

# Advocate

<http://web.gc.cuny.edu/advocate>

## Scaffolding Ads Remain Despite Expired Deadline

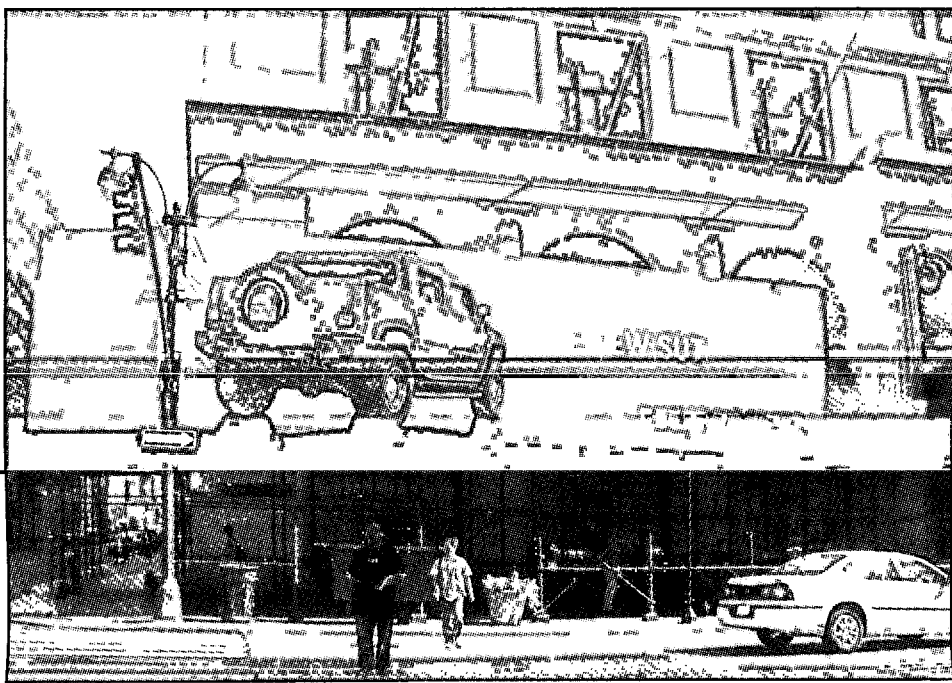
ANDREW KENNIS

The presence of heavy scaffolding on the front of the Graduate Center building, continues to evoke ire from much of the student body.

For some the main problem is that the scaffolding's ad-draped presence is simply an eyesore. "It's ugly, it pisses me off," said Larry Bomback, 21, a student in the Music department. "It doesn't bother me that the ads are there, as long as once the scaffolding is removed, so are the ads."

However, for others the presence of ads on the scaffolding pushes the controversy beyond aesthetics and provokes broader questions of the "corporatization of the university."

According to GC administration officials, the advertising helps to finance much-needed building repairs, which total see *Scaffolding Scam*, page 12



James Trimarco

### How GC Professors Vote

### Election Analysis You Need and Crave

### Iraqi Nukes, Bad; Israeli Nukes, Good?

### Track Bike Riders Hipster Snobs?

### "Fatherland Security" Course to Arrive Soon at BMCC

## GC Students Win Right to Use Baruch Gym

JAMES TRIMARCO

After literally years of negotiations, stalling and downright moaning about the future of a fitness center at the Graduate Center, VP for Student Affairs Matthew Schoengood has worked out a compromise: while there will be no fitness center at the GC, our students may use the fantastic Baruch College fitness center at a discounted price.

Baruch College is a CUNY school located at the corner of 25th street and Lexington Avenue. Baruch's Athletic and Recreation Center (ARC) is a large, first-class fitness center complete with cardio machines, weights and even a swimming pool. Out-of-shape graduate students beware: your excuse for your wormlike physique has just expired!

The Graduate Center's trial relationship with Baruch College officially begins on February 1, 2005. After that date, students registered at the GC may become members of the ARC for \$50 instead of the general non-student price of \$100. In order to take advantage of this offer, you will need to obtain from the Registrar's office a certification of enrollment to present to the ARC Facilities Director. Membership will require completion of paperwork at Baruch along with payment of \$100 for the year (or, beginning February 1, 2005, of \$50 for the Spring semester).

## AELLA Bakes for the People of Haiti

VALERIA TREVES

On October 12th and 13th, the savory smell of homemade treats greeted Graduate Center students and staff in the main lobby as they walked to their classes and jobs. However, tasty baked goods were not the only force leading dozens of people to stop by the table, operated by members of the Association of Latino and Latin American Students (AELLA). Rather, AELLA was collecting relief funds for the people of Haiti following the series of hurricanes that swept through the Caribbean nation in recent months. The cause drew so much support from the Graduate Center community that a stunning \$1,200 was collected through a two-day bake sale. Surely a record-breaking feat.

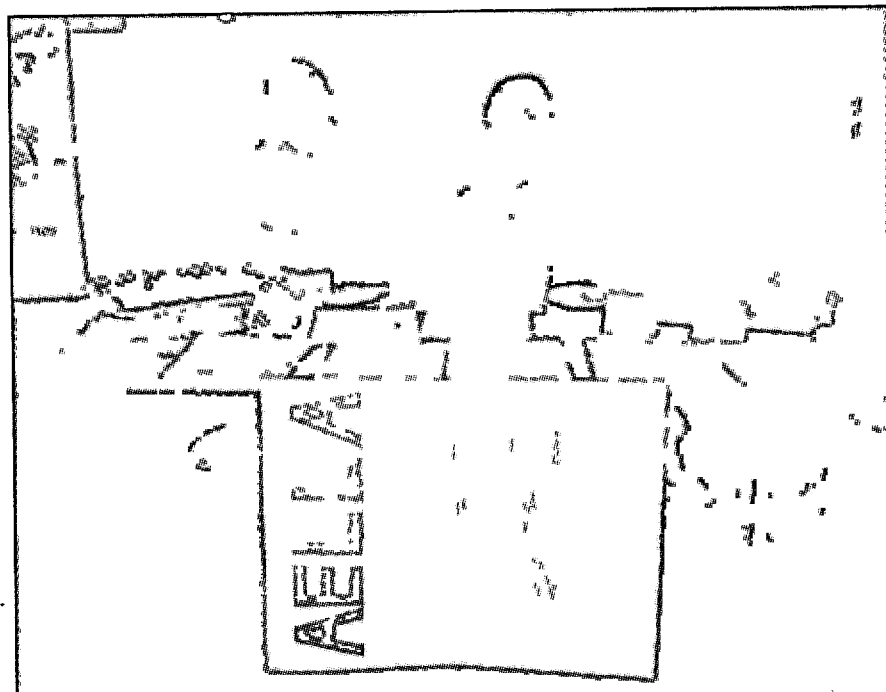
AELLA member and master cupcake chef Victoria Stone explained that the efforts put forth by AELLA facilitated what many GC community members already had envisioned. "A large number of people thanked us for having the table out there" she said. "They had wanted to do something [in terms of relief aid] but had not had an outlet to do so." A wide range of people from students to staff to professors collaborated in the fundraising efforts with contributions of various sizes. Debora Upegui, AELLA co-chair, explained: "We had a few \$100 donations, but the single dollar donations really added up as well." Citing dietary constraints, some contributors even forewent their treats—rumor has it that even those on Atkins' diets collaborated, cupcake or not. In all, the GC community showed strong support for the affected people of Haiti and the members of AELLA are very grateful for that.

AELLA also used its table to inform the GC community about other causes affecting students and scholars throughout the Western Hemisphere. At the Graduate Center, AELLA is advocating for the Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies (CLACLS), now under threat of losing its funding. According to Debora Upegui, who dutifully sat at the table for hours, "People were surprised to find out [about the funding cuts].

They thought it was outrageous!" Thus, AELLA collected well over 100 signatures that will be used to petition senior CUNY administrators to continue to fund CLACLS, the only center of its kind in the CUNY system. Further, AELLA was able to gather signatures in solidarity with student causes in Bolivia and in Puerto Rico where activists and professors engaged in struggles for social justice are now facing jail time and firings respectively. Please contact AELLA for more details on any of these causes.

Once again, a big 'Thank You' to all who participated in the fundraising!

Valeria Treves is a graduate student in the Geography program at Hunter College and a member of AELLA.



Victoria Stone

Cupcakes for HaitiansØ AELLA raises relief funds in the GC lobby with a bakesaleØ

# Editorial

## A Generation Comes of Age

For those of us in our 20s or 30s, growing up politically as a generation has taken some time—especially for the type of relatively privileged kids most likely to end up in graduate school. However, after four years of Bush-style rule from above, there are signs that our political immaturity is nearing an end. Hopefully, our generational growth spurt will also cut short the era of Bush's reign.

It has been said many times that ours was an age group lacking the natural catalyst of war to provide the classical human dramas of loyalty, separation and loss to form us into adult personalities. Our grandparents' generation had World War II, which from today's viewpoint looks reassuringly—almost impossibly—black-and-white in terms of morality, although it didn't appear so to war resisters of the time. Our parents' generation had Vietnam, which today is often remembered for its widespread and eventually effective antiwar protest—although it helps to remember that with 60,000 US casualties, many more Americans had

pointedly personal reasons to be angry about that war.

Then came us—a generation often perceived as spoiled, drifting, obsessed with MTV and celebrity in general, politically infantile, and so on. These representations are often modulated—but not eliminated—by race, class and gender. For instance, African-American parents may use the language of "materialism" to complain about the things they don't like in hip-hop culture, while white parents may use the language of moral decay or "spoiled" children.

While the reasons behind such variations are too complex to pursue here, it's fair to say that the characterization of today's young Americans as spoiled does contain its kernel of truth. The new generation of young adults has tended, in many situations, to focus on its "individuality" and "creativity." While these attributes are essential to the birth of new ideas and movements, they need to be supplemented by other ideas in order to be effective in the political realm. There, we need unity as well as individuality, and persistence as well as creativity.

The funkiness and sense of self-importance we may have picked up through a life of media consumption has led to highly problematic political methodologies. One need only remember the passionate pleas that youth "vote with their hearts" by supporting Nader in 2000, or the type of political mobilization that often seems centered and led by celebrities from the entertainment industry. Witness spectacle-driven methodology of opposition to the Bush agenda of war and handouts to the American aristocracy: protest, protest, protest.

This is not to say that protesting isn't important or to deny the role of protest experiences in shaping radical consciousness. But conversations after major protests seem to be turning more and more often to question the efficacy of marching and chanting *alone*—especially against an administration that, perversely, interprets those protests as a sign that free speech is in good shape.

From this perspective, it's truly edifying to see large busloads of people, the majority of them young, traveling to swing states to do the hard work of persuasion and getting out the vote where it matters deeply. Young people have donated money, time and attention to this election as never before. And that will make a difference on November 2, as well as in the years to come, when political networks formed during the Bush years will need to keep pressure on John Kerry—a center-right candidate who represents only a partial stepping back of the radical Bush agenda.

Many unintended consequences have sprung from Bush's decision to invade Iraq, and the increased political maturity of the younger generation is not the least of them. Let's hope it's enough to cost him his crown.

# Short Takes

## CUNY Adopts Master Plan

The following is a press release from the CUNY Board of Trustees:

### New Schools, Programs, Faculty, Buildings in Plan

The City University's Board of Trustees has adopted a master plan that provides an innovative and diverse educational road map for the 19-campus system through 2008.

Most notable in the plan, which was adopted at the May meeting of the Board, is the call to hire 800 new full-time faculty members that will assure CUNY's continuing rise within the ranks of preeminent institutions of higher education.

With this master plan, Chancellor Matthew Goldstein said, "the University will continue its institutional renewal, will strengthen its high academic standards and will continue its mission to offer more meaningful educational opportunities to the widest range of students, including, importantly, those who are among the most highly qualified as well as those inadequately prepared for college."

Among other key initiatives contained in the 2004-2008 master plan, which will be submitted to the N.Y. State Board of Regents, are the following:

- \* A Coordinated Undergraduate Education Initiative will aim at strengthening undergraduate education by bringing together several projects that have been developed in recent years to maximize student success. These include: the Coordinated Freshman Programs, free Summer Immersion Programs, Academic Support Programs, Writing Across the Curriculum and the new General Education Project, a University-wide investigation of the foundations of what should constitute a college education in the 21st century. The Project has been engaging faculty, students and administrators from the 17 colleges.

- \* The plan envisions the opening, in September 2005, of a new Graduate School of Journalism. Tapping the wide array of New York City media resources, including established professionals, the school will prepare students for careers in TV, radio and print news and will focus on media coverage of the metropolis.

- \* The building of a \$198-million Advanced Science Research Center on the City College campus in Harlem will consolidate core resources from all CUNY campuses. The center—which will be supported by NASA, the National Institutes of Health and private companies—will focus on bioscience and biosensing, which has many practical applications, including monitoring and identifying biological terrorism and the treatment of disease. It will function in conjunction with the Center for Macromolecular Assemblies at the College of Staten Island and CCNY's Structural Biology Center.

- \* Concentrated hiring of new faculty members in designated key disciplines is also planned. Among these key areas are art history, visual arts and foreign languages, as well as in digital media, an evolving academic discipline that promises numerous new practical business applications, and in photonics, a field in which researchers are exploring ways to harness light to generate energy.

- \* The University will implement a system-wide program to improve the recruitment, retention and graduation rates of male African-American and Caribbean-American students. This initiative will build upon existing CUNY programs, notably the Male Development and Empowerment Center at Medgar Evers College, which recently was expanded to actively involve other CUNY campuses. The CUNY Prep transitional high school, which has enjoyed success in this area, will serve as a model for the new initiative.

- \* The U.S. History Initiative will be enhanced by adding more senior faculty who have expertise in scholarship and teaching. The program will also be strengthened by the introduction of new online courses and teaching methods. Such measures will ensure that CUNY's diverse student body, which includes a significant new-immigrant population, will be able to gain a thorough knowledge of the history of their new country.

- \* Expansion of the School of Professional Studies, a schedule-flexible Master's-level program, will strengthen the University's ability to respond to the educational needs of business and industry, unions, non-profit organizations, City agencies, and self-employed members of the city's workforce. Both credit and non-credit opportunities will be offered. Credits will be applicable to undergraduate and advanced degrees, as well as certificates and accreditations in such fields as education, law, art and culture, finance, health and human services, and foreign languages.

- \* The plan includes enhancement of CUNY's teacher-training programs in close collaboration with the Department of Education. The goal is to identify and project teacher shortages in each subject area and coordinate teacher-education programs to meet these needs. CUNY will also improve and streamline procedures by which future City public-school teachers transfer from community to senior colleges.

- \* CUNY's veterans' services and liaisons will also be improved under the plan. This will help in facilitating untimely exits and readmissions when soldiers are called to active duty. CUNY will be better able to collaborate with the Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs in providing up-to-date information on veterans' benefits.

## ADVOCATE

[web.gc.cuny.edu/advocate](http://web.gc.cuny.edu/advocate)

CUNY Graduate Center, Rm. 5396  
365 Fifth Avenue,  
New York, NY 10016  
Tel: 212 817 7882 or 7885  
Email: [advocate@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:advocate@gc.cuny.edu)

James Trimarco  
Editor-in-Chief

Daniel Skinner  
Managing Editor

Spencer Sunshine  
Layout/Production Editor

Paul McBreen  
Media Board Chair

### Contributors:

Mariya Gluzman, Joseph Kaminski,  
Andrew Kennis, Jae Myung Kim,  
Tony Monchinski, Shukhan Ng,  
Abram Negrete, Joseph Sabino,  
Jason Shulman, Valeria Treves,  
Will Weikart, Harlan Whatley

The Advocate is the student paper of the CUNY Graduate Center and published six times a year. Publication is subsidized by the Doctoral Student Council.

The Advocate accepts contributions of articles, poetry, illustrations, photos and letters to the editor. Please query the above email address. Articles selected for publication will be subjected to editorial revision. Payment for articles ranges from \$30 to \$75, depending on the time commitment.

Shorter articles should be between 500 and 1,000 words, and features may run up to 1,500 words. The Advocate is published in September, October, November, February, March and April; submission deadlines are the 25th of the month before publication.



# How Will Your Professors Vote?

TONY MONCHINSKI

I got the idea for this article after I interviewed CUNY professor Frances Fox Piven for another publication. I asked her if she would be voting in the 2004 Presidential election, and if so, for whom. John Kerry, she answered without hesitation.

The gist of Piven's rationale went like this: she is not a Kerry supporter per se, but she feels that, in the short run, a Kerry victory will remove Bush from office, supplanting him with a man who is more of a "uniter than a divider," if only on the international scene. Furthermore, if Kerry is elected, Piven noted, he will be more responsive to progressive demands than George W. Bush. Just as Bush has to appease his religious-right constituents with talk of a constitutional amendment spelling out marriage as a bond between a man and a woman, Piven feels Kerry can be made to listen to the demands voiced from the other end of the political spectrum.

This seems to be a sentiment voiced by several professors in the CUNY system. In researching this article I emailed 25 professors from various departments and institutions, asking them the following questions:

- Will you be voting in the 2004 presidential election?
- Who will you be voting for and why?
- Is a vote for Ralph Nader or Green candidate David Cobb a vote for Bush?

I wasn't exactly bowled over by the number of responses I received. As a matter of fact, I would have scrapped the article but for the fact that some professors did take time out of their busy schedules to answer my queries, and tossing those replies in a trash can would be doing them a disservice.

A few professors were kind enough to email me back and explain that they would rather not contribute to the piece. I can understand that, and I respect their wishes. But about 15 of them didn't even bother to email me back. Sure, I know: people are busy, things come up, *The Advocate* isn't the *New York Times*. Okay.

But I was especially disappointed that no one from the Economics Department at the Graduate Center answered me back, as I was hoping to find at least one or two conservative voters who could articulate their interests. You're thinking: conservative voters? At CUNY? Isn't that an oxymoron? Well, maybe I was naïve.

As this article was being submitted, some germane news was breaking. George W. was pulling ahead in the polls, with registered voters claiming Kerry was spending too much time attacking Bush (!). The Florida Supreme Court approved the addition of Ralph Nader to the ballot in Florida, causing certain Democrats to blanch. The war in Iraq looks more and more unwinnable, with over a thousand US troops dead so far, yet no exit strategy is forthcoming from the Commander-in-Chief.

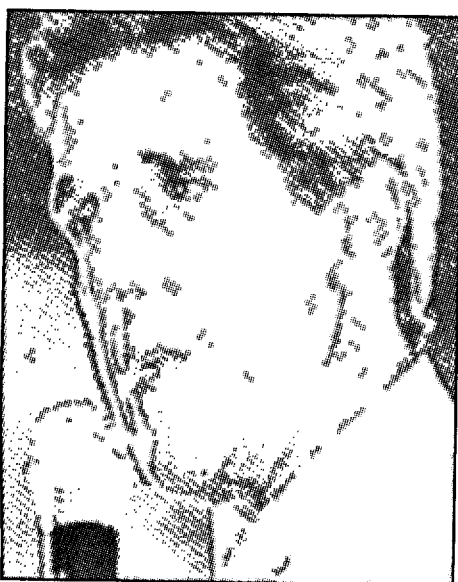
Here, for your edification, are the answers provided by several of CUNY's esteemed faculty to the aforementioned questions. Whatever their views, I want to thank these professors for agreeing to

share them in a public forum. Doing so does entail a certain measure of risk, be it the opprobrium of colleagues or just the fact that they are laying their personal opinions out in the open.

**Professor Rosalind Pollack Petchesky, Department of Political Science, GC and Hunter College**

*Do you intend to vote in the 2004 presidential election?*

Yes, I will definitely vote and will vote for Kerry—not because he represents my views on just about anything (well, he's actually fairly good on women's issues and reproductive rights and very good on the environment from what I can tell), but



empire nonetheless); of the global gag rule; of the war in Iraq; of uncritical support for Israel (Kerry is just as bad if not worse on the Middle East, unfortunately); of nationalist trade policies; of the very perverse policy on HIV/AIDS (especially abstinence over condoms, funding of "faith-based" groups, punitive attitude toward sex workers, promotion of Big Pharma drugs and suppression of generics)—all this and so much more makes Bush anathema around the world. His domestic policies, from deficit-boosting tax cuts for the rich to privatization of health care and social security to environmental devastation, hardly need comment. And for sure, another Bush term will spell doom for the federal and supreme courts as



*If so, which candidate do you intend to vote for and why?*

If I vote, I may vote for Cobb so as to keep the Greens alive. I may even vote for Bush if I am convinced in November that his reelection will so alienate Europe that the community will react more meaningfully to the fact that he is trying to spread the Empire throughout the world. A Bush election may encourage India (raw materials), Japan (technology) and China (disciplined labor, i.e. semi-slaves) to form an economic unit (like Europe should be) to fight the US in the market, which in turn might convince Europe to do the same. If that occurs, the US economy will completely collapse and we might see real meaningful reforms here via a socializing (sshh) president.

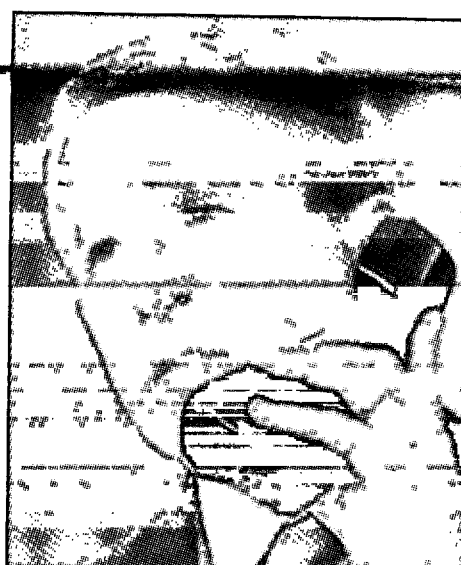
*Do you believe that a vote for Ralph Nader or Green Party candidate David Cobb is a vote for George Bush?*

Not in New York which will go for Kerry by a large enough margin that odd-balls like me could vote for even the vegetarian candidate (is there one?).

**Professor Jackie DiSalvo, Department of English, Baruch College:**

*Do you intend to vote in the 2004 presidential election?*

I am disturbed that Kerry is running as a pro-occupation moderate Republican who is backed by and owned by the same corporate finance capital as Bush. Like Clinton on NAFTA he may be more able to get away with reactionary policies. I consider that he will at least delay the ominous threat to civil liberties, make saner judicial appointments, not privatize social security, and appoint a fairer Labor Board—all very significant but undermined by other regressive policies: a "jobs" program that is just corporate subsidies, further global corporatization, a more effectively internationalist imperialist foreign policy, and other New Democrat policies. Worse he will co-opt the leadership of a growing progressive movement and they will demobilize the membership again. The old escape clause for Dem Presidents—will persist after the election: we must support him against Republican enemies. Why vote for Kerry if he's already a shoe-in in NY?



Clockwise from top left: Kerry Democrat, Cobb Green, Bush Republican and Nader Independence. Who will your favorite CUNY prof favor?

because there is simply no alternative. I do indeed believe a vote for Nader or Cobb is a vote for Bush, though less so in New York State than in so-called swing states, and I thought the Green Party took a principled position by urging supporters to vote for Cobb only in those states where it won't matter much. Still, this election is going to be so very close one almost believes every vote counts, and four more years of the neocons will be truly a disaster for the world. I do a lot of work internationally, travel in a lot in other countries and regions, and believe me, most of the world despises Bush & Co. and is looking to American voters to do boot them out—and will hold us accountable if we don't. The impact in other countries—of Bush's arrogant, unilateral version of imperialism and Christian crusade fundamentalism (Kerry will be a more multilateral and liberal-minded imperialist but a proponent of

far as civil rights, affirmative action and the rights of ordinary people over corporate power are concerned. I think we're at a moment of severe crisis where we have to get these people out in order just to carry on our lives and build a serious movement for social change, without having to defend every tiny piece of turf that progressive movements won over the past 50 years (or more).

**Professor John 'Tito' Gerassi, Department of Political Science, Queens College:**

*Do you intend to vote in the 2004 presidential election?*

I'm not sure yet.

*If not, why not?*

I can't stand Kerry and of course Bush is a fascist.

**Professor Ruth O'Brien, Executive Officer, Political Science Department, Graduate Center:**

*Do you intend to vote in the 2004 presidential election?*

Yes, I'll vote and vote for Kerry (though I'm in the ABB camp and will hold my nose for this Wall Street Democrat). And yes, third party candidates still hurt the candidate they are closest to. (This is why—as is widely reported—the Bushies are helping Nader in states where he's on the ballot.) This is not to say that third party candidates don't have role to play in a duopoly. They help push agendas that the two dominant parties won't push. If these agenda items resonate with the voters, they might well be appropriated by one of these parties.

see *How Profs Vote*, page 9

# Abu Ghraib at BMCC? Fatherland Security Hits CUNY

ABRAM NEGRETE

A sinister "Homeland Security" course with links to the Guantánamo prison camp, death squads, and the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad is being planned at CUNY's Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC). Presented to BMCC's Faculty Council last May, the course is the keystone of a proposed Security Management Certificate Program. Originally scheduled to begin in Fall 2004, the program will begin soon but is still "being developed," according to officials at the lower Manhattan school.

The BMCC program, which includes study of "interrogation techniques" and "technology for surveillance," is part of an educational program promoted by the Task Force on Homeland Security of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). Among the twenty-one members of this task force, CUNY is represented by BMCC President Antonio Perez. A look at its activities, as well as the BMCC program's advisory board, exposes connections to a veritable rogue's gallery of repressive groups.

## Front and Center: The Guantánamo Connection

The AACC's task force boasts of the upstate Homeland Security Management Institute opened last December at Monroe Community College: "The institute is directed by Colonel John J. Perrone Jr., [who] previously served as commander of the Joint Detainee Operations Group...in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba" (*Community College Times* special Homeland Security issue, 28 September). Perrone was the "first employee" of the institute, which is to be "a national model for homeland security training," "extending its reach through the country's network of 1,100 community colleges," proclaims its host campus (*Monroe Community College News* [Rochester, New York], 9 December 2003).

Perrone "can speak to Home Land (sic) Security issues from a unique perspective: he has been on the front lines," says a puff piece on the colonel. That's one way of describing the former commandant at the infamous prison camp for suspected terrorists.

## The Union-Busting Connection

The "BMCC Advisory Board - Security Management Committee" for the proposed certificate program includes representatives of companies like OCS Security, Guard Screen and Hill & Associates, whose activities include "confidential investigations and business intelligence." Also represented is the American Society for Industrial Security, whose affiliates include firms specializing in strikebreaking and union busting: one advertises "protection of over a hundred businesses during labor disputes and organization drives"; another notes that when "a strike is taking place," picketers "can be a true hindrance to company productivity".

## The SAS/Northern Ireland and Iraq Connection

William J. Daly also sits on the Security Management Committee for the BMCC course, representing Control Risks Group, Inc., of which he is Senior Vice President. The Center for Public Integrity notes that this company was a pioneer in "military privatization" in the 1970s, hiring officers from Britain's deadly Special Air Services (SAS). "The SAS is an assassination squad, like the South American death squads," notes Raymond Murray in his 1998 book *State Violence: Northern Island 1969-1997*. The agency ran a covert war in the 1960s against leftists in North Yemen, and carried out innumerable other murderous actions in the service of imperialism. Today, Control Risks, like the American Kroll & Associates, carries out "security" operations in Iraq ("Ex-SAS Flock to Iraq," *London Telegraph*, 12 October 2003).

## Finally, the Mossad/Death Squad Connection

The BMCC course advisory board includes another company associated with deadly repression: International

Security and Defense Systems (ISDS), an Israeli firm represented by its president, Leo Gleser. The ISDS web site says the company was "established in 1982 by highly experienced officers, former operatives of I.S.A. Israeli Security Agency, the MOSSAD and the Defence Forces." The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* (31 August) says Gleser and partner Arye Avnat "met in the early 1970s during their military service in the Haruv reconnaissance unit" and later set up ISDS, which recently hired "former Mossad department chief Yehiam Meret" and Israel's former police commissioner. Together with the CIA, the Mossad is one of the deadliest, dirtiest instruments of state terror in the world.

When Gleser attended a Homeland Security fair in Chile last year, the Chilean news magazine *Qué Pasa* (31 October 2003) ran an article titled "Ex-Mossad Men Come to Chile." It reported that the presence of this purportedly retired colonel of Israeli intelligence "captivated the attention of military circles." His company "has become known for its services as advisor to the State Department of the US"—godfather of former military dic-



tator Pinochet—and "has the authorization and sponsorship of the Israeli Defense Ministry for its projects."

Among Gleser's "projects," the article states that "Leo Gleser has some strong detractors.... One of the harshest criticisms is that in the early '80s Israeli intelligence sent him to train members of the military in Central America. During his stay there he trained the leaders of the legendary Intelligence Battalion 316, a squad operating with the Honduran Army, which human rights organizations blame for disappearing 191 persons."

In other words, this death squad part of the CIA's reign of terror during Reagan's campaign of exterminating Central American insurgents—used techniques of "disappearing" people perfected by Israel's intelligence agencies against Palestinian Arabs (as well as Mordechai Vanunu, who blew the whistle on Israel's huge nuclear bomb factory), and innumerable others around the world. Coverage of Gleser's training of this Honduran death squad has also cited the 1991 exposé by Andrew and Leslie Cockburn in their book *Dangerous Liaison: The Inside Story of the US-Israeli Covert Relationship*.

## BMCC and "World War IV"

In the special Homeland Security issue of the AACC's *Community College Times* (28 September), BMCC President Perez writes that the attacks of September 11, 2001 were "the first salvo of what one observer has called World War IV." He goes on: "Community colleges need to be in the vanguard of those institutions helping to prepare our nation and its defenders to respond to attacks."

The proposed 30-credit BMCC security management certificate consists of ten required courses, with the "Homeland Security" course at the top of the list. It features a guest speaker from the New York State Department of Homeland Security and readings from Tom Ridge's agency. Noting that "trends clearly demonstrate increased demand" for "investigative services" and "surveillance systems,"

the course defines "national security" as protecting "national values, interests, and institutions." This requires "understand[ing] current threats against domestic and international assets." Could political protests and "Third World" insurgencies be targeted? You bet.

Next on the list of classes is "Security Management Principles," which includes "Intelligence gathering" and "Interview and interrogation techniques." Readings include an interrogation textbook written by a top "lie-detector" expert together with a former FBI agent and member of the Philadelphia police. Also on the syllabus: Undercover Investigations in the Workplace. That's the kind of investigation employers carry out against union-organizing drives.

## For Militant Protest to Stop BMCC "Security" Course!

CUNY is no stranger to repression. The most prominent case is the relentless prosecution of Hostos student leader Miguel Malo for holding up a sign protesting cuts in Spanish and ESL programs. Last semester Baruch College arrested the respected CCNY psychology professor and activist Bill Crain for the "crime" of entering campus without an appointment.

As for "electronic surveillance," mentioned in the "Letter of Intent" (14 November 2003) for the certificate program, CUNY has done plenty of that itself. Just ask student activists at CCNY: in 1998 they found out a surveillance camera, disguised as a smoke detector, was aimed at their offices—a fact the campus paper was shut down for revealing!

Nor is CUNY new to connections with "private" spy companies linked to the long and bloody trail of the intelligence agencies. Last year Hunter College hired the notorious, CIA-linked Kroll & Associates for a "thorough survey" of campus "security" (*Hunter Envoy*, 2 October 2003). The only outcome Hunter students heard about was the decision to lock the main entrance of the Thomas Hunter building—a move reversed after students kept going through anyway (setting off the alarm each time). CUNY students should demand to know the full story of what happened with Kroll.

The sinister course at BMCC is part of the wholesale onslaught against the most basic civil liberties and democratic rights carried out through the USA PATRIOT Act, passed and administered by Democrats and Republicans, and a vast array of repressive measures. Fighting against this repression is part of the struggle for the defeat of U.S. imperialist aggression abroad and police terror, racism and exploitation here "at home."

BMCC's Repression 101 can and must be stopped. Students, faculty, workers and defenders of democratic rights must mobilize to protest and expose it massively, now!

Abram Negrete is grad student, adjunct professor and a member of the Hunter Internationalist Club.

## \*GRAND OPENING\* PAIN RELIEF

One-on-One Sessions \* After work &  
Sat. Appointments \* 25 Yrs. Exp.

EMPIRE STATE HANDS-ON PHYSICAL  
THERAPY & PAIN CENTER

\*Sports Injuries \* Orthopedic \*  
\*Pre & Post Op\*

347 5th Ave @ 34th St., NY

(212) 725-3778

www.eshopt.com



# What about Vonnegut?

JOE SABINO

This article is about a particularly useful cliché: everything has its pros and its cons.

To illustrate, here's a for-instance. I go to graduate school in New York City—there should be a million pros to that, right? *Au contraire!* There's a nonexistent awesome fitness facility at my school; I have an unaffordable apartment; and other living costs are through the roof when compared to the rest of the country. Now, it seem that my school may let my only means of professional medical advice walk out the front door forever. Yes, there are obviously cons.

However, I also am aware that I can probably transfer to the one of a number of universities, such as the University of Iowa, and find all the faults I mentioned above corrected. But then I would have to face the unavoidable fact that I would be in IOWA. Ouch.

Right, so that's not really an option. And undoubtedly New York has a great number of benefits. Namely Central Park, museums galore, St. Patrick's Cathedral, crazy people talking to themselves, pseudo-crazy people talking on their fancy cell phone earpieces, the best Italian style pizza made by Mexicans in the world, the United Nations, delivery services (wink), music, rooftops, and seeing Joan Rivers walking down the street. (Sorry about the

sarcasm. Not good. I probably have low self-esteem or something.)

Basically, we have it all, the sights, the sounds, the people—all in a city that seems to ooze charisma. By the way, according to Merriam-Webster the definition of charisma is dynamic appeal or charm (one has to admit that is a pretty charismatic definition).

So, what do we not have that we easily could? I'll tell you of course, and will do so with no disrespect to the institutions and people that are likely to take offense.

I'm talking about one truly amazing, mind-blowing guest speaker (dramatic pause) every semester. Yes, I hear that in years past, politicians such as Bill Clinton and Ted Kennedy have graced the floors of the GC. I also hear that the colossal psychologist Albert Bandura (they guy who proved that watching violence on TV facilitates violent acts) even said a few words while picking up an honorary doctorate. And I'm sure other esoteric giants have graced our halls. Hell, I'll even admit that it's pretty cool we had Michael Gondry (director of *Eternal Sunshine*) here this semester. But is he colossal? *Non.*

John Kerry spoke at NYU in September, and although I know that's not an impossible accomplishment considering he's in the middle of a presidential race, he's still big. And more importantly this is the type

of level I'm talking about. Maybe I'm asking for too much, but then again, maybe I'm not.

New York is arguably the capital of the world, and unquestionably the cultural center of America. How about a living legend or at least a likely legend say 20 or 30 years postmortem.

WHAT ABOUT KURT VONNEGUT?

Hopefully, you know who he is, and if you don't, please read one of his books. I'll also provide a list of reasons why we should have him speak at our institution.

Number one, he lives in the city—Turtle Bay from what he writes in his books.

Number two, he's really old.

Number three, old people die more often than young people and then they're gone forever.

Number four, Einstein, Bob Marley, and Martin Luther King are no longer available.

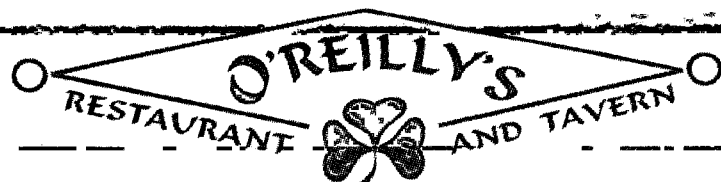
Number whatever, someday you and I will die and we can either experience cool things like listening to Vonnegut speak in person now, or not. It doesn't really matter (watch out I'm feeling stoic); but questions at least don't hurt.

So to the powers that be, I'll make you a deal. Instead of giving us 30 to 40 small to middle of the road guests each semester (who, let's face it, are all way more important than me), give us 1-2 really big speakers and a handful of medium sized guys or

gals. And in return I will be very much so grateful.

Adios (to god)

*Joseph Sabino usually doesn't complain so much, but writes with a "it doesn't hurt to ask" attitude. For his sake hopefully it doesn't. He is a student in the Educational Psychology program.*



**Specials for students  
with valid ID:**

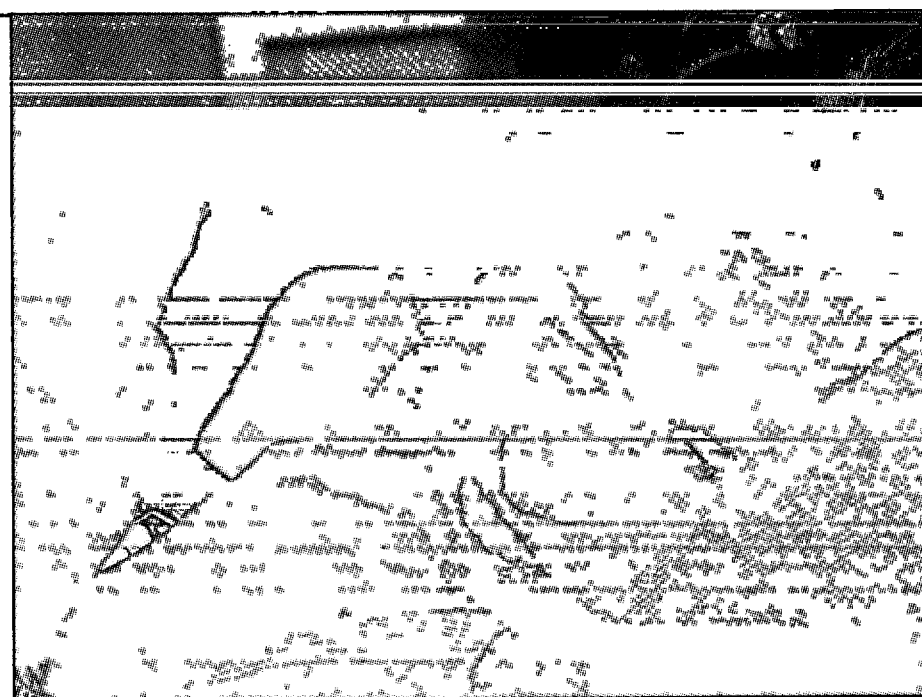
**\* Monday and Tuesday after 5pm:  
Buy two of the same drink, get  
the third free (per person).**

**\* And at all times,  
10% off menu items.**

**We always have a full menu and  
daily specials, and on weekdays a  
free buffet from 5pm until its gone!**

**We are located a half block from the GC  
at 21 W. 35th St (between 5th & 6th Ave.)  
on the north side of the street  
(212) 502-5246**

## Sleeping through Class?



**Make sure to caffeinate your  
bloodstream at the Doctoral Student  
Council's Coffee Hour!**

**Wednesday, November 10  
From 4:00 to 7:00 pm**

**Free coffee, pastries, treats and company will be  
provided. All you gotta bring is your own sexy,  
brilliant self.**



# Nuclear Double Standard in the Middle East

JAE KIM

## American Double Standard

"If those American guys go to Israel, they can easily find the weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Why are they staying here and wasting valuable time and money collected by American taxpayers?"

So spoke Hassan Ali Sabti, Professor of History at Baghdad University, whom I interviewed this summer. Professor Ali Sabti expressed scorn for the Iraqi Survey group, which was at that time still desperately searching for any scrap of evidence that the Hussein regime was stockpiling WMD.

But is Professor Sabti's comment justified? In *Israel and the Bomb*, published in 1998, Avner Cohen revealed that Israel went nuclear on the eve of the 1967 Six Day War. Cohen, a conscientious Israeli scholar who broke the code of silence in his homeland, estimated that Israel currently retains a maximum of three hundred nuclear bombs. However, the Israeli government's policy of Neither Confirm Nor Deny keeps discussion of this topic in the zone of "strategic ambiguity."

Not everyone considers Israeli nuclear weapons to be a problem. I interviewed Gerald Steinberg, an Israeli student majoring in conflict resolution at Bar Ilan University in Jerusalem. He argued that, "Nuclear weapons are a last resort to protect Israel, which is surrounded by the neighboring Arabs like a small island in a sea." His point was that nuclear bombs could be used in the event of an all-out Arab military attack.

This view leads to political exceptionalism. For instance, Israel has not joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in order to avoid being pressured by the international nuclear watchdog group known as the IAEA. The IAEA's attitude toward Israel is ambiguous. The country is a longstanding member, but at the same time has not allowed international inspectors to visit its nuclear sites. And although IAEA head Mohamed ElBaradei has called for talks on creating a nuclear-free Middle East, political realities have drawn his current focus toward North Korea.

One final decisive fact: Israel has never been criticized by the US for its policy of developing and continuing to stockpile WMD, and international critics point out that Israel maintains its clandestine program with American blessings. Many Iraqi intellectuals, in fact, are eager to show their anger against the Bush administration, citing its double standard towards Israeli and Iraqi WMD development programs.

## Secret Site, Dimona

The core facility of Israeli nuclear development program, the Negev Nuclear Research Center, is near Dimona, a small city in the Negev desert in the southernmost region of Israel. In 1958, working with French assistance, Israel constructed a natural uranium, heavy-water research reactor near Dimona, and succeeded in develop-

ing nuclear weapons by the close of the 1960s. It is believed that there are currently 2,700 employees working in the six-floor underground building.

Visiting Dimona is not easy. My plan was simple; I would photograph the Negev Nuclear Research Center from outside. I did not expect to be invited inside the Center, let alone to be allowed to photograph the inside of the plant.

One day before my departure, I changed my Israeli driver, who I feared would be uncomfortable with my plans. Instead, I found an Israeli Arab driver who was very cautious and cooperative while I took photos of the nuclear site, which is surrounded by double barbed-wire entanglements topped with security cameras. Road signs announced that taking photos was prohibited; even parking one's car on the roadside is strictly forbidden. Still, I managed to take a few shots from inside my car, focusing on the large silver-domed reactor containment vessel, nearly 20 meters in diameter.



## Interview with Vanunu

After returning to Jerusalem from the Negev Desert, I looked up Mordecai Vanunu, the Israeli nuclear whistleblower who was released in April from jail after suffering 18 years in prison—most of which was spent in solitary confinement. Once a nuclear technician at the Negev Nuclear Research Center, Vanunu was fired from the Center in 1985 after arguing that Palestinians have the right to establish an independent state. After revealing

Israeli nuclear secrets in London's *Sunday Times* in 1986, Vanunu was abducted in Italy by the Mossad, and imprisoned until this year. Owing to Vanunu's revelations, Israel's stockpile of 100 to 200 nuclear devices—a much larger nuclear capability than was previously estimated—was made public.

Although Vanunu was released from prison, the Israeli government has forbidden him from contacting reporters or traveling abroad. When I approached the Saint George Cathedral where Vanunu has resided since his release, I spoke with him for about five minutes. At that time, our talk was interrupted by a security guard. Below are selections from our conversation:

**Jae Kim:** I heard that you are under surveillance. How are you feeling about this?

**Mordecai Vanunu:** I am still not free. I cannot talk with foreigners because the Israeli government banned it. Moreover, I cannot leave Israel. For 18 years, I was brutally harassed in jail. Of those 18 years, I was isolated alone for 12. Now I strongly hope to be free and travel abroad.

**JK:** Why do you think the Israeli government keeps you from talking with foreigners?

**MV:** The only reason I understand is that the Israeli authority fears any truth about the Israeli nuclear program would spread out to international society. I think this situation is absurd and contrary to the principles of democracy and human rights. Israel is no more a democratic state.

**JK:** Do you think the main reason of the US invasion to Iraq was WMD Saddam Hussein was alleged to have or try to develop?

**MV:** I don't think so. In my viewpoint, the US should first of all resolve the Israeli WMD problem. Although all the countries in the Middle East, including Iraq, Libya, and Syria, are transparent to WMD development program, Israel alone has kept secret WMD. Not just the US but Europe, China, Russia, and all other countries should focus on this Israeli problem.

**JK:** I understand that your point about international pressure on this agenda. How do you feel about strengthening the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) activity in Israel?

**MV:** Of course. I strongly hope the head of IAEA, Mohamed ElBaradei, will make an effort to solve this problem after visiting Israel. If you meet him in the near future, please let him know my feelings on this.

**JK:** I heard some Israelis have scolded you as a traitor. Do you fear that they might threaten your life?

**MV:** I cannot predict my future situation. One clear thing is that I do not want any holocaust in the Middle East caused by Israeli WMD. That's the reason I revealed what was happening inside Dimona.

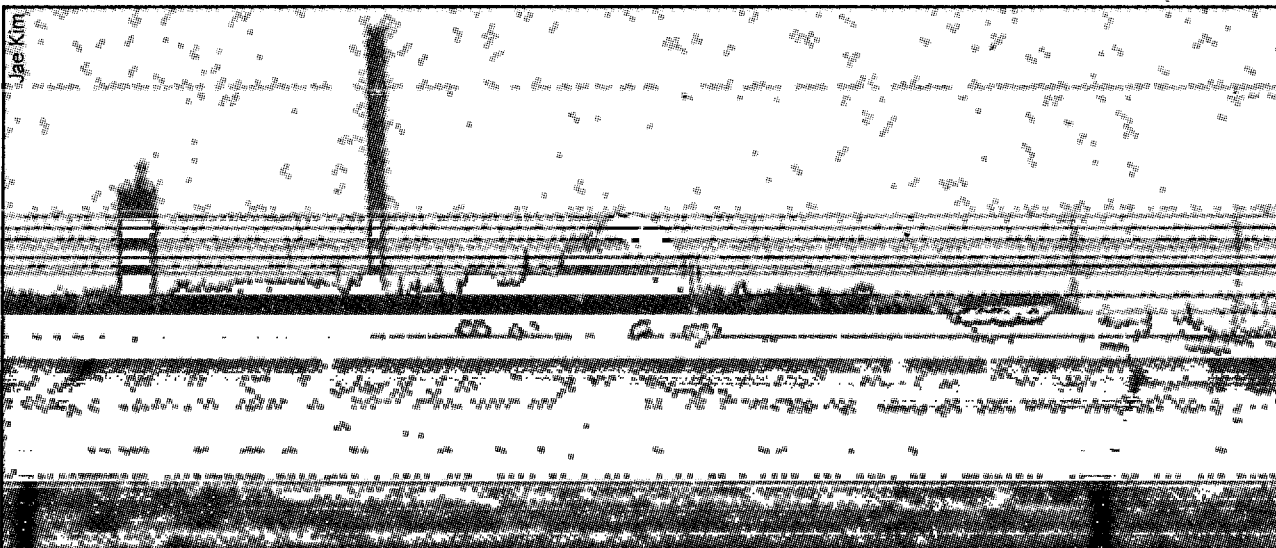
## Air Strike in Osirak

Vanunu's plan is to campaign for a nuclear-free Middle East. Perhaps, he says, the Negev Nuclear Research Center in Dimona should be destroyed, like the Iraqi facility in Osirak, which the Israeli air force attacked and destroyed in 1981.

While in Iraq, I visited Osirak to see if remnants of the Israeli bombing still existed. Osirak is located in Baghdad's southern suburban area, 30 km from the city center. When I arrived at the remains of the Osirak nuclear site, I was blocked by the Iraqi police at the gate. After identifying myself to a US military serviceman inside the site, the Iraqi police refused me entrance to the plant. I was curious about the US troops there. Were they desperately looking for evidence of WMD among the ruins of a site destroyed 23 years ago?

My Iraqi interpreter, Kazim, tried to persuade the Iraqi police to let us in, but to no avail. Instead we visited poor farming families living near the site. Salem Musin, a 67-year-old former truck driver, explained the Israeli bomb-

continued on next page



Above: Modcai Vanunu; Below: The Negev Nuclear Research Center near Dimona

# From UnAmerican to too American in Thirty Seconds

SHUKHAN NG

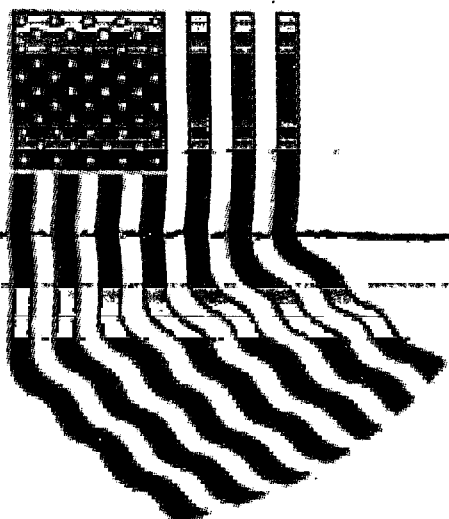
The stump speeches of presidential candidates John Kerry and George W. Bush are fascinating. Vice President Dick Cheney has warned voters that if they make the wrong choice in the election, the US might "get hit again." The next day Vice Presidential candidate John Edwards shot back: such a warning is "unAmerican."

What exactly does unAmerican mean? This was not the first time I had heard the word; in fact, I've heard it over and over again. So I decided to do some sleuthing and get to the bottom of this rhetorical commonplace.

First, I checked the online dictionary. According to the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, "unAmerican" means: "Not American: not characteristic of or consistent with American customs, principles, or traditions."

Seems clear enough, but I certainly don't know what "characteristics" Americans share. The first thing that came to my mind was that, with two-thirds of adult Americans overweight, being unAmerican probably means to have a healthy body mass index. In that sense, John Edwards, John Kerry and George W. Bush are probably unAmerican. Dick Cheney looks pretty American though.

Then I consulted the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* and the *Cambridge Dictionary of American English*. Both agree that unAmerican means: "Guilty of activities, behavior or beliefs that show opposition or a lack of loyalty to the US and its political system."



## Nuclear Hypocrisy @on@

ing on June 7th, 1981 in the following terms: "On that day, I came home earlier than usual. It happened in the early evening. Israeli jet bombers appeared suddenly from the eastern sky, and then I heard huge sounds of explosion. It was a sudden attack, and the Iraqi military did not have time to return anti-aircraft missiles."

### Is Iran the Next Target?

The four Israeli jet bombers Musin saw in the sky were sent following the decision of then-Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin. As we know now, these Israeli F-15s and F-16s were donated by the US military on the condition that they be used only for defensive purposes.

The collapse of Hussein regime resulted in a major shift in geopolitical circumstances, and the decisive collapse of military balance in the Middle East. The strong Iraq of the 1980s, which retained almost half a million soldiers, has disappeared since the first Gulf War, leaving Israel the dominant military power in the region. The presence of Israeli nuclear bombs is clear evidence of the military unbalance in this area. This is why Iran, which has nuclear ambitions of its own, has complained about the double standard of IAEA and the US. Could an Iranian reactor site be the next target of Israeli air strike?

Jae Kim is a student in the PhD program in Political Science.

This definition is different from that in the Merriam-Webster. While the Merriam-Webster focuses on a broad array of criteria, the blokes at Cambridge have a pointedly political view. Note: the Fourth Edition of the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* and it didn't even have an entry for the word. This dictionary lives up to its name: A real American dictionary shouldn't have anything that is unAmerican, including the word itself.

I also did an internet search for the word "unAmerican," which yielded thousands of "hits" for the House Committee on UnAmerican Activities (HUAC). HUAC, it seems, was established in 1938 mainly to investigate German-American involvement in Nazi and KKK activity. After the Second World War, it launched a high-profile witch hunt for Communist sympathizers, and its investigation of political organizations allegedly found strong connections between Americans and the Communist Party. The people who "got caught" included Alger Hiss, W.E.B. DuBois and I.F. Stone. HUAC was also interested in the show business; it blacklisted a number of leftist scriptwriters known as the "Hollywood ten" and forced Charlie Chaplin into exile in Switzerland. The Committee was dissolved in 1975 and its functions were transferred to the House Judiciary Committee; the same committee that drew up impeachment papers against Bill Clinton in 1998.

Meanwhile, a website of MTV's "Rock the Vote" says censorship is unAmerican because it threatens free speech, free thought and free expression. An article on the web site of *The Economist* proclaims the establishment of the military commissions for the trials of terrorist

suspects is unjust, unwise and unAmerican. These statements seem to suggest that Americans *should* question the government and social norms; they show an appreciation and respect for free speech, free thought, free expression and justice. Do you agree? I wonder what un-French, un-Korean, un-Brazilian, and so forth would mean.

In today's politics, the term unAmerican is usually understood derogatively. But note that while Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's repeated insistence that the Abu Ghraib scandal was unAmerican, some people argue that those abusers were in fact *too* American. An article by Ron Jacobs on *Counterpunch* says the practices that came to light at Abu Ghraib "represent the US military's standard operating procedure." The author lists a series of events dating back to 1776 that reveal atrocities committed by US military personnel. The settings, to mention only the more recent ones, include the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Panamanian invasion of 1989 and the Gulf War of 1991. Similarly, a piece by Munnoo Bhai in *The Daily Times* discusses an article by investigative crime reporter Anne Marie Cusac detailing the human rights violations, torture, sadism and sexual perversion in US jails and detention centers. All this paints a picture of Americans who assume power over others is too American. But they could well become unAmerican if the people above them decided to no longer support them.

Shukhan Ng is a student in the PhD program in Linguistics.

# Let@ Talk About @America@

JOSEPH KAMINSKI

Here at the Graduate Center there seems to be a prevailing idea that America is a place that is "on the brink of change." As we prepare for the upcoming elections, we see increased coverage of both John Kerry and George W. Bush. Both candidates—yes, even W.—are attempting to offer programs of "change" for the next four years. Whether in regard to the handling of Iraq or domestic policies, something "new" is on the horizon.

But we need to reevaluate our perspectives on the American political landscape. There is a country outside of the greater New York City Metropolitan area that has far different values than we tend to have here. I speak, of course, of the Midwest.

The Midwestern United States is a vast region spanning from Eastern Ohio to far beyond the Mississippi River. States covered in this blanket term include Indiana (my home state), Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas. Here we see a completely different form of political organization and structure. Here, "activism" involves aligning with a church group or some other at least semi-formal or recognized community group. While these groups may embrace worthwhile causes (parks restoration, environmental cleanup, financial assistance to the needy), it is important to note that the aesthetic underlying these organizations is different than what we see in New York City. While the activists in these Midwestern communities may have lofty goals for reform, they are not necessarily in accordance with the radical ideals held by the core founders and position holders of many metropolitan activist groups.

Many of these Midwestern activist groups lack what Hegel called a "total" agenda of universal transformation of the whole, and focus instead on a more pragmatic "single issue." While groups that focus on parks development and urban change in the East commonly harbor Marxist sentiments (even if only subconsciously), this is not the norm when it comes to Midwestern styles of popular activism. Groups such as the Lions' Club and the Rotary Club offer many outlets for community activism in a truly progressive sense, but their work is much less teleological and ideologically driven. Instead, this activism focus-

es on particular issues and emphasizes direct and immediate action. While these specific issues may be progressive in nature, presenting these groups with a radical set of "points of unity" will not only alienate any broader coalition but may even drive these groups into the arms of more reactionary camps. It is easy to frighten off potential "brothers in arms" with discourses of "Marxist utopias" or "Proletariat dictatorships."

The only way to amalgamate these groups effectively into a more formidable coalition is to present them with an agenda that is less threatening to the ways of life many Midwestern activists enjoy. This harkens back to the age-old question of the "two Americas."

The best way to effectively bridge this gap is to make "progressive in-roads to these more conservative activist groups slowly, emphasizing single issues instead of grand narratives that advocate "radical transformations of the whole." In this age of fragmentary day-to-day interaction, we can only act by taking smaller steps toward reaching out to the broader whole. As we continue to change the fragments, we can slowly, at the same time, alter the consciousness of the greater whole. The question that this addresses is: How do you get the Democratic Socialists of America to work together with a Midwestern Park and Recreation group without alienating one or the other?

The answer is that the Left must be patient and willing to work with groups that are more moderate in nature, without enforcing ideological orthodoxy. The Left must take responsibility for bridging this gap, because the far Right will not. Unifying these coalitions can potentially get states that are "overwhelmingly conservative" to, over time, soften their tone. In doing this, values of progressive policy can be fully and effectively introduced into the sphere of discourse. If groups from the East can successfully align themselves with groups west of New Jersey that also have moderate to progressive agendas, then we can hope to finally see a truly uniform effort for progressive/positive change.

Joseph Kaminski is a student in the PhD program in Political Science.



# Comparative Politics: A Commentary on the Bush & Kerry Debates

DAN SKINNER

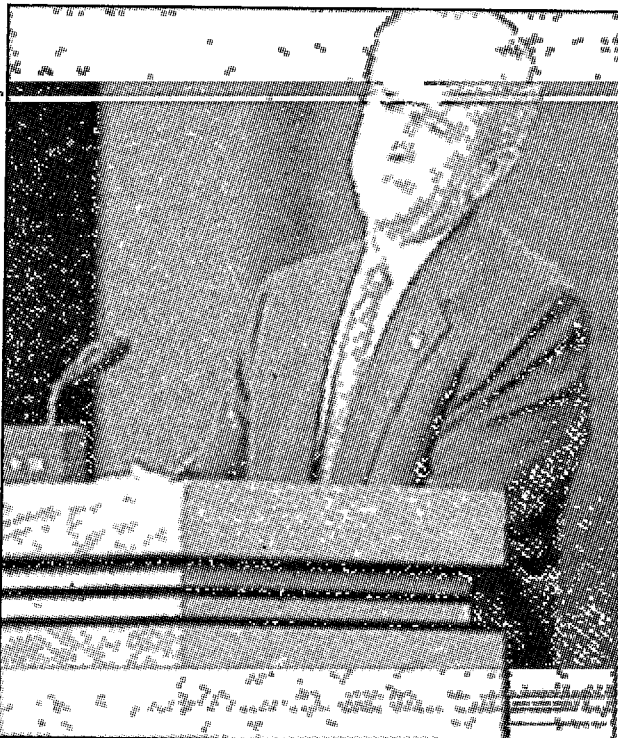
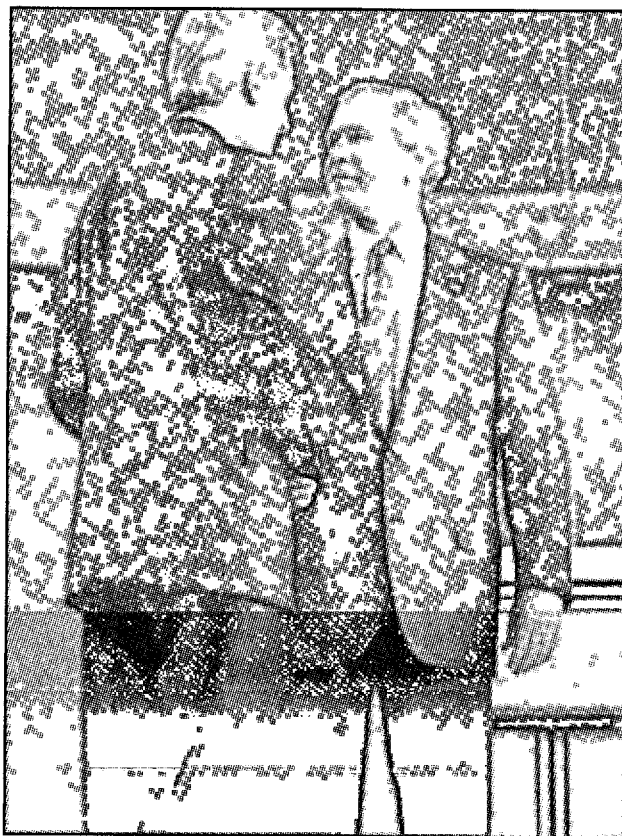
In the first presidential "debate," a sleepy and frail George W. Bush predictably charged that John Kerry was a flip-flopper and that he would turn over the defense of the United States to other nations. Of course, John Kerry, a political animal ever aware of the dangers of speaking about multilateralism in an irrationally unilateralist nation, said nothing of the sort. Nevertheless, Kerry's "global test" became the buzzword—the "lock box" of 2004—that propelled the bulk of post-debate media coverage. By the next day, however, most pundits—including many on the Right such as Sean Hannity—as well as polls, conceded that Kerry had won. Some, such as Matt Drudge, began looking into the possibility that Kerry had used a cheat sheet, which would be a clear violation of the Commission on Presidential Debates' formal rules. Others noted that Kerry's face looked less jaundiced and botoxed than it had earlier that week. Bush, on the other hand, seemed hardly prepared for the debate and appeared to shrink next to his towering opponent. The best characterization came from Alessandra Stanley of *The New York Times*:

*The decision to have the two lecterns be of matching height (50 inches) turned out to work against Mr. Bush. The agreed-upon lectern cut the president mid-chest, and made him look smaller, as if he were in a bunker. He did not extend himself beyond its confines, but instead kept his arms in front of him, barely peeking above the lip of the lectern.*

*If Mr. Bush looked too testy when his opponent spoke, Mr. Kerry looked a little too engaged. He kept picking up his pen and scribbling notes and smiling to himself, like an overly confident prosecutor in court.*

In debate two, which was branded as a "town hall" meeting, a better-rested Bush pounded away at Kerry over the issue of the "global test." Kerry handled this well, however, explaining the difference between an alliance formed of small, mostly poor nations, and one comprised of nations that can actually shoulder some of the costs of war. Kerry successfully turned the issue of unilateralism into one of strategic wisdom, rather than mere symbolism. In the first debate, Bush harangued Kerry for forgetting Poland (which contributed about 800 troops to the invasion of Iraq) in his list of Coalition partners. This time, however, Bush's Poland fetish was undermined by an announcement that, beginning in 2005, Poland would begin pulling out of Iraq. Kerry failed to mention this specifically, which was a pity. But then again, he also failed to mention that the third largest member of the "Coalition of the Willing" was in fact a group of corporations providing paid mercenaries, like a band of hired thugs, for a supposedly national defense initiative.

One of the weirder moments of the second debate was the exchange over the environment. Bush touted himself as "a good steward of the land" who supports something known as "off-road diesel engines," and who proposed a "healthy forest bill" (which is, in truth, a program that opens old growth forest to loggers). Stranger yet, Bush claimed to have proposed a "hydrogen-generated automobile," which, as one might imagine, simply doesn't exist. Kerry, for his part, charged that George W. Bush's environmental record was marred by corporate interests, noting that he is part owner of a timber company. This suggestion prompted a volatile Bush to fire back: "That's news to me!" and, in an attempt to make a joke, ask "Wanna buy some wood?" But it turns out that Bush was wrong: the \$84 he received in dividends from "LSTF, LLC," a limited-liability company organized "for the purpose of the production of trees for commercial sales"



is, by the administration's own definition, technically small business ownership.

Touché. So, Kerry was right about the wood, but the exchange was at best confusing and at worst a missed opportunity for Kerry to hammer away at a president whose policies have been devastating for the environment. Despite Bush's stammering and rhetorical tree-hugging, however, Kerry clearly won the moment when he straightforwardly declared that he would be "a president who believes in science," which, many concluded, was an indication that Kerry believes global warming is real.

Many viewers thought this debate was a tie, but this could be the product of low expectations derived from Bush's first performance. One right-wing pundit, WABC Radio's Steve Malzberg, even opined that Bush did better because Arizona is on Central Mountain Time—one hour behind Cleveland where the prior debate took place—and that our intrepid Commander in Chief isn't used to staying up past nine, when the debates began. One extra hour, it seems, makes all the difference between the complete ignorance or acceptable incoherence of George W. Bush. After the second debate, the blogosphere was rife with investigations into a bulge on Bush's back that many thought was a radio device used to feed him lines. Others began to suggest that this is why Bush's speech has been awkward from the beginning of his presidency. Cartoons of "Bush: The Wind-Up Toy" abounded. Still, if Kerry displayed nothing else, the second debate highlighted his consistency and composure, even though the media didn't seem ready to consider amending its flip-flop charge. In fact, it didn't even seem to notice.

Everybody was nervous about debate three. A Yankees playoff game pitted the Apollonians against the Dionysians, the girly men against the real men; yet, surprisingly, Americans chose to watch the debate over the game by a ratio of three to one. Many commentators attribute this not to an increased interest in politics, but to a residue of the reality television fad. As one might imagine, political "scientists" are still not sure whether to interpret the public's interest as a positive development.

But viewers were not disappointed, as this debate was hot: John Kerry made sure that everybody was aware that Dick Cheney's daughter, Mary, was in fact "a lesbian"; he dutifully recited lines from the Bible, bragged that he had voted for tax cuts over 600 times (even supporting Ronald Reagan!) and that he had consistently voted to increase the military budget. In all three debates, Kerry stole Bush's show, and with good reason: the American electorate seems to demand this kind of tough talk, and especially from a "liberal senator from Massachusetts" who opts for windsurfing over chopping wood. The whole night was depressing for the Left, not only highlighting the differences between the candidates, but underscoring the Faustian bargain that ousting Bush seems to require. With the media having proven so unwilling to undertake a post-debate fact check, and with politics as being slimy as ever, Kerry's advisors might have considered encouraging their boss to charge that Bush's daughters were gay, too. Now *that* would be the move of a man with *gravitas*.

These moments, like so many others in the three debates between George W. Bush and John Kerry, are only a smattering of what the American people had to wade through to decide which man would make a better president. According to some polls, as many as 18% of Americans were undecided before the debates. This number had decreased only slightly—if at all—by the close of the third. Samantha Bee of *The Daily Show*, which offered by far the best post-debate coverage, understandably screamed at a mock panel of undecideds after the first: "What the fuck is wrong with you people?" Pollsters and political "scientists" are also confounded: what do these people need to see or hear, they wonder?

The 2004 presidential debates provided fodder ripe for

*continued on next page*



# Choosing the Lesser Evil

MARIYA GLUZMAN

This year we have heard even the most radical Leftists saying that it is essential to choose the lesser of two evils and cast a vote for John Kerry. But, what then? So we mobilize and get the most dangerous president in the history of the United States out of office. But do we really accomplish regime change? Where is the guarantee that, having elected Kerry, a previously energized electorate will not simply fall back into complacency, vulnerable to the ruthlessly powerful once again?

If day after day your company's cafeteria offered the same two unappetizing and boring soup choices, would you shrug your shoulders and choose the concoction least offensive—in other words, continue to consume whatever is shoveled in your trough? Or would you go elsewhere—even to that little mom-and-pop hole-in-the-wall Mexican joint down the block that's barely staying afloat? Mostly, people choose to suffer cafeteria food because it's convenient, everyone they know eats there, and the little hole-in-the-wall place is too run-down to risk entering.

But surprise! Those little shabby places will often have just what you've been looking for. Even if they don't, they're bound to have something that at least tastes better going down. Of course, one might say, "We're stuck with this cafeteria, let's try to pressure the owners to spruce up their soup selection." So, you band together around this idea by choosing the more edible chicken noodle soup. Perhaps as a result, the cafeteria supervisors would even remove that foul-tasting chili from the menu. But then you're left with only one barely edible soup and the same old cafeteria.

In the upcoming election, there are at least three other important presidential tickets, each with its own distinctive platforms. The Independence Party, the third largest party in New York State, is represented by the one-and-only Ralph Nader. The Green Party is running David Cobb, a candidate who believes that every American is

entitled to health care. The Libertarian candidate, Michael Badnarik, stubbornly claims that "free market" means competition, not monopoly. But because these individuals are backed by "third" parties (which, as in "third world," apparently implies inferiority), the general public is either unaware of them or views them as a distraction, at best.

Electing Kerry will not prevent the ongoing degradation of the democratic process; it may actually speed it up. Because his position on various issues is nebulous, at best, many people on the Left may actually take him to be on their side of an issue, or at least sympathetic to it. As a result, they will not be as vigilant or critical of him as they should be. While they wait for him to get things right and excuse dangerous policy-making as simple blunders, the private sector will continue to encroach on the public sector, more tax breaks will continue being handed out to corporations—like the \$137 billion corporate tax cut recently approved by the Senate—and the middle class will get poorer. It will still cost motorists an arm and a leg to gas up at the pump as they vainly grasp for the shiny promise of hydrogen- and electric-powered cars. Troops will continue to spill blood for oil—their own blood and the blood of those who happen to be in the way of corporate America and its political puppets.

Whatever may be said about Bush's reign, he did not polarize the country single-handedly. That's something that took many years of disenfranchising the poor and people of color, handing out tax breaks to the least deserving, cutting public services and using the corporate media to cover it up. Like a boulder rolling down a mountain, polarization of the American people has gained momentum and will only continue to accelerate until the whole thing reaches a sickening, shattering conclusion. Nothing short of regime change can prevent this polarization from fracturing the union. Soon enough, even those middle-class voters who allowed the American Dream to be pulled over their eyes will realize that the corporate government has them spinning their wheels in a ditch that's

only getting deeper and deeper. The American middle class is holding on for dear life at the poverty line, and nothing that Kerry has said will do anything other than throw them a bone, when what they really need is a lifeline.

Whoever wins the elections, liberty will be a loser. We live in a country that is fast becoming a place where ordinary citizens can be followed and investigated without their knowledge or proper court oversight, detained for long periods of time without being charged or afforded legal representation, or fired for holding an unpopular opinion. Kerry made it possible for our government to do just that and more by helping to pass the USA PATRIOT Act, and he reaffirmed his commitment to it during the second debate.

Of course, this argument may be nothing but a slippery slope; after all, didn't Kerry say that he has a plan for balancing the budget, providing affordable health care, and preventing any further abuses of the PATRIOT Act by law enforcement? Sure he did. But you know, George W. Bush, like Bill Clinton before him, had promised some of the same things, most of which were never delivered. But even if Kerry comes through on some of his pledges, we will still be stuck with the war in Iraq, an ever-rising cost of living and divide between the rich and the poor.

This election should not be about choosing the lesser of two evils. Doing so would only further legitimize America's political duopoly. Cast your vote for someone who you truly believe represents your hopes and dreams, be that person Bush, Kerry, or one of the candidates who don't have a prayer. While politicians don't seem willing or able to listen to their consciences, citizens still can.

Mariya Gluzman is a student in the MA program in Philosophy and Web Developer in the Office of the Associate Provost for Instructional Technology.

## Debate Commentary on

a study in psychopathic tendencies—not of the candidates themselves, but of an electorate that is so cynical that it considers this kind of milquetoast exchange sufficient for a democratic process. Americans don't seem to make a connection between the tenor of political discourse and the "greatness" of a country.

Yet, most talking heads agreed at the outset that Kerry's goal was to prove himself to be a viable Commander in Chief who could defend the nation. There is a general consensus that he in fact accomplished this goal.

Bush, most agreed, needed only to hold his own, avoid major sound bite-friendly gaffes, and appear, well, presidential. The problem is that Bush has never done this to begin with. His image makers have reframed ignorance as "folksiness" and the idea that Bush resembles a "true statesman" is laughable in the light of his alienation of most of the world. Bush's most masterful accomplishment has been his ability to generate a set of entirely different expectations for himself than Americans use in judging John Kerry. In all three debates, Bush and Kerry were held to qualitatively different standards, which is why it is difficult to know exactly how the party-faithful on both sides interpreted their performances. Kerry, as a result, was clearly restrained by the unfounded assumptions most Americans have about national security, and the possibilities of reforming our political institutions and processes at home. Yet, by jettisoning many of his core beliefs, and appearing calm but firm, Kerry appeared at the end of the debates to be someone that even Americans may be able to recognize is simply the better man for the job.

## How Profs Vote on from

Professor Judith Stein, Department of History, Graduate Center:

*Do you intend to vote in the 2004 presidential election?* I am voting and voting for John Kerry. Given the choices, I suppose you want to know why I am not voting for a candidate of a third party. Even if Ralph Nader and the Green Party candidate were more to my liking, I still would not vote for them. A presidential election has nothing to do with preference for individuals. It is not the occasion for protest. At this moment in time, the election of John Kerry would be the most effective verdict on the foreign and domestic policies of George Bush. Then, by depriving the GOP of complete control of the government, it would place a brake on the most right-wing administration in United States history. The next act, after Kerry's election, would depend upon what progressive forces are able to muster.

Nader would not be my choice even if I viewed the election as beauty contest. Unlike the constituencies of the Democratic Party, Nader's base of relatively affluent individuals and students is not the group who would suffer from four more years of George W. Bush. Nader's candidacy did not emerge from any popular demand, but from his own desire for celebrity. His history is less splendid than many claim. His electoral record demonstrates a political philosophy of worse is better. He was not very upset when Ronald Reagan was elected and predicted a rise of public interest organizations which would produce new reforms. He was wrong. Nader is demagogic. When anyone disagrees with him, and that includes colleagues, he accuses them of being corporate lackeys. This moral righteousness and oversized role he assigns for himself renders him unfit for political leadership.

Professor Andrew Polsky, Department of Political Science, Hunter College:

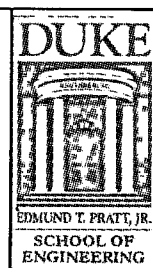
*Do you intend to vote in the 2004 presidential election?* I will vote for Kerry with some misgivings, which is how I always vote and what I would expect. Bush's presidency has been a disaster on most levels. In terms of foreign policy, Iraq was a reckless, short-sighted adventure. You cannot protect America from threats unless you can recognize them. Iraq was not a danger to the US; it had been reduced to a third-rate power after 1991.

To this we can add Bush's disastrous tax cuts, which will saddle my children's generation with an enormous debt. A second Bush term will see attacks on the remaining structure of social provision in the United States that are unacceptable.

A vote for Nader or the Green party is a form of political masturbation: briefly satisfying and without constructive effect on the world beyond the voting booth curtain.

Tony Monchinski is a student in the PhD program in Political Science.

### Duke's GRADUATE PROGRAM in Civil & Environmental Engineering



Want to be a professor? Or a researcher at National Labs or NASA? Want to manage a team in an engineering or management consulting firm? Or have a plethora of other professional opportunities? If so, get to the frontiers of engineering science and tackle challenging questions that will make a difference in the real world. Earn a Ph.D. (or an M.S.) at a world-class university in a prestigious, vibrant, and close-knit program where all professors will know you and help you achieve your goals. Simultaneously enjoy the southern weather, the Carolinas' beaches and mountains, and Duke basketball. For more info visit us today at <http://www.cce.duke.edu> or call 919-660-5200. Applications for Fall 2005 are due by February 1, 2005. All admitted doctoral students are fully funded.

# Hierarchies in Bike Culture Part II

WILL WEIKART

How ironic—a couple months after writing part I of this essay (to appear in the next issue—think of that as the “prequel”), I was at the anti-RNC demos committing the CRIME of riding my bike with others when I was arrested and had my beloved Peugeot 12-speed seized by NY’s “Finest” for about a month. Anyway, my point is, I ride just about every day (for commuting and/or for fun) and I was bikeless for an indefinite period! Having increasingly lost the capacity to deal with enclosed and moving spaces, I emailed a very generous friend who owns a track bike (a.k.a., fixed gear, fixed, fix, “fixie”) and asked if I could borrow his bike, since he was taking a hiatus from it, switching temporarily to a free-wheel. Bingo.

I had VERY little experience on a fixed bike, but I’m a pretty strong urban biker by this point with a lot of control, balance and confidence (heck, my feet never touch the ground even on free-wheel, so put that in your pipe, fix snobs!). I approached the totally brakeless newbie—a dinged-up 1960s French frame by Mercier—gingerly and with much caution. I even wore a helmet the first day I rode into Manhattan (this lasted all day long). What I discovered, and what you may know, is that riding a fixed bike is a totally different riding experience, because the back wheel is permanently affixed to the chain. That means that you can’t coast along without pedaling. Fixies will even go in reverse if you pedal backwards!

The first night, for example, I was riding slowly around Greenpoint to practice, and suddenly I felt my right leg/ankle area being rapidly and forcefully sucked in two diametrically opposed directions. Naturally I panicked, and, probably for the best, allowed myself to simply fall over to my right—stunned, pathetic—and onto the pavement. I looked down and my pant leg had gone into the gear. My foot had of course been strapped to the pedal, which kept on moving forward so—you get the picture. Luckily the force broke the foot strap free altogether and my pant leg ripped away.

*Lesson #1 on a fixed gear bike: ALWAYS, ALWAYS make sure your (especially right) pant leg is WAY up.*

I’d be dead now if this had happened as I was going down the bridge or in dense traffic. If you don’t want to look like LL Cool J in 1997, roll up both sides to an even length and endure potential comments about expecting a flood. It’s worth it.

Luckily I had some organic salve left over from when the NYPD released me after 30 well-deserved hours in

custody. A lovely medic friend of mine was waiting outside 100 Center (the police holding tank) when I got out, and she applied the ointment to my swollen, slightly nerve-damaged wrists. (The cops had cuffed me excessively tight with the plastic at least twice. Thanks, fellas. C-P-R baby.) The leftover salve remained applied to my right ankle for weeks after.

As of today I’ve ridden the fixed for nearly a month. I’ve gotten used to it—indeed, rather addicted to it—and now, finally, I can speak from direct experience and expound on the theories from Part I.

Riding a fixed gear is fun as shit for reasons that are hard to convey. Not long after my initiation, I visited some

websites for urban fixed-gear riders and heard passionate ruminations about the joy of “fixies” from riders. So yeah, some of it is true, I guess. Somehow it does feel more “ZEN”—to the (albeit quite limited) extent that I know what the hell Zen feels like. You do go generally slower, you need more space to stop, and you need more space to

accelerate from a stationary position. It totally changes one’s riding strategy. But fixies also keep your legs fresh and eager for the up-hills.

Part of my personal attraction is to the often slow, methodical pedaling movements necessary to keep the bike going, which fit with a minimalist aesthetic. The fixie is light as hell and gives you razor-sharp sensitivity and control, especially at slow speeds. You can’t help but be seduced by the increased bad-ass mindset you get from the unearthly smooth, utterly silent stealth of riding one. Much slower speeds are possible (instead of putting your

feet down), and you can turn corners more tightly than on a free-wheel. Other fixed riders inevitably turn their heads to check you out.

When going fast, you can’t stand up because you have to keep your legs moving. You can only stand up (a bit) if you are going at a slow to medium pace. This makes bumps—like those hideous and mountainous speed bumps on the Williamsburg bridge, for example—particularly jarring on the downhill. Sharp turns can also be treacherous because, if your timing is off, your downstroke side may catch the ground.

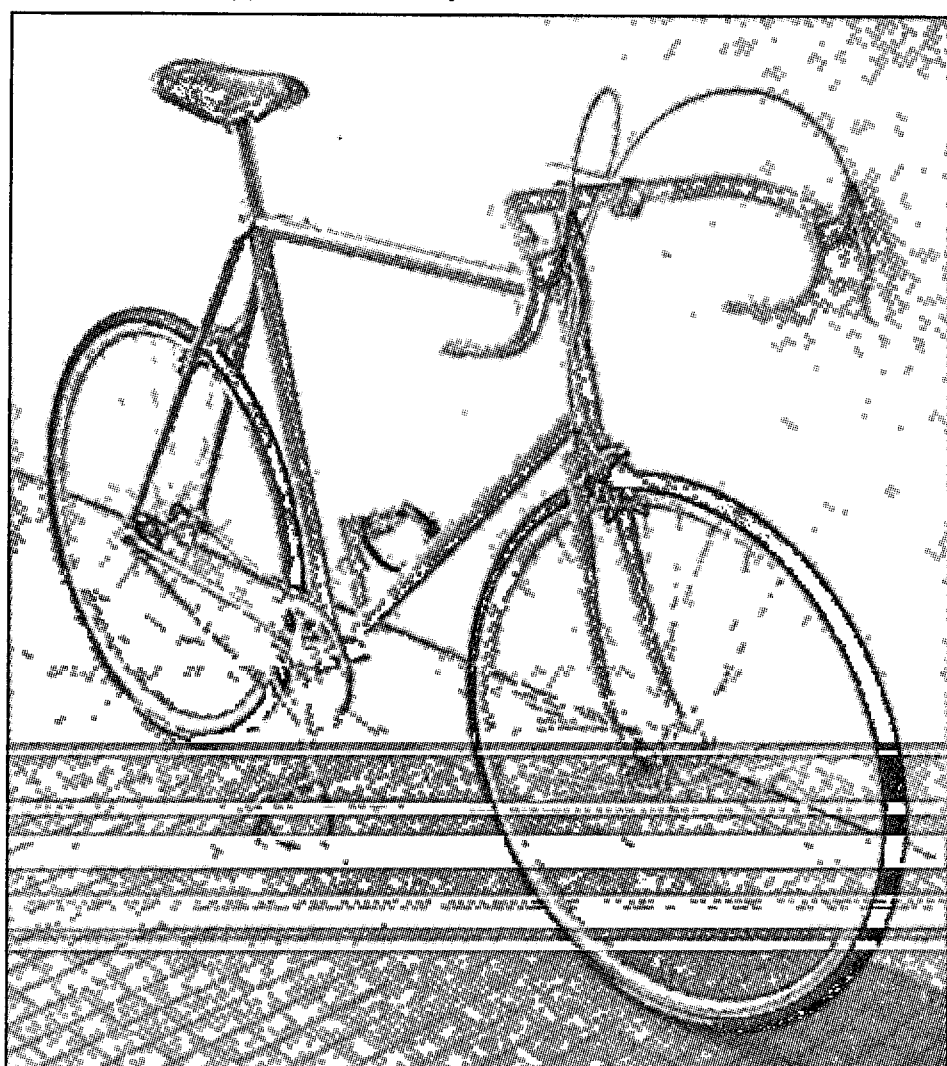
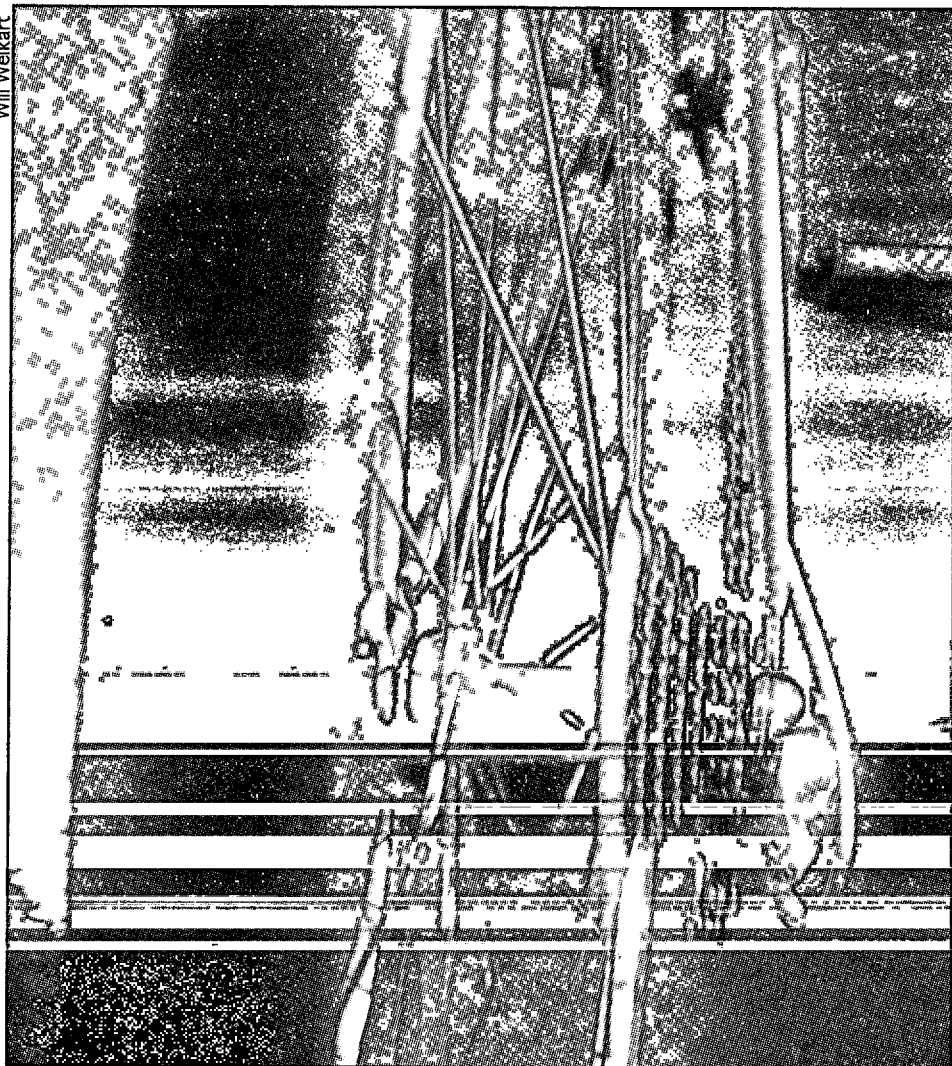
Well, most of the points I made in Part I turned out to be correct. But I really didn’t anticipate the elegant, luxurious ride to be had on a fixed gear. It changes your consciousness on the road and in some ways it may make you ride more attentively, and hence more safely. Excluding the pant leg incident and the pedal scrape, things have gone just fine. The fixie is analogous to the car enthusiast who insists on stick shift over automatic; or worse, me continuing to smoke because it just feels good, even though I think I am capable of quitting (I just don’t have any desire to). I do see why so many straight-edge dolts I have encountered ride fixed gears—it IS macho, no question about it. It is more dangerous overall and less practical in many ways than a free-wheel with breaks. Some might romantically cite the “over-technologization” of the bike, but that doesn’t do much for me since I’m no primitivist, Luddite, purist, or nostalgia-monger. Sure, fixed riders suffer no loss in stopping power in wet conditions, but their stopping power is never good to begin with!

I have to give back the fixed soon and I am thinking of one day buying a fixie (maybe after I get health insurance). My commute time on the Mercier has been decreasing incrementally, a change that is due not to my own conscious effort, but practice.

Finally, a prediction: the next plateau of “craziness” will be a free-wheel with NO BRAKES. Now that’s truly BADASS. I thought of it first!

• Oh, and by the way, regardless of what kind of bike I ride, I have decided that I AM a hipster and so are all of you. You can’t escape. Just accept it. As one friend pointed out, “I’m not against hipster-ism, but I am against snob-ism.” Kudos, friend. You can be one without the other.

*Will Weikart is a nice, affirmative hipster in Sociology at CUNY GC. Part III may be on “Dialectical Movement or the Plane of Pure Immanence: Fixed and/or Free?”*





# Old Bottles & New Wine: Renewing the Anarchist Tradition

WILL WEIKART

Anarchists have a long history of being varyingly 1. misunderstood and misrepresented, and 2. ignored in mass media and in the academy, respectively. To call anarchists misunderstood, however, is generous. As a group we have repeatedly tried to convey our message(s) and represent ourselves to a media that seems systematically incapable, in this era of the sound- and image-bite, of allowing even slightly nuanced statements. Especially since the Seattle anti-WTO protests of 1999, "The Anarchists" have served in the US at least as the infamous masked, black-clad, allegedly violent bogey(wo)men (read: scapegoats) of the anti-globalization (or alter-globalization) protest movement—in both the sensational mainstream media and the intelligence gathering efforts and pre-emptive repression by local and national law enforcement. No coincidence there—since so much fodder for the media is gathered directly and uncritically through other official, news-producing bureaucracies such as the propaganda wings of police department. Dominant myths that circulate are at best misunderstandings and misinformation; at worst they are outright lies which often take absurd form. ("Anarchists" plan to unleash venomous serpents on the city during RNC. No joke.)

Likewise, as a legitimate and coherent social movement, anarchists are rarely acknowledged as such by the dismissive or even hostile "academy". This is due only in part to old debates on the left between orthodox and/or sectarian Marxists (many of whom found homes in university settings) and anarchists. This is increasingly disturbing since it has become clear to many observers that the global anarchist movement is growing and attracting new members every day. So the anarchists constitute a perpetual source of frustration for everyone from law

enforcement to media to other potential allies on the left.

The view of the academy is understandable, as anarchists, particularly in the US, have typically harbored a mistrust of all institutions, which has not excluded the academy. Unfortunately, this is often translated as a dogmatic and widespread anti-theory, anti-intellectual stance in favor of "action." This, one should note, is merely yet another appropriation of the broader anti-intellectual legacy and climate so unique to the US. As a graduate student, I share much of this anti-academic sensibility, but it does not follow that academism is comprised only of theory and intellectualism. The redheaded stepchildren of the left, anarchists' own relative isolation is due at least in part to the old left and anarchists' own self-imposed alienation. Everywhere we find disjunction where we should find conjunction.

Alas, on September 24-26, around 200 anarchists from the US and beyond gathered at the lushly verdant, quaint campus of Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont for the fourth annual Renewing the Anarchist Tradition (RAT) conference. Organizers said that this was the biggest draw of any RAT thus far. The conference serves as a much-needed attempt to address the central concerns of the anarchist movement, and provides a space for anarchists to share ideas and update theoretical foundations where needed. New York City sent many participants—at least three cars full—and among them, at least four CUNY GC students, two of whom were panelists or presenters.

This year's conference was co-organized by the Institute for Social Ecology and the Institute for Anarchist Studies. The Goddard campus is just minutes from the main ISE facility that offers classes and houses several computer terminals, a sizeable library and many resources for activists/thinkers who are particularly interested in ecology. Conference attendees stayed both in the empty

Goddard College dorms (due to a recent financial crisis all students now live off-campus) and in tents on the ISE land. In accord with stereotypes, attendees were by and large white and young (college-aged) but there was notable age diversity, a pretty good gender balance, and some queer presence.

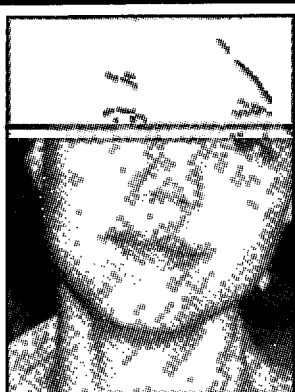
RAT clearly succeeds in creating a much-needed space and context for theoretically oriented anarchists (most of whom, indeed, are also activists involved in various projects "on the ground") who think there is life beyond Bakunin, Proudhon and Kropotkin to strategize and share ideas. Panel topics were eclectic and covered topics as diverse as: anarcho-primitivism, Bataille's radical subjectivity and carnival, fashion, autonomism, radical art movements and anarchism, the anti-authoritarian imagination in post-Bop music, dual power, the commodity, *horizontalidad*, gender, race and power, international solidarity, and post-anarchism (the long-overdue and promising cross-fertilization of post-structural theories and anarchist thought). There were also workshops on stenciling/street art and media, puppet performances, an art installation on the history of gender, and much campfire camaraderie.

The conference was possessed of a lively openness and general good will—something that made it far better than, say, the old Socialist Scholars Conference. Unlike the recent anti-authoritarian (but not explicitly anarchist) Life After Capitalism conference, RAT managed to avoid sectarian and vanguardist attempts at disruption or sabotage.

For more info on RAT please visit: <http://www.home-madejam.org/renew>

Will Weikart is a student in sociology at CUNY GC.

*If you had a sibling & close friend or relative who was considering enrolling at the GC what would you tell her or him?*



**Flagg Blaque,**  
Urban Studies

I'd say great! So glad you decided to get an education! You kind of have to know my siblings & all but one is kind of a slacker...



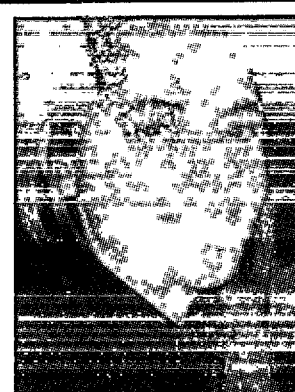
**Andrea Morrell,**  
Anthropology

That they can move into my living room! That's a FUNNY question



**Bhakti Shringarpure,**  
Comparative Literature

There's no funding! You have to be independently wealthy! You have to struggle with the adjunct stuff which leaves no time for research! It's a trap!



**Kim Libman,**  
Environmental Psychology

You should look into coming here since it's public and relatively affordable if you're not married & wealthy or wealthy & married...



**Matthias Wivel,**  
Art History

Look closer and see whether it's good for you! Depends on many things but I'd recommend it, yeah!



**Patricia Hoffbauer,**  
Liberal Studies

You have to have a way to make a living & but it's the most affordable NYC school! I couldn't afford to go to NYU & it's a good place to see if you want to get a PhD!

# Scaffolding Scam

an estimated \$950,000. Most of that sum was provided by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York, while the difference was covered by the \$295,800 generated from ad revenues since August 2003.

Provost and Senior Vice President Dr. William P. Kelly considers the ads symbolic of the crisis that public education is currently experiencing. But some students aren't convinced.

Kat Griefen, a student in the Art History department, said "whenever there is corporate involvement in public education, it is potentially bad. In the case of art and education, there are other purposes outside the goal of learning, such as selling cars and cigarettes to turn a profit, which show how interests can interfere with achieving what the real goals of education should be." Indeed, early advocates of public education such as John Dewey certainly never envisioned private businesses as having a role to play in financing public schools.

In the October 2003 issue of *The Advocate*, contributing writer Elizabeth Primamore wrote of the "irony of an institution as critical of the vagaries of unrestrained capitalism as the Graduate Center being financed by a bank notorious for its redlining policies is too striking to be left unsaid." Primamore was referring to a Citibank ad which has since been replaced, but students have also expressed objections to the current advertisers.

The Hummer is a civilian vehicle based directly on a military model. AM General developed the High-Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) from 1979-1983 as part of a competitive bid to develop formidable transportation for the US army. The model has been used by the army for so long that it has become emblematic of the the military, often appearing in discussions over whether Hummers in Iraq are equipped with appropriate armor or not. In 1999, AM General sold the name and distribution rights for the Hummer to General Motors, which now distributes them to consumers as a gas-guzzling symbol of pro-military enthusiasm.

A second ad touts *Espirit*, a brand name fashion line derived from sweatshop and otherwise exploitative labor conditions. Additionally, the *Espirit* advertisements contain images that many feel contribute to the mental and physical health crisis of adolescent girls, such as anorexia and bulimia.

Many feel that the removal of the scaffolding itself is simply long overdue. "It's embarrassing," said Alex, 34, of the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages department. "I don't know why they have had it here for so long. It's been here, what, 5 years? 3 years?"

In fact, the scaffolding was erected in March 2001, and were scheduled for removal in the spring of 2004, an estimate given by Michael Mahoney, Director of Facilities and Campus Planning, quoted in an earlier story in *The Advocate*.

## The Administration's Perspective

Provost Kelly is more concerned with the poor gas

mileage that Hummers have and its related impact on the environment than its relation to the military-industrial complex. He finds such a relation indirect and added, "I think differentiating between these ads is a level of moral precision that eludes me."

Dr. Kelly also seemed confounded by the continued presence of the *Espirit* ad, which he mistakenly thought had been removed. The *Espirit* ad, however, continues to be prominently displayed on the northeast corner of 34th street and 5th Avenue.

Regarding the scaffolding's extended tenure on the GC façade, Provost Kelly explained to *The Advocate* that the scaffolding remains because of a new problem discovered with the building's infrastructure. "Mold was discovered on the building that for aesthetic reasons ought to be cleaned and taken off. It was asked of us whether before we take the scaffolding down, if we wanted to clean the building up. My own preference is to get the building clean."

Adding to the reasons for the delay, President Frances Horowitz, writing in the administration bulletin *Centerline* (No. 45, September 2004), wrote that "Weather conditions periodically have led to a temporary stoppage of the restoration process" and that "because our building has landmark status . . . procedures had to go through sometimes lengthy approval processes by the Landmark Commission."

Nevertheless, delays have raised a skeptical eye amongst students, who speculate about the true motives behind the continued presence of the scaffolding. In this vein, Political Science student Jan Polivka, 27, said "I come from Berlin and they did the same thing, but they had it over a year and the repairs only took six months. But they kept the scaffolding out, many felt, to keep receiving the corporate ad revenues that they also put up." Polivka echoed the suspicions of many other students when he noted that he hadn't seen anyone doing work on the building and was thus "skeptical" about the Administration's claims. Meanwhile, a security guard who asked that he not be identified said that he had not seen any work done on the building recently. "I think that some work was done on the façade, but that was a long time ago," he noted.

In her *Centerline* memo, President Horowitz expressed further uncertainty about the removal of the scaffolding. "We do not presently know but are estimating perhaps in December or early in 2005." As long as the scaffolding continues to be present, however, student concerns about its aesthetic ugliness and moral objections over the involvement of corporations in the financing of public education are sure to be raised. Many students suggest that further action may be necessary if the latest estimate for removal is not met.

Andrew Kennis is a student in the PhD program in Political Science.

## Some facts about Hummers:

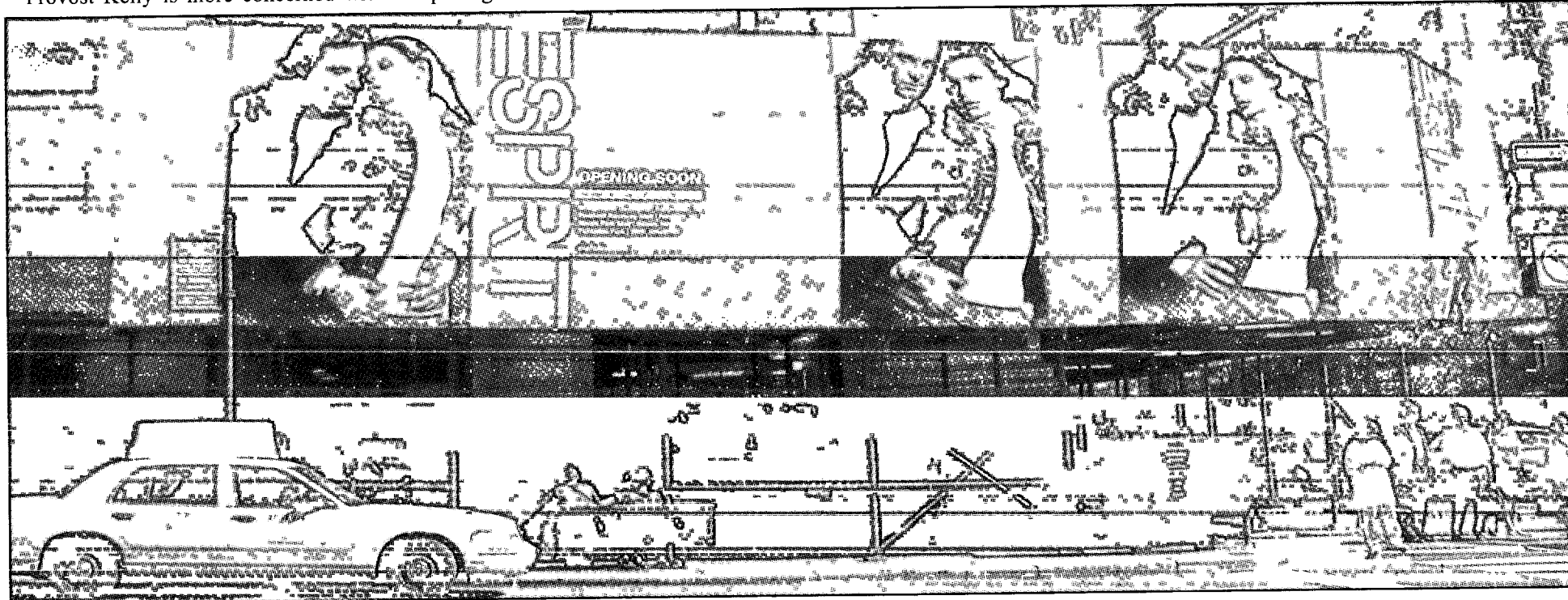
\*Its dreadful gas mileage of 10 miles per gallon is less than half the mileage of the Model T Ford some 80 years ago!

\*Hummers emit over 3 times more carbon dioxide than average cars, hastening global warming, and they give off substantially more smog-producing pollutants and dangerous particulates. But because they are categorized as light trucks, they are actually exempt from meeting emission or fuel-efficiency standards.

\*Hummer owners (an elite class in itself as the H1 starts at \$100,000, the H2 at \$50,000) take unfair advantage of a tax benefit originally meant to help farmers purchase tractors. Using this tax loophole for vehicles over 6,000 pounds, Hummer owners can get up to a \$100,000 tax break! (Compare this to \$2,000 for the Toyota Prius hybrid, which gets over 50 miles per gallon). Taxpayers for Common Sense estimates that this outrageous subsidy for Hummers and heavy SUVs robs the US Treasury of \$800 million a year.

\*US autos, taken by themselves, emit more CO2 than all but four countries: US, China, Russia and Japan.

\*Irate bicyclists may slash your tires, while Earth Liberation Front members may incinerate your vehicle!



Wait there's a school behind that ad? No shit I always thought there was a dressing room



# Wrestling with Zion: Progressive Jewish American Responses to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Edited by Tony Kushner and Alisa Solomon

Grove Press 000000000 pp0

JASON SCHULMAN

*If God as some now say is dead, He no doubt died of trying to find an equitable solution to the Arab-Jewish problem. —I. F. Stone*

This worthy collection is long overdue. Perhaps no issue save the Holocaust arouses Jewish-American passions like the Israeli-Palestine conflict, and those of us who decry Israeli state terror and support Palestinian self-determination are invariably deemed “self-hating Jews” by the majority of Zionists, no matter how much we might condemn Palestinian suicide bombers. The party line for American Jews—even amongst liberals—is, as Kushner and Solomon put it, that the survival of the state of Israel “requires nothing less the disappearance of Palestinians, at least figuratively, and for some, who openly advocate transfer, even literally.” We are told repeatedly that Israel has no one to negotiate with; the Palestinians are a non-people or, at best, a people submerged in a culture of death; former Israeli Prime Minister Barak made generous offers of land that were selfishly rejected; the Palestinians’ continued suffering is all the fault of Arafat and Hamas; and so on. And, of course, the tensions between Israel as a democracy and Israel as a Jewish State are glossed over or deemed nonexistent.

It’s worth picking up *Wrestling with Zion*, then, if for no other reason than to read essays that date as far back as 1891 and question the wisdom of the Zionist enterprise, at times from within the Zionist movement itself. Ahad Ha’am notes how Israeli colonialists “deal with the Arabs with hostility and cruelty, trespass unjustly, beat them shamefully for no sufficient reason, and even boast about their actions.” Early Zionists such as Judah L. Magnes and Martin Buber find cultural and spiritual Zionism to be incompatible with “militarist, imperialist, political Zionism.” Many of the contemporary essays concern matters that are surely familiar to many readers of *The Advocate*: Israel’s relations with the United States; the

outsized influence of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) on US policy towards the Middle East, as well as that of the lesser-known Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA); the US corporate media’s anti-Palestinian bias and its blackout of the death of the American Palestinian solidarity activist Rachel Corrie by an Israeli bulldozer; and, finally, the “unholy alliance” between the fundamentalist Christian right and right-wing Zionists, both American and Israeli. As Phyllis Bennis aptly puts it, “The intersection of pro-Israeli right-wing ideologues, the arms industry, influential institutions and powerful people in government makes the question of who are the dogs and who wags the tails essentially moot.”

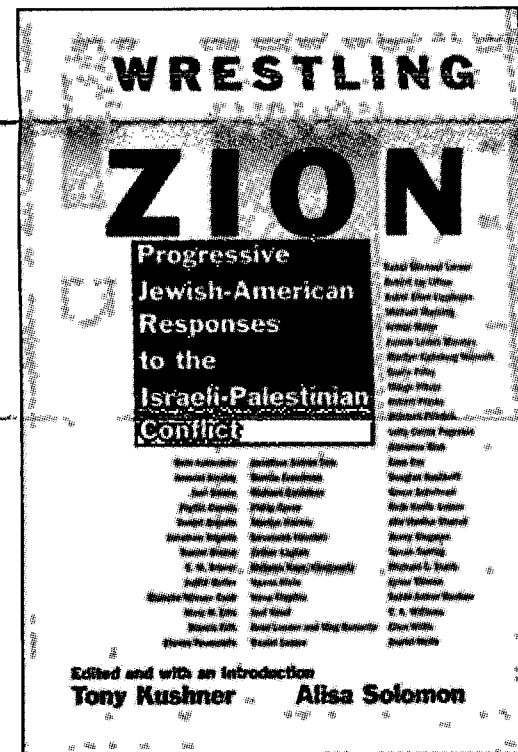
Beyond this established perspective, some of the essays offer surprises. Michael E. Staub provides a history of the forgotten 1970s organization Breira, a nationwide, feminist, left-center alliance of “prominent American Jews that sought to challenge what they perceived already at that time to be the rightward drift of American Zionism.” Internally contentious (and openly so), for its four brief years of existence, Breira tried to be a dovish alternative to AIPAC and far-right religious Zionism, supporting Israeli negotiations with the Palestinian Liberation Organization and a self-determining Palestinian state. Though it defined itself as Zionist, the larger Jewish organizations denounced Breira, as did Jewish journals such as *Hadassah*, *American Zionist*, and *Commentary*. Breira crumbled under this assault, leading *Dissent* editor Irving Howe to “remember why I had nothing to do with the Jewish community all these years.”

The book offers a fair range of views. Esther Kaplan celebrates the current Palestinian solidarity movement, accepting that the path to the end of the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip “will be littered with e-mail postings that are a bit strident and flyers that are insensitive to Jewish history—a handful of placards that read “Zionism = Nazism”—and so what? This new wave of activism has healthy roots, not [from] ancient wells of Jew hating.”

Contrast this with the “anti-anti-Zionism” of Ellen Willis, who refuses to accept “the intemperate tone of left anti-Zionist rhetoric” even as she endorses the generally-accepted two-state consensus. In my view, both writers have blind sides. Kaplan is right that the fact that Jews “don’t own this movement anymore” isn’t innately bad, but an irredentist movement that says that all peoples have the right to self-determination except for the Israeli Jews is not going to win over the majority of Americans. And if it were to do so, it would—intentionally or not—be through appeals to Christian anti-Semitism. (Consider the Pew Research Center report that roughly a quarter of all Americans believe that Jews were responsible for the death of Christ.) Willis, for her part, gives too much ground to past Israeli governments, failing to note the continued expansion of settlements during the Barak-Arafat talks and claiming that “the occupation came about as a result not of aggressive settlement but of defensive war,” which appears to not be the case.

To be expected, there’s commentary in *Wrestling with Zion* about anti-Semitism—the essay by Judith Butler, doyenne of postmodern feminism, is perhaps the most lucid thing she’s ever written—but there’s little explicit

debate about Zionism itself and what it means today. Does it merely connote a defense of the right of Israel to exist? Or is it inextricably tied to Jewish chauvinism? Only Joel Kovel begins to bring up this question. But there is, at least, a debate on the Israeli Law of Return, which gives automatic Israeli citizenship to any Jew. Some contributors argue that Jews should renounce their right of return, as it is a benefit that rests on the back of wrongs done to Palestinians. Others claim that the Law is a Jewish affirmative action program, a needed compensation for centuries of oppression against Jewish people. Letty Cottin Pogrebin thinks that the Law is justified if Israel acknowledges the Palestinian right of return, but for her this means Israel paying reparations and helping a Palestinian state “absorb some of its own diaspora within its own borders.” This might be acceptable provided that Israel, as Pogrebin wants, admits that “the displacement of another people was a by-product of establishment of the Jewish State.” But it still seems hardly fair that, to use the oft-cited example, a Jew from Brooklyn can automatically become an Israeli citizen while an Arab born in pre-Israel Palestine cannot. And quoting the racist David Ben-Gurion does not bolster her argument.



A good companion volume to *Wrestling With Zion* is Bennet Muraskin’s *Let Justice Well Up Like Water: Progressive Jews from Hillel to Helen Suzman* (The Center for Cultural Judaism, 2004). The majority of those profiled are secular Jews who still “dedicated their lives to the development of Jewish culture and/or progressive social causes.” In other words, the historically important Marxist Jews (Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Leon Trotsky, et al) aren’t here—though Ernst Bloch and Issac Deutscher do show up, as do lesser-known American Communists (including, of course, Moissay Olgin of the CP’s Yiddish paper, the *Morgn Freiheit*) and the anarchists Gustav Landauer and Rudolph Rocker. Muraskin could have used a proofreader, and one could quibble with some comments that he makes, but his overall Jewish Labor-Bund-derived political perspective is solid, as is the book.

Jason Schulman is a doctoral student in the Political Science program and wrote “The Life and Death of Socialist Zionism” in the Summer 2003 edition of *New Politics*, which he co-edits.

## ACE YOUR JOB INTERVIEW ONE-DAY INTENSIVE SEMINARS

Practical training for your successful job interview

- \* maximize all verbal and standard skills
- \* establish rapport with the interviewer
- \* develop a unique and effective presentation style
- \* elicit confidence by using your voice effectively
- \* harmonize through culture specific body language
- \* anticipate the questions you will be asked
- \* demonstrate leadership ability

**TO IMPRESS THE INTERVIEWER,  
NOT JUST YOURSELF!**

Video analysis of interview simulations and reviews  
are given by professional interviewers.

**REGISTER NOW!**

**next seminar dates are:**

October 30 and 31; November 6, 20, and 27  
9:30AM to 4:30 PM \$195

*Our one-day intensive seminars are held  
at the New York Marriott Marquis.*

**CONTACT CROSS-CULTURAL CONNECTION**  
at 212-886-4514 [www.c-c-connection.com](http://www.c-c-connection.com)

## Film Reviews

# ØNew Progressive Documentaries: The CorporationØSupersize Me and Howard Zinn: You CanØBe Neutral on a Moving Train

TONY MONCHINSKI

From the student lounge on the fifth floor of the Graduate Center one gets a wonderful view of the top of the Empire State Building. To the best of my knowledge, it is the only view the windowless GC offers students unless one counts the bustle of 5th Avenue and 34th and 35th Streets visible from the Mina Rees library. When the Empire State building was constructed, the top was designed as a berth for blimps. After the fatal final flight of the Hindenburg, this dock for Zeppelins was never used. It now serves, in part, as antennae for radio station Z-100, which bills itself as the biggest, most listened-to radio station in the world.

Look around: corporations are everywhere. Corporate advertising from Hummer, Espirit and Citibank plasters the "sidewalk shed" surrounding the GC. Z-100 is owned by Clear Channel. Manhattan has the highest concentration of McDonalds "restaurants" anywhere in the world: four per square mile. What you might find interesting about the ubiquity of corporations is this: for all their immense wealth, power and privilege, corporations are legally individuals, just like you and me. Except they're not quite like you and me, as evidenced in Mark Achbar and Jennifer Abbott's documentary, *The Corporation*. Achbar, best known for his Noam Chomsky doc, *Manufacturing Consent*, revisits the MIT linguist in the film, along with Michael Moore, Howard Zinn and

Naomi Klein, but also corporate executives and self-described "free market liberal," Milton Friedman.

The documentary is based on Canadian law professor Joel Bakan's book of the same name. In the film, as in the book, the case is made that corporations, if they are indeed considered to be individuals, must be considered mentally ill. Psychologist Dr. Robert Hare runs down a list of diagnostic symptoms for psychopathy from the DSM-V, and guess what? Corporations meet them all. Corporations are singularly self-interested, irresponsible, attempt to manipulate everything, exhibit grandiose ideation and asocial tendencies, lack empathy, and, besides refusing to accept responsibility for their actions, they feel no remorse. Hannibal Lector move over!

Achbar and Bakan spend some time pointing out that there are corporations that do appear to have a social conscience and do engage in good deeds. Pfizer senior vice president, Tom Kline, shows off improvements his company has made to its Brooklyn neighborhood, from a subway station across the street from the plant that is equipped with an intercom which allows harried riders to summon Pfizer security, to a public school funded partially by Pfizer. But, the documentary makes clear, corporations exist for one purpose and one purpose alone: to serve shareholders by increasing profits.

If putting on a friendly face is good for business, allowing for greater profit returns and better public relations, corporations will engage in seemingly altruistic behavior.

However, the moment corporations pursue altruistic and seemingly moral ends for their own sake, they are guilty, in the words of Milton Friedman, of "immorality." When asked about CEOs who attempt to better the environment, Uncle Milt opines, "If he [the CEO] pursues those environmental interests in such a way as to run the corporation less effectively for its stockholders, then I think he is being immoral. He's an employee of the stockholders... as such, he has a very strong moral responsibility to them."

Corporations exist to make a profit. That is their *métier*. One way they maximize profits is to minimize responsibility by outsourcing "externalities." Externalities are the effects on third parties of transactions that the third parties have neither agreed to nor are directly a part of. Bakan defines externalities

as "other people's problems." So, for example, when Patricia Anderson and her four children are severely burned after their Chevy Malibu is rear-ended and the gas tank explodes, General Motors enters into cost/benefit analysis mode. And this is what they find out: to make the necessary alterations that would keep people from dying in rear-end collisions would cost GM \$8.59 for every car they have on the road, whereas the company would only have to pay out \$2.40 per car per fatality in compensation from legal cases. Leaving their cars the way they are saves GM \$6.19 per vehicle. Patricia Anderson and her four young children never asked to be externalities; that's what makes externalities externalities.

And externalities are what makes government regulation of corporations necessary. In 1927's *The Public and Its Problems*, John Dewey argued that the state is formed to regulate the indirect consequences of actions. Today, corporations are fighting government regulation tooth and nail. Deregulation, Friedman and other conservatives assure us, will lead to the triumph of the market, an automatic society where market forces lead to a social equilibrium. As many critics say of communism, "capitalism is great in theory, but..." Joel Bakan explains, "No one would seriously suggest that individuals should regulate themselves, that laws against murder, assault, and theft are unnecessary because people are socially responsible. Yet oddly, we are asked to believe that corporate persons—institutional psychopaths who lack any sense of moral conviction and who have the power and motivation

continued on next page



## TANGOØUN GIRO EXTRAØØ ØTANGOØA STRANGE TURNØ Directed by Mercedes García Guevara

HARLAN D. WHATLEY

Tango—not just the fabled dance, but also the music that accompanies it—is alive and well in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In the third feature film from Argentinean director, Mercedes García Guevara, the viewer enters the musical world of tango artists such as La Chicana, Fernando Otero, Las Muñecas and others. The film recounts tango's transformation from the traditional songs of Carlos Gardel, through Astor Piazzolla's rearticulating of the genre, to the hip current trends in tango today. The film also depicts the stunning beauty of this city that never sleeps—hypnotic Buenos Aires—and its nocturnal music aficionados.

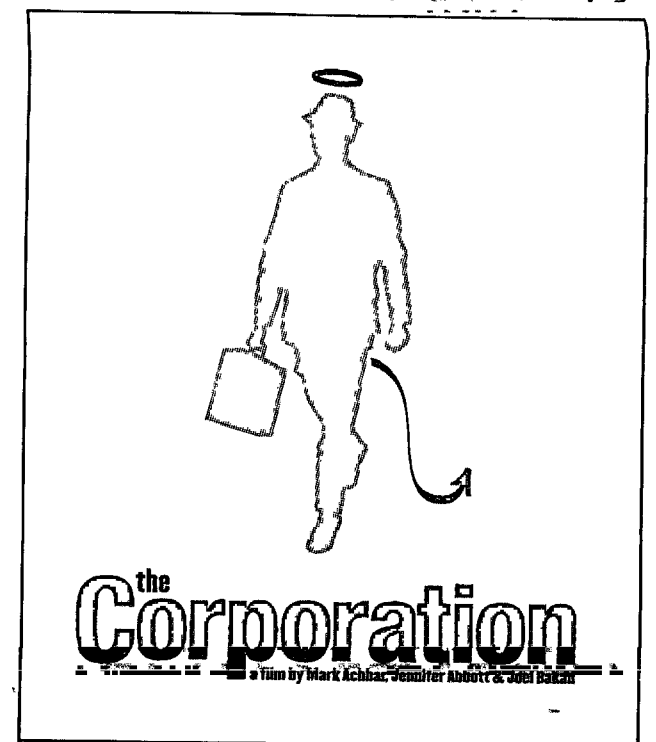
Guevara captures the musicians in their day-to-day studio and practice sessions—even in front of their computers and music composition software—as well as their live stage performances in Buenos Aires. Backstage inter-

views with the musicians show their perspective on tango as not just orchestral dance music but "Argentina's new rock'n roll" and give the documentary some additional color.

La Chicana's performances were particularly moving. La Chicana is led by female vocalist Dolores Sola, who performs sensual tango dance moves on stage while singing. Acho Estel's guitar gives the band's tunes additional strength.

The film also focuses on the tango dance itself, and we see a young couple who teach it to children. Also, the film features a provocative and sensual formal dance scene. Ivan Gierasinchuk's photography is darkly lit, which creates an erotic, nocturnal feel throughout the film.

Overall, this documentary was both educational and entertaining. All too often musical documentaries are either too egotistical or filled with "over the top" performance sequences littered with animation graphics.



*Tango, A Strange Turn* drew me into the story early with the use of archival photographs and charming film sequences of Buenos Aires in the 1930s and 40s. Both the music and the musicians featured portray an honest and passionate lifestyle dedicated to the revival of this often misunderstood genre, which is much more than just a dance.

The film premiered in May of 2004 at the Cannes Film Festival and has been screened at the 2004 Toulouse Latin America Film Festival and 2004 Latinbeat (New York City). Max Films International of Canada is the distributor.

Harlan Whatley is an adjunct lecturer in the Department of English and an MFA student in the Integrated Media Arts program at Hunter College.



## DSC Announcements

The DSC (Doctoral Students' Council) will hold its Fall Coffee Social on Wednesday, November 10th. Coffee and pastries will be provided from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. in room 5414.

DSC representatives will be receiving their business cards at the upcoming plenary meeting (Friday, October 22, 2004). Please attend to pick up yours.

Aleja Styers, the Co-Chair for Business Management, strongly suggests that DSC representatives request their funds this year as reimbursements not advances. Hold your party, save receipts and flyers/invitations as proof that the event took place, and then submit the original receipts for reimbursement.

Interviews for the Adjunct Project Coordinator(s) will be held on Friday, October 29th beginning at 4:00 p.m. If you applied, you will be specifically assigned a time no later than 6 p.m. on that day for your interview.

### Graduate Council (This is *not* the DSC!)

Graduate Council meets on Thursday, October 28 at 3:00 p.m. in room 9206/07. The DSC is attempting to spur student attendance at these meetings by raising awareness of this body, the governing political group at the Graduate Center. Each program elects students to Graduate Council and this term is for two years. There is often confusion about this position as programs hold elections but rarely pass along complete information about the duties involved. The following is stated on the Provost's web page (<http://web.gc.cuny.edu/provost/index.htm>) which can be accessed on the "Inside 365" web page:

*The Graduate Council is concerned with such matters as curriculum, degree requirements, standards of admission, academic performance, and program governance. Much of the work of Graduate Council is done through its standing committees.*

The other Graduate Council meetings for this academic year are on the following days:  
December 2 - March 3 - May 12

If you were elected to as your program's representative to Graduate Council, you should, first of all, mark the dates above in your calendar. Secondly, take a look at the section "GC Governance" on the Provost's page. This is where you can learn about Graduate Council, its standing committees, by-laws, etc.

## YOU ARE ALL WELCOME to the WOMEN'S STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

office on the fifth floor of the Graduate Center. Within the office, the Certificate Program shares space with the Center for the Study of Women and Society, promoting interdisciplinary feminist scholarship through symposia, seminars, and diverse events. We run a Speakers Series, as well as the College and Community Fellowship (CCF), a program by and for formerly incarcerated individuals assisting in issues of education and re-entry into society.

The Certificate is available to all students currently enrolled in one of the doctoral programs at the Graduate Center. Two Women's Studies classes are offered every semester, along with a many classes that are cross-listed with other programs. These classes focus critical attention on issues of gender, ethnicity, sexuality and class. Women's Studies faculty draw attention to those whose voices have been suppressed, ignored, and devalued.

The Women's Studies Certificate Program enrolls an average of 25 students every year. Since 1990, 65 students have been awarded the Certificate along with their Ph.D. The Certificate Program's faculty comes from across the CUNY system, giving students the opportunity to work with a diverse population of scholars. In conjunction with the Center for the Study of Women & Society, students discuss issues of race, class, gender and sexuality through seminars and conferences, and have the opportunity to interact with leading scholars both within CUNY and throughout the world through symposia and Speakers Series events.

Current projects include the Conviction Seminar, which last semester was focusing on the topic of *Conatus and Control: Matter, Bodies, and the Affect of Politics*, and this semester: *Affect, Politics and Psychoanalysis*, and The Global Prison Project. Speakers Series events this semester include panels on bodies and landscapes of control, a film cosponsored by the Fashion Studies Forum, and the Seventh Annual Beatrice Kachuck Lecture on Women in India, this year titled *When Neoliberal Economics and Fundamentalism Meet: Impacts on Women in India*. The Certificate Program and the Center together offer a wonderful chance for Graduate Center students to learn about many of the most important issues of contemporary society.

You can reach Catherine Silver, the Acting Director of the Women Center at [csilver@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:csilver@gc.cuny.edu) and Elisabeth Small, our Assistant Program officer, at [esmall@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:esmall@gc.cuny.edu). Our website is: <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/womenstudies>.

# Lefty Film Reviews @continued@

to cause harm and devastation in the world — should be left free to govern themselves."

The point is well-made. Just as few stand a chance as individuals versus the schoolyard bully, so citizens need to unite to face the corporate Goliath looming over us. Democratic government channels, as much as corporations try to pervert them with their inordinate pull, stand as a potential countermeasure to corporate excesses. What is necessary is that citizens work together through their governments to make the state more responsive to our needs and less the lap dog of its current corporate master.

*The Corporation* covers these topics and many more. Achbar's latest is never dull, but at times it seems long. I preferred Bakan's book, which I read afterwards and was pleased to find contained the same interviews with Chomsky, Friedman, et. al. as appear in the film (but not with Michael Moore).

One corporate individual that comes in for a supersized reaming is McDonalds. Morgan Spurlock's documentary, *Supersize Me!*, now available on video, singles out Mickey D's, but, as the filmmaker makes clear, his in an indictment of the whole fast food industry. Americans are getting fatter and fatter. Sure, some overweight Americans argue that they are happy just the way they are; yet medical science—and millions of dieters—posit that being overweight is unhealthy. Personally, I think it's the utmost in *chutzpah* when Oprah's sidekick, Dr. Phil, no skinny Minnie himself, has the audacity to go on television and give people diet advice. Uh... okay. And remind me again, how did Dr. Atkins die? Eating habits and lack of exercise are the double whammy that lead to our literally—expanding America.

For one month, Spurlock ate nothing but McDonalds. Breakfast, lunch, dinner. If a McDonalds employee asked him if he wished to supersize his meal, he would say yes. He couldn't eat anything if it wasn't on the McDonalds menu (Fortunately, they do sell bottled water). Viewing the film, one feels a great deal of empathy for Spurlock's girlfriend, a vegan chef who must bear witness to this

month-long binge. Spurlock suffers, but of his own volition, and his camera captures every minute of it.

By the end of his 30 days, Spurlock is a mess. He has gained 25 pounds (which took him 14 months to shed afterwards). His liver is shot, with one of his three doctors telling him—at only three weeks in—that, if Spurlock was a drinker, he (the doctor) would have to advise him that he was drinking himself to death based on his liver enzyme test results. As time goes on, Spurlock is moody and irritable, somber and lethargic. The only time he is happy is when he is eating McDonalds.

One point raised in *Supersize Me!* is of especial interest. Why is it, one person Spurlock interviewed asks, that people feel fine dismissing smoking as a nasty, unhealthy, unattractive habit, yet it is bad taste to point out that being overweight is equally as unhealthy and—depending on your point of view—unattractive? The point is well taken: it's not PC to disparage someone because of their excessive weight, but many people feel no problem scoffing at smokers. While a host of arguments can be raised to explain the discrepancy, both problems are unhealthy. Furthermore, many people find both unattractive, as evidenced by the US's continued worship of emaciation in the form of Paris Hilton. While warning against excessive McDonalds indulgence, Morgan Spurlock offers us a different type of food for thought.

Hopefully we all recognize how bad McDonalds and the like are for us. I know, I know: but the fries taste so good! Sure they do. Still, you probably don't want to eat them more than once in a while. We're adults, but children are the target audience of the company's ever more aggressive advertising. *The Corporation* covers children's marketing, with the latest techniques of creating advertisements that will get young children without money to nag their parents to buy them things—like Happy Meals. Most children are easier to manipulate than adults, and Friedman's amoral corporations know this.

At an hour shorter than *The Corporation*, *Supersize Me!* could have benefited from some fat-trimming itself. This

documentary is good, but Spurlock could have made his point in less than 60 minutes. What then to say about the 75 minute Howard Zinn documentary, *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train?*

That depends on what you can say about Howard Zinn the man. If, like me, you're a fan of Zinn's work, you'll be receptive to this film that details the life and development of this progressive thinker. If, on principal, you're opposed to leftist hagiography, to a film that plays as "less documentary than infomercial" in the words of *The Village Voice's* J. Hoberman, you're gonna want to steer clear of this one.

Deb Ellis and Denis Mueller's documentary follows Zinn from his working-class New York upbringing to his current status as Boston University professor and author of the bestselling *A People's History of the United States*. Unlike other progressive thinkers, Zinn knows firsthand what he criticizes. A bombardier during World War II, Zinn took part in the first bombing runs that used Napalm. After killing who knows how many German civilians and soldiers, Zinn turned to a life of non-violence and civil disobedience.

The documentary follows him from his days at Spellman College where his anti-Vietnam War activism led to his expulsion from the faculty, through his travels to Hanoi to secure the release of downed US airmen, and to the contemporary staging of his two successful plays based on the lives of Karl Marx and Emma Goldman. Along the way there are testimonials from Noam Chomsky, Daniel Berrigan, Frances Fox Piven, Alice Walker, Marian Wright Edelman, as well as narration by Matt Damon. All in all, *Howard Zinn: You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train*, sheds some light on the still active octogenarian, but it will probably be best enjoyed by the already converted.

Tony Monchinski is a student in the PhD program in Political Science.



# Round One: Marx ∅ ∅ Starbucks ∅

DAN SKINNER & TONY MONCHINSKI

The Yankees weren't the only big losers in the middle of October. In an unparalleled instance of cosmic irony—cosmic *chutzpah* is more like it—Anthropology Professor David Harvey's famed *Reading Marx's Capital* class was unceremoniously relocated on Monday, October 18 to make room for a convention of Starbucks Coffee managers. Uncle Karl was presumably rolling over in his British grave as the Graduate Center took one more step to cement its warm and snuggly embrace of corporate

America—as if the ads for gas-guzzling Hummers adorning our sidewalk sheds weren't enough.

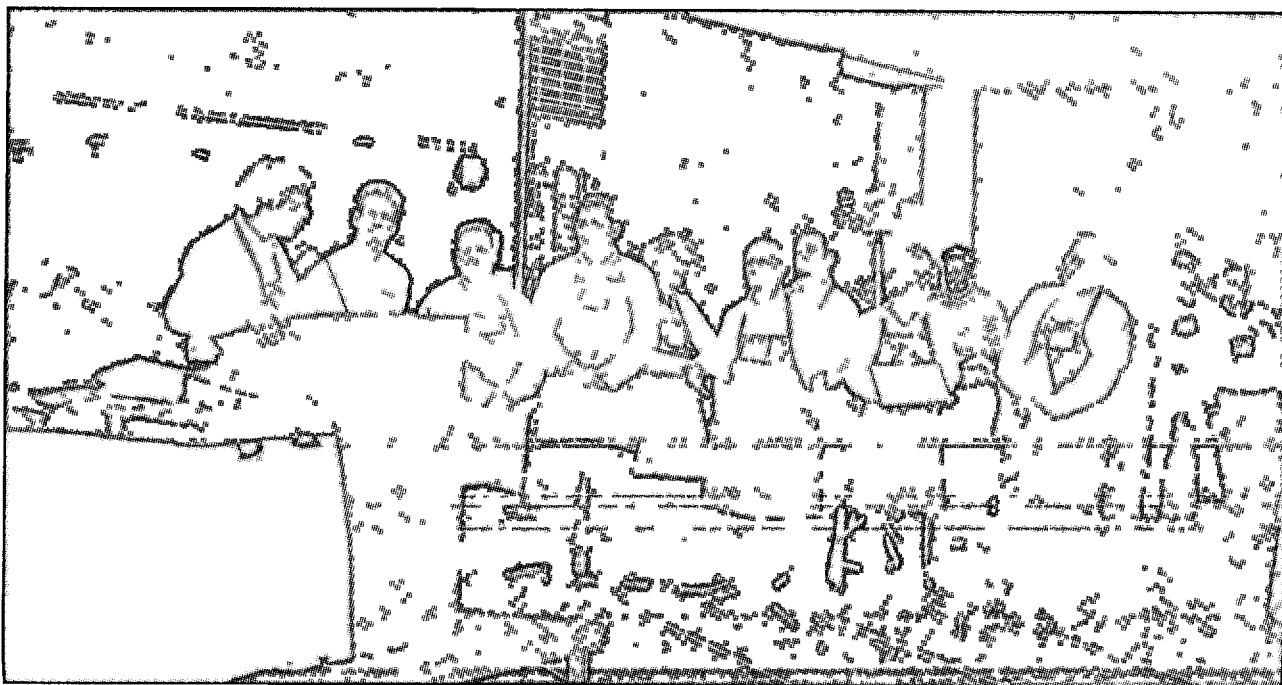
Throughout the day, men and women adorned in green aprons occupied a total of sixteen rooms, including the Segal Theater, the Concourse Lobby, the Auditorium and the Skylight Conference Room, reducing the ads outside on the 365 Fifth Avenue façade to mere auger of a larger, seemingly protracted struggle. The editors of *The Advocate*, after consulting their oracle bones and the entrails of small feral city creatures, believe it too soon to speak up to reveal the ghastly next Graduate Center sell

out to corporate America. Nevertheless, be advised that the Graduate Center is now officially in Code Mauve. Go about your daily routines as normal, but please check the stall with the broken door in the men's bathroom on the second floor of the library daily for security color code upgrades.

Some of Harvey's students, including all three editors of this newspaper, as well as many of its contributors, sensed something bigger than a mere room change was afoot. Restraining themselves, they conducted acts of nonviolent civil disobedience, stealing into the conference and absconding with muffins and coffee. One noticeably coughed during a Starbucks big wig speech, possibly hoping to disseminate flu germs in this inoculation-free climate. Meanwhile, the 100 strong students in Harvey's class had to forego their usual view of the top of the empire state building (and their daydreams of *Lord of the Ring's* director Peter Jackson's forthcoming remake of *King Kong*) and found themselves cramped in a small, airless basement room while Starbucks managers chortled, stuffed their faces and generally whooped it up in their newfound space of capital. Calls to Graduate Center security went unanswered, as security personnel were too busy checking the color of validation stickers on GC IDs to assist in the removal of the capitalist detritus.

Professor Harvey himself made the best of the situation, teaching his class in what one disgruntled sociology student described as "Guantanamo-like" conditions (okay, we admit that's embellishing a bit, but you know those disgruntled sociology students). Developing...

Tony Monchinski is a PhD student in the political science department.



James Trimarco

## Latin American FILM SERIES - Fall 2004

### DIÁSTOLE Y SÍSTOLE: LOS MOVIMIENTOS DEL CORAZÓN/ DIÁSTOLE AND SÍSTOLE: THE MOVEMENTS OF THE HEART (Harold Trompetero, Colombia, 2000; 80m)

October 20<sup>th</sup>

It chronicles the highlights—happy and sad—over the duration of a relationship between El and Ella, a young couple. From their meeting, to the seduction, to the relationship, and then the dissipation of interest in one another, this smart Spanish production takes you through it all—with the emphasis on realism.

### EL LADO OSCURO DEL CORAZÓN/ THE DARK SIDE OF THE HEART (Eliseo Subiela, Argentina, 1992; 126m)

November 17<sup>th</sup>

Oliveiro is a young poet living in Buenos Aires where sometimes he has to sale his ideas to an advertising agency to make a living or exchange his poems for a steak. In Montevideo, he met a prostitute, Ana, with whom he fell in love. Back in Buenos Aires, he accepts a contract with a publicity agency to get the money for three days of love with her. Will he get what his searching for when his ideal of love's pleasure is literally going in levitation while making love?

### LA LEY DE HERODES/ HEROD'S LAW (Luis Estrada, México, 1999; 120m)

December 8<sup>th</sup>

After the corrupt former Mayor is killed by the peasants, poor janitor Juan Vargas is appointed new Mayor of a desert town in central Mexico. Although he tries to bring the motto of the ruling party to town (modernity, peace and progress) he realizes soon that there's nothing to do against corruption... except to become corrupt. Step by step, helped by his pistol, Juan Vargas becomes the law and the worst Major in the town's history.

Wednesdays, 7:00 pm (Party and mingling after movie!!!)  
Room # 5414 (DSC Graduate Student Lounge)  
FREE Popcorn and drinks!!! :) provided  
Movies are in Spanish with English subtitles

