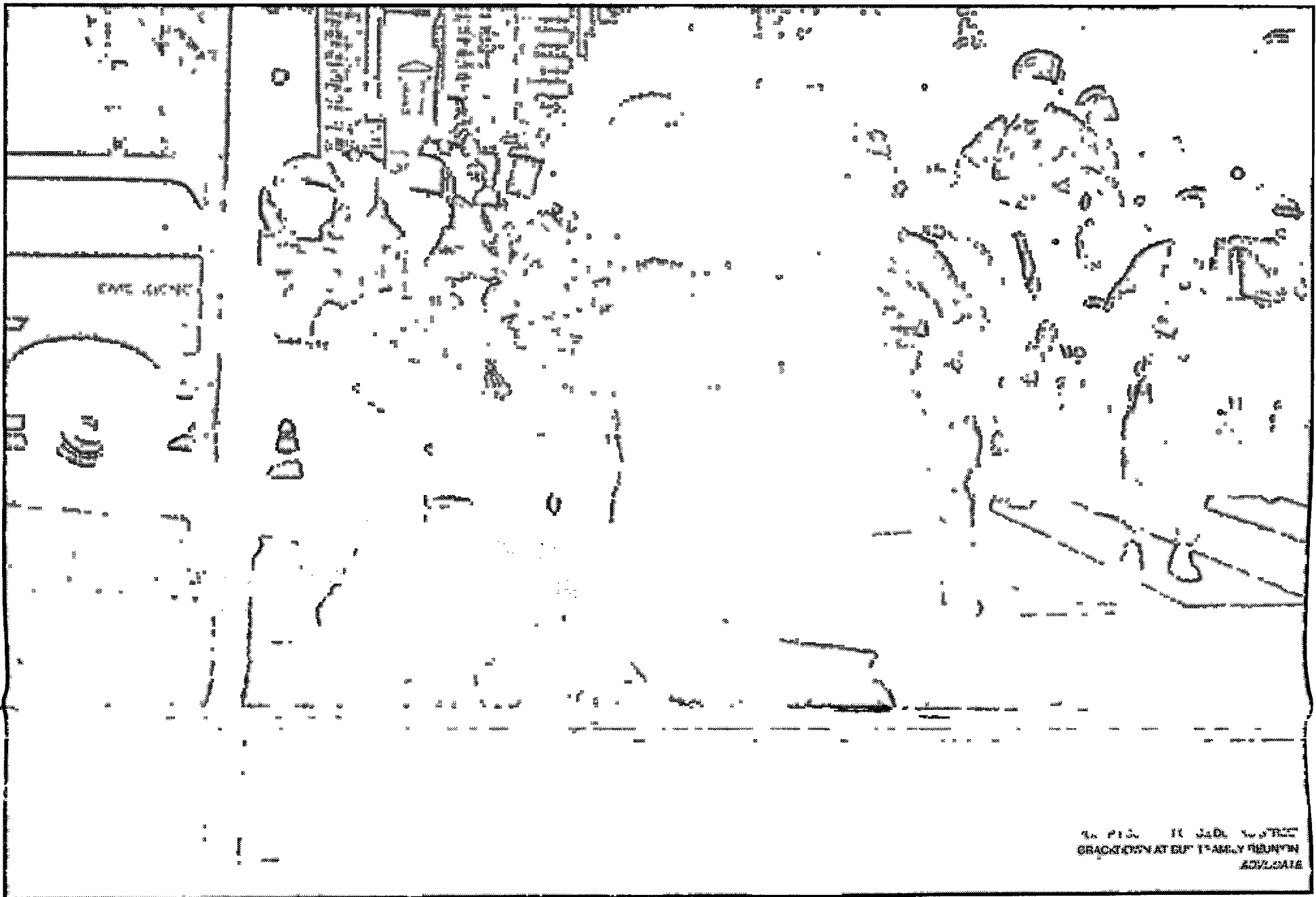


# ADVOCATE

CLINY GRAD CENTER | SEPTEMBER 2000



## ROWDY PROTESTS HIT REPUBLICAN CONVENTION

**COVERAGE INCLUDES NEWS, ON THE SPOT PHOTOGRAPHS  
& WORDS FROM BONELESS FILLET OF CHICKEN**

**IN THE CENTERFOLD**



**DAYCARE COMES TO GRAD CENTER, P. 4**

# EDITORIAL



COURTESY: GREEN PARTY OF NJ WEBSITE  
**RAPLPH NADER** speaking to the  
NAACP national convention. For more  
information check: [www.votenader.org](http://www.votenader.org).

## Advocate Publication Schedule For Fall 2000

### October

Deadline - October 1st  
Publication date - October 15

### November

Deadline - November 1st  
Publication date - November 15

### December

Deadline - December 1st  
Publication date - December 15

Announce your events in the  
Advocate! Submit printed copy of  
announcement to be scanned in,  
or a copy on disk, to room 5396 on  
the fifth floor. Dates above are  
subject to change at the discretion  
of the Advocate staff.

## ADVOCATE

CUNY GRAD CENTER | SEPTEMBER 2000

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JASON SCHULMAN | PATRICK THOMAS  
& THE BONELESS FILLET OF CHICKEN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR MUST BE 500 WORDS  
OR LESS, SUBMITTED ON DISKETTE AND  
ACCOMPANIED BY A SIGNED HARD COPY.  
OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THE ADVOCATE  
DON'T NECESSARILY REFLECT THE OSC  
OR ADVOCATE STAFF.

## Join the discussion

By Mark Petras

Greetings. The Advocate is back and again ready to inform, consider, confront, irritate, and do whatever else it is we do. Joining me this year as the new managing editor is Nassima Abdelli, a bright, enthusiastic scholar and writer who will be filling the Advocate's pages with important and evocative articles. Sadly, the Advocate bids farewell to Miriam Greenberg, who has opted to leave her position as the paper's layout editor. Thank you, Miriam, for the good work you have done on the Advocate.

That concludes the official business of my editorial. Truthfully, however, I do not have much else to say this month. (Vote for Ralph Nader. Build a viable third party and watch political efficacy and involvement soar.)

Subliminal endorsements aside, let me just say that I am pleased to see more and more people writing for

the Advocate and reading it. Remember, we are open to your articles and ideas and we encourage any student, professor, security guard, secretary, administrator, etc. to write for us. The Advocate is an open forum—a place for discussion and debate. Those interested in joining our ever-growing list of contributors should call us at 212-817-7882 or stop by room 5396 on the fifth floor. Enclosed in this issue is a schedule outlining our deadlines and publication dates, so the slackers among you will never have an excuse to miss a deadline.

Although I always have nagged people to submit their article as a printed copy and on disk, I now am allowing people to simply e-mail me their submissions. For those who choose this option, send your articles to [cunyadvocate@hotmail.com](mailto:cunyadvocate@hotmail.com). I'll be waiting to read your thoughts. Until we next meet...

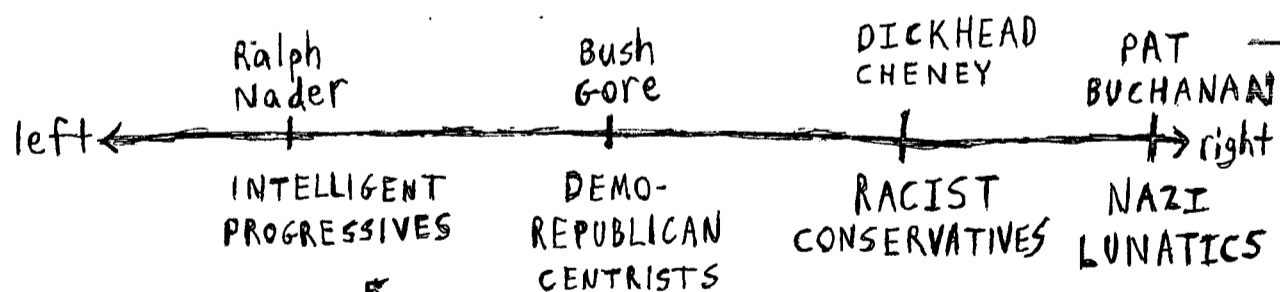
## Rack attack update

By Mark Petras

I am pleased to announce the Graduate Center lobby contains a new rack to be used solely for the purpose of holding the Advocate. You will see it in front of the security desk as you walk into the build-

ing. Please note that this rack is not to hold any literature besides the Advocate. The school has provided it for our use alone. In the interest of keeping the Advocate visible and readily available to all please respect our rack.

## THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM IN AMERICA TODAY



"DO THE LEFT THING"

-A Mark Petras Joint

# LETTERS

## THE ADJUNCT

## PROJECT

### "Sensation" debate continues

#### DEAR DAVE GERARDI

By Alan Moore

What struck me in your response to my, well, attack on your review of the Brooklyn Museum's "Sensation" show was when you wrote that the Black Flag rock group's album sticker "Corporate Rock STILL Sucks" could be applied to the work of the English artists because "talent takes a back seat to profit." This seems like a kind of 1930s back-stage melodrama analysis, where things'll come out swell if only the right kid gets the part.

The culture industry sector of rock 'n' roll music cannot be so easily conflated with the production of high art. While it seems tempting to roll an analysis across the lines of class which condition this production — rock 'n' roll being roughly working and middle class expression, and advanced contemporary art basically patronized by the ruling class — there's a rather big speed bump. As a quick take, this kind of reduction of a complex situation only obscures it. The Black Flag album sticker was dissing corporate music product as compared to the entrepreneurial, independent music product purveyed by the short-lived SST Records label. Neither culture industry corporations nor the contra-posing entrepreneurs who seek to displace or merge with them as indie subsidiaries are very interested in contemporary new music, *avante-classical, fast folk, or other non-commercial forms of musical practice*. There's no mass market.

Art is different. As Jasper Johns told an artist-friend of mine 25 years ago, only a few people have to like it. Oh yeah? Like who? Well... if you have to ask, it ain't you, babe. In an attempt to imply some democracy in this kind of situation, MoMA director Kirk Varnedoe recently said that the audience (not the collectors) of contemporary art were a "self-selecting elite," which certainly warmed the cockles of my heart.

What I think the reporting around Sensation revealed, in examining the relations between the Brooklyn Museum and the English collector and advertising agency owner Donald Saatchi, was the increasing synergy of corporations and cultural institutions, something that was an early theme of Hans Haacke's work (see Wallis, ed., *Unfinished Business*, 1986; Haacke attacked Saatchi directly). And today this synergy is growing stronger between museums

and media corporations, advertising and fashion companies, and, in the emerging world of digital culture, the "dot-coms."

This is one of the key structural problem that lies at the heart of any quest for cultural democracy, and I use that chivalric word deliberately. It's a big job to make those relations clear and critique them effectively. It's a job for intellectuals, and it'll be a largely thankless one.

But — and this is the heart of my critique of Gerardi — it is a job of analysis that is only further mystified by in essence, "blaming the victims," that is, loading the artists who strive to make innovative and often courageous (as in "we don't want to hear that") creative statements with opprobrium out of some feeling that they have sold out.

#### SYNERGY?

By Dave Gerardi

First, SST Records is STILL in business. Second, capitalism does not beget democracy, cultural or otherwise (Moore, apparently, has not talked to small-business owners and asked how they've fared against the collusive might of their oligopolistic competitors). Third, I'll waste no more ink on someone who uses the word 'synergy.'

Lastly, a smidgeon of advice packaged in a brief postscript: take your local media giant (print, film, internet, and all), follow the ad dollars, and, at the end of that urine-bricked road, pull back the editorial curtain to see what integrity remains.

#### UPDATE ON "SENSATION"

By Alan Moore

Prompted by the controversy over the "Sensation" exhibition, the American Association of Museums adopted new ethical guidelines on museum exhibitions of private collections (New York Times, Aug. 3, 2000, p. E1). These state that museums should control the exhibitions they produce and make public all sources of funds. The guidelines are intended to protect museums from "unreasonable" interference by both corporate and private sponsors.

Welcome back everybody! And to our new students, welcome! You've come to a pretty cool place. At a very interesting time. Whether you're a new or a returning student, chances are that at some point in your grad school career, you'll be teaching part time in the CUNY system. Perhaps you are now. Either way, the Adjunct Project is here for you when you do. We're a chartered organization of the Doctoral Students Council dedicated to advocating for the interests of graduate student adjuncts, and we've got big plans for the upcoming year. We need your involvement to make them successful.

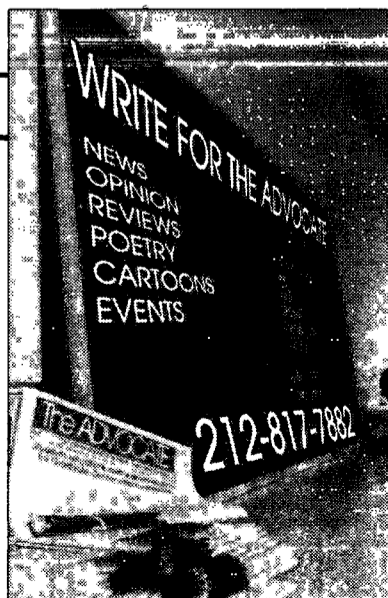
We worked tirelessly last year to sign up grad students to be union members, and then to get grad students involved in the spring election. Well, our efforts and those of countless others throughout the system paid off and the new leadership of the Professional Staff Congress, the CUNY faculty union, is now a progressive one dedicated to ending the two-tier wage system that exploits part-timers and lets the full-time, tenure-track jobs that are our future slip away. They will be negotiating a new contract over this year that could effectively end this system, and we need to be an active part of this process. As we've emphasized, only union members can vote to approve or disapprove a new contract. So if you aren't in the CUNY system, and you're not a union member, now is the time to join. If you are a member, now is the time to make your voice heard within the union. They're finally listening.

The new leadership, headed by union president Barbara Bowen, is also committed to broadening the reach of the PSC by making alliances with other sectors of the labor movement in New York City, and by bringing our intellectual resources, as a union of scholars and writers, to bear on the political issues that affect our union, our city, and beyond. So it's an exciting time to get involved. Join the union. Help us get your friends in the union. Let us know what your concerns are as a graduate student and a teacher. We teach all over the city, and our schedules can sometimes be a little nuts. It's crucial that we have a means to share information, concerns, and ideas, and the Adjunct Project is just that, right here at the Grad Center. Give us a call at 817-7890. Stop by our office in room 5398.

Email us at [klawler@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:klawler@gc.cuny.edu) or [markhalling@msn.com](mailto:markhalling@msn.com). It's going to be an important, exciting year, and we want you to be a part of it!  
—Kristin Lawler and Mark Halling  
Adjunct Project coordinators

#### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AT THE ADVOCATE

THE ADVOCATE IS CURRENTLY LOOKING TO HIRE SOMEONE FOR THE POSITION OF PRODUCTION MANAGER. THE PRODUCTION MANAGER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL ASPECTS OF DESIGN. PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES A+. APPLICANT MUST HAVE READY ACCESS TO A MAC G3 OR BETTER WITH ALL NECESSARY SOFTWARE, INCLUDING QUARK 4, ILLUSTRATOR 8.0+ AND PHOTOSHOP 5.5+, AS WELL AS A HIGH RESOLUTION SCANNER, ZIP DRIVE AND TABLOID LASER OUTPUT CAPACITY. APPLICANTS SHOULD BE A REGISTERED GRADUATE CENTER STUDENT. SUBMIT RESUMES & LAYOUT SAMPLES TO EDITOR-IN-CHIEF MARK PETRAS, ROOM 5396.



# GRAD CENTER

## At last, childcare at Grad Center Hope it will last!



NASSIMA ABDELLI

**LINDA PERROTTA,**  
new director of the GC Child  
Development and Learning Center

**By Nassima Abdelli**

Approximately one week before the Fall 2000 semester begins, the Graduate Center Child Development and Learning Center will open its doors to about 35 children of students registered at the Graduate Center. But the center will be licensed "to serve 27 children aged two and a half through six," according to an informational packet put out by Linda Perrotta. There has not been a childcare center here since the mid-1970s when the Graduate Center had an unlicensed drop-off program, Perrotta said. The Graduate Center is the last CUNY school to develop a childcare center.

Perrotta, emphasized that Dr. Charlotte Frick, Director of Student Activities, and Dr. Sue Zalk, Vice-President for Students Affairs, along with the Child Care Board of Advisors were instrumental in helping to develop a childcare center at the Graduate Center. Funds were sought and received from the Office of Children and Family Services in Albany and through a CUNY Higher Education Expansion Grant. The funds received have allowed the director of the center to buy furniture, books, and equipment; to have some overall operating funds; and to hire staff. At the present time, the childcare center will serve only children of students because of current budget restrictions. Each CUNY childcare center contractually has agreed with the CUNY Central Administration to serve only children of students. In the future it might serve children of faculty and staff provided a less restrictive budget, Perrotta hopes.

The Center will operate from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and will follow the Graduate Center's calendar with a break between semesters. The Center offers a flexible schedule at an affordable tuition rate: \$10 for half days (four hours or less), \$45 for five half days, \$14 per day (full day) and \$60 per week (five full days). Parents are asked to provide packed lunches for their children, but the Center will provide nutritious snacks and juices on a daily basis.

In compliance with the regulations set by the NYC Department of Health, the Graduate Center's Child Development and Learning Center is located on the third floor. Unlike the center in the mid-70s, the new Center will be licensed through the NYC Department of Health and adhere to all of its regulations. The premises of the Child Development and Learning Center are composed of two classrooms of about 300 square feet each, one playroom of about 600 square feet, a kitchen, a reception area and a library. The classrooms and the playroom are embellished by cast iron window gates that were recently placed at the special request of the director for safety reasons. Unlike most of us at the GSUC, the children will see daylight.

One classroom is fitted with a one-way mirror, through which observation will be conducted for research on early childhood development. Only children whose parents consent to the research will be observed. For security purposes, an intercom connects the entrance door to the reception area. But Perrotta has requested that two additional intercom connections be established between the entrance door and each of the classrooms in case the receptionist is absent.

The selection of every item in the daycare center as well as its arrangement in the space have received

the careful and selective attention of the director. The classrooms and the playroom are dressed with beautiful wooden furniture and matching toys. A piano stands in the center of the playroom below the cast iron window gate. Children's books garnish the wooden shelves and their colorful illustrations bring life to the classrooms.

Because of the location of the Graduate Center building within the city, children will not have access to an outdoor playground on a regular basis. One playground is located on 35th Street and First Avenue. But the director expresses reservations regarding the use of the playground; the walk may be too long for children and the sidewalks in this area are filled with busy people who walk with haste and impatience.

During the first semester, the director will be assisted by a full-time head teacher licensed by the Department of Health. Two full-time assistant teachers with experience in childhood education or working with children will join the team. Because the operating funds are less than expected, the director will assume the role of one head teacher until funding allows another head teacher to be employed. A receptionist and a secretary will be hired from the pool of graduate students. *As the law requires, background checks (criminal records and fingerprint history) will be performed prior to hiring any staff member.* In hiring staff, Perrotta is open to hiring males and females, although she has reported that some parents have expressed their concern about the potential of a male hire in the position of either head or assistant teacher.

The director does not dismiss parents' concerns. She is well aware that the parents' confidence is vital to establishing a solid connection between parents, children and staff members. As written in the center's informational packet, "parental involvement is essential to a quality care early childhood program." Perrotta plans to invite parents to participate in classroom activities and she proposes "to educate parents regarding early childhood issues such as separation, self-discipline, sibling rivalry, and toilet-training," according to the packet. To cultivate ties with parents and their children, conferences will be held twice a year during which the director will cover issues central to her philosophy of early childhood education.

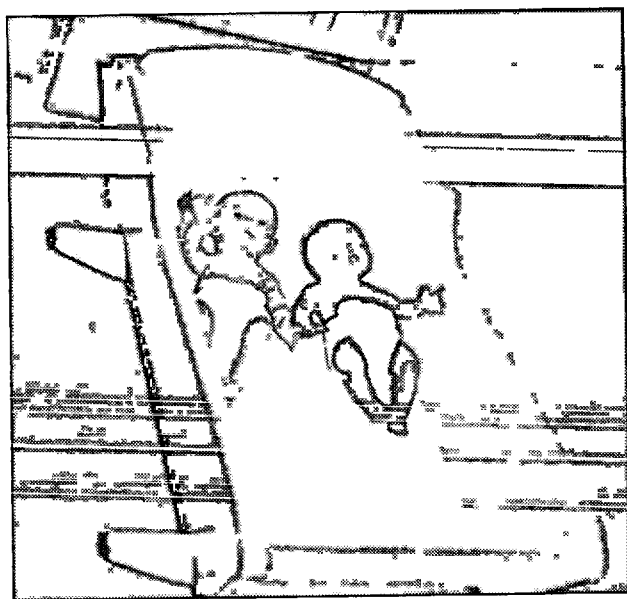
During my conversation with her, Perrotta seemed to be sensitive to parental fears and queries. She never dismissed my questions regarding safety. Perrotta speaks with a soft voice tinted with passion and enthusiasm about the daycare center. She holds an MA in Early Childhood Education from NYU and MS in Reading and Literacy from Queens College. Her love for books seems to be equal to her love for children. She was a nursery school teacher for ten years at the Park Avenue Christian Day School. She initiated the child care center at the CUNY Law school in Queens and was director there for 8 years. She then became the educational director at the Bloomingdale Family Head Start Program for 5 years. She was hired as director of the GC Child Development and Learning Center in March 2000.

I had many questions regarding the security and safety of the children. I borrowed some of them

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

from the book of Gavin De Becker, *The Gift of Fear* (appendix 7: "Questions for your child's school"). The director handled all my questions with intelligence and tact. She admitted that improvements were currently under way. She also spoke of the ways she tackled past situations where the security was found lacking while she was a director at other institutions. Unquestionably, she is creative about ways to offset limitations; I expressed my serious concerns of having 35 children between the ages of 2.5 and 5 brought down three long flights of stairs with the help of only about 5 staff. In such a scenario, one adult would be responsible for seven children. Those stairs are not easy for adults let alone for toddlers or adults carrying and holding children while rushing out of a building during an emergency situation. Her answer indicated that she was aware of the problem; she said that she was thinking of devising a system where adults from the adjacent programs (Educational Psychology and the Music school) would be involved in assisting the staff in case of an emergency. Monthly fire drills will be performed and children will be involved in some of them. It is not clear yet how the adults of the adjacent departments will be involved in those drills and how the adults will be selected. One cannot trade a safety issue for another one. That implies that those who will participate in this "rescue team" will have to be screened in the way the staff has been checked. In addition, the daycare center operates from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and shifts will have to be established. This ingenious system requires coordination and the effort of many adults who are not staff members. I feel that the issue of evacuating children from the third floor through a double-level staircase is a thorny issue I would like to see resolved soon.

Overall, I personally feel the director is extremely competent. She is quite at ease with all the issues I addressed and I suspect that she feels equally comfortable with children. Unfortunately, this beautiful daycare center may be short-lived like the one that opened and closed in the 70s. It may operate for only one year unless more money comes in. The director is counting on fundraising events and possibly monies from student activity fees to maintain its operation. This has not been discussed yet with DSC co-chairs. It will be unfortunate if this new daycare suffers the fate of its predecessor, because students, faculty and staff need one. I am quite puzzled to hear that this doctorate-granting institution that pays a president and administrators yearly salaries of at least \$100,000 cannot offer its employees and the students who support them an adequately staffed daycare center that can accommodate more than 27 children. Perhaps you have ideas about fundraising events for maintaining the daycare center at the GC. Please write to nabdelli89@hotmail.com with suggestions or comments.



NASSIMA ABDELLI

IN THE CRADLE socialization begins.

# HORRORSCOPE

By Dave Gerardi

This month is not an idle one. Bad tidings litter the horizon like hotel room keys at an N'Sync concert. All is not lost, however. I have spared no expense to chart this month's skies. I've taken the most archaic formulae in the Roman system back four years to insure the highest of standards. Based on the teachings of an excommunicated Italian monk, Romulus Apollinare, the system was thought lost forever upon his death in 1911. His grandson, Callisto, hid the books from his disapproving father and kept up the calculations on wide lasagna noodles. Callisto died in 1993 at the ripe old age of 104, but I was fortunate enough to have known him ere that dreadful date (aye, the stars foresaw it). To my knowledge, I am the last practitioner of the Roman system.



ARIES

March 21-April 19

Pursue opportunities blindly. Beware of hoaxes.



TAURUS

April 20-May 20

You will meet someone at the beach who will play a significant role in your life. He is either a future husband or a rapist—the stars are not clear on this point.



GEMINI

May 21-June 21

Having plowed through the latest Harry Potter book (a grueling 32 words per page), you will find time to tackle the next opus on your list: this week's TV Guide.



CANCER

June 22-July 22

A good time to take up a hobby. Try grifting.



LEO

July 23-Aug. 22

A local college will offer a Bachelor's degree in astrology with minors in tarot and Ouija. Due to fiscal constraints, the physics department will have to be shut down.



VIRGO

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Look to Gemini. Beware of shifty-eyed Leos.



LIBRA

Sept. 23-Oct. 23

Love and joy for you this month. Things are looking super! Beware of Capricorns, Virgos, strangers, opportunities, job offers, toothpaste, and small kittens.



SCORPIO

Oct. 24-Nov. 21

You will vote for Nader. You will vote for Nader. You will vote for Nader.



SAGITTARIUS

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Your gluttonous purchases at Toys R Us and Walmart put sixteen more small retailers out of business.



CAPRICORN

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Eat a peach.



AQUARIUS

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

A good month to make soup.

~~A bad time, however, for children.~~



PISCES

Feb. 19-March 20

Duck.

# RECIPE

An Important Message for Incoming Students

By Dave Gerardi

You brave, incoming students. You've sat through countless hours of orientation. First, the Office of Student Services. Then the Student Services Center. Finally, the keynote speaker from the Student Office of Central Services. Stunning.

In the sea of information washing up on your fertile shores, much of the flotsam has all the practical utility of medical waste. My advice to all new victims of the academic machine, on the other hand, will save money and frustration. But not your appetite! Heh, heh—...ahem.

Bananas, friends. I write today about those delicious yellow treats that last all of an hour and a half on your counter before going bad. Lest this fate befall you, fellow fruit-munchers, I am passing on a recipe for banana bread which requires you to wait until the bananas blacken before dumping them in flour.

Ingredients:

3 extremely ripe bananas  
1 cup sugar  
1/2 cup butter or margarine  
2 eggs  
2 cups flour  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp salt

Mash bananas, add sugar, and let stand for 15 minutes. Mix flour, baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Add butter to bananas and beat well. Add eggs to bananas, beat, and add flour mixture. Mix well. Pour into greased pan and bake at 350 degrees for about one hour.



## Album Review

By Dave Gerardi

### NOFX

#### *Pump Up the Valuum*

Simple riffs. Crisp vocal melodies. The high standard of pop-punk listeners have come to expect from one of the bigger names of indie music.

NOFX plays a style of punk many attempt but few master. Written by Fat Mike, Pump Up the Valuum [sic] is one of those rare albums without any real lags. Sure, maybe the scatological "Louise" is a little silly (an obscene vignette about an S&M lesbian), but it's catchy as hell.

"Dinosaurs Will Die" fortells the future of corporate rock and is ostensibly the mission statement of Fat Wreck Chords: "we're gonna fight against the mass appeal; we're gonna kill the seven-record deal; make records that have more than one good song." Should the major labels crumble, it will be their just dessert for "all the years of hit and run; for all the piss-broke bands on VH-1." "Thank God It's Monday" is a breathy exclamation about being able to do your own thing on your own terms and succeed (if you were Fat Mike and in NOFX and had your own label, Fat Wreck Chords, you'd be pretty damned ecstatic about Mondays too). Pump Up the Valuum, quite frankly, has a truckload of good songs—none of which, true to NOFX' style, will appear on TV or radio.

It's not all politics. Check out "Clams Have Feelings Too (Actually They Don't)." The following is a representative sample: "they have no face, no place for ears; there's no clam eyes to cry clam tears." Funny stuff.

The album unmistakably has that Ryan Greene sound. Of late he has been recording and mixing albums for Fat Wreck Chords and Honest Don's. He's good. Real good. But some people, and you know who you are, just don't like the fact that all the instruments are intelligible. For the rest of us, Pump Up the Valuum is just another feather in his downy cap.

For more information contact: Epitaph Records, 2798 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90026, [www.epitaph.com](http://www.epitaph.com), [NOFX.org](http://NOFX.org), [nofxofficialwebsite.com](http://nofxofficialwebsite.com).

### What is the Doctoral Students' Council?

What does it do? How can you participate?

These are just a few of the questions addressed here in order to introduce you to your student government at the Graduate Center.

## WHAT THE DSC CAN DO FOR YOU

By Silvia Rivero

*DSC Co-Chair for Student Affairs*

The DSC has as its mission to foster a sense of community among GC students, develop channels of communication among graduate students, undergraduates, faculty, staff, and the administration of the GC, generate a space of discussion on GC issues, project the students' voice in Graduate Center affairs, and provide students with valuable resources for advancing their professional careers and enjoying their personal time. In line with these goals, the DSC offers the following services:

### Departmental Allocations

The students of each GC Academic Program are entitled to between \$150 and \$250 each semester depending on the number of students enrolled in their program. A departmental representative elected to the DSC can pick up check-request forms in the DSC Main Office (Room 5495, Ext. 7888). The representative must bring receipts for the money spent during the previous semester in order to receive another allocation. After the money is spent for each semester, receipts must be turned in to the Co-chair for Business, Erin Martineau (Room 5499, ext. 7892, mailbox at the DSC Main Room # 5495). These allocations are meant for students in each department to use towards student-oriented activities like a party, a journal subscription, a workshop, a publication, etc.

### Chartered Organizations

In order to foster community and facilitate communication and activities among and between the GC student body, the DSC charters organizations like the Black Students Alliance (BSA), The Latino and Latin American Students Association (AELLA), and QUNY (The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer Student Group). Any group of students can apply to charter an organization by submitting a statement of purpose, a constitution, and a petition with 20 signatures from students representing at least three different disciplines. Chartered organizations receive \$250 each semester for expenses to conduct events, organize speakers, or have socials. After being active for at least three semesters, these organizations also receive office space equipped with a telephone and computer. Contact the Co-chair for Student Affairs, Silvia Rivero (Room 5493, ext. 7881, mailbox at the DSC Main Room # 5495) for more information on this. See below for the complete list of chartered organizations.

### The Advocate

In order to provide students with an important tool of communication at the GC, the DSC subsidizes The Advocate, your student newspaper. ALL students are encouraged to submit articles to the editor, Mark Petras (Room 5396, ext. 7882). For each article published, students receive \$50. Articles can cover current political events, GC issues, movie and music reviews, etc.

### Cultural Affairs

Funding for cultural affairs is available to individual students, departmental organizations, chartered organizations, and ad hoc groups of the Graduate Center. These grants are made for the purposes of publishing cultural and academic materials or conducting cultural events that are open to all GC students. In order to apply for a Cultural Affairs grant you must present a proposal (estimated budget included). Proposals must be turned in to the Co-chair for Student Affairs, Silvia Rivero (Room 5493, ext. 7881, mailbox at the DSC Main Room # 5495).

After submission, proposals are evaluated by the DSC Cultural Affairs Committee.

### Movie Tickets

Students can purchase up to 10 movie tickets at a time for just \$5 each with a check or money order and a valid student ID. These tickets can start being used 10 days after the movie release upon their submission and a \$1 payment at the box office. They can be purchased in the main DSC office (Room 5495).

### Wellness Center

The DSC contributes \$50,000 per year to the Wellness Center to secure the services of Mary Clancy, our Nurse Practitioner (ext. #7020). Current students can use these services without cost. All medical lab tests are subsidized by the DSC so when students receive their lab bills, they pay merely 10% of the total and take the bill to the Wellness Center to process. Mary Clancy can prescribe medication and offer referrals to Mount Sinai for sliding scale treatment for the services she cannot provide. Psychological counseling (up to 16 free sessions) and adult development workshops are also available through the Wellness Center (ext. # 7510).

### DSC Parties

One of our most important services to students is to offer them a space and time for putting away the books, forgetting about orals and exams, and RELAXING. At our parties, we offer hot food, beer, wine, music and dancing, and the chance to meet and socialize with people in and outside of your departments. We throw three parties each academic year, at the beginning of the Fall semester, at the December holiday recess, and at the end of the Spring semester. We hope to see you there!

### DSC Social Lounge and DSC Study Room

All students can access the two DSC lounges on the 5th Floor. These lounges are for the exclusive use of students. The Social Lounge (Room 5414) provides a relaxed environment where students interact on a social basis. The Working Lounge (Room 5409) is more amenable to holding more formal meetings or for studying and interacting on work projects. Both lounges are connected by a pantry equipped with a microwave, a refrigerator and a sink. We want to encourage students to utilize these spaces. These are YOUR spaces. You can come any time; the doors remain unlocked for you. Later this semester we aim to offer movie nights and other events to bring students to the lounges.

### Room Reservations

The following rooms are under the Doctoral Students Council's direct administration:

Room 5414  
(The Robert Gilleece Students Social Lounge)  
Room 5409  
The Robert Gilleece  
Doctoral Students Study Room  
Room 5489  
Conference Room

These rooms are for the exclusive use of chartered organizations and students in general and meant to provide a space where activities organized by students and for students can take place. To reserve a DSC room, students should go to the Main DSC office (#5495), fill out one of the forms available for this purpose, and leave it in the mailbox of the Co-Chair for Finance, Erin Martineau.

## CONTACT

If you want to contact the DSC to make suggestions, discuss issues and present projects, here are some useful office & phone numbers, respectively (eg room 5495, #7888):

**Main DSC office: 5495 7888**  
DSC Social Lounge 5414  
DSC Study Room 5409  
DSC Conference Room 5489  
The Advocate 5396 7882  
The Adjunct Project 5398 7890/1

### DSC Executive Committee

Co-Chair for Student Affairs:  
Silvia Rivero 5493 7881  
Co-Chair for Communication:  
Jocelyn Boryczka 5491 7879  
Co-Chair for Business:  
Erin Martineau 5499 7892

### Steering Committee 5495 7888

Moira Egan  
Oscar Franco  
Angus Johnston  
Holly Porter-Morgan  
Michelle Ronda  
Elizabeth Watson

### Student Organizations Chartered by the DSC

AELLA (Latino & Latin-American Students Association) 5496 7866/7  
Africa Research Group 5490 7872/3  
Biology Graduate Student Org. 5399 7860/1  
Black Student Alliance 5486 7876/7  
Caritas 5395 7856/7  
Chinese Students Org. 5390 7850/1  
Democratic Socialists of Am. 5494 7868/9  
Feminist Studies Group 5497 7864/5  
Global Studies Collective 5488 7874/5  
Intl. Socialist Org. 5388 7846/7  
Korean Student Assn. 5394 7854/5  
L'Atelier 5389 7848/9  
P. Kibre Medieval Study 5397 7858/9  
QUNY, The GLBITQ  
Student Group 5498 7862/3  
Social & Political Theory  
Students Assn. 5492 7870/1  
Taiwanese Students Org. 5392 7852/3  
Turkish Students Association 5391 7878

# STUDENT GOV'T INTRODUCTIONS

## HOW THE DSC WORKS FOR STUDENTS

**By Jocelyn M. Boryczka**

*DSC Co-Chair for Communications*

There are many issues that confront GC students, and the DSC works to represent student issues in a variety of arenas. Since issues are constantly changing, though some remain the same, please contact the DSC and its representatives to discuss issues pertinent to you. Below are just some of the areas that the DSC attempts to focus its energies.

### Adjunct Project

Are you a CUNY GC adjunct or Graduate Teaching Fellow (GTF)? If so, this project is of the utmost importance. The DSC created the Adjunct Project to disseminate knowledge, information and advocate on behalf of the CUNY GC adjuncts and GTFs. Bylaw #7 was passed in November 1998, which codified The Adjunct Project in the DSC Constitution. Currently, Kristen Lawler and Mark Holling head up the Project, and last year, they signed up about 200 adjuncts to join the union, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC). After an exciting election this past Spring, the New Caucus, which supported adjunct issues during the campaign, won control of the PSC. The time is ripe for making adjunct issues heard in the union. Contact Kristen or Mark at ext. 7890 or 7891, or stop by room 5398 for more information.

### The Graduate Center

Last year, members of the DSC and especially a student organization called GSUCK worked hard to get the GC administration to meet their demands regarding a whole range of problems with the new building. After meetings between the administration and students, faculty, and staff, many improvements were made including increased numbers of computers, access to fax machines, longer library hours, and chains for IDs. Undoubtedly, though, issues about our Graduate Center will continue to arise and the DSC hopes to help students address them.

### Students at Campus-based Programs

A number of Graduate Center students teach, attend classes, do lab work, etc. at the various CUNY campuses such as City College, Queens College, etc. and rarely set foot in the GC. Due to their distance, the DSC hopes to work hard at reaching out to these students by improving communication between them and the DSC, sponsoring social events, making sure that copies of The Advocate reach them, and other means.

### Student Representation on GC-wide Committees

The GC administration has various different committees that address a wide range of issues. The adminis-

tration is mandated to include student participation. This allows us an opportunity to be heard. This is your chance to be sure that students are the number one priority of the GC administration. The following is a list of the current committees: Committee on Committees, Curriculum and Degree Requirements, Information Resources, Library Committee, Research Committee, Structure, Student Services, Student Faculty Disciplinary Panel, and College Association. If you are interested in participating on one of the committees or need more information, contact the main DSC office (Rm. 5495, ext. 7888, 7887, 7889).

### Larger CUNY Struggle

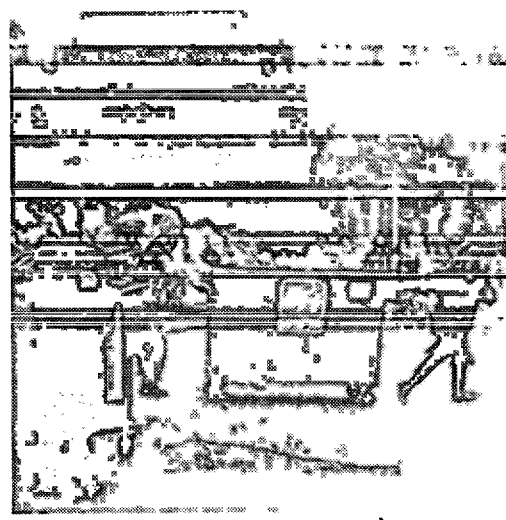
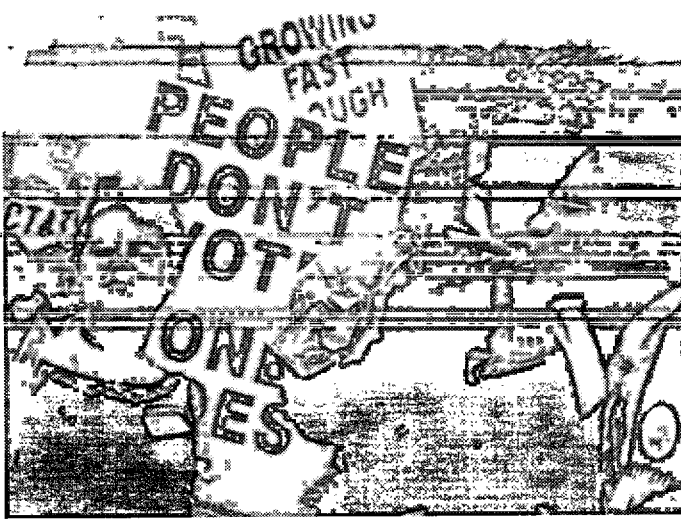
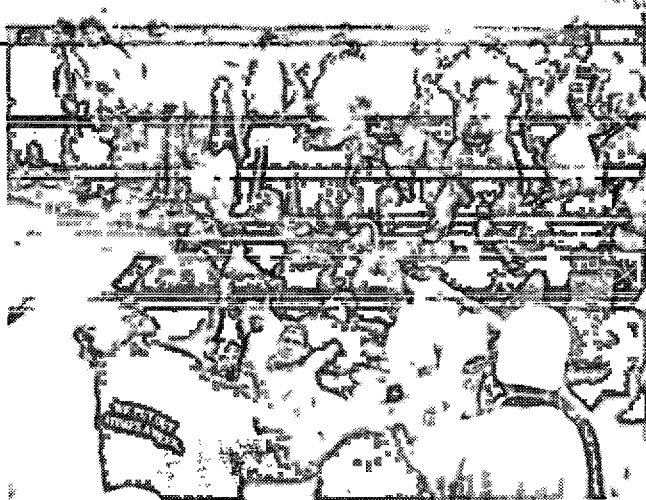
The City University of New York is the third largest urban public university system in the country. As a city and state funded entity, we always seem to be fighting to preserve CUNY's historic mission of providing access to higher education to low-income communities and communities of color in New York City and in this nation. The DSC works consistently with other CUNY entities to maintain awareness among the student body of such issues and to speak at public hearings and advocate on behalf of CUNY as an institution and the GC as a contributor of not only doctoral education but adjunct faculty to teach at the campuses.

### How the DSC Operates

The DSC is the student representative governing body of the GC. The DSC has both departmental representatives, students who represent their own academic programs, and at-large representatives, students who represent the GC student body as a whole. The DSC holds its general meetings for all representatives on the third Friday of each month. The governing structure of the DSC consists of three co-chairs who make up the Executive Committee (Silvia Rivero, Co-Chair for Student Affairs; Erin Martineau, Co-chair for Business; and Jocelyn Boryczka, Co-Chair for Communications), and the Steering Committee made up of six students elected by the DSC. To join the DSC, students are elected by the student body and their departments during the Spring semester.

You can become involved with the DSC and the GC community in a variety of ways. Students can, among other things, charter an organization, apply for a grant from Cultural Affairs, organize an event, serve on a GC-wide committee, or attend a DSC party. The DSC would like to extend a standing invitation to students to attend DSC meetings and voice their issues to their student government.

If you have any comments, questions, or issues of concern to raise with the DSC, please come by and visit us on the 5th Floor, Room 5495, or call us at ext. 7888.



ALL PHOTOS TAKEN BY ADVOCATE CONTRIBUTOR

## WE WANT DEMOCRACY Around the World and at Home

from *Direct Action*, a one-issue newspaper produced by the Direct Action Network, SLAM and the Aug. 1st Coalition

Actions against the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other international bodies have shined a spotlight on the terrible deeds these institutions have committed against the people of the world, depriving them of their most basic freedoms: the right to live free of hunger, sickness, racism, sexism, ecological devastation, and above all the right to democratically determine the future of their own communities.

At the same time, we've seen a movement reborn in the United States against the local reflection of those same global forms of political and economic oppression. People are taking a stand against the Prison Industrial Complex, for Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners, for freedom and justice for immigrants, for economic justice and a living wage, and against all forms of racial oppression in a way we haven't seen in many years in this country.

In the past, many of these battles have often been dealt with in isolation from each other. We see now an opportunity to begin a process of bringing these previously separate struggles together as a powerful united movement against all the interconnected injustices we face in the U.S. and worldwide. And what better place to start than at the Republican and Democratic National Conventions. Our corrupt and undemocratic political system and the two parties sitting atop it are smack dab in the middle of the problem.

Our two-party "democracy" portrays itself as legitimately representing our interests. And as long as we say nothing and do nothing, they will continue to portray themselves this way and get away with it. But the irrational and barbaric priorities of our political system far from represent the wishes of the vast majority of people. Democracy requires direct citizen participation; choosing between preselected, unaccountable politicians every two or four years through a one-dollar, one-vote process is woefully insufficient.

If we lived in a real democracy, would we allow millions to go homeless while others live in obscene luxury? Would we accept a healthcare system in which 45 million are uninsured in a country with the most sophisticated medical technology in the world? Would we spend billions on weaponry and wars for the sake of corporate profits? More and more everyday people are seeing it: we live in a democracy for the few—a democracy of the corporations, by the corporations, and for the corporations. And, in the absence of any alternatives, a majority of people these days take the most reasonable action in response to this knowledge: staying home on election day.

It is now time to take democracy into our own hands. The first step is to put our feet in the streets outside the Republican and Democratic conventions.

FROM LEFT: PROTESTORS BLOCKING Interstate 676 laid on the ground and locked their arms together using modified plastic pipes; BILLIONAIRES FOR BUSH (OR GORE) light cigars with burning money at the legal Unity 2000 march on the day before the convention; ANARCHIST BLACK BLOC pull dumpsters into the street to stall police reinforcements.

## WHY THOUSANDS WENT TO PHILLY TO DISRUPT THE GOP CONVENTION

OR, WHY DIDN'T I READ THIS IN THE NEW YORK TIMES?

### CORPORATE GLOBALIZATION COMES HOME

## THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

FROM *DIRECT ACTION*, A ONE-ISSUE NEWSPAPER PRODUCED BY THE DIRECT ACTION NETWORK, SLAM AND THE AUG. 1st COALITION

In Seattle and Washington DC thousands of people engaged in non-violent direct action against the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank, all institutions of global corporate domination. On August 1 in Philadelphia and August 14 in Los Angeles we will be targeting the domestic criminal justice system. [This article was written before the convention events. —ed] What's the connection?

### Structural Adjustment Begins at Home...

Institutions like the WTO and the IMF are there to impose economic policies overseas that make it easier for giant corporations to exploit the people and the land. Since these policies are almost invariably opposed by a vast majority of the population in the countries in question, ultimately they have to be imposed by force and violence.

While policies of "structural adjustment" were being imposed on countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, a similar process was underway in the U.S. In the '60s and '70s, liberation struggles within communities of color had thrown the U.S. corporate power structure onto the defensive, in the '80s and '90s, these same communities were the hardest hit as social spending was cut, whole industries deregulated, and the rights and wages of working people rolled back. At the same time, with the civil rights movement and urban rebellions fresh in their minds, the U.S. ruling class chose to increase the level of violence directed at communities of color.

More cops every year were hired and new privately run prisons were built. New policing strategies targeted youth of color. The federal government trained state police agencies in the art of racial profiling. Budgets for public defenders and legal aid were slashed. Mandatory sentencing guidelines sent more people to prison for longer terms. This vast population was turned into a virtual slave labor pool for corporate America. Capital punishment was reinstated.

As a result, complaints of police brutality have skyrocketed. The U.S. prison population has increased by

over 300% since 1980 giving us by far the highest rate of incarceration in the world. Roughly two million people will go to sleep behind bars tonight, the vast majority for nonviolent offenses. And these costs are borne overwhelmingly by Blacks, Latinos and Native Americans. One out of two Black men between the ages of 18 and 34 are in jail, awaiting trial, on probation or on parole. The number of executions is soaring. This year California voters approved a proposition that promises to fill the adult prisons with minors and that lowers the minimum age for the death penalty to 14. The criminalization of people of color can only be viewed as the continuation of a long history of white supremacy in America.

There are also hundreds of political prisoners in the U.S.—people who were explicitly targeted for their participation in struggles for social justice. Scores of members of the Black liberation movement, American Indian Movement members, and Puerto Rican Independentistas have spent decades locked down. Additionally whites who supported the liberation struggles of oppressed people within the U.S. and environmental and human rights activists are behind bars.

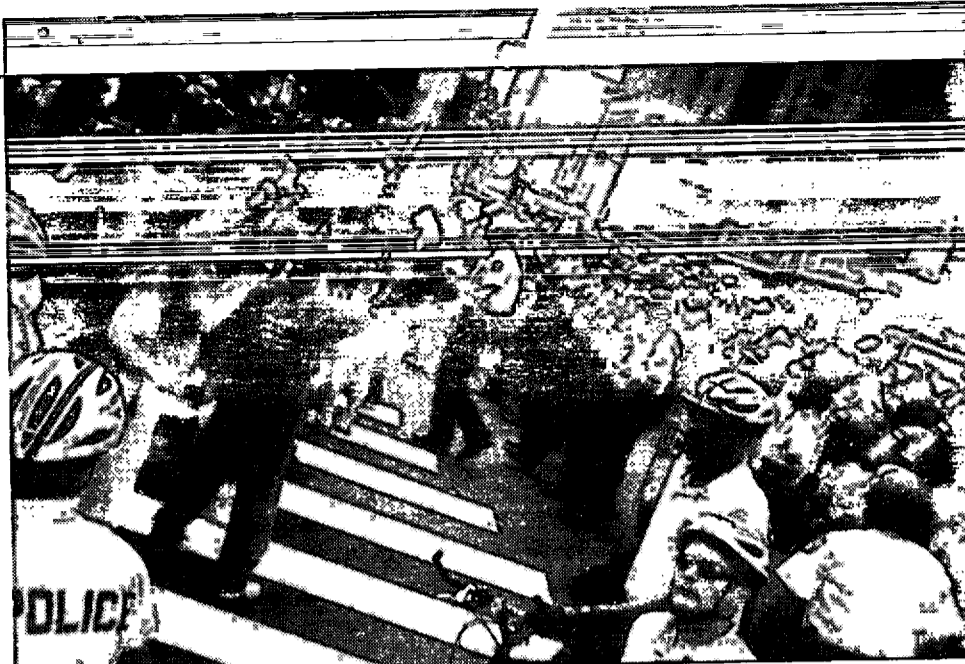
Mumia Abu Jamal, an award winning journalist, former member of the Black Panther Party and MOVE supporter, is one of these political prisoners. Mumia has spent the last 18 years of his life on death row in Pennsylvania. Governor Tom Ridge (a likely candidate for Vice Presidential nomination on the Republican ticket) has signed two death warrants in the case.

### ...So Does Resistance

Over the past year we have witnessed an explosion in opposition to police brutality in the wake of the police killing of Amadou Diallo and the acquittal of the cops who fired 41 shots at him. We've seen increasingly militant demonstrations in defense of Mumia. We saw mass opposition to Proposition 21 in California. Opposition to the death penalty continues to mount, with recent demonstrations across the country against George W. Bush's execution of Shaka Sankofa (Gary Graham) only the latest example.

We can't just stand up to the policies of structural adjustment and political repression when they take place halfway around the globe but fail to act when they target our own neighbors and communities. If we want to build a genuinely democratic movement against corporate power, we have to make these connections constantly, both in our words and in our actions.

**POLICE & PROTESTERS FACE OFF** near JFK Blvd in Philly  
as police attempt to clear the intersection.



# FREE SPEECH FALLS VICTIM TO POLICE CRACKDOWN

By Ana Nogueira  
FROM THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA CENTER

Helicopters flew like vultures over Philadelphia today as the streets filled with activists intent on expressing their opposition to what they call "the criminal IN-justice system." Throughout the city, thousands participated in rallies, marches, spontaneous direct action and nonviolent civil disobedience in an attempt to illustrate their disaffection with Republican support for prison expansion and privatization, active pursuit of the death penalty, and the ongoing problem of police brutality. Both activists and police have prepared carefully for this long-awaited day. Although the strategies of the activists often proved successful, police were well-informed enough to be able to respond to immediately, indicating they had access to detailed intelligence information.

While police fretted about not being able to contain the chaos, protestors were upset that certain planned actions had been abandoned because of the intense police presence. A woman named Etacetera, who was traveling with the Black Bloc from an action at the PoliticalFest to a civil disobedience at 16th and Vine, expressed dismay that the actions thus far had not achieved their purpose. Right now the mood is that we failed, that our actions have failed, she said.

The anarchist group intended to serve as "a divergence squad" that would draw attention away from the direct actions. But [we] were foiled, she said. We came and there were a million cops, and the puppets are in prison. (75 activists were arrested in a puppet-making studio on 41st and Haverford Avenue).

Bernadette expressed confidence that the direct actions would effectively express their concerns to the world. "We're telling them what our views are, they're learning about it. We're showing them that we don't agree with the way they run our country. We don't agree with this system."

The estimated arrest count for the day is over 450 people. Eighty percent of those people are practicing jail solidarity, according to R2K Legal. As late as 7 a.m. Wednesday morning, serious complaints of police brutality were still coming in. While people who locked down streets comprised the bulk of the arrests, 37 were charged with felonies with some defendants facing over 20 years in prison.

"There was a strict policy of no damage to personal property," said David Graeber, a reporter for *In These Times* who acted as a daylong witness to the black bloc. "I don't think there were any store windows smashed or anything like that. Since the theme chosen for Tuesday's protests was the 'Prison Industrial Complex', 'all the attacks were on symbols of state authority,' Graeber said.

Such symbols included the burning of the American flags and the red, white, and blue bunting which adorns the facades of buildings everywhere. Police car hoods were dented and the District Attorney's office received a new paint job when anarchists threw rubber balloons filled with red paint at its facade. "But everything was designed not to hurt anybody," said Graeber, "including the smoke bombs."

The day was nevertheless fraught with violence that did cause injury to humans. At major activist convergence places during the day, police stuck to Commissioner John F. Timmone's instructions to provoke no violence and make no arrests. But reporters have taken at least ten video witness accounts of police brutality directed at specific individuals on random streets and hidden alleyways.

Independent Media Center (IMC) reporters videotaped an incident regarding police disguised as anarchists, beating a demonstrator while radioing uniformed officers for assistance. "There were about five or six of them amid the protestors and once the marching group started to thin out, they turned around and jumped one man and threw him to the ground. Then one officer dug his knee into the man's eye-socket," said IMC reporters. "At first I was very confused at why the protestors would tackle their own comrade. But it turns out that they were working with the police," said one reporter.

According to Graeber, several similar reports of cops disguised as activists, claiming to be hurt by protestors, gave the police the excuse they needed to beat and arrest specific individuals. This behavior escalated dramatically starting around 6 p.m., after the city was emptied of its workforce. Tactics were not limited to protestors on the street. On Tuesday night, policemen entered the lobby of the Independent Media Center. At roughly the same time, a vanload of cops pulled up to the offices of the R2K Legal Team. The officers stepped out onto the street carrying plastic handcuffs. At neither location did the police actually enter the respective offices. When asked by an ACLU observer what they were doing outside the legal offices, the officers replied they stopped and got out of the van merely to stretch their legs.

Regardless of how much the authorities know and how they act, many feel the movement is immune to their behavior. One confident protester expressed this to a passing conventioneer, rumored to be Senator Phil Gramm (R-Tex.): "Your party's over! The rich will no longer rule this country," he said. To this the Senator replied, "Bullshit! The rich will always rule this country."

## Protesters Imprisoned in Philadelphia Face Brutal Treatment, Physical Assault

By R2K Legal  
PROVIDED BY INDEPENDENT MEDIA CENTER

Hundreds of nonviolent protesters arrested during the protests in Philadelphia are reporting inhumane conditions in custody and physical brutality from authorities, according to members of the R2K Legal Collective. R2K Legal is a collective of lawyers and paralegals providing legal support to protesters.

After the arrest of hundreds of protesters, bail for protesters not giving their names was set at unprecedented levels, between \$15,000 and \$450,000. "To my knowledge, bail has never been set so high for misdemeanor charges in the history of this country," said Ron McGuire, an attorney working with R2K Legal. "I consider this a civil rights catastrophe of the first order."

On Tuesday night, female protesters being held in the Police Administration Building, commonly called the Roundhouse, reported seeing guards drag a male protester past their cell. The male was naked except for a pair of boxer shorts, which were down around his knees. "He was screaming in pain," said a female protester in custody who asked not to be identified for fear of retaliation from authorities. "His back was badly bruised, he was bleeding from shoulder to wrist, and his fingers were blue."

One protester, who gave his name only as Jack, phoned R2K Legal from custody early Thursday morning to report that his ear had been nearly torn off by an officer's baton during arrest. Jack had been taken to a nearby hospital to have his ear stitched back onto his head, he said.

"Sadly, this kind of abuse is not unusual," said Sara Marcus, a Philadelphia resident and member of R2K Legal. "The abuse protesters are facing on the streets and in jail is representative of the very issues they were protesting about on Tuesday — police brutality and human rights abuses in prison."

Protesters in custody are demanding the return of the dozen or so comrades in isolation, immediate attention to medical issues in jail, reduction or dismissal of all charges, and equal treatment for all arrested.

# FOR INFO

- Contact SLAM (212) 772-4261
- Help is needed. Money is needed.

## Mr. American Socialist

By Jason Schulman

The legacy of the late Michael Harrington – known best to the public at large as the author of *The Other America* (1962), the book credited with sparking the Kennedy-Johnson War On Poverty – is a contested one on the Left. Many see him as the heir of the democratic socialist tradition of Eugene V. Debs, to be honored for having dedicated his life to building a “left wing of the possible,” first in the Socialist Party and later as co-chair of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). Others see him as basically “a Marxist in theory and a liberal in practice,” responsible for driving many U.S. radicals into the “graveyard of social movements” that is the Democratic Party.

The new and excellent biography of Harrington by historian of the U.S. Left Maurice Isserman, *The Other American*, tends towards the first view, albeit not uncritically. He makes it very clear that Harrington’s excessive moderation and ambiguous stance vis-à-vis the Vietnam War and sectarianism towards the early New Left were both wrongheaded. But Isserman’s admiration for his subject is also obvious, even as he ultimately wonders whether even the faint possibility of a mass American socialist movement has come to a close with Harrington’s death.

Isserman does a superb job in tracing Harrington’s ancestry and his early life, particularly the Catholicism which was to have such an influence on him throughout his days. A Taft Republican in his youth, Harrington became a socialist at Yale University. Briefly losing his faith, he moved to Greenwich Village in 1949 and lived as a bohemian poet. By 1951 he was again a practicing Catholic – but this time of the anarcho-pacifist Catholic Worker variety. For two years Harrington lived an ascetic existence at the Catholic Worker House, attempting sainthood, but soon found himself drawn into the orbit of the Marxism of another “politically unwordly” group, the Independent Socialist League. Led by a former secretary to Leon Trotsky, Max Shachtman, the ISL were proponents of “Third Camp” revolutionary socialism; that is, they considered the USSR and other Stalinist states to be “bureaucratic collectivist” class societies, ruled by a new, bureaucratic form of ruling class. Unlike the orthodox Trotskyists, they did not consider the USSR worthy of any sort of political privilege in the Cold War by virtue of its nationalized economy – they opposed both capitalist and Communist imperialism. As Harrington would later put it, the ISL was a “genuinely democratic sect” – but a sect nevertheless. Seeking to overcome the past and their own marginality, the “Shachtmanites” joined the rump Socialist Party in 1958, then led by Norman Thomas, a former minister seen by the public as the heir of the tradition of Debs.

Harrington soon became heir apparent to Thomas. Following the lead of his mentor Shachtman, Harrington became an advocate of “realignment” – turning the Democratic Party into a genuine social-democratic labor party through the efforts of labor, liberals and radicals forcing out Democratic conservatives. A trip throughout the U.S. led to the writing of *The Other America*, which became a best-seller but did not mention socialism, out of fear of diverting attention from the plight of the poor and evoking “all misconceptions that Americans had about the term.” Suddenly, Harrington had the ear of top labor officials – and even the President.

But by this time Harrington had fully alienated

himself from the emerging New Left. He attacked the Port Huron Statement of Students for a Democratic Society as insufficiently anti-Communist, among other sins. He proceeded to chair a hostile hearing on the Statement by the League for Industrial Democracy (LID), SDS’s parent organization, and order the firing of Tom Hayden and Al Haber from the staff of SDS. LID then changed the locks on SDS’s New York office doors, denying SDS members access to LID organizational facilities. Most tragically, as many of Harrington’s ex-ISL comrades proceeded to push the Socialist Party rightwards and support the Vietnam War – as their anti-Communism overwhelmed their socialist principles – he stuck with them out of organizational loyalty. Though he opposed the war, and supported “doves” within the Democratic Party, his leader-centered “realignment” strategy attempted to bring together hawks and doves in an attempt to create a “laborist” Democratic majority. He supported the slogan of “Negotiate Now!” during the war – believing that anti-Communist American workers would never support the demand of “Out Now!” – when the whole of the New Left had long since decided that there was nothing to negotiate.

By 1970, Harrington – now openly speaking against the war – had broken with Shachtman, whose hatred for George McGovern and the “New Politics” Democratic-left-liberals led him to effectively support Richard Nixon in the 1972 presidential election. Harrington and his Socialist allies then broke with the SP and founded the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, envisioned as “a democratic socialist presence within the mainstream” of American politics – which, inevitably, meant working with left-liberals in and around the Democratic Party. Though Isserman gives more attention to Harrington’s life in the 1950s and 60s than his last two decades, he makes some valid points regarding Harrington’s political activities during his years in DSOC and later DSA.

Though in the early 1970s Harrington was worried that movements around issues such as abortion and gay/lesbian rights would scare off Middle American workers. He – and DSOC – would improve on such matters within the decade. DSOC itself would increase from 500 to 5000 members by 1980, with Harrington as the group’s primary attraction – even as he often found himself on the losing side in internal debates. In 1976, DSOC pulled together a labor-Left coalition, Democratic Agenda, which proved a pain in the neck to Jimmy Carter’s operatives at the Democratic presidential nominating convention. In 1978, Democratic Agenda got forty percent of the conference vote for resolutions opposing the Carter administration’s backpedaling on full employment and confronting Big Oil at the Democratic Party mid-term convention. Harrington and his comrades, as Isserman puts it, “were doing for liberalism what it could not seem to do for itself, which was to set forth a coherent response to the conservative attack on the welfare state.”

In 1982, in an attempt to overcome the internal battles of the 1960s Left, DSOC merged with the post-New Left socialist-feminists of the New American Movement to form DSA. The group would not reach over 7,000 members until the early 1990s. Harrington worked tirelessly on DSA’s behalf, but as Isserman notes, DSA “failed to invent a meaningful political role for local members to play as socialists.”

## AMERICAN

THE LIFE OF

## MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Maurice Isserman



Maurice Isserman

*The Other American:*

*The Life of Michael Harrington*

New York: Public Affairs, 2000.

Individual DSAers were involved in any number of progressive issues and organizations. But beyond “wearing a DSA button to the meetings of these other groups...there was seldom any meaningful connection between their socialism and their other activism.” Harrington himself seemed not to grasp the problem. He also spent far too much time involved in the Socialist International (SI), the worldwide grouping of social-democratic and labor parties, in an attempt to get the SI to live up to its name. It was no more likely that Americans were going to be inspired by Swedish active labor-market policies than they were by the Bolshevik revolution. Still, Harrington remained in the public eye as an opponent of Reaganism, and to a lesser extent as “Mr. American Socialist,” the “conscience of America.”

Harrington died of cancer of the esophagus in 1989. He was, in his own words, a man “walking a tightrope,” in danger of falling to his right (and becoming a pragmatist liberal) and his left (hence becoming another politically marginal radical). At times he did fall rightwards, with his top-heavy realignment coalitions that did not truly involve the union ranks, and his persistent lesser-evilism, which led him to unnecessarily stump for Jimmy Carter in 1976. But supporting left-wing Democrats did not make Harrington a class-collaborationist, as some socialists opine. The Democratic Party is not a party in any meaningful sense. The U.S. is the only liberal democracy in the world where the state, not parties, controls registration and ballot access. Class conflict runs through and within the Democratic Party, not around it (and also within the Republican Party, between free-marketeer, upper-class libertarians and working-class social conservatives). U.S. “parties” are coalitions of disparate elements – they are not ideologically coherent. One can’t even be kicked out of them; anyone can register and vote in primaries. Hence, both Klansmen and Communists – and DSAers – have run for office, and even have been elected, as Democrats. While U.S. socialists, therefore, need not support every single Democrat, supporting those with progressive politics does not make one “cross the class line.”

Isserman ends *The Other American* on a pessimistic note regarding the future of American socialism. He says, effectively, that the U.S. has moved into an “infotainment” culture in which authors of policy-related books will no longer become mass-media figures. Hence, without an heir apparent to

# QUESTIONING BOOKS

## Ending the reign of the book

By Fernando Janer

I had a really hard time writing this, perhaps because it is precisely against the unjustified dominance of writing, and it is hard sometimes to differentiate something from the negative uses which it has been given. But I don't want to stamp out writing altogether from my life, I just want it to take its proper place among all the other ways of knowing and communicating knowledge that I have available as a carbon-based primate. Just in case we don't make it together to the end let me tell you what my intention is, I want to laugh at the popularly held elitist notion that books make you intelligent and TV dumb, and I want to denounce the absolutist dominance of print media in graduate school, academia, and generally the upper echelons of knowledge-making. Again, a major popular critique and the revolution of the academic industry in 800 words. In writing.

Doesn't it make sense that in film school you study films and make films? It makes sense also that in cooking school you cook. Conversely imagine professing knowledge about mathematics without ever using mathematical equations. If you can do that, a kiss on the lips, but you imagine that being the norm in a math program. Then why are programs with subject matter entirely independent from a particular media nevertheless fixated on a writing product? For historical reasons? Convenience and accessibility of writing?

History I can see excluding visual media which were not available or widely accessible until now. But why orality? It is certainly appropriate for small-scale evaluation. And as for recording and communicating blocks of studied material, audio technologies could have done for some time now. As for convenience, live oral performance and recorded audio also serve most purposes.

One obstacle that I can imagine right away to freedom of object choice is that small-scale forms of communication require more attention to the student. So this would be part of a general problematic in higher education, and another of the sacrifices made due to lack of time and lack of money. The evaluation of a paper somehow seems to be easier to adjust to these

demands because it takes control away from the learner in that relationship and gives it to the evaluator. I suspect that if all of a sudden every paper had to be read thoroughly, universities would collapse.

In favor of written objects, I can think that you need to practice with many writing assignments in order to later attempt a major task like a thesis. Practice for other arenas is definitely one of the functions this article has for me. What I would object is that a written thesis is questionable as the exclusive statement of knowledge of a problematic. Even if you choose or it is chosen for you as the culmination of your study, it is not necessary that every single object or communication you do for a grade be a rehearsal of that climax. During the minimum of six years that people spend in graduate school you will have plenty of time to practice writing without being forced to specialize. And of course, when do you practice for your oral examination? That is a different skill which you are actually required to have without really having provided for its development. There are critiques of disciplines, paradigms, epochs, but I seldom hear an acknowledgment of a specificity of the knowing enterprise that affects what you think you know. Certainly what you know about yourself is going to be confused by lack of practice of your other potentials for learning and communicating what you have learned.

I suspect this is related to the fact that knowledge is cheap. As tuition increases meaningful knowledge is increasingly a meaningless objective of the academic process. That process seems to be more about certification to hold authority within the hierarchy of one of the professions that allows more unsupervised activity and free time. The process is not one of facilitation then, but of presenting obstacles to participation in the profession, or more generally, and importantly, in the community of knowledge. It is of course not the reign of the book, but of a class educated in a particular technology refusing participation in a common discourse to people educated in other technologies. Like many dominators it has its particularity taken for granted as universal, essential, too obvious to mention. The fact that there is a particular method of communication that is the sole solution is never a topic of discussion. The logocentrism of the West might be studied, an actual demand from a professor for expressive plurality is never made.

I understand that in a society where a majority of people grow up making their strongest connection with visual media or engaging their environment orally it is absurd that the official, and financially supported, production of knowledge be connected predominantly to text. If you have a chip on your shoulder about your intelligence, or need to distinguish yourself from the rabble in some way, write on, go Lacanian, what the fuck, go back to cuneiform shit, but please don't make your issues into a programmatic statement. If people grow up watching TV and films, they should not to be recognized as knowledge participants have to do it in text. This discriminates against their psychological comforts and strengths. Maybe they should be able to make clearer statements than I seem to be capable of making, but not exclusively in writing.

The thing is that part of what is lost in this monopoly is writing itself. Its pleasures, the things for which

it is particularly suited, its particular effects are never regarded distinctly because it is the only unquestionable thing to do.

What writing is in academia, reading is at large. A popular discourse is that reading books makes you intelligent, and watching TV makes you dumb, sub-human really since humans have to constantly prove themselves by their intelligence. This is one the most ridiculous anachronistic elitist prejudices that I encounter regularly, and I am a queer spik. As if there wasn't a whole lot of excrement smeared on unbleached paper. And a good number of very ignorant well-read people. That write dissertations, and get tenure, and have probably given you a class in graduate school.

All of this for a four-centuries-old practice that has sure been used to put out mostly inconsequential material. A relatively recent technology that some people want to cling to in total denial of its place within history and communication. I can imagine a time when a kid that spent most of his time reading was considered retarded for not participating in the receding oral tradition of the culture.

What's writing without personal anecdote? Some time ago I was at a cafeteria with a friend. Next to us sat an elegant old lady, the kind most people would describe as sweet. We started conversing and early on she quoted the party line about books, and youths of today, and stupidity. In those days I had been thinking intensely about this topic, and I reacted very strongly because it is to me this freebie of contempt that people have. I'm not going to tell you about barking at a sweet old lady, I don't want my character flaws to hurt my argument. I will tell you that as if sent by the Great Spirit, not the Hegelian one, you bookish brute, she mentions the Iliad which is precisely what I was thinking about in those days.

Now, I know you know that the aforementioned elite considers the movie version a vulgarization of the book. Vulgarization is good, it means a generalization of the material. Nevertheless as a degradation it is true in many cases I'm sure, not for medium-specific reasons as much as for political economic reasons, and how access to more recent technologies is still not vulgarized. At any length, the idea is that the defenders of book elitism are zealous about the inviolability of the book version.

Thus my joy when she mentions the Iliad because that great canonical book is actually not a book. It is an oral story that was recorded textually at a loss to the original because some of the exigencies of oral narration became awkward in print. It is the Rock Hudson of literature, regarded as a major display of the dominant mode, Miss Thing actually practiced an art most people would like to think was left behind in ancient Greece. Far from upholding the sanctity of literature, it is a document of the possibility of media transfer, as much as of the need for theoretical practice in all forms of communication. In my case, I have never done theory as fulfilling as the one I have done in ephemeral flows of slippery sounds.

I realize this article has more loose ends than Chaka Khan's hair, but this time it will do. For a circular conclusion, please get a hoola-hoop. bye.

### HARRINGTON, FROM LAST PAGE

the legacy of Harrington (and Debs and Thomas), the socialist movement is doomed. This analysis ignores the fact that it is easier today to be a socialist than at any time in recent memory, given the recent upsurge in anti-corporate activism, against sweatshops, the WTO, and the IMF and World Bank. Moreover, despite the labor movement's modest resurgence, there are severe limits to what single-issue and laborist politics can accomplish absent the development of a strong socialist presence in American life. Even without a charismatic national leader, there is no choice but to continue the hard work of building a viable socialist organization in the U.S., to ensure that Harrington's life's work was not in vain. For all his mistakes, Harrington was dedicated to the socialist cause. His memory deserves no less than our continuing the struggle.

Jason Schulman is on the National Political Committee of Democratic Socialists of America. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

# SURVIVAL TIPS

## Preparatory courses for successful graduate studies

By Nassima Abdelli

In my long career as a graduate student in the City University of New York (CUNY) I have taken many classes. Some were electives. Some were prerequisites. Some I was allowed to choose. Some were forced upon me by professors who desperately needed a fifth student to maintain the course! Some were useful. Some were useless. The courses as well as the professors who taught them are endowed with lasting memories mixed with anxiety and anecdotes. I learned about amnesia, madness, double-blind procedures, placebo effects, neural-net works models, instrumentation, speech processing, ethics in research, sleep deprivation, and on and on and on. Supposedly, it was about gathering knowledge about various topics in the hope that the foundations on which would rest my diploma would be solid.

But I was forced out of a doctoral program at the all-but-dissertation level, with a 3.91 GPA. That is when I realized the intellectual foundations may have been solid, but my knowledge of the Ph.D. granting institution I had entrusted my professional future to was sparse. I knew little of its procedures, its structure, its agenda, its power and its selfishness. I ignored the politics. I hailed academia high on a paramount from which I was precipitated when my mentor of the time traded my professional future and seven years of doctoral studies in the name of collegiality.

After my fall out, I realized that not one course I had taken had prepared me for graduate school, for its strenuous toll, for its chimerical promises and for the post-traumatic disorder I am still struggling with. None had prepared me for a change in career out of the academic world in which I had bathed for so long and in which I had nested my professional dreams. In the Experimental Cognition doctoral program, I was raised with the idea that there is no life outside of Academia. Deviating from the natural evolution from postdoctoral fellowships to the glorious position of full professor after years of abnegation, poverty and possibly abuse was unthinkable. For long, I held the transcripts, which had not protected me from the wrath and the inequity of some CUNY professors and administrators, to be the sole representative of my qualifications and skills. Ignorance had joined my foes. So, I wish that no other graduate student goes through the painstaking process of learning post-facto the dangers of overly trusting any institution, its union, its enticing promises of better life, its tolerance for abuse, its seeming fairness.

Graduate student life can be a pleasant experience if prior to embarking on this long journey, you check out the itinerary and avoid the dream-threatening situations that have engulfed years of effort of students before you. Before you embark on this perilous journey, prepare yourself; adopt a few strategies and you will learn to navigate in the Ivory Tower. Listen to those who have been in the doctoral program you are in or plan to enroll in. Lend your two ears and your brain to gossip. Check for yourself. Collect first-hand information. Interact with ALL the professors in and outside the department. Write up a diary. Sum it up and sparkle it with intuition. This is your sixth sense, an invaluable one whose value is too often discarded in our society. Any "oh-oh" feeling (discomfort, fear, anxiety) should be taken seriously. Search for a mentor that will support you — but not carry you —

throughout the program and hopefully through the initial stages of your professional path. Be prepared to change program or even career if you feel that the degree is not worth it. I have seen too many students falling into depression, having wasted money, hopes, time, professional or personal alternatives for a degree they will never reach without draining their health and compromising their soul. It breaks my heart every time. But the casualties can be minimized with proper preparation.

In addition to those few basic techniques, there are a few books (*Saints and Scamps* by Stephen Kahn and *The Gift of Fear* by Gavin de Becker) that you must read, and two courses you must take: Ethics in Academia and Career Management. You do not receive any credit for these courses, but they are worth your time. These courses are free of charge and advertised for 3rd level students, but they may well be opened to everyone, for they are essential. The Career Management course is advertised for scientists. But I strongly urge non-scientists and first-year students to attend both courses. The attendance is low — no more than five students. I heard that Executive

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Officers do not advertise those courses. Attend the courses. You may find out why!

Ethics in Academia is a seminar taught by Steven Kahn, a philosophy professor and former Provost of the Graduate School and University Center. His keen interest in ethics in academia has guided him to offer such a course and publish a few books on this issue. His course covers teaching issues, the structure of the university, preparation for interviews, the long route from earning a doctorate to the status of full professorship. He touches on the delicate issue of choosing and dumping a mentor. The search for a mentor should begin early in the student career and one should not hesitate to change when earning a doctorate becomes one's nemesis. This course lets you venture through the initial stages of graduate school up to the level of tenure-track positions with a detour by the teacher's obligations, the hiring process in academia, the notion of collegiality and the obligations to serve on committees. If at any time you realize that you don't want to enter the race for tenure, you are left with the Career Management course that offers viable alternatives.

The Career Management course is co-taught by

Carol Wood and Brian Schwartz. Carol Wood is a musician and a career consultant at Baruch College. She has been assisting CUNY students in planning their career and in search for employment. She went through a career change herself and she speaks from experience. Brian Schwartz is the director of Sponsored Research and a physics professor. Schwartz received a grant from the National Science Foundation to develop and implement career courses at the GSUC. These courses are aimed at optimizing graduate students' ability to seek and get jobs in "both the traditional and non traditional areas."

The gist of the course is unveiled in a syllabus: it promises that students will learn to write appropriate and effective resumes and cover letters, to assess the their skills inventory and identify transferable skills, to widen networking, which really begins when you take the course, to practice mock interviews and to strengthen communications abilities in oral and the written domains. The syllabus may be traditional but the course itself is not taught in a traditional way. The course begins with cookies and juice. (Seasonal!) Schwartz brings them to almost every session. The course is supplemented by free books and plenty of documents that you can read at your own pace. Schwartz inquires about those who attend, not only out of curiosity — he is a researcher after all — but also because he tries to find jobs for those who attend. He is well connected.

We are reminded in this course that we should search in our past and present to draw a personalized, accurate and winning professional image of ourselves, irrespective of our expertise. The most challenging question in this course is "the accomplishment statement:" what have you done as far back as you can remember that demonstrates some skills (organizational, technical, managerial) using some measurable unit. That is when you realize that brandishing your transcripts during an interview will serve no purpose. You need to construct a story about yourself based on true facts. You need to write a scenario that one will intentionally listen to and that will demonstrate you can do more than take classes and get a passing grade. The synopsis of your capabilities should convey the message that you can do something for your prospective employer.

The Career Management course is not about teaching you something you don't know; it is about unearthing all your skills and crafting one or several professional images. You are reminded that a doctoral candidate acquires expertise in a highly specialized domain, which limits his/her employability and transferable skills that enhance his/her marketability. Of course, it is not enough to be skilled; you need letters of recommendation. And that is where Stephen Kahn's course meets the Career Management course. Searching for the suitable mentor or mentors will consolidate your vitae. It is vital for your vitae; it is vital for yourself.

By the end of the Career Management course, I felt reassured. There was indeed life outside academia and outside my field of expertise. The arduous task of writing an accomplishment statement was revealing. I decided to pursue alternative goals and construct several professional images and appropriate vitae whose backbones are not my two M.A.s and two M.A. Phil.s., but rather the wide array of skills I had acquired almost unbeknownst to me.

# My monthly diatribe

By Boneless Fillet of Chicken

I haven't seen the rubber chicken around for a while. Hopefully the non-gendered pseudo-foul is in a jail cell somewhere with its hoodlum friends. That's right: non-gendered; PSEUDO-CHICKEN. You see, "Funky Rubber Chicken," as it calls itself, is not a REAL chicken at all. It is made of rubber, rubber that has been molded and shaped into the LIKENESS of a chicken. But rubber that is, altogether, NOT a chicken.

I have to make this clear to Advocate readers, as I fear that this "funky" rubber chicken is, through its chicken impersonation, tarnishing the reputation of chickens everywhere. I know this because I, on the other hand, am a REAL, bonafide chicken: born and raised on a factory farm, and sent straight from my 6" by 6" cage to another factory where, much like in human universities, cultured chickens such as myself get cut up into thousands of little pieces and then put back together again in a different order. All of the bad pieces are discarded, of course, and new, better pieces, are added.

Let me clarify. I am not just any chicken. I am a boneless fillet. A premium, preformed patty of chicken parts. I have been sliced up and reformed into a new, better chicken. Such gourmet morsels as myself are brought to every neighborhood freshly frozen by your local McDonald's, Burger King, and any of the other boneless fillet sanctuaries, where we sit patiently next to the rainforest-destroying-cattle-patties, eagerly awaiting our post-fillet lives.

Sure, sure, there are critics of this style of molding young chickens. There are those among us who complain that we are all identical, only varying in our assigned oblong or circular shapes. But let me put these criticisms to rest. It is true, we are all identical in our appearance, our artificial smell, and the McDressing, lettuce and bun that will inevitably surround us. In other words, we are all identical in the IMPORTANT ways. What lurks below our batter-fried surfaces may be just as much of a mystery to us as it is to those who see us. There are endless possibilities, not endless similarities. And do any of us REALLY want to know what exists there? I think not, my young, naive critics; and you do not really want to face the answer, yourselves. It is the outside that counts. Oblong or circular, these differences, like a good presidential race, mean nothing. We are so identical that you just know we're all going to end up winners in the end — those of us that are successful, high-positioned, farm-players, that is.

Unfortunately, there are those chickens and chicken fillets among us who have deformities. And I am speaking here of deformities of the mental persuasion. Yes, it is true, among us there are those chickens who wish they could be free range organic chickens, or who complain about spending their entire pre-patty life in the no-work, no-movement luxury of a factory farm cage. And there are even... yes, there are even those chickens among us who have the nerve to denounce our wondrous future in genetically engineered bliss. These are the chickens who run amok screaming nonsense about "big brother" and a "brave new world." But their protests are nothing more than mere propaganda created by the spoiled, directionless chickens who are, today, threatening the very fabric of chicken communities everywhere.

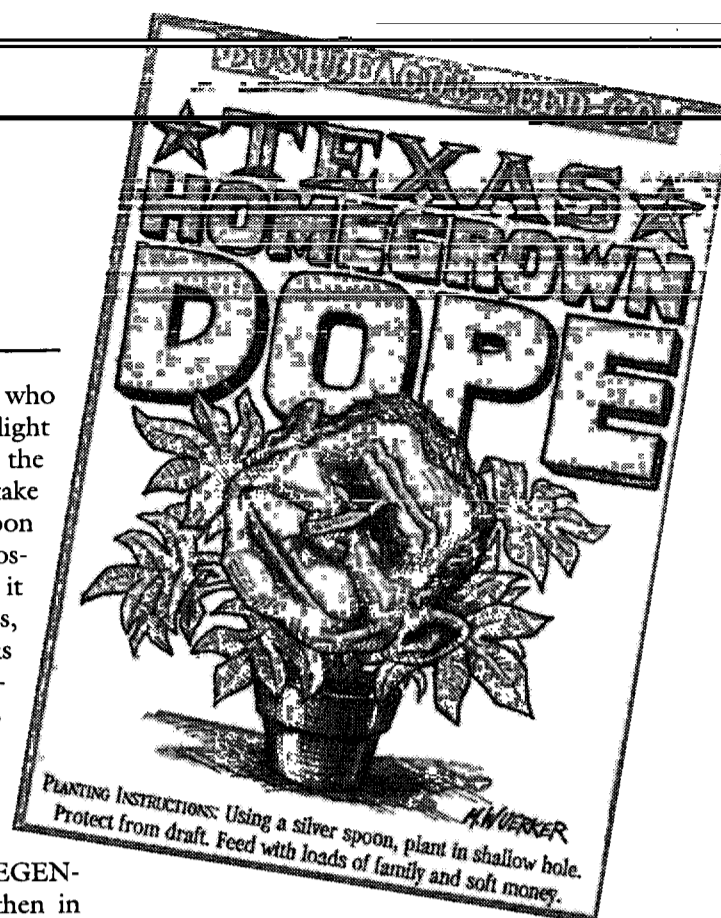
"What does this have to do with me?" you may ask. Well, brothers and sisters of the human persuasion, a great emergency is upon us. I write to you today because I see trends just as equally disturbing among humans as those that have been developing among the ungrateful delinquent chickens that squat in the tiny cages among us today. These trends, these most UNHOLY trends, are surely nothing less than the work of Mephistopheles herself. And I urge you: be

warned not to treat the ingrates among you who dare to think outside the breaded crust of fillet light handedly. The Philadelphia police are getting the idea, and I hope the whole nation will watch, take notes, and follow in suit — striking down upon these with only the heaviest-feathered wing possible. We must smash this scourge before it spreads like a wildfire and destroys our families, our family values, and all that is good within this country that is so great we don't learn geography and we never hesitate to refer to ourselves not by our country name, but by the name of two entire continents: AMERICA.

This scourge, this plague to which I refer is the growing group of private-property-disrespecting, traffic-blocking, puppet-toting, DEGENERATES who congregated first in Seattle, then in Washington DC, and who have most recently disrupted the special V.I.P. transportation arrangements made for the Republican delegates and financed by the taxpayers of Philadelphia. I applaud the Philadelphia police for their efforts in arresting a whole warehouse of puppeteers, as well as certain, targeted delinquents who dared to walk the streets and claim they were doing "nothing." It is also encouraging that these "do-nothings" will be detained for weeks behind prison bars on very tenuous charges, and very high bails — some as high as \$1 million.

The police must also be applauded for arresting upwards of 300 so-called activists for blocking city streets or for just being present when the streets were blocked. After all, whether marching in a permitted rally or spray painting and smashing the windows of police cars, these delinquents are nothing but trouble and must be detained and severely, severely punished. Beatings, the refusal of necessary medicine and/or medical attention, the withholding of food and bathroom privileges for days at a time, the denial of phone calls and/or legal council, the hog-tying of detainees and the dragging of naked detainees through sewer troughs in the police station all constitute a good beginning to the punishment of these spoiled brats. We must applaud the Philadelphia police for doing the right thing in these specific situations, though we may certainly wish to criticize them for not going far enough in their punishment. And as for those who complain about some near-fictitious "Constitutional rights" of the detainees, well I have this to say: Constitution, schmonstitution. You would have done the SAME thing if it had been YOU who was listening in on their phone conversations and reading through their emails — among other things. When you're in charge of the safety — and of enforcing the rights — of republican's and big money's freedom of speech, you don't have many choices in how to deal with a bunch of radical fruitcakes who scream half-baked ideas about abolishing the death penalty or universal health care.

Universal health care, indeed! These immature brats just want to suck the wealthy dry. The nerve they have expecting the rich to fund health care for all, when the rich already have health care — and very good health care, at that. Freedom of choice! What do they know about choices? It is the few who run the country via large corporations and huge political contributions, who have to make the choices day in and day out. These are the few, the proud, the millionaires and billionaires who have the responsibility — the BURDEN — of governing the lowly masses of this country, and of many other countries around the globe whose internal affairs we dominate. That the masses are often, quite simply, too ignorant to even know that what these leaders do is in their own interest is evidence of their inability to govern themselves,



were they ever given the chance (which they will not be, in the grand scheme of things).

There's a reason why certain people are on top. There are birthrights in this country, and if you are going to walk around expecting to enjoy the same privileges of those born above you on the social and economic ladder, well, then, you just better be ready to pay the price for your naïve and irresponsible illusions.

And so I must criticize the Philadelphia police for not showing more foresight and arresting the entire slew of hippy hooligans the minute they got into town. It was clear from the minute they set foot in Philadelphia that these spoiled brats were up to no good, yet the police sat back and did nothing to protect Philadelphians from the inevitable: several hours of slowed traffic in the Center City section of town.

Philadelphia Police Commissioner Timmone has taken the right step in calling for our tax dollars to be spent on an extensive federal eavesdropping into the emails, phone calls and underwear drawers — among other things — of these dangerous rebels. Rumor has it that Bob Barr or Orin Hatch may also take a right step, and introduce legislation that will mandate the death penalty for blocking traffic or carrying anything that might be used to commit a traffic-obstructing crime. These fine gentlemen know well that all fetuses must be saved and cherished — as there is still hope that they can be properly socialized to conform to responsible, middle-class values — but that these repugnant protesters have already made their deals with the devil and must be stopped before they spread their hedonistic blight on all of humanity.

Perhaps this seems extreme to some, but I have come to the conclusion that this is necessary by using the same logical pretensions that have been used to justify our active destruction of the livelihoods (and lives, quite literally) of hundreds of thousands of small farmers in Colombia; it is not at all about the drugs today, it is about maintaining our political and military domination — in the name of present and future PROFITS — now and FOREVER. Killing off millions of farmers and displacing millions more from their land (especially oil-rich land!), it has been decided by our leaders, is a price worth paying. Wouldn't we be hypocrites to not deal with our own domestic problems in the same way? And, after all, isn't killing off ten thousand or so radicals and suspected radicals today a price worth paying for the maintenance of our safe, reliable plutocratic domination?

Whether or not we can pass such legislation this year will have to be seen. Until then, let me leave all you — with this: mark my words, kiddies, the day of reckoning is upon you. As one of the great pro-life demonstrators in Philadelphia said this past week, all you fornicators and drunkards will burn in Hell with Tupac, Elvis, Sunny and Cher.

## Are we responsible for this material?

### Academia's three eternal questions

Commencement means beginning.. yadda, yadda, yadda.. the youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. . yadda yadda yadda. . the world will open its doors for you all... yadda, yadda, yadda.

It is graduation season again and as I sit in the faculty section of yet another ceremony I think of the card we just sent Rachel, my wife's younger cousin with the newly minted MBA: "Congratulations on becoming the person your parents always wanted you to marry."

I'm quite warm in my long black gown and doctoral hood, even if I do wear it over sneakers and a T-shirt. The introductions are longer than the speeches at these things. As the speakers drone on, my mind wanders to graduates and students I have encountered over the years. I am back in class. Listen along:

"Are we going to be held responsible for this material? I mean, do we have to read ALL these chapters? Like...could you give us some idea of what's gonna be on the final?"

The words are delivered in a childish whine, punctuated by an expression that mixes pain and confusion. The questions are expected in a seventh-grade classroom, but this is not a junior high school; it is a graduate program at a large university. And my student is not an adolescent but a seventh-grade teacher herself.

Absently, I wonder if the great masters of Western culture faced similar frustrations. I see Socrates standing before his students: "And so my friends, I have decided. that I can never compromise. The honesty and integrity of my teaching must stand—even if I cannot. I shall drink from the Hemlock, indeed take my own life rather than submit."

His students stand by in stunned silence as they watch their beloved teacher raise the chalice filled with poison to his lips. But then, from somewhere in the back, a solitary voice is heard. In a childish whine it cries, "Are we going to be responsible for this material...?"

Cut to Moses at the foot of Mt. Sinai, holding two stone tablets. His voice is deep and resonant, his face still beams from his encounter with God. "If you will keep faith with the commandants of the Lord," he intones, "and follow in His ways, then you shall receive an everlasting reward in this life and in the World to Come."

There is reverent silence as those assembled bask in awesome power of the moment. Then from somewhere in the back, a solitary voice is heard. Childishly it whines: "Are we expected to read ALL these chapters?"

Cut to Jesus, on a beautiful morning in early spring. The waters of the Sea of Galilee glisten and the cry of gulls pierces the heavens. There is no other sound but the voice of the Nazarene preacher well into his Sermon on the Mount. His voice calls out in a rising crescendo, warning his flock to beware, for the legions of evil shall surely test them.

The multitude strain to hear his every word. But then, from somewhere in the back, a solitary voice is heard. In a childish whine it cries, "Like...could you give us some idea of what's gonna be on the final?"

Of course I do not consider myself to be among the great masters of Western culture. But I have been a university instructor for half my life, spending most of that time with students in graduate and professional programs, and I have discovered one simple truth: People walk around with an idea of what it means to be a "student" that they developed back in grade school.

No matter who they become or what other roles they play, these early impressions remain. Sit them in a classroom, and even if they are 35 years old and married with four children and a full-time profession, they are still little boys and girls in school.

It is a point I stumbled upon at the beginning of my own career. I was a young doctoral student in the political science department of a large metropolitan university. Though when it comes to earning potential, university instructors generally rank somewhere between successful bicycle messengers and ambitious newspaper boys, it was my errant dream to be a college teacher.

I was overjoyed when the department called on me to teach a graduate course deadline with American political institutions as part of its fellowship program. Nervous but excited, I began preparing my lecture notes. Back then corruption and marital infidelity were not yet accepted as American political institutions, so I was able to do most of my work in the library. Today, the same assignment would probably require more field research.

The first weeks were uneventful. I worked diligently, rehearsing each lecture as though it were the State of the Union message. I was all business, never smiling in class or veering from my carefully prepared notes. And it appeared that my work was paying off. I could handle all the questions students tossed at me.

And they really seemed to be learning something, arcane though it may have been. I mean, the year in which the number of U.S. Representatives was set at 435 is not likely to come up in most polite conversation. Still, I was in for a shock about halfway through the fourth week of the semester. I was discussing the workings of the United States Congress and its voting system.

"In most cases," I said, every bit the erudite scholar, "a voice vote is employed, but in more controversial circumstances, a roll call may be necessary to help establish the winner and to record how each member voted."

I paused for effect, stroking the first harvest of my goatée, planted and fertilized just for the occasion. I had wanted to wear a cap and gown to class but the Department chair thought it a bit showy. She wore jeans, a flannel shirt and work boots.

"In extremely close ballots," I continued, rising to my full height and pausing to lend drama to a discussion that was about as intriguing as a TV commercial for laundry detergent. "In really, hotly contested political battles, a teller vote might be called."

I looked around the room and was fully satisfied, even flattered that I couldn't see one pair of eyes looking back. Everyone was busy taking notes, confirming to me that each word I uttered was worth its weight in gold. If only I could have convinced my landlord.

Smiling to myself, I pushed further, "A teller vote is a rather unusual procedure. Two staff members of the Congress sit at either end of the hall, near the doors," I explained. "Those in favor of the bill pass through one door, their vote to be registered by a 'teller' seated there. Those who oppose are counted as they walk through the second door."

And then—Inspired by the same muse that moved Einstein to quip, "E equals mc cubed... but seriously ?????? folks..." — I tell my class, "And, if any members of Congress choose to abstain...they jump out the window!"

I expect uproarious laughter in response to my brilliant stroke of wit. Instead, I am met with dead silence.

I fear that my reappointment is in danger and I beat a hasty retreat. "No, no," I tell them sheepishly, "no one really jumps out the window. I was just kidding."

I watch with awe as 27 of the cream of the American intelligentsia lift their pens as one and scratch out the last line of their notes, the line where they wrote that all abstentions are required to jump out the window of the Rayburn Congressional Office Building in Washington. No point in debating the issue, if the instructor says they jump out the window, we write it in our notes and spit it back on the next exam.

When that sort of thing happens now I generally pay it no mind. But in my darker moments, perhaps after an exhilarating hour discussing the mysteries of grant-aid formulae to local governments under current revenue-sharing programs, I wax less turgid. Like last week:

"How do they know?" I ask Goldstein, a colleague in the Department of Sociology. His doctoral dissertation is rumored to have been a careful statistical study of low birth rates among homosexuals. "How do my students know that I am really the instructor of the course? Could any one of them swear out an affidavit as to my true identity?"

He looks at me with a patronizing smile; "You're dealing with absolutes again," I hear him say. "You've got to stop hanging around with those existentialists from the Philosophy Department." I ignore his comments, instead directing my remarks to his own poster of Max Weber, that sociological deity, eating a Big Mac.

"How do my students know that I am not some outpatient at a local mental institution," I continue. "Maybe I'm on an experimental treatment plan. Some people do primal scream or est, others chant or use crystals—well, my therapeutic program requires that I lecture to graduate students on consecutive Monday nights."

Goldstein dials for a security officer to restrain me. I take the quizzical look on his face to mean that he thinks perhaps I am in some experimental therapy program; And if not—maybe it's not a bad idea. "When the guy comes to read the gas meter," I am screaming at him now, "these people ask for identification. But in class, they just take notes!"

He puts the phone down and decides to give it one more try. "Haven't you learned yet," he says to me in his most patient, professorial demeanor. "You mean, after all these years of teaching, you still don't understand? There are really only three questions that move and motivate all students, questions that form the core of any curriculum and are really basic to the educational process..."

The static feedback from the microphone jolts me back to this overlong graduation ceremony. Is that really Goldstein delivering the final benediction? His face beams and he seems to be smiling right at me. "And let me leave you with a final thought," he bellows. "Remember, the three questions central to academic life:

**"Are we going to be held responsible for this material? Do we have to read ALL these chapters? And, Could you give us some idea of what's gonna be on the final?"**

*The writer, Arik Harbi, has taught at six different colleges & universities since 1971. He thinks it may be time to give it all a rest. Courtesy of the Jewish Sentinel.*

# POETRY

## Ineffable Chant

BY PATRICK A. THOMAS

I love you

I might say  
My heart, a grand bouquet of stars  
exploding,  
Weaves a milky way of myriad  
kisses  
that implodes  
in the blinding moment of a sweet  
caress

But no.  
That is too much  
That is too little

I love you

I might recall  
The before time  
The cold before time  
Before you  
When in an autumn moment  
You passed before my eyes  
A golden, scarlet leaf  
And suddenly  
There is no winter  
Only spring

I love you

I might elucidate  
The delectable intertwining  
Of our fingers, of our thoughts  
As our blood becomes wine  
And our bodies manna  
Sacrificed  
On the altar of ecstasy

But no  
That is too honey  
That is too bitter

I love you

I love you

I love you much

## Intimations of Mortality

BY PATRICK A. THOMAS

The heart breaks  
But it continues beating  
And even if each fragment

Scattered to the four ends of the  
universe  
Each infinitesimal bit of heart  
Would itself become a beating heart  
And shatterable  
Into an infinity  
Of unforgotten sorrows

The ribboning path stretched  
before us  
Is shredded in twain  
On the right side brambles, on the  
left thorns  
But not to move  
Brings still more pain  
Than treading on broken crystal

How can we live without love?  
And yet  
A dethorned rose is far less poignant  
Its perfume much less piercing

We flit from pleasure to pleasure  
And shrink in horror  
Watching each petal turn  
Into a heap of dung

The long fingers of longing  
Reach out to touch the stars  
And travel the galaxies  
And ride the comets  
Only to return again  
Monotonously  
In a graceful curve  
To close upon itself

The end of life is death  
The purpose of everything is nothing  
But nothingness is pollinated:  
Even a dying star is the food of the gods.

## Poems

BY ROASTED CHICKEN

I don't care  
that my room  
is so filled with trash  
I can barely touch  
the floor when I walk.

I don't care  
that I sleep on the floor,  
a top a blanket  
I haven't washed  
for six months  
or more,

who's counting?

I don't care  
that I don't bathe  
or change my clothes  
for days  
at a time;  
that I smell  
and people flee  
from me, on the train;  
that my hair is caked  
in so much grease and dirt  
it looks several shades darker than it is,  
and shiny.

I don't care that I go days  
unable to feel  
anything  
that I get so numb  
I even forget to eat  
more than a few morsels of junk food  
a day.

I don't care that I lose weight I  
can't afford to lose  
and trigger my own flashbacks  
to the days of mind-numbing  
hunger  
and worse  
pain  
that I can't  
even feel,  
still.

And I don't care that I find ways  
to fill each of my days  
with nothing  
and it  
keeps me so busy  
I never have to take the time  
to think about  
how hellish my life is —  
internally.

In fact, I don't care that I never  
enjoy life.  
I may even feel a bit superior and  
bitter  
towards those who have not yet  
learned  
that life isn't something  
to enjoy.

I don't care about anything.  
I'm keeping everyone away from  
me.

And I'm treating myself better  
than I've ever been treated  
in my life:  
no one can  
hurt me,  
now.

## years ago

I thought about you all the time  
after I left  
but the pain  
turned to anger  
and I blamed you  
for not forcing me to stay  
Forcing me to see  
that you cared  
Forcing me  
to be with you  
Forcing me...  
to do anything  
because forcing me  
was the only love  
I had known.

You didn't force me to do any-  
thing  
and so I never knew that you cared  
until now.

Then again,  
I guess maybe you didn't.

## Where's David Banner when we need him?

Where's  
David  
Banner  
When we  
need him?

## Method Man

Will the  
"real"  
revolutionary  
please stand up?

Everyone still sitting  
is at least  
rooted  
in reality.