

All You Ever Wanted To Know About APC (But Didn't Know Who To Ask)

by Steven Bruckert

At the end of last term, tensions ran high in the student body. The administration announced that midterm evaluations would be cut, and that a mysterious body known as APC made the decision. Students were concerned that the body had too much power and that the decision was intentionally announced late in the term so that students wouldn't be able to discuss it.

I met with Paul Voice, chair of APC this year, to talk about APC and the decisions that were made.

APC stands for Academic Policies Committee. APC is made up of faculty members, plus one Chair who does not get a vote. The committee discusses issues like faculty leaves of absence and sabbaticals and academic life at Bennington, and suggests changes to academic policy on the campus. APC does not have any real power itself, and can only propose changes to the faculty.

When students learned that midterm evaluations were cut, many wondered who to blame for the changes and for the students' lack of involvement in the decision-making process. APC decided that the old system of midterm evaluations should no longer be a part of the academic process. Their reasoning was that the process was very time consuming and not worth the effort. Many professors didn't do midterm evaluations at all, or left them until so late in the term the evaluations were irrelevant. Another reason for the decision was that APC

believed the time professors took for midterm evaluations could be better spent on direct involvement with individual students. The change was made so that instead of spending fifteen minutes writing a midterm evaluation, the time could be used in a fifteen minute meeting with the student. The idea of the change in policy, Paul said, was not to get rid of midterm evaluations, but to change the midterm evaluation *process*.

To ensure that students are still receiving midterm evaluations, SEPC evaluation forms will ask "Did you receive a midterm evaluation of some kind from your professor?" APC believes that midterm evaluations are important, but that the way midterm evaluations are given should be up to the professor.

In the old system, professors were required to fill out midterm evaluation forms instead of evaluating students in some other way more appropriate for the class or discipline. The change in policy doesn't take anything away, Paul said, but rather allows professors and students more freedom in deciding what method of midterm evaluation is best for them.

Many students also had questions about how APC works. APC does not have the power to change policy. The only thing APC can do is present proposals for policy changes, which are then voted on by the faculty as a whole. Academic policy changes are not decided by APC but by the entire faculty.

continued on "snap II"



Bennington College community discusses the war

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Faith-Based Initiatives: Justification for Violence

by Emily Sweeney

On September 11th, 2001, America was violently assaulted. Four hijacked airplanes killed three thousand people. The attackers were Muslim extremists who believed their violence necessary for the defense of the Islamic way of life. The United States government responded in kind, launching a military campaign on the Taliban in Afghanistan within weeks of the hijackings. This violence perpetrated by the United States military has been justified as necessary for the defense of the American way of life. But what distinguishes this justification for America to launch war on Afghanistan from the justification for Al Qaeda to launch war on the United States? How is one faith more justified in perpetrating violence than another? Is faith, religious or otherwise, truly the

driving force behind any of this recent violence?

Since September 11th, 2001 George W. Bush has called on Americans to band together; to love thy neighbor; to find solace in religious belief and social good deeds. Bush has given a name and a place to this idea that faith provides consolation: the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. With this office, the President and his Administration wish to blur the boundaries between religion and government. They have done this by offering government funds to religious organizations that are dedicated to helping disenfranchised people help themselves.

Bush has created faith-based charities to help America become a better place, a place to be more proud of. He wants America

to be a place worth fighting for. As he said in his White House address of April 11th, 2002:

I mean, government can write checks, but it can't put hope in people's hearts, or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That is done by people who have heard a call and who act on faith and are willing to share that faith (Patriot Resource, 2002).

Compare this definition of President Bush's faith-based initiative with a definition of Islamic Jihad:

jihad:

1 : a holy war waged on behalf of Islam as a religious duty

2 : a crusade for a principle or belief (Merriam-Webster, 2002).

When the President's justification for introducing faith into government continued on "snap II"

THE HOOKAH NAZIS

Mark Stone is not a smoker of marijuana. Mark Stone is not a pothead. Ask his friends. Ask anyone. He does, however, smoke tobacco. He comes from a cultural background of tobacco-smoking. Many of his friends back in LA are Jewish, Persian, and Moroccan, and many smoke tobacco, with or without him, from hookahs. He comes from a background, a world of hookahs.

Mark Stone bought a hookah and had it shipped here so that he could smoke tobacco out of it. When it arrived, he smoked tobacco out of it. Not weed. Not grass. Not green, bud, Buddha, owski-woski, or any other euphemism. Mark doesn't smoke euphemisms. He smokes tobacco. Out of hookahs.

Mark Stone doesn't smoke weed out of pipes and bongs. Many people—most Bennington students, I'd say,—do this. Weed and its paraphernalia are necessarily easy to find, easy to conceal. A hookah is not. A hookah is expensive and weighty and requires great care in its handling.

It makes no sense to buy a hookah in order to smoke marijuana.

It makes no sense to confiscate Mark Stone's hookah. But Security did this.

Actually, Security left, laughing, and came back ten minutes later with reinforcements and a new decision. What happened in those intervening moments? Tobacco smoking.

House Chairs were in the room. House Chairs don't smoke weed out of hookahs in front of Security. They will, however, smoke tobacco. Anyone will. If you're eighteen, it's not illegal. It is more dangerous than smoking marijuana, but scientists don't make the laws. Politicians do.

And, apparently, Nazis enforce them. What happened to common sense? What happened to American preservation of freedoms? Since when must we fear that some walkie-talkie-slinging Stalin might swoop out of the night and steal from us our tobacco and tobacco products?

Did Security say "Don't smoke tobacco?" No. Security said "No hookahs." Security admitted it made no sense. Security admitted that anyone smoking weed would have smoked it out of a pipe or bong or with rolling papers, and that a pipe or package of papers would not have been confiscated. Why? Well, what if it was a tobacco pipe? What if said smoker was rolling his own cigarettes with those papers?

What about hookahs? Why are hookahs, devices traditionally used only for the consumption of tobacco, so inherently different than pipes and papers? What about apples, Coke cans, and other household objects? One can craft a makeshift bong (a MacGyver bong) out of nearly anything. But apples and Coke cans are not even considered for confiscation.

Just hookahs.

Mark Stone is not a perfect man, not a martyr. Mark Stone is alive and well, physically, in that his lungs have inhaled far less tobacco smoke in the past weeks than they might have, had certain persons of supposed authority failed to take certain actions of obviously Fascist bent.

Mark Stone is also missing something. His freedom. His right to do as he pleases, so long as what he does breaks no law.

Hookahs are not against the law. They are for tobacco. They are items of cultural importance. They are, here, at least, taboo without cause. Admittedly. Security admitted this. Sydney admitted this. They lost the argument and now wish to remain hardliners in the interest of not being softliners. It has nothing to do with hookahs.

Despite this, despite logic, it seems, Mark faces a seventy-five dollar fine in order to be able to smoke tobacco here. Is the fine punitive? No, hookahs are not against the law. The fine is an act of Fascist funds-requisitioning that should not go unnoticed by other students. When will Kool-Aid become anathema to the administration here because one can mix it with alcohol? How long before papers used to roll cigarettes become a thing of the past? How long before it's seventy-five dollars to smoke, drink, and/or dance? How far does it go? *How far do we let it go?*

Hookahs not a problem. Fundamentalists and Fascists are problems.

Please return Mark Stone's hookah. Please return his freedom.

-Wythe Marshall

ELEGY

*Those who sang in the inns at evening have departed; they
saw their hope in another country...*

- The Summer holds: upon its glittering lake

W.H. Auden

I'm supposed to be writing an article on Lucy Grealy, and all I keep doing is avoiding it. I listen to music, make phone calls, read, pace. A while ago I sat here and wrote a villanelle (Lucy's first and most poignant lesson ringing in my ears—"Most poetry is bad poetry..."). It's a beautiful day out, fresh-faced liberal arts students are enjoying the pleasures of their education's lawn; not me. I'm sitting here, alone, trying to come to grips with the realities of being a writer. There's a stack of books on my floor, paper everywhere, CD cases strewn across the floor, more books and papers across my bed—there is a Beckett-esque desperateness to my digs. I thought I'd want to write about Lucy, but the truth is that I'm disturbed by it. How do I go about conveying her pain when I was only a minor friend; or, how do I go about the task of writing about someone who wasn't necessarily happy here, about a teacher who was demanding and didn't settle for mediocrity; about a professor whom I held in the highest esteem, while most found her brash and tough?

Bennington being Bennington I'm going to disappoint the gossips and not talk about the darker side of Lucy. I'd rather you get a sense of Lucy through her writings. If you want a closer look at her life, read the wonderful articles written recently by her friends Ann Patchett and Sven Birkerts.

Maybe I'll talk about my first impression of Lucy. I was a transfer, going to my first class (Lucy's *Reading Modern and Contemporary Poetry*). No. Maybe I'll talk about all the nights Whit and Lucy and I would roll into the bar in North Bennington, knock back round after round of shots of Jameson with Guinness chasers and argue about literature. We'd talk for hours about Pound and Eliot (two of her favorites), or whether *Illuminations* was superior to *A Season in Hell* (I battled for the *Illuminations* and Whit took the *Season*, Lucy just giggled and listened to the Stones raunching from the jukebox).

I could talk about that night over FWT while here, working the MFA program, I sat with her at the faculty-staff dinner. That night Lucy and Liam Rector (the Director of Bennington's MFA program) sang old songs (Leonard Cohen, if I remember correctly) and had a long discussion about farting. So this is what America's literary elite talked about. Earlier Lucy had imparted her secret to staying warm in winter: flannel bottoms underneath leather pants.

Or I could tell you about the time Lucy and I spent the afternoon shopping. She was looking for anything Carhart. It never ceased to surprise me just how mean people can be. The looks she got from passersby, clerks—always the look of one wrestling with something slightly alien—didn't phase Lucy. Or at least she never let on. And as a result, one almost felt brave or surly when around her in public. To say protective would risk sounding sentimental or sappy, and that just wouldn't jive with Lucy. After watching her shop and talking about books, she decided she was in the mood for a milkshake and a glass of orange juice. We crawled into the Blue Bunn. Lucy ordered. We talked honestly for what seemed like a long time; about life, about music, about love, about how we see things. When it was over she drove me back to the College, and she went to finish packing up her office.

I saw Lucy for the last time in June. She was gaunt, and the mischievous glint that usually flickered in her eye was nowhere to be found. The MFA residency was a tough one for her and we kept threatening each other with pool. But that never happened. We just missed each other. When I was busy, she was off and vice versa. I figured I'd run into her soon enough, either in New York, or at the worst, in January at the next residency.

Lucy died in December.

What this is then is a short collection of memories, instances. Lucy had an effect on my reading and writing life that is still being felt. The impulse to write creatively instead of do this assignment for example. An ironic aside. I'd like to think that Lucy would laugh at this sort of excuse; I'd like to think of Lucy chuckling with delight over getting me inspired to write—and discovering that inspiration just as I sit down to write a piece about her, a piece that is required of me. Ultimately, I'd just like to express my thanks to Lucy one last time for being a force in my life and education. Lucy, you are missed.

-Andrew Hughes

EDITORIALS

Dear Editor,

I wasn't already in love with Bennington when I first got here. I wasn't even sure I wanted to be here at all. Eventually I did fall in love with Bennington, and I wanted to do anything I could to keep it the place I fell in love with. I became a "student leader."

I sit in meetings every week with Paul Renzi and Sydney Cuzzort. I hang out a lot in Student Life. I meet with Alyssa Tenny regularly. I talk to Ernie whenever possible. I go to Student Council. Everyone who comes through Judicial gets my extension. All of this happens on top of my classes and my two FWS jobs. Being a student leader isn't something everyone can do. It's a huge commitment, especially when you are committed to being a student. Everyone can, however, be an informed and active student. Coffee Hour and Campus Wide Coffee Hour are there for everyone. Everyone in the Barn has open office hours. Paul has even moved his to Thursday evenings in Commons. Most people in the Barn are willing to stay late or have lunch with you if that's what it takes. All of this is an effort to have "a more open dialogue between students and administrators," exactly what the students keep asking for.

Stop telling me students don't have a voice. Because students spoke up, APC is no longer considering changing the transcript, anyone who wants to can stay for graduation, and the snack bar has weekend hours. If students don't have a voice, it is only because the election turn-out was so poor that elections didn't count, no one attended the most recent meeting with Ernie, most houses have less than half their residents attending coffee hour, and no one bothers to walk into the Barn and say, "I'm concerned." These are easy things to do. Dealing with administration can be frustrating. It is much more frustrating to take the time to set up forums, ding in the dining halls, and have only a handful of people show up. If you care about Bennington, do something about it. If you don't care, then please shut up, because I am tired of listening to you.

-Kryssy Wright
Chair of Judicial Committee



Who the Hell is Vincent Ravi Booth?

Julianne Smolinski travels time and space

A few terms ago, out of idle curiosity, I put my house's name into an internet search engine just to see what would appear. In addition to a few websites run by the College were a multitude of biographical web pages on William Heard Kilpatrick, who had a huge forehead and was apparently a great educational innovator.

Despite probably having many, many better things to do, I spent the next hour or so turning up old newspaper articles, obituaries and several frightening Tripod genealogy homepages with scary midi music of people claiming to be related to John Dewey.

I decided it might be an interesting endeavor to actually catalog as many of our houses as I could, and checked out Thomas Brockway's *Bennington College: In the Beginning* from the library. With the combined superpower of Tom Brockway and the oh-so-reliable internet, I was able to assemble a list of wacky facts about a few of the houses (excluding those on Wu Street, which are too new to have dubious histories).

Most of the houses' namesakes are from the time when the College was first founded, from days of yore when one could pay e.e. cummings 25 bucks to speak in Commons (according to Brockway, he wrote a letter to Ezra Pound describing Bennington students as delightful eccentrics who sit in their rooms all night drinking apple brandy).

As with all Bennington College apocrypha, I'd take it with a hefty grain of salt. That said, I give you the list.

Bingham: The Bingham, of Bennington, were an old Republican family heavily involved in the Congregationalist religious community. They seem to have a long tradition of Bingham daughters marrying into the Dewey family, as is recorded as far back as 1780.

Booth: Italian immigrant Vincent Ravi Booth was pastor of Bennington's Congregational Church. With the help of his primary investor, Bennington's Hall Park McCullough, he first began his crusade to establish the College when his wife complained that all the best women's colleges were too "congested."

Canfield: Originally from Kansas, Dorothy Canfield-Fisher moved with her husband to southern Vermont in 1907, where she published 10 novels, 11 collections of short stories and 20 books of nonfiction. On becoming the most "generous" benefactor Bennington College had ever enjoyed, Fisher remarked that it was futile to try to refuse money to Vincent Booth.

Dewey: Educational innovator and philosopher John Dewey once said, "To 'learn from experience' is to make backward and forward connections between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions, doing becomes trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like; the undergoing becomes

continued on "snap II"

WAR

Albany Arrest

by Emily Sweeney

On Monday, March 3rd a 60-year old man was arrested at Crossgates Mall in Guilderland, New York because he was wearing a t-shirt that read "Peace on Earth" and "Give Peace a Chance." Here's how it happened. Stephen Downs and son Roger went to a silkscreening shop in the mall to have anti-war t-shirts custom made. After putting the t-shirts on over their turtle necks, Stephen and his son walked out into the mall. Within ten minutes, they were approached by mall security and asked to remove their t-shirts or leave mall property. When they asked why, the guard told them a mall employee had phoned in a complaint against them. Stephen and Roger calmly refused the guard's request. Minutes later, the guard returned with a police officer, who offered to arrest the father and son if they continued to wear their t-shirts in the mall.

Roger instantly removed his shirt. After all, they hadn't been intending an active protest. As he commented two days later, "In this time when your voice seems to mean very little, this is a nice, quiet, passive way of expressing yourself." But the two men never imagined that their t-shirts would

spark a heated debate over civil liberties and the right to free speech. Much to his son's surprise, Stephen simply refused to remove his t-shirt and quietly allowed the police officer to handcuff and arrest him for trespassing. When asked why he didn't remove his t-shirt, Mr. Downs replied, "I didn't think I had to. It seemed to me my first Amendment rights permitted me to wear the t-shirt."

Indeed, it does seem that Mr. Downs's right to wear a t-shirt would be protected by the first Amendment. Since Crossgates Mall almost immediately dropped all charges against him (and subsequently fired the security guard who asked him to leave), one is tempted to dismiss the event as an isolated case of poor judgment on the part of the mall's administrators. But I've felt compelled to think long and hard about what this arrest might mean, not just for Stephen Downs, but for all of us. Is this arrest an isolated event? Or is it part of a larger national trend? One that discourages any form of dissent, including, in this case, t-shirts which borrow from Hallmark Christmas cards and John Lennon song lyrics?

continued on "reviews reloaded"



Photos: Devin Asch, nyc.indymedia.org

War Is No Way to Make Love

by Ayn Slavis

On March 22, 2003 New York City marched for peace. The first protesters of the day moved through Union Square carrying signs with messages like "Drop Bush, Not Bombs" and "war is no way to make love." They shouted, "Kids against war!" The crowd, ranging in age from seven to twelve, made its way uptown to the start of the march at 42nd Street and Broadway. By 1 p.m. 42nd Street was packed with New Yorkers. The sun was glaring up above, along with several helicopters. Everywhere were signs made

from an array of materials, from plastic to cereal boxes: homemade protest declarations. Posters varied in opinion: several were nationalistic, "Objection is Patriotic," and "Patriots for Peace." The American Flag was seen often. There were anti-Bush statements: "Respect your people, not your dad," "Castrate the monkey," and "Empty warhead found in White House." And, of course, "No blood for oil" was a prominent sign in all shapes and sizes.

Just as the protest posters varied in opinion and appear-

ance, the people in the protest did as well. Barefoot hippies dressed in exuberant colors marched alongside businessmen in suits. A group of lesbian teenagers shouted, "What do we want?" and some teenagers from Westchester, wearing Chanel sunglasses and the latest styles from J-Crew responded, "Peace!"

At 38th Street a Frenchman, wearing a beret and holding a baguette, stood in the middle of the crowd and passed out pamphlets that read,

continued on "snap II"

Bennington Speaks: The First of Many War Discussions

by Holli Jakalow

The conflict between the US and Iraq has been a popular conversation topic among Bennington students, especially during the past two semesters. Opinions on the Iraqi crisis can be found everywhere from fliers mocking President Bush to t-shirts, pins and most apparently the large "No Blood for Oil" banner that hung from Commons last semester. On Thursday, March 13 students had the opportunity to formally discuss the Iraqi crisis.

Students opposed to US mil-

itary action against Iraq gathered in Leigh's living room, voicing their opinions, as well as then up-to-date information regarding the topic. Professor Ron Cohen mediated the forum.

"This is a very important moment in the history of the US because if the US goes to war, it will have economical, political, military and moral repercussions. Everyone is concerned about it, and it is very important to communicate about," Cohen said.

The forum com-

menced with prepared speeches by Jonathon Leiss, Ian Courtney, Jessica Kutch and Natasha Stoudt.

Leiss first addressed the financial sacrifice that the war would require, and how it would negatively affect the quality of life in America. The war would cost the United States an estimate of \$90 billion dollars, which could further slow down America's economy. He also mentioned that war will adversely affect the US's ability to promote world peace in the future and diminish our country's rela-

tionships with Germany and France, two countries that have been important allies in the past.

Courtney feels the Bush administration likes to pretend that the war will not have serious casualties, which he finds unfathomable. He cited that the casualty rate for the Persian Gulf War increased dramatically after the war was over due to radiation caused by depleted uranium, and articulated his fear of a similar mortality rate increase after the potential war. His suspicions arose after he learned

that the protective gear and gas masks used to protect soldiers from chemical or biological attacks were defectively manufactured.

Kutch used her time to address each of President Bush's reasons for going to war, followed by her opinion, rich with facts to invalidate the President's reasons. A war would increase terrorism, instead of preventing it because Saddam Hussein said that he would only use his weapons against the

continued on "snap I"

t r o u b a d o r

Ode to My Mental Illness

...the world changes
if two look at each other and see,
to love is to undress our names...

- Octavio Paz*

Peeled
the last time
from my gray nest
you caught me
once again:
now smaller,
backsliding,
my body a
sculpture of bone.
You gave me
that blood, blooming
purple, tentacle-like
just under my skin.
And the bright blossoms!
Even in winter, red flowers.
The fold of sheets
is nothing against us.
Spidery villain,
I love you
like dry earth
and its sweet rain.

- Corrina Collins

*from *Piedra de Sol*, translated by Eliot Weinberger

blood spots

these soldiers are not germain
sweet pious pills,
in a desert
they die.
freud's poet.

- buffalo bill

What Was About To Begin But Missed Happening

What word could have untwisted silence
In one clean rotation
And let me in?

Maybe something smaller than a word was needed-
A gesture slender as an eyelash
To fall and divide us from blankness together.

-Anna Mortensen

Cold War Memoir

I was hired to follow Nikita Khrushchev and
step on his heels as he walked; even made him fall
on his face a couple of times, in public. At night I
erased everything he had written during the day,
unlaced his shoes, undrank his wine. It was October
in the U.S.S.R. The sun stayed low in the sky, a
sniper in the rear window of a moving van. Night
descended like a charcoal foot onto our tracheas. I'd
stand over Khrushchev as he slept, unraveling the
thick tapestry of his dreams.

- Jack Gendron

Improvisation as Conversation

The language is inherent in the music
and will lead us to new interpretations;
new libretti will come from the body.
Resist expectation, and rest.

The world in a word swirls between us.
I've come to this recital without having practiced;
this too could be a source of my unease.
Come to me then, help me find the notes that suffice.

-Andrew Hughes

Pterodactyl

She looked at him longingly.
"I love you," she said.
"I love you, too," he said.
"I love you more," she said.
They sighed.
A bird passed overhead. She pointed up to it.
"Look George," she said, "Isn't it lovely?"
"It is," he said.
"I wish I could be a bird," she said, "A big
prehistoric bird, with big talons."
"In my mind," he said, "You already are."
"Caw," she said, and kissed him.

-Kat Gardiner

Motion, With Respect To The Ether

There is color, but it has yet
to become light. Let's face the urgency
and see what happens to the dance.

I cannot see into the bird's mouth.
Only the deaf can hear what the wind says
to the water.

I could never wear a suit of armor,
knowing what music could be made
with just slightly twisted metal.

When you watch a tree move
you know the grace of a door
half opened.

How much more the ground respected us then.

-Whit Griffin

WE WANT YOUR CLOUDY ABSTRACTIONS

So my previous attempts to inspire you poets to submit your work
(remember my "blurb on memory" and Jim Harrison's words "A poem is better
than a bloody turkey foot in the mailbox") was, for the most part, not effective. Now, the *Troubador* hopes to expand. We want whatever you've got;
poetry, fiction, non-fiction --- give us selections from your novel if you've got
one. Those of you taking the stage at Poetry Nights, reading at Open Mics,
submitting work to *Silo*, give us your work! E-mail submissions to
snap@bigletdown.com, subject "Troubador."

In the first issue of *Snap*, when the editors asked me to write that
"blurb on poetry" to call to all submitters, I asked this question: what is poetry,
what is the written word, good for? What difference does it make? It's a question
I've fought with in the past and continue to fight with now, and I think it's
a question worth asking again.

I couldn't begin to form an opinion about the true necessity of litera-

ture and poetry without noting again Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*. He
writes, "Similarly cloudy have become all the deep and simple human needs in
which life renews itself. But the individual can clarify them for himself and
can live that clarity." Poetry, I believe, does the same thing. It takes the cloudy
abstractions that have become these "deep and simple human needs" and clarifies
them, makes them tangible, renews them and so renews life. Rilke recognized a
writer's power and wrote, "One of the most difficult tests for the true artist:
he must always remain innocently unaware his best virtues if he does not wish
to rob them of their spontaneity and their unaffectedness."

Perhaps this is too serious a way to address the question. Literature is
both knowable and unknowable. It's a net extending from some invisible place
that catches us mid-fall and puts us back into the world with redefined surroundings.
Perhaps by demanding too many answers, we ruin it.

-Jaime Delp

r e v i e w s

HOW THE REAGANITES LEARNED TO LOVE THE BOMB: WITH ENOUGH SHOVELS: REAGAN, BUSH AND NUCLEAR WAR

by Keith Hendershot

Don't put a loaded rifle onstage unless someone intends to fire it—

—Chekhov

In his 1950 Nobel Prize acceptance address, William Faulkner heralded the beginning of decades-long twilight of dread and anxiety marked in part by the Cold War. He said, "There are no longer problems of the spirit. There is only the question: When will I be blown up?"

What of the ideas and mentality of men who have gone to great lengths to ensure the continued existence of the *Big Red Button That Could Blow the World To Hell*? *LA Times* correspondent Robert Scheer's book, *With Enough Shovels: Reagan, Bush, and Nuclear War*, written in 1982, stands out as an annal of recent history is worth viewing in such times when 43% of the current administration served under Bush Sr. and 1 out of 3, under Reagan.

Considering this, it's no surprise the administration Scheer wrote about in 1982 overlaps and resounds in our current administration. When in the Fall of 2001 our President announced the U.S.'s willingness to use nukes as a first-strike deterrent on non-nuclear nations, it was further

snipping the last wisps of Cold War détente. *Slate* magazine recently published a list ranking war pundits by bellicosity and influence. Topping the list were former Assistant Defense Secretaries for Reagan, Richard Perle and Frank Gaffney. Both Reagan men have been spirited over to the current administration as influential advisors to Bush in matters of defense and security.

In his first year of office, Reagan approved 1.6 trillion dollars to defense spending and his administration felt free to talk about strategic nuclear war with unabashed candor—(quickly curbed after opinion polls revealed the American public wasn't as thrilled about ICBMs as the Reaganites might have first thought). In those early Reagan years, Americans were allowed to see clearly the birth of a new mentality about nuclear conflict: a confident, academic posturing detached entirely from the Hiroshima future shock evoked by Robert Oppenheimer when he described the very first nuclear detonation, fumbling these verses of the *Bhagavad Gita*:

If the radiance of a thousand suns were to burst forth at once in the sky, that would be like the splendor of the Mighty One. . . I am Death, the shatterer of worlds.

The growing sophistication of nuclear arsenals ushered in a belief that nuclear war could be a winnable affair, "It would be a terrible mess, but it wouldn't be unmanageable," Louis O. Giuffrida, head of the Federal Emergency Agency told ABC news in 1982. Bolstered by recent studies on survivability, the Deputy Undersecretary of Defense Thomas K. Jones was confident in stating that merely digging a hole and covering it with dirt was protection enough against a nuclear blast—*If there are enough shovels to go around, everybody's going to make it.*

In *Shovels*, Scheer depicted Reagan's "neo-hawks" as men of convictions marred by notions, academic and pathological. In interviews with such men Scheer had a knack for exposing their enthusiasm on the subject of nuke war. There are moments of humor in Scheer's depicting the men; there is a story of Jones ruining a romantic dinner date in Paris, boring his company with talk of ICBMs and Soviet nuclear capabilities. Scheer detailed a 1980 encounter with George Bush, Sr. on a private jet. Bush's talk segued from discussing the Oilers' football season to discussing nuke war, and his varsity spirit is clearly represented on both subjects—*You have a survivability of industrial potential, protec-*

tion of a percentage of your citizens and you have a capability that inflicts more damage on the the opposition than it can inflict on you. That's the way you can have a winner.

Perhaps the character who came off as the spookiest in *Shovels* is Perle, who retired two months ago as Chairman on the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board. Like many of the neo-hawks, Perle is an academician, given to intellectual abstraction. Perle's ideas seem to straddle a line between a thesis proposal and outright conspiracy theory—claiming the European anti-nuclear movement was the result "Protestant Angst" and an attempt by churches to boost membership. Scheer writes of interviewing men like Perle, how he is struck by "this curious gap between the bloodiness of their rhetoric and the apparent absence on their part of any ability to visualize the physical consequences of what they advocate."

The convictions of such men evoke John Gardner's inversion of the Beowulf legend, where all the malice in the world comes not by the crude beast Grendel, but in the clean-shaven Teutonic face of our Beowulf, who kills with a grin.

THE SOUND OF EAR DAMAGE

by Wythe Marshall

BEFORE TONIGHT, I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO SPELL TINNITUS. Before tonight—before Japanese post rock band Mono—I didn't need to know how to spell tinnitus. According to The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, "tinnitus" is a "buzzing, ringing, or whistling" often caused by "ear infection, the use of certain drugs, a blocked auditory tube or canal, or a head injury." Mono—however inarguably cute, skilled, and innovative it may be—is one big head injury.

Of course, this sort of thing at Bennington is not without precedent. Some of you may remember the comeback show of a little noise collective called Godspeed You Black Emperor, a group who played a sound and made it gradually louder, then gradually less loud, until they stopped. Not to be outdone, Mono caught on and quickly retaliated with a quartet even more amazingly likely to give Wythe a headache and something resembling a phantasmagoric skullfucking.

Mono looks how you'd think—four tight pants-wearing Japanese twenty-somethings with shirts that include the

words "Wisconsin" and "Milan." Two and a half of them play guitars (the skinny guys and the girl), one plays a bass (the girl), and the chubby one plays drums and xylophone.

Pre-show, hopes are high; the Monoists chat in broken but comfortable English with a few people, saying "great" to just about everything, including questions like "Is this your first time in the States?" They genuinely want to know about the Japanese language classes here; the beta guitarist even checks one girl's homework, laughing, "Great, great..." in a strange, hard to punctuate manner.

As the trickle of fashionably late incomers to the DownCaf swells to a satisfactory leak, Mono takes the stage, brandishing a xylophone mounted on an empty Sam Adams crate and over a dozen pedals for each of the lead guitars, positioned right and left of the customary chick-bass. The chubby drummer, of course, sits back, rocking out in a typically drummer-centric world of his own.

The concert begins as a pleasant, droning post rock riff from the alpha ax-man, followed by secondary and tertiary modulations from the beta and the girl,

then xylophone dings from the drummer.

The storm increases. The riff intensifies. Pedals are rapidly deployed, one after another, mounting white noise upon melancholy, wordless rock, building something elaborate, and—for a long time—beautiful.

At this point, it's clear that every member of Mono is both talented and committed to an avant garde, furious sound of layered melodies and architectural-feeling harmony. Their latest release is *One Step More and You Die*, which I at first take to be a funny faux-hardcore non sequitur. But as Mono grows heavier and darker and louder, always louder, the title looks more and more like a personal admonition to hold back and ride the edge of despair, to draw from emotion but bind it with the strict structuralism of these post rock fugues.

The crashing sounds die off, leaving a vacuum. As the first tune's dénouement lulls to a peak of noiselessness, the guitarists and drummer slump, their shaggy haircuts falling over their eyes. The bassist goes even more motionless, her arm draped over her black instrument like Death enveloping the plague-begotten

countryside.

This stage move is not uncommon, not particularly Japanese, or even foreign to us. Each lick of guitar speaks to an audience sans language, and we appreciate that. But each lick is louder than the last. Each song, minus a two or three-minute interlude of softer fare, is more ear-blasting, penis-gripping, sternum-shaking than the one before it.

Unfortunately for Mono, the language of pain is far more universal than that of music.

And—as the final, endless rumbling of song begins to dissolve into chaos—the pain in my head is all I can hear or see. I don't really see the alpha guitarist drop to his knees and curl around his guitar, smacking pedal after pedal, whipping closer to and turning from the amp behind him. I don't see the other guitarist do the same, obviously and smilelessly enjoying every second of the breakdown.

I do feel waves of varieties of pain I didn't know existed emanating from the speakers. I do think about oblivion (and my melting teeth) as the bassist vaults from the stage, cutting through the small
continued on "snap I"

Reviews Reloaded

Albany Arrest

continued from "war"

I put this question to a number of Bennington students, and many of them had a gut feeling similar to my own, saying that they felt the arrest in Albany was part of a downward slide into increased repression. As one student said, "If it were an isolated incident, it wouldn't make me so angry." Another student mentioned Brett Barber, a Michigan high school student who was sent home in February when he refused to remove a t-shirt featuring a photo of Bush with the subtitle "International Terrorist." I had my sinking feeling confirmed may time over.

Trudging across campus, feeling sorry for myself and my country, I stopped to pose my question to one more student, and, lo and behold, that student presented me with a novel view point: "I think that their was a clamping down on civil liberties right after 9/11," he said, "but that political space was opened up in the past several months as people become more vocal about their opposition to the war in Iraq- things have opened up because they've had to." An optimist. On the Bennington campus. Can you believe it? And I'm so thankful I ran into him, because he set me thinking about whether my wandering around felling anxious about the certain erosion of my civil liberties was perhaps no more productive than shouting "remember 9/11" at a crown of anti-war protesters. That student reminded me to stop whining and blaming the Bush Administration for my woes. After all, Bush might be gone in a year and a half. But, with any luck, the American people will still be here, and we'll still have to deal with each other.

Stephen Down's arrest was frustrating and unfortunate, as are all cases

when authority flexes it's muscles and silences a dissenting voice. And I do still have the sinking feeling that his arrest is part of a larger movement towards intolerance of people who question Bush's policies. But the scary thing is that it's not only the members of the Bush administration who are intolerant- it's also the people I pass on the street every day who think that unity is more important than freedom, and who would deny me my right to free speech simply because I disagree with them. And the intolerance comes from both ends, left and right. It's the little things- a man protesting Down's arrest who punched another man in the nose because he yelled "remember 9/11" as he walked by; those who accuse protestors of supporting Saddam Hussein through their anti-war activities- these little refusals to acknowledge others' right to disagree with us are what will really get this country in trouble.

Are we forgetting that in order for any of us to have the right to free speech, all of us must have that right? What exactly did we defend by going to war with Iraq? What were we making "more secure?" So yes, the Patriot Act, the TIPS hotline, our bombs dropping in Baghdad, and Stephen Down's arrest all scare me. But most frightening of all is the willingness of so many American people to believe that dissent equals anti-Americanism, and that free speech should only be allowed for those with whom we agree. So when I think about Stephan Down's arrest in a mall for wearing a pro-peace t-shirt, it's not the security guard who asked him to leave that scared me most- it's the anonymous mall employee who made the phone call in the first place, simply because he or she didn't like what Mr. Down's had to say.

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THE CLIFF PLAYS

by Wythe Marshall

ONE COMMON COMPLAINT OF BENNINGTON made by its students is that—while the college has many performance spaces, talented faculty, easily procured resources, and even a god-damned sauna—only a few drama productions see light every term. This means only a fraction of the actors get to act in front of their peers; only a few set designers see their work put to use, etc.

John Boyd's production of short plays, each dealing with the arbitrary convention of a cliff and a limited rehearsal time, went a long way toward giving more students more to do with and thus more to learn about drama. Each piece was written, produced, directed, and performed by students, and—while not everyone loved every aspect of *The Cliff Plays*—I have not yet encountered a student who thinks that having a short play festival here is in any way a bad idea.

Of course, there's little to complain about in a cartoonish romp like "NxNW2" by Bill McCool, directed by McCool and Zach Hill, which opened the show. In the short, American action-hero Ted Chase (Jefferson Craig) takes on Southern robber-baron Boss Kline (Jake Bandman) to save the innocent Maggie MacGugger (Kat Gardner), who is really another spy sent to help Chase. Sam Tyndall's hilarious Ted Chase-theme song and McCool's use of the ever-popular "crashing helicopter" dramatic convention tie the piece together with a sort of Rocky & Bullwinkle kitsch and timelessness that make "NxNW2" resonate as larger-than-itself satire in a time when real-life American heroism is even now punishing "the bad guys" in a far-off land.

"Untitled 2," written,

directed, and performed by Cristian Panaite (who I accidentally and unfairly forgot to credit for his impassioned performance as the titular Herr in last term's *Institute Benjamenta*) followed, telling the tale of a doomed soldier named Cliff.

The Cliffs then changed directions again with "Flora and the Mounties," written and directed by James Zatolokin, starring Helen Gassenheimer as Flora and Tadd Morgan and Hans Werner-Jatzke as the Mounties, with horses (Thursday, March 20 only) by Andrea Hendrickson. Flora, a neurotic young woman on a hike for mental health through the Canadian mountains, appear bewildered and vaguely schizophrenic, though brilliant, in front of an unexpected and perhaps imaginary audience.

"Untitled," by Tugce Kurtis, directed by Adam Sussman and Tugce Kurtis, set and costumes by Viktorija Abolina, with Jim Bentley as the Emotionally Distraught Man and Tugce Kurtis as the Hysterically Despondent Woman, seems to concern a couple fighting with such issues as emotion and (possibly) death. There is also a plane. I am not sure if the playwright intends for her audience to take away a narrative or theme from the performance, but the startling images she invokes—a knife hidden in a bundle of twigs, a huge tree, constant, quick blackouts, the sounds of a plane, etc.—call to mind a tale of anguish, lost love, etc. The etc. is more prevalent than the plot, or at least it was in its March 21 interpretation.

"Above the Mountains (for Beth)" by Ryan C. Tittle, directed by Penn W. Elo Genthner, starring Nat Sylva as Randall and Anna Penniman as Kay, features a pair of young lovers in a vaguely Southern

state coping with issues such as acrophobia, trust, and... mainly acrophobia. Randall is afraid to scoot to the edge of the mountain; Kay wants him there, though not in an expressly sexual way; it all works out in the end. While Tittle's piece is not boring, it might benefit from raised stakes, and the characters' accents could use serious work.

"Falling for Risko," written and directed by John Boyd, starring Boyd as Jones/Jonesie and Jim Bentley as Circus, capped off the night with probably the most tight, well-drawn piece of the six. In the chaos of the L.A. riots, two guys argue about whether or not to push their stolen car and Risko, the bum who hitched a ride—now paralyzed inside it—off a cliff. Whereas some of *The Cliff Plays* treat the titular convention as a distant prop to reference or fear, Boyd makes his cliff something immediate and constant. Everyone wants to know, will Risko bite it? Will Circus stay and risk capture and mandatory prison time for a third-strike grand theft auto conviction? Will Jones make it to that party? Naturally, the play ends with these issues largely unresolved, turning the question out to the audience and exploiting the short nature of the work to cover a lot of philosophical ground in a mere ten minutes.

So we ask, as the whole of Bennington teeters on a strangely familiar precipice: What will become of a short play festival? Will we see another run of *Cliffs* (though this time maybe *Fjords* or *Estuarial Marshbanks*)? Or will our metaphorical helicopter of drama crash into a lonely Southern mountainside? Of course the question is rhetorical. It is up to the student body to decide and always has been.

A Note From Snap

Our goal is not to impose a voice on the campus, hoping instead to function as a venue for others to speak. Opinions expressed by our contributors are theirs alone, and not necessarily those of *Snap* as a whole. We carry advertisements in addition to articles, poetry, fiction, editorials, comics, and photography. The views presented in the work on these pages should not be linked to anyone other than the individual who signs his or her name to those words.

To those who helped us along the way, thank you.

As *Snap* is a collaborative effort, we encourage all members of the Bennington College community to contribute their thoughts and words to this journal. Be it a news article, editorial or art, all submissions are welcome.

—corrina & dan

features

NEW AND IMPROVED! UPCOMING CAFE RENOVATIONS

by Liz McComiskey

The Bennington website lists the Cafés as the place on campus where, "students... bake the breads, cakes, and cookies that accompany poetry readings, receptions, music performances, movies, lectures, student art exhibits, casual conversation and coffee-drinking that goes on most nights throughout the term." Soon, there will be far more than that going on at the Cafés, as there are plans in the works that will add an addition onto the current Cafés.

Though no dates have been set for the beginning and end of construction on the new facility, there are sketches that have been done that show the new building with every-

thing from a handicap-accessible walkway, a mezzanine above where the larger performance space will be constructed, and a garage door capable of opening up on one of the side walls, revealing a terrace and a larger area for parties on beautiful Vermont nights.

Feedback from students on the new building has been very well received, and keeps with the Bennington theme of students having a say in what goes on here, as opposed to other schools where buildings just appear. Overwhelmingly, the students have said that, though it will be wonderful to have an expanded Café, the ethos of the current facility should remain intact. This has

certainly been taken into consideration, judging from current sketches. The building where the game room is now will be taken down, for the building itself won't be necessary when the project is complete. The equipment from the game room (ping pong table, pool table, etc.) will be moved to where the Downstairs Café is, as a bar and stage will be in the new building, leaving the Downstairs Café needing something to fill its space. A new snack bar will be between what is now the Downstairs Café, and what will be the new building. Outside the entrance (just in front of the location of the new snack bar)

continued on "snap I"

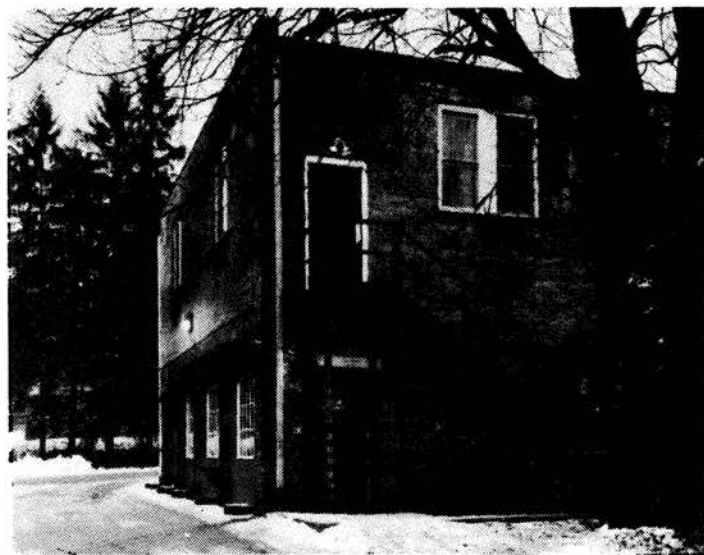


PHOTO COURTESY OF CANSU OZER

BOUNCING BACK

by Stoney Ackroyd

With enrollment at Bennington College almost reaching the school's maximum capacity of 620 students, as well as a fundraising campaign by Bennington administration that has raised a \$9 million endowment fund, administration is once again looking ahead for future improvements to campus life and education.

"Enrollment is back to what it needs to be and with a routine annual fund, coming in the college is in a position to secure its long term future," said David Rees, Director of Communications and External Affairs. "Planning for future improvements to the school is still ongoing," Rees said.

"There are some really good things ahead," he said. "It's too early to talk about it now, but I will talk to the students probably within a year."

One of the things that students at Bennington can expect to see in the near future is a sweep of the improvements to the Physical Plant, Rees said.

"Making sure the campus is equal to and able to support what happens in the classroom

is a top priority," he said.

However, the road to relative financial comfort did not come easy.

Problems started for Bennington in the late 1980s.

"The financial aid picture for colleges changed dramatically. Enrollment was declining, and with the government covering less of the cost for financial aid, the college had to pay more."

Bennington has always been a leader in progressive education, but in the late eighties and early nineties, following federal financial aid cutbacks it started to lose its edge, Rees said.

"They decided to make the college second to none again. The Board of Trustees started a symposium and invited the student body, faculty and the community - pretty much anyone who had ideas to share their ideas, but it was decided that in the end, the Board of Trustees would make the final decisions."

The Symposium was held during the summer of 1994, and the end result sent shock

continued on "snap I"

A Decadent Lifestyle?

by Charlotte Silver

Is there a drug problem on campus? Sadly, according to some students, no. "The biggest drug problem on this campus is that you can't get any drugs," says one sophomore. Adds a senior, "I've seen some really high-quality drugs on this campus, but also some really awful diluted ones like cocaine that seems to not actually involve cocaine." Another senior, a seasoned member of the social scene, slams her water glass on the table and tells me, "There are no drugs. Anywhere."

Drinking, it appears, is a more popular pastime than doing drugs. Many students I talked to agreed: people do abuse alcohol on the Bennington campus. I heard the adjectives "unsafe," "addictive," "dangerous," and "sneaky." But drinking, like drugs, may be a vice of the shimmering past. One junior told me that she thinks too many people go to Alcoholics

Anonymous: "I'm not talking about the people who really need it. I'm talking about it as a big, glamorous lifestyle thing." She does a world-weary voice. "Like, 'Oh, drinking. I'm so over it now.' They're cheapening other people's problems." But one senior considers this attitude hardboiled: "I disagree. Everyone should be allowed to go to A.A. if they really think they need it."

But do some Bennington students romanticize addiction? Many students think so. "I don't know if kids do drugs, but I know that they like to write about them," says a senior. And even if doing drugs is the reality, there's still a lot of fantasy involved. I guess you could say that their fascination turns into reality." According to another senior, that fantasy involves keeping a bottle of Jack Daniels next to your computer and smoking unfiltered cigarettes. "People think they're a character in

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas," she says. "Or *Rules of Attraction*, of course." A friend adds, "We have a literary drug problem on campus."

We've all read *The Rules of Attraction*, alumnus Brett Easton Ellis' novel in which everyone does coke and has a lot of bloodless, blasé sex because, one feels, they have nothing better to do. And some feel that even in the era of Alcoholics Anonymous too many students are frittering away their time. One senior, believes that the struggle for creativity often leads to substance abuse: "People can't think of any other way to define themselves as artists, so they think they have to do drugs. But that's so shallow-minded, and it makes me so mad." More homework, says another student, is the answer. "If people had more to do up here," she says, "then maybe the problems would take care of themselves."

Bennington Speaks: The First of Many War Discussions

continued from "war"

----US if they try to change his regime.

She also mentioned that military action by the US against Iraq could potentially sacrifice the integrity of the United Nations.

The US does not have a global mandate or widespread public support. Kutch feels that the reason behind Bush's decision to go to war is for the power that comes with obtaining Iraq's oil supply.

Stoudt, the last scheduled speaker, addressed issues the US would face after a war with Iraq. She said that it would cost our country a minimum of \$20 billion a year to rebuild our military and homeland. She did not estimate the cost of rebuilding Iraq's oil fields, but she argued that the expense will be overwhelming. In addition to the monetary consequences, war will also have many negative political consequences for Iraq and US soldiers would be stationed in the country indefinitely.

After the speeches, issues discussed included Israel's involvement, Al Qaeda, the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the first Bush administration, alternatives to military action, the US and UN's international responsibilities, issues with Turkey and the Kurds, as well as the US-Iraq conflict in relation to the Persian Gulf War, World War II, and the Cold War.

"I think it was excellent, I learned a lot; I learned something about the issues and about students' opinions," Cohen said.

The discussion was not the first of its kind; last semester there was a forum on the relations between the US and South Asia. Ron Cohen, Jonathon Leiss, Zubin Soleimany and Beverly Bhangi organized both forums. They are planning to continue to hold discussions on international issues throughout the semester. For additional information on the future dates and topics, contact Ron Cohen, ext. 4384.

After Financial Troubles, Bennington Re-emerges as a Leader in Progressive Education

continued from features

---waves through the national education community, as well as, local and internal communities.

One third of the faculty positions were eliminated, with the idea that teacher at Bennington must also be practitioners in their fields, and that certain subjects would not be taught at Bennington. The Board also eliminated tenure for professors, erasing the lines of traditional academic divisions in an attempt to encourage more communication across disciplines.

"They decided to go to the core of what Bennington is about," Rees said. "They went back to 1932 to ask what made it important then and how we can bring it back into the twentieth century, these fundamentals were key to the turn around of Bennington financially and academically."

However, sentiments at the time were greatly divided. Following the Symposium, enrollment at Bennington dropped to fewer than three hundred students.

Eli Anihauck was going

E A R D A M A G E

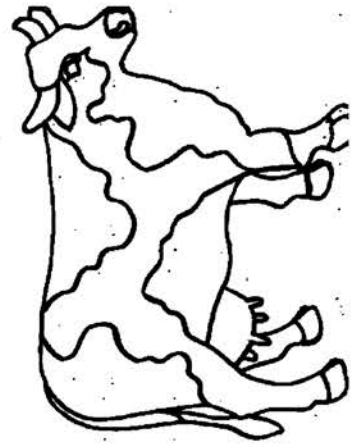
continued from "reviews"

---to grab something, maybe a jacket, then set up shop at the merchandise table, her band-brothers still rocking out to, at this point, a still un-homogeneous sea of noises and thumps and rhythms and notes and pedal-smackings.

So Mono is not J-pop. Mono is not silly or especially heart-warming or funny, at least not

musically. The problem is, Mono is also not a very safe confluence of people and machines. Mono is an elegant, over-that-thing-that-everyone-says-is-over-the-top, idiotically loud band who Godspeed fans and fans of piercing head trauma might like.

Mono has free stickers. Long live Mono. Long live Mono, far, far away.



Renovations coming to cafe

continued from "features"

---right of this will be one of the sides of the new large building, where a sort of garage door will be, in order to easily open up the space inside, and eliminate the problem of over crowding. Inside the new building will be a balcony, which will also be available for seating during performances. Above the new building will be a mezzanine, for people who want to socialize, but do not necessarily want to go into the actual party. The upstairs café will remain much as it is now, keeping the coffee house feel it has now, while the new facility will also have room for performances, dances, parties, and other, larger events.

Though there is going to be every attempt at keeping interference with the current Cafés to a minimum, there will be changes made to the campus, in order to keep a place open for socializing. Tischman, a largely unused area, considering the extent to which most buildings on campus are used, will become a sort of social center, with the addition of comfortable furniture, and a better sound system for watching movies, etc.

The process for getting the addition has been a long one. Everything from meetings with CAB, meetings with architects and a gathering of students in Downstairs Commons last term has happened. This isn't even

mentioning the involved process of getting permission from the towns in which Bennington lies.

The hope for the completion of the additions was to have them finished by the fall of 2003. This is looking less and less likely, as one must deal with zoning issues in Bennington and North Bennington, and when one considers all the time it takes to actually deal with all the issues surrounding the construction, before the actual construction even begins. It is now looking more like the construction will be done for the fall of 2004, as the plans now are only in sketch form, and there are still many hurdles standing in the way of a new Café.

to be a first-term junior in the spring of '95 but instead decided to take time off from her studies.

"I decided that I would rather not go to school than go to Bennington," she said. "I don't think that very many people agreed with the decisions, or the way they went about it, because since it was during the summer, students didn't have time to transfer and the fired faculty members had no way of securing new positions."

According to an article printed in the Boston Globe in 2002, 19 of 20 professors who

were let go filed a multi-million dollar suit against the College claiming that they were not necessarily for financial reasons, but rather for openly opposing the politics of the Board of Trustees. In 1998, the Board settled out of court for \$1.89 million dollars, but at that time Bennington was already on its way to recovery.

One of the reasons for the recovery was the freeze Bennington placed on tuition following the Symposium summer. "They froze tuition for two or three years because they decided that they weren't going to fund it

on the backs of families, but would rather rely on philanthropy," Rees said.

In the years that followed, enrollment began a slow but steady increase and, many say because of the controversial change made following the Symposium, the school re-established itself as a leader in progressive education.

"Bennington always had a good reputation," Rees said. "But we are definitely receiving national attention again, more and more people are discovering that Bennington matters."

War Is No Way to Make Love Faith-Based Initiatives

continued from "war"

—"Not In Our Name, Statement of Conscience." Inside was a list of people including famous actors, musicians, writers, activists and politicians who have stated opposition to the war. Not far away were posters that read, "I like French kissing and German hugging," and "The statue of liberty is French-made; would you boycott liberty?"

As the march passed Macey's on 34th Street, a group of about 30 cyclists raised their bikes in the air, pumping them up and down, shouting for peace. The throng of protesters passing responded with screams of joy and appreciation.

Two Iranian men marched down 32nd Street sporting stickers on the backs of their pants, "Axis of Evil my Ass, Iranian Americans against War." Posters about nationality: "9/11 was not done by Iraqis," "Free Palestine" and "Thou shalt not kill children. Almost 50% of Iraq's population is under 15 years old," were seen throughout the march, as well as parodies such as, "If you can't pronounce it, don't bomb it" and "\$200 Billion. Hawaiian Vacation for Every American or 1 War (What would Jesus Buy?)"

On 23rd Street, several spectators stood watching the marchers pass. Most shouted encouragement, though some opposed the protesters. One African American woman shouted out, "All your money on posters could be used to feed the homeless!" While another man yelled, "You're too late, we're already at war." This did not faze the protesters; they just continued to yell, "One, two, three, four, we don't want your fascist war!"

Several blocks down a twenty-something man with a sign reading, "A NYC teacher against the war. Just what the hell are we teaching our kids?" passed by smiling fourteen-year olds posing for pictures, making peace signs and dancing. In the same frame of mind an elderly man on the sidelines of the march held a sign reading, "Money for education, not war."

Outside the 17th Street Barnes & Noble, the protesters got slightly hostile. From the street they screamed to the few people going into stores, "While you're shopping, bombs are dropping!" As the protest reached 14th Street Union Square, the Missile Dick Chicks, in an apparent political satire on the country-singing Dixie Chicks, took a more humorous approach and entertained the marchers. The ten women dressed head to toe in red white and blue, with wigs, gloves, and huge model missiles strapped to their waists like vibrators (complete with money tucked into their underwear) sang and danced to their own rendition of the Supremes' *Stop in the name of Love*: "Shop, in the name of war/ You need a whole lot more/ Don't think it

over." Standing on the sidewalks of Union Square were crowds of young teenagers holding up a variety of protest posters from "Latinas para paz," to "Bush is a Wangster," apparently referencing a song by rapper 50 Cent.

By 10th Street a family held pictures of Che Guevara outside their windows. His face, considered a symbol of revolution and protest, was seen throughout the entire march. On the next block a woman stood on a fire escape blowing a shell horn while her daughter danced around in a t-shirt stating, "Fight AIDS, not Iraq." The protesters below erupted with cheers.

The march ended at Washington Square Park. People flocked to the main water fountain in the center of the park to dance, sing and mingle. Children ran around playing tag, covered in anti war stickers and pins. Police officers were scattered around the park, some even struck up conversation with the protesters and, of course, the regular bocce ball players didn't let an anti-war protest disturb their game at the north end of the park.

The atmosphere didn't stay festive, however, when several protesters set an American flag on fire in front of a crowd with mixed reactions. The New York City Police began violently arresting civilians. It was reported at least ninety-one people were arrested. A few blocks away from Washington Square Park and the threat of danger, a man walked proudly down the street bearing a hefty sign which read, "Bomb Protesters." He received no more than a lot of sneers walking down 2nd Street.

In true New York City style people with all different ages, race, sexual orientations and opinions came out to stand up for peace. Whether it was to burn a flag or just walk silently in the crowd, a statement was made. Over a quarter of a million people marched from 42nd Street to Washington Square Park in support of some kind of peace. The environment was a refreshing one, filled with people who hoped to do something about the war on Iraq. A popular sticker, "If you're not outraged you are not paying attention" expressed that mood. A middle-aged woman waved a tiny pink flag with "women for peace," and on the back of her shirt was a slogan germane to the day's opinions, "Hey! I can do two things at the same time. I can walk and chew gum. I can hate Saddam and disagree with the Bush administration. I can support the men and women in our military and disagree with the people who sent them to war. I can love this country and hate the policies of the people running it."

continued from front page

—program is set alongside the hijacker's justification for their attack on America, one cannot help but see the parallels.

This idea that God belongs in government social programs is a dangerous one. Especially at a time when the United States has just finished waging war on yet another nation, and is considering an assaults on others. All of this violence is perpetrated in the name of the "American way of life." America is being called to arms in the name of faith. The steps the American government is taking right now are an eerie echo of steps taken by other nations who have blended religion and state, who have sought religious justification for political ends.

Indeed, the political nature of Bush's faith-based initiative is plain to see. He wants to be remembered as the President who comforted the nation during a time of turbulence and uncertainty. He wants to placate fringe Christian voices, like Jerry Falwell, who suggest that America is being attacked because it has fallen into a state of moral decay. Bush wants the country to fall in step behind him with a strong sense of moral purpose. He wants us to feel that we are doing right in God's eyes. Most importantly, he wants to be relected.

House Histories?

continued from "editorials"

—instruction —discovery of the connection of things."

Fels: Dr. William C. Fels, president of the College in the late 50s and early 60s, said, "Standards are qualitative." Fels inaugurated more traditional collegiate practices to the school, such as a formal graduation ceremony.

Franklin: Elsie Jennings Franklin, the apocryphal "Mrs. Jennings," benefactress and board member, helped draft the original prospectus and mission statement of the College. She offered to take over as the dominant female chair if Mrs. McCullough were to slack off.

Kilpatrick: W.H. Kilpat, a proponent of progressive education, helped to found the college and sat on the Board of Trustees from 1931-38. Student of J. Dewey and co-founder of the Dewey-Kilpatrick School. Said in *The Project Method*, "The student, ideally, should initiate all phases, not the teacher." Was the son of a slave-owning dentist. Author of *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right From Wrong*. Wanted a woman president for Bennington, but refused to serve as faculty if McCullough was appointed.

Leigh: Robert Leigh, social scientist, was the first president of the College. Chosen while working as a government professor at Williams as a compromise by Kilpatrick and Mrs. McCullough, when the College did not have enough money or credentials to attract their first 70 choices. Originally called Jennings House.

McCullough: The McCullough family was the richest in Bennington at the turn of the century. H. P. McCullough and his family resided in New York, spent summers and holidays in Bennington. He agreed to invest in the College at the influence of his wife, who believed that higher education for women at the time produced little more than housewives and "spinster teachers." Mrs. McCullough was easily offended and often stormed out of initial planning dinners and committee meetings.

Noyes: Edith Noyes was a member of Bennington's first graduating class and drew up the first plan to organize alumni. Daughter of Charles Noyes who, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, was known as the "Dean of Real Estate."

Sawtell: As far as I can tell, the Sawtells have been in Bennington forever. There's a record of a Sawtell in the Battle of Bennington, as well as a Henry Sawtell who burned to death, with his wife and five children, in a fire (source: *New Hampshire Gazette*, circa 1782). The only Sawtells who I can find around the time Bennington was founded are a married couple named Hannah and Obediah, who had seventeen children, one of whom they named Martin Van Buren.

Stokes: Originally called Stokes-Sanford, after Helen Stokes and Mary Sanford, two socialists who were nearly appointed as two of the first chair of Bennington at its inception. Mrs. McCullough, who originally found the position distasteful, assumed the role to preclude any socialist stigma that might be associated with the new college.

Swan: Mary Warner Swan, benefactress, was a chairperson and the secretary on the original Board of Trustees. Studied under Kilpatrick at the teacher's college and formed with him the Swan-Kilpatrick Committee to advertise Franklin's proposed mission statement.

ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

continued from front page

During meetings about the change in midterm policy, students expressed concern that APC meetings are closed so that they can bypass student input. APC meetings are closed, Paul said, because faculty leaves of absence and other personal matters are discussed in the meetings and that it is inappropriate for students to be present during such discussions.

The other two policy changes suggested by APC, how final evaluations are handled and how transcripts are handled, are currently being tabled for further discussion. The recommended changes for the handling of transcripts will be discussed again once APC has gathered information on how other schools use the Bennington transcript.

Finally, I asked Paul if the

changes to midterm evaluations and other aspects of academic life were part of a larger plan to turn Bennington into a more traditional school without narrative evaluations and with letter grades, majors and prerequisites.

"There are some people on the faculty who think that's a good idea. I don't. But we're not discussing that in APC right now."

Sporting News

Baseball: Memories, Dreams, Reflections with "Dizzy" Deane Bogardus

by Zubin Soleimany

For many of us, the first consistent smacking of ball against glove in a game of catch is as beautiful and clichéd a spring sound as birdsong. For Deane Bogardus, it is one of the few remaining windows onto the game he once played. "I think, at this age, the thought of playing baseball is actually much more deep and rich than the actual playing," he says.

Formerly Bennington's Director of Admissions and now head of the Center for Creative Teaching, Bogardus doesn't talk much about his life in baseball. Co-workers say he'll occasionally rub his shoulder, grumbling about old sports injuries and never mention the hidden year of his life spent playing AAA ball or his two heavenly weeks in the Show.

"Yeah, [my career] was pretty much a series of lucky breaks," says Bogardus whose father, a former St. Louis Brown, had old friends scouting the colleges. Wanting to play shortstop at Ohio University, Deane found his way to the pitching mound where he discovered he was born with a trebuchet of an arm that could launch a 98 mph fastball. A shoulder injury during his sophomore year, though, weathered it down to the high eighties and Deane was forced to expand his pitching repertoire to include more mirrors and less smoke, adding a slider, change-up and curve.

Upon graduation in 1970, Bogardus said he signed on with Pittsburgh's AAA farm team, the Columbus Jets, after, "They offered me enough money to buy a new Volkswagen and the pen I signed my name with." The young pitcher soon found himself on a bus full



Bogardus, as seen today.

of recent high school grads and half-forgotten big leaguers like former rookie-of-the-year Tony Gonzales who Deane remembers "could hit a ton, drunk or sober."

Deane speaks softly and self-effacingly about his life with the Jets, and not without reason for a pitcher whose most prominent minor-league memory is vomiting in front of 10,000 people. "The groundskeeper came up, raked it off and I went on to pitch the rest of the game; did alright—lost ten pounds in the process, though."

Bogardus' year wasn't without its highlights, though during spring training, he played alongside Roberto Clemente during his last season and struck out Tommy Agee and Cleon Jones of the Miracle Mets back-to-back.

And a few weeks later, two Pirate injuries opened the gates for Bogardus' entry to the Show.

Although Bogardus spent his two week career on a major league bench, it might as well have been the English throne. "It was unreal, you just think it's part of your life. I had a sense of awe about it... I was so cocky and arrogant, there was no doubt in my mind that I was going to be in the majors for twenty years—but it didn't last very long, though."

One day back down in Birmingham with the Jets and his fastball still waning, Bogardus' arm went out, sounding a crack-pop of a death knell for his professional career. "I knew it was time to go looking for another line of work," Bogardus said, "when skip asked me, 'So, have you got your Master's yet?'"

After a lot of sulking, some bartending and commercial shrimping, Bogardus made his way up to Albany where he taught high school and played short-season "beer ball" in an Albany twilight league with ex-college players and the more desperately optimistic washed-up big leaguers. "I kept thinking I'd make a comeback too," he says, "but it was obviously a pipe dream."

By now, Deane has outgrown most of his regrets, but beams when he admits that, "Every spring, when it gets above fifty, my fingers start to make a two-seamer." Bogardus seems content tossing a ball around with his wife occasionally; he says he's done and that he'll be "conspicuously absent" at the fledgling Bennington College Baseball Club's games. I've seen his fingers itch though, and I wouldn't bet on it.

IN THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW SPRING INTEREST IN ATHLETICS AND GENERAL "JOCKINESS" ON CAMPUS, WE HAVE ASSEMBLED A QUIZ, FEATURING *"Suspenders" Soleimany*
THIS WEEK: BASEBALL

- 1) Bill Buckner achieved notoriety in 1986 by:
 - A. Missing a routine ground ball that cost the Red Sox their first championship since 1918.
 - B. Missing a routine ground ball after the Sox had already blown their lead over the Mets.
 - C. Stabbing every Bostonian in the heart.
- 2) Graham Porell's favorite major league baseball team is:
 - A. The New York Yankees
 - B. The New York Yankees
 - C. The New York Yankees
- 3) Who said the following in 1983: "Eighty-five percent of the people in this country work. The other fifteen percent come here and boo my players. They oughta go out and get a f_ucking job and find out what it's like to go out and earn a f_ucking living. Eighty-five percent of the f_ucking world is working. The other fifteen percent come out here. A fucking playground for the c****s****ers."
 - A. Chicago Cubs Manager Lee Elia
 - B. Los Angeles Dodgers Manager Tommy Lasorda
 - C. New York Philharmonic Conductor Zubin Mehta
- 4) At the time of their respective deaths, which player had the smallest liver?
 - A. Hack Wilson
 - B. Mickey Mantle
 - C. Ty Cobb
- 5) In what town was baseball invented?
 - A. Pownal, Vermont
 - B. Jersey City, New Jersey
 - C. Cooperstown, New York
- 6) In 1932, Babe Ruth was rumored to have:
 - A. Made third base on a pop fly before the ball hit the ground
 - B. Eat 23 hot dogs during the seventh inning stretch
 - C. Point to the stands and successfully predict a centerfield home run.
- 7) Who earned the nickname "Iron Horse" for his legendary endurance, playing 2130 consecutive games without a break?
 - A. Wilt Chamberlain
 - B. Cal Ripken Jr.
 - C. Lou Gehrig
- 8) Which of the following is an actual professional sports team?
 - A. Brooklyn Hooknoses
 - B. Washington Redskins
 - C. Toronto Pacifists
- 9) Which of the following players did not refuse to play on Yom Kippur?
 - A. Hank Greenberg
 - B. Sandy Koufax
 - C. John Rocker
- 10) During which era did the Chicago Cubs win their last World Series?
 - A. Pre-Clinton
 - B. Pre-Communism
 - C. Precambrian

Answers: 1) A, 2) A/B/C, 3) A, 4) B, 5) B, 6) C, 7) C, 8) B, 9) C, 10) B.

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Life In a Quarry



There's Megan Krigbaum in Graniteville!

A WORD ON THE LIBRARY

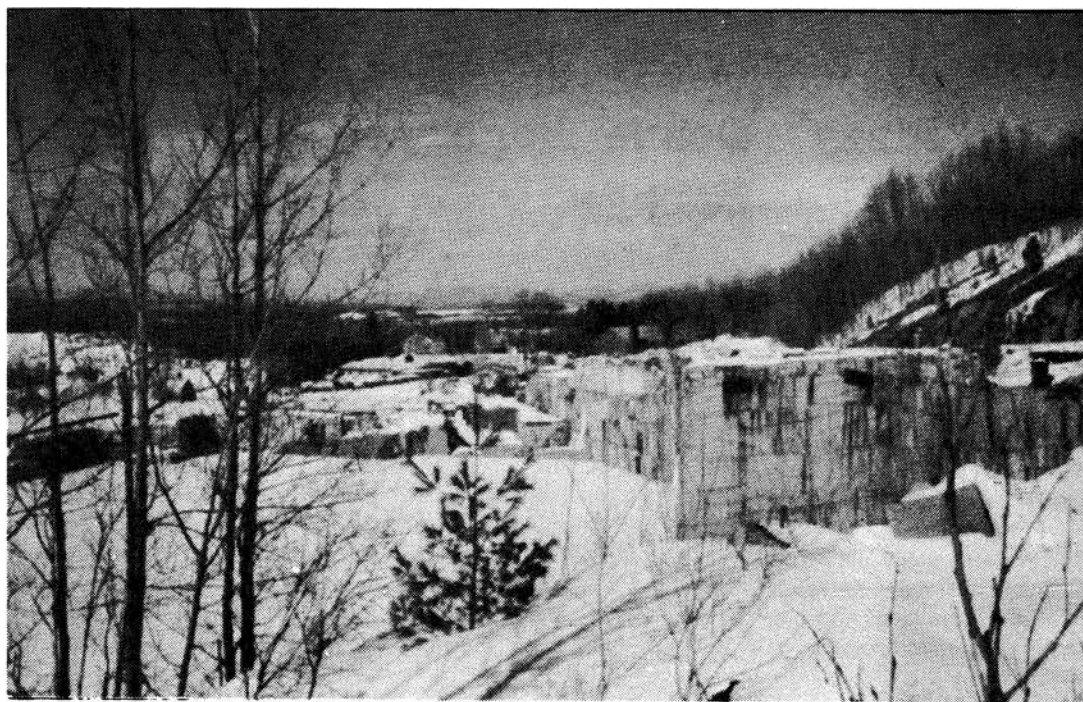
by Charlotte Silver

This spring not being what it might have been – this spring not being, as in other years, a time of cheap champagne under the trees and picnics on the lawn, melting Italian ices and hot dogs and all the girls at last in pretty dresses – I spend most of my time in the library. This suits me just fine. I am a senior and, anyway, I like to study. But it gets lonely in the library – not only in my study carrel but also in the whole building. Where is everybody? If people aren't studying in the library, I want to know, where are they studying? And will someone let me know? It's bleak here, night after night, morning after morning.

This past weekend, in one of the warmest displays of solidarity I have ever seen on this campus, a group of students waited outside the doors of the library together. We were waiting for it to open – this on a Saturday afternoon at twelve o'clock. (The library's hours are another story. Weekdays: eight-thirty to midnight. Weekends: noon to ten o'clock at night.) We all showed up, one by one, with our book bags and laptops and carefully labeled floppy disks. Other people appeared, with videos in hand; I watched, with an aching kind of envy, as they slid them into the drop-box and vanished. Minutes passed.

Tension grew. Anyone who shows up at the library at the library at twelve o'clock sharp on Saturday is a particular type of student – itchy, driven, desperate – and that was the beauty of it. We found each other, and had the library not finally opened fifteen minutes past schedule, there might have been an uprising.

I say this with love. I say this to give voice to the bluestockings. And I am not criticizing the library for opening past schedule, or for keeping inconvenient hours – I have always found the librarians themselves to be both helpful and sympathetic, and I understand that the schedule may depend, as so many things do, on staffing, on money. I just wish that more students *wanted* the library to stay open longer – and, if they did, I wish that they would actually show up. I wish I could sit in the library and hear the tap of computer keys, going at different speeds. I wish I could look up, after hours in front of my computer screen, and see other people sitting lock-jawed, grim, suffering in front of *their* computers. I wish I could go upstairs and rub elbows, as in a crowded bookstore, with other people rooting through the musty stacks. And I wish that there were more than four or five of us, valiant souls, stuck here all the time.



by Megan Krigbaum

On flipping through some sort of home decorating magazine this winter, I came across a two-page photo of men wearing yellow hardhats, standing beside enormous chunks of rock. To the side of the picture was a caption that spoke of granite a quarry in Barre, Vermont and two-ton slices of granite. Immediately, I knew. That was where I had to go.

One Saturday morning, just as the fire alarm went off at Welling, I got into my car and drove three hours north to Barre (pronounced Barry, I later learned.) The roads to Barre were winding, and lined with pined trees that still held recently fallen snow, a very scenic route.

Once off Interstate 89, I saw a sign that read "Graniteville, 1 mile" and knew that all of my dreams were about to come true.

In order to fully capture this felicitous occasion, I decided to go into downtown Barre to get a point and shoot camera. The town is a flashback to the 50s with old brick buildings, apothecaries, and shops with signs written in kitschy script.

Camera in tow, I headed for the quarry. This is not just any ol' granite quarry; this is the largest granite quarry in the world! Its name is Rock of Ages. Slowly I made my way up the meandering road, first passing a manufacturing

plant and then what I later determined to be a granite graveyard. Here were piles upon piles of pieces of granite that for some reason did not meet up to standards. This dumping area was at least five times the size of the largest landfill I have ever seen. Those rocks looked fine to me.

Finally, I approached the visitors' center and the quarry. Here, I learned three things: 1) the visitors' center is only open from May first to October first. 2) It's not a good plan to visit a granite quarry after a snowfall ('Makes it tough to see the granite'). 3) There is no one at the granite quarry on a Saturday, after a snowfall, between the months of October and May. So there I sat, thinking, "my, my, that's a mighty big hole."

Then I really started to look at what was before me. Here was a beautiful thing. The walls were lined with perfectly gray rock and they were enormous. I thought back to the photo I found in that magazine and remembered how small the men were along the wall. Then I jumped out of my car, walked through the snow and very close to the edge of the quarry and looked down. Suddenly, I, too, felt very small and knew how massive the carved walls really were. I so very badly wanted to put on a hardhat, too, but there was no one there. There was nothing but rock and

pebbles off to one side and a moat on the other, but all of this was somehow very refreshing.

After about an hour with the granite, I drove back into Barre for breakfast at The Farmer's Diner. There, they only serve organic food that is grown within 50 miles of the restaurant (aside from the coffee, which hails from Olympia, Washington). I spent a long time talking with the owner of the diner about organic food, while eating a heavenly omelet made from eggs collected that morning. I asked him what he knew about granite and he told me, "there's green granite." When I asked him if green granite was found in Graniteville, he replied, "I think they have both."

I tried talking to some other Barre folk about the pure and veiny rock I had just admired, but no one at that diner seemed to know anything about it. Most often all they could tell me was that it comes in a variety of colors and that many of the people who work at the quarry aren't from Barre.

I shopped around for a while and then hit the road back to Bennington. I truly know nothing more about granite now than I did in the first place, but I did accomplish that goal. I have stood beside the largest granite quarry in the world, and my, my, that's a mighty big hole.

ALL OF US AT SNAP WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING: MISSI ST. PIERRE AND JASON KYLE MYERS FOR KEEPING THE FLAME OF STUDENT JOURNALISM ALIVE AT BENNINGTON; STEVEN BACH; SOUTH STREET CAFE (LOCATED IN TOWN); STEPHEN BRUCKERT; MEGAN KRIGBAUM; PAUL RENZI; WHIT GRIFFIN; DUNKIN DONUTS; TEXACO QUIK STOP; PENNYSAVER PRESS... WITHOUT YOU WE WOULD JUST HAVE, WELL, NOTHING.