

CUNY GRADUATE CENTER Advocate



KING OF DIGITAL RADIO? (page 5)

The Newspaper for the CUNY GC Community

March 2006

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Anger, Warnings, and Grim Talk at the GC Community Meeting

From Floppies to Flash Drives: The Future of Info Resources

DAN SKINNER

At the March 15 GC Community Meeting, billed as an open forum on recurring computing problems, Information Resources' *annum horribilis* devolved into a GC-style *theatrum absurdum*.

President Kelly opened with some optimistic remarks about the budget process in Albany (CUNY, it appears, may make it out of this cycle without further cuts), and then promptly turned the forum over to the Vice President for Information Technology and External Programs, Stephen Brier. Kelly joined the audience while Brier fielded questions solo from confused and sometimes dismayed faculty, staff and students. A noticeably empty chair sat next to Brier, by the way, possibly intended for Kelly, or maybe Gloria M. Barlow, Executive Director of Information Resources. Ms. Barlow sat out of the spotlight a few feet away, which seemed a bit unfair. IR reform: too hot to handle?

Brier asked that the event not focus on expressing dismay – “everybody knows there are problems” – but on proposing real solutions. These remarks, reiterated at several points, seemed to suggest that IR was expecting the GC community to offer technical advice about a complex network problem, which seemed odd.

Brier asked the community to tell him their priorities, including which features they valued more than others to help IR make informed changes. The conversation, however, kept steering back to the network.

Brier explained that IR did not know “exactly what caused the U:\ drive to go down” earlier this semester and announced a commitment to replace “80-plus” outdated network Cisco brand switches throughout the building. These switches, according to Brier, are the routers through which all information is processed in the building, and how it connects to the outside world.

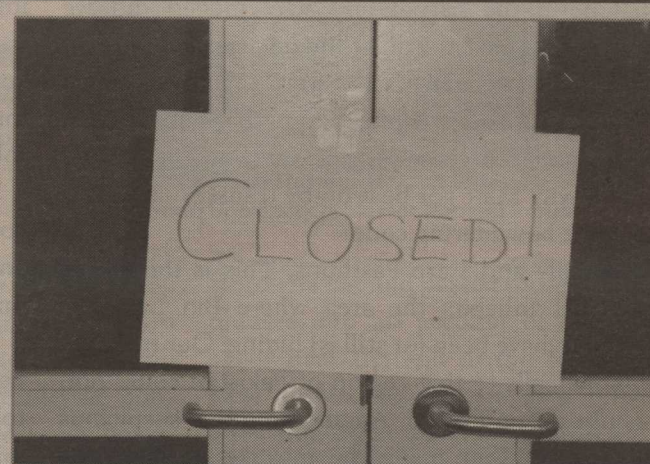
Since the meeting, Brier has told THE ADVOCATE that funding for this project has been finalized. The first phase of the transition is slated to begin at the end of the fiscal year in June and continue

into the next fiscal year, with the (albeit seemingly optimistic) goal of completion before the Fall 2006 semester commences. Students, staff and faculty should be aware, however, each time a switch is replaced, the network will go down (for those of you out there keeping score, that's 80+ “downs”). Brier, however, says he is committed to minimizing the impact of this process on the GC community.

Major structural questions notwithstanding, here's a run-down of other main points from the meeting:

1. **Students should not (and should not reasonably expect to be able to) trust their U:\ drives.** Brier nostalgically recalled his own graduate school days, when he and his colleagues lived in dorm rooms with back-up floppy discs strewn about wildly. They knew better than to save their important work “in one place.” Brier's salve? GC students “need to be educated about the dangers” of relying on the U:\ drive. Moreover, DSC funds were used to provide flash drives to all students to alleviate this very purpose. Students should pick up flash drives from APOs immediately and back up their dissertations.
2. **Brier noted that the GC email system has only been down one day since June.** Reinforced at one point by Kelly, he noted that this record is above average for a network of this size. At several points Brier pleaded with the community to come back to GC email and “give it a chance.”
3. **Unconvinced, DSC Media Board Chair David Golland asked Brier to allow GC students to forward their GC accounts** to their everyday (and, he insinuated, more trustworthy) email accounts, such as Yahoo! and Gmail. Brier explained that the Microsoft platform that the GC currently uses does not allow for this and that deploying third-party forwarding software would nullify the GC's service contract with Microsoft.
4. **Golland announced that DSC has now purchased non-GC web space because the GC FTP system was extremely unstable** and that this problem was forcing the DSC webmaster to spend several extra hours each week duplicating prior work. This is the latest example of similar such moves: both the DSC and THE ADVOCATE moved to Gmail accounts this

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The GC Bar: A Requiem

DAN SKINNER

Sadly, though not unpredictably, the GC Bar has closed. On March 17, Vice President of Student Affairs Matthew Schoengood sounded the death knell via an email: “Although we had hoped to provide this service on a trial basis through the end of Spring 2006 semester, it became apparent that this was not an economically feasible venture.” No further details were provided.

For the record, this reporter enjoyed the bar very much. Though its life was short (a brief 22 days – oh, it never had a chance!), the conversations were lively and the beer delicious and reasonably priced. This reasonableness, of course, is no doubt the reason why the bar is no more. Reasonable=affordable=bad for Restaurant Associates' coffers.

Sure, the hours were terrible (most people start drinking at 9), and the aesthetic was, well, boring corporate blarg. But still, it was nice to know that the GC community had a place to gather on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On one occasion, important DSC-related gossip was exchanged, and I felt warmly “in the know.” On another occasion, I discussed Milton Friedman with a colleague. I understood the world better, and enjoyed a Heineken Dark.

My feeling? There is no way to have both an “economically feasible venture” in this building and services appropriate to the needs of students receiving a public education – so long as the GC outsources food services to the same union-busting conglomerate that services Goldman Sachs, the Pierpont Morgan Library and Nasdaq Marketsite. CUNY and Restaurant Associates are – or at least should be – oil and water.

Though Schoengood hopes “to encourage other types of community gatherings in the future,” the bar experiment calls into question whether this is really possible. The GC bar, like all efforts subject to neo-liberal logics, is a victim not of student apathy, but the political-economic constraints of the Restaurant Associates business model. This model is antithetical to the very notion of a vibrant GC community.

RIP GC Bar. Is RA next?

Some pointed out that wireless networks, search engines, VPNs and other new features are useless if the network is down.

MY KITTENS...YOUR MONEY

JAMEEL HAQUE

Before the public admission that our government was spying on its own citizens, my family had long suspected that our phones might well be tapped.

This essay is a public apology.

America, I would like to apologize to you personally. Thousands, perhaps millions of your tax dollars have gone to listening to me babble about the kittens that my fiancé was fostering. Countless man hours have been wasted trying to decipher just who are the Katzenjammer twins and why one of them was sleeping in my underwear drawer. Why had Mukesh urinated on the carpet and why indeed did we keep insisting that Cardinal Ratzinger was the most social? And how many hours were spent musing on the inane talk about *Nip/Tuck*... perhaps some NSA spook wondered ceaselessly about who the Carver was and why Matt got beat up by transsexuals... was it all some bewildering code?

My family and I are Pashuns. This is the ethnic group that inhabits the area where Bin Laden is believed to have been (or still is) hiding. Our frequent telephone calls to that region of Pakistan could not, certainly, go unnoticed. Augmenting our suspicious origins, my father made the mistake of using the

Guest Editorial

word "anthrax" while speaking Urdu with a Pakistani phone operator. The Pakistani operator had asked my father, a U.S. citizen for more than half

of his life, just what the heck was going on in America during the anthrax scare of '01. There is no word for "anthrax" in Urdu, so my father and the Pakistani operator both used the English word in their discussion. The American oversees operator, who had connected them initially and was still monitoring the call (constant vigilance!) immediately disconnected the call. She announced her intention to call the CIA, FBI and the John Birch Society on my bewildered father.

Since that day our phone clicks and frequently disconnects. There are also odd echoes and in my ear, an imagined whisper of, "Go about your business, no one is watching you."

We have all been damaged by the events of September 11, 2001. In one way or another it has touched all of our lives. Many of the governmental policies that have emerged as a response to these



Countless man hours have been wasted trying to decipher just who are the Katzenjammer twins and why one of them was sleeping in my underwear drawer.

events are misguided and damaging. It is time to heal as a country, time to reevaluate our security while keeping our eyes on our goal. Terror and terrorists, not Muslims, are the enemies of America and terror comes in many forms and disguises. If our goal is the protection and spread of liberty, we must question whether domestic spying is truly moving us in the right direction.

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Advocate

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Network

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year for similar reasons.

5. **Happily, a new search engine – powered by Google – has been activated on the home page of the GC web site.** This should increase the usefulness of the (previously useless) GC web site and enable students to find out about events and other important information.

6. **Wireless technologies are also in the works.** As a preliminary steps, a survey was conducted and bids are currently being solicited. As the GC is a landmark building, Brier and Co. may have to jump through a few legal hoops here. But, barring unforeseen problems, wireless technology – at least in the library area and 8th floor cafeteria – is slated for the Fall 2006 semester. These initial locations were chosen via the online survey in which 400 of the GC's 4,000 students participated.

7. **GC students are now entitled to free anti-virus software** and update subscription for their personal computers. Because of a special deal worked out with Symantec, all CUNY students

and faculty are entitled to two free downloads of Symantec Anti-Virus (visit <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/icit/software> for details).

8. **Gloria Barlow (with a "huzzah" from Brier) said that IR needs to do a better job publicizing offerings and communicating with the GC community.** Currently, email and web postings are their preferred method, which is one reason why they are encouraging students and faculty to "come on home" to GC mail. David Golland told THE ADVOCATE that "transparency is important from senior administrators and elected committees. What we need from the IR staff is not transparency, but efficiency."

The meeting revealed that there are still major unresolved problems with regard to the future of information technology at the GC, though it is certainly good news that the network issues will begin to be addressed this summer. Still, it is clear that while the IR staff is concerned with addressing a range of problems and expanding the available offerings, it has yet to devise a solution to the major structural problem: the instability

and unreliability of the network itself. According to Brier, while replacing the switches is an important step in the right direction, there are still additional Rumsfeldian unknowns regarding instability. For his part, Brier told THE ADVOCATE that he's "feeling that there are areas of the network that are extremely stable" and that IR is "working to make the network more functional and simpler in the way they it is configured." (Brier alluded to something else that many have long suspected: the incompetence of the former IR regime of James Haggard continues to be felt.)

But as some in attendance at the meeting pointed out, wireless networks, search engines, Virtual Private Networks and other features are useless if the network is down. There is little point in polishing new bells and whistles so long as the sleigh itself is broken.

The sleigh is broken now, though the community will have to see how IR's summer plans play out. Kelly joked that some have suggested to him that Community Meetings be renamed "keggers." If the next one addresses questions of information technology, this seems like a smart move.

JOB OPENING:

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, THE ADVOCATE for the 2006-2007 school year

Applications are now being accepted for the position of Editor-in-Chief of THE ADVOCATE, the DSC-funded student newspaper of the CUNY Graduate Center. All applicants must be GC students. Applicants should have strong writing and editing skills, be comfortable with managing a small staff, and be willing to commit time to this project. Responsibilities will include editing and writing news, features and editorials; attending DSC Media Board meetings; soliciting and developing writers; and handling financial affairs.

THE ADVOCATE appears three times a semester; the pay is \$700 an issue. Please send resumes (clips and a cover letter are optional but suggested) to: dgolland@gmail.com or slip them under the door of room 5491. Interviews will be held in late April or May.

Warning! Warning! Danger! Danger!

The following is a blog posting, titled Warning! Warning! Danger! Danger! by professor Michael Bérubé. Michael was recently selected by David Horowitz for inclusion in his book *The Professors: The 101 Most Dangerous Academics in America*. Readers can visit his blog at <http://www.michaelberube.com>.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 06, 2006

At least two readers want to know how I feel about being named one of the 101 most dangerous professors in America by some guy named David Horowitz. "Congratulations, Michael!" writes my mysterious friend Tristero, in the course of dubbing me the Keith Richards of academe. "No false modesty now, you've earned it."

But listen, everyone, I don't care about these accolades and awards. False modesty made me what I am today, and I'm certainly not going to change now. Look, if I went around thinking I'm an emperor just because some wingnut with a website lobbed a scimitar at me, they'd put me away!

Besides, truth be told, this "101 most dangerous professors" thing is a complete sham. It's a travesty. It's an outrage, I say, an utter outrage. First of all, Horowitz didn't even bother to rank us. In his promotional email for the book, Horowitz catalogues some of the reprobates and miscreants of American academe:

At Cal State-Long Beach: Ron Karenga is a Professor and Chairman of the Black Studies Department. He's also a convicted torturer and inventor of Kwanzaa. [Emphasis in original.]

Hold the phone! He's a what? You're thinking, "golly, isn't that a little like saying 'he's an arsonist and the creator of Grandparents' Day?'" Well, yes, it does sound a little odd. But remember, dear friends, that most of David's readership thinks torture is just fine. Kwanzaa, however—that's down-right un-American.

Moving right along:

At Brandeis University: Robert Reich is a Professor of Social and Economic Policy. He was Bill Clinton's Labor Secretary and is a multi-millionaire. That doesn't keep from [sic] telling his students that the U.S. has "fallen under the sway of radical conservatives who, by the malicious application of intolerant moral precepts, intended to secure the 'reign of the rich' at the expense of most Americans."

Seriously, folks. There's no way I'm in the same league with former U.S. Secretaries of Labor who go around saying true things. (Apparently Reich is also a traitor to his class. Hang 'im high, David!) In fact, I happen to know

Academic Repression In the First Person

that until I got myself this here blog and began driving David into spittle-flecked frenzies, I wasn't even in the upper quartile of the country's most dangerous academics. Although when I have my pruning knife I'm in the top twenty. Or so say some of the local flora.

OK, so that's one obvious reason *The Professors* is an outrage. Here's another. According to my contacts at the American Association of University Professors, only 23 of the 101 are members of the AAUP. What the hell is the matter with the other 78 of you? Consider this your wakeup call, people!

Last but not least, much of the "book" is apparently just a bunch of reprints of David's "Discover the Networks" pages. You probably remember what mine looks like. It's pretty feeble stuff, really. Here's how it works. I write something like this, from an old essay on postmodernism:

There really are some remarkably salient differences between the pre-war and the postwar world, between the financial crash of '29 and the computer crash of '87, the phonograph and the Internet. Though some critics prefer 1945 and some prefer 1973 as postmodernism's Year One, there seems to be a fitful consensus that something like postmodernity does indeed exist—and that it involves the incomplete, deeply contested globalization and digitalization of capitalism.

Postmodernism, in this sense, is based on an electronic global economy and what David Harvey, the geographer and cultural critic, famously calls 'the regime of flexible accumulation'—by which he means a world in which part-time labor, adjunct professors, and just-in-time production lines supersede the Fordist logic of modernism, in which laborers were assured wages high enough to allow them to buy the products they made. The important question for cultural critics, then, is also an old question—how to correlate developments in culture and the arts with large-scale economic transformations.

And David Horowitz summarizes it like so:

Believes in teaching literature so as

to bring about 'economic transformations.'

At least he's succinct! Or I write something like this, opening a review essay in the journal *American Literary History*:

Four new books on the state of the academy, and not one of them elaborates a line of argument that bisects any of the others. One gets the eerie feeling that this kind of intellectual noncoincidence is no coincidence, that one could review 20 new books on the state of the academy (if one could take the necessary time away from one's 'normal' academic work) and discover the same result: the contemporary university is so amorphous that it can be described as the research wing of the corporate economy, the final resting place of the New Left, the last best hope for critical thinking, the engine room of global technological advance, the agent of secularization and the advance of reason, the training ground for the labor force, the conservatives' strongest bastion of antifeminist education, the progressives' only bulwark against the New Right, the natural home of intellectual isolates, the natural home of goosestepping groupthinkers, and the locus of postmodern skepticism and fragmentation. Perhaps Clark Kerr, whose influence on David

Damrosch and Bill Readings seems to me one of the few common threads in the books under review, put it best when he remarked, in a phrase as felicitous as it is cynical: 'I have sometimes thought of [the university] as a series of individual faculty entrepreneurs held together by a common grievance over parking.'

And Horowitz summarizes it like so:

In a 1998 essay called "The Abuses of the University," Professor Bérubé described the university as 'the final resting place of the New Left,' and the 'progressives' only bulwark against the New Right.' Critics of this definition—in particular those who failed to regard 'feminist or queer theory as a legitimate area of scholarship'—were only perpetuating 'ignorance and injustice,' he wrote.

Now, I could dilate endlessly on the random-access technique by which



Penn State University professor Michael Bérubé.

Horowitz cut and pasted those last two phrases into his account of me (they occur near the end of the essay, and have nothing to do with each other), but I think you get the point by now. Horowitz can be a fairly clever guy when he wants to be, but here he's not even trying. This is genuinely stupid stuff. I mean, Michelle Malkin quality stupid. Personally, I'm disappointed.

Still, there's one little thing about *The Professors* that bears closer attention. It's the front cover blurb by Laura Ingraham: "A thoroughly enjoyable and useful guide to the worst of the worst in the hallowed halls of academia."

The worst of the worst? I have to say that's kind of harsh, coming from someone like Ingraham. I mean, this is the woman who, as editor of the *Dartmouth Review* and comrade-in-arms of Dinesh D'Souza, sent a henchman to tape meetings of the campus Gay Students Alliance, then mailed copies of the tapes to GSA members' parents—and published the transcripts (along with some of GSA members' stolen documents and personal letters) in the *Review*. As Dudley Clendinen reported at the time ("Conservative Paper Stirs Dartmouth," *New York Times*, May 30, 1982), "one student named, according to his friends, became severely depressed and talked repeatedly of suicide. The grandfather of another who had not found the courage to tell his family of his homosexuality learned about his grandson when he got his copy of *The Review* in the mail."

Of course, Ingraham pulled that little stunt long before she became a regular feature of the liberal media—before she was hired by CBS (!) and MSNBC and became a talk-radio star. But still, even though I believe in teaching literature so as to bring about economic transformations, I can't say that I've ever jeopardized the life or the safety of another human being. I'm not *that* dangerous, after all.

Michael Bérubé is a professor of Literature at Penn State University.

Isn't that a little like saying 'he's an arsonist and the creator of Grandparents' Day?'

ON GETTING INVOLVED

CHONG WOJTKOWSKI

Sometimes the Graduate Center feels like a hotel. Students check in and check out, pay their bills, get their learn on, and leave for the day, or week... or semester. I don't mean that the sense of cohesiveness and community is lacking; that depends on social and familial situations of individual students. But a stroll through the fifth floor and a glance at THE ADVOCATE, or the various department web sites reveals that many students are deeply committed and involved in many aspects of Graduate Center life beyond their own writing and research. Others come to take courses and teach, and rarely are involved in anything else. What makes some students want to get involved, and not others?

To some, students are primarily here to earn a doctorate, and during the journey, to gain professional experience by publishing, presenting at and attending conferences, and teaching. When it

comes to dissertation stage, our job is to write; any dilly-dallying at this stage is harmful to a career. With this already overwhelming list of demands, is it recommended or even feasible to serve on a faculty search committee, or in a Student Chartered Organization, or on Grad Council? Moreover, if you cannot add it as a line on your CV, is it worth doing at all? This last question reminds me of the inevitable scramble during junior year of high school to sign up for as many activities as possible in order to floor college admissions committees with one's dedication and diversity. Looking at my own high school yearbook, I noticed that I was, apparently, a member of the Shaker High Figure Drawing Club in 1997, a membership of which I have no recollection, nor do I have the skills requisite of a portraitist. (But there is one unequivocal truth: students anywhere sign up for Yearbook Committee only so they can stuff it with photos of themselves and

their friends. Go check!) It is easy to look at serving your institution or program on a committee or in a group as self-interested, or even unimportant, a waste of (your) time, and unhelpful. After all, you might think, that's what those other students do—the types that are involved in everything, former class president-types. Therefore, when serving on committees and representing the student body appears like “more work,” then perhaps the notion of service needs a new definition.

Serving your department is rewarding and enriching not only with respect to your professional development, but social life as well. It is invaluable for a graduate student to learn the ins and outs of university administration, since one day, as a faculty member, you will be required to sit on committees and the like. Knowing what to expect gives you the upper hand. Problems or frustrations you may encounter might inspire you to work for change once you are

in a position of power. Likewise, working with other students from different disciplines and fields is a way of networking, which is an overly business-sounding word that simply means taking the time to meet people who might be “useful” one day. (“Schmoozing” is simply networking, with the addition of alcoholic beverages and a smirk). This is especially important if you find yourself in a small, or isolated, or off-campus department and are eager to branch out. Lastly, there are slightly self-interested reasons: collectively, students can fight against tuition increases, or work to secure funding for their program, but these have overarching beneficial effects for the entire student body.

Let's say reading this makes you want to jump up and run for university president: not so fast. Here are some ways to become more involved at the Graduate Center, and to make the most of your time here. I think it is our col-

See **GET INVOLVED**, page 11

It's Nice to be Mean

DAN R. QUILES

In 1986, Huey Lewis and the News contended that it was “hip to be square.” They were wrong. But I have a similarly paradoxical maxim for the '00s: it's nice to be mean. And I'm right.

Of course, I don't think that the kind of “mean” that I'm talking about is actually mean. But I must be missing something, because it appears that conventional academic etiquette doesn't see it that way. The discourtesy, the offense? The practice of critical response.

Why is there, in our classes here at the Graduate Center, such an unbelievable lack of critical engagement with each other's work? My chosen field is Art History, but from what I've heard, it's not so different anywhere else. It surely is not for lack of in-class presentations. Almost every seminar has them (in some cases they take up a third to a half of the course!), and, as we all know, there is always plenty of time for awkward silence after one of our colleague's papers has been delivered. Sometimes the professor mercifully fills this silence with words of her or his own; on less fortunate occasions, the sodden query is offered: “So... any questions?” All too often, no one has any-

thing to say.

When this happens, I always wonder if people were actually listening. Perhaps the presentation was so astonishingly terrible, or so intimidating, that all have been left speechless, like after the dance sequence that climaxes *Napoleon Dynamite* (and even there the silence was followed by near-unanimous applause!). But surely every paper cannot be so awe-inspiring via either pleasure or pain. Is it possible that the entire class simply doesn't care? Maybe. If so, that is depressing, reprehensible, scandalous. It might not be in the Student Handbook, but it is our responsibility as academics, as human beings, to care about and try to aid our fellow students' development. I'll go with the more sympathetic possibility, and guess that we are all just too damn polite to try to offer critical remarks – but this too is folly.

I recently had the opportunity to experience intelligent, feisty criticism firsthand when I participated in the Whitney Independent Study Program (ISP). The program is structured so that a group of about 25 aspiring artists, curators and scholars gather frequently and, in addition to discussing critical texts and being lectured by guest speakers, share one another's work, be it art, exhibition proposals, or texts. When I first began the program, I was shocked at how critical some of the responses were. At first it reminded me of a particularly vindictive creative writing class I had taken in college, in which competitiveness and insecurity seemed to fuel a constant exchange of vicious and unconstructive responses. But I quickly realized that this was different – no one was trying to cut anyone else down. People were genuinely trying to give each other strong critical feedback, and the results were often remarkable. It took a lot of trust for this situation to fully flower, and naturally it wasn't utopian; there were some rough spots. But for the most part, it was an inspiring and supportive environment. We were all genuinely committed to helping one another improve.

Thus my concern about our fond graduate program. I would like to believe that we all want one another to improve, and, indeed, understand that it

helps all of us if any of us succeed. But instead I have witnessed a “niceness” that is meaner than it looks. Let's say you see a friend walking down the street, oblivious to a manhole he's about to step into – surely you would shout and warn him?! It's the same if you're there when a colleague gives a bad presentation. Say nothing, and you're letting them take a fall. Politeness with an edge. Pointing out problems in a paper is the best service any of us can do for each other while we are graduate students. It's as simple as that. I have been in so many GC classes in which people laughed and joked like they were the best of friends, yet when it came to the papers; nothing. It was not friendliness but nervousness that had yielded this deceptive small-talk; during presentations it was suddenly everyone for themselves.

Naturally I am not advocating ripping people to shreds. But we all know, or at least should know, how to constructively critique. You don't have to be cruel, but pointing out contradictions, omissions, vague points, is essential; it's our responsibility. What is best to point out? Whatever really strikes you. It's not a contest for the best comment. No one's going to laugh if you don't have the greatest suggestion of all time. But make sure to say something. A critical comment, however trivial, is a show of support for your colleague's work. Silence is not polite, not nice; it's totally obnoxious – representative of either indifference or ill will.

Of course, the respectful acceptance of criticism is an art as well. In the ISP, we (usually) smiled and took it as graciously as possible – thus acknowledging this interest and support, however harsh, in our work – whether we agreed or not. It was always best when passionate yet respectful debate ensued from such critical responses. This is what being fellow students is all about – open-minded discussion of one another's work. We should be doing this on our own, without our professors to prompt us.

So next time, go ahead. Give it a try. Open your mouth. Be nice to your fellow student, and dish out some mean.

Dan Quiles is a PhD student in the Art History program.

Free Concert:

The Doctors Orchestral Society of New York

As part of The Rosenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies Lecture Series, The Doctors Orchestral Society of New York (founded 1938) will perform a free concert in the Proshansky Auditorium on Holocaust Day, Tuesday, April 25th at 7:00 PM.

The program will include appropriate music and the Grieg Piano Concerto with Ilya Kazantsev as soloist. He is an internationally recognized pianist.

Promises & Problems: Howard Stern's Move to Satellite Radio

TONY MONCHINSKI

In October 2004, "shock jock" Howard Stern announced he'd be leaving 92.3 K-Rock when his contract expired for greener pastures. His destination: Sirius satellite radio. His motives? Following the Janet Jackson "wardrobe malfunction" incident at the Super Bowl, K-Rock's management was kowtowing to the Federal Communications Commission, assigning censors to Stern's show to dump content deemed obscene.

Stern, who has made a name for himself with humor (low brow and high), was incredulous: what could he say, what couldn't he say? Fart sound effects were okay, but they couldn't be too wet. Asking guests if they engaged in anal sex was out unless Stern could find a way to ask without saying the words themselves: "Do you ever get mud on the helmet?" Stern complained on air that the content of his show was being diluted, that he wasn't free to do what he did best. Sometimes he spent a portion of each 6 to 10 a.m. morning shift going through the list of material that had been censored. His company didn't defend Stern against the FCC, which was allowing Oprah Winfrey to host a daytime television program with topics including middle school girls taking part in blowjob parties.

Enter satellite radio. Unlike terrestrial radio, satellite radio is not governed by the FCC. It is a pay service like cable television, meaning, presumably, if you're paying for it you know what you're getting. Right now there are two major players in the satellite radio industry, XM and Sirius. XM leads in market share and stock price, but Sirius is on the rise. Stern threw in his lot with Sirius, which promised him complete creative control over two to three channels of his own and \$500 million dollars over five years. Keep in mind that this \$500 million is where Stern's budget for the show comes from, including salaries for his co-hosts. If you just listen to reports on the news, you might come away thinking Stern is pocketing a cool 500 mill.

Satellite was a trade off. Stern had spent a couple of decades on terrestrial radio and had amassed an audience of some 8 to 10 million listeners. Would his fans pay to listen to him every month? Satellite would mean starting all over again, but Sirius offered him freedom to do just about anything he wanted.

According to Stern, CBS Radio (owners of K-Rock) made no serious offers to renew his contract and keep him on. Not that he would have stayed; he is adamant that he would not have. Instead, CBS made record profits in Stern's last year and their last quarter

with Stern topped all others. People were tuning in to hear Stern's trials and tribulations. They were getting twenty-two minutes of commercials an hour. He was forbidden to mention Sirius satellite radio by name when on the K-Rock airwaves, opting out of respect to refer to it as "Uh-uh-uh."

Stern is entering his third month on Sirius. Listeners get to hear "the king of all media" raw. Surprisingly to many, this has not translated to an uninterrupted stream of "foul language." Sure, Stern can and does work blue, but what listeners have been tuning in for is a reinvigorated Stern, a man busting his ass and turning out some great programming. There are only two commercial breaks per hour on Stern's Sirius show, each no longer than five minutes (the music stations on satellite radio do not have commercials).

Alas, CBS-FM isn't doing as well. Former Van Halen frontman David Lee Roth was hired to replace Stern in New York on the newly named 'Free-FM'. Roth was upfront that there is no filling Stern's shoes. Roth told his bosses and listeners that he was going to be starting from scratch, doing his own thing and building an audience. First quarter reports are coming out and CBS Radio is tanking. Roth is feeling the heat from management and fighting back on and off air.

Roth has been told that he needs to take on a female sidekick, like Stern's Robin Quivers. Further, CBS-FM wants him to pick up a producer who is also an on-air personality that Roth can bust on, much like Stern's Gary Dellabate. Roth will occasionally bust out into a Spanish phrase or two, but CBS Radio is telling him to stop. They claim their demographics do not reflect Spanish speakers and it is unlikely their mostly white male listeners will appreciate Roth's bilingual antics. He is not supposed to read emails from outside the United States. Roth counters that CBS Radio is being racist.

CBS Radio isn't only whining about Diamond Dave. They've filed a lawsuit against Howard Stern seeking half a billion dollars. They are suing him for fraud, breach of contract, misappropriation of airtime and unjust enrichment. There are two main points to their case against Stern, each easily laid to rest. First, CBS Radio claims Stern spent his last 14 months on terrestrial radio promoting Sirius. Stern counters that his speech was being monitored

the whole time, that they could have censored him or suspended him at any time if he was crossing any lines. CBS Radio head Les Moonves came on Stern's last show and wished Howard well, saying that he (Moonves) owned a Sirius satellite radio and stock in the company and would be listening to Stern. Secondly, CBS Radio alleges that Stern and his agent had a "secret deal" with Sirius, where if he pulled enough new listeners to make the transition to satellite radio he would be rewarded. Sirius subscriptions went up a million listeners in Stern's last year on terrestrial radio. Stern counters that he and his agent did in fact receive 34 million shares of Sirius stock valued at \$220 million for passing subscription goals, but that this was not a secret deal.

Even David Lee Roth considers his boss' lawsuit against Stern "frivolous." CBS Radio may see its day in court, but it might not be to argue the merits of their case. Their lawsuit may very well be dismissed and Stern is sure to countersue. When Howard ran for governor years ago he pulled out of the race so that his income would not become public record. He has always



Howard Stern as he appeared in *Private Parts*.

been protective, even secretive, of how much he earns. CBS Radio's suit against him makes that information public. In case you were wondering, Stern made \$705,000 in 1985 when he started with K-Rock and his last contract with Infinity broadcasting (CBS Radio's predecessor) saw him earning \$58.8 million over five years. Les Moonves may be feeling frustrated as Free-FM's ratings sink, but legal action against Stern looks like it might only come back to haunt him. Should this lawsuit fail, the longterm repercussions for Moonves could be career-damaging. Moonves is one of two men expected to jockey for Viacom head Sumner Redstone's position once the octogenarian steps down.

In the meantime, Stern's move to satellite radio is fraught with as many problems as promises. Yes, Stern will have his creative freedom and be able

to do what he wishes, including hours and hours of original programming. For instance, Sam Simon, creator of the *Simpsons*, is putting together a radio serial for the Stern network. The fact that such creative freedom could only be found on satellite radio valorizes the private sphere over the public.

We live in a time when the public sphere is increasingly under attack. Privatizers tell us our world would be a much better place if only we would submit to the suzerainty of markets. Privatization is underway in all facets of our lives, from education and health to the prison industry and the military. Part of the plan to promote the private sphere over the public involves maligning the public as much as possible. We are told that the public sphere is inefficient at the same time that the social contract is rolled back so that the public sphere cannot deliver.

As if it's not bad enough to watch this full-on assault against the public-sphere, it's even more disconcerting to watch it consciously speed its own downfall. The radio airwaves nominally belong to the people. In truth, they have been parceled out among powerful corporations. The people haven't been too successful in rescuing them from the corporate domain. Yet the capitalists are battling it out themselves.

Infinity Broadcasting, instead of sticking by Stern and cautioning people who find his content offensive to change the channel, gave in to the FCC. Terrestrial radio today exists to sell audiences to advertisers. The autonomy of disc jockeys who cannot stray from pre-programmed play lists is next to zero. Infinity got rid of New York's Oldies Station, CBS-FM, and replaced it with JACK-FM, a mix of music without DJs, just an occasional canned voice trying to inject a bit of humor between the commercials and the music. CBS-FM's Cousin Brucie and others have also found homes on Sirius.

People once complained that they wouldn't pay for cable television. Now some of the best programming available is on pay TV. We are at the beginning of an era where there will be just one more thing we have to pay for: good radio. Give a listen to the dial: outside of listener-supported stations like WBAI, the only other options are bland broadcasts that offend no one bearing the stamp of the U.S. Government by way of an FCC license and blessing to operate. Not to mention the nonstop commercials. Cutting edge content, commercial free, is available for \$12.95 a month (Sirius' monthly fee). Stern's move to satellite radio may be good for him, but what about the rest of us?

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Neither Occupation Nor Political Islam: A Secular, Democratic, and Progressive Alternative in Iraq?

ROBERT AUGMAN

After three years of war and occupation in Iraq, many Americans across the political spectrum are having a difficult time finding a constructive position. According to media reports, one would think there is only a choice between two sides: you either support the U.S. occupation and the Iraqi National Congress, or you support the armed groups opposing them. For those who want to support the freedom of Iraqis, neither side of this constructed conflict seems to be legitimately working toward such a goal.

On the one side, the U.S. occupation has turned Iraqi society into a war zone, which lacks the most basic forms of security and sustainability. On the other side, the same is the case. On top of the chaos brought about by the war and occupation, violent factions are making life even more unbearable for ordinary Iraqis. Following mainstream media reports – National Public Radio, independent media sources, and Left media included – Iraq appears to be a society whose fate hangs in the grips of these two competing sides. They seem to be the only recognizable social actors. The future looks grim. It is with great inspiration, therefore, that

a secular, democratic, and progressive alternative appears on the horizons.

Speaking to a small audience at The New School for Pluralistic Anti-Capitalist Education (The New S.P.A.C.E.), on the Lower East Side, Houzan Mahmoud, an Iraqi organizer and journalist told about Iraq's civil resistance to U.S. occupation and political Islam. Mahmoud co-founded the Iraqi Freedom Congress (IFC), a broad organization of progressive and civil society groups. And she also co-founded The Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI), a group working for equal rights and empowerment of women.

"We are the opposition to power in Iraq. We're the third pole, the alternative to the occupation and the so-called 'resistance,'" Mahmoud said. "The IFC is trying to mobilize communities to defend themselves, by building a democratic, secular, and progressive movement."

On March 8, The Organization for Women's Freedom mobilized nearly 1,000 people – mostly women – to an International Women's Day Rally in Baghdad, in defiance of the curfew. The demonstration was to "support female prisoners who've been tortured,

raped, and denied their political rights," Mahmoud explained. It was "to publicly oppose 'Honor Killings' which legally allow women to be killed by men."

With demonstrations and grassroots support, they have influenced policy and helped turn down Sharia Law, which Mahmoud says would have meant forced marriage, no divorce rights, and other unjust policies. The women's movement has also opened up women's shelters to protect women from violence.

In addition to women's groups, the Iraqi Freedom Congress also includes labor organizations. In opposition to the state-run labor organizations controlled by the former Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein, which weakened workers by criminalizing strikes and political activity, organizations which are now being recreated by the Iraqi National Congress with U.S. backing, independent worker's organizations have been formed by worker's themselves. They formed The Federation of Workers' Councils and Unions in Iraq, and The Union of Unemployed in Iraq. These groups have been fundamental in fighting for rights, and for improved living and working conditions. Mahmoud told of worker's mobilizations that ejected occupying forces from an electrical facility so that the workers could restore electricity to Iraqis.

Mahmoud argued stridently for a secular, democratic, and progressive Iraq. Those who are angered by the collapse of Iraq ought to stop lending tacit support to the occupying forces on the one hand, or the political Islam groups on the other. Instead, it ought to lend explicit support morally, politically, financially, or otherwise to the civil resistance.

The Iraqi Freedom Congress is an open membership organization, open not just to Iraqis, but to people in every country. "We want to mobilize a civil resistance movement in Iraq and across the world," Mahmoud argued, "If we can't have socialism, we'll at very least fight for a secular, democratic, and egalitarian government. We are the alternative in Iraq."

The event was co-organized by a new anti-war group, the National Organization for the Iraqi Freedom Struggle (NO-IFS), which seeks not only to oppose the war, but to make links with progressive movements in Iraq. While the IFC has received support from groups in Japan, France, and England, it is seeking support in the U.S. as well.

The position of NO-IFS, along with the IFC, is an immediate end to the U.S. occupation. "Only then can Iraq decide on its own future," Mahmoud argued.

In the U.S., supporters of progressive politics at home and abroad need to do more than present their opposition to the occupation. They need to connect with progressive movements that can fill the vacuum, and organize society differently. A progressive politics must be vocal about its opposition not only to the occupation but also to political Islam, which, according to Mahmoud, seeks to turn back the clock and rule Iraq not according to people's needs, but according

to oppressive religious views.

Progressives in the U.S. ought to consider these social movements working to build a secular, democratic, and progressive future in Iraq, amidst the turmoil. While there's no question as to the ongoing destruction the occupation is creating in Iraq, it is still a question of how an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops will help or harm these social movements establish a progressive society. In the meantime, supporters of Iraqi freedom could lend support to these movements, revealing to the world that there is not just a choice between occupation and political Islam. Alternatives exist, and they're worth fighting for.

To learn more about the civil resistance in Iraq:

- **Iraqi Freedom Congress:** www.ifcongress.com
- **Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI):** www.equalityiniraq.com
- **Union of the Unemployed:** www.uuiraq.org
- **Worker Communist Party of Iraq:** www.wpiraq.net
- **Iraq Freedom Congress:** www.ifcongress.org
- **World War 4 Report:** www.ww4report.com

U.S. groups supporting the civil resistance in Iraq:

- **National Organization for the Iraqi Freedom Struggle:** www.no-ifs.org/
- **U.S. Labor Against the War:** www.uslaboragainstawar.org

For a list of upcoming events at The New S.P.A.C.E.:

- **The New S.P.A.C.E.:** new-space.mahost.org

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Reflections on Democracy in Haiti and Palestine

NIRIT BEN-ARI

On February 7 and January 25, Haitians and Palestinians (respectively) went to the polls. Haiti has been an independent republic since 1804, and is one of the founding members of the United Nations. Palestine is a territory that has been occupied by the Turks, then the Brits, and now the Israelis. It is not an independent country and only has observer status in the United Nations. Despite these apparent differences, Haitians and Palestinians share much in common – in particular, their belief in the democratic process. Sadly, their way of practicing democracy also share something in common – the disdain of most of the civilized world.

The Occupied Palestinian Territories are to this day under Israeli military control. Despite the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, Israel still maintains control over its borders, the flow of goods in and out of the Strip, and occasionally carries out military operations, including extra-judicial assassinations, deep in the territory. Similarly, in the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority (PA) does not have control (or has only minimal control) over borders, the movement of Palestinians, and trade. Palestinians who live in the West Bank and Gaza are in fact living in huge prisons, where their movement, their economic activity, and their police force, are mostly under the control of a foreign army.

Despite this reality, the world has told the Palestinians that they must practice democracy. Based on Bush's road map from June 2002, Palestinians were asked to put in place a democratic system, consisting on democratic institutions and periodical elections, to receive the support of the so-called "world." Which is exactly what they did. The first democratic elections after Arafat's death took place in January 2005, and were observed by the Carter Center and declared free and fair. Mahmoud Abbas (Abu-Mazen), of the secular Fatah party, won with 62% of the vote.

In the last elections in January 2006, Palestinians took their despair to the polls. Frustrated with the security fence that imprisons and blocks them from accessing their lands, and with the corrupt PA regime which cooperates with Israel, they voted the old ruling party, Fatah, out of office. Hamas won about 45 percent of the popular vote and about the same percentage of seats – a standalone majority. Why Hamas? Since began Israel destroying all PA services in 2002, Hamas has filled in the gaps everywhere, setting up and running schools, orphanages, mosques, healthcare clinics, soup kitchens, and sports leagues. According to Israeli scholar Reuven Paz, approximately 90% of Hamas' work is in social, welfare, cultural, and educational activities. Hamas is also known for its hard-line military tactics, including attacks against Israeli citizens within Israel-proper.

The world watched in dismay as Palestinians counted their ballots. It was only few days after the results were made known that the voices started to come out: Hamas is not a legitimate government. In fact, Hamas's election is the wet dream of hard-line Israeli right-wingers. It makes it much easier for Israel to say they have no one to talk to, since Hamas refuses to negotiate. It allows Israel to act unilaterally without anyone complaining.

The Palestinians were told, yet again, that democracy is good, as long as you vote to whomever we want you to vote.

So, what does the state of democracy in the Occupied Palestinian Territories have to do with the above-mentioned Caribbean nation? Indeed, there is more in common that meets the eye.

Although Haiti has been an independent republic

since 1804, it is today the poorest country in the western hemisphere. There are no checkpoints or security fences on Haitian land, and no direct foreign control over the flow of goods in and out of the country. Do Haitians have control over their country?

Consider Haitian rice and poultry production, for example. On condition of restoring President Aristide back to power in 1994, Washington had imposed a neo-liberal economic

reform, in which Haitian farmers were denied tariff protection and were hence free to compete with U.S. agribusiness, which receives 40% of its profit from government subsidies. As a consequence, cheap American rice and poultry had flooded Haitian markets. By 1998, the chicken industry was shut down, and 10,000 jobs were lost.

This what Haitian sovereignty looks like.

But Haitians have been told by the world that it will only get better if they hold free democratic elections. Which is exactly what they did.

The first free elections in Haiti had taken place only in 1989. After 30 years under the dictatorship of Duvalier and his son Baby Doc, and few more years under a military junta, Haitians took to the polls in a show of democracy that was as rare in non-western countries as it was in western countries. The winning candidate, with 67% of the vote, was the populist priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was backed by a vigorous grassroots movement, the Lavalas ("flood" in Creole). Only seven months later, Aristide and his government were overthrown by coup d'état at the hands of a murderous military regime. After three years of terror, the U.S. intervened and restored Aristide to power – but on condition that his government adopt the neo-liberal economic regime that was designated to it by Washington. A second condition was that Aristide (who only had seven months left in his term at the time he was restored to power) could not run for a second consecutive term. Barred from running in the 1996 elections, his protégé Rene Preval (Ti Rene) won with 64% of the vote.

In 2000, Aristide was back, and his Fanmi Lavalas party won 91.81% of the vote. This time, it took Washington four years to organize a coup. In March 2004, the U.S. Marines invaded Haiti, put Aristide on an airplane, and dispatched him to the Central African Republic, and later on to exile in South Africa.

The country spiraled into chaos. Despite the fact that the income per capita of this country is less than one dollar a day, the Inter-American Bank had withheld its loans for Haiti following Aristide's forced exile. The reason? Haiti needs to hold democratic elections. But this is exactly what Haiti has done! The problem was, they have not chosen the right candidate.

The story of Haiti is one of unending tragedy. What used to be one of the richest colonies in the world (and a source of a good part of France's wealth), is today one of the poorest countries in the world, with



Jean-Bertrand Aristide: Once seen as the savior of Haiti.

80% living in abject poverty. American support of Duvalier's dictatorial regime and the military juntas that came after him, as well as the imposition of neo-liberal economic adjustments, have generated more instability and political violence than the country could handle. And yet in the American mind, Haiti is hopeless, backward, savage, and in need of more American help.

On February 7, 2006, Haitians showed the world what a real democracy looks like. People walked for days by foot in order to reach the voting polls. Some slept outside the polls for days before Elections Day. Many others stood in long lines under the fierce sun for hours before practicing their democratic right. And when, finally, after much delay and attempts to circumvent and steal the elections, the results were known that Ti Rene was chosen, they danced in joy in the streets.

So, what do democracy and sovereignty mean for Haiti and Palestine?

To put it bluntly, nothing. Democracy is a ticket for good relations with the U.S. (and it's client Israel) so long as Haiti and Palestine choose who the U.S. (and Israel) want them to choose. If it is the wrong candidate, then bye-bye democracy, hello dictatorship, repression, and violence. You play by our rules, or get the hammer.

Ironically, Americans can learn the meaning of democracy from Haitians and Palestinians. When was the last time that a US Election Day was a day of celebrating democracy? According to the latest estimates, 46% of Americans don't even vote. And most days of the year, most Americans think that shopping is a democratic duty. The days when Tocqueville was touring this country, impressed by the rich activities of the American civil society are long gone. Americans don't vote, don't know what electoral precinct they live in, or who their representatives are.

Haitians, despite abject poverty, the world's neglect, and the imperial aggression of their powerful neighbor, have overthrown a dictatorship, voted into office a truly grassroots party of their own making, and a candidate of their own choice. Against all odds, they have persistently continued to believe in democracy, a belief that was powerfully showcased on February 7. Palestinians, despite almost 40 years of direct foreign occupation, insist on practicing their democratic rights. They go to the polls (that is, if they can actually reach them) and protest with their ballots.

THIS is what democracy looks like.

Nirit Ben-Ari is a PhD student in the Political Science program.

The Global Cartooning Crisis: American Artists Respond

KRISTIAN WILLIAMS

"It's really surreal," cartoonist Matt Wuerker observed. "It's like something out of a Kurt Vonnegut novel."

And it is. In September, Fleming Rose, the editor of the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, invited cartoonists to "draw Mohammed as you see him." Twelve did, with results ranging from the bland to the grotesque.

Months later the Islamic world exploded in anger. In Afghanistan, police used tear gas against crowds throwing stones. Protesters in Pakistan torched shops, and the authorities dispersed them with gunfire. In Nigeria, protests against the cartoons re-ignited long-standing ethnic tensions: Muslim rioters attacked Christians and set fire to churches; Christians responded in kind, burning Mosques and murdering Muslims.

Muslims throughout the Middle East declared a boycott of Danish products. *Hamshari*, the largest newspaper in Iran, called for cartoons mocking the Holocaust. (This pushed one Israeli newspaper to retaliate – by calling for Jews to out-bigot the bigots by producing their own anti-Jewish cartoons!) The Iranian government severed its diplomatic relations with Denmark, and security concerns led the Danish government to close its Pakistan embassy.

The cause-and-effect here is vertiginous. An Italian government minister, Roberto Calderoli, wore a T-shirt displaying the cartoons during a television interview, leading to protests outside Italy's consulate in Benghazi, Libya. The demonstrators set the building ablaze and police responded with gunfire, killing eleven. Both Calderoli and Libyan Interior Minister Nasr al-Mabrouk were fired.

The embassies and offices of France, Germany, Norway, the EU, and the World Bank have also been targeted. In Indonesia, four hundred protesters carrying rocks and sticks tried to storm the U.S. embassy. Protests produced less bloodshed in Kenya, Iran, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, and Jordan – as well as in England, the U.S., and Denmark itself.

Worldwide, at least 139 people have died in cartoon-related violence. Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen called the situation a "global crisis."

EDITORS RUN FOR COVER

Very few American publications have run the Mohammed caricatures – the most prominent exceptions being Fox News and the Philadelphia Inquirer. Most editors have opted to describe the images, explaining the decision in

terms of cultural sensitivity. But some, such as the *Boston Phoenix*, have cited fear of retaliation. It's hard to blame them: The attack on Norway's embassy in Damascus was prompted by a Norwegian paper's decision to publish the images. And even after *Jyllands-Posten* sent Mr. Rose on an extended vacation and printed an apology, a radical cleric, Mohammed Yousaf Qureshi, offered a million dollar bounty for killing the artists.

According to Mikhaela Reid, whose cartoons frequently appear in the *Boston Phoenix*, "some cartoonists are feeling very defiant and scared at the same time, and they're drawing things to express their frustration and anger (and sometimes, their total ignorance). But editors are scared witless." She predicts a move toward greater editorial control, at the expense of substantive critique: "mainstream newspaper editors are going to be keeping a much closer eye on their cartoonists."

"No Exit" artist Andy Singer argues that such editorial squeamishness is really nothing new. "Cartooning is already heavily censored in this country," he says. "Editors in the U.S. are scared of even running cartoons that criticize Bush too harshly, or Israel. If you do a cartoon that critiques Israel, even in a small weekly newspaper, you will be put on right wing Israeli list-serves and the paper will get tons of hate mail." He goes on to note that

American conservatives – "the Michael Savage, Daniel Pipes, Fox News crowd" – apply constant pressure to limit dissent, and "they are succeeding, whether it's cartoons, radio or TV. They successfully hounded Ted Rall out of the *New York Times* and have hounded many other cartoonists out of existence entirely."

Clay Butler, the artist behind "Sidewalk Bubblegum," sees the issue in terms of "impotence." In a way, he finds the uproar encouraging. "It's nice to see somebody get upset over a political cartoon. I mean, in America it doesn't do anything." But then again, no one – not even the creators – actually expect cartoons to have a real political effect. "Political cartoonists really do it for themselves, to amuse themselves first and also to amuse like-minded individuals.... It's really not about changing minds. You do it because you have a passion." Perhaps ironically, it may be this sense of irrelevancy that has allowed cartoonists the degree of freedom they have enjoyed. Butler

remarks: "The humorists always have greater leeway [for] speaking truth, but at the same time, our truth has negligible effect because people see us as 'funny people.'"

Matt Wuerker sides with Reid: "Editors all around the world are looking at this and taking away the lesson that cartoons are dangerous and incendiary." Wuerker emphasizes the economics underlying enforced mediocrity. Fewer and fewer papers employ staff cartoonists, subscribing to syndicates instead. This gives the editor a broader selection, and thus makes it easier to avoid anything that might cause trouble. The result is "a lot of mostly insipid cartoons with John and Jane Doe sitting in front of their TV and some one-liner that vaguely relates to the day's news." Editors, he says, tend to prefer safe cartoons, "because they're corporatists. Once upon a time you had people who published newspapers because they had strong political leanings... These people have now been bought out and are controlled by corporate conglomerates... And [the



Mikhaela Reid with Ted Rall.

editors are] not going to take any risks, because they'd lose their jobs if they took risks." This caution, in turn, trickles down to the cartoonists. "There's a certain amount of self-censorship.... All cartoonists do that, to some degree."

On this, Clay Butler agrees: "Editors and cartoonists do not have the same obligations... The editor is there to freak out and worry about the bottom line. And the cartoonist is there to push the limits... My experience has been, with papers, editors are just chicken-shit beyond belief. I don't think this will have an effect on what is produced, but on what gets in – which has an effect on what gets produced."

DON'T (JUST) BLAME THE CARTOONS

This much is sure: there is more behind the unrest, besides some silly drawings.

Stephanie McMillan – who draws "Minimum Security" – explains, "The outrage is not only about the cartoons. These cartoons are one more bigoted

slur against people who have been experiencing oppression as immigrants in Europe and the U.S., imperialist wars that have killed perhaps more than a hundred thousand, sanctions that have killed more than a million, theft of resources and exploitation through a long history of colonialism and neo-colonialism, as well as flagrant torture, abuse and unjust imprisonment at the hands of the U.S. and Britain today. It is not surprising to me that fury builds up and erupts into resistance."

Andy Singer wonders what the controversy may say about the prospects for democracy in the Middle East: "Alas, until people in the Muslim world can have open, honest discussions about the Koran, Mohammed, and their religion, there is never going to be 'Democracy' in the Western sense. Partly, this is the fault of repressive governments... But, partly, it seems endemic to the religion itself...."

Butler agrees: "When people start burning down embassies and putting million dollar bounties on the heads of cartoonists... it's clear that the Islamic world in general doesn't really understand democracy in the way that we understand it." At the same time, he notes, "It's just completely crazy to think that we're going to go to the Middle East, kill a bunch of people, topple some governments and say, 'Okay, you can have elections now...' They're going to have to do it themselves and do it their own way."

But Jen Sorensen of "Slowpoke" isn't sure that we can draw such broad conclusions from this crisis. She sees not a clash of civilizations but a clash of extremisms. "Opportunists on both sides are using the cartoons as a way to further their ideologies – and by 'sides' I am not referring to Islam and the West, as some would generalize, but to extremists. The vast majority of Muslims and Westerners are just spectators to this... Both sides in this controversy are right-wing, and both are pretty frightening."

In the meantime, how should a socially conscious cartoonist respond? Keith Knight, author of "The K Chronicles," has the answer: "By doing good work. There are ways to comment on what's going on, that [are] pointed and funny and edgy and searing, without just looking to offend." And, he adds, "imagine a world where nations and cultures battled each other with comic strips instead of guns and bombs. Ahhh – a perfect world...."

Kristian Williams is the author of *American Methods: Torture and the Logic of Domination* (South End Press, 2006) and *Our Enemies in Blue: Police and Power in America* (Soft Skull Press, 2004).

'It's the Jews – the Jews, I Tell Ya!!'

SPENCER SUNSHINE

In an article in *THE ADVOCATE* last year ("The Hysteria of the Obvious," February 2005), I attempted to refer to a statement by Osama bin Laden in which he expressed anti-imperialist political goals. But I couldn't find it. Anywhere. It was like it never existed, even though I knew I heard it in the mass media. Then I remembered that, back in October 2001, the White House had asked the US media to black out bin Laden's talks, supposedly because he sends secret messages to his followers through them.

In actuality, that claim was, like many of the Administration's pronouncements, a complete fabrication. The messages were straightforward explanations of bin Laden's religious-political ideology, which Bush & Co. deemed dangerous for Americans to hear – no doubt because it would cause cognitive dissonance with all that racket GW made about how "they hate freedom." But thanks to Verso's *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden*, we can now hear bin Laden's own responses to Bush's clap-trap: "Free men do not underestimate the value of their security, despite Bush's claim that we hate freedom. Perhaps he can tell us why we did not attack Sweden, for example?" (238) (Not having read this statement, I wrote in my article "If they 'hated freedom,' why did they attack a financial center and not, say, the Statue of Liberty? Or attack Holland for that matter, a country whose social freedoms far outstrip our own?")

However, what this anthology also reveals – which almost all Western political actors, Left and Right, are working hard to cover up – is how absurdly anti-Semitic bin Laden is. It sounds almost identical to Nazi propaganda. The Jews, the Jews, the Jews – they're behind every tree, every newspaper, every US President! The Zionist conspiracy controls the world!!

As in any abridged anthology, we follow the narrative selected by the editor. In the ten year period covered (1994 to 2004), bin Laden's concerns shift from a focus on denouncing Saudi Arabia for allowing US "infidels" to position troops in their land to protect against Hussein, to a focus on Palestine – a shift which occurs immediately after 9/11, and is mirrored exactly by the US Left. In fact, many of bin Laden's statements could come directly out of a local Leninist newspaper, banging the drum of anti-imperialism:

the collapse of the Soviet Union... made the US more haughty and arrogant, and it has started to see itself as a Master of this world and established what it calls the new world order... The US today, as a result of this arrogance, has set a double standard, calling whoever goes against its

injustice a terrorist. It wants to occupy our countries, steal out resources, install collaborators to rule us with man-made laws, and wants us to agree on all these issues, If we refuse to do this, it will say we are terrorists. (50–51)

Bin Laden says that the Bush administration banned his words because

they felt that the truth started to appear to the American people, and that we aren't really terrorists in the way that they want to define the term, but rather because we are being violated in Palestine, in Iraq, in Lebanon, in Sudan, in Somalia, in Kashmir, in the Philippines, and throughout the world... (112–113)

You steal our wealth and oil at paltry prices because of your international influence and military threats. This theft is indeed the biggest theft ever witnessed by mankind in the history of the world. (163)

OBL even proves my remarks right again ("the two targets were specifically symbols of military [Pentagon] and economic [WTC] power") when he says that the 9/11 attacks targeted "economic and military landmarks," and not symbols of freedom. (107)

But what we don't hear from either Bush & Co. or Lenin & Co. is the frothing anti-Semitism that smothers bin Laden's writings. Sure, the creepy religious fundamentalist stuff is all there: he justifies killing civilians, and – turning Bush's colossal stupidity about the "Crusade" against terrorism – repeatedly denounces the "Zionist-Crusader

alliance." At one point (apparently in reaction to claims that he murdered American infidels without giving them the chance to convert first) OBL even declares that his goal is to get all Americans to embrace Islam. (166) Also of interest are his repeated mentions of the American atom bombs dropped on Japan during WWII, repeated mentions of Clinton's Lewinsky scandal (a particular peeve of his, especially since Clinton's approval rating soared during the investigation, thereby revealing how morally corrupt Americans are!), and how the US keeps refusing the Koyoto protocols. And, of course, there is the obligatory sexual rigidity and homophobia: "We call you to be a people of manners, principles, honor and purity; to reject the immoral acts of fornication, homosexuality, intoxicants, gambling and usury." (166)

Book Review

• *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden.*
Edited and Introduced by Bruce Lawrence (Verso, 2005)

But the anti-Semitism is the cake. As social theorist Moishe Postone has pointed out, in the new Jihadism "a central aspect of the global character of that ideology has been anti-Semitism" (1) Bush has downplayed

this, and the neo-anti-imperialist Left in the US and Europe has done everything in its power to sweep this under the rug. Calling on Leftists to unite with misogynistic and homophobic religious fundamentalists under the banner of "anti-imperialism" is bizarre enough, but when the groups are openly and explicitly anti-Semitic, somehow this is even stranger. In order to do this, writers like Norman Finkelstein and Michael Neumann engage in tortuous manipulations of the historical record to try and show that there is no anti-Semitism – or better yet, that whenever it is mentioned, it is only the Israelis crying wolf to distract from their own micro-imperial ambitions. Meanwhile, Leftists are encouraged to engage in solidarity work with groups that make no attempt to hide their open anti-Semitism, such as Hamas, who now lead the Palestinian Authority. (Hamas cite the seminal anti-Semitic document *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* in their governing Covenant.)

Bin Laden's words speak for themselves, however. The full title of one piece in the collection is the "Global Islamic Front Against Jews and Crusaders." Bin Laden says that Jews practically control the White House "as everyone can see – the Defence Minister is Jewish, the Secretary of State is Jewish, the CIA and National Security officials are Jewish, all the biggest officials are Jews..." (67) "We have incited and urged the killing of Americans and Jews. It is true." (108) Of course, the US government is under the "payroll of the Zionist lobby, which serves the needs of Israel." (113) He also says that the "pro-Jewish lobby has taken the US and the West hostage." (143) The United Nations is a "Zionist organization" (219); and in the US, behind the rich, "stand the Jews, who control your policies, media, and economy." (168)

Unsurprisingly, bin Laden moves between "Jews" and "Zionists" and "Israel" without distinction, often in the same thought. For the past few years, activists have accused "anti-Zionist" rhetoric used by Palestinian support activists as treading precariously close to, and sometimes acting as a cover for, anti-Semitism. "The Zionist-controlled media" and the "Zionist lobby which controls US foreign policy" are the two most obvious examples: just replace "Zionist" with "Jewish" and you get century-old anti-Semitic rumors. Coincidence or cover-up?

Whichever, it's weird to see the hardcore, unadulterated anti-Semitism when you are not expecting it. It begs the question: is the US Left just consuming a softcore version of this, only slightly watered down for domestic consumption? Quite a few activists on the Left are claiming it is so, while others furiously deny it.

All in all, everyone should read at least sections of bin Laden's writings. It's clear from his references that he reads the Western Left's analysis. (He referred to William Blum's *Rogue State* in a recent statement.) Now, everyone – Left, Right or Center, and pro- or anti-Zionist, no longer has an excuse not to be familiar with his own words.

(1) Moishe Postone, "History and Helplessness: Mass mobilization and contemporary forms of anti-capitalism," in *Public Culture* 18(1), (2006) p. 98. Online at: <http://publicculture.dukejournals.org/current.dtl>



Bin Laden says that Jews control the White House: "as everyone can see – the Defence Minister is Jewish, the Secretary of State is Jewish..."

Yesterday's Gauntlet, Today's Guantanamo

SPENCER SUNSHINE

When I first heard about this DVD re-release, I thought, 'I love tacky leftist agit-prop.' Director Peter Watkins had recently been talked about because of his six hour reenactment *La Commune*. The advance promo for his 1971 film *Punishment Park* – the plot revolves around radicals forced to run a desert survivalist course if they want to avoid prison – seemed to promise a fun-filled 88 minutes of '60s-exploitation-orama. But when I finally got around to seeing it, I was floored by how powerful the film actually was, and ended up kicking myself for not seeing *La Commune* on the big screen.

The plot certainly does seem a bit cheesy from the outside: at the height of the Vietnam War protests, President Nixon declares an "Event of Insurrection" and opens the Bear Mountain National Punishment Park. Radical leftists, draft-dodgers, and black nationalist DJs, among others, are given secret "trials" with a court-appointed lawyer, and convicted for long sentences. They are given an option, however: they can attempt to navigate 53 miles of desert in three days to reach a flag, while being pursued by a group of armed government agents. If they reach the flag first, they are set free. If caught, they are sent to serve their prison terms. It is shot in faux-documentary style, with a British documentary film crew "shooting"

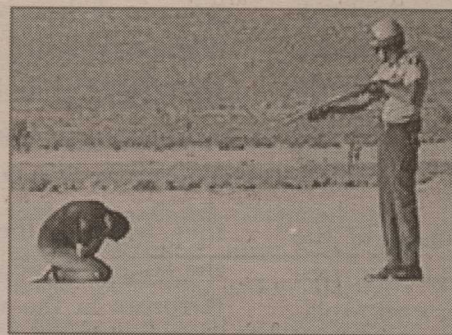
the action as it is happening, and interviewing the participants and their pursuers.

What makes this film amazing is its improvised nature. Watkins did not have scripted lines – actors were given characters and improvised the scenes – so no two takes were alike. Most actors were cast according to their actual political opinions; many of the guards in the film had law enforcement experience, and one actor who played a radical was later convicted both of assaulting a police officer and a bomb charge. The result is a powerful and realistic portrayal of an absurd situation – one which is being played out today in the US prison at Guantanamo Bay and in secret C.I.A. and military jails (for example, recently a US soldier was convicted of killing Iraqi General Abed Mowhoush while torturing him).

The trial of one group of prisoners (modeled on the

DVD Review

• *Punishment Park*. Directed by Peter Watkins. 1971 / DVD rerelease 2005



Chicago 8, a high-profile trial of famous leftists in 1968) is juxtaposed with the attempts of another group to navigate the course. Without revealing the details, let's just say that things don't go well for them, even for the pacifists who attempt to play the game by its own rules. The image of the shell-shocked soldier at the end of the film remains vivid in my mind: the notes in the DVD booklet claim that the images of the director yelling "Cut! Cut!" were not planned – Watkins had assumed that people had really been shot. In fact, the film is so realistic that some audiences, and

at least one media source, assumed that it was an actual documentary.

Although the film won Watkins Best Director at the 1971 Atlanta Film Festival, it originally only had a ten day run in San Francisco and a four day run in New York City. The distributor pulled it, and no one would touch it. Thirty-five years later this film is barely dated; I can only imagine the nerves it touched then.

THE JOY OF PLUMBING

ANDREA SIEGEL

It's always fun to complain about the Administration (any administration), but in this case, I can't. They've been terrific. Last week I noticed a broken towel dispenser in the ladies room on the sixth floor, and broken water fountains in the library. And, of course, the pay phone was out in the library basement.

So I did what I always do when I'm annoyed, I complained to the President. I've found the White House unresponsive about my political concerns (Try them yourself: 202-456-1111. They bring new nuance and depth to the phrase, "We don't care."). However, an email last week to Graduate Center President Bill Kelly (wkelly@gc.cuny.edu) about my plumbing problems resulted in immediate response. The water fountains and the towel dispenser are fixed. And IT has been notified about the phones.

For the repairs, we have to thank Michael Mahoney and his crew.

First, a word of thanks to the people who clean the bathrooms. As most of you know, if you've taught at any of the other CUNY campuses, we have by a mile the cleanest bathrooms of any CUNY campus. This is a thankless job, and it's important to take a moment to express our gratitude to the people who do this work. Our staff at the Graduate Center does a great job and it makes one part of our lives that much easier. I have some of my best thoughts in the bathroom, and I can't help but think in part, it's due to them. Mr. Mahoney, who has visited most of the 220 (at last count)

CUNY buildings independently confirms my rave evaluation about our crew. Now onto the incisive in-depth reportage you've come to expect from me.

After the publication of my scintillating article about the sex at the Graduate Center in last month's *ADVOCATE*, I expected a deluge of requests for more provocative sexual insights. Instead, you people wanted to talk about potty problems, which I mentioned only briefly. Given the remarkable response by President Kelly and Mr. Mahoney, I decided I have an obligation to you Dear Reader to pursue the bathroom matters touched on in the last issue.

I embarked on an in-depth study of the Graduate Center bathrooms and etc. Fearlessly using methods shamelessly poached from urban ethnography, I nervously went from floor to floor, trying every sink button and every water fountain. Note to self: It is fun to walk by the sinks and punch the button on each one, but don't try at home. I looked at the stalls (I was only in the women's rooms—the men's rooms I leave to others). While in the bathroom, I hollered out to people behind closed stall doors, "Any problems with the bathrooms?" I tried to look official: I carried a spiral notebook. It had a list with columns. Frankly, this was a weird project, but I'm used to me. For the record, I didn't get IRB approval.

One woman with a child in tow pointed out the missing steel sanitary-napkin boxes. One woman said, "The soap could be a little thicker." By and large, however, the response

was enthusiastic and grateful, more thanks to the cleaning crew. The question raised last month, "Where have all the condom machines gone?" remained unanswered. I didn't ask it then, actually.

So, I asked Mr. Mahoney. It turns out the condom machines disappeared in 2004. Why it took me two years to notice I don't care to speculate, and neither should you. It turns out the machines were never stocked because it would have cost thousands of dollars to fill them all. Even so, people vandalized the machines whether they were left locked or unlocked. Can you imagine breaking into a condom machine? Actually, I used to live with a guy who picked locks as a hobby, so I can imagine. About that, enough said; he has tenure.

According to Mr. Mahoney, because there was only one towel dispenser, people were making a dribbling slippery path to the towels. (My words, not his.) So they replaced the condom machines with more towel dispensers. Restrooms are safer and cleaner. End of story.

Well, actually not. People at that time were also frequently breaking into the sanitary napkin machines and stealing the money. That seems to have stopped.

This leads me to my next bizarre question to Mr. Mahoney. Please note that the aplomb with which he answered my questions was endearing. I'm not used to endearing.

Warning: the following may not be suitable for the squeamish. I told him my findings about the missing stainless-steel menstrual pad disposal

boxes: four are missing on the fourth floor, two aren't there on the ninth floor, etc. He told me that this was first reported earlier in March, and "we are all disturbed by it." The fourth floor houses the English department—is it some deranged Chaucer fan, or is it someone from Comp Lit who found shelter behind those doors from the all-invasive gaze of Foucault's panopticon who is stealing the boxes? I know, I'm worse than the Tabloid press. Any time there's a problem, they round up the usual suspects—English majors.... It's not fair, and I'm playing right into the hands of the real perpetrator. Whoever you are, please stop. You're preying on the vulnerable, and making for some embarrassing moments for those of us who need to use those boxes.

Finally, returning to our story. I asked Mr. Mahoney my most personal plumbing concern. The pink marble fishies in the basement, on the landing and on the second floor of the library have stopped spouting water. I am terribly fond of them. Mr. Mahoney reports, "The ornamental fountains in the library have had a broken pump for quite a while and locating the proper replacement has been a deuced problem. One of our vendors believes he has the right one, but we'll see. We have been disappointed before."

Good luck to you Mr. Mahoney. I hope the pink fish are spitting up again soon.

I still haven't heard about the pay phones. Thank goodness I still have something to complain about.

Andrea Siegel is in the Sociology program.

Grad Council Participation a Success — Let's Keep It Up!

The March meeting of Graduate Council achieved quorum, due in no small part to the presence of students. (The availability of beer and wine may have been a contributing factor.) The next meeting of Grad Council will be on Thursday, May 11, from 2:30-4:00 p.m. in room GC 9206/7. If you're a student program rep to Grad Council, please show up. If you can't, please let your department's DSC reps know so that one of them can serve as your alternate.

DSC SPRING PARTY

The DSC Spring Party will be held on the evening of March 31st, from 7:00-11:00 p.m., in rooms 5414 and 5409. Beverages and snacks will be served. DJ music will be provided. Come see the returned Frick plaque.

DSC TO HELP SAVE DARFUR—RALLY TO STOP GENOCIDE IN WASHINGTON

On April 30, SaveDarfur.org will hold a Rally to Stop Genocide on the National Mall in Washington. The DSC is hoping to send a GC student contingent and has formed a rally committee to coordinate the trip. Contact DSC Co-Chair for Communications Dave Golland at dgolland@gmail.com if you're interested in participating or attending.

FRICK PLAQUE RETURNED

As you might know, the plaque honoring the late Charlotte Frick had been missing for some time. We

know that its absence troubled many members of our community especially those who knew and cared for Charlotte, but the DSC is pleased to announce that it is has been returned. The plaque will shortly be re-secured near Charlotte's painting in room 5414, kindly donated by the Frick family. We are glad that Charlotte's 24 years of service to the Graduate Center and her work for students, including her advocacy for the childcare center, will now continue to receive the public recognition they deserve.

APRIL MOVIE TICKET DISCOUNT SALE

Most of the DSC's current batch of discounted Loews movie tickets will expire on April 30th, so we are "halving" a sale. Movie tickets purchased through the DSC during April will cost \$3.00 rather than the usual \$6.00. Visit us during our office hours (listed at <http://www.cunydisc.org>) in room GC 5495 to make your purchase. Checks (no cash or credit) from GC students only (ID required). Manhattan theaters may impose a \$1.00 surcharge.

GC BAR IN JEOPARDY

Restaurant Associates (the company which currently holds the food and beverage monopoly at the Grad Center) re-examined its liquor license and found that it could only sell alcoholic beverages to members of the college community, and has closed the bar as of this writing. The DSC will keep you updated as this unfortunate story develops.

DSC ELECTIONS—DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

Nominations for membership on the DSC and other college-wide student panels are over. The DSC is now contacting nominees to determine willingness to serve. The election ballots will be mailed out in early April and will need to be postmarked by April 24. The DSC will welcome its 2006-7 members and elect next year's officers at a special plenary meeting on Friday, May 12, at 6:00 p.m. in room GC 5414.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DSC DATES

Plenary Meetings (room GC 5414):

- Friday, March 24, 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, April 28, 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 12, 5:00 p.m. (6:00 p.m. for 2006-7 reps)

Steering Committee Meetings (room GC 5489):

- Friday, April 7, 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 5, 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 19, 6:00 p.m.

HELP WANTED: ADJUNCT PROJECT COORDINATOR

The DSC will be hiring a new Adjunct Coordinator for 2006-7. This is a paid position. Further information about the job can be found at the DSC website. Please send resumes to dgolland@gmail.com or DSC, Attn: Communications, 365 Fifth Avenue, Suite 5495, New York, NY 10016.

Get Involved

From page 4

lective duty as students of the largest public urban university in the nation — and one which is often overshadowed by our wealthier private counterparts here in the city — to work together to increase our presence both in New York and in the nation. At the very least, you will sharpen your professional and decision-making skills, and become more articulate while working towards a common goal with your colleagues.

1. **Join the DSC as your program's representative.** Although ballots are going out soon, there is still time to write yourself in and get your colleagues to do so. Next year, nominate yourself. Come to a meeting regardless and hear what goes on.
2. **Join your program's governing committees.** Students can vote, and programs value students' input on committees that hire professors, decide curriculum, and select the next year's incoming class. This is a great way to at least appear like you are invested in your program beyond your own interests; all cynicism aside, these committees make decisions that directly affect YOU!
3. **Have a conference.** Interested in a topic, but there's no conference scheduled by your program? Send out an email to your program's listserv to form a conference committee, and then meet to discuss

the topic, speakers, call for papers. Need money? Apply for a DSC cultural affairs or a professional development grant.

4. Need practice writing/giving papers, or need to brush up on a language for your language requirement? **Start a lecture series or informal seminar.** There are myriad resources for advertising and soliciting student interest: the DSC website, numerous easels on which to post flyers, DSC meetings, as

well as a general student body listserv. Many programs are willing to contribute at least some money to student intellectual and professional pursuits, as long as it benefits the program as a whole.

5. **Join one of the many auxiliary committees** involved in GC administration: volunteer on a search committee or a committee dealing with ADA regulations.
6. **Attend a Professional Staff Congress rally** with your fellow

CUNY adjuncts, informing yourself of what is at stake.

Getting involved in student activities doesn't mean that you won't have time to do your own work; look at it as a way of contributing to the well-being of your program and the institution. Finally, an added bonus — the line on your CV — but of course, this is the least of reasons to get involved.

Chong Wojtkowski is a PhD student in the French program.

Spring has Sprung!



**Celebrate with —
Snacks, Drink,
Dance, FUN!**

**DSC Party
Friday, March 31
7pm - 11pm
GC Room 5414**

and . . .
buy Movie Tickets for ONLY \$3.00!!!!

(. OFF the already discounted price — expires April 30th)



DOCTORAL STUDENTS' COUNCIL
City University of New York



GRAD STUDENT ASTROLOGY

What do the stars hold in store for you?

HEATHER ROYCE-ROLL

ARIES

March 21 to April 20

Lie #1 told to you: Haste must make waste. Lie #2: You are not strong enough to know how strong you really are. Lie #3: If you continue this conflict, even if you win, you will lose a part of your heart.

TAURUS

April 21 to May 21

I would never advocate deception, but it is prime time for you pull out the stops on strategy, diplomacy, and even ol' fashioned trickery to get ahead. Your security blanket of home and money is wrapped around you snugly, so harness your diverse skills and energies and gallop towards sure victory. Use your brain.

GEMINI

May 22 to June 21

It's time to defend your

poetic vision. Rush in to slay mundane nay sayers and battle against humdrum practicality. Rigorously fight on the side of art, beauty, truth and love.

CANCER

June 22 to July 22

The more you say how you feel – and not just crabby bitchiness either – the more good things will come to you. The more you speak emotional lies, the more isolated from joy you'll feel. This involves that independent, wise from experience, tough chick, who just happens to have that loyal, sensitive, artistic soul that sees into yours.

LEO

July 23 to August 23

You have two choices. Either change you way of judging how things and people ought to be, forgive everyone, and release the whole damn mess of "should

be" mania hiding under your bed or stay trapped in a voluntary Hell of knowing you are right.

VIRGO

August 24 to September 22

Once I write this, it will have been written that the time that a Virgo spends in idle daydreams will yield much greater profits than actual work. I know, I just killed you by saying that. However, remembering who you really are will immediately put you at an advantage. It is your destiny to dream your destiny. Stop being so freakin' busy!

LIBRA

September 23 to October 23

I think you should just admit that there are changes. I think you should just admit there are changes you are strong enough to handle. I think you should just admit there are changes you are strong enough to handle and perhaps even speed up.

SCORPIO

October 24 to November 22

All I am going to say is persevere. No, wait, scratch that. Don't just persevere. Relax about money. Stop clinging to fears about security. It's making you so rigid, rigor mortis is about to set in. Show me how you can be strong yet flexible, patient without apathy. Thank you.

SAGITTARIUS

November 23 to December 21

All those things you think you know about love – well, half of them are wrong. You will have the wonderfully liberating, giddy, terrifying experience of finding out Truth with a capital T about love from a partner wiser than you, young grasshopper.

CAPRICORN

December 22 to January 20

Recently you fought the good fight and you lost. Who cares? It was the wrong fight anyway. Now you have the chance to join Nina Hagan

in exclaiming, "I know who I am and I am willing to declare myself to the world!"

AQUARIUS

January 21 to February 19

I will guess that because of a man who handles the money and walks the bottom line, your financial rug may be pulled out from under you. This is fine. Now you can put into practice your amazing skill of juggling metaphorical chainsaws, flaming bowling pins, and pineapples while balancing on a flying carpet.

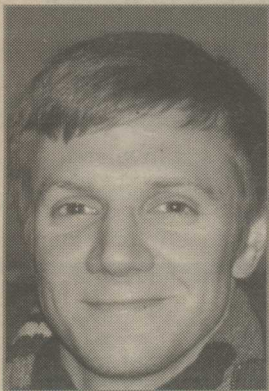
PISCES

February 20 to March 20

Today you become the hobo. Hit the road in search of opportunities to creatively challenge yourself with a bundle of truth, art, beauty and love of love tied to a stick. You've given up "happily ever after" for a new "once upon a time."

Heather Royce-Roll is a Tarot reader, astrologer and freelance writer living in Los Angeles. Visit her site at www.earthless.com/tarot.

Is the Graduate Center a diverse institution? Why or why not?



John Harkey,
English

Absolutely. The interaction between departments spawns a diversity of ideas. This draws a spectrum of students and professors.



Una Chung,
English

I think it's fairly diverse. Perhaps not compared to New York generally. I think it would be great if we continued to care about and foster diversity further.



Tamara Mose Brown,
Sociology

Coming from Canada, I'd have to say yes. This is a city of immigrants and I see the same faces in the building.



Malav Kanuga,
Sociology
(incoming student)

Seems like a prism.



Lesley Pastrick,
Earth & Environmental
Science

I think diversity is relative. Compared to Yale or other private institutions, the GC is diverse, particularly if you are a white male.



Henry Tork,
Physics

Any gathering of human beings is diverse. The question is, do we seek out our commonalities?