

TALKING WITH NOAM

In Part II of an Exclusive Interview,
Noam Chomsky Discusses Flawed U.S. Policy on Colombia

By Andrew Kennis

In the last issue of the *Advocate*, the first question of an interview with Noam Chomsky appeared. The interview took place during Chomsky's four-day trip to New York City last November. *Advocate* contributor Andrew Kennis talked with whom the *New York Times* (ironically, Chomsky's nemesis) has dubbed, "the most important intellectual alive." Indeed, according to the Arts and Humanities index, he is the most quoted scholar alive. Nevertheless, Chomsky continues to be ignored and marginalized in U.S. mainstream media. Thus, the *Advocate* is pleased to give Chomsky the attention and space that needs to be given to intellectual dissidence and social criticism. This issue will feature the second question of the interview, while the remaining questions and answers will be published in subsequent issues of the *Advocate*.



aiding Colombia's "drug war"

KENNIS: In the book that you co-authored with Edward Herman, *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, you lay out three kinds of bloodbaths: benign, constructive and nefarious. Benign bloodbaths are human right atrocities
continues on page 11

SAME OLD SAME OLD AS ANOTHER SEMESTER BEGINS

By Tracy Steffy

It was the first day of the Spring 2001 semester and I had a 4:15 class on the third floor that was ten minutes late getting underway because — what a surprise — the door to the classroom was locked. I seem to recall numerous meetings with the President, senior administrators, and staff over the last year and a half where students argued, and the President agreed, that **CLASSROOMS AND HALLWAYS SHOULD REMAIN UNLOCKED DURING THE HOURS THE BUILDING IS OPEN**. So, really this should not have happened. Of course everybody makes mistakes and sometimes doors don't get unlocked when they should, but what made this particular incident so very special was the attitude of the security officer when I called to let them know we needed someone to open the class.

I called down at about 4:10 after first calling

the school operator to have her transfer me to security because even though there are phones all over the place, no one has thought to list any important numbers like security on, or near, the phones. The school operator transferred me to a phone that I let ring about 10 times. No one picked up and it never went to voice mail. (Thankfully no one was in mortal danger). I next called my program office and got the actual number (which is the pretty easy to remember, x7777 but you might want to write it down if you're not in the habit of calling security since you won't find it posted anywhere) and I then called security.

The person I spoke with was pleasant enough and said he would send someone up. After more than ten minutes, I called back to see if anyone had been dispatched. The guard on the phone answered, "I've told them, they know about it." I replied, "Thanks but I was wondering if anyone has actually been sent up yet." To which he responded, "Look, what do you want me to do

about it, you'll just have to wait. I've done all I can do." I said, "Thanks, that's a nice attitude," and waited another five minutes for someone to show up.

While this incident was moderately irritating, I couldn't help but feel that we are right back at square one again. One of the most basic things students have been asking for in the last year and a half in this building is open doors, open hallways, and open classrooms. But perhaps more importantly, we have asked for at least some recognition of the fact that the only reason anyone has a job in this building is because the students keep filling the seats in the inadequate, poorly designed, windowless, overly cramped classrooms (when they are actually allowed into them).

Which gets me back to my class. When we finally got into the room I discovered

continues on next page

THE WORST classroom I have been in so far here at the "new" Graduate Center. Last semester I endured a classroom in which there were four mismatched tables that varied substantially in height and that were in a different configuration every week. There were also two freestanding chalkboards adding to the congestion. I didn't think anything could top that room, but it was a palace compared to my classroom this semester. The room is so small that there is barely enough room for the tables. Once everyone is seated around the six tables squished together to make one, there is not even enough room between the chairs and the wall for a person to walk. I find it hard to believe that this isn't some kind of fire hazard.

Anyway, this arrangement also renders the chalkboards on the walls practically useless, unless everyone huddles on one side of the table, which I guess is possible if there are only five people in your class. The lack of clearance between the back of your chair and the wall also means that once you're in, you're stuck. If you're not lucky enough to sit on the end by the door, if you've got to get up for some crazy reason like say, to go to the bathroom or something, everyone on your side of the table is going to have to get up and step aside.

I realize that other campuses have it much worse, however how many other campuses have so new a facility that is so ill-equipped to deal with students? I seem to recall that back in the day the administration tried to "sell us" on the move with

promises of ample classroom and student space, a gym, and day care among other things. Although we do finally have day care, it has space for less than 30 children and is underfunded (the DSC has been asked to consider raising student fees in order to contribute to its funding which it so far has declined to do).

We have no gym because the funds were spent elsewhere (although, thanks to the persistent efforts of some students yoga and belly dancing classes are being offered this semester) and I'll let you be the judge on how the class and student work space rates. Yes, there are hundreds of places to use a computer (provided you can actually log on and the network is functional) but as my friend who is preparing to take his orals next week noted, there is not one space at the Graduate Center where a student can sit quietly, have a cup of coffee and read.

One afternoon he started out at 365 Express but it was too crowded, noisy and hot for that to work so he thought he'd try the Dining Commons. After about fifteen minutes up there, he was kicked out because they close at 3:00 p.m. You can't take coffee in the library and of course, it's not actually all that quiet in there either. With the constant blare of car horns and police and fire sirens, the only place to read at a table not surrounded by people clicking away at computers or overly distracting street noises is the tiny dissertation reading room on the first floor. Next stop on the quest was his own Sociology department student lounge, which although a nice place to have parties, offers little in the way of quiet space to study. The lounge is surrounded by professors' and program administrators' offices and is therefore full of people coming and going-- as it should

be, but it was certainly not a place to study.

Do not misunderstand me. I think our new library is a VAST improvement over the dungeon at 42nd street and I applaud the fact that it is finally open past 9:00 p.m. There are even a few things that are improvements for students. But the library, like so many other things at the Graduate Center, is so incredibly poorly designed to meet the needs of students it is hard to believe that the people who worked on the planning and design of this new building ever imagined that actual students would someday use the space.

Now, I will admit that if some way could be found to operate this institution without the need for any actual students, it would probably be a heck of a lot easier to run. We have so many needs, and we're so demanding. We need functional classrooms, computers that work and a network that can operate properly for more than a week at a time, places to hang our coats and leave books, safe places to park our bikes, light, air, and occasionally food and water -- the nerve of us!

But until the day comes that our presence is no longer required at this institution to keep its front doors open, it would be awfully nice for someone to apologize when we're locked out of our classrooms and to open them without the negative attitude. It would also be nice for the administration to begin to treat us with the respect we deserve and do a better job of providing us with the very basic tools we need to do our work.

I encourage everyone who can squeeze it into their overly crowded schedules to attend at least one of the community meetings with the President, and to work with your DSC representatives to continue to press the administration to live up to some of the promises it made.

ADVOCATE

CUNY GRAD CENTER 10/2003

365 5TH AVENUE 5TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10016
212.817.7882
CUNYADVOCATE@HOTMAIL.COM

PUBLISHED 6 TIMES ANNUALLY
SUBSIDIZED BY:
THE DOCTORAL STUDENTS' COUNCIL

EDITOR
MARK PETRAS
MANAGING EDITOR
NASSIMA ABDELLI

DESIGN
ANATOLIY KHARKHURIN

CONTRIBUTORS
TRACY STEFFY FRANK BENJAMIN
ERNEST SARTOR LOUISE AMMENTORP
MARK HALLING ARTHUR SCHERR
ELEANOR B. TIPPLER FERHAT KUTLUCAN
ROB WALLACE ANDREW KENNIS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR MUST BE SUBMITTED ON DISKETTE AND ACCOMPANIED BY A SIGNED HARD COPY. ALL ARTICLES IN THE ADVOCATE PRESENT THE OPINIONS AND VIEWS OF THE WRITERS AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE OPINIONS AND VIEWS OF THE ADVOCATE STAFF OR DSC.

WRITE FOR THE ADVOCATE

Submit articles to room 5396
on the Fifth Floor

Articles should be on diskette in MS Word format

Call 212 817 7882 with any questions
Or e-mail cunyadvocate@hotmail.com

WRITE FOR THE ADVOCATE

SARTORIAL SOBRIQUETS

By Mrs. Eleanor B. Tippler, M.Sc.

As graduate students (and those who work with them) we make great sacrifices for our art, our craft, our science. Late nights mean bad skin. Harried schedules leave little time for workouts to trim our figures. Diets suffer under the strain of too much caffeine and Advil. One sacrifice we needn't make, dear scholars, is fashion. Short on cash, time, and basic dress sense, graduate students are notoriously poor dressers. (We remember one T.A. for our undergraduate calculus course who never even bothered to comb his hair... for the entire semester!) Were we to have a single wish for beautifying the Graduate Center, it would be a small measure of fashion onto the student body. Fashionistas and designer snobs we're not, but how we love the look of smart, cute things in nice clothes.

In the interest of the larger good and greater beauty of the Graduate Center, herewith is a collection of our favorite nearby shops and fashion secrets where one can dress with panache for little cash. Perhaps more of us can now look as if we're one of those smartly dressed English or Art History students.

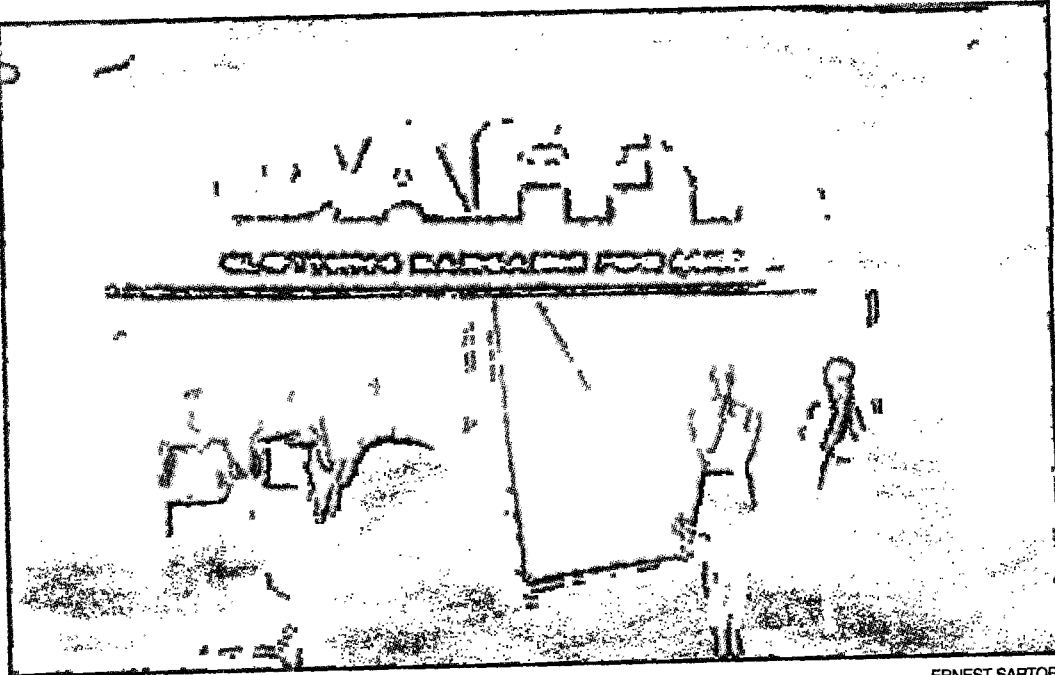
dark-haired one with whom we always make eye contact but to whom we never get properly introduced. (Ever notice how everyone looks sexier and more glamorous in the new building?)

Perhaps these urges come from the toil that grad school takes on our, ahem, extracurricular activities. Regardless, we know exactly where to go when they strike. While our usual *modus operandi* is that of studied rationality, we do know how to succumb to impulse on occasion — like the

time we seduced a rising star at an academic conference, and after a delightful evening in a downtown hotel we impulsively bought what turned out to be the best balm for our bruised kisser (None of your business and Moist Stic, respectively).

When urges get too great to ignore, just pop into Conway. Fur-trimmed red thong underwear? Sexy

Lolita fur-trimmed pink pajamas? Sheer black naughty nighties? Burgundy velvet bras? At Conway, you can look like a porn star without a porn star's salary. Just browsing through all their affordable goodies somehow makes us feel satisfied, and after a lunchtime shopping break we're back in the library knowing, underneath, we're as sexy as we feel. For those in a less daring mood, we've found adorable little accoutrements for the home like fun fuzzy slippers and fantastic little



ERNEST SARTOR

Daffy's on Broadway & 34th St.

striped storage boxes — perfect for holding the love letters we're writing to our secret crush.

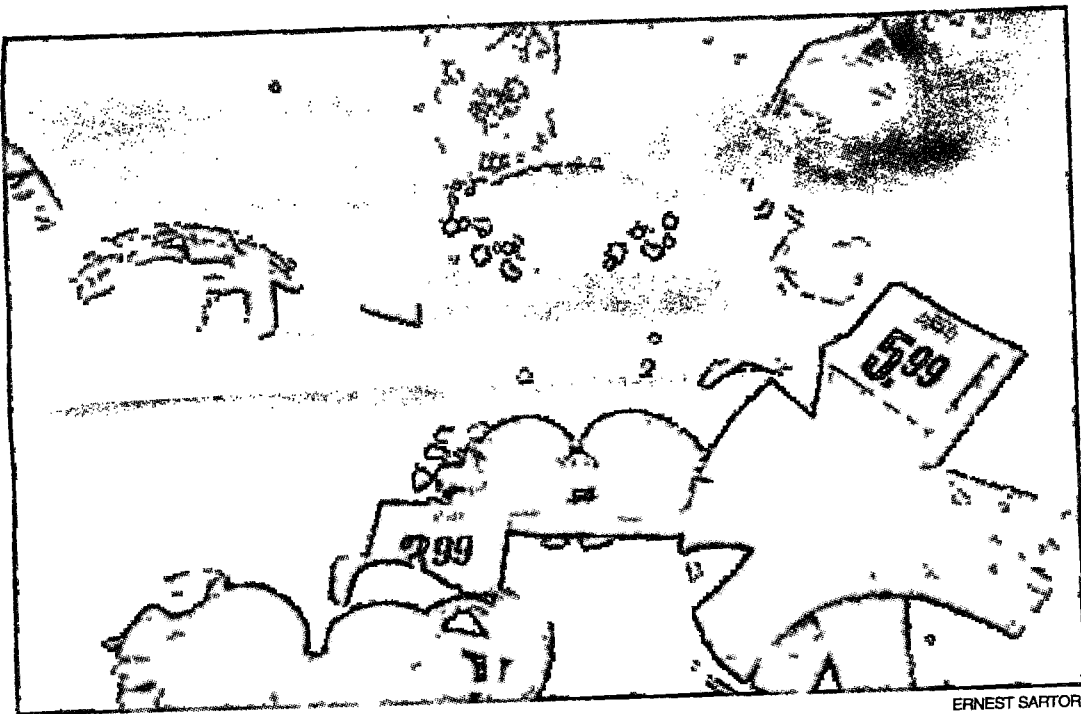
Daffy's

Broadway & 34th Street
Monday-Friday 10 am - 9 pm
Saturday 10 am - 8 pm
Sunday 11 am - 7 pm
736-4477

Too short on cash to even think about dressing fashionably? We have found a wonderful way to procrastinate going to the Grad Center while consuming like the dutiful American citizens we are: Daffy's. Tucked away between the Toys-R-U's and the Payless Shoestore in the "Manhattan Mall" (talk about oxymorons!), Daffy's is not for the faint of heart. After the thrill of finding the darn place and the dizzying glass elevator ride, the rush of the merchandise is almost too much to stomach: Cashmere! Leather goods! Designers! Shoes!

Our advice? Take a deep breath and remember Eleanor's shopping mantra for bargain basements survival everywhere — focus, focus, focus! Kamikaze shopping missions that are brief and often are the key to surviving Daffy's. Otherwise, even the most well-intentioned discount vultures are quickly overwhelmed by the endless racks, bulging with the possibilities of quality merchandise buried

continues on next page



ERNEST SARTOR

Conway on Broadway

Conway

1333 Broadway
Monday - Friday 8 am - 8 pm
Saturday 9 am - 8 pm
Sunday 10:30 am - 7 pm
967-3460

Sometimes we get these strange urges. Perhaps they come from sitting so long in the library with all the cuties around like the swarthy,