to workers the really raw deal they were getting in exchange for preserving "bread and butter" issues.

Besides this, the new contract between RAB and 32B-32J signaled the eventual demise of organized labor in New York City and demonstrated the increasingly unchecked and unregulated power of corporate America. As Daniel DeLeon has written about a century ago, Gus Bevena and his union bureaucrats must do more than just provide "ambulance service" and a bandaid contract for 32B-32J's rank-and-file during periods of labor-management crises, lest the union president be transformed into a capitalistic "caricature" on the "industrial battlefield." —ANDREA ZIMMERMAN

The Unholy Trinity

Government, Big Business, and the "New" Populism - Part 1

BY CHARLES PRICE-REAVIS

Old Karl Marx might have the last word after all. No, the "dictatorship of the proletariat" is not at hand, nor is capitalism on its last legs. What is happening, though, is an intense sharpening—on a global scale—of the contradictions of capitalist development. Fundamental to this historically unique set of social relationships is the private appropriation of socially produced wealth. Capitalism is different from other forms of wealth appropriation, such as absolutism and feudalism, that characterize other social epochs. Today, more and more wealth is produced, while its distribution across all groups becomes increasingly constricted to a relatively small group of capitalists, many of them new "corporate" and "entertainment" millionaires.

That polarization is occurring is not denied by any informed person. Simply put, this is what is happening: in America, wages for over two-fifths of households have stagnated over the past two decades, with 20% of this group seeing actual loss of wealth and income; another 20% have seen a modest increase, which is less than \$1000 for a year's work. This meager gain has come largely through working harder (i.e., productivity increase) and longer. This corresponds to Marx's concepts of recurring need to increase relative and surplus value. The 20% next-to-the-top have had more success, seeing income increases of over 10%. Nearly all the gains have gone

to the top 20 percent. Today, the top 10% of accumulators in the U.S. control nearly as much wealth as the remaining population. These winners derive a hefty portion of their largesse from capital gains which, of course, they want to protect. But only one in five Americans has any stock, bonds, or other property-related investments; most people are deeply in debt, with less than \$5000 in savings.

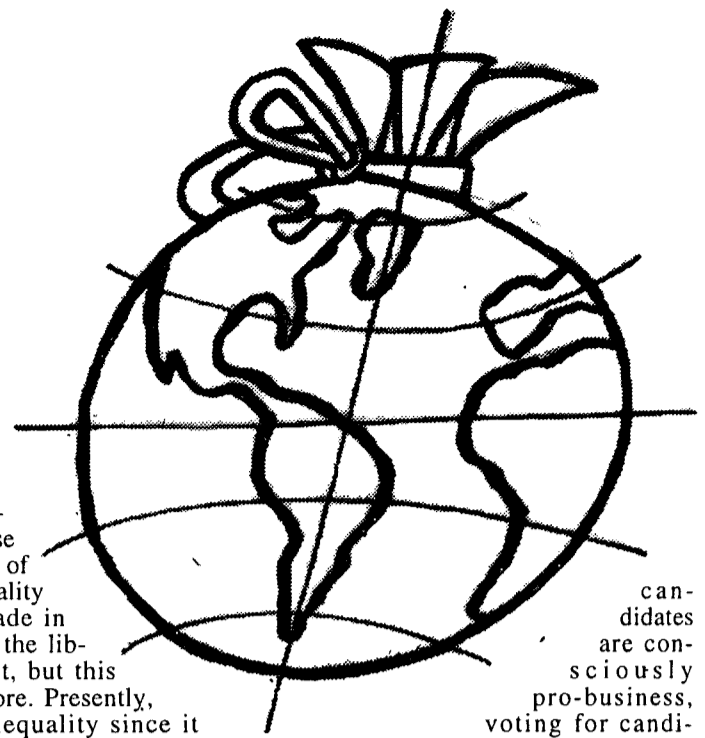
These trends have accelerated since the 1980s, fueled by the policies associated with the conservative rebellion. In old-fashioned parlance, polarization is increasing in the face of plenty. Most people, however, are not aware of these trends, or the associated ramifications, although many people sense that something is amiss. The "Market," then, refers not simply to the abstract idea of the place where things are bought and sold. It refers also to a system that erases the rules that ordain general equality and a redistribution of the social product called wealth. The Market favors the powerful.

Concomitant with increasing social polarization has been an increasing concentration of power and control by capitalist cabals over individual and class-based life chances. In most variants of democracy, especially the American one, access to political power and influence is closely correlated to degrees of power and control; the greater the economic power, the greater the potential political clout. This is a textbook illustration of the idea that government is unduly influenced by ruling groups, and that theirs are the ruling ideas. After all, ruling groups control the media, not the public;

few acknowledge that private actions and decisions carry public costs.

This tendency is exacerbated by the conflict between liberty and equality. A false dichotomy of equality of opportunity over equality of condition was made in the past to reconcile the liberty-equality conflict, but this does not work anymore. Presently, liberty facilitates inequality since it implies the freedom to be unencumbered by public responsibility. But these trends have not been widely presented as issues related to the public good. Instead the public is poorly informed and their perceptions framed by public relations analysts and political pundits. In short, the mandates of the Market are, profits and market shares as sought by cabals of individuals through organized economic monoliths.

Who are the "members" of these cabals and how have they gained such extensive power? Our cabals consist largely of boards of directors of both private and public institutions, and various corporate and company executives. These folk are not actually conspirators in the covert sense, but collaborators whose similar beliefs and agendas mesh to further uncoordinated outcomes. How have they come to be so powerful? In the U.S., no small part of their ascendancy is directly tied to the democratic political system. In many cases, especially where



for benefits for the industries and businesses that support candidate X.

These perquisites are indirect transfers of responsibility and power. Politicians who tout deregulation (of banks, S & L's, transportation, pollution control) have transferred the responsibility for the public good to Market forces. The practice of "Market reigns supreme" is simply a euphemism for allowing commercial, industrial, and financial corporations to take the shortest route to profitability. This euphemism is presented as an ideology of "competitiveness" necessary for economic prosperity, where competitiveness means some combination by corporations and government of downsizing (job shedding), merger (or acquisition), replacing labor with machinery, and dropping the responsibility of providing benefits like health insurance. Such euphemisms are indeed powerful.

Part 2 on the global economy next month.

D'SOUZA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

herself, and "pro" the best quality of life possible for a child, one wherein he or she won't be born into a world of poverty, neglect, or to unfit, abusive, even lethal parents). In a manner very similar to the abortion issue terminology, these supposedly crafty and media-savvy folks employ a term like "liberal antiracism," which equates the fight (and the fighters) against racism with the political left, the liberal group (which is no more homogeneous in character than the conservative group of Americans). This strongly implies that one cannot be, or at least not usually, both antiracist and conservative at the same time; nor can one be both racist and liberal simultaneously, according to the false dichotomy that D'Souza has set up. Of course, such postulations are absurd, since it is common knowledge that racism - much like other evils such as child, sexual, and drug abuse - cuts across all lines in this society - all social, economic, political, class, and racial lines.

Further, D'Souza couples the negative term "antiracist" with the word "liberal," to create an association in the reader's mind of being liberal and being against racism with a negative, and hence an undesirable thing. (This is completely in line with using a term such as "pro-life.") The author could have just as readily - and more fairly - used a term such as "proequality" or "proegalitarian," terms which carry much more positive connotations and subconscious messages. D'Souza repeatedly couches a blatantly racist, white supremacist message in such well-chosen, superficially scholarly, yet ultimately biased terminology. I think such a practice is not only odious, but also reveals a glaring weakness in his arguments as well as a fundamental ineptitude in his so-called scholarship.

But what truly incensed me was D'Souza's creation, use, and discussion of a term such as "rational discrimination," which is an oxymoron if I ever heard one. D'Souza has taken the tack of his white colleagues and predecessors in the conservative (read "racist") brigade: he has cloaked his patently racist - and therefore patently offensive - rhetoric in an impressive "academese" and has assumed the role of the supposedly objective, dispassionate scholar, so that

he might toss out such terms without restraint. He cites the case of an Asian American shopkeeper in Washington, D.C., Michelle Joo, to explain what he means by "rational discrimination." He quotes Joo, as regards African Americans, as saying, "When deciding whether to let people into her jewelry and cosmetics store, 'I look at the face,' ...She won't release the glass door 'if he looks ugly, if he's holding a bottle in a paper bag, if he's dirty...If some guy looks kind, I let him in'" (259), to point out how Joo, and D'Souza as well, focus exclusively on black males, and thereby reinforce the negative, stereotypical image of them as being threatening, ugly, dirty, drunken bums, which has been a tactic of the racist establishment for many years now. The author goes on to state that "Young black men are kept out if they seem rowdy, Joo says. Usually they react by banging on her glass windows." A sure sign of their innate primitiveness, harking back to their simian jungle ancestors! Never mind that almost anybody's response to being denied access to a business establishment during its normal business hours based upon such capricious, insulting judgments would tend to be an angry one. D'Souza continues: "One may say that Michelle Joo has no fixed policy of keeping blacks out. Nor does she have a quota about the number she will admit. Rather, she seems to be a prudent statistician. She employs race as one factor, but not the only factor, in her decisionmaking. She seeks to discriminate among blacks, choosing those who pose the least risk. As a means to ensure her security and business survival, Michelle Joo is practicing what may be termed rational discrimination" (259).

In this excerpt, as in others, D'Souza is damning himself with his own words. What Joo does, according to his description, is an exact definition of racial discrimination, of racial segregation, of racism in practice. I mean, could he even imagine so blithely accepting such behavior and, what's more, then coining a catchy, impressive-sounding term for it, if the shopkeeper were white and all of the persons discriminated against were East Indian, or Asian, or anything else other than African American, for that matter? I doubt it seriously.

In this one example regarding "rational discrimination," D'Souza does what he

has done throughout the book: he focuses his analysis of the problem of racism entirely, from start to finish, on the population against whom racism is practiced and towards whom it is directed, and he conspicuously fails to ever turn the searchlight of inquiry and speculation on the Caucasian racists who are the source of the whole book's subject and text, and without whom there would be no text (or title)! Even for someone such as myself, who has matured to a point where I no longer subscribe to a victimizer/victimized construct, *The End of Racism* is clearly the product of someone with a classic case of blame-the-victim mentality. Added to this is an also classic case of a member of another culture identifying solely and completely with the mainstream, central culture, which pays his salary and gave him the funding, time, and support to write such an offputtingly dense, extensively endnoted, sufficiently scholarly-like and impressive volume - made so via the aforementioned chapter endnotes, as well as via the use of the names of many real scholars and much appropriated/made up "academese." Mentioned are such scholars as Franz Boas, the well-known anthropologist who championed the idea of "cultural relativism" (which stipulates that all cultures have an equal validity and right to exist in whatever form they do), along with some of his protégés such as Margaret Mead (about whom D'Souza hastens to mention the lesbian relationship she shared with a colleague, Ruth Benedict, just as a good ultraconservative should. I can just hear the leaders of the Moral Majority shouting "See! We knew that all of those leftist liberals were nothing but a bunch of homosexuals, anyway!")

D'Souza also constantly uses the words "race" and "racism" interchangeably, as if they were identical in meaning and implication! This is no doubt why he speaks about "the pathology of race," when there's nothing inherently pathological about the idea or the biological reality of there being races of humankind. The true pathology lies in the existence and practice of racism, and therefore within the hearts and minds of the racists. And who are they?

Finally, he muddies the waters of supposedly rational, logical thought by using the word "liberal" frequently - exposing his own political and personal biases in the process - and attacking this group

(liberals) by renaming them as "liberal antiracists" and juxtaposing them against (conservative) "racists" (whom, it is assumed, might be renamed as "conservative anti-egalitarians"), particularly in Chapter Four. His arguments are so complexly stated (at least there's a superficial complexity to them; in fact, they all boil down to the one-note racist theme that has been elaborated on throughout this review) that he almost manages to make being antiracist sound like a bad thing, and being racist sound like a good thing to be! An example of this verbal sleight-of-hand work may be seen in this quote from the text: "Just as the antislavery movement of the nineteenth century delegitimized and eventually banned servitude, the antiracist cause of the twentieth century made racism a four-letter word and the racist an object of public contempt" (115). Now I ask you, should a racist be anything other than an object of public contempt? I say "Hell, no!" In fact, he/she should also be an object of public ridicule, censure, and ostracization. That would show that the United States is serious about attaining a truly egalitarian society.

Dinesh D'Souza, as a person of color; as a member of a people and culture that has experienced, directly and profoundly, the effects of racist, white supremacist thinking and actions; and as a supposed intellectual and scholar, ought to be ashamed of himself and should have known better than to write such a book, one which so thoroughly and disgustingly serves the interests of the ultraconservative, white male racist establishment which inhabits an undesired position at the nucleus of this society, and one which is full of such specious, spurious scholarship. But then again, perhaps he was the perfect person to write such hogwash; he has traded on the fact that, although he is indeed a person of color moving and operating in a white world, he is not a black person, and therefore has a redeeming quality as well as an obvious usefulness in the eyes of those whites who have set him up as the mouthpiece for their ugly doctrines. And perhaps those ultraconservative racists are in exactly the right position, because the fact that a book such as this would be published and accorded the respect and accolades that it has received is proof positive that this American society is racist, and thus rotten, to the core.

COUNTER CULTURE

A DISPLAY OF THE ALTERNATIVE MEDIA
FROM THE 1960S TO THE PRESENT

BY ALAN MOORE

**"Counterculture:
Alternative Information from
the Underground Press to
the Internet" at Exit Art**
**"Cultural Economies:
Histories from the
Alternative Arts Movement"
at the Drawing Center**

THESE TWO COMPLEMENTARY exhibitions, twins in their origin, both present cultural and political materials from the American underground of the last 30 years. "Counterculture" (curated by Brian Wallis with Melissa Rahleff) is basically a vast survey of 'zines, from the underground newspapers of the 1960s to the Internet. "Cultural Economies" (curated by Julie Ault) is an art exhibition, using declamatory graphic materials to context photography, sculpture and painting. These two exhibitions then are high and low, rewritten as polity and person. Together they make an implicit argument for a revision of the art history and cultural studies of the period they survey.

"Counterculture" is the bigger of the twins, and, depending on your politics, the more thrilling or the scarier. This is newsstand poetry and the venerable, inflammatory rhetoric of the broadside. From the explosion of underground press around the U.S. in the '60s, through the head-banging nihilist punk 'zines of the '70s, to the corrosively ironic AIDS consciousness campaigns of the '80s and '90s the surface of this canvas is content, and it speaks itself best.

As a historian, I felt exhilarated by this blast of primary materials; the exhibition is like a library splayed out and blowing in the wind. This is the home-grown popular culture of a free press. In the first of the two large rooms, which is given over entirely to the '60s, we see the handwriting of the emerging liberation movements including the Black Panthers, gay liberation, and the com-

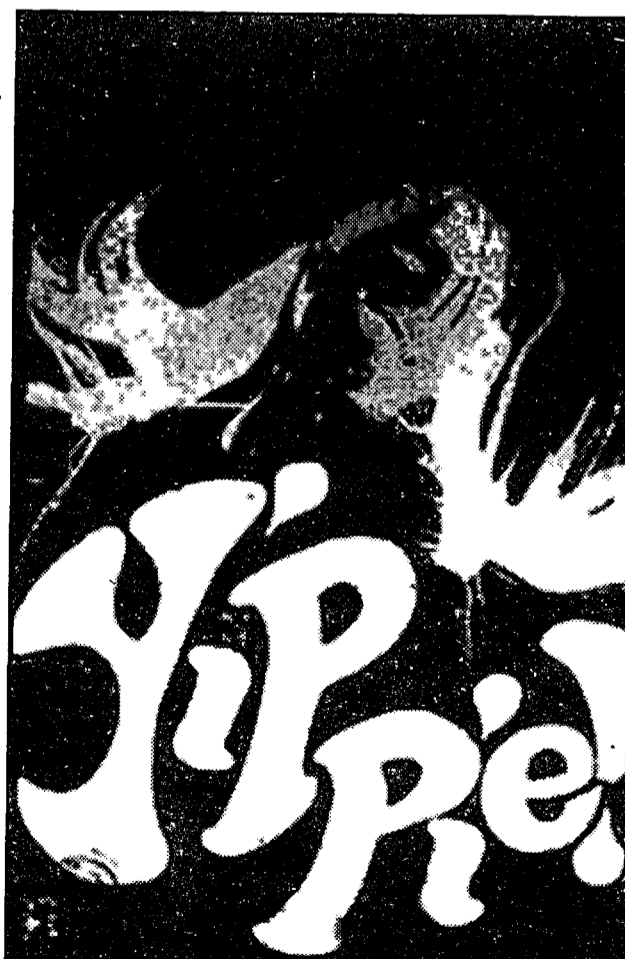


mune movement. The temptation to play graphologist is overwhelming. One of my colleagues here told me she felt an overall naiveté emanating from the material in the '60s room; instead I felt a relief that long-denied currents of that moment were here represented in their infancy.

To be sure, "Counterculture" needed better (and in some cases just some) labeling, handouts to context the material, and overall, better acknowledgment



Alternative publications from "Counterculture" at Exit Art



of sources. Significant efforts are underway to sort out and represent much of this material, and not only scholars need to know who to get in touch with. As it stands, I'm afraid the show is most impressive to those who already have a good understanding of the events in response to which these media products were produced.

"Cultural Economies" is a more complicated case, since the venue of the artwork exhibited was not the newsstand,

the campus or the street. Using the kind of careful collage of position and color that has marked past exhibitions put together by the artists called Group Material (e.g., the "AIDS Timeline" at the Whitney of 1989), curator Julie Ault builds a de facto alternative survey of the last 30 years of New York art. It is, of course, art exhibited outside the showrooms of commerce, where the content of the work and the intention of the artist is ritually reduced to a matter

The Last Whole Earth Catalog



of style, and where the sustained efforts of artists in the '80s to seep into the mainstreams of media and commodity presence were denominated "appropriation."

Ault's is "a histories project," according to her introductory wall text (posted in two clockwise-reading parts, near the ceiling and at floorboard level), embracing "contradictory descriptions" to form an "unmanageable" story that is "more inspiring" than a conventional art historical narrative. Having written herself this broad brief, Ault's basic strategy was to present roughly chronological clusters of documents, posters, manifestos and photographs from artists' groups interspersed with larger works by a number of individuals hung throughout the installation.

A few of these were very large for such a tight show, including Martin Wong's life-sized painting of part of a shuttered storefront *Iglesia Pentecostal* (1986), and Rebecca Howland's tinted concrete outdoor sculpture *Manhattan as a Dead Horse* (1983), a bizarre animalian topography of a dead horse with World Trade Center legs straddled by an octopus. Other big things included numerous brightly painted veristic casts of South Bronx residents by John Ahearn and Rigoberto Torres, and Christy Rupp's agglutinated bars and bottles of Ivory soap soaring in the shape of tusks, *99.44% Forgotten*. "Economies" made a virtue of its crowded installation with striking thematic contrasts of position: Tim Rollins + K.O.S. salvaged South Bronx bricks painted like burning buildings were arrayed along the floor, while Anton Van Dalen's simple ideographic stencil images of community renewal were spayed near the ceiling.

Other fine works included Jane Dickson's striking array of dark-colored fans (1981-90), some painted with burning matches, others with skulls, and Mike Glier's early meaty variation on what's become a Holzerian formula *Clubs of Virtue* (1980), found pieces of turned wood painted with single words like "honor." Not everything worked well here. Fred Wilson's juxtapositions of Egyptian and Greek casts seemed quaintly pedantic in this context, and Louise Lawler's photographic work displayed on or near painted squares and texts is so consonant with this overall exhibition design that it is literally hard to see.

In general, Ault found and struck a delicate balance between context and object, between the agenda of the show and the nuanced display of complex single works. Still, as befits a gallery, the artwork was privileged. The organizations from which many of these artists emerged, like Group Material, Colab, Fashion Moda, and ABC No Rio were only swiftly sketched through spotty documents.

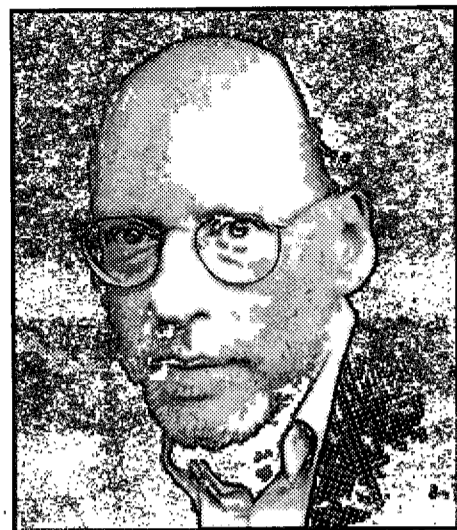
This group picture did include a chronological non sequitur, the earlier Art Workers Coalition of the early '70s was represented at the head of the show with photos of their actions and two of their works: the "artist's reserved rights transfer and sales agreement," a document the commercial artworld has scrupulously ignored, and the indelible Vietnam-era poster of murdered villagers in My Lai with the red superscription, "Q: And babies? A: And babies." This is a powerful, poignant work of art. The soft colorful representation of tangled half-nude bodies in lush grass overlaid with large type bespeaks the erotics of genocide, and the miserable insufficiency of official justice to redress war's horrors.

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Letting a Thousand Flowers Bloom, Wither, and Die:

Legacies of the Left and Rightward Drift

BY PAMELA DONOVAN



Todd Gitlin

The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars. By Todd Gitlin. Metropolitan Books. 1995

What's wrong with a little universalism, anyway? This is the question Todd Gitlin asks of the American Left in his latest book. Simultaneously, he wishes to address the erosion of notions of the common good in public discourse in the United States and the dire state of its political left wing, seeing a striking parallel. The country needs a sane Left, but it's AWOL according to Gitlin, too caught up with what Freud termed the "narcissism of small differences" among its traditional constituencies to form a unified front against the Right and too suspicious of "universalizing" concepts to embrace any common struggle. Although ostensibly devoted to overlap-

ping confusions about American identity and values, universalism in social movements, and the strategic and moral tasks for the next Left, the book is mostly devoted to what went wrong in the eighties.

The book builds an argument about that topic as the chapters progress. Gitlin begins with an episode from the public school social science textbook wars of the eighties; when we tune in, it is clear that the need for uplifting representations of historically under-represented groups, in particular, African-Americans and Native Americans, have become central to parents and school board members in Oakland, California. The new books, commissioned by Houghton-Mifflin to produce a new, multicultural history of the U.S., are rejected as still too Eurocentric. Since no one can reach consensus about what should be taught, the schools go back to using the old textbooks by default—in which non-Europeans play an even more marginal role.

It's a good starting point for following what Gitlin is preoccupied with for most of the book, "the culture wars" by which he specifically means identity politics and the politicized need for "self-esteem." Gitlin is at his sharpest when he is pointing out how completely inedible the latter is, but more unfocused when he translates from school to contemporary American society. Unfortunately, Oakland is virtually the last time that we gather word on the "state of the disunion" from anywhere but the campus quad.

Gitlin takes a brief detour through the American century, centered around the numerous historical factors leading to the American Left's marginality: mid-century mass affluence and consumerism, bad examples of socialism around the world, suburbanization, anti-communism, business unionism, the persistence of racism, and the inability of the New Left to select a universal transformative category to replace "the working class." On the last point, Gitlin is

fairly critical of the movement that led him into political maturity, Students for a Democratic Society, whose means of universal emancipation, "participatory democracy," seemed designed, in retrospect, for those who could and would attend endless meetings. Gitlin brushes by this too quickly, since the need for some universal idea guides the rest of the book. Onto the fragmentation of the late sixties, which segues a little too quickly into the intellectual and academic left and its obsessions. More than half of the book is devoted to the devolution of the left in this arena. If you've found Eighties campus politics confusing, Gitlin provides a good summary, but if you've been soaking in it, it's pretty much retread.

The problem for Gitlin is pretty much this: the Left (or at least this Left) has been entranced by relativism and particularism, owing to some cartoonification of theoretical trends in anthropology, sociology, literary criticism and post-structuralist philosophy. Mediated by the egocentrism of American culture and the unceremonious history of previous claims to universality, the anti-essentialists defined the problem in the following manner: universalistic claims about humanity (human essence, democracy, human rights) are inevitably a kind of philosophical dog-and-pony show designed to prop up the imperialistic, Western, Cartesian white straight male ego—so just stop trying. It's not clear whether he thinks the problem inheres in the theories themselves or in their retrofitting to practical politics, but either way Gitlin declares an all out intellectual war, and thus lets down his guard somewhat, whereas elsewhere he seems the disinterested, if slightly disgusted, onlooker. He skewers those who try to claim emancipatory politics is possible without making universalistic claims, uncovering a set of universalistic and essentialistic claims behind claims of radical and unbridgeable difference, and rather anemic ones at that.

One might skeptically wonder whether

this is kind of an easy target, except that he's right about these notions having been quite influential. That may be Gitlin's point: by attempting to define "resistance" as a laundry list of rigid identities (at precisely the time when they were breaking down and hybridizing outside university walls), the academic "left" at best made the left seem like a bunch of self-righteous clowns with no real moral center, and at worst undermined enthusiasm for the universalistic, cosmopolitan, that is, worldly Left that is needed to respond to the country's (and the world's) rightward drift. There's no doubt that certain kinds of trained incapacities emerged in the social imaginary.

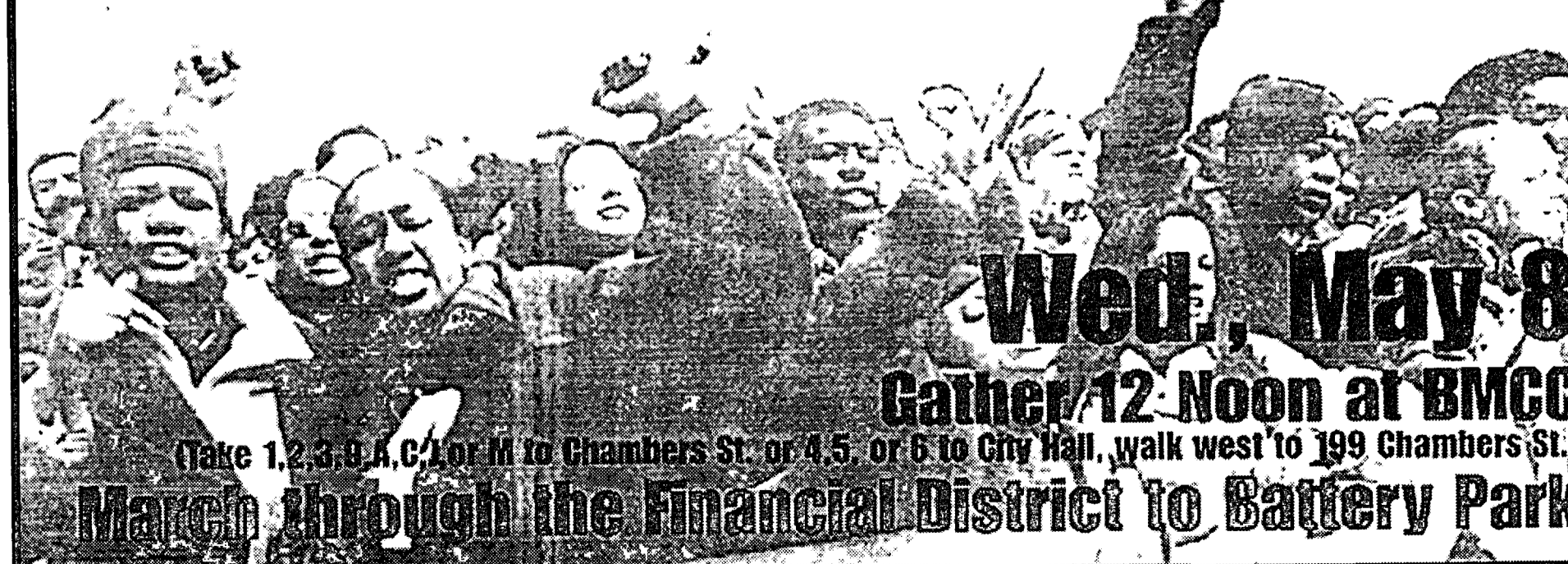
But it's here that Gitlin's tendency to generalize from the campus quad leaves much unanswered. If he drew more examples from outside the academy, would fragmentation along lines of rigid group identity be at the center of the problems facing the rest of the Left—for those in the labor movement, community organizing, and environmentalism, for example? This is not to say that if such examples were added that the Left would look robust by comparison, but rather that the factors in its marginality in American political life might be different. Gitlin's focus on the campus culture wars is all the more irksome considering that he takes the mainstream press to task for doing precisely the same thing.

If a truly inclusive, respectful, and yet unabashedly universalistic Left were to emerge, what would it look like? What would it want, and how would it go about getting it? Could it draw on dormant, alternative American values in order to rebuild itself? Gitlin's answer is that basically, a little class consciousness couldn't hurt. He's a bit circumspect on this issue, noting that much of the energy devoted to the politics of representation (image, that is) on the (sort of) Left could have been directed toward "fighting poverty" and challenging the "unbridled market." It's hard to disagree, but harder to regard these negatively-conceived tasks as a positive and unifying force among a variety of constituencies. It may be that Gitlin's pulled punches—when it comes to identifying what we could struggle for together—reflects to some degree the long-term effects, a generational caesura of sorts, emerging from the suspicion of commonality that Gitlin describes.

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