

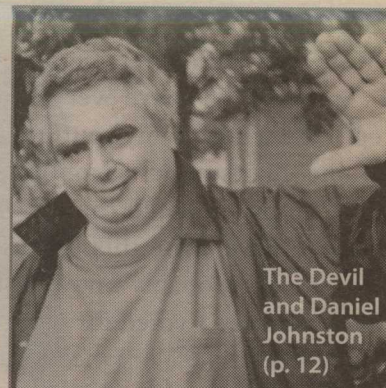
LICENSE TO KILL: OUTSOURCING THE WAR

CUNY GRADUATE CENTER **Advocate**

November 2006

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Hunter, City Fight to Grab Beloved School

CHAD TURNER

Most people have likely heard the old realtor adage that the three most important factors in real estate are location, location, and location. It is precisely location that has become the crux of a dispute between Hunter College and the Julia Richman Educational Complex (JREC).

The JREC was built in 1923 as an all-girls high school. Initially a successful school, by the 1990's budget cuts and attempts at reorganization took their toll on the school, then known as Julia Richman High School. In 1990, Julia Richman was identified by the Board of Education as having the worst statistics of student achievement in Manhattan, graduating only 37% of its students. This school, full of smashed windows, graffiti, and destroyed bathrooms, was referred to by the 19th Precinct as "Julia Rikers," a reference to the infamous Riker's Island prison, because of the crime problems there. Allegedly, the school had cages to separate particularly troublesome students. In 1995 the school was redesigned, and now houses six different schools. These include four high schools: Urban Academy, Vanguard High School, Talent Unlimited, and Manhattan International High School; an elementary school: Ella Baker School; and a school for students with autism: P226M Junior High Annex. While each school has its own classrooms, offices, bathrooms, and stairways, the six schools share several common areas, which include a mini-theater, an art gallery, a sports facility, a pottery studio, a dance studio, a library, an auditorium, and a cafeteria.

In the summer of 2006, a proposed land swap between Hunter College and JREC was revealed. Under the plan, Hunter would receive the land on East 67th Street which currently houses JREC. Hunter would then tear down the JREC building and build a state-of-the-art science and health facility. In exchange, JREC would be given Hunter's Brookdale campus on East 25th Street and First Avenue. Hunter would build JREC a modern facility on this property; seemingly a "win-win" scenario as Jennifer Raab, president of Hunter College, put it.



However, as news of this proposal came out, students, parents, teachers, and neighbors of JREC came out in opposition to the plan. JREC says that this plan has been in the works for nearly two years, and they are just now hearing about it.

On November 14th, JREC held a press conference to address these issues. Several people affiliated with the school and community spoke briefly about the concerns surrounding this proposed land swap. Between 20-25 students stood behind the speakers holding signs protesting the move. Following the press conference, a group of several hundred students, parents, teachers, and community residents marched to Hunter College to demand a meeting with President Raab. The crowd was boisterous yet nonviolent, carrying signs and loudly chanting phrases such as "Don't wreck JREC" and "Move, Raab, get out of the way, Julia Richman's here to stay." Ultimately, a few members of the JREC administration were granted a meeting. As of press time, it was unclear what the results were of this meeting.

Since it was redesigned, JREC has become a model school. Gone are the crime problems and now 90% of students graduate. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation presents it as a prime example of success in breaking up larger schools. It has been featured in several books and articles. Groups from all over the country and beyond have toured this facility. JREC supporters are worried about the effect such a move would have on the delicate balance the six institutions have struck here. The schools house a total of 1,900 mostly minority and immigrant students, and there is concern about how they will adjust to such a change. Furthermore, the local community has embraced the JREC and there are concerns by neighbors who do not wish to see it moved forty 40 blocks away.

JREC supporters also site the issue of money. Since 1995, \$30 million in public funds have been used to retrofit the building. Merely tearing it down represents a waste of all of these funds, and, they argue, is not fiscally sound. They also claim that this sends a bad message to the

many individuals and private organizations that have donated money to JREC over the years, and may make them think twice about making such donations to other schools in the future. They also challenge the claims that JREC needs a new building, pointing out that the changes made to the building over the last twelve years have made it into a modern facility. According to the JREC website, "Educators from modern 'state-of-the-art' buildings marvel at how well JREC is served by an 83-year-old structure and say, 'We'd swap our new facilities for what you have here anytime. Julia Richman is a 'state of the art' school, not just 'any old building.' Its sound structure has been carefully and thoughtfully renovated to meet the needs of its schools." In a letter read by Giancarlo Osaben as the September 20 Community Board 8 Meeting, John Broderick, who has been JREC's custodial engineer for over thirty years, detailed many of the changes made and asserting, "I've been a school custodian for 35 years and never have I seen a build-

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"What are we gonna do now?"

I have a confession to make: that unlike most of the people that I know, and many I respect, I didn't vote for any Democrats this election—not even Eliot Spitzer. Like I have every other November—except 1992 when, in my youthful exuberance I voted for the charismatic, saxophone blowing playboy Bill Clinton—I voted the Green ticket across the board. I have done this for a full ten years now, and, as you probably know, not once have any of the candidates I voted for won. I like to think that I have at least once or twice contributed to the party's attempts to get subsequent ballot access, but who knows?

Nonetheless, I was ecstatic to see the results of this month's mid-terms. Watching the numbers pour in Thursday night at the bar, it was easy to get caught up in the fantasy that we had somehow all collectively come to our senses. And in a sense we had. November's congressional elections demonstrated that, despite some of the more dire projections of the left, there is still room for progressive change through participatory politics and democratic elections. The American public, although it's not clamoring for proportional representation and has not yet started signing up in droves for the Green Party—we've still got a long way to go—has at least finally demonstrated that it is capable of holding politicians accountable for their policy ac-

FROM THE editor's desk

tions. Indeed, it is clear from the polls that, unlike the presidential elections of 2004, this was actually an election about issues and about accountability. But it is obvious that the American public was not voting for Democrats on the 5th; they were voting against Republicans and, more specifically against the Bush administration's Neo-conservative agenda. Although this says a lot about the deficiencies of our national politics, it nonetheless at least redeems the American electoral system as a form of protest and as a real check against Executive power. That it took us this long as a nation to finally figure out what seemed so obvious to so many of us, is evidence of the continued work that lies ahead for progressives.

In other words, now is not the time to sit back and congratulate ourselves. Of the many democrats to win congressional and senate seats this year a good portion of them, known as blue dog democrats, are only moderately more progressive than the Republicans they ousted. Much of the Democratic Party, it seems, as it has done for the last twelve years is continuing to trend to the right.

The Democrats' recent choice of moderate Steny Hoyer over the more liberal Jack Murtha as Majority Leader of the House of Representatives, is indicative of the centrist position of the new democrats. Progressive issues like a real living wage (pegged to inflation), economic sustainability, free national health care, civil rights, and political reform, are, despite the rhetoric about health care and increasing the minimum wage, off the radar of the new democrats, and, if this year's elections are any indication, aren't going to be issues in this congress anytime soon. Sure, Pelosi will do everything she can to hold the Bush Administration accountable for its economic and foreign policy blunders, but this kind of reactive politics only takes us back to the Clinton era—if we're lucky. It does nothing to move us forward.

Now that at least some temporary semblance of balance has been restored to the government, it is time to start thinking about the issues that really matter. If this election has taught us anything it is that change is possible, and in many ways inevitable. Now is the time to start actively pushing the Democratic Party to the left, pushing for real political reforms such as proportional and run-off voting, and simultaneously building third parties that can challenge the Democrats without undermining them. ■

GC Paper Use Getting out of Control

ATTACK OF THE MACS

Since the deployment last month of ten new Macs throughout the Graduate Center community, efforts are being made to incorporate more of the machines into the GC framework, said Assistant Vice President for Information Technology Robert D. Campbell. This includes efforts to get the present Macs up to current hardware and software standards. Members of IT have met with the Audio/Visual Department to discuss how to increase the usage of Macs throughout the building. Campbell said that plans are in place to begin replacing the iMac machines on the C-level concourse of the Mina Rees Library, once proper funding has been identified.

In order to increase the ability of the GC community to use Macs, once more machines are in place, Help Desk Supervisor Elain Montilla said that work is underway to set up a dedicated server for all GC Macs, thus facilitating operations. As the Mac machines run on a differ-

ent server than PCs, the difficulty in installing more Macs on campus has traditionally been this server disparity. By setting up a Mac server, Montilla said that this will hopefully remedy that old, persistent problem.

PRINTING

Last month the DSC recommended that all printers be set to default to double-sided printing in an effort to save paper. This stems from the increasing student printing rates each semester. The quantities of paper have continued to climb since Fall 2003, when the student paper consumption was 386,135, to 2,268,388 for Spring 2006 and, as of Nov. 1, 2006, 2,845,121 for Fall 2006. The total student paper consumption for Fall 2006 is estimated to reach 3,200,000, according to Montilla. In terms of dollars and cents, this totals \$9,550.00 for paper for Fall 2006 alone.

Campbell said that IT would be happy to comply setting the default of all printers to double-sided print-

gc technology

ing, although no present plans are in place for such a move—yet. The Systems Group is establishing a printer server management system which will be installed over the upcoming months. Once in place, it will be able to monitor the number of printouts and to manage printing throughout the GC. This would be the first step in trying to get a handle on the steadily increasing amount of paper consumed by students in the Graduate Center for printing purposes.

34TH ST. PROPOSES WIRELESS DEAL

The GC has been approached by the 34th Street Partnership to discuss a neighborhood wireless internet access project. The 34th Street Partnership is the same group, Campbell said, responsible for installing wireless internet access to Bryant Park and would represent "the first domino," in getting wireless coverage up and running at 365 Fifth Avenue.

The GC and the 34th Street Partnership have had

"productive conversations" related to a closer cooperation on this issue. "We anticipate a working relationship to figure out where our IT would provide wireless coverage and the partnership would," said Campbell. Although Campbell acknowledged that the 34th Street Partnership is a valuable one, he insisted that the Graduate Center would take full responsibility for wireless coverage of the Mina Rees Library, according to the original wireless access plan presented earlier this fall.

FREE SOFTWARE AVAILABLE

The Graduate Center has made several software applications available to students for download, pick-up (in room 8311), and/or on public computers. The free software for home use that is available for download includes, EndNote, a program to help create and organize bibliographic

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JREC LAND SWAP

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ing that is as sturdy and sound as the JREC structure." Sybille Werner, the music director of the New York Symphonic Arts Ensemble said, "The auditorium at JREC was refurbished as part of the \$30 million renovation. It has wonderful acoustics; there is no other concert venue of this size and quality available to the community on the East Side."

Both students and neighbors cite a reciprocal relationship between JREC and the community, a relationship that would be destroyed if they were forced to move. A number of groups use the JREC facilities after school hours. Two orchestras, a chorus, local theater groups, and various other community organizations utilize the space. St. Katherine's Park, which sits adjacent to the JREC building and is used by the schools during school hours, is open to the community in the evenings and weekends. According to JREC, 30 neighborhood groups make use of their space. At the November 14th press conference, Lynn Love, a resident of the community, said that residents of the Upper East Side are concerned with the increase of student traffic in the area. She pointed out that over 15,000 students would make use of the new science and health center, and asked how the neighborhood would handle having 10 times the number of students than there currently are in the area. She further pointed out that this is a residential neighborhood, not a science park, and a high-rise science building would not fit the area. According to community members Sherry Jacobs and Tina Pack, Hunter College's property on 25th Street is located within Mayor Bloomberg's designated "bioscience science park", and so fits better in that location.

Students also claim benefits from being a part of this community; benefits they would lose if their facility was moved across town. Ashley Brown, a student from Brooklyn who attends Urban Academy, told *The GC Advocate* that although the new campus would be a shorter commute for her, she is not in favor of the move. She said that the proximity to parks, shops, the New York Public Library, and Central Park are part of what makes JREC a great place to go to school. She also said that many students are involved in community service in the area, and that removing them would be detrimental both to the students and to the people and organizations they assist.

Supporters of JREC are also concerned about the example this sets for other schools in the city. Mayor Michael Bloomberg has created many new schools during his tenure using JREC as a model. How will this affect these other schools and the possibility of creating more in the future? Also, what message does this send to other communities in the city which

Students protesting the JREC land swap at Hunter College on Nov. 14.



are fighting to retain and improve their public schools? According to Jacobs and Pack, "We need more, not fewer, good public schools."

However, President Raab insists that Hunter College is in dire need of new health and science facilities. Hunter is lacking 175,000 square feet of instructional and research space, particularly in the arts and sciences. This lack of space makes it impossible for Hunter to meet the needs of its students. Even though classes are scheduled days, evenings, and weekends, they often fill up before many students get a chance to register.

Raab's fear is this lack of suitable facilities could cause Hunter to lose its competitive edge with other universities. Hunter College is well respected, especially in the sciences. *US News and World Report* ranked Hunter No. 62 among master's universities in the northern US. Hunter was also included in the *Princeton Review's* list of the top 361 colleges and universities, which only includes 15% of the four-year colleges in the United States. Members of Hunter's science faculty have received many accolades and many of them are widely-published in their disciplines.

Another fear is that in losing this competitive edge, Hunter will lose grant money. Hunter recently announced a \$1.6 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse of the National Institutes of Health to study factors related to drug abuse. This comes on the heels of a \$13.2 million National Institutes of Health grant to Hunter's Center for Study of Gene Structure and Function. Maintaining Hunter's role as a top university in the sciences is crucial to getting these grants.

The Hunter administration maintains that these new science facilities must be near the main Hunter campus. They point out that students need convenient access to lab space to conduct experiments. However, they also need to be close to the science professors who direct these experiments, who need to be near Hunter's main offices. Thus, building these labs 40 blocks away would cre-

ate a litany of logistical problems.

President Raab also points out that JREC is getting a brand new building out of this arrangement. While the current building has been retrofitted over the years, it is still an 83-year-old building, and with this plan JREC gets a new building, one that will be built with their needs in mind. Jamie Smarr, an assistant to the deputy chancellor for finance and administration for the city school system, told the *New York Times* in a June 28 article that JREC would benefit from having this new building and cited a fear of change as the main concern of the JREC supporters.

CUNY also challenges the notion that this will be a high-rise science

for the strength of the programs at the Graduate Center.

However, the location of these labs is less important to the students of the Graduate Center than it is to the students of Hunter. Actually, building the science and health center at 25th street would be much closer to the Graduate Center than the proposed location on 67th street.

Many aspects of this plan are still being worked out. Mr. Smarr indicated that much of the plan hinges on Hunter's ability to finance both the new science center and the new JREC complex, which he estimates would cost at least \$100 million. ■

Chad Turner is a student in the History program.

IT NEWS

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information, Citrix ICA, an application that allows students to access their Graduate Center desktops from home, and VPN Client, a secure connection to the Graduate Center's computing resources.

- EndNote <http://library.gc.cuny.edu/database/endnote/endnote.asp>
- Citrix ICA <https://citrix.gc.cuny.edu>
- VPN Client <http://inside.gc.cuny.edu/informationresources/vpn/>

Additional software available free of cost to students for home use includes SAS (PC only) and Mathematica (for both Mac and PC). Students who wish to pick-up either of these two programs should contact Pauline Budd (pbudd@gc.cuny.edu) to request a copy and arrange for a time to pick-

up the software. Students should be aware that they will be required to show their GC ID card in order to pick-up these applications.

There are also several software programs available for use on-campus only, including: ESRI Products (ArcInfo, ARCEditor, ArcGIS, ArcView, ArcSDE, ArcIMS, ArcPAD Application Builder including ArcPad, ArcPad StreetMap, Map Objects-Windows Edition, MapObjects-Java Edition, BusinessMap3, ArcLogistics Route with Data, NetEngine for Windows for UNIX, ArcIMS Route Server, ArcGIS Engine Developer Kit, ArcGIS Engine Server Development and Testing License with Spatial Analyst, 3D Analyst and Street Map Options. ■



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To apply, please send a CV and cover letter to dgolland@gmail.com by 12/7/06. Be available for an interview with the DSO Media Board from 6-8 p.m. on 12/15/06.

Lies, Damn Lies, and David Horowitz

GROVER FURR

The specific context of this essay is my inclusion in David Horowitz's book *The Professors* as one of the "101 most dangerous academics in America." The section on me is hugely dishonest. Researched and written by one Rocco DiPippo, it was first published in Horowitz's blog in March 2005—a big favor for DiPippo, who fawned with gratitude to Horowitz while publishing a yet longer version in his own blog.

The article is full of deliberate lies—statements that Horowitz either knew were false or that he made in flagrant disregard for the truth, without any attempt to verify them. They appear in the book as well. I've explained the main ones in a short essay, "Horowitz's Lies about Grover Furr" (<http://chss.montclair.edu/english/furr/pol/horowitzlies.html>).

DISHONESTY

As is the case with conservative writers generally, Horowitz has no regard for the truth. Not only does he publish false statements, but when they are pointed out he acts as though they do not matter.

And they don't matter, in fact, because Horowitz, like other conservatives, is basically writing PR for exploitation. He is funded by corporate foundations, and everything he writes promotes capitalists' interests—favors employers vs. employees—in a very class-conscious but ideologically rigid way. (For articles on Horowitz's funding sources see Alan Jones, "Connecting the Dots," (<http://insidehighered.com/views/2006/06/16/jones>) and Jennifer Jacobson, "What Makes David Run?" *Chronicle of Higher Education* May 6, 2005. Ellen Messer-Davidow, "Manufacturing the Attack on Liberalized Higher Education," *Social Text* 36 (1993), 40-80, summarizes similar attacks of the Reagan-Bush Sr. era).

Horowitz's contempt for the truth has historical roots. Ivy Lee and Jacob Bernays, founders of the modern PR industry, knew that a concern for the truth is not irrelevant—it is a negative, a disadvantage—for the advertiser, the propagandist, the PR flack (in later life Lee felt some guilt about this). Josef Goebbels, Hitler's propagandist, learned from them. All served up falsehoods to defend brutal exploitation and corporate profits.

Many neocons are former Trotskyites or, like Horowitz, former Communist Party members who move from a dogmatic pro-working class form of class consciousness to an even more monochromatic form of pro-employer, pro-imperialist dogmatism.

But thanks to his Marxist training Horowitz knows something most of our colleagues do not know. There

academic repression

IN THE FIRST PERSON

is a class struggle. It is waged in the realm of ideas as well, including, importantly, in colleges. This struggle is biased hugely in favor of capitalism, with only occasional dissenting voices, usually very weak ones.

Horowitz wants to weaken those dissenting voices even further, and is well paid for his efforts. Horowitz makes his money—a million or so a year—by carrying water for the class of exploiters. The money comes from corporate foundations and spin-offs like speeches to business and pro-business groups, all linked to the Republican Party. Recently Horowitz has turned to defending Zionism and Israel, knowing there's big bucks there too.

In public relations concern with the truth is a positive handicap. The flack's job is to compose lies that serve his boss's interest and spread them abroad thanks to the "mighty Wurlitzer" of the mass media. The media are themselves Big Business and large-scale employers of labor, a.k.a. exploiters, and also depend on capitalists for advertising.

This connection to the mass media through the corporate foundations and Republican Party is crucial. If Horowitz had only his blog, nobody would ever notice him. Case in point: DiPippo's attack on me appeared in that blog in March 2005 urging readers to bombard me with email ("Send this to your E-brigade!"). I got a total of seven messages!

MORE DISHONESTY

Horowitz's concern for student rights, indoctrination in the classroom, and diversity of viewpoint is another lie. How about indoctrination in exploiters' dogma in Economics and Business departments? Religious dogma in Religion departments? Zionism in Judaic Studies? Horowitz is happy with the indoctrination and lack of diversity of viewpoints when it promotes the two faces of capitalist exploitation: the interests of corporations at home and imperialism abroad.

Indoctrination is the norm in higher education, as it is in primary and secondary school. Horowitz is all for indoctrination—until capitalist

exploitation comes under scrutiny. Then he cries foul!

The reality is this. There is so little diversity in US schooling that anyone who thinks diversity is at all desirable should put Marxists, communists, and other opponents of capitalism at the head of their Affirmative Action lists.

But—need I say it?—Horowitz is not at all for "diversity" unless it means even more bias in favor of business interests—which he calls "patriotism."

ANTICOMMUNISM

What stimulated the DiPippo-Horowitz attack on me personally was my research into the new Russian historiography of Stalin and his role in the USSR. Documents from the former Soviet archives, and studies of them by Russian historians, have proven that the Khrushchev—Trotsky—Gorbachev—Cold War view of the "evil Stalin" is, simply put, a complete fabrication.

This exciting new work is anathema to champions of capitalism of all stripes, social-democratic and liberal as well as conservative. It's especially upsetting for the neocons, many of whom are quondam Marxists who believed Khrushchev and/or Trotsky, and who have been spouting the compatible Cold War line ever since. I've published some articles on this work, with more to come. (I summarize my work, with bibliography, in "(Un)critical Reading and the Discourse of Anti-communism" in *Red Critique* 11 (2006), at <http://tinyurl.com/v5deh>.) I've also opposed anticommunist falsifications on H-HOAC (Historians of American Communism), an academic mailing list which both Horowitz and DiPippo haunt.

The pages on me in his book reveal what Horowitz is really about—suppressing opinions that are not compatible with pro-capitalist PR. He argues that I made erroneous statements, but he is wrong in every instance. For the most part, though, he does not complain that the materials I assign in class are wrong—only that he does not agree with them.

He charges that I am "indoctrinating" students—but by this he means that I assign materials he considers to be, not wrong, but from the Left—that is, incompatible with his view of what is in the interest of his corporate masters. Despite his charge that I "indoctrinate" students, neither he nor his researcher DiPippo have any idea of how I teach. Neither interviewed a single student of mine or visited any of my classes.

By itself Horowitz's blog would be

insignificant. After all, I don't mind if rotten neocons attack me. Or rotten Liberals, for that matter, like Michael Bérubé, also one of Horowitz's "101 Most Dangerous", who has insulted me on his blog without bothering to give any reason ("The ravings of people like Grover Furr and the fringes of the Monty Python Left..."; August 30 2005). If they point out my errors, I'm grateful! If, as here, they lie and slander, they tell us something useful about their own lack of principles.

But through his big-business masters Horowitz is not only wired into the web of conservative pro-corporate hacks. These people constitute a segment of the Republican Party, and thereby an entry into the mainstream mass media too. A couple of examples from my own case:

The *Star-Ledger* of Newark, New Jersey's largest daily paper, carries a "conservative" Op-Ed columnist named Paul Mulshine. I suppose this is to keep New Jersey business interests happy so that they keep buying ads—but no doubt too because the paper is owned by the billionaire Newhouse family.

Mulshine, it turns out, reads Horowitz's blog, and devoted 1½ of his columns in Spring 2005 to attacking me for—you guessed it, not keeping Marxism out of my classes! In a second column Mulshine compared me unfavorably to an admitted Nazi professor at a nearby university, dismissed despite the fact that his students denied he had ever raised Nazi politics in his classes.

Mulshine's conclusion: if the Nazi could keep his Nazism out of his classes, I should certainly keep Marxism out of mine. This from a guy who had no idea what my classes were like—who just read Horowitz, who had no idea either. Mulshine too never spoke to a single student! Nor did he obtain any record of a single student complaint—my employers, Montclair State University, informed me that there were none.

I learned months later that Mulshine had written several articles for Horowitz's blog. Journalists are supposed to acknowledge this kind of thing—you know, "in the interest of full disclosure I'd like to inform my readers that I have written for David Horowitz's blog myself"—so we know where they are coming from. But from "journalist" Mulshine, not a peep.

A year later, hard upon the publication of his book, Horowitz was given a very friendly interview by the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. Editor Bill Steigerwald pitched soft questions to Horowitz and the latter ranted away about all the horrid professors, including me.

I emailed, and then phoned Steigerwald. He told me the *Trib-Review*

had been bought by Richard Mellon Scaife. The same Scaife who has been bankrolling conservatives for 30 years (See Messer-Davidow 1993) and who has been bankrolling Horowitz too! Hmmm!

Steigerwald agreed to publish a Letter to the Editor in which I replied to Horowitz's slanders against me. This elicited a letter from an indignant reactionary, to which I was allowed to reply, and so on.

Finally Steigerwald called a halt to the exchanges, refusing to let me respond to a last letter that called for me to be imprisoned for my views! I wondered about this. In fairness, shouldn't it be the person who has been assaulted—in this case, me—who gets final say?

A few months later I discovered that, like Mulshine, editor Steigerwald too had published in Horowitz's blog. Once again, his sweetheart interview of Horowitz contained no mention of this important fact. Nor did he inform his readers that the owner of the *Trib-Review* also funds Horowitz.

Both these facts would be relevant to a reader's ability to assess the paper's objectivity. Objectivity is—supposedly—what newspapers have to sell. Without it they are just advertisements swathed in PR material, which anybody can get for free.

In this case, the linkage runs this way: Scaife funds both Horowitz and the *Trib-Review*. Editor Steigerwald writes for Horowitz's blog; interviews Horowitz, and works for Scaife's paper, which prints favorable opinion piece on Horowitz. No "full disclosure" from Scaife; the *Trib-Review*; the editor—nada.

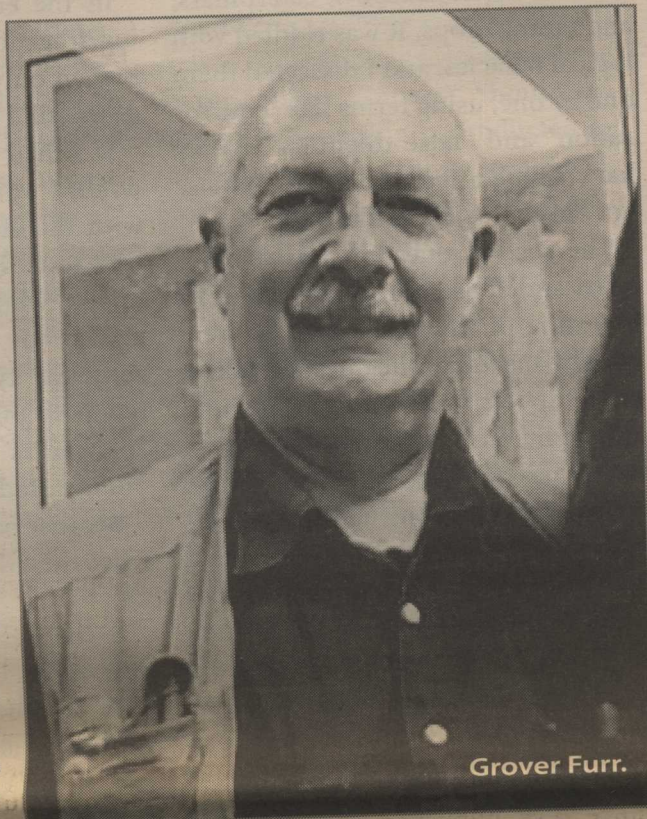
It gets better. Steigerwald's softball interview of Horowitz was syndicated to at least four other newspapers around the US. Each one of them has a policy of publishing Letters to the Editor only from persons in their circulation area. So they can publish interviews slandering me—or you—while refusing even to consider publishing a reply!

More "objectivity" from US journalism! Thus is the public kept from being informed of what is really going on! These two examples of how neocons are linked into the mainstream media are revealing. Let me give one more that is possibly more troubling still.

A couple of days after the attack on me in Horowitz's blog (March 2005) I received a phone call from Kelly Heyboer, a *Star-Ledger* reporter. She had been assigned by her editor to do a story on me because I had appeared in Horowitz's blog!

Ms. Heyboer was very pleasant and professional, and I gave her the interview. When it was over I told her that one thing concerned me. "The *Star-Ledger* is one of the largest newspapers in the country," I said, "and it seems wrong to me that it should consult a shrill right-wing blog to find material to fill its news hole." By doing so, I pointed out, the *Star-Ledger* was giving Horowitz a great deal of power—power that he would otherwise not have.

Ms. Heyboer told me that she had thought of this too, and agreed to speak with her editor about it. She later phoned back to tell me that her editor had agreed, at least to this extent: the story on me would not run



"unless something more happened." It did not hurt that she was needed to rush to cover a serious fire that had just broken out in (I think) Passaic.

So here's what this means. At least one editor at this major mainstream newspaper reads Horowitz's blog and uses it as a source for stories. Either that, or the publisher likes Horowitz, and the editor can take a hint. (The *Star-Ledger* is the flagship of the Newhouse chain of over 30 papers, including three of the most important papers in New Jersey).

In any case, had I not been a bit savvy about journalism and raised the "news hole" issue, Horowitz's meretricious slander against me would have been in 375,000 copies all over the state, and well over a half-million if syndicated to other papers in the Newhouse chain. Now there's power!

More than that—it shows how the lying conservatives are not just hooked into the fascist-neocon-Republican media. They have their *entrée* into "mainstream" media too.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM, ACADEMIC INTIMIDATION

Horowitz aims to intimidate. It won't work with me or, perhaps, other tenured professors. But the vast majority of faculty—the untenured and part-timers who teach most of the students in American universi-

ties—are the most underpaid, and have few legal protections.

Attacks against professors who protest the brutality and murder that conservatives equate with "balance" and "patriotism" have already had a big effect. Last winter John Peter Daly, an adjunct at Warren County Community College in New Jersey, lost his job for a private email to the head of the local student YAF chapter—an email in which no one alleged there was a single false statement and in which he insulted no one. Then there's the Ward Churchill witch-hunt.

At last year's convention of the Modern Language Association of America in Washington, D.C., I proposed a resolution, sponsored by the Radical Caucus of the MLA, against Horowitz's proposed Academic and Student Bills of Rights (A/SBOR). It passed and is even now being voted on in a mail ballot to the 15,000 or so MLA members (text at <http://tinyurl.com/dd36w>).

There was lively debate over what action to take, but little disagreement about the A/SBOR themselves, since the threat is a clear one. Horowitz would like to redefine "academic freedom" in a very narrow way. Here's what Horowitz means by "indoctrination":

"...a disturbing absence in university courses of assigned texts that did not validate or amplify with the professor's ideological point of view. The net effect was to deny students access to alternative—and particularly—conservative ideas that would challenge the course assumptions. The curriculum was thus transformed into a program of indoctrination." (<http://www.discoverthenetwork.org/Articles/generalintro.html>)

So for Horowitz, if a professor does not choose to assign "conservative" texts, s/he is guilty of "indoctrination."

Horowitz's group "Students for Academic Freedom" puts it this way:

If you are not taking a course whose subject is the war in Iraq, your professor should not be making statements about the war in class. Or about George Bush, if the class is not on contemporary American presidents, presidential administrations or some similar subject. (<http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/images/professor%20platform%20ad%20IN.pdf>)

Says who? Says Horowitz! He cites the 1940 AAUP statement that

"Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject."

And who determines what material has "no relation to the subject?" The faculty? No—Horowitz!

But here's the larger question: It is easy to make a relation between the Iraq War, Bush's policies, and any subject matter under the sun.

Would even Horowitz claim that, say, a German professor of Greek or

Latin of the 1930s would have been "violating academic freedom" when criticizing Nazi anti-Semitism in their classes? I'm sure he would not—but even if he did, he'd be wrong. For example, it would be easy to relate 20th century anti-Semitism to the Roman suppression of Jewish revolts in 66-73 and 132-135 A.D.

Furthermore, I'd argue that as faculty we have an obligation to do precisely what Horowitz criticizes. We should urge our colleagues to discuss the Iraq War, Bush, US foreign and domestic policy, in creative ways in all our classes.

CONSERVATISM = LIES

Horowitz can cite AAUP statements from now till US troops quit the Middle East. He's never going to find that phony definition of "indoctrination" there. Students come to university to learn what's true. If you give them, not what's true, but what is expedient—what makes the exploiters, the imperialists, the capitalists, what makes David Horowitz, happy—then you are abandoning your responsibility as an academic.

Right after MLA 2005 I wrote to *Inside Higher Ed.*:

ABOR is certainly intended to intimidate college administrators into promoting "affirmative action" for "conservative"—read: false and reactionary—ideas that, because they are false, should not be taught (except for purposes of refutation), but that are promoted by powerful institutions that promote exploitation. ("ABOR Information, Red-Baiting Dishonesty," <http://tinyurl.com/y9wpjq>)

We need to recognize this fact: Conservative ideas are false ideas. They do not deserve "equal time", or any time, except for purposes of examination, dissection, criticism, and refutation.

NOT JUST THE CONSERVATIVES—LIBERAL ELITISTS TOO

I'd like to close by emphasizing this final point. The attack on Academic Freedom comes not from the Right and conservatives alone. Their attack is in the ascendant now, and of course must be resisted. But it is similar in all essential respects to the arguments made by many liberal elitists.

The star of the conservatives will no doubt go some day into at least temporary eclipse. Most faculty and students will sigh with relief. I have to admit—I will too. But we should not sigh too much.

As the American elite get us deeper into their push for domination over the Middle East, they come ever closer to war with some combination of other powers. Predictions of a global war with China in the next couple of decades can be found in many quarters. In the meantime there'll be no shortage of "limited" wars like Iraq. Surely too there will be more terrorist attacks on US soil—attacks that will give future US leaders the kind of

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Writing to the Test: A Cautionary Tale

ETHAN CAMPBELL

Everything in the small cubicle looked grey and beat-up: the threadbare partitions that enclosed me, the filing cabinet at my feet, the computer keyboard with its grime-smeared plastic cover. The flat glare of fluorescent bulbs from behind mesh ceiling screens washed out any other remaining color. It felt like the high school library from hell.

And for more reasons than one. I was here to take the Graduate Record Exam, the GRE, as part of my applications for English Ph.D. programs. The barren office space looked hauntingly similar to the classroom where I'd taken my high school SAT test years ago—and the GRE, itself so similar to the SAT, I wondered if their respective publishers might sue each other for plagiarism. There was one verbal and one math section worth 800 points each, and a writing sample graded on a scale from 1 to 6. My fellow test-takers didn't look far removed from high school, either. They wore unlaced basketball shoes and pro sports jerseys, and chewed nervously on the supplied mini-pencils. They clearly had much riding on this 8 a.m. performance.

For myself, I suspected that the GRE was just a formality. I couldn't imagine any worthwhile graduate program caring much about the ability of its doctoral candidates to solve sophomore-level geometry problems, or distinguish shades of meaning between words like "obsequious" and "subservient." The only part they might consider, I thought, would be the writing sample. This was the newest section on both tests, which a few years ago replaced the infamous SAT "analogies"—and robbed Conan O'Brien of a memorable recurring sketch.

But there was nothing to worry about, was there? I had been teaching writing courses at the college level for nearly five years at that point. Before that, I'd gone through an MFA program in Fiction: two years of short-story writing, novel writing, all-night writing, writing tutorials, writing workshops, public readings of my writing. I'd published articles, in print journals and on the Internet, some for decent sums of money. I didn't claim to be the next Norman Mailer or Joan Didion, but I could write clear, concise, grammatically clean prose, in fairly short order.

As you may have guessed, though, this is a cautionary tale. And now the tragic hero must reveal his fatal flaw: I didn't study for the exam.

At least, I didn't study for the writing portion. The night before the test, my wife Alice, who works in finance, forced me to memorize formulas for right triangles, polyhedrons, and parallelograms, in the hope of bump-

dispatches FROM THE FRONT

ing a sure-to-be dismal quantitative score up to mediocre. It didn't matter that math was not remotely related to the degree I hoped to pursue—she didn't want me embarrassing her.

Four hours after I'd stepped into that grey, Tartarean cubicle, my eyes dimmed by the flickering screen, the computer spit out my math and verbal marks. Those sections had been multiple choice and so were calculated immediately. The essays, on the other hand, had to be read by live people and would take two weeks. My math score turned out to be middling, as expected, but my verbal stellar. I air-kissed my young colleagues goodbye—their eyes had turned various shades of yellow by now—and left in high spirits.

A cautionary tale, I said. Listen carefully.

Months later, after I'd learned to laugh again, I came across an experiment conducted by the Princeton Review, published in *The Atlantic Monthly* under the title "Would Shakespeare Get into Swarthmore?" Former SAT graders were given several excerpts from classic writers and asked to give them numerical scores according to College Board standards. Depending on what level of power the SAT currently holds over your life and future, the results were either hilarious or terrifying. Macbeth's monologue "All the world's a stage," for example, rated an obscenely low score of 2; Gertrude Stein, perhaps more justly, received a 1. The highest score, a perfect 6, went to a lengthy excerpt from the Unabomber's rambling manifesto.

My own performance on the GRE turned out to be better than the Bard's but worse than Ted Kaczynski's. It was a 4.

"That's not so bad," Alice said encouragingly, as I stood by the kitchen sink with the letter, too stunned to move. Then she saw what the score meant in comparative terms: the 33rd percentile. In other words, I fell into the bottom third of a field composed mainly of college juniors and seniors. This might not have been so demoralizing had I been a college student myself, but I was a college composition teacher. My own students had had a 2-to-1 chance of outscoring me.

Alice lowered her voice. "I guess that's not so good, either."

My first thought, like a knee jerk, was that there must have been a mistake. I thought back to my responses on the test—not an easy task, since my mind until then had been bent on forgetting the experience. Was it possible that I had made a mistake, perhaps answered the wrong question or responded more sloppily than I wanted to admit?

The questions themselves I remembered well. The first had been a test of "logical reasoning," in which I evaluated an argument about the connections between sunspots, caterpillars, and failing crops. It was riddled with logical fallacies, and I dissected them one by one, using terms like "equivocation" and "false dilemma." I may have slipped "*post hoc, ergo propter hoc*" in there, just to show off.

The second question was a more open-ended prompt about the role of literature in American society. Were Americans today, the question asked, more or less willing to engage with classic literature than they had been in the past? The question was vague, to be sure (how long ago was "in the past?"), but I felt sure of a slam dunk. In the 45 minutes allotted, I told several anecdotes from my teaching experience: the boy who dismissed *Moby-Dick* as a "gay book"; the girl who complained about Chaucer's "olden-time English"; the boy who steadfastly refused to read between the lines of a Hemingway story. My conclusion, not so much expressed directly as woven into the entirety of the piece, was that American college students are growing increasingly impatient with great works of literature, at a

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time in their lives and in history when they could find it most valuable. As I often do when composing essays, I "overwrote," then returned in the last 10 minutes to make cuts, for the sake of eloquence and concision.

Surely, I thought, this effort was worthy of more than a bottom-third ranking.

I applied to the Educational Testing Service for a rescoring of my exam, a complicated, fee-laden process that left me frustrated—they don't want anyone to challenge their scores. But the results came back promptly, two weeks later. My score remained a 4.

After this, my correspondence with the ETS grew increasingly less cordial. I asked to see a copy of my test, so I could evaluate it myself; they declined. I asked to see readers' comments, so I could hear an explanation of what I had done wrong; declined

again. I demanded to know who my graders had been, and whether their professional credentials exceeded my own. I was denied emphatically. My final e-mail message to their customer service was a lengthy, Unabomber-worthy rant, accusing the ETS of a variety of damnable offenses, starting with the opaque nature of the entire grading process. I may also have vowed to devote my life to pursuing the company's demise—I don't really remember, in my rage-fueled haze. I received a polite form letter in reply.

In the end, as in most humiliating tragedies, the hero realized that he had only himself to blame for his downfall. I should have studied.

If I had studied in advance, no doubt I would have grown disgusted with the entire system of standardized tests. But at least I would have known what to expect. I could have gritted my teeth, churned out exactly the type of bad writing that test-prep publishers like Kaplan and Sparknotes recommend, and lived out my grad school days in bliss.

Because bad writing is, indeed, just what the GRE and SAT are looking for.

In the freshman-level college writing courses I teach, I tell my students, "Less is more. Write only as much as you need, and keep your sentences and paragraphs concise." In *The Elements of Style*, E.B. White put it even more succinctly: "Omit needless words."

Kaplan's guide to the 2007 SAT, on the other hand, says that the 25-minute essay "should range between 300 to 400 words . . . If your essay is too short, no matter how well written, it could mean the difference between a low 3 or 4 and a 5 or 6" (italics mine). Length, it turns out, is the single most important factor in determining a standardized essay's grade. In a *New York Times* article last year, an M.I.T. professor claimed the ability to determine SAT essay scores from across the room, without reading a single word. Backtracking to make judicious cuts, as I did, is roundly condemned by every guide as a cardinal sin.

I tell my students, "Don't write according to a formula. There are many different ways to structure an essay, and the one you choose should depend on its context, content, and voice." The Sparknotes guide to the SAT says, "No matter what topic you end up writing about, the organization of your essay should be the same." The SAT's preferred method of organization, as anyone who's endured an AP English class will tell you, is the white-bread five-paragraph essay: introductory paragraph, thesis statement, three paragraphs of evidence, and a conclusion restating the thesis. A quick survey of the op-

ed pages of every major newspaper in America reveals that approximately zero percent of professional writers actually use this persuasive strategy. But Sparknotes proposes no alternative. My structural choice, a series of short, related anecdotes hinting at a broader abstract concept, is not worthy of mention.

When my students make grammar, spelling, or punctuation mistakes, I subtract points from their grades. Too many mistakes, and they fail. The first page of the writing test guidelines on the GRE Web site says, "Spelling or grammatical errors will not affect your score." The SAT's official guidelines, to their credit, claim that spelling and syntax will play a "minor role" in the graders' determinations, but it was hard to see them playing any role at all in the 20 top-scoring SAT essays released by the College Board this past August. Many contained glaring spelling errors that would have drawn red marks from any self-respecting copy editor: "percieve," "hinderance," "elluded," etc. My own attention to grammatical detail, while relatively automatic, may have drawn my attention away from more important matters . . . like writing as many words as possible regardless of quality.

Now that I've supported my thesis with three pieces of evidence, let me restate: the SAT and GRE writing exams promote bad writing. The strategies and skills I teach my freshman composition students are directly opposed to those needed to earn a high score on a standardized writing test. This wouldn't matter much if the madness ended at the test itself. But often the "skills" needed to score well also end up getting taught in high school classrooms, in an insidious phenomenon known as "teaching to the test." It is a phenomenon that forces me, every fall, to stand before groups of otherwise high-achieving teenagers and say, in the words of Yoda: "You must unlearn . . . what you have learned."

ACADEMIC REPRESSION

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"carte blanche" to continue the work so ably begun by the Bushites of destroying our remaining freedoms, Academic Freedom among them.

Now that the Bushites have lost some of their power, let us take advantage of what may be an all-too-brief breathing spell, and buckle down for the real fight that has only just begun—a fight for the Academic Freedom to speak the truth.

We can thank David Horowitz for one thing. He has reminded us that Academic Freedom must be fought for, or we will lose it. And if we, the faculty, do not lead this fight, it won't happen.

No fight can be won through defense alone. We faculty, together with our students, whom it is our honor and privilege to serve, must begin to

Last spring, Alice decided to join me in the Bizarro World of grad school and pursue an MBA degree. The standardized test of choice in business-education is the GMAT, an exam nearly identical to the SAT and GRE: 800 points for verbal, 800 for math, and 6 for writing. The only difference, I suspect, is that the math is harder. (The other questions no doubt come from a master list somewhere in Dubuque.)

As her test date approached, she asked for my help in preparing for the essay section. Why would she trust me with her academic reputation, knowing of my embarrassing performance several months earlier? Honestly, I can't say. But I wondered what to tell her. Should I give her exercises and critiques similar to those in my college courses? Should we discuss how writing is conducted in the real world, in all of its complexity and variety? Or should I—foul heresy—teach to the test?

Without much hesitation, I sold my soul to the test-prep devil.

"Write one paragraph of introduction and one paragraph of conclusion," I told her. "Put a clear thesis statement in the intro and conclude with a clever, pithy line. Then write the middle section. It should contain three pieces of evidence to support your thesis, but more importantly, it should contain words—lots of words. Don't pause for style; don't look back for mistakes. Just write as fast as you can, as much as you can, until time is called."

Alice claims not to remember the test prompts, or her exact responses to them. But she followed my advice to the letter. Two weeks later, the results arrived in a thin envelope. A perfect 6.

Woody Allen said that those who can't do, teach. I may never make it as a standardized test writer, but I have a promising career as a tutor to fall back on. ■

Ethan Campbell is a student in the English program.

expand the traditional boundaries of academic freedom. The old AAUP language is far too narrow. We should insist that it is we the faculty who have the right to decide what "has . . . relation to their subject."

We need to insist on our right to find creative ways to raise in all our classes the vital issues of contemporary public affairs—issues like the Iraq War, assaults on civil liberty, the bipartisan attack on the social welfare benefits and standards of living of working people, citizen or not.

Not to fight for these things is to abandon our responsibility to our students. And it is our dedication to serving the interests of our students as we see them that makes Academic Freedom a vital right in our profession. ■

Grover Furr is an assistant professor of English at Montclair State University in N.J.

Fixing the Academic Labor Crisis: Lessons from History

CARL LINDSKOOG

For much of American history, the American labor movement has been like an exclusive club, barring everyone from membership but the white, male, native-born, skilled worker. The largest labor organization of the early twentieth century was the American Federation of Labor (AFL), an alliance of unions that built on and maintained the exclusive membership policies of the elite craft unions of an earlier period. Despite the existence of the more inclusive Knights of Labor and the radical Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), most American labor unions excluded the majority of the workforce until well into the twentieth century.

This all changed in 1935 when labor leaders, fed up with the AFL's unwillingness to organize the scores of unskilled industrial workers, created the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

The craft unionists of the AFL had resisted inclusion of the unskilled because they believed that their interests conflicted with those of the industrial workforce and that their best mode of defense was to protect their craft base. However, as the formation and success of the CIO demonstrates, by the mid-1930s, more and more movement activists recognized that it was in the interest of *all* workers to organize the unskilled and thus strengthen the whole labor movement.

We desperately need a similar realization within academic labor because of the crisis that now confronts us. According to a report by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the number of contingent faculty (part-time and full-time non-tenure-track) has skyrocketed in recent years, resulting in the current situation in which 46% of all faculty now hold part-time appointments. At CUNY over half of faculty positions are staffed by adjuncts and other part-timers. This current crisis is part of a longer trend. The number of full-time faculty who are off the tenure track has risen from 3.3% in 1969 to 65% in American universities today. This process is part of what some have identified as the "corporatization of the academy." The number of full-time, tenure-track positions are fast disappearing, leaving low-paying, insecure, non-tenure-track positions.

Fortunately, like the forward-looking founders of the CIO, many within the academic labor movement are beginning to recognize that this crisis endangers full-time and part-time faculty alike. In November 2003, the AAUP adopted a resolution highlighting "the current trend toward over-reliance on part- and full-time

non-tenure-track faculty." The resolution called for equitable treatment and compensation for contingent faculty and a transition from part-time to full-time, secure positions. It also called for the majority of new appointments to be for full-time, tenure-track faculty. In its 2006 convention in Boston, the Higher Education division of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) announced the creation of a state and national legislative campaign seeking to "address the exploitation of part-time and adjunct labor in colleges and universities." More specifically, the resolution identified the need for legislators to "explore the impact of the staffing crisis on higher education[,] . . . to promote the improvement of working conditions and the earnings of part-timers, and to reverse the erosion of full-time, tenured jobs."

Within CUNY we have a similar movement building. In 2000, when the New Caucus became the elected leadership of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC, the union that represents CUNY faculty and staff), it took steps to place the crisis in academic labor on the agenda. Recognizing the need for unity of all faculty and staff, the New Caucus took steps to include part-timers. It changed the constitution so that there was increased part-time representation on the executive board of the union. It collected the agency fee for previously-exempted part-time workers, which did much to facilitate union membership among this group. In the last two contracts, the New Caucus won some limited advances for part-timers, including the conversion of 100 positions from part-time to full-time and increased funding of professional development for part-time faculty.

Despite the promising recent attempts to address the crisis in the academy, much more must be done. Full-time faculty must recognize that the health of the university depends on reversing the trend toward contingency and supporting part-time workers. Graduate students, aspiring to full-time, tenure-track positions must recognize that unless a change is made, they will be stuck in low-paying, expendable positions for the rest of their careers. Only when the founders of the CIO recognized the need to organize and unite with industrial workers did the American labor movement become a force to be reckoned with. Only when full-time and part-time workers in the academy unite to address the current crisis will we be able to reverse the process that is destroying our jobs and universities. ■

Carl Lindskoog is coordinator of the Adjunct Project of the Doctoral Students' Council.

A GC Refugee Finds Respect—in Canada

TONY MONCHINSKI

When Joe Kincheloe was in high school in rural Tennessee considering his future options, his guidance counselor suggested he become a piano tuner. A few decades—and, with wife Shirley Steinberg, over forty books—later, Kincheloe is Canada Research Chair at McGill University's Paulo and Nita Freire International Center for the Study of Critical Pedagogy.

When the Canadian government started to actively recruit the best people in a variety of fields, they offered Kincheloe a position. His recent works had included *White Reign: Deploying Whiteness in America*, *Rethinking Intelligence*, and *Measured Lies: The Bell Curve Examined*. CUNY did nothing to counter Canada's offer to Kincheloe, who left the GC's Urban Education department at the end of 2005.

Kincheloe has Masters degrees in History and the Social Studies of Education and a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction, all from the University of Tennessee. With good reason, Joe and Shirley are recognized luminaries in the field of critical pedagogy, although their modesty would lead them both to dismiss such descriptions. Recent works include *What You Don't Know About Schools*,

Tony Monchinski: People have this image of New York City as this big liberal metropolis where multiculturalism flourishes. CUNY in general and the GC in particular have this rep as left-liberal institutions. I wanted to ask you about your experiences in the CUNY system and if this is an accurate description.

Joe Kincheloe: Is that a loaded question! (laughs) That's exactly what people say to me, "It must have been great to have taught in liberal New York, such an open place," etc. I come at this from a rather unique position, having taught high school and middle school in Tennessee and Virginia; having taught university in Tennessee, Louisiana, South Carolina and Florida. I have these experiences of teaching in these conservative, very right wing, very fundamentalist places. In those places I have been around students and faculty who are amongst some of the most conservative and, as far as race is concerned, some of the most racist places in the country.

I came to New York City after having been at Penn State, which shocked me with the level of racism and insensitivity to students of color that I've ever seen. I was shocked and just couldn't stay, as were many African and Latino students who came

and bias of different types were at CUNY.

TM: How so?

JK: My position as endowed chair at Brooklyn College allowed me to be around faculty members from different fields. And the level of class bias I saw from these faculty towards students coming from lower socio-economic classes at Brooklyn and the GC floored me.

TM: It's disturbing because CUNY has a rep as a working class college system.

JK: The class bias I'm talking about I saw much more at the Graduate Center than I did on the individual campuses. In the Graduate Center class made such a difference in *who* was admitted, in *who* had certain types of cultural capital and who didn't. Amazingly, race had so much to do with the lives of students in the Graduate Center. There were times I watched faculty at the GC proclaim "We have a crisis in our programs because of the lack of ability of African American students." I'd been around those students and it was a god-damned lie.

I watched GC faculty proclaim, "We have a crisis in our programs because of the lack of ability of African American students."

TM: An inability to do what? Use "standard" English?

JK: They were talking about just general intellectual ability. To the great praise of many of my often-times white male colleagues, they fought against those sentiments. There were people who bravely stood up against that type of racism. I want to make sure I get that across.

The racism certainly wasn't monolithic. But it was coming from people who were doing writing and research that was

backgrounds.

I had a group of students who quit the Urban Ed. Department because they refused to be treated that way. They went and complained to people in the administration about the racist treatment accorded them and nobody ever got back to them. I went to the administration myself and asked why nobody was getting back to them, but nothing ever happened. I never felt so impotent in all my life.

I was in a privileged position as a professor. But even I wasn't immune to their prejudices and class biases.

There were colleagues—inside and outside my department—the ways they would treat me and what they would say about me and my own subcultural southern-Appalachian and class background.

TM: What would they say? Would they try and kid around with you?

JK: Kid around? No, never. It was basically trying to discredit my person and my scholarship. Saying I had no business being there. Saying there was a groundswell of people around the CUNY campus that *knew* I had no business being at an urban university teaching.

TM: You and Shirley publish more books—well received, positively reviewed books—in one year than most professors publish in their entire careers. How was that treated?

JK: I had people like Phil Anderson and Ken Tobin—nobody could have supported me more. I hated to leave them and I still really miss them. We were building an Urban Education program at the Graduate Center that had 60% minority enrollment. I'm really proud of that. No other department in the GC comes close to that. But outside of these dear colleagues there were those who said the type of work I was doing was just shit. When I wrote the McDonalds book [*The Sign of the Burger: McDonalds and the Culture of Power*], there were faculty who were like, "Why would anyone waste their time writing about McDonalds?"

TM: Do you think it was professional jealousy or a deeper ideological divide?

JK: Both. It wasn't necessarily ideological. Why would people who label themselves on the left be opposed to my work? Ostensibly we're fighting for similar things. Why would there be this kind of obsession with undermining and degrading my work and work like it? I'd like to emphasize not so much the bias against me as a lower class southern person with a southern accent. The point is how



Professor Kincheloe moderating a discussion on Urban Education at the Graduate Center last year.

the *Critical Pedagogy Primer*, and *The Miseducation of the West: How Schools and the Media Distort Our Understanding of the Islamic World*. In addition to being one of the most prolific professors on the planet, Joe fronts his own rock and roll band.

to Penn State. They were so taken aback that they shut the university down while I was there, just to protest the situation. So I came to CUNY to teach at Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center. And I have to say, the most egregious forms of racism

ostensibly against racism and class bias. To see the way they spoke in private situations but also the way they acted—and I think *that's* the key—the way they *acted* towards many Latino and African American students, towards students from working class

the students we brought in—African American and Latino students, female students, students who went to CUNY for their undergrad years—were mistreated. The point was to give an opportunity to indigenous New York students that Columbia and NYU weren't giving them. That was part of our charge. But there were a lot of faculty who wanted us to fill the Urban Ed. Department with students who'd done their undergraduate work at Brown and Harvard.

TM: CUNY sits in New York City, which has one of the largest public education systems in the world. Yet the Urban Education Department wasn't created until 1999.

JK: They purposefully kept it out for almost 40 years. Education was *déclassé*. People look down on education as a field in the disciplines. One of the things that all of us had to deal with was the condescension that we found from all around the university towards the education program. There were people I would speak to who wouldn't acknowledge me. It was almost like a joke. There were a few who ignored me to the point that it became a joke. I could say to a friend, "Watch this." Then say hello to one of these professors and they wouldn't say hello back to me.

TM: Ever get any good advice in high school?

JK: My guidance counselor told me I should be a piano tuner. That came out of left field. I searched my mind wondering why he would say I should be a piano tuner and I figured it out. I showed a lot of interest in music, which continues to this day with my band.

Yet at the same time, coming from where I came from, and my lack of dominant cultural capital, it was deemed that somebody like me didn't have the academic ability to succeed in higher education. So if you're my guidance counselor and you go along the X-axis and say "high musical interest" and on the Y-axis "low academic ability" you come up with "piano tuner." If it'd been "high musical interest" and "high academic ability" you'd come up with "conductor."

TM: I'd wager that your guidance counselor thought he was giving you advice that was meant to help you, not stifle you.

JK: Oh absolutely. It was very much a positivistic interest-inventory-vocational test. He was just going by the

standard interpretation of it.

TM: What were your students at CUNY like?

JK: I was overwhelmed with where my students came from. The struggles they had to go through just to get a college education and get bachelors degrees, then to go on, get their Masters degrees while they were working full time.

The Urban Ed. Department is set up such that students have to take classes outside the department itself. Students would come up to me and say, "We've never had any classes that prepared us for what we're expected to know here." They were exposed to rigorous social theory classes—and rightly so—very highly academic classes. Many of them didn't even know what that was.

I realized very quickly that students in our program needed forms of social thought and social scientific understandings that they would never have taken in a vocationally oriented Masters class.

I'd have out-of-class informal

seminars every week where we'd get together and go over, "What is sociology? What is social theory? Who is Dirckheim? Who is Weber? What are the paradigm changes we've seen over the last 40 years?"

I was doing it because they needed to know it, but also as a form of cultural capital so that when they walked into a class they'd know who Derrida, Foucault or Spivak was. They needed to show that they had the kind of cultural capital necessary to *belong* at the graduate center.

Don't get me wrong. These things are *very* important, but they're important on many levels. They're important for your intellectual development because you're going to study these things and need to know about them. But they're also important in the sense of a kid taking a standardized test in *No Child Left Behind*-Bushian public education.

If you can't do that, you can't get through. If you don't know who these people are and you can't speak this particular arcane language, you're never going to get a doctoral degree at the graduate center because you'll be dismissed as being unworthy of being there.

TM: I think you hit the nail right on the head. ■

Tony Monchinski is a Ph.D. student in the Political Science program.

*Education was
déclassé. One of the
things that all of us had
to deal with was the
condescension that we
found from all around
the university towards
the education program.*

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Bush's Private Armies, Seen from Within

MICHAEL BUSCH

Despite its initial efforts to behave responsibly following the attacks of September 11th, America has turned the War on Terror into a Wild West story for the 21st century. Complete with grizzled bad guys, "Wanted" posters, lawless badlands, and a straight-shooting sheriff in cowboy boots, this violent burlesque bears all the hallmarks of a classic western. It should come as no surprise, then, that hired guns have appeared in Baghdad, assisting the forces of good in their fight against evil. Yet far from their lone-ranging Hollywood counterparts, America's modern day gunslingers roll in Humvees, carry AK-47s, and work for corporations contracted by the United States Government.

These military contractors are the subject of Robert Young Pelton's *Licensed to Kill*. The book illustrates how the presence of soldiers-for-hire in Iraq and Afghanistan exemplifies the changing nature of the way America conducts war. As a corollary to Donald Rumsfeld's desire to transform the military into a smaller, more efficient fighting force, combat security operations have increasingly been outsourced to private corporations. From guarding kitchen supplies in Baghdad's Green Zone, to hunting Osama bin Laden in the caves of Tora Bora, paramilitary contractors have increasingly assumed the responsibilities of regular armed forces.

Of course, the phenomenon of private militaries is nothing new. Soldiers of fortune have been a staple of war since classical times: Herodotus notes that the Persian king Xerxes employed native Greeks in his war with Sparta; the Romans had an extensive history of hiring barbarian groups to do their fighting; Swiss mercenaries developed such a strong reputation in battle that to this day the Pope retains them as his personal guard. But it wasn't until global decolonization took hold in the latter half of the 20th century that mercenary warfare began to wear the clothes of corporate respectability.

Decolonization brought institutional collapse to a number of countries throughout Africa and Asia. As these nations deteriorated into civil war and social turmoil, special interest groups searched for mercenaries to seize and secure natural resources, while weak governments sought assistance in controlling domestic turbulence. Start-up corporations developed almost overnight to meet this demand. Before long, small groups of highly-trained former military men were defending diamond shafts in Sierra Leone, putting down popular revolts in Papua New Guinea, and seizing precious metal deposits in the Solomon Islands. The first generation of "corporate warriors" had been born.

After September 11th, the business of private militaries blossomed into a full-blown service industry. As the United States engaged in state-building on the one hand, and regime-change on the other, demand for skilled fighters skyrocketed. The stakes were high: on offer from the State Department and Pentagon were billions of dollars in contracts waiting to be seized. Demand was again met with supply: companies like Blackwater USA and Triple Canopy emerged from nowhere, promising services specifically tailored to the demands of America's nascent War on Terror.

While the number of private security contractors has proliferated into the tens of thousands since the American invasion of Iraq, little is known about these men, or the companies that employ them. To be sure, a small literature on private militaries

book REVIEW

• *Licensed to Kill* by Robert Young Pelton, New York: Crown Books, 2006. 368 pp.

exists, but it's largely theoretical in character. Academics, like Peter Singer of the Brookings Institution, have dissected the genealogy of corporate mercenaries, and asked uncomfortable questions about the possible consequences of their continued use. But little effort has been made to study private security operations on the ground, undoubtedly due to the immense danger involved.

Licensed to Kill constitutes an attempt to bridge this knowledge gap. Pelton spent two years traveling with private contractors in Iraq, searching for CIA-sponsored operators in southern Afghanistan, and retracing the footsteps of mercenaries attempting to overthrow the government of Equatorial Guinea. What emerges is a study in the muddled distinction between traditional mercenaries, and their recently arrived stepsiblings, private military contractors.

Pelton has made of career of traveling the world's most violent terrain in what he describes as an effort to understand the motivations of the people living there. Regardless of his own assessment, Pelton's writing sits firmly atop the fence separating war tourism and reportage. Among trips to most of the globe's nations, Pelton has written of his adventures in Colombia (where he was kidnapped), Uganda (where he was nearly killed by a bomb), and Borneo (where he narrowly survived a plane crash).

Whether Pelton's activities lead one to believe he's mad—or simply asking for it—there's no denying his journalistic knack for being in the right place at the right time. Pelton was with the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan when they captured Johnnie Walker Lind, securing the first interview with the American Taliban fighter as a stringer for CNN.

He's the only American to have interviewed the Chechen rebel leader Shamil Basayev, as well as the only Westerner to have met with the revolutionary Francis Ona on the island of Bougainville. Pelton converts these adventures into a highly successful series of practical handbooks, *The World's Most Dangerous Places*, television programs for the Discovery Channel and National Geographic, and pleasurable travelogues that evoke the spirit of Bruce Chatwin, Robert Kaplan, and Paul Theroux.

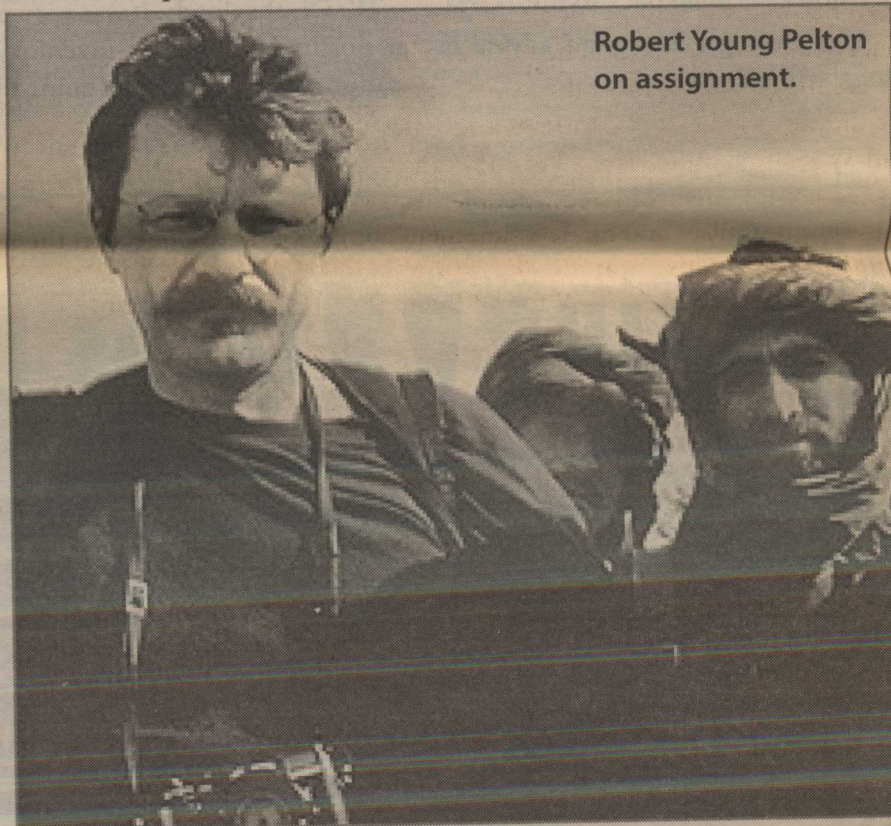
Pelton's latest book offers a largely descriptive account of his travels through the battlefields of the ever-changing War on Terror. While he disavows any attempt to provide "an academic treatise on the complete range of issues raised" by the advent of the modern military contractor, Pelton does not shy away from addressing critical problems associated with hiring private fighters to help in the fight against terrorism. In particular, *Licensed to Kill* directs its readers to the relationship between contractors and the murky waters of international

law.

Since March 2003, few images stand out in Iraq's gallery of horrors as powerfully as that of four charred bodies dangling from a bridge in Fallujah. The victims were private contractors working a security detail for Blackwater USA. After their bodies had been punctured by bullets and set on fire, the men were dragged through the streets and dismembered by a jubilant crowd of local Iraqis. What remained of the Blackwater contractors was hoisted up on a bridge spanning the Euphrates, and left hanging for days until American marines lay siege to the city a short time later.

Pelton uses the incident at "Blackwater Bridge" to investigate corporate response to the deaths of its employees. What he uncovers is ugly, but not surprising. The families of the dead contractors each received a one-time payment of \$64,000 and a letter of condolence from L. Paul Bremer. That the convoy had been improperly equipped, undermanned, and the operation hastily organized, seems of limited importance to the company. Indeed, a recurring theme throughout Pelton's narrative is the willingness of corporations to abandon their employees when the going gets tough. But Fallujah drives to the heart of even more disturbing problems associated with private military contractors.

Pelton notes that "while not active members of



Robert Young Pelton
on assignment.

the military per se, [the four contractors] were armed and ready to shoot if necessary, were providing critical support for the U.S. military's core mission, and their paychecks . . . were ultimately financed by the Pentagon. Even though those facts tilt the assessment essentially in a military, though nontraditional, direction, some analysts continue to argue that the contractors were essentially playing a civilian role."

This questionable assessment raises the specter of "unlawful combatants," made famous in the Supreme Court's consideration of *Hambdi vs. Rumsfeld*. The important distinction here is not between mercenary and contractor, but between soldier and civilian. The United States has made plain what it considers the rights of unlawful combatants under the Geneva Conventions. For all intents and purposes, military contractors fall within the rubric. According to the logic of the Rumsfeld defense, then, the fate of the contractors at Blackwater Bridge falls outside the jurisdiction of the Geneva

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When Controversy Is Part of the Show

FRANK EPISALE

My Name is Rachel Corrie is a new play adapted from the correspondence and diaries of a student-activist from Olympia, Wash., who was killed while protesting the bulldozing of Palestinian settlements by the Israeli military in 2003. Originally developed and produced under the auspices of the Royal Court Theatre, the play's text is made up entirely of material taken from Corrie's writings, edited by Alan Rickman and Katharine Viner. The production was directed by Rickman and was well-received in London.

Months before its American premiere, *Corrie* had already become the year's most controversial off-Broadway play. Originally slated as a part of New York Theatre Workshop's Spring 2006 season, the play was postponed by NYTW artistic director Jim Nicola, who was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying "there was a strong possibility that a number of factions, on all sides of a political conflict, would use the play as a platform to promote their own agendas." Given the situation, Nicola asserted, his organization needed more time to arrange a series of talkbacks and events to better "contextualize" the play.

A firestorm followed, dominating listservs, community forums, and press releases for weeks. Artists, academics, and not-for-profit administrators throughout the theatre community weighed in. What many found particularly unsettling was that Nicola said he had reached this conclusion after talking to "members of the Jewish community." He did not say he spoke to Jews and Palestinians and WASP-y families from Washington state. He fielded complaints from a few people from one of these communities and made a statement about "a number of factions from all sides" of a complex situation. As a result, NYTW found themselves in the unwelcome and unfamiliar position of being scorned by the theatre community. Representatives from the Royal Court Theatre, including Alan Rickman, announced that they would pull the rights for the U.S. premiere from NYTW and produce it elsewhere off-Broadway.

When it finally opened at the Minetta Lane Theatre in October, many critics wondered whether a relatively modest one-woman play could stand up to the multivalent hype. Was it even possible to evaluate the production itself given the theatricality of the events leading to its opening? Ultimately, though, these questions are beside the point. The debate surrounding this production cannot and should not be separated from evaluation of the production itself. The discussion is not a distraction from the work; the discussion is part of the work.

My Name is Rachel Corrie does not aspire to be a masterwork of dramatic literature. It was not originally intended to be a profit-making venture (though its current incarnation has shifted that somewhat). Despite a performance that may turn out to have launched the career of a formidable actress (Megan Dodds), it is not intended primarily as a star-vehicle. Rickman's Director's Note asserts that "Rachel Corrie's words" do not ask to be "approved of, repossessed, interrupted or censored" but "simply heard." I would argue, however, that "simply hearing" these words is not at all the point.

theater REVIEW

- *My Name is Rachel Corrie* by Rachel Corrie, Alan Rickman and Katharine Viner
- *Bhutan* by Daisy Foote

At its most successful, this play encourages debate and conversation among a theatre-going population too often content to "simply" and passively "hear" rather than to engage and respond as part of a larger conversation.

When I arrived to pick up my tickets at the box office, two women were waiting to hand me flyers. Each flyer claimed to be dispelling myths surrounding Corrie's life and death and, not surprisingly, each flyer contained facts that seemed to directly contradict the other. Intriguingly, the disparate points of view seemed to be equally well-documented, citing major news organizations and reputable opinion-makers. The performance, and the conversation, had begun before I'd even picked up my tickets.

All the theatricality and role-playing involved in the pre-show controversy interacts intriguingly with the first third of the play's text. Rachel is a passionately humanist woman but also seems to feel a little lost. She tries on and discards identities, and causes, and bedroom décor. She remembers her fragmented answers to childhood questions about what she wanted to be when she was "grown up" and reflects on the fact that she's hardly narrowed it down much since then. The decision to go to Palestine with an activist organization is framed

poverty-stricken population.

Rickman and Viner have shaped Corrie's writings into a cohesive dramatic arc about the transformation of a young woman from privileged outsider to political martyr. This results in a complex and uneasy relationship between Rickman's assertions that these words are meant to be "simply heard" and the evident fact that the words have, in fact, been edited into a dramatic fiction. It is also troubling that, in martyring Corrie, the play asks us to cry more for her than for those she sought to protect. I am not writing this to suggest that the work is dishonest or fraudulent; I mean it simply as a reminder that we are not watching an objective document of Corrie's (already subjective) experience but a carefully crafted text that, in this

case, has been brought to life by a powerful actress and a skilled director.

My Name is Rachel Corrie is manipulative insofar as it is meant to evoke emotional and intellectual responses in the spectator, but it does not demand that the audience remain passive. Indeed, on the night I attended, some audience members leapt to their feet yelling "Bravo," others

applauded quietly with tears on their cheeks, and still others sat on their hands in silent protest of a point of view they found offensive. The audience response itself was a part of the performance, and blurred the boundary between the "theatrical" and the "real" on yet another level.

Daisy Foote's *Bhutan*, now enjoying its world premiere at the Cherry Lane Theatre in Greenwich Village, does not claim to be a documentary

exploration of its subject matter. At its most successful, however, it feels as closely observed and as "true" as anything in *My Name is Rachel Corrie*. It also falls into some of the same traps, including a neatly constructed narrative that provides some too-easy explanations for the flaws of its characters. This structural and psychological tidiness undermine the play's effectiveness; with all the loose ends tied up, there's not much left to think about af-

Megan Dodds as Rachel.



at first as almost whimsical. Yes, she is motivated by humanitarian issues, but she is also following a relatively shallow impulse that she's not sure will last very long.

Having spent perhaps too much time presenting colorful, anecdotal observances from Corrie's writings, the text moves to the Gaza Strip where, for the most part, the tone shifts dramatically. Corrie was a clever diarist with a self-deprecating sense of humor and the play only gradually transitions into the weighty, overtly political tone that marks its final moments. Most interesting among these passages are those that explore Rachel's recognition of her own privileged position as a relatively moneyed American in the midst of a besieged and

ter the house lights have come up. Nevertheless, it is both a moving exploration of working class America and an admirably crafted dramatic text that mark Foote as a playwright to watch.

Bhutan is an exploration of imprisonment both literal and metaphorical. Warren (Jedediah Schultz) is in prison for a crime that is only revealed about midway through the play. It is unclear at first whether this crime was intentional, but it is a crime to which he has confessed. His sister, Frances (Sarah Lord), longs to escape small-town-Massachusetts to attend Columbia University and to visit far-off and exotic-sounding places like Bhutan. She is encouraged in this by her next-

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Lost in America

The Myth and Symbol of Daniel Johnston

ANTON BORST

While the absolute last thing the United States may need right now is another white male to stand representative for a mythic national consensus, a very strong case could be made for outsider folk artist Daniel Johnston. Recently released on DVD, the documentary *The Devil and Daniel Johnston* makes clear how expansive a swath of American values, themes, and realities Johnston's life and work encompasses. Propelled by his brilliantly individual artistic vision, an audience that yearned for the perceived authenticity of folk and punk, and the massive publicity he received when Kurt Cobain wore a Johnston t-shirt in multiple TV and photo appearances during the early 90's, Johnston is a poster child for DIY cult indie rock success, despite—or because of—a lack of both conventional stage presence and guitar playing ability.

According to the documentary, Johnston first hits the Austin music scene in the 80's after having fled the confines of his religiously conservative West Virginian family via a short stint selling corn-dogs with a traveling carnival. The film sketchily implies that a period of intense drug use culminating in a bad acid trip at a Butthole Surfers concert brings him back to the Christian fundamentalism of his parents: in one of many darkly funny tape-recorded conversations, Johnston neatly out-pon-tificates the mother who had so often dismissed him and his art as "satanic," chastising her for not reading the "scriptures" enough. At around the

music REVIEW

- *continued Story + Hi, How Are You* by Daniel Johnston (Eternal Yip Eye Music 2006)
- *The Devil and Daniel Johnston*, directed by Jeff Feuerzeig

Yo La Tengo, and Tom Waits. He worships fame, has an over-inflated sense of personal destiny, and expresses profound ambivalence towards sex. Like his high-pitched voice, he is infantile, his tyrannical parents saintly for the self-sacrificing devotion they show in caring for an adult at times not only helpless but dangerous. While the Johnston of *The Devil and Daniel Johnston* may or may not be a genius, he is certainly delusional, crashing a plane piloted by his father while under the impression he is Casper the Friendly Ghost. But then again, he might also be prophetic: "God Promises a Safe Landing But Not a Calm Voyage" reads the sign in front of the Church of Christ his father passes on his way home from the ordeal.

For Johnston, the themes catalogued above do not merely unfold one-by-one over the course of years, but often seem simultaneously held in mind, offering a tempting cultural explanation for severe bipolar disorder. His story is not that of a prodigal son who trades a crude and foolish excess for a crude and foolish faith (i.e., Dubya), but of a modern day Walt Whitman, whose mind breaks

in encompassing too great a multitude of contradiction. But while Whitman's great unifying "I" in *Leaves of Grass* functions as a safely textual repository of antebellum tensions, Johnston's art is less a buffer zone between his mind and disparate external pressures than a record of their direct collision into one another. Wisely, however, director Jeff Feuerzeig avoids the classic romantic traps of metaphorizing madness as genius and the individual as nation, even as he clearly reveals why such metaphors have long compelled the imagination—and

why they especially do in Johnston's case. While acknowledging the brute but real tautology that mental illness is mental illness, Feuerzeig's complex portrait nevertheless leaves the meanings of Johnston's life and work generously available to interpretation, and provides a rich context in which to understand the lo-fi, tape-recorded gems on the recently reissued double-album, "continued Story + Hi, How Are You."

The song "Funeral Home," for example, on which Johnston belts out "I'm going to the funeral home and never coming back," symbolically expresses a bitter Christian hopefulness about the release death will afford, but also literally alludes to the fact that the woman he secretly loved in college married a funeral home director. As Feuerzeig's documentary shows, Johnston constantly converts into art everything around him, tape-recording friends talking, doodling his own illustrations into comic books, filming himself as a teenager caricaturing his mother. In "Dem Blues," an *a capella* dialogue, Johnston draws imagery from the banalities of

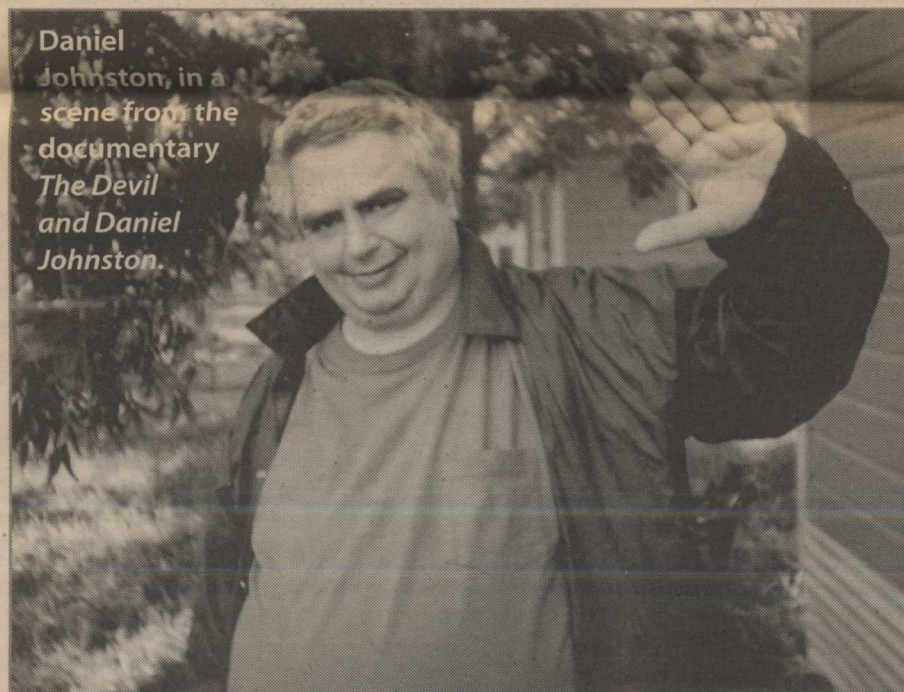
his stifling upbringing when he scolds himself for upsetting the "juice" and "donuts" of staid church socials in the excitement of his despair ("I really don't know what I'm after / You're stepping on the crackers"). The chillingly simple "I Picture Myself With a Guitar," however, questions just how much contact with the world his art in the end provides, the title rather solipsistically answering the only other line in the song: "I see your face."

Sometimes playful, sometimes haunted, and often both at once, Johnston's lyrics on "continued Story + Hi, How Are You" are always powerfully direct. The buoyant melody of the cartoon based "Casper," for instance, carries the starkest of opening lines: "He was smiling through his own personal hell / Dropped his last dime in a wishing well." "Despair Came Knocking," ploddingly spoken over descending pairs of atonal guitar notes, figures depression as a visitor who comes by only to sit smoking in morose silence. While many tracks feature a full band and exhibit a polished blues and Beatles inspired pop sensibility, the lo-fi rawness of songs like "Despair" more compellingly frames the dark simplicity of his words. And no amount of studio production could better deliver the lines "I'm a loner, I'm a sorry entertainer" than the dissonant plastic-strung-banjo-sounding guitar Johnston bangs on solo in "Sorry Entertainer."

The roughness of the recording shines for other reasons, too, especially on "Hi, How Are You," which unlike "continued Story" was not recorded in a studio but by Johnston onto cassette. Songs are accompanied or interrupted by conversations with friends, strange mechanical pulses, bits of other recordings, ticking, a running faucet, and the loud clicks of the tape recorder as it stops and starts, infusing the album with the authenticity of a found object and the suspense that accompanies chaos, rather than the security of a planned product. Soft static suffuses the background of every song, rendering the air in whatever garage, basement, or trailer Johnston recorded them sonically palpable. While this makes Johnston's voice muddled and distant, it also establishes an unsettling intimacy: you can actually hear the room in which he sings his nervous breakdown.

Strange dislocating things happen even in the packaging of the album, blurring the boundary between error and intention. The CD begins by continuing the story with which it ends, the earlier "Hi, How Are You" (1983) following the later "continued Story" (1985), which in turn begins with a song that repeats the words, "It's over, It's over," again and again. The lyrics included in the liner notes only vaguely follow the order of the actual CD, and list a song called "The Dead Dog Laughing In The Cloud" in the place of "Sorry Entertainer," which does not appear at all in the printed matter. In addition to cover art by Johnston (who has received a great deal of attention for his drawings as well as his music), the CD includes a reprint of "Daniel Johnston's Symbolical Visions," the "Rosetta stone" of his work according to former manager Tartokov, because it explains many of Johnston's most recurring images, among them a boxer with an opened skull emitting light beneath a large, hovering Satan: a cliché potently rendered of an artistic mind raw to demons both within and without, but that nevertheless retains the ability to transform them into objects of striking beauty. ■

Anton Borst is a Ph.D. student in the English program.



Daniel Johnston, in a scene from the documentary *The Devil and Daniel Johnston*.

same time as the acid trip, the already manic-depressive Johnston suffers a complete psychological breakdown, beats his manager with a pipe, and is institutionalized for the first of many times. In addition to straddling the apparently not so disparate worlds of evangelical visionary and psychedelic countercultural rocker, Johnston brings heartland revivalism into the heart of New York City cool, turning an exclusive gig at a hipster record store into a lengthy, sobbing call for salvation (making "everyone feel very awkward" according to Jeff Tartokov, his next manager). He poisons himself: he smokes, he works at McDonalds for a time, he becomes obese, he writes extremely dark jingles for Mountain Dew from a mental hospital ("Demons, demons drink the Mountain Dew" he sings). In college, he unrequitedly falls in love with a girl he would never see again (aside from a recent filmed encounter included in the DVD's special features), but who would nevertheless inspire songs of heartbreakingly pure love for decades. A musician's musician, he has been covered by Beck,

THEATER REVIEW

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door neighbor, a retired Columbia professor with liberal politics and, apparently, inherited wealth. Frances's dreams of exploring the word rankle her mother Mary (Tasha Lawrence), a beleaguered widow who is angry with herself for not being able to better provide for her children and angry with a world that has put her in a difficult position.

While Foote's sympathies are primarily with Frances, Lawrence dominates the play with her layered and forceful performance as Mary. Schultz's performance is somewhat uneven; neither his swagger nor his swoony obsession with his girlfriend are consistently believable, but the moments when his desperation breaks through the façade are among the most powerful in the production. Lord, as Frances, and Amy Redford, as her aunt Sara, are both compelling actresses but fail to overcome the text's somewhat simplistic character psychology. Their performances both reveal the limitations of the play itself and underscore the strength of Lawrence's performance as Frances. Because the play's strengths are so rooted in its specificity of place and time, inconsistent dialogue work from some of the actors is sometimes distracting.

Foote has a good ear for language and a fine understanding of dramatic structure, but pushes each storyline just a little too far. The heavy-handed metaphor of the basement-furnace threatening to explode is also a bit much. Evan Yionoulis has staged and pace the play skillfully and, clearly seeking to keep attention on the text and the actors, has elicited competent but largely invisible work from his design team.

Bhutan admirably seeks to bring three-dimensional life to Jerry Springer's America. The characters are allowed dignity even when descending into the seediest of subplots. In its quest to explain the cultural and economic contexts that lead to reality-TV behavior, though, the play fails to really engage the issues it explains away, demanding responsibility neither from its characters nor from the audience. Still, there's an underlying condescension at work in the play's structure. When Frances talks to her family about Bhutan, she is troubled that none of them, including herself, have ever heard of "a whole country." The moment is played for laughs, but there's a thematic seriousness underneath. When Mary and Sara steal and destroy the anti-Bush signs from their wealthy neighbor's lawn, they don't seem to be doing it for any specific political reasons as much as a general disdain for both liberals and the wealthy. It's moments like these that reveal the play's politics, and the less-than-flattering sympathy it seeks with its characters. While I happen to agree that rural, working-class Americans have been hoodwinked by the Republican party, the implication that every misfortune in their lives could be avoided if they would pay more attention to national politics and world geography, is a little too simple, a little too tidy, a little too easy. There's little for the audience to do besides clap their hands, shake their heads, and congratulate themselves for their sympathetic point of view. ■

Frank Episale is a Ph.D. student in the Theatre program.

BOOK REVIEW

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Conventions.

This observation leads to further concerns related to international law, and the protection of human rights. Non-state armed groups, and their activities in combat zones, have received considerable attention from lawyers and scholars since the end of the Cold War. The attacks of September 11th, and America's response since, have added further complications to understanding notions of accountability during wartime. Here, the role of private military contractors is critical. Unlike the soldiers at Abu Ghraib, corporate warriors are not held responsible to a clear chain of authority.

Pelton wills the problem away by noting that "for the most part, the vast majority of security contractors in Iraq abide by the rules of engagement" that state "shoot only when shot at." But as "trophy videos" of random murder shot by contractors emanate from Iraq, and a contractor in Afghanistan is charged with torture and murder demonstrate, the small percentage of human rights violators in the contracting ranks is precisely what demands attention. In the aftermath of September 11th, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan addressed the need to "formulate clear guidelines for . . . the protection of civilians in armed conflicts where terrorist organizations are active." Yet no such stipulation has been advanced for contract organizations.

Of greater importance still is Pelton's observation that many contractors slip back and forth between security-related contracting jobs and more traditional mercenary activities. As Pelton, Singer, and others have pointed out, future military operations will likely become dependent on soldiers-for-hire. Private militaries are not only cost-effective, but politically effective. They allow governments and organizations the luxury of pursuing military objectives without taking responsibility if things go awry. That a significant number of these private fighters have experience as death squad operators in apartheid-era South Africa and as Chilean "disappears" under Pinochet, should compound our anxieties about shaping future conflicts within more humane laws of war, let alone about the possibility of peace.

In addition to concerns regarding contractors vis-à-vis international law, Pelton also draws attention to ways corporate warriors will affect the future development of the United States military. While life for contractors is risky, the pay is high, freedom of movement is great, and contracts stipulate alternating six month rotations of work and rest. None of these luxuries are enjoyed by regular forces. Pelton discusses the problems other countries face in preventing their military personnel from defecting to private companies that provide



more lucrative opportunities in mercenary work. Yet he is disappointingly quiet on the issue in regards to the United States military. Given deteriorating morale brought on by the Iraq campaign, it stands to reason that American troops look on their paramilitary brethren with envious eyes.

Pelton's narrative suffers other shortcomings as well. If *Licensed to Kill* benefits from its author's willingness to risk life and limb in the pursuit of facts, it exhibits his inability to coherently organize those facts into a sustained examination of the modern mercenary/contractor. At times, the book loses focus. Why Pelton devotes a section of his book to the loose-cannon antics of Jack Idema is unclear. Idema is neither a mercenary nor a private contractor, but an adventurous con man in pursuit of his own glorification. Additionally, it fails to treat the full spectrum of contractor/mercenary activity. Absent is any discussion surrounding the presence of private contractors in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. Nor is their involvement with humanitarian NGOs given any space.

Nevertheless, Pelton succeeds in making one thing starkly evident: soldiers-for-hire enjoy no protection on any front. If things get hairy, their corporate sponsors will not hesitate to terminate them, and laws—international and domestic—will afford them no safeguards from prosecution, or, as in the case of Blackwater Bridge, from a much bleaker fate. These concerns question the wisdom of their use by governments and others in the first-place. As one lawyer has pointed out, "if laws protect you like trees from the devil, and you cut them down to get to the devil, what will protect you when the devil comes after you?" ■

Michael Busch is a Ph.D. student in the Political Science program.

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The Agony Booth is an ongoing inquisition into some of the worst movies humanity has to offer, and is not for the weak of spirit or the easily disheartened. However, if you think you have the fortitude to completely immerse yourself in a truly awful film, withstanding in-depth commentary and analysis, then the Agony Booth is the place for you. As Mirror Spock would say, you may just find it to be a most effective means of discipline.

agonybooth.com

Border Crossings, Intellectual and Literal

TIM KRAUSE

For decades, the cinematic figure of the outsider—the wanderer, the exile, the foreigner, not the criminal or the outlaw *per se*, but more of an unwilling traveler, “thrown forth by fate,” like Virgil’s Aeneas, into new worlds of danger and uncertainty—has been a familiar character. In films like Michelangelo Antonioni’s *Il Grido* (1957) and *The Passenger* (1975), Jerzy Kawalerowicz’s *Night Train* (1959), and Wim Wenders’s *Alice in the Cities* (1974) and *The American Friend* (1977), the outsider takes on a metaphysical, existential status, as a necessary stance forced upon unwilling men and women by humanity’s nakedness before nature, time, and fate. The voyage ultimately becomes a mental, as well as a physical, one: the hardest borders crossed by the traveler are internal, not political or physical.

Many recent films have taken these themes as their subject: Carlos Reygadas’s unfairly neglected *Japón* (2002) and Fernando Mierelles’s more mainstream *The Constant Gardener* (2005) spring to mind, as does Michael Haneke’s haunting, suspenseful *Caché* (2005), which presents the twin protagonist-victims Georges (Daniel Auteuil) and Majid (Maurice Bénichou) as exiles in their own lives—Georges in his marriage, Majid in his depressing, dirty flat, each man consumed by rage, confusion, and regret—disastrously impelled from a single, fatal moment of betrayal in their childhood.

One of the films under review, Alejandro González Iñárritu’s *Babel*, charts similar emotional and conceptual terrain, while taking its narrative

film REVIEW

- *Babel*, directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu
- *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*, directed by Larry Charles

been given; the voyage of a married American couple Susan and Richard (played by Cate Blanchett and Brad Pitt), akin to the “tea in the Sahara” vacation of Port and Kit Moresby in Bertolucci’s *The Sheltering Sky* (1990), and which veers into disaster when Susan is shot by one of the boys; the couple’s children back in the United States, who illegally cross the border into Mexico with their maid Amelia (the terrific Adriana Barraza) to attend her son’s wedding, accompanied by Amelia’s troubled nephew, Santiago (Gael García Bernal); and a lonely, deaf-mute Japanese girl, Chieko (Rinko Kikuchi), who has turned suicidal following the death of her mother.

Babel is excellent in showing how innocent individuals get caught up in vast schemes beyond their control, as with the Moroccan boys, who are classified as terrorists and apprehended after the accidental shooting; or Susan and Richard’s children, who cannot return from Mexico to the US and must attempt a dangerous border-crossing, along with Amelia, who is caught and deported. Throughout Iñárritu focuses on the powerless, the helpless, and the lost, with a deft eye for cinematic metaphors of his characters’ simultaneous

violence, and death. *Babel* is a fine film, if not a great one—it’s somewhat humorless, and its attempts at significance sometimes feel forced—a provocative and moving portrayal of contemporary rootlessness and discontent, its characters searching for a pattern of human contact behind the seemingly random events of their lives.

One wonders what Borat Sagdiyev, the fake Kazakh journalist and eponymous hero of Sasha Barton Cohen’s *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan* (directed by Larry Charles), would have done in their situations. *Borat* approaches the themes of cultural displacement and exile with a comic sledgehammer, pounding away at national, religious, and cultural pieties until they are reduced to rubble.

The plot is as stupidly simple as the generations of idiots-on-the-road comedies to which *Borat* is the proud heir: Borat has come to the United States from Kazakhstan, hoping to complete a documentary on the great empire, home of the “mighty warlord Premier Bush.” He sees an episode of *Baywatch* on a hotel TV, and is transfixed by the sight of Pamela Anderson, with whom he promptly falls in love, and whom he now searches for incessantly. *Borat* thus indulges in the various divagations and digressions of the picaresque adventure movie, with the film turning its attention, like General Sherman, to a scorched-earth campaign throughout red-state America: an unceasingly satiric attack on American jingoism, fundamentalism, and racism.

Borat is a demonic Candide, perpetually wide-eyed and awake in the dream-land of America, a hyper-friendly whirlwind of inappropriate speech, pratfalls, and precisely-timed misunderstandings (part of Cohen’s routine is to perform Borat before unsuspecting dupes, recording their generally-hilarious responses to his various inanities). Borat is always two things at the same time: as the hapless foreigner, he readily indulges the audience’s appetite for the negative stereotype, the exaggeration, and the ridiculous—the cruel, socially-corrective element of comedy as elaborated by Henri Bergson; as the hyper-enthusiastic lover of America, he explodes our own positive national and cultural stereotypes—our openness, our tolerance, our good-heartedness—revealing much of them as the overinflated, empty rhetoric we might have suspected them of having been.

Finally, *Borat* is mercifully short: a concession, no doubt, to the improvised, sketch-like quality of much of the material, as well as a smart way to have more screenings, but also a brave, humane acknowledgement of its status as an entertainment object, as a fun throwaway star vehicle. *Babel*—whose nearly two-and-a-half-hour exposition of the human condition drags at times under the weight of its own endlessly elaborated significance—could have benefited from *Borat*’s lean, mean economy. ■

Tim Krause is a Ph.D. student in the English program.

Alejandro González Iñárritu and Brad Pitt on the set of *Babel*.



structure from a recently-developed genre of Hollywood drama: the “we-are-all-connected” melodramatic thriller-morality play, most memorably used in Paul Thomas Anderson’s classic *Magnolia* (1999), and later seen in films like Steven Soderbergh’s *Traffic* (2000) and Stephen Gaghan’s *Syriana* (2005), having reached a point of aesthetic bankruptcy with its commercial and critical apothecosis in Paul Haggis’s travesty *Crash* (2004).

Babel happily avoids the excesses of the form, deftly counterpointing a number of seemingly unrelated, yet subtly connected, plot lines: the adventures of two Moroccan boys with a rifle they’ve

interconnectedness and lack of connection—the ripples flowing outward from a rock thrown in the water, say, or the glittering nighttime towers of Tokyo, home of millions of strangers, through which Chieko and her schoolfriends flit, unnoticed, like ghosts.

The plot can be convoluted, but there are moments of extreme loveliness, such as the wedding in Mexico, or Chieko’s attempts to communicate with the policeman investigating her mother’s death, that resonate: moments of connection, however fleeting and temporary, that strain against the general trend toward miscommunication, chaos,

News You Can Use from the DSC

CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS

A note to all Chartered Organization leaders: In order for your group to remain chartered (that is, eligible for funding and an office from the DSC) you need to submit updated contact information, a membership roster, and a constitution and mission statement to Co-Chair for Student Affairs Chong Wojtkowski at <cjwojo@gmail.com> by December 15th at the very latest.

CAMPUS VISITS

The DSC is coming to a campus near you! In September, DSC officers hosted a pizza party at the Grove School of Engineering at CCNY; as this page goes to press, we are preparing for a happy hour at Lehman College. Please contact the DSC at <dsc.steering.committee@gmail.com> to request that we hold our next event at your campus!

DEPARTMENTAL ALLOCATIONS

DSC reps are encouraged to spend their allocations and submit receipts by the end of the fiscal year, June 30th. Please contact Co-Chair for Business Management Brenda Vollman at <brenda.vollman@gmail.com> to find out how much money your department is eligible for this year.

OPEN MEETINGS LAW, QUORUM, AND VOTING

In September, the chancellor modified its position, finding the

DSC subject to the Open Meetings Law and the General Construction Law. The quorum and voting changes are drastic. Quorum is now a majority—not of the actual membership—but of the potential membership, including vacant seats. Since there are 83 potential members of the DSC, quorum is now 42. Additionally, motions can only be carried by a majority of the total potential membership, meaning nothing will be considered “passed” without 42 affirmative votes. The Executive and Steering Committees are discussing potential ways to mitigate the impact of this decision, and in the meantime, we are working very hard to fill as many of the vacant seats as possible. But we need your help. If you are a member, it is absolutely imperative that you not miss meetings, and when you must, please send a non-member replacement to serve as your proxy (notifying us in advance, at <dgolland@gmail.com>). If you are a member who simply cannot attend the meetings, please get yourself a permanent replacement and resign. If you are a student from an unrepresented (or under-represented) department, please consider representing your department at the DSC. Simply contact Co-Chair for Student Affairs Chong Wojtkowski at <cjwojo@gmail.com> to sign up. A complete list of reps’ rights and responsibilities is available from Chong on request. The unrepresented departments are Business, Educational

Psychology, Mechanical Engineering, German, Philosophy, Biopsychology, Cognitive Neuropsychology, Developmental Psychology, Experimental Psychology, and Speech & Hearing Sciences. The under-represented departments are Art History, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Sociology.

GRADUATE COUNCIL AND GRAD COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Graduate Council is the decision-making body of the college, comprised of students, faculty, and administrators. (This is not to be confused with the Doctoral Students’ Council, which is the college’s student government.) Without substantial student attendance at Grad Council, student voices will not be heard. Additionally, we must continue to oppose efforts to limit student representation at Grad Council. If you are a Grad Council rep for your department, please be sure to attend all meetings (twice per semester) and notify your DSC rep if you can’t make it (DSC program reps serve as Grad Council alternates). A complete list of upcoming meetings is below. If you are on a committee and don’t know when your next meeting is, or if you are a Grad Council member and are not receiving notices by mail, please contact Alice Eisenberg, the Grad Council Staff Assistant, at <aeisenberg@gc.cuny.edu>.

PLENARY GUEST SPEAKERS

GC Ombuds Officer Rolf Meyer-son and Vice President for Student Affairs Matt Schoengood were guest speakers at the September and October DSC plenary meetings. Look for the newly-elected University Student Senate chairperson (CUNY Trustee Ex-Officio) Robert Ramos and Vice Chair for Graduate Affairs Shelly-Anne Quilty in November. The new chairperson of the University Faculty Senate (CUNY Trustee Ex-Officio) Manfred Phillip will be our guest speaker in December. Future guest speakers will include President Kelly, Acting Provost Edwards, and the new head of IT, Bob Campbell.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:

- DSC Plenary meetings (6:00 p.m./5:30 for food, GC 5414): November 17, December 8, February 23, March 23, April 27, May 11; these are also now listed in the elevator calendars.
- DSC Steering Committee meetings (6:00 p.m., GC 5489): December 1, January 26, March 9, April 13, May 18.
- DSC Media Board (6:00 p.m., GC 5489): March 2, May 4.
- Graduate Council (3:00 p.m./2:30 for food, GC 9205/6/7): December 12, March 1, May 10.

VISIT US ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.CUNYDSC.ORG](http://WWW.CUNYDSC.ORG).

Make a Diff: Volunteer for the Holidays

ADVOCATE STAFF

Since the ghosts, ghouls, and goblins of Halloween put away their costumes, the city has begun to bedeck itself for the annual winter holidays. While the Thanksgiving through New Year’s rush accelerates life around us, please take a moment for those who are not as fortunate. We’ve put together a short, but by no means exhaustive, list of ways that members of the Graduate Center community can give a little back to others during the holidays. To search out an opportunity by date, organization, or event/holiday, go to New York Cares at www.nycares.org for a complete list of city-wide openings.

TAKING CARE OF THE HOMELESS

Since 1971, the Bowery Residents’ Committee (BRC) has been providing social services for women and men who are homeless or at risk of becoming so. Located in Manhattan, the BRC provides assistance to all five boroughs. All types of volunteer opportunities are available, and the BRC will be hosting several Volunteer Orientation sessions in December (Dec. 5th, Dec. 12th, and Dec.

19th). To reserve a space at one of these orientation sessions or to learn more about upcoming volunteer opportunities, please contact Rick Akin, Director, Volunteer Services, at rakin@brc.org or (212) 803-5700.

FEED THE PEOPLE

Father’s Heart Soup Kitchen, part of the faith-based non-for-profit Father’s Heart Ministry, has a Hunger Prevention program that operates on Manhattan’s East Side. For three Saturdays each month, this program provides food and meals to over 500 people via a combined Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen that dispenses served breakfast and groceries. Multiple types of volunteer opportunities exist for this program, from serving, cooking, clean-up, crowd management, and translating to grocery distribution. Please contact Marian Hutchins at (212) 375-1765 or fathersheart@cfaith.com for further information.

SANTA’S HELPERS

Project FIND, which has been assisting the city’s elderly populations since 1969, runs an annual Santa’s

Helper program that brings a little holiday cheer into the lives of the homebound, frail, or elderly seniors who will be alone this season. On December 24th from 10am-2pm Santa’s Helpers will be preparing and delivering Christmas meals and gifts around the city. Volunteers are needed for food packaging, gift wrapping, deliveries, drivers with vans or cars, and people to lead groups and assignments. Please contact Debra C. Escort, Director of Special Projects, at (212) 874-0300 or descort@projectfind.org to register or to learn further details.

CHANUKAH HELPERS

DOROT, Hebrew for ‘generations,’ is an organization that seeks to reach out to the elderly, Jewish or other, throughout the greater Metropolitan New York region. This year, DOROT will be running a Chanukah Package Delivery on December 10th, from 10am-12pm and are seeking volunteers to deliver a holiday package and visit with the package’s recipient for an hour. Those interested should contact Carrie Jacobs at (212) 769-2850 or cjacobs@dorotusa.org.

CITYMEALS-ON-WHEELS

Citymeals-on-Wheels works with hundreds of volunteers to provide contact and connection to the city’s isolated, homebound elderly population and has several different types of volunteer opportunities, both holiday-related and year-long. Please contact Vivienne Brown-O’Neil at (212) 687-1234 or go to the Citymeals-on-Wheels website for further details (citymeals.org). ■

Can you draw?

Do you make people laugh?

We are looking for an experienced and/or ambitious comic artist to illustrate a regular original comic strip for the Advocate. Comics should be related to graduate student life, should ideally be serial in structure, and will run six times a year. Interested illustrators should send samples, digital or conventional to James Hoff Editor-in Chief The GC Advocate Room 5396 The Graduate Center 365 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016 or electronically to advocate@gc.cuny.edu.

UFC Matches to Determine Executive Officer Posts

MATT LAU

In the wake of last school year's controversial yet widely popular backgammon match between Professors Aciman and Alcalay to decide who would head up the Comparative Literature Department—in which Aciman rolled an improbable six double-sixes in a row for the come from behind victory—University officials announced sweeping changes to the Executive Officer appointment process.

Vertically integrated in its scope, the new plan aims not only to select the strongest, toughest professor for these coveted positions, but also to promote the brand-image of the Graduate Center both in the metropolitan area and nationally. Finally, officials hope that by teaming up with the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) brand and Spike TV they will be able to generate desperately needed revenue for the Grad Center.

"We know we're taking a little bit of a risk in pairing ourselves with UFC," said a high-ranking official speaking on condition of anonymity. "Sure an ivory tower is a beautiful thing, but it can get a little stuffy at times. We want people out there to know that our ivory tower is different. It has a deep, treacherous moat around it with crocodiles, snakes, twentysomething homicidal marital artists, and Kafkaesque combinations thereof swimming around in it."

"We are especially pleased to be inking this deal with UFC," added another, "at a time when the sport is shedding its label of 'human cock-fighting' and gaining popularity proportionate to its new found legitimacy. We hope the Graduate Center brand can only further this renaissance of mixed-martial arts."

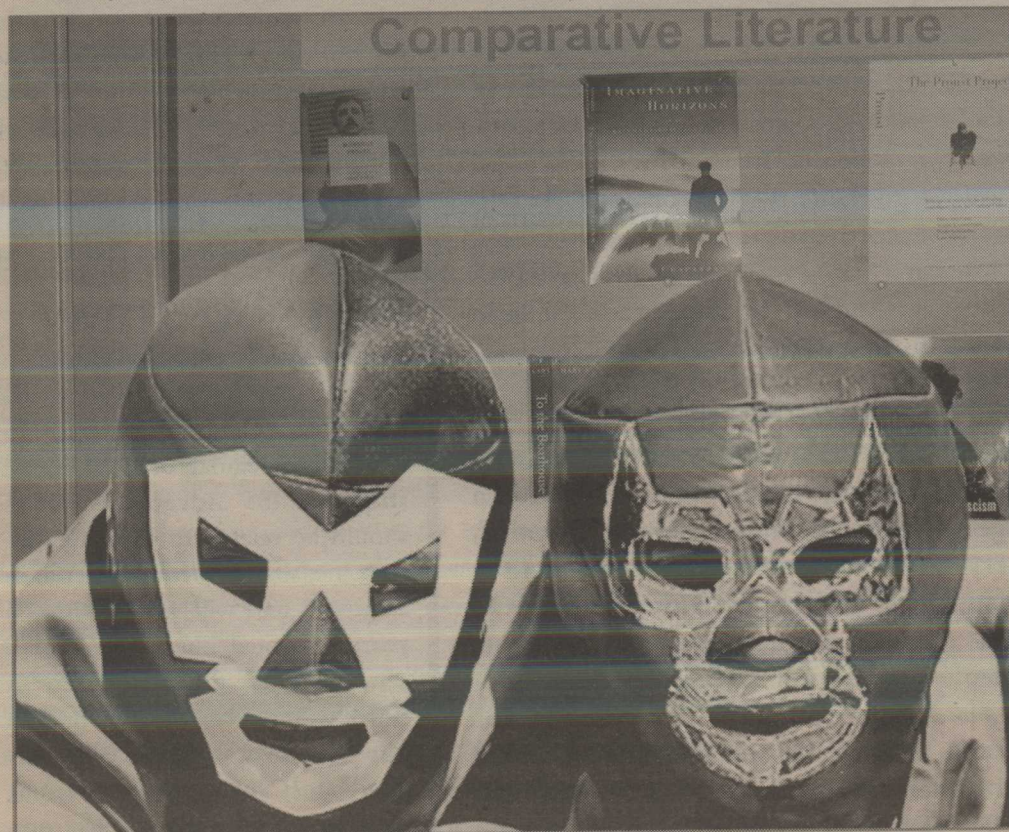
A UFC official remarked, "We jumped at the opportunity to bring our matches to New York City for the first time." Spike TV's spokesperson added, "The idea of professor's beating the shit out of each other for extra duties and a modest salary increase is unlike anything else on television. Actually, never mind."

Here is a brief summary of the plan pending approval from the trustees: (1) Six months before the expiration of the current EO's term, 12 professors in the given program will be selected at random and kidnapped from their homes and/or offices. (2) They will share livings quarters in the basement of the GC while having their lives taped to find out what happens when things stop being polite and start getting really, etc. (3) Divided into two squads along ideological lines—in English, for example, the boring versus the slightly less boring—and after three months of grueling training with UFC hall of famers Royce Gracie and Ken Shamrock, contenders from each team will face each other in bi-monthly cage matches in the famous UFC "octagon." (4) The winners advance to the next stage, culminating in a winner-take-all pay-per-view/close circuit final match.

The usual "rules" of UFC will apply: no head butting, no eye gouging, no attacks to the groin, no rabbit punching, obviously no donkey punching, no spitting on your opponent or taunting. In addition to these standard rules, there will be special academic rules in place: there will be no questioning the linearity of time vis-à-vis the duration of rounds and there is to be no ridiculing of the opponents' research interests and publications as either irrelevant or boring.

When reached for comment on this new development, Professor Alcalay responded in the voice of his best Borat impression: "He is very small man, but because he is Jew he still very dangerous."

"But when I fight him, I can finish him," he added, making a fist with his hand to clarify any ambiguity in his meaning. ■



Known for their Derridean wordplay and backbreaking body slams, Professors Gonzales and Guitierrez teamed up this year for a chance to lead the Comp. Lit Department.

Student Forum:

Now that the holidays are almost here, what (if anything) do you have to be thankful for?



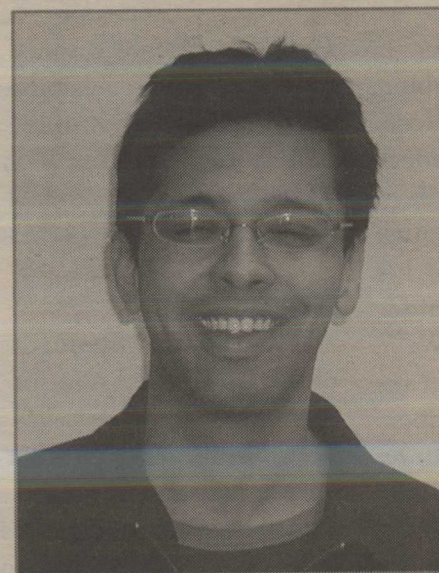
"I am thankful to live in a city that has such a clash of culture. I am thankful for each day I take to the streets on my well worn bicycle and make it to my destination—in one piece, and I am thankful for the wonderful people in my life that allow me the room to be the strange character that I turned out to be."

Brenda Vollman
Criminal Justice



"I am thankful for the opportunity to pursue my personal and academic passions in an exciting and stimulating environment."

Mike Goyeffe
Classics



"Most importantly American capitalism for giving people like me a chance to fulfill my career goals. My family, for all their support during my time away from home and my lovely wife for putting up with our crazy schedules."

Apurva Saraf
Baruch College



"I'm thankful I get to leave New York for Thanksgiving."

Ellen Hurst
Art History